

## Chapter VI

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Practical political activities of the CPI and the CPI(M) on their respective programmatic issues of agrarian reforms and rural democracy : An empirical study :

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                 (ii)    The Questionnaire and the Profile of  
                          the Respondents
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## Section 1 (i) Methodology

To study the programmatic differences between the two communist parties it is imperative to examine their respective actual political practices. Therefore, this study is designed to explore areas of differences on two important programmatic issues—agrarian reforms and rural democracy by looking into the actual practices of the two communist parties, namely, the CPI and the CPI(M). To explore their differences the methodology applied for the purpose may be stated below.

The State of West Bengal has been taken as the universe of this study. Three distinct regions have been selected from three parts : northern part, middle part and western part of West Bengal. These are West Dinajpur district, Burdwan district and Midnapore district respectively. The specific areas where this survey has been conducted are : Itahar Assembly Constituency in West Dinajpur district, Bhatar Assembly Constituency in Burdwan district and Panskura-West Assembly Constituency in Midnapore district. Only predominantly rural areas have been chosen so that in the context of agricultural economy there the two parties' practices for agrarian economy may be studied. It has also been taken care of that in the areas selected both the communist parties have considerable political influence or base since 1964. Besides, the undivided communist party

had political influence in these three areas both in the pre-and post-independence periods. Their respective political influence can justifiably be shown in the table below from their election records for the State Legislative Assembly elections since 1964. This study covers the period

Pre-split CPI's position in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly Elections in the following Assembly Constituency in West Bengal

|      | Panskura-West<br>(in Midnapore<br>District)   | Bhatar (in<br>Burdwan<br>district)  | Itahar (in<br>West Dinajpur<br>district)   |
|------|---|---|--|
| 1952 | Haripada Bhowmik<br><br>CPI. 9,654  | In this election<br><br>Bhatar was a part<br>of Kanksa Assemb-<br>ly Constituency<br>and from 1957 it<br>became an Assemb-<br>ly Constituency | *Banamali Das<br><br>Cong. 11,779<br><br>Basanta Lal<br>Chatterjee<br><br>CPI. 6,020 |
| 1957 | Smt. Geeta<br>Mukherjee<br><br>CPI. 19,134  | *Smt. Abhalata<br>Kundu<br><br>Cong. 14,922   | Banamali Das<br><br>Cong. 8,443<br><br>*Basanta Lal<br>Chatterjee<br><br>CPI. 8,887  |
|      | *Shyamdas<br>Bhattacharyya<br><br>Cong. 26,303<br><br>(It was then<br>Panskura-South) | Sundar Gopal<br>Mitra<br><br>CPI. 10,274  |  |

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|      |                            |                           |                           |
|------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1962 | Omar Ali                   | *Aswani Roy               | Basanta Lal<br>Chatterjee |
|      | <u>CPI.</u> 27,228         | <u>CPI.</u> 21,301        | <u>CPI.</u> 19,542        |
|      | *Shyamdas<br>Bhattacharyya | Saradindu Sekhar<br>Gupta | *Joynal Abedin            |
|      | <u>Cong.</u> 31,849        | <u>Cong.</u> 15,407       | <u>Cong.</u> 22,276       |

\*Candidates elected.

since 1964 when the Communist Party of India was divided into the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) and the Communist Party of India (CPI).

The post-split electoral position of CPI and CPI(M) in the three Constituencies since the Fourth Assembly Elections (1967) has been shown in the table below.

|      | Panskura - West<br>(in Midnapore<br>district) | Bhatar (in<br>Burdwan<br>district) | Itahar (in<br>West Dinajpur<br>District)                                  |
|------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| 1967 | *Rajani Kanta<br>Pramanik                     | Aswani Roy                         | Basanta Lal<br>Chatterjee   |
|      | <u>B. Cong.</u> 36,132                        | <u>CPI.</u> 11,638                 | <u>Ind.</u> 10,529  |
|      | Shyamdas<br>Bhattacharjee                     | *Santimoy<br>Hazra                 | *Joynal Abedin  |
|      | <u>Cong.</u> 21,949                           | <u>Cong.</u> 12,291                | <u>Cong.</u> 25,620   |
|      |   |                                    | [ Chatterjee was<br>officially not<br>nominated but<br>supported by CPI ] |

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|      |   |  |   |
|------|---|--|---|
| 1969 | *Ahindra Mishra<br>B. Cong. 32,070<br>Harekrishna<br>Pattanayak<br>Cong. 25,029 | *Aswani Roy<br>CPI. 26,357<br>Santimoy<br>Hazra<br>Cong. 10,808                | Basanta Lal<br>Chatterjee<br>CPI. 24,447<br>*Joynal Abedin<br>Cong. 26,461  |
| 1971 | Chitta Ranjan<br>Chakraborty<br>Cong. (R) 12,448<br>*Omar Ali<br>CPI. 20,984    | *Anath Bandhu<br>Ghosh<br>CPI(M). 18,516<br>Aswani Roy<br>CPI. 5,391           | Haricharan<br>Debnath<br>CPI(M). 12,541<br>*Joynal Abedin<br>Cong. R. 30,221<br>Sachindu<br>Chakraborty<br>CPI. 6,308 |
| 1972 | Manaranjan Roy<br>CPIM. 9,209<br>*Omar Ali<br>CPI. 28,090                       | Anath Bandhu<br>Ghosh<br>CPIM. 11,974<br>*Bholanath<br>Sen<br>Cong. 31,822     | *Joynal Abedin<br>Cong. 37,810<br>Shanti Sarkar<br>CPIM. 10,543   |
| 1977 | *Omar Ali<br>CPI. 15,497<br>Sk. Fayez Ali<br>CPIM. 9,533                        | *Bholanath<br>Sen<br>Cong. 29,324<br>Saktipada<br>Chattopadhyay<br>F.B. 28,587 | *Joynal Abedin<br>Cong. 26,747<br>Salil Kr. Gupta<br>CPIM. 16,384   |

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|      |                        |                        |                        |
|------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1982 | *Omar Ali              | Bholanath Sen          | Basanta Lal Chatterjee |
|      | <u>CPI.</u> 46,399     | <u>Cong.</u> 37,016    | <u>CPI.</u> 35,339     |
|      | Jyoti Kr. Roy          | *Sayad Md. Masih       | *Joynal Abedin         |
|      | <u>Cong (I)</u> 26,407 | <u>CPIM.</u> 44,045    | <u>Cong (S)</u> 42,496 |
| 1987 | Asit Baran Samanta     | Banamali Hazra         | Joynal Abedin          |
|      | <u>Cong (I)</u> 30,974 | <u>Cong (I)</u> 38,493 | <u>Cong-I</u> 43,021   |
|      | *Omar Ali              | *Sayd Md. Masih        | *Swadesh Chaki         |
|      | <u>CPI.</u> 52,416     | <u>CPIM.</u> 55,958    | <u>CPI.</u> 47,542     |

Section 1 (ii) The Questionnaire and the Profile of the Respondents.

The questionnaire has been designed for a field survey to explore the individual political aspects and areas of activities of the two parties in respect of agrarian reforms and rural democracy and to examine their differences.

Basic features of the questionnaire : (1) Queries were directed to demands for agrarian reform and rural democracy made by CPI and CPI(M); nature and forms of struggle for these demands; participation, leadership and opposition. (2) Queries were also designed to get information for the periods separately for 1947-1964 and 1964-1985. (3) Emphasis has been laid more on the latter period (1964-1985) which is

relevant to this study. (4) Another important query was on the inter-relationship between the two communist parties as to how one party assessed the other at the lowest layer of their respective party-organisations. This examination will be indicative of the programmatic criticism of one against the other. (5) The questionnaire has been as far as possible structured.

However, this is an attempt to examine the practical positions of the two contending parties beside their respective programmatic assertions for India's revolution and their difference of approach studied earlier.

The specific lay-out of the questionnaire consists of the three main sections, namely, agrarian reforms, rural democracy and practical aspects of CPI and CPI(M).

First, the questionnaire on agrarian reforms has been subdivided into (i) leadership of the movement during both the pre-split and post-split periods; (ii) approaches to agrarian reforms particularly after the split of the party, and (iii) role of CPI and CPI(M) in the movement for the economic rights for the agricultural labourers.

Second, the questionnaire on rural democracy covers the movement for democracy and the class forces required for ensuring democratic measures.

The last important aspect is the political inter-relationship (difference) between the two contending communist parties for joint movement at the lower level.

A profile of the respondents necessary on the basis of their independent characteristics. For this purpose, the questionnaire was designed to elicit information about the respondents' age, occupational identity, education and class origin.

An equal number of respondents have been chosen from the two parties in each of the three selected areas. In each Assembly Constituency 8 respondents from the CPI and 8 respondents from the CPI(M) have been chosen. Thus their total number is 48 in the three constituencies. Care has been taken to choose the respondents with a minimum organisational experience in their respective parties at the lowest level like Local Committee Membership (LCM) of the CPI(M) and the Local Council Membership of the CPI.

Data collected from the three selected areas of West Bengal on the above issues relating to CPI and CPI(M) are presented in the next Section for detailed study.

The Questionnaire has been included as Appendix II.

#### Independent Characteristics of Respondents :

The profile of respondents has been drawn up showing their independent characteristics. The following tables are prepared on this basis.

Table 1 : Existing occupation of the respondents (rural level leaders from both the CPI and the CPI-M)

| Name of professions                        | Itahar |       | Bhatar |       | Panskura |       | Total |       | Grand Total |
|--|--------|-------|--------|-------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
|  | CPI    | CPI-M | CPI    | CPI-M | CPI      | CPI-M | CPI   | CPI-M |             |
| Ag.L.                                      | 1      | 1     | 1      | 1     | 1        | 1     | 3     | 3     | 6           |
| Poor peasants/<br>Share<br>-croppers       | 1      | 1     | 1      | -     | 1        | 1     | 3     | 2     | 5           |
| Middle peasants                            | 3      | 1     | 2      | 1     | 2        | -     | 7     | 2     | 9           |
| Educā- (Teac-<br>ted )hers                 | 2      | 4     | 2      | 4     | 1        | 3     | 5     | 11    | 16          |
| Middle (Doct-<br>class )ors                | -      | -     | 1      | -     | 2*       | -     | 3     | -     | 3           |
| Full time politicians<br>(whole-<br>timer) | 1      | 1     | 1      | 1     | 1        | 1     | 3     | 3     | 6           |
| Unemployed                                 | -      | -     | -      | -     | -        | -     | -     | -     | -           |
| Landlords                                  | -      | -     | -      | -     | -        | -     | -     | -     | -           |
| Others<br>(Business<br>men)                | -      | -     | -      | 1     | -        | 2     | -     | 3     | 3           |
| Total                                      | 8      | 8     | 8      | 8     | 8        | 8     | 24    | 24    | 48          |

\*One is a homeopath and another, unlicensed practitioner of medicine.

It may be noted that CPI respondents have a larger representation from middle peasants (i.e., 29.1%) whereas the corresponding figure for CPI-M is 8.3%. Certainly,

CPI-M respondents have larger representation from educated middle class (45.8%), the corresponding figure for CPI being 20.8%. If, however, these two groups are added together, there is not much of a difference.

Table 2 : Average age-group of the respondents

| Average age group<br>(in years) | Itahar |       | Bhatar |       | Panskura<br>- West |       | Total |       | Grand<br>Total |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|
|                                 | CPI    | CPI-M | CPI    | CPI-M | CPI                | CPI-M | CPI   | CPI-M |                |
| Below 40                        | 1      | -     | -      | -     | -                  | -     | -     | -     | 1              |
| Between<br>41-50                | 2      | 6     | 1      | 5     | 2                  | 3     | 5     | 14    | 19             |
| 51-60                           | 4      | 2     | 2      | 2     | 3                  | 5     | 9     | 9     | 18             |
| 61-70                           | 1      | -     | 4      | 1     | 2                  | -     | 7     | 1     | 8              |
| 71 and<br>above                 | -      | -     | 1      | -     | 1                  | -     | 2     | -     | 2              |
| Total                           | 8      | 8     | 8      | 8     | 8                  | 8     | 24    | 24    | 48             |

It may be noted that age-group 41-50 years has largest representation from CPIM respondents (58.3%), the CPI figure being 20.8%. On the otherhand, 61-70 years age group has much larger representation in CPI (29.1%) whereas the CPI-M corresponding figure is 4.1% only.

Table 3 : Institutional educational standard of the respondents

| Educational standard                  | Itahar   |          | Bhatar   |          | Panskura - West |          | Total     |           | Grand Total |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
|                                       | CPI      | CPI-M    | CPI      | CPI-M    | CPI             | CPI-M    | CPI       | CPI-M     |             |
| No education                          | 1        | -        | -        | 1        | 1               | 1        | 2         | 2         | 4           |
| Upto primary                          | 1        | 1        | 2        | -        | 1               | 1        | 4         | 2         | 6           |
| Upto Matriculation                    | 4        | 6        | 2        | 2        | 2               | 3        | 8         | 11        | 19          |
| Graduation                            | 2        | 1        | 3        | 5        | 3               | 3        | 8         | 9         | 17          |
| Post-graduation                       | -        | -        | -        | -        | 1               | -        | 1         | -         | 1           |
| vocational or professional graduation | -        | -        | 1        | -        | -               | -        | 1         | -         | 1           |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>8</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>8</b>        | <b>8</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>48</b>   |

If those reading upto primary level are alone considered, the CPI respondents have 16.6% representation, the CPI-M figure being 8.3% only. Again, taking those reading upto Matriculation alone, CPI-M has 45.3% respondents of this category, but CPI figure is 33.3%. If these categories are put together, there is no significant difference between CPI and CPIM.

Table 4 : Class origin of the Respondents (among the different rural classes)

| Class origin                   | Itahar |       | Bhatar |       | Panskura - West |       | Total |       | Grand Total |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
|                                | CPI    | CPI-M | CPI    | CPI-M | CPI             | CPI-M | CPI   | CPI-M |             |
| Agricultural labourers         | 2      | 2     | 1      | 2     | 2               | 1     | 5     | 5     | 10          |
| Poor -peasants share -croppers | 2      | 3     | 1      | 3     | 2               | 2     | 5     | 8     | 13          |
| Middle peasants                | 3      | 2     | 1      | 2     | 3               | 4     | 7     | 8     | 15          |
| Educated Middle Class          | 1      | 1     | 2      | 1     | 1               | 1     | 4     | 3     | 7           |
| Erstwhile landlords            | -      | -     | 3      | -     | -               | -     | 3     | -     | 3           |
| Others (Rural Businessmen)     | -      | -     | -      | -     | -               | -     | -     | -     | -           |
| Total                          | 8      | 8     | 8      | 8     | 8               | 8     | 24    | 24    | 48          |

It has been found that agricultural labourers and poor peasants and share-croppers, the lowest category of rural residents constitute 54.16% of respondents from CPIM and 41.5% from CPI. The percentages of middle peasants and educated middle class together constitute 45.8% respondents from each CPI-M and CPI. Erstwhile landlords constitute 12.5% of respondents from CPI, but no such respondent was found from CPIM.

## Section 2 Compilation and Analysis of Data

A field survey has been conducted to enquire about the practical political approaches of the CPI and the CPI(M) on the two basic programmatic issues, agrarian reforms and rural democracy and to examine whether their respective programmatic assertions have been translated into practice. Here below the discussion will be concentrated on compilation and analysis of data collected through field survey from the selected areas and from the selected respondents mentioned earlier.

It is evident that agrarian unrest was a continual feature of rural life in the period(1947-54). Main slogans in the agrarian front under the leadership of the undivided CPI during the period was for complete abolition of landlordism, distribution of the surplus land among the landless peasants, security of share-croppers and a proper tenancy legislation, etc. The CPI and its peasant front fought for these aims and mobilized the rural poor and landless peasants against the stiff opposition of the landlords and vested interests. The following tables would throw light on the methods and means of movement, opposition from the vested interests, pattern of participation of the rural people and the class origin of the leadership for the agrarian movement. The respondents of both the parties responded almost in the same fashion about the state of

affairs of the pre-split CPI in these regards during the period between 1947 and 1964.

Table 5 : Methods and means of struggle for land under the leadership of the (undivided) CPI and its peasant front during 1947 to 1964

| Methods and means of movement                      |     | Itahar |       | Bhatar |       | Panskura - West |       | Total |
|--|-----|--------|-------|--------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|
|  |     | CPI    | CPI-M | CPI    | CPI-M | CPI             | CPI-M |       |
| 1. Meeting/ Protest Procession/ memoranda          | Yes | 8      | 8     | 8      | 8     | 8               | 7     | 47    |
|  | No  | -      | -     | -      | -     | -               | 1     | 1     |
| 2. Strike/ Demonstrations                          | Yes | 2      | 1     | 5      | 2     | 5               | 1     | 16    |
|  | No  | 6      | 7     | 3      | 6     | 3               | 7     | 32    |
| 3. Forcible acquisition of vested and benami lands | Yes | 7      | 8     | 5      | 5     | 5               | 7     | 37    |
|  | No  | 1      | -     | 3      | 3     | 3               | 1     | 11    |
| 4. Others, Legal battles                           | Yes | 1      | -     | -      | -     | 1               | -     | 2     |
|  | No  | 7      | 8     | 8      | 8     | 7               | 8     | 46    |

The above table shows that the methods and means stated in the item no. (1) (meeting, protest procession and memoranda) were pursued in most of the cases for agrarian movement followed by the method of forcible acquisition (stated in the item no.3) took the next place in the struggle for land during this movement. The application of force was a pointer to the threat of opposition of the

landed interests during the struggle for land. A third of the respondents have indicated that strike and demonstrations were also means pursued during this period but double that number denied this.

The survey result shows that the nature and means of opposition by the landed interest in the rural areas during this period were principally of five categories; these were - armed attacks, repression through police administration, harassment through court-cases, economic boycott and social persecution. From the answers of the respondents it is evident that barring a few, almost all respondent held that vested interest in the rural areas was far stronger to meet any challenge of the landless and the poor peasants led by the CPI and its peasant front during this period.

The pattern of participation among the different rural sections in the struggle for land during this period would show that the landless and poor peasants participated, rather provided the basic force, in the struggle for land led by the CPI and its peasant front. The participation of the middle peasants always remained insignificant. The CPI did not hesitate to bring them into the movement for land reform but their lack of interest in this movement was obvious due to the fact that this land reform movement was not directly gainful to them. However, the middle peasants did not oppose it either.

Respondents were asked each to name five leaders who led the movement for acquisition of the surplus land illegally held by the landlords in their areas during the period mentioned. The following table indicates the class of origin of these leaders. Mention may be made that a few names of leaders came up repeatedly as they were more influential in this respect. These names have been added up even when repeated.

Table 6 : Class of origin of the leaders in the struggle for during the period between 1947-64

| Class origin          | Itahar | Bhatar | Panskura<br>- West | Total |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------------------|-------|
| Ag.L/Poor peasants    | 25     | 17     | 38                 | 80    |
| Middle peasants       | 35     | 38     | 32                 | 105   |
| Educated middle class | 4      | 4      | 3                  | 11    |
| Rich peasants         | 13     | 18     | 4                  | 35    |
| Landlords             | 3      | 3      | 3                  | 9     |
| Others                | 0      | 0      | 0                  | 0     |
|                       | 80     | 80     | 80                 | 240   |

The above table shows that the largest number of leaders (43.75%) came from middle peasants followed by the stratum of agricultural labourers and poor peasants (33.3%).

From rich peasants came the next batch of leaders (14.58%). However in the case of Panskura - West the number of leaders from the agricultural labourers & poor peasants was more than that of the middle peasants. Landlords and educated middle class provided no significant number of leaders.

Table 7 : Methods and means of opposition used by the landed interests against the agrarian movement led by the CPI during the pre-split period (1947-1964)

| Methods and means of opposition  |     | Itahar | Bhatar | Panskura - West | Total | %     |
|----------------------------------|-----|--------|--------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| 1. With arms                     | Yes | 11     | 16     | 12              | 39    | 81.25 |
|                                  | No  | 5      | 0      | 4               | 9     | 18.75 |
| 2. By the help of police         | Yes | 10     | 8      | 13              | 31    | 64.58 |
|                                  | No  | 6      | 8      | 3               | 17    | 35.42 |
| 3. Harassment through litigation | Yes | 4      | 5      | 8               | 17    | 35.42 |
|                                  | No  | 12     | 11     | 8               | 31    | 64.58 |
| 4. Economic boycott              | Yes | 3      | 1      | 2               | 6     | 12.50 |
|                                  | No  | 13     | 15     | 14              | 42    | 87.50 |
| 5. Social persecution            | Yes | 14     | 8      | 3               | 25    | 52.08 |
|                                  | No  | 2      | 8      | 13              | 23    | 47.92 |
| 6. Others including eviction     | Yes | 16     | 16     | 14              | 46    | 95.83 |
|                                  | No  | 0      | 0      | 2               | 2     | 4.17  |

In the relevant period (1947-64) the united CPI carried on agrarian movements and noticed some typical forms of opposition thereto from the landed interests. The above table gives an idea of the methods and means of such opposition. All the 48 respondents were asked about six types of means and methods. It is found that direct eviction of tenants was found by respondents with greatest amount of unanimity (95.8%) to be a means.

Among the other means armed attack on tenants and resort to the help of police were also affirmed largely 81.25% and 64.58% respectively. Social persecution was affirmed by 52% of the respondents. However, economic boycott and legal harassment were denied as means by a majority of the respondents, 87.5% and 64.5% respectively. Thus the means and methods widely used by landed interests for their opposition to agrarian movement were mostly direct such as eviction, armed attack and the use of police help.

In the next stage when the party was divided into the CPI(M) and CPI in 1964 the issue of radical land reform and rural democracy got different treatment in their rival programmes. The following analysis from the data available could highlight the most debated issues of land reform and rural democracy in the countryside during the period between 1964 and 1985.

Equal number of respondents from both the parties (namely, the CPI and the CPI-M) were asked what were the important aims of land reform movement during the period between 1964 and 1985 for which their respective local party-organisations fought for. They equally emphasised that the main slogans for the agrarian movement were same. There were - (1) acquisition of vest and benami land from the grip of landlords, (2) distribution of the same among the land poor peasants and landless agricultural labourers, (3) recording of rights of share-croppers, and (4) protection of the economic rights of the agricultural labourers.

Table 8 : Class position of leaders named by the respondents of CPI and CPI(M) who led the agrarian movement during 1964-85.

| Class positions       | Itahar |      | Bhatar |      | Panskura<br>- West |      | Total |      |
|-----------------------|--------|------|--------|------|--------------------|------|-------|------|
|                       | CPI    | CPIM | CPI    | CPIM | CPI                | CPIM | CPI   | CPIM |
| Ag.L/Poor peasants    | 9      | 9    | 10     | 20   | 12                 | 13   | 31    | 32   |
| Middle peasants       | 11     | 6    | 8      | 7    | 7                  | 10   | 26    | 23   |
| Educated middle class | 14     | 22   | 12     | 18   | 20                 | 17   | 46    | 57   |
| Rich peasants         | 4      | 2    | 9      | 4    | 1                  | 0    | 14    | 6    |
| Landlords             | 2      | 1    | 1      | 1    | -                  | 0    | 3     | 2    |
| Others                | -      | -    | -      | -    | -                  | -    | 0     | 0    |
| Total                 | 40     | 40   | 40     | 40   | 40                 | 40   | 120   | 120  |

All the 48 respondents were asked to name 5 leaders each who were in the forefront in the agrarian movement during 1964 - 1985 period in their areas. Though some of the names were repeated, we have added up such names in the totals. The above table indicates the class position as mentioned by the respondents for such leaders. It is found that the order in which leaders from different classes were found by CPI and CPI(M) respondents have a similar distribution. Both groups of respondents agreed that the largest number of leaders came from the educated middle class. CPI(M) respondents found 47.5% and CPI respondents 38.33% of leaders coming from this class. This class was followed by agricultural labourers/poor peasants. CPI(M) respondents found 26.56% and CPI respondents 25.83% of leaders coming from this category. Respondents from CPI(M) and CPI found leaders from the middle peasantry 19.16% and 21.66% respectively.

From both the parties respondents found leaders from rich peasantry to have the next position but CPI(M) placed them only 5% whereas CPI found 11.66% for this section. Only from among landlords came the rest of the leaders. There percentages found by CPI(M) and CPI respondents were 1.66 and 2.5 respectively.

Table 9 : Methods and means used by the respective peasant organisations of CPI and CPI(M) in the following areas during the struggle for agrarian movement (1964-1977).

| Methods and means of movement      |     | Itahar |      | Bhatar |      | Panskura - West |      | Total |      |
|------------------------------------|-----|--------|------|--------|------|-----------------|------|-------|------|
|                                    |     | CPI    | CPIM | CPI    | CPIM | CPI             | CPIM | CPI   | CPIM |
| 1. Meeting/ protest procession     | Yes | 8      | 8    | 8      | 8    | 8               | 8    | 24    | 24   |
|                                    | No  | 0      | 0    | 0      | 0    | 0               | 0    | 0     | 0    |
| 2. Strike/ Demonstration           | Yes | 3      | 4    | 1      | 8    | 6               | 2    | 10    | 14   |
|                                    | No  | 5      | 4    | 7      | 0    | 2               | 6    | 14    | 10   |
| 3. Forcible acquisition            | Yes | 2      | 8    | 1      | 8    | 4               | 4    | 7     | 20   |
|                                    | No  | 6      | 0    | 7      | 0    | 4               | 4    | 17    | 4    |
| 4. Others, including legal battles | Yes | 1      | 0    | 0      | 1    | 1               | 1    | 2     | 2    |
|                                    | No  | 7      | 8    | 8      | 7    | 7               | 7    | 22    | 22   |

As we have earlier noted, after their split CPI and CPI(M) continued in their rivalry upto 1977 with only very brief period of 1967 and 1969 expected. Therefore we thought it advisable to study the methods and means adopted by the peasant organisations of the two parties during this period separately. It is also to be noted that both the parties claimed to have carried on agrarian movements in this period. In the above table we have shown the methods and means which, in the opinion of respondents from the two

parties were used in their areas for this movement.

Respondents were asked about four methods of their movements. It is found that in some cases there are hardly any difference between the two groups of respondents. The two parties claimed to use meetings/protest procession in all cases. In the case of strike demonstration, the affirmative responses from CPI and CPI(M) respondents being 10 and 14 respectively. It is also found that both the parties showed little interest in legal battles as effective means for which negative replies were 22 each for CPI and CPI(M).

But it is a remarkable fact that there is a great difference between the responses of CPI and CPI(M) respondents in using the method of forcible acquisition. In this case the affirmative responses from CPI and CPI(M) respondents being 7 and 20 respectively. It clearly indicates that the CPI did not consider this means as much important and necessary. However, what the total figures miss is that in the first two Assembly constituencies the CPI(M) has far outnumbered the CPI, but in the case of Panskura - West Assembly constituency, responses from CPI respondents are quite similar with the CPI(M) 's.

Table 10 : Methods and means of opposition used by the landed interests against the agrarian movement led by CPI and CPI(M) during 1964-77.

| Methods and means of opposition  |     | Itahar |      | Bhatar |      | Panskura - West |      | Total |      | Grand Total |
|----------------------------------|-----|--------|------|--------|------|-----------------|------|-------|------|-------------|
|                                  |     | CPI    | CPIM | CPI    | CPIM | CPI             | CPIM | CPI   | CPIM |             |
| 1. With arms                     | Yes | 5      | 4    | 8      | 8    | 3               | 2    | 16    | 14   | 30          |
|                                  | No  | 3      | 4    | 0      | 0    | 5               | 6    | 8     | 10   | 18          |
| 2. By the help of police         | Yes | 5      | 2    | 8      | 8    | 2               | 1    | 15    | 11   | 26          |
|                                  | No  | 3      | 6    | 0      | 0    | 6               | 7    | 9     | 13   | 22          |
| 3. Harassment through litigation | Yes | 4      | 4    | 3      | 4    | 6               | 3    | 13    | 11   | 24          |
|                                  | No  | 4      | 4    | 5      | 4    | 2               | 5    | 11    | 13   | 24          |
| 4. Economic boycott              | Yes | 2      | 1    | 2      | 3    | 0               | 0    | 4     | 4    | 8           |
|                                  | No  | 6      | 7    | 6      | 5    | 8               | 8    | 20    | 20   | 40          |
| 5. Social persecution            | Yes | 5      | 2    | 2      | 4    | 1               | 0    | 8     | 6    | 14          |
|                                  | No  | 3      | 6    | 6      | 4    | 7               | 8    | 16    | 18   | 34          |
| 6. Others including eviction     | Yes | 8      | 7    | 8      | 8    | 3               | 2    | 19    | 17   | 36          |
|                                  | No  | 0      | 1    | 0      | 0    | 5               | 6    | 5     | 7    | 12          |

In the period 1964-77 the methods and means used by the landed interests against agrarian movement were asked about from respondents of the two parties. It is found that armed attack, use of police help and others including evictions of

tenants evoked affirmative responses more than negative ones. Among them eviction of tenants received largest number of affirmative responses (75%), followed by armed attack (62.5%) and resort to police help (54.16%) while for legal harassment affirmation and negation were evenly divided, for social persecution and economic boycott affirmative responses were 29.16% and for economic boycott 16.66%.

Between the CPI and the CPI(M) responses there was some difference on the use of two methods, namely, use of police help and legal harassment. For both these methods the CPI respondents offered more affirmative than negative responses while the CPI(M) respondents did the opposite.

It is significant to note that in Bhatar Constituency all the CPI and CPI(M) respondents affirmed the use of armed attacks, police action and eviction of tenants. Many of the respondents were eloquent of the dastardly attacks by the landed interests and the police particularly in the period from 1972 to 1977.

Respondents of both the parties were asked about the methods and means of movement used by them and their local leadership of their respective party and peasant organisations during the period between 1964 and 1985. The tables below can highlight over this question.

Table 11 : Methods and means used by the respective peasant organisations of CPI and CPI(M) in the following areas during the struggle for agrarian movement (1977-1985).

| Methods and means of movement                    |     | Itahar |      | Bhatar |      | Panskura - West |      | Total |      | Grand Total |
|--|-----|--------|------|--------|------|-----------------|------|-------|------|-------------|
|  |     | CPI    | CPIM | CPI    | CPIM | CPI             | CPIM | CPI   | CPIM |             |
| 1. Meeting/ Protest procession memoranda         | Yes | 8      | 8    | 8      | 8    | 8               | 8    | 24    | 24   | 48          |
|  | No  | 0      | 0    | 0      | 0    | 0               | 0    | 0     | 0    | 0           |
| 2. Strike/ Demonstration                         | Yes | 5      | 8    | 4      | 8    | 6               | 8    | 15    | 24   | 39          |
|  | No  | 3      | 0    | 4      | 0    | 2               | 0    | 9     | 0    | 9           |
| 3. Forcible acquisition of vest and Benami lands | Yes | 1      | 8    | 0      | 8    | 2               | 4    | 3     | 20   | 23          |
|  | No  | 7      | 0    | 8      | 0    | 6               | 4    | 21    | 4    | 25          |
| 4. Others including legal battles                | Yes | 0      | 2    | 0      | 4    | 3               | 1    | 3     | 7    | 10          |
|  | No  | 8      | 6    | 8      | 4    | 5               | 7    | 21    | 17   | 38          |

For the period 1977 to 1985, we have tried to find the nature of movement in agrarian issues by the CPI and the CPI(M). The CPI changed its earlier positions in relation to the Congress and the CPI(M) in 1978 though it joined the Left Front of West Bengal in 1980. However, this study of

the period, 1977-85, does not focus on differences if any between the periods 1977-80 and 1980-85.

In the table above, we have tabulated responses of respondent of the two parties regarding four types of methods and means used by their respective peasant organisations for agrarian movement. It is found that except for legal battles the other three types of methods and means evoked more affirmative than negative responses. The most widely used according to the total of affirmative replies were meeting/protest processions, etc. (100%), strike/demonstration (81% 25 ) and forcible acquisition of vest and benami lands (47.91%).

In regard to forcible acquisition of vest and benami land the CPI respondents gave 21 negative responses against 3 affirmative responses only. On the other hand, the CPI(M) respondents indicated 20 affirmative against 4 negative responses for this method of their movement. This shows a clear difference of perception of the two parties in respect of means employed. Though any similar opposite responses were not noticed between CPI and CPI(M) respondents about two other methods, namely, strike/demonstrations and legal battles, the numerical variations in their affirmative and negative responses may also be noted.

Table 12 : Methods and means of opposition by the landed interests against the agrarian movement led by CPI and CPI(M) during 1977-1985.

| Methods and means of opposition  |     | Itahar |      | Bhatar |      | Panskura - West |      | Total |      | Grand Total |
|----------------------------------|-----|--------|------|--------|------|-----------------|------|-------|------|-------------|
|                                  |     | CPI    | CPIM | CPI    | CPIM | CPI             | CPIM | CPI   | CPIM |             |
| 1. With arms                     | Yes | 1      | 1    | 0      | 1    | 0               | 0    | 1     | 2    | 3           |
|                                  | No  | 7      | 7    | 8      | 7    | 8               | 8    | 23    | 22   | 45          |
| 2. By the help of police         | Yes | 0      | 0    | 0      | 0    | 0               | 0    | 0     | 0    | 0           |
|                                  | No  | 8      | 8    | 8      | 8    | 8               | 8    | 24    | 24   | 48          |
| 3. Harassment through litigation | Yes | 6      | 4    | 5      | 8    | 5               | 2    | 16    | 14   | 30          |
|                                  | No  | 2      | 4    | 3      | 0    | 3               | 6    | 8     | 10   | 18          |
| 4. Economic boycott              | Yes | 2      | 1    | 0      | 2    | 1               | 1    | 3     | 4    | 7           |
|                                  | No  | 6      | 7    | 8      | 6    | 7               | 7    | 21    | 20   | 41          |
| 5. Social persecution            | Yes | 0      | 0    | 0      | 0    | 0               | 0    | 0     | 0    | 0           |
|                                  | No  | 8      | 8    | 8      | 8    | 8               | 8    | 24    | 24   | 48          |
| 6. Others including eviction     | Yes | 0      | 1    | 0      | 0    | 1               | 0    | 1     | 1    | 2           |
|                                  | No  | 8      | 7    | 8      | 8    | 7               | 8    | 23    | 23   | 46          |

About the means and methods used by landed interests against agrarian movement during 1977-1985 respondents were asked about six types of methods. The replies in the grand

total more or less reflect the same pattern as for the two individual parties. In this period only legal harassment were affirmed more in number. About all the five other types of methods negative replies far outnumbered affirmative replies. This may be due to the fact that the Left Front having been in power in the state neither allowed police help to the landed interests nor did they allow any armed attack or eviction of tenants during this period. Also the left parties in West Bengal were more united in this period and particularly there was greater cohesion between CPI and CPI(M) which has wider rural base than other parties. It is also noteworthy that through the Panchayat election since 1978 the rural government machinery was democratised and so much strengthened that the balance of forces in the countryside changed in favour of poorer sections of the people and against the landed interests. All these might also explain the fact that the landed interests were unable to use economic boycott or social persecution in the countryside.

Regarding the movement of the agricultural labourers for their economic rights, only the CPI and the CPI(M) were active among all political parties. Respondents of one party admitted the activity of the other party in this regard. However, when they took recourse to movement for this issue the respondents of the two parties varied significantly.

Table 13 : Methods and means of movement of the agricultural labourers for their economic rights during 1964-85.

| Methods and means           | Itahar |        | Bhatar |        | Paskura - West |        | Total |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|--------|-------|--------|
|                             | CPI    | CPI(M) | CPI    | CPI(M) | CPI            | CPI(M) | CPI   | CPI(M) |
| Boycott                     | 1      | 6      | 0      | 8      | 0              | 8      | 1     | 22     |
| Strike                      | 6      | 8      | 4      | 8      | 4              | 8      | 14    | 24     |
| Meeting/protest/ procession | 8      | 8      | 8      | 8      | 8              | 8      | 24    | 24     |
| Bargaining                  | 8      | 8      | 8      | 8      | 8              | 8      | 24    | 24     |
| Others                      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0              | 0      | 0     | 0      |

8 respondents each from CPI and CPI(M) in each of the three assembly Constituencies was asked about the methods and means of movement of the agricultural labourers. The numbers given in each box except for the total is out of 8. The number for each of the boxes of the last two columns are out of 24.

While about meeting/protest procession and about bargaining there is no difference at all between the two parties. They all admitted the use of these means. But about boycott and strike they differed considerably. Their difference is not significant between different constituencies taking the total from CPI and CPI(M). We find that while 1 out of 24 (0.4%) of CPI respondents affirmed the use of boycott, the

corresponding figure for CPI(M) was 22 out of 24 (91.56%). Similarly, 14 out of 24 (58.3%) of CPI respondents affirmed the use of strike, the corresponding figure for CPI(M) was 24 out of 24 (100%).

Another important information is received that no party is keenly interested in abolishing this age old discrepancy in wage against female workers rather they accepted it as quite natural.

Respondents of the two parties were of the opinion that the direct feudalism has taken back seat in their areas but they disagreed over the question of main danger before the peasants and agricultural labourers in the rural areas.

Table 14 shows their opinions.

Table 14 shows that there are marked differences about the question of main danger before the poorer sections of the rural people. 15 out of 24 (62.5%) respondents from the CPI agreed that capitalist market is the main danger. Corresponding number for CPI(M) was 5 out of 24 (20.83%). On the contrary landlordism was considered as the main danger by the respondents from the CPI(M). 14 out of 24 respondents (58.33%) from CPI(M) considered this view. Corresponding number from CPI was 5 out of 24 (20.83%). No other group included in the table was identified by either CPI and CPI(M) as a significant danger. It seems that their perceptions of the main danger are consistent with their respective parties' programmatic assertions.

Table 14

| Enemies of the<br>agricultural<br>labourers and<br>poor peasants      | Respondents of CPI and CPIM from - |      |        |      |                    |      |       |      |
|---|------------------------------------|------|--------|------|--------------------|------|-------|------|
|   | Itahar                             |      | Bhatar |      | Panskura<br>- West |      | Total |      |
|   | CPI                                | CPIM | CPI    | CPIM | CPI                | CPIM | CPI   | CPIM |
| 1. Remaining<br>features of<br>feudalism                              | 0                                  | 0    | 0      | 0    | 0                  | 0    | 0     | 0    |
| 2. Landlordism  | 2                                  | 5    | 2      | 5    | 1                  | 4    | 5     | 14   |
| 3. Jotdar/Rich<br>peasantry   | 1                                  | 0    | 0      | 1    | 0                  | 1    | 1     | 2    |
| 4. Capitalist<br>market   | 4                                  | 2    | 5      | 1    | 6                  | 2    | 15    | 5    |
| 5. Local business-<br>men, M.R. Dealers,<br>Rice Mill owners,<br>etc. | 1                                  | 1    | 1      | 1    | 1                  | 1    | 3     | 3    |

To benefit the agricultural labourers and poor peasants through radical land reforms, 20 out of 24 respondents of the CPI(M) (83.33%) claimed that the CPI(M) is the leading party while other left partners like CPI, F.B., R.S.P etc. are helpful and reliable allies. The Congress party has been considered by them as the principal force of opposition as the latter has served as a reliable agent of the landed interests in the rural areas. On the other

hand, 10 out of 16 respondents from the CPI from Itahar and Bhatar (together 62.5%) admitted the leading role of the CPI(M) in launching radical landreform in these two areas whereas the 4 out of 8 respondents from the CPIM from the Panskura- West (50%) claimed the leadership of the CPI in doing so. However, all of them marked, like the respondents of the CPI(M), the Congress party as the enemy of radical land reform in their areas.

On the question of rural democracy the most important issues were -

establishment of democratic set-up,  
spread of education,  
abolition of casteism and caste privileges,  
protection of weaker sections,  
protection of scheduled tribes,  
protection of the rights of women,  
movement for the economic rights of the  
labourers, peasants, etc.

Respondents of both the parties claimed that they have launched a persistent movement on these issues. But the respondents of the CPI(M) claimed that they are the front-runners who for the first time established and ensured democratic rural administrative bodies by encouraging the mass participation of the rural downtrodden. Though the

CPI respondents did not refute the claim of the CPI(M), they claimed that their party also always stood for democratically organised rural decision-making bodies.

Another important highlight from the survey is that the above mentioned issues of rural democracy have been fully supported and carried forward by the three sections of the rural populace, namely the agricultural labourers, the poor peasants and rural artisans and the educated middle class. But opinion slightly differed on the question of the role of different rural classes protecting and enlarging the scope of rural democracy in the villages. The respondents from the CPI and the CPI(M) observed the issue in the following way.

Table 15 : Opinion of 24 respondents each of the CPI and CPI(M) of the three areas surveyed on the role of rural classes in ensuring rural democracy.

| Rural classes                                    | Roles                  |      |               |      |                     |      |         |      |                |      |     |      |
|--|------------------------|------|---------------|------|---------------------|------|---------|------|----------------|------|-----|------|
|  | (1)                    |      | (2)           |      | (3)                 |      | (4)     |      | (5)            |      | (6) |      |
|  | Principal and Reliable |      | Helping force |      | Potentially helpful |      | Neutral |      | Opposing force |      |     |      |
|  | CPI                    | CPIM | CPI           | CPIM | CPI                 | CPIM | CPI     | CPIM | CPI            | CPIM | CPI | CPIM |
| Ag.L.  | 24                     | 24   | -             | -    | -                   | -    | -       | -    | -              | -    | -   | -    |
| Poor peasants/<br>share-croppers and<br>artisans | 24                     | 24   | -             | -    | -                   | -    | -       | -    | -              | -    | -   | -    |
| Middle<br>peasants                               | 13                     | -    | 10            | 19   | 1                   | 5    | -       | -    | -              | -    | -   | -    |

contd ...

Table 15 contd ...

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|  |   |    |    |    |   |    |   |   |    |    |
|--|---|----|----|----|---|----|---|---|----|----|
| Educated<br>middle<br>class              | 9 | 10 | 15 | 14 | - | -  | - | - | -  | -  |
| Rich<br>peasants                         | - | -  | 20 | -  | 2 | 14 | 2 | 7 | -  | 3  |
| Landlords                                | - | -  | -  | -  | - | -  | - | - | 24 | 24 |
| Rural<br>Businessman                     | - | -  | 18 | 8  | 6 | 14 | - | 1 | -  | 1  |
| Others,<br>unemployed,<br>students, etc. | - | -  | 24 | 24 | - | -  | - | - | -  | -  |

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24 respondents from each party tried to divide the various rural classes included in column 1 among five categories of roles included in Column 2 to 6. It is found that both the parties agreed about the role of the agricultural labourers, poor peasants/sharecroppers and artisans. There were believed to be the principal and reliable force. The middle peasants were also put in the same category by 13 out of 24 respondents of CPI (54.16%). Among CPI(M) respondents 19 out of 24 (79.16%) placed the middle peasants in the category of helping force. It is significant that among CPI respondents 10 out of 24 (41.66%) agreed with the CPI(M)'s view.

About the role of the educated middle class there was disagreement among the respondents of both CPI and CPI(M).

While 9 out of 24 (37.5%) respondents of CPI placed them in the category of principal and reliable force another 15 out of 24 (62.5%) respondents of CPI recognised them as helping force only. Among CPI(M)'s respondents 10 out of 24 (41.66%) considered this class to be a principal and reliable force, but 14 out of 24 (58.33%) identified them as only helping force.

There is significant difference between the two parties also about the role of rich peasants and rural business-men. The CPI respondents identified 20 out of 24 (83.33%) and 18 out of 24 (75%) of rich peasants and rural business-men respectively to be helping forces. Of the CPI(M)'s respondents, however, 14 out of 24 (58.33%) agreed about potentially helpful role of the rich peasants though none of these respondents actually found them to be a helping force. About the role of the rural business-men 14 out of 24 respondents (58.33%) again identified them to be potentially helpful, while 8 out of 24 respondents (33.33%) identified them as actually a helping force.

The typical nature of any Marxist political party is to educate its activists and supporters about the political and ideological position of the party in a regular manner. More particularly this means is used for the purpose of orientation of the new recruits. The following tables could show the frequency of political education carried on by the respective parties in the periods mentioned below.



A comparative analysis between the two periods indicates that regular orientation was pursued by both the parties in the first case. 25% respondents of each CPI and CPI(M) affirmed this position for the first period (1964-80). However, occasional orientation was also held more important in the first period compared to the next period. The explicit trend for both the parties in the second period has gone in favour of orientation only once in a year. The CPI(M) is fairly consistent than the CPI in regard to the orientation of its activists in both the periods. But the CPI has shifted its policy of regular orientation to other frequencies whereas the drift of CPI(M) is not total but partial in this regard.

The most significant question is as to where lies the basic disagreement in the lower level political activities for launching joint movement though they held the common view of building democratic & socialist revolutions in India. The table below presents their typical subjective views in the following way.

Table 18 : Main Questions of disagreement between CPI and CPI(M).

| On the Question of   | Respondents from |    |      |    |
|--|------------------|----|------|----|
|  | CPI              |    | CPIM |    |
|  | Yes              | No | Yes  | No |
| 1. Building broad democratic unity of all sections (including the rich peasants) of the rural people | 0                | 24 | 14   | 10 |

contd ...

Table 18 contd ...


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|   |    |    |    |    |
|---|----|----|----|----|
| 2. Depending mainly on the Ag.L. and poor peasants                                | 0  | 24 | 0  | 24 |
| 3. CPI's attitude to the ruling Congress party in the past (1969-1980)            | 0  | 24 | 21 | 3  |
| 4. Over emphasis on land reforms rather than on national and international issues | 5  | 19 | 0  | 24 |
| 5. Reluctance of the rival party for radical land reforms                         | 0  | 24 | 7  | 17 |
| 6. Organisational disbelief and rivalry   | 24 | 0  | 24 | 0  |
| 7. Sectarian outlook  | 24 | 0  | 0  | 24 |
| 8. Revisionist outlook  | 0  | 24 | 24 | 0  |
| 9. Hegemonism of the rival party  | 20 | 4  | 0  | 24 |
| 10. Others, specify   |    |    |    |    |

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We tried to find how did respondents from the two parties working at the grass-root level for their respective party's avowed political and ideological objectives perceive the differences between the two parties. The table above was prepared on the basis of these replies. From the table it is clear that these perceptions are fairly consistent with

the assertions of the leadership of the two parties. We may note that responses on item numbers 2, 6, 7 and 8 are entirely consistent without any division among the respondents of the two parties. However, we find some disagreement among the respondents from the CPI on two items, namely, 4 and 9. A small minority of CPI respondents affirmed that over emphasis on land reform rather than on the struggle against capitalist market economy, and its evils like unemployment, price rise, penetration of foreign monopoly, etc. was a point of disagreement between the CPI and CPI(M).

Again, while a large majority of the CPI respondents asserted that the hegemonic behaviour of the CPI(M) was responsible for disagreement between the two parties, a small minority of CPI respondents disagreed with this view.

On the other hand we find that among the CPI(M) respondents a majority agreed that a crucial point of disagreement between the two parties related to the question of building a broad democratic unity of all sections of rural people including rich peasants. Another group of respondents though a minority but considerable section (41.66%) did not agree with this view.

With regard to the question whether the CPI was reluctant to bring about radical land reforms and thus there was disagreement between CPI and CPI(M) a good majority (70.83%) negative reply. But a minority of some strength (29.16%) asserted

that this was a cause of disagreement.

Lastly, while a very large majority of CPI(M) respondents (87.5%) asserted that a cause of disagreement between the two parties was the CPI's attitude towards the Congress Party in the past, a very small minority (12.5%) disagreed with this view.

With regard to the question whether there should be unification of CPI and CPI(M) into one party, respondents of both side shied away from giving any clear answer without, however, emphatically denying the necessity and desirability of such unification. In these circumstances Question No. 5.01.1 was a little reformulated for administration thus : supposing such unification is attempted would you agree about the following steps ?

Responses have been tabulated in Table 19 accordingly.

Table 19 : Responses on the issue of probable unification of both the parties.

| Possible steps                           | Respondents from |    |                   |      |    |                   |
|--|------------------|----|-------------------|------|----|-------------------|
|  | CPI              |    |                   | CPIM |    |                   |
|  | Yes              | No | Refused to answer | Yes  | No | Refused to answer |
| 1. By changing your party programme only | -                | -  | 24                | -    | -  | 24                |

contd ...

Table 19 contd ...

|  |    |   |   |    |    |   |
|--|----|---|---|----|----|---|
| 2. By changing the party programme of the opposite party only        | 24 | - | - | 24 | -  | - |
| 3. By changing of party programmes of both the parties'              | 12 | 9 | 3 | 6  | 14 | 4 |
| 4. By resolving leadership battle in the top level                   | 20 | 2 | 2 | 7  | 9  | 8 |
| 5. Continuous persuasion of common tactics by both the rival parties | 21 | 3 | - | 18 | 6  | - |

As followers of typical Marxist parties, their respondents refused to answer if such unification could be attempted by changing their respective party programme only. At the same time they all were favourable to such unification by changing the programme of the opposite party only. However, about the other three steps there was disagreement in both groups of respondents. Of CPI respondents 12 out of 24 (50%) were favourable to changes of programme of both parties for unification, 9 out of 24 (37.5%) could not agree to such a step. From the CPI(M), however, 14 out of 24 (58.33%) opposed even this step of changing the programme of the two parties. Only 6 out of 24 (25%) agreed to this step.

Resolving the leadership battle at the top between the top between the two parties as a means of unification was

favoured by 20 out of 24 (83.33%) respondents of the CPI. From the CPI(M) not more than 7 out of 24 (29.16%) would even consider this one as a possible step.

However respondents from both the parties in large number, 21 out of 24 from CPI (87.5%) and 18 out of 24 (75%) from CPI(M) agreed about the desirability of continuously pursuing common tactics by both the parties as a possible means of unification though they consider such unification hypothetical.

Another significant question asked, although it is beyond the focus of our study, whether present downfall of socialism in the East European countries and Soviet Russia has harmed their respective party organisations or they feel for any requirement of changes of political path of activity for this country. However, two groups of respondents of the two communist parties have negated the question and reiterated their faith in Marxism and Leninism as the path for India's socialist revolution.