CHAPTER IV
LEADERSHIP
There is a close relationship between the importance of leadership, the militancy of the ideology, the cohesion and power of the revolutionary organization, and the amount of time necessary for the revolutionary process to run its course. The role and personality of the leader become more important as the movement's ideological appeals are diffuse or incoherent, as its organization is weak and as the revolutionary process is extended in time. Under these circumstances, the leader must constantly reassure his followers that they are achieving their goals, that history is on their side, that defeat is only a temporary set back, and that tomorrow will bring the movement to the threshold of victory.

Also, the leadership's brilliance, and especially its charismatic content, become essential for a revolutionary movement because the movement must get the support of diverse interests. Workers, peasants, white-collar employees, middle and upper classes must be able to find their common identity in the personality of the leader. Sometimes, it is more the presence of the charismatic leadership than the argument that expresses the causes of their discontent, that gives confidence to the masses in their revolutionary power.

Leadership becomes a decisive factor in a revolutionary movement, when ideological uncertainty and organizational weaknesses exist. In such a situation a charismatic personality
could retrieve the situation beyond description. He could inspire confidence among the masses, fill the gap in the organizational structure and can buy time to complete the process of policy formulations. In short, he could become a source of strength to the very movement itself.

But political parties have different conceptions about leadership and charismatic personalities. The centrists consider that the leadership of a political party must be geared to winning elections only and all other issues must be allowed to wait. As the charismatic personalities attract the masses with great ease, the centrist parties always welcome such personalities into their fold. Sometimes, centrists do not even hesitate to build the party around the charismatic personalities. But the ideological leftists take a diagonally opposite view when they say that a political party must function as a communication network, functionally specializing in the aggregation of political communication for a polity. ¹ Certainly the leftists realize the importance of leadership but they do not believe in historical personalities and charismatic leaders. At any rate, they are not enamoured of it.

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A responsible leadership has got four functions to perform: (i) It must reflect the diverse interests of its group to the other groups of the society. (ii) It must bargain with other groups so as to bring maximum benefits to its group. (iii) It must mobilise the resources of its group to a better bargaining position with other groups. (iv) And, finally it must not hesitate to reveal the policy options and recourses available to its group as well as possibilities of success and pitfalls ahead.

In this perspective, Section I of this chapter describes the extent to which the communist leadership has remained as a true representative of the exploited sections of Tamil Nadu. Section II outlines the processes of collective leadership among the communist leaders of Tamil Nadu. Section III offers brief conclusions about communist leadership in Tamil Nadu.

Section I: Representative character of Communist Leadership.

Intellectuals and activists are the mainsprings of a social revolution and they have distinct, yet complementary, roles to perform. Intellectuals are predisposed - through temperament, family, education, occupation, etc. - to manipulate the symbolic rather than the material environment. They deal with man's role in society and the relationship between man, society, nature and history. They tend to be skeptical of
established norms and are willing to speculate on alterations in the social environment that presumably would correspond better to the nature of man.

Taking this message from the intellectual, the activist revolutionary leader is expected to interpret the greater events and general conditions of the society into terms that have meaning for everyday life of rank and file citizens. He does not implant new ideas but summarizes the existing ones in an especially coherent and appealing way. He simplifies complexity. While more objective conditions lay the basis for revolutionary action, it is in the consciousness of the revolutionary leader that revolutionary action begins. The activist then communicates his own insights and understanding of events to others, convincing and converting them into revolutionary action.  

Marxism first spread in India as well as in Tamil Nadu as a political programme rather than as a new world-view or cultural movement. The old generation of Indian Marxists served both as promoters of Marxist thought and builders of a political movement. But their role as activists overshadowed their role as intellectuals. In fact, the Marxist as broad

2. It is possible that an intellectual may be an activist and that an activist may have in him an element of intellectualism.

3. In many of the developed countries Marxism emerged first as an intellectual force before it gathered strength as a political force. But in India the historical sequence of the development of Marxist thought was reversed.
collectivity neither fully imbibed nor transmitted the entire philosophical and cultural legacy of Marx and Lenin. The introduction of Marxism to most Marxists began and often ended with the writings of Stalin. Consequently the problem of integrating the struggle for power with the endeavour for a cultural renewal or the problem of creating cultural preconditions of the struggle for power was seldom posed in Indian Marxism as sharply as it was done in the writings of Lenin, Gramsci and Mao. The result is that the concept of politics as both the fruit and the seed of deeper critical consciousness did not develop in India.  

A similar situation obtains in Tamil Nadu also. The Russian revolution kindled the imagination of Bharathi, but he was primarily a nationalist poet. Marxism did not attract his imagination as did the Russian revolution. No commendable work was done by him highlighting the politico-social and socio-economic conditions of India or Tamil Nadu. His role was entirely in a different category.

The publication of the pamphlet 'A challenge' by 'The Communist Federal League of India' organized by Nilakanta

Brahmachari was a powerful spark. But Brahmachari did not revise and publish this booklet as he was absorbed very much in political activities and was under imprisonment since 1922. The brief references of the socio-economic conditions of Madras Presidency, was the chief merit of this pamphlet.

Thiru.Vi.Kalyanasundara Mudaliar was convinced about the necessity of fulfilling the materialistic requirements of life as a precondition for the spiritual wellbeing. He expressed this opinion in his famour 'Biographical Notes'. His two works, 'Katturai Thirattu' (Anthology of Essays) and 'Indiavum Viduthalaiyum' (India and Freedom) provide ample testimony to his interest in Russian Revolution and Marxism and Leninism. Further he was also instrumental in bringing up the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society in Tamil Nadu. But Thiru.Vi.Ka did not creatively apply the tenets of Marxism to Tamil conditions.

The stalwart M.Singaravelu also failed to analyse the conditions of Tamil Nadu in the light of Marxist principles. He wrote profusely about the impending necessity of Marxist revolution in India but he did not describe the modalities of such a revolution in a complex society like the Tamils.


Actually Amir Hyder Khan, and S.V. Ghathe were not Tamils and hence no intellectual and Marxian treatment of Tamil society sprang from them. In fact they were more absorbed in building the party than in interesting themselves in theoretical queries. From 1940 onwards activists came to dominate the entire communist movement in Tamil Nadu. It is a pity that there was not even a single theorist amidst all the three streams - Dravidian, Nationalist and Communist - of Tamil Communists. The post-Independence period opened up new vistas of enquiry. But the 'activist' Tamil communists did not bother to study the structural specificities of Tamil Nadu. To-day they function more as faithful units of their all-India parties. Their ideological descriptions of Tamil society are nothing but average and generalised statements about the socio-economic conditions of India and they do not adequately picture Tamil Nadu. Also no significant creative Marxist description of Tamil Nadu came from the poets, dramatists, writers, journalists, lawyers, economists or academics.

Tamil communism had a significant growth during the pre-Independence period. But it did not fully develop as an intellectual force and movement in spite of its potentialities. It has remained more derivative than original, more theological than scientific, more assertive than receptive, and more negative than positive.
The paucity of intellectual climate has been directly responsible for the disharmoning of the activists and seeking of scapegoats for their failures. Their submergence in what P.C. Joshi calls, 'pamphlet Marxism' has led them to erroneous theoretical orientations. They have firmly believed that political practice is detached from the task of the development of theoretical consciousness. Consequently they have held that it is not man's struggle based on a higher level of theoretical consciousness which emerges as a principal factor in the emancipation of masses. They have piously hoped that emancipation is expected to come as a natural outcome of the objective course of evolution, as if without any conscious intervention on the part of man. And when such a miracle does not happen, they have traced the failure not to the lower level of consciousness of the masses but to the conspiracies and machinations of the class enemy.

The erroneous theoretical orientations of this pamphlet marxism, have seldom been identified by Marxist activists as one of the sources of their failure to intervene in the processes of social change in India with greater effectiveness. Seldom do they recognize that if a correct theoretical orientation releases social energy and transforms it into a revolutionary

force, a wrong orientation paralyses social initiative and thus undermines the active role of the people in the historical movement. It must be admitted that wrong theoretical positions by Marxist activists have been responsible in the past and also in the present for producing an escapist and perverse kind of mental outlook in the communist movement, one of seeking shortcuts to social revolution.

Paucity of intellectual climate and wrong theoretical orientations of the activists are not the only two reasons for the absence of revolutionary energy in Tamil Nadu. A third one exists. The activist leaders of the communist movement also happened to be thoroughly unrepresentative of the structure to which they belonged. Several reasons may be adduced for this situation.

(A) In the pre-Independence period as well as in the post-Independence period it has been the middle class intelligentsia who lead the CPI at the national and provincial levels. Even today the top brass of the communist parties are drawn from the middle class old guards who were associated with the CPI during its formative period. 10 Perhaps the illiteracy

10. P. Manickam, the present Secretary of the CPI, is a product of the student movement in South Arcot District. A. Balasubramaniam, the present Secretary of the CPI(M) is a lawyer. A. M. Kothandaraman, leader of the biggest Maoist movement in Tamil Nadu, is also a lawyer.
of masses, dearth of reading material in the regional languages, traditionalism, industrial backwardness, appalling poverty of the peasantry and the inability of the people to understand the problems of the country would have allowed the middle classes to monopolize the various strata of leadership during the pre-Independence period.

In the post-Independence period also the middle class dominance in the communist party has continued. The acceptance of the parliamentary methods as one of the weapons to fight Congress, the need to choose English knowing persons for effective communication in the All-India party organizations, and the professional competence of the middle class leaders in propaganda and debate might have been the major reasons for their continuation.

(B) In the pre-Independence period, several Brahmins with excellent organizing prowess - notable among them were Rajaji, Srinivasa Iyengar, C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, S. Satyamurthi etc.

11. An analysis of the leaders - 31 member Executive committee of the CPI, 23 member Executive committee of the CPI(M) and 7 leaders of the CPI(ML) - shows that: (1) all of them are literates (2) 50% of them are graduates (3) 27% of them are lawyers and (4) 12% are postgraduates.

Also, the report of the credentials committee of the 11th congress of CPI says: "56% of the delegates are from the middle classes". And the report of the credentials committee of the 10th congress of CPI(M) says: "56% of the delegates are from the middle classes".
had espoused the nationalist cause and became leaders in Indian National Congress. Several non-Brahmins with matching organizational capacities - notable among them were Thiagaraya Chetty, Raja of Panagal, E.V.Ramasamy, C.N. Annadurai etc - had gone over to a regionalist cause and led the non-Brahmin, Dravidian movement. The best in both the brahmin and non-brahmin leadership having gone to two opposing streams, the communist leadership came to possess only a second-line of leadership in Tamil Society.

In the post-Independence period a different trend in the leadership took place. Caste politics became predominant. In its progressive role, the primary function of caste in politics had been to transfer authority from higher to the middle castes.\textsuperscript{12} In the congress period, leadership slowly slipped out of the hands of the brahmins and was grasped by the castes of the landed gentry. To break the monopoly of power by the higher castes who dominated the congress party, C.N. Annadurai and his followers manipulated the symbols of caste and language adroitly.\textsuperscript{13} And they succeeded in wresting power from the higher castes and bringing it to the middle castes. With his popularity as the matinee-idol, M.G.Ramachandran has skillfully used his control over political communication, to bring power further down to


\textsuperscript{13} See Ramanujam, K.S. Big change, (Madras : Higginbothams, 1967).
lower castes. In this transformation communists remained as silent spectators.

Scanning the whole period, the inevitable objective conclusion that emerges is that, while Kamaraj was sedulously building the congress party in the middle of the fifties and was trying to iron out various factional squabbles, the communists were engaged in the ideological controversy. Their steadfast clinging to the argument of exploiting and exploited classes was divorced from political reality. And they lost the first chance. A second chance was given to them when Annadurai’s DMK was gaining momentum. Instead of co-operating with DMK, the communists mercilessly attacked them for their belief in 'Cultural nationalism'. Thus the second chance was also lost.

The Tamil communists were at a loss in trying to see the class argument in social relations all the time. The Bengali Bhadralok went ahead to mobilize the higher castes to achieve power in West Bengal. The Ezhava community also went ahead to seek support amidst non-Brahmin lower classes to capture power in Kerala. Pitifully the communists in Tamil Nadu had neither mobilized the higher castes nor the lower ones.

The result is that their leadership remains dormant today.

One more clarification about the social determinant of Tamil Nadu leadership, and its impact on communist movement, remains of the three streams that made the confluence in communist movement, the original communists slowly dissipated immediately after the Independence. Only Mohan Kumaramangalam was wielding influence. The Dravidian and the Congress Socialist leaders remained in uneasy coalition. When 1964 split came, it became a godsend chance to the majority of the congress socialists to move to the CPI(M). What was interesting was the majority of the congress socialists were Brahmans and the Dravidian element which stayed in CPI was largely from the non-Brahmin contingent. As the Tamil politics is strongly entrenched in Brahmin/Non-Brahmin controversy, the Brahmin leadership of the CPI(M) could not make headway among the masses. And people saw a better alternative, and which was alluring to the eyes and ears, in the DMK than espousing the non-Brahmin CPI.

(C) A study of the pattern of leadership unfolds another unhealthy trend. At present mass organizations are treated as wings of the party. No serious attempt is made to draw non-party

17. The percentage of scheduled castes in the leadership of CPI state Executive committee is 12.6 and the percentage of scheduled castes in the leadership of CPI(M) State Executive Committee is 14.2.
people into the executive bodies of mass organizations. In some places even regular elections are not held. Even a cursory glance into the leadership of the 23 member State Executive Committee and the office bearers of the state CITU, AIKS, TNALU, TNDWP, TNDYP and SFI reveals the fact that only about 30 people are occupying all these offices. Especially the party is careful not to allow any outsider in the workers, kisans, and Agricultural Labourer's fronts. They are not paying that much of attention to the women, Youth and Students Organizations. 18

The CPI leadership also functions in much less a similar fashion. The 31 member state Executive Committee dominates the State AITUC, AIKS, TNMKU, TNPW, TNYF and TNSF. Here also party members occupy the offices of the mass organizations and the mass organizations of the women, youth and students are neglected. 19

(D) With regard to leadership change, the communist parties present a pitiable picture. Normally leadership is replaced when (i) death occurs (ii) the member resigns (iii) member is expelled from the party or (iv) the member is promoted to the All-India organization. Resignation and expulsions are quite rare and promotion to All-India organization do not come easily.

The column of condolences offered to their party members in Party Life and People's democracy do not contain any such news with regard to Tamil Nadu State Executive Committee in the seventies. It shows a remarkable stagnation in the State Executive Committee. And the average age of the State Executive Committee of CPI(M) is 56 and the average age of State Executive Committee of CPI is 59. These ages cannot be considered as old age for political personalities but they are not zestful ages either.20

(E) A study of the class origins of the delegates to the Eleventh All India Congress of CPI shows that only 42% of the delegates belong to exploited classes, in the conventional Marxist sense. The rest 58% are middle classes. Even among the exploited classes only 13.1% belong to working classes and 15.4% belong to poor peasants and agricultural labourers. The rest 13.5% belong to the other categories. Class representation from women, is not at all reported. It is a pity that women find no representation at all.21

20. The functioning of National Council, the State Council and the District Council in CPI is convenient for the top brass of the CPI to filter the comparatively young aspirants for position and power. As a result new faces stop with these organs and they do not reach more. Although these institutions are not to be found in CPI(M), the party filters the new faces by sending them to relatively minor offices in the mass organizations for longer periods.

A study of the class origins of the delegates to the tenth congress of CPI(M) shows that: 14.8% are workers, 20.2% are peasants and agricultural labourers, 56% are middle classes and 9% are the rest. Even the CPI(M) does not report about the class representation from the women. It is difficult to estimate the particulars of class representation for state conferences of CPI, and CPI(M) because both the parties do not print and circulate the reports of the credential committees. 22

Thus, absence of the intellectual leadership coupled with wrong orientation and unrepresentative nature of the activists have put the communist parties in the real doldrums. No real theory of man's role in Tamil society has been worked out. No clear cut policy has been laid. The Tamil society moves along castc, linguistic and all other considerations except the class one.

Section II: Processes of Collective Leadership in Communist parties

The collective nature and perhaps an echo of Khruschev's denunciation of personality cult is heard in Article XIV(e) of the constitution of CPI, and in the very same article of the constitution of CPI(M), which runs as follows: "All party committees shall function on the principle of collective

decisions and check up combined with individual responsibility". Leadership between two state conferences belongs not to the Secretary but to the State Executive Committee. Thus democratic centralism reduces substantially the importance of individual leaders.

Collective decision and responsibility of the leaders are a reality in the communist parties. The party leader is more of an accredited agent than a chief and occupies a representative position in every sense of the term. They can initiate proposals. It is one of their duties to do so. But such proposals are never regarded as anything deserving special consideration simply because they emanate from leaders. The proposals are subjected to searching criticism at different levels and finally they may not be accepted by the party, or may be adopted by it with radical modifications. The top leaders also do not consider this as a matter of no-confidence; because they realise that the leadership in the party is of a collective nature.

Once a decision is taken by an appropriate body it is for the leaders to take suitable measures for its implementation. The directive of the leaders have to be carried out faithfully by rank and file. So far as execution of a policy is concerned the leaders occupy positions of unquestionable authority. It
is generally conceded that the standard of discipline of the communist parties are fairly high. The leaders, therefore, have the satisfaction of functioning as real executives of the party.

Thus in communist parties democracy is found in 'innerparty democracy', 'mass participation in the formulation of policy' and in 'criticism and self-criticism'. Centralism is found in the 'individual subordinating to the will of the majority', 'minority carrying out the will of the majority', and in lower party organizations abiding by the directives of the higher party organs. There are no two opinions with regard to the observance of the principle of democratic centralism by the communists.

However a certain measure of uncertainty is introduced in the relationship between the party and its legislative wing. Since education, particularly, education leading to the ability to handle the English language continues to be an indispensable requisite of legislative efficiency, the middle classes have had a special advantage in securing party nominations for elections to State Legislatures or Parliament. English is still the contact language for All-India affairs and is the most commonly used language in the parliament. Hence the English-knowing middle class members of the party enjoy almost a monopoly of the legislative offices.
Not unnaturally, the communists make a distinction between legislative leadership and that in the party organization. Leaders for legislative offices are chosen after giving due consideration to the country's age-old tradition, caste, religion, and other regional interests. At the same time the parties bear in mind the socio-economic conditions of the aspirants also. But getting elected to leading positions in the party organization at different levels is the reward for personal sacrifice, loyal and efficient service to the party. 

As such the principles of 'recognition to service' for party leadership and 'recognition to socio-economic status' for legislative leadership appear sound in theory. In the day today relations the legislative leaders do not enjoy the freedom that may be claimed by the corresponding bodies of centrist parties. The communist parliamentary or legislature party organizations are directed by the party constitutions to function under the appropriate committee in strict conformity with the line of the party, its policies and direction. The leader of the parliamentary or Legislature party has to maintain close contacts with appropriate party headquarters and report back to the organization within the Legislature or Parliament. The nature and extent of control that may be exercised by the Party headquarters, vary according to the attitudes of the headquarters as also the character of leadership of the communist personnel.

in legislative bodies.

Now two consequences are bound to arise by the headquarters control over legislative wing: (1) Any possibility for the emergence of charismatic leadership is suppressed and impatient members of the legislative wing migrate to other parties. (2) If there is lenient attitude towards the legislative party by the headquarters, various party organs consider it as 'alien outlook'.

The attempting of the communist parties to use Parliament as an instrument for social change and their eschewing charismatic leadership do not go together. Peaceful method of social transformation is essentially a technique of centrist parties. Remaining ideological, and yet trying to do what exactly the centrists want to do, ends in strange bedfellowship. When the charismatic qualities of a communist leader is neglected or derided, the 'peaceful' intention of the communist party gets dwarfed. And in the process the charismatic leader also gets disheartened. Actually the case of P.Jeevanandam is an illustration in point. It may be true that Jeeva never deserted his party. But, given the development of his charismatic qualities, he would have become a much more popular leader among the Tamils. This, in turn, would have benefitted the

24. Interview with Jayakantan on June 18, 1981.
communists in the long run. But under the mask of democratic centralism the communists disabled Jeevanandam to such an extent that he was defeated in 1962 Assembly elections to the point of losing his deposit. Apart from Jeevanandam, no other leader possessed any magical influence among the masses. All other leaders are simple careerists.

In the CPI, suppression of the legislative wing by the party headquarters and underplaying the charismatic personalities or efficient leaders has led to migration of leadership. In the migration of leadership three patterns are discernible. 25

(1) The first type of migration has been based on Kumaramangalam's thesis. (2) The second pattern has been to establish new parties and (3) The third alternative has been

25. Mr. Kumaramangalam's thesis, "A Review of Party policy since 1947", was submitted as a confidential document to the CPI in 1964. It was then unceremoniously consigned to Party archives. In early 1969, he submitted it again with a postscript. The major contention of the thesis has been to infiltrate Indian National Congress, own its radical programmes and launch mass movements in support of these demands to pressurise congress leadership both from within and without with the ultimate object of capturing power. Kumaramangalam himself joined the congress cabinet in 1969. See Singh, S., Communists in Congress, (Delhi : D.K.Publishing House, 1973). Veteran communists, who firmly established communism in Tanjore district, Nanarli C.Kandasamy and A.K. Subbiah went out of the party to establish Tamil Nadu Communist Party in 1973. The party soon dissolved because of premature death of Nanali C.Kandasamy. K. Subbu, who had a meteoric rise in the CPI, found that the slow moving communist organization was not to his taste and hence he joined the DMK in 1973.
to migrate to regional parties. Although the damage inflicted by the migration to regional parties has been very much less, such migrations show the deep resentments inside the party to a remarkable extent. But it is undeniable that the migrations to the congress party has worked out severe losses to the CPI.

Although the party headquarters and legislative wing relations are not cordial, no precipitative action can be discerned, as the discipline is strict in the CPI(M). It may be that no charismatic leaders has so far emerged in their ranks. Also leadership migration is not noticed. It is further interesting to note that there is no crossing of leaders between CPI(M) to CPI or vice versa since the split.

To illustrate the observance of the principle of democratic centralism in the CPI right from its beginning and also to show the nature of behaviour of the State Executive Committee, a case study is presented here. This case study also brings out the conflict that was in existence between the headquarters and the Legislative wing.²⁶

Two State Executive Committee members of the Tamil Nadu community party did not like the favours that were shown to

legislative assembly members. They also did not like the way in which party affairs were conducted and strikes were organized. Hence they submitted a 'Self critical note' along with 'Relevant Notes' to the central committee meeting and the Provincial committee meeting on June 10, 1949. The details of the note were: (i) Characteristics of the pre-second congress (1948) period (ii) The second congress and after and (iii) Railway strike. The 'Relevant notes contained: (i) On the background to March 9, 1949, (ii) Additional note to self critical report, (iii) On the Secretary's note to Jail Comrades and (iv) On publications.

The report opens with a statement that the aim of the letter was self criticism and an analysis of the Railway strike on March 9, 1949. In the characteristics of the pre-second congress period, the note says, the Tamil Nadu Communist Party had developed economic concepts of struggles by observing: (i) Strike as a weapon to win partial demands (ii) Formulating demands as are realisable in the particular strike without reference to any basic programmes of the party and without bothering to raise the level of consciousness of the workers engaged in struggles (iii) Strikes to bring pressure on the congress ministry. For this theoretical reasoning, Shankar and Nuthu had given practical instances to prove their contention. They said: (1) We tailed behind P.R.K. Sharma and Seetha Rama
Naidu in Madras fearing an independent approach would split the Trade Union. (2) A strike against Surendran in Nettur was abandoned. (3) In the name of tripartite negotiations, B and C Mill strike in 1947 was withdrawn as per the wishes of S.C. Anthony Pillai. (4) In 1945 with the arrival of anti-congressmen, CPI quits Binny Beach Engineering Works, Madras. (5) We prolonged cut to call a strike in Harvey Mills, Madurai. (6) In Coimbatore we failed behind the leadership of the socialist party. (7) In Harvey Mills, Tuticorin, congressmen lead our struggle and show the path to us. (8) In November 1947, Kamaraj tries to silence the N.C.O. strike by threat and the initiative of the CPI was withdrawn by calling off the strike, due to the pressure of CPI legislators.

Finally Shankar and Puthu contend that ignorance of Marxism, lack of any principled approach to the problems and realities of the working class movement and deep rooted reformist practice lend to the incapability of the provincial council to assess at every stage its work and policy. They suggest that the strikes should have been conducted in the following manner:

(1) Show how the economic crisis is intensifying and how the strike defeats have not solved any problem for workers and show how resistance is bound to grow.
(2) Picture the face of the New Masses - the meaning of their resistance, getting interested and trained in revolutionary battles.

(3) Show the political content of the strike as expressions of disillusionment and defiance, against congress government after the achievement of so called Independence.

(4) Estimate the gains of these struggles in relation to general working class movement as a whole, how it strengthens the class fight, how it forces the bourgeoisie government to go slow and cautious in its attack against workers, how it builds greater confidence in the working class in its own struggle etc.

(5) Bring out self criticism of the role played by the party and the strike committees in the struggles and the tactical line pursued in the struggles.

(6) Finally lay down the perspective for the coming period.

Further Shankar and Rethu had analysed the existing relationship between the party centre and the unit of Madras. They alleged: (1) The task of political leadership was not at all taken seriously by the Madras unit. It has been almost a tradition. The practice of examining our activities and struggles in the light of the political line at every stage had been absent. It had always been our practice of solving our problems by tips, impulses and the prevailing moods which reformism gives rise to, without reference to the basic perspective and the
fundamental class realities. (2) Our conception of our political obligation to New Delhi Headquarters had been one of formal centralism. We did not send any reviews. There had been a tendency to substitute individuals for Politbureau and central committee. (3) Self-criticism vanished more and more from the party and criticism of the activities of other members had increased beyond description. (4) Leadership qualities had been on the wane. The communist leader if he is to remain a leader must be constantly revolutionizing his consciousness, learning from the masses, critically examining and uprooting all those concepts that have proved harmful and obsolete, and striving to replace them with new revolutionary concepts that the theory and the revolutionary experience of the masses afford. It means taking the study of theory, seriously applying theory to the movement, doing real self-criticism in every moment of activity and irreconcilably fighting alien class outlook and habits.

Finally Shankar and Muthu had concluded their note by saying that such a conception of the role of a leader does not exist in Madras unit, and that is why, though our province represents a powerful working class force, its leadership is bankrupt in Marxism and political understanding.

In response to this Note, the politbureau of the CPI had resolved on May 5, 1949: (1) The Politbureau denounces the stand and conduct of the Tamil Nadu Secretariat in
withdrawing from the Railway strike as treacherous to the working class. (2) The PB warns that the Tamil Nadu Secretariat returns to Joshian Line. (3) The tactics advocated by Tamil Nadu Secretariat are continuation, under different circumstances, of Ramamurthy's treacherous line of Industrial Truce. (4) Tamil Nadu had been led by people whose consciousness and conception of Marxism, proletarian struggle and hegemony, and partial struggle - were all pre-Meerut conceptions. (5) Tamil Nadu leadership had mistaken radical congressmen for communism and Marxism. and (6) Since comrades Muthu and Shankar had placed pure facts of Tamil Nadu leadership, it has not been necessary to take any drastic actions against them. 27

Thus the dual between the party headquarters and the legislative wing had led to a serious weakness in the party organization. The weakness manifested itself in three areas: 1) Though the question of party's policy has been settled in periodical All India party congresses, several comrades have not reconciled to this fact and they repeatedly raise policy issues. 2) The united functioning has been hampered because of the rise of individualism and subjectivism; and (3) The party loses efficiency because the whole party is not attuned

to participating in the struggles conducted by the party.

Section III: Conclusions

By remaining in middle class leadership, by not allowing all other sections to participate and by not giving way to younger elements the leadership of the communist parties have become sterile. As they do not mobilize the masses and leaders of either of Brahmin or Non-Brahmin castes, they have travelled away from social reality. Thus the leadership of the communist parties have become totally unrepresentative of the structure of the society.

This unrepresentative position has led to their incapacity for bargaining with congress or DMK or AIADMK. A nationalist and a regionalist stream have shared among themselves the general and particular issues of the society respectively without giving scope to the communists. The arguments of the communists have not cut much ice. Again, their own unrepresentative position has not enabled them to mobilize them in favour of their struggles and programmes. Actually, the mobilization of the masses, bargaining with class enemies or friends, and remaining representatives of the classes are all mutually interactive and in this the communists could not do much.
A leadership is fed on the strength of the followers.

Having failed to mobilize the workers and peasants and having given not much real care to enlist the support of women, youth and students, the communists did not expect very many victories in their struggles. It was difficult for them to keep their houses in order, especially in the antagonism between relationships of its legislative wing and party functionaries. That they did to keep strict discipline so long is a matter for rejoice. And presumably the communist leadership in Tamil Nadu has failed so far.