

**ON FASCISM  
AND  
FASCISM IN INDIA**

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In the world a vigorous discussion has been going on from the last two -two and half decades about the rise of fascist, semi-fascist movements. This discussion is particularly vigorous in India where there exists a strong fascist movement in the leadership of RashtriyaSvayamsevakSangh (R.S.S).

In India, since 2014, R.S.S' political wing BhartiyaJanta Party (B.J.P) has been forming the union government. In India's left movement there are different views regarding the character of B.J.P's rule, about the fascist danger in India. It is held by some that the B.J.P. regime, in power since 2014, is a fascist regime. Here only a façade of bourgeois democracy remains. Yet Marxist understanding of bourgeois democracy is that it is only a façade for bourgeois dictatorship. Thus, the upholders of 'facade' theory obliterate the difference between bourgeois democracy and fascist regime. The upholders of 'façade' theory hold that since 2014 a fascist regime exists in India but they do not glean out any practical task from this. According to them even when bourgeois democracy existed in India, their central task was establishment of dictatorship of proletariat and even after 2014, since the establishment of fascist regime, the task remains that of the establishment of proletarian dictatorship. Thus, once again they obliterate the difference between bourgeois democracy and fascist regime. As Gramsci said that if you speak of changed situation but do not deduce any changed task accordingly then in reality this means that according to you the situation has not at all changed.

There are differences even between the groups upholding the "facade" theory. Some plainly acknowledge the existence of fascist regime in India since 2014 while others do so albeit a little

indirectly. A few amongst the latter say that through the façade of bourgeois democracy remains since 2014 but after the formation of union government by B.J.P in 2019 "fascism has either captured the bourgeois state or there exists immediate danger of it, unfortunately the essence of both is the same." Some organisations hold that since 2014, in India there exists neither the liberal democratic rule nor the fascist dictatorship. This "is a semi-totalitarian state with strong fascist tendencies." It hasn't done away with the parliamentary system in one go. It doesn't need to do so. But it has changed it. This means that the façade of bourgeois democracy remains. Democratic space for other bourgeois party has shrunk as well but there is no task of allying with them.

Some communist revolutionary groups hold that India is a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country. The character of state here is autocratic. Here bare-naked dictatorship always prevails. That is why the discussion regarding fascism or the advent of fascist dictatorship is completely redundant. Due to their incorrect understanding of India's socio-economic structure, these comrades are unable to understand the changes that take place in the political situation here and neither can they set correct tasks for themselves.

Some amongst those communist revolutionary groups which consider India as semi-feudal, semi-colonial hold that there is strong fascist movement in India and that the character of B.J.P's union government, formed since 2014, is fascist. But when the question is posed that a fascist regime cannot originate in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country because fascist regime is related to the economic and political crises of capitalism, they illogically argue that a fascist regime can occur even in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country. To back these claims, they refer Chou-In-Lai's article 'On Chinese fascism, new autocracy.' (We will discuss Chou-In-Lai's article further on.)

A trend amongst those who hold India to be capitalist but semi-colonial assert that imperialism has adopted a form of bourgeois democracy to dupe the people. Bourgeois democracy is

dictatorship it has been termed democracy to dupe the masses. Dictatorship has only two forms, bourgeois democracy and bare-naked dictatorship. India is moving towards bare-naked dictatorship. These comrades do not differentiate between different forms of bare-naked dictatorship such as fascism, military dictatorship, bonapartism.

The way confusion prevails in India's communist revolutionary camp regarding rise of fascism in India, character of the government led by B.J.P since 2014. Similarly, a lot of confusion also prevails regarding the strategy of resisting fascism. The upholders of 'façade theory' though hold that since 2014 fascist rule has been established in India but to resist it no alliance can be forged with any fraction of the bourgeoisie, according to them the strategy of 'popular front' adopted by the 7th congress of comintern in 1935 has become irrelevant. Now, despite the establishment of fascist regime, the task is not of re-establishment/ establishment of bourgeois democracy or people's democracy rather the task is of establishing dictatorship of proletariat. Thus, the comintern's correct line of popular front adopted in 1935, is completely rejected.

In absence of a correct understanding of fascism and the strategy to resist it, "Anti-Fascist united Fronts" are created from time to time and often disintegrate without any activity. In Punjab, some communist revolutionary groups have set up a 'Front against Fascist Attacks' with revisionists such as Communist Party of India (C.P.I), Communist Party of India Marxist (C.P.M), Pasla and Liberation etc. barring one or two activities (activity against Citizenship Amendment Act), it hasn't undertaken any such activity which particularly falls under the head of Anti-Fascist activity.

Fascism in India, fascist threat is a pressing question. Quite a lot of confusion prevails in the revolutionary camp of the country regarding theoretical understanding of fascism and correct line to resist it. In such a situation it is important to theoretically understand fascism, to concretely outline its danger and discern the right strategy to resist it. In the concrete conditions of India, our tasks

are adversely affected both by exaggerating the fascist danger and by underestimating it. It also affects the building of a workers' movement on correct line. For a correct theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of fascism and to develop an understanding of the correct strategy of resistance we must turn to our heritage, communist international (third international), to the parties that were affiliated to it, to the works of theorist of these parties. The purpose of the current article is not the criticism of the understanding of fascism of various revolutionary groups in India rather, drawing from the rich heritage mentioned above, positively attempting to understand fascism in today's world, especially in India. By engaging critically with our heritage, dividing one into two, learning from both its negative and positive aspects can we draw some correct conclusions about the current situation.

The phenomenon of fascism came into existence in the last century immediately after the end of world war I. After world war I, fascist movements emerged in many European countries. there and then efforts were underway to understand this phenomenon, of developing its general theory of fascism. Due to this being a new phenomenon though there were many shortcomings, wavering, self-contradictory statements regarding its understanding but on the whole things moved on the right track going forward. In developing a theoretical understanding of fascism and a correct strategy to resist it, prominent place has that been of 'Communist International', Parties linked with it and their leading theorists too had an important role in this. Some of these leading theorists were- Clara Zetkin (Germany), Antonio Gramsci, PalmiroTogliati, Ignazio Silone( all three Italian), Gyula Sas ( Hungary), Dimitrov ( Bulgaria) etc.

After world war II many Marxist intellectuals attempted to further deepen the theoretical understanding of fascism. Most prominent among them was Nicos Poulantzas (Greek). Though the work of NicosPoulantzas on fascism has its own deviations and mistakes but it could be undoubtedly said that his work on fascism

made an important contribution towards developing a general theory of fascism.

This article, in the light of above-mentioned thinkers' theoretical work on fascism, is an attempt to understand fascism and the strategy to resist it through an analysis of concrete conditions of India.

In resisting fascism in the last century, particularly in European countries, the leading role was that of communist international and its member parties. Though, a critical assessment of comintern's understanding of fascism and its policies to resist it is a task of a mature communist party or an international platform of communist parties but still a working assessment is the need of the hour. In this article we would also briefly present our views on comintern's understanding on fascism, its strategy of resistance.

## WHAT IS FASCISM?

Fascism is a particular form of bourgeois reaction, which comes into existence during the highest stage of capitalism, the stage of imperialism.

Max Horkheimer says, *"Anyone who does not wish to discuss capitalism should also stay silent on the subject of fascism."* Commenting on this statement of Horkheimer, Nicos Poulantzas said, *"Strictly speaking, this is incorrect: it is he who does not wish to discuss imperialism who should stay silent on the subject of fascism."*<sup>(1)</sup>

Fascism is a particular political phenomenon. Its understanding requires a deep probing of the conditions in which it originates. In the countries in which fascist dictatorship was set up, the study of their general and particular features is also necessary. In nearly 100 years of history, fascist dictatorship has been set up in two countries of the world, Italy and Germany. Franco regime of Spain is also termed as fascist dictatorship but it was more of a military dictatorship. Only on the basis of fascist

dictatorship that were set up in Italy and Germany, can fascism be understood correctly, its necessary characteristics can be identified. Though there are naturally some national or country wise differences in the fascist movements that originate in different countries, but there are also common characteristics, which are necessary characteristics of fascism. Further on in this article we will identify the necessary characteristics of fascism.

Nicos Poulantzas says, "Fascism is only one form of regime among others of the exceptional capitalist State (Etatcapitaliste d'exception). There are others, notably Bonapartism, and the various forms of military dictatorship. The specific political phenomenon of fascism can therefore only be analysed by positing at the same time a theory of the political crisis and the exceptional State which also fits other types of exceptional capitalist regimes."<sup>(2)</sup>

State is the product of class contradictions. Its control is with that class which owns the means of production. Alongside repressing the rival classes state also performs economic and ideological activity. state forms policies regarding its societies main economic and social relations.it regulates the equilibrium of entire society. Finally, through the agency of state, dominant social classes are organised. This means that they rise above their selfish, personal interests and organise on the basis of common class interests. Only the private and competition based character of surplus appropriation attempts to increase the structural split between capitalist. It is through state that the dominated classes are disorganised. Their interests are reduced to the level of individual, citizen and the interests as members of a nation. <sup>(3)</sup>

State in the capitalist society is relatively autonomous from individual capitalists. Formal equal competition between factions of ruling classes under parliamentary democracy rule further increases this autonomy. Constant cut throat competition amongst the different fractions of capitalist class, between different groups of monopolists, between monopoly capital and non- monopoly capitalists for the maximum appropriation of surplus value,

capturing of the largest share in the market. Generally, a conflict goes on between the interests of capital as a whole and the interests of a part of capital, between various fractions of capitalists for immediate and long-term interests. This conflict becomes the reason for the relative autonomy of capitalist state. This autonomy operates in the limits ascertained by the logic of capitalist development.

This autonomy of the state is ascertained by those methods through which the economic sector depends upon the state's activity. Broadly, these methods are -:

**i)** State makes organisational and legal rules for the capitalist system

**ii)** Its constructs/establishes the material prerequisites of production

**iii)** State regularly participates in economic activity so that the growth rate can be maintained, crisis may be averted or solved.

**iv)** The state tries to maintain the legitimacy of capitalist system and people's loyalty towards it through the policies of "social welfare", foreign occupations etc.

**v)** To prevent social crisis, state regulates the disputes between labour and capital. It attempts to keep these disputes to a certain limit. <sup>(4)</sup>

Friedrich Engels had said about the modern bourgeois state that, *"modern State, again, is only the organization that bourgeois society takes on in order to support the external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against the encroachments as well of the workers as of individual capitalists. The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine — the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital."*<sup>(5)</sup>

Generally, the state functions in the interests of the entire bourgeois system. It strives to make certain that capitalist production and reproduction continues in a proper manner. The

above reference of Friedrich Engels includes this. But in the era of monopoly capital, state primarily functions in the interests of monopoly capital. Though, sometimes the regulation of state goes against the interests of some monopolist groups, but on the whole it works in the interests of monopoly capitalists. It represents the interests of monopoly capital.

After this brief discussion regarding the character of state, especially bourgeois state, let us return to the question of those conditions in which fascist regime is set up.

## **BASIS OF FASCISM COMING INTO POWER**

The capitalist class is not a monolith and nor can it be so in any instance. The Capitalist class is split into many factions. On the basis of size, there exists monopoly, middle and small capitalists. Similarly, capitalism is also divided on the basis of occupation (sector) like industrialist, commercial and agricultural capitalist etc. A cut throat competition prevails between these factions of the capitalist class for appropriating maximum profit.

For the protection and furtherance of their interests, these different factions of the bourgeoisie create different political parties or back various political parties by giving them financial assistance. The various factions of the bourgeoisie generally fight out their interests through political parties. The task of these political parties, which represent the interests of different factions of the bourgeoisie, is to gain mass support for the bourgeois system. Generally, these political parties participate in elections with the backing of some faction of the capitalists. Wealth has a decisive role in these elections. Normally that very party is victorious in the elections for which a large chunk of the capitalist/monopolists have loosened their purse strings. Parliamentary system is best suited for capitalist structure due to the factional division of capitalists, the incessant conflict that goes on between them. Generally, in this system (parliamentary) the various contradictions between the different

factions of the bourgeoisie are peacefully resolved.

During an economic and political crisis, when the strife between bourgeois factions cannot be resolved in the parliamentary sphere or there arises a threat (that of proletarian revolution) to the existence of bourgeois system, a faction of the bourgeois can attempt to abolish the parliamentary system. If this faction succeeds then an exceptional form of bourgeois rule (fascist, military dictatorship etc.) is set up.

## **ECONOMIC CRISIS OF CAPITALISM**

The economic crisis of capitalism finds expression at certain intervals of time in the form of Recession and Depression. If Total Real Domestic Product in an economy shrinks for two consecutive quarters, then it is said to be in recession and if it shrinks more than 10% or it shrinks for three years consecutively then it is termed as depression.

What is the root cause operating in this recession or depression? This was unveiled by Karl Marx. According to Marx, the law of tendency of falling rate of profit operates in its foundation. Here we will not delve into the explanation of this law. For this, the readers can refer to Marx's work, Capital Vol III, Part III (The law of the Tendency of Rate of Profit to Fall). Besides this, in some other books too, this law is correctly explained.<sup>(6)</sup>

No economic crisis facing the capitalist system is permanent. If the working class does not abolish the capitalist system, then capitalism with time due to its internal motion (or interference by the state, like shifting the burden of crisis more and more on the working class and other toiling masses and capturing the financial assets/natural resources/regions of other countries or occupying entire countries) emerges out of this crisis. But this emergence again includes the seeds of a new crisis.

Marx writes, *"The periodical depreciation of existing capital – one of the means immanent in capitalist production to check the fall of the rate of profit and hasten accumulation of capital-*

*value through formation of new capital – disturbs the given conditions, within which the process of circulation and reproduction of capital takes place, and is therefore accompanied by sudden stoppages and crises in the production process....”*

*“Alongside the development of productivity there develops a higher composition of capital, i.e., the relative decrease of the ratio of variable to constant capital.*

*These different influences may at one time operate predominantly side by side in space, and at another succeed each other in time. From time to time the conflict of antagonistic agencies finds vent in crises. **The crises are always but momentary and forcible solutions of the existing contradictions. They are violent eruptions which for a time restore the disturbed equilibrium.**”<sup>(7)</sup> (Emphasis ours)*

In our revolutionary movement, the trend of propagating capitalism being in permanent/everlasting crisis is dominant. Some claim that world capitalism is in permanent crisis since the last 4-5 decades. About India, they claim that its economy has been in crisis ever since 1980s or 1991 when the bourgeoisie of India extensively adopted neoliberal policies. Such claims regarding the crisis of capitalism are borne out of ignorance or superficial knowledge of the Marxist theory of crisis. In turn these claims serve to slander Marxist political economy.

## **POLITICAL CRISIS OF CAPITALISM**

The economic crisis of capitalism can escalate and change into its political crisis or revolutionary crisis. But it doesn't mean that this will be the case in every instance. Particularly developed capitalist or imperialist countries with strong economies can postpone this crisis for some time. This is accomplished through governmental support to capitalist enterprises (like presently USA is acting in the case of banks such as Silicon Valley and Signature Bank which are collapsing), policies of credit expansion. But these measures cannot endlessly postpone crisis.

In times of economic crisis, normally the rules attempt to shift the major chunk of the burden of crisis onto the shoulders of working class and other sections of the toiling masses. This is, often at times, resisted by the working class and toiling masses. If a strong revolutionary communist party exists which can correctly lead the toiling masses' protest in such a time, a crisis can emerge for the very existence of capitalist system. In such a scenario, the capitalist class removes its façade of democracy and endeavours to establish naked terrorist dictatorship. If in such a crisis ridden country a fascist party/movement exists, then this dictatorship comes to the fore in the form of fascist regime/dictatorship.

Nicos Poulantzas says, *"Fascism can only be explained by reference to the concrete situation of the class struggle, as it cannot be reduced to any inevitable need of the 'economic' development of capitalism.... Lenin and Mao have many times stressed the fact that, while economics plays the determinant role in the last instance (the fundamental contradiction), it is the class struggle (i.e. in the end politics and the political class struggle) which has primacy in the historical process."* <sup>(8)</sup>

Fascist dictatorship is not the sole or inevitable result of capitalism's crisis (economic and political). Alternative possibilities exist as well. An important possibility is that of the working class eradicating capitalism and establishing socialism. For this, the presence of subjective forces, meaning a strong communist party based on a correct line, is vital.

## **OTHER SUPPORTING FACTORS IN THE COMING OF FASCISM TO POWER**

We have discussed above the most important factor in the emergence of fascist state, namely the economic and political crisis of capitalism. Besides these, some other factors too need to be discussed here. These factors are-

- i) Capitalist development also means increase in accumulation of capital. This also hastens polarisation

in capitalist society. Due to capitalist development, petty bourgeoisie (middle class) is continuously proletarianised. Its class position is adversely affected by capitalist crises. The sword of proletarianisation always hangs over the head of this class. In the absence of a revolutionary alternative, this class becomes a part of reactionary movements due to the uncertainty, instability of its conditions. Fascism is a romantic reactionary social movement of the petty bourgeoisie.

**ii)** Capitalists, in the throes of economic crisis, attempts to shift the burden of this crisis onto the shoulders of working class and other toiling masses. If in such a situation, working class emerges as a challenge for the capitalist system in the leadership of its party (communist party) but fails to accomplish revolution then fearing revolution, a faction of monopoly capitalists takes refuge in reaction or fascism so that the back of organised workers' movement may be broken.

**iii)** The treachery of the social-democratic or revisionist parties with the working class play an important role in fascism's ascension to power. These parties blunt the class consciousness of working class by entangling them in trivial economic struggles. They avoid resisting fascist offensive and one by one retreat from the positions won by the working class. The treachery of social democratic parties is renowned worldwide in the case of fascists coming to power in Italy and Germany. In India too, the revisionist parties (CPI, CPM, Liberation) tremendously helped the growth of fascist forces via the above mentioned methods.

# VARIOUS THEORIES OF FASCISM

## 1) Theory of Fuhrer State

This theory centres upon the role of Hitler. This theory is the explanation of fascism as the dictatorship of one person (with some leaders). This theory, in its original form, emerged after the end of second world war and the defeat of fascism. This theory mainly surfaced in Germany. This theory fails to answer many questions. For instance, why fascist movements emerged in almost all the capitalist countries after the first world war? Why do some classes more than the other are influenced by fascist propaganda? Why the big bourgeoisie benefits from the crushing of the workers' movement? Etc.,

## 2) Fascism as Totalitarianism

This theory emerged during the starting period of cold war, when the anti-fascist alliance between Soviet Union and western powers collapsed. The central idea of this theory is that both fascism and communism, in its nature are essentially same. meaning both are totalitarian, both are threats to "democracy". During cold war it was an important ideological weapon of the imperialists for combating the danger of communism. This is used even today in one form or another by the imperialists and their "thinkers".

## 3) Fascism as a result of national particularities

This theory sees the roots of fascism, particularly those of German fascism in its pre-industrial backwardness, delayed nationhood, delayed industrialisation and underdevelopment of bourgeois democratic institutions resulting from it. Jurgen Kocka was one of the major theoreticians of this theory. Jurgen Kocka goes to the extent of making the false claim that "German society in the true sense has never been a bourgeois society."<sup>(9)</sup> Germany's particular path of development is termed to be responsible for the

popular effect of reactionary, anti-democratic and illogical ideologies which ultimately made fascism and its horrible crimes possible.

Jurgen Kocka, transforms the above mentioned quote of Max Horkheimer, in his own words, "One who does not wish to discuss pre-industrial, pre-capitalist, pre-bourgeois traditions should stay silent on fascism."<sup>(10)</sup>

This theory, that terms fascism as the product of some national particularities, does not answer many questions. For instance, it fails to clarify the question that during sharp social conflicts why do certain classes as opposed to others not support reactionary movements/ideologies like fascism? This theory also does not answer this question as to why after the first world war fascism emerged in almost all the capitalist countries including countries such as France, England (no one doubts the validity of these being modern capitalist countries)? Etc. The upholders of this theory fail to see the roots of fascism in capitalism's crisis.

#### **4) The theory of centrality of Holocaust**

In common folk's conception of fascism, the massacre of Jews on a large scale has an important place. After the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961, a trend emerged in the theory of fascism which stressed that racial ideology and 'Holocaust' (this term has been taken from ancient Greece which means sacrificing someone for the gods by burning) are characteristics that define fascism. This theory stresses that the inhuman crimes committed by Nazis are out of the ambit of scientific analysis and logical explanation. This theory ignores the fundamental causes of the origins of fascism. In this way it attempts to undermine the resistance against its re-emergence.

#### **5) Fascism as the reactionary social movement of petty bourgeoisie**

The abovementioned theories of fascism fail to scientifically

explain this phenomenon. These are either superficial, piecemeal, incomplete theories or reactionary (like the theory of fascism as 'totalitarianism'). This theory fails to identify the grounds of the origin of fascism as well as the class roots of fascist movements. The theory that sees fascism as a reactionary social movement of the petty bourgeoisie is the sole scientific theory of fascism. The large scale involvement of petty bourgeoisie in the fascist movements of the world attests to this fact. Petty property owners, traders, handicraftsmen, people involved in self-employment, government employees employed in unproductive sectors etc., make up the petty bourgeoisie. The process of the accumulation of capital threatens their existence. The sword of proletarianisation forever hangs over their head. In the absence of a revolutionary alternative, the petty bourgeoisie, especially urban petty bourgeoisie comes under greater influence of fascist propaganda and actively becomes part of fascist movements. Fascist movement is a romantic upheaval of petty bourgeoisie. Fascism in power does not fulfil any aspiration of the petty bourgeoisie because fascism now, at the cost of all other classes interests, serves the interests of a section of monopoly capital.

Clara Zetkin, German communist, prominent leader, theoretician of Communist International (Comintern) was among those early Marxists who pointed towards the larger social base of fascism. She attempted to differentiate fascism from other bourgeois forms of naked terrorist dictatorships. Clara Zetkin says that, *"The terror in Hungary began after the defeat of an initially victorious revolutionary struggle. For a moment the bourgeoisie trembled before the proletariat's might. The Horthy terror emerged as revenge against the revolution. The agent of this revenge was a small caste of feudal officers.*

*Fascism is quite different from that. It is not at all the revenge of the bourgeoisie against the militant uprising of the proletariat. In historical terms, viewed objectively, fascism arrives much more as **punishment because the proletariat has not***

***carried and driven forward the revolution that began in Russia.*** And the base of fascism lies not in a small caste but in broad social layers, broad masses, reaching even into the proletariat. We must understand these essential differences in order to deal successfully with fascism. Military means alone cannot vanquish it, if I may use that term; we must also wrestle it to the ground politically and ideologically.”<sup>(11)</sup> (Emphasis in the original)

In the quote above, Clara Zetkin has drawn attention towards the larger social basis of fascism and the method of resisting it. In this report, Clara Zetkin specifically identifies the class roots of fascism meaning its large basis in petty bourgeoisie.

Antonio Gramsci was among the first Marxist thinkers, Communist leaders who stressed the petty bourgeois class basis of fascism. He says that for the first time in history, fascism discovered the secret of mass organisation of petty bourgeoisie: in the form of nationalism as an ideology and on the ground as an organisation modelled on the army.<sup>(12)</sup>

About the origin of fascism in Italy, Gramsci says that it emerged after the first world war with troops of Mussolini's organisation *Fasci Combattimento*, whose character was petty bourgeoisie. In the cities it was centred around the petty bourgeoisie.<sup>(13)</sup>

## **SOME OTHER PROMINENT IDEAS ON FASCISM**

**Kurt Gossweiler** in his analysis on fascism takes as the starting point Dimitrov's definition that **fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital.** But he also warns that this definition should not be considered as an all-encompassing, universal formula. Gossweiler says that in the era of imperialism fascism can originate in any country though the country might not have an iota of their own finance capital. Most

importantly fascism does not merely express the interests of finance capital but also other sections of the ruling class including the landlords.

We cannot agree with Gossweiler's criticism of Dimitrov's definition of fascism. Firstly, Dimitrov does not say that fascism is the dictatorship of finance capital rather he says that it is the dictatorship of a fraction of finance capital. Gossweiler also incorrectly states that fascism is also the dictatorship of other sections of ruling class (including the landlords). Fascism primarily is the dictatorship of a fraction of monopoly capital. Later on, we shall discuss this further.

**Reinhard Opitz** says that fascism represents the general interests of monopoly capital and not as stated in Dimitrov's definition i.e., the interests of a particular fraction of finance capital.

This criticism of Reinhard Opitz is incorrect. This sees monopoly capital as monolith. It does not consider the conflict between different factions of the capitalists.

**Reinhard Kuhn** disagrees with Gossweiler and Opitz on this point that both reject the need of mass movement for fascism. He says that it is precisely mass movement that separates fascism from other reactionary terrorist dictatorships of monopoly capital. He opines that such differentiation is important not merely for academic correctness but also for political decisions as the strategies of combating both would be different. Kuhn's criticism of Gossweiler and Opitz is correct to a large extent but Kuhn himself while stressing the mass movement character of fascism does not clarify as to which class' mass movement is it primarily.

**Nicos Poulantzas** very concretely identifies the participation of different sections of various classes in fascist movements. He says that, *"Fascism is basically an urban phenomenon in that the class origins and 'militant wing' of fascism are rooted essentially in the towns..... As for its relationship to other sections of the peasantry (except the large landowners – author), even where fascism got active support going beyond mere*

*voting, the impact of the peasantry within both the fascist and national socialist parties was entirely secondary. This is a remarkable fact, if fascism is contrasted with the 'reactionary' but essentially 'peasant' mass political movements which arose at the same period in the East European countries (Hungary, Romania, etc.) or even Spain. The explanation is that fascism really represents the interests of monopoly capitalism at a step at which its interests are in very strong contradiction with those of the agricultural sector as a whole..... the big landowners gave fascism direct and active support. This is also true of the rich peasantry, though some of them, depending on the region, seemed to share the doubts of the middle peasantry about fascism. The middle peasantry, next to the agricultural workers, seem to have resisted fascism more strongly than the other peasant classes, at least for a time. Although it cannot be said that the middle peasantry and some of the rich peasantry resisted fascism in the way that middle industrial capital did, there are still some similarities in their political attitudes. Further, it was middle tenants rather than middle landowners who swung towards fascism.*

*The poor peasantry, small producers and rural petty bourgeoisie, were particularly deeply divided over fascism. They were distinguished from the middle peasants by a more open and majority support for fascism, but their case is much more complicated than that of the urban petty bourgeoisie. The rural petty bourgeoisie in the majority swung over to fascism, but did not work actively in the fascist movement. Even their votes were deeply divided. Where there had been agrarian reform, creating the familiar 'parcels' of peasant land, the small-holders were much more resistant to fascism than the small tenants or the tenants of feudal estates..... They were also more divided than the urban petty bourgeoisie." (14)*

There are other instances where fascists could not establish their base in the peasantry. "Conversely, some of the smaller fascist movements owed their weakness to the country population's

*relative immunity to their appeals. This applied to both Norway and Sweden, where farmers kept to the established framework of agrarian-labor cooperation, and to Finland, where neither the Lapua movement (1929-32) nor its successor, the Patriotic National Movement (Isänmaallinen Kansanliike-IKL; 1932-44), could break the hold of the Agrarian Union and Coalition Party on the smaller farmers.”<sup>(15)</sup>*

## **NECESSARY CHARACTERISTICS OF FASCISM**

**1)** Fascism is inseparably linked with the economic and political crisis of capitalism. Due to capitalist development the conditions of life of petty bourgeoisie remain uncertain and instable. They swing towards fascism in the absence of a revolutionary alternative. Fascism, in its social structure, is a reactionary social movement of petty bourgeoisie.

**2)** Party based on ideology and cadres is a necessary characteristic of fascism.

**3)** Fascism considers nation to be above all class contradictions and class interests. Nationalism is an important part of its ideology.

**4)** To feed militarism and to initiate wars of occupation fascism takes the support of national chauvinism. Italian communist Palmiro Togliatti said, *“War has an important place in all of fascism’s activities.”*<sup>(16)</sup>

**5)** To crush workers’ movement fascism embarks on organised violence. For this it relies on gangs too. Extra-legal violence or violence from below is a mandatory characteristic of fascism.

**6)** Racial ideology and racial massacres have central importance for fascism. In India, fascism terrorises religious minorities, particularly Muslims and Christians and uses communal

ideology to execute killings. The essence of both is the same meaning enticing a section of masses to fight against the other. To present a false enemy for a section of the people in the form of other religions, races. It erects the concept of othering.

**7)** Fascism in power abolishes all bourgeois democratic liberties. It abolishes bourgeois parliament, bourgeois opposition parties and it goes to the extent of abolishing rival factions in fascist party.

Ignazio Silone says that, *"fascism had to be distinguished from the two other typical forms of capitalist reaction: in developed countries by conservative parties working through parliamentary means, and in less developed countries by military dictatorship. Fascism differed from the latter, he argued, by the mobilisation of a mass movement, and from the former by its hostility to parliamentarism and constitutionality."*<sup>(17)</sup>

Comrade Stalin too presents the fascist form of bourgeois state as opposed to its bourgeois democratic (parliamentary) form. He says, *"In this connection the victory of fascism in Germany must be regarded not only as a symptom of the weakness of the working class and a result of the betrayals of the working class by the Social-Democratic Party, which paved the way for fascism; it must also be regarded as a symptom of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, of the fact that the bourgeoisie is no longer able to rule by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, and, as a consequence, is compelled in its home policy to resort to terroristic methods of rule-as a symptom of the fact that it is no longer able to find a way out of the present situation on the basis of a peaceful foreign policy, and that, as a consequence, it is compelled to resort to a policy of war."*<sup>18</sup>

On the basis of the above characteristics fascism can be thus defined, *"Fascism is a particular form of bourgeois reaction that emerges in the imperialist stage of capitalism. It is a reactionary social movement of crisis ridden petty bourgeoisie, which is led by an ideology and cadre based party. In the times*

*of crisis, a fraction of monopoly capital backs it. Fascism comes to power with the slogans of blind nationalism, national purification. Fascism in power serves a fraction of monopoly capital.*

## **NOT ALL FORMS OF BOURGEOIS REACTION ARE FASCIST**

The trend of misnaming every bourgeois reaction as fascism has not just been prevalent in our country but also in the world communist movement. Various leaders of Comintern, especially Clara Zetkin, PalmiroTogliati and Dimitrov warned against this. But still this trend lives on today in one form or another. Regarding this we have already referenced Clara Zetkin's ideas where she talked about differentiating between fascism and Hungary's Horthy regime.

In this regard PalmiroTogliati says, *"I want to examine first of all the error of generalization that is commonly made in the use of the term 'fascism'. It has become customary to use it to designate every form of reaction. A comrade is arrested, a workers' demonstration is brutally dispersed by the police, a court impose a savage sentence on some militants of the labour movement, a Communist parliamentary fraction sees its rights infringed or abrogated, in short whenever the so-called democratic freedoms sanctified by bourgeois constitutions are attacked or violated, one hears the cry: 'Fascism is here, fascism has arrived'. It*

*should be realized that this is not just a question of terminology. If someone thinks it reasonable to use the term 'fascism' to designate every form of reaction, so be it. But I do not see what advantage we gain, except perhaps an agitational one. The actuality is something different. Fascism is a particular, a specific type of reaction; and we must understand fully the precise nature of its particularity. We should not imagine that such an analysis is necessary merely for the purposes of objective, scientific*

*differentiation. It is equally indispensable to the attainment of political ends, so as to be able to define the precise attitude to take towards fascism as it currently exists, and above all the measures to be adopted for the future, during the period of preparation and development of a fascist movement. We could actually work out in the course of this preparatory period a precise course of action intended to distract these preparations and hinder this development, but our actions could only be successful if we were able to assess exactly what was afoot in the opposition camp. If, in contrast, we took as our point of departure the well-known saying that 'all cats are grey at night', and inferred from this that all manifestations of reaction are fascist, we should never reach any firm political or tactical positions."*<sup>(19)</sup>

Comrade Dimitrov, in this regard, says that, "Comrade Dutt was right in his contention that there has been a tendency among us to contemplate fascism in general, without taking into account the specific features of the fascist movement in the various countries, erroneously classifying all reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie as fascism and going so far as calling the entire non-Communist camp fascist. The struggle against fascism was not strengthened but rather weakened in consequence."<sup>(20)</sup>

The trend of misnaming every form of bourgeois reaction as fascism can also be found in Chou-En-Lai's article 'On Chinese Fascism, The New Autocracy.' In this article Chou brands Kuomintang Party as a fascist party. This party, in its ideology, in its social basis cannot be called a fascist party in any way. Chou-En-Lai's understanding of fascism in no way accords with the understanding of fascism developed by Comintern, the parties associated with it, leaders, thinkers of these parties and Marxist intellectuals after the second world war. Here we cannot criticise it in detail.

## **FASCIST MOVEMENT – FASCIST REGIME**

To correctly understand the phenomena of fascism, it is important to differentiate between fascist movement and fascist

regime. In the imperialist stage of capitalism, the reactionary movement of fascism can originate in any capitalist country. But it is not necessary that this movement will succeed in setting up a fascist regime. Fascist movements originated in almost all the capitalist countries after the first world war in the last century. But only in two countries, Germany and Italy fascist regimes were set up. Whether the fascist movement will be able to set up a fascist regime depends on many factors. We have already discussed these factors. The most important factor out of these was the economic and political crisis of capitalism. Fascist dictatorship can only be set up in the condition when a threat (from the working class) emerges for capitalist system.

## **WHICH IS THE BETTER SITUATION FOR THE WORKING CLASS?**

Here it needs to be discussed as to which situation is better for the development of working class movement? Is it the bourgeois democratic form or fascism or some other form of naked dictatorship? We should not forget that today in various capitalist countries the bourgeois democratic liberties that are available to the working class and other toiling masses, they aren't a form of charity by the rulers to workers/toilers rather the working class with the help of other toiling masses (especially peasants) has won these through century long struggles, uncountable sacrifices, martyrdoms. In the anti-feudalism struggles around the world, the ancestors of the working class, handicraft workers spilled their blood. Modern working class, since its origin, engaged in long struggles in feudal system, colonial anti-colonial countries with the alliance of toiling masses. The struggle of workers/toilers for democratic liberties continued ever after the establishment of capitalism. As a result of these sacrifices, workers, toilers won democratic rights. This struggle for the safeguard and extension of democratic rights has an important place in the struggle of workers/

toilers for the construction of new socialist society. It is in bourgeois democratic system that the working class can correctly organise itself. It can ideologically, politically and organisationally prepare itself for the construction of new social system (socialism). That is why, when the working class faces the question of choice between bourgeois democracy and fascist dictatorship (or some other form of naked dictatorship of the bourgeoisie) it sides with bourgeois democracy. Such was also the directive of Comintern's line of 'Anti-Fascist Popular Front' in 1935.

## **CONTRADICTIONS OF FASCISM IN POWER**

Dimitrov had said that fascism is a ferocious but unstable power. After capturing power, it is mired by many conflicts. The promises that fascism makes with the masses, especially petty bourgeois masses, while capturing power aren't fulfilled after fascism ascends to power. The empty phraseology of fascists that it considers nation above everything bursts like a water bubble. The real meaning of nation for the fascists comes to the fore in the form of interests of a fraction of monopoly capital. There can be a temporary alliance of small and large owners for crushing the worker's movement. But after fascism ascends to power it comes clear that the policies of interests of monopoly capital can be furthered only at the cost of the interests of middle class and working class. Accumulation of capital, inflation, burden on people of new taxes puts fascism in conflict with its mass base.

Petty bourgeoisie's (middle class), which forms the axis of fascist movements, interests are hurt after fascism comes to power. Petty bourgeoisie, due to its class position, swings to and fro between capitalists and working class. It cannot make an independent economic policy for its interests. As part of the fascist movement, it assists in crushing the workers' movement. The capitalist class definitely benefits from the crushing of workers' movement; it becomes stronger which is also not in the interests of petty bourgeoisie. This hastens the proletarianisation of petty

bourgeoisie.

To restore capital's falling rate of profit fascism in power, shifts the burden of crisis onto the toilers and especially the working class. Naturally the working class opposes it. This sharpens the contradiction between bourgeoisie and proletariat.

Togliatti informs as to how the structure of fascist party changes when fascism comes to power. We shall discuss some changes here because rest of the changes listed by him aren't that accurate. He says that –:

*1) The supporters of fascism among petty bourgeois producers began to desert it bit by bit. Now the membership of the party (fascist – author) comes primarily from unproductive petty and medium bourgeoisie (employees of state, professional fascists etc.)*

*2) The fascist cadre is almost entirely replaced. The former black vests are replaced by Fascists of the first hour, who occupy the leading posts are the representatives of the big bourgeoisie (industrialists, bankers, landlords and their agents) <sup>(21)</sup>*

Togliatti did not add that the fascist party does not represent all the above mentioned fractions of the capitalist class, strife and collisions continue between them.

Fascism in power abolishes the parliamentary democratic form of bourgeois rule. This shuts the door to the resolution of contradictions between the different fractions of bourgeoisie in parliamentary sphere. Fascism embarks on the path of eradicating rival factions inside it and rival bourgeois parties. It attempts the impossible task of forming a single party of the various factions of capitalist class. It miserably fails in this. The conflicts between various factions of the bourgeoisie sharpens after fascism comes to power. The strife between different factions inside the fascist party sharpens too.

# THE EXPERIENCE OF ITALY AND GERMANY

Italy and Germany are those two nations in the history of fascism (almost 100 years) where fascist dictatorships were established. It is from the experience of Italy and Germany that fascism can be correctly understood.

Up until the first world war there were many similarities in the economic development of Italy and Germany. First let us consider Italy. Capitalist development occurred at a later stage in Italy but quite rapidly between 1890-1914. But as is the law of capitalist development, this development was quite uneven. Northern Italy was a developed capitalist region, majority of the modern industries were concentrated in this region, here in agriculture too capitalist development had occurred to a considerable extent. On the other hand, Southern Italy was quite backward. Here the remnants of feudal system remained to a considerable extent. Italy had emerged victorious from the first world war. But on the whole, war had left its economy quite worse off. The toiling masses were suffering for the war in form of poverty, unemployment. Italy was mired in deep economic crisis in 1920. This situation gave rise to the revolutionary crisis in Italy in 1918-20. This further worsened the condition of toiling masses of Italy. The workers' movement rose in this situation in Italy. In 1917, there occurred an anti-war armed rising of the Turin workers. Workers fought for increase in wages, 8 hour working day, right to form trade unions. Isolated strikes often turned into general strikes. In August-September 1919, two-month long strike took place in which 2 lakh metal workers participated. In the wake of the rising tide of workers' movement, ruling classes were forced to retreat and accept several demands of the workers.

At this time, in Italy's rural areas, agricultural labourers were struggling for an increase in wages and 8 hour working day. Poor peasantry was occupying the lands of feudal lords. Due to these

struggles, demands such as decreasing rent and the right of agricultural labourers to form trade unions were accepted.

In cities and villages, the struggle of workers and peasants was led by the socialist party of Italy. In 1920, this struggle of Italy's workers and peasantry reached its peak. The struggle of toiling masses brought on agenda the question of power. In Antonio Gramsci's leadership the Ordine Nuovo group of the socialist party began creating factory councils and turning them into institutions of workers' state. When the ruling classes began dismantling these factory councils, then a large strike movement started spreading in Northern Italy. The workers occupied the factories of Milan, Rome, Naples, Genoa, Turin and other cities. Workers set up factory councils and armed red defenders. Milan, Florence and many other cities were in the occupation of workers.

But Italy's proletariat could not sustain this victory. The other sections of the socialist party showed no enthusiasm for furthering the workers' movement and taking it to victorious culmination. Two-line struggle sharpened inside the socialist party. Socialist party split in January 1921 and the Communist Party of Italy came into existence.

For the agriculture dominant Southern Italy, where feudal remnants survived on a large scale, the Socialist Party had no program for poor and middle peasants. Here it gave the Maximalist program for the solution of agrarian question. Here the mafia gangs of feudal lords were already attacking the agricultural labourers and landless, poor peasants. The above mentioned program of Socialist party pushed a large section of poor and medium peasantry in favour of the feudal lords. When Mussolini gained popularity in the country, these feudal lords, along with their mafia gangs, joined the fascist troops.

During the first world war and in the immediate after years, Italy was governed by a government led by liberals. Ruling classes were dissatisfied with this government and it began to organise its forces in order to curtail the increasing power of working class.

In January 1919, on the initiative of Vatican, the Catholic people's party was formed. In its supervision a catholic trade union, confederation of workers was formed. Alongside, some bourgeois politicians began backing the fascist movement. The first fascist gangs emerged in the spring of 1919. Their leader was Benito Mussolini, a runaway of Socialist Party. Seeing the popularity of socialist movement in Italy, Fascists starting giving anti capitalists and anti-landlord slogans. Fascists also gave the slogan of the recreation of "Great Roman Empire".

By the end of 1920 Italy's counter revolutionary forces and their leading fascist detachments' activities gained pace. In November 1920 Fascists captured the city councils of Bologna which was previously led by socialists. In the parliamentary elections of May 1921, Fascists had great success.

In 1922, fascists captured many cities of Italy. On 28 October 1922, they started the famous 'march to Rome'. Fascist squads easily entered Italy's capital, Rome. Governmental troops did not oppose them at all. The king of Italy, Victor Emmanuel declared Mussolini to be the prime minister. The fascists banned factory councils, trade unions. Peasants were removed from the lands captured from feudal lords, worker clubs were broken. The killings of trade union activists, socialists, communists began. The communist party was particularly targeted for repression which made it quite weak. To crush the workers' movement fascists particularly depended on extra-legal violence along with "legal" means.

In 1926, through an order Mussolini was declared to be above the parliament. Besides the fascist party, all other political parties and organisations were declared illegal.

The treachery of socialist party and the errors of communist party too helped to pave the way for rise of fascism in Italy and establishment of fascist dictatorship. Whereas the socialist party turned away from resisting fascism, the communist party under its leader Bordiga was prey to left sectarianism. The communist party

could not detect the real character of fascism and underestimated its danger. Whereas the leader of Communist party, Bordiga was prey to left sectarianism, Tasca, on the other end of the spectrum was right opportunist. Gramsci's understanding on fascism and the way of resisting was relatively accurate. He considered Tasca's right opportunist line to be more dangerous. For resisting fascism, Bordiga was against the formation of united front with socialist party or any other group. It was Gramsci that correctly understood the importance of anti-fascist united front. *"In fact, during the rise of fascism, and despite their own mistakes, Gramsci and the Turin Ordine Nuovo group seem, in their position on the workers' councils, to have been the only section of the Third International in Europe to have grasped the problems of the united front."* (22) But Bordiga's left sectarian line dominated over the party, thus, Gramsci's thinking could not be turned into practical action.

The first organisation that came into being in Italy to resist fascism was Arditi Del Popolo. It was founded by anarchist Argo Sokotari in June 1921. It included all types of anti-fascist fighters (communist, socialist, anarchist, republican). In a few months, Arditi had organised 144 sections to resist fascism which had 20 thousand members. In the beginning, Arditi had considerable success in resisting fascism. But in the end, Arditi could not survive in face of the fascist offensive. One cause for this was the open financial support to fascists by monopolists of Italy and second was the attitude of socialists and communists towards Arditi. On 3 August 1921, Socialist party affected a peace truce with Mussolini and withdrew support from Arditi. Socialist party was against armed resistance of Fascism. Its peace agreement with Mussolini allowed the fascists to re-organise and sharpen its offensive. Under the influence of left sectarian line, Communist party rejected Arditi by branding it as a bourgeois trick and declared their withdrawal from Arditi. But the rank and file of both parties revolted against their leaders and remained in Arditi on a large scale.

The lack of understanding about fascism's true nature, the

trend of underestimating its threat wasn't just prevalent in the Communist Party of Italy but also in the Communist movement of Europe. Most of them thought that fascism is a common tool of counter revolution which will quickly be outmoded. Before long the bourgeois, with the help of social democrats, would return to the parliamentary forms of rule. That is why, the social democrats are the real barrier in the way of proletarian revolution.

The economic condition of Germany, emergence of fascism, contemplation regarding resisting fascism etc., was quite similar to that of Italy. Capitalist development was not only delayed but also backward in Italy. Capitalist development in Germany too started late but then progressed at a quick pace. Germany's capitalist development was uneven but not backward like that of Italy. Germany, rapidly emerged as a modern capitalist and imperialist country on the world's map.

In the first world war, Germany was terribly defeated. Germany signed the Versailles treaty with victorious powers on 28 June 1919. In this treaty, Germany and its allies were accused to be the perpetrators of this war. Germany was heavily fined. In 1921, the amount of this fine was decided to be 1,32,000 million Mark (of gold). 52% of this fine was to be received by France, 22% by Britain and 10% by Italy. Versailles treaty banned the universal military service in Germany. It also banned the maintaining of submarines, warships by the navy etc. France recovered their Alsace and Lorraine region, previously captured by Germany. This treaty stung the "national" pride of Germany, a sentiment which was later utilised by the fascists.

When the first world war was nearing its culmination, all contradictions in Germany sharpened. The Great October Revolution had a huge impact on the toiling masses of Germany. It provided an impetus to their revolutionary aspirations. In 1917-18 workers in Germany affected a string of strikes. The sense of protest invaded the army too.

It became clear by 1918 that Germany's defeat was certain

in the war. Revolutionary conditions were ripening in the country. On 3 November 1918, the navy revolted in Kiel city. Workers of the cities announced a general strike in solidarity with the soldiers. Workers and soldiers' soviet was organised which wielded the administration of the city. On 9th November, a general strike began in the capital, Berlin. Strike turned into revolt and the German Kaiser Wilhelm II fled the country. Thus, the November bourgeois democratic revolution began in Germany.

This revolution was accomplished mainly by the participation of working class. Power came in the hands of soviets of people's representatives which was led by the social democratic party of Germany. There existed three trends in the party at that time. Rightist social democrats and reformists, leftist social democrats (Spartacus group and others) and centrists. Centrists were leftists in theory but reformists in actions.

Centrists separated and formed their own party which was named independent social democratic party of Germany. In most of the soviets in Germany, rightist social democrats dominated. This restricted the scope of November revolution.

The new government undertook many reformist steps, controlled the production and administration of many departments. Martial law was removed. Freedom of speech, gathering and organisation, women rights, 8 hour working day etc., were recognised. But it did not touch big capital or the old state machinery. Rather, to stem the rise of revolutionary movement the new rulers conspired secretly with the army. German bourgeoisie and landlords did not want to hand over the state completely to rightist social democrats. In the end of 1918, bourgeois parties of the countries re organised and demanded the abolition of soviets. In December 1918, counter revolutionary revolts broke out in many places. "Self-defence" squads began mushrooming. The reorganisation of army began. Capitulationist social democrats announced the national assembly elections.

The events of Germany were indicating that social

democrats cannot take the cause of toilers to its culmination. A strong communist party was required for the emancipation of Germany's workers and toiling masses. In the beginning of 1919, revolutionary elements (Spartacists and other leftist groups) founded the communist party of Germany. Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht were its leaders. In January 1919, these beloved leaders of the working class were martyred by the counter revolutionaries.

On 19 November 1919, the elections of German national assembly were conducted. Bourgeois democratic parties gained majority in this. But the chairman of social democratic party, Friedrich Ebert became president and another leader of social democrats, Philipp Scheidmann became head of the government.

Sharp class struggle continued in Germany between 1919-1923. In some regions of Germany like Braunschweig and Bavaria, soviet rule came into existence which were crushed by counter revolutionary forces. On 31 July 1919 German national constitutional assembly accepted the Weimar constitution. In accordance with this constitution, Germany became a bourgeois parliamentary republic.

The most reactionary elements of bourgeoisie wanted to completely abolish the nominal democratic rights obtained by the people which were reflected in the constitution. Hitler's Nazi party came into existence in 1919. It came to power with the backing of monopoly capital. In December 1923, new bourgeois government was formed in Germany. This attempted to bring economic and political stability to the country. During this time of political stability, the German working class won some rights. Workers fought against reaction and militarism for 8 hour working day and better working conditions. But reactionary forces succeeded in enacting a 10 hour working day in 1927.

The great depression started in 1929. It particularly affected the German economy adversely. Industrial production in 1932 as compared with 1929 fell 40%. The number of unemployed, semi-

unemployed reached 80 lakh. Many banks went bankrupt. Peasants, artisans and traders started going bankrupt.

Political forces were sharply polarised in this period. The workers were fed up with the ruling class' parties (social democratic and other bourgeois parties). They were also displeased with the communist party. A considerable portion of the masses, especially petty bourgeois went into the fascism's influence. In parliamentary (Reichstag) elections of September 1930, candidates of Nazi party received 65 lakh votes. In 1928, it had received only 8.1 lakh votes. In the parliamentary elections of December 1932, Nazi party received 1 crore 17 lakh votes. Immediately after the elections, the reactionary ruling classes of Germany moved towards the setting up of fascist dictatorship. President Hermann Hindenburg declared Hitler as the head of state on 30 January 1933. This meant the setting up of naked dictatorship of the most reactionary elements of monopoly capital in Germany. After this, the already transpiring fascist terror intensified further. The arrests, murders of communists, trade union leaders hastened. At the time, the communist party of Germany was the second largest communist party of Germany. Fascist state eliminated this party in a week. The first task that Hitler's fascist state did was to cripple the organised workers' movement of Germany and unshackle the German capital of the danger of worker's revolution which was continuously circling over it.

Like Italy, in Germany too, surely social democracy's treachery, (which we have already described briefly and which we shall discuss more further on) its economic reformist practice (meaning entangling the working class in the struggle for nominal economic achievements, not allowing the consciousness of working class to rise above economic achievements) is responsible but the mistakes of communist party too played its role in it.

Like the communist party of Italy, the communist party of Germany too could not understand the real character of fascism and underestimated its threat. Instead of fascism, it continued to

consider social democracy as its true enemy. It primarily targeted it (social democracy) in its attacks. The 'social fascism' theses adopted by Comintern in 1929, which misnamed social democracy as fascist, too played its role in this. In Germany the communist party could not form a united front with social democracy and other anti-fascist forces against the rising tide of fascism. One of the reasons for this was also the fact that social democratic party too was unwilling to form a united front with communists. But the primary cause for this was the attitude of communist party towards social democracy (considering it as the primary enemy instead of fascism). Even though social democracy was not prepared to forge a united front with communists, still the attitude adopted by communist party should have been that if making an anti-fascist front with it. The social democratic party had a larger basis in the workers of Germany. This entire basis could not have been in agreement with the capitulationist line of social democratic party. The continued appeals for forging a united front would have affected its social basis. Either this party would have been forced to construct a united front or it would have suffered a split and a section of it would have joined the united front. This could not materialise due to Communist party of Germany's incorrect understanding of fascism, its left sectarian line.

For the construction of wide united front against a common enemy, we should learn from Comrade Mao. When people's war was striding forward in 1935 in China, Japanese imperialism attacked China. Before Japanese aggression the primary contradiction was with Kuomintang. But after Japanese attack the principal contradiction changed. The communist party of China, its leader Comrade Mao offered to forge a united front with Kuomintang for fighting against Japanese offensive. The understanding of Communist Party of China was that though reactionary elements dominated in Kuomintang but there were anti-imperialist and patriotic elements in it too, particularly in the masses which followed in its wake had large amount of patriotic elements. Thus,

Kuomintang must be forced to join the anti-Japanese united front. But Kuomintang leader Chiang-Kai-Shek rejected this offer. But the communist party of Japan was steadfast in its position of forging a united front with Kuomintang against Japanese offensive and regularly issued appeals to Kuomintang for the same. This created a situation of split in Kuomintang. As a result, Kuomintang was forced to forge a united front with communist party against Japanese aggression.

## **COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL (COMINTERN) IN STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1923, in the third extended plenum of Comintern's executive committee, Clara Zetkin presented a report on Fascism and wrote a resolution regarding fascism which were accepted by the executive committee. In the report and resolution by Clara, on the whole a correct approach towards Fascism was adopted. We have discussed it briefly before. The main points of Clara Zetkin's report and resolution were -:

- i) Fascism is a product of the economic and political crisis of capitalism.
- ii) This dictatorship isn't like the Horthy rule of Hungary rather it was a larger social basis. Fascism needs to be fought not just by military methods but also political ideological method.
- iii) The construction of proletarian united defence was called upon to fight fascism. All workers' parties, trade unions, and proletarian mass organizations were called on to join the common defence against fascism. <sup>(23)</sup>

In 1924, Comintern's 5<sup>th</sup> congress was held. A resolution was passed on fascism. In this resolution was discussed the basis of fascism and its character was identified. Correctly identifying

the social basis of fascism, it was said that, "in its social structure, fascism is a petty bourgeois movement."

Along with this, the resolution contains some exaggerated, non-realist verdicts. For instance, in this resolution all other bourgeois parties (including social democratic parties) along with fascist parties are declared to be fascist. It is stated in the resolution, *"all bourgeois parties, particularly social democracy, take on a more or less fascist character. ... Fascism and social democracy are the two sides of the same instrument of capitalist dictatorship. In the fight against fascism, therefore, social-democracy can never be a reliable ally of the fighting proletariat."*

Thus, in the resolution difference between fascist and other bourgeois parties was wiped out. The possibility of united front with social democracy was fundamentally rejected. This was the start of left sectarianist deviation in Comintern which reached its peak with the 'social fascism' thesis of 1929.

In 1924, Comrade Stalin wrote an article titled 'The period of bourgeois democratic "pacifism"'. In which he presented views similar to those presented in the above resolution. He wrote, "Fascism is the bourgeoisie's fighting organisation that relies on the active support of Social-Democracy. Social-Democracy is objectively the moderate wing of fascism."<sup>(24)</sup>

In 1929, an extended meeting of the executive committee of Comintern took place. In this a resolution was passed regarding the international situation. In this social democracy was declared to be social fascism. The resolution stated that, *"In this situation of growing imperialist contradictions and sharpening of the class struggle, fascism becomes more and more the dominant method of bourgeois rule. In countries where there are strong social-democratic parties, fascism assumes the particular form of social-fascism."*

To declare all other parties (including social democracy) along with fascist party to be fascist was the peak of left deviation. This was a rejection of utilising contradiction between the different

fraction of bourgeoisie to further the struggle of proletariat. This left sectarianist deviation was a barrier in the construction of wide united front against fascism and seriously harmed the anti-fascist struggle. But after several years, especially during the 7<sup>th</sup> congress of Comintern in 1935, this mistake was rectified.

Actually the practice of correcting the left sectarian mistakes of 1929 started inside Comintern in 1933 when it called upon the communist parties to forge a united front with social democratic parties. On 5 March 1933 in the Comintern's executive committee's statement on the situation of Germany and regarding united front' was stated, "in view of fascism's offensive against the German working class, unleashing all the forces of world reaction, the ECCI calls on all communist parties to make a further attempt to establish a united fighting front with the social democratic working masses through the social-democratic parties."

In the 7<sup>th</sup> congress of Comintern in 1935, Comrade Dimitrov presented a report regarding fascism and strategy for resisting it. The title of this report was 'The Fascist Offensive and the Tasks of the Communist International in the Struggle of the Working Class against Fascism'. The congress adopted this report after ample debate. Even today this report is a guiding document for communists worldwide for understanding fascism and resisting it. Discussing the entire report here is neither possible nor necessary. Here we will discuss some points of this report. In this report is observed the approach of getting rid of the earlier left sectarian mistakes and also of criticising them. In the report is stated,

*"The accession to power of fascism is not **an ordinary succession** of one bourgeois government by another, but a **substitution** of one state form of class domination of the bourgeoisie — bourgeois democracy — by another form — open terrorist dictatorship. It would be a serious mistake to ignore this distinction, a mistake liable to prevent the revolutionary proletariat from mobilizing the widest strata of the working people of town and country for the struggle against the menace*

of the seizure of power by the fascists, and from taking advantage of the contradictions which exist in the camp of the bourgeoisie itself. But it is a mistake, no less serious and dangerous, to **underrate** the importance, for the establishment of fascist dictatorship, **of the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie at present increasingly developing in bourgeois-democratic countries** — measures which suppress the democratic liberties of the working people, falsify and curtail the rights of parliament and intensify the repression of the revolutionary movement.

Comrades, the accession to power of fascism must not be conceived of in so simplified and smooth a form, as though some committee or other of finance capital decided on a certain date to set up a fascist dictatorship. In reality, fascism usually comes to power in the course of a mutual, and at times severe, struggle against the old bourgeois parties, or a definite section of these parties, in the course of a struggle even within the fascist camp itself — a struggle which at times leads to armed clashes, as we have witnessed in the case of Germany, Austria and other countries. All this, however, does not make less important the fact that, before the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, bourgeois governments usually pass through a number of preliminary stages and adopt a number of reactionary measures which directly facilitate the accession to power of fascism. Whoever does not fight the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie and the growth of fascism at these preparatory stages **is not in a position to prevent the victory of fascism, but, on the contrary, facilitates that victory.**"<sup>(25)</sup>

"... there has been a tendency among us to contemplate fascism in general, without taking into account the specific features of the fascist movement in the various countries, erroneously classifying all reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie as fascism and going so far as calling the entire non-Communist camp fascist. The struggle against fascism was not strengthened

*but rather weakened in consequence.” (26)*

The most important thing in this report is the line of popular front for the resistance of fascism in power. When fascist dictatorship is set up, the choice facing working class is not bourgeois democracy or dictatorship of the proletariat but rather bourgeois democracy or fascist dictatorship. In the latter pair, working class stands for the restoration of bourgeois democracy. It depends on the balance of power in the anti-fascist united front whether after the toppling of fascist dictatorship, bourgeois democracy is restored or (temporarily) some people's democratic state comes to power in the leadership of the working class.

As social democratic and other bourgeois forces are included in the anti-fascist dictatorship united front, that is why this united front will not be for the setting up of proletarian dictatorship. This would be for some transitional form of the state. In Dimitrov's report it has been stated that,

**““Social-Democracy is for democracy, the Communists are for dictatorship; therefore, we cannot form a united front with the Communists,”** say some of the Social-Democratic leaders. *But are we offering you now a united front for the purpose of proclaiming the dictatorship of the proletariat? We make no such proposal now.” (27)*

*“What is and ought to be the basic content of the united front at the present stage? The defense of the immediate economic and political interests of the working class, the defense of the working class against fascism, must form the starting point and main content of the united front in all capitalist countries.*

*We must not confine ourselves to bare appeals to struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. We must find and advance those slogans and forms of struggle which arise from the vital needs of the masses, from the level of their fighting capacity at the present stage of development.” (28)*

*“If we Communists are asked whether we advocate the*

united front **only** in the fight for partial demands, or whether we are prepared to share the responsibility even when it will be a question of forming a government on the basis of the united front, then we say with a full sense of our responsibility: Yes, we recognize that a situation may arise in which the formation of a government of the proletarian united front, or of an anti-fascist People's Front, will become not only possible but necessary. And in that case we shall advocate for the formation of such a government without the slightest hesitation." (29)

"I would like to utter a note of warning against oversimplification or the application of cut-and-dried schemes in this question. Life is more complex than any scheme. For example, it would be wrong to imagine that the united front government is **an indispensable stage** on the road to the establishment of proletarian dictatorship. That is just as wrong as the former assertion that there will be **no intermediary stages** in the fascist countries and that fascist dictatorship is **certain to be immediately superseded** by proletarian dictatorship." (30)

"Our attitude to bourgeois democracy is not the same under all conditions. For instance, at the time of the October Revolution, the Russian Bolsheviks engaged in a life-and-death struggle against all those political parties which, under the slogan of the defence of bourgeois democracy, opposed the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. The Bolsheviks fought these parties because the banner of bourgeois democracy had at that time become the standard around which all counter-revolutionary forces mobilized to challenge the victory of the proletariat. The situation is quite different in the capitalist countries at present. Now the fascist counter-revolution is attacking bourgeois democracy in an effort to establish the most barbarous regime of exploitation and suppression of the working masses. Now the working masses in a number of capitalist countries are faced with the necessity of making a definite choice, and of making it today,

*not between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois democracy, but between bourgeois democracy and fascism.”<sup>(31)</sup>*

## **FASCISM AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY**

In the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, when capitalism of free competition was developing into fascism, the leader of the opportunist faction of social democracy, Bernstein claimed that the centralisation of capital would definitely create such a situation in which capitalism will gain control over its crises. He claimed that the working class is benefitting more and more as a result of capitalist development. Its share in national income is regularly increasing instead of shrinking. Kautsky, who was then a Marxist, opposed the claims of Bernstein. But he himself committed serious mistakes in this regard. Bernstein had rejected the impoverishment of working class in general. He had claimed that wages were increasing not merely in absolute form but also relatively. Kautsky demonstrated the relative impoverishment of working class under capitalism but not absolute impoverishment.

In a way he agrees with Bernstein that though the condition of working class is worsening relatively but it is getting better absolutely. If the condition of working class is improving under capitalism, then why does it need to struggle for socialism?

This was the path (rejection of struggle for socialism) which Kautsky followed in the future.

Another prominent leader of German Social Democracy was Rudolf Hilferding. In 1910, his book 'Finance Capital' was published. In it he claimed that cartelisation has no absolute limit in capitalism. Rather there exists the trend of its rapid expansion. Independent industries become more and more dependent on cartelised industries and in the end they are devoured by cartelised industries. As a result, a general cartel emerges. The anarchy of commodities and production comes to an end. The role of money vanishes. If capitalism correctly distributes production, then it can develop without crises.

In this manner, Hilferding veils the fundamental contradictions of capitalism. In 1927, Hilferding brought forth the revisionist theory of organised capitalism. He stated that a monopoly firm could rationally plan production and free of any competition in the market, could achieve technical innovation. The superior socialist principle of planning made it possible for the same to stand on its own feet and stabilize itself.

These illusions of social democrats regarding the imperialist stage of capitalism became the basis for their illusions regarding fascism. According to them, fascism is an uncommon obstacle, an aberration in the path of technological progress and political democracy. Kautsky, particularly was the supporter and originator of such ideas. According to him political violence is a historical deviation in an industrialised world. Like the violence of Bolsheviks and communist party of Germany are futile attempts to hasten the motion of history, similarly fascist violence is an attempt to pull history back, stop economic development and an attempt to solve problems with force. As a movement fascism is supported by 'short sighted capitalists' and the middle class which is a victim of confusion and ruination due to economic change.

From this understanding of fascism the social democratic party of Germany and social democratic party of Austria gleaned the following practical tasks -:

- i)** For the protection of parliamentary democracy an alliance should be forged with far sighted elements of capitalist class
- ii)** If the alliance proves inadequate due to increasing popular support for fascism, then one should wait for the storm to pass or for the fascists to prove their economic incapability in power.

Kautsky held that fascist violence is the other side of Bolshevik violence. Due to this thought process he preferred the creation of united front with far sighted elements of capitalist class rather than with communists.

Hilferding held that support for Nazism isn't just the matter of 'near-sighted elements of capitalism' but rather it is a much wider attack on the social legislation of Weimar Republic. This attack is also on the parliamentary system which is responsible for this system. But he strongly opposed any kind of struggle against Nazism. He said that the result of any struggle against Nazism would be naked dictatorship. From such calculations he strictly opposed any program of non-parliamentary action in alliance with communists.

Due to this capitulationist policies of the German social democratic party, it was split in 1931. In Max Sedewitz, a part of left social democrats separated from the party.

In Austria, two "kinds" of fascism were at loggerheads with each other. One was the domestic fascist party (Celerio). Second was the imported Nazi movement which quickly expanded in 1932. In 1933 rightist prime minister Dolfuss decided for an anti-parliamentary coup. The aim of this coup along with crushing the Nazis was to also crush the social democrats, which it did. The social democratic party of Austria did not immediately oppose this coup rather it tried to hold talks with Dolfuss. The assessment of Otto Bauer, the leader of the party was that the result of general strike against the coup would be a civil war which would unite both the varieties of fascism. That is why more and more concessions were made for the peaceful solution of the situation. But there was no beneficial effect of this. Dolfuss rejected any type of discussion. He continuously stripped the rights of workers. Due to the capitulationist policies of social democracy, the working class of Austria lost all its rights one by one.

## **FASCISM IN INDIA**

Rashtriya Swyamsevak Sangh (RSS) is a fascist organisation in classical terms. 'Hindutava' is its guiding ideology, the foundation of which was laid by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and which was advanced by Madhav Sadashiv Rao Golwalkar. RSS was founded in

1925 in Nagpur. Its founder was Keshav Baliram Hedgewar. In 1926 it was named RSS.

In the beginning, RSS was the organisation of Brahmin-Baniyas (urban traders) of Maharashtra. By the end of 1930 it expanded till northern India. At that time there was an atmosphere of communal tension (Hindu-Muslim) in northern India. RSS benefitted by this. Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha helped it to establish itself in northern India.

In the period of 1937-47 in India, particularly northern India, there was an atmosphere of communal tension. This was also the period of RSS' expansion. In 1938 there were 400 shakhas of RSS and its membership was 40,000. In 1940, its membership had increased to 1 lakh.

In 1940, M.S. Golwalkar became its head. In Golwalkar's leadership, RSS quickly progressed. In 1938 his book 'We or Our Nationhood Defined' was published. After some time, a collection of his speeches and articles 'Bunch of Thoughts' was published. This advanced forward the ideological project of Hindutva. 1940-45 were the years of rapid expansion of RSS. It actively participated in the communal killings of 1946-47. RSS termed it as 'the best times'.

Accused of the murder of Mahatma Gandhi, RSS was banned by the Nehru Government on 4 February 1948. Mahatma Gandhi was murdered by RSS' member Nathuram Godse. The ban was a serious setback for RSS. Golwalkar continuously requested Nehru to uplift the ban. He counselled Nehru that the real enemies of India (actually the exploiting system established in India) were communists and for the eradication of communists RSS was ready to support the Indian government. Ghanshyam Das Birla too recommended uplifting RSS' ban. Home Minister Vallabh Bhai Patel too pressurised the Nehru Government for uplifting RSS' ban. Finally, on 12 July, 1949 the government of India lifted the ban on RSS.

After the lifting of the ban, RSS began its open activities. It established various wings. For instance, it created the Bharti

MazdoorSangh in 1955. Similarly, it created Bharti Jansangh for participating in the parliamentary elections. It created its terror organisations Bajrang Dal and Vishva Hindu Parishad. These are names of few of the numerous RSS wings.

After 1947, capitalist development gained momentum in India. With this, on one side the petty bourgeoisie expanded while on the other hand its proletarianisation, uncertainty and instability of its occupations increased. Benefitting from this situation, the RSS expanded its base. RSS utilised every crises of Indian capitalist system to expand its base.

In 1977, for the first time, RSS members (Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Lal Krishan Advani and Brijlal Verma) became central ministers in the Janta Party government. There were 93 parliamentary members of Jansangh in this government. Afterwards Bharti Jansangh was renamed as BhartiyaJanta Party (BJP). In 1981, there were 16 M.P.'s of BJP which shrank to two in 1984.

In the end of 1980s, the capitalist system of India was mired in a serious crisis. The RSS parivar (SanghParivar) again drew benefit from this. They started the Ram Janambhoomi movement. The peak of this movement was the destruction of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya on 6 December 1992.

In 1996 Lok Sabha elections, BJP was the party with maximum seats. It minority government was formed which only survived 13 days.

In 1998 Lok Sabha elections it again emerged as the party with maximum seats. The government formed in its leadership remained in power only till the starting of 1999. Lok Sabha elections were again conducted in 1999. BJP again emerged as the largest party. In the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), formed in its leadership, Janta Dal and D.M.K. too participated. This NDA government held power till 2004.

Twice, in 2014 and 2019, union governments with complete majority to BJP were formed. The latter government is still in power. This is a very brief description of development of RSS and

SanghParivar. To go into further detail on this article is not possible. Readers can consult other books for the same.

BJP, running the union government since 2014, is busy in the attempts of fascistisation of state. It is extensively attempting for the complete control of armed forces, judiciary, media etc. The implementation of neoliberal policies has accelerated in this period. The rights of workers, peasants and other toiling masses are being blatantly snatched. National oppression too has increased in multinational India. RSS and SanghParivar is crushing underneath the unique identity of different nations of India to practically implement the policy of 'Hindi, Hindu and Hindustan' and transform India into a nation. The attacks on religious minorities, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs are being intensified. The target of the sharpest attacks is Muslims.

Presently, in India, there exist a strong fascist movement in the leadership of RSS. But its development is quite uneven. In some states RSS/SanghParivar is in a strong position while in others, it is quite weak. In Kashmir, Punjab, some states of South India, many states of North East RSS/ SanghParivar is in a weak position. But where it is weak, it is trying its utmost to gain a foothold. To what extent it succeeds in this, only the future can tell. It is important to keep in mind the uneven development of fascist forces in India. So that an effective strategy for its resistance may be formed.

## **OBSTACLES IN THE PATH OF FASCISM IN INDIA**

The multinational character of India is the biggest obstacle in fascism's path. Behind RSS's fascism there is not a united identity/force, like there was behind Hitler (the national identity of Germany). RSS talks of 'Hindu Rashtra', but Hindu is not a nation, it is a religious sect. It does not have a monolith, countrywide identity. Hindus of India are Hindus of different nations. Their language, culture and history are different. RSS (SanghParivar) is attempting to erase

these differences and make India into a nation. This is impossible. As the BJP government is progressing on the path of centralisation policies, stripping the rights of various states, the contradiction between monopoly capitalists of India, which control the union government, and different nations is sharpening.

Caste is another obstacle in the path of RSS' fascism. RSS favours Varna system. Thus, Dalits, who form nearly 16% of India's population, do not trust it.

## **IS THE UNION GOVERNMENT OF BJP A FASCIST REGIME?**

The union government of BJP is not a fascist regime. Fascist dictatorship has not been set up yet in India. The working class of India does not yet face the choice of fascism or bourgeois democracy rather the task facing it is that of setting up proletarian dictatorship in place of bourgeois democracy. This is so because at the moment the ruling classes, particularly the monopoly capitalists, do not face a serious crisis, neither at the economic front nor at the political one. The working class movement of India is scattered, broken up and disorganised. Here a countrywide communist party does not exist. The ruling classes of India face no such crisis which could threaten their existence. That is why, at the moment, naked fascist dictatorship is not required by ruling classes.

Second cause of this is the multinational character of India and very uneven development of fascist movement. Though in the past, naked dictatorships of the capitalist class have been established in multinational countries, like the Franco dictatorship of Spain which was primarily a military dictatorship. This is common in both military and fascist dictatorship that both throw away the mask of parliamentary democracy and enforce naked dictatorship of the capitalist class. But the condition of India is different than that of countries like Spain. Firstly, the national diversity here is much greater and secondly, there does not exist the clear

domination of any one nation. But still the possibility of the setting up of naked dictatorship by the capitalist class in the future cannot be rejected outright. This possibility depends primarily on the nature of crisis facing the ruling classes here.

While discussing about fascism in India, we must bear in mind that India is not an imperialist country like Germany or Italy. India is a backward capitalist country which is economically dependent on imperialism. National chauvinism, militarism which is an important characteristic of fascism is not to be found in fascism of India. Though RSS/SanghParivar continue to create an anti-Pakistan “national” chauvinistic atmosphere but this does not receive an impassioned response from the entire country. This anti-Pakistan, “national” chauvinist jingoism provoked by Sangh Parivar remains restricted to the so called Hindi belt. In Punjab the atmosphere exactly opposite to this.

The limited “national” chauvinist jingoism provoked by Indian fascists fail to serve any end because Pakistan too has nuclear weapons. Second country which is presented as an enemy by fascists of Sangh is China. Waging war against China is beyond the realm of capabilities of rulers of India. The fascism of India, unlike the fascism of Germany and Italy, is not in a position to wage wars and occupy other countries.

## **STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCIST THREAT**

Though a fascist regime hasn't been established in India, but without a shade of doubt there is a presence of a fascist movement with uneven development. The primary task facing us is the construction of socialist society by overthrowing the present bourgeois socio-economic system. Subordinate to the primary task of socialist society's construction, we will have to fight against the fascist threat. These points enumerated by Dimitrov regarding anti-fascist struggle are still relevant -:

*“Whether the victory of fascism can be prevented depends first and foremost on the militant activity of the working*

*class itself, on whether its forces are welded into a single militant army combating the offensive of capitalism and fascism. By establishing its fighting unity, the proletariat would paralyze the influence of fascism over the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the youth and the intelligentsia, and would be able to neutralize one section of them and win over the other section.*

**Second**, *it depends on the existence of a strong revolutionary party, correctly leading the struggle of the working people against fascism. A party which systematically calls on the workers to retreat in the face of fascism and permits the fascist bourgeoisie to strengthen its positions is doomed to lead the workers to defeat.*

**Third**, *it depends on a correct policy of the working class towards the peasantry and the petty-bourgeois masses of the towns. These masses must be taken as they are, and not as we should like to have them. It is in the process of the struggle that they will overcome their doubts and waverings. It is only by a patient attitude towards their inevitable waverings, it is only by the political help of the proletariat, that they will be able to rise to a higher level of revolutionary consciousness and activity.*

**Fourth**, *it depends on the vigilance and timely action of the revolutionary proletariat. The latter must not allow fascism to take it unawares, it must not surrender the initiative to fascism, but must inflict decisive blows on it before it can gather its forces, it must not allow fascism to consolidate its position, it must repel fascism wherever and whenever it rears its head, it must not allow fascism to gain new positions. This is what the French proletariat is so successfully trying to do.*

*These are the main conditions for preventing the growth of fascism and its accession to power.”<sup>(32)</sup>*

Besides these general points regarding anti-fascist struggle, these points also have to be kept in mind -:

- 1)** The ideological, political struggle against fascism has to be continued. We have to keep on exposing among the masses the anti-people ideology and politics of fascists,

their cowardly past (their aloofness from the freedom struggle of India, playing the role of colonial master's lackey's etc.)

**2)** We will have to struggle for the abolition of caste system. Struggle would also have to be waged against the patriarchal oppression of women. Come what may, the fascists of India wish to preserve these.

**3)** RSS/SanghParivar's program of national oppression, 'Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan', should be especially opposed. Due to the centralisation policies of BJP, the contradiction between monopoly capitalists and different nations is sharpening. In this we must stand in favour of the rightful, democratic demands of various nations.

**4)** We must stand against the fascist attacks on national minorities especially the Muslims, Christians and Sikhs.

**5)** Presently, there exist no conducive conditions for constructing any anti-fascist united front in India. The communist movement of country is in a condition of disintegration. It isn't in a situation to unite on a countrywide basis and undertake an effective anti-fascist activity. Thus we should concentrate more on the local, issue based activities against fascism.

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**Translated from Punjabi by Navjot Navi**

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