ON ORGANISATION

(A series of lectures delivered at the Central Party School, Delhi, on July 13, 14 & 15, 1954)

by

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

These lectures were delivered in the Central Party School held in Delhi in July.

They were based on the decisions of the April Central Committee meeting and some PB documents. Subsequently, however, another meeting of the Central Committee was held in September. This September meeting discussed the question of the Communist Party's work in the students' organisations and adopted a resolution on the same. Hence the Politbureau Note of June, on the basis of which the student organisation was dealt with became outmoded; and that part of the lecture was therefore dropped.

Similarly, certain other parts have been revised in the light of the Central Committee resolution on peace, Government of Democratic Unity, etc.

Provincial and District Committees which organise Party Schools are requested to read these together with resolutions adopted by the September meeting of the Central Committee when they prepare their notes for the Party Schools.

September 21, 1954

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Lecture I

WHY ORGANISATION?

I. *General*

THE difference between Dialectical and Historical Materialism and Mechanical Materialism is that, while the latter cannot offer any satisfactory explanation for the role which man as an individual, and human society collectively, play in the transformation of nature, the former gives a rational explanation for it. Man, the individual man, says the latter, as well as human society collectively, are nothing but cogs in the wheel of nature to be ordered about and played upon by it. The former, however, rejects this deterministic approach to the relations between Nature and Man. As Comrade Stalin explained in his *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*:

"It does not follow from Marx's words, however, that social ideas, theories, political views and political institutions are of no significance in the life of society, that they do not reciprocally affect social being, the development of the material conditions of the life of society. We have been speaking so far of the *origin* of social ideas, theories, views and political institutions of *the way they arise*, of the fact that the spiritual life of society is a reflection of the conditions of its material life. As regards the *significance* of social ideas, theories, views and political institutions, as regards their *role* in history, historical materialism far from denying them,

stresses the important role and significance of these factors in the life of society, in its history.

"There are different kinds of social ideas and theories. There are old ideas and theories, which have outlived their day and which serve the interests of the moribund forces of society. Their significance lies in fact that they hamper the development, the progress of society. Then there are new and advanced ideas and theories which serve the interests of the advanced forces of society. Their significance lies in the fact that they facilitate the development, the progress of society; and their significance is the greater, the more accurately they reflect the needs of development of the material life of society.

"New social ideas and theories arise only after the development of the material life of society has set new tasks before society. But once they have arisen they become a most potent force which facilitates the carrying out of the new tasks set by the development of the material life of society, a force which facilitates the progress of society. It is precisely here that the tremendous organising, mobilising and transforming value of new ideas, new theories, new political views and new political institutions manifests itself." (*Problems of Leninism*, pp. 726-727)

In his last work on the *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, Comrade Stalin succinctly explained the relation between Nature and Man. "Marxism regards laws of science," he said, "—whether they be laws of natural science or laws of political economy—as the reflection of objective processes, which take place independently of the will of man. Man may discover these laws, get to know them, study them, reckon with them in his activities and utilise them in the interests of society, but he cannot change or abolish them. Still less can he form and create new laws of science.

"Does this mean, for instance, that the results of the action of the laws of nature, the results of the action of the forces of nature, are generally inavertible, that the destructive action of the forces of nature always and everywhere proceeds with an elemental and inexorable power that does not yield to the influence of man? No, it does not. Leaving aside astronomical, geological and other similar processes, which, even if he has come to know the laws of their development, man really is powerless to influence, in many other cases man is very far from powerless, in the sense of being able to influence the processes of nature. In all such cases, having come to know of the laws of nature, reckoning with them and relying on them, and intelligently applying and utilising them, man can restrict their sphere of action, and can impart a different direction to the destructive forces of nature and convert them to the use of society....

"Reference is made to Engels' *Anti-Duhring*, to his formula which says that, with the abolition of capitalism and the socialisation of the means of production, man will obtain control of his means of production, that he will be set free from the yoke of social and economic relations and become the 'master' of his social life. Engels calls this freedom 'appreciation of necessity'. And what can this 'appreciation of necessity' mean? It means that, having come to know the objective laws ('necessity'), man will apply them with full consciousness in the interests of society." (*Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, pp. 6-8)

It is this understanding of the relation between nature and man that Marxism applies to the theory of revolution. Marxism does not consider laws of political economy in the fatalistic way in which some pseudo-Marxists do.

For example, it is the fashion among certain 'Marx-

ists' to consider that, just because the economic crisis is developing, the political crisis should immediately follow; that just because a political crisis is breaking out, it is bound to lead to revolutionary seizure of power. The result of this pseudo-Marxist understanding of the relation between the economic and political crisis, as well as between the political crisis and the revolutionary seizure of power, is that, the moment signs of an economic crisis become visible, talk will start of the revolutionary seizure of power, while, as a matter of fact, the objective political conditions are not at all mature. It is in answer to such pseudo-Marxists that Comrade Stalin made the following remarks in his *Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. (B)*:

"Some comrades think that, once there is a revolutionary crisis, the bourgeoisie is bound to be in a hopeless position; that its end is therefore a foregone conclusion; that the victory of the revolution is thus assured, and that all they have to do is to wait for the fall of the bourgeoisie and to draw up victorious resolutions. This is a profound mistake. The victory of the revolution never comes by itself. It must be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare for and win victory. Moments occur when the situation is revolutionary, when the rule of the bourgeoisie is shaken to its very foundations, and yet the victory of the revolution does not come, because there is no revolutionary party of the proletariat sufficiently strong and influential to lead the masses and to take power. It would be unwise to believe that such 'cases' cannot occur.

"It will do no harm in this connection to recall Lenin's prophetic words on revolutionary crises, uttered at the Second Congress of the Communist International:

"'We have now come to the question of the revolutionary crisis as the basis of our revolutionary action. And here we must first of all note two widespread errors. On the one hand, the bourgeois economists represent this crisis simply as 'unrest', as the English so elegantly express it. On the other hand, revolutionaries sometimes try to prove that the crisis is absolutely hopeless. That is a mistake. There is no such thing as an absolutely hopeless situation. The bourgeoisie is behaving like an arrant brigand who has lost his head: it commits blunder after blunder, thus making the situation more acute and hastening its own doom. All this is true. But it cannot be 'proved' that there is absolutely no chance of its gulling some minority of the exploited with some concessions or other, or of suppressing some movement or uprising of some section or another of the oppressed and exploited. To try to 'prove' beforehand that a situation is 'absolutely' hopeless would be sheer pedantry, or juggling with concepts and catchwords. In this and similar questions the only real 'proof' is practice. The bourgeois system all over the world is experiencing a most profound revolutionary crisis. And the revolutionary parties must now 'prove' by their practical actions that they are intelligent and organized enough, are in contact enough with the exploited masses, are determined and skilful enough to utilize this crisis for a successful and victorious revolution.' (*Lenin*, Vol. XXV, pp. 340-41)" (*Problems of Leninism*, pp. 589-590.)

Comrade Stalin returned to this theme again in his *Economic Problems* wherein he stated as follows:

"Unlike the laws of natural science, where the discovery and application of a new law proceeds more or less smoothly, the discovery and the application of a new law in the economic field, affecting as it does

the interests of obsolescent forces of society, meets with the most powerful resistance on their part. A force, a social force, capable of overcoming this resistance, is therefore necessary. In our country, such a force was the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, who represented the overwhelming majority of society. There is no such force yet in other, capitalist countries. This explains the secret why the Soviet government was able to smash the old forces of society, and why in our country the economic law that the relations of production must necessarily conform with the character of the productive forces received full scope." (*Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, pp. 10-11)

This is the theoretical basis for considering organisation as of key importance. This importance was stressed by Comrade Dimitrov in his well-known speech in reply to the debate at the 7th World Congress of the Communist International:

"Comrades, it is clear, of course, that for the Communist International and each of its sections, the fundamental thing is to work out a correct line. But a correct line alone is not enough for concrete leadership in the class struggle.

"For that, a number of conditions must be fulfilled, above all the following:

"First, *organisational guarantees* that adopted decisions will be carried out in practice and that all obstacles in the way will be resolutely overcome. What Comrade Stalin said at the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union about the conditions necessary to carry out the line of the Party can and should be applied also, in its entirety, to the decisions which our Congress adopts. Comrade Stalin said:

" 'Some people think that it is sufficient to draw up

a correct Party line, proclaim it from the housetops, enunciate it in the form of general theses and resolutions and carry them unanimously in order to make victory come of itself, automatically, so to speak. This, of course, is wrong. Those who think like that are greatly mistaken. Only incorrigible bureaucrats and office rats can think that. As a matter of fact, these successes and victories were obtained, not automatically, but as a result of a fierce struggle to carry out the Party line. Victory never comes by itself—it has to be dragged by the hand. Good resolutions and declarations in favour of the general line of the Party are only a beginning; they merely express the desire to win, but it is not victory. After the correct line has been given, after a correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on the manner in which the work is organised, on the organisation of the struggle for the application of the line of the Party, on the proper selection of workers, on supervising the fulfilment of the decisions of the leading organs. Without this the correct line of the Party and the correct solutions are in danger of being severely damaged. More than that, after the correct political line has been given, the organisational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, i.e., whether it is fulfilled or not.' (*Socialism Victorious*, pp. 78-79)

"It is hardly necessary to add anything to these striking words of Comrade Stalin, which must become a guiding principle in all the work of our Parties.

"Another condition is the *ability to convert decisions of the Communist International and its sections into decisions of the widest masses themselves.* This is all the more necessary now, when we are faced with the task of organising a united front of the proletariat and drawing very wide masses of the people into an anti-fascist People's Front. The political and tactical genius of Lenin and Stalin stands out most clearly and

vividly in their masterly ability to get the masses to understand the correct line and the slogans of the Party through their own experience. If we trace the history of Bolshevism, that greatest of treasure houses of the political strategy and tactics of the revolutionary labour movement, we can see for ourselves that the Bolsheviks never substituted methods of leading the Party for methods of leading the masses.

"Comrade Stalin pointed out that one of the peculiarities of the tactics of the Russian Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for the October Revolution consisted in their ability correctly to determine the path and the turns which naturally lead the masses to the slogans of the Party, to the very 'threshold of the revolution', helping them to sense, to test and to realise from their own experience the correctness of these slogans. They did not confuse leadership of the Party with leadership of the masses, but clearly saw the difference between leadership of the first kind and leadership of the second kind. In this way they worked out tactics as the science not only of Party leadership, but also of the leadership of millions of toilers.

"Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that "*the masses cannot assimilate our decisions unless we learn to speak the language which the masses understand.* We do not always know how to speak simply, concretely, in images which are familiar and intelligible to the masses. We are still unable to refrain from abstract formulas which we have learnt by rote. As a matter of fact, if you look through our leaflets, newspapers, resolutions and theses, you will find that they are often written in a language and style so heavy that they are difficult for even our Party functionaries to understand, let alone the rank-and-file workers." (*United Front* pp. 112-113. International Publishers, New York.)

The above-mentioned emphasis on the role of ideology and organisation was completely taken into account when our Party prepared its new Programme.

It will be recalled that the Programme stated in its 19th Section that "our Party does not find it possible at present to carry out socialist transformations in our country." The Programme gave two reasons for this —*firstly*, "the backwardness of the economic development of India" and *secondly*, "the weakness of the mass organisations of the workers, peasants and toiling intelligentsia".

It has been explained elsewhere how the first of these two factors—backwardness of the economic development of India—makes it impossible for us to carry out socialist transformations. That, however, still leaves unexplained how the second factor—weakness of the mass organisations of workers, peasants and toiling intelligentsia—prevents us from carrying out socialist transformations.

The explanation for this is to be found in the fact that, while it is entirely necessary for a country to have a certain degree of economic development—development of the process of the socialist mode of production—for it to advance towards socialist construction; while it would be impossible for a backward economy to go forward to socialism without passing through a number of transitional stages; it would be wrong to consider the contrary statement to be true. It would be wrong to consider that, once a country overcomes its economic backwardness, once it builds modern large-scale industry, once great advances have been registered in the direction of socialisation of the process of production, it will be possible for it straightaway to advance towards a socialist system. For this, it is also necessary that a certain amount of development should have taken place in the mass organisations of workers, peasants and toiling intelligentsia.

This was underlined by Lenin in some of his writings in the immediate post-October Revolution period on the training of the whole working class in the process of administration and control. Because Lenin realised the significance of this training, he advanced the slogan of workers' control over the industry, rather than direct management by the workers. He said that, once the employers are made accountable to the workers, once they are forced to open all the records connected with the management of industry, the workers will learn the art of management; no amount of manoeuvring by the employers would deceive them.

It was again the necessity for giving the large mass of individual peasants the necessary training in the process of collective production and management, that made Lenin lay great stress on Co-operation as the means of bringing peasants under the system of collective farming. With regard to the forms of collective farming itself, Comrade Stalin, in various speeches and writings explained how it is necessary to start with the lowest forms, and then go on to higher and higher forms.

It is out of this necessity for training the mass of individual peasants that the basic principle of the Socialist progress towards collectivisation—the voluntary principle—has been worked out by Stalin and other leaders of the Soviet Union, as well as by the leaders of People's Democracies which came into existence after the Second World War. It is, therefore, necessary to bear in mind that the existence of strong mass organisations of workers, peasants and toiling intelligentsia, emphasised by the Communist Party will determine the tempo of overcoming economic backwardness itself and, thus, of going over to the construction of Socialist society.

How the existence of these mass organisations of

workers, peasants and toiling intelligentsia would accelerate the tempo of the advance of the working class towards Socialism, has been shown by the very rapid develop r of People's China, in its transition to Socialism. In just four years of People's Democratic Dictatorship, China could overcome e backwardness her semi-colonial and semi-feu economy and embark on the First Five-Year Plan, which is designed to lay the basis for Socialist Construction.

Many of us had thought that, because the Chinese Party was emphasising the anti-imperialist, anti-fe al nara r of their revolution, it would take several years for China to emba k on socialist construction. We were therefore surprised to find that, by the beginning of 195 , th Communist Party of Chi a had already mapped ou China's path of Socialist construction. It was surprising to us because we did not realise the immense significance of the fact that the social forces ca le of overcoming the resistance of obsolescent forces of society, which Comrade Stalin spoke in his *Economic Problems*— the worker-peasant alliance—had been created in the course of over twenty years of bitter and arduous struggle in which the Chinese people engaged under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Absence of such social forces n India should, therefore, be considered, along with the economic backwardness of our country, as a factor making it impossible for us, to embark on socialist construction today.

How is this shortcoming, to be overcome in our country? The answer is to be seen in the picture which the Party's 1951-52 Election Manifesto drew of the People's Democratic State as an alternative to the present landlord-monopolist Government "The very structure of the St te," the Manifesto said, "will be such as to ensu effective administration of the State

by the people themselves. The organs of struggle of the united people, heading the battle against the existing regime and achieving its destruction, will become the base of the new State power."

It is the creation of these "organs of struggle of the united people which will become the base of the new State power" that is the key to the problem, both of the establishment of the State of People's Democracy, as well as of its quickest possible transition towards Socialism. Are we able to forge the unity of the working people in every factory, every mine, every plantation, every farm, every office, every village and every ward or mohalla of a town—in short, wherever the common people work or reside—in struggle against the existing regime? It is the answer to this question that determines the speed, both of the establishment of the State of People's Democracy, as well as of its further advance along the path of Socialism.

This distinguishes the Communist approach towards the question of power from the approach of all other parties. For example, there are "left" critics of the idea of People's Democratic Dictatorship, who argue that People's Democratic Dictatorship is a "betrayal of Socialism". Adherents as they are of the petty-bourgeois outlook on the revolution, these "left" critics of People's Democracy do not understand that the prerequisite for the quickest and most successful transition to Socialism is (not the loudest talk about it but) the widest possible mobilisation of the entire people in struggle against the existing regime, under the leadership of the working class, headed by the Communist Party.

They talk of Marxism-Leninism, but miss the essence of Marxism-Leninism—the basic idea that it is the working people, organised in their day-to-day struggle at the place of their work and at the place of their residence, that have to smash the existing State

and to create a People's State. It does not matter to them whether the millions of the working people are organised in struggle at the place of their work and at the place of their residence; what matters to them is that they themselves should mouth certain "revolutionary" phrases. For the Communists, however, what matters, above all, is the working people and their organisations.

The Communist approach to the question of power is also to be distinguished from certain vulgar and distorted ideas of United Front, according to which what is important in building United Front is that the Communist Party should have an understanding with certain other parties of the Opposition. Since the forging of such a United Front of parties is supposed to be the "key job" of the Party in the present period of the development of the Indian people's democratic movement, it is suggested that "the leading role of the United Front consists" in its making the maximum sacrifices in building United Front with other parties! This, however, has nothing to do with the real United Front whose essence consists in building the unity of the working people at the place of their work and at their place of residence. United organs of struggle in every factory, in every mine, in every plantation and farm, in every village, ward or mohalla—such is the essence of United Front.

The Communist Party's relations with other parties have to be determined on a single basis: whether it helps the building of such a real United Front of the toiling people at the base. Agreement with other parties and groups should be welcomed, if it helps the process of developing such United Front at the base; on the other hand, anything which hinders the process should be firmly rejected and resisted. For, United Front with parties and groups is not the be-all and end-all of United Front; it is only a means to the end, the end being

the forging of unity of the fighting people at the base.

All these make it clear that the key question which faces the Communist Party, both in relation to its immediate task of developing present-day struggles towards the central political slogan of the formation of Government of Democratic Unity, as well as its further development along the path of People's Democracy and Socialist Construction, is the question of *organising* the millions of our toiling people.

2. *In the Struggle for Peace*

Now let us apply this understanding to the question of the struggle for Peace.

The Central Committee at its last meeting arrived at two conclusions on the international situation: *firstly*, there is a certain amount of relaxation of international tension; *secondly*, in spite of this relaxation of tension, the warmongers of the world are very active.

The first of the above two conclusions has been completely confirmed by the proceedings of the Geneva Conference: for the first time in the post-second-world-war period, American warmongers stood virtually isolated in international relations. No amount of pressure and intimidation from Dulles and his deputy, Bedell Smith, could prevent the British and the French from negotiating with the Chinese and the Vietnamese for an agreement.

This raises the question: Does this show that the Central Committee's second conclusion has become outmoded? No, it does not mean that. In spite of a certain amount of relaxation of international tension; in spite of the fact that, so far as Geneva is concerned, the plans of the American warmongers headed by Dulles and Eisenhower have been thwarted, the efforts of the warmongers have not been finally defeated.

At the very time when these developments were taking place—Chou-Nehru talks, Chou-Nu talks, etc.—talks were going on in Washington between the British and the American imperialists. The communique issued at the end of the Washington talks shows that the American and British imperialists, if they have things their own way, would still further intensify international tension. For example, they make a very clear statement to the effect that it will be their common endeavour to see that what they call "States which were formerly free and are now in bondage" should be liberated. They are also putting all sorts of pressure on France to ratify the EDC.

It will therefore be wrong to see only the relaxation in international tension and to ignore the frantic efforts made by the warmongers to work up war hysteria. Nor are these efforts accidental. They are based on an objective material reality, the reality that the whole economy of world capitalism, including that of America, is cracking up. It is in order to find a way out of this situation that they are trying to work up war hysteria. This is a very important fact which we should always remember. Stalin has noted it in his last work *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, wherein he stated that, so long as imperialism continues, so long as modern monopoly capitalism tries to make maximum profit, the possibility of war always exists. And now is the time when the whole system of world capitalism, and as part of the system of world capitalism, American monopoly capital, is going through a very serious economic crisis.

That being so, we cannot, by any means, rest content with the fact that there is a certain amount of lessening of international tension today. Discontent against the warmongers is, of course, growing; the resistance against war preparations is growing; but we cannot rest satisfied with these things. The monopo-

lists are desperate. They are not finding any other means to save themselves from collapse than preparations for war. Through greater and greater preparations for war, through actual launching of war, they are hoping to get out of the crisis.

The broad conclusions at which we have arrived are:

(1) The danger of war is extremely serious. Consider this: there was world-wide indignation against the Hydrogen Bomb tests; America has, a few days ago, announced that they are still going to carry on the tests. This underlines the immense danger that faces us.

(2) The recent developments have at the same time shown that, provided the working-class movement headed by the Communist Party, together with all non-party democratic, anti-imperialist and nationalistic elements, build a powerful movement to assert the will of the people, the danger can be minimised, averted, or at least postponed.

When we survey the national situation, we find that the recent developments, particularly the last Delhi Convention against US-Pak Pact and for Lessening of International Tension, and the manner in which the delegation to the Stockholm Conference was selected, show that a new opportunity has opened up to build a very powerful, broad, united movement for peace and for relaxation in international tension. It makes it possible to build a broad United Front of all sections, even large sections of Congressmen—on specific issues, even the leadership of the Congress—in the struggle for peace.

At the same time, can it be said that, because Nehru is today accepting a particular policy, because Nehru is coming out more and more against American impe-

rialism, because Nehru has issued a Joint Communique with Chou, because of all these things, the Indian ruling classes, and the Indian Government, as a whole have taken their place in the camp of peace? You cannot say that. Because we see the stiff opposition that is voiced even to the line adopted by Nehru though this line itself is very much short of a policy of lasting peace, inside the ruling circles.

It is therefore necessary for us to realise that we cannot rest content with the improvement that has recently taken place in India's foreign policy. Of course, we are happy over this change. But we cannot go on with the assumption that this change and improvement will continue. Whether it will continue or not depends on the manner in which we look upon this change and help to develop India's foreign policy further in the same direction.

This is the main point which the Central Committee emphasised in its decisions and Comrade Ajoy emphasised in his article explaining its decisions:

"While recording all this, the Central Committee could not also ignore the weakness that had been revealed. It is obvious that actual mobilisation in the struggle for peace is still far less than what it can and should be. An important reason for this, the Central Committee concluded, is the prevalence of sectarian concepts. There is, in our Party, the tendency to think that when the Nehru Government makes a statement or proposal which, in some measure, helps the cause of peace, the Communist Party has merely to express formal support to it and point out its inadequacies.

"Due to this tendency, the task of building mass unity in action on the stand that has already been taken by the Indian Government is considerably neglected..."

The main point is not whether we formally

support or do not support a certain stand of Nehru. After all, when Nehru and the Government, and the party of the ruling class take a stand in favour of banning the A-Bomb, for example, or in favour of a cease-fire in Indo-China, it is not our formal support to it that carries the movement forward. What is required at the present moment is concerted mass action.

It is not just the Communist Party, the Central Committee, the Provincial Committees or the Party units down to the local unit, issuing statements supporting Nehru's stand that will take the movement forward. It is only if every Provincial Committee, every Party unit down to cell, goes into action and sees that all those who support Nehru's stand come together on a joint platform and express their determination to see that this policy will be carried out, only if what Nehru has said is transformed into something which the mass of the people understand and fight for, that the movement will be advanced.

Now what is happening? The Government has made an official declaration. Nehru has made his personal declaration. That official declaration and that personal declaration by Nehru, have value only so long as this Government, and Nehru personally, stick to this policy. The value of such an official declaration from the Government, such an individual statement by Nehru, arises only out of the fact that they are coming from the Government or Nehru. There is no mass pressure or support behind them. To the extent that Nehru and his Government stick to this policy today, it will be effective. But suppose, tomorrow or the day after, as a result of the immense pressure exerted by all sorts of people, this Government changes its policy and Nehru also changes his stand—then what happens?

It is our task to see that, to the extent that the Government and Nehru adopt a progressive policy, it

is allowed not to remain as mere official policy of the Congress and the Government, but it is made the basis for a very big mass movement. Nehru's stand gives us a very big opportunity to go out to a far wider section of the people. It gives us the opportunity to draw even elements from the Congress into the campaign for a policy of peace which their own Government has adopted. It is this that creates the guarantee that if, after some time, Nehru gives up his present policy, or if the ruling classes succeed in removing him, there will be a movement which will continue to fight for the same policy, independently of Nehru. It is the failure to see this that leads us to a sectarian approach to the peace movement.

Comrade Ajoy Ghosh's above-mentioned article goes on to say:

"In effect, it is a tendency which weakens the struggle for peace, by looking upon the declarations of the Governent as a substitute for mass mobilisation.

"The Central Committee pointed out that this is a wrong tendency. It stressed that while fighting for a consistent policy of peace, while combating the false propaganda about 'two power-blocs striving to destroy each other', a propaganda often indulged in by even Nehru, the Communist Party has to do something more also.

"It has to lay utmost emphasis on the task of building unity in action on the basis of declarations already made by the Government itself. In fact, without such mobilisation and unity in action on the basis of the declarations already made, the task of combating the false propaganda of two power-blocs and of fighting for a consistent peace policy itself cannot be fulfilled."

When I speak of the peace movement, I am not speaking only of the movement for peace which comes within the purview of the Peace Committees, or Peace Council, but a peace movement which includes, to-

gether with these committees, other organisations, groups and individuals.

The Party, therefore, has two main tasks to fulfil:

Firstly, there is the above-mentioned task of building unity in action of the broad masses of people on the basis of the very declarations of policy made by Nehru and his Government.

But this is not the only task that we, as the Communist Party, we as the foremost champions of peace, have to carry out. Together with this, we have to carry out a *second task*, that of combating the false propaganda to the effect that the present-day international tension is the result of "rivalry between two power-blocs." This is a line of propaganda which is carried on by the Congress, by other bourgeois parties, in which Nehru himself participates.

For example, consider the recent letter which Nehru wrote to the Pradesh Congress Committee Presidents. It is a very good letter. It draws attention to the supreme importance of the movement for peace, Chou En-lai—Nehru talks, etc; it comes out very clearly against America. It even says that we have accepted 'aid' from America only because it will be impolite when somebody says he is prepared to give aid and we refuse. All this is very good.

But, along with this, he also goes back to the old theme of two power blocs. It is therefore very necessary that, in the midst of mobilising the people for the policies of the Nehru Government, we do not forget the fact that Nehru's policy is not a policy which will ensure full and complete peace. The ideology which he preaches, as part of his campaign for peace, is an ideology which confuses the people, an ideology which in certain respects, unless we combat it effectively, may ultimately lead to the strengthening of the war bloc.

So it is very necessary that we, independently as

a Party, as well as along with all such parties, groups and elements who believe that it is not a question of "Two Power Blocs", but between the camp of war and the camp of peace—there are such elements outside the Party as well—carry on a sustained and systematic campaign among the people to popularise the genuine peace policy of the Soviet Union, China, etc. These two tasks should simultaneously be carried out.

Now, this is a task which obviously is very seriously neglected in our Party. Of course, there was a time when there were controversies as to whether the Peace movement has any relevance to India. But those days are gone. Now, particularly after the developments in connection with the US-Pak Pact, everybody agrees that India is as much interested in the peace movement as any other country, that India is as much threatened and menaced by the aggressive manoeuvres of the US imperialists. All this has been recognised.

But, has this change been fully reflected in the activities of the Party? Has the importance of this been fully realised by our Party? You cannot say that. Because, if we had realised this, then all these movements, the Delhi Convention on US-Pakistan Military Pact etc., would not have remained as they were, i.e., confined to MPs, figures of the cultural world, intellectuals, scientists, etc. As a matter of fact, the movement is today mostly confined to such a small circle of very big people. *A small circle of very big people—this is both the strength and weakness of the present peace movement in India.*

It is true that in order to draw such elements into the peace movement, our brother Parties in France, Italy, Britain and other countries are making their utmost efforts. But in India, we are extremely weak in the major aspect of the peace movement, which is the participation of the workers, peasants, middle classes, handicraftsmen, small shopkeepers, etc., organised in

their trade unions, kisan sabhas and other mass organisations. *It is the participation of this large mass of small people that makes the peace movement a movement of the people.*

It is this distinction that I want to make—the small circle of very big people were drawn in; but the large circle of small people has not yet been drawn in.

The peace movement is looked upon as the concern of a very few people who are either not interested in, or whom the Party does not consider fit for, trade union, kisan sabha, or Party-building work. There are such arguments also: "Why don't you delegate so-and-so for peace work?" "No, he is useful for TU work."

So, it is assumed on the one hand that intellectuals and middle-class people cannot do trade union or kisan sabha work; on the other hand, it is assumed that the peace movement work can only be done by these people, as if peace is not the concern of workers and peasants!

It is here that you will see the immense difference between the peace movement in our country and the peace movement in France or Italy. The French Party and the Italian Party take the peace movement to every factory, every mine, every farm, everywhere where the worker, the peasant, handicraftsman and small shopkeeper works or lives.

Peace and war is the concern of living humanity and not a question of just the destruction of a few historical monuments, as is sometimes made out. In the writing of intellectuals, you find this: "If the war comes, what about the Taj, Kutub Minar, Red Fort?" All this is true. It may also be true that intellectuals, the historians who have a genuine love for these monuments, will come into the peace movement on such considerations. But for people like us, what is important is humanity—the millions of workers, the millions of peasants. What will happen if a Hydrogen Bomb is

exploded in the Indian Ocean and radio-active ash falls on this country. Millions and millions of common people will die. This is what affects every worker, every peasant and every common man.

Of course, in the course of this, even in the factories, even in the farms, even among workers and peasants, we should certainly mention historical monuments, etc. I am not at all ignoring its importance even for the workers and peasants. But there is something like the living man, the living man is as important as a dead monument, and it is a question of making the millions and millions of people realise that the question of peace and war is a question of life and death. It is, this that is missed. Because this is missed; because the trade-union movement is only concerned with dearness allowance, bonus, compensation for disability, etc.; because it does not concern itself with the major question of life and death which is a part and parcel of the trade-union movement itself that the peace movement does not become a mass movement.

It is the integration of the peace movement with the movement for the improvement of the people's standard of living that has created such heroes and heroines in France as Raymonde Dien. It is this integration of the struggle for peace with the struggle for the people's living standards that has raised such a powerful mass movement in France that its ruling class at last was forced to come to terms in Viet Nam.

It is such an approach that is lacking in our country. That is why it is confined to a few people at the top. Building up of such a powerful mass peace movement in co-ordination with the entire trade-union and peasant movements is thus one of the key tasks we have to fulfil.

3. *In the Struggle for People's Democracy*

I have so far dealt with our task in relation to foreign

policy. Now I have to come to the task with regard to the internal policy of the Government and its consequences on the people.

Certain comrades are asking whether, in the light of recent developments in the Indian Government's foreign policy—its treaty with China on Tibet, Nehru-Chou talks, etc.—the basic characterisation made by the Party with regard to the foreign policy of the Nehru Government has not become out of date, whether it is not time for us to reconsider our whole attitude to the Nehru Government in the light of the progressive peace policy which it is pursuing.

I have very often heard people ask: how is it possible for a government to pursue a policy which is progressive in foreign relations and reactionary in internal matters? So the conclusion is drawn that, since the Nehru Government has adopted a progressive peace policy in foreign relations, it is bound to adopt a progressive internal policy also.

Now, it is necessary for us to be very clear on this point. This was, of course, raised at the Party Congress itself and was rejected. But, still, it is necessary—particularly in view of the most recent developments in foreign policy matters—to be perfectly clear on this.

It is necessary at this stage to clear up one point: we in our semi-colonial, semi-feudal set-up cannot take the same attitude to a "Government of Peace" as our brother Parties in advanced capitalist countries. For them, foreign policy questions—questions of peace or war, questions of armaments—are directly related to questions of internal social advance, questions of less taxation of the people, greater expenditure for social insurance, etc. The question of industrial rehabilitation is also directly linked with reduction in armament expenditure. This is the position in Britain, France, Italy, America and in all those countries which are within the orbit of the Atlantic Treaty, so much so that the very

struggle for the reversal of foreign policy and for the reduction in armament expenditure, is directly and openly linked with the struggle for social reform.

But you will agree that the position is not exactly the same in our country. It is not the burden of armament expenditure, but continuance of semi-colonial, semi-feudal relations of production, which stands in the way of social advance in our country. After all, though we spend 50 per cent of the budget for defence, what is this 50 per cent? Suppose, we demand that the budget allocation for Defence be cut by half. How much will it come to? It will be 75 or 80 crores. Or, suppose even that we all turn non-violent Gandhites and say we do not want any defence at all. It may be 160 crores or 170 crores. It will go nowhere in the direction of social advance.

But, in Britain, suppose the armament expenditure is cut by half, even then, that is a very big amount like 700 or 800 million pounds. The question of reducing armament budget in Britain therefore is directly linked, on the one hand, with the reversal of foreign policy, and on the other, with the adoption of a progressive internal policy.

In India, it is a moot question whether Defence expenditure can be cut. Even suppose it can, there is a limit to it. No modern State can go without defence, particularly under circumstances in which the American imperialists are doing all they can by way of aggression. In these conditions, there is a limit to reduction of armament expenditure. That being so, a cut in our Defence Budget is not so directly linked with our internal policy. What is directly linked with internal policy are such things as rent reduction, tax reduction, recasting the whole structure of taxation in order to put greater burdens on the rich and to give relief to the poor.

There is a greater amount of separation in India

than in France, Italy, etc., between questions of foreign policy and questions of home policy. It is possible, to a limited extent, for a government to be less linked with the war bloc in relation to foreign policy, but, at the same time, be totally reactionary in relation to home policy. It is not necessary for one to be progressive and democratic in relation to home policy, as a condition for him to adopt a policy of peace or neutrality in foreign policy.

We should now raise the question: what is the reality? To the comrades who argue how it is possible for Nehru to be progressive in foreign policy and reactionary in home policy, my answer is: even if you do not know how it is possible, you must admit that that is the reality. On the one hand Nehru issues a joint statement with Chou, which, in any case, you cannot call 'reactionary'; on the other hand, he pursues a policy of rationalisation in industry, helping landlords in eviction, rent increases, etc., in relation to land policy, putting greater burdens on shopkeepers, peasants, handicraftsmen and poor people; putting all militant trade union and kisan sabha workers in jail wherever there is any struggle. You cannot call it a 'progressive' policy, by any stretch of imagination. These are the facts before your own eyes. Why then argue whether it is possible or not?

Now, we shall also see whether it is possible or not. Yes, it is possible. After all, a class, which is ruling a State, is primarily interested in one thing: it wants to safeguard its State Power. It should maintain its power somehow or other. Now, this maintenance of its power at any cost has obviously two sides:

(1) Maintenance of its power as against the majority of the exploited and oppressed people; this is its home policy;

(2) maintenance of power in relation to foreign

States; this is its foreign policy.

We should see that, at the present moment, two things are happening.

One the one hand, the Indian people are more and more coming into action, not only in order to gain certain partial concessions, but in order to change the whole character of the State. This is slowly developing and this is the movement for replacement of the present Congress Government by a Government of Democratic Unity. The ruling class wants to save itself from this.

On the other hand, the way in which American imperialism through the United Nations has been manoeuvring against India, using Pakistan, and certain elements in India itself, has become a threat to the Indian nation. ..

As between these two threats — the threat from their own people and the threat from outside — the ruling circles or rather the various sections among them, are shifting from position to position. Sometimes the whole ruling class and sometimes certain sections, think that since the common people are coming into action against their exploiters, since this growing people's movement is threatening the State apparatus, everything else should be subordinated to the task of the crushing this people's movement. That being so, the whole ruling class on certain occasions, and certain sections at all times, go in for collaboration with British or American imperialism, or both. But there are certain sections which at certain times think that it is not the growing people's movement that is threatening their existence so much as the threat from outside.

In these circumstances, all sorts of shifts from position to position are taking place and will continue in future to take place. We should be prepared for

unexpected changes in the position taken up by individuals and groups in the camp of the ruling classes. But all these are changes which do not alter the basic reality that the ruling classes are concerned with the problem of State Power.

Our ruling classes are, in short, determined to maintain their State Power at all costs. You cannot therefore determine your attitude to them and the Government in the light only of certain aspects of its foreign policy. Your attitude has to be determined in the light of its internal policy, in the light of the policy it pursues towards the working class, towards the peasantry and other toiling sections of the people.

Looking at the whole thing in this light, what do we find today?

We find that this is a Government which is unleashing a terrific offensive against the common people. This has to be very clearly seen. The concrete forms of this offensive have been described in the Political Resolution adopted at Madurai and in the Central Committee's decisions of April. None of these things have changed as a result of the recent developments in the foreign policy of the Nehru Government.

As Comrade Ajoy Ghosh's article and other Party documents point out, the recent developments have shown that, in relation to internal policy, the present Congress Government is resorting to all sorts of manoeuvres. As a matter of fact, the conclusion which the Central Committee, at its recent meeting, arrived at was that, the Congress being faced with an ever-growing economic and political crisis, is doing its best to consolidate all forces of reaction under its own leadership. This is what was seen in the Travancore-Cochin and PEPSU elections, as well as in Rajasthan where the jagirdars have joined the Congress.

Moreover, when the Congress found that at least in one State—in the State of Travancore-Cochin—even

such a consolidation of reactionary forces could not save it, it threw into the fray its second reserve, the Praja-Socialist Party. Now the PSP has been claiming, and the Congress has been conceding, that the PSP is the major party of Opposition and that, if at all the Congress is to be replaced by any other party, it should be by the PSP. But in Travancore-Cochin, the Congress itself was anxious to see that the PSP did not remain a party of the Opposition but formed the Government. Why? Because that is the only way in which in Travancore-Cochin, it could avert the danger—which according to them is the worst danger to society—of a Government in which the Communists will share power.

Seeing both these aspects of the Nehru Government's policy, its foreign aspects and its internal aspects, it becomes obvious that it is the task of our Party not to get diverted from its path of consistent struggle for peace, and also its struggle in defence of every single interest of the common people. As I mentioned before, the struggle for peace and the struggle for the improvement in the living and working conditions of the people are two parts of the same struggle for People's Democracy.

It is because this fact is realised clearly by our brother Parties in France and Italy, that they have have been able to develop such a colossal movement in their countries. They have taken the struggle for peace to every factory, farm and village, every corner where the working people live. At the same time, they have also taken up the struggle for improving wages, working conditions, etc., in every factory and and every farm. This is the way in which they have integrated the struggle for peace and the struggle for improved living conditions of the people and this is the secret of their success.

We also can integrate the two. But not in the

same way as they are doing. This is what we have to realise. Take the slogans of the peace movement—not in the same form as in France or Italy—but in the light of our own conditions to every factory, farm and plantation.

The basic peace slogan for Asia is not the same as the basic peace slogan for Europe. In Europe, the basic peace slogans are: "Away with EDC", "Away with NATO", "Cut down armament costs and spend those amounts for social reform", etc. For Asia, "Away with colonialism", "Foreign troops, Quit Asia", "Development of economy", etc. are the basic peace slogans. That is why within the peace movement itself, there is more and more emphasis on Asian solidarity. This, together with our anti-imperialism and the urge of our people for the development of our economy, links up the peace movement with the movement for improvement in the living and working conditions of the people.

That being so, when we develop such a movement, what is our attitude towards the Government? Our attitude towards the Government is determined by concrete issues and developments. For example, on issues like China's admission to the UN, cease-fire in Indo-China, etc. we support the Government. Of course, we do not content ourselves with supporting the Government, but we emphasise on mobilising the people in support of the policy which the Government is pursuing.

Then on issues like rationalisation, evictions, taxation, we oppose the Government.

Then, what is our basic attitude to the Government? It is one of opposition—opposition in the sense that we tell the people that there is no salvation for them unless and until this Government is replaced by a Government of Democratic Unity. This is the basic stand that we take.

This does not mean that, just because we stand for the replacement of this Government by a Government of Democratic Unity, we oppose everything that this Government does—good, bad or indifferent. Our basic stand is certainly opposition, certainly one of seeking to replace this Government by a Government of Democratic Unity. But, if this very Government takes a correct stand on certain issues, even on issues of internal policy, we will support it; we have not taken any pledge that whatever the Government does on foreign policy we support, or whatever it does on internal policy we oppose. Even in foreign policy, if the Government takes an incorrect stand we shall come out against it and mobilise the people against it. On the other hand, suppose on a particular issue, whether through the pressure of democratic forces or because of other considerations the Government does something good, we will not oppose them. But our basic stand of opposition to it, seeking to replace it, is independent of our stand on particular issues.

4. *Government of Democratic Unity*

Now, I will deal with the question of "Government of Democratic Unity". On this question there has been some controversy for some time. That controversy was reflected in the Party Congress as well.

Here again, I want to draw your attention to the fact that the slogan of the Government of Democratic Unity is a slogan of action on the basis of which we seek to mobilise the entire people in struggle. What does it mean? It means that the political conditions in the country are such that the giving of such a slogan is mature; it is a realistic slogan because it sums up all the desires and all the aspirations of the majority of the common people today.

It may be that the majority of the common people are not today able to see the full implications of this slogan. It may be that this slogan has not yet become a conscious, well-understood slogan of the majority of the people. But this slogan of the Government of Democratic Unity expresses all the desires, all the aspirations of those millions of people who are more and more coming out in action against particular policies of the Government, against the misdeeds of individual Ministers, against particular instances of corruption, nepotism and all such things.

Now we know that during the last three or four years there have been innumerable examples of mass struggles. Many of these struggles were partial struggles waged for the realisation of certain partial demands. But you cannot dismiss these struggles as just partial struggles. These partial struggles for realisation partial demands are inseparably linked with the general discontent against the Congress Government as such.

You know that, barring probably very exceptional individuals like Nehru, every Congress Minister, every Congress MLA and every Congress leader is today the target of the intense anger of the common people who curse them in the trains, in buses, in the shops, in the market places, and wherever the common people gather. It is this that is reflected during times of elections; not only in the General Elections of 1951-52 but in the innumerable local elections. Areas which were considered to be Congress strongholds even in the General Elections were turned upside down during the Panchayat Board and Municipal Elections. What is this due to? To the fact that, though very imperfectly, though very slowly, the people are beginning to realise that this Government should be replaced.

This we see at the time of such political actions of the people as elections. We also see it at the time of such actions as, say, solidarity actions in support of

tramway workers in Calcutta, or the amount of sympathetic support which the students of Uttar Pradesh received at the time of their strike struggle. In all these things, we see that the partial struggles of various sections of the people for the realisation of partial demands are linked with the general desire of the common people for the replacement of this Government. That is why the replacement of the Congress Government by a Government of Democratic Unity has become a mature slogan, a realistic slogan.

But at the same time let us not forget the fact that a slogan which has become realistic need not necessarily be a slogan which can tomorrow be translated into practice everywhere.

Beause, as you know a gap very often appears between the objective factor and the subjective factor. If the objective factor alone were taken into account, India was, in fact, mature for a People's Democratic Revolution—I do not know since when—at least in the immediate post-first-world-war years. But no revolution takes place by objective factors alone.

There is something called the subjective factor.

What is the subjective factor? The subjective factor is the mass organisations of the working class, peasantry and other common people; the unity of the working class in its own class and with the peasantry; the leadership of the Communist Party within the working class movement, within the peasant movement; above all the unity, organisational strength and ideological maturity of the Communist Party itself.

The Government of Democratic Unity will not be formed in India unless these conditions are satisfied, when only this becomes a slogan for immediate action. How it will be realised, what are the forces against which we have to fight, how that fight will have to be carried on—these are questions which we cannot now enter into. But we have to realise that the Gov-

ernment of Democratic Unity cannot be realised by electioneering and manoeuvring in relation to electioneering alone.

Let us not deceive ourselves with the idea: we come to agreement with certain Left parties or certain non-Left parties of the opposition in order to form a Democratic Front; through this Front we defeat the Congress at the polls; following it, we form a Government of Democratic Unity; once such a Government of Democratic Unity is formed in one State, that can be followed by similar formation in other States and in this way the whole country can be covered. All this is, of course, possible. For, the economic and political crisis is leading the country along this path, the path of formation of a Government of Democratic Unity, provided, however, that the subjective factor of organisation simultaneously develops. I do not know in which State and when—but anywhere, at any time, it may be possible that the present Government is replaced by a Government of Democratic Unity.

Such is the essence of the analysis made in the Political Resolution adopted by the Party Congress. That is why the Political Resolution says that all the struggles that are today breaking out are to be directed towards this. The formation of a Government of Democratic Unity is, therefore, a question of struggle—the present struggle in order to form it, the struggle in order to defend it, once it is formed—it is this process that makes the Government of Democratic Unity realisable.

Lecture II

WHAT IS ORGANISATION?

I HAVE tried to emphasise the fact that the whole future of the democratic movement and the Party, the whole future of the realisation of the basic slogan of formation of a Government of Democratic Unity, depends on organisation.

Now the question will naturally arise: What exactly is this organisation? When you speak of this organisation, what exactly do you mean—Party organisation, United Front organisation or the mass organisation? If mass organisations, what type of mass organisations and of which class? If the Party, what is the pattern of that Party? If United Front, is that to have the character of a political party and what is its organisational form? All these questions naturally arise and it is these questions that we have to take up now.

1. *Bourgeois Conception of Organisation*

But before we take up these questions in detail, we have to clear up one point—we have a basic understanding regarding organisation which we have inherited from the bourgeois-national movement. This is the point which I would like to emphasise to begin with. This understanding of the pattern of organisation—a multi-class political party—has nothing to do with Communist organisation.

In connection with this, I would draw your attention to Comrade Ajoy Ghosh's article on *Proletarian Leadership and the Democratic Movement*. On pages 3, 4 and 5 of the article, he has analysed the features of of the bourgeois-led national movement. He gives seven features of this national movement, to which he later on contrasts the features that a revolutionary movement must have. This is a basic generalisation which we have made after a good deal of discussion in the Polit Bureau. I have no time to explain all the points that have been made there. But I would just read to you the second distinguishing feature:

> "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 country and of the workers in the towns—that constituted the most characteristic feature of the movement, but the activity of the petty bourgeoisie."

This was one of the distinguishing features of the bourgeois-led national movement. I want to point out to you that, though it has not been mentioned in the article, this distinguishing feature of the bourgeois-led national movement has its own organisational implications.

If you are leading a movement, which though it includes all classes including the workers and peasants, is essentially a movement of which the leadership consists of the bourgeoisie and the most active elements of the petty bourgeoisie, then that movement will have

its own pattern of organisation. As a matter of fact, it is this feature—though not in this particular form—that has always been the most characteristic feature of the Social Democratic movement of the Second International.

The Communist International in its thesis on organisation has laid down that the main task of the growing Communist movement is to make a sharp break with the organisational pattern of Social Democracy. This is something which we have to learn on the basis of our own experience and the history of our national movement led by the bourgeoisie.

What is our experience? The bourgeoisie could lead a national movement embracing in its fold all classes, including the workers and peasants, but which nevertheless remained essentially a bourgeois organisation—an organisation whose leadership consisted of the bourgeoisie and whose most active elements consisted of the petty bourgeoisie.

This was made possible because of a certain pattern of organisation.

For launching the non-co-operation and civil disobedience movement, a particular type of national organisation was built up, a multi-class political organisation more or less on the basis of bureaucratic functioning from the top. This was the pattern of organisation which Gandhi built up beginning with the non-co-operation days. It was a multi-class political organisation which had nothing to do with independent class organisations. And this organisation was guided and led on the basis of bureaucratic, if not individual, guidance from above.

And that is why, further on, in the above article, another distinguishing feature of the bourgeois-led national movement has been noted as:

"The fourth distinguishing feature of the move-

ment 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."

This again arises out of the particular pattern of organisation that they built up.

Now this pattern of organisation has not remained exactly what it was when first evolved. There was a certain difference in policy between the epoch of the emergence of Gandhi and the epoch of the emergence of Nehru, which led to a corresponding difference in the pattern of organisation as well. What is this difference?

The main difference is that, in the epoch of the emergence of Gandhi the pattern of organisation was that of a multi-class political party having nothing to do with independent class organisations. In the period of the emergence of Nehru, however, this was modified. Independent class organisations did arise in the Nineteen-Twenties and Thirties; they did become part of the national movement. There was, therefore, a corresponding adjustment in the pattern of organisation as well. This was what Nehru attempted to do with his organisational slogan of "collective affiliation". Even though this was not accepted, relations of co-operation were established between the Congress on the one hand and trade unions, kisan sabhas and such other mass organisations on the other which became part and parcel of the bourgeois-led national movement.

As a matter of fact, the Indian National Congre-

itself began to set up its own trade union, kisan and other departments. It was thus that in the evolution of the movement, the original idea of multi-class political organisation got modified to the extent that this organisation began to have "its own" trade union organisation, kisan organisation, etc. Or, as they themselves say, the political party "controls" the mass organisations. It is characteristic that they use the term "control". That very term indicates their attitude to the mass organisations. These mass organisations have to be "controlled" by the Congress.

This is an idea which is no longer confined to the Congress alone. It has gone so far that every political party in our country considers it necessary to have its own trade unions, kisan sabhas and other mass organisations. This same thing was later on attempted by the Muslim League, then by the Socialist Party. This has become part and parcel of the bourgeois-nationalist approach to the whole question of organisation.

This you notice inside the People's Democratic movement as well. Go through the correspondence which passed between Dr. Jaisoorya and Govindlal Shroff on the one hand and our Central Committee on the other. One of the points made by them was that the People's Democratic Front should have its own trade unions and kisan sabhas. They say that, just as the Congress has its INTUC and the PSP its HMS, so the PDF should have "its own" trade union and kisan organisations. We rejected it on the ground that it is not for a political party to build up "its own" mass organisations. Every political party has a right to work in the organisation, but no political party has a right to consider any mass organisation as "its own". Mass organisations are organisations of the masses themselves. Of course, a political party can lead these mass organisations; but "leading" is a process, the process

of so helping them, serving them, earning their confidence that they voluntarily and spontaneously look up to you for leadership.

Now the traces of this heritage of the bourgeois-national movement can naturally be found inside our Party as well. The main point that is to be seen is that, here is a question of the ideological understanding of the popular movement. Even supposing that traces are not visible inside our Party, it becomes the task of the Party to carry on a systematic ideological struggle against this particular approach which is manifesting itself, at least, in all other political groups, including our allies in the democratic movement. That is why it is necessary for us to study and re-study a number of formulations made by Stalin, with regard to mass organisations and the leading role of the Party.

2. *Proletarian Conception*

Comrade Stalin in his *Foundations of Leninism* makes the classical formulation on the question: "The Party is the highest form of class organisation of the proletariat."

He says that, besides the Party, the proletariat has a number of other organisations without which it cannot properly wage the struggle against capital: trade unions, co-operative societies, factory organisations, parliamentary groups, non-Party women's associations, the Press, cultural and educational organisations, youth leagues, revolutionary fighting organisations (in times of open revolutionary action), Soviets of Deputies as the form of State organisation (if the proletariat is in power), etc. All these, says Comrade Stalin are organisations created by the proletariat in the course of its struggle. He goes on:

"The overwhelming majority of these organisations are non-Party and only some of them adhere directly to the Party, or represent its offshoots. All these organisations, under certain conditions, are absolutely necessary for the working class, for without them it would be impossible to consolidate the class positions of the proletariat in the diverse spheres of struggle; for without them it would be impossible to steel the proletariat as the force whose mission it is to replace the bourgeois order by the socialist order. But how can single leadership be exercised with such an abundance of organisations? What guarantee is there that this multiplicity of organisations will not lead to divergency in leadership? It might be argued that each of these organisations carries on its work in its own special field, and that therefore these organisations cannot hinder one another. This, of course, is true. But it is also true that all these organisations should work in one direction for they serve *one* class, the class of the proletarians. The question then arises: who is to determine the line, the general direction, along which the work of all these organisations is to be conducted? Where is the central organisation which is not only able, because it has the necessary experience, to work out such a general line, but, in addition, is in a position, because it has sufficient prestige, to induce all these organisations to carry out this line, so as to attain unity of leadership and to preclude the possibility of working at cross purposes?

"This organisation is the Party of the proletariat." (*Problems of Leninism*, p. 103)

It is not as if there is the multi-class political party which, in order to get a mass basis for itself, organises "its own" trade unions, "its own" kisan sabhas, "its own" other mass organisations. It is a question that the working class, in the process of its struggle, creates various organisations—trade unions, kisan sabhas, co-

operative societies, cultural, educational and youth organisations; it is the class which creates them in the process of its struggle. These various organisations are the particular forms through which the class asserts itself. It is through them that the working class becomes a class for itself, and not a class for others.

Each of these organisations, of course, has different functions. But each of these organisations has to be directed towards one goal because all of them serve the same class. This job of directing them is done by the Party. But how does the Party do that? Does the Party do it by bureaucratically "controlling" these organisations? Does the Party do it just in the same way that the Congress does in relation to the INTUC? No. The Party does it because it embodies in itself all that is best, all that is wisest, the most militant and the most experienced in the class. The Party consists of the most intelligent, the most resourceful and the most militant elements in the class. It draws towards itself—even draws into itself—all these elements. That is what makes it capable of leading all these organisations to the one goal.

Now it is this understanding which we should cultivate among ourselves, which we should popularise among the masses. Let us not keep this understanding to ourselves; let us put this to the masses themselves. The question of strengthening the Party, the question of bringing the best elements into the Party, is not a question which concerns the Party alone. Comrade Stalin at another place explains how the Lenin enrolment took place in the Soviet Union, how workers in the factories came together, discussed who were the best elements in their factory and sent their lists to the Party saying that they were the best in their factories and asking them to be enrolled. So, we have to popularise all these basic ideas with regard to mass

organisations, with regard to the Party, with regard to the relation between them among the broad masses.

We have to see that these mass organisations are developed as organisations which function democratically, which express the desires, feelings and demands of the masses themselves and fight for what the masses themselves desire. These organisations will be led by the Party only to the extent to which the Party members in a particular factory, or in particular sectors of industry or sectors of life, are able to feel the pulse of the masses and, in the light of that, give appropriate slogans. It is in this way that the leadership of the Party in the working class and the leadership of the working class among the rest of the toiling sections, has to be established.

Now, in connection with this, I should also refer to one paragraph in Dimitrov's Report on how sectarianism expresses itself in this connection. He says:

"Self-satisfied sectarianism *will not and cannot* understand that the leadership of the working class by the Communist Party does not come of itself. The leading role of the Communist Party in the struggles of the working class must be won. For this purpose, it is necessary not to rant about the leading role of the Communists, but *to merit and win the confidence of the working masses* by everyday mass work and correct policy. This will only be possible if we, Communists, in our political work seriously take into account the actual level of the class consciousness of the masses, the degree to which they have become revolutionised, if we soberly appraise the concrete situation, not on the basis of our wishes but on the basis of the actual state of affairs. Patiently, step by step, we must make it easier for the broad masses to come over to the positions of Communism. We ought never to forget the words of Lenin, who warns as strongly as possible:

'....this is the whole point—we must not regard that which is obsolete for us as obsolete for the class, as obsolete for the masses.'" (*The United Front*, pp. 84-85. International Publishers)

Now, this is the basic point that we have to bear in mind in relation to the mass organisations and the leading role which the Party has to exercise in relation to them. This means, as a matter of fact, a sharp determined break with all the traces of that understanding which we may have inherited from the bourgeois-led national movement—the relics of the understanding, according to which the masses, their organisations, have to be "controlled" from above by a multi-class political party.

Of course, we will not put all this down in this crude form. But it may still lurk behind our understanding and action. For example, we will not say that mass organisations have to be "controlled", we may say that "the leading role of the Communist Party should assert itself." But if the point which has been made by Dimitrov in his speech is forgotten, then this phrase regarding the "leading role of the Party" itself will become another version of the same old idea of the political party "controlling" the mass organisations.

Similarly, we may not say that the mass organisations have to be "controlled" by a "multi-class" political party—we certainly will not, because we claim that ours is a Party of the proletariat—but suppose our own Party functions on the basis of bureaucratic control from the top; suppose our own Party does not pay attention to the task of enrolling the best among the workers and peasants into the Party, educating them, seeing that they are able to actively participate in the evolution of the policy of the Party, in the carrying out of the policy of the Party; then, in spite of our assertion that our Party is the party of the proletariat, in

actual fact it will be a Party which does not deserve its title.

So, it is very much necessary for us to pay attention not to certain formulas, not to certain phrases which have been used by Lenin, Stalin or Dimitrov, but to take their essence and carry that out in practice.

What is its essence? It is this. We have to pay our utmost attention to the task of seeing to it that the working masses in every factory, in every mine, in every farm or plantation, in every other place of work, in every chawl, in every village—in short, in all those places where the working people work or live—are brought into their own organisations. We have to see to it that they are helped to carry on their own day-to-day struggles and they are helped, in the process of these struggles, to throw up their own organisation of struggle.

But can this be done by merely helping them in their struggles and helping them in forming their organisations? No. Together with this, we have to see that the best and most active among them are given the cultural and ideological equipment with which they will be able to lead their colleagues in their places of work, or in their places of residence. This means that the best and most active from among them have to be educated in Marxism-Leninism, brought into the Party, and given day-to-day practical education, as a result of which they will be able to give practical everyday help and leadership to the masses.

Now, it is the totality of all these that is called organisation. Organisation is the aggregate of the various forms in which the working class or its allies assert themselves in day-to-day action; the Communist Party directs all these various forms of action and various forms of organisation towards one goal, because it is itself the result and the highest form of the organisation of the working class.

It is obvious that, if the Party is able to do this, it should have not only a fundamental philosophy and a fundamental outlook on world problems, not only a fundamental approach to economic and political questions, but it should also have a basic political direction, a basic political perspective, a basic aim and goal to which all these movements are to be guided. That goal, in the present stage, we have laid down as the formation of the Government of Democratic Unity.

3. *Central Political Slogan & Organisation*

After I explained the slogan of Government of Democratic Unity yesterday, some comrades asked me: "You say that the whole thing depends on the subjective factor; you say that the objective factors which make the formation of a Government of Democratic Unity possible will not themselves lead to the formation of a Government of Democratic Unity unless and until the subjective factor also develops. You know that these subjective factors are today absent; then, how do you say that the slogan of the formation of a Government of Democratic Unity is a realistic slogan today? Are you not, in saying this, putting the objective factors in isolation from the subjective factor? Are you not missing the significance of the subjective factor?"

Now, in this question, there seems to be an understanding as if the subjective factor will arise on its own, or as if this subjective factor of organisation, its development, has nothing to do with the objective factor and the basic slogan arising out of it. The idea seems to me to be that the situation is now mature only for struggles against rationalisation, against eviction and struggles to win various partial demands; the struggle for the formation of a Government of Democratic Unity is immature because organisation is absent.

But how is this organisation to be created? How does the organisation emerge? Do not forget that no mass organisation, at no stage in the history of our national movement, or in the history of the national and working class movements of other countries, has developed into a political force, if it is based only on partial demands. No working-class movement, no democratic movement, can arise unless it has some definite political objective, it can arise only on the basis of a political objective—it may be Swaraj, it may be the replacement of the Congress Government by a Government of Democratic Unity or it may be the establishment of Socialism.

But if these mass organisations are to develop, if they are to generate that political power which alone guarantees the replacement of this particular Government, if they are to generate this power themselves, we should see to it that a link in the chain of development of the whole movement is selected and on the basis of that the entire people are educated. As a matter of fact, in the Political Resolution itself, we had stated that one of the basic tasks of the Party in relation to the working class movement is to carry on mass scale political campaign to make the working class conscious of its political role.

How do you make the class politically conscious of its role? Is it by just repeating those points which have been written in the CPSU (B) Chapter I regarding the basic characteristics of the working class due to which it plays its leading role? Is it by showing that the working class alone would build Socialism? No. The leadership of the working class today asserts itself in relation to the present-day political situation; the present-day political situation is related to the immediate political objective which is the replacement of the Congress Government, as well as to struggle for the realisation of day-to-day demands—economic, poli-

tical, cultural, etc. Once we go into the working class and the peasantry and help them to link up their day-to-day struggles with the political objective (the formation of a Government of Democratic Unity), then the whole situation will be altered.

The basic weakness of the present-day situation is that, while working-class and peasant movements are mostly confined to the immediate partial struggles, the basic political struggles are mostly confined to the field of elections and other manoeuvres.

Big mass struggles of workers and peasants are breaking out on immediate demands and for the realisation of concessions. Political campaign is carried on, political struggles are breaking out, but these are mostly confined to a narrow section of the people except in times of elections. The political struggles are mostly confined to the elections, so much so that the linking up of the struggles for immediate demands with the main political slogan and the campaign for this main political slogan is lacking and the subjective factor itself is weak.

This weakness of the mass movement cannot be overcome by saying that the subjective factor is weak and so we cannot give the slogan. It can be overcome by making the working class and peasant millions conscious of their role in the political struggle, conscious of the fact that it is they who can make the struggle for a Government of Democratic Unity successful. It is only in this way that the subjective factor can be created.

All this makes it necessary for us to raise and answer questions mainly of two categories:

Firstly, questions which relate to the building up of mass organisations and leading of mass struggles.

Secondly, questions relating to the building up of the Party.

We will first take the questions of the first category and then pass on to the other.

Now, the questions of the first category are rather easy to deal with because they have been partly covered in separate lectures on the peasant question and on the trade-union question. But they have been confined only to the trade-union and the peasant questions. Now we have to consider the mass movements and mass organisations as a whole.

4. *Various Types of Mass Organisations*

What exactly are the tasks of the mass organisations? For example, we always emphasise the all-important role of trade-union and kisan organisations as the basic forms of mass organisation, as the organisations of the basic masses to which every other activity should be subordinated. Does this mean that we are not to have any other mass organisation? By no means! All the organisations that we have today are organisations which we should have and which we should further strengthen. There is no question of going back on it. These organisations are to be continued. For example, we have students' organisations, youth organisations, women's organisations, the Progressive Writers' Association, The Indian People's Theatre Association—all these organisations are there. They are functioning. They are necessary and are helpful for the development of the democratic movement as a whole.

It is not to under-rate the significance of the other organisations that we are emphasing the supreme importance of the trade unions and kisan sabhas. It was just in order to point out that there is something special about these two forms of organisations.

What exactly is the relation between these two types of mass organisations—class organisations and

the special role that they have to play—with the other organisations?

All the mass organisations can be classified into more or less the following categories:

(a) *Class Organisations*

Firstly, there are the *trade-union, kisan and agricultural labourers' organisations*. In this you can also include some organisations which are very often not included in the trade-union organisations, but which are today part of the trade-union movement. For example, in all the foreign countries, we see that such organisations as organisations of the teachers, government employees and so on are part of the trade-union movement. As a matter of fact, the WFTU does not call the teachers by the name "teachers" but as "educational workers." There is a distinct Educational Workers' International of the WFTU.

Similarly we have in our country, in several provinces, organisations like the Non-Gazetted Officers' Associations. Do you know that in Britain, France and other countries civil servants' associations are organisations affiliated to the Trades Union Congress? All this I am just mentioning in passing only in order to stress the significance of organisations of people, who are organised on the basis of their work and on the basis of struggle for the improvement of their living and working conditions. You need not strictly classify them into trade unions. That is not the point before us now. The point is that the working people who are engaged in production and or those who sell their labour power—either physical labour power or mental labour power—and their mass organisations are included in this first type. They are the elementary form of organisation in which those who are engaged in production, those who

sell their labour power to others or who employ themselves are included.

Then come certain other types of organisations which are not exactly class organisations; which, as a matter of fact, are multi-class organisations. They have an important role to play in mobilising millions of people in the democratic movement and in the development of the working-class and the peasant movement itself. In this category, I include women's organisations, students' organisations and youth organisations. You cannot put these organisations on the same level as the trade unions and kisan sabhas for the simple reason that the trade unions and kisan sabhas are organisations of people who are engaged or in some way connected with the process of production, whose problems are related to struggle for better relations of production; you cannot say this either with regard to the students', youth or women's organisations. They are multi-class organisations.

(b) *Women's Organisations*

In the women's organisation, there will come peasant women, petty bourgeois women, women from the bourgeois sections and even a section of the enlightened feudal women. What is the basis on which they come? Women as women in the existing semi-feudal and semi-colonial social order have certain specific problems of their own, and, in fact, certain additional difficulties. If a wage earner is undergoing difficulties and the hardships of wage slavery, the working-class woman suffers not only the sufferings of wage-slavery but also from the existing reactionary and outmoded system of relation between man and woman. It is on this basis that even women belonging to non-toiling sections come into the women's movement. That being so, you cannot look upon the women's movement and women's organisations

as a movement and organisations of the working class or the peasantry.

You cannot, however, jump to the other conclusion —the conclusion that women's problems which affect all other classes of women—have nothing special so far as women from the working class and peasantry are concerned. It is totally wrong to think in this manner. Women coming from the working class and peasantry—in the matter of the antiquated system of relation between man and woman—suffer these rigours and difficulties in a form far worse than the women coming from the bourgeois or feudal sections. That being so, it is the women belonging to the working class and peasantry who are far more interested in building a real democratic women's movement.

Not only that. Even male workers and peasants should know that it is in their interest to develop the democratic women's movement. It is necessary to state this, because male workers or male peasants, just because they are males, may have a reaction against the women's movement. As a matter of fact, even within the framework of wage slavery or semi-feudal relations, the male worker or peasant thinks that he must subject the woman to all sorts of humiliations. In this way, he transfers part of his humiliation and exploitation at the hands of his boss to his wife or sister or mother. In the working-class or peasant family, the mother, sister and daughter, go through this double slavery. Actually the male worker or male peasant who is backward, may think that he is the master in his house. That being so, he may react violently against the women's movement.

The male worker and peasant should be made to realise that such questions as, say for example, the struggle for equal pay for equal work, the struggle for hospital and other facilities, the struggle for maternity leave and maternity allowance—all

these are in the interests as much of the male worker, male peasant, as of the woman worker and woman peasant.

It is, therefore, very, very necessary for us to see that the Party carries on a systematic campaign among male peasants to the effect that the women's movement is not directed against them. It is directed against the existing social order in which women are made to suffer severe difficulties, hardships in the process of which the working class and peasantry—both men and women as a whole—are put to great suffering.

It is also necessary for the Party to ensure that in this democratic movement of women every effort is made to see that all those progressive women belonging to the petty bourgeoisie, bourgeoisie and the enlightened elements of the feudal class are brought in. At the same time, it is for the Party to ensure that the entire working-class and peasant women are brought into this women's movement. Let us not take the term 'democratic women's movement' to mean that the working-class and peasant women are to be excluded from it. Some people take democracy to mean something which is non-working class and non-peasant. Actually, the women's movement will be democratic precisely because, and only to the extent to which, the overwhelming majority of women workers and peasants are brought into it and encouraged to form their own organisations wherever they live. They must be made to participate in the evolution of policy and day-to-day work of these organisations.

It is in this way that one of the biggest lags of the present democratic movement of our country can be overcome. It, therefore, means that the women's movement should not be looked upon as a movement which has nothing to do with the trade-union and kisan movement. It is our job to see that the women's movement

is taken into the factory, mine, plantation, farm, village—wherever there are working women.

(c) *Youth Organisations*

The same thing applies to the youth as well. Youth does not mean only the well-dressed, urban, middle-class youth. Drawing them in, of course, is very important. They have a very vital role to play. But let us not forget that there are hundreds, thousands and millions of youth who are from the working class and the peasantry. They are as much interested in such very good things as sports, films and culture as the middle-class youth.

It is necessary to emphasise that youth are a section of society which is sought to be utilised by all sorts of people. See how the RSS and Jan Sangh are trying to organise the youth. It is something which should be taken note of. As a matter of fact, not only the RSS but all sorts of organisations like the Congress, and even the United States Information Service, are trying to utilise the youth, to set the youth against the democratic movement. Unfortunately, we have not been able to pay much attention to it. In some provinces like Andhra and Bihar something has been done. But it seems that recently that work itself has come to a sort of stagnation. In any case, it is very necessary for us to pay attention to it. The movement need not necessarily be in the form of youth organisations. It may be in the form of clubs, reading rooms, etc. In Calcutta there are many clubs and in the political life of Calcutta these clubs are an institution. They play a significant role in politics, elections, etc.

(d) *Cultural Organisations*

Now we come to a third category, i.e. cultural

organisations—organisations of writers, artistes, etc. They are different, both from the first category, as well as from the second category, because they are not class organisations. Of course, such sections of cultural workers as the film workers may be organised in the film workers' unions. And in that case, they come into the category of trade unions. Barring such cases, there are big sections of cultural workers who will not come in the first category.

Their organisations are not mass organisations either. After all, their number is limited, particularly if they are divided into separate categories as writers, artistes, architects, sculptors, painters and such other professions. The tendency is to divide them further and further. If, for example, you divide the scientists into physicists, chemists and such other categories, their organisation would be very small.

Does this mean that we leave them, we disregard them? Not at all. They form one of the key sectors of the cultural and political life of our country, they should be sought out and won over for the democratic movement, for Marxism-Leninism; this is of supreme importance for the development of the whole democratic movement. We should realise that, just as in the case of women, students, youth, etc. a big struggle is going on between the various political groups to get at them; all the reactionary elements, supported and financed by the USIS, are making a bid to capture these sections.

What exactly is the form in which these cultural workers can be organised? That is a question which it is difficult to go into. The form of this organisation may vary from province to province. The experience that we have gained so far through such organisations as the Indian People's Theatre Association and the Progressive Writers' Association is that organisations of this type on all India-scale cannot function. I per-

sonally had the experience of attending meetings of Party members working in one or two such organisations. The discussions that go on in such organisations are unrealistic. What sense can the writer from Bengal make to the writer who comes from South?

Ours is a multi-national country and the culture of a multi-national country is such that it is utopian to attempt to have an all-India organisations for such a movement. Cultural life, its form and language, are so different from province to province that it is absolutely impossible to have an organisation of this sort on an all-India scale for the purpose.

This, however, does not mean that we do not take up this organisation. It is very important that we pay sufficient attention to the development of culture. It is not just a question of certain middle-class intellectuals. It is of supreme importance for the very development of the working class and peasant movement. I will give one example.

You know that, in Kerala, a play has been written entitled *You Made Me a Communist*. It is a very popular drama. There is one incident in that connection which is very significant. It is a play in which there are a large number of songs. The comrade who sings the main songs is a factory worker from the Punalur Paper Mills. During the last General Elections (1951-52), this boy had come with a request to be allowed to sing a song in one of our election meetings. At that time, our organisers did not know who he was and they refused to give him permission to sing. But somehow, in the end, he managed to sing. After that, he became very popular. And today he is one of the most talented singers in Kerala. Throughout the 200 and odd shows of this play, he has sung his songs which have now been recorded.

This is an instance of the hidden talent in the working class and peasantry. We intellectuals have

a peculiar arrogance towards talents in the working class and peasantry. This is far more true of the so-called cultural workers than of the rest. What we fail to note in all these things is that, the development of the working-class and peasant movement needs the development of the cultural level of the working class and peasant masses. Development of the resources and talents in the working class and peasantry is the fundamental aim of our cultural work. An Communist worker, whether he be a writer, artist or film artiste, should realise that basically, first and foremost, he is a Communist; that means, his work is related, above all, to the working class and peasantry. All his cultural activities should be directed towards this end. *Take culture to the masses and foster and develop the culture of the masses.*

Lecture III.

THE PARTY — WHY STAGNATION?

THE reports which we receive from all the provinces show that there is a certain amount of stagnation in the Party today. At the time of the General Elections, and immediately after the elections, we all thought that the democratic movement was advancing, and together with it the Party was developing. Then we found that it is not developing on the lines we had expected.

In some places at times, there was an upsurge like the UP students' struggle and two to three struggles in Calcutta. When these things happened we felt that the spirit of the General Election period was there. But, once it was gone, we found that this spirit was not coming again. In every place this has become a common feature of the democratic movement and of the Party, as a whole.

Now it is very often asked why this is so. Is it found that something is going wrong somewhere in the Party work, that everything is not going as we had expected, then it is assumed that there is something wrong and that "something wrong" should be found out and corrected. All these processes of thinking come up very often. Now we have had some discussion over this and we came to the conclusion that it is a wrong approach.

It is a wrong approach to try to trace every stagnation at every stage of development, to some mistake

in policy. Because, after all, it is not correct policy alone that will lead to the development of the movement. As a matter of fact, for the movement and for the Party to develop, there should at least be three factors, of which correct policy is only one factor. If you take a one-sided approach and try to trace every growth and every stagnation to correct or incorrect policy, that would be wrong. Because even for a correct policy to yield results, two other things are necessary.

One is the objective factor, the spontaneous upsurge. Now very often it happens that because Lenin in his *What is to be Done?* has come out against reliance on spontaneity, and has laid stress on consciousness and organisation, we in our one-sided way tend to forget that, even for this factor of consciousness and organisation to yield results, there should be spontaneous movement as well.

For example, look at the way Comrade Stalin analyses the October Revolution. He analyses what lay at the basis of the success of the Bolshevik Party. In that he says one of the reasons for the success of the Bolshevik Party was that the Party relied on the spontaneous upsurge which developed between the February and October revolutions. The Bolshevik Party, of course, did not rely on this spontaneous upsurge alone.

Again, read Lenin's letters to the Central Committee, which may even appear somewhat hectic. He says, the moment is now. Delay means death. If you strike you can go forward; if you lose this opportunity, you are lost. The historians of the October Revolution have come to the conclusion that, if the Bolshevik Party had not seized the opportunity to take power then the October Revolution would not have occurred.

This means two things. One, you should very carefully study the spontaneous upsurge and seize that

opportunity which offers itself as a result of the development of objective factors. Any number of examples can be given. For example, Marx and Engels had to make one correction in their writings of 1848-50 with regard to their understanding of the movement in those days; they had at that time failed to take account of the fact that the economic crisis had begun to recede. The revolutionary crisis of 1848 had given a tremendous new opportunity to go forward. But slowly the economic crisis began to recede and the revolutionary political crisis began to slow down. This they could not at that time see.

I am pointing all this out to underline the fact that there is such a thing as the objective situation. But the spontaneous upsurge is not something which stands by itself. Together with it there are the activities of various classes to consciously direct and lead it in the direction which is to their best class interests. For example, in our country, in the period after General Elections, we see there is the spontaneous upsurge moving in one direction, the direction of replacement of the Congress Government; at the same time there is the ruling class trying to arrest this spontaneous upsurge for which they are resorting to all sorts of measures. All these are having some effect on a section of the people, as a result of which you will find that, as we have noted in the Political Resolution, we are witnessing the maturing economic crisis and the *initial stages* of a political crisis. This political crisis itself is not going in a straight line. There are twists and turns. These are results of various factors.

Say for example, there is a fall in the price of food grains which affects the general mass movement in various ways. It has given some relief to certain sections of the people—that is a fact. The urban poor who have to buy food find it to be a great relief, but at the same time this very factor, the fall in the price of food grains,

affects the rural poor adversely. Even the rich peasants are affected in another way. Various factors are working in this way.

Similarly, there is the Government's economic policy; Plans and Projects are being worked out. All these are having their impact on the people. As a result, the spontaneous upsurge itself does not remain in the same form at all times in all places. It has twists and turns. It is true that in the midst of all these turns and twists, through all these turns and twists the general feature of the political crisis does not get relaxed. It is developing. But the tempo of development is not the same. So, we have to take note of the fact that, as a result of these things, the character of the spontaneous upsurge will change.

Let us take one example. During the last General Elections, it was the common feature that we used to have very big meetings attended by fifty-thousand, thirty-thousand, and such large numbers. If you expect that this feature would continue even after the Elections, then you are living in a fool's paradise. It is impossible for the tempo of the mass movement to be kept up after the General Elections, at the same rate as during the Elections.

But suppose, finding that the meetings are attended by less number of people, we come to the conclusion that there is something wrong with our policy and then we start criticism and self-criticism. Then you will go completely off the track. This is seen in the fact that, in spite of this stagnation, the old tempo reappears whenever there is a mass issue to be fought or when there is an election campaign.

Let us, for example, take any province. During the General Elections, there was a tempo. Immediately after the Elections, that tempo suddenly went down. But again, after some time when a Local Board Election or some bye-election came in which there was

direct conflict between the democratic movement on the one hand and the Congress on the other, we saw again the old tempo. This was seen in a number of cases—in the T C State elections, PEPSU elections, in a number of bye-elections, District Board and Municipal elections. In all these campaigns we saw that the tempo rose again. We also find that, on such issues as the tramfare agitation, food agitation, civil liberties movement and the UP students' struggle, the tempo is rising.

We find that on the question of rationalisation, we are able to have very big meetings, united campaigns, etc. But if you expect this same tempo to be maintained with no interruption and with no ups and downs then that would be wrong.

This point I have mentioned in order to point out the fact that it is not just a question of correct policy. For it happens that, even with the most correct policy, the movement does not advance because the spontaneous mass upsurge, the objective factor, is not there.

But as important as this objective factor is the factor of Organisation itself.

2. *Key Importance of Organisation*

We very often find that there is stagnation. But what is this stagnation due to? The major part of the responsibility for this stagnation lies on our own shoulders. That we should realise. Why?

It is a fundamental principle of the Communist Party's policy and organisation that it is not correct policy alone that determines the development of the movement. This is the first point. Secondly, the policy should be such as to enable the Party to take advantage of all that is favourable in the objective situation. Thirdly, having worked out this

correct policy, there should be the proper organisation to see that this correct policy is carried out.

This is a principle which we have to bear in mind when we try to find out the reasons for whatever stagnation there is in the Party. After the 1951 All-India Conference when the new Programme and Policy Statement were adopted, which settled most of the fundamental controversies which had been raging in the Party for over three years, that after that Conference, we all felt that the political line had now become clear. The political differences had now been settled, i.e., the major political differences. But we found that those differences having been settled has not made much difference in the mode of our functioning and in the method of our work. This is a very big factor.

It may be said that, after all, the Programme and Policy decided only the fundamental questions—the character of the Revolution, the class forces, the major slogans—but there were still differences, major differences on the questions of application of this policy on the peasant front, on the trade-union front and on various practical issues of the day. That is correct. It is not denied, of course, that there were differences. But these differences themselves can be settled only if the Party starts functioning in an organised way; differences should be settled in and through the Party.

This is a point, which you will notice, was for the first time made by the Political Bureau in its Resolution of August, 1952. In that Resolution, we had stated that, now that the major political line has been accepted by the entire Party, now that the results of the General Elections have removed all those doubts with regard to the policy of the Party itself, the problem today is one of tackling questions of organisation.

Between the General Elections and the Madura Party Congress the situation was more or less like this.

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The general Programme of the Party had been accepted. The general tactical line had also been accepted.

What is the crux of that tactical line? Rejection of two opposite, and mutually contradictory, tactical lines —one, a line of civil war, insurrection, etc.; and the other, a line of retreat and lie low. One took the stand on the theory that this is a period of upheavals, growing crisis and so ever fresher and fresher victories in struggle for the revolutionary forces. From this came the line of civil war, insurrection, etc. This line was rejected. As against this, there was another line which said that, because of the mistakes committed by the Party and government repression, the Party has lost its base among the people. It has become discredited. So we have to regroup our forces. This is a period of regrouping. This line also was rejected by the October, 1951, Party Conference. The correctness of this new Tactical Line given by the Party Conference was confirmed through the result of the General Elections.

So major questions of policy, approach and tactics have been solved. But still there remain a number of questions on which can arise differences on the application of this line to the peasant movement, working-class movement, student, women's and youth movements, etc. It is not as if inner-Party struggle has ceased to be a necessity for the development of the Party. There is no such situation at any time in the history of the Party. Struggle between the conflicting ideas and views is the eternal law of the development of the Party. But how is this process to be carried on?

This has to be carried on in such a way that it strengthens the Party. It is only through Party forms, observing strict Party discipline, that inner Party struggles have to be carried on against wrong tendencies and lines.

We have been groping; as a result of all these

discussions, we have come to the conclusion that, now that the major questions of policy, strategy and tactics have been settled, a time has come to take up seriously the question of organisation, and as Com. Ajoy Ghosh stated in his article *Some of our main weaknesses*, the question of organisation is to be taken as an independent task—not, of course, in the sense of being unrelated to other tasks but *in the sense that it is a task which does not get fulfilled automatically through the fulfilment of other tasks alone*. The task of building the Party does not automatically get fulfilled by the fulfilment of the task of building the trade unions, kisan sabhas and other mass organisations and by carrying on mass political campaigns. For that, it is very necessary to look upon the task of building the Party as a separate task.

An idea has come into our Party that inner-Party struggle is conducted individually by individual Party members. This is wrong. The very process of inner-Party struggle is a process which is carried on within the Party. The Party is not just a collection of individuals. For, after all, the Party is the sum and system of Party organisations. From the Central Committee and Polit Bureau down to the lowest cell, the Party at every level means a particular Party unit, a collective organisation functioning and developing through inner-Party struggle. This is the essence of the Party. This is why Comrade Stalin calls the Party a sum and system of organisations. The battle of ideas, the struggle by every individual Party member for a correct Party line, should therefore be carried on through the Party units. Individual members of the Party through their units; every unit through their higher and lower units—that is what is meant by the statement that the Party is a sum and system of organisations.

That is why we in our resolution had stated that

the very task of carrying on inner-Party struggle and the process of criticism and self-criticism is a process which has to be carried on through the Party organisation.

I will read out to you some extracts from the Organisation Resolution of the Central Committee of March, 1953:

"Some comrades who regret the present state of affairs argue that the weakness of our organisation is due to 'lack of political unification'. They—their number is few—argue further that due to this, the time has not yet come to enforce strict discipline in the Party, enforce observance of Party forms. These comrades are mistaken. The fact is that sufficient basis for political unification has already been laid and a large measure of political unification has already been achieved on the basis of various documents of the Central Committee and Polit Bureau and as the result of experience of mass work. To argue that as long as 'full political unification' is not achieved, one should be permitted to violate Party forms and Party rules should be held in abeyance or at least 'relaxed'—to argue like this is to betray utter ignorance of what political unification means and how it is achieved in a Communist Party. Political unification is achieved as the result of collective work by the Party, through Party units applying the general line of the Party to the given situation and further concretising, amplifying it in the course of activity, through constant discussion, criticism and self-criticism, through regular review of lessons of struggles, etc. And for this strict adherence to Party forms and strict discipline are essential.

"This, of course, does not preclude the existence of differences on many concrete questions. Such differences exist and will arise in future also, particularly

in view of the rapidly developing situation which will pose new problems. They will have to be resolved—not by glossing over the differences (as is very often done today) but by formulating them and by means of discussion, by means of principled inner-Party struggle. Comrade Stalin taught—'It may be said without fear of exaggeration that the history of our Party has been a history of inner-Party conflicts, a history of resolving these conflicts and of gradually strengthening the Party in the process of resolving them', and that 'the resolving of inner-Party differences by means of struggle is a law of development of our Party.'"

The essence of this is that a time has come when it is not enough for the Party to pay attention to political-ideological questions alone. This, of course, is very necessary. But, together with it, even as part of the Party's efforts at solving these political problems, it is necessary to immediately pay attention to the problem of building the Party. This is the stage we had arrived at that time. This is the lesson which we had drawn in the Political Resolution and in the Organisational Resolution of March, 1953.

It is necessary that this understanding is carried to the entire Party. The habit, which is widely prevalent of trying to trace every weakness to something wrong in the policy of the Party, has to be put an end to. This does not mean that we should not try to find out whether there is anything wrong in the Party policy. Of course, every effort should be made to find out anything wrong in the Party. But what is to be carefully avoided is to think that, since work is not going according to plan, some mistake there should be and, therefore, we should try to discover whether there is something wrong. Actually there may not be anything wrong at all. Actually it may only be that you have not yet carried out your task.

3. *In Relation to Literature Sales*

For example, I can give you one instance, with regard to the sale of Party literature, the sale of the weekly *New Age*. It is the Central Committee's Organ. It has now a sale of seven to eight thousand copies which is less than half of the *People's War* in the worst days of anti-Communism when we had to fight bitter battles, when we were isolated and fighting all alone with our banner high. In those days, we used to sell sixteen to twenty thousand copies. But now when we have become a really alternative to the present Government in the eyes of millions, our paper sales are less than half of those days. When this is mentioned we hear very often the argument: Comrade, the content of the paper is not good. Correct. I think the Editor of the *New Age* and the Polit Bureau will be the last persons to claim that the content of the *New Age* is very good. But can you say that regarding the *Lasting Peace*, the *New Times*? You cannot say that. But what is the position of the sale of *Lasting Peace*? As bad as that of *New Age*. How is it that, taking the country as a whole, the *Lasting Peace*, organ of the international working-class movement, which from week to week is giving us such a rich treasure of creative Marxism at such a cheap price, is selling less than 2,000 copies? Look at this. Such papers as *Blitz*, what is its sale in your own city and what is the sale of *Lasting Peace*? Why is it so? Of course, nobody claims that the *Lasting Peace* can have as wide a circulation as *Blitz*. It cannot. But can you claim that the Party as a whole has seriously taken up the popularisation of the *Lasting Peace*?

Just recollect the 'thirties or 'forties even upto 1944-45 when, if one copy of an international journal was somehow smuggled into the country with what avidity we used to grab it, taking carbon copies, etc. What

exactly is the position today? Who cares for the *Lasting Peace*? I do not know what would have happened if such a institution as the People's Publishing House and some bookshops had not been there. We ourselves may not have got the copies of the *Lasting Peace*. Why I am mentioning this is that you cannot trace the whole of the fall in circulation of the *New Age* to contents alone.

The same is the situation in the case of all provincial papers. So far as I have been able to study, there is no provincial paper which, in spite of the political growth of the Party, has got a circulation more than it was before August 15, 1947. At that time, particularly in 1942 and after, when you were the target of universal political offensive, you made use of every single piece of paper in your hand. Every Party member and sympathiser fanatically carried Party policy to the people. It does not matter that we did some very stupid things in those days. We did, but what we have to see is that, stupid or wise, we had a revolutionary fervour then. What Stalin calls the style of work is revolutionary fervour combined with American business efficiency. This is what Stalin calls Bolshevik style of work. Regardless of consequences, you fight for your Party as for your life. In this, it does not matter whether you are one or more. Of course, if you find that you are one and small, then it is your job to see what is the reason for it. But, unless and until the Party line is changed, it is your responsibility to see that Party line is taken to the people, to as big a section of the people as possible. This revolutionary fervour, this selflessness, this is what we had in those days. In those days, we had literature Sales Squads. Individuals and groups used to go from place to place, house to house, individual to individual and sell and popularise: that was considered to be our sacred task.

The position now is that there is no such thing. If you take the whole country, I do not think that there

are even a dozen localities or towns where the corresponding Party committees have taken this as a Party job, as a part of the job of Party building. This state of affairs has come into existence and the sales organisations have become more or less commercial propositions.

Suppose for example, the *New Age* manager catches hold of the Provincial Committee Secretary, the most responsible cadre after the Central Committee member. The manager asks him about the circulation of the paper. The first complaint he will receive most probably will be its content, after that the second question that will be raised is about commission. You doubt it? I do not, because I have seen this in actual practice in relation to the Central Organ, the People's Publishing House and the Provincial Committee organs. So far has it now come, that the sale of party literature has degenerated from a weapon in the struggle against alien tendencies and a weapon of struggle against enemies, into a means through which one tries to find out whether one can get commission.

I am not going into the question whether commission should be paid, or whether this system should be put an end to. That is another question, a question of policy with regard to how the Party press is to be organised. But there is something very seriously wrong in this: that is, what Com. Dimitrov calls, the organisational guarantee that the Party decisions will be carried out is lacking.

4. *In Relation to Check-up*

How can Party decisions be carried out unless the Party Organ, which carries the Party policy, is taken to the people? One of the most important tasks of Party building is thus neglected.

Of course, one can give so many similar examples. For, the situation is similar with regard to Party Funds, Party members carrying their assignments, etc. This lack of organisational guarantee for the carrying out of Party decisions should be considered one of the main reasons for this stagnation. This lack, however, cannot be overcome unless the whole Party functions as a sum and system of organisations. The individual submitting himself to the unit; the minority submitting itself to the majority; the lower unit submitting itself to the higher unit, the higher unit regularly reporting to the lower units—all these together make the organisational structure of the Party. It is this that is lacking today and the overcoming of this lag is one of the key political tasks of the Party.

Do not relegate this to the position of a "routine organisational-technical" question. The enforcement of Party discipline, the creating of organisational guarantees to ensure that decisions arrived at are carried out—this is not a technical-organisational question, not a formal question. Whether I have done the job which has been assigned to me by the Central Committee or Polit Bureau—this is not a formal and technical-organisational question. This is a question, which, as Comrade Stalin said, under certain conditions, that is, conditions in which a correct policy has been laid, "will decide the fate of the political line itself."

What is the use of a correct political line if the entire Party refuses to carry it out? I am giving one example. The Central Committee at the Calcutta Plenum (January 1953) which, as you know was attended

by representatives from all the Provinces, worked out certain slogans and none of those slogans were implemented. What is the use of a Central Committee? What is the use of our calling ourselves a Communist Party?

Do not take this as the Centre complaining against the Provinces. This is the position with regard to Provinces in relation to the Districts. It may also be that, in certain other form, the Provincial Committees may have to make such complaints in relation to the Centre also.

But consider this fact that at that Plenum, the Central Committee said that a Fund Drive should be made and each Provincial Committee should fix up its own quota. It should fix its own quota not only of what it will collect, but what it will give to the Centre. It said that these quotas should be such that, when added up, the Centre will get Rs. 1 lakh, because the Centre's requirement for the time being till after the Party Congress will be Rs. 1 lakh. And the Fund Drive has been made and collections also have actually been made. But in place of Rs. 1 lakh, the Centre received less than Rs. 5,000. That is one aspect of it.

Take another aspect also. In that Plenum resolution, the Provinces had been asked to fix up their own quotas and inform the Central Committee. There are several Provincial Committees which have to this day not even fixed up their quotas. There is no question of their not having sent the amount. They have not even fixed up their quotas!

Then there is another question. In the March 1953 Central Committee Resolution, the Central Committee had fixed up a time-schedule that, by such-and-such a date, all the Provincial Conferences should be over, etc. I do not remember exactly whether there was a single Provincial Committee which had finished its Conference in time. But all except one or two possible honourable exceptions—I am not sure whether even

that is there—all the Provincial Conferences were held just in time for the Party Congress.

The reality is that, however unanimously you may take decisions, however correct the policy, there is no guarantee that the decisions will be carried out. This is the basic reality with regard to Party organisation. And it is in the background of such a reality, it is just at a time when everyone of us is behaving in this fashion, that we go on trying to find out whether there is something wrong with our policy!

When something is going wrong, you do not examine yourself, you do not turn the torch of criticism inside yourself but try to turn it towards Party policy. This is what is happening.

We do not realise that the way I do the little thing that has been assigned to me determines the future of the revolution. Taken in isolation that assignment may be petty and insignificant; but it is when all these petty and insignificant things are added up that such a big thing as the Party develops. We do not ask ourselves: What will happen to the Party line if I do not do what I have to do today. There is no realisation that what I do or do not do today will determine the whole future of the Party.

Questions of check-up on assignments are not questions of a fear of what others will say; they are not questions of what your unit or your higher unit will say, but questions of realising what will happen to the line of the Party, to the development of the Party and the democratic movement, unless each one of us does what has been assigned to us.

It was on the basis of this realisation that a very small and a very modest attempt has been made by the Central Committee at its meeting in April 1954. What is that? The Central Committee did two things: firstly, it gave certain very definite and concrete directives to Central Committee Members. They

are very small things. The directives are that within the next six months they should do certain things– if you hear it you will laugh—that every Central Committee Member should read *New Times, Lasting Peace,* and the Central and Provincial Organs of the Party. What? Such petty things? Yes, comrades, it is through such petty things that the Central leadership has to be built up.

A Central Committee Member does not even read the Central Committee's Organ. Can you think of such a state of affairs? It is such small tasks that we have laid down. Similarly, for the Provincial Committees also. Very small things. If I remember right, one of these is that effort should be made to see that, within the next three months, all Party members who are illiterate are made literate. Those comrades who are illiterate, make them literate; those who are barely literate, enable them to read at least the Party Organ. Such small things.

We have started with such small things. Of course, we cannot rest satisfied with small things. At the next Central Committee meeting, we are certainly going to review the work of each Central Committee member and Provincial Committee and find out how far they have carried out their jobs. I do not know whether we will have to report at the end of that meeting that we have not received reports from such and such Provinces. In any case, at the last Central Committee meeting, we had given certain directives to the Provincial Committees and we have also issued a questionnaire to them, putting definite questions in order to find out how many of those directives have been carried out.

This, I believe, is a departure we are making from the practice of the recent past. We are trying to establish a new system, or rather we are trying to restore the system under which there is a regular check up of

the work of the individual Party member by his unit and of the lower unit by the higher unit.

It is this question of ensuring that every Party member and every Party unit carries out the assignments given to them by his or her unit, as well as by the higher units, that has become very important today.

5. *Modest in Assignments, Strict in Carrying Out.*

In this connection, the Central Committee also came to another very important conclusion and that conclusion is: when fixing up assignments and fixing up quotas, be rather modest. But, once it is fixed up, see that the modest assignment is religiously carried out. Do not be too ambitious when you fix up quotas and targets. As a matter of fact, one of the banes of the Party in India today is that we are too ambitious when we fix up quotas, and even when fixing up the tasks. For example, we very often us the term—what is the task of the Central Committee? It is to "lead, co-ordinate and direct the whole movement in the country." Such a beautifully vague and senseless term "lead, direct and guide the whole movement in the country" at a time when you are not able to enforce your decisions on your own Party members and Party units! What sense is there in this?

This does not mean you should not have this idea in your mind. Certainly, the Central Committee should aspire to become such a leading body. But that does not come just by declaring your wish for it. It has to be done by carrying out certain limited and modest tasks which you can undertake.

Let us take any meeting of any Party Committee. A long list of tasks is drawn up—tasks on the trade-union front, tasks on the kisan front, tasks on this front and that front. All these things are there. At the end

of this you come to two very important questions, questions on which alone depends the carrying out of these decisions.

What are these two important questions? They are not even thought of when a very big programme is drawn up. Firstly cash and secondly cadre. You have no idea at all of cash and cadre when you fix up your programme. So many things are also fixed up first and only later do you think of cadre. Afterwards you find that there is not sufficient cadre. You fix up that so and so is to be in "in-charge" of the kisan front, student work, Party education, etc., etc. I do not know what else. So much burden is put on the shoulder of one individual comrade that he cannot carry out any of them. This has an adverse effect on him. If he is honestly trying to carry out his responsibilities, he will break himself.

Similarly, with regard to cash. Very beautiful plans are drawn up. Say, for example, a Provincial Committee draws up a plan of setting up a press. Then it thinks of the size of the press. "We should bring out a weekly, which after two to three years will be converted into a daily. Therefore, the press should be such that it can today bring out a weekly and after two years, it can bring out a daily. So it should be a double demy cylinder machine." That cannot do job work. So there should be a treadle. Then you must have a cutting machine for the press. Then comes the question—if you get all this equipment, your present weekly of eight pages will not feed this press. So you have to go in for getting manuscripts that will feed the press. And, at the end of all this, you start calculating the cash required. Cylinder machine Rs. 10,000; treadle Rs. 7,000—and so on. The whole thing comes to Rs. 40,000 or Rs. 50,000, and this at a time when you are not able even to pay the rent of your office! That is the position today.

What I am trying to stress here is that, when you sit down to plan, be modest. A little of modesty once in a way will not do much harm to us. But, once the plans are drawn up, see that they are carried out. This is the Lenin-Stalin principle of the Bolshevik method of work.

That is why the Organisational Resolution of the Central Committee says that one of the reasons why there is lack of respect for Party decisions, that there is a certain amount of cynicism with regard to certain decisions taken by the Party, is the fact that often decisions are taken in an irresponsible way, without taking into account the possibility of their being carried out. And, having taken a decision, the next moment you decide that the particular decision cannot be carried out. This has its own reaction.

A succession of irresponsible decisions and irresponsibility in carrying out those decisions which can be carried out is one of the banes of our Party organisation today. That is why in laying down the organisational slogans for the Central Committee Members and Provincial Committees we have been very modest. Of course, it is to be seen how far even these modest decisions will be carried out.

6. *Collective Leadership with Individual Responsibility*

Now I will refer to one more point with regard to Organisation. A certain amount of clarity is needed on this business of "Collective Leadership." It is sometimes assumed that, collective leadership is something which has nothing to do with individual responsibility. Collective leadership means that the leadership on every question is exercised collectively. There is no

individual—the individual is submerged in the collective. In what sense is everything actually collective?

Collective leadership has something to do with individual responsibility. Collective leadership does not mean the exclusion of individual responsibility. How can a unit carry out its collective responsibility or exercise collective leadership, unless every individual member of that unit has individual responsibility to it? After all, collective leadership consists of discussion of important problems, taking decisions unanimously or by majority, if by majority the minority carrying it out as if it is their own opinion. Even if one member or some members did not agree with the majority during the discussion, a member's personal opinion does not matter. He is part of the unit, and, after taking such a decision, the unit decides as to who will carry out which part of the responsibility in implementing this decision. Then the individual member of the unit goes and carries it out. Then in the next meeting of the unit, it checks upon all the assignments for which each individual member was made responsible to ascertain whether they were carried out or not. This is Collective Leadership—the Collective Leadership which is exercised through individual responsibility. Collective Leadership is a mechanism through which individual responsibility is assigned and checked up.

In connection with this, I want to mention another thing as well. With regard to Organisation there are several principles of Party organisation which are emphasised in international literature. The basic principle of Party organisation, the basic law of Party development is, of course, inner-Party struggle, which is carried on through the process of criticism and self-criticism, particularly criticism from below. This is a principle which is emphasised in all international literature.

We find that there is also an emphasis on Collective Leadership.

Similarly there is emphasis on Party education.

When you read one article dealing with one of these subjects, you will think that that is the *whole* of Party organisation. Because in that particular article, the importance of that particular subject is emphasised. Whether it is Party education or criticism and self-criticism or collective leadership, emphasis is laid on one aspect. So what happens is when we read the article, the point of that article sticks in our head and we go on trying to apply it to every circumstance, as if it is a talisman.

Now what we have to see is that all these are principles of Party organisation. All are equally important. The point is not which of them is more important. The point is which of these has to be made the basis of work in the conditions of the Communist Party of India today.

For example, in the years of 1950-51 and even in 1952, the process of inner-Party struggle, the battle of ideas, conflict between different views, the process of criticism and self-criticism were of supreme importance. Is that the position today? No.

Does this mean that the validity of the law of inner-Party struggle has ceased? It does not. But, as I stated earlier, having come to an agreement on correct policy, the time has now come to lay the utmost emphasis on organisation. That is what the Polit Bureau did in the August 1952 resolution. In that resolution we again and again stress Organisation.

On Organisation itself, the same process has had to be gone through.

In the first stage it was an emphasis on how to link up, how to combine the principle of inner-Party democracy with centralism. It was on this basis that the January 1953 Plenum and the March 1953 resolutions on

Organisation laid down certain rules of functioning. These are now being accepted; but having been accepted, do these rules or that question continue to be the main question? No. Having accepted them, certain other questions remained.

We have found out, for example, that between the Central Plenum in January 1953 and the Party Congress in December 1953, we have been emphasising the role of building a strong Centre. It is for this that we have been making all our efforts. At the Madura Congress itself, with regard to organisational resolution, this was the central slogan which we had raised. That also has been now accepted and partly implemented. Having accepted and implemented that slogan can you say that that continues to be the central organisation l slogan? You cannot say that, because today a situation has arisen in which some sort of Party Centre has been established. A slight improvement in the functioning of the Centre has been registered. But can a strong Centre by itself lead the whole Party? No

A new question has come and that is what you will see in the Organisational Resolution of the Central Committee in March 1954. In it we emphasise the supreme importance of the Central Committee functioning in such a way as to render practical and effective leadership to the Provincial Committees. We have to emphasise that, i. is not enough for us today to say that the task is one of strengthening the Centre. Does strengthening the Centre today mean strengthening it in order to "lead and direct" the whole movement in the country? We do not consider that as our job We consider it to be our job to give that much help and leadership to the Provincial Committees as will advance the movement. We do not even aspire to lead the whole Party, except through the Provincial Committees.

What is the main link in the chain today? *The main link in the chain of Organisation today is to so organise the work of the Central Committee that it will be able to help the Provincial Committees, which in turn will be able to lead, direct and guide the District Committees, which in their turn will organise the whole chain of the Party in such a way that the primary units of the Party are activised and become the leaders of the movement.* It is such an orientation that we are trying to make.

This is the key link in the chain which you cannot seize unless you take up the other slogan which I have stated earlier, which is the combining of the Collective Leadership with Individual Responsibility.

Lecture IV

PREREQUISITES FOR COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP WITH INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

YESTERDAY I told you that, according to us, the key link in the chain of Party organisation today is Collective Leadership together with Individual Responsibility. Enforcement of this principle, of combining collective functioning with assignment and check up of individual responsibility is the key link today.

It may be that sometimes the circumstances may change and the key link itself may require to be changed. But now, so long as the situation continues as it is, what should be done about it?

I think that there are certain prerequisites for this.

This, of course, is a question which we have not discussed in the Polit Bureau in detail. It will be one of the main questions we will be discussing at the next Central Committee meeting. At the March 1953 Central Committee meeting we could not do it because we had to carry out certain jobs which had been assigned to the Central Committee by the Party Congress, with regard to the kisan question, organisational resolution and other things.

On the organisational question, we finalised the Organisational Resolution. But we could not take up such concrete questions of organisation as, for example, Party organs, Party funds, what is the concrete manner in which the general slogan of sustained mass

activity has to be worked out, etc. It will be our effort, at the next Central Committee meeting, to take up these questions and, with this idea in mind, we have sent out a questionnaire to the Provincial Committees. That being so, you need not take it that it is the considered and final opinion of the Central Committee or the Polit Bureau. It is quite possible that many of them will be modified or changed by the Central Committee. But I am stating all these things in the light of a good deal of discussion that some of us had with some Provincial Committees and among ourselves. You should take them in this light alone.

1. *Demarcation of Responsibility*

As I said, there are certain prerequisites necessary for the enforcement of this principle of Collective Leadership based upon Individual Responsibility. There should be a definite line of demarcation regarding items and subjects which are to be discussed by the Party Committees.

For example, suppose we interpret the idea of Collective Leadership in such a way that every minor question of detail with regard to functioning of the Central Organisation is to be discussed and decided upon by the Central Committee, as for example, the selection of a particular cadre to work in the Central Committee Office or the sanctioning of a particular item of expenditure, etc.—you can very well interpret the concept of Collective Leadership thus — but that way, no unit, or individual can function. If every minor and petty detail has to be discussed in the Central Committee and decided upon, it will not be possible to run the Centre.

We have to draw certain lines of demarcation. What are these lines? Broad questions of *policy*, includ-

ing not only the political line but questions of *organisational policy*, policy with regard to recruitment of cadres, finance, expenditure of the Party—all these questions of *policy* have to be discussed by the Central Committee.

But does this mean that every minor detail will be left to individuals? It cannot be. Even in this matter, there are gradations of responsibility. There are certain types of questions of policy which can be discussed and decided only by the Central Committee. There are other questions of policy, or the interpretations and the execution of the policy laid down by the Central Committee, which can and should be left to the Polit Bureau. There are, however, certain questions of *execution* which have to be left to the *individual Polit Bureau Members*, who certainly are accountable to the Polit Bureau, just as the whole Polit Bureau is accountable to the Central Committee.

Therefore, there should be a clear demarcation as to what are the functions of the Polit Bureau, the Central Committee, the individual Polit Bureau Members, and, in the same way, at the levels of the Provincial Committees and District Committees down to the lowest unit. It is impossible to have collective functioning without individual responsibility. Unless this is fixed up what will happen? The so-called collective responsibility will become nobody's responsibility, and the so-called individual responsibility will lead to individual domination. Both these things can take place. Everybody can say that, "It is not my responsibility and it is the responsibility of my unit. At the most, I am responsible as a member of the unit."

Suppose something goes wrong. The Polit Bureau can very well say, we are a unit which is only responsible to carry out what the Central Committee says. So whatever [illegible] wrong should be on the Central Committee [illegible] the Central Committee itself can say

that the whole Party is responsible. This is not collective functioning; this is not collective leadership.

But this does not mean that the Polit Bureau as a unit or individual Polit Bureau Members can take decisions on questions of policy. It does not mean that. Certainly on certain questions of urgent importance, even on the question of policy which properly should be decided by the Central Committee, we may have to take certain decisions for immediate action which are liable to be reviewed by the Central Committee. But beyond this nothing else should be done. Such a line of demarcation is very, very necessary. Unless this is done, no leadership can be of value.

I think lack of such an understanding creates all sorts of difficulties at all levels. There are endless discussions in prolonged meetings; each of these meetings goes into most petty details; most of these details can very well be left to a smaller executive body, or the Secretariat. Unless this is done it cannot be carried out. It is my feeling that this is the position with regard to most Party units at almost all levels.

The moment, last year or so, more and more stress began to be laid in the international Party Press on Collective Leadership, we began to wonder: what is this, and how is this to be enforced? We tried to do all sorts of things. Very many questions of details are put down. Then it is found that is not possible to function in this way.

Even now we cannot say that we have come to a very clear understanding regarding the lines of demarcation. We have yet to grope towards it. But there is no doubt that, unless lines of demarcation are drawn, there will be a series of unending meetings, each of which will go into all sorts of details and at the end of which everyone will feel frustrated and a sense of "nothing has been done" will prevail.

2. *Well-prepared Meetings*

The second point I have to make is that for every meeting there should be sufficient preparation. You cannot have collective leadership unless meetings are thoroughly prepared. If only you compare a well- prepared meeting of the Party with an ill-prepared one, you will find that so much time of the latter is taken in unnecessary talk. It is assumed that, whenever there is a meeting, whenever some subject is put down for discussion, all those who attend the meeting should speak on it. I do not know how this understanding arose. But, in all our Party meetings, the practice has come to be that everybody should speak, or at least say "I have nothing more to add to what other comrades have said."

So much so that if there are five topics put down for discussion at a meeting attended by 25 comrades, it will be found that nothing has come out of it when one round is over. Everybody speaks one round but nobody knows on what to speak because nobody is prepared for it. The first comrade starts speaking, nobody knows on what, and then all those who follow may either support or contradict the first comrade, so that the comrade who speaks last has to support and contradict everybody else who has talked before.

I do not know whether I am drawing it to the absurd limit, but I know that there are such absurd cases in the Party. The reason for this is that, when a meeting is called, there is nobody who is entrusted with the task of preparing for the meeting. What is the agenda? What are the items on this? What are the main basic facts? What are the issues which should be settled? What is the suggested basis for settling it?—these are not thought about. The Party is to discuss on problems which have to be settled now.

What are the various points of view? What are the various aspects of it?—these should be studied by one or three, or five comrades; they put their heads together and then put the whole problem before the meeting.

Then all those comrades who have to speak for or against, or say something in addition to what these comrades have said, as well as those who think that they have something to contribute to the solution of this problem, or those who have to pose fresh problems in connection with the same, can speak.

So much so that, though in the formal-technical sense, the procedure will be that a particular resolution or a particular proposal is moved by a comrade or comrades who prepare for this meeting and then amendments, additions, proposal for rejection, proposals for redrafting—all these are made by the other comrades who have to make any suggestions. These are discussed and after this discussion, issue after issue is taken up, put to vote and decisions taken.

This is not the procedure that we usually adopt. And I have heard it sometimes said that inside the Communist Party nobody can remain silent, nobody has the right to remain neutral. That means, on every subject, everybody has to speak. I do not know from where this principle arose, but, in any case, it upsets all our work. Unnecessarily we have to talk, unnecessarily we have to listen, and the whole meeting goes on endlessly.

Look up the *Lasting Peace* reports and see how many days the CC meetings or Party Congresses of other Parties take. In so few days, how many items they discuss and come to conclusions. Compare it with ours. Then you will find the difference and that difference arises out of our not having well-prepared meetings.

If you go through any of the *Lasting Peace* edito-

rials on Collective Leadership, you will find it repeated again and again that you cannot have Collective Leadership unless the meetings are well prepared. You will also notice that the very same Parties, the very same international Party Press which put so much emphasis on Collective Leadership, also speak against—actually ridicule—the tendency to have too many meetings and endless discussions. As a matter of fact, they characterise the tendency for too many meetings as a tendency towards bureaucratism.

What is bureaucratism? You are concerned only with your own affairs. You are not concerned with the affairs of the masses. Suppose for example, every month a particular Party Committee has to hold its meeting for 10 days, then many of these comrades have afterwards to go to the lower committees and hold their meetings. In this way almost the entire time of so many comrades it taken up in endless Party meetings. Party members who are supposed to be the leaders of the mass movement have no time to attend to the problems of the movement. They have to attend Party meetings, discuss with clinching or without clinching issues—it does not matter—but they should discuss.

This is something which has to be put an end to. And this has to be put an end to not through avoidance of Party meetings but through sufficient preparation for every meeting.

3. *Leading Team—A Necessity*

This brings me to the third point and that is that it is not enough for us to say that every meeting should be well-prepared, but there should be somebody or some team which is charged with the responsibility of preparing for this meeting. In the case of the Cen-

tral Committee and Provincial Committees, in any case, this should not be an individual. An individual cannot prepare for the meeting. Of course, for the meeting of the PB and the PC Secretariat, the individual has to prepare. The Secretary has to prepare. But, for the CC or PC meetings, no individual can prepare for them. It should be done by the PB and the Provincial Committee Secretariat. This team should be charged with the responsibility of preparation.

All efforts should be made to see that the Polit Bureau and the Provincial Committee Secretariat, before every meeting of the Central Committee or Provincial Committee, discuss every aspect of the questions that are being placed before the Central Committee and Provincial Committee, come to conclusions and put proposals before the CC and PC. These proposals may be amended, rejected, changed. That does not matter. It is the task of the Polit Bureau and the Provincial Committee Secretariat to make concrete and definite proposals and it is on these definite and concrete proposals that discussions should take place.

Now, whether this can and should be done with regard to the lower committees, I cannot say. I do not know whether it can be done even with regard to all the Provincial Committees. For example, this was my experience: In the Organisational Resolution adopted by the January 1953 CC Plenum and later amended and revised by the March 1953 meeting of the Central Committee, there was the definite provision that every PC should have a Secretariat. I had the opportunity later on to go to some of the smaller Provinces—Gujarat and Karnatak. Then I found that the whole thing was so unreal. For example, there are some DCs in Karnatak and Gujarat which are formally District Committees, but in relation to their place in the movement and in comparison with similar DCs in some of the bigger Provinces, you cannot say that they

are District Committees. There is one Committee in Coorg which you may call a State Committee, because Coorg is a separate State. It formally is a District Committee under the Karnatak PC, but actually it is a cell. In such a situation, to try to build up an apparatus on the same model as in other Provinces obviously would be wrong. And I found comrades, both in Gujarat and in Karnatak, struggling among themselves as to how to implement this directive—on the PC Secretariat. I told them, "Don't bother; we have framed the Central Committee Resolution on a certain assessment of the situation. If this does not work in your Province, do not bother. Look at the whole problem from the point of view of how all the resources of the Party in your Province can be put to the maximum use. This is the main point."

After all, the principle of organisation is nothing *but a job for every comrade and a comrade for every job*. Take it from the commonsense point of view. If a certain rule or provision in the Constitution or Central Committee Resolution does not suit your Province, think about it and modify it.

What I am pointing out at present is that this principle of collective preparations for the wider committee meetings, in so far as the Central Committee and Provincial Committees are concerned, should be there. It should be there in the case of major District Committees for example, the Calcutta DC or the Bombay Committee, which till recently was a Provincial Committee but has now become a District Committee. These committees cannot perform their jobs without a functioning leading team. You cannot leave it to a Secretary, or some other individual, to prepare for the meeting.

Suppose you have the same pattern in the lower units like the local committee. After all, in the local committee, the overwhelming majority of committee

members will be part-timers. It may be that there are several committees in which there may not be a single whole-timer. There is nothing wrong in that. Now suppose you try to have the same mechanism of a Secretariat for the local committee. It may not work So you have to look at it from the practical point of view that there should be somebody who is charged with the task of preparing for the Committee meeting.

When there are four items on the agenda, it is not even necessary that the same comrade, the same individual should be charged with the responsibility of preparing all the four items. Suppose that, in relation to a meeting of a local committee there are four items on the agenda (1) discussion of the latest resolution of the Central Committee; (2) discussion on a particular development in the trade-union movement; (3) discussion on a certain programme of action in relation to the District; and (4) preparations for a Peace Conference. Is it not possible that, for preparing for the meeting, these four items are divided among four comrades? One comrade, say, the Local Committee Secretary, prepares for the discussion on the Central Committee resolution. Another comrade who is leading a trade union prepares for the next item. Why should it not be possible? This is possible. But, in respect of major units, this individual preparation is not possible, because the problems are so vast, and so complicated, that one individual, however wise and experienced he may be, cannot properly prepare for it.

4 *Inner-Party Campaign on Responsibilities*

Then, the fourth point that I want to mention in this connection is that a serious and consistent inner-Party campaign should be undertaken throughout the

Party on the individual member's responsibilities to the Party. It may look absurd that we should start it today. But that is the present situation.

At a particular stage in the history of our Party, all the emphasis was on the individual's responsibility to the Party—a stage in which the rights of the individual Party members were ignored, leading to all sorts of bureaucratic practices.

Now, during the last five years, the pendulum has swung the other way. The whole emphasis is now laid on the rights of the individual Party members. In this swinging of the pendulum, there was something that was correct. What is it? The principle that every individual Party member has certain rights, which are well defined. This has now been made the common consciousness in the entire Party. That is very good; that should be preserved.

Something more, however, has to be asserted now. That every individual Party member, together with his rights, has corresponding responsibilities to the Party. This is something lacking today. I do not want to give any examples, which are there in plenty. We find that, whenever Party questions are discussed, these questions come up again and again: there is slackening of discipline; there is slackening of the Party members' preparedness to suffer and sacrifice for the Party.

Think of the situation previously, the way in which Party members used to respond to the call of the Party during 1942-44 and compare it with the position now. How do Party members themselves respond to the call for funds? How hard do those Party members who are well-to-do, those who have certain incomes, even those who have started getting income because of the Party (for example, MPs, MLAs, etc.) bargain for the reduction of their levy to the Party! What is all this due to?

Is it due to the fact that certain individual Party members have degenerated? No. That is there, of course. But, if you proceed that way, then you will have to say that the whole Party has degenerated with which nobody for a moment can agree. For, it is during this very period that Party members have suffered and sacrificed immensely. It is at this very time that, whenever there had been attacks on the Party, our comrades have faced torture, jail and even firing. Do all these show that the sense of sacrifice and suffering and all these have gone? No, it is still there.

But there is not at present a sufficiently wide-spread mass campaign in the Party for the idea that every Party member should sacrifice his all, whatever he can, in money and resources, in labour, etc.—that all the best in him belongs to the Party. This idea we had propagated previously, and it is on the basis of that that we had carried out recruitment campaigns, fund drives, etc. Nowadays we are not carrying out that inner-Party campaign. Not only are we not carrying it out, but in our own consciousness, in the consciousness of Party leaders themselves, there is no realisation of its importance.

When we emphasise the supreme importance of the assertion of the individual member's rights, we neglect the importance of the individual member's responsibilities. This approach has led to various forms of degeneration in the cases of the Party members with regard to their various activities. There are various forms of this degeneration. But this degeneration is one which can be successfully overcome, provided the entire Party takes it as one of its main jobs. Throughout the Party the entire membership—from the topmost leadership down to the lowest Party unit and the ordinary members of the cell—has to be made conscious of his rights, as well as of his responsibilities. In the

Party Constitution itself, it is in the same Chapter that the rights and responsibilities of the Party members are laid down. These two are put together: you assert your rights, you discharge your responsibilities. Only in this way, the whole thing goes forward.

These are some of the points which I thought it necessary to mention in relation to the principle of combining collective leadership with individual responsibility. Now there is one last point.

5. *Popularise the Party, Rouse Pride in the Party*

Let us not be under the illusion that all this can be carried out just through certain inner-Party campaigns. Inner-Party campaign on all these points is undoubtedly very necessary. But this campaign must have close and intimate links with the political mass campaigns in which the entire Party participates. These concepts of Collective Leadership with Individual Responsibility should be popularised not only inside the Party but outside the Party as well—among the broad masses of the people.

There is a certain amount of lack of confidence in popularising the Party which expresses itself very often because of various factors. For example, we ourselves fall a prey to the propaganda of the bourgeoisie that the Communist Party is a Party which has always committed mistakes; that it has gone from one deviation to another, one mistake to another, and so on. This is bourgeois propaganda and we also have very often succumbed to it.

But what is the reality?

If you just survey the past of our Party, I would like even the worst opponent of the Party—not to speak of Party members—to point out one single party in India which has gone through such two crises as

the 1942 and 1950-51 crises without getting blown up? Is there a single case? Look at 1942-44. Almost the entire National Democratic Movement was against us; we were almost entirely isolated from the anti-imperialist movement. But did we get disrupted? Even at that time, we grew. As I said on another occasion, if our Party had been entirely correct in the past, then our growth would have been very much greater. But it is a fact that, in spite of so many odds against us we grew in that period. Is there a single other party in India which had to go through such a period and could come out of it unscathed?

Similarly in the 1950-51 crisis. Is there a single Party which had had to go through such an inner-Party crisis? Is there any other party in India which can hope to come out of such a crisis unscathed? No.

What is the reason for this? It lies in the fact that, in spite of the mistakes committed by us, we have stuck to certain fundamentals. Regardless of our crude understanding, regardless of the mistakes that we committed, we stuck to internationalism and patriotism. We have been the best fighters for the cause of the working class—best in the sense of being most sincere. And, in doing this, we have been the most determined, the most militant, and most sincere anti-imperialists. Of course, in combining this internationalism with patriotism, we have committed mistakes of all sorts. We may have gone from one extreme to the other. Sometimes we may have characterised Gandhi and Nehru as national leaders and not bourgeois leaders. On some other occasions, we might have considered every rank-and-file Congressman and every rank-and-file Socialist as our enemy. We have done all sorts of things. But what is the totality?

When I speak of "we" I am speaking of the Communist Party of India from its very early days when half a dozen young intellectuals in Bombay and

Calcutta like Dange and Muzaffar Ahmed started working and forming Communist groups. I speak of the Communist Party of India from those days when there were a few groups, down to the present day. We have grown from stage to stage, because we have stuck to certain fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism. In its application to India, we may have been right or wrong. That does not matter. And there is no guarantee that we may not go wrong again. There can be no such guarantee. But we have stuck in the past and shall stick in the future to Marxism-Leninism and apply it to the conditions of India.

Here I recollect a certain incident which Comrade Gallacher relates in his Autobiography. He was going to the Second Congress of the Communist International. It was on his way, at Stockholm that he heard that Lenin had written a pamphlet in which he had made certain references to him. The pamphlet referred to was *Left-Wing Communism.* In those days, Gallacher was against any truck with the Labour Party or the Parliament. When he was speaking in the Second Congress there was heckling and fun was being made of him. Comrade Lenin intervened and said that this was impermissible. "Comrade Gallacher has committed certain mistakes. He will commit mistakes in the future also. But he will never betray the revolution." This is the quality of the Communists.

I well remember another incident to which he also refers. After this Congress, Lenin called Gallacher for a talk. He asked him: "Why are you opposed to your fighting the elections?" Gallacher said that elections are an engine of the bourgeoisie for corrupting the working class. Then Lenin asked: "Suppose you were elected, will you get corrupted?" Gallacher's working-class pride was hurt. He said, "I won't get corrupted." "Then," Lenin said, "go to England and get elected to the Parliament."

This is just to show you that the fact we have committed mistakes does not necessarily mean that our basic approach to problems has been wrong. In the application of basic principles, we have certainly committed very serious mistakes. There is no doubt about that. But consider this. How is it possible for a Party which is supposed to have committed nothing but mistakes for 30 years, which has had to go through such serious crises as those of 1942 and 1950-51, to grow from strength to strength as we see before our very eyes?

Even without an examination of the reasons, the reality should rouse our pride in the Party. For, it shows that the Party is an instrument through which the working class and the peasantry in India have been raising their political consciousness; this is an instrument through which the struggle for People's Democracy is being carried out. This realisation should create a sense of pride in our Party, in our own comrades and in the mass of people as well. It is in this way that the entire working people have to be told how the Party is leading the democratic movement. Hegemony of the proletariat headed by the Communist Party—it is not just a phrase. This has to be made a real living thing by creating pride in the Party, in every Party member and Party sympathiser. It is through this alone that we will be able to overcome our weaknesses.

This, of course, will lead us to various questions with regard to the method of our agitation, social composition of our Party members, quality of our mass work—all of which flow from this. I cannot take up these things now.

THE END