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**The CPI(M) Programme:**

**Updated In Tune with Changing Times**

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The most important document for the Communist Party is its programme. Dwelling on the subject Lenin had stated that adherence to the programme is essential for a person seeking to join the Communist Party. It is on this basis that a person applying for membership of the Party pledges his or her allegiance to the Programme and Constitution of the Party.

The Programme of any given Communist Party should reflect the concrete application of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions prevalent in the country for the particular stage of the revolution. It remains valid till the revolution passes over to the next stage.

For instance, before independence, when the feudal landlords were allies of British imperialism, the immediate objective was national-liberation. The stage of our revolution was directed against these two classes. But since the working class was unable to acquire the leadership of the movement, a compromise was struck between Indian bourgeoisie and British Imperialism. This compromise resulted in the non-completion of the anti-feudal, ant-imperialist tasks of the revolution. Despite this, the stage of revolution changed with India becoming independent from British rule.

The new stage was that of the Peoples' Democratic Revolution. The Programme should define the stage and the revolution, the class composition of the front that would comprise the peoples' democratic front which would be led by the working class, and the tasks that are to be accomplished in this stage. Only the leadership of the working class would ensure that the unfinished tasks of the democratic revolution are completed. It would require a complete study of the concrete conditions prevailing, and on that basis work out the

strategy and tactics to complete that stage. It is only after completion of the peoples' democratic revolution that we can enter the stage of the socialist revolution. How long the peoples' democratic stage would remain depends on various factors

### **CLASS ALLIANCE DIFFERS FROM STAGE TO STAGE**

The class alliance, however, will differ from stage to stage. The objectives will also vary from stage to stage.

During the stage of national-liberation, the main enemy was imperialism and its ally feudalism. Success of the anti-feudal struggle enables the working class and its allies to come to the fore. In countries where, along with the struggle against imperialism, the anti-feudal struggle has been carried forward to success, the stage of revolution passes over to peoples' democratic stage. The classes against whom the revolution is targeted also varies from stage to stage. In our country, in the first stage it was against imperialism and feudalism. In the second stage the revolution is directed against the big bourgeoisie, landlordism and its collaborator imperialism In the third stage i.e., the socialist stage, it is directed against capitalism as a whole

Whereas in the first stage the bourgeoisie is an ally of the working class along with the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, in the second stage where the anti-feudal tasks remain unaccomplished the classes targetted are the big bourgeoisie, feudalism and imperialism as the collaborator. The classes who have to carry through the revolution will consist of the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, and sections of the non-big bourgeoisie. It is, ofcourse, necessary to understand that the role of these classes will be different according to their place in the production process. The working class has to lead the revolution based on its alliance with the peasantry. It has to carry along with it the petty-bourgeoisie and the non-big bourgeoisie as the revolution develops.

In the socialist stage it is the working class which has to lead the revolution and eliminate the remnants of the bourgeois society. These are the broad principles on which the Programme of the Communist Party is formulated.

The Communist International first enunciated these principles. It was based on these principles that after the October Socialist Revolution, many other revolutions succeeded in China, Vietnam and North Korea.

### **Brief History of Programmatic Documents**

As stated earlier, these principles were enunciated by the Communist International. In the pre-independence period, the guiding role was provided by the Colonial Thesis presented by Lenin. The Thesis laid down the strategy and tactics for the colonial peoples fighting for liberation. M.N. Roy tried to project his alternative views in the form of a theory of decolonisation, i.e., as capitalist relations develop, the country will get decolonised automatically. Lenin and the Communist International rejected this view. Practice also proved the fallacy of this theory. El Browder, the leader of the Communist Party of USA, also came out with the thesis of automatic advance to the socialist stage, after the victory over fascism. This also was totally erroneous.

Though the Communist Party of India was formed in 1920, it was not until the Meerut Conspiracy Case that it succeeded in creating some influence. Communists existed as some groups in different regions of the country at that time but were not able to work out any programmatic document. The first programmatic document worked out was in 1930 -- *The Draft Platform of Action* when the Meerut trial had started. After the release of the Meerut prisoners the second document *The Draft Political Thesis* was adopted by the provisional Central Committee in December 1933. A centralised communist party came into existence only in 1933 after the release of the Meerut prisoners. The party set up a central headquarters and organised the units in different provinces of the country. The third programmatic document *Platform of Action* was adopted in 1936. The earlier two documents had a sectarian approach based on the 6th Congress of the Communist International. By the time the third document was issued the 7th Congress of the CI had taken place. It made corrections in the line pursued by the various communist parties all over the world. This Congress was held in the background of the rise of fascism and advanced united front tactics while keeping the basic positions of Marxism regarding different classes intact, in leading the revolutionary struggle.

It is only on the basis of this platform of action that the Communist

International recognised the party as a constituent of the CI. Some basic formulations of the Programme were presented in 1921 and 1922 when the party was illegal. This was reflected in the raising of the slogan of complete independence in Ahmedabad and Gaya sessions of the Congress.

Again some broad indications of programmatic questions in the manner of guidelines was provided by the first Congress of the Communist Party of India.

## **DIFFERENCES OVER ASSESSMENT**

In the middle of 1947 itself differences arose inside the Central Committee on the assessment of independence. A section argued that we had to pursue the same tactics which were pursued during the struggle for independence because the tasks remained unfulfilled. This resulted in the line pursued from the Second Congress which was elaborated in the document on strategy and tactics. It was a detailed exposition of the programmatic objectives to be fulfilled in our country.

But the following years were to see growing differences inside the party on this line. By 1950 differences saw the party divided into three groups. This was the period when the post-war upsurge was continuing and various anti-feudal struggles were being waged with the highlight being the Telengana armed struggle. Three schools of thought emerged in the party. The differences were on the question of strategy and what path the revolution in India has to take -- whether it is going to be the Chinese path or the Russian path. The leadership at that time advocated the Russian path which meant that the working class would take the lead and the peasantry would follow. Another view was advocated by the Andhra comrades -- that in India the revolution has to take the course of the Chinese path, the rural countryside has to be aroused and it would encircle the cities and the working class would join them.

The differences led to our seeking the help of the CPSU to resolve the issue. Following thorough discussions with the CPSU leadership, led by J.V. Stalin, the Indian delegation came back united with a draft programme. This draft advocated that the country is yet to be free and that imperialism remains the enemy and the nature of political

independence was not properly recognised. On the path of the revolution, the document stated that it would take neither the Russian nor the Chinese path, but an Indian path.

At a special conference convened in 1951, this programme was approved, without dissent. The third Congress of the party held in December 1953-January 1954 gave its stamp of approval to this programme. This programme also was flawed in as much as the stage of the revolution was set out as anti-imperialist, leading to the conclusion that the bourgeoisie, including the big bourgeoisie was to be our ally. Subsequent events after the adoption of the programme were to expose the erroneous understanding contained in the programme.

This led to serious inner-party differences which continued for ten years. This period saw intense debate and the widening and sharpening of the divide. Many programmatic documents were circulated and debated. These however failed to resolve the issue. At the fourth Congress of the Party the issue could not be clinched. At this Congress some paras concerning the programmatic understanding were incorporated in the Political Resolution at the instance of the section opposed to the revisionist understanding.

It stated: "While laying utmost emphasis on the task of building the broadest mass unity for immediate demands and for progressive policies, the Communist Party will also strive to make the masses realise, through their own experience, the necessity of bringing about basic transformations in our economy, in our social and state structure and the necessity of establishing a new government which can carry out these transformations."

Further, "In the course of its general propaganda and ideological political activity among the masses, the Party will systematically, concretely and constantly popularise the fundamental slogans of People's Democracy -- basic agrarian reforms with distribution of land to the peasants *gratis*, the confiscation of British capital and establishment of a democratic stage -- and emphasise the necessity of a Government of People's Democracy.

"The attainment of political freedom by India and the leading position of the bourgeoisie in the Indian State do not alter the basic

objective and basic strategy of the Indian revolution. It is the establishment of a Government of People's Democracy -- which includes all the democratic classes, including the national bourgeoisie, and is led by the working class -- that will bring the democratic revolution to completion. The People's Democratic Government will not only complete the tasks of democratic revolution, but also put the country on the path to socialism -- the only correct path, in the present epoch, for the advance of every country. Therefore, while resolutely fighting for every progress that can be made under the present conditions, the Communist Party will carry on mass propaganda in favour of People's Democracy and Socialism."

The differences, however, continued and by the time we went to the 6th Congress at Vijayawada, the Party was sharply divided. Two separate draft programmes were circulated at the Congress. The holding of the 1960 conference of world communist parties and the adoption of a common document averted the split for the time being. We hung on to the hope that the understanding of the international movement would help us in resolving the programmatic issues. The basic formulation contained in the document pertained to socialism becoming a decisive factor. The 1960 statement of 81 Communist and workers parties said: "the world socialist system and the forces fighting against imperialism, for a socialist transformation of society, determine the main content, main trend and main features of the historical development of society."

### **CPI(M) Formed**

The ruling class, with the aim of weakening the movement, was keen to exploit the differences within the Party. A section of the leadership was arrested and put behind bars on the pretext of being pro-China on the Sino-Indian border dispute. The other section tried to use this opportunity to capture the Party machinery at all levels without caring for the unity of the Party. The leadership that was jailed and was to constitute the CPI(M) later on, remained in prison for one year. The released leaders made a proposal that a special congress be convened on the basis of the membership at the Vijayawada Congress. It also made it clear that the decision of the Congress would be binding on all. The other section however refused to yield to this request leading to a situation where 32 members of the National Council walked out. They were clear that they had no other option but to reorganise the party on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

The formation of the CPI(M) took shape.

The Tenali convention decided to convene a Party Congress which should concentrate on adopting a programme for the party. Taking up the task seriously, a draft was prepared by M. Basavapunnaiah, P. Sundarayya and Harkishan Singh Surjeet which was circulated among the delegates for discussions. This document became the basis of the programme for the CPI(M). After thorough discussions the Party Congress adopted it. It must be known that at that time we had not yet clinched the ideological issues being debated in the world communist movement. We deferred a discussion on the issue as it was not possible for the Congress to handle such a heavy agenda. Moreover, the primary task was the adoption of the programme. Ideological issues were later taken up at the Plenum at Bardhwan in 1968.

## **PROGRAMME OF 1964**

The split in the Communist Party in the country was the result of a prolonged struggle within the communist movement which continued for a decade. On some very basic issues, particularly relating to the class collaboration and class struggle, and the concept of national democracy versus peoples' democracy, the Programme formulated in 1951 was found to be incorrect in relation to both the stage of the revolution and the class alliances. It would not be wrong to state that our Party from the beginning was working not on the basis of the Programme but certain documents which combined the immediate and ultimate objectives without referring to the particular stage of the revolution. It was only in the Seventh Congress when the CPI(M) was formed, were we able to formulate a proper programmatic document.

We had been working upto the Fourteenth Congress on the basis of this Programme adopted in the Seventh Congress in Calcutta. However, the strategy was based on the assessment provided by the 1960 Statement of the International Communist Movement adopted by eighty-one Communist and Workers' Parties. It was natural that this assessment had bearing on our Programme. The 1960 Statement noted: "It is the principal characteristic of our time that the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of society." It goes on to say: "The world capitalist system is going through an intense process of disintegration and decay" and

"Socialism entails more and more the use of the achievements of science and technology in the interests of social progress" and that "time is not far off when socialism's share of world production will be greater than that of capitalism. Capitalism will be defeated in the decisive sphere of material production." The Statement continues: "A new stage has begun in the development of general crisis of capitalism" and talked of "the growing instability of the entire economic system of capitalism". Based on this understanding it concluded: "The restoration of capitalism has been made impossible not only in the Soviet Union, but in the other socialist countries as well".

To sum up, capitalist collapse was advanced as a possibility around the corner. It was this serious error that prevented a concrete study of the changes that were taking place in capitalist countries and the ways in which it was adapting to meet the challenges arising from the socialist countries. Apart from that, all the resolutions adopted by the Party, including those about the trade union movement, the peasant movement, the mass organisations, including our political approach to various issues confronting the Party and the country, had traces of this understanding.

Subsequent events proved this understanding wrong. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the restoration of capitalism in the countries of Eastern Europe brought about a radical shift in the international correlation of class forces as well as in the national situation. This, therefore, necessitated an updating of the Party Programme taking into account the changed realities. It was against this background that the Fourteenth Congress adopted a resolution in this respect.

After having gone into the wrong assessment of the situation prevailing at that time, and commensurate with the changes in the country changes were made in the programme. We have to understand what are the major points of departure from the earlier formulations.

We have stated earlier that the factors necessitating the changes arose from the wrong assessment of the international situation as well as the setbacks to socialism with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the restoration of capitalism in the East European countries. From a bi-polar world, the US remained as the sole

superpower intent on imposing its hegemony the world over.

The 1964 Programme had nine chapters: 1) India Attains National Independence 2) The Bankrupt Path of Capitalism Leads to Growth of Monopolies and Danger of Neo-colonialism 3) Balance Sheet of Bourgeois Agrarian Policies 4) Foreign Policy 5) State Structure and Democracy under Congress Rule 6) Conditions of the People 7) Programme of Peoples' Democracy 8) Building of Peoples' Democratic Front 9) Building of a Communist Party.

The first three chapters of the 1964 Programme, i. e., India Attains National Independence, Bankrupt Path of Capitalism, and Balance Sheet of Bourgeois Agrarian Policies have been replaced by the Introduction, Socialism in the Contemporary World, and Independence and After.

The new Programme has eight chapters. Certain details in the first chapter are not found relevant in the present situation, and second and third chapters have been combined and dealt with in a single chapter in the new Programme. Chapter three of the new Programme titled "Independence and After" incorporates the understanding and spirit of Chapters 2 and 3 of the 1964 Programme. (Bankrupt Path of Capitalism and Danger of Neo-colonialism, and Balance Sheet of Bourgeois Agrarian Policies.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The inclusion of the first chapter, Introduction, is to give an idea of the historical role of the communists and their contribution both in the struggle for independence and towards achieving the objectives of peoples' democracy. The chapter also gives the struggles that the Party has waged inside the Communist movement against revisionism and in defence of Marxism-Leninism. This introduction has been appreciated not only by the Party members but also the sympathisers of the Communist Party. This introduction becomes necessary as very few people, particularly of the younger generation, are aware of the glorious role played by the communists in the struggle for freedom, and in advancing and defending the interests of the working class, the peasantry and other sections. It needs to be mentioned that it was the communists who raised the slogan of complete independence at the Ahmedabad and Gaya sessions of the

Congress, when the Congress party was not even daring to think of it. This slogan of independence-it was communists who endeavoured to give a social content to slogans being raised during the national movement, voicing the demands of workers, peasants, and other oppressed sections of society. We were the ones demanding abolition of landlordism,, land to the tiller, and other such slogans when the dominant leadership in the Congress was out to defend the interests of the landlords.

The new Programme also traces the history of the Party in the formative days, the various streams that converged to form the communist movement and later on the struggle against revisionism resulting in the formation of the CPI(M).

## **SOCIALISM IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

The second new chapter titled Socialism in the Contemporary World has been incorporated in the Programme. This section analyses the struggle against Imperialism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; the victory of the October Socialist Revolution; the defeat of Fascism; the triumph of other socialist revolutions; and the new vistas opened by the scientific and technological revolutions.

This chapter also contains the analysis of the contemporary world capitalist system and imperialism. It is a fact that the capitalist system has utilised the advances in science and technology to develop the productive forces and increase productivity. But this has not enabled the system to get rid of its crisis. The capitalist system is incapable of solving the basic problems of humanity. It cannot eliminate unemployment or the sharp disparities in incomes and wealth. Imperialism has intensified its exploitation of the third world countries through institutions like the IMF, World Bank and the WTO. The internationalisation of finance capital has reached unprecedented heights. Globally mobile finance capital moves around the world for quick speculative profits and this is used as a weapon to encroach upon the sovereignty of all countries and subdue the third world countries. Savage cuts in social security for the working people, jobless growth and casualisation of labour are features of contemporary capitalism.

The programme asserts the validity of the four major social

contradictions existing in the world. It reaffirms that the central contradiction is between imperialism and socialism. This remains the central contradiction even in the changed world situation, as socialism is the only alternative social system to capitalism. In the course of developments any of the four contradictions can aggravate and come to the fore. In the present period, under the neo-liberal global offensive, the contradiction between imperialism and the third world countries is coming to the forefront.

The section on socialism incorporates the new understanding, which has been gained after the reverses suffered by the socialist system a decade ago. The earlier simplistic understanding that with the victory of the socialist revolution and the capture of State power there will be a linear progression in building socialism has been given up. The building of socialism will be a more prolonged and protracted process with various stages. The existing socialist countries, China, Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea and Laos have to build socialism in the new adverse conditions with imperialism on the offensive. It is necessary to develop the productive forces to provide the material basis and for the consolidation of the socialist system. This is being done by the socialist countries while rebuffing the attempts by imperialism to undermine the socialist system through political, economic and ideological means.

## **INDEPENDENCE AND AFTER**

As mentioned earlier, chapters 2 and 3 of the earlier Programme have been combined in chapter 3 of the new Programme. It deals with the development of capitalism after independence and the dual nature of the bourgeoisie. It also explains that instead of abolition of landlordism the bourgeoisie of India adopted agrarian policies to transform the semi-feudal landlords into capitalist landlords and to develop a stratum of rich peasants. The policy of liberalization and globalisation pursued by the Government from 1991 has led to the indiscriminate entry of foreign capital, affecting vital sectors of domestic industry. Multinational companies are buying up Indian companies. This path of liberalization and privatization has enormously benefited the big bourgeoisie. Its ranks have been expanded by the entry of new business houses. Assets of the top twenty-two monopoly houses shot up from Rs 312.63 crores in 1957 to Rs 1, 58004.72 crores in 1997, which is a five-hundred fold increase. Even though some sections of the non-big bourgeoisie appear willing to collaborate with foreign capital, large sections of

middle and small capitalists are badly hit by the liberalization. Under liberalization major concessions have been given to big business houses and affluent sections by reduction in the rate of income tax and abolition of other taxes such as wealth tax. Such policies have enormously enriched the affluent classes and expanded the market for luxury goods for their consumption.

The working classes have borne the brunt of heavy burdens imposed by the capitalists and the Government. The real wages of workers do not rise because of ever increasing prices. The crisis in the industrial sphere is becoming endemic, the workers face the onslaught of closures and retrenchment. The labour laws supposed to safeguard the rights of workers are defective and even these are not enforced. Violation of laws by employers is the norm. The regulation of trade unions by secret ballot and right of collective bargaining are denied. The offensive of liberalization-privatisation has rendered lakhs of workers jobless without any security to fall back on. The deregulation of the labour market is demanded as part of policy of liberalization. Benefits and rights earned by workers through prolonged struggles are sought to be curtailed,

This chapter also deals with the developments in the agricultural sector. No land reforms have been enacted in the real sense except in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura by Left Front governments led by the CPI(M). The agrarian policies of the Congress governments and their successors were designed to benefit the landlords and rich peasants in the allocation of funds for investment and government loans. Bank and co-operative credit were cornered by these sections. From the late 60s the application of technology, introduction of high yielding seeds and new varieties of wheat and rice, and chemical inputs enhanced production of food grains and non food crops. The growth of agriculture was accompanied by widening inequalities.

The developments in the agrarian sector have been updated in the programme. While there is the overall development of capitalist relations in agriculture, there are variations and regional disparities. Broadly, we can divide the type of agricultural developments into three categories within this overall framework. Firstly, there are areas where capitalist relations have advanced to a great extent such as in Punjab, Haryana, western UP, coastal Andhra Pradesh, parts of Tamilnadu, Maharashtra etc. Secondly, there are areas which still see the admixture of capitalism with semi-feudal relations. Here the level of agricultural development is lower and various old forms of

landlordism, tenancy and unfree labour services still play an important part. Finally, there are the states of West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura where Left-led governments have carried out land reforms within the limitations of the Constitution. Here big landlordism does not exist and concentration of land has been broken up. So far we have not been able to develop the agrarian movement to the level to take up the slogan of abolition of landlordism for implementation. As capitalism develops, nature of landlordism will also change and be converted to capitalist landlordism. So the slogan of abolition of landlordism has to take into account this new reality.

## **FOREIGN POLICY**

The fourth chapter is on Foreign Policy. The foreign policy is determined by the class interests of the bourgeois-landlord classes who control the Indian State. Within this framework, there have been different phases in foreign policy. In the initial years the foreign policy tamely followed the interests of Britain and the western camp. But in the mid-fifties, there was a shift. After the Bandung conference, India alongwith other third world countries promoted non-alignment. This policy continued till the eighties though there were vacillations and at times reversals as during the Indo-China border conflict. This policy was broadly in the interests of the country and the people and the period saw friendly relations with the Soviet Union and the socialist countries.

However, in the background of the changed world situation and the policies of liberalisation pursued domestically in the 1990s there has been the turning away from non-alignment and Indian foreign policy. With the advent of the BJP government in office in 1998, the foreign policy has become pronouncedly pro-imperialist. The Vajpayee government does not hide its intention to become a junior partner of the United States. This has created a dangerous situation. A major struggle lies ahead for the left and democratic forces to fight back the pro- Imperialist direction in foreign policy and to ensure that foreign policy gains its non-aligned basis and orientation to ward off Imperialist pressures.

## **STATE STRUCTURE AND DEMOCRACY**

This chapter lays down the class character of the State: “the present Indian State is the organ of class rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords led by the big bourgeoisie who are increasingly collaborating with foreign financial capital in pursuit of the capitalist path of development”. This class character essentially determines the role and functions of the State in the life of the country. But this chapter also takes note of some new developments such as that after very prolonged struggles people were able to achieve the demand of linguistic states. But now the BJP led government has launched a fresh attack on the principle of linguistic states. It advocates smaller states based on administrative convenience. This will further weaken the federal structure. The repeated use by the Centre of the inherently undemocratic provision of the Article 356 of the Constitution to dismiss elected state governments and dissolve elected state assemblies has been a major instrument of subverting the federal system and attacking the autonomy of the states.

Similarly, though the secular principle is enshrined in the Constitution and the values of secular democracy are proclaimed by the bourgeois leadership of the State, the practice of secularism by the bourgeoisie has been flawed, and with the BJP coming into power, systematic efforts are on to communalise the institutions of the State, of administration, educational system, and the media. The new Programme also warns that the growth of majority communalism will strengthen the forces of minority communalism and endanger national unity. The Programme asserts that our Party is therefore committed to wage an uncompromising struggle for the consistent implementation of the principle of secularism.

It further states that the bourgeois-landlord system has also failed to put an end to caste oppression. The worst sufferers of the caste system are the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The assertion by the dalits of their rights has a democratic content even though bourgeois parties and caste organisations seek to use anti-caste consciousness for narrow electoral ends. It is necessary for the Communist Party to work for the abolition of the caste system and to integrate the struggle against social oppression with the class struggle.

The Programme also highlights the plight of women in this country. The women had hoped after Independence for emancipation from the shackles of feudalism and gender oppression. But leave alone advance, five decades of bourgeois-landlord rule have perpetuated

patriarchy in every sphere. Women are exploited at different levels, as women, as workers, as citizens. The Programme emphasizes that the resistance against this unequal status and the women's movement for equality are part of the movement for social emancipation.

## **PROGRAMME OF PEOPLES DEMOCRACY**

The next chapter is about the concrete programme of Peoples' democracy. This chapter lays down the objectives to be achieved during the peoples' democratic revolution. Though the situation is different as compared to one existing at the time of the formulation of the Programme in 1964 the character of the revolution and the stage of the revolution remain the same. Most of the objectives remain the same because the main objective is that of completing of anti-feudal, anti-Imperialist tasks. But with change in the co relation of class forces in the world arena certain necessary changes had to be made with regard to how these objectives are to be achieved. For instance the 1964 programme advocated the abolition of landlordism without compensation. The word "without compensation" is deleted but the distribution of land free to the agricultural labourers and poor peasants remains intact. During the course of the revolution, it may be necessary to differentiate the role of the small landlords, many of whom are salaried employees in other sectors. What attitude different strata of landlords take towards the revolution will determine the final approach. The present formulation does not state compensation has to be paid in all cases. This issue has been debated and the experience of various countries necessitates this position. It will depend on the situation at a given period and the correlation of class forces in the process of abolition of landlordism.

A change is made also on the language question. This question was debated earlier also. There is no difference of opinion in the Party on the equal status of national languages. Members of Parliament have the right to speak their own language and simultaneous translation must be provided in all other languages. But the problem arises as some language of communication has to be there. The 1964 Programme, as amended in 1972, stated: "The use of Hindi as official language shall not be made obligatory. In the course of growing social, political, economic and intellectual intercourse people of different states of India will develop in practice the language of inter communication most suitable to their needs The use of English in the field of administration, legislation, judiciary and as medium of

instruction in education shall be discarded replacing with the national languages". The GOI is using both English and Hindi for the language of communication. Moreover Hindi is being spoken in vast parts of the country. After discussion the present Programme has decided that the equality of all national languages should be maintained. The use of Hindi as "the sole official language to the exclusion of all other languages shall not be made obligatory. It is only by providing equality to the various languages that it can be made as acceptable as language of communication throughout the country. Till then the present arrangement of use of English and Hindi will continue." The right of people to receive instruction in educational institutions in the mother tongue till the highest level should be ensured. The use of the language of a particular linguistic state as language of administration in all its public and state institutions should also be ensured. Provision for use of language of all minorities or of a region where necessary in addition to the language of the state shall be made. The Urdu language and script shall be protected.

Another provision made in the updated programme concerns the multi-party system and the right to form political parties and associations in the peoples' democratic stage. It is a new idea that has been added, particularly the right to form political parties and associations, freedom of movement and occupation, right to dissent. These shall be ensured. This new idea has been incorporated in view of the experience of various countries that after achieving peoples' democracy are advancing towards socialism.

In the field of agriculture and peasantry a new point added is, "a comprehensive public distribution system to supply food grains and other essential commodities cheaply to people shall be introduced" This demand has risen on the basis of experience when many starvation deaths have taken place and no distribution system exists in all the states where people can be provided with food grains and other essential commodities. State of Kerala is the best example where a public distribution system exists and no starvation deaths have taken place.

Paragraphs 6.5 and 6.6 state that the transition to socialism will be a prolonged one going through various stages of economic and social formations. The People's Democratic government will ensure a decisive role for public ownership; the state will perform a regulatory role over economy as a whole. The economy under

People's Democracy will be a multi-structural one, with various forms of ownership, with the public sector having the dominant position.

In the field of industry, the document does not mention nationalization as the only form of State intervention to abolition of monopolies. The steps to eliminate monopoly and breakup the concentration of assets will be implemented through various forms including state take-over. The precise form will depend on the prevailing situation. There is also a provision for allowing foreign direct investment in selected sectors for acquiring advanced technology and upgrading productive capacities and regulating finance capital flows in the overall interests of the economy.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist), characterises the present stage of revolution as the stage of *People's Democracy* that, once accomplished, will usher the country into the transition to socialism, finally laying the basis for communism. It, however, requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to socialism because, the difficult task of reorganisation of production and radical change in all spheres of life, need time. Now, as communists, our first and foremost task is to correctly identify the classes that will be participants in the people's democratic revolution, and the classes whom this revolution will be directed against.

## **LEADER OF THE REVOLUTION**

Needless to say, the CPI(M) views the working class as the most revolutionary class of today, the class that is the natural leader of the revolution and will rally all other revolutionary classes under its banner. Given its position in the system of production obtaining today, the working class has the biggest stake in accomplishing the revolution that will end the exploitation of man by man and of nation by nation. As Marx and Engels correctly pointed out one and a half century ago, the working class "has nothing to lose but its chains;" on the contrary, "it has a world to win." Further, as Marx rightly said, the working class cannot emancipate itself without emancipating the entire society at the same time. Hence to arouse the working class and equip it properly for effecting the people's democratic revolution is our central task today.

But this is by no means an easy job. It is true that the working class

in our country is numerically much bigger, and also more organised here, than in many other third world countries. Even when India had not attained independence from the British colonial power, capitalism was more developed here compared to other colonies. Accordingly, our working class has inherited a tradition of fighting for its rights and also for broader political issues. As far back as in 1908, it was Lenin who had hailed the Indian working class for its strike on a political issue, i e on the arrest of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The All India Trade Union Congress was formed way back in 1920 and developed in the 1930s and 1940s, under communist leadership, into a mighty instrument of the working class.

Yet the fact is that the growth and development of the Indian working class has not reached such a level where it can accomplish the task that history has assigned it. First of all, in our country, the industrial working class still constitutes only a small proportion of the total population. But still more important is the fact that, despite the tremendous growth of trade unions since independence, only a small section of the workers are unionised. The sad fact is that, according to an estimate, more than 90 per cent of our workers are still unorganised and working in informal sectors of the economy, where they suffer all sorts of exploitation but are unable to resist and fight for their rights. As the experience goes to show, the capitalists not only mercilessly exploits this vast section of unorganised workers but, at the time of a strike or some other struggle, also pits them against the organised workers. This is a real challenge before the Indian trade union movement, which will have to devise ways to overcome this difficulty.

At the same time, the organised workers too have a low level of class-consciousness and are not ideologically equipped for their revolutionary tasks. We face two types of problems here. First, coming as they do from the countryside, our workers are affected by casteism and by other alien ideological influences, which hamper the process of uniting them. In a sense, this is very natural and similar things have happened in certain other countries as well. But the problem is that the process of fighting these alien ideologies and ridding the working class of their influences has been very slow. A lot of sustained work needs to be done to bring the working masses, irrespective of caste, creed and religion into common struggles against the bourgeois-landlord regime.

The second problem is of what we call "economism" in Marxist

terminology. It cannot be denied that the Indian working class has fought many mighty battles in defence of its rights, before as well as after independence. The fighting capacity of our working class has never been in doubt. But, most of the time, these battles have been confined to narrow economic issues like wage rise, bonus, etc, and for the implementation of labour laws. There is no denying the importance of these battles in bettering the lot of the working class, in strengthening its fighting capacity and in uniting it as a class. Yet the paramount need today is to instil in our working class the consciousness of transcending the confines of the exploitative bourgeois-landlord system and to inject the realisation among them that only socialism can emancipate them and the rest of the society from exploitation and oppression. It is the bounden duty of the Communist Party to instill that consciousness in our working class and to prepare it for political struggles. This is absolutely essential to enable the working class to transform itself from a class-in-itself into a class-for-itself so that it can properly discharge its leadership role.

## **ROLE OF THE PEASANTRY**

But despite the leadership role of the working class in a revolution, the fact is that this class cannot effect the revolution alone. For this purpose, the working class will have to align with other toiling classes and sections who are groaning under the bourgeois-landlord exploitative system. The most important among these classes are the peasantry and agricultural workers who, in our country, constitute more than two-thirds of the population.

In our country, like the working class, the peasantry too has a glorious tradition of fighting. There were numerous peasant struggles in various parts of the country even before the formation of the All India Kisan Sabha. The Santhal revolt and many other similar revolts are still alive in our people's consciousness. Indian peasants took part in our first war of independence in 1857-58 in a big way and made tremendous sacrifices for the cause of the country. Then, after the formation of the All India Kisan Sabha in 1936, peasant struggles assumed a more coordinated form and formed part of the post-war upsurge that contributed to forcing the British out of the country. The Tebhaga struggle in Bengal, the struggles in Assam and Surma Valley, the Adivasi revolt in Worli in Maharashtra, the Punnapra-Vayalar struggle in Kerala, the peasant struggle in the then United Provinces, the Bakasht agitation in Bihar and, above all, the glorious armed struggle in Telangana --- these are the struggles that

our peasantry can justly be proud of.

But yet the degree of organisation of Indian peasantry is dismally low even today, and at the same time highly uneven. At present, the All India Kisan Sabha has a membership of about 13 million, but the bulk of this membership is confined to just two states, i e West Bengal and Kerala. An overwhelming mass of our peasantry in vast stretches of the country is still unorganised and, therefore, quite vulnerable to the adverse impact of outside forces. Even where the peasants are united, their struggles are by and large confined to narrow economic demands which hampers their capacity to fight for a basic social transformation. At the same time, our peasantry is steeped in ignorance as well as under the influence of casteism and other feudal ideas. Ridding the peasantry of these alien ideologies is thus the basic task to which the Party and Kisan Sabha units have to pay utmost attention.

Be that as it may, we have to accept the fact that the vast mass of our peasantry is not a uniform entity; decades of capitalist penetration into Indian agriculture, particularly after independence, have led to differentiation among the peasantry. Of these, the poor peasants are the most trustworthy ally of the working class in the people's democratic revolution while the middle peasants too have an important role to play in this revolution. Then there remains the strata of rich peasants who, because of their position in the system of production, are inclined to gravitate towards the class of landlords. Yet, to write off the rich peasants would be a mistake and against the interests of the revolution. Our Party, the CPI(M), has thoroughly debated this question and come to the correct conclusion that the rich peasants, though they remain a vacillating section, can be won over to the side of the working class at certain junctures. In the recent period, after the government of India has allowed free import of a number of agricultural commodities from abroad, the rich peasants are finding it difficult to compete with the highly subsidised foreign produce in the market and are afraid of getting ruined because of the indiscriminate imports. This has further opened up possibilities of winning the rich peasants over to democratic side.

## **AGRICULTURAL WORKERS**

The basic revolutionary class in the countryside are agricultural workers who are the most exploited class of our society. Many of

these workers are landless or land-poor, and live from hand to mouth. They are deprived of even the minimum basic amenities of life, of literacy and education, of even minimal health care; most of them don't even own the tiny homesteads on which their shanties stand. At the same time, an overwhelming bulk of these landless agricultural workers come from the oppressed sections of society like the scheduled castes and tribes, and they are often subjected by the rural rich to the worst kinds of social oppression. Any attempt by agricultural workers to unite and demand their rights is met with fierce repression; they are even burnt alive and the women molested and raped.

At the same time, successive governments at the centre and in most of the states, since independence, have constantly ignored the plight of agricultural workers. The draft of a comprehensive legislation for agricultural workers is lying with the central government for the last 18 years, but the centre is trying not to act upon it, as it does not want to annoy the landlords who have a share in the state power. The result is that agricultural workers are even today forced to live a sub-human existence in the most pathetic of circumstances. Like the working class, therefore, agricultural workers too have nothing to lose but their chains.

It will be therefore no exaggeration to say that the class of agricultural workers will be the most trusted ally of the working class in the people's democratic revolution. Moreover, by its very position in the system of production, this class is destined to serve as a link between the industrial working class and the peasantry. The rock-like unity of the poor peasants and agricultural workers is what is absolutely essential to overcome the vacillations of the middle peasantry and win the rich peasants to the cause of the revolution. Organising the agricultural workers is therefore one of the paramount tasks to which utmost attention must be paid.

Apart from these basic classes, the Party will have to pay attention to organising the intelligentsia and the other sections of the middle class as well. The intelligentsia has an important role to play in the revolutionary process, just as it played an important role in the freedom struggle. In the updated draft, we have noted the impact of liberalisation on the middle classes; "An upper strata has benefitted and they do not share the outlook of the rest of the middle classes." However, in today's circumstances, when education and health are being privatised and commercialised, when the number of educated

unemployed is growing by leaps and bounds and when the sword of retrenchment is hanging over the educated employees, the middle classes are bound to bear the brunt of the all-round attacks which the government is launching against our people.

The opportunities for mobilising the middle classes will increase in the future. The revolutionary forces have to devise innovative ways to mobilise this section and utilise its mental resources to further the cause of the revolution. The intelligentsia amongst them can play a vital role in ridding the mass of the people of influences like casteism, communalism, feudal and semi-feudal vices, and prepare them for the revolutionary tasks ahead.

## **IDENTIFYING ENEMY CLASSES**

After identifying the classes that will be aligned to the working class in the people's democratic revolution, we now have to identify the exploiting classes against whom this revolution will be directed. The Party Programme of 1964, in its Para 56, described the class character of the Indian state as *"the class rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords, led by the big bourgeoisie, who are increasingly collaborating with foreign finance capital in pursuit of the capitalist path of development."* The draft of the Updated Party Programme retains that understanding.

Our understanding of the class enemies is based on this very understanding of the state power --- the people's democratic revolution that we envisage will be directed against the big bourgeoisie, the landlords.

One clarification is due here. While we do not believe that differentiation among the bourgeoisie has reached such a level that a section of it has become the sworn enemy of the big and monopoly bourgeoisie, we do not write off the section of small bourgeoisie from the revolutionary process. The fact is that the small bourgeoisie can indeed be won over to the side of the working class, as has happened in some of the successful revolutions. Particularly after the onset of globalisation and liberalisation, and the entry of foreign finance capital into India in a big way, small and medium industrial units are getting closed and ruined on an increasing scale, and these sections of the bourgeoisie too have begun to feel the pinch of the new

economic policies. At times, they have expressed their opposition to these policies and have cooperated with the trade unions in fighting these policies. Yet, winning over these sections of the bourgeoisie to the cause of the revolution is not an immediate possibility. Secondly, and much more importantly, how much we succeed in winning over the sections of the non-big bourgeoisie will depend on how strongly we forge the worker-peasant alliance.

## **CRUX OF THE REVOLUTION**

*In sum, the people's democratic revolution which we envisage will be carried out by a people's democratic front that will be led by the working class and will include all the layers of the peasantry, the agricultural workers and the intelligentsia; even the small bourgeoisie will not be excluded from it. This revolution will be directed against the big bourgeoisie, the landlords, the whole bourgeois-landlord regime and imperialism. The worker-peasant alliance will be the bedrock of this revolution, and its basic thrust will be on completing the agrarian revolution.*

The last point must be clearly grasped. If we say that an agrarian revolution constitutes the core of the democratic revolution, it is because we believe that no regeneration of our country is possible without a radical, revolutionary transformation of our countryside. Para 97 of the 1964 Programme very clearly put forward this point:

*The anti-feudal and anti-imperialist people's democratic revolution will have to take upon itself, first and foremost, the task of carrying out radical agrarian reforms in the interest of the peasantry, so as to sweep away the remnants of feudal and semi-feudal fetters on our production forces of agriculture as well as industry. This will have to be supplemented by sweeping measures of reforming the social system through which such remnants of pre-capitalist society as the caste and other social systems keep the villages tied to age-old backwardness. The task of making such sweeping reforms in the social system, however, is inextricably bound up with the completion of the agrarian revolution which in fact is the axis of the democratic revolution. Any failure to grasp its full significance and import is to miss the very essence of the democratic revolution.*

The draft of the Updated Party Programme reiterates this

understanding.

However, all this is a complex, protracted and assiduous process that needs sustained work among the masses. Any adventurism in this regard will only harm the cause of the revolution as we have already witnessed in our own country and in some other countries. In the meantime, in order to meet the requirements of the fast changing situation, the Party will have to devise suitable interim slogans and work out tactics to take forward the cause of the revolution. The concept of Left and democratic front, which must not be confused with the people's democratic front, has been an interim slogan of this very type.

At the same time, whenever necessary, the Party can participate in governments without falling prey to parliamentary illusions and without losing sight of the basic goal of *"dislodging the present ruling classes and establishing a new democratic state and government based on the firm alliance of the working class and peasantry."* This was very clearly put forward in Para 112 of the 1964 Programme and has been retained in the draft of the Updated Party Programme. The only difference is that at that time, it was the question of participation in state governments alone while, subsequently, the issue of participation in the central government arose. The formulation in the original para is so worded as to be applicable to the Central government too. The purpose of this tactic is quite modest --- to provide immediate relief to the people, educate them about the basic goal of the Party, show them in practice the difference between a Communist Party and the bourgeois-landlord parties, and thus give a fillip to the revolutionary movement of the working people.

The way our governments in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura have provided relief to the people within the limitations imposed by the bourgeois-landlord system, the way they have carried out land reforms and other pro-people measures, the way they have made the people participants in governance through democratic decentralisation have indeed gone a long way in enhancing the prestige of the CPI(M) and of the Left in general. Yet the Party never loses sight of the limitations of *"such governments of a transitional character"* and keeps educating the masses that these governments *"would not solve the economic and political problems of the nation in any fundamental manner."* Nothing short of a people's democratic revolution is required for that purpose.

The role of a Communist Party occupies an important place in the Marxist-Leninist theory of revolution. Marxism-Leninism does not believe in the theory of spontaneity as was propagated by, for instance, the syndicalists of those days. According to Marxism-Leninism, a revolution does not happen, *it is made*. And the making of a revolution requires not only certain objective conditions; the existence of a subjective factor --- the revolutionary working class and its decisive intervention under the leadership of a Party that is wedded to Marxism-Leninism --- is also crucial. For the founders of this science, it is precisely a Communist Party that acts as the subjective factor; it is the Party that rouses the toiling masses for making a revolution, leads them for an overthrow of the old regime and guides them in their advance to people's democracy.

Needless to say, a Communist Party is fundamentally different from the multitude of bourgeois-landlord parties that we see around us. It is a revolutionary party that is guided by Marxism-Leninism, i.e. the ideology of the working class or, better to say, it is the Party of the working class. A Communist Party represents the most advanced detachment of the working class who have no interest at heart except that of the revolution and its success.

## **DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM**

The principles governing a Communist Party were formulated by the Second Congress of the Communist International (Comintern), under the direct guidance from Lenin, and are available in the pamphlet entitled *Principles of Party Organisation*. Apart from defining the class character of a Communist Party, the pamphlet also lays down the basics of organisation which the Party must continuously follow in order to discharge the tasks it is assigned.

Going by the principle that the internal organisation of a party must be in accordance with the basic goal which it wants to achieve and, therefore, the internal organisation of a Communist Party must be suited to the task of effecting a proletarian revolution, the Comintern laid down that a Communist Party has to be based on the principles of democratic centralism. In other words, it must combine the elements of both democracy and centralism, sacrificing neither at the cost of the other.

In practice, this means that a Communist Party must practice democracy in its internal life and its members must have full freedom to express their views in their respective fora, without any fear or favour, on any issue before a decision is arrived at. They must freely and frankly debate all aspects of the question under discussion so that all its pros and cons come to the knowledge of the members, and they are in a position to take a balanced view of the issue concerned. This is absolutely essential to involve all members of the Party in decision-making.

But once a decision is arrived at unanimously or by a majority vote, it becomes the decision of the whole Party and all the members are duty-bound to implement it. In fact, unless a Party decision is earnestly implemented, there is no way of knowing whether it was a correct decision or not. For, as Marx taught us, it is practice that tells us of the correctness or otherwise of a position. It is therefore essential that, once the Party arrives at a decision, all its members whole-heartedly implement it and give it adequate time to be tested in practice. It is through such democratic discussions that the unity of will is forged and, then, it is through the unity of action that a particular decision is tested in practice.

This is the way a Communist Party combines the elements of democracy and centralism. The Party should also bear in mind the warning given by the Comintern that there is only a thin dividing line between democratic centralism and bureaucratic centralism, and that any lack of vigilance on part of the Party and its rank and file blurs this distinction, and leads to the dominance of centralism at the cost of inner-party democracy. Similarly, any lack of centralism would convert the Party into a social democratic party.

However, in the critical situation of today, after the debacle of socialism in the USSR and East European countries, we witness the sad fact that many of the parties calling themselves communist have abandoned the principles of democratic centralism. Our Party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), does not share the view of these parties and we do believe that a Communist Party cannot but be based on the principles of democratic centralism.

We in the CPI(M) believe that this combination of democracy and centralism is absolutely essential for *inculcating* rock-like discipline

among Party members at all levels, *without imposing it from above*. This combination is also required for transforming the unity of will into unity of action, without which the Party can never discharge the tasks which history has assigned it.

## **FIGHTING ALIEN IDEAS & TENDENCIES**

Another important aspect of Party-building is that a Communist Party not only fights the external enemies but also the alien ideas and influences that are found in its ranks. In fact, fighting the enemy classes and fighting the alien ideas are inextricably linked to one another and are mutually complementary. The fact is that many of us come from or work in a bourgeois, landlord or petty bourgeois milieu and, when we join the Communist Party, we bring its influences to the Party. Hence the need to constantly fight these influences and ideas in a most thorough manner.

From the point of view of a Communist Party, these alien ideas and influences can be divided into two categories. While casteism, communalism, religious obscurantism, male chauvinism and the like may be classified as external influences which we inherit from our milieu, revisionism, adventurism and Left-sectarianism may be termed as internal phenomena which corrode the fighting capacity of the Party from within. A communist is expected to be a perennial fighter against the ideas of both these kinds. He or she must not only fight these influences in his/her own life, but must also help other Party members in fighting these vices. At the same time, a communist has also to strive to rid the masses of the bourgeois, feudal and pre-feudal influences and ideas, and prepare them for the revolutionary tasks ahead. On its part, the Party too must assist its members at all levels to engage in a constant process of rectification.

Our Party, the CPI(M), can be rightfully proud that it has a glorious record of fighting the tendencies like revisionism and adventurism. The united Party witnessed a consistent struggle against revisionism during the period 1954-64, culminating in the reorganisation of the Party in 1964. Then, soon after, we had to face the onslaught of Left adventurism which took a heavy toll in Andhra Pradesh and some other states. That was also a time when the CPI(M) was being castigated by the CPSU as well as the CPC, two biggest parties of the communist movement. Yet we never gave up our principled position, nor did we give up our partisanship with the socialist countries

including the USSR and China. The Burdwan Plenum of the Party, held in 1968, is a memorable landmark in guiding the Party on ideological issues, steering clear of both right revisionism and Left adventurism.

This is an aspect that must be constantly highlighted in Party education programmes, for an overwhelming bulk of Party members today is of those who joined the Party after 1977; even among them, a big majority joined after 1985. These members must be continuously educated in these aspects of Party history along with the role the Party played in fighting for the country's independence from British imperialism and in fighting against the bourgeois-landlord regime.

This is, however, not to deny that the Party still has an arduous task before it in so far as fighting the alien influences and tendencies is concerned. Two tendencies are particularly threatening the unity of the working people today. One of them is communalism which has assumed a menacing proportion today, as communal parties like the BJP and Shiv Sena are in power at the centre now, and more so because the fascistic RSS is trying its level best to use state power in order to undermine the pluralistic, secular ethos of the country and mould India into a theocratic state.

Another alarming tendency today is casteism. Many of the bourgeois-landlord parties are striving to pit one caste against another in order to gain political mileage and are, in the process, sacrificing the genuine aspirations of the lower castes that have been oppressed and suppressed for centuries together. Here the Party will have a very crucial role to play. While recognising the genuine aspirations of the oppressed castes and their quest for equality, and while striving to create the material basis for this equality through land reforms and other pro-people measures, the Party has to expose and fight every attempt to pit one caste against another, and protect and strengthen the unity of the toiling people of all creeds, castes, ethnic and linguistic groups.

## **PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM**

Another important principle governing a Communist Party is that of proletarian internationalism that was symbolised in the immortal war

cry of the *Communist Manifesto*: "Workers of the World, Unite!" What Marx, Engels and Lenin taught us is that capital is an international force and, therefore, the toiling people's fight against it will have to be international in character, even though this struggle is waged in national theatres. A party forsaking the principle of proletarian internationalism has in fact no right to call itself a Communist Party.

Our Party can also be proud that it has been faithful to this principle from its very inception in 1920. At times the Party had had to face adverse circumstances but it always stood steadfast by this principle. On issues like the Vietnam war and even on questions like Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, the Party never wavered from the principle of proletarian internationalism even if it had to swim against the current. The Party always declared its partisanship with the socialist world despite its differences with some of the bigger Communist Parties. It always extended active and fighting support to the national liberation movements, and extends support to the existing socialist countries today in their struggle against the imperialist attempts to undermine them. Thus the Party has demonstrated its loyalty to the principle of proletarian internationalism in practice, and this is what has enhanced the prestige of the Party in the international communist movement.

## **ON TO THE STRUGGLES AHEAD**

Thus, while concretely applying the science of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of our country and constantly reminding its members that Marxism-Leninism is not a dogma to be parroted but a guide to action, the CPI(M) consistently strives to fight the bourgeois, feudal and pre-feudal ideologies, steer clear of the rightist and leftist deviations and extend fighting support to the struggles for democracy and socialism worldwide. It is a result of all this that, in the aftermath of the debacle of socialism in East Europe and USSR, when many of the parties lost their moorings and split, the CPI(M) maintained its unity and its fighting capacity. It would be dishonest to say that we were not at all affected by the developments in the USSR and East Europe; certainly we were to an extent. But in its *Resolution on Certain Ideological Issues*, the Madras (14<sup>th</sup>) Congress of the Party dispassionately analysed those catastrophic developments and drew valuable lessons. It was this analysis that enabled us to successfully withstand the offensive launched by the bourgeoisie and imperialism in the wake of those developments.

The Party Programme in its concluding chapter states:

*The Communist Party of India (Marxist) carries forward the fighting traditions of our people and all that is fine and valuable in our culture and civilisation. The CPI(M) combines patriotism with proletarian internationalism. In all its activities and struggles, the Party is guided by the scientific philosophy and principles of Marxism-Leninism which alone shows the correct way to complete emancipation. The Party unites in its ranks the most advanced, the most active and most selfless sons and daughters of the working people and ceaselessly strives to develop them as staunch Marxist-Leninists and proletarian internationalists. The Party devotes all its energies and resources to the task of uniting all patriotic and democratic forces in the struggle for a democratic course of development --- to the great task of building a mighty people's democratic front for the realisation of the Programme.*

It is our firm adherence to the above principles which gives us the confidence to face the new century and motivates us to march ahead.