Draft of Policy Principles
(Prepared by State Draft Preparatory Committee)

1. IPTA expresses via art the pains, hopes and aspirations of the people. Its highest aim is to do maximum good to the majority of the people of the country. It organizes all its cultural work to fulfil its this aim. People are the leaders of IPTA.

IPTA hopes to change the culture of the country to give birth to an India where people will be independent, happy and prosperous and where culture will be the property of all.

IPTA knows that in the past, many many times, spontaneously such democratic aspirations of the people have revealed themselves in culture. To take such militant national heritage in an organized form to its logical end is the task of IPTA. It declares its pride in being organically linked to the soil of our country. It considers its task to pull this heritage and to link it with the progressive global humane traditions.

The people in this country are vastly made up of workers, peasants, middle class intellectuals, small traders, etc. They are the overwhelming majority of our country. All the conservative and anti-national ideologies that work against their interests are the enemies of IPTA. It knows that most people of the country are our support.

IPTA was set up in 1943 with these ideals in mind, and has been trying to reflect the cultural awareness of liberation of the country.
The Cultural Impasse of Bengal

2. The foreign rule of the last two hundred years has given crippling blows to the roots of our culture. Particularly, the apathy, inhumanity and cultural poverty today are the direct result of the ruling policies.

Folk Culture

3. The disaster meted out to our folk culture is clearly seen in the villages of Bengal. Bengal the land of the river mother, with its village-centric social formation had been a state wherein the riversides of Ganga, Padma and Brahmaputra had created a symphony of folk tales and folk stories. Kanchanmala-Mahna-Kankabatis had immersed the lands in their tunes, just as Jari-Sari-Bhaoaia, Jigir, Bhatiali, Baul kirtan had filled the relaxation time of the toil-tired people with colour and taste. Such an immensely rich folk culture has lost its ancient pristine beauty. It is now gasping its last breath and is struggling to survive. As the present has been robbed from the people they in order to search for their ideals look back to find fulfillment. One day the folk culture had roots deep in life. Today that life is past but the dry roots strangle it and try to drag it back to the dead era.

4. Still life keeps on asserting itself in folk cultures. So the Kirtans still continue to describe religiously the unknowns of Vrindawan and Mathurapuri. The bards revolve their recitations around the hopes and aspirations of the people, in various traditional formats, but new contents are incorporated in order to include the local problems. In a society where traditional religions and feudal relations are expressed in social events, functions and melas, in such a society folk
stories must be treated with respect and pride. Moreover the folk forms express a strong and rich Bengali mode of existence which is, that life continues to express itself despite all odds. This is the victory and therefore the pride of folk culture.

From where does it come? What are the secret defenses of folk culture?

It naturally has its own defenses for it co-exists with its two sources and thus finds its sustenance and power from them. The first source is the people. Folk composers and folk literature have always lived as the common property of the overwhelming majority of the people. Such a close proximity to the labour and greatness of the people day and night cannot allow it to get alienated from their reality.

The second source is nature. The environmental background where these people labour and live is a strange entity. It is so large that it spreads to infinity, its rivers are subtle, the smell of earth is as fresh as the smell of little infants. It is nameless but heart-rending. It has infected the awareness of the folk poet to a large extent. The paintings of Jamuna are presented as Padma-Meghna-Bramhaputra, Shri Radhika is seen as any Bengali wife, Agamani and Vijaya puja songs reflect the tragedy of parting with a daughter in child marriage.

This culture has further spread the views of rebellion against human misery, sin, injustice in society in various ways. The oppression of foreign rulers, has lately become the object of hatred and anger in folk culture.
Stand of IPTA

5. IPTA will follow thousands and thousands of unknown national poets to use the folk culture as the principal mode in expressing the pains and hopes of national life and take this heritage to higher levels.

We will bring to light our predecessors and broadcast their jewels countrywide. We will search out the folk poets and learn from them the style of entering the hearts of people. We will also help them in all ways. They will stand at the forefront of people’s theatre movement.

Theatre

6. Theatre has influenced the cities and given expression to the people’s urge to live. This theatre is born in cities especially Calcutta. Despite the fact that it was the richest part of the Indian cultural tradition during the Hindu era and even afterwards, faced with external aggression, its cultural form became folk (Lokayata). It eventually developed into the form of Jatra, Palagan, Tarja, Gambira. But when the proscenium theatre was born again, it did so denying these traditions though it has influenced folk drama to some extent.

What is the source of the city theatre? In the West it grew following the powerful traditions of drama in developed countries, particularly in England. But it was never shy of adjusting to the environment of our country. In building national awareness, especially amongst the newly educated, its contribution is extreme. Whenever the nation rose up against foreign oppression, the folk theatre expressed the resistance of the people. From the dramas of Michael and Dinabandhu the folk artists have been fulfilling their historical role.
But, at the same time, while in the cities, under the glare of foreign traders and under the pressure of the feudal economy, it many a time forfeited its role. It failed to reflect the revolts of the workers, peasants, and the pain of the lower classes. Thus it failed to create an organic link. The vast awakening of the mass awareness could not be captured in its tiny heart. Thus the voice of the theatre became too small to reflect this mass awareness. Today the demands of the era are repeatedly being declared.

To speak generally the stage is decaying, sunk in the muck of feudal ideology, it is showing its back to society and to life. Even the compositions of the socially conscious authors like Sharat Chandra, etc., in this environment are losing their social value. Due to these situations and due to the people's theatre movement of the last ten years, the bankruptcy of the stage is thrown in sharp relief. So today, many professional and non-professional artist groups, new socially aware dramatists are vowing to carry on the social role of the drama and stand with the camp of people's theatre.

7. To bring to the surface the life nourishing traditions of city drama, to free it from its bad directional forms and to publicize its social value is our duty. The other significant duty of the IPTA artists is to inject life nourishing content in the ancient traditions, that are reflected through Jatra, Palagan, Gambhira, Kabigan and all that is close to the soil of the country but unfortunately they now have become the carriers of feudal culture. Our task is to create new traditions that will integrate the best of the urban and rural traditions and thereby create new forms.
The tradition of the city groups compliments IPTA and it deserves our appreciation. It is necessary to give a practical shape to this appreciation and to support it in every way in our programmes.

**Songs**

8. The traditional songs of Bengal originate from three traditions. The first is folk, that lies neglected despite its rich potential. Conservative and escapist trends have shadowed it. The second is classical, but this is only an organized form of the folk. IPTA regards highly the Indian classical. But the patronage of feudal kings and nababs for hundreds of years have imprisoned it. It has been denied access to reflect and participate in people's struggles. Hence, the classical that is the cultured form of the folk, lies lost and is locked in the royal cage and even today it meditates there. So, it has largely become an alienated, dry and form-centric medium. Its possibilities, and its power to influence mass awareness lies lost for the time being. The third is the Western, it has been assimilated with these two other forms. But it has not been used boldly. Instead of the classical form we import frivolous asocial forms that are supported and promoted by our foreign rulers and exploiters. As a product of these three, modern film music has evolved and of course it does not represent the people's lives. It rather is distorting the people's values. The way in which Rabindranath, Nazrul, Kanthkabi, Atul Prasad, Dwijendra Lal had mixed the three forms to create a new form had helped in the struggle for the national liberation. The professional music of today lacks this assimilation and so the radio and film records are facing a big problem. They are losing popularity.
Stand of IPTA

9. Folk music should be given prime significance. It is important first to clean it of all the muck it has developed over the years and then to use it to represent the people’s pain and suffering. For this IPTA gives highest priority to find and include artists from peasants and workers. It believes that they are the vanguards of the people’s art.

Classical music is pining to get liberated. IPTA calls upon the classical singers to free it from its form-centrism, to enrich it with life’s content, and to apply it for people’s work. IPTA will help in all possible ways.

A strong need is also being felt by the IPTA artists to incorporate musical forms from other countries and then to amalgamate our forms with theirs in order to create a new taste. IPTA believes that the assimilation of all these three forms, that is the folk, the western and the classical along with life nourishing content will lead to popular, people’s music.

Film Art

10. Today cinema is becoming most popular and is influencing even the farthest village. India is world’s second in film making and Bengal and Calcutta is the second centre of films in India. The American cheap fun influence comes from Hollywood via Bombay to get into the marrows of Bengal. Bengal film industry is getting lost at the abundance of Bombay and is blindly floating down the trend. In order to compete, it often is using sick and unrealistic stories and incidents.

But few films are reflecting our national consciousness and the pain and aspirations of our people. These films are getting
mass support too. But this is not emerging as the main trend, nor is it able to reflect realism. This is because all the stages of cinema making are under the influence of foreign capital and its national jockey. The artists are realizing this. National businessmen are also beginning to realize that national and democratic liberation can flourish as art and business.

Position of IPTA

11. The main content of IPTA should be the problems of real life and the healthy reflection of national life. Cinema cannot ignore its historical responsibility as the most socially relevant art form of this era. Bengal's film industry cannot compete outside in terms of opulence and money power. It can survive only by producing quality, popular and realistic films. It is the duty of IPTA to carry all these messages into the film industry. IPTA should also demonstrate that the huge store house of folk culture can enrich cinema.

Dance

12. Today, the various classical schools and their forms are being presented by the dance artists of the cities. And, folk dances, with their pristine charm, are spread all over our country. Some of these forms have been recovered but much remains to be done.

Dance is a powerful medium. The interests of the people can be well represented by it, as it has been done in the past. Foreign dance forms have been experimented with. More needs to be done.
IPTA's Stand

13. IPTA will try to popularize the democratic and national (indigenous) art of our dance artists. It will collect the necessary material from classical schools. It will primarily utilize the folk forms and will give primacy to nationalist material. It will draw inspiration from foreign traditions. IPTA will emphasize all such experiments and studies to learn the folk traditions by going to different regions of our county.

Shadow Play, Puppet Dance

14. Shadow play was born in India in the past. Though it is nearly extinct now, evidence of it is spread all around. So when Uday Shanker in IPTA used this form, it was quite experimental. Similarly there is scope to experiment in the arena of Puppet dance too. Even today it is popular in the rural areas of Bengal. It is important to accept it and to experiment on it by fusing in it national and democratic content.

Position of IPTA

15. Shadow play, Puppet dance etc., are mediums full of possibilities. It is extremely important to experiment and create new artistic forms using all these. We must also experiment with these as these are amongst the most popular art forms.

Aggression of foreign culture:

16. The twin aggression of reckless and irresponsible Imperialist culture on the one hand and dogmatic, conservative feudal culture on the other has crippled folk culture or any other decent culture. At the same time the situation of the artists has become desperate. The rural and peasant folk artists are practically eating mud to survive and the urban middle class
intellectuals are similarly getting defeated in their struggle to live. Imperialism is destroying them. The camp of the nationalist people can give life to them.

The Jagannath Rath-like imperialism is trampling through our economic and cultural world and is changing our culture and ideology. They are using all reactionary traditions, using the language differences they are forcing Hindi on others: wrecking the united culture of Hindus and Muslims to spread deeply the sectarian feeling. This culture uses spiritualism and sectarian religiosity. This culture is directly against the interest of the people and has spawned sexually titillating, sick and degenerate arts. This culture ignores all the hopes and desires of the people and so depicts an imaginary sick and inactive reality. It ignores and hides the reality of the exploitation of the ruling classes. It trades in all that are lies.

And this culture tries with all its money power to bring to life the redundant past. It desperately tries to kill the best of the revolutionary and rebel artists even in their life times, and, when they are dead, tries to distort and magnify their blind sides to use them in their interest. Thus it distorts the nation's history and imposes it on the people.

Background of the imperialistic policy

17. The history of the English merchants in India is a history of plunder. They organized their role and policy centered around that plunder. On one side they imposed sectarian divides of many types on our economic and cultural life. On the other they carried on a rule of unlimited oppression. They, from the time of entering the country, broke to pieces the united culture of Hindus and Muslims. Using religion, artificial division of
provinces, creating gap between town and villages, creating the princely states and tribal regions they created contradictions of new types.

Their first attack was on the self-sufficiency of Bengal. They smashed the villages by creating many cities and railways. The stagnant hyacinth filled villages, and became a curse for the entire Bengal. They forced the patua (the Pat painter) and other artists to change into artisans. They cut the fingers of the famous Muslim artists, Janardan and Govingda Tati and thousands of others. They seized the boats and fishing nets of innumerable fisher folks. They forced peasants to harvest indigo and jute in their paddy fields. Thus horrors like the '42 famine were repeatedly created. Thus the economic and cultural life of the country was ruined by the colonial traders. They created big cities but did not create the national commerce industry there. They enforced the system that would perpetuate India as a raw material exporter and thus converted India into a market of large scale exploitation. In their interest the imperialist imposed the 'permanent system', the landlordism in villages to block all roads of national development. To carry on their tasks in the cities they had to create a servile compradore class, and for this they introduced western ways and education but to a limited extent. Bengal never tolerated this exploitation. Starting with revolts led by Muslim landlords like Mirkaseem, different peasant rebellions, Indigo revolts, Titumir and Santhal rebellions, people repeatedly rose to resist. The newly educated urban people were also not silent. Bango Bhanga movement (against partition of Bengal), the courageous era of fire, several rebellious movements, non-co-operation movement, all are instances of this.
Cultural workers too fought against colonialism in the social and cultural spaces. The social and educational movement of Raja Ram Mohan Rao and Vidya Sagar, the cultural dedication of Michel and Dinabandhu, the exposure of false distortions of history by Rakhaldas Bandoupadhaya, Akshay Maitra etc: The literary dedication of Rabindranath, the flaming inspiration of Nazrul all are instances through which the culture of nationalism was inculcated in the educated.

Mukunda Das from popular folk cultural tradition and Nazrul from urban educated side had come to a common space where two entirely different streams coalesced to express the pain and anguish of all sections of people of the country and thereby give direction to a purely indigenous national culture. So, Nazrul and Mukunda Das are the best representatives of our national culture.

All the above factors combined to create a national awareness and workers, peasants, middle classes, intellectuals and all the classes of people could unite in a camp against imperialism.

At such period the crisis of colonialism intensified. The Second World War started. The great famine of '40s descended on Bengal. War and its consequences gave a powerful boost to the liberation urge of our country. Imperialism realized that the old forms of exploitation would no more work. So they hatched a scheme of taking a portion of capitalists of the country in partnership and then, in the name of giving 'independence' they changed their sign boards and cadres and went underground in our country.
The new stage in the national liberation struggle

18. The independence of the nation in no way reduced the exploitation or misery of the country. It created confusion in the national liberation struggle. In the partitioned country, one section kept threatening the other. The intoxication of the drama of independence did not work for long. The real situation went down from bad to worse. Both the economy and culture of our country were fatally injured by the partition of our country. The organization of business and industry were forcibly broken. A vast section of workers were turned into destitutes. A particular section of the peasants, small artisans, small business folk, lower middle classes were torn apart by the partition.

Food and cloth problem became severe. It looked like the preamble to the great famines of the 40s and 50s. Inflation and other consequence of war were raising their ugly head. Instead of following the path of peaceful reorganization, the country’s economic problems are heading towards a newer crisis and global war madness. The global economic crisis of Anglo-US business is spreading its poisonous shadow here.

People are seeking liberation from this economic exploitation. They do not want to follow the economic policy of the west that is perpetuating their exploitation. They instead want an independent national economy. A new tide in culture can come only if we proceed on the road of national liberation. The desire for national liberation is organically tied to the desire for cultural liberation.

Position of IPTA

19. The IPTA believes that not only did we not get independence
on 15 August 1947, but we got enmeshed in newer confusions. The success of national liberation struggles has temporarily received a set-back. To pull it up and take it to final victory is the task of national liberation in this new era. The cultural fulfillment of the nation depends on this.

The path that the liberation struggle will follow should be to solve the massive problems of daily life of people. The task of IPTA is to spread this struggle in the cultural sphere. It is a soldier within the national liberation struggle. While doing this work it holds fraternal feelings towards all parties, groups and individuals who are colleagues in this enterprise.

IPTA considers it its duty to create art in the interest of each of the classes who are a part of the camp of national liberation. Hence its art can be said to be the art of the democratic camp of national liberation.

IPTA considers art to be the path finder of people’s mind. As such its duty in this present situation is:

1. To unite ourselves in the interest of national liberation struggles.
2. To use all art work to strengthen the national liberation struggle.
3. To consider and search people’s interest, to create genuine people’s art and to take it to the people.
4. To resist any attack on national solidarity.

The Intrinsic Question of Art, Content and Form; Popularity and Quality

20. IPTA believes that any art work is the result of the combination of both content and form. The work of the artist cannot be considered to be art if it fails to integrate and balance both these beautifully.
This combination creates both popular and quality art. Today in all art work, popularity is most important. The problem of IPTA is that of achieving wider mass contact. At the same time IPTA will adequately take into account the best of the militant traditions of our past and of the outside world.

Popular forms are those that are easy to grasp; folk and clearly realistic. So, IPTA will take them to be the basis of all its art work.

IPTA does not consider 'popularity' to mean the prevalent popularity of the imperialist feudal culture. IPTA considers something to be truly popular (janpriya) if it helps in the growth of the people’s power. While trying to be popular, it always should keep the point of quality in mind. IPTA’s task is to move towards quality art work. But the structure of quality can rise only on the basis of popularity. And again IPTA does not want popularity for its own sake. It wants to be popular in order to speak to the people and also it would like to be popular in its quest for quality. IPTA should always keep this in mind.

IPTA looks at any art work from the point of view of the audience. Popularity thus is a vital question along with the variety and specificity of art’s form and content in different regions of the country. But that variety can emerge only through the understanding of the unity of the form and content.

The Art Professionals in Towns

21. IPTA knows how the urban art professionals have been fatally hit by the present crisis. So it has a fraternal outlook towards them. It supports their attempts to defend the national heritage. Moreover IPTA feels that they can give a lot to the
national liberation struggles. IPTA considers it its duty to take their democratic artwork to the people. It declares its full support for their economic struggle.

IPTA believes that it is possible to form a united front by joining with different groups in the professional art world. This will be valuable in the struggle for a cultural movement.

World Peace

22. IPTA considers the problem of peace to be the root problem in the national liberation sphere. The era of imperialist exploitation is ending in the world. They, the imperialist, can no more tolerate the crisis and the pressure from the people. It is no more possible to dupe the people. So they are always worried lest peace prevail. So to prevent 'peace', they are trying to spread fascism and war around the world.

IPTA knows that war, if it happens, will be qualitatively different due to the use of atomic bomb and other weapons. We should not visualize the Third World War on the basis of our past experience. It will be a horror of entirely unprecedented type. It will be different from earlier war as a steam is different from water. This war will destroy civilization.

IPTA believes that these mad, anti-people forces can be isolated. If all peace loving people of the world unite, it will be possible to prevent war. It is not possible to continue war without the consent and the active participation of the people. By peace loving people IPTA means all such people of the country having this sense.

IPTA believes that people will join the camp of peace irrespective of parties and ideologies. Because people are
creative. Artists create art, knowledge workers knowledge, the cadre their organization, ordinary people create many a family, some create love. All human race wants to create.

War, especially atomic war, will destroy all creation. It will prove correct the prediction of the famous savant Einstein: "... the weapon in the third world war will be stone axes." That is civilization will be destroyed by the third world war.

IPTA regards all the people of India as peace loving and hopes to unite with them in one camp.

IPTA believes in the programme and stand of the world peace congress. Imperialism is the organizer of this war. It is actively starting wars in Asia. Direct and indirect machination by it are leading to wars in Korea, Formosa, S. E. Asia, Kashmir and Middle East. Imperialist war mongers are the peace wreckers in Asia.

They are the ones who are exploiting our country. To liberate ourselves from this oppression, national liberation struggle is a must for peace too. They both are mutually complementary.

As IPTA considers the peace question to be central, it will make art in the service of peace and always consider strengthening the camp of peace in its creative art work. IPTA will unite with all other artists on the question of peace.

The Past of IPTA

23. IPTA knows that it repeatedly deviated from the historic analysis and the task that it had set for itself.

In the past it overemphasized the city work. And it had
shifted away from the militant culture and ideas of the majority of the people. It did not emphasize popularity among workers and peasants, the majority of our population. It almost failed to unite folk and sophisticated cultures. For this reason it remained confined to a narrow set even in towns. Then it changed its line in another direction. Fantasizing an imagined revolutionary situation, it leapt directly in war. It hoisted a middle class ultra-revolutionary vision on reality in the name of workers and peasants. It ignored the artistic disciplines of form in order to overemphasize the imaginary revolutionary 'reality.' So, art did not remain art. It became a slogan. It had to pay with its organization for all those acts. The organization broke down.

But, the last ten years have been not just a history of mistakes. It has also been beautifully creative despite all its mistakes. It has taken at least one step ahead in its historic task. The Punjab tour to prevent famine; the playing of the Nabanno; the creation of the Navagivaner Gan (songs of new life); touring Bengal and Assam with, Shaheeder Dak (Call of the martyr); are instances of its heritage. Their dedication is beyond doubt and unsurpassed. It is important to realize and analyze our past mistakes but at the same time we should not abandon our past. Our present is after all created by our past. Self satisfaction is like death, but so is self denigration.

IPTA is proceeding on its path and is learning from the lessons of its past. Its only faith is, in its burning sincerity and the teachings of the people. People will make us understand at every step whether we are deviating or not. Sincerity will drive us towards revolutionary activism.

IPTA takes a look all around itself. People are moving
People’s theatre movement is moving ahead, history is moving forward. We have many colleagues in this journey. We greet and extend our hands to all of them. IPTA knows that the people of Bengal will keep moving ahead with their culture. Leaders can err time and again, but the great people of Bengal will continue to move on the correct path.

Call

24. So IPTA calls every one. The time for discharging the social and historic responsibility of the artists has come.

IPTA is interested to work with each progressive artist of the country. IPTA will make a sincere effort to build up unity and create joint work with each cultural organization or individual of the land on the basis of widest possible alliance-professional or amateur, irrespective of party, nationality, religion, to help realize the dream of uniting in a common space.

All cultural lovers of the country unite!
All creative artists of the country unite!!
All toiling people of the country unite!!!

For national liberation struggle; against the interest of imperialism and their jockey’s; for international peace against global imperialist war makers; for human progress, against imperialism, the enemy of humanity; unite in one great struggle.

Long live the people’s theatre movement!
Long live the artistic masses of Bengal!!!
Long live the toiling people of Bengal!!!
Appendix II

Ritwik Ghatak's Letter to the Secretary, CPI

To
The Secretary
West Bengal Provincial Committee
Communist Party of India
Calcutta

Dear Comrade,

I would like to draw your attention to the following facts which have seriously hampered me in the execution of my party works. I request the party to take necessary action, if there is scope for any.

In the middle of June 1954, I suddenly came to know from some of my Cell comrades that a Party commission has been set up to investigate into my conduct. I also learned that these comrades have learned from IPTA comrades of IPTA office at 46, Dharamtala St., that there are 'twenty three' charges against me, the major ones being cheating, drinking, looseness in moral character, strike-breaking, etc., etc. They have also learned from the same source that I am going to be expelled within three or four days, etc.

By and by, I came to know that everybody (including non-party elements) of our front know about these charges, barring only those who should know, myself, my cell secretary and my local.

I learnt in January last that one of my associates in a business has instituted a charge concerning money affairs with the P.C. I asked my partner in the business, Comrade Promode Sengupta, if he knew anything. He also knew nothing.

For more than a month I was in a state of total isolation
from my friends and comrades. Baseless insults were a daily occurrence. I had to stop my work in one of the most important theatrical projects in recent years in IPTA solely due to this insufferable pressure.

It is almost impossible for me to describe the situation of those days in the end of June and the beginning of July.

But one thing has slowly become clear in my mind's eye. It is not a case of commission any more, or has to do directly anything with it,-it is rather an issue around which a movement in a hush-hush manner, as was usual in, say, 1949, gains ground.

I was at a loss to do anything. My cell passed a resolution asking P.C. to clarify the position. A week, ten days passed, no answer came. Then I put a resolution repeating the request. I decided to go to P.C and learn what is the root of the matter.

With my partner, Comrade Promode Sengupta, I went to P.C., submitted my resolution through cell personally and enquired. I learnt from P.C. leaders that there is really a case there. I asked for something in writing, and received from Comrade P.C.S. a letter to cell informing the real position. Cell learnt that Parijat Bose has accused me of cheating him of a sum of money in a film business and P.C. has fixed up comrade Promode Dasgupta to hold a preliminary enquiry. If occasion arises, I will be asked to explain.

So, that is all that party formally knew at the time. I also had to show this letter to comrades to allay falsehood however much I could.

After this, once I have been formally called up by Comrade-in-charge, and asked various things. I submitted a written
reply, and the whole thing quietened down. Nothing in the nature of a definite step has been taken as far as my knowledge goes. Probably the theory is that of "withering away."

But having recently received some information, I have reason to think that the whole thing is in a state of suspended animation. It may, I fear, land again like a veritable bombshell and the campaign would start again, that is, this seems to be a 'Democles sword' hung there by an unmindful person somewhere high up.

And during and after these facts came to light, I pondered over them and came to the conclusion that something must be done about it, because it does not affect me only, but my party and my organization. Party leadership including C.C. and C.C.C. must learn about them and be aware. This is a case in point rather, there are many such cases.

So, this letter and this formal charge

Whatever I can substantiate, I am recording here. These are to be taken as pointers and not the full picture. As such hush-hush campaigns are very difficult to locate and pin down in a formal manner, I can mention here only a few. But these stray points will show the line of action that has been followed. And if party wants to, it may unearth much more evidence.

To proceed:

(1) It was seven full months from the time P. C. took formal decision to hold the enquiry to the time of my being called up. I learnt from comrade Jyoti Basu. Within this period I have never been called, yet innumerable persons were called and their "statements" recorded. But comrades directly concerned with the
matter, either from the party or from the business point of view, have never been called.

(2) The persons called had nothing to do with the original charge, they were not concerned with it. Neither have they been asked about that point, but have been asked to opine about me and give information concerning my past. I learnt these from comrade-in-charge.

(3) Comrade-in-charge called "witness" by sending "chits" to non-party people in the name of the party such as Sri Mrinal Sen, sri Surapati Nandy etc. And he used to send these "chits" through another non-party man, and the accuser in this case, Sri Parijat Bose. This Parijat used as a weapon in his slander campaign against me. He told Sri Mrinal Sen and Com. Samiran Dutta (who was also called) many a story/stories concerning Com. Promode having tea with him in tea shops, telling him that I will be expelled forthwith, etc., etc. I do not know whether Com. Promode has done anything of the kind, but Parijat circulated these, its a fact and Com. Promode, by virtue of issuing 'chits' and commissioning such strange messengers, gave him full scope to display his talents.

(4) Com. Promode called me by sending a letter through Com. Nirmal Ghose, who took this opportunity to circulate the news that I am being called up. There are many comrades who heard from him this. Com. Promode could easily avail himself of the regular party channel. When I asked him this, he vaguely talked about a cell being loose from the party body, having difficulty in changing over a local or local etc.

(5) One day, an ex-party member and close sympathizer Sailen Painter, who used to work in the Technicians Studios, Tollygunge,
came to me and told his story. He had been approached by Parijat to give false statements implicating me in 'strike-breaking' in the Studio. When he refused, he has been urged in the name of Comrades Promode, Niranjan (IPTA) and Nirmal. He and Kesto Mistry of studio (who is also a sympathizer) should be asked to tell the whole story, I deter to go into this.

(6) Kartik Sarkar, a noted INTUC organizer and a gang leader of blacklegs who is in the pay of such persons as G. C. Bothra and I. K. Karnani is circulating sweet stories concerning Communist Party among studio workers, which is having repercussion upon the party. He is talking about his going to P.C., giving a piece of his mind about my character and so on and so forth.

I have learnt from Comrade-in-charge that he actually has visited P. C. and recorded his statement. What is this, Comrades?

(7) The original charge was forwarded by Provincial Fraction in I.P.T.A. Com. Jyoti Basu actually showed me the forwarding note signed by Com. Nirmal Ghosh strongly urging P.C. to take immediate action.

Parijat was a member of our squad in IPTA, which he left in May-June of 1953. It completely baffles me how he came to know of the existence of Party Fraction. He could have been directed to P.C. as his letter is addressed to P.C. of C.P.I. The whole thing has nothing to do with frontal organization or its fraction.

(8) It is more curious when I remember that these comrades, Nirmal and his associates put forward a charge in the then Cal. District Fraction of IPTA that this Prajit is a "police Spy."
They promised evidences, but as usual, forgot to produce them. But they never withdrew this charge, they stuck to it.

How this tallies with the behaviour of self-same comrades in letting this 'police spy' know of party Fraction within organization, fails me and befogs me.

(9) I met in the street Sri Mrinal Sen. He was very critical of the leadership for its handling of the case. Then he informed that many IPTA party members have visited the home of this sympathizer to urge him to go to P.C. and record charges about me, another communist. From his talks, I could gather that it was Nirangan (IPTA) and Nirmal Ghosh who went to his home. He should be asked.

(10) Com. Amal Kar of my cell reported in the cell that a frontal worker, Shri Jnan Majumdar told him that he has gone and given evidence against me. He told Amal that he was not very willing to go, but it was Com. Nirmal Ghosh who urged him and actually took him from office to P.C. office. Nirmal let him know about the charges 23 in number.

(11) I met Com. Subhas Mukherji and learnt that Com. Niranjan (IPTA) has met him and had told him about a "Commission" sitting on my moral and political lapses. He should be asked.

(12) Com. Nirmal Sarbajnya reported in our cell that Com. Niranjan used to take uncanny interest in the functioning of our cell. In fact, Niranjan did not even go back to his place at Baranagar on some nights and stayed at 46, Dharanmatala. N. Sarbajnaya also used to stay there at the time and when at night he used to go back, Niranjan used to ask him about whether I went to the meeting to-day, what did I say, what did I do, etc, and
used to comment, also he used to learn about next meetings etc.

In the later part of June, when it became clear that I am not going to take it laying down, in fact, I am going to face the whole music, he sent word through Sarbajnya that I should meet him—If I want my well-being. Of course, I did not go.

These are reportings in the cell.

(13) Com. Kali Banerji and Com. Sunil Dutt reported to the cell what they heard either from Nirmal or Niranjan or their close comrades at 46. They were told how bad I am, what politically dangerous element I am, how the commission is going to pass verdict within three days (presumably without informing, me, without going through the insignificant details of serving me a charge sheet etc.) and so on and so forth.

(14) I learnt from Com. Jyoti Basu that a resolution from the secretary of PIT III has reached the P.C. informing them that I am working frontally with them and am in a very responsible position. Com. Nibedita Das of that cell has learnt from Provincial Fraction that P.C. had warned it that there is a commission against me. Com. Secy, of PIT III wants to learn whether they can go on working with me!

How Com. Nibedita learnt this, I asked. Com. Saroj Mukherji told me that P. C. informed Provincial Fraction that they are taking necessary steps about the charges forwarded by it. This was merely a technical matter of routine

Com. Secy, of PIT III and Com. Nibedita have not heard this, (actually they were not aware that the charge was forwarded by provincial Fraction), but on the basis of this, something much more grave. What is that, and who told them? Has it been
distorted while in transit?

(15) Com. Sudhansu Chaudhuri, Town committee Secretary of Malda and a boyhood friend of mine, along with Bishua, a noted non-party artist of "Gambhira", who respects me very much—came one of those days to 46, Dharamatala to enquire about me. Niranjan and Nirmal immediately collared them, took them in a corner, and started telling that I am Party enemy, there is a commission against me, I am a Trotskyite (this is one of the 23 charges, they told). I am going to be expelled soon, etc.

Bishua left Calcutta without meeting me, Com. Sudhansu met me long after and told this.

(16) There are others who learnt the same things from the same source. I have reason to believe it has been reported as a part of official reporting in the PIT 1 cell that there is a commission sitting over me, and so comrades beware!

(17) My full membership has been approved by my cell about a year ago, but our local at that time did not ratify it as some complaints were pending about me in D.C. (which, I will show, is absolutely false and engineered by interested comrades).

Long after, our present L. C. S. went with the unanimous cell resolution granting me full membership to D. C. and received a formal reply that there is a case pending against me. Meanwhile, I learnt from Com. Debu Bose of my old local, that they have completed their reporting on the case long ago, and there is no reason to withhold my membership.

I learnt from Com. Promode that he was present at the D. C. office while this question cropped up. Afterwards it has been reported in the cell that it is being told by the P. C. and
D. C. to L. C. that I am a dangerous man, etc.

The long and short of it is, the whole thing is hanging for the last seven, eight months. Is it not now turning into a punishment without proper ground, and does it not make redundant further enquiry according to Party Constitution?

Any way I have grave doubts that Comrades-in charge of P. C. has a hand in circulating these whispers throughout the body of the party and in withholding my rightly earned membership.

(18) When I met Comrade-in-charge in P. C. office some months ago, he started talking with a curious attitude. He point blank asked to learn why I have concealed the fact that I was a member of R. S. P.

After this, he asked me about many things, but not a word about Parijat's charge. When I pointed this out, he declared that it is the "Party way" to hold an enquiry by entering into the whole past of a comrade. When I pointed out that he has never asked the comrades with whom I worked, or he has not touched any point which has a bearing with my front-IPTA, he told that these he considered unnecessary. I found a strange desire on his part to disassociate IPTA or any individual of that front from the whole thing.

These and many other things seemed extremely irregular to me, and in my written answer to him I touched these points at that time.

(19) I came to know that Comrade-in-charge even recently, in the latter part of December, talked before Comrade Jyoti Basu and some other P. C. 'M.'s and Com. L. C. S. of Ballygunge local (my
local), talked absolutely loosely. At best, his words can be described as most irresponsible way a party leader may talk; at worst, it forebodes grave danger for the party.

I gather that Comrade-in-charge is still collecting evidences about the charge put forward by Parijat, collecting them in North Bengal. He is still in the process of digging up my past.

I also gather that he has declared that I have Sneaked my way into the Party. He considers me highly dangerous (why, that has not been declared), and he thinks that I have accomplices around me, I have come with a "motive" (that, of course, everybody does, but he probably means a diabolical motive) and I am going to do something with something up my sleeve in some way and not according to something.

The details have not been unearthed as yet, but they will come, the point is, I am dangerous!

(20) Comrade! If you go through the papers, you will find that I had to answer numberless questions, completely unconnected with the original charge about which you have fixed up a Comrade to hold preliminary enquiry. It seems that any man of the street has walked in the P. C. office and D. C. and L. C. and recorded charges. All throughout the body of IPTA my name is mud. Whatever I say or do, becomes a charge forthwith. For the last one year, I had to go on answering negligible and imaginary charges. But still I could not get down to the main charges, that of being Trotskyite or some such thing or a police agent, because this is unuttered as far as records are concerned.
These are but some of the instances that have come to my knowledge and which I could substantiate. This is never the full picture, furtherest from it. But, I hope, the point I was getting at has been shown.

It is upto P. C. or C. C. C. to take necessary action or leave it.

But let me formulate my thoughts and concretize the whole thing into a charge.

I think I will have to touch upon a bit of the past also:

(a) The affair of this Parijat's charge has been handled in a manner reminiscent of 1948-49 period. I would like to draw attention of the party to the paras 32, 2(a), (b), (d) & (e) of Organizational Resolution of C.C. These have a direct bearing on this case and can be taken notice of from that angle.

(b) It is apparent to me that Comrades Promode Dasgupta, Nirangan Sen and Nirmal Ghosh have moved in a dangerous manner, which has infringed not only my party rights but violated Party forms and principles over and over again and has done much harm to the Party and unpopularised the Party to a section of the non-party masses and has given scope to anti-party element for slander.

(c) Especially Comrade Promode Dasgupta, while being a Provincial leader, has shown a want of leader-like loftiness and sober judgement. His behaviour has seemed to me Bureaucratic and it seems to me that he has used his high office and position for other interests than the Party's. His formulation that one has to dig up the whole past to hold any enquiry may well become unwelcome to himself if Party now enters his past, from the time
of his leaving "Anushilan" Party to date, including the period ending in the last P. C. conference.

I will have occasion to refer to certain malpractices done in IPTA in the name of P. C. etc. I think each time it will be found that it is he who is behind them. There is reason enough to believe that he is in "Physical contact" with Niranjan and Nirmal and as such, sees to their interest more or less.

(d) Comrades Niranjan Sen and Nirmal Ghosh are the fountain-head of all the falsehood germinating in IPTA party circles in my case. And their such behaviour is not an isolated case directed against a particular "Bad Boy" like me. Their past will show this trend again and again.

1952 was their target year for Utpal Dutt. This genuinely good and highly capable worker had his faults, as we all have, but he has been called an American Agent, a Trotskyite, by these two comrades to all the comrades working in IPTA. They talked of P.C. (Comrade Promode ?) having innumerable evidences to this effect ultimately, they were successful in driving this worker out. He can be contacted now and asked to state his case.

In 1953, these comrades concentrated upon Comrade Salil Chaudhuri, who, again, has his faults and greatness. They circulated stories that Salil has worked as a Strike-breaker in Gramophone Company of Dum Dum and many other stories. Salil left work not solely due to his anarchic habits, but no less due to disgust. He is coming down to Calcutta soon, he can be asked.

1954 made it apparent that I mean serious business as far as art work is concerned. Though they have consistently tried to harass my working in IPTA and coming into the Party for the last
four years, they were silenced by an ideological victory of the same approach to culture at Bombay Conference of IPTA. But this year they understand that I am working right in earnest. So, they tried the old method of such hush hush campaign. Saw that it is not making any effect. Then Parijat became a god-send to them. And they started heaping up trumped up charges in the P. C.

Niranjan has come to IPTA leadership in 1946. From then on, he has pulled these tricks upon many others in order to efficiently control and pocket this organization. He is constantly afraid of possible quarters of alternative leadership. (though, in almost all cases, the victims never cared for the leadership like him).

Nirmal came in 1950. His method is the same, if not more drastic and objectionable.

They have over and above party comrades "Liquidated" many a frontal worker. Latest is Sri Debabrata Biswas. He may be asked to state his case.

Their method is to collect all discontent (imaginary or real) about a certain comrade, and find out loopholes in the past or behaviour of such persons, and throw this collection into circulation as a hus-hush campaign. This is the first time they have failed and had to come out in the open.

They live by a "physical contact" method with P. C. leadership. They have ample time to go to P. C. regularly to direct its way of functioning and thereby assume authority.

Since there has been no principled Inner Party Discussion in IPTA Party circles' after the sectarian period, the whole
organization and notions of the comrades are where they were in 1948-49, and this situation they use to "control" the organization.

Their political say is very difficult to locate, as they scrupulously avoid writing. But still it can be shown that their Political say about the front is absolutely sectarian and dangerous.

Their organizational behaviour within IPTA is a history by itself. How they handle the funds of organization, the funds of different tours, office running methods, disbursement of money in the Ballet Squad of Cal., IPTA which is under their direct control their management of "Unity" and its fund, all these may turn out to be scandals by themselves. If the party wants to enter into this dirty affair of IPTA, I am ready to put forward facts and figures about these aspects.

About their personal characters, and doings, I have reason to have many questions.

About their personal artistic abilities, their records show nil. In order to be at the helm, they have taken recourse to finding such theories as "art organizers" (!) and such totally meaningless terms.

And they have accomplices within the Party body. Not only high up, but in the organization they have made a "family," the changes in the country demanding changes in outlook and organization and work have gone completely out of their sight.

Politically, Organizationally, Ideologically, Artistically and on personal plane, there are many questionable aspects in them.
Whatever I have stated, I will substantiate if and when the Party asks for it.

As far as Niranjan and Nirmal are concerned, it is only possible to assess the whole case when one enters the IPTA problems which have scrupulously been avoided so long by them in my case. As they know that I have always stated my say in writing frontally and in the Party, as they can see that the zigzag they followed in the last four years will immediately give out bad smell, as they feel secure that Party will never enter the problems of IPTA because of lack of time they concentrated on other things.

I will also now concentrate not upon IPTA. I am afraid, that will instantly mean a long delay. Though I do not understand why the Party which does not have time to brood over those problems, has enough time to spend over such things as my case, still I now want quick action.

And I think that I have enough ground for such demand. It is dangerous when Party leadership becomes partisan, it breeds despondency and depression among the comrades. It makes us feel helpless. When top leadership of a highly popular front becomes so much corrupt, it adds to despair.

I think that this is greatest danger within the Party today, much more grave it is than shift in stress as regards Nehru government or about the meaning of "Sovereignty" or about our notion of India proceeding on the path of Capitalist independence. It is true that these political facts have profound bearing upon our whole work, but no line of the party is
"right" or every line is a "liquidation" one so long as the Party including its leadership is so much uneducated and apolitical.

I think the case will prove to be so if even half my points are substantiated. And I hope to substantiates each one of them.

All the behaviour of these three comrades and their associates can easily be termed as "Factionalism."

I charge Comrades Promode Dasgupta, Nirangan Sen and Nirmal Ghosh of factionalism within the party and "Grouping" and "Disruption" in the frontal organization.

I request the Party to take action forthwith.

I also request the Party to take away my case from the hands of this comrade and hold fresh enquiry if necessary and arrive at a conclusion as quickly as possible.

I also request the Party to sit over the problems of IPTA which has become breeding ground for such treatments to comrades and clean up the whole organization.

And finally, I request the Party to send the copy attached herewith to the Central Control Commission for information as I think this step to be essential for my safety.

With revolutionary greetings,

Comradely yours,

Copy forwarded to:

Central Control Commission,
Communist party of India.
Notes
