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Why did Comrade Shibdas Ghosh accept Marxism in his pursuit of truth

[This is the English translation of the speech delivered in Bengali by Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI (C), at the public meeting held at Rani Rashmoni Avenue in Kolkata on 5th August, 2012 on the occasion of 36th Memorial Day of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Founder General Secretary of the Party and a great leader of the proletariat. The responsibility of translation error as well as inadequate representation, if any, solely lies with the Editorial Board of Proletarian Era.]

We have assembled here today to pay our deepest of respect to Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, great Marxist thinker and guide to the struggle for emancipation of the proletariat. On this very day, the Party activists as well as supporters-sympathizers imbued by his teachings are observing his memorial day in 21 states of the country. Notwithstanding virtual absence of his name and thoughts in the media, at least several lakhs of the countrymen carry his name and teachings in their heart of hearts with profound respect and intense emotion. His thoughts are gradually spreading even overseas. It is Comrade Shibdas Ghosh who enriched and developed Marxism-Leninism and brought its understanding to a new height. Based on his thoughts, a powerful proletarian revolutionary movement has been growing in the neighbouring Bangladesh. There is

a cultivation of his teachings among the revolutionaries of Nepal. The communists of Pakistan are translating his Works into Urdu. Revolutionaries engaged in building up struggles in Europe, USA, Africa, West Asia and Latin America are contacting us with a view to acquainting themselves with Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought, grasping and acquiring his teachings. In various parts of our country, thousands of students-youths, workers-peasants-women inspired by his teachings are developing class and mass struggles subordinating all the needs and wants of their personal life. On 14th of March last in Delhi, they successfully organized a mammoth protest rally of over a lakh of people with signatures of over 30 million countrymen on the charter of demands centring on the burning problems of life. The Party is gaining strength, both ideologically

and organizationally, with every passing day. The fighting people of the country are getting attracted towards us in large numbers.

Historic struggle of Party formation

At the outset, I would like to recall under what an adverse situation, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh waged a historic arduous revolutionary struggle to form this Party. Let me quote his words. In a workers' meeting in 1967, he said: "What did we have in the early days of Party formation? We had nothing, neither money nor manpower. Many had told us: Yes, your theory is correct. Your logic is sound. But is it that easy to build a party? You have no leader, no press publicity. So, it is impossible a task. It can never be fulfilled. I did not argue with them much. I only asked them one question: Ok. Let me agree for argument's sake that the task is impossible. What should I do then? Become a slave or an agent of the vested interest and sell out conscience? Do I have to act contrary to what I have understood as truth? I would not be able to do that. If I die starving in the street, I shall die with honour raising my

head high. But I cannot put myself up for sale. I may be shot dead. I know I might die starving and there would be no one to even enquire if I am living or dying. But what is the alternative? I might at the outset fail in my endeavour. In that event, I would think I lack ability to achieve success. The ignominy of inability is one thing. But it is a crime to sell out conscience. I would take it as my failure but at the same time, I would know I have not bent my head. Yes, I might have died starving. But have I not been able to achieve anything? Every revolutionary is aware that even his death due to starvation would spread out the message that the existing system has become obsolete. So this oppressive system must be changed by revolution. This appeal of a revolutionary never goes unheard, never is it proved to be abortive. Slowly, one or two persons come forward and respond to his appeal." ¹ In another discussion in 1969, he observed: "I can still recollect those early days when we started building up the Party — there were very few people to support us; we could not even arrange a room as shelter and, day

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SUCI(C) strongly opposes the most draconian hike in Diesel price by Rs 5 per litre and restricted supply of subsidized cooking gas to six cylinders per household per year, calls for immediate countrywide resistance movement

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C) has issued the following statement on 14 September, 2012 :

We strongly oppose the most unjust and draconian decision of the Congress-led UPA government to steeply raise diesel price by Rs 5 per litre and restrict supply of subsidized cooking gas to six cylinders per household per year which is bound to push the already spiralling price line of essential commodities, transport fare and power tariff to a record height, putting bare survival of the common people at stake. What is worth noting is that the government which cries hoarse about democracy and sovereignty of parliament has glaringly and

deliberately avoided parliament to take such a sinister step making mockery of their own proclamations. It once again proves that in the name of so-called reforms and under out and out fraudulent pretext of 'economic compulsion', the sole objective of this reactionary bourgeois government is to secure profit-making as well as unhindered prosperity of the oil behemoths, corporate sector and the stock market speculators by squeezing even the last drop of blood of the increasingly pauperized wretched toiling millions and thus squarely pass on

the entire burden of accentuating capitalist crisis on them. It goes without saying that absence of much needed countrywide organized sustained powerful democratic mass movement on the burning problems of life, this pro-rich government is daring to hold the people into ransom and getting away with implementation of one after another devilish measures including limitless fiscal savagery. While BJP, the other most trusted party of the ruling monopolists besides Congress, is expected to make a show of opposition with an eye on reaping electoral benefits,

the pseudo-Marxists also are remaining confined to customary protest in words without taking any serious effort to build up necessary people's movement to thwart such sinister schemes of the government.

We, therefore, call upon the countrymen not to accept these fiendish moves lying low and come forward to develop the desired united prolonged movement under correct leadership and force the government to bend before people's power and withdraw all such atrocious impositions forthwith.

Question arose in Comrade Shibdas Ghosh if mere ouster of British imperialists would beget desired emancipation

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after day, in our fierce battle to build up a new party in the midst of severe obstacles and a completely adverse situation, we had to strive hard even without food, but we had no grievance for all this. For years together we shared a grass-mat only, and so many winters we passed like that. Our old friends will bear it out even today. They will relate that never could they trace any lack of composure in us. How many days we went without food, but we felt ashamed to tell about it! That we could not arrange our provisions, we could not collect even the minimum was considered to be our own failing. What was there to be proud of? How could it be the height of 'sacrifice'?"² He further added in his speech delivered at the youth conference in 1975: "...when I started this party with just a handful of compatriots. Everybody laughed at us then. The CPI, then an undivided party, ridiculed us. They taunted, we had sprouted like a mushroom. They derided: if the SUCI is a party, then a bat also is a bird; how is it that they, too, would sit with us! The Forward Bloc, RSP and RCPI, everybody said that the SUCI was not a party at all, it was just a club. Even sitting with us could not be contemplated. I endured all this silently. I ignored all their ridicules and just proceeded along with firm resolve to build up the party."³ In these few lines is contained a glimpse of the history of prolonged, complex, determined, death-defying struggle to build up a genuine revolutionary party on this soil.

Initiation of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh towards Marxism

The Party was founded in 1948. In my school life, I was initiated into the Party in 1950. I had occasion to witness a part of that historic struggle. There is so much of elaborate arrangement for today's meeting—dais, rostrum, mike, chairs, table and so forth. Despite inclement weather, what a massive turnout of people! But in those days, it was so difficult for us to arrange even a table and chair, a simple microphone for a meeting addressed by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh at Hazra Park in South Kolkata. We were happy if there was a gathering of few hundreds of people. Overcoming all these hurdles, we have inched forward without any media backing or financial assistance by big bourgeois houses. That day also, we used to resort to street collection of

funds from the people as we do today. It is in this way our Party is advancing guided by Marxism-Leninism-Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought. Some of you are aware, those who are new might not be, that Comrade Shibdas Ghosh started his political life at a very crucial juncture of Indian freedom movement. At that time, the country was in ferment. Waves of freedom movement were sweeping across the land. A boy of just thirteen, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh plunged into the freedom movement. The then undivided Bengal was the citadel of revolutionism. He got associated with that revolutionary trend of freedom movement. Even at his teens, he was immensely inspired by the struggle and teachings of Vidyasagar, Vivekananda, Rabindranath, Saratchandra, Nazrul, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan, Netaji Subhas as well as Kshudiram, Surya Sen, Chandrasekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh and others. Later, in course of his penetrating analysis, he showed that there were two distinct trends in the renaissance movement of our country, one compromising and the other uncompromising. Vidyasagar, Saratchandra and Nazrul in his early period represented the uncompromising trend while Bankimchandra, Vivekananda, Rabindranath and a few others belonged to the pro-religion compromising trend. Gandhiji was the representative of the compromising reformist trend in politics while Netaji Subhash and the revolutionaries of the country like Kshudiram, Bhagat Singh, Surya Sen were upholding the uncompromising trend. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh was connected with this revolutionary trend and waged struggle. While the objective of the struggle to many was to free the country from the alien rule, the question that came in the mind of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh was if mere ouster of the British imperialists would achieve the desired emancipation of the workers-peasants-oppressed people. And if that desired emancipation has to be brought about, what was to be done? In his search for the correct answer, he came in contact with the lofty revolutionary scientific philosophy of the time, Marxism-Leninism. Already, after successful working class revolution in 1917, socialism was making bold stride ahead in Soviet Union under the leadership of great Lenin and then Stalin. That message reached our country also. Rabindranath after

his visit to Russia in 1930 was amazed at the phenomenal progress of Soviet socialism. Netaji Subhashchandra also observed that in the eighteenth century, the best contribution of France was the French revolution. In the nineteenth century, the most significant contribution of Germany towards human civilization was Marxist philosophy. In the twentieth century, Russia had enriched human civilization and culture by accomplishing proletarian revolution, installing a proletarian government and acquiring proletarian culture. Saratchandra, the celebrated litterateur, was in favour of working class revolution and socialism. All these had a great impact on a section of the revolutionaries of the country then. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh was also greatly inspired by that.

Religion cannot show path of emancipation

One question can arise why was he drawn towards Marxism despite existence of other philosophical thoughts including idealist philosophies prevailing in the country? Why did he embrace Marxism as the guiding philosophy? I want to dwell on this aspect in a bit details today because a malicious campaign has been unleashed against Marxism both in our country as well as in other countries. Dismantling of socialism in Soviet Union and China, setback of world communist movement and the decadence, degeneration of the so called communist parties like the CPI(M), CPI have, in particular, raked up this question anew. Such questions did not arise in such a manner in the 1930s, '40s or '50s. During that time, there was a growing emotion and appreciation for Marxism, socialism among the thinking people as also the common masses. Of late, it is being propagated with alacrity that all problems of life can be resolved through spiritual path. Cult of religion, observance of religious rituals, offering *Puja* or *Namaz* and such other spiritual espousals are being encouraged on a massive scale in our country today. These were not so widespread during the freedom movement and even for some time in the post-independence days when democratic movement was at its peak and communist ideology had a discernible influence on the people. On the one hand, the ruling oppressive capitalist class and the capitalist state are deliberately patronizing such cults

and practices while on the other hand the frustrated people finding no ray of hope in life are increasingly tilting towards spiritualism and divinity. That is why, there is a necessity for some philosophical discussion. I want to confine myself mainly to that discussion in this meeting. I have elaborately dealt with the present political situation in the meeting of 24th April last. So, I would not like to enter into that today.

I would like to focus on why Comrade Shibdas Ghosh accepted Marxism and proletarian internationalism as philosophy of knowing the truth in spite of the existence of cult of spiritualism, the thoughts of Vivekananda-Gandhiji-Rabindranath and also cult of humanism-nationalism in our country. Before entering into the philosophical questions, I want to refer to one aspect. Those who believe in god think that starting from the earth, the entire Nature, the material world, life, living species, animals, human beings all have been created by god. Everything is ordained by god and whatever is happening is as per the divine wishes and dictums. It is god who has created the rich and the poor, the oppressor and the oppressed. Why a poor is poor? It is because of the sin he had committed in the previous birth. Similarly, the rich is lavished by wealth and prosperity as reward of all the virtues of his previous incarnation. If the poor and the impoverished bear with all these onslaughts and repressions with a smiling face, he would receive salvation in his next birth. If we accept these prescripts of religion, then we have no other way but to conclude that unemployment, retrenchment, price rise, penury, starvation deaths, death without treatment — everything is endowment of god. Divine wish is the ultimate. No one can go against it. Right from the day the concept of god arose in the society; such thinking has been prevailing over thousands of years. And if one is to concur to this view then all kinds of exploitations, oppressions and injustices are to be deemed as divine acts and hence beyond questioning, let alone protesting.

In this connection, it is pertinent to add that according to the believers in god as also the idealists and spiritualists, the idea of god or spiritualism has been there in human society since eternity and would remain so for all ages to come. But judged on the anvil of

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Idealists think mind is governed by a super-natural power

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science and history, such a belief would prove to be wrong, unhistoric. History has shown that in the primitive society, there was no concept of god. Even today, if you happen to look at the aboriginal populace in the Andaman-Nicobar or the deep jungles of Africa, you would find no concept of any super-natural power or entity in them. That was the scenario in the primitive society. Primitive man did not think of any non-material or supra-matter entity, nor was there any scope for that. These are not my words. I am referring to the observations of Swami Vivekananda, who is respectfully obeyed by all the believers of the country and, despite philosophical differences, is revered by us also. Vivekananda himself had said that the thinking of primitive man was materialistic, matter-based. To quote his words: "The first was a search in external nature of the truths of the universe; it was an attempt to get the solution of the deep problems of life from the material world."⁴ How great a man he was to acknowledge the objective truth despite himself being a believer of spiritualism. In the land known as India today, in the dim past, there was cultivation of powerful materialist philosophy of Lokayat, sage *Charvaka* and others. Even in the academic curriculum of Indian philosophy, one can find mention of materialist philosophy of ancient India. According to those ancient materialistic philosophies, everything in this world is composed of four basic ingredients, *Kshiti, Apa, Tez and Marut* meaning earth, water, fire and air. Hindu sage *Kanada* (600 BC) stated that every object in creation was made up of *paramanu* (atoms). It was here that "zero" was discovered to be a digit. In other words, it was held that there was nothing, no existence of any non-matter in the universe. So, even zero has a quantitative value which implies that no existence of "nothing". The person held in high esteem as Bhagwan Buddha was a non-believer in God. Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, was a non-believer too. Similar non-belief prevailed in some other parts of the world also in ancient time. Later, at a particular stage of social development, in keeping with the social necessity and the course of social progress, the idea of God appeared in the society. I want to allude to one more point in this connection. Many are of the belief that we, the Marxists, have been the first to propagate atheism. This is incorrect. The fact is that much

before advent of Marxism, the bourgeois humanists in Europe during the period of industrial revolution and establishment of parliamentary democracy in the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century had attacked theism while fighting the monarchy, perceived to be the accredited representatives of 'almighty god'. Spurred on by the necessity to develop democratic thoughts and establishment of democratic social order, many philosophers and scientists like Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, Descartes, Diderot, Kant and Feuerbach had sought to promote science, scientific enquiry and scientific reasoning as against the doctrines of theology and religiosity. They believed in either mechanical materialism or agnosticism or atheism or secular humanism. Vidyasagar, during sprouting of Indian renaissance in mid-nineteenth century, was an atheist. Many scientists of this country as well other countries were protagonists of atheism. But, all of them, apart from calling theism as untrue, harmful and hence liable for being rejected, could not say anything further nor could they throw any light on the origin of this thought in history. It is Marxism which first provided scientific-historic genesis of theism. Marxism has shown that religion or religious thoughts appeared in the society at a particular stage of social development in order to meet the then social necessity and further the concept of morals, ethics and well-being of the humanity. For that reason, the Marxists highly respect the founders of various religions as great men of the then society. Based on science, we, the Marxists know that the material condition of human thoughts and ideals appears first and then, on that base, develops the world of ideas. Matter or material condition is prior, ideas or thoughts germinate basing on that given conducive objective condition. In the primitive society, there was no ingredient in the material world for idea of god or religion to appear because there was no private property, no concept of ownership of property, no class division, no ruler-ruled relationship, no division between rich and poor. In other words, the society was running not because of any law-giver ruler or master. So, there was no material condition or objective situation conducive to emergence of the concept of God. At that time, primitive man made efforts to know the various forces of Nature, tried to propitiate or control those natural forces lest those should harm him.

With that objective, he had based on whatever understanding had developed in him, used to dance and gesticulate to tame the natural forces and even chanted mantras to appease them. The idea of super-natural entity or god came much later only after agriculture was invented, stable property had appeared and centring on that, society became class-divided and the slave-master society was established. Society was running at the order of the slave master. Slave master's order was the law at that time. When the barbaric oppression and repression of the slave masters accentuated beyond endurance, the question of emancipation from the yoke of this oppression also arose in society. Greatly moved by the tears, wails and woes of the subjugated slaves, a group of thinkers in those days were struck with the thought that as there was a master in society while all others were slaves and the society was being run orderly by the rule or dictate of the master, there ought to be a lord or super-master at whose behest and conduction, the vast universe was running orderly with systematic outbreak of day and night, sunrise and sunset, alternating new moon and full moon, ebbs and tides and periodic change of seasons. This super-master ought to be the lord of the slave-master also. Slave master and slave both are creations of God. Hence both are the God's children. This is how the concept of god and subsequently religious thoughts, system of worship and such other religious ceremonies arose in society. That is why Marx had made a historic statement that "Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions."⁵ Thus Marx has given due recognition to the positive role of religion in the then context of social progress. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, too, hailed the religious preachers of stature as men of great height, outstanding personalities who, in their times, had left unmistakable marks of their genius. He had explained that once Christianity fought against the slave system. Islam too took up cudgels against the slave system and injustices. In Hinduism too, there were concepts of virtue and sin, justice and injustice, social well-being, ethics and morality, and societal good in the prevailing perspective. So, we, the Marxists, do not have any disrespect for religion. We only say that concept

of religion came at a particular juncture of history to meet social necessity of that time and based on religion grew religious thoughts and religious scriptures. The religious preachers then argued that the oppressor and the oppressed, the slaves and the slave master were both sons of god. And in that sense, all were deemed to be equal. So, they urged upon the rulers to govern by obeying the prescripts of religion. It occurred to them based on whatever they could understand in their quest for truth in the then period, that all kinds of thoughts and ideas germinating in their minds were divine contemplations, gospel truths. Since they believed that this world was created by god and so were the rich and poor, these would continue forever. But the ruler should govern his subjects following religious directives. Later, slave-master society was replaced by feudalism, monarchical rule based on religion. Monarchy used religion as a prop to establish a belief that the king was accredited representative of god. God was the owner of all properties and on behalf of him, the king or the emperor or the feudal lord was owning that property and ruling the society. So the decree of the king is the command of god. Thus all kinds of exploitations, repression and oppression by the monarchy and the feudal lords were sought to be sanctified in the name of obedience to religion. There was no scope for protest because that would have been deemed to be rebellious against religion. In pointing out this role of religion, Marx had opined, that is "the opium of the people."⁵ Referring to religion, the rulers were convincing the poor and exploited to accept their destitution, penury and misery as having been ordained by god. Any protest against oppression and exploitation was tantamount to going against the command of god and hence a sin. Already he was paying price for his sin in previous life. Now if he dared to rise up against the king or feudal lord, he would only multiply his sin and thus spoil his both earthly as well as reincarnate life. So the advice was to remain as opiated and desist from rising against oppression-repression. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie who in the period of rising capitalism attacked religion and religious backwardness has itself in the phase of its decadence turned utter reactionary and is using religion as intoxicant to destroy revolutionary thought and struggle.

I have said earlier that it was the

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Slogan of 'nationalism' is against interest of the struggle for emancipation today

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bourgeoisie who first launched attack on religion. During French revolution, European renaissance and establishment of bourgeois democracy by overthrowing obsolete feudal order, fight was directed against the monarchical system sustaining on the belief that such rule was based on god's command. It is in this way that renaissance based on modern science marked its augury with the announcement that the material world is only the truth, nature is the only reality, nothing exists beyond nature and there is no super-natural existence. So, in the realm of thought and human life, there can be no place for god. Thinking is the contemplation of god—such belief was discarded by the votaries of European renaissance. It was Vidyasagar who first brought this thought on Indian soil. Many are not aware that it was Vidyasagar who first said boldly based on reason that *Veda-Vedanta* and *Sankhya*, the old Hindu religious scriptures, are false systems of philosophy and hence do not represent the truth of life. He wanted to free the thinking process of people from the shackles of spiritualism and influence of *Vedanta* and invoke new enlightened rational scientific thought process and rational faculty. So was his call for new system of education, secular scientific education as against old obsolete religious tutelage. What is worth noting is that when Ramakrishna Paramhans, known to be the preceptor of Vivekananda was preaching spiritualism, Vidyasagar

was struggling for freeing human mind from the clutches of spiritualism and setting up a secular education system. Why were there these two trends in thinking? The answer has been provided by Marxism, by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh based on Marxism. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh has shown that a thought cannot appear unless the material condition conducive to its growth developed prior to it. This is one aspect. But that is not all. It is immensely important as to how you are approaching an objective reality. One might be honest, dedicated and ready to make sacrifices. But if one's philosophical outlook, methodology of thinking and process of reasoning are erroneous, one can never find the truth. Just like a doctor who might be very honest, extremely caring for his patient but is bereft of necessary medical knowledge. Then, he cannot cure his patient. Same is in the realm of thought. Ramakrishna's approach was based on the *Veda-Vedanta*, spiritualism, belief in super-natural power. So, he encouraged cult of religion. On the contrary, Vidyasagar wanted to develop a mind free from religious thoughts because he embraced secular humanist approach of Western renaissance, modern science, rational thought process. If we follow spiritual approach today, then we ought to accept the Indian capitalist state, the exploitative capitalist social order, the class division in society, the spate of oppressions, deceptions and deprivations all as command of god and hence *fate accompli*. In that

event, there could be no question of protest. Only course left is to please god through ritualistic worship and pray for salvation in next life. So the fundamental difference is between the two outlooks and methodological approaches in getting to know the truth. This is where Marxism is distinctively different from other schools of thought.

Limitations of idealist philosophy

My next point is there are idealist philosophers, spiritual thinkers who even by going to the extent of acknowledging many scientific truths like the world is full of matter, the influence of environment on human thought, evolution of animate bodies and human species in course of change in the material world etc. got struck over the question as to what is meant by mind, what are thoughts and ideas? Material world can be comprehended with five sensory organs. But thoughts and ideas cannot be comprehended in the same process. Then where the thoughts and ideas are coming from? Is it that these are originating from any super-natural or supra-material source or thoughts and ideas are originating from matter through an objective process? Basic difference between idealist philosophy and materialist philosophy lies here. Conduction of the struggles of life by our people is connected with this question. Gandhiji was a great and honest man. He used to think that he received orders from god in

directing his acts. He had opposed the revolutionaries during the freedom movement, resisted Netaji Subhash and endorsed his ouster from the Congress. Gandhiji even did not try to stall the hanging of Bhagat Singh. Because he believed that armed revolution would spell disaster to the country, cause immense harm. He had even said: "Even if I was assured that we could have independence by means of violence, I should refuse to have it. It won't be real independence." (6) He held that the relation between the capitalist owner and the worker is like that of father and son. To quote his language: "the relation between mill-agents and mill-hand sought to be one of father and children... Connection is of mutual love and regard as between father and son." (6) His claim was that "Having made a ceaseless effort to attain self-purification," he had "developed some little capacity to hear correctly and clearly the 'still small Voice within'," which to him meant "Voice of God" and whatever he used to say were not his own words but "Voice of God". He said: "My claim to hear the Voice of God is no new a claim...I was not dreaming at the time I heard the Voice. The hearing of the Voice was preceded by a terrific struggle within me. Suddenly the Voice came upon me. I listened, made certain that it was the Voice, and the struggle ceased. I was calm...this was between 11 and 12 midnight. I felt refreshed and began to write the note about it which the readers must have seen. ... I have no further evidence to convince the sceptic. ...But I can say this that not the unanimous verdict of the whole world against me could shake me from the belief that what I heard was the true Voice of God." (7) Just imagine, Gandhiji at whose call thousands of countrymen had then joined non-violence movement forsaking revolutionism, used to think like this. How could such be with a great and honest person like Gandhiji? Because, he also used to believe that thinking was contemplation of god, mind is guided by what is called, super-mind.

You might be surprised to know that similar were the views of Vivekananda. I have already told that we have deepest of respect for him. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had taught us to respect all greatmen of yester years like Vivekananda, Gandhiji, Rabindranath and others. We are of the opinion that after Vidyasagar, it was Vivekananda who

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SUCI (C) condemns unprovoked police firing on anti-Koodankulam Nuclear Power Plant protesters

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C) has issued the following statement on 11th September, 2012

We strongly condemn the unprovoked police firing, baton charge and bursting tear gas shells on the peaceful anti-Koodankulam Nuclear Power Plant protesters yesterday (10th September) at Tuticorin causing death of a fisherman and grievous injuries to many and demand a high level judicial enquiry into the incident, stringent punishment of the guilty police officials and adequate compensation for the families of the dead and injured, release of all those arrested, dropping of the false charges on the protesters, lifting of the unlawful imposition of act 144 and withdrawal of the central and state police forces stationed there. We also protest brutal police

atrocities on another set of protesters at Koodankulam itself on the same day. At the same time, we hail the courageous sustained just struggle of the people of Koodankulam and adjoining areas against the heinous move on the part of the Congress-led central government to the commission of a highly risky nuclear power plant there endangering life and livelihood of the poor fishermen and other sections of the people residing in that area. Setting up of such nuclear power plants at any part of the country is fraught with the danger of radioactive radiation, widespread environmental pollution, extensive damage to animal and plant lives and severe health hazard of the people

and hence ought to be opposed by all right-thinking persons.

We fervently appeal to the people of Tamilnadu to firmly stand by the brave fighters of Koodankulam and adjoining areas and exert necessary pressure of united protest on both the central as well as Tamilnadu state governments to abandon the project immediately. We also call upon the countrymen to take cognizance of the legitimacy of this Koodankulam movement, regard it as a struggle of theirs because of common cause and extend whole-hearted support to the protesters there so that the government does not dare to venture any such project anywhere in the country.

No religious doctrine can provide answers to today's problems

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played a historic role in rousing the people of India, in fostering a spirit of human essence in them at the dawn of Indian nationalism. But, alongside respect, there can be difference of opinion and stating that difference boldly is no sign of disrespect whatsoever. This has been the teaching of Vivekananda himself. As I have mentioned earlier, Vidyasagar had clearly said that there was no truth in Veda, Vedanta and Sankhya. He did not believe in god, never used to go to temple or perform puja. Ramakrishna had gone to his house and after paying due respect, invited him to visit Dakshineswar. But Vidyasagar, honest and dedicated as he was to his firm belief in atheism, did not even for the sake of formality go to Dakshineswar, known to be a pilgrimage because of Ramakrishna's Kali temple there. Later on, Vivekananda had stated that he equally revered both Ramakrishna and Vidyasagar though he was a preacher of Vedantic philosophy which was contrary to what Vidyasagar espoused. Vivekananda had done that without deviating an inch from the respect he had for Vidyasagar. Let me now quote certain relevant portions from the works of Vivekananda. He said: "Knowledge is inherent in man, no knowledge comes from outside, it is all inside. What we say a man 'knows', should, in strict psychological language, be what he discovers or unveils. What a 'learns' is really what he 'discovers' by taking cover off his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowledge." (8.) From this understanding, what conclusion did he arrive at? We all know that Newton had discovered the force of gravitation. But according to Vivekananda, "We say Newton discovered gravitation. Was it sitting anywhere in a corner waiting for him? It was in his own mind; time came and he found it out. All knowledge that the world has ever received comes from the mind; the infinite library of the universe is in your own mind. The external is simply the suggestion, the occasion, which sets you to study your own mind. The falling of an apple gave the suggestion to Newton and he studied his own mind. He rearranged all the previous links of thought, in his mind, and discovered a new link among them, which we call the law of gravitation." ⁸ This very observation of Vivekananda reflected the same idealist philosophy as pursued by Gandhiji. As per such belief, human soul is a part of the divine soul, divine soul is the Supreme Being and the Supreme Being is the Supreme *Brahma* and

abode of eternal knowledge. So the knowledge of the entire world is stored there from time immemorial. Hence, there is nothing to be called a new discovery. According to Vivekananda's line of thinking, the theory of gravitation could have been discovered even ten thousand years ago. It could have been discovered by either Plato or Socrates. Likewise, Jesus Christ or Shankaracharya could have invented theory of relativity. Only what was needed was a kind of act like the fall of an apple from the tree which struck Newton. Would modern scientific historic outlook endorse such an explanation? Since

not take any interest in them — each and every one of them I count guilty of betraying the country." ⁹ This is another Vivekananda, who loves the poor masses, who is humanitarian. Tears well up in him for the starving masses, for the exploited. On their behalf he is urging upon humanity's conscience, he is crying shame upon the owners of riches, the so called educated men and women. Even, he says: "Millions of the distressed masses of this land are asking for bread, just bread, in a voice clamped with hunger. Bread is what they are asking from us, and we are doling out chips of stone. Holding out the virtues of religion to souls who are

explained." ⁴

It means that the person who is begging for a morsel is also occupying the throne. One who is uneducated is at the same time educated. Where were such thoughts coming from? Such thoughts were stemming from the belief that only truth in the world was the *Brahma* (Supreme Being). And this *Brahma* is residing in each of us. As a humanitarian, one personality of Vivekananda was standing by the wail and woe of the hungry, upholding their demands, deprecating the elites and the affluent while the other personality of Vivekananda was consoling the



Comrade Provash Ghosh addressing on 5th August

Vivekananda was a believer in monotheist Vedanta and his thought process was guided in accordance therewith, a wise man like him also in his search for truth got enmeshed in such kind of weird thinking. This is the limitation of idealism. From this idealist thinking, one is prone to believe that every occurrence in society is pre-ordained by the Supreme Being, pre-determined by the Supreme *Brahma*. So these are all eternal, absolute and hence could not be changed. Nothing new can come by. Again, the same Vivekananda, in agony at the sufferings of his countrymen, speaks out: "I call them simply traitors, who have their education at the expense of earnings by blood, sweat and tears of millions of downtrodden, poverty-stricken men and women, yet, drowned in affluence and luxury, they have no time to spare a thought for the poor multitude. They rest assured of appropriating the income of millions of Indian people as long as these people remain plunged in darkness of ignorance, yet they do

suffering angst of hunger, or explaining to them the high points of philosophy is to abuse them with humiliation." ⁹

But you would be surprised at another saying by Vivekananda and wonder if both are utterances of the same person. In a speech delivered at Lahore in 1897, he said: "Whether you know it or not, through all hands you work, through all feet you move, you are the king enjoying the palace, you are the beggar leading that miserable existence in the street; you are in the ignorant as well as the learned, you are the man who is weak and you are in the strong; know this and be sympathetic. That is why, we must not hurt others. That is why, I do not even care whether I have to starve, because there will be millions of mouths eating at the same time, and they are all mine, therefore I should not care what becomes of me and mine, for the whole universe is mine, I am enjoying all the bliss at the same time; and who can kill me, or the universe? Here is morality. Here, in Advaita alone, is morality

self by assuming that *Brahma* was within the wretched millions as much as it was within the one on the royal throne. So, there was nothing to groan or moan over hunger and starvation.

This is where the idealists suffer from limitation. Because they think that mind is governed by a supernatural power. Mind is controlled by Super-mind. Soul is part of the Supreme Almighty. What is mind? How do ideas and thoughts arise in mind? Such questions prevailed for quite a long period. In ancient time, the materialists could only say that mind and life were created through combination of earthly particles. But they could not elaborate any more as it was impossible to do so at that point of time. During the days of industrial revolution, the bourgeois humanists and scientists argued that the human body is a machine, so is brain and mind. Yet, the moot question remained unresolved. Confusion prevailed all around. Idealist Hegel viewed matter as the

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With wrong or false ideas we cannot forge ahead

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dialectical expression of an absolute idea and assumed that idea was the 'original idea' which had inherent contradiction within itself and it was this contradiction that had led to creation of the material world. It means that the material world is an image, and in that sense, it is an expression of an absolute idea. And this material world, to put it simply, would one day be merged into the absolute idea. So, everything occurring in nature and society is pre-determined. Opposing Hegelian theory, Marx based on science had shown that "The ideal is nothing else than this material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thoughts." His worthy disciple Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had provided a developed and enriched understanding of this concept based on the latest discoveries of science. He said: "Philosophers debated for long in the past whether mind came first or matter, that is which of the two was prior. But the point of this 'priority' has been resolved by science, once and for all. That matter is prior to mind and it exists independently of consciousness is now established beyond doubt. We also know now that, through the sense organs, the external world or the objective reality comes into interaction with the human brain with its distinctive power of translation and it is through this process that thoughts and ideas arise." ¹⁴ Thus, he conclusively showed that "the material condition for human thoughts and ideals appears first and then, on this base, develops the world of ideas. Herein lies the limit of the relative independence of the power of thinking of man." ¹⁴ So, no thought or idea is eternal. Thought does not originate from any super-natural power but is developed through interaction of the human brain with the external world. The ingredient of any thought lies in the objective world. But even if the ingredients are the same, a difference in the methodology of analysis or comprehension may lead to different conclusions about the same incident or occurrence in nature and society. That is why, though being contemporaries, Vidyasagar using science and rationality as a tool opposed the Vedanta but Ramakrishna guided by spiritual thinking eulogized the Vedanta. In the same way, there were differences between Gandhiji and Netaji Subhas, Rabindranath and Saratchandra over many socio-philosophical-political questions. So, I was telling you that idealists proceed from the assumption that

there is a super-natural power, supra-matter thought and those are eternal. The truth they have understood through cult is divine command. So their gospels are also eternal and applicable in all ages.

But what is the objective reality? Copernicus, Galileo, Bruno had to face outrageous assault of the Churchdom and fight religious thoughts to propel growth and development of modern science. Rise of bourgeois democracy in the Western world was based on disapproval of spiritual thoughts and religious fiats. There is no denying the fact that solution of any of the modern day problems in either the economic-political-social spheres or any other walk of life can be found in any of the holy scriptures, be it the *Gita* or the *Bible* or the *Koran*. Because, the religious leaders of the past had no occasion to witness the present era and its problems. And they were not able to understand how ideas develop, thoughts arise or mind is constituted. It is not that they were inferior in genius. Rather, in the then context, they were amazingly talented. But they could not get the opportunity of being acquainted with the developments of modern science. But, right from Marx to Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, all Marxist thinkers had that opportunity. At the same time, despite scope for being familiar with latest discoveries of science, a group of thinkers notwithstanding being exceptionally talented did not accept science as means to know the truth. So, they were gripped by spiritual-idealist outlook and hence failed to reflect the truth. These spiritual thinkers had assumed that society is unchangeable and so the gulf between the rich and the poor or the divide between the oppressor and the oppressed would remain forever. These are all eternal. So, the desired emancipation of the oppressed people cannot come by following the spiritual line. On the contrary, spiritualism poses stiffest of hurdles before the struggle for emancipation. It is for this precise reason that Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in his quest for truth did not embrace spiritualism.

As you have already seen, materialization of the humanist aspiration of a person like Vivekananda could not take place because his spiritual thoughts, his idealist outlook became the stumbling blocks. Gandhiji in the last phase of his life had at least repented on one question. He did not want partition of the country. When Nehru and Sardar Patel came to him with the proposal for

partition of the country, he could not agree to that. He wrote: "My struggle has failed. Hindus and Muslims are engaged in fratricidal bloodbath. No one understood me. Only one person could, but he too is not near. He is Subhas." "Today, I am alone. Even Sardar Ballavbhai Patel and Jawaharlal also think that my analysis of the situation is incorrect and acceptance of partition of the country will bring back peace. ... They think that with age, I have degenerated. ... I clearly see that dark future awaits independence earned at this cost. I pray let not God keep me alive to see this." ¹⁰

But, why did the partition take place? It was also an inevitability of Gandhism. Gandhiji and his followers participated in the freedom struggle with religious books in hand. As a result, the leadership of the freedom movement in the main was in the hands of the upper caste Hindus. Consequently, vast masses of the people belonging to the Muslim and lower caste Hindu communities remained out of the mainstream of the movement. Such would not have been the case if secular humanist leadership was at the helm. The demand for partition of the country as India and Pakistan arose based on this religion-oriented nationalism. As Gandhiji had rejected science, scientific outlook, what he did not want had happened because his pursuit of truth was based on religion. That is why the question of correct outlook is so important. Gandhiji who sincerely longed for welfare of the people had believed that "God is the creator of both capitalist owners and the workers. While capitalist has the power of intellect, worker has the power of labour of the limbs...." "We invite the capitalist to regard himself as trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and increase of his capital.... Earn your crores by all means. But understand that your wealth is not yours; it belongs to the people. Take whatever you need for your legitimate needs and use the remainder for society." ⁶ He added further: "In the individual body the head is not high because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as members of the individual body are equal, so are the members of the society. This is Socialism. In it, the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level." According to him, such division had been there from time immemorial and would

remain forever. He believed that "A person cannot amass individual wealth without private ownership. Only he has to ensure that this wealth is not misused, but used for justice and in right manner." ⁶ It means private ownership of Tatas and Birlas is a necessity. As trustees of social wealth, they would only take what is 'legitimately due' to them and give the remainder to the society. But, how would this 'legitimate due' be determined? Which owner has ever said that he is appropriating wealth illegitimately? Every one of them claims that he is taking what is legitimately due to him. This was the limitation of Gandhiji and Gandhite philosophy. Similar has been the case with another towering personality like Rabindranath. On the one hand, he had shed tears for the oppressed while on the other hand, his inability to be freed from the clutches of idealism caused his world outlook impede social revolution. "Throughout the ages, civilized communities have contained groups of nameless people. They are the majority—the beasts of burden, who have no time to become men. They grow up on the leavings of society's wealth, with the least food, least clothes and least education, and they serve the rest. They toil most, yet theirs is the largest measure of indignity. At the least excuse they starve and are humiliated by their superiors. They are deprived of everything that makes life worth living. They are like a lampstand bearing the lamp of civilization on their heads: people receive light while they are smeared with the trickling oil", wrote Rabindranath." ¹¹ This shows how much pain and agony he had for the oppressed and repressed people. But, immediately after that, he wrote: "I had often thought about them, but came to the conclusion that there was no help for them." (ibid) Why is there no help? Because, according to him, "If there were no one below, how could there be anyone above, and it is necessary to be there above. If there is nobody at the top, it is impossible to see anything beyond one's immediate ken; mere animal existence can never be man's destiny. His civilization consists in going beyond bare subsistence. The most cherished fruits of civilization have flourished on the field of leisure." ¹¹ So, in his opinion, a section of the people must live at the bottom pending which another section cannot be at the top. Unless there are some people at the top, they cannot cultivate science-

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Only Marxism can illumine the path to emancipation

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epistemology, art-literature and such other necessary social activities, he thought. Rabindranath too believed that this gap between the upper and lower layers of society is eternal and necessary for civilization. He also went on saying: "I used to think that the utmost should be done to improve the education, health and comfort of those who are compelled to labour at the bottom of society not merely through circumstances (meaning not just for pecuniary condition), but by reason of their body and mind."¹¹ You can thus see that according to him, the very nature of body and mind of a particular section of the people is such that they are suitable as well as bound to perform inferior jobs. In other words, their physical and mental structures are so developed as to be only 'fit' for jobs considered to be low-grade. Hence, even to Rabindranath, rich-poor divide or worker-owner relationship and division between mental and physical labour had appeared to be eternal. This happened because his outlook was clouded with idealist thoughts and hence he failed to realize the scientific reason behind class division in society. Now you can well understand how imperative it is to have a scientific outlook.

In another place, Rabindranath observed, "The attachment to one's property is not a subject of argument: it is human nature. We want to express ourselves: this is a mode of self-expression....But for an ordinary mortal, personal property is the language of his individuality: he is struck dumb, as it were, if he loses it....private property will remain but the excessive individualism of its enjoyment will be circumscribed. What overflows these limits must be for the common good....In short, for oneself there must be something of one's own: everything else should be for others. A true solution is possible only by recognizing both self and non-self. When one of them is forgotten there is conflict with the law of human nature."¹¹

It means that a person should retain legitimate something for his own consumption and give the remainder to others. This is humanist outlook, outlook of Feuerbach. "Rational restriction for ourselves and love and love for others" — these were the words of Feuerbach. His exhortation was that there ought to be reasonable self-restriction in acquiring property and in case of self-consumption while the balance should be given to others out of love and affection. According to Feuerbach, love

between 'I and thou' is eternal. It suits all periods, all ages of history. The man he conceived was an abstract man who did not belong to any class, to any period of society. It follows from this understanding that the relationship between capitalists and workers is also a relationship of love. So, whatever workers get from the capitalists is the expression of love. This is a concept of a supra-class abstract man. This humanism is deemed to be eternal. Same was the outlook of Gandhiji and Rabindranath. As per this outlook, individual ownership of property and the urge of an individual for acquiring property have been taken as legitimate and logical. This approach, therefore, works in favour of capitalist ownership only. So, this approach cannot illumine the path of overthrowing the existing oppressive capitalist system in India. This is the reason that Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had accepted Marxism as the highest revolutionary philosophy of life based on science.

Difference between Marxism and other philosophies

Marxism fundamentally differs from other philosophies over the method of finding the truth. In all other philosophies, whatever an honest great individual thought subjectively based on his personal power of judgement, self-realization and intellect was propagated as the truth. As against that, Marxism brought a new methodology of analysis, a new methodological approach in searching out the truth. Marxism showed that there is difference among the thoughts of different individuals because the thought of an individual, of a genius even, is in reality nothing but individual thinking. Hence, there could be different realizations of truth and falsity among different individuals. So, there have been differences on this score in different ages. For that reason, the methodological approach to examining a particular concrete event or phenomenon to unravel the truth must be such as to be acceptable to all and which reflects the truth. Next question is how do we know what is truth? Modern science has shown that such is possible only through the process of scientific experimentation and verification. There cannot be two different understandings about composition of water or air, about the cause of tide and ebb, typhoid or tuberculosis, about the configuration of an atom or electron or the nature of light. There can be

only one understanding about each of these aspects if the same is based on experimentally verified scientific truth. As a philosopher, it was Marx who first said that experimentally verified truth of science is the only truth. Everything has to be judged on the basis of experiments, history and experience, not on any individual's notion or idea. After establishment of capitalism and considerable progress of modern science, Marxism evolved based on science at a particular juncture of history to meet the social necessity of accomplishing anti-capitalist revolution and finding out truth correctly. Marxism, as Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had taught, holds that on the question of knowing truth science is far more powerful and dependable than the power of an individual. So, it is only rational to depend upon science rather than on the belief or self-realization of an individual. At a particular age, there was emergence of religion for the well-being of humanity. Later, nationalist thoughts and bourgeois humanism appeared in society to free people from the tightening noose of monarchy and feudalism. And now has emerged Marxism based on science to take civilization forward by bringing about anti-capitalist revolution.

Marxism is a science

The different branches of science, through their methods of experimentation and verification followed by logical objective and scientific analyses of the facts gathered thereby, reveal the particular objective laws of particular domains of the material world. Through the process of scientifically coordinating, correlating, integrating and generalizing these particular laws derived from the particular disciplines of science, Marxism or dialectical materialism has emerged as a generalized concept of law-governance of the material world and a comprehensive science. Marxism has been first to proclaim that the material world is subject to changes all the time and such changes are law-governed. Right from elementary particle like electron to macro-terrestrial bodies like the planets—everything is in motion and hence changing. Nothing is static. There is no way to stay out of motion. But this motion is law-governed. In accordance with that law, matter is undergoing change. In course of this change had evolved life, living species, men and human society. This human society is also changing. Marxism showed that first there was primitive society.

Then came the slave society followed by feudalism and then bourgeois democracy. All these forms of society appeared following a definite law of social development. And in accordance with the same law, socialism under the dictatorship of the proletariat would replace decadent moribund bourgeois democracy. This is the inexorable law.

In the mid-nineteenth century, when capitalism had not entered the stage of monopoly and imperialism, when industrial crisis and market crisis had not appeared with so much intensity, massive retrenchment, recession and such other phenomena of crisis-ridden capitalism were not there, when capitalist economy notwithstanding certain manifestation of its systemic crisis was still in the growing phase and neither the bourgeoisie nor the bourgeois economists could dream of outbreak of any crisis on such a massive scale, Marx, the founder of the scientific philosophy of dialectical materialism said based on scientific analysis that this growth of capitalism would not be sustained. Capitalism would be mired in severe crisis. He showed that in capitalism, the capitalists invest capital for reaping profit. That is the law of capitalism. Motive of production in capitalism is to earn profit. The capitalist owner makes profit by depriving labour of their legitimate dues. Mathematically, Marx showed that capital consists of two parts, constant and variable. The plant and machinery, land and raw material form constant capital. Investment in constant capital comes back to the capitalist investor in either one shot or periodic installments. Constant capital does not yield profit or surplus value. The other one is variable capital which he pays the worker as wage to buy the latter's labour power. If the worker works for eight hours, then in four or five hours, he produces value worth the wage he is paid by the capitalist owner for buying his labour power. In other words, the owner recovers the price he is paying as wage in four or five hours of labour expended by the worker. But the worker does not get wage for the remaining four or five hours of his labour. This is what is known as surplus value. The capitalist owner makes profit by usurping this unpaid surplus labour. The capitalist owner accumulates wealth out of this profit generated by expropriating the surplus labour of the worker. Thus Marx unfolded the truth that the capitalist owner earns

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Decadent capitalism is breeding crisis in every walk of life

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profit by depriving the worker. He further showed that the term 'market' in capitalism denotes the purchasing power of the people which depends on their income. The working people constitute the majority of the market. But the very working people are denied their legitimate wage. So, a day would come when the workmen having been ruthlessly exploited would have no purchasing power. At that time, market crisis would accentuate. When Marx made this prognosis, the bourgeois economists rubbished it as delirium. But see how the prognosis is vindicated today. The entire gamut of capitalist crisis round the world can only be explained on the anvil of this historic prognosis of Marx. By applying the science of dialectical materialism, Marx analysed the social laws, the law of capitalism and showed that capitalism would plunge into an insurmountable crisis. When he made this prediction, capitalism had not reached its decadence and turned out and out reactionary. This was no prophecy but a forecast based on science. The horrendous crisis did not unfold at that time but he could see the inevitability of the same. History has proved him right because he based himself on science.

Later, Lenin had shown that capitalism has passed the earlier phase of its development and entered the decadent reactionary phase. After giving birth to monopoly and then finance capital and imperialism, it had become ridden with market crisis. The imperialist powers like England, France, Germany, America and later Japan were engaged in limitless loot and plunder of their colonies and semi-colonies in Asia, Africa and Latin America because their domestic markets were squeezed. He showed that imperialism generates war for the re-division of the market for plundering. Stalin had shown that after Second World War, capitalism had become further crisis-ridden so much so as to have lost whatever relative stability of market it had earlier. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh said that capitalist crisis has become an hourly crisis. Earlier, as per law of capitalist economy, supply depended on demand. But now there is almost no demand in the market because there are very few buyers. Even there is hardly any demand for bank loan. The capitalist owners too are not investing capital as they used to do earlier and hence are not eager for bank loans. Banks are asking

common people to borrow money and spend for housing or acquiring consumer durables now and pay back the loan with interest later. Because, if purchasing power is boosted a bit with borrowed money, that would somehow stimulate the market and trigger some activity at the production front. And if there is increase in the number of buyers, there will be marginal improvement in credit off-take from the banks by the capitalist investors. Thus demand-driven economy today is replaced by credit-driven economy. As against normal demand, there is artificial creation of demand through offer of credit. But when the debtors or loan-takers because of falling income are becoming defaulters, the banks are getting bankrupt. The industries are also shutting down. In order to rescue the banks, the state is injecting fresh capital to their kitty from public exchequer. The capitalists are also complaining of incurring loss. So, the state is also giving them huge financial assistance in the name of 'fiscal stimulus', and resorting to waiver of their loans. Whose money is thus used by the state for salvaging the 'insolvent' banks or the capitalists? It is public money deposited with the government through taxation route. The government is supposed to use this fund for various public welfare measures like education, healthcare, irrigation, road construction and so forth. Now the same very fund is diverted to revive the banks and compensate the capitalists for their reported loss. Even the government is resorting to market borrowing to secure funds for saving the banks and the capitalists and the corporate sector. Because of this huge market borrowings, all capitalist-imperialist countries like US, UK, France, Italy, Greece, Spain are now burdened with huge debt known as 'sovereign debt'. Scenario in our country is no different. Budget deficit is increasing by leaps and bounds. India too is a heavily 'indebted' country. Both the central as well as the state governments are laden with enormous debts running into several hundred billions of rupees. As a result of this, there is savage economic onslaught on the people. To meet the yawning budget deficit, the government is increasing taxes, raising prices, withdrawing subsidies and massively curtailing allocations towards public welfare activities like education, healthcare, irrigation, transport etc. The value of rupee as currency is falling. A section of bourgeois economists and columnists are advising the government to totally withdraw

from providing any public service. In the name of pursuing reforms, they are shamelessly advocating for wage cut of the workers, trimming workforce, diverting pension and provident fund money to speculative stock market, entry of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in retail sector, deregularization of diesel-kerosene-cooking gas prices and so forth. All these anti-people schemes are on the anvil. Whatever little of public welfare activities were hitherto undertaken by the capitalist state is being dispensed with. A harrowing crisis has engulfed the entire capitalist world.

Slogan of nationalism—a privilege in the hands of the bourgeoisie today

It is pertinent to note that during the period of its rising, capitalism fought against feudalism and later it fought against imperialism-feudalism for national independence and sovereignty. The nationalist thoughts then had a progressive role. In that fight against colonial rulers, on the basis of nationalism, there was a necessity for broader unity of the national bourgeoisie, the working class, peasantry and other sections of the common people. But once the national bourgeoisie is installed in power and turned into the main exploiter, there is historic necessity for united struggle of the workers-peasants-toiling masses against it. Now, in any capitalist state, the interest of capital is being projected as national interest. In this situation, any slogan of 'national unity' or 'nationalism' is against the interest of the struggle for emancipation of the workers-peasants-toiling millions. So, historically, nationalism is exhausted today. Moreover, in the present moribund stage of capitalism, a few Multi-national Corporations (MNCs) are dominating the world and virtually transcending all political-territorial boundaries to carry out unbridled loot and plunder, run steam-roller of ruthless exploitation. Abandoning all concepts of erstwhile national independence and sovereignty, the national bourgeoisie of various capitalist countries have become either partners or lackeys of these MNCs. Long back, Marxism had shown that not nationalism but proletarian internationalism is the only way to emancipation.

Indian context

Look at our country today. Crises have penetrated into every walk of life. Millions are unemployed. Two-third of the

population is either unemployed or underemployed. Strangely, the government report is saying that there is no unemployment among the poor. Only a section of the educated is without job. What is the yardstick of their measurement? It is incredible indeed! The government is arguing that since the poor work as domestic aids, porters and street-hawkers, are engaged in either selling vegetables or making paper-bags for somehow eking out a livelihood, they are deemed to be employed. This is the contention of the Labour Bureau. In that event, there is no unemployment in the country. They might of well even argue that there is no needy or indigent person in the country since millions are surviving in a starved, semi-starved condition for days together. So, there is no necessity to sit in an air-conditioned chamber to work out the definition of poverty line and calculate the percentage of Below Poverty Line (BPL) people because, as per their view, there is no poverty in the country. Had the people been poor, how could they be living then? But, what is the reality? Reality is that millions are street beggars. There his huge influx of the rural poor into the city everyday in search for job. These people have no home, no hearth. They stay on the footpaths, along the sides of the railway tracks in makeshift shanties. Millions of children are born on the streets, dying by the roadside. So many people are dying because of starvation and lack of medical care. Lakhs of hapless debt-stricken peasants are committing suicide. Thousands of children are being sold. Father is selling daughter. Women-trafficking is soaring. Even seven or eight year old girls are initiated into the flesh trade. This is the harrowing spectacle of the country. But the leaders of the parliamentary parties are not bothered. They are busy in submitting the details of 'development'. Whose development they are talking of? Is it of the people or of the giant industrial houses, financial oligarchs and MNCs? Profits of the Tatas, Birlas, Ambanis, Jindals and Mittals are swelling. Huge black money of theirs is being stashed away in foreign banks. So, they are developing. Prospering alongwith them are the blackmarketers, hoarders, ministers and bureaucrats. Salary and perks of the ministers and legislators are soaring. Pay packets and other facilities of the big officials are increasing without limit. Besides them, a small

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Honour is in taking active part in revolutionary struggle for social transformation

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privileged section is making fortune. Two third members of Indian parliament boasted to be the emblem of democracy are billionaires. They are enjoying the status of people's representatives.

Politics of opportunism and capitulation

In capitalist India, even the sphere of politics is afflicted with crisis. Politics has turned into a roaring trade. Like business, aim of ministership is also to accumulate wealth. The power-seeking politicians can stoop to any level for ministerial berth, name, fame, luxurious life and amassing fabulous wealth. All the vote-based parliamentary parties have no concern for ethics-morality or culture. They receive money from the big monopolists and embezzle public fund with alacrity. It appears there is a competition of misappropriation of public money. Congress, BJP, CPI (M), TMC, SP, BSP, DMK, AIADMK—all are sailing on the same boat. There is a politics of capitulation to the ruling capitalists. As the capitalists need business managers, industry managers, so also they need political managers. These parties act as the political managers of the ruling bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie installs them in power alternatively. Yesterday only, the CPI (M) leaders sat in a *dharna* (sit-in demonstration) at Rani Rashmoni road to make a show of movement. Ousted from power, they are indeed passing through bad days. The CPI (M) leaders and cadres are passing sleepless nights worrying when and how soon they could return to power, get back the ministerial posts. For that, they need to befriend Congress. So they have voted in favour of the Congress candidate in the last presidential election. In between, there were some cracks in their relationship with Congress. The leaders of West Bengal CPI (M) are accusing their central leadership for losing assembly elections. Their contention is that had the central leaders maintained good relation with Congress, there would not have been such a poll debacle for them. To get back the lost power, it was necessary to support Pranab Mukherjee to presidential post. If there is rift between TMC and Congress, they would stand to gain. The sole objective is to ride to power. Without power, their brand of 'leftism' does not last. So they are ready to stoop to any low for

regaining power. This is one kind of politics which is practised by the parties in the corridors of power to cheat people. They thrive and survive on hypocrisy, deception and debased culture. To them, vote is nothing but a means to grab power.

Higher revolutionary politics

As against this, there is revolutionary politics of the proletariat—politics which calls for noble feelings of heart—the politics illumined by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had taught that revolution is necessary to overthrow oppressive corrupt capitalism. Vote and revolution are not same. Vote can change the government, but not the capitalist rule or capitalist state. For that is needed armed revolution. To accomplish that objective is this revolutionary party of ours. Apart from economic-political crisis, capitalism has bred another deadly crisis hitherto unprecedented in history. That is the crisis of culture, of human essence. Capitalism is excommunicating the country from its glorious past. This soil once produced luminaries like Vidyasagar, Vivekananda, Rabindranath, Saratchandra, Kazi Nazrul, Premchand, Subramaniam Bharati, Jyotirao Phule, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan, Netaji Subhash, Bhagat Singh, Kshudiram, Chandrasekhar Azad, Surya Sen and Pritilata. But they are going to the oblivion. With great pain, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had observed that the youth today is de-linked from this glorious past. As a result of that, there is virtually no culture, no glow of human essence. Human beings are becoming slave of instinct, impulse. This capitalist society is destroying values, finer senses, tender feelings and stifling conscience. Capitalism is only concerned with maximization of profit at any cost. The capitalist owner is unfazed if a worker dies of starvation or a retrenched worker commits suicide. Crude individual interest, interest of profit maximization is sole and supreme to the capitalist owner. Similarly, bourgeois individualism has reached such a peak that to the youth earning money by hook or by crook has become the mission of life. Indifferent to others, he is made to be concerned only about self, self-consumption, self-pleasure. He is tutored not to be bothered about human value, ethics or morality. Let Saratchandra, Netaji, Bhagat Singh, Kshudiram go to hell—the youth

life should be enjoyed in drinking, drug-addiction, eve teasing, lurid discussions, rape and such other things. Is it a civilized society? The girls cannot move in the streets. Indecent remarks, sexual assaults and incidents of outraging of their modesty are rising. Anytime, a girl can be lifted from anywhere, raped and even killed. In the capital city of Delhi, a 22-year old boy has raped a 66-year old lady after abduction. Even a 6-month old girl is becoming victim of sexual torture. Husband is handing over newly-wed wife to his friend for money. Who is dehumanizing the youth, the masses at large? It is capitalism which is dragging the nation to the dregs of ruination. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh could well anticipate this inevitability. The pain and sorrow of the entire society made such a penetrating impact on him that he became steeled in his resolve to make revolution a reality. So was his call for taking revolutionary struggle ahead being spurred on by the noble ideology of Marxism.

CPI did not grow as correct revolutionary party

When Independence Day was being celebrated on 15th of August, 1947 with pomp and grandeur, he spent sleepless night. He could realize that the fruits of such a glorious freedom movement, great sacrifices of countless of martyrs, so much of bloodshed had been usurped by the national bourgeoisie like the Tatas and Birlas. Foreign imperialist rule was being replaced by the rule of domestic capitalists through compromise. So, he gave call of anti-capitalist socialist revolution in 1948 and founded SUCI (C) to lead that revolution.

You should also know that Lenin had said that, "We do not regard Marxist theory as something completed and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the corner-stone of the science which socialists must further advance in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life. We think that an independent elaboration of the Marxist theory is especially essential for Russian socialists, for this theory provides only general guiding principles, which, in particular, are applied in England differently from France, in France differently from Germany, and in Germany differently from Russia."¹² In other words, he emphasized that Marxism is no static a theory. It has to be developed in keeping with the

changing life and must be concretized in a concrete situation of Russia. Following the teachings of Lenin-Stalin-Mao Zedong, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh also concretized Marxism on Indian soil and contemporary international situation and in the process elaborated it further, enriched it and developed it. He has provided us with developed understanding of Marxism-Leninism in the realm of philosophy, politics, epistemology, art-literature, ethics-morality, love and affection, conjugal life everything. He has left guideline for our development as true revolutionaries. Here is where our difference with the CPI (M) or undivided CPI. While being in the vortex of freedom movement, he could realize that despite bearing the name 'communist', CPI did not grow as a true communist party following correct Marxist process and methodology. So, it could not give birth to correct revolutionary leadership. Despite being honest and dedicated, the leaders and workers of undivided CPI could not develop themselves as Marxists. They viewed Marxism only as a political ideology, not as a 'philosophy of life' covering all aspects. All their theoretical formulations and decisions were anti-Marxist. That is why, the leadership of the freedom movement was usurped by the national bourgeoisie. Today, CPI (M) is so much hated by the people. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh could well understand that CPI (M) would be degenerated to this level. So, he developed, reared and steered SUCI(C) as a genuine communist party. Based on his teachings, our Party is trying to build up correct revolutionary movement. With that objective, we fight for achieving the just demands of the various sections of the oppressed people by organizing class struggles and democratic movements. Though one of the aims of these struggles and movements is to realize the demands, the other important object is to rouse the people based on revolutionary ideology, make them politically conscious and morally bolstered, involve them in revolutionary struggle, form people's struggle committees and volunteer corps.

Clarion call of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh

It is raining intermittently today. Yet, you all are listening so patiently

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Make the countrywide General Strike on 20 & 21 February, 2013 a grand success

A National Convention of workers was held on 4th September, 2012 at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi under the auspices of the eleven Central Trade Union Organizations. The Convention which was addressed by Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, President, All India United Trade Union Centre (AIUTUC) and other Central Trade Union leaders resolved to implement the following action programmes to press for once again the burning issues facing the working people : Countrywide two-day General Strike on 20-21 February, 2013 and before that Joint Conventions at different levels during September to November, 2012, Satyagraha / Court arrest on 18/19 December, 2012 in all the states throughout the country and March to Parliament on 20 December, 2012. Comrade Satyawani, member, All India Secretariat, AIUTUC was in the Presidium.

In his speech, Comrade Krishna Chakraborty said: This is not the first time that we have assembled in the convention like this. This convention is different from all previous ones. This convention particularly is for bigger and more powerful movements than the previous ones. This has been necessitated because of the most indifferent attitude of the Government towards our demands. How legitimate our demands are that you all know and government knows no less. But, it is

paying no heed to our demands even though we have been conducting movements for the last three-four years. Why this attitude of the government, we have to deeply understand. All these problems are there because of the capitalist exploitative system of our country. All these problems were there from the very beginning of our independence but after the introduction of the policy of globalization, liberalization and privatization, they have aggravated and made life miserable, unbearable so much so that more than two lakh poor and middle peasants have been forced to commit suicides. It is not only the peasants, even many unemployed youths are committing suicides; also lakhs of highly educated youths are not getting jobs. Such is the miserable situation of the country. These are the results of the globalization. Without fighting this policy none of the demands can be achieved. But this is a difficult struggle because it is not only the policy of the Congress. Whichever party comes to power at the Centre or in any state, has been pursuing the same policy. Actually this is the policy of the capitalist class — a policy to protect capitalism from its ultimate doom. The government is defending this system. This is why movement is becoming very difficult. It is true that all the problems will be ultimately resolved with the overthrow of this capitalist

system but the demands we have raised can be achieved within this capitalist exploitative system. But for that we have to build up a very powerful movement that can compel the government to concede to our demands. This is why this time continuous two-day general strike has been planned so that all the industrial units, factories, mills get closed for two consecutive days to paralyze the economic life. If two days strike is not sufficient to force the government to concede to our demands, then we will have to go for still higher forms of struggle. World capitalism is in deep crisis. You have just seen how a powerful working class movement broke out first in Greece, then in Spain, France, Portugal and other countries of Europe, Middle East and finally to the citadel of capitalism, the USA. If we search the causes of these movements, we will find that the immediate cause of each country's movement is different from other countries. But, if we deeply analyze, we will find that the basic cause everywhere is one and the same, i.e., extreme capitalist exploitation and its misuse. The working class movement in our country is also growing. I believe that you will engage yourselves to organize the struggle that we the eleven central trade unions are trying to build up throughout the length and breadth of the country.

Comrade Provash Ghosh's Speech

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and attentively. I find the sky overcast. So, I would not prolong my speech. I would end by reminding you of one of the exhortations of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. In 1974, just two years before his death, he gave this clarion call: "...you will have to travel many a step, arduous and tortuous — painful but happier. I say this is the happier and honourable way. Yes, in this way of fighting things, it may be painful — sometimes even tortuous, but no doubt it is the honourable way to lead a life. Here in this struggle you may die, but you will die with honour, raising your head high. You shall not die with humiliation just as cats and dogs die, rotting in the street. Remember, we are all mortal beings. So, if to die, don't die begging, don't die humiliating yourself. When to die, die with honour, and you have got only one surest way to live and die with honour, that is by taking active part in the revolutionary struggle of the masses to bring about a revolutionary transformation of the society, and for that purpose you will have to organize yourselves in thousands, and close up your ranks.

Comrades, engage yourselves and take active part in all the just struggles of the masses, individually and collectively, and all the while keep up your political initiative at the fore. Your slogan should be — go to the masses, organize them, help them in creating political power so that people, the toiling masses, can take up arms and bring about a fundamental change of our society by overthrowing the bourgeoisie from

power, replacing capitalism and establishing socialism." ¹³

If we all can respond to this call of his with due solemnity and develop ourselves as revolutionary fighters, then only observance of this Memorial Day would be purposive and efficacious. With this appeal, I conclude today.

Source of Quotations;—

1. From a speech of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in Bengali in 1967 (Free translation)
2. "Why SUCI is the Only Genuine Communist Party in India" — Shibdas Ghosh Selected Works Vol. II
3. Mass Movement in India and Tasks of the Youth — Shibdas Ghosh, SW, Vol. III
4. Advaita Vedanta, the Scientific Religion: Swami Vivekananda, Advaita Ashrama
5. Karl Marx — Introduction to "A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right"
6. *Socialism of My Conception* by M K Gandhi, Bharatiya Vidyabhawan, Mumbai
7. *My religion*, MK Gandhi Mahajiban Publishing House, Gujarat
8. Education, Swami Vivekananda, Ramkrishna Math, Madras
9. Selected Works Swami Vivekananda
10. Collected Works of Gandhiji, Volume VI
11. Letters from Russia — Rabindranath Tagore
12. Lenin, Vol. II, p. 492
13. 'Tasks ahead of students and youths' — Shibdas Ghosh Selected Works Vol. IV
14. Some aspects of Marxism and dialectical materialism, Shibdas Ghosh, SW, Vol. II

SUCI(Communist) strongly opposes FDI entry in retail trade and disinvestment of PSUs in the interest of domestic and foreign monopolists

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C) has issued the following statement on 14th September, 2012 :

The decision of the Govt. of India to open the retail trade sector for domestic and foreign monopoly capital and disinvestment of PSUs is totally against the interest of the people of the country. In fact, the domestic monopolists in order to come out of the severe market crises through more exploitation has been colluding with foreign imperialist capital. By the current policy decision, Govt. of India has now opened the public sector industries like NALCO, HINDALCO and others for the loot by the domestic monopolists, and on the other hand, has opened the retail trade sector for the imperialist capital by dint of which the agricultural sector is now opened for their unhindered plunder. This will throw away nearly 7 crore of retail traders and crores of poor peasants to streets for begging to survive.

We strongly oppose this pro-monopolist, both domestic and foreign, decision, demand its withdrawal and call upon people to come forward in movement.

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