

MANIFESTO
of the
WORLD
SOCIALIST PARTY
(India)

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The time has come when the *Lal Pataka* and the *Marxist International Correspondence Circle* can be transformed into a companion party of the *World Socialist Movement*. The Movement consists of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and sister parties in the United States of America, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Austria with groups sharing the same ideas in various other countries producing socialist literature in English, Arabic, Dutch, Esperanto, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish and Bengali too.

On the eve of this great occasion, we feel in a position to state, with full responsibility, the salient point of our reason to be transformed into a Party of the World Socialist Movement and to remain in existence as long as the historical necessity for a socialist or communist party exists.

Our evolution towards the World Socialist Movement has not been without pains. Yet it has been rewarding. Deprivation, intrigue, uncertainty and sufferance were no strangers to a subjectively committed socialist endeavour, which journeyed through a quarter-century of the so-called “Marxist-Leninist” mishmash to reach its objectively correct, and only revolutionary socialist movement – arriving at last on the most fundamental issue for a socialist party – *Democracy*. Our tendency had broken away first from the “Communist Party of India (Marxist)” in 1982 and from January 1983 began publishing the *Lal Pataka* – a Bengali monthly drawing heritage from the name of *Die Rote Fahn*, the organ of the German Internationalist group, the Spartacus League, this as an immediate political response to the onslaught of the “Left-Capitalist” racket of the CPI (M). Political criticisms of the ruling coalition government in West Bengal and theoretical exposures of the futility of trying to reform capitalism by substituting parties for managing the affairs of the machine of coercion and exploitation took our tendency to a confluence with the *Sarbaharar Mukti* (Emancipation of the Proletariat) – a monthly journal of the “Revolutionary Proletarian Platform” – a new anti-Stalinist, anti-Trotskyist, and anti-Maoist group formed of persons breaking away from various shades of so-called “socialist” and “communist” parties. Just a few days before the RPP’s first conference at Gorakhpur in August 1984, following some discussions and on the basis of an agreed understanding about democratic functioning of the organisation that nothing will be concealed or suppressed from the working class, the LP joined them only to be disillusioned within a year. The LP established contacts with some “Left Communist” groups and individuals working around the globe – the ICC, the IBRP, LLM to name some of them. On request they began to send literature. By the

end of 1985 the ICC sent a delegation to Bishnupur. They stayed three days but discussions ended in disagreement. In the meantime, the LP and the IBRP were coming closer to one another.

A weeklong Study Circle (24 to 28 September 1986) was convened by the LP inviting supposedly like-minded revolutionaries working at different places of India. Amongst other, the “Kamunist Kranti” group from Faridabad came over to take part in the deliberations, which, however, had to be postponed under duress.

This was followed with a Discussion Meeting in Calcutta from 29 September to 5 October 1987 between the KK and the LP. Then again a Study Circle was organised by the LP in Calcutta from 31 December 1987 to 2 January 1988 participated in by three groups – the LP and two other from Faridabad – the KK and the CI. Unresolved though our differences remained, the Circle ended with a tone of optimism in agreeing to continue material exchange with a hope to meeting again (which none of us felt inclined to follow up so far, maybe because we all lacked a clear-cut definition of socialism).

In the in-between times, two successive IBRP delegations visited the LP in Calcutta – the first one from the CWO, Great Britain that arrived on 27 December 1987 stayed here about 10 days and held face-to-face discussions on a wide range of issues and there was a certain level of homogeneity of views especially on the principle of workers democracy. The other delegation was from the P.C. Int. (B.C.) Italy in July 1988 (17.7.88 to 24.7.88). In the wake of the gruesome bloodbath of the Tiananmen Square in China, the LP penned a Bengali article “Bourgeois Barbarity in China – Another Face of Capitalist Decadence” – that incidentally criticised the Bolshevik paralogism and incorrect programme. Its English version was sent to the CWO, who outrageously revised, turned and twisted the text by substituting words and restructuring sentences without LP’s knowledge and published it in the *Communist Review* NO. 8, preceded by some extracts in the *Workers Voice* No. 49 – both produced in Great Britain (cf. *ICR* No. 1, Calcutta.) It was again “the basic principles of workers’ democracy that workers must know all observations, analyses and propositions, no matter whether those are held by a “majority” or a “minority” group, or such a section of a group, or even an individual within the international proletarian milieu”, which were at stake. The split became obvious, and split we did, since we were then on the threshold of a new awakening to denounce Leninism or Bolshevism altogether.

Already, since June 1986 the *Socialist Standard* – the official journal of Socialist Party of Great Britain – began to arrive and enter into our reading materials. A few students who were then studying Marxism with guidance from the LP came up to establish the Marxist International Correspondence Circle (May 1990) in order to find out the correct political positions of the day. Literature publication, weekly educational meetings, studying and drawing information from the *Socialist Standard* texts took place. We replied to the SPGB on 3.5.86 stating that the LP adhered to the position of the IBRP while expressing willingness to exchange materials. And this we went on doing.

It was only after the MICC's belated letter of 14 May 1993 to the SPGB that we began to clinch our differences with them on (i) parliamentary elections, (ii) trade unions, (iii) workers democracy administering a labour-time voucher system as a transient economic category.

This delay was not intentional. What deterred us most from direct contact with the SPGB were, on the one hand, our adherence to Marx's idea of a "transitional period" and on the other our associations with the IBRP and LLM – both providing wrong information about the SPGB's position. Yet, that an ill-informed group operating from a different geo-political bastion distanced by both space-time and methodology has finally overcome the impediments bids no less fair, perhaps, to become a classic in its own right.

Parliamentarianism

With the CPI(M) and against the CPI(M-L)'s anti-vote campaign, parliamentary action became necessary because achieving reforms (i.e. "minimum programme") appeared to be necessary before "the transition" arrived; with the RPP a more confusing stance was taken – abstaining from elections while campaigning for reforms; and thereafter up till some time ago both with and without the IBRP the policy pursued was: abstaining from parliamentarianism on the basis of rejection of reformism, for they seemed inseparable.

Not that the question of democracy under socialism was of no concern to us, but that this concern was contented with the simplistic distinction between workers' councils and bourgeois parliaments, having no urge to ask a more pertinent question – what if the parliaments are overwhelmed with socialist majorities, clearly mandated by socialist electors to abolish the states and turn the parliaments into institutions where delegates assemble to parley? Had it been asked,

the real strength borne by ballots could be perceived. But it hadn't been, simply because we were still walking along the cul-de-sac of revolutionary romanticism – insurrection-barricades-seizure of power by workers' councils (a fratricidal Leninist perspective indeed!).

We had been theorising on an incorrect premise that the parliament is merely an organ of the capitalist state apparatus, which stands in opposition to the necessity of self-organisation of the working class; and further that when the socialist revolution is on the agenda "revolutionary parliamentarianism" is "objectively counter-revolutionary" regardless of the participants' subjective intentions. The idealism of the conception could be traced out only if the history of universal adult franchise would have been analysed to see that it was incorporated into the body politic of modern state as a result of the working class's long-drawn struggle.

However, we found this premise undialectical only when we went through the history of the SPGB's advent – that obtained properly from Marx's understanding and precepts and has analysed the dilemma of their immediate predecessor William Morris over reform and revolution. The founders of the party solved it by making a distinction between government and democratic administration of affairs, whereby the revolution's emancipation from reformism has been complete. Socialism and government are incompatible.

This view represents the party's specific contribution to socialist theory by scientifically separating reforms from revolution. Contesting elections on the basis of a campaign on an exclusively socialist programme in opposition to any kind of reformism and seeking votes only from those who understand and want socialism is the criterion. In other words, socialists seek votes from workers turned socialists for a peaceful democratic social revolution in opposition to all attempts for reformations, which resolve round promises and personalities. Who needs violence anyway? And for what purpose? A society that needs to be turned non-violent, nay more co-operative has no chance to be so turned by violence. What about its practice? This theory is being practiced by the companion parties of the World Socialist Movement. It is the only sure way, in the words of a struggling Morris, "to get hold of the machine which has at its back the executive power of the country" (or, more dramatically, "to get at the butt end of the machine gun and rifle") not in order to hold on to it to run its business but in order to abolish it. This is how universal suffrage is transformed "from the instrument of

trickery which it has been till now into an instrument of emancipation”, as suggested by Marx.

Undue speculation about the precise organisation of the stateless society didn't interest the SPGB. According to them such decisions must be made by those establishing socialism not under circumstances chosen by themselves but under circumstances transmitted to them, by dint of the revolutionary process. The inhabitants of socialist society might use organisations of various forms and scales – *local, regional, global*. In so doing “there is intrinsically nothing wrong with institutions where delegates assemble to purely (Parliaments, Congresses, diets, or even so-called soviets). What is wrong with them today is that such parliaments are controlled by the capitalist class. Remove class society, and assemblies will function in the interest of the whole people” – simply by not voting the capitalist politicians but voting the socialists into political power.

Clearly, the SPGB's answer to the question of how socialism would have to be organised could not be obtained without considering the insistence of the proponents of soviets or councils, while emphasising that the administration of affairs of production and distribution will be the prerogative of the people establishing socialism. For socialism is not a premeditated blueprint for the future, but the necessary outcome of the present.

Transition

Most people have been ideologically deceived into believing that socialism stands between capitalism and communism as a transitional phase, or that socialism is categorically different from communism, and further that this distinction conforms to Marxism. But the truth is that nowhere did Marx distinguish between socialism and communism. For him, as also for us now, they are synonymous.

Marx, however, did make a distinction between “the first phase of communist society” and “a higher phase of communist society” in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. And in so doing he made a case for the use of labour vouchers in the first, whilst, in the same breath, arguing that “these defects” will be transcended “after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly”. Clearly, in Marx's time *productive abundance* had yet to be acquired. Hence his distinction. The MICC's insistence on a nonmarket socialism to be established and administered by workers' councils with labour vouchers as a

transient economic measure of measures to replace money rested on an unformed postulation of a potential abundance. Specific facts about actual abundance were still at large. Hence the MICC's distinction. But now we endorse no such measure, because they conform to a form of economic rationing with exchange, alienation and in effect voucher circulation, which has no function in a non-exchange society as sought by socialists; and also because, since the beginning of this century abundance has long been awaiting unfoldment. Abundance does not have a measure of measures. For us its only measure is *satisfaction of needs*.

In this connection we also discard the distorted and loathsome Leftist lie that the “principle” of distribution of the means of personal consumption “to each according to his work” is a Marxist tenet applicable to the first phase of communist society. The truth again is that never did Marx say so; and never could he, for workers, as workers, are never paid for what they produce, but for what their ability to work requires to be produced and reproduced. They produce more than what they receive – leaving the surplus at their employers' disposal. It was Lenin's dogma that in socialism there will be “the distribution of products according to the amount of work performed by each individual” and the word “work” has been picked up by the Leninists to corrupt Marx's word “needs”! Thus they invented a theory of “Marxism-Leninism” to satisfy their state capitalism's needs.

The false idea of a transition from private ownership to common ownership through state ownership gave rise to the ideology of state capitalism. And now the ignominious collapse of its tyrannous frame-work in the ex-USSR and eastern Europe has struck the “step forward”-theory down to the ground laying bare the Leninist confusion that somehow state-run capitalism was something to do with Marxism.

This is not to mean that the concept of a transition is un-Marxist, but that it has to be socialist from the very beginning. That is to say, a transition initiated by a stateless, moneyless and classless global community of equal men and women co-operating to produce what they need on the basis of common ownership and democratic control of the world's resources. Marxist transition is *socialist transition*. This process has to pass through a space-time when the competitive, anarchic unplanable and crisis-and-war-ridden capitalist economic structure will be transformed into the co-operative and planned socialist one – restructured on *local, regional and global* scales. The so-called “minimum programme” (i.e. a set of reformations of capitalism itself) has nothing to do with the socialist process, which pre-supposes

abolition of the wages system altogether, which implies abolition of the working class as a class and thereby abolition of all classes for ever. This cannot occur unless universal common ownership is achieved in the first place. This transition for us means the course of rationalization of the affairs of production and distribution and thereby of the cultural superstructure of our global community of equals. And with this the problems of a "transitional period", that we had so far been grappling with, have become the problems of the past.

ALL COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD ARE CAPITALIST.

Capitalism is a social system which has the following characteristics :

1. Production is based on the capital/wage labour relationship with an employing minority class who own and control the means of production and distribution, and a majority propertyless working class.
2. Surplus value is produced through employment of wage-labour.
3. Things are produced as commodities to be sold on the market at a profit.
4. Money becomes all powerful as the measure of measures.
5. Workers have no control over things they produce and distribute; those are legally appropriated by their employers.
6. The exploitation process is automatic: workers produce more than what they receive.
7. Society is divided into two main classes: a ruling capitalist class and a ruled working class.
8. The state exists under the control and in the interest of the ruling capitalist class.
9. All various national sections of the world capitalist class at all times strive for the preservation and extension of markets for selling commodities produced by the working class.
10. The system is globally competitive with its in-built anarchy having to pass through continual cycles of booms, crises, slumps and wars.
11. The television, radio, press, schools, colleges and universities belong to the capitalist class and this entire superstructure always seeks to justify the perpetuation of the system.

STATE CAPITALISM: Once the above-mentioned features of capitalism are fully recognised and world history thoroughly studied, it is not difficult to see that nowhere and never was socialism established. In the past we shared the inaccurate view that in 1917 the working class in Russia made a political revolution led by the Bolshevik Party, later renamed the "Communist Party", but owing to the erroneous party programme and persistent economic alienation the workers

remained workers, whilst the new ruling nomenclature of the "Communist Party" via its exclusive monopoly over the state became the employing and exploiting minority class using money and wages with all their paraphernalia.

In fact there was an Industrial Revolution which had nothing to do with socialism. The incorrect use of the term socialism and nationalisation interchangeably has created confusion in the working class milieu and retains workers as willing supporters of the same system that enslaves and exploits them. Despite our knowledge that nationalisation is a capitalist measure, we once tended to accept it to be a progressive step. But it was not long before 1984-85 that we could come out publicly to argue against state capitalism and write articles to that effect. Guided by the basic precepts of Marxism and following the course of history the Marxist International Correspondence Circle have ultimately arrived at the conclusion that Bolshevism or Leninism is state capitalism and by definition all questions of Leninism are state capitalist and further that all positions of all political parties outside the World Socialist Movement are fallacious. History has confirmed all positions of the Socialist Party of Great Britain since its inception in June 1904, including confirming their position on the Russian Revolution in 1917. The SPGB, later to be accompanied by other companion parties, has always held that socialism could not be established country-wise but only on a global basis, and that it was not real socialism but a version of capitalism wherein the state was all-powerful that held sway over the USSR till 1989 when it became too incompetent to compete in the crises-ridden world market. Never had the Bolshevik Party represented the interest of the working class, and had never attempted to adopt a socialist programme. They had distorted Marx's definition of socialism, destroyed all forms of democracy and perpetrated mass-scale murder and imprisonment against the dissenting members of the class they pretended to represent. The general misconception that the demise of totalitarian state capitalism in Russia and eastern Europe reflected the demise of socialism is the result of a seven-decade-long propaganda by opponents and supporters alike. Yet confusion cannot overrule the case for genuine socialism. We hold that socialism has never been tried in history. So, the states still misnamed "socialist" such as China are out-and-out capitalist just as their "rivals" are in England, Europe, the USA, Japan and all other lands. Insistence on labelling state capitalism with "socialism" reflects the utter bankruptcy of the capitalist ideology that desperately twists Marx via Lenin to fit in with Stalin, Mao and the hierarchy of wretched tyrants.

How passionately we despise this century's biggest and loathsome lie that state-run capitalism is socialism! How contemptuously we condemn those who distort Marx! And how eloquently we like to declare that Marx lives through the SPGB to show us the correct socialist Object.

"The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community."

SOCIALIST PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS TRADE UNIONS

Trade unions emerge and exist under capitalism. Capitalist class-struggle is the basis whereupon *the trade union movement spontaneously rises* and expands to *defend* the working-class interests on the *economic field*, just as the *socialist movement politically rises* and expands to rouse the working-class consciousness so as to *eliminate* the class struggle itself.

Trade unionism is an institution of daily struggle against the encroachments of capital. Under capitalism the working class is exploited through the *wages system*. The system is such that during every aliquot part of the working time a worker produces more value than he is paid in terms of wages. This difference is called *surplus value* (which after being realised in terms of prices in the market is divided into interest, rent, profit and taxes and shares of various sections of the capitalist class). And the ratio between the working time necessary to produce the worker's wage-goods and the working time he is obliged to work gratis for his employer is called *the rate of surplus value or rate of exploitation*. It is this rate of exploitation that the daily struggle resolves round – workers always having to defend and to try to improve their "standard of living" and employers always having to encroach on the workers' "standard of poverty". This conflict provides trade unions with their cradle.

The trade unions, however, are incapable of ending exploitation because they are incapable of questioning the ownership rights of the capitalist class. But this question has never ceased in the history of class-struggle and will not cease as long as class-society exists. Class-ownership arose with the alienation of the producers from the means of production and distribution. So it follows that class-ownership and alienation will cease to exist only with their elimination by common ownership. In the past all dispossessed classes, driven by their economic needs, strived to gain ownership rights though gaining political power. The last historical

class of wage and salary slaves, too, must have to do the same in order to abolish class-ownership and class-organisation of society. Their struggle against exploitation has to be turned into the struggle for the ownership of the means of production and distribution by the whole community. As long as this transgression remains unrealised the slaves will remain slaves fettered with the chain of exploitation while their trade unions will go on bargaining with their employers over wages and working conditions.

In this dispute the *ultimate weapon* in the hands of the trade unions is the *power to strike*. But this power is incapable of pushing wages up to a level that prevents profits being made. It is with the purpose of making profit that the capitalist "private" companies as well as the state-capitalist nationalised industries are run. Without profit they cannot survive long. The collapse of state-capitalism in Russia and eastern Europe is a glaring proof at hand. The strike as a weapon is usually *effective only* in times of recovery and booms when business prospects and profitability improve. But it becomes blunt against a firm nearing bankruptcy or in times of recession and slump when companies in general reduce production, lay workers off, or close down whole factories. Being confronted by the employers with lock-outs and in an atmosphere of mass-unemployment abject poverty and hunger, the striking power of the trade unions recedes into submission. This same old story repeats itself over and over again for generations, workers remaining at the receiving end – deceived, defeated and never to win this economic game.

The only way to get rid of the wage-slavery is the common ownership which must be sought in the political arena, where the real power of the capitalist class is exercised through their control of parliaments, congresses, diets and the state machines. This stage is yet to be reached.

The story of the trade unions in the state capitalist countries and to a great extent in the countries of the capitalist periphery is quite different from that in the "private" capitalist centres.

The despotic state capitalism, that has collapsed in Russia, but still rules over China, Cuba and elsewhere, does not allow workers to organise their own trade unions. The so-called trade unions there are essentially *state-run mass organisation or appendages* of the ruling communist parties, and are used to propagate their political policies.

In countries like India workers have the legal right to form trade unions. But there, too, unlike Europe and America, most of the big trade unions have been organised from above more as fund-raising, vote-catching political subsidiaries of self-seeking “leaders” than as spontaneous, grass-root, independent and autonomous organisations of the working class to defend their economic interests. Moreover in the absence of factory-wide free election of trade union functionaries, there are as many unions as there are political parties, most of them operating with their hired gangsters and peculiar flags having very little regard to class-unity. Actually these trade unions are *not genuine trade unions*.

Still workers’ organised resistance against exploitation is a must; and for that matter, their resistance struggles must have to be freed from the infamy of remaining divided and sunservient to various capitalist political parties. This they can achieve by organising themselves in fully *integrated and independent trade unions* of their own, by throwing away all kinds of blind faith and submissiveness regarding the wretched heirarchy of subscription-squeezer and flag-hoister “leaders”. The working-class movement is a movement of equals – organised by the workers and in the interest of the workers. No “leader” supposedly having some unknown “god”-given or “intrinsic” trick-finding qualities given is necessary to lead the working-class movement. For a “trick” cannot throw profit overboard. Simply because private property lives to levy its tribute on labour.

All workers are equals; all humans, as members of the animal species *Homo Sapiens*, are essentially equals; all humans brains are intrinsically the most adaptable and uniquely creative brains, except the few mentally-disabled ones. All workers are able, rather abler than the “leaders” to understand their own class-interests only if they are fully informed of their circumstances from local to global. And to be informed of what is happening around, and what has happened earlier, what they require is to meet in regular general assemblies, discuss and debate all that matters keeping ears and minds open and decide to take such steps as deemed useful. In case a strike is to be declared, they would need a *strike committee* to be formed of *recallable delegates* elected and mandated in the *general assembly* – thus retaining the ultimate control in their own hands.

Where there are many rival trade union shops in a single factory or workplace operated by many capitalist political parties, a socialist worker can neither keep on supporting the one he is in, nor go on seeking membership of one after another or

all at the same time, nor can he open his own “socialist” trade union instead. What he can, and should, do as immediate perspective, is to try to form a “political group” with like-minded fellow workers and campaign for a class-wide democratic unity as stated above. Whenever an opportunity arrives the group must use the assemblies as a forum for political propaganda to expose the uselessness of the “leaders” and show that the trade union movement is unable to solve the problems of crises, insecurity, poverty, unemployment, hunger and wars.

In principle socialists are not prevented from participating in genuine trade union activities, but are cautioned about the dangerous diversions and limitations of defensive activities under capitalism. Achieving socialism being the only objective of a socialist, socialists relate to their fellow workers only as socialists to put forward socialist answers to their questions and help heighten their class consciousness to Marx’s understanding that: “Instead of the conservative motto: A fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work”; they should inscribe on their banners the revolutionary watchwords: ‘Abolition of the wages system’.”

The greater political awareness of the working class towards socialism, and the greater their control over trade union activities, better might be their chances of obtaining larger proportions of the wealth kept at the behest of the ruling class, who, observing socialism on the horizon, might not hesitate to offer liberal terms, fallaciously through expecting that it could buy their system some breathing space.

Socialist *theory* will then begin to be realised in socialist *practice*.

Class, not nation

Nationalism, integrationist or separatist, in spite of and against one another, breeds patriotism that feeds on contempt for and hostility towards people in others, whereunder fratricidal strifes are inevitable. Instances abound around. But these strifes, in essence, are expressions of the dynamic of a system that feeds on profit.

“Independence”, “My country”, “Sovereignty”, “Self-sufficiency”, “Indigenous growth”, “Prosperity”, “Peace” et al pertain to the ideology of nationalism that forestalls class-consciousness.

This ideology speaks in terms of “common bonds” – race, religion, language, economic interests – to define the nation-state. But such homogeneity is conspicuously absent in almost all

the 186 countries on our planet. And all nations are class-divided.

All definitions are confusing. In fact what capitalism needs for its continual reproduction is not so much “a nation” as “a state” based on the economics of wage-price-profit oriented private property institution. And for that matter, a nationalist “liberator”, integrationist or separatist, is bound to appeal to the prejudiced emotions of his “people” over a territory at all times in the name of a national “story” – christened “history” – invariably told by “the heroes”!

Colonial expansion of trade and commerce transgressed feudal formations and established the *World Market* in the past century. Capitalist production and distribution assumed global dimensions. Striving capitalist interests raised heads in the colonies under the banner of “freedom movements”. Direct colonial rule of the capitalist metropolises over other lands became anachronistic. Colonialism gave way to modern “Imperialism”. Imperialistic hostility has actually turned many “freedom struggles” into mere pawns in its hands. Passing through the experiences of two World Wars and never-ceasing regional and local wars rival interests find this ideology the most useful instrument for gaining ground in their manoeuvres for war.

Winning “national independence” is a capitalist objective. A change of a capital’s “Capital” with a change of its governors do not make workers “independent”. Workers remain workers – as exploited and oppressed as before. The transfer of political power that takes place, takes place between two rival “nationalist” minorities belonging to the same exploiting and ruling class who own and control the means of production and distribution all over the world.

But the saga of “independence” is unending. While towards power, one must remain a “freedom fighter”, and once in power, one finds much reason in “joint ventures” or “collaborations” with any “imperialisms” of any colour including the one it fought against – a trajectory from “independence” to impasse.

India is no exception to this rule. “Indian” capitalists got India “freed” from their “foreign” rival to the extent that they now have a market of their own and a working class to exploit. But the market they got was partitioned between the two “leading” factions of theirs at the terrible price of workers sweat and blood and life sacrificed on both sides. The wound their “freedom” has inflicted on the social body of this sub-continent is still taking its toll, and it will until workers of all “nations”

recognise themselves as workers belonging to the one single world working class.

Just as the abandonment of colonial forms of domination reflected the demise of the British power through two World Wars, so it marked the opening up of the sub-continent for world “imperialism” at large. For not “independence” but “interdependence” is the order of the day.

The so-called “relative prosperity” achieved by some people during about a decade-and-a-half after 1947 cannot be attributed to “independence”, but to the post-war “reconstruction” of the World Economy.

Hangovers with other class-layers alongside the two main capitalist antagonists in India have misled many ideologues to raise on misconceptions and mystifications about the nature of the Indian society. They miserably fail to understand that feudalism in India had long gone and “The Indian Economy” is nothing but capitalism at work and further that the “peasant question” persists due not to there being an absence of agrarian “land reforms”, but to there being a multi-million landless agrarian cheap labour force beside the robbed homeless and hungry “refugee” masses.

The whole lot of “anti-feudal” and “anti-imperialist” pseudo-theories using a motley collection of definitions such as “The Third World”, “Developing countries” etc., stand on the fallacious treatment of each “nation” in isolation and viewing each one having to go through and to complete every historic stage in mechanical imitation of the European states.

Nationalism and colonial independence are not things that ought to concern the working class. Wherever they live and work, their only concern ought to be socialism. The material basis for socialism exists in the World Economy. Gone are the days of “the economies”. There is no need for all “the economies” to be industrialised and all “the peoples” to be proletarianised before socialism could be established. Thus the theories which ask workers of all places to wait for industrialisation to “develop” their localities before attempting to establish socialism are hopelessly irrelevant.

GLOBAL ECONOMY : All nationalistic ideas simply seek to turn back the wheel of history by fettering the ongoing process of capitalist globalisation. The process has been precisely well-narrated by Om Das/Ramesh in the following words :

“Impelled by the dynamic of the system the process of globalisation is going full steam and the problems are by definition global. The globalisation of markets, the incompatibility of state of playing a significant role, the inoperativeness of old economic models that policymakers had used to guide their actions, given the impression that an invisible hand guides the destiny of the economy.

“Shifts in consumer demand, new technologies, and new distribution methods that change their markets, are giving difficult time to the corporate giants. Ideas, beliefs, fashions, attitudes and opinions are formed, reformed, challenged and defied almost every second. Companies all over the world are planning workforce reductions and sweeping changes in working practices. “Restructuring”, “downsizing”, “Rationalising”, “Re-engineering” are the euphemistic labels under which big corporations are shrinking the world over.

“Nation-states which played a predominant role in human affairs in the past few centuries have lost their old importance. In fact they have become an impediment in the march forward of the world order – an unresolvable contradiction of a system essentially constituted of nation-states.”

Globalisation of capitals is not synonymous with globalisation of the interest of capitals. What has set capitals in an illusory unification expressed through the post-Second World War Bretton Woods mechanism of inter-national liquidity management, credit expansion and manipulative tariff and trade diplomacy with the organisations the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade etc. just in the opposite direction of their “nationalist” interests is the experience of 1929. The utopia of eliminating “national” interests can only be sustained until the crisis “bottoms out”.

Scarcity vs. abundance

The economies are becoming more “inter-dependent”, crises more international, conflicts more bloodier with more militarisation.

If the hungry and homeless ask the governments for the reason of their misery the answer is: the governments are not responsible for “scarcity” and “overpopulation”. Even if they mean idle material and human resources and destroying food and homes whilst building military industrial and nuclear missile complexes for “mutual terror” power balance! Guns over Butter? Yes, that is what is happening with the governments the world over.

Consider the facts:

- National killing firms comprising the world’s single largest industry is feeding on an estimated (1993) expenditure in the region of \$ 30,000 per second (i.e.) about \$ 950 billion a year; compare: - a spending of \$ 1,000 per day takes about 3,000 years to exhaust one billion dollars).
- According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) already in 1981 about 30 million people die of starvation or starvation-related diseases (i.e. about one per second) not because there was no food in the market but because they lacked purchasing power. Half of the dead were children – 40,000 per day!
- The money required to provide basic food, water, education, health and housing for those without these has been estimated at mere \$ 21 billion a year.
- India’s “defence” spending (10th in Asia) in 1993 amounted to \$6.9 billion, China’s \$24.8 billion, Russia’s \$ 29.1 billion and Japan’s \$ 39.7 billion.

The *Human Development Report 1993* has reported that 90 percent of the world’s people have lost control over their lives. Which class do they belong to? With all certainty the class who produce all wealth but do not own and control. Any more doubts? Let us see:

In India, the world’s second most populous country, adding much fuel to the politics of begging based on “overpopulation”, “scarcity” and “drought-famine” theories, press photographs of hunger-stricken bare-bodied skeleton-like semi-dead men, women and children off and on produce news for profits. Kalahandi is a profitable name as such! Working people of Kalahandi and Koraput districts produce increasing amounts of pulses, food grains and fish every year; and pulses they produce cater not only to the demand in Orissa but also in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. In Kalahandi they produce the best and the highest quantum of cotton in Orissa and then they receive a “famine” in return. The half-naked wealth-producer – “Hunger Omnivore” – lives there through a “meal” cooked from tamarind seeds sometimes with some added taste of wild and mostly inedible, even poisonous, fruits and roots searched out of decaying jungles around.

In a country where “malnutrition” means a “luxury” meal and “starvation wage” a standard of living”, the government turned down some time ago the US offer of a gift of three lakh tones of maize to India simply because the agricultural

ministry claimed that the gift would cause great harm to the interests of the domestic farmers!

Leaving aside India's existing stocks, only if this year's (1994-5) estimated food grain output of about 185 million tons could be distributed equally, India's 850 million men, women and children could receive 600 grams per head per day.

Karl Marx pointed out that "right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby." But the "Human Developers" deny Marx!

Alongside news headlines on "female foeticide", "infanticide", "dowry deaths" "bride burning", "child labour", "child prostitution", "child abuse", "rape" and violence of every description, much rhetoric runs on "child rights", "women rights", "human rights" and so on and so forth.

In India alone 10,000 children die every day; many of them could survive if they had access to safe drinking water, adequate health care and sanitation facilities, according to the UNICEF.

By the year 2000, the world's children who would be living without adequate food, water, healthcare and education would be around 650,000,000 – a "perspective of prosperity", indeed, for the "Rights Omnipresent" of the New World Order (Disorder!) which needs tanks for "defence" as in 1989 on the plaza called "Tiananmen" in China, by trampling on student masses demanding democracy! Look:

- One tank = equipment for 520 classrooms (\$500,000 – 30 pupils per primary school class)
- The USA's dairy herd in 1983 was 57 percent smaller than 40 years previously, yet these genetically improved cows were giving more milk that rose to about 139 billion pounds or 16 billion gallons – enough to make a seven-million-ton mountain of cheese. At 1983-4 levels of demand and supply they produce 10 percent more than enough to meet domestic and export market demand for milk, butter, cheese and ice-cream. By law the federal government had to buy this surplus and then incur the cost of storing and preserving these surplus stocks. This put a drain on the federal budget, so the Reagan administration and the dairy industry were agreed on the need to cut milk production. A policy of bonus payment for dairymen who would cut production and cash penalties for dairymen who would increase production was discussed.

- In India in 1993 Bombay's state dairy department has been pouring seven lakh litres of unsold milk down the drain. Who knows what is happening in other provinces!

- Some cancer experts who are coming to attend the International Cancer Congress from 30 October in New Delhi say about 5,000,000 people are suffering from different types of cancer in India alone and the figure is likely to reach 6,000,000 by the end of this century.

- Capitalism is incapable of feeding and housing everybody. But by the early 1980s it has been capable of providing about four tons (TNT equivalent) of nuclear explosives for every man, woman and child on the planet. According to an estimate then 50 thousand nuclear warheads exist with a total force equivalent to one million times the bomb that was exploded over Hiroshima in 1945 and which killed 120,000 of our fellow humans!

- This year World Bank projects have been responsible for the "displacement" of 2,153,000 people on three continents!

- In 1972, the world had 2,500,000 refugees. At December 1992, this figure stood at 19,000,000!

- Capitalism cannot construct houses for the millions whom it has rendered homeless, but can construct the multi-billion-dollar "MX nuclear missile complex" laid out in 20,000 square miles of the Nevada desert in the USA in 1983 – the world's largest construction, of course!

- Much to the dismay of the patriots, the United Nations Development Programme reports that about 30 percent (390,000,000) of the 1.3 billion (1,300,000,000) poor in the world live in India; and in Bangladesh 80 percent of its people live in poverty. (The FAO definition of "seriously undernourished" is a calorie intake of 1,600 calories per day or less.)

- Poverty is not just a problem of "underdeveloped" countries. In 1983, 32 million of the American population of 233 million were graded as below the poverty line, but the mayors said that soup kitchens were not keeping pace with the hungry. In 1984, within the European Economic Community, 30 million workers were living below the poverty line and now there are about 40 million unemployed. Everywhere in the world, malnourishment exists since capitalism exists to produce food, like any other commodity, in order not to satisfy human needs, but to realize a profit. Production and supply are geared with a view to market capacity. A scarcity is maintained

amidst plenty. The EEC destroys food every year, and maintains a policy of restricted food production. In 1982, American farmers took 82 million acres out of food production.

As early as the 1930s the American government evolved a policy, which instead of waiting for the food to be produced and destroying it involved paying farmers not to produce in the first place. Food supplies were artificially restricted. This policy was frankly described by the late President Kennedy as “planned and subsidized under-production.”

Agricultural “over-production” has given rise to “farm trade war” which is emerging as a major source of worldwide instability.

AS TO THE POTENTIAL PLENTY – there are 7.28 acres of food-growable land per person on this Earth. And the sun delivers at a rare equal to nearly 20,000 times Earth’s primary energy consumption – a “free lunch” for all on the Earth. Isn’t it? As Norman Armstrong puts it, “the human body is *an organism* in the world and receives its energy through food, and the Earth is a planet in the solar system, that likewise receives, free of charge, an inexhaustible input of fuel from the star in the middle of the solar system: the Sun” (*Socialist Standard*, August 1994).

“The sun is the free lunch that orthodox economics can’t come to terms with”, simply because economic modeling clings to the “trick” of satisfying our “unlimited wants”, with “limited resources”!

One estimate observes in 1986 that the energy derived from the sunlight on only 320 square kilometer surface of the Earth could satisfy the world’s total energy demand.

According to the FAO’s forecast, (outlook report for October 1994) world cereal production would be about 1,934 million tons. If this food is equally distributed among 5.6 billion people who will be on the planet by the end of 1994, global food availability throughout the 365 days of 1995 would be about 946 grams per capita per day, all previous stocks remaining untouched, and this despite the fact that only 50 percent of the world’s arable lands is used for cereal production and an increasing proportion of which is subsidized away from food production only in order to maintain profitability in the food sector.

It is now possible to reduce use of wood to the minimum, for substitutes could be used for making furniture and building houses, not to mention fuel, etc. Yet every year 200,000 square

kilometers of tropical forests are destroyed or severely degraded. At today’s rate of top soil loss – 25 billion tonnes – the world may lose 50 percent of its top soil by 2050.

Orthodox economics always speak in terms of “over-population” and “scarcity” as the cause (not results!) of poverty and unemployment!

The truth is that it is not over growth of population but the overgrowth of production (forces) with respect to the relation of production that is the cause of hunger and misery.

Famine – the horror-name “starvation” and “malnutrition” – today, unlike the localized famines of earlier epochs, is global since it is the necessary outcome of the insane and compelling logic of global capitalism: workers sacked when they overproduce, and food dumped while workers starve!

With capitalism *artificial scarcity, organized waste and pollution* go hand in glove. For instance the armed forces and armed production, commerce and finance, the cashiers, the accountants, the bank clerks, the computer operatives, the salesmen, the ticket collectors and many other functions associated with buying and selling belong to the category of organized waste of both resources and labour. For they would be of no use in a rationally organized society.

Moreover, the problems of pollution – “nuclear wastes”, “toxic excreta”, “radioactive wastes”, “acid rain”, “deforestation”, “ozone layer depletion”, and “waste-dumping” trade under “shady contracts” etc. are all problems of the capitalist system.

Nothing short of socialism can sweep away the whole lot of this capitalist garbage – physical and mental. Once production and distribution are freed from the fetters of the capitalist private property institutions and placed under common ownership, “scarcity”, waste and pollution will cease to exist and abundance will unfold itself in all respects.

DRUGS : Another instance of the organized waste is drugs industry. According to William Rees-Mogg’s estimate the capital funds in the “illegal” drug trade in now in hundreds of billions with \$300 billion as a plausible figure – at an average 15 percent compound return which doubles every five years. He is concerned with the question “whether drug profits are going to finance a widespread criminal, take-over of respectable businesses”!

Our business, however, is to abolish all businesses for profit – “criminal” and “respectable” alike.

DEBT CAPITALISM: Post-war world capitalism can be called debt capitalism. Debt implies expending of future income – or capitalization of future production – a self-deceptive process in itself. Governments, corporate giants, individuals are all in debt. Accumulation of debt accounts has turned the world economy into a devastating debt-economy. In many world economies, debt is compounding at a faster rate than income and total world indebtedness by every yardstick that can be named was heavier at the start of the present slump than at the beginning of any other. In the United States alone, the ratio of debt to nominal GNP is now 195 percent, compared with 120 percent before the 1929 crash. The “Third World” debt is running at 1.3 trillion dollars. India’s “national debt” is 75 percent of the GNP.

History has demonstrated that sustainable recoveries only begin when a considerable portion of debt built-up during the boom has been liquidated. Insufficient liquidation can only keep growth sluggish. It has been estimated that the amount of debt still to be liquidated during this slump only in the USA is three to four trillion dollars-worth as against the whole world’s total “GDP” around 25 trillion dollars. “The extension of credit effectively delays the onset of capitalism’s periodic crises only to make them worse when they finally occur.”

This generalization of the crisis reflects itself in the deficit-swollen “national” budgets outrageously attempting to further downgrade the standard of poverty of the workers.

WARS : World War means reversion to barbarism – a systematic, organized, indiscriminate mass-murder – a deliberate destruction of productive forces. War in the modern world is the military name of commercial competition.

Today’s desperate competition between nation-states for a bigger share of the world market turns tomorrow into a desperate war. Driven by the built-in instability of capitalism all “sovereigns” succumb to their real sovereign – commerce.

“So each nation state must maintain its own armed forces to protect the wealth of its national capitalist class from the predatory aspirations of its trade rivals. Sources of raw materials, markets, trade routes and strategic areas for their protection or acquisition have got to be defended by force of arms if necessary or to be gained by force of arms, represent the vital life’s blood of

capitalism and no price in human lives and materials can be too high to achieve them or to keep them.” (R. Montague, *World Socialist*, April 1984).

“Whenever war is fought, for whatever superficial and false reasons, and whichever side is declared the victor, one side is always invariably the loser – the world working class”. (S. Leight, *World Without Wages*)

The socialist position on war is: Today’s wars are caused by capitalism; wars are inevitable under this system since the conditions which give rise to wars are inherent within it and all wars are fought over the interests of the capitalist class and we are opposed to all of them without any reservation.

Workers of all countries have the same single interest – gaining world socialism.

A point of reference regarding the application of this principle that requires mention is that eight decades ago the Socialist Party of Great Britain opposed World War I with their *War Manifesto* saying:

“Having no quarrel with the working class of any country, we extend to our Fellow Workers of all Lands the expression of our Good Will and Socialist Fraternity, and Pledge ourselves to work for the overthrow of capitalism and the Triumph of Socialism.”

In 1939 the same message was reiterated by the Socialist Party of Great Britain, the World Socialist Party of the United States and all their companion parties to oppose World War II.

This “Socialist Fraternity” will remain our watchword that will usher us into a new era where, in Samuel Leight’s unbetterable language: “Furnaces throughout the world will become the recipients of a colossal amount of scrap metal – a fitting tribute to the long awaited commencement of social sanity.” (*World Socialist*, 1)

Who is there to accomplish this

As a creation of capitalism, the working class, as a class, can survive only under the conditions of its creator. Therefore, the elimination of these dehumanized and reified conditions will be accomplished with termination of them both. This shows how and where the working class represents the interest of the society’s total movement, which is not a totality of narrowness, but just its opposite – the end of all narrowness. Since knowledge is not a natural but a social product, acquisition of this positive knowledge, in spite of and against the

workers' own existence as the negative force of the ongoing social process can be guided by their own criticism of the history through bitter experiences. Their criticism leads them ultimately to the core of all their questions – the common ownership through seizure of political power using democratic means. Such knowledge as has already been acquired by a small minority of our class, awaits recognition by the majority.

Recognise it we must. The process is going on. But an unceasing succession of “leaders” hold fast the rein of reification lest the workers forget their “usefulness”! As if workers are tame cattle herds or flocks of sheep or goats requiring shepherds to tend them! As a deterrent, they put up their last weapon – their “human nature” argument. But what they are referring to is “human behaviour” not “human nature”. How we behave is determined by how we live. Today's competitive *ways of thinking* and acting are a product of private property society. But our ability to adapt our behaviour can reasonably turn us to *co-operation* for a rational and comfortable life. Even under capitalism, people often obtain pleasure from doing a good turn for others; few people enjoy participating in the “civilized” warfare of the daily rat-race. How better it would be if the society were based on co-operation! It will become a mass-question only when the confusing comparison – “how we lived and how we live” is replaced with the awakening one – “how we live and how we ought to live”. The decisive step towards this enlightenment requires complete dissociation from the “leadership” concept. There is no other way, no shortcut.

The history of the LP and the MICC's evolution is no different. As already stated, the extent to which we could rescue ourselves from our awkward intellectual and organisational associations with the opportunists and tyrants who claim to be Marxists depends on the possibility of us addressing the question – can Leninism be regarded as being an associate, or antagonist of the essential principles of Marxism? Much to the chagrin of the whole array of Leninist state-ideologues we found Leninism as being anything but Marxism, and the Leninist vocabulary as a sort of scavenging in the history's waste-heaps of ideas. The last thing that we got rid of was the dogma of “vanguardism” (including “paid professionals”) that turns Marx's Materialist Conception of History upside down, since it clings to the same age-old idealist conception that it is the “great men” who lead the masses to make a history of their own!

The making of history was never, and can never be, the task of “the great men” – chiefs, masters, kings, emperors, leaders and the like. It is not “the great men” who create history, but on the contrary, it is the history made by men that creates

these historic categories in conformity with the prevailing circumstances. Leadership theory retards historic categories in conformity with the prevailing circumstances. Leadership theory retards historic truth, dampens mass initiative, inflicts inferiority complex, defends the ruling class's pyramid of power by fueling the fire of nationalism-racism-patriotism and martyrdom based on glorification of pomp and prejudice of the institutionalized violence. And violence always serves the interest of a minority. Violence breeds violence.

Insurrection is no exception. Armed upsurge or “civil war” means militarisation of the class struggle necessarily having a hierarchy of commanding bureaucracy operating on an unquestioning obedience of armed contingents of workers. The same alienating process that sets workers against workers – on either side of a barricade – now as illegal killers against legalized killers and thrusts a new military set-up destroying the old, jeopardizing the chance of their own democratic self-organisation.

The deliberate deception is there all the same in their being “led” by the same politicians in “peace marches”. As war protesters, workers “are in a position of beggars asking governing politicians to do something vital in the interest of society, but which would clash with the interest of the owning class. Not much chance. Beggars can't be choosers”.

The tragedy of the “Peace drama” is yet to reach its climax! What if, when back from a “peace march” at a gun factory-gate the ordnance workers' rallying slogan – “No more wars, we want peace!” – is met with the management's suggestion – “Well, then, let's close the factory down!”?

The wage-slaves must retaliate – “No, the factory must remain open!” A slave's dilemma, indeed!

But the dilemma has a solution – the end of the wage-slavery altogether – that ends with the necessity to be “led”.

So the overwhelming majority of today's world population – the working class, while recognizing man's active role in responding to his circumstances, must discard “the great theory of violence” once and for all. A movement that intends to demilitarize the society cannot achieve its goal by militarizing itself. It has to be carried forward by a majority who have decided to build socialism as a world system, and are willing to take responsibilities in organizing consciously and

globally for the democratic conquest of political power to institute common ownership. Socialism is nothing but self-education, self-organization and self-emancipation of the working class itself.”

Divisions on the basis of “nation” or “race” are capitalist vulgarity. Those who raise the banner of “national independence, security and sovereignty” to show that “The West” is swallowing “The East” or “The North” or “The South” are out to conceal the stark truth that all “nations” are class-divided; capitalists of all countries are share-holders, big or small, of their international debt capitalist accumulation mechanism. Whatever they accumulate and centralize comes from the exploitation of their respective workers; needless to say that it presupposes a relative inequality in their claim over the total wealth. Yet when it comes to getting out of depression and paying out the interest and principal installments – it is only the working class who are to make back and belly sacrifices in terms of starvation wages, simply because workers, as workers, can survive only under the conditions of exploitation. In order that a handful of jet-set sky-trekkers’ wealth and pleasure can scale the sky workers are obliged to live below a beastly existence have to accept the condition of obedience to the discipline of starvation beside destruction of food they have produced with their own labour.

All over the world colossal fixed capitals stand idle with millions of workers joining the ranks of the unemployed, businesses going bankrupt, factories closed, machinery scrapped and food dumped.

When only a part of the world’s productive capacity, already worked out, is more than enough to produce abundance for all, millions are condemned as fodder of famines, millions going to the wall. This contradiction seeks its palliative in devastating overheads, i.e. destruction of capital by capital. At a cost of millions dead and much of the productive capacity and produced wealth destroyed, capital is devalued through wars. Wars take over trade wars. People’s needs go unmet because the global rate of profit had fallen, for the flow of global surplus value had dwindled and remained unrealised, forasmuch as the productive forces have outgrown the capitalist production relation since the beginning of this century. And now it is the third and deepest phase of the depression since the end of the late sixties when the post-war “boom” ended. “Boom” or “slump”, the working class everywhere, in general, is in a permanent state of depression, which only varies in degree.

Capitalism has fulfilled its historic mission and has outlived its usefulness. The society awaits a change, not merely a change of this or that aspect of it, but a total change, the world over. And change it we can, by our rationally-willed actions. For it is this that characterises human behaviour in contradistinction to instinctive animal behaviour. Men have journeyed through changing and have been changed by the circumstances that environ them.

How and wherefore of which has been explained by the Marxist theory which is dialectical, for, in itself, it is capable of revealing its won cause and analysing the effects and reviewing the basis. This dialectics is historical in that its objective is derived not from any philosophical or contemplative premise.

Now, our task is to use every available means and every possible opportunity to make new socialists until, the society is turned socialist. “Our task is not only to understand the world but to change it” (Marx).

And with the accomplishment of this task in history the rule of prejudice will give way to the rule of reasons over the destiny of humanity. Self-alienation of man will give way to self-realisation of man as the Supreme Being in consciously shaping the really human life.

Socialist view on religion

Religion: Religion is the most fantastic and fetishistic product of humans’ self-alienation whereby they make themselves devoid of all power and a non-power all-powerful. It is the aura of “an inverted consciousness” of an “inverted world” – the “fantastic reflection of human things in human mind”.

All the various religions have a common origin – blind faith. Their tenets are very similar no matter how different they appear to be. They treat everything as the creation and manifestation of a supernatural, eternal idea – the omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient god, personified and descended through incarnation in a never-ending succession of gods and goddesses, to take charge of various aspects of nature and society. Prayers and rituals are practiced, and provision for an afterlife and immortality are preached by all.

Believers’ sincerity: Appalling though it is that our fellow workers indulge and throng themselves in thoughts and rites of ultimate salvation and rewards in cloudlands while our exploiters acquire their full deserts of riches down here on earth, and while the religious bodies

preach sacrifice but practice possession well beyond the parameter of their precepts, socialists (unlike many rationalists) do not view workers as nonsense crowds. Most religiously minded workers are very sincere in their beliefs. Men and women who produce and distribute all wealth cannot be imbeciles. Aware or not, as long as they produce and distribute wealth they are materialists. It is only while treating conflicts, which are seen occurring between “good” and “evil” that they fall prey to religious superstitions and misconceptions.

Religion’s appeal: Capitalism, with its aims of “maximization of profit” and “maximization of consumption”, produces insatiable passion for possession, status consciousness, egotism, selfishness and greed, as against the real human desire not for possession but well-being, not selfishness but satisfaction – not “to have” but “to be”. Egotism is opposed to egalitarianism, and greed to peace. Hedonism and Sado-masochism complement each other, involving an idea of unlimited pleasure against the ideal of disciplined work and a concept of complete laziness against obsessive work ethic. Pathogenous “character traits” produced by this conflictual socio-economic system, in turn, produce sick people and a sick society. Constant conflicts over money turn everybody against everybody.

As inherently antagonistic – hence insecure social process cannot but generate workers’ competition for crumbs. It goes on conditioning notoriously unhappy, lonely, anxious, anguished, depressed, destructive and dependent people, glad to kill time that they actually want to save, whereas gratification of capital’s profit-need requires them to work obediently.

The one that has been well put into this service is religion. Its mythology and mystification sanction capital’s authority as against worker’s mental and material subservience. Promising a rewarding and immortal life after death and social cohesion in a heaven for the believers, and threats of punishment in a hell for the “sinners”, aided with intimidation and persecution of the atheists here, religion strikes the right balance with this competitive, insecure and cruel social process that we live under. The more cruel the competition the more fantastic the solace offered by religion – a solace that conceals real distress underneath religious distress posed as the protest against real distress. “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of the heartless world, just as it is the spirit of the spiritless conditions. It is the opium of the People” (Marx.)

Capital – itself a hybrid entity – has allowed no form untried, no source untapped for its

lifeblood of profit. All forms and relations were to be turned into capitalist. All wealth-creators into workers, and all institutions into capital’s levers.

Capitalism’s question is not what is useful for humans, but what is useful for profit. “Capital is a social force, and not a personal one” (*Communist Manifesto*). As a worker is a slave of wages; likewise a capitalist is a slave of profit; capital cares not a bit for personal relationships. Change of owners, workers, forms, nations and religion, is its customary business. But the ultimate form of expression of all its contents and relations is money – now “the boundless” above the boundary of the world of commodities. The all-pervading and absolutely developed recognition of capital is money; because capital and with it every other from of its self-objectification is ‘not a thing but a social relation between persons mediated through things.’ (Marx.)

The money form of capital as a self-expanding value appears as though money begets money. All social bonds – all correspondences between man and man – find expression through exchange between commodity and commodity, money and money. Since all fetishistic faith pertains, generally to the category of religion, this fetishism too appears as if money is the mundane manifestation of the attributeless **Brahma** who commands all attributes. A thing that, in itself, is destitute of any attribute, worth or honour has become the measure-incarnate of all. “Money is the alienated ability of mankind”. It represents the totality of men’s relations, while the individual man defends himself at a cell-corner of the social body. In the eyes of an individual all commodity forms destined to be exchanged for money-forms are transcendental – hence to be worshipped. The religious customs and rites are also commodities having price (exchange values) as well as use value. Where do they have any bad blood with capital?

Religion and Capitalist Politics: No nationalist capitalist party – no matter what its credo says and what its individual members think and say about it – can afford to miss any opportunity of using “the trump card” of religion and racism against its rival – in trade and wars with God’s blessings on both sides, and in elections with the right nominations for the right race at the right place! And all this behind the banner. “Don’t mix, don’t mix religion and politics!”

History shows, in all class societies religion and politics intermarry in a symbiotic reciprocity. Their interwovenness is laid exposed when sages and priests, mullahs, parsons and popes accompanied by their accomplices play merry hell

with their perennial communal religious robes, rites and edicts – differential political colour and party affiliation makes no difference. No nationalist party, in reality, is and could ever be, completely free from such a corrupt state of affairs, simply because religion offers moral sanction to, and consolation and justification for the coercive and patriarchal state-family-property power-structure.

On religion the general position of capitalist politics is “secularism” or religious “indifferentism”. One’s boastful proclamation of adherence to it might make one look very radical-a-“leftist” but in actuality, “secularism” means evasionism or escapism, since it lets things go as they go. “Indifferentism” or “neutrality” is anything but a principle. For the gullible it is tomfoolery and for the “leaders” hypocrisy. Religious “indifferentism” implies religious institutionalism – supposed to achieve the never-achievable – a balance between religion and religion. It can never cause religion to wither away; just the contrary, it provides all with a plea of “a private matter”, a posture that allows any self-seeker the advantage of talking both radical and religious at the same time. And above all it prevents class-consciousness and obscures class-struggle.

When a communal riot runs wild, many anxious men and women hope to see a solution in preaching communal harmony and peace, dismantling the thronging crowds, driving rioters away from the streets, disbanding their organizations and punishing the ringleaders. That they are of little help remains well instanced with the co-existence and recurrence of the both – these measures and the riots.

The typical pre-capitalist forms of exploitation and oppression since the days of the Vedas in India based on **casteism and untouchability** can be traced back to the typical socio-economic relationship engendered by the Aryan aggression against the Dravidians. Opposition to casteism and untouchability is not something modern, it is centuries old. Opposition takes root simultaneously with the emergence of a position. Much water has rolled along the altitudes of the Himalayas down through the Ganges into the Indian Ocean, many reformists with their all various dictums had forged ahead and then fallen into the oblivion – but untouchability is still having its drag effects not only in religious rituals but also in the social body of this sub-continent, simply because nothing less than economic equality can completely remove social inhumanity.

That a way of life full of hatred, hostility, strives and wars can be wished away or legally

exterminated is an extreme pipe-dream. Peace precepts, law manuals and state intervention are of little use.

The so-called principle of “secularism”, therefore, for the working class is essentially an intellectual corruption – an importunate imposture. Workers cannot remain “indifferent” regarding religion. It is only by Marxist materialist method that they can hope to understand society’s class composition and their own class-objective. It is not by trying to avoid, with one’s eyes and ears closed, but by arranging and organizing for knowing that one begins to know. And this question too, like any others, must be addressed not to its effects, but to its historical source of motion. Lack of knowledge of a cause implies lack of knowledge of an end. “To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter. But for man the root is man.”

Where is God ? Where was God when 6 million Jews were massacred in Nazi Germany; when 15 million, exclusive of civilian, were killed and millions more wounded in World War II? Where was he when. “The Great Bengal Famine” fed on 1.5 million of our fellow people – according to the official Famine Enquiry Commission (but, in the current literature on world “food crisis” occasional references are made to the Bengal Famine; “when floods destroyed the rice crop, costing some 2 million to 4 million lives”) whilst “Bengal was producing the largest rice crop in history in 1943” and the per capita availability index for 1943 was higher by about 9 percent than that for 1941? Call up God to save 40,000 children under age 5 who are dying every day of malnutrition beside dumped food (including milk) due to lack of buyers! Maybe, they are receiving punishment for their “original sin”! Then try contacting him to help save some 550 million people who go to bed hungry each night, some one billion (1,000,000,000) who live in a state of absolute poverty, and some 200 million (200,000,000) more in the so-called “developing world” alone who will join their ranks by the end of this century. Not much luck here either. And where will he be to do something about the following predictions for 1995: Based on historical averages 180,000 people will die in wars; 2,500,000 children will die and another 2,500,000 will be disabled because they will not receive vaccines? Can God undo or divert an estimated expenditure of \$1,000,000,000,000 (one trillion) on arms this year? Will the Almighty be able to close down munitions factories as long as the wage-slavery exists? Not really. Were he able to do anything about all these and many more, they wouldn’t have been allowed to arise in the first place. Or what? The religious might retort: All that

our auspicious Saviour doeth unto us, doeth for our bliss!

Why then the inevitable struggle between employees and employers crops up in the strangest places?

That faith does not pay, and that all workers have to sell their ability to work for a wage or salary, and further that professional holy men are no different – their saffron or white robes notwithstanding – have never been better exposed than in their forming trade unions. Buddhist monks in Japan have formed the Heartful Labour Union because one monk was abused, assaulted and then sacked by one head monk. A court case is there to decide if monks are paid workers or own allegiance to a “Higher Authority”. But this monk speaks out his worries about his mortgages and his children’s future. **“Money is a key problem, I have to keep my family,”** he says.

Consciousness

In 1843, the young Marx, while corresponding with Ruge, arrived at the awareness that consciousness has no place outside the materialistic course of history. In the modern world, capitalism has shown that it is incapable of dealing with crises and the horrific plight of millions of workers; therefore, the future of the working class, and thereby that of all humankind, rests on the question if the working class will be able to take correct steps in the right direction before capitalism kills all life over the earth. “Only a revolution of radical needs can be a radical revolution.”

A theory “becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses”. Ideological elements are not mere masks, mere flags and slogans; they are the necessary constituents in the make-up of a real struggle. Only by applying the Historical materialist method to the sociological implications of these struggles are economic interests discovered as their decisive determinants.

Before the advent of capitalism, humans remained hidden behind motives and, consequently, acted as blind forces of history, “true driving forces which stand behind motives of human actions in history” were yet to be discovered. True, class-interest in pre-capitalist economic society had no possibility to achieve full economic articulation. For, structuring of society based on spontaneously evolved estates and castes kept economic elements interwoven with and hidden underneath political and religious factors. But the rule of capital has eliminated the estates-system, and inflicted a mortal blow against casteism. This gears society along class lines –

vestiges of pre-capitalism notwithstanding. This has made class-consciousness able to achieve complete clarity in order for consciously influencing the course of history. The heightened understanding of natural phenomena and its concomitant disregard of unevidenced beliefs – both by-products of modern capitalism – have driven religion to its last resort of “social sciences” based on a distinction between “good” and “evil”, much to the benefit of the capitalist class since they cannot allow unrestricted scientific investigation of the cause of unemployment, poverty, crises and wars. It is, therefore, the working class consciousness that can point the way out of this impasse. As long as this consciousness remains lacking, crises will remain unresolved, repeating their never-ceasing cycles, until after protracted sufferings and dreadful detours history’s university completes the education of the class and confers upon it the task of its own emancipation and thereby that of the whole of humanity. But the working class is not given a choice. It must become a class not only “as against capital” but also for “itself”.

Any religion of any race as well as any God of any name is man-made. But the conception of religion and race is not an intrinsic attribute of humanity. They are the product of a spontaneous, i.e., unconscious mode of production. Consciousness starts from knowledge, knowledge from facts and facts from man’s own practical activities. Once humans regain their lost substance – humanity – alienation is alienated. “Assume man to be man and his relationship to the World to be human one; then you can exchange love only for love, trust for trust, “(Marx).

Humans are not born aggressive; they are essentially sensible, compassionate, gregarious and co-operative. That alienation rules show an intellectually-shackled working class. Capital’s power in attracting and subordinating the workers is not the cause. The cause that prolongs alienation is workers’ uniformed submission to capitalism’s rationale.

It is here that the *raison d’être* of the World Socialist Movement steps in. What distinguishes this movement is to be seen in its immediate cause – not in the continuation but in the elimination of class struggle through the abolition of capital/wage-labour relationship via the ballot.

The religious view that workers are incapable of solving the problems they face is diametrically opposed to the socialist view that it is the intelligence and diligence of workers in active adaptation with nature that produce all scientific knowledge and technology, bring into being a

capacity of producing abundance – if only capitalism is replaced with socialism. This we say, however, not to mean that socialism will be a heaven-on-earth having no problems to deal with, but to point that universally-owned and democratically-controlled production for use ought not to have the problems engendered by a capitalistically-owned-and-controlled production for profit.

In times of socialist awakening – country-to-country – world over, possibly many members of the emerging socialist majority might bear rudiments of religious thoughts whilst understanding, wanting and voting for democratically controlled universal ownership with free access for all. But emerge it could not, had those members of the majority who already belonged to a companion party of the World Socialist Movement not completely freed themselves from such ambiguities and turned firmly and honestly to socialism before joining the party.

Religion and socialism preclude each other.

What about other parties?

The various political parties and groups exist as expressions of the interest of either the capitalist class or the working class. We now hold that all political parties including so-called “Communist”, “Socialist”, “Labour” and “Workers” parties, except the parties of the World Socialist Movement, exist objectively only to run and reform the ongoing system, irrespective of subjective intentions and stances of their individual members. And as this system survives only to serve

the interests of the capitalist class, these parties obviously cannot serve the interests of the working class. It is misleading to divide the “nationalist” parties into “Left Wing”, “Right Wing” and “Centrist” parties. The popular misconception runs that the “the Leftists” represent working-class interests and socialism, which they never did, nor can ever do, but only pretend to do. The “Leftists” were and are in no way no less capitalist than the avowedly capitalist “Rightists”.

But we are socialists, not “leftists”, not “nationalists”. The socialists have only one theory and practice – world socialism. So we have nothing in common with them nor have we with any of the pseudo-internationalists supporting “vanguardism” of any name and degree. So we are opposed to any idea of “United Front” of any kind with any of them. Thus we take our position inside the World Socialist Movement beside our companion parties and close our ranks to all and sundry outside except those who qualify as socialists.

Our organization

We are organizing ourselves in a party. However, this organization is not to be confused with “leadership”. Our party need not have a “leadership”, but does need to have a democratic organization within which members exercise full control over the various functions and functionaries. It is along with the principle that the World Socialist Society will also be organized.

Thus we adopt the following **Object and Declaration of Principles of the World Socialist Movement** as ours:

OBJECT: *The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.*

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The World Socialist Movement holds:

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e. land, factories, railways etc.) by the capitalist or master-class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE WORLD SOCIALIST MOVEMENT**, therefore, enters the field of political action, determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

The following parties in the following countries adhere to this object and declaration of principles:

AUSTRALIA : The World Socialist Party of Australia, c/o SPGB, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN, GB.

AUSTRIA; Bund Demokratischer Sozialisten, GuBriegelstraBe 50, 1100 Wien.

BRITAIN: The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN.

CANADA: The Socialist Party of Canada, PO Box 4280, Station A, Victoria, Bc V8X 3X8.

INDIA: The World Socialist Party (India), c/o B. Sarkar, J-78 Baghajatin Pally, Calcutta 700 032.

IRELAND: The World Socialist Party (Ireland), c/o 151 Cavehill Road , Belfast BT15 1BL, Northern Ireland.

NEW ZELAND: The World Socialist Party of New Zealand, PO Box 1919, Auckland, N.I.

UNITED STATES: The World Socialist Party of the United States, PO Box 405, Boston, MA 02272

World Socialism in India

We publish below the speech delivered by Richard Donnelly, fraternal delegate from the Socialist Party of Great Britain to the Founding Conference of a section of the World Socialism Movement in India on 1 March 1995.

Comrades and Fellow Workers,

Today is a very important day for the Socialist Revolution. For the first time in history, some men and women of the working class in India are embarking on the necessary task of transforming society from one of oppression, exploitation and degradation to one of fraternity, co-operation and emancipation.

The history of the world's working class has been one of exploitation. Despite the differences in that exploitation in Europe, Asia, the Americas, Africa and Australia, one common theme is ever-present. The working class produce a surplus that the useless minority, the exploiters, consume.

Here, in this hall in Calcutta, we start the process of ending that exploitation and the building a new

society based on common ownership and democratic control.

The ideas of the World Socialism Movement are based on science. We do not worship gods. We do not believe in miracles or divine intervention. We take the view that men and women make society we are born in. We are not dreamers who imagine a perfect world and ignore the realities of our own existence. Therefore, it is necessary, before considering the socialist transformation of society, to analyse the present society of world capitalism.

Global capitalism

Capitalism is indeed a global system. It stretches from the North Pole to the South Pole; from the Rockies to Siberia. The basis of that

society is production for profit. All wealth takes the form of commodities – articles that are produced for sales or exchange on the market with a view to realising a profit.

Wherever the tentacles of this monstrous society stretch, it tears asunder the customs, cultures and mores of previous societies and replaces them with the madhouse economics of the capitalist market place. Thus small producers and subsistence farmers are wrenched from the traditions of the past and thrown onto the labour market as mere “hands”. Mere producers of surplus value, to be hired in times of boom and fired in times of slump.

Capitalism is competitive society. Indeed its apologists and supporters laud its competitiveness. They praise this aspect of capitalism and say it leads to efficiency and productiveness. We deny this. The working class produce all wealth. They not only produce it, they manage its production and distribution. A modern factory is run from top to bottom by members of the working class. From labourer to engineer to manager – all are members of the working class. They own little but their ability to work. They must sell this ability for a wage or salary. But during the time they work in the factory or workshop they produce more than the price of their labour-power – they produce a surplus value. This surplus value is pocketed by the owners of the factory. They live off the surplus value created by the working class.

How efficient is this system? Firstly, workers have to compete with each other. In a desperate struggle to get enough wages to live they compete with each other in the factory. They compete with workers in other factories. They compete with workers in other countries.

It is the capitalists’ aim to pay as little as possible in wages and to get the workers to produce as much surplus value as possible. On the other hand, it is in the workers’ interest to get as high a wage as possible and to produce as little surplus value as possible. Between these two classes, the capitalist class and the working class, there is a constant struggle in the industrial field. This shows itself in strikes, go-slows, lock-outs and productivity drives.

But there is not only conflict between worker and worker; and worker and capitalist – there is also the conflict between capitalists. In order to realise the surplus value produced by the working class, the capitalist has to sell the commodities produced on the market. Here, he enters into conflict with other capitalists. He must constantly strive to cheapen production in order to claim a

portion of the market for his commodities. The more ruthlessly he can exploit his workers the better chance he has to compete.

Should he be unable to sell his commodities, he cannot realize his surplus value. He goes out of business. Horror of horror he may even lose his capital and become a mere worker.

This happens locally, nationally and – because capitalism is a worldwide system – globally. In the international struggle for markets, whole groups of capitalists struggle for markets, sources of raw materials, military bases. This commercial rivalry leads to military rivalry. To threats, counter-threats and, eventually, war.

How efficient is capitalism when, in defence of its markets, the world capitalist class spend on armaments (on weapons of destruction) more than one million US dollars per minute every minute of the day and night?

How efficient is capitalism when, millions live in sub-standard housing, suffering malnourishment and, at the same time, food is destroyed to keep up prices and building workers are unemployed, banned from producing the housing that is so desperately needed?

How efficient is capitalism when, throughout the so-called civilized world, millions of pounds, dollars, marks and roubles are spent on policemen, gaols and gaolers in the hopeless task of curbing the ever-mounting crime wave?

How efficient is capitalism when, in every great city in the world – Calcutta, New York and London – millions of workers pour in every morning to perform useless non-productive jobs in banks, advertising agencies and insurance offices?

Wasteful and destructive system

Capitalism is a wasteful social system. It destroys property in wars, closes factories, destroys food and, most wasteful of all, it starves millions and denies education and medical care to the world’s working class.

Many non-socialists would agree that capitalism is, in many respects, a wasteful and destructive system, but they would claim that the system can be made more equitable. They believe that, by government legislation, capitalism can abolish the conflict between rich and poor. Soften the harsh exploitation of the working class. Solve the housing problem – lessen the growth of crime – feed the starving millions – bring co-operation to a system based on class conflict. They imagine that

somehow we can have capitalism without war, poverty, ignorance and conflict. Such people we call reformers of capitalism. Such people we call dreamers.

The recent history of the working class has shown the futility of such reforms. In Britain, the Labour Party believe a programme of reforms could transform society. Promising workers a high wage, low prices economy, they were swept to power in 1945. Claiming that they could abolish poverty inside capitalism, they found that it was not a case of them running capitalism, but capitalism running them.

Today, in 1995, the British Labour Party are imitating the policies and slogans of the avowedly capitalist party – the Conservative Party – in a desperate bid for power. They have made the very term Socialist a word that stinks in the nostrils of the British working class, since experiencing their various terms of power. They have been proven to be just another reformist party eager to run capitalism.

In India, as you know, the congress party has adopted the same reformist programme, with the same disastrous results. It makes no difference whether the reformers are honest, genuine, clever people (and we know that quite often they are not that), they are powerless to run capitalism in the interests of the majority. Capitalism is a system based on class exploitation. There is only one way to run it – in the interests of the exploiters.

There are yet another set of political parties who claim they can transform society in the interests of the majority. These people call themselves revolutionaries, they mouth a pseudo – Marxism and claim to be the saviors of the working class. These groups are Leninists, Trotskyites, Stalinists and Maoists. Whatever they may have by way of differences, they have one major thing in common. They see themselves as leaders; they have contempt for the understanding of the working class.

To them, the view of the World Socialist Movement – that we must have a majority of the working class understanding, desiring and organizing for Socialism – is a utopian dream. Lenin, their great leader, proclaimed that if we had to wait for working class understanding, we would have to wait 500 years for Socialism.

In power in Russia since 1917 until recently, and in power in much of Eastern Europe since the end of the Second World War, their ruthless dictatorship led to the imprisonment and death of all those workers who stood in their way. Stalin's

Russia was as bloodthirsty as Hitler's regime in Germany and the rest of Europe.

In China today countless millions still suffer the lash of the Bolsheviks' harsh dictatorship. Tiananmen Square in Beijing being only one of its recent purges. Workers give up the right to think for themselves at deadly peril.

In 1917, the Socialist Party of Great Britain was almost alone in denying that there was a socialist revolution in Russia, pointing out that Socialism was impossible without the active, class-conscious efforts of the majority of the working class.

Organise for World Socialism

What are the lessons to be learnt from the tragic history of the world's working class? For make no mistake about it, your efforts to form in Calcutta an active party based on the principles of the World Socialist Movement, will only succeed if these lessons have been learned.

These lessons are firstly; the party seeking working class emancipation must be based on understanding. Each member of the World Socialist Movement must have basic knowledge of what capitalism is and how it operates. Must understand that World Socialism and only World Socialism can solve the problems of the working class. A policy of no-compromise to the policies of reform must be a fundamental principle.

The second lesson is that a World Socialist Party must base all its activities on the democratic decisions of that party. It must oppose the concept of leadership and elitism. Otherwise, it would cease to be a revolutionary party and succumb to leadership and reformism.

For some years now, the Socialist Party of Great Britain has been in correspondence with the Marxist International Correspondence Circle in Calcutta. Arising out of this, the Calcutta comrades have drawn up a basic statement, which you will consider over the next three days of your Conference.

You have much debate before you. You have to discuss the formation of a new political party; you have to discuss its organization and its campaigns. I am confident that based on your understanding of World Socialism and your adherence to democratic principles that at the end of this Conference, the World Socialist Movement will be welcoming a new vigorous adherent in the struggle for Socialism.

On a personal level, I would like to say that I joined the Socialist Party of Great Britain in the City of Glasgow in 1957. I have been at many debates, meetings and conferences in the United States of America during that time. Today, in Calcutta, is without doubt the most exciting and important in my political life.

In conclusion then, Comrades, let me commend to your Conference the famous words of the *Communist Manifesto*:

**WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE.
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR
CHAINS.
YOU HAVE A WORLD TO WIN.**

The Welcome Address by Toby Crowe, Delivered on 2nd March 1995

Comrades and Friends,

Comrade Donnelly finished his inaugural address yesterday by saying how excited he was to be in Calcutta as a representative of the Socialist Party of Great Britain so I might as well begin in the same way by expressing my own excitement and pleasure at being present on this historical occasion. I am happy to say that the optimism and anticipation I felt before I flew here on Sunday have not grown any less since my arrival.

As you may know, the Socialist Party of Great Britain (to which I belong) was formed in June 1904, when this city was still the capital of British India and second city of the British Empire. I know you will not hold Britain's imperial past against me; after all, my own grandparents' grandparents at that time were railwaymen, seamen, farmhands and grocers, none of them part of the British capitalist class, and none of them therefore the recipients of the wealth taken from this country. Today, nevertheless 91 years later, it is a special pleasure for a British socialist to be able to witness the foundation of a party of the World Socialist Movement, with the World Socialist Movement's object and principles, in a country which our masters once called their own.

From this encouraging start we as much as you look forward to seeing you grow. Today, as always, the Indian working class is being cheated – as your grandparents were by the British and your distant ancestors by the Moghuls. India too is no different from other countries in seeing the failure of reformism. The gross opportunism of politicians (and in Calcutta at the moment we can observe something of the C.P.I. (M)'s methods for ourselves). Disillusion with politics is now widespread in the West, and must surely be so here too, because of Indians politicians' inability to solve any of the problems we can see around us.

Obviously then, the world's largest "democracy" has not brought a transfer of power to the working class and there is a lesson here for those outside this hall who did not know it already

(as all of us inside do): what they – the capitalists – call democracy (putting a cross on a ballot paper from time to time) is not enough. The ballot box is only the first step on the road to democracy; it is the means whereby democracy will be brought about. No more.

If the ballot box is not by itself the answer, what of that given by many economists and politicians, economic growth? I know that India has experienced economic growth since 1947 – this was easy to do, because the British capitalists used the country for their own purposes. It has taken an Indian capitalist class, the real winners from "Independence", to create anything like any Indian industrial revolution. But what benefit has this growth brought you here in this hall? The wealth you produce sometimes goes into Indian hands, of course. But they are the hands of Indian capital. Before it was the hands of British capital. (And I say "sometimes goes into Indian hands", as much of the wealth produced here is enjoyed by foreign investors in any case, capitalism being a global system) the hands which benefit are never yours.

So the ballot box? Not enough economic growth? No, thank you. What India needs is a new political and economic system relevant to India's past and present. It seems paradoxical, then, that this new system relevant to India is the same as that relevant to Great Britain, which is in many ways a very different country. But the working class suffers the same problems everywhere, irrespective of race, sex, language, colour and culture. For this reason the emancipation of the working class can come about only by our unity – there is no room for unity's enemies – communalism, superstition, racism, caste. The liberation which this unity alone can achieve is described in the founding statement we have just considered, and Comrade Donnelly and I are therefore glad to see its adoption and with it the adoption of the Object and Declaration of Principles of the World Socialist Movement.

Fifty years ago, India belonged to British capitalists. Now it belongs partly to Indian, partly still to foreign ones. It is our task to work towards

that day (hopefully not too long in coming!) when both India and Great Britain belong to you, and to me. Until then, capitalism will continue in both countries (and in the rest of the world) to act just

like India's own banyan tree: underneath it, nothing of any value or beauty will ever grow. We have to rip this infernal plant up by the roots, and begin to plant a new and better tree.