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**POLITICAL RESOLUTION
OF THE
FOURTEENTH CONGRESS**



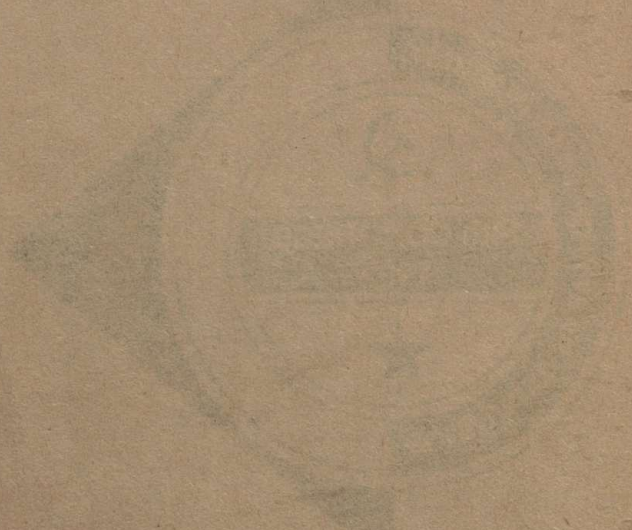
January 3 - 9, 1992, Madras

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INTERNATIONAL

1.1 The international situation in the period after the 13th Party Congress has been a stormy and difficult one for the forces of socialism, national liberation and the working class movement. The reverses suffered by socialism in the Soviet Union and earlier in Eastern Europe have altered the world balance of forces in favour of imperialism for the present. The process of restoration of capitalism in the countries of Eastern Europe, the course of dismantling socialism in the Soviet Union and the break up of the USSR in its old form are accompanied by a new imperialist offensive. This has grave repercussions for the socialist countries and the Communist movement, the struggle to safeguard national independence of the third world countries and for the forces of peace and democracy. It is in such an adverse situation that the revolutionary and progressive forces must work to overcome the present difficulties.

1.2 Though significant changes began taking place in the socialist countries and in many Communist Parties by the time of the 13th Congress of the Party, we failed to grasp their deep implications then. Hence the subsequent developments which unfolded were quite unexpected.

1.3 Within a year of the 13th Party Congress, socialism as it existed suffered major setbacks. In Eastern Europe, one country after another, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and the GDR, went through the throes of upheavals and they culminated in the process of restoration of capitalism. In the case of GDR, it led to its merger within the capitalist system in unified Germany.

1.4 In the Soviet Union, in the six years of perestroika and glasnost, what began as reforms to renew and strengthen the socialist system paved the way for the demolition process of

socialism. Ideologically and politically the reforms were so conducted that they generated forces inimical to socialism. They opened the way for the forces who espouse capitalism and facilitated imperialist intervention to aid these forces.

1.5 The events in August 1991 were the culmination of the gathering anti-socialist momentum. These forces went on a counter-revolutionary offensive after the August events. The CPI(M) took a principled stand based on the defence of the socialist system in the Soviet Union and for the unity of the USSR—a product of the October 1917 Revolution.

1.6 The major reverse in the Soviet Union, with the disbanding of the Communist Party and the breakup of the Union of republics, will have serious and adverse repercussions in the international arena. Earlier, national liberation movements and those third world countries undertaking progressive changes could bank upon the support of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Now that countervailing force to imperialism is no more present in the old form.

1.7 For the past four years the “New Thinking” in Soviet foreign policy, based on the modification of contradictions and the absence of imperialism in its analysis, had its disastrous consequences. It has emboldened U.S. imperialism to intervene brazenly to impose its dictates globally. The war waged against Iraq by the United States and its allies illustrated this new imperialist aggressiveness and arrogance. The abandonment of the Soviet role contributed to the reversal of the progressive course of transformation in Mozambique and Ethiopia, the compromise forced on Angola to settle with reactionary and pro-imperialist forces and the disunity among Arab States. The advance of fundamentalist forces threatens the Algerian revolution. The Palestinian liberation movement is sought to be pushed back by the division created in the Arab camp and the rallying to the imperialist side by some major Arab countries in the Gulf war. Spearheaded by the US, the settlement of the Palestinian question through international peace negotiations is sought to be achieved by bypassing the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Israel continues to defy world opinion by refusing to vacate the occupied territories and settling its people in these areas. In the civil war in Yugoslavia, Germany and Austria support the secession of Slovenia and Croatia.

1.8 The new found dominance of the imperialist alliance is re-

flected in the weakening of the Non-aligned movement and its passivity. Regional organisations like the Arab League and the Organisation of African Unity are now subjected to greater imperialist pressures and economic blackmail. The U.N. and in particular, the Security Council, has been hijacked by the U.S. and its allies with the tacit support of the Soviet Union. China abstained in the crucial vote in the Security Council on the Gulf War. Cuba was the only socialist country to oppose. In the gulf war and its aftermath, permanent members of the Security Council used the UN cover, to launch its war on Iraq and to repeatedly infringe on its sovereignty by imposing humiliating conditions of war reparations.

1.9 Notwithstanding the serious reverses to socialism and the revolutionary process, the recent period saw important advances for the anti-imperialist, democratic national liberation forces. The independence of Namibia after protracted struggle; the significant success for the democratic forces in South Africa against the racist regime, the release of Nelson Mandela and the legalisation of the ANC and the Communist Party there; the defeat of the Pinochet dictatorship by the people of Chile; the agreement for a UN supervised plebiscite in Western Sahara; the progress in the peace negotiations in Cambodia; the advance of the democratic forces in Bangladesh with the restoration of the parliamentary system; the electoral gains of the Communists in Nepal in the first democratically held elections after three decades; the progress of the anti-US military bases movement in the Philippines; and the improvement in Sino-Vietnamese relations—all these are pointers to the potential of the anti-imperialist and progressive forces operating in the world today.

1.10 The new world situation is exerting allround pressures on the remaining socialist countries which are committed to the path of socialism. The smaller socialist countries particularly are under threat of subversion and intimidation by imperialism. Cuba, the only socialist country in the Western hemisphere, is directly threatened. The Soviet Union has unilaterally withdrawn its military aid while the US maintains the Guantanamo military base on Cuban soil. The US blockade of its economy, the constant efforts to subvert it internally, all will be stepped up to undermine Cuba's independence and socialist system.

1.11 Our Party expresses its firm solidarity with the socialist countries who are tackling the difficult challenge of reforming the

system and renovating the economy. They are doing so in conditions where imperialism is utilising its dominance over science and technology and the world economic order to deprive these countries of their normal share and participation in world development. The on-going economic reforms in China have met with important successes. These reforms are continuing after the Government of the People's Republic of China met the counter-revolutionary challenge of the May-June 1989 events successfully. Vietnam is also undertaking important reforms while adhering to the Socialist framework. We hope these reforms undertaken in the socialist countries will be able to overcome the weaknesses and strengthen socialism. The CPI(M) supports the efforts of the DPRK, for a principled resolution of the problem of the reunification of the Korean nation.

1.12 The dismantling of the socialist states in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are the results of the accumulated distortions and revisionist deviations in applying Marxist-Leninist principles to building socialism and the deformations in socialist democracy. The theoretical defects in summing up correctly the negative experiences of the past, the theoretical and practical distortions of Marxism-Leninism by individual parties and socialist countries, cannot be attributed to the science of Marxism-Leninism. The whole course of history since the October Revolution has confirmed the validity of the correctness of the theory of Marxism-Leninism. Hence the reverses which the Communist movement and socialism have suffered are not permanent. Revisionism of the right or left variety and social democracy cannot be the substitutes for the creative application of Marxism-Leninism.

1.13 The struggle for peace and nuclear disarmament must be re-evaluated in the new context. The forces of peace welcomed the steps initiated by the Soviet Union to check the arms race and cut down nuclear stockpiles. But in the past two years this process has become one-sided and unequal. While the WARSAW Pact stands dissolved NATO is intact and worked unitedly in the Gulf War. The NATO powers have decided to modify their strategy and build up a rapid reaction force for speedy intervention consisting of troops of all member countries. The latest strategic arms limitation agreement which cuts long-range missiles by 50 per cent and the mutual cuts in tactical nuclear weapons, do not bar new weapons being produced. In fact the US is embarking upon the production

of a whole range of new sophisticated weapons. Even the Star Wars project is continuing. The dominance of US as a single super power and its military arsenal spells a grave threat to world peace. The absence of the so-called Soviet threat should spur the world peace forces to demand major and rapid steps by US imperialism and its allies to shut down its world-wide military bases, stop producing new weapons, cut down drastically on conventional forces, while negotiating further reductions in and elimination of nuclear weapons. The world peace movement must be strengthened to achieve these aims.

1.14 The setbacks to socialism are being used by world capitalism to mask its own crisis and problems. The recovery in the world capitalist economy which began in 1983 substantially slowed down after 1988. Just when the Eastern Europe and the Soviet crisis deepened some of the major advanced capitalist countries like the USA, Britain and Canada went into a recessionary spell in 1989-90. The US despite optimistic forecasts, is still not out of the downturn. The OECD which comprises 24 advanced capitalist countries has a pessimistic forecast of GNP growth in 1991 of only 2 per cent as compared to 2.8 per cent in 1990 and 3.4 per cent in 1989. The gross domestic product (GDP) growth rates of the OECD members also shows a declining trend.

Average Annual Growth of GDP

	1980-89	1987	1988	1989	1990
OECD Members	3.0	3.4	4.4	3.3	2.6

(Source: World Development Report 1991)

The imperialist world, though it experienced growth in real GNP in every year after 1982, could not recapture the high rates of growth it had achieved in the quarter century after the Second World War. The UNCTAD Report on trade and development of 1991 predicts that trade growth rate will fall further this year, the third year in succession. In short, the world capitalist system is in the midst of a protracted period of slow growth exhibiting cyclical fluctuations. While the brunt of the crisis is borne by the third

world countries, the rich capitalist countries are also afflicted by the ills of the system.

1.15 The phase of capitalist recovery and growth does not lead to the reduction of the rate of unemployment. USA, Britain, France, Italy and Canada are all experiencing high rates of unemployment. The right wing policies initiated in the 80s exemplified by Reaganism and Thatcherism with their unbridled privatisation has led to greater exploitation and suffering for the poorer sections; cuts in social welfare and growing homelessness have been the common features in these countries. The effective harnessing of science and technology has revolutionised the means of production, but it has also intensified the exploitation of the working class by displacing large sections of workers due to retooling by increasing workload and cutting social security benefits. World capitalism is able to intervene and modify the effects of the cyclical crisis which creates new problems within the system. An important aspect of this growth of the advanced capitalist economies is the intensification of the exploitation of the third world countries through transnational corporations, the debt weapon and adverse terms of trade. The other feature of contemporary state monopoly capitalism is the integration of arms production through the military industrial complex. Billions of dollars which should be spent on raising the living standards and quality of life of its citizens are diverted to the production of weapons of mass destruction. The reckless drive for profits threatens the ecological balance and the environment.

1.16 In Europe, there is a growth in the influence of extreme right-wing parties in the recent period. In France, Belgium, Austria and Spain rightwing parties have gained ground. In Germany, France and Belgium racist attacks have increased on immigrants. Neo-nazi groups have become more active. After the unification of Germany, there have been hundreds of violent assaults on immigrants in Germany led by these groups. A striking feature which has manifested itself in the recent period is the dominance of the advanced capitalist countries over the international media and the monopoly they have established over the flow of information and the electronic media utilising the latest technology. This control has become a vital ideological weapon to be used against socialism and the progressive forces.

Validity of Social Contradictions

1.17 The big changes in the world situation do not nullify the theory of contradictions operating in the world today. The central contradictions between imperialism and socialism has witnessed further intensification which has manifested in the growing offensive against socialism. The method adopted by imperialism in its struggle against socialism is not direct military intervention but utilising the internal problems to concentrate on subversion of the socialist system. This contradiction has manifested in the present favourable situation for imperialism when a number of socialist countries have "peacefully" transformed themselves and are seeking to integrate back into the world capitalist system.

1.18 The drive for the domination of the third world reflects the need for imperialism to intensify exploitation in an allround manner to maintain its tempo of growth and development. The decade of 80s saw a steady deterioration of the position of the third world countries in international trade and the world economic order. The terms of trade for developing countries have steadily deteriorated in the last decade. The burden of debt is a major weapon for exploitation and subjugation. The total third world external debt stood at 1.32 trillion dollars by 1989 end. The total debt received by third world countries is now less than the debt service repayments. To ensure economic subjugation, now direct onslaughts are launched on the political sovereignty of independent third world countries. The invasion of Panama by US imperialism, the threats to other Latin American countries; the active intervention through financing counter-revolutions in Nicaragua, El Salvador, certain African countries and Afganistan; and above all the brutal war waged on Iraq and the humiliating conditions imposed on it through the Security Council—all portend a period when the contradiction between imperialism and the third world countries is bound to sharply intensify.

1.19 The inter-imperialist rivalries are assuming complex and contradictory forms. At the political level, the current dominance of the USA in the Western alliance is evident. In the conduct of the Gulf war, the USA was able to carry along its allies by pressures and bargaining. Even though Germany and Japan did not send troops they were made to contribute substantial funds to finance the war.

But this unity of purpose is not the underlying reality in the economic sphere. The period saw the continuation of the economic decline of the USA and the vitality and strength of the rival centres—Japan and Germany. The US has become the world's largest debtor and its growth has been financed by foreign investments and flow of funds. The current recessionary spell in world capitalism has been uneven—it hit the USA, but did not affect Germany and Japan though there has been a slowdown in their growth rates. The institution of the G7 summit meeting of the seven richest capitalist countries—has not been able to resolve the differences. At present the USA is demanding a cut in the interest rates by Germany which is being jointly resisted by both Germany and Japan. The failure of the GATT round of talks earlier in 1991 showed the sharp conflict of interests. The formation of an integrated Europe will further strengthen the centrifugal tendencies against US domination. But these conflicts and differences have been subordinated to the common interest of all the imperialist powers to launch their major offensive against socialism. The success achieved in this regard and the exploitation of the new markets to be opened up in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union will open up new areas of inter-imperialist rivalries in the future.

1.20 The decade of the 80s saw the big offensive of the imperialist ruling circles and big business against labour in the advanced capitalist countries. Technological upgradation, modernisation, anti-trade union policies, cuts in social security and high unemployment rates were the weapons used to intensify the exploitation of the working class. Despite these adverse circumstances, the trade union movement has gradually faced these attacks with innumerable struggles and strike actions in defence of the interests of the workers. In Britain, France, Japan, Germany and Italy there have been big strike struggles to protect the workers' gains and interests. The contradiction between capital and labour has assumed new complex forms. The absence of revolutionary organisation and socialist consciousness have also contributed to hampering the struggles being knit together for a broad left advance and democratic transformation.

1.21 An important area of revolutionary movements are the popular and democratic struggles in the third world countries which have adopted the capitalist path. These struggles are directed against the bourgeois-landlord regimes which exploit the

people. The ruling classes in many of these countries succumb to imperialist pressures because of the pursuit of the capitalist path and compromises with feudalism. With the relentless drive to transfer the burdens of the world capitalist crisis to the third world, the contradiction between these ruling classes and the people in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are bound to grow.

1.22 Our movement and struggles in India for democracy and social emancipation must be carried out in the background of these developments and their impact. We must firmly counter the massive propaganda unleashed by imperialism and its agencies in India that socialism is doomed, communism has no future and that capitalism is eternal and the last stage in social evolution. The entire course of 20th century history proves that capitalism cannot solve any of the basic problems of humanity. Under imperialism, billions go hungry, millions of children die of malnutrition and disease. In the advanced capitalist countries, unemployment, crime, racism and moral decay and the miserable plight of the East European countries show that capitalism is not the answer. The socialist system as it existed in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries showed the great potential of a superior system with many historic achievements to its credit such as full employment, housing, education, healthcare and social security for all.

1.23 We must in the face of the imperialist offensive heighten our solidarity with the socialist countries, with the third world countries determined to defend independence and social transformation; with the national liberation movements; with the working peoples' struggles in the capitalist countries and the forces of world peace. The CPI(M) is pledged to fulfill its internationalist duties by mobilising all sections of the Indian people in the struggle against imperialism.

NATIONAL SITUATION

2.1 The 13th Party Congress had noted the "growing instability of the economic order established after independence. It has imposed tremendous misery on all sections of toiling people and unleashed spontaneous mass discontent extending all over the country. The discontent is often diverted into wrong channels although the objective causes are everywhere the same." The period since the 13th Congress further confirms this assessment.

Instability permeates the political system due to the crisis in the bourgeois-landlord order which was subjected to such severe strains as never before since independence.

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS SINCE LAST CONGRESS

2.2 The significant changes since the last Congress are as follows:

(a) The country entered a period of political instability with two general elections in quick succession. This reflects the accentuation of the crisis in the bourgeois-landlord system which gripped all spheres—economic, political and social. The Congress(I) lost power in the 1989 elections. The National Front Government dependent on the support of the Left Parties and the BJP from outside could last only eleven months. This was followed by the minority defectors' Government installed by the Congress(I) which lasted barely six months. The Congress(I) could not get a majority in 1991 elections also. This shows the further erosion of the Congress(I) support base. The two elections led to a situation in which single party majority rule at the Centre was not possible. This marked a significant break from the long period of one party dominance.

(b) The crisis is also manifested in the continuing threat to national unity which has become a central issue. The intensification of the separatist and terroristic activities in Kashmir and Punjab with the backing of imperialism, is the gravest challenge to Indian unity. The basic bourgeois-landlord approach and policies are failing to resolve the chronic problems of national unity. Centre-state relations are reaching an impasse.

(c) In the new world situation imperialist pressures are mounting on India with the divisive and communal forces facilitating their penetration. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi was part of destabilisation. Along side, there are the intensified imperialist pressures to further open up India to foreign and multinational capital. The weakened position of the ruling classes has made them adopt major economic steps succumbing to the imperialist IMF pressures. The new economic measures of the Narasimha Rao Government endanger the economic sovereignty of the country.

(d) The period since the last Congress has witnessed an unprecedented offensive of the communal forces. The Congress(I) adopted a policy of compromising with these forces. The spate of riots, the biggest since partition, Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, the communalisation of state institutions and the consciousness of

sections of society, the erosion of secular values—all pose a serious threat. This was reflected in the electoral gains of the BJP in the ninth and tenth general elections. The growth of majority communalism further aggravates the situation in Punjab and Kashmir by encouraging the separatist forces. The aggressive designs of Hindu communalism strengthens minority fundamentalism.

(e) The announcement by the N.F. government of the implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendation of 27 per cent reservation of jobs in Central services for backward classes led to a widespread anti-reservation movement. This violent agitation, particularly in the North, resulted in hundreds of deaths and large-scale destruction of property. Both the Congress(I) and the BJP actively supported the agitation which sought to protect the vested interests of the upper-caste sections.

(f) The major secular opposition combination, the National Front, has been working with the Left. But the Janata Dal-National Front is not a stable and cohesive entity; it is riven by dissensions both on policy and personality issues. The factional quarrels in the Janata Dal, its compromising attitude towards the BJP for some time and the absence of sustained mass mobilisation on the temple-mosque controversy enabled the Congress(I) to split the Janata Dal. The BJP treacherously withdrew support to the N.F. government and the Congress(I) joined hands with it. This brought about the downfall of the V.P. Singh Government and the installation of the minority defectors' government of Chandra Shekhar at the centre which played havoc in both foreign and internal policies. This paved the way for the further growth of the communal forces, particularly the BJP.

(g) The Left could increase its prestige and maintain its strength in this period due to its consistent fight against the separatist and communal forces and its firm defence of democracy and economic sovereignty. The Left parties have been working more unitedly. The CPI(M) and the Left were successful in securing the support of the Janata Dal and the National Front to fight both the Congress(I) and the BJP. It is significant that for the first time a bourgeois combination at the national level came out openly declaring for an alliance with the Left.

(h) In spite of its weakening, the Congress(I) continues to display authoritarian trends. It particularly attacks the CPI(M) and the Left. The continuing terror in Tripura and the attacks on the

National Front-Left after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination show this. Its proclivity to subvert state institutions and the democratic rights of states was seen in its connivance in dismissing the Tamil Nadu Government and the role of the Chief Election Commissioner in the last elections.

(i) The social effects of the bourgeois-landlord crisis is being directly experienced and felt by the most vulnerable sections of society—the tribals, the dalits, the rural and urban poor. The criminalisation of politics, all pervading corruption, rise of mafia gangs, landlord-goonda armies and atrocities on dalits and women are making the life of the poor and the defenceless miserable. Booth capturing and using criminals to rig elections have become widespread in some states depriving citizens of their fundamental right to vote. The life and property of ordinary citizens are threatened by the serious deterioration of law and order. All civilised norms are flouted with the moral decay and corruption of society.

DANGEROUS ECONOMIC SITUATION

2.3 The policy of liberalisation wantonly pursued by the Rajiv Gandhi regime has come home to roost. The country's unprecedented balance of payments crisis is the direct result of the policies of the import liberalisation, concessions to foreign capital and accepting the IMF-World Bank prescriptions. These and the all round crisis have led to further pressures to privatise the economy, dismantle the public sector, open the doors indiscriminately to foreign capital and to scrap restrictions on the growth of monopolies.

2.4 A further rightward shift has taken place with the gamut of economic policies adopted by the Narasimha Rao Government within the space of four weeks of coming to power. The 20 per cent devaluation of the rupee; the new trade policies; mortgage of gold, the proposals in the Union budget and the new industrial policy together represent a reversal of the limited policy of self-reliance and the industrial policy worked out in the fifties. The new economic policy reflects the imperialist sponsored dominant world trend of privatisation, abolition of public sector and "integration with the global economy." Sections of the bourgeoisie, intellectuals and the media are supportive of these right-wing policies. The economic policies of the National Front Government did not make a break with the old Congress(I) economic policies. Some of the

proposed measures reflected the continuation of the economic liberalisation. The Chandra Shekhar's defectors' government went further ahead in accepting the IMF dictates. This approach has been brazenly carried forward by the Congress(I) to go full steam ahead with the policy of submitting to the IMF conditionalities.

2.5 The going in for further IMF loans with the fulfilment of the conditionalities, will lead India into a debt trap and undermine economic sovereignty. India has already an external debt of over Rs. 1.8 lakh crores and an internal debt of around Rs. 2.4 lakh crores. Its annual external debt servicing is now 31 per cent of its export earnings. India has become the third largest debtor in the third world after Brazil and Mexico. An increasing portion of this debt from the period of Rajiv Government is in the form of commercial borrowings with high interest rates. The Narasimha Rao government is now seeking an IMF loan under the Extended Fund Facility or the Extended Structural Adjustment Facility which will lead to the direct regulation and supervision of the Indian economy for three years by the IMF under humiliating conditions.

2.6 The liberal concessions to foreign capital and the multinational corporations in the new industrial policy will adversely affect self-reliance and endanger economic sovereignty. The policy provides for automatic clearance of 51 per cent of foreign equity capital in 34 industries. Further, a high power board has been constituted to negotiate with the big multinational companies and all but 18 industries are now open to them. The government has declared that hundred per cent equity will also be favourably considered. The flow of foreign investment will primarily be in the elite consumption goods sector for the domestic market which will further distort the direction of the economy. Import of technology will not be geared to meet our priority needs but the requirements of multinational investments in pursuit of quick profits. The Bush Administration is blatantly pressurising the government with the threat of trade sanctions to amend the Indian Patent Law and to accept its version of intellectual property rights. Further, it wants free entry for the transnational corporations into India's insurance and banking sectors. The GATT negotiations are also being used to make India accede to these demands. The weakening resistance of the Congress(I) Government to these pressures leads to the danger of multinationals' penetration in new areas of the economy.

2.7 The new policy is a bonanza for the big bourgeoisie and will

work against the small and medium sectors. The virtual dismantling of the MRTP and the delicensing is geared to meet the monopolists' demand for greater scope for investments of the surplus capital. The Indian big bourgeoisie has fattened in the past four decades due to the pro-monopoly policies of the Congress(I). The total assets of the 20 big industrial houses which was Rs. 8,987 crores in 1981 increased to Rs. 41,523 crores in 1989-90, a five-fold increase. In the recent years the private corporate sector has increased its profits and assets substantially and now demands for more privatisation and for cutting down the public sector. The new industrial policy accepts this demand by reducing the public sector to a handful of sectors such as mining, defence, atomic energy and railways. The dismantling of the public sector would mean the end of a self-reliant path and the development of indigenous research and development. The pro-monopoly policies are harming the small-scale sector by allowing the former entry into areas meant for small enterprises. While it is true that the new economic policy favours the Indian monopoly capital vis-a-vis a small medium capital, it is also to be borne in mind that the indiscriminate liberalisation of imports of capital, technology and commodities under imperialism is bound to generate conflicts between western monopoly capital and the Indian big bourgeoisie.

2.8 The privatisation drive is anti-worker and triggers unemployment. In the period 1985-1989, employment in the private sector went up by a mere 32,000 while in the private manufacturing sector it actually declined. The exit policy being fashioned under the guidance of the IMF and World Bank will spell the end for the 2.4 lakh sick units which will not be revived throwing lakhs of workers out of jobs; it does not lead to employment oriented development. Such a policy is profoundly anti-people when unemployment in the country is steadily mounting. The registered unemployed in the employment exchanges has crossed the 35 million mark. It is estimated that with the backlog of the Seventh Plan and the new entrants, 65 million jobs have to be created during the Eighth Plan period.

2.9 The fiscal and the budgetary policies of the government are a naked attempt to pass off the crisis on the people. The Union budget of 1991 has not increased direct taxes but heaps fresh indirect taxes on the people. The burgeoning budget deficits passes the burden on to the common people through inflation. The 20 per

cent devaluation of the rupee and the indirect taxation and administered price hike have set the stage for both high inflation and stagnation. Belying all the false claims of the government, the prices of all essential commodities are galloping and the annual inflation rate of wholesale prices in 1991 is nearly 50 per cent more than the previous year.

2.10 The agrarian situation is marked by immense suffering for the rural poor and deterioration in the conditions of the peasantry. Despite three successive good harvests the per capita consumption of foodgrains is stagnating for the past decade and in the case of pulses it has declined substantially. This reveals the pauperisation of the vast section of the rural poor and the landless. On the other hand, the landlords and upper sections of the peasants are able to garner all the benefits of the state policy with regard to credit, subsidised inputs and price fluctuations. The plight of the agricultural workers is the worst with the Central government refusing to enact an all India legislation to protect their minimum wages and social security benefits. In the case of commercial crops, the vagaries of capitalist pricing mechanism periodically pauperises the poorest sections of the peasantry who are forced to resort to distress sales. Less than half the potential for irrigation is utilised. An important section of the rural working force, the rural artisans and those working in traditional industries like coir, beedies and handlooms are being squeezed by the policy of rampant liberalisation and encouragement to big traders and capitalists. The doors have been opened for imperialist/MNC penetration with the seeds policy and joint ventures in agro-processing industry like the Pepsi Cola project. Much of the funds allotted for rural development schemes like IRDP, RLEGP, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana are siphoned off by corrupt bureaucrats and contractors with just a trickle reaching the really deserving.

2.11 The crux of the agrarian problem, the implementation of land reforms, has been studiously ignored by the centre and all state governments except those led by the Left. It is a telling indictment of bourgeois-landlord policy that of the total surplus land distributed all over the country, 20 per cent of it is accounted for by West Bengal alone. Even tenancy legislation goes unimplemented and land records remain uncorrected inspite of repeated promises made by the government. Only 1.4 per cent of the total cultivated area has been distributed so far. It is this glaring fact

which is at the heart of the agrarian crisis in the country. For the emancipation of the mass of the peasantry, and to abolish the poverty which afflicts the rural population, there is no basic solution but land reforms.

2.12 There is an alternative path to the IMF dictated pro-imperialist, pro-monopoly, pro-landlord policies. Such a comprehensive alternative policy has been clearly spelt out by the CPI(M) and the Left parties. This policy has been fashioned after wide discussions, the latest being the convention organised in defence of economic sovereignty by the Left parties in July 1991. It has also been spelt out in the alternative policy document prepared by the West Bengal Government in the same month. The alternative approach requires bringing down the fiscal deficit through increased and direct taxation and the reduction in inessential government expenditure. Loopholes in the tax laws should be plugged. Black money in circulation is estimated at Rs. one lakh crore which should be curbed through punitive measures. Wealth taxes should be imposed on the monopoly houses that have built up huge assets. The adoption of these measures will reduce the revenue and fiscal deficits and reverse the trend of relying on indirect taxes and administered price hikes to garner additional revenues at the expense of the common people.

2.13 The public sector must continue to be given prominence in the strategic industries; steps must be taken to eliminate inefficient and bureaucratic management with workers' participation in management. The policy of indiscriminate imports of capital goods and technology for luxury goods production must end. Import of high technology must be confined to those vital sectors essential for the development of the economy. Main emphasis should be on developing self-reliance and indigenous R & D. The priority task should be implementation of radical land reforms. This together with rural employment guarantee schemes are the basic steps to expand the home market. Measures are to be taken to provide relief to the poor in the period of economic difficulty. The public distribution system covering 14 essential commodities of daily life must be expanded and targeted for the rural poor. There has to be a sizeable expansion of schemes for employment generation and poverty alleviation. These must go along with expanding primary education, literacy and health care for people. For implementing these measures effectively there has to be greater decentralisation

of powers from the centre to the states and down below to the panchayat level.

FOREIGN POLICY

2.14 So, far, over the years, successive governments have pursued a basic policy of non-alignment and taken mainly correct positions in support of national liberation movements and world peace. But the changed international situation and the domestic economic policies pursued to meet the crisis are endangering the basic foreign policy postulates. During the Rajiv regime, some steps were taken for defence production in collaboration with the U.S. A serious break was seen when the Chandra Shekhar's minority government took the shocking stand of allowing U.S. warplanes to refuel at Indian airports. This was the first major policy decision which grossly violated the nonaligned foreign policy.

2.15 Now with the Narasimha Rao Government getting deeper into the IMF-World Bank quagmire, the pressures to shift and change foreign policy have mounted. The President's address to the budget session in July 1991 showed no awareness to reorient and strengthen non-aligned movement in the face of the dramatic changes in the world. With the negative developments in the Soviet Union, a pillar of support for the non-aligned orientation of India has disappeared. There are more vociferous demands from domestic reactionary circles also to adopt a pro-U.S. and western orientation on grounds of real politik. The turn away from self-reliance and recourse to foreign capital and privatisation helps imperialism to further pressurise India which is becoming manifest in the recent shifts in foreign policy positions. India voted along with the Western powers to rescind the U.N. resolution in the General Assembly characterising Zionism as a form of racism. Further the Rao Government refused to back Cuba in the United Nations for its resolution calling for the end of the US economic blockade of the country. India is being pressurised to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty by the U.S. More dangerously, the Congress(I) government is now engaged in negotiating a deeper military collaboration with the USA by setting up a Joint Steering Committee for military training and joint exercises. A major struggle lies ahead for the Left and democratic forces to fight back this pro-imperialist pressure and ensure that India's foreign policy retains its non-aligned basis. A basis which must be oriented to ward off the

strengthened imperialist pressures on all third world countries, including India, which is a major target. Only such a policy will help India to retain its independent role in world affairs and protect economic sovereignty.

RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBOURS

2.16 India-China relations : There is a growing realisation of the need for improved relations with China. It has acquired added importance in the new international situation. A positive policy in this regard has been pursued during the last few years and progress registered. The recent visit of Chinese Premier Li Peng to India has strengthened this process. Further initiatives are required for improvement of relations including the settlement of the border dispute. This will help India in saving defence expenditure and concentrating on economic development. The strengthening of mutual ties between the two big Asian neighbours will contribute to world peace and assist in resisting imperialist pressures.

2.17 Sri Lanka : President Premadasa's policy on the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka has proved disastrous. It has served the imperialist interests in this region. Instead of the sincere implementation of the terms of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord, the Sri Lankan Government pursued a policy of encouraging the LTTE to crush the other Tamil groups to the sabotage the North Eastern Provincial Council. Subsequently, it stepped up its attacks on the LTTE and sought to rouse Sinhala chauvinism. The military conflict in the northern part is taking a heavy toll of lives of the civilian population. The ethnic conflict helps imperialism to further penetrate Sri Lanka. It has serious repercussions in our country, particularly Tamilnadu. The only rational solution to the ethnic problem is for a political settlement on the lines suggested in the accord whereby the Tamil areas are given due autonomy within the framework of Sri Lankan unity. The Government of India must make all diplomatic efforts for a solution on the lines of the Accord.

2.18 Pakistan : US imperialism continues to instigate Pakistan to foment trouble in Kashmir and Punjab. At the time of the last Party Congress, some hopes were raised by the restoration of the democratic set-up in Pakistan. It was expected that relations will improve between the two neighbours. But, unfortunately, this did not materialise. After the dismissal of Ms. Bhutto's government and fresh elections, the government of Nawab Sharief was formed, backed by the combination of rightist forces. This has aggravated

the situation with the present government intensifying its intervention in Kashmir and Punjab, and even dismissing the government of so-called Azad Kashmir. The Jamat-e-Islami is being utilised in Kashmir to foster Muslim fundamentalism. There must be a consistent effort to improve relations and solve mutual disputes on the basis of the Shimla agreement.

2.19 Bangladesh : After prolonged struggle the people of Bangladesh achieved a big victory by ending the authoritarian military rule of General Ershad and the holding of elections. The parliamentary form of government has been restored and the presidential system abolished. This should strengthen the democratic trends. It is vital that the new set up in Bangladesh adheres to the secular outlook. It should take steps to check large-scale illegal migration to India. The CPI(M) will continue to extend solidarity with the Left and democratic forces in Bangladesh.

2.20 Nepal : The people and Left and democratic forces of Nepal scored a historic victory with the restoration of parliamentary democracy in the country. The united movement led by the Nepali Congress and the Left, with the massive participation of the people, succeeded in defeating the pro-monarchy forces and the creation of a new constitution. In the elections to the Nepal Assembly, the United Communist Party (ML) won 69 seats and 14 more seats were won by other Left parties out of a total of 204 seats. The restoration of parliamentary democracy is a very significant development in the region which can help in further improving relations between our two countries on the basis of equality.

2.21 Afghanistan : Afghanistan is still struggling for the restoration of peace and normalcy. Pakistan, backed by U.S. imperialism, has been sabotaging the Geneva agreement arrived at for establishing peace. Different Mujahideen groups supported by Pakistan are refusing to accept the proposals by U.N. mediators. The Government of India must make all diplomatic efforts to ensure that the agreements arrived at, are adhered to and support mobilised for President Najibullah's proposal for a coalition government.

2.22 Bhutan and Burma: Bhutan is a small country where a large number of immigrant Nepalis are settled. The denial of democratic rights and equal status are causing tensions and many have been forced to leave the country. It is imperative that all ethnic groups are given equal treatment and democratic rights so that the integrity and independence of Bhutan is preserved. In Burma, the ruling

military junta has refused to accept the verdict of the elections held in 1991 and hand over power to an elected government. It is brutally suppressing the movement for restoration of democracy. The CPI(M) extends its support to the struggle for democracy in Burma (Myanmar).

2.23 The CPI(M) considers it vital to ensure that India's foreign policy remains one of non-alignment with a clear-cut anti-imperialist orientation. The adverse Soviet developments will have its negative impact on our country's external relations. The Party should mobilise the people and all political circles to ensure that the foreign policy is oriented to defence of non-alignment, strengthening bonds with third world countries, south-south cooperation, friendly relations with neighbouring countries, and close ties with forces of world peace, the third world countries and socialist countries. The Party has to firmly expose all imperialist attacks on third world countries and national liberation movements. It expresses its firm solidarity with the fighting people of Palestine, South Africa and Western Sahara. The CPI(M) will insist that the Government of India take a stand on the integrity and sovereignty of Iraq and oppose all moves to subject Iraq and its people to humiliating conditions including blockade of food and medical supplies. It extends its full support to the progressive forces in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile and other Latin American countries who are struggling against imperialist intervention and neo-colonialist exploitation. The Party extends support to the struggle for democracy in Burma (Myanmar). The Party works for developing warm relations between India and China and for strengthening the bonds with all other socialist countries. It stands for firm defence of socialist Cuba against imperialist provocations.

GRAVE THREATS TO NATIONAL UNITY

2.24 The policies of the successive bourgeois-landlord governments at the Centre have failed to stem the threats to national unity emanating from the secessionist forces who are operating from across the borders backed by imperialism. For nearly a decade the Central Government has been treating this problem merely from the point of view of law and order instead of going to the root cause of the alienation, and creating conditions by which the patriotic feelings of the people are roused and the genuine demands met. If a further drift is allowed the situation will go out of hand. The balkanisation trends which developed in the Soviet Union and the

break up of the USSR in its old form, will have a direct impact on the nationality problem in India. The CPI(M) has consistently advocated a consensus on issues concerning national unity which are of great importance for the very future of the country.

2.25 Kashmir : The situation in Kashmir is extremely serious. Large sections of the people are totally alienated from the Indian state and apprehensive about their identity due to the long years of misrule by the Central Government. The depredations of the secessionist forces have led to large scale migration of the minority community. The CPI(M) has repeatedly stated that the situation cannot be tackled merely on the basis of army and the para-military forces. It is necessary for the government to differentiate between those forces who are fighting for their identity and those advocating Muslim fundamentalism and accession to Pakistan. The demand for scrapping of Article 370 of the Constitution by the BJP must be exposed. More autonomy has to be provided for the state and regional autonomy for Jammu and Ladakh regions.

2.26 Punjab : The ruling party has so far proved incapable of learning the lessons of its disastrous policies in Punjab which were motivated by petty political considerations. Lack of a principled approach to this biggest challenge to national unity and opportunist manoeuvres have led to the growing offensive of Khalistani extremists. The tragic toll in Punjab runs into thousands of human lives. The necessity of a political solution has to be repeatedly emphasised. The just demands of the Punjabi people contained in the Rajiv-Longowal Accord must be implemented immediately. Unlike in Kashmir, the overall majority of people are not swayed by the slogan of Khalistan. It is imperative that they are politically mobilised to isolate the terrorists. The coming elections to the State Assembly will be a major test for the patriotic and secular forces and those committed to national unity to unitedly face the challenge of the extremists backed by imperialism.

2.27 Assam : The situation in Assam remains abnormal and was made more complicated by the connivance and inaction towards violence unleashed by the ULFA during the AGP Government's tenure. After the short spell of the President's Rule and the deployment of the army, the Congress(I) Government formed after the elections has followed an indecisive and vacillating policy. Killings, kidnappings and extortions have become common occurrences. The bungling by the Saikia Government and the Centre is

evident from the fact that the army was redeployed to meet the ULFA menace. As against the ULFA's demand for independence, all parties in Assam including the regional ones have expressed themselves against the separation of Assam. There has to be a serious effort to address the problems of the economic backwardness and regional imbalances in the state. The discontent and the struggle for the identity of the tribal people must be sympathetically considered and maximum regional autonomy should be granted to the contiguous tribal region. The CPI(M) will struggle uncompromisingly against terrorism and separatism while championing the genuine demands of the people of Assam, the rights of minorities and fostering the unity of all sections.

CPI(M) IN DEFENCE OF NATIONAL UNITY

2.28 The Party has emerged as the most consistent defender and champion of national unity. This is proved by the record of the 1980s. In Punjab, Tripura, Assam, Darjeeling and Kashmir, our Party units and cadres were in the forefront for the struggle against separatist and divisive forces. Hundreds of our comrades sacrificed their lives for the cause of national unity. The saga of heroic struggle by our comrades in Punjab continues. Valuable cadres have laid down their lives in the battle against the Khalistani terrorists, in many cases their families being martyred along with them. It is a matter of pride that not a single comrade has deserted his post. In Tripura, the battle to maintain the unity of the tribal and Bengali people is being conducted by our Party courageously in the difficult conditions of semi-fascist terror. In Darjeeling, the Party cadres are alert to foil efforts to disturb peace and to preserve the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council set up by the Left Front Government. The small unit of the Party in Kashmir refused to succumb to the dictates of the secessionist forces. The Party in Tamil Nadu has been consistently condemning the violent and disruptive activities of the LTTE. This courageous and consistent defence of national unity emanates from the standpoint of a working class party which defends the unity of the people and the class and thereby takes an uncompromising attitude on preserving the unity of the country. The Party's line on national unity has enhanced its prestige and standing among the people. Along with the Left and democratic forces, the struggle to defend national unity must be carried forward with greater vigour.

DANGER FROM STRENGTHENED COMMUNALISM

2.29 The warning by the Thirteenth Congress of the growing menace of communal and fundamentalist forces, has proved correct. The three-year period since then saw this threat grow in serious proportions. At no time since independence, was the communal polarisation so sharp and the threat to secularism so grave. Centering on the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, the VHP, RSS and their allied organisations launched a systematic and virulent campaign directing their ire at the minority community. This was supplemented by the BJP campaign against "pseudosecularism" which actually is an assault on the secular basis of our polity. The Congress(I) government in 1989 compromised secular principles by allowing shilanyas at the disputed site at Ayodhya.

2.30 The stepping up of the agitation for building the temple at Ayodhya by the VHP with October 31, 1990 as the deadline and the BJP directly plunging into the movement by launching Advani's rathyatra were the signals for widespread communal riots. The assumption to office of the defectors' government headed by Chandra Shekhar and its refusal to confront the VHP-BJP challenge only fanned the flames further. What happened is a blot on India's image. Gonda, Agra, Aligarh, Bulandshahr, Khurja, Etah, Kanpur were some of the worst affected districts. Outside U.P., horrific riots took place in Hyderabad, Jaipur, and in several towns of Gujarat and Karnataka. A disturbing feature was the large number of industrial centres which were affected.

BJP GAINS

2.31 The political manifestation of this poisonous propaganda and its impact was seen in the tenth general elections when the BJP and its Shiv Sena ally won 123 seats in Parliament and polled 20 per cent of the vote. It came second in 128 seats. It also scored a major victory by winning the U.P. Assembly elections and forming a government there. More disturbingly, the BJP could substantially improve its votes in some other states including West Bengal.

2.32 These elections saw, for the first time, a section of the big bourgeoisie openly backing and financing the BJP to create an alternative to the Congress(I). The BJP attracted support from many retired army and defence officers which bodes ill for the integrity of the armed forces. The BJP was able to gain new sections of the middle classes and intelligentsia in the urban areas apart

from penetrating rural areas. The BJP cloaks its aggressive Hindu chauvinism with a nationalist appeal. The Ekta Yatra is meant for national unity but is actually directed against the minorities. It propagates the abolition of Article 370 of the Constitution for Jammu and Kashmir on the plea of containing secessionism whereas the scrapping of this provision will only alienate the people of Kashmir further and help the secessionists to strengthen their hold.

2.33 The passing of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act which guarantees the maintenance of the status quo as on August 15, 1947 of all other religious places of worship except the disputed shrine at Ayodhya will be helpful in countering the nefarious moves of the VHP and other communal forces to open new controversies and agitations to disturb communal amity. The CPI(M) took the initiative to get this bill passed which was promised in the election manifestoes of the National Front, Congress(I) and the Left parties, by moving a private members bill in the Lok Sabha on the subject.

2.34 The VHP has announced its intention to go ahead with the temple construction at Ayodhya utilising the existence of the BJP Government. The state government issued a notification to acquire land at Ayodhya which includes portions of the disputed site. This illegal order is designed to help the VHP in its plans to begin construction. All the secular and democratic forces must be firm in opposing such a move. The Central Government must make it clear that it will not allow any alteration of the status quo at the disputed site at Ayodhya. The Ayodhya dispute involves the religious sentiments of people of both communities. There is no other way to solve the dispute than by negotiations by both sides to find a solution, or, failing which, abiding by the court verdict before whom the case lies. Any other method, of resorting to force in violation of the court directives would be tantamount to accepting the supremacy of religious passions over the law and destroying the secular fabric.

2.35 The CPI(M) will firmly defend the rights of the minorities and protect them from the ravages of communal riots. The CPI(M) wants an end to the discrimination practised against the Muslim minority in education, jobs and social security facilities. The struggle of the deprived masses belonging to minorities, will advance only when they are able to join and participate in the common movements of the different sections of the working people. The feelings

of insecurity and discrimination of the Muslims are used by fundamentalist leaders to foster exclusivity and obscurantism. These hinder the progress of the oppressed Muslim masses. The CPI(M) is opposed to the fundamentalist forces in the minority community who, in the name of religion, wish to keep women deprived of equality. The CPI(M) will resolutely fight majority communalism; it is committed to oppose the Khalistani fanatics and the Jamait-e-Islami fundamentalists who are active in Kashmir and all forms of religious obscurantism and communalism which disrupts the common interests and unity of the people.

2.36 The exposure of the dismal record of the BJP state governments is essential. In Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh, the two-year record of these governments show that they are essentially no different in economic policies from the earlier Congress(I) governments. The additional new factor is their anti-minority character and open encouragement to majority communalism. These governments, in line with the BJP thinking, are going ahead with privatisation of state undertakings and adopting anti-working class policies. They refuse to take up land reforms. The Madhya Pradesh government has become notorious for its mass transfer of employees for political reasons, for its patronage of big contractors and big businessmen. The discontent generated by these governments' performance was seen in the last Lok Sabha election. In U.P., the short record of the Kalyan Singh Government is marked by non-performance. The law and order situation has sharply deteriorated and the government has failed to provide relief to the drought affected peasantry and the earth-quake affected areas. In the first major communal riot in Varanasi under the BJP government the police and administration were nakedly used against the minorities. The people are realising in these states that a BJP Government means a capitalist-landlord-traders nexus and increasing communalisation of society. At the national level, the rightwing reactionary class character of the BJP has to be fully exposed before the people. It is unashamedly supporting all the pro-monopoly, privatisation policies of the Narasimha Rao government including the scuttling of the public sector.

CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS

2.37 The last four decades have seen the twin trends of capitalist development heightening regional imbalances and uneven development and the growth of a centre with authoritarian tendencies

and concentration of powers which have aggravated the nationalities question. The prolonged and adamant refusal by the successive Congress(I) Governments to reform centre-state relations has aggravated the problems of separatism. They have refused to implement even the Sarkaria Commission recommendations. Instead, the drive to concentrate all powers at the centre and to function an authoritarian set-up has fuelled separatism and regional chauvinism. Article 356 is blatantly and repeatedly misused—the latest instance being the dismissal of the DMK Government in Tamil Nadu which had with its allies a two-thirds majority. This dismissal by the centre was done bypassing the Governor.

2.38 The partisan use of Governors, the discrimination against state governments run by other parties, the steady erosion of the states' financial and resource mobilisation powers—all these are the products of Congress(I)'s authoritarian outlook. Freight equalisation discriminates against the eastern states; the recent decision that coal producing states cannot levy a cess has led to the loss of hundreds of crores of rupees revenue for states like Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa. The National Front Government, in the short period of its rule, tried to adopt a different posture to the states and not pursue confrontationist policies. It also set-up the Inter-States Council as provided for in Constitution. As for decentralisation of powers below the state government level, the Congress(I) governments have been inimical to such moves. Only the Left Front government of West Bengal has decentralised powers to the zila-parishads and panchayats. The LDF government in Kerala constituted the District Councils in the state after holding elections for the first time.

2.39 It should be understood that without a radical restructuring of centre-state relations, states, autonomy in legitimate spheres and democratic decentralisation of powers, the just aspirations of the different peoples in a complex country like India cannot be fulfilled. A broad-based movement to demand changes in centre-state relations and for a federal structure must be mounted. Without this, solutions to the problems of national unity—the problems in Punjab, Assam and Kashmir—cannot be found.

ISSUE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

2.40 The National Front Government announced the implementation of the Mandal Commission report by reserving 27 per cent of jobs in the Central services for the backward classes. This step was

announced without consulting even the parties supporting the government. The Congress(I) and the BJP encouraged the anti-reservation movement pitting one section of the people against the other. The stand of the Party was clearly reiterated and enunciated in the election manifesto for the 1991 Tenth General Elections as follows :

2.41 "The CPI(M) has supported the implementation of the Mandal Commission report for reservation in jobs in Central services for the backward classes. It is a step towards social justice which will provide some opportunities for those socially backward due to the oppressive caste structure for entering employment in the state sector. The CPI(M) opposes any move to scuttle reservations and wants this benefit to reach the really deserving sections amongst the backward classes. The CPI(M) has suggested that the Karpoori Thakur formula, in force in Bihar for over a decade, should be the basis for evolving an acceptable consensus for ensuring the implementation of reservation for backward classes. The CPI(M) fully recognises that the poorer sections within upper castes also require relief.

2.42 "The CPI(M) while supporting reservation as a measure for advancing social justice, wishes to stress that the mass of the rural poor in the backward communities will find their basic problems addressed to only through radical land reforms and the elimination of feudal relations in the villages by speedy industrialisation of the country. Common struggles of all sections of the toiling people of all communities are necessary to change the present socio-economic order. Any attempt to oppose reservation by upper caste vested interests or to project reservations in such a manner as to perpetuate caste divisions are detrimental to unity of the toiling people and must be shunned."

2.43 The announcement of a new formula by the Narasimha Rao Government conforms to the above stand taken by the Party. It has retained the 27 per cent reservation for the OBCs and introduced an economic criteria so that the poorer sections get preference. If the vacancies are not filled up within the criteria, then it will be open to other members within the OBCs. Ten per cent reservation has been provided for the poor of the other communities. All efforts must be made to ensure that the issue is resolved on this basis and disruptive agitations prevented so that caste divisions are not perpetuated.

SCHEDULED CASTES : STRUGGLE FOR ASSERTION

2.44 The vicious attacks and atrocities on scheduled castes, particularly the landless agricultural labour, continue unabated. The Chundur killings in Andhra, the massacres in Bihar and widespread attacks on dalits in M.P., Rajasthan, U.P. and Maharashtra indicate the upper caste and feudal outlook which dominates vast sections of society. These attacks have been spurred by the growing awakening and assertiveness of the dalit sections to stand up for their rights and not to accept caste humiliations. The leadership of some scheduled caste organisations and dalit parties like the BSP seeks to keep the masses following them away from common struggle and class issues and erect sectarian barriers. The Party must adopt tactics to reach out to these masses and for united activities with those dalit organisations who are willing for joint actions.

2.45 The approach of the Congress(I) and bourgeois parties so far has been to dangle the bait of reservation of jobs. Except for a thin strata, the bulk of the scheduled caste masses living in the rural areas have found no salvation. Their growing anger and will to resist are now sought to be suppressed by naked violence and physical terror. The formal approach of the government to check atrocities by promises to enforce the law, has proved futile. In order to ensure that laws are effective there has to be a powerful movement to end caste oppression. The CPI(M) and the Left's championing of social justice has made the scheduled castes more receptive to Left policies. The Party must champion and fight for the rights of the dalit sections which is an integral part of the struggle to abolish the old feudal relations in the villages.

FIGHT FOR TRIBAL PEOPLE'S RIGHT

2.46 The worst sufferers of the exploitative and iniquitous social system are the five crore tribal people. They are subject to the bondage of feudal exploitation by big contractors and landlords and also the rapacious capitalist exploitation which are converting them into semi-slaves. Driven off their traditional lands and denied forest access, and their traditional way of life brutally disrupted, they are easy prey and cheap labour for the contractors in the mines and forests. Tribal women are sexually exploited and sold as chattel. The brunt of the displacement in big development projects have been borne by the tribal people.

2.47 The Party stands for the defence of the rights of the tribal

people. A major demand concerns protection of their identity and social and cultural rights. This requires setting up of regional autonomous councils wherever necessary with adequate powers in areas of contiguity of tribal population where they are in a majority. Such an autonomous council is required in the tribal contiguous majority areas of South Bihar which goes by the name of Jharkhand; similarly the Bodo people's struggle for autonomy must be recognised and steps taken to provide them regional autonomy. The relevant provisions in the Constitution can be amended and strengthened to provide adequate powers to these autonomous councils. The vast mass of the tribal people are outside the purview of the Left movement. They must be actively mobilised and organised against brutal exploitation and for the protection of their elementary rights. It is only when the CPI(M) can widen its appeal amongst the tribal peoples that the unity of the tribal and non-tribal oppressed sections be strengthened and the divisive and separatist forces contained.

WOMEN'S STRUGGLE FOR EMANCIPATION

2.48 The unequal status of women and the double oppression they suffer in contemporary Indian society, is highlighted daily by the reports of atrocities on women, particularly the most socially and economically oppressed sections. Crimes against women in the form of dowry deaths, rapes and molestation and trafficking in women are on the increase. Police personnel are often responsible for such crimes. The media, films and advertising portray women as sex-objects and demean their image. Women are forced to bear the brunt of the economic crisis being victims of the retrenchment of existing jobs and shrinking employment opportunities.

2.49 The women's movement has made steady progress in the recent years. The government fails to integrate in its developmental plans the creation of adequate economic opportunities for women and on the other refuses to accord due recognition to their work thereby marginalising the role of women in the economy and society. On the contrary, women are subject to discrimination, unequal wages and deprived of equal rights in property. The violation of Constitutional guarantees against discrimination and unequal treatment led to the joint women's movement for the setting up of a National Commission for Women. It met with success with the enacting of a law by Parliament during the tenure of National Front Government. However, the new Congress(I)

government has refused to implement this Act. The Party must actively help to develop the democratic women's movement which is essential for stimulating progressive social changes and widening the democratic movement.

TUSSLE BETWEEN THE BOURGEOISIE AND LANDLORDS

2.50 With the aggravation of the economic crisis, conflicts and tussles continue to break out between the bourgeoisie and landlords who are partners in the ruling alliance. Strong landlord lobbies are working to see that they would not have to share the burdens of the crisis, whereas the IMF prescriptions would mean sharing new burdens such as the hike in fertiliser prices, increase in electricity charges, water rates, etc. These are bound to be resisted by the landlord lobby. The landlord sections actively resist the implementation of land reforms.

2.51 The agricultural policy which the National Front government and the Chandra Shekhar government had formulated, showed no concern for the agricultural labourers and poor peasants and was solely meant to defend the interests of the landlords and richer sections of the peasantry. The whole emphasis was on technological advance on the pattern of the green revolution with more irrigation facilities, power and liberal allocation of credit, bypassing the main question of concentration of the land ownership. In the coming days, the severe economic crisis will see sharper conflicts and pulls and counter-pulls between the bourgeoisie and landlords with its inevitable manifestations in the political sphere.

2.52 The Party must work out such tactics as to intervene to gather the growing discontent of the peasantry, basing itself on the common interests of the peasants and with particular emphasis on the demands of the poor peasantry and agricultural labourers regarding land and wages. This is essential so that the landlord organisations do not mobilise the vast discontent for their narrow interests.

FOR A DEMOCRATIC EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

2.53 The new education policy brought into being by the Congress(1) Government in 1986 still continues to operate. It was a policy reinforcing the elitist bias in education; increasing the cost of education, denial of government responsibility and drive towards privatisation; centralisation of authority, erosion of the democratic rights of the academic community and formal delinkage between

education and employment. It created two streams—the navodaya schools, autonomous colleges, elite private institutions and centres of excellence and the other stream of ill-equipped institutions from the primary to the university level for the underprivileged. This profoundly anti-democratic policy has to be reversed.

2.54 The educational system is getting increasingly penetrated and run by communal, casteist and profiteering forces. The danger to the moulding of children's outlook by these forces has to be prevented. It is therefore necessary to fight for the state's responsibility in providing education for all and to check the rampant privatising and commercialising of education. A new dimension is the encouragement by the BJP-run state governments to erode the secular component in the education system.

2.55 For the past few years big movements by students, teachers and concerned intellectuals have taken place to scrap the new education policy. The Ramamurti Committee set up by the N.F. Government, submitted a report on educational reforms which contained some positive features. But this could not be brought into effect with the fall of that government. The Narasimha Rao Government plans to continue the new education policy.

CULTURE AND MASS MEDIA

2.56 The cultural field has not been immune to the resurgence of communal and obscurantist ideas. A major struggle has developed to defend secular values and the scientific temper amongst the intelligentsia. This struggle has to be carried forward more vigorously in the cultural sphere, as the erosion of secular consciousness has affected sections of the intelligentsia. The evolution of a democratic culture will depend on the success in this struggle. It is heartening that a large number of creative artists and writers have picked up the gauntlet against communalism, sectarian strife and in defence of democratic values. The protest movement and the spurt in democratic cultural activities after the heinous murder of Safdar Hashmi indicated this potential. The Party will work for and support a broad cultural movement propagating secular, democratic and progressive ideas as manifested in the creative expression of art and literature in the urban and rural areas.

2.57 The bourgeois media is used to systematically purvey decadent and elitist culture. Reactionary ideas imported from the western media are propagated to divert the attention of the readers and viewers from the real problems of society. Direct access to

spread these ideas to television viewers is now possible by satellite and cable T.V. Many of the press barons are bringing out periodicals which pander to the base instincts including pornographic material. A determined struggle has to be waged against them. The Prasar Bharati Act passed in 1990 was an important step to provide an independent status to the electronic media—television and radio. The Congress(I) Government is now bent upon bypassing this Act to restructure the official media and wishes to privatise and commercialise the electronic media. There is also a proposal to privatise the second channel. This move has to be foiled and the Prasar Bharati Corporation set up as envisaged in the Act.

THREATS TO DEMOCRACY

2.58 In the recent period there has been an increasing criminalisation of political and electoral activities encouraged by the bourgeois-landlord parties. Rigging of elections, intimidation by criminals recruited for the purpose, connivance of sections of the bureaucracy in electoral malpractices and massive use of black money are eating into the vitals of the electoral system. The blatant partisanship exhibited by the Chief Election Commissioner in the tenth general elections in Tripura and other places is an indication of the extent to which the institutions to safeguard parliamentary democracy are being subverted. The elementary right to vote is being snatched away from people in many areas by such criminal activities. The use of caste and communal appeal is vitiating the atmosphere further. Attacks on trade union rights are growing with the new economic measures of privatisation and liberalisation.

2.59 These dangerous trends have to be seriously combatted by all the Left and democratic forces if the parliamentary democratic system is to survive. Central to the question is the need for urgent electoral reforms. Proportional representation system with lists is one major reform which can eliminate much of the perversion of the popular mandate. Apart from this, the suggestions made by the Electoral Reforms Committee set up by the N. F. Government, in which all national parties were represented, must be considered when a legislation is brought.

RAMPANT CORRUPTION

2.60 All the efforts of the Congress(I) to bury the Bofors scandal, failed as evidence mounted to prove that crores of rupees were paid out as kick-backs into secret Swiss accounts. Another instance

of massive corruption and subversion has come to light with the BCCI scandal. This has wider ramifications as the bank's network is known to have acted as conduit for funds for terrorist outfits and also for money laundering operations for top personalities in the country. There has to be a relentless pressure built up for a thorough probe into the whole affair connected with Bombay branch of the bank by instituting a joint parliamentary committee which the government wants to evade.

2.61 The corruption generated by the use of black money by big business, the suborn and pay roll bureaucrats and politicians is well known. What is more disturbing is the invasion of corruption in the higher echelons of the judiciary, the latest instance being the charges against a sitting judge of the Supreme Court against whom an impeachment move was initiated by MPs in Parliament.

INNER-CONFLICTS IN THE CONGRESS(I)

2.62 The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi has created a sense of uncertainty in the party and affected its cohesion further. The long awaited organisational elections are yet to be held. The choice of a new leader saw jockeying and inner tussles. The writ of the High Command does not have any sanctity. In the states sharp tussles for ministerial berths and between factions for and against Chief Ministers are being openly conducted. Differences on policy issues such as secularism and self-reliance are beginning to manifest publicly. The growing isolation of the party and its failure to rise upto the serious challenges the country is facing, is bound to heighten the inner conflicts further.

ATTITUDE TO THE MINORITY

CONGRESS(I) GOVERNMENT

2.63 The general elections led once again to an unclear verdict. The Congress (I) Government in power is in a minority in the Lok Sabha. Such a tenuous political situation has come to exist in the background of the intolerable strains to national unity and the growing imperialist pressures to erode India's sovereignty; the economic situation threatens to destabilise the country further. The communal forces are out to disrupt unity and the BJP wishes to direct the discontent from the Congress(I)'s policies to strengthen itself.

2.64 The CPI(M), along with the Left and National Front parties, decided to function as an opposition force in Parliament. The Narasimha Rao Government has unfolded its dangerous eco-

conomic policies which are a serious onslaught on the people. The CPI(M) is pledged to oppose and fight back all anti-people policies within parliament and outside and vote against such measures in parliament. The CPI(M) is pledged to oppose and fight back all anti-people policies. The Party will have to stress the building of mass resistance and popular struggles against the onslaughts of the new economic policies.

CHANNEL DISCONTENT AGAINST GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON DEMOCRATIC LINES

2.65 In the coming days the new economic policies are going to worsen the situation for all sections of the working people. These will aggravate the contradiction between the ruling party and the people. The growing discontent will be sought to be diverted by the BJP and other disruptive forces into divisive channels. It has to be the foremost endeavour of the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic forces to direct this discontent into democratic channels by ceaselessly struggling and mobilising in defence of the interests of the working class and toiling people. The link between mass resistance to the anti-people policies of the Congress Government and the isolation of the BJP and communal forces must be understood since the BJP's economic platform is, in essence, the same as the Congress(I)'s—pro-big business and pro-landlord.

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES

2.66 The independent activities of the Party and mass organisations must be expanded and sustained on class and mass struggles. The degree of success we have in this task of building mass struggles and simultaneously keeping at bay the communal forces will determine the advance of the Left and democratic forces when the confrontation between the Congress(I) Government and the people develops.

STRIVE FOR UNDERSTANDING WITH SECULAR BOURGEOIS PARTIES

2.67 In order to carry forward the struggle against the Congress(I) and its anti-people policies and the communal threat posed by the BJP, the understanding built up with secular bourgeois parties must be pursued. This understanding assumed a new direction after the prolonged efforts to get the National Front-Janata Dal to demarcate from the BJP. As against the all in-opposition unity idea, the developments since November 1990 led to the break with the BJP on the part of the secular bourgeois combination and a national

alliance between the National Front and the Left. Such an understanding will remain superficial unless it is backed up by mass movements.

2.68 While striving for wider joint actions on common issues, the Party must be clear that we do not share identical views and policies on every issue with our allies, particularly on the approach to national unity and economic policy. Here, the Party must assert its independent positions and develop its mass activities without any hesitation. With regard to regional parties with whom we enter into an understanding, on some issues they take positions which divide the people or cater to chauvinist sentiments. The Party must, on such issues, demarcate its stand and project the line of the Party independently. The mass activities and campaigns possible jointly are to be strengthened and widened so that we can unitedly fight the forces of authoritarianism and communalism and reach out to wider sections of people.

FOR INCREASING LEFT INTERVENTION

2.69 Due to the firm defence of the interests of all sections of the toiling people and leading mass struggles, its consistent stand in defence of national unity, against communalism, in defence of democracy and change in centre-state relations, the Left influence and intervention has increased. But given the failure of bourgeois-landlord policies and the deep problems it is creating—the Left strength and intervening capacity is far less than what is called for and it is developing in an uneven way. In the coming days, only the rapid increase of Left strength will guarantee the barring of the path of communal and divisive forces and ferocious attacks on the people's interests.

2.70 The ninth and tenth general elections saw the Left improving its strength in Parliament though not substantially. Its influence is not fully reflected in the electoral arena but goes beyond it also. The role of the Left Front Government headed by our Party in West Bengal, and by the earlier LDF Government in Kerala played an important part in enhancing the prestige of the Left and to project alternative policies.

2.71 The period after the Thirteenth Congress saw the acceleration of mass discontent against the Rajiv Gandhi Government. The Bharat Bandh of August 30, 1989 in which the Left played a key role, was a historic popular protest demanding the ouster of the Congress(I) Government for its anti-people policies. On the trade

union front, the CITU and other unions have consistently organised struggles for wage rise, minimum wages for unorganised workers, right to work, against closures and attacks on trade union rights and in defence of women workers. The AIKS has been leading many struggles in defence of the interests of the peasantry and to build joint movement for debt relief, remunerative prices and distribution of surplus land. The All India Agricultural Workers' Union conducted movements and court arrest actions both independently and jointly for the demand of implementing a Central legislation for agricultural workers.

2.72 The DYFI and SFI conducted a series of campaigns and led struggles against unemployment and for better educational facilities. The membership of the DYFI and the SFI have shown steady growth due to these ceaseless activities. The AIDWA has been in the forefront of campaigns against atrocities on women, for equal rights and in the joint campaign for the setting up of National Commission for Women.

2.73 The last three years saw the growing offensive of the communal forces with its disruptive effects and large-scale communal riots. The CPI(M) and the Left parties played a key role in the anti-communal campaign along with the Janata Dal in Uttar Pradesh in July-September 1990. This campaign held mass rallies which were attended by over a crore of people. The CITU, DYFI, SFI, Kisan Sabha and AIDWA conducted many all-India campaigns against communalism through conventions, seminars, public meetings and demonstrations. Many solidarity activities were organised by the Party and various mass organisations in defence of democracy in Tripura. On Punjab a big mass dharna was organised in Delhi in September 1991 by the Punjab unit of the Party and various solidarity actions were held in different parts of the country. In many centres there was a mass campaign for collection of funds for the struggling units of Tripura and Punjab. After the fall of the V.P. Singh Government, the National Front-Left parties conducted a countrywide campaign through mass rallies in defence of secularism, social justice and against the formation of the defectors' government. After the Narasimha Rao Government came to power, the Left parties were the first to organise mass protests against the new economic policies.

2.74 All these mass activities and struggles were conducted in a period which was very complicated and difficult. The prolonged

anti-reservation movement with its destructive effects and the aggravated communal situation leading to widespread violence, had to be faced while mobilising the people. The two general elections within a short space of two years also required the mobilisation of all the Left and democratic forces to conduct the big election campaigns. The activities of the Party and the mass organisations have helped in the struggle to strengthen the Left, democratic and secular forces. These mass activities and struggles must be stepped up and expanded in a big way in the coming period.

LEFT :

TARGET OF CONTINUING ATTACKS

2.75 The CPI(M) and the Left have played a consistent role in opposing the bourgeois-landlord policies of the Congress(I). The Left-led government in West Bengal and till 1991 the LDF government in Kerala were in the forefront of the struggle to implement alternative policies. The Left, all over the country, is the outspoken champion of the people's interests and the organiser of struggles. It is this record which attracts the class hostility of the ruling party. Even in the period 1989-90 when it was out of power, the Congress(I) was relentless in its attacks on the Left in its strong states.

2.76 Tripura is the prime example of this hostility where Congress(I) and its alliance government has established a new bloody record of repression. The terror against the CPI(M) and the Left has continued unabated. Since the February 1988 elections, hundreds of CPI(M) workers and supporters have been killed. A shocking number of women have been raped or molested, many of them tribal women. The terror and lumpen goondaism has now enveloped all sections of society. All the elections since the last Assembly elections have been shamelessly rigged with the right to vote becoming a threat to life. The recent Lok Sabha elections saw systematic terror launched to prevent the CPI(M) and Left Front election campaign, and after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination an orgy of violence was unleashed with widespread arson and looting of houses and shops of Left cadres and supporters. This forced the Party to withdraw from the elections after the Election Commission refused to intervene. The complete break-down of all norms and constitutional obligations shows the depths of authoritarianism that a desperate Congress(I) can stoop to. The cancer fostered in Tripura by the ruling party will threaten parliamentary democracy in the country if it is not countered effectively.

2.77 The other opposition parties are still not able to understand the significance of the Tripura experience. Their failure to strongly raise their voice against the semi-fascist terror will only strengthen authoritarian trends.

2.78 Fourteen years of Left Front rule in West Bengal, after winning four successive Assembly elections decisively have, not reconciled the Congress(I) to democratically accept the people's verdict. Time and again, provocations and confrontations are organised to disturb normal life and to attempt to malign the Left. In the post-election period, the Congress(I) has been responsible for the deaths of 36 CPI(M) workers. But a constant chant is kept up, with their willing accomplices in the media, of violence unleashed by the CPI(M).

2.79 The victories and existence of the Left Front Government in West Bengal is a main source of the prestige and influence of the Left in the country. The achievements of the Left Front Government in the sphere of land reforms, guaranteeing the rights of sharecroppers, democratic functioning of panchayats and devolution of powers to them; its firm stand in defence of the interests of the working class and democratic rights of the people, the protection of the rights of minorities, scheduled castes and tribes—all these are in stark contrast to the performance of the Congress(I) and other governments. In the present situation when the economic crisis is of great magnitude, the defence of the livelihood of the people assumes special significance. All governmental and administrative measures will have only limited scope given the depth of the crisis and the disastrous policies of the Centre. It is therefore essential that the Party and the Left Front in the state ceaselessly mobilise the people, build mass movements and raise their political consciousness regarding the difficult struggles ahead; to defend and expand the gains of the democratic movement in the state by helping to implement the programme of the Left Front.

2.80 Kerala : That the Congress(I) will jettison its secular professions to fight the CPI(M) and the Left, was once again nakedly displayed in the 1991 Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. It wooed the Muslim League back into the UDF and struck an underhand deal with the BJP to fight the LDF. It also gathered the casteist forces into this alliance. The narrow victory achieved with the small swing due to the sympathy factor after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, has now been utilised to scuttle the District Councils. The

Grandhashala Act has been amended to nullify its democratic provisions and plans are being made to erode democratisation of universities.

2.81 The Congress(I)-led UDF has also resorted to violent attacks to intimidate and suppress the CPI(M) and LDF. In the post-poll attacks, 15 CPI(M) workers have been killed.

THE NAXALITE TRENDS

2.82 Those subscribing to naxalite ideas have been undergoing transformation, and there is greater differentiation amongst them. Some of the groups, primarily the IPF-Liberation variety, have made major changes in their ideological and programmatic outlook and have entered the field of mass work and parliamentary activities. However, there are groups such as the People's War Group, which continue with their terrorist and disruptive activities. The Party should take a positive attitude to those groups and elements who are prepared to join the Left mainstream while continuing to oppose their erroneous ideological-political positions. It must combat those groups which are relying on terrorism and allied to divisive movements.

2.83 The Party must be vigilant to combat the activities of imperialist agencies active in the tribal areas and in sensitive sectors who are out to disrupt the unity of the people and foster separatism and divisiveness. Special attention has to be paid to counter the Ananda Marg which relies on terroristic methods and disinformation to disrupt and malign the CPI(M) and the Left movement.

NEED FOR

STRENGTHENING LEFT UNITY

2.84 In this context, the building of Left unity which has made steady progress in the eighties, must be enhanced by more independent projection of Left policies and alternatives and more joint campaigns and struggles. The relations between the CPI(M) and the CPI are crucial in this respect. While there have been greater areas of agreement in the past three years, there have been difficulties due to differences also. On the one hand, there has been by and large common assessments and tactical lines on how to deal with the fast developing national political situation. The Left parties took a joint stand during the critical days of the BJP's blackmailing ultimatum to withdraw support to the V.P. Singh Government; the resignation of the National Front Government; approach to the defectors' government and electoral understanding with the N.F.-

Janata Dal.

2.85 On the other hand, the Assam situation has led to divergent views with the CPI continuing to adopt a compromising attitude to the AGP and a soft approach to the ULFA; in Punjab too, there have been differences on the appropriate time to hold elections and appreciating the situation on the ground; in Andhra, the CPI unit continues to adopt an ambivalent approach to the Congress(I). There is a divergent stand also on the issue of economic criteria within OBC reservation. But these differences have not prevented wider joint actions at the Party and mass organisational level. The success of the industrial strike on November 29 and the joint work for the September 27 rally at Delhi being the latest instance. It is vital to strengthen Left unity further in the coming period.

PRESENT SITUATION AND TASKS

2.86 Never before since independence has the country faced such a serious crisis situation as today. The crisis engendered by capitalist development in collaboration with feudalism and imperialism, has led to the growing isolation of the Congress(I) from the masses. Its current position as the single largest party in Parliament is due to the sympathy wave after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. Otherwise a situation would have developed leaving a question mark on the future of the Congress(I). This has also intensified the inner-conflicts in the Congress(I) party.

2.87 But the weakness of the Left taking the country as a whole, is posing a big problem as the discontent arising from the Congress(I)'s policies is being made use of by the BJP and its allies. The enormous growth of the BJP during the last three years, is undoubtedly also the result of the policy of compromise pursued by the Congress party, its failure to defend secularism combined with the failure of the bourgeois opposition parties to realise the communal danger. The BJP, alongwith its allies, the RSS, Shiv Sena, VHP and the Bajrang Dal, has been able to make big headway in the elections to the tenth Lok Sabha. It poses a serious danger to the unity of the toiling masses, of the workers, agricultural labour, peasants, employees and other sections of the people.

2.88 The grave threat of majority communalism which has already led to large-scale riots, combined with intensified activities of the fundamentalist and separatist forces, constitutes a well-designed assault on Indian unity by the forces of reaction backed by imperialism. Therefore the most important question before us today is to

defend national unity and the unity of the country. The future progress of the democratic movement depends on whether, while firmly defending national unity, we are able to mobilise the growing discontent against the Congress(I) rule in a democratic direction or, whether the communal and fundamentalist forces are able to divert it into divisive channels. This requires a three-pronged battle on the economic, political and ideological fronts.

2.89 With the new economic policies of the government leading to immense miseries for the people and causing great damage to the economy, the Party, alongwith other Left parties, will have to unleash united mass struggles of various sections of the people against these policies and their impact. The November 29 industrial strike was a good beginning in this direction.

2.90 Conscious efforts will have to be made to rally all democratic and secular forces in these struggles. In spite of the crisis in the Janata Dal, the Left must strengthen relations with it and the National Front on the basis of the common agreed programmes as placed before the September 27 rally. The political significance of the efforts to draw the masses behind these parties in common struggles must be properly understood. Efforts should also be made to win over the masses with the Congress(I) who are getting discontented with the government's policies. In the course of this campaign we must expose the central government's policies of accepting the dictates of U.S. imperialism and its agencies and fight against the consequent threat to our foreign policy.

2.91 Alongwith this we have to carry on the political struggle against the threats to the unity of the country and the danger of communal and separatist forces striking at the very roots of peoples' unity. We will have to expose the imperialist game to destabilise and disrupt the unity of the country. The Party must, in this struggle against separatism and communalism, arouse the patriotic and secular feelings of the entire Indian people and persistently try to unite all secular forces in various parties in this struggle.

2.92 On the ideological plane, with the spread of vicious and disruptionist ideas in the nefarious game of inciting communal passions, it is our prime duty to conduct continuous ideological fight against these ideas, using the traditions of our freedom movement, stressing the importance of maintaining the unity of the common people. The situation is very complex. We have to

fight against the authoritarianism of the Congress(I) and its policy of succumbing to imperialist pressure and also combat the threat to national unity from the BJP and separatist forces. The success in this struggle based on a correct line is crucial to further developments in the country.

2.93 With the present unstable political situation the government may not last long and the country may have to face a fresh election. Bearing this in mind we have to seize the initiative and strengthen unity with the secular bourgeois opposition parties to intervene in the electoral battle when it comes, with the objective of defeating both the Congress (I) and the BJP.

STRUGGLE FOR LEFT AND DEMOCRATIC FRONT

2.94 This great effort to mobilise all Left, democratic and secular forces to defeat the Congress(I) and the BJP and to defend national unity, to foil the destabilising designs of U.S. imperialism and to defend the vital interests of the people constitutes an integral part of the Party's struggle for building a Left and democratic front as has been pointed out in the Political Resolutions of the Party Congresses since Jalandhar. It is through these efforts to build a broad unity on the immediate struggle that the Party and the Left forces will be able to gradually change the correlation of forces and be in a position to decisively influence the developments in the country. Success in this struggle will open up bright prospects for the emergence of a Left and democratic front which alone can save the country from the deep all-embracing crisis which has been developing over the years.

2.95 The growing mass struggles led by the Party, the growth of the mass organisations, the performance of the Left Front government, the increasing common activities of the Left parties and the closer links with the masses of other democratic parties should steadily create conditions for significant advances in which the Left can play an important role.

2.96 The CPI(M) is committed to its basic aim of building a People's Democratic Front led by the working class. Only such a front can ensure the success of the People's Democratic Revolution. The programme and activities of the Left and democratic front are to be visualised as a necessary stage in the struggle to build the People's Democratic Front.

2.97 It is necessary to work out a proper programme for immedi-

ate mass actions for the Left and democratic forces. It consists of certain immediate slogans and demands for political agitation and mass activity. The CPI(M) suggests that such a programme must consist of the following :

- (i) Defend democracy against authoritarian onslaughts by the Congress(I). Defence of democratic rights of citizens; withdrawal of repressive legislations like ESMA, NSA and TADA.
- (ii) Restructuring of Centre-state relations with more powers to the states; abrogation of Article 356 of the Constitution; defence of Left Front Government.
- (iii) Defence of national unity against separatist, communal and divisive forces. Political solution of Punjab, Kashmir and Assam problems meeting the genuine demand of the people of these states within the framework of Indian unity. Resolve Babri Masjid dispute by negotiated settlement or by court verdict. Protect the rights of minorities.
- (iv) Reverse the IMF-World Bank dictated policies; preserve economic independence and self-reliant economy; increase direct taxes, curb black money; cut inessential imports and wasteful government expenditure; resist imperialist pressures on patents, intellectual property rights and trade related investments.
- (v) Scrap new industrial policy; state take-over of sick jute and textile mills; stop closures and massacres of jobs in the name of promoting technology and modernisation. Preserve public sector in the commanding heights of the economy and de-bureaucratise it.
- (vi) Implement land reforms and distribution of land; enact laws to plug loopholes in land reforms; correction of land records; remunerative prices for peasantry; Central legislation for agricultural labour; ensure minimum wages for agricultural labourers.
- (vii) Measures to curb price rise of essential commodities; stop administered price hikes; expansion of public distribution system to cover 14 essential commodities and to areas not covered by ration system; adequate food stock to be procured by the state for this purpose.
- (viii) Right to work to be embodied in the Constitution as a fundamental right; provision of unemployment benefits; concrete plans to generate rural and urban employment.

- (ix) Need-based minimum wages for the workers; recognition of trade unions on the basis of secret ballot; statutory provision for workers' participation in management; end to all discriminations against women workers.
- (x) Compulsory primary education and universal elementary education; free education upto the secondary stage; revamp the educational system on democratic, secular and scientific lines by abandoning the new education policy.
- (xi) Check atrocities against scheduled castes and tribes by stringent action. Stern measures against untouchability and caste discrimination. Ensure that quotas of reservation for them are filled. Protection of land, development of culture and language of tribal people and regional autonomy for tribal compact contiguous regions where necessary.
- (xii) Stern measures against atrocities on women; end all discrimination against women; ensure equal rights and other legal and constitutional guarantees; equal rights in property for women.
- (xiii) Inclusion of Nepali and Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution as national languages.
- (xiv) For developing a secular and democratic culture which will combat all forms of obscurantism and promote the scientific temper; to make cultural facilities available to all sections of the people.
- (xv) Electoral reforms to eliminate malpractices; proportional representation system to be introduced.
- (xvi) A science and technology policy which encourages scientists to do creative work and nurture self-reliant basis of India's development. An environmental policy which is integrated with the needs of rapid and sustainable development. Housing to be accorded the status of a basic right. Expansion of primary health facilities.
- (xvii) Defence of non-aligned foreign policy, friendship with socialist countries, world peace, and support to anti-imperialist struggles and the struggles for democracy in neighbouring countries.

THE PARTY

2.98 All these tasks can be fulfilled only by strengthening the Party ideologically, politically and organisationally. This is the most important task today. The developments in the international

communist movement and the socialist countries raise a lot of fundamental questions and its impact can breed alien ideological ideas. The Party has to properly educate the ranks on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and its creative application to the concrete conditions prevailing in our country.

2.99 The Party has to gear up its organisation to widen its mass base by developing mass movements of the workers, peasants, agricultural labour, employees, students, youth, women and other sections of the toiling people. There has to be constant emphasis on the expansion of the independent activities of the Party. The Party must strengthen and nurture its live links with all sections of the toiling people by championing their cause ceaselessly and organising them in struggles for the redressal of their problems. The Party has to educate the entire membership in applying the scientific outlook on all aspects of life and society so that reactionary and feudal ideologies can be combatted. Drawing proper lessons self-critically from past experience, the Party has to overcome its shortcomings. It must step up its all-sided activity so that it is able to spread its influence all over the country through its devotion and dedication to the cause of anti-imperialism, secularism, democracy and socialism.

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**Unleash Militant
Mass Movements to
Change Correlation of
Political Forces**



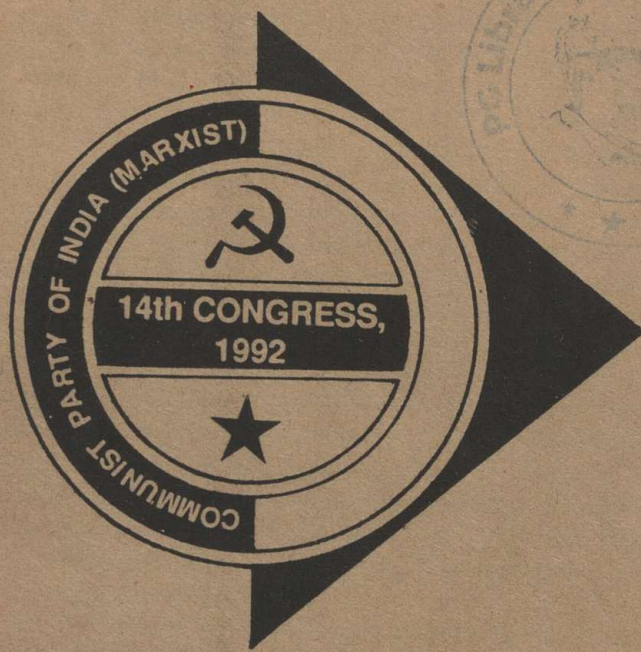
**Build Up A
Mass Revolutionary Party**



Uphold Marxism-Leninism

J736

**POLITICAL RESOLUTION
OF THE
FOURTEENTH CONGRESS**



January 3 - 9, 1992, Madras

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