

Let us build a strong party to meet the challenges of the future.

We think that the time has come to amend matters asserted in the perspectives document of the party in the light of the changes and developments in the social, economic and political fields since the time of the last party congress. Marxists can advance only if they take care to make the requisite changes. What in fact were the main assertions accepted at the last Congress?

"After 1964, the working class is independently moving forward. That independence of the class came into being with the birth of the SLMP, which, is not merely a workers' party but centrist too. Whilst petty bourgeois sections are temporarily incumbent in the leadership of that party, the influence of the militant workers who constitute the lower layer of the party will result, in the very near future, in unity with us who are the revolutionary party of the country, certain embarkation on decisive struggles. Unlike in 1964, the revolutionary advance is dominant and the coalition idea is secondary. The left front which has been formed with the SLMP in the leading position will advance providing an alternative leadership to the working class, peasants, students, youth and other militant layers whilst the SLFP will take the shape of its pre 1956 form getting pushed back as an organisation of utter reactionaries and

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socialist fascists and will not be an attraction for the militant anti C.N.P masses.

The youth organisations are moving towards massing away from individual terrorist. They are gradually moving towards the NSSP and taking up our slogans and accordingly, militant youth are talking about a Socialist Sri Lanka instead of the Calam slogan. It is clear that they are rapidly moving towards Hartals, demonstrations and strikes with the participation of the broad Tamil masses instead of Guerrillalist attacks.

In this manner room should be created for a mass struggle which combines the liberation forces in the north with the class struggle which emerges in the south through the left front. When the path of political coalition is proposed; the coalitionists within the left front will get pushed aside and the revolutionary march will be initiated with our forces too being added. Thus, whilst we must exert our full strength towards transforming the left front into a fighting front which includes us, it is paramount that we work together with the SAMP which is militant and which is the main party of the working class. It is through this means that the emerging struggles may be intertwined and advanced along the revolutionary road.

Thus, in the perspectives presented to the last Congress, there was heavy emphasis on a revolutionary situation that would unfold in a few months. However, since the comrades of the leadership now deny this, we shall leave this aside here.

In any case, in the period of nearly one year since the Congress, we worked making our interventions, with tactics and manoeuvres based on this strategy of the above perspective. Our Cadres and the HARAYA paper were employed accordingly. Because the situations developing in the immediate period were to be very decisive, the conduct of all sections of the party work was taken into the hands of the majority Comrades.

In the past eleven months whenever any important occurrence took place, we as the minority expressed our differences and enriched the discussions at the C.C. but the comrades of the majority position refused to accept any of our views even to the slightest extent. They insisted that their positions expressed at the congress were right to the letter and repeatedly attacked the I.S. and the minority Comrades as people incapable of understanding anything instead of showing a readiness to make realistic assessment of situations developing in the country.

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These discussions which took place along these lines did not permeate to the rank and file properly and, because the bulletin was not received by the local secretaries due to reasons of security, even the possibilities for a discussion at the base were restricted. The I.S. which did not accept the perspective document produced a document for discussion within the party - even that document has not been adequately discussed in the district Committees.

In the past period, the document produced by Comrade Jayatilleke opposing the enfa assertions in bulletin no: 69, the document produced by the I.S, the discussions in early 1986 in relation to the restoration of Civic rights of Sirima and the discussions held on the 12th of April (in the midst of the AKMEEMANA bye-election) all relate to matters of high importance to the membership. At the end of the discussion on the 12th of April, during the course of his address in reply, the General Secretary asked several questions from the I.S and the comrades of the minority —:

- 1) You said that T.R. will be able to continue to string the economy together
- 2) That there will be an agreement on the national question.

- 3) That the working class has had its back broken after several defeats.
- 4) That the traditional leaders of the working class will be unable to call a Congress.

Do you now accept that you were wrong on all these counts?

Thus the general secretary, insisting that everything that the minority and the international had said had been proved wrong, repeatedly asserted that even today, the main leader of the working class was Wijaya Kumaratunga — that the main working class party was the SLMP. No good is served by declaring everywhere that everything the minority and the international said had gone wrong in a situation where the discussions were not properly permeating to the lower levels. A considerable body of experience has been gained by the Cadres and the rank and file members through the situations which unfolded in the past period. We see a difference between what the membership gathered from these experiences and what the comrades of the majority asserted in the C.C. discussions. Therefore it is essential to have a discussion today which permeates properly to the base.

Let us go through the questions raised by the general secretary. —:

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Did we say that T.R. will be able to string up the economy together and proceed? What in fact did we say? What we of the minority accept is the analysis in the document produced by the international. What was described therein was that although the situation was favourable to the government of T. 1983 due to various reasons, that has now gone into reverse. It is not difficult for an unbiased reader to understand that the document did not speak of T.R. being able to continue & string the economy together and proceed. We do not see any new evidence to suggest that these matters have to be accepted as wrong.

The second aspect was the prediction of an agreement on the national question. No agreement has been reached in a short period in precisely the way we predicted. We are not reluctant to accept that. It is true that on this matter our view has not been borne out exactly. The reason for that was that because the SLFP has strengthened itself in the south on the basis of Communalist ideas even more rapidly than we had anticipated. Had the class movement been relatively stronger, there would have been even more room for an agreement with the north. The major youth organisations in the north have moved further into absurdity.

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Although the room for an agreement was restricted in this situation, the possibility cannot be entirely ruled out in the future.

As we saw, the need of imperialism and the upper layers of the bourgeois is to come to an agreement with the mediation of India and this can still be seen to be the case. This effort has still not been abandoned.

On the other hand, whilst no agreement has yet been reached, the developments have not been according to the vision of the majority comrades either. What the comrades of the majority saw was that the youth organisations rejecting agreement moving towards marxism and combining with the class activity which would arise through the left front in the south to create mass struggles through the correct methods of struggle. What indeed has transpired? we will discuss this secondly.

Taking the third question posed by the general secretary, we are supposed to have said that the backbone of the working class is broken.

In the document we presented to the congress and in the subsequent discussions, what we said was that the working class had

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gone through several defeats and that Coalition Politics had induced severe confusion and organisational weakness. Further, we said that the class, thus weakened and confused do not find themselves yet in a political situation conducive for advancement as a coherent independent force under a left leadership and that consequently, whilst struggles arise from place to place, these struggles intertwine into a whole. We have seen that the events unfolding since the Congress have clearly confirmed the validity of our views. The recent struggle, let alone arising with an orientation to the left front did not even have any real connection with the left parties.

The fourth matter was whether we claimed that the traditional left are incapable of convening a workers' congress. At the outset, we must say that we did not express such an idea. What we did say was that within the class, confidence in and esteem of the leadership of the left adequate enough to generate an awakening of the class through the left front has not been established because of the historical betrayals of the left and that the efforts of the C.P. to convene a congress are tactic directed towards establishing a coalition and not for the purpose of nourishing the class struggle. These matters have been clearly expressed in our document.

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These matters will be clarified in the sections towards the end of this document. This is how the differences between the ideas of the majority and those of the minority and the emphasis given by the two at the C.C. discussions which arose in connection with the restoration of civic rights to Sirima manifested themselves more clearly.

What were the positions taken by the comrades of the majority in those discussions? There will not manifest a mass popularity around Sirima because she has been pardoned by T.R. Whilst Sirima can establish a rural base, she will not attract mass popularity in the urban areas. The conflict between T.R and Fremadasa is acute. Thondaman has reached the point of separation from the government as shown by the struggle in the plantations. The class will be drawn towards major struggles because of the U.L.F. There has been no agreement in the north, nor will there be one.

Sirima has been brought to the forefront for the purpose of establishing a popular front in order to subdue the united front force which will be engendered on a major scale in this situation. But, given the widespread experience of the period from 64 to 70, the working class will not allow itself to be

dragged back into Coalition politics. Although a very minor section within the L.S.S.P. and the C.P. will try to go with Sirima, there will be no room for the firm establishment of a popular front because of the opposition of the S.I.M.P. as the major party of the working class. In these circumstances, we have to work very carefully in respect of the left front. If we very tactfully enter the left front, Sirima can be faced up to and the situation in Russia in February 1917 can be reached [or precipitated? is not clear — Translators Note].

What was the minority perspective on this matter? Although we envisaged some form of settlement between the militant youth in the north and the Government, it has yet to materialize. The war continues within this present stalemate. The Government cannot maintain this any further. The J.V.P. is reemerging at a time when certain sections of the petty bourgeoisie in the South are becoming active. The struggles on the tea plantations which developed within the limitations of Thondaman's leadership ~~had assumed a form~~ of widespread unrest, but in fact, these agitations strengthened his leadership instead of exposing it. In countries such as the Philippines and Pakistan, the ruling regimes have been advised by their imperialist masters to hold some elections and give an appearance of democracy, in order to contain the anger of the masses. Accordingly, J.R. Jayewardene is making an effort to follow that path. We must understand that there is a possibility of a general election or provincial council elections. So, the Communist Party and L.S.S.P. leaderships may move toward coalition politics. They still show some opposition to Mrs. Bandaranaike because they are uncertain about their potential governmental positions and its price tag. However, the traditional Stalinists and Social democratic leaderships will maintain their historic characteristics. In the final analysis, these leaderships are totally incapable of carrying out class politics which is independent of capitalist politicking. We should understand this from the

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world revolutionary experiences. Under these conditions, the SLMP staff which is based on the urban petty bourgeoisie will disintegrate and except for a few leaders, the majority will rejoin the SLFP.

Therefore we must correctly understand the various factors and deal with them accordingly. Next time Mrs. Bandaranaike comes to the fore, the working class and the left campaign will be drowned in blood as in the Indonesian and Chilean experiences. We must thoroughly understand the popular front developments in the future. It is the responsibility of the leadership to inform the party cadre and act in a manner which takes into account the results and experiences of this front. Instead, if the party concludes that there is no problem of a popular front and there is no need to be afraid, such a conclusion will paralyse the cadre in the face of future developments. The ideas we have put forward ~~should~~ might become clearer by Mayday of 1986. The SLFP slogan calling for a general election is its main political force.

The above differences in perspectives are clear.

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Thus, the difference continues to be clear.

The above differences in perspectives are clear.

whatever the differences, the comrades on the side of the minority perspective, while continuing the discussions, have clearly carried out their responsibilities in every task within the restricted room given a determined and clear headed manner. But, some leading comrades of the majority perspective have inevitably moved from one confusion to another. Although we have attempted to explain some mistakes as personal weaknesses of some individuals, eventually, it has to be seen in terms of trying to progress along a path based on wrong perspectives. There has been faction forming at leadership Central and organisation level. There is also a degeneration of various individuals: The revolutionary vitality has come under severe challenge within the Party: ^{continuing} ~~and degeneration of~~ ~~vitality has come under severe~~ ~~party challenge within the Party:~~ ~~life style within the~~ ~~he's deteriorated.~~ Coming forward for leadership is a characteristic of a revolutionary but many important comrades are acting in a very egoistic manner. The continuing questions about having your name in a prominent place on a poster, positioning of your table, having a telephone etc have even lead to physical disagreement between ~~long standing~~ ^{full time} comrades. Surely, this is not training for revolutionary leadership. It has degenerated to the point of having to consider personal weaknesses before taking any decisions. ~~Although drunkenness killing nothing kills~~ Having to take into account the personal weaknesses of leading comrades, has to some extent, ~~jeopardise~~ political decisions. Although drunkenness during working hours

has become a habit, it has reached the stage in which one cannot even discuss such a matter. If ever such a matter is brought up, it can lead to personal enmity. Even though our trade union leaders ^{have been} accused of not showing sufficient concern about problems regarding workers, we are not in a position to discuss this, let alone overcome any mistakes. The continuity and intensity of work at branch level has decreased. We cannot draw any satisfaction from such matters as winning new members and the growth of our trade unions. We attract very few people outside the party to our seminars. Not only did we fail to bring out the paper "Nava Samasamajaya" there has been no growth in the readership of the "Haraya". The determination and courage of the rank and file member seems to be declining.

Even under these conditions, those comrades who experienced in party work, come forward with great strength and determination to defend the party wherever it is under attack in the country. If the emphasis in perspectives of the party are correctly placed and succeed in understanding the future of the party, then it is clear that the party can grow. The above described weaknesses are not a question of the minority or majority sections. These matters concern everybody in varying degrees, but the difference is that we accept that such a situation exists within the party. Some comrades in the leadership, while denying the existence of such a situation,

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justify in a very wrong way

attempt to ~~take place~~ it by using various theoretical points. This is totally uncharacteristic of a revolutionary party. It is the historic responsibility of the revolutionary party to act as the vanguard of the working class which will overthrow capitalism and take power. There can be no debate about the incompatibility of these tactics and behaviour with a fighting feminist organization based on the traditions of bolshevism. The main reason for these problems is the fact that our party's perspective of the future is not conducive to a party which will grow stronger in the unfolding events throughout the country. It is useful to recall that Trotsky's transitional program said that the ^{today's} crisis of the working class is a crisis of leadership. Let us look at today's unfolding situation realistically. However much we may favourably approach the SLNP, they will not allow us to join the ULF. This fact is an expression of deep political differences. We expected the lower section of the SLNP to bring about a decisive influence on the leadership regarding this matter ^{it does not happen as we expected}. Since the ULF is not prepared to give leadership to any struggle, it is waiting for a suitable opportunity to build up another coalition. The emerging struggles are limited by the fact that our revolutionary party of the working class is not suitably strong and the social ^{democratic} ~~revolutionary~~ stalinists do not command the support it had in the past period.

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In the north, the futility of individual terrorism is expressed by the fact that the youth are killing each other. There is a consequential increase in racial prejudice amongst the people in the south. The left has not taken a single step towards expressing the anti-government sentiments amongst the despondent soldiers who are fighting an endless war and the sinhala people who are made refugees from those battle areas. Meanwhile, Mrs. Bandaranaike opportunist draws support from the slogan of socialism on one side and the anti-government slogan on the other side.

The cost of living has become a burning issue of the working class. The left front will not provide the leadership in order to express this anger organisationally. Instead, they are planning devious ways of controlling and using the awakening masses for their own political purposes. Therefore the working class is in a crisis state. Although the objective conditions have created a period of social unrest, there is no clear political alternative for the working class. In this situation, there will be anarchist unrest and various struggles expressing the anger of the masses but these cannot be mobilised into a class struggle in a way favourable to the class struggle.

Our expectation that the SCMP which our party considered to be the main working class party, would break ranks with the LSSP and CP and come forward to battle has been proved wrong.

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those sections are going rapidly into crisis and in the process of joining the SLFP, we see the SCDF ~~joining~~ ~~in a crisis~~ and some sections are rejoining the SLFP. Meanwhile, the CP has been consolidate coalitional hopes and has been winning support under false pretences of military ~~leaders~~ slogan. It has resulted in some success for them. The JVP rears its head by condemning the bankruptcy of the traditional left ^{deliberately throwing as on the same} (including the NSP), appearing to oppose the war and talking about the so-called defence of the ~~nation~~. In this unfolding situation, we have orientated our party leaders toward the non-fight left front and attempting to win new sections by praising the SLFP and shouting victory slogans for the northern youth. Their experience of this approach is that our slogan and strategies are not realistic and fail to appeal to the working class and the broader anti-government masses.

Leon Trotsky made the following statement on the correct tactics used by the united front in a situation where the working class revolutionary party has no significant authority within the working class.

"We separated ourselves from the reformists and centrists in order to criticize the treachery, betrayal, inconsistency and irresolution. Therefore, we cannot accept any organisational pact that would compromise our critique. We will participate in the united front. But for ~~any~~ reason we are not prepared to be washed ~~in~~ in the waters called the united front. We will ~~be~~ in a manner that will show as a

* (This statement was submitted to the 1922 central committee
of the Communist Party) (18)

distinctly separate organisation. Wide sections of the masses will fully realize from their class experience that we are more skilful in battle, possess a clearer vision in a revolutionary situation, fearless and more determined. In this manner, we will hasten the formation of an united revolutionary front under a revolutionary leadership." * (our emphasis)

This passage by Comrade Trotsky is a sound lesson in the strategies of the united front. He considers the fact that the left movement in this country has a heritage spanning half a century, the left parties of today are important. Seen for their impotence.

Since the origin of ~~degenerate~~ coalition politics in 60s to the ~~the~~ 70s, the left parties have given leadership to the struggles emanating from the workers' arena, even the struggles of students, fishermen, peasant and ethnic minorities. These struggles ~~were restrained to~~ ^{left parties (within limits)} ~~restricted to~~ ^{within limits} ~~centralized~~ units. During the struggles of the last decade, the SCMP and other left parties have not displayed any independence of action. They have ~~resigned or abandoned~~ ^{excluded or abandoned} in struggle. In this situation, the left front which is yet to be a formidable force was identified as independent of capitalism and believed to be drawn into battle (due to pressure from its ranks and file). The party hoped that due to the front's popular attraction, the working class will be drawn into struggles. Because of the last party conference

resolutions being based on such assumptions, the hard work of the membership brought no benefits.

Now it is patently clear that the party's analysis of the SLMP and the youth groups in work were wrong. In the Abmeemana by-election, even though we just managed to prevent the very costly damage of putting forward comrade Vasi, the leadership of the majority perspective did not seem to be prepared to learn any lessons from it. After we failed in our effort of using Vasi's personal standing to encourage the SLMP to adopt him as left candidate, we made another mistake. Vijaya Kumaratunge and his wife Chandrika had said right from the start that they would give their support, but just ~~at the event~~ before the nomination closed, they withdrew this promise. By stating this publicly as the reason for withdrawal of Vasi's candidature we compromised our party's separate identity. The second candidate who was nominated ^{was} said to be not an alternative left candidate. Despite these blunders, the party cadres who worked in the by-election realized that the SLMP had no base at all in this Abmeemana electorate which has a considerable semi-rural basis. In spite of this, leading Comrades displayed a strange kind of united front strategy by introducing an outsider (to Abmeemana on the platform as an important SLMP leader. There is no doubt that the party cadres were wondering as to where Comrade Trotsky had taught to create imaginary organisations.

and then attempt to get the United front to work with these bodies. The treachery of Vijaya Kumaratunge and his party reveals that the efforts made to win over the ranks and (of the SLMP) to battle by having faith in the SLMP leadership, instead of building unity from top to bottom have been unsuccessful.

Today the SLMP is in a crisis and it is disintegrating very rapidly. Should we help to maintain those disillusioned sections of the SLMP by saying that it is the largest workers party? Those sections that joined the SLMP in the belief that its leaders were willing to battle, have now realized this to be false and they are looking around toward Mrs. Bandaranaike. Shouldn't we win over these sections by criticizing the SLMP leadership in a manner which will expose the weaknesses of the leadership and the emptiness of the party? We cannot win over these disillusioned sections by proclaiming that the SLMP is the largest workers' party and praising Vijaya Kumaratunge as the most important workers' leader. We need to engage in intelligent and sharp criticism. Our work must be aimed at inside the SLMP. We can see a good example in the British section of how to build a base of support within the ranks and file by exposing the treachery of the leadership.

The other very important issue is our approach to the national question. As marxists, we must be always

for the right of self determination for the oppressed Tamil people. We must point out the Northern Tamil youth chose the wrong method of struggle because the left leadership failed to give them any proper leadership. We must be clearly seen to be opposed to bogus peacemakers who say that the militant Tamil youth should be vanquished, the Sinhalese racists who say that a Tamil must be driven out and the jingoistic who call for a greater war effort. But it is not possible for Marxists to call for victory to the Northern youth groups who move from one dead-end to another. It is not our responsibility to mediate in their internecine battles. We should be pointing out that their internal battles is the result of their incorrect method of struggle. ~~Over the series classes~~ It is absolutely essential that our slogans are aimed at a strategy of trying to induce the disillusioned soldiers toward class struggle. One of the main factors of the February revolution, massivity of the main cause of the 1917 February Revolution in Russia was the uniting of war-disenfranchised soldiers with movement of the working class. We can learn the method of choosing tactical slogans for this task by recalling this period of history.

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To revolutionaries wanting to capture power, it is important when attacks which weaken or confuse Capitalist power are launched whether the methods are correct or not. But it is not by cheering those who launch such incorrect attacks that we may induce the soldiers and the masses who are disorientated by those attacks to follow the correct road.

They can be won by raising the correct method of struggle while criticising the wrong attack. Here, the slogans that our Party have put forward in relation to the youth groups in the north and the analyses in relation to them are indeed closer to the Petty Bourgeois slogan of people like Mahanama than to Marxism. Marxists who accept that the correct method of struggle is the mass struggle launched with the leadership of the working class cannot indulge in general cheering for youth leaders in the north. Such slogans and statements to the effect that now the northern youth are moving toward marxism and analysis as such only help to push the southern anti government masses towards the direction of the communalists. It is to be seen that some sections in the south who were with marxist movements earlier have lost faith in the class activity and moved to accepting individual terroristic methods of the north with close connections now being kept with those groups. Simultaneously,

certain groups in the north may move into discussions with left parties in the south but these do not indicate their giving up petty bourgeois methods of struggle and a movement towards marxism. It is worth recalling that even when the JVP were in joint trade union activity and active with left parties, we correctly identified those as varied tactics of the petty bourgeois and never declared them moving towards marxism.

The petty bourgeois, do not easily give up terrorist methods for the mass struggle. It happens only by proving in practice that the mass struggle centred around the working class can accomplish what individual terrorism cannot and by the unconditional theoretical struggle to affirm the correct methods of struggle in opposition to the method of individual terrorism.

The struggle to build the Russian Social Democratic party showed that it is an intense struggle to affirm the case for the working class mobilisation in opposition to petty bourgeois rebellion and particularly in opposition to individual terrorism. That struggle today in the North is even more difficult than in the past. That can only succeed if the mass struggle is created by the class leadership. The guerrillaist groups in the north, primarily based on the petty bourgeoisie are facing

its historic contradiction. These groups, in the main based on the various layers of the petty bourgeois, have guerrillanist as their fundamental strategy and the activity of the working class and the masses is secondary to them. While some guerrilla groups have faith only in guerrilla attacks in the north and east, other groups believe in guerrilla attacks launched in combination with the petty bourgeois of the Sinhalas in the south. There are such tactical differences amongst them. It is wrong to express approval of various groups on these grounds as we have been doing so far. We must study the situation in the north closely and understand how the activities in the north influence the class.

In our task of generating the mass struggle through the class activity in the south, our tactics are determined by commonly accepted assessments and perspectives. Precisely because of the error of our accepted assessments we failed to provide the leadership that should have been given at the Conference held on the 25th of March. Precisely because we worked in anticipation of class activity emanating through the left front and particularly through the SLMP, we acted as aides to Panditha & Company to an unnecessary extent. The SLMP which we estimated as the main party of the working class were unable to bring forth qualitative or

quantitative influence within the Conference. We were imprisoned within the Constraints of the top Committees to the extent that no difference was apparent between us and Panditha and Company. Whilst the Conference was a success within the broadest unity, the petty bourgeois were able to cause confusion with feigned militancy.

It is clear that the left front as such is showing no enthusiasm to launch the national protest day. Meanwhile, the Bank and Postal unions were pushed into celebrating may-day within the Trade Union Unity of Bala Tamizol and a representative of the nurses union too joined them making a speech at the C. celebration. However, it is to be expected that those who stand for a coalition would try to generate some activity within the working class as a bridge to serve their Coalition needs.

Because of unlimited praying to the left front and the SLMP, our identity within the class has diminished. Further our tactics have not resulted in the left front being pushed towards struggles or the growth of our party.

although we repeatedly said that the youth in the north are moving towards Marxism on the whole they have gone to the absurd limits of futile terrorism.

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We predicted Sirima receding to the village, as an unimportant force, in fact, the SLFP is rapidly growing in the work places and the cities. The majority of the working class sections which we said became independent through the SLMP have now gone towards Sirima. We propose that we must understand these matters and change our assertion. Because we consider it to be of assistance towards this end, we quote the final section of the document we presented to the party congress.

[There follows the final section of the minority document presented to the party congress — the first of the paragraphs quoted begins ---- "In general the situation coming before us is one of severe crises. Repression and further cutbacks in living standards is the policy of the government. -----]