

JUST OUT

Resolution on Party Organisation

This Resolution was adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India at its meeting in April 1954.

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FOUR ANNAS

Our Tasks among the Peasant Masses

The text of the Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India at its meeting in April 1954.

This document explains the tasks of the Communist Party with regard to concrete issues like the question of ceiling, resumption, rent reduction, tax burdens, economic prices for agricultural labourers and the question of their separate organisations, and the problems of building kisan organisations.

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Proletarian Leadership and the Democratic Movement



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Proletarian Leadership and the Democratic Movement

THE Political Resolution adopted by the Third Congress of our Party put forward the slogan of a Government of Democratic Unity as the key slogan in the present period, as the "objective towards which all the struggles of today have to lead."

Explaining the manner in which such a Government would come into existence, the Resolution stressed:

"It must be remembered that the slogan of a Government of Democratic Unity is a slogan which demands the organisation and unleashing of mass struggles on the widest scale. It will be realised only in the course and as the result of determined struggle to defeat the economic and political policies of the ruling classes and by repelling their attack on the standard of life, rights and liberties of the people. Hence, the most important task today is to unfold such a movement on the basis of the struggle for the immediate, concrete demands of the workers, peasants, students and other classes and sections and build powerful mass organisations and strengthen the Party. The importance of the struggle for economic demands led by mass trade unions and kisan sabhas acquires far greater importance than ever before precisely because of the growing crisis. It is through these struggles, as the history of the last two years proves, that the strength will be generated and the unity forged which alone can be a guarantee of victory. Then only, even the conflicts in the Congress can be utilised to the advantage of the masses. Failure to see this will lead to the giving of abstract slogans, diverting mass attention from immediate tasks, reliance on top negotiations and manoeuvres and weakening of the mass movement."

The Resolution formulated the general tasks of the Party as follows:

"The three inseparable tasks on the carrying out of which will depend the success of the democratic movement are: the building of the Party, the building of the mass organisations and the building of the Democratic Front. In the measure that these tasks are carried out in an integrated and co-ordinated manner, the attempts of the Government and the ruling classes to shift the burdens of the crisis on to the people, will be defeated, the mass movement will get strengthened, grow and achieve its aim."

The correctness of these formulations has been proved by the events of the last few months. It is necessary now to concrete and amplify them further. The Party has to address itself to this task.

DEMOCRATIC FRONT — NOT AN INDEPENDENT TASK

For this, it is first of all necessary to understand clearly what the basic task of the Party is. It may be argued that this has been done many a time before and that on this issue there is a unified understanding inside the Party. Such, however, is not the case. The fact is that even today there is widespread confusion on this basic task itself. This can be seen from the following formulation made in the Political Report presented by a Provincial Committee of the Party at its Conference:

"This Party programme has given us the clear understanding that the building of the Democratic Front is the supreme task before us."

Such a statement occurs in many of our reports and writings and is generally considered by Party ranks to be a correct presentation of our key task. But, is this really so?

It is not. Such a presentation distorts the position of the Party and ignores the key lesson which the history of the democratic movement in India brings out. That lesson is that it is not enough to build the Democratic Front. It has to be built for a particular purpose, and, therefore, has to be built in a particular way. Unless that is done, the Democratic Front can achieve very little.

It must not be forgotten that the National Congress also strove to build, and succeeded in a great measure in building, a Democratic Front. India witnessed a progressive realisation of national unity between 1919 and 1947. New areas were drawn into the orbit of the movement; new classes entered the arena of struggle; every successive wave of mass struggle for freedom revealed that the national movement had become more broad-based and stronger than before. Despite all this, however, the movement failed to attain its objective—full freedom and democracy—and ended in an ignoble compromise.

This happened because the United Front built by the Congress was a reformist United Front; the movement led by it was a movement which, despite its mass character, remained, in the main, on reformist rails. Undoubtedly, events like those at Chauri Chaura, Peshawar and Sholapur, the INA demonstrations and the RIN uprising revealed the fighting capacities of the masses and the revolutionary possibilities of the situation. But at no time did these possibilities become realities in relation to the movement as a whole.

FEATURES OF THE BOURGEOIS-LED NATIONAL MOVEMENT

As we all know, the reason for this lay in the class character of the national leadership. The national bourgeoisie had its conflict with imperialism and wanted to resolve that conflict in its own favour. It wanted to build national unity—but of a particular kind, national unity that would enable it to exert pressure on British imperialism and effect a compromise. It, therefore, developed a specific type of mass movement and whenever the movement threatened to go beyond that framework, it was either called off or a brake was put on it. This, of course, is known to all. But the fact that must be understood is that the national bourgeoisie succeeded in keeping the movement on reformist rails because the movement itself, under its leadership, developed certain specific features.

What were those features? How did the fact that it was a movement led by the national bourgeoisie express itself concretely?

A distinguishing feature of the movement was that it had no clearly-defined objectives, no concrete programme. Words like Swaraj, Purna Swaraj, Independence, were bandied about but their concrete political content, especially the social and economic changes that were needed, was not defined; there was lack of clarity with regard to what was to be attained and how; bourgeois and feudal ideologies dominated the political field; and, while there was a widespread awakening among the masses, the agitation that was carried on by the leaders and cadres of the Congress was of an abstract nature and did not sufficiently educate the masses and raise their political level.

The second distinguishing feature of the movement was that, while all classes, including the workers and peasants, joined the movement, the classes from which the movement derived its main strength were the petty bourgeoisie in the towns and upper and middle strata of peasants in the countryside. It was not the activity of the vast majority of the people—poor peasants and agricultural workers in the countryside and of the workers in the towns—that constituted the most characteristic feature of the movement, but the activity of the petty bourgeoisie.

The third characteristic feature was the actions in defence of the immediate demands of the people did not become a part of the mass political movement. While it is true that during periods of political upheaval and due to the general radicalisation of the people, innumerable mass actions of the workers and peasants took place and, on certain occasions, as in U.P. in 1932, "no rent" struggle and a struggle for reduction of rent were advocated by Congress Committees, the general political struggle for Purna Swaraj was kept strictly separate from the day-to-day

economic struggles of the workers and peasants. This prevented the intertwining of the political and economic struggles and the drawing-in of the most oppressed classes into the mass movement.

The **fourth** distinguishing feature of the movement was that the dominant form of struggle was satyagraha and not militant mass action—mass strikes of workers, mass struggles of the peasants for land. The main forms which the political struggle assumed were such acts as picketing, salt-manufacture, defiance of bans, etc. On a number of occasions mass political strikes of workers did take place and mass peasant struggles did break out, but such mass actions were generally discouraged and at no time did they become the main form of struggle.

The **fifth** distinguishing feature of the movement was that popular organs of struggle did not emerge and the movement in each locality was led by the so-called dictators—each dictator, on his arrest, nominating his successor.

The **sixth** characteristic feature was reliance on spontaneity. This expressed itself in an absence of any programme for planned extension and strengthening of the movement and for raising it to higher levels. It also expressed itself in a failure to take effective organisational and other measures to meet repression. The result was that, throughout its history, the national struggle retained the character of an elemental upsurge and did not acquire enough strength to frustrate the plans of the enemy. This was seen in 1932 and in 1942, when no "settlement" was reached but the British Government successfully crushed the popular struggle by means of repression.

The **seventh** characteristic feature was that the National Congress, the leader of the movement, had a specific pattern of work. Intensive activity during periods of mass upheavals, the drawing of all its cadres and supporters into action during these periods, but passivity and absence of day-to-day functioning at other times. Also, the Congress developed a specific pattern of organisation—a few leaders making all the decisions, absence of of rank and file initiative, absence of active basic units.

Such were the most important specific features of the national movement led by the Congress. All these features followed directly from the class character of the national leadership and prevented the national movement from becoming a revolutionary movement of hundreds of millions of the Indian people and foredoomed the movement to failure.

There is a tendency in our Party to pay insufficient attention to the task of making a concrete study of the **specific** features which the national movement under bourgeois leadership developed. That the bourgeoisie betrayed the national struggle is obvious to all. The betrayal, however, is generally understood in an oversimplified way, as expressed in specific acts like the

Bardoli retreat, the participation in the Round Table Conference, the acceptance of the Mountbatten Award. Sometimes, it is asserted that but for these acts of betrayal the struggle might have led to victory. This understanding is incorrect. The fact is that such specific acts as the Bardoli retreat merely consummated the process of betrayal; the bourgeois character of the leadership was seen not merely in the acts of betrayal but in the **character of the movement itself**, as expressed in its specific features.

Unless these features were discarded and new features acquired, the movement could not have led to anything except defeat or compromise. The final outcome of a struggle does not depend merely on the subjective desire of the leaders of the struggle; nor does it depend on militant forms of struggle alone. It is wrong to think that the national movement did not attain victory merely because it confined itself to satyagraha form of struggle. The features which the national movement acquired under bourgeois leadership must be studied in their totality and in their inter-relationship. If this is not done, wrong conclusions may be drawn. For example, one might think, if one were to focus attention on only one feature of the national movement, that, if instead of satyagraha, militant forms of struggle had been adopted, the enemy would have been defeated. It must be realised, however, that such a conclusion would be wrong. Mere militancy does not ensure victory for a movement, even if it has mass backing and is launched when the enemy is in a crisis.

This was seen in 1942, when the Congress leadership gave the "Do or Die" slogan, when a number of militant actions took place in the course of the struggle and when the movement was not withdrawn as it had been in 1921. Despite all this, however, the movement, on the whole, retained the characteristic features of a bourgeois-led, reformist movement and could not, therefore, defeat imperialism.

It is therefore obvious that what was needed in India was not just a movement against imperialism, but a mass revolutionary movement. Hence the building of the Democratic Front in the abstract could not be the task of the Communist Party.

FEATURES THAT A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT MUST HAVE

What then was the key task before the proletariat and the Communist Party? This question was answered with classic precision and lucidity by Comrade Stalin in his speech at the University of the Toilers of the East in the following words:

"...It is a question of preparing the proletariat of such colonies as India for the role of leader in the liberation move-

ment, and of dislodging, step by step, the bourgeoisie from this honourable position. The task is to create the hegemony of the proletariat within this bloc."

What did this concretely mean? It meant that a mass revolutionary movement for freedom and democracy had to be developed. Such a movement would have had features different from those acquired by the reformist mass movement led by the bourgeoisie.

1. The masses of people, or at least a big section of them, especially the working class and the toiling peasantry, had to be convinced that freedom meant not merely the removal of the British officers and the British army of occupation but also the breaking of the British stranglehold on our economy, the complete abolition of feudalism and the establishment of a democratic state; that without this there would be no real improvement in their conditions. The political level of the masses had to be raised and mass political education imparted through ideological-political work and intensive political agitation.

2. It was to be a united movement of various classes because the democratic front, above all, is a front of classes. All anti-imperialist classes and strata of people, including the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie had to be drawn into the national movement. But the movement had to derive its main strength from, and base itself progressively on, the masses of the most oppressed classes and strata—the workers and the peasants, especially the poor peasants and agricultural workers. Further, their activity was to be the most important characteristic feature of the movement.

3. While all democratic classes had to be united, the unity of the working class and the peasantry was to be the pivot of the democratic front. This unity was to be built in action by rallying each of these classes in support of the demands and struggles of the other, by organisation of mass actions of workers in defence of the demands of peasants.

4. Political and economic struggles had to be developed simultaneously and the struggle for day-to-day demands of the masses had to be made an integral part of the national struggle for freedom. Only then, as the history of the Russian Revolution of 1905 shows, could the broad masses have been drawn into the movement. Mass actions of workers and peasants—mass strikes of workers and mass peasant actions for land—had to become the dominant form of struggle.

5. Organisations consisting of the most militant, most conscious, most self-sacrificing elements from among the fighting masses themselves had to be created for conducting the struggle.

6. Instead of reliance on spontaneity, the movement had to be extended, in a planned way, into new areas and among new

classes and firmly led from stage to stage. Effective measures had to be taken to fight repression and to carry on mass work even under severest conditions of repression.

7. Organisations had to be built capable of sustained activity among the masses, constantly educating and organising them, developing mass initiative.

Proletarian hegemony was needed precisely in order that the movement could acquire these specific features and become, in Lenin's words, "a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement".

And the struggle to impart to the movement these specific features was also the struggle for the establishment of proletarian hegemony. Mass political strike was a major weapon for the struggle.

This struggle itself could be conducted only by a strong Communist Party rooted in the masses. The features which the mass movement had to acquire in order to grow into a revolutionary upsurge for power could not come automatically or as the result of a spontaneous process of mass radicalisation. Hence, the building of a mass Communist Party was the indispensable condition for the growth of a revolutionary movement and its victory. Such a Party could be built only by sharp ideological struggle against the bourgeoisie, by the inculcation of socialist consciousness in the working class and advanced masses and by a policy of bold recruitment into the Party of the most conscious and militant elements from the masses. Also, powerful mass organisations of workers and peasants were essential for effective mobilisation of these classes.

The United Front with the bourgeoisie was necessary and possible because the bourgeoisie had its conflict with imperialism and desired national unity. At the same time, this United Front also involved struggle against the bourgeoisie because the bourgeoisie wanted to fight imperialism with a particular aim and wanted a particular kind of national unity which was not in conformity with the interests of the vast majority of the people, whose problems could be solved only by destruction of imperialism and feudalism. The struggle for hegemony had to be waged within the National Front. Concretely, it would have assumed the form of struggle to direct the national movement of its bourgeois-reformist features and to give it popular revolutionary features.

From this it should be clear that the development of a mass revolutionary movement, the building of a powerful democratic front and Communist Party and the establishment of proletarian hegemony inside this Front—these are not unrelated or even separate tasks. They are different aspects of the same

task—the development of a mass movement for full freedom and democracy.

WRONG IDEAS ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT AND PROLETARIAN HEGEMONY

It is precisely this which was not always understood by us. Many a time the task of building the Democratic Front was postulated as an independent task, a task isolated from the task of the establishment of proletarian hegemony. Many a time, proletarian hegemony itself was presented in a vulgar and distorted manner. This expressed itself sometimes in glorification of bourgeois leaders in the name of national unity and in the putting forward of such theories as "the Congress has to be built as the United Front and the Communists must build the United Front by acting as the best builders of the Congress", "National unity means Congress-League unity and the Communists have to act as a bridge between the Congress and the League". Also, at other times, proletarian hegemony was accepted in words, but presented in a typically petty-bourgeois manner, as basically a question of "bold lead" and "militant action" by the Party and its cadres and not as a question of practical leadership of the Party and its cadres for developing a mass movement of a specific kind, with specific features.

The most disastrous manifestation of these wrong ideas was that insufficient attention was paid to the most important tasks whose fulfilment is essential for the establishment of proletarian hegemony: ideological struggle against the bourgeoisie; building up of mass organisations of workers and peasants, basing ourselves primarily on the most oppressed and exploited strata; inculcation of political consciousness in the working class; the building of a mass Communist Party.

It should be noted that it was precisely in those areas where mass organisations of workers and peasants were built up and the movement acquired some of the features of a militant mass movement under proletarian leadership that the democratic movement today is strongest and was able to present an effective challenge to the Congress even during the last general elections. On the other hand, in areas where the movement did not acquire these features to any marked extent, the democratic movement is weak today. In other words, to the extent the Communist Party succeeded in developing a militant mass movement and militant unity on the basis of the oppressed and exploited classes and built their organisations, to that extent it succeeded in strengthening the democratic front. Not merely our shortcomings, but our achievements also, therefore, teach what kind of unity has to be forged and how.

Has this question, the question of the Democratic Front and its relation to proletarian hegemony, any great significance

today? Yes, it has. Its significance today is no less than it was before, because the key task of the democratic movement, as formulated by Stalin, has yet to be realised. Many of the weaknesses which characterised the popular movement in the past still persist. The movement of today, though it is directed against the Congress Governments, retains many of the characteristic features which the national movement under Congress leadership acquired. It has not yet assumed the character of a mass revolutionary movement.

The tendency of looking upon the building of the democratic front as an independent task, a task to which everything else must be subordinated, is still widespread in our Party and expresses itself again and again. This is seen not merely in the emphasis laid on top negotiations and on such slogans as "Left Unity", it is also, and above all, seen in the tendency to forget that the Front that has to be built is a Front different from what the National Congress built, that this difference has to express itself not merely in revolutionary phraseology, nor even in that it has to be a "front of struggle". It must be remembered that the Congress also built a Front of struggle. The difference between the Front built by the Congress and the Front that has to be built now lies in the concrete features that the mass movement has acquired today. These are features in relation to its objective, clarity among the masses—especially among the working class and advanced sections about that objective—and their level of consciousness; the classes from whom the movement derives its main strength and whose action is the most characteristic aspect of the movement; the extent of inter-linking of political and economic struggles; the forms of mass actions and the organs created in the course of and for the conducting of mass struggles.

If all these features do not develop, the movement of today too will not attain its objective and will end in defeat and betrayal. Moreover, these features will not develop automatically, merely because the Left or even the Communist Party is the main opposition to the Congress and is leading these struggles. It must be realised that a mass movement led by the Left or even by the Communists can be basically of the same type as the movement led by the Congress—a mass reformist movement drawing its main strength from the petty-bourgeoisie. And such a movement, despite all the revolutionary "aims" of its leaders, will inevitably lead to the same results—betrayal and defeat.

Hence, the revolutionary features which have been pointed out earlier will have to be consciously imparted to the mass movement, to the spontaneously-growing popular upsurge. To the extent that this is done, to that extent will unity be realised, the Democratic Front built, and to that extent also

will proletarian hegemony be established. This, it must be emphasised, is the indispensable condition for victory over reaction. This, therefore, is the key task before the Communist Party.

It should not be concluded from this that the Democratic Front will be built automatically if the Communist Party strives to develop a mass revolutionary movement on the basis of its own strength. The development of such a movement is itself a process. All the specific features which such a movement must have cannot be acquired at one stroke or merely because of our desire. They can be acquired only gradually, through the growing experience of the masses, through the remoulding of their consciousness, through the strengthening of their organisations. This involves building of unity in action, on the basis of the existing consciousness of the people and their existing strength.

As the Political Resolution adopted by the Third Party Congress points out:

"The Democratic Front is the united front of all classes and elements whose interests can effectively be furthered only by the elimination of imperialism and feudalism. It can be built only by developing the broadest mass movement on the basis of struggles for immediate economic and political issues confronting the people. It is obvious that, at a time when the masses are under the influence of different political parties, when even the working class is split, united front agreements between parties and organisations regarding demands and slogans of struggles on each issue are powerful factors in drawing people into common action. Such united fronts help in bringing even masses following the Congress into common struggles. Hence it is necessary for the Communist Party to continue and intensify its efforts for such agreements on each issue. At the same time, it should be remembered that the growth of the United Front depends, above all, on the independent role of the Party in uniting and mobilising the working class and the working people.

"Experience has also shown that the formation of united committees for the specific purpose of conducting of such united struggles, as was formed for example to conduct the struggle in Calcutta against increase in tramfare, committees whose constituents are the various parties, organisations and elements, and where decisions are taken by common consent, help the strengthening and further unfolding of the mass movement. It also helps the building and growth of united mass organisations of workers, peasants and others. It is this coming together from issue to issue and jointly leading the mass struggles and the working in common mass organisations that will create conditions for a closer united front.

"Further, united front does not mean merely the united front of the Communist Party and Left parties but, above all, united front of the masses, including masses still under the influence of the Congress. Hence the development of the united front movement demands the drawing into struggles and common activity of the large mass of Congressmen, Praja-Socialists and progressive individuals. The tendency to look upon all Congressmen and all PSP members as reactionary because of the reactionary policy of the Congress leadership and disruptive policy of the PSP leadership must be combated. With the growth of the crisis, with the growth of mass struggles and growing disillusionment of the masses about the policies of the Congress and PSP leaderships, possibilities already exist for drawing disillusioned Congressmen and PSP followers into struggles and common activity and these possibilities will develop in future."

At the same time, it is necessary to realise that even a united mass movement—even a united mass movement under the leadership of the Left and the Communist Party—will remain weak and at a low level if it does not acquire the characteristic features of a mass revolutionary struggle for power. And these features will have to be consciously imparted.

It is in the light of this understanding that the Party has to evaluate the movement that has grown today in various parts of the country and examine its specific features. It is in the light of this understanding that the party has to decide what specific tasks have to be undertaken to strengthen and extend the mass movement.

UNITY OF OPPOSITION PARTIES NOT ENOUGH FOR DEFEATING REACTION

When, in 1952, the General Elections revealed a heavy decline in the influence of the Congress, there were many who tended to draw over-simplified conclusions. It was argued that if the "splitting of democratic votes" could be avoided in future elections, victory over the Congress and the establishment of a democratic government by purely constitutional means would inevitably follow. The obvious assumption was that, except for the supporters of such parties as Jana Sangh and Hindu Sabha, all those who voted against the Congress were potential supporters of the Left. Hence, if the Left Parties united, all those masses would rally under their banner.

Facts have shown that this utterly reformist understanding had no basis in reality. Facts have shown that the method of "analysing" election figures by merely adding up the anti-Congress votes is totally wrong. Facts have shown that something

more is needed besides mere "unity of the Left" to crack the mass base of the Congress and win over the majority of the people. Above all, facts have shown that only the determined resistance of the people and mass unity in action can defend the democratic rights and liberties of the people and preserve democratic forms.

It was in the State of Travancore-Cochin that the Congress suffered its biggest reverses in the General Elections of 1952, securing only 44 out of 107 seats and 36 per cent of the votes. Economic distress has assumed an acute form in this State during the last two years. In the recent elections, the Communist Party, the R.S.P., the K.S.P., and the P.S.P. jointly opposed the Congress. But despite all this, the Congress secured 45% of the votes—9% more than during the General Elections held two years ago. The Travancore-Tamilnad Congress Party, another right-wing Party, polled 6% of the votes.

This happened because, on the whole, the Congress succeeded in retaining its mass base; further, the disappearance of the right-wing parties—Cochin Party and Republican Party—the absence of many Independents and the support given by the Catholic Church resulted in **consolidation of reaction** under the Congress banner (except in the Tamil areas where the TTNC defeated both the Congress and the Left Parties). In the elections in PEPSU also the Congress improved its position by enlisting the support of a large number of princes and landlords.

It is evident therefore that **even** for electoral victory the main thing is not agreement between opposition parties. Such agreements are necessary and useful. They will have to be made again and again. But they can never be the **main weapon** for dislodging the Congress from power. Whatever course events may take and whatever form the struggles for power may assume from stage to stage, the main weapon will always have to be **unity of masses in action**, getting consolidated and growing into a mass revolutionary movement under the leadership of the working class and its Party. This weapon alone can shatter the mass base of the Congress and bring about a change in the correlation of the forces. It alone can make even electoral agreement on a correct basis possible and effective.

The biggest victories over the Congress were achieved during the last elections precisely where this weapon had been wielded by the Party over a long period—where mass struggles were fought and mass organisations built. Unity of Left parties and elements can defeat the Congress only if unity of action is developed **now** to defend the immediate interests of the masses.

It may of course happen that a reactionary or reformist "opposition" Party, by cleverly utilising the anti-Congress sentiment of the people gains ground at the cost of the Congress.

Such a development however will neither be "a step forward", nor a "lesser evil" because such a Party, even if it talks of Socialism, as the Praja-Socialist Party does, will in reality be nothing more than another instrument of the ruling classes—their second line of defence. The victory of such a party will mean a set-back for the popular movement, the sowing of new illusions among the masses, a step towards new betrayals.

Hence, the task facing the democratic masses is not merely to isolate the Congress and remove it from power. It is also to ensure that reactionary or opportunist parties—parties representing the same ruling classes as today—do not supplant the Congress. The task is to bring into existence a democratic government, a government representing a new class alliance, coming into existence as the result of a powerful mass movement, acting as the instrument of the masses in the struggle for human conditions of life and urgently needed reforms.

THE NEW FACTOR IN INDIAN POLITICS

It is fully possible to realise this objective. The possibility arises not only because of the objective situation in the country and the growing awakening and militancy among the masses, but also and above all, because of the position which the Communist Party has acquired and is acquiring in our national politics.

It is sometimes asserted that the most important thing that has happened in India since 1947 is that the Congress has lost the backing of the majority of our people. This assertion is incorrect. The most important things that have happened are the leftward swing among the masses and, above all, the fact that the main challenge to the Congress today comes not from another bourgeois or landlord party, not from a petty-bourgeois party, but from the Party of the working class, the Communist Party. It is precisely this that is the **new factor** in Indian politics. And, it is this that creates greater possibilities than ever before for leading the democratic movement along the correct path.

At the same time it must not be forgotten that the position which the Communist Party has won is by no means an unchallenged position. Not only is the Congress still, by far, the strongest single force in the country but in vast areas the position of the Praja-Socialist Party and even of parties of communal reaction is stronger than that of the Communist Party. Further, as already explained, even a movement under the leadership of the Communist Party may retain the features of a reformist mass movement. Hence in order that the **possibility** of leading the masses along the correct path may become a **reality**, it is essential that the significance of the new factor in Indian

politics is constantly kept in mind, opportunist and liquidationist concepts of democratic front are abandoned, the independence of the Party is maintained at all costs and its mass position continually strengthened. For this, we have to draw correct lessons from our own history.

Because of the very serious mistakes which the Communist Party of India has committed on several occasions, mistakes which have been frankly admitted by us, there has grown a tendency on the part of many, including some who claim to be friends of the Party, to belittle its achievements. These persons often talk as though the history of the Communist Party of India has only been a history of deviations, as though the Party has very few achievements to its credit, and, whatever position it has won, has been due, almost solely, to such factors as achievements of the USSR and the victory of the People's Democratic Revolution in China. Sometimes such a view is expressed openly and paraded as an example of "internationalism". The reality, of course, is quite different.

The shining example of the USSR where a new society is being built and the mighty advance of the Revolution in China are undoubtedly most precious assets for Communist Parties in all countries and a powerful weapon to educate the masses. They are factors of world revolutionary significance and have greatly contributed to the radicalisation of masses in our country also. At the same time, history teaches that the position which the Communist Party in each country acquires depends, in the ultimate analysis, on its own work—the effectiveness of its agitation and propaganda and the manner in which it uses the national and international developments (including the achievements of the USSR and China) for heightening the consciousness of its own masses; on the correctness of its slogans and tactics, the manner in which it serves the cause of the exploited people and leads them in their battles in each area. This is the case in India also. Were it not so, were the developments in the international arena the sole, or even main reason for our growth, there would not have been the present **unevenness** of development of the Communist movement in our own country, an unevenness strikingly demonstrated in the results of the last General Elections and the subsequent events.

It is obvious, therefore, that something more than "external factors" are responsible for the growth of the Communist Party in our country.

It should be remembered that at a time when all other elements in the country, including the Left parties that now claim to be Marxist, looked upon the national movement as merely a struggle between the Indian people and the British

masters, the Communist Party was the only party that showed that our movement for freedom was an integral part of the world-wide battle of the working class against the domination of capital, for socialism, for the abolition of all exploitation. At a time when petty-bourgeois Left parties and groups were either uncritically following the Congress leadership or merely criticising it, in words, for not being sufficiently bold and militant, the Communist Party was the only party that strove to expose the **class character** of this leadership, warn against its treacherous role and emphasise the need for proletarian leadership. At a time when even those who called themselves Lefts indulged in academic debates about the character and content of Purna Swaraj, the Communist Party stressed the importance of making the struggle for economic demands of the masses a part of the democratic movement and of building mass **class organisations**. The Communist Party, despite heavy odds and despite the many serious mistakes it committed, strove to implement these principles. And if today the Party has become the main opposition Party in the country, that is because of its concrete work in these respects and its leadership of the masses in action.

At the same time, it must be admitted that the Communist Party of India did not succeed in the most important task—the dislodging of the bourgeoisie from the leadership of the national movement and establishing proletarian hegemony. This is the task that has to be carried out with the utmost rapidity now. The Party is in a better position than ever to achieve this.

NEED FOR SUSTAINED ACTIVITY

As already explained, this demands the development of a mass revolutionary movement which draws its main strength from the basic masses—the working class and the toiling peasants.

Such a movement can be built only on the basis of **sustained mass activity**. Without this it is futile to talk of advancing the revolution, of establishing proletarian leadership, of building the Democratic Front. It is the united front of classes, parties, groups and individuals growing, taking shape and consolidating in the course of mass activity—struggles for immediate demands as well as other forms of activity; it is this united front that will develop into the fighting Democratic Front capable of replacing the present Government by a Government of Democratic Unity.

It has been amply demonstrated by the events of the last two years that our old pattern of work—(1) general political agitation from the Press, platform and legislature, (2) running mass campaigns from time to time during which alone the whole Party is activated and (3) leading of or participation in partial

struggles as they break out—this pattern is not adequate. The extent to which the mass movement could be revived and strengthened on this basis is severely limited. And that limit has either already been reached or is being reached in most provinces.

During the last two years innumerable struggles have been waged in all parts of the country for the immediate demands of the people. Many of these struggles have been fought unitedly. Many of them have won partial successes also. In fact, at no time since 1947 have there been so many struggles and at no time have so many successes been achieved. The reasons have been dealt with in the Political Resolution adopted by the Third Congress of the Party and it is not necessary to narrate them here.

More such struggles will break out in future and they will create even greater opportunities for heightening the confidence of the people and building their unity in action. The latest example was the West Bengal Teachers' Strike which, supported by all parties and groups in the State, grew into a united mass movement and wrested important concessions from the Government.

IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC STRUGGLES

Nothing would be more harmful than the tendency to underestimate the significance and importance of these struggles for immediate demands. Such a tendency undoubtedly exists in our Party and needs to be vigorously combated. There are comrades who think that the emphasis on the struggle for immediate demands, the emphasis on the securing of such demands, is a variety of "economism". This tendency is especially strong in many of the new areas where the Party has extended its work in recent years, areas where the working-class movement has been either weak or non-existent, areas where the tradition of doggedly-fought class struggles for partial demands has yet to be created. Evidently, many comrades have not understood the significance of Lenin's words in connection with the Revolution of 1905:

"The broad masses of the exploited could not possibly have been drawn into the revolutionary movement had not these masses seen how the wage workers in different branches of industry compelled the capitalists to grant a direct and immediate improvement in their working conditions."

And further,

"... only the economic struggle, only a struggle for an immediate, direct improvement of their conditions can rouse the most backward strata of the exploited masses, give them real

education and transform them—in a revolutionary epoch—in the course of a few months into an army of political fighters."

A fact which must be noted in this connection is that despite the growing burdens on the peasantry and the sharp deterioration in their condition, the peasant movement is still at an extremely low level in most areas, and mass actions of the peasantry have yet to take place on a big scale. An important reason for this was the absence of unified understanding in our Party and among peasant leaders on many vital issues of the movement. This has been remedied to a great extent by the decisions of the last meeting of the Central Committee (April 1954) which has formulated immediate slogans and tactics for the peasant movement.

The organisation and development of peasant struggles is thus a most important task facing the Party. At the same time, it must be realised that this **alone** is not enough to overcome the weakness of the popular movement. For, it may well happen that our work in the rural areas also becomes nothing more than a further extension of our **existing pattern of work** into the countryside. This certainly will not alter the basic character of the present upsurge, nor enable us to build a growing and extending mass movement rising in a crescendo and acquiring greater and greater striking power.

In other words, struggles for the immediate demands of workers, peasants and other classes and sections remain the most important task of the Party. But that is not enough. These struggles themselves are to be conducted as part of **planned, systematic, sustained mass activity** on all the three fronts of class struggle—economic, political and ideological. **Secondly**, the Party itself has to be organised in such a way that it can conduct such activity most effectively and so that thousands of cadres get trained in the shortest possible period.

STAGNATION IN THE MIDST OF ACTIVITY

What are the specific weaknesses which such sustained mass activity has to overcome?

A characteristic feature of the situation today is that a certain amount of **stereotypedness** is visible in all parts of the country despite the big struggles that have taken and are taking place. During the last two years big struggles and campaigns took place in many parts of the country. Many of them drew in lakhs of people and achieved success. Yet after each struggle, even successful struggles and campaigns, the **organised strength of the Party**, of the mass organisations, and therefore, the **effective strength of the democratic front**—measured in terms of Party membership and new Party units, circulation of our

newspapers and sale of literature, stabilisation and increase of Party funds, securing of new contacts and sympathisers, increase of membership and increase in the number of basic units of mass organisations, activation of non-Party progressive elements in mass organisations, even activation of Party sympathisers and members—all these did not register a correspondingly appreciable advance.

But, without the strengthening of the Party, of the mass organisations and of the democratic front, the mass movement cannot advance beyond a certain stage. This stage was soon reached in several States as was sharply revealed in the fact that in respect of areas and masses moved and forms of struggle adopted, each struggle tended to become a replica of earlier struggles. Thus there has developed, in these states, a peculiar kind of stagnation in the midst of intense activity. Many struggles are conducted — strikes, demonstrations etc.—the Party unit and many comrades are active; yet the movement as a whole is not going forward as powerfully as it should.

When such a situation arises, inevitably two tendencies develop. One, the tendency of smugness and complacency, a tendency that would drag the Party into the rut of reformism. Another, the tendency of impatience and frustration, a tendency that advocates militant forms of struggle as the sole recipe by which the stagnation is to be broken and the movement raised to higher levels.

Both these tendencies have already expressed themselves in certain areas. They have to be combated.

For this, what must be understood above all is that without the strengthening of **consciousness** and **organisation**—which have become the **most decisive political factors in the present situation**—the stagnation cannot be ended. Complacency would corrode the Party and sap its morale. Attempts to discover shortcuts would lead to adventurism.

Advance has to be made therefore through the raising of the consciousness of the masses and the strengthening of their organisations. This is precisely what sustained mass activity has to achieve.

THE KIND OF WORK THAT IS NEEDED

What is meant by the organisation of systematic, sustained mass activity? How is it different from what is being done today?

Such activity includes:

1) **Agitation and Propaganda** among the masses with a view to **educate** them on international and national issues, remove their doubts with regard to Party policy and Party slogans, answer the criticism which is current so that people

are not merely **roused against the Congress** but **won over for our Party and its policy**. Also agitation to focus attention on concrete issues in each area with a view to mobilise mass opinion and organise mass action on these issues.

A characteristic feature of our agitation (whether in speeches or writings) today is that it is of an **extremely general and diffused nature**. Our speakers seldom prepare their speeches beforehand. They are not sufficiently concrete either in their exposures of the Government or in relation to specific issues which agitate the people in each area and on which mobilisation is possible.

A second feature of our agitation is that it is marked by repetitiveness and slogan-mongering. It does not generally educate the people, tell them anything they do not already know.

A third feature of our agitation is that it does not pose questions which rise in the mind of the people about the Party and its policies, about the Government and its measures and answer them in a convincing manner. It is quite often forgotten that people will get drawn towards us, not by the vehemence of our denunciation of the Government but by the effectiveness—which is not the same thing as vehemence—of our exposure and, above all, through conviction about the correctness of our policies. This is particularly true of the vast number of politically-minded people who followed the Congress or other parties in the past and are getting critical of them.

A fourth feature is that our agitation is carried on almost exclusively through the press, through speeches on the platform and legislature. It must be noted that the Thesis on Organisation adopted by the Third Congress of the Communist International in the Section on Propaganda and Agitation, when discussing the question of "forms of propaganda" placed "individual verbal propaganda" **in the first place**. It emphasised that this is a job not only of "the professional propagandists and agitators, but also **all other Party members**". It is a bourgeois concept that agitation is carried on only by leaders at mass meetings and that the rank and file content themselves only with arranging such meetings.

2) Organisation of mass action on immediate demands of the people, preparing for the conducting of these actions in such a way that they acquire a popular democratic character.

3) Undertaking of multiple forms of activities—cultural, educational, relief, sports—through which the Party and mass organisations can forge links with the people.

4) Using of Legislatures, District Boards and Municipalities not merely to expose the Congress, but also in order to serve the masses, secure them concessions and relief. Periodic publi-

cation of pamphlets explaining the work done by Communists in Legislatures.

5) Conducting of Party journals in such a way as to educate the masses, answer their doubts, consolidate and extend work. Organisation of circles of readers in each area to send comments, criticism and suggestions. Organisation of sending of reports by correspondents. Squad sale of newspapers by Party units in all areas. Collection of funds for newspapers, enrolment of subscribers by house-to-house canvassing.

6) Undertaking of sale of literature as a serious political task for all Party units.

7) Finally and above all, as the focal point towards which all the activities are themselves directed—the building up of the Party and of mass organisations, especially trade unions and kisan sabhas, **with special emphasis on primary units—in factories, streets and villages.** The running of T. U. and Kisan Sabha Schools, especially to train functionaries of their lower units.

It cannot be denied that many comrades underestimate the importance of work in mass organisations. This can be seen in the fact that despite the clear direction given in the Party Constitution that a Party member must be, unless exempted, a member of a mass organisation, a very large percentage of Party membership consists of those who have nothing to do with any mass organisation and are doing "general political work" or are working on "fronts" which exist only on paper.

It is only through the organisation of such all-round sustained mass activity and in the process of building organisations—organisations of workers, peasants, students, youth, women—that the present upsurge can be consolidated and made the basis of further advance. It is only thus that working-class unity can be forged in action and decisive steps taken to bring about firm organisational unity. It is only through this that the Party can gauge its strength, know exactly how big a section it can firmly rely upon and plan its work on the basis of a correct assessment of the correlation of forces. It is only through the undertaking of such mass work that the entire Party can be activated, the actual capacity of comrades tested and suitable work found for each. Finally, and above all, it is through the undertaking of such activity that the **weakness of Party organisation itself can be overcome**, because the most effective way to train cadres, to educate them, is precisely to draw them into day-to-day activity of mass organisations, which must include, together with struggles for demands, activity in diverse spheres—education, sports, relief, co-operatives, cultural work, etc.

The tens of thousands of people from all classes and strata who are getting drawn towards the Party today can be trained

and assimilated only in the course of such work and their worth tested. Without this they can never become cadres of the Communist Party. Without this, they will remain only "contacts" and "sympathisers", conducting "general political agitation" in periods of elections, etc. The orientation towards sustained mass activity in general and building of mass organisations in particular is, therefore, the **key orientation** needed in our practical work.

ON MAKING THE WORKING CLASS CONSCIOUS OF ITS ROLE

The immense importance of economic struggles has already been stressed. Through this alone can the unity of the working class be forged in action. Significant united actions have already taken place in many areas, actions which won the support of the broad democratic masses, helped to heighten their consciousness and militancy and strengthened popular unity.

But such actions by themselves will not lead to the establishment of working-class leadership nor qualitatively change the present situation. A far higher degree of consciousness is needed than what prevails today in the working class—a consciousness that expresses itself in mass political action on broad democratic issues affecting the entire people, especially the peasantry. At a time when the country is seething with discontent and the idea of struggle for the establishment of a popular Government is maturing in the mind of the people—at such a time mass political action by the working class can be the most powerful weapon to give form and direction to the mass sentiment, rally the people round the working class and raise the level of the whole movement.

Only a conscious working class can become the leader of the people. In this connection, the well-known words of Lenin in the article **Reformism in the Russian Social-Democratic Movement** should always be kept in mind and made the basis of work in the working class.

"This being the situation, the tasks of the proletariat are fully and unmistakably obvious. As the only consistently revolutionary class of contemporary society, it must be the leader, the hegemon in the struggle of the whole people for a complete democratic revolution, in the struggle of all the toilers and exploited against the oppressors and exploiters. The proletariat is revolutionary only in so far as it is conscious of this idea of hegemony and acts upto it. The proletarian who has become conscious of this task is a slave who has risen against slavery. The proletarian who is not conscious of the idea that his class must be the hegemon, or who renounces this idea, is a slave who does not realise his slavish condition; at best he is a slave who

rights to improve his condition as a slave, but not for the overthrow of the slavery." (Marx-Engels-Marxism, p. 304.)

PARTY EDUCATION AND IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

The task of **Party Education**, as all comrades recognise, has acquired great importance today. It has to be carried out in the context of this key task—the organisation of sustained mass activity. The immediate main purpose of education today should be to facilitate the undertaking of such mass activity. It should be evident, therefore, that the task of Party education cannot be carried out if the leading committees merely appoint "Education Sub-Committees" or entrust the work to comrades who, whatever other qualities they may have, have little experience in organising the Party and mass organisations. In order to be effective, education has to be organised directly by the leading Committees. It has to be conducted and guided by the Party leaders and mass leaders. Education should also include education in running mass organisations, agitation on current issues, how to collect grievances and formulate demands, knowledge of elementary trade union rights, etc.

Further, the object of education should also be

— To wipe out illiteracy among Party members, sympathisers and militants, impart elementary general knowledge to all Party members about history, geography, science and about the national and international situation so that they may follow newspaper reports. (At present a large number of Party members, sympathisers, especially those belonging to the working class and peasantry, are illiterate and many semi-literate, unable to follow even reports in newspapers.)

— To impart to all comrades a correct understanding of the Party line as evolved at the Third Party Congress at Madurai with special explanation of such issues as: significance of the struggle for peace in our country; Pak-U.S. Pact and the struggle against it; the basic struggle in India—why it is directed against British imperialism and feudalism; features of the economic crisis and the Government's Five-Year Plan; the agrarian set-up, Congress Government's reforms and their defects; our solution of the agrarian problem, with special reference to what was done in China and what that led to; the features of a People's Democratic State and its difference from the features of an ordinary bourgeois State; Party's stand on the issue of Linguistic States, why we support the demand, what struggle against bourgeois nationalism means; our policy on languages, why Party Programme was amended in relation to Hindi; what United Front means and what it does not. All this, not to be covered in one lecture but in a series of lectures carefully pre-

pared and delivered by Party leaders in each Province—with facts, figures and illustrations from the Province itself.

— To acquaint the entire membership in the Province with the actual position of the Party vis-a-vis the masses, what activities it is carrying on, its position among various strata and in different areas, its work in the Legislatures.

— To inculcate Marxist-Leninist consciousness by organising classes on the teachings of Marxism—economics, philosophy, methods of analysis, etc.—and by insistence on self-study.

It must be stressed that without such education, there can be neither effective criticism and self-criticism nor real inner-Party democracy. In order that there may be really helpful criticism from below and in order that there may be real democracy, a minimum amount of political education is necessary. Rank and file comrades must know something of Marxism, of the Party's position, of the general political situation and the line of the Party in order that they may make effective criticism of deviations from it and in order that they may exercise the democratic rights guaranteed in the Party Constitution.

Ideological struggle, ideological remoulding of the most advanced elements among the masses, is of decisive importance in the strengthening and building up of the Party. Ideological struggle occupies the pivotal position in the inter-relationship in which the three fronts of class struggle stand. It is this understanding that demarcates a Marxist from a petty-bourgeois radical and philistine. And this ideological struggle has to be carried on not merely by Party leaders but by all Party members, not merely through classes but continuously and in the course of day-to-day intercourse between Party members and non-Party masses.

Economic and political struggles rouse the masses, forge their unity, heighten their self-confidence and bring them into mass organisations and towards the Party. But the best of them can be drawn into the Party, absorbed and transformed into Communist cadres only through ideological work on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. The Party cannot grow unless this task is given key importance. And, as already stressed, if the Party does not grow, the mass movement will not advance. Hence, the decisive importance of ideological work in the present situation.

ON IDEOLOGICAL WORK AMONG THE INTELLIGENTSIA

One of the gravest shortcomings of our work today is that though there is immense political awakening in the country, growing friendship for the Socialist States headed by the USSR and great respect for the Communist Party—yet the extent of ideological work carried on among the intelligentsia in general

and students in particular is extremely meagre. In fact, in many Provinces, this work today is **less in quantity and qualitatively poorer** than it was in those days when the situation was far less favourable. The majority of Communist student leaders of today know very little about Marxism and do not strive to improve themselves ideologically.

The intelligentsia, it must be remembered, is an extremely important section in a semi-colonial country like India. This section and especially students, cannot get drawn towards Communism and the Communist Party through struggle for their immediate demands alone. In order to draw them, especially the most serious-minded and intellectually developed elements, towards the Communist movement, ideological-political work on the basis of Marxism has to be carried on among them on a big scale. They have to be intellectually convinced about the correctness of Marxism and the falseness of the theories preached by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties. Unless this work is undertaken seriously the problem of cadres will remain unsolved, with grave consequences for the whole movement. The problem has already grown serious in the majority of Provinces.

ON PARTY JOURNALS AND PUBLICATIONS

Just like Party education, agit-prop work, the work of Party journals and publications also has to be organised in the context of the key task—the development of sustained mass activity and organised in such a way that it facilitates this activity. This demands that Party Committees—the CC and PCs—take direct responsibility for this work and Party leaders and mass leaders consider it a key task of theirs to help the improvement of journals. The journals can never become mass educators, mass agitators and mass organisers if the leading Party Committees do not make this one of the **most important jobs** and if the editing, etc., is left to one leading comrade and others who have little experience of Party and mass work. The worst record in this respect has been of the PB itself and its members,

The hunger for political literature is great. Pamphlets on topical subjects and also serious informative books, if they are even moderately well-written, get sold off rapidly. Nevertheless, from the Central Committee downwards, there prevails an attitude of indifference towards Party publications in general and Party journals in particular. Their contents and presentation of news, their language, how to improve them, how to make them serve the people better, how to develop new features and cover new areas so that the movement may extend, the problems of cadres and finance in relation to journals—these and other problems are either not discussed in Party Committees or discussed

in a cursory way which leads to few practical measures. The C.C. and even the Polit Bureau members seldom write for the Central journals of the Party—monthly and weekly—nor do they undertake the writing of pamphlets. Similar is the attitude of many Provincial Committee members towards provincial journals. This attitude towards the task of improving the journals and strengthening them, towards the task of publication of literature, reveals reliance on demagoguery in agitation and on spontaneity. It reveals failure to understand the supreme necessity for **moulding mass consciousness**. Obviously all talk of consolidating the upsurge, of giving it a specific direction, of imparting revolutionary features to the mass movement will remain mere talk if a sharp break is not made with this attitude.

ORIENTATION TOWARDS BASIC MASSES

In the work of the Party, mass work as well as educational, agitational and organisational work, special attention is to be paid to the basic masses—the working class in industries, mines and transport and the poor peasants and agricultural workers in rural areas. This has to express itself in practice—in the allocation of cadres and funds, as well as attention to specific demands affecting these classes. We have to combat opportunist concepts of peasant unity and abandon the wrong notion that has gained ground in certain areas that these semi-proletarian masses are “already with us” and so no “special attention need be paid to their demands”. While no one actually formulates this position so crudely, it should be noted that many of our speakers and also our journals seldom take up the question of the most oppressed and exploited strata—the agricultural workers and poor peasants and keep silent even over the social disabilities from which they suffer.

FOR CORRECT METHODS OF ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP

It is only through such sustained mass work on all the three fronts—economic, political and ideological—and in every sphere that the Party will progressively be strengthened, the democratic front built and proletarian leadership established. It is thus that the democratic movement will go forward with increasing momentum, rise to higher levels and acquire the features of a mass revolutionary movement.

The organisational problems facing the Party have to be tackled and solved in relation to this basic task. In other words, the Party has to be so organised from top to bottom that it can develop sustained mass activity on every front and on the widest scale. For this, the most important thing needed is the establishment of correct methods of organisational leadership inside the Party.

What this means and in what manner higher Committees have to lead lower Committees have been indicated in the Organisational Resolution of our Party as finalised by the Central Committee in its meeting held in April 1954.

A concept, fairly widespread in our Party ranks, is that Party Committees at each level should directly organise and lead the day-to-day mass activities of the Party: the Central Committee should organise and lead the day-to-day all-India mass activity, the Provincial Committee, the day-to-day Provincial mass activity. According to this concept, the leading Committees should become primarily the organiser and co-ordinator of the mass activities that the Party carries on on various fronts—trade union, kisan sabha, student, youth etc. An auxiliary function of the leading Committees, it is held, should be to “intervene” when a lower Committee commits mistakes or faces special difficulties due to political and organisational differences.

This concept is wrong. On the one hand it results in Party Committees usurping the functions of mass organisations, on the other hand, it prevents leading Party Committees from carrying out their most important task—the task of leading, building and strengthening the lower Party units. Thus Party units, on whose strengthening depends the fate of the democratic movement, are left to function as best as they can while mass organisations tend to become adjuncts of the Party. This harms the Party and harms the mass organisations also.

It must be clearly understood that unless the task of strengthening the Party, strengthening the units of the Party, at all levels is undertaken as the most important task by the higher Committees, no real advance is possible. And, this means, above all, that the Central Committee has to play the part of a real leading organ in the system of Party organisation. The Provincial Committees have to do the same in relation to the units under them. And utmost attention has to be paid by all units to the task of strengthening the cells, the basic units of the Party, for it is their firmness and their ties with the masses that shall decide the strength of the Party.

As the Organisational Resolution points out, this does not mean that the Central and Provincial Committees can divest themselves of the responsibility in relation to the mass movement and the mass organisations. On the contrary their task is to give broad guidance to comrades working in the mass organisations and also to build up the Party units in such a way that the movement can be advanced and the mass organisations strengthened.

Quite often, at present, the leadership given by higher Committees to the lower Committees is paper leadership—through

general talks or through a series of circulars which too are couched in extremely vague and general terms, as is inevitable because of inadequate knowledge on the part of higher units about lower units and because of the varying level of the movement in different provinces and also in different areas in the same provinces. Check-up in such a situation assumes the form of reminders, requests to send reports and occasional visits to the areas. Even when reports are received, these are not studied carefully or discussed with the unit that sent them; no practical suggestions are made as to how to remove defects in work.

There is hardly any planned expansion of work into new areas, planned strengthening of the Party and its activity in areas where it is relatively strong so that the area becomes a firm base, planned distribution of cadres and finance in conformity with the importance of particular areas and sectors. At best, leadership in relation to lower Committees has come to mean correcting of political mistakes when they occur. This method of leading the Party is totally wrong. But it is inevitable if Party Committees get so bogged in problems which should really be tackled by mass organisations that they have no time to deal with problems of Party organisation. Our present method of leading the Party reveals, as the Organisational Resolution points out, reliance on spontaneity in the crassest form.

It is not enough for a higher Committee to declare the necessity for orientation towards mass struggle on immediate demands, towards mass organisations and towards basic masses. It has to show how that is to be done in practice, by helping to work out the broad slogans for the area concerned. It is not enough for it to state that Party work has to be strengthened in areas where the situation is most favourable for the movement. It has to study the existing areas and suggest the steps (cadres, finance, on what areas and tasks to concentrate first) to be taken for this strengthening. It is not enough for the higher Committee to state that concrete local issues have to be taken up and struggle developed. It has to help the lower Committee to decide as to which concrete issues should be taken up in the specific area immediately. It is not enough for the higher Committee to declare that agitation should be concrete; on certain issues, it has, through some experienced comrade, to show how this agitation is to be carried on. It is not enough for the higher Committee to state that Party work should be extended to new areas. It has to plan out this extension itself and evolve the method of doing it. It is not enough for the higher Committee to emphasise the importance of Party education. It has to prepare syllabuses and undertake education for cadres of the lower Committee. It is not enough for the higher Committee to say that one unit should learn from the experience

of another. It has to make the experience of one unit available to all other units.

Assumption of practical leadership, giving of practical guidance by higher Committees in relation to lower Committees, is an indispensable condition for the assumption of leadership by the working class and the Communist Party in relation to the democratic movement.

Of course, this leadership, this guidance by higher Committees should not mean spoon-feeding. It should not mean the higher Committees taking decisions for lower Committees or doing the work which they have to do. It must be of such a nature as to help the lower Committees to solve their problems themselves, to acquire initiative. But, if, on the plea of developing local initiative, the higher Committees continue to content themselves with mere "general guidance", even initiative will not develop and the movement will continue to be weak.

Further, without such practical guidance at all levels, it will be impossible to test the worth of comrades, to test as to who are most fitted for leadership, who possess what qualities and evolve a correct policy in relation to cadres.

Many a time it has been stated by us that of all factors in the present situation, the Party is the most decisive factor. Many a time it has been stated that Party building is the most important task. But the relation that prevails today between the higher and lower Committees shows how inadequately this is understood.

The Party is a sum and system of organisations. And the building of the Party does not mean merely the giving of correct "general guidance", or of evolving general slogans. It means, **strengthening and building up the Party organisations**—units of the Party—from top to bottom. This can never take place spontaneously but has to be brought about through conscious guidance and concrete help from above, from higher committees.

Such is the orientation that has to be achieved in the methods of leading the Party. Then only the political tasks facing the Party can be carried out and the Party can grow into a mass force, thus making possible the progressive strengthening of the Democratic Front and the realisation of proletarian hegemony.

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