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JOURNAL OF THE BOLSHEVIK LENINIST GROUP

---- A TROTSKYIST ORGANISATION ----

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IN THIS ISSUE

In preparing this issue we found that given our limitations with respect to resources and time, we could not be as ambitious as we had earlier intended. Our editorial this time has a narrower focus than presenting a comprehensive socialist perspective on the housing question. But it has put forward what we feel are rather important perspectives for how to struggle against the Indian state, and not only over the issue of housing for the poor. In the course of analysing the Maharashtra government's attempts to evict pavement-dwellers and the opposition it aroused the editorial points out how the whole experience highlighted the fact that the Indian state is essentially bourgeois democratic in nature.

This the CPI(ML) fails to understand and this failure is related to their totally false characterisation of India as semi-feudal/semi-colonial. If this is indeed the nature of the Indian economy, then it would be very difficult to argue that the political structure resting on such a foundation is basically a bourgeois democratic one, no matter how weak. Because the CPI(ML) is so completely wrong in its understanding of both the economy and the state, their revolutionary strategy to combat this state is correspondingly flawed. It remains the task of Indian revolutionaries to develop an appropriate revolutionary strategy that can lead to victory.

Since India is not semi-feudal it is wrong to see the Indian state as representing above all the domination of so-called "feudal" landowners in the countryside. The Congress is supposed to be the party of this landlord class. It is extremely difficult for any serious student of agrarian relations to accept that this is the case in present-day India. But even in pre-Independence India, the Congress did not represent the class of big, so-called "feudal" landlords. This is what our first article aims to show, and in doing so, it in effect criticises the political and programmatic perspectives which follow from the theoretical characterisation of India as feudal or semi-feudal. In the next issue we will present the final article in the series on this subject, which will show why present-day agrarian relations are clearly capitalist.

The second article is on Poland. The great workers' movement there has raised any number of questions--- the developments within the Polish communist party, the impact of the momentous events on East and West, the possibility of a Soviet invasion, the dreadful state of the economy, the failure of Solidarity to effectively tackle women's oppression and so on. We have had to limit our focus to two issues--- the role of the Church and the question of socialist democracy. A necessarily restricted, but accurate glossary of events has been provided.

It must be understood that the political revolution in Poland has begun. This is the most powerful and sustained working class movement in history, whose natural dynamic is towards genuine socialism. But though Poland can never return to what it was before Aug. 1980 (even if the Soviets invade) many of the gains achieved cannot become irreversible, and indeed the workers' movement cannot move forward to complete institutionalisation of workers' control without decisively defeating and overthrowing the ruling bureaucracy. Implicit, therefore, in the existing dynamic is the question of political power. The latest troop mobilisations by the bureaucracy only reinforces the point.

Outside of Poland it is not possible to even suggest confidently, let alone dictate, what tactics and strategy must be adopted to achieve this end. But the direction of the dynamic must be made clear to all. The central axis of the struggle today is the organisation, extension and centralisation of the self-management workers councils which will lay the indispensable foundation for the decisive political showdown with the bureaucracy, which can be postponed but not ultimately avoided. Before that the proletariat must try to achieve the most favourable shifts in the relationship of forces that it can. The increasing institutionalisation of workers' control will enable the existing dynamic to gather greater and greater momentum. The development of revolutionary political parties and formations which can pose the question of political power most sharply will then become an increasingly urgent need. The ongoing struggle by the Polish workers has truly momentous, indeed global implications. It deserves the support and solidarity of revolutionaries all over the world.

One reader criticised our presentation of Michael Kidron's article on state capitalism in the last issue because our own attitude to it was not made clear. As our programme on the back page shows we reject the view that the USSR is state capitalist. But we should have mentioned earlier that after we have presented this debate in full we will publish our own critique of it. In any case subsequent issues will carry our own concrete analysis on China's foreign policy and its conception of "Soviet social imperialism", as well as our own assessment of the nature of the Indo-Soviet connection. Finally a brief mention about the implications of Sadat's assassination.

The nationalism of the Egyptian masses had earlier encouraged Sadat to make a separate peace with Israel, draw close to the US and thus get back Egyptian territory lost in the 1967 war. But he failed to deal adequately with the pan-Arabist feelings of the Egyptian masses which conflicts with their nationalism. And the historical injustice handed out to the Palestinians lies at the very heart of this pan-Arabist consciousness. This tension between a narrow nationalism and pan-Arabism is always present. That is why Sadat had to link, even if it was only for form's sake, his

separate peace treaty with Israel to the prospects of progress over the Palestinian issue. But since US imperialism and Israeli Zionism will never accept the existence of a strong and truly independent Palestinian state, Sadat's turn to the West only helped to sell out the Palestinian cause. This turn also isolated Egypt from the rest of the Arab world and wrecked the country's economy.

The reassertion of pan-Arabism sealed Sadat's fate. His assassination is not a surprise. Time had long been running out for him as domestic opposition mounted. And his death is not so much a turning point in middle-eastern politics as a symbolic reflection that the processes of change had already emerged and in order to further, had to discard him. But unfortunately it is Islamic fundamentalism that is giving focus to these pan-Arabist aspirations. It is therefore the responsibility of revolutionaries to give a genuinely socialist perspective to this pan-Arabism, such as the struggle for a socialist federation of Arab nations of which Palestine would form a part. This is a complex issue which needs to be discussed in the future.

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OPERATION DEMOLITION

On the morning of July 23, 1981, the Maharashtra government unexpectedly commenced Operation Demolition. In six hours it ruthlessly demolished 1800 kutcha huts housing roughly 10% of Bombay's estimated 200,000 pavement-dwellers. Most of them were deported to their 'native places' by buses specially commandeered for this purpose. Even pregnant women were not spared and at least one newborn baby died in transit. Having evicted so many so quickly, Mr. Antulay and his cohorts were confident of rapidly completing the operation.

But the PUCL (Peoples Union of Civil Liberties) filed a petition in the High Court against this eviction-cum-demolition and obtained a stay order temporarily halting the operation. The state government and its supporters gave a number of justifications for the ruthless exercise, all of which were false. Some said these structures on the pavements were an unhygienic "eyesore" and were also positively dangerous for the inhabitants. Thus the government was actually doing a favour to the pavement-dwellers by demolishing their huts!

Others gave an equally grotesque justification arguing that there was a strong link between pavement-dwellers and criminal activity. There is much irony in such an accusation coming from the likes of Antulay and company, but even if we take the argument seriously, there exist no studies to show any such link. On the contrary, studies show that 53% of Bombay's pavement-dwellers are self-

employed, mainly as hawkers selling vegetables, flowers etc., while 38% are wage earners mostly employed as casual labour, badlis, construction workers, domestics etc. Only around 1.7% are unemployed which is a much lower figure than for almost any other statistical group.

The real reason for Operation Demolition is not difficult to fathom. The Maharashtra government wants to solve the problem of "unbalanced" growth of the Bombay metropolitan region by physically curbing the entry of poor migrants and thus preserving the city primarily for the rich and the well-to-do. As part of this strategy it wants to evict many of the poor who have already settled in the city-- hence Operation Demolition. This kind of thinking even goes against the government's own Regional Development Plans in not trying to understand why so many people in the metropolitan cities of India have to make pavements their homes, let alone doing something to solve this housing problem.

It is well known that around 80% of the urban population of India is at, near or below the poverty line. Despite significant industrialisation, there has been no significant urbanisation. The proportion of people living in the countryside and in the cities is roughly what it was 30 years ago. Though pressure to leave the villages has built up, the big urban areas are not a strong attraction for most of the rural populace since migrating to them still means taking a big risk. It is thus, the really destitute who, dispossessed of land, migrate to the big cities and it is usually a drought or famine that leads them to do so.

Although in Bombay (the richest city in India) it is possible to earn a meagre livelihood, it is impossible to afford a place to stay. In other words the destitute are roofless but not jobless. They are forced to stay on the pavements because they have nowhere else to stay.

But by making pavement and slum-dwellers the scapegoats for the environmental mess that exists in Bombay, the state government can hope to cover up its own responsibility for the gross neglect of the whole housing question. Not only is the programme totally inadequate, the construction industry is totally corrupt and brutally exploitative. A deeper investigation into the links between the state governments, building contractors, the business and intellectual elite, the MLAs and MPs of all parties etc. would reveal the class character of this exploitation clearly, and explain why real estate prices artificially keep on rising to such an extent that in Bombay for example, a one-room tenement in a zopadpatty nowadays costs Rs. 30,000.

In the light of all this, it is interesting to note the highly subdued response of all the established political parties, including the CPI and CPM to this Operation Demolition. Indeed some opposition figures openly congratulated Antulay. Others merely pro-

tested that it was cruel to evict pavement-dwellers during the rainy season. Even the PUCL, which filed the petition leading to the stay order did so essentially on this "humanitarian" ground. Thus eviction was stayed only till October 15 when the monsoons end. But this breather gave time for other strategies of legal intervention to emerge.

Another group filed a petition in the Supreme Court under Article 32 of the Constitution arguing that the fundamental rights of the pavement-dwellers had been violated. The right of citizens to life and liberty is guaranteed under another Article(21) in the Constitution and only under certain specified conditions can this right be overridden. Since people must live reasonably close to where they work, rendering pavement-dwellers homeless would also render them jobless in violation of their constitutionally guaranteed right to life. Thus given their economic circumstances, the -se petitioners argued that pavement-dwellers have a fundamental right to stay where they are.

The Supreme Court has accepted for the time being that the petitioners have a valid case and will defer its judgement till sometime next year. Thus more time has been gained for pavement-dwellers with a reasonable chance that they might finally win a legal right of some sort to stay where they are. Subsequently the PUCL also filed a petition in the Supreme Court under the same Article 32.

It is important to note how the first petition to the Supreme Court, in order to defend the interests of the pavement-dwellers, tried with some success to interpret the provisions of the Constitution in an original way i.e. by giving an economic content to the concept of fundamental rights. Thus the Constitution which has essentially defended the interests of the rich, can be used in the interests of the poor, and in the process of doing so help to undermine the bourgeois character of the Constitution itself. Furthermore no one can doubt that if these petitions had not been filed, the Maharashtra government would have carried out to completion its demolition programme. For a variety of reasons pavement-dwellers have not been sufficiently organised to be able to oppose effectively such onslaughts upon them.

All this raises some important questions about the methods that can and should be adopted by Indian revolutionaries in the course of their political activity. No revolutionary can dispute that trade union work is necessary in order to defend the interests of the working class. Or that to carry out such work it is necessary to intervene legally in the courts. But whereas trade unions are sufficiently organised to be able to use the legal apparatus, this is not the case with pavement-dwellers and other oppressed sections which are similarly unorganised. Fortunately the legal system in India has a liberal interpretation of what is called locus standi which allows individuals or public interest groups to file petitions on behalf of unorganised groups. If this were all, then of

course this would be very unsatisfactory. From a political point of view such actions should also help to raise consciousness among, say, pavement-dwellers. But this is precisely what such "legal" activity can do. The first step in organising among slum or pavement-dwellers etc. is to gain credibility. And winning such legal battles in their favour is as good a way as any other in gaining that initial credibility. This must, of course, be followed by all kinds of propagandistic and agitational activities. Indeed after the success of these petitions, many groups even those not at all connected with these legal actions, received a big boost in their efforts to mobilise among pavement-dwellers.

In fact these legal interventions engendered a wide public and national debate on the rights of pavement-dwellers and did so within the framework of the arguments put forward by the petitioners. This by itself raised consciousness of the issue and mobilised people. In a situation where revolutionaries have great difficulty in getting access to the forums such as the mass media and parliamentary institutions for propagating their ideas, this was no mean achievement. In fact this whole experience re-emphasised the importance of two points.

First that even the Supreme Court is a political institution where issues can be debated in a political manner. The bourgeoisie and its representatives understand this even if many revolutionaries don't. The latter must tackle and confront the former in all arenas, both within the apparatuses of the bourgeois state as well as outside it, on the battle-field of extra-parliamentary and extra-legal actions.

Second, contrary to what many leftists, particularly in the ML movement think, India has had since independence (apart from the emergency period) a functioning bourgeois democratic state, weak though it is in comparison with the bourgeois democratic regimes of the advanced capitalist countries. That is why it is possible in the first place to achieve even the partial and temporary successes in stopping Operation Demolition, through interventions in the bourgeois legal apparatus. In such bourgeois democratic states there is space for revolutionaries to fight within the state apparatuses and in so doing gain wider legitimacy for their ideas and their actions. This is absolutely necessary because in a bourgeois democratic state, the bourgeoisie's domination is partially legitimised in the eyes of the masses, since this rule is based also on consent and not just through coercion. This legitimacy must therefore be challenged and undermined in every way possible.

It must also be understood that the apparatuses of the bourgeois democratic state crystallise the relationship of class forces. That is why ultimately these institutions help to preserve the rule of the bourgeoisie. ~~But because these institutions embody and reflect~~ exploitative class relations, they are not static organisms but living ones which try to reproduce and enhance the class rule

of the oppressors. This makes it all the more important to fight within these institutions to improve to some degree at least the relationship of class forces in the direction of the oppressed. Judicial activism and creativity can help to do this in the bourgeois legal apparatus.

Since there is also greater scope for achieving reforms in such bourgeois democratic regimes, revolutionaries also have a greater responsibility to fight for these--- to stand in the very forefront as champions of all actions that can improve the lot of the oppressed masses. And of course, revolutionaries must be able to develop an overall strategy that can link such work for reforms with revolutionary perspectives and actions. Nobody should therefore conclude that such legal interventions within the apparatuses of the bourgeois democratic state are a substitute for organisation and the promotion of directly "class struggle" methods. They are an important complement to it. Ultimately, of course, it is the unity and combativity of the oppressed classes that will be the deciding factor in the revolutionary struggle.

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THE CONGRESS PARTY BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

According to the CPI(ML) India is a semi-feudal/semi-colonial society dominated by the bourgeois-landlord combine. These principal oppressor classes are supposed to be politically represented in the Indian state by the Congress party. The idea that as far as the countryside goes the Congress is the party of the landlords is a grave error which is clearly revealed if we look at the history of rural struggles in India even before the advent of the Congress and then later at the relationship of the Congress to these struggles.

Before The National Movement

A common feature of the nineteenth century was the struggles of tenant farmers and small peasant proprietors against the landlords which were successful on the whole in improving the lot of the former. The struggle by Bengali tenant farmers forced the British to pass the Bengal Tenancy Act in 1885 which gave some section of the tenants permanent tenure. This Act was the culmination of a decade of struggle between landlords and tenants. There was the famous Pabna revolt of 1873 which succeeded in restricting the landlord's hitherto absolute power in matters of estate management. The socio-economic power of rich peasants or jotedars was consolidated as a result. These jotedars were the forerunners of the rural bourgeoisie in the late twentieth century.

Another example of the turbulence of this period was in 1875 in the Deccan region when tenants, hardpressed by the slump in cotton prices and burdened by government taxes passed onto them, and by usury, attacked zamindars. The government had to pass the Deccan Agriculturalists Relief Act. In the Punjab during 1890-1900 there

was similar unrest as small peasants protested the loss of their land to moneylenders and landlords, who were often the same person.

The kisan uprising of 3 lakh peasants in 1921 similarly forced the government to confer permanency of tenure on the peasant. The farm strike by the peasants of Lohara, Patiala and Nabha spread to Mysore, Travancore and Orissa. It was followed by the prolonged satyagraha of Mausa peasants against landlords. The latter capitulated, abolishing a number of "feudal dues". In late 1946, the Hyderabad peasants rose up against Dasmukh landlords. These are only a few examples of such struggles.

As a consequence of these struggles, the British government was time and again, forced to declare a moratorium on rural debts and scale down debt burdens, increase the rights of zamindar tenants, reduce rents, grant educational and cultural facilities to this section of rural society and prohibit the dispossession of land. Government policies thus made possible the decline of landlordism and the rise of the rich peasant class--- the future rural bourgeoisie.

During The National Movement

As we have seen, there were sporadic disorders all over rural India since the beginning of the nineteenth century. These uprisings were against individual landlords and sometimes against particular actions of the British administration. The Congress began to take a part in such struggles in the two decades prior to independence on the side of forces hostile to the landlords. Co-ordinated action against the landlord system really developed when the Congress Socialist party (CSP) emerged in the thirties. Kisan sabhas were then organised throughout the provinces. Even when the CSP was dissolved in 1938 (because the communists captured it), the work of wrecking the landlord system went on. The Congress had to take part in such anti-landlord agitations or risk losing its rural mass base. Thus, despite Gandhi's assurance to zamindars that they would not be touched, the Congress in fact led many agitations against landlords--- illegal crop cutting, no rent campaigns etc.--- which in some cases took on a national scope. Without participating in such a manner, the Congress would not have been able to involve the rural masses in the independence struggle, since such movements had more significance for the rural masses than the national movement itself.

This "turn" towards the countryside affected the programme of the Congress which became very broad and loose, allowing various classes to find a common meeting point under the Congress umbrella. Following from this, the centres of political activity also shifted in some cases (Meerut constituency) from the towns to the rural areas. Whereas during the non-co-operation movement of 1921 there were no Congress branches in the rural areas of this constituency,

by 1930 there were many. Rural leaders subsequently emerged, when Jats began to participate in the Congress movement. By the 1940's the DCC president from Meerut was invariably from the rural areas.

As a part of this shift, the Congress focused much more on the well-to-do tenant -- the nascent kulak. He was seen as the motor-force of change in the rural economy. This section was not only the most politically articulate and educated, it could also attract mass support from the classes further down because it opposed the zamindar.

U.P., where zamindari or landlordism was so widespread, is a good example of the emergence of such trends. Here, in the 30s and 40s, the Congress gradually emerged as the leading supporter of the peasant proprietor. This is why Jats joined the Congress en masse. Even after independence, this Congress identification with the rising kulak class continued. Charan Singh as a prominent member of the United Provinces Zamindar Abolition Committee worked hard to ensure that there would be no loopholes in the new acts favouring cultivators which deprived zamindars of their previous dominance. Because of this the rural influence of banias and usurers-cum-landlords diminished since very few banias cultivated the -ir land.

Take Rajasthan, as another example. Before independence only the Congress was able to develop strong roots. The Congress movement was based on the Arya mandals which had sprung up in most of the princely states during the 30s and 40s. These mandals were limited to the towns and cities. Their leaders were well-educated and drawn from the Brahmin and Mahajan castes. They represented a non-aristocratic urban elite. The mobilisation of the peasantry came about essentially after independence. But even before 1947, there was a break with Brahmin/Mahajan domination, first of all in the Jat region of Rajasthan. These Jats demanded above all the abolition of jagirdhari land tenure.

One of the most significant mobilisations in this period was by the Marwari kisan sabha whose origins lay in the social reform of the 1920s within the Jat caste. This sabha became a major political organisation in Jodhpur, especially during the second world war and developed close contacts with the countryside. It aimed at abolishing the jagirdhari system, ending the jagirdhar's traditional right of demanding forced labour and the establishment of legal protection for tenancy rights. The sabha's main enemy was the Rajput aristocracy.

In the years just prior to independence, hostilities between the Jats and the Rajput aristocracy reached their height. The Congress was then faced with two forces-- the Marwari kisans and the Rajput aristocracy-- over both of which it had no control. But the Congress forged an agreement with the Marwar kisans to fight against the Rajput landlords, provided the sabha join the Congress.

In view of such alignments between the Congress and the anti-landlord forces in the countryside it is hardly surprising that the landlords should often help the British administration to suppress Congress agitations. In Orissa for example, landlords were politically active, had their own party and paper and provided coherent and co-ordinated opposition to the Congress.

False Characterisation

Why then was the Congress party characterised as the main representative of landlordism? One major argument in support of this false thesis generally runs as follows: Landlords dominate the countryside and therefore the voting pattern. Therefore the Congress has to go along with them if it wants to get most of the rural votes. Furthermore, most of the MPs and MLAs in the Congress party come from the rural areas and are usually from the landlord class.

We have already shown that the political thrust of the Congress was in favour of the peasant proprietors against the landlords. This thrust continued after independence. Furthermore, there was a change in the class origins of the leaders within the Congress. In the towns more and more businessmen, merchants and shopkeepers became Congress leaders instead of the earlier lawyers and professionals. In the countryside also, the leaders came more frequently from the middle strata. The petty bourgeois character of the Congress leadership became more and more marked. Landlords, for one, had less and less control over Congress policies.

Even though a large number of prominent Congressmen were landlords, their political influence continued to diminish and was in any case much less than their numbers warranted. The urban-based Congress leaders easily outmanoeuvred them in the fight for party control over the rural masses. All the landlords could do was manoeuvre for petty favours within the overall framework of a national policy promoting the long-term interests of the rich peasants and the individual bourgeoisie.

How were the landlords outmanoeuvred? In the zilla parishads, the Congress party was determined to have direct formal control. But the Congress argued for abstaining from politics in the lower bodies. The zilla parishads were dominated by professional politicians, mainly lawyers from the towns, whereas most of the samities and village panchayats were composed of various local, propertied groups whose party ties, where they existed, were weak. The Congress could not afford to identify formally with local factions contesting for control of the samities. By keeping aloof from such rivalries and posing as an arbiter, the Congress avoided identifying itself with the local oppressor classes such as landlords. Thus, landlord influence was further undermined.

Postscript: Congress after Independence

There was a strong continuity with the Congress policies of the

pre-independence period. Legislation was passed to abolish zamindari and to promote the rise of the kulak class which was seen as the real motor force of change and the propertied class with a future. If this class was still structurally weak, one reason for this was the Congress hold on the rural masses. It is also true that the first two five year plans concentrated on building the industrial infrastructure and therefore the rural sector was relatively starved for funds. But this was temporary though it did give rise to disenchantment with the Congress and led to the emergence of the BKD as a separate political party of the kulaks. But a decade later the BKD declined and by the 70s the state dominated by Congress pursued policies clearly favouring the kulaks. The Indian state consciously sponsored the capitalisation of agriculture (can anyone argue that the promotion of 'green revolution' was meant to benefit the "feudal" landlords?) This was the purpose of the government's policy on procurement prices, its subsidies to inputs of all kinds and its credit policies---- pushed through most of the time, let it be said, by the Congress party in power. All this has immensely strengthened the kulak class. But the Congress party remains above all the representative of the industrial bourgeoisie which has also benefited considerably from this process of capitalist development of agriculture.

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THE WORKERS' MOVEMENT IN POLAND

Glossary Of Events

1980

July 1-16: Polish government raises meat prices. Sporadic strikes begin.

July 19-Aug. 14: Strikes gather momentum. Aug. 14, Gdansk shipyards go on strike.

Aug. 17: Shipyard workers formulate 21 demands. General strike expands as workers elsewhere in the country adopt same 21 demands.

Aug. 22-30: Cardinal Wyzynski, the Polish primate urges "moderation" and an end to the strikes in Gdansk. Shipyard workers ignore his call.

Aug. 28-31: Gdansk strikers victorious. Government agrees to all 21 demands, which include the right to form independent trade unions, the right to strike, access to public media for unions and church, an end to special privileges for secret police and party members, rest day on Saturdays, release of all political prisoners and other economic and social gains.

Sept. 6: Kania replaces Gierak as First Secretary of the party and President in the country. Appointment hailed by the Kremlin.

Sept. 22-Oct. 24: Rapid formation of nationwide Solidarity union,

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whose membership swells to between 9 and 10 million workers. Government puts pressure on Solidarity to accept "leading role the party" not merely in society but in the union itself. Middle-level courts refuse to legally recognise Solidarity unless it accepts this clause in its statutes. Solidarity refuses and threatens strike action.

Oct.24-Nov.12: Government backs down. Supreme court recognises Solidarity. While party acknowledged as having "leading role in society", no outside institution (whether party or church) has formal powers of any kind with respect to decision-making process within Solidarity.

Dec.10: Polish farmers begin to agitate for a legal "rural Solidarity" union.

Dec.14: Church condemns Solidarity "extremists" for acting in such a manner as to "provoke" the Soviets.

1981

Jan.8: Solidarity presses government to fulfil Gdansk accords and give free Saturdays. Government trying to back out of the agreed demands. Solidarity threatens strikes.

Jan.20: Walesa urges union members not to strike for work-free Saturdays after his return from six-day visit to Vatican. Strike plans were drawn up in his absence and Solidarity's executive body rejects his plea.

Jan.22: Mass general strike for work-free Saturdays.

Jan.30: Polish students begin to agitate for independent student unions, right to decide curriculum and an end to compulsory classes in official Marxism-Leninism.

Jan.31-Feb.6: Government agrees to 3 out of 4 Saturdays off i.e. a 42½ hour week instead of previous 48 hour week. Government accepts right of students to have own unions, uncensored publications and to participate in university administration.

Workers in Bielsko Biala strike for reinstatement of dismissed colleagues. Church calls on workers to end strike and not to press demands. Church's call rejected and eventually government capitulates to workers' demands.

March 3: Government meets with Church. Government stresses the "positive role" of church in restoring social peace and praises Cardinal Wyzynski's role throughout crisis. In return for church's "moderation", government gives it the right to go into hospitals and old peoples' homes for the first time.

March 18: Within the Polish communist party pressure for fundamental reforms builds up enormously. Roughly two out of the three million party members belong to Solidarity. The rank and file demand special party congress and secret balloting to elect delegates for it. Local party committees and industrial enterprises submit 12,000 resolutions for discussion prior to congress.

Farmers renew pressure for a legal union of their own.

March 19: In Bydgoszcz, Solidarity officials brutally beaten up by local police. Nationwide anger and demand for punishment of the guilty policemen.

April 3-6: Sharp criticism within Solidarity's national committee of Walesa's "moderation" and "autocratic" methods of functioning. The number two man in Solidarity, Andrej Gwiadza circulates open letter criticising Walesa.

April 18: Rural Solidarity representing 3.5 million farmers legally recognised. Inquiry into Bydgoszcz beatings promised.

June 5: Authorities fail to carry out promise regarding punishment of policemen responsible for Bydgoszcz beatings. Solidarity calls for warning strike despite Walesa's and church's appeal not to.

June 11-24: Communist party rank-and-file press for "horizontal structures" i.e. right of members to organise discussions and pressure groups across branches and cells so that base can democratically mobilise against leadership if necessary.

USSR sends warning letter to Warsaw virtually demanding change of leadership. However, pro-Soviet hardliners in Polish leadership defeated and Kania wing's leadership endorsed.

July 1-8: Shake-up in government with various heads of economic departments replaced. Kania warns of economic catastrophe.

Cardinal Wyzynski dies and is replaced by new primate Cardinal Glemp, approved by Vatican and Kania government.

July 14-20: The special party congress held. New democratic procedures adopted. Only communist party in the world to now have multiple slates for party posts and election by secret ballot. Full freedom of debate allowed but there is no right to organise separate tendencies. Thus no systematic and programmatically coherent opposition to Kania wing emerges.

July 27-Aug. 13: Acute food shortages. There are warning strikes and hunger marches. A million workers down tools. Solidarity raises issue of workers self-management and fundamental economic reforms. Rejects government plans for self-management as a farce, as well as its proposal for price increases. Solidarity accepts the need for sacrifices but in the context of genuine economic reform and self-management councils. As gesture of goodwill, Solidarity urges members to work one extra Saturday in 8 weeks.

Aug. 23: Moscow warns Polish party to curb Solidarity and to reject its demands for access to public media (as promised in the Gdansk accords) and for the right of workers to hire and fire directors of enterprises.

Aug. 27: Church tries to arbitrate between government and Solidarity calling for mutual cooperation and an end to protest action. Church's call ignored as printer's strike continues.

Sept. 7: Warsa Pact begins week-long military manoeuvres which are its biggest in 35 years.

Sept. 5-10: First session of First National Congress of Solidarity held. Congress resolutions call for free elections to the Polish

parliament, for free trade unions in the other countries of Eastern Europe and for self-management workers councils to be set up in the country.

Sept. 11-19: Bitter reaction by party leaders and Kremlin who say Solidarity w: its political power. Solidarity rejects accusation and says party leaders "lack realistic" appreciation of present situation.

Sept. 23-24: Walesa and fellow moderates on National Praesidium, Solidarity's chief negotiating body, accept a compromise settlement with government on the issue of workers right to hire and fire directors. Directors of key industries to be appointed by government. In other industries only government to appoint directors but workers councils will have legal right to challenge and veto appointment.

Sept. 26-Oct. 8: Last session of Solidarity congress held. Bitter criticism of Walesa. Majority of delegates oppose his compromise with government, and Walesa admits that settlement "was bad". It holds for the moment but Walesa agrees to a future referendum within Solidarity on the terms of the settlement.

Resolutions passed calling for free elections to a parliament and to local and provincial administrative bodies, for an independent judiciary, for free access to the media and for the establishment of a national level Economic Council to which the government should also be a part, so that collective discussion of the economy and for the establishment of genuine self-management councils can be initiated.

Walesa reelected as Solidarity chief but with only 55 percent support.

Oct. 18: Kania resigns. Victory for hardliners. Prospects of a decisive showdown between ruling bureaucracy and the working class brought that much nearer.

Oct. 25-29: Jaruzelski, the new party chief calls in Polish army to help administer 2000 towns and villages. He rejects call for establishing such an Economic Council. Solidarity's 9.5 million members go on a one-hour warning strike to press for Economic Council.

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The Role And Influence Of The Church

Ever since the massive strike wave of the Polish working class began in July 1980, the imagery of the Catholic Church--- crucifixes, religious services etc.--- have been a highly publicised (by the Western media) part of the mass meetings and strikes. Lech Walesa, the principal leader of Solidarity is an ardent Catholic. The Polish Pope John Paul II has hailed the workers movement in his homeland. It is undeniable that the majority of the Polish people greatly respect the Church and in one way or the other are committed Catholics. What does it all mean? Does the Church dominate So-

solidarity? Did the Church instigate or manipulate the mass movement for free trade unions? Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth. But what then is the source of the Church's prestige and what is its relationship to the government, to Solidarity and to the masses?

The single most important reason for the Church's popularity is that it is seen as the repository of Poland's national heritage. From the sixteenth century onwards, after the victory of the counter-reformation, Polish nationalism has had to fight German Lutheranism in the west, Russian Greek Orthodoxy in the east and also the Austro-Hungarian empire in the south. Catholicism was an inseparable part of the nationalist ideology whereby the Poles could sustain their centuries long struggle for independence. Thus unlike in Spain, France or Italy the Polish Church was on the right side of a "progressive" struggle. Much more recently, during the second world war, the Polish Church fought against the Nazi occupation and the Hitler/Stalin carve-up of Poland that immediately preceded it. This history has had a deep impact on the attitude of the Poles to their Church.

After the second world war, the Soviet Red Army installed the Polish communist party in power. The party did not have substantial mass support. But far worse than this was the fact that the Soviets had a Stalinist conception of socialism and rapidly set up a one-party dictatorship which tried to establish a tight control over all aspects of life--- social, economic political and cultural--- and naturally over all the organisations connected with such activities. The Church was the only powerful form of organised cultural activity to escape such totalitarian control. What is more, by nationalising the major means of production, the Polish state broke the link between the Church and the former propertied classes, which had earlier given a reactionary shadow to the Church. This fact of state expropriation of property was also one reason why there was no schism within the Polish Church unlike in the case of the Catholic Church in many Latin American countries. There the Church's upper hierarchy, having property or linked to such interests, was and is nakedly and brutally reactionary and hostile to the lower clergy. The latter because of their daily contact with the poor came to emphasise much more the ethical values of Christianity, often to the point of siding with the oppressed classes and espousing radical change. The Polish Church remained united, but now had to rely on its moral and intellectual resources in order to extend its influence rather than on any material resources or wealth.

In this respect the Church was helped by the deificity and censorship practised by the Polish authorities which is characteristic of all the one-party regimes in the Soviet empire.

No one believed the official press. By contrast Catholic publications became a respected, because truthful voice. Even if they did not report everything what they did report was true. Furthermore these publications threw open their pages to atheist intellectuals as well as left-minded Catholics.

But it would be quite wrong to believe that the Church, since 1945 was an unblemished force for good. The Church clearly recognised the benefits of accommodation with the powerful state apparatus. At the same time because the Church was on the side of greater democratisation which was and is a deep desire of the Poles (as also of the masses in the Soviet bloc), it could use its mass influence to put pressure on the state and thus drive a harder bargain for concrete benefits. That is to say, it wanted to gain as much as it could from opposition but take as little as possible of the risks.

The Church never had any interest in encouraging violent opposition to the regime. After all its basic aim is to propagate its own social programme, not to make political prescriptions which will give the state an excuse to repress it or which might usher in a revolutionary momentum not to its liking. The movement of free trade unions developed out of the workers own experiences. They first put forward this demand in 1970. The Church never initiated the workers struggles of 1956, 1970, 1976 or 1980. As the glossary shows, in Aug. 1980, Cardinal Wyzynski even asked the Gdansk workers to give up their strike before they achieved their basic demand! Thus the state recognises the Church as a force for "moderation" and often seeks its cooperation and support. The history of post-war Poland gives ample proof of how mutually profitable is this accommodation between the Church and state.

In 1950 the Church opposed government legislation on abortion, divorce and civil marriage. In April that year it made a deal whereby it kept quiet about all this, agreed to preach respect for the state authority, and not oppose collectivisation in the countryside, all in return for permission to hold religious education classes for children outside school and to have a Catholic university in Lublin.

In 1956 when Gomulka came to power and wanted Church support he de-collectivised land and gave the Church greater freedom to publish its own papers. By the sixties there were thrice as many monks and twice as many nuns as in the nineteen thirties. Between 1945 and 1970, 352 new churches were built and 871 old ones restored. Between 1971-78 the government issued permits for 186 new churches to be built. At present there are in Poland 78 bishops, 2 cardinals, 2 archbishops, 9856 churches, 19683 priests, 42 monastic orders, 7000 monks, 100 women religious orders and

25,765 nuns.

All this could never have happened if both sides were not prepared to be "pragmatic". In the early 'fifties there were sham trials, tortures and purges of alleged Titoists in every East European country. The Polish Church kept quiet about all this. In 1968 when the Polish government launched a fierce anti-Semitic campaign, the Church did not unequivocally oppose it. In 1970, when the workers struggle broke out the then President Gierak went to Cardinal Wyzynski for help. The Cardinal called for an end to the strike. Later Gierak personally requested the Vatican to extend Wyzynski's tenure.

It is important to understand why the Polish state was willing to grant the Church greater freedom to preach in return for an allegiance of sorts. Hardly anybody, even within the ruling party takes "official Marxism" seriously. The party bureaucrat is first and foremost a careerist concerned with achieving and maintaining whatever degree of power he can. The one-party state, therefore, is prepared to allow the Church to spread its doctrine even at the expense of the "official Marxism", if at the same time the latter undertakes not to jeopardise the latter's political power. The Church fully understands the rules of this cynical contract. So while it can indeed welcome a movement like the present one (which it had little to do with bringing about anyway) it is (as the glossary clearly shows) essentially a force for "moderation". It has been using the spectre of a Russian invasion to justify its moderate stands and to limit the process of democratisation that is going on. The last thing it wants is a decisive showdown for political power between the workers and the ruling bureaucracy.

Like other ideological tendencies the Church can advise Solidarity but it cannot decide for it or in it. Beyond its general message of "moderation" (and one does not have to be a church supporter to be a "moderate") it has no specific programme or answers to the burning problems of the day. Its influence within Solidarity must not be exaggerated. Walesa and some of the leaders are close to the Church. But workers accept Walesa's leadership because of his role as a working class leader who has been and still tries to keep in tune with their deep-seated aspirations, not because of his religious affiliations. This is what Solidarity's official document has to say about itself-----".....the Union itself, as a social movement is secular. It acknowledges the Christian values to be the foundation of European culture, but it is not politically related to the Church, nor does it consider the Catholic social doctrine to be its programme."

This is quite true. Indeed the Church in Poland today cannot occupy itself with its two principal social concerns---- control over children's education and control over female fertility. State abortion facilities and cheap contraceptives are easily avail-

lable and widely used. Schools have been secularised for a long time.

It is perhaps a remarkable irony that leftist in India who find no difficulty in supporting the revolution though it was against the Shah of Iran though it was led by mullahs, find it difficult to support the struggle for free trade union led by workers because they suspect the Church's influence!

The famous 21 demands of the Gdansk accords were not drawn up by the Church. The central dynamic of the conflict between the workers and the bureaucracy today is located in the struggle for genuine workers' control. The demands for self-management councils were not promoted by the Church. Any number of articles describing or pictures showing the respect ordinary Poles have for the Church and its leading figures does not alter this fundamental reality. As one perceptive observer of Polish affairs put it--- "One should not confuse paying spiritual leaders moral respect with taking orders from them."

In fact the rise of Solidarity weakens not only the state but also the Church as an institution. The church is no longer the only institutional source of opposition to the regime. And the deepening process of democratisation promises to throw up other sources of power such as workers council, which if they become institutionalised will further weaken the bureaucratic state and Church.

The Church has given moral support to Poles in their opposition to a hated and discredited regime but it cannot offer solutions to the basic economic, social and political problems that the masses have to cope with. As long as the Church's freedom was restricted, it benefited from championing further democratisation. But with the advent of ever greater democratisation the role of religion diminishes. The creation of a modern society must, almost by definition be essentially secular (witness Iran). Religion is but one dimension and one that becomes less and less important for the organisation of a modern society.

In a post-capitalist society where the material foundations of religious power have been expropriated, the struggle between Marxist rationalism and religious obscurantism must be fought primarily on the ideological level, with full freedom of discussion for all participants. In this respect the experience of Poland carries vital lessons for India where so many different religions have a very deep hold on the masses. The revolutionary seizure of power in India will not come about because the masses first reject religion but because of their consciousness of other economic, political and social issues. The task of eradicating religious influence can only be accomplished after the revolutionary seizure of power. But this will

never be accomplished by persecuting the advocates for religion or denying the masses the right to full freedom of worship. Greater democracy not less is the way in which the hold of religion can be best weakened.

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Poland And The Question Of Socialist Democracy

Since the second world war there have been three major social explosions in Eastern Europe ---- the Hungarian revolution in 1956, the "Prague Spring" in 1968 and the "Polish Summer" in 1980. In each case the central axis the mass upheaval was the struggle for greater democratic rights and freedoms. In each case the overwhelming majority of the working class supported the struggle. This undeniable fact constitutes the gravest indictment of the bureaucracies which rule the so-called socialist countries. The working class in whose name these communist parties rule, despises and rejects them. The masses also despise the "official Marxism" which these bureaucrats put forward to ideologically justify their rule.

Yet many Indian Marxists oppose these historic struggles. For some of these Marxists there is no problem--- these movements were and are basically reactionary. For them socialist democracy means a one-party state. There can be no question of multi-parties or freedom for masses to choose between different parties or to otherwise organise themselves as they wish. In their scheme of things, unions must not of course be independent of the party, and freedom of the press and discussion must be carefully controlled in order to reduce the influence of "bourgeois ideology". For such Marxists the dictatorship of the proletariat means the dictatorship of the party for the proletariat. (Of course the party must be kept "pure" by internal purges and reforms directed by "wise" leaders.).

This kind of mentality has no difficulty in arguing that the events of Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968 and Poland 1980 show how workers (millions of them) can be mised by "counter-revolutionary" forces. Both in their conception of socialism and in their hostility to these mass upheavals, these Marxists reveal their fundamentally manipulative attitude towards the working class, its actions and the question of bringing about revolutionary change.

For other Indian Marxists things are more disturbing. They oppose the Polish struggle but are not sure that they are right to do so. They recognise that these tumultuous developments throw up fundamental questions about the nature of socialist democracy which challenge their present understanding of Marxism.

What the Polish events show is that real workers' rule (what Marxists believe in and fight for) can only come about if workers themselves have more and more power to take the basic decisions that keep a society going. This they cannot do unless

there is the widest and deepest possible democracy---- unless workers have their own independent unions which they can democratically control and use to protect their interests; unless there are workers' councils which draw up the basic economic plans and take some the basic economic decisions at the factory, regional and national level; unless workers can choose between different macro-economic programmes put forward by different parties to be implemented only in agreement with the workers and other affected sections of the oppressed masses; unless there is complete freedom of information so that workers can get to know the true state of affairs in all spheres of life and thus plan properly; unless workers can democratically elect the leaders and the government they want and also know that they can recall the leaders or topple the government when they wish because they have the legal right and the independent power to do so.

What gives "bourgeois democracy" its class character is that the freedoms and democratic rights are based upon and guaranteed by bourgeois institutions indirectly controlled by the bourgeoisie. Socialism tries to change the class character of this democracy not by doing away with these freedoms but by trying to extend and deepen them by basing them on proletarian institutions which are much more directly under the control and influence of the working class.

All this, is in fact the basic thrust of the workers movement in Poland. This is the meaning of the workers' fight for more access to the media and their rejection of censorship; for a nationally elected multi-party parliament; for self-management workers' councils and the right for workers to hire and fire factory directors; for greater democracy within the communist party so that rank-and-file members can elect the leaders and criticise freely the party's policies. The Polish workers fight for all this, not because they understand Marxist theory or realise that this is the way forward towards a genuine

socialism. Indeed they reject Marxism because they associate it with the bankrupt "official Marxist" ideology of the bureaucrats. They fight in this way because they are determined to extend their power as a class to the greatest degree possible.

The natural dynamic that is unleashed by such a movement goes in the direction of socialism, not capitalism. This is the dynamic that is operating in Poland today. A closer look at the actual organisation of Solidarity and the course of the struggle in the last year (see glossary) show this quite clearly.

Solidarity's Structure

No other single union in the world has so many members. But this is not the only source of Solidarity's immense strength.

That comes above all from its unity. Upto now all strikes called by Solidarity have been supported virtually 100 percent. A major reason for this remarkable unity is the unique three-tier geographical structure of Solidarity. The basic unit of the union is the inter-factory strike committee which developed during the course of the momentous strike wave in July-August 1980. This committee unites workers of all factories in a town or locality. The delegates to these local committees are democratically elected by all union members with special provisions to ensure that the weaker sections of the working class in the light industries, health and services sector etc. are properly represented.

These local committees unite by electing the delegates to the regional level Solidarity committees which in turn elect the delegates to the National Coordinating Commission which is the chief decision-making body. This Commission elects the National Praesidium which is the principal negotiating body with the government. The regional and local level committees also have the right to set up special advisor and "expert" bodies to help them in their functions, like the National Commission. Debates at the National Commission are recorded on cassettes which are played back at the regional and local Solidarities.

The various publications of the union also carry extracts of the discussions at the different levels. Because the fear of material corruption and excessive bureaucratisation, the majority of Solidarity leaders and activists are on paid leave from their workplace and are not paid by the union. The vast majority of delegates are young workers who distinguished themselves as acitivists in the strike movement. Intellectuals advise Solidarity but do not decide for it. Solidarity is more than just a union it is also a mass movement. As such it has many tendencies within and sharp differences about what to demand and how to fight constantly surface and will continue to do so. Nevertheless the overall achievements are truly impressive.

Above all its remarkable structure contrasts sharply with the now defunct party controlled unions which did not take up the deep-seated grievances of workers and confined themselves to arranging holiday programmes, sports facilities etc. Those union officials were of course appointed by the party heirarchy. Now the tremendous unity of Solidarity means the stronger sections of the working class in the steel, shipbuilding, coal-mining sectors etc. help the weaker sections to achieve their demands. Nowhere else are the workers as powerful as they are in Poland today. Never in history, has there been such a sustained and powerful workers movement as this one. Solidarity

is the most powerful workers' organisation in the world.

Its unique geographical structure which cuts across the traditional divisions within the working class of occupation, skills, race, sex etc. is possible because in Poland there is really only one employer--- the state. In capitalism where private property flourishes, there are many employers and the union structure is correspondingly diffuse and divided. At best workers are able to forge an industry-wise union structure in some cases. The potential of workers in societies where the basic means of production have been nationalised is therefore, always much greater than those of workers in advanced capitalist countries no matter how strong are the militant traditions of the latter. Poland where this potential is being partially realised shows the truth of this observation. This is one reason why the state capitalist theories which aim to show that the countries of the so-called socialist bloc are not fundamentally different from capitalism are so misleading.

The awareness of this potential is another reason why in Poland no section of Solidarity, however, small, has ever raised the question of restoration of private property in basic industry. Again, this is not because the workers have read the "right" Marxist texts, but because from their own experience they know that such a restoration will weaken their great unity and strength. Thus, in order to get out of the present economic mess a growing number of Polish workers are pressing for genuine workers' management and planning of the economy through the institutionalisation of self-management councils. The discussion of "liberalisation", use of "market forces" and "decentralisation" is taking place within the framework of an unshakable commitment to maintaining the social ownership of the basic means of production. The aim is in fact to make such ownership truly social. A genuine dialectic of democratic decentralisation and centralisation must be established.

A real dictatorship of the proletariat must rest on such democratically controlled councils at the workplace. Solidarity has thrown up this question of councils because it cannot take on itself the burden of economic management. At the same time the independent unions assure that these councils cannot override the interests of workers. This is a key difference from the Yugoslav situation where councils and unions are both controlled by the one-party state and thus workers' control is reduced to just a little better than a farce.

Apart from such councils there must be other institutions at the level of the neighbourhood, in schools and colleges etc., which are democratically controlled by the masses and ensure

that they have a vital say in all aspects of life. The emergence of such an advanced system is what makes socialist democracy far superior to bourgeois democracy.

But the Polish bureaucracy also knows that the advent of such a system would also mean its own death. Such an outcome would also mean a grievous body blow to the Soviet and other East European bureaucracies which fully support and often instigate Warsaw's efforts to subdue the mass movement. Indeed Western capitalism although it is happy to see the Soviet empire being weakened by the Polish struggle, has absolutely no interest in seeing genuine workers' management becoming institutionalised and proving successful. The example it would then set for its own workers would be too dangerous. From its point of view, it is far better that the Polish bureaucracy be stabilised and to the extent that the West can, it tries to help the bureaucracy to overcome its economic problems.

But before such a system of workers' rule can be fully achieved there will have to be a decisive showdown between the bureaucracy and the Polish working class, where the question of political power and the overthrow of this bureaucracy is unequivocally posed. A major weakness of spontaneity, of what has happened so far in Poland, is that not enough workers see this clearly yet and are not consciously preparing for it. This test may come in a matter of months or it may take rather longer. But as Kania's resignation confirms, this showdown is ultimately unavoidable.

A Soviet invasion could halt or reverse the present dynamic though it cannot return Poland to what it was before August 1980. The potential role of the Polish army (for or against the bureaucracy) is a crucial unknown factor. The political preparation for such eventualities is vital. It is here that revolutionary political parties and formations in Poland have an absolutely crucial role to play--- in providing clear-cut political perspectives, in explaining the fundamental political issues at stake (which are of truly global significance), in stressing the importance of linking up with the workers in other countries, and in otherwise helping to politically prepare the Polish working class to achieve its ultimate victory.

THE PROGRAMME OF THE BOLSHEVIK LENINIST GROUP

1. INDIA IS A BACKWARD CAPITALIST COUNTRY.
2. WE REJECT AS NOT APPLICABLE TO INDIA, THE THEORIES OF 'SEMI-FEUDALISM', 'COMPRADORISM', AND 'NEO-COLONIALISM'.
3. NO SECTION OF THE BOURGEOISIE OR 'PETTY-BOURGEOISIE' IS 'PROGRESSIVE'. ACCORDINGLY WE REJECT ANY STRATEGIC ALLIANCE WITH ANY SECTION OF THE BOURGEOISIE.
4. THE COMING REVOLUTION WILL BE SOCIALIST IN CHARACTER AND NOT BOURGEOIS DEMOCRATIC, NEW DEMOCRATIC OR PEOPLES DEMOCRATIC.
5. THE LEADING REVOLUTIONARY FORCES ARE THE URBAN AND RURAL PROLETARIAT. THE REVOLUTION WILL SEE AN ALLIANCE OF THESE FORCES WITH THE POOR PEASANTRY.
6. ALL SECTIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS ARE IN A HISTORIC SENSE REVOLUTIONARY. WE REJECT THE CONCEPTION THAT THE HIGHLY PAID INDUSTRIAL WORKER IS REFORMIST.
7. WE STAND FOR A UNITED FRONT WITH WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES, SUCH AS THE DEFENCE OF DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS. WE ALSO STAND FOR A UNITED FRONT OF ALL COMMUNIST FORCES ON A REVOLUTIONARY PROGRAMME.
8. WE SUPPORT AUTONOMOUS MOVEMENTS OF ~~WOMEN, DALITS, TRIBALS & OTHER OPPRESSED MINORITIES.~~ WOMEN, DALITS, TRIBALS & OTHER OPPRESSED MINORITIES.
9. WE SUPPORT THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL NATIONALITIES THAT DESIRE IT.
10. WE SUPPORT THE EQUALITY OF ALL LANGUAGES, RELIGIONS AND CULTURES.
11. WE STAND FOR THE BUILDING OF A DEMOCRATICALLY CENTRALISED REVOLUTIONARY PARTY BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF WORKERS' CONTROL AND RANK-AND-FILE DEMOCRACY.
12. WE STAND BY THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT BASED ON SOVIETS AND NOT THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PARTY FOR THE PROLETARIAT. IN SUCH A GENUINE SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY WORKERS WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO STRIKE, FORM INDEPENDENT UNIONS AND MANY PARTIES.
13. WE REJECT THE THEORY OF 'SOVIET SOCIAL IMPERIALISM'. THE SO-CALLED SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ARE ONES IN TRANSITION BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND SOCIALISM. THESE POST-CAPITALIST SOCIETIES ARE RULED BY BUREAUCRACIES, MOST OF WHICH HAVE TO BE OVERTHROWN BY A POLITICAL REVOLUTION IF THERE IS TO BE A DECISIVE ADVANCE TOWARDS SOCIALISM.
14. SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN BACKWARD SOCIETIES AND IN ADVANCED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES JUST AS POLITICAL REVOLUTIONS WILL OCCUR IN THE TRANSITIONAL SOCIETIES. HOWEVER, THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALISM CANNOT BE COMPLETED IN ANY SINGLE COUNTRY, BUT ONLY ON THE WORLD SCALE THROUGH THE CONSCIOUS CO-ORDINATION OF REVOLUTIONARY EFFORTS. FOR THIS A REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONAL IS VITAL.