

'FOURTH WORLD': MARXIST, GANDHIAN, ENVIRONMENTALIST...

In February 2004, Dr. M.P. Parameswaran was expelled from CPI (M). Widely known as MP, without ever having been a Member of Parliament, Dr. Parameswaran about four decades ago quit his job as a nuclear scientist in the nuclear establishment of India soon after coming back from USSR after a three year stay. Since then he has been full time into various movements for social change. He has played a leading role in number of movements and organisations, at least two of which have received international recognition in the form of UNESCO awards - Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) and Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS) – and in All India People's Science Network (AIPSN).

He was expelled from the Party for propounding an 'unmarxist' concept of 'Fourth World'. The concept, first put forth in 1998, caused controversy in Kerala in 2003. There was massive debate about it in media and subsequently he was expelled. Post-expulsion, he had elaborated and expanded his views and published a booklet in Malayalam, which has gone into number of reprints. Now, an English translation of this document, more than 40,000 words long, "Thoughts About A Fourth World", is circulating on the net.

In the aftermath of breakdown of the USSR, this is a major alternative vision document to come from within the Indian mainstream Left. Given his stature and fact that post-expulsion too he continues to play a leading role in above organisations, his vision is likely to have a far reaching, though perhaps quite, influence. Forth World aims to provide an 'ideological document which evaluate(s) the failure of the socialist experiments and ... provide(s) a sound foundation of economics, politics and ethics for a new society'. It identifies 'three important reasons for (break up of the USSR): economic centralization, political centralization and distorted view of progress.' Its vision of future world is based on 'necessity of: participatory democracy, an alternative view of progress, and an alternative approach towards the progress of productive forces, technology'. Need for 'participatory democracy' is often recognised but even theories promoting 'rectified socialism' have not been "able to get out of technology fetishism and unlimited growth syndrome". Taking 'an alternative view of progress, and an alternative approach towards the progress of productive forces' is a distinctive feature of the concept of the Fourth World. It notes that "Under communism, at least as conceived by the 20th century experimenters, the productive forces would have developed to such high levels that there is an abundance of each and every commodity, that everybody can have everything they want and hence there is no necessity for competition. The State can, consequently wither away." **Fourth World rejects this possibility and visualises future society 'with out such abundance'.**

The sketch of future society, particularly economy is nearer the Gandhian vision. Fourth World is to 'be a network of hundreds of thousands local communities which are **increasingly** becoming self-sufficient.' It seeks to localise material production as far as

possible and to decentralise economy by decentralising “(i) spatial habitat pattern (ii) spatial distribution of resources and (iii) distribution of the control over resources.” This it is argued is essential because only by having a ‘human scale of polity and economy’ can participatory democracy flourish. To this end, it makes a case for harnessing modern technology to make ‘small powerful too’. In the Fourth World material progress is to be reflected in ‘continuous reduction in working hours and increase in leisure’. This is based on the understanding that ‘correlation between per capita GNP’ and even ‘life expectation is very weak’. International data and Kerala experience is cited to show that high levels of life expectation and education are possible with comparatively very low levels of income’.

However, his discussion of ‘economic structure’ is quite weak. It focuses on ‘characteristics’ and not on ‘structures’. Section on economic structure extensively cites Michael Albert’s ‘Parecon: Life after Capitalism’ wherein for managing large scale industries ‘Representatives of Workers Councils and Consumers’ Councils’ reminiscent of Yugoslav system are suggested. Some of the other propositions cited are: ‘Means of production will not be owned by anybody. It will not come into the picture of the value of the product’; ‘Remuneration will be calculated not on the basis of production but on the basis of effort and sacrifice’. Discussion of economic aspects of the Fourth World has many such aspects, which do not make economic sense. It is the weakest part of the whole argument. Moreover, discussion often implies absolute deprivation/worsening of situation for majority of people within the present/capitalist system and not just increased relative inequality for majority and absolute worsening for some. It results in a reading where ‘majority has nothing to loose but their chains’. Can one say that the majority of Kerala population (or Dalits) have not experienced any improvement in their life? Fortunately, these formulations are not essential ingredients of the Fourth World, which can stand with out these.

The political structure of the Fourth World is premised on ‘citizens ability and willingness to participate in socio-political activities.’ It views politics to be ‘too important to be left alone with career politicians.’ So, political structure goes deeper than even Panchayats. It is based on ‘neighbourhood groups consisting of 20-30 proximate households of 60-80 citizens (voters). Beyond the size of 60-80 direct, democracy is viewed to be unwieldy. Formations of larger number of citizens can be only representative’ Inversion of power pyramid- where only delegated functions move up and residual powers rest with the grassroots- has often been suggested. But Fourth World has two innovative provisions. One, ‘in all representative formations, representation will be always done by a pair of one woman and one man’. Secondly, electors shall make all higher-level nominations not ‘from among themselves but from citizens’ residing in that area.

Document does not stop with sketching an outline of the Fourth World. It also suggests a programme of action which is based on the understanding that a “new world is not the result of one single creative act – call it revolution, call it change. It is an evolutionary product, a product of hundreds of thousands of small and big, local and wide spread struggles, a product of meso and macro creations, a product of making and

breaking of mutual faiths and alliances. ...The experiments will challenge the existing systems, but will still be conducted within it.” Future action plan consists of two components, direct and indirect struggles. Direct component includes economic boycott of not only MNC products but the ‘reactionary strength of national large scale manufacturers will [also] be checked using the same techniques used against foreign transnationals – boycott and local substitutes’. It goes on to describe a strategy to handle three main obstacles in promotion of local products: ‘Paucity of good quality alternatives, weakness of marketing mechanism for alternative products and entrenched consumerism brought about by the media’. But it does not stop at struggle from the outside and, in the Gandhian mode, it also suggests indirect mode of struggle, where in those “who are employed in State institutions from panchayat to national government can use their own office files as a weapon to fight the class enemies. Each issue, each file, will have a class content in it. ... This is the meaning of a united front of all the exploited.” Those ‘in S&T research and development [segment can engage in] activities to make small powerful. The People’s Science Movement [should] consider this as their primary responsibility’. For teachers he suggests another battlefield: “The political struggle of teachers has to be expressed in their classroom transactions [not just outside classrooms!].”

However, as an analytical concept, Fourth World has number of loose ends. While it is open to ‘enrichment’ of Marxism, which may involve criticism and correction but these terms are not used in this document. While it critiques ‘official interpretations of Marxism’, it does not explore if these official interpretations have some basis in Marxism. It asks, “Where did the Russian and other communist parties go wrong? In interpreting Marxism? Or in the practice of Marxism?” It does not even recognise the possibility that Marxism itself could be wrong/ inadequate. Over all, explanation of break down of USSR in terms of neglect of cultural development of Soviet Citizen and ‘distorted view of progress’ is quite inadequate.

Moreover, while vision of the ‘Forth World’ is called ‘pre-socialist’ the term ‘socialism’ has nowhere been defined. It is amply clear that for the Fourth World ‘socialism’ does not mean state ownership of the means of production. So, what is meant by socialism, particularly in terms of economic structure and not just in terms of achievements/results needs to be explained. This has not been done. It is important as in the light of distinction made by Engels between ‘Utopian’ and ‘Scientific’ socialism, unqualified, ‘socialism’ usually stands for so called ‘scientific socialism’. Next, there seems to be a search for a perfect system. In the Fourth World the ‘interest of the individual and of the community become harmonized and the necessity of State vanishes’, there is a ‘transition from competition to cooperation’ and ‘each member of the society has enough wisdom for self-control’. Rather than seek a conflict less ideal society, shouldn’t we be satisfied with a society where basic needs of all are met in a sustainable manner, conflicts are minimised, and a functional system exists to see that these conflicts do not go out of hand?

Uncritical application of Marxism has reflection in understanding of ‘capitalism’. This fairly detailed monograph has no word of appreciation for any aspect of capitalism and market forces. It blandly says that, “*Sanitized or Human-faced capitalism*” is “a

semantic absurdity, to say the least. Capitalism per se cannot have a human face.” Why ‘welfare state’ is considered to be an exception incompatible with ‘capitalism’ is not elaborated. ‘Capitalist’ societies are not devoid of ‘fellow-feeling’ as is often made out to be. Perhaps ‘capitalism’ was/is victim of similar ‘distorted view of progress’, that plagued ‘socialism’. Ideology of ‘capitalism’ is not indifferent to poverty and deprivation; it suggests a different strategy (which does not seem to work is another matter) to handle this. Moreover, why seek to do away with markets and profit all together? Certainly in deciding location of a shop or a factory, cost, demand and viability considerations should play an important role. The problem is serious and deep rooted.

Fourth World reproduces following quotation from Che Guevara:

"It is not at all possible to speak about expanding trade [between USSR and Third World countries] as for ‘mutual benefit’ when the trade is based on values dictated by uneven development of productive forces. The world market price is dictated by the mechanized factory production. To ascribe the same value for the labour of underdeveloped nations is not for mutual benefit. If socialist countries establish such relations with underdeveloped countries, it will have to be accepted that they too are partners in imperialist exploitation."

What else can be the basis of trade? Else, it will be aid and not trade. But in a way Che Guevara cannot be faulted because Marxist analysis otherwise calls it exploitation. This contradiction can be resolved by recognising inadequacy/errors of Marxism. Further, the question of inefficiency of ‘public sector’ is not considered at all and no suggestions are made in this regard. Today, one has to convince people that public sector can be made to work

However, it is quite a comprehensive document and discusses wide range of issues, though not with uniform rigour. While it does have misplaced arguments like “Sexual relationship is purely a biological act”, it also has number of valuable insights, or at least beautifully put ideas. To wit:

- ?? “There have been arguments within almost all communist parties about the concept of an ‘Ideal Communist’ and of a ‘Pragmatic Communist’. In the struggle, the ideal communists loose, perhaps not because of their idealism, but because of its degeneration into formalism and organizationalism and often fundamentalism. The pragmatists survive, but in the process become more and more ‘pragmatic’ and in the end become one with the public - not like fish in the water, but water itself.”
- ?? “Propensity for cooperation too is a genetically inherited quality.” “This was an essential element of human evolution. The species could not have survived without cooperation. Variants with less ability for cooperation became extinct. Collectivity is an evolutionary feature.”
- ?? It has suggested number of alternative and innovative indices to measure physical and spiritual quality of life. These include Wastage Index, Dehumanization Index, Participation Index, Emancipation Index and Recycling Index. Construction of these indices is discussed in detail and hence these can be debated. For example, it suggests that “If we divide the total expenditure on police, jail, courts, military, and administration by the total expenditure on education and health care, we get a

quantity which can be termed as 'dehumanization index'." While this may be all right for the time being but eventually health expenditure like expenditure on pollution control should go down. So, health and education cannot be equated.

Anyway, visions and ideologies can neither be discarded nor developed in one go. But with the Fourth World, post-Soviet gestation period within Indian Left is perhaps coming to an end. It has brought out into the open and given a theoretical form to what was perhaps already changing in praxis of mainstream Indian Left. (Even party programme of the CPI (M) does not call for abolition of private property.) **This has been done without disowning as well as without defending the Marxist/Soviet path all the way.** Fourth World is offered as 'one concept of a post-capitalist society' with the recognition that 'there could be many others too.' So, it can form the basis for Marxists, Gandhians, Environmentalists, Feminists, Socialists, Dalits and peace activists to come closer, if not together. This is possible because the Fourth World has a theoretical space for all these movements and not just a desire for broadest possible unity. A comparison of the ideological documents of National Alliance of People's Movement (NAPM) and Samajwadi Jan Parishad (SJP) formerly led by Kishan Patnaik, Bharat Nirman Abhiyan led by BD Sharma and Gandhian fortnightly 'Sarvodya Jagat' with the Fourth World, would give a feeling that there is lot of shared ground. Of course a closer reading of documents of all the aforesaid organisations/movements will show shades of differences, some of which may appear to be unbridgeable to their respective proponents. But having gone through these, one can say that at least as a programme of action in the current context, there is lot that is common. This commonality is perhaps being increasingly realised as reflected in coming together of various shades of opinion against the hegemony of America and American vision in World Social Forum, as campaigns for Right to Information, Right to Food, for Employment Guarantee Act and for peace. Fourth World, coming from within the mainstream Left bridges this gap further and can form the basis of further fine tuning.

ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE

THOUGHTS ABOUT A FOURTH WORLD

M.P. Parameswaran

ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE : WHAT IS IT?

Towards the concept of a " Fourth World"

To the loud neoliberal propaganda that 'There Is No Alternative' (TINA) initiated by the 'globalizers' after the fall of the socialist bloc, the 'resistors' all over the world have come up with the slogan: 'Another World Is Possible' (AWIP). We had five World Social Forums since 2001 with this as the central slogan. This 'Another World' will not be neoliberal or imperialistic. Neither will it be similar to the present Third World. It will not be, also, a repetition the type of socialism experimented with in the twentieth century. All we can say is that it will be a Post- Capitalist Society. It may not yet be a truly socialist society. Having exhausted the numerals 1, 2 and 3, we call it a 'Fourth World'. The use of indefinite article is intentional. There could be many variations. The nomenclature 'Fourth World' applies to them all. One current such example could be China. It is neither capitalistic nor socialist. It is experimenting and claims to be moving towards socialism. This claim may be contested. Even if agreed to, they too feel that socialism is far, far away. Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea too are experimenting. They too are striving forwards a future socialism, quite different from that of the 20th century one. This too may be contested. It may be argued that, objectively, they are moving towards capitalism and that instead of joining the First World, they may end up in the Third World. Hopefully they may end up in a distinctly different situation, positively more advanced than capitalism, but not yet achieving socialism, a genuine Fourth World. This Fourth World may take different forms and contents in different countries.

This small book is an attempt to conceive one such form suitable to, and realizable in, India. It is based on the experiences of the 20th century India and, in particular, of Kerala. The heroic struggle waged by the people of India during the 20th century, its long tradition of democracy , the deep political consciousness of its people, all these form the basis for such a hope.

INTRODUCTION

The word 'Fourth World' has been used differently by many. It is natural to think of a 'Fourth World' different from the first, second and third. I used this expression for the first time in a paper titled "Towards the Perspective of a Fourth World" presented at the 6th All- India People's Science Congress held in 1998 at Nalanda, Bihar, India. There, it was used with a specific meaning: a post-capitalist pre-socialist social order. The necessity and reality of such a transition formation is now widely accepted. That paper remained an academic one for nearly five years. Suddenly in the middle of 2003, the term was resurrected by some pseudo-Marxist journalists and a huge media blitz was mounted against it. Several top leaders of the CPI(M) and the CPI competed with one another in condemning the 'Fourth World'. There was practically no polemics, because there was no critique on content but only blatant accusations.

Being a disciplined member of the CPI(M) then, I did not openly join issue with the senior Party leadership. For reasons unconvincing not only to me but also to lay readers, I was summarily 'expelled' from the Party in February 2004. There was no warning, no opportunity to explain my position, no suspension and enquiry but straight expulsion – a punishment meted out to extreme anti-Party activities. One academic paper presented in a conference and forgotten for almost five years was suddenly interpreted as an extreme anti-Party activity. Neither the public nor the ordinary members of the Party had any clue as to what this 'Fourth World' was. This book gives the answer.

The progressives and the Party members can judge for themselves how much it is useful or harmful in the fight against globalization and neo-liberal capitalism.

In this context, it has to be pointed out that I do not believe that Marxism needs no more enrichment, that everything that can be said has already been said, that leaders' interpretation - from the local committee level to the central secretariat level - is to be accepted without questioning - centralised democracy, indeed!)

All the 20th century experiments to build socialism have failed. Why? Are there common features? Was the weakness internal? Or was the external enemy all too powerful? Why? Why? Why? In 1997, while convalescing from a mild heart attack, I had jotted down a number of issues which needed intense discussion and wrote to several Polit Bureau Members of the CPI(M), leaders of the CPI, other Marxists and even friendly non-Marxists. It is sad, but it is a fact, that I failed to kindle enough enthusiasm amongst the Party leadership to initiate such a study. Later, in 2000 and in 2002, small group discussions were organized. For this, the original questions were re-organised and categorised as given below.

HISTORIC - CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

1. How and why did **all** the "socialist-working class" states in the world collapse? Are there any common features/ causes for this?

2. Can the economic policies followed by China (and also North Korea, Viet Nam and Cuba) be reconciled with their professed political objectives?
3. Why have all the "workers' states" (and their parties too) become less or more corrupt? Has absence of real democracy contributed to this?
4. "While in Rome do as Romans do." China apparently follows an updated version of this proverb: While in a capitalist world, be a stronger capitalist. There Is No Alternative (TINA). Some counter this with TIAA, There Is Another Alternative: What could that be? What attempts have been made to outline this?
5. Was the October Revolution a mistake? Was it an experiment doomed to fail from the outset because of the poor development of productive forces? Why did revolutions not take place in England and Germany as Marx expected?
6. In 1905, Lenin wrote "Imperialism: Highest and Last Stage of Capitalism." Since then, year after year, communist literature wrote about the general crisis of capitalism and its impending collapse. Where did they/we go wrong?
7. Apparently capitalism has not exhausted its full potential. If so, what could the remainder be? Is exhaustion of potential a purely objective category? Does the subjective element, the consciousness and organization of the working class accelerate this exhaustion? If so, what are the limitations?
8. What possibly, we can learn from Gramsci and other later Marxists? How have the capitalists "manufactured consent" among the rest? Is dissent possible "only after" capitalism has exhausted its potential?
9. Why was the question of nationalities never resolved in USSR or in Yugoslavia? Why does it persist and continue to grow?

THEORETICAL- CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

10. In the Communist Manifesto Marx wrote:
 "It has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other – the bourgeoisie and the proletariat." Is this true? Is it that simple? What about castes in India? Religion? Nationality? Gender? "It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers". - continued Marx and Engels. Does this mean that they all belong to the same grand "working class," including the factory worker, the agriculture labour, the casual worker, etc.? Do they, or can they ever, have the same class consciousness?
11. The Manifesto ends with these words: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains." Is this true now?
12. "Communism" is often epitomised through the phrase "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." Gandhiji said: "This world has enough to satisfy everybody's needs, but not their greed." Has Marx ever tried to differentiate need from greed or pseudo-need created by capitalism? If yes, how do one differentiate the two? If no, is it possible to satisfy the unlimited needs of all the human beings? Are there enough physical resources on this earth for this?
13. What do we understand by human progress? Is it more and more consumption? Is it more choices? How do we quantify it ?

14. Greed is a difficult category. It could be defined in two contradictory ways: (1) Greed is a need which you cannot presently satisfy. Anything that can be satisfied by anybody is not greed. (2) Anything that everybody cannot have is greed. Which is correct? Or are there better definitions?
15. The concept of contradictions is central in Marxist philosophy. What are the major contradictions impacting upon the human society today? (1) Capitalism and Socialism (2) Imperialism and Colonialism (3) Imperialism and imperialism (4) Capital and Labour (5) Ever expanding needs and limited natural resources (6) Ever increasing pollutants and limited sink (7) Gender inequity, (8) Caste/ religion.
16. The contradiction between growing productive forces and stagnant production relations is supposed to create ultimate revolutionary conditions. Can we think of an alternative scenario: nucleation and growth of local, cooperative, economies, coalescing to assume larger and larger proportions and leading to effective confrontation with global capitalist economy? This has both an objective (small made powerful through appropriate science and technology) and a subjective (wisdom to differentiate needs from greed) element in it. Can quantitative growth of local economies lead to a qualitative change in the global society?
17. To quote from Manifesto again: " The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all elements of production in the hands of the State; i.e., the proletariat organised as a ruling class..." This is further elaborated: Abolition of property in land; abolition of rights of inheritance, centralization of credit, means of communication and transport, etc., in the hands of the **State**. This is exactly what happened in Russia and elsewhere. Was this correct? Is this to be attempted again? Is State ownership the same as People's ownership?
18. Is the formulation "dictatorship of the proletariat" still correct? Is dictatorship preferred to democracy? Who forms the proletariat? If we say "proletarian democracy," how is it different from bourgeois democracy? Is democracy merely casting votes? Is not participation an essential element in it? And does not participation demand human scales of operation, both in economics and in politics?
19. Finally, if the condition of abundance, as characterised by "to each according to his needs" is not possible theoretically and we have to operate always under conditions of scarcity demanding regulation, can the State "wither away"? Is the concept of absolutely classless society valid?
20. Revolutionary or transformatory process demands :
- ever evolving, ever expanding and ever diversifying actions of the people.
 - an evolving, flexible and yet coherent organization/ institution to focus these actions so that they have a resultant force and resultant direction of movement.
21. It can so happen and had almost invariably happened, that the organization or institution loses its dynamism, ceases to evolve and in turn become impediment to the growth of the movement.

22. Can we say that Communist/ Workers' Party organizations have shown this tendency of calcification and inflexibility and thereby constricted the growth of people's movement?
23. Can it be said that the party hierarchy and leadership solidifies first and everything else become subsidiary to it?
24. May not this lead to a situation that the dynamic people's movements - economic, political and cultural movements – undirected they may be – explode, breaking asunder all organizational/ party structures?
25. Can we say that what happened in the USSR and other socialist countries in the world is something like this?
26. Communists are considered 'leaders' of the society in which they live. They are supposed to have a powerful influence on the society around. However, the outside society can have influence, in turn, on the communists too. There have been arguments within almost all communist parties about the concept of an "Ideal Communist" and of a "Pragmatic Communist." In the struggle, the ideal communists lose, perhaps not because of their idealism, but because of its degeneration into formalism and organizationalism and often fundamentalism. The pragmatists survive, but in the process become more and more "pragmatic" and in the end become one with the public - not like fish in the water, but water itself.
27. In this context, does not a theory of constant revolution, constant change within the party becomes important?
28. Can we assume that Mao was deeply conscious of the "fish becoming water" and that his slogan "Storm the Citadels" was a reaction towards it? The fact that it had failed may not be due to its intrinsic fault, but due to the extreme degeneration of the apparatus that had already taken place?

ISSUED RELATED TO INDIA

29. What is the character of Indian State today? What do we learn from international experience? Which are the classes existing in India today? What are the roles of caste, religion and nationality?
30. Have we failed to apply Marxism creatively to Indian conditions? If so, what are the major features of that failure? Will Marxian analysis alone suffice? Do we require other tools too?
31. What is the path of Indian revolution? The classical Russian? or Chinese? Or what else?
32. Does decentralization of power and resources, people's participation and strengthening of local economies help the Indian revolution? How? Or does it weaken? If so how? Is decentralised democracy "antithetical" to democratic centralism?
33. Can India chose the path of Asian Tigers? If not, why? What is the development perspective for India? The Nehruvian model? The Gandhian Model or a New Model? What are the features of a new model?
34. Is it possible to resolve all our border problems with Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, Nepal, and also the Kashmir problem and reduce the defense expenditure in the entire region? What would be its impact on the arms trade economies? If this is not possible, what are the objective and subjective impediments?
35. How are we going to stop and reverse the growing strength of religious fundamentalism and of the underworld and also of the increasing stranglehold of the WTO, the World Bank and the IMF?

This book, of course, is not a contribution towards answering these questions. No single person shall dare to attempt it. This book is intended only to inform fellow citizens what I meant by this mysterious 'Fourth World', which seems to have become the main enemy of Indian Revolution.

Chapter One

GENESIS OF THE BOOK

This book is the product of a personal enquiry. It doesn't end here. And it started in the early sixties of the last century, while living in Moscow as a Ph. D scholar, from 1962 to 1965. The experience of those days was both exhilarating and disconcerting. The Soviet people's success in eradicating poverty, in providing food, clothing, shelter, education, health, recreation and rest – basic needs – for all was unimaginable but true. A Soviet citizen didn't have to worry about the future of self or children. Both were safe in the hands of the community. And they had full faith in this security. They never felt the necessity of amassing wealth for the security of themselves or their children's future. The Soviet Union of those days, was, so to speak, 'a paradise on earth'. True, they had to pay a very heavy price to achieve it. The first world war, then the civil war, then the second world war – all these had claimed millions and millions of lives – fathers, brothers, husbands and sons and also mothers, wives, sisters and daughters. There was, also, the cleansing operations of Stalin - more than half of his comrades-in arms were executed. Today, nobody believes that these executions were absolutely necessary to save the working class state from counter-revolution. However, by the sixties all these stages had been crossed.

It was the period of India-China conflict and of the Indo-Pakistan war. Both could have been avoided. Unfortunately, by that time, even the Sino-Soviet relations had become severely strained. It was quite problematic to explain this growing animosity between two working class states! At the same time, capitalism was practically equipping itself with policies to overcome the severe challenges it was facing.

If in India we were to achieve total literacy, universal education, employment for all, ability to satisfy basic needs of all, etc., the price we were to pay would be heavy – this was clear even by then. Still it was desirable.

At the same time, several factors which caused anxiety about the safety of the Soviet system too were visible. Black market in dollar-rouble exchange, excessive desire for foreign, especially American, consumer products, the deepening and lengthening of the red tape in government, the excessive privileges enjoyed by party leaders, the perception of the general public that they didn't deserve such privileges, the increasing alienation of the party from the people, the lack of enthusiasm amongst younger generation, to study Marxism, the concept that progress meant catching up with USA and surpassing it, the excessive 'Great Russian' nationalism amounting to chauvinism and the corresponding anti-Russian feeling amongst other nationalities... all these were causes for concern. In the relationship with Third World countries too, there was a marked absence of internationalism and solidarity of the working class. This has been criticized strongly by Che Guevara in 1965, during the Afro-Asian Conference held at Algiers. He criticized the basis of trade relations (retranslated from Malayalam):

"It is not at all possible to speak about expanding trade as for 'mutual benefit' when the trade is based on values dictated by uneven development of productive forces. The world market price is dictated by the mechanized factory production. To ascribe the same value for the labour of underdeveloped nations is not for mutual benefit. If socialist countries establish such relations with underdeveloped countries, it will have to be accepted that they too are partners in imperialist exploitation."⁽¹⁾

During those years there were many students and doctoral scholars from Poland, Bulgaria, Chekoslovakia, Romania, East Germany and China (last batches) in Moscow. In their sub-conscious, one could easily discern a latent anti-Sovietism, especially anti-Russian feeling. Many of us feared that if this path continued there was a possibility for Soviet Union becoming non-socialist. Because, the corrective force required to rectify the mistakes, democracy and participation, was conspicuous by its absence. I had shared these anxieties and fears with the Party leaders in the Moscow Power Institute where I was doing research. They had concurred with me that there were problems. Their attempts to rectify them, unfortunately, did not succeed.

During those three years of stay there, I had formed a hazy outline of the shape of the future world and future India in my mind. Three important components of this, which were clear even then, were the necessity of:

- (i) Participatory democracy,
- (ii) An alternative view of progress, and
- (iii) An alternative approach towards the progress of productive forces, technology.

Gradually and imperceptibly an idea was developing in my sub-conscious mind: to get involved in an extensive and massive Citizen Education Programme to help realize the right of citizens and small communities, to regain control on their own lives. This is what prompted me to join the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishat, which had already been formed, and become its active worker, as soon as I went back from Moscow. It was the firm conviction that citizens' ability and willingness to participate in socio-political activities had to be continuously strengthened that prompted me to take initiative in forming organizations to develop scientific literature in Indian languages, some of them to begin with and federating them in FILSA (Federation of Indian Language Science Associations) in 1966 at Bombay and later participating in the formation of All-India People's Science Network (AIPSN) and the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samithi (BGVS) and also in the total literacy campaigns and the people's plan campaign in Kerala. However, there was a nagging question: where did the Russian and other communist parties go wrong? In interpreting Marxism? Or in the practice of Marxism? Why did every one of them degenerate? During those days, I had neither the theoretical knowledge nor the practical experience to properly formulate these questions. Various activities carried out during the past two or three decades in the fields of education, health, scientific temper, environment, development, energy, gender equity, etc., helped me considerably. So did the books like *Limits to Growth*⁽²⁾ (Club of Rome Report), *Silent Spring*⁽³⁾ (Raechel

Carson), Declaration of 1972 Stockholm Convention on environment, etc.. The danger behind the concept 'development' as mere growth was becoming increasingly clear.

Slowly it became obvious that goods have, besides 'use value' and 'exchange value', also what could be called as '*welfare value*'. New models of cars produced year after year do not make travel quicker. Even with eight-lane roads, increased number of cars result, in towns, bumper to bumper traffic at snail pace. These new models have only 'vanity value'. Many goods like agent orange, nuclear bombs, narcotics, alcohol, etc., have, in fact, negative welfare value, though their exchange values are very high. Capitalism cannot survive without continuously expanding the production and exchange of values. For majority of the citizens, they generate negative or zero welfare values. One mistake committed by the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries was, perhaps, non differentiation of exchange value and welfare value. Their aim was to surpass USA, in production and consumption of each and every item without taking into account their welfare value. In the famous statement: 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs', they perhaps, failed to differentiate real human needs from the pseudo needs manufactured by capitalism. They thought that the immense development of productive forces freed from the chains of capitalism had to be directed towards a continuous increase in the production of goods and services. True, for developing and poor countries this has to be the case. But what of developed countries like the USA, Europe or Japan? Little thought was given to 'freedom', emancipation from alienation. What did Marx mean when he said that mankind was at the threshold of liberation from animal limitations? Marx and Engels wrote in *German Ideology* (pp.44-45):

".... each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape... and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, to fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner..." (4)

The interest of the individual and of the community become harmonized and the necessity of State vanishes. Here, Marx is not referring to increased production of commodities, but increased freedom, emancipation from alienated labour. The continuous expansion of productive forces should lead to reduction in alienation. But this was not so, either in the USA (understandable) or in the USSR. There was no agenda for reduction in labour time, increase in leisure and increased activities, which are truly human. The industrially developed countries today, with their existing level of productive forces, can produce all the welfare values, which are being currently produced with an average daily labour of 2-3 hours and not 8-10 hours. It is strange to note that there was no 6-hour work movement for the past one century or more. So, a question has to be asked: what do we aim in a movement towards a communist society?

?? A continuous increase in the availability of commodities demanding, often, more working hours than less, or

?? A continuous reduction in working hours and increase in leisure through development of productive forces on the one hand and limiting the production to welfare values only?

Common sense demands the second. Unfortunately, the mainstream Marxists of 20th century opted for the first. This author raised a critique on this mainstream interpretation in an article entitled "Science and Technology: Necessity of a New Vision" published in *Chintha Weekly*, August 1974.⁽⁵⁾ There, explaining the concept of "Quality of Life," this author wrote: "Humans cannot be happy without satisfying both physiological and cultural hunger." A few years later, as measures to these two kinds of hunger, two qualities, i.e., Physical Quality of Life (PQL) and Spiritual Quality of Life (SQL), were defined. The article referred to above says further, "the present organization of habitats into towns where industrial workers live and villages where peasants and agricultural workers live has to be done away with. They should intermix. Both industry and agriculture should be uniformly distributed. That is the only way to resolve the contradiction between town and village."

In the second part of the Communist Manifesto, which gives a 10-point programme, the 9th point is this:

"Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries, gradual abolition of distinction between town and country by a more equitable distribution of the population over the country."⁽⁶⁾

This is not possible with mega industries and mega projects, which demand concentration of population in towns. The concept of "economy of scale" will have to be questioned. Science and technology will have to be so geared as to make small- scale production more economic than today, even more economic than large scale production, if all the hidden or transferred costs are taken into consideration. The article referred to above ends thus:

"This may appear to be a version of Gandhiji's self-sufficient village. So what? It doesn't mean that primitive technologies are to be used. Modern technology need not necessarily mean large- scale production...."⁽⁵⁾

"Once the distinction between towns and villages disappears through judicious location of industries and farming and also human habitats near to their place of work, wastage in several other areas can be considerably reduced. The most striking point is that of transportation. Reduction in environmental pollution follows. Together with changes in the socio-economic system, our scientists and technologists should turn their attention to research and development efforts to make small powerful, not only beautiful."⁽⁵⁾

One can find a mixture of Gandhian views and Marxist views in this.

By the 1980s, the great socialist experiments of the 20th century had all begun to exhibit symptoms of decay and degeneration. By 1990, this became complete. This collapse, though painful, was not totally unexpected. Che Guvera had already prognosed it in the sixties. Symptoms were, as noted earlier, visible even then.

New slogans, new perspectives, new programmes have become necessary. With the fall of the Socialist block, the world had become monopolar. It was abundantly clear by then that capitalism, especially American imperialism would begin to ride over the entire third world. India, which had resisted it till then, would be forced to sign the GATT agreement- it was clear. The opposing document prepared by the group of left economists was not comprehensive enough to awaken the imagination of the people. A comprehensive ideological document which evaluated the failure of the socialist experiments and which provided a sound foundation of economics, politics and ethics for a new society was called for.

As a contribution towards this, in 1990 June, a one-day brainstorming or collective dreaming session of 20-30 persons with similar sympathies was held in New Delhi. Dr Arun Ghosh, Dr. Amaresh Bakshi, Dr H.K. Paranjpe, Dr. A Vaidyanathan, Dr. Venkatesh Athreya, Dr. Thomas Isaac, Shri Probir Purkaysatha, Dinesh Abrol, C.P. Narayanan, S.P. Shukla, etc., were some of the participants. But nothing worthwhile came out of it, except certain contingent activities to decelerate the process of capitulation. The agenda of preparing a politico-economic and ethical basis for the socialism of the 21st century was not even discussed. Persons like Dr. Ashok Mitra, Dr. I.S. Gulati, Dr. K.N.Raj, etc., too were approached with such an agenda. They all agreed about the necessity of such a task, but considered it too heavy for them. They promised all help to a group of younger scholars if they would take up such a responsibility. Attempts to excite younger professionals did not succeed. It was under such a desperation that the present author decided to note down whatever he learnt from experience, discussions and reading. The book "New World, New India" (1994) was the first product. The main arguments in that book can be summarised as below:

- (i) To face the challenge of World Bank-IMF-WTO triumvirate we require a strong theory. Neither socialism as practised in the 20th century nor Deng's modification will suit the bill.
- (ii) The political foundation of the future society will have to be participatory democracy. Concepts like progress and growth will be understood differently than present.
- (iii) The present international situation is desperate. Inequalities rise by leaps and bounds. Neo-liberal imperialism is swallowing the entire world. It is proceeding along the path of total self-destruction.
- (iv) Absence of democracy and lack of correction leading to corruption lead to degeneration of the Party and its alienation from the people.
- (v) Distorted ideas about development led to consumerism and corruption.
- (vi) Suppressed national feelings – of Baltic Republics, Armenia, Georgia... - have exploded.

- (vii) The 'market socialism' of China is leading to capitalism. Inequalities are increasing.

Economic concentration and increasing inequality; ever deepening inter-dependence and giantization—these are three historic tendencies. Neo-liberal globalization and liberalization are strengthening these trends. The question arises: "What is to be done?" – the same question raised by Lenin a century ago.

The extravaganza of the rich and upper middle class has to be controlled, existing production capacities are to be fully made use of; military expenses to be reduced by solving border disputes through a process of give and take, the demand for petroleum products to be reduced through increase in public transportation, reduce wastage in administration, transform as far as possible hierarchical relations to horizontal relations, bring out fundamental changes in the concept of ownership, separate greed from needs, eradicate corruption, eradicate violence in the name of caste, creed, and other group identities, respect the national spirit of even small groups, ensure free and compulsory education up to the age of 14, make right to work fundamental right, continuously increase self-reliance and self-sufficiency... thus goes the chain of answers to this question.

All these demand a new world view the essence of which can be summarised as below:

- ?? Recognise the limitations to and necessity of material consumption.
- ?? Make small powerful, increasingly de-scale large institutions.
- ?? Put a stop to cancerous urbanization.
- ?? Strengthen local economies so that they can withstand onslaughts of the global economy.
- ?? Establish peace with neighbouring countries through a process of give- and- take, of compromises and reduce defence expenditure substantially.
- ?? Strengthen the democratic base of the community through ever-deepening participation.
- ?? Ensure sustainability.
- ?? Transition from competition to cooperation.
- ?? Rally maximum number of people in the struggle for democracy.
- ?? Do not wait for the incarnation of a 'liberator' – liberate ourselves through collective leadership.
- ?? Ensure that the means are compatible with ends. Realise that democracy cannot be strengthened through dictatorship.
- ?? Workers, peasants, government servants, small entrepreneurs, etc., are subject to continuous impoverishment. They are rallying today under the banners of different political parties and fighting one another to the delight of the class enemies. Instead, they have to rally together under one banner. The political scene should become reorganized in terms of real class interests. Even amongst the impoverished conflicts in interests do exist. They are non-antagonistic and can be

solved through cooperation. Against globalization and imperialism, an unrelenting struggle has to be waged.

- ?? The power pyramid has to be turned upside down. Citizens should become sovereign. Basic units like Grama Sabha or Panchayat should have the authority to restructure larger units like the state/ province and nation. The converse shall not be allowed.
- ?? Citizens' right to information and responsibility to learn - both are to be recognised as basic.
- ?? All the elected people can be 'recalled' – the entire process of election and recall will have to be made simple and almost zero cost.
- ?? Quality of life can be separated into physical and spiritual qualities of life. The objective is to enhance both. Physical production has to be restructured to achieve this.
- ?? The experience of Kerala (The Kerala Model) and a few other countries shows that this is possible.

This is the 'FOURTH WORLD' concept which became so notorious in Kerala during the end of 2003. Thousands of newspaper reports have appeared, mostly rejecting the "Fourth World " without ever mentioning what it is. This is not socialism, as conceived by Marxists, including the present author. But it is a post-capitalist society – and pre-socialist one. Something similar to concepts like People's Democracy or New Democracy. When several countries free themselves from the yokes of neo-liberal capitalism, they may become a new block in the world arena, just like the former socialist block. This will be different from the first and third worlds and also from the erstwhile second world – the socialist bloc – hence the nomenclature Fourth World. The socialism of the 21st century, could then be a Fifth World, if all other systems co-exist or could be simply one socialist world.

The Book "New World – New India" was published 10 years ago. The fears expressed in it about the impact of neo-liberal globalization have all been proved to be more than true.

The situation today is more fearsome and desperate. The Americans under Bush have proclaimed shamelessly and haughtily that they are the masters of this world, that they don't respect world opinion or world bodies like the UNO, that they have right to interfere in any country, if they feel it to be justified in *their* national interest, be it Afghanistan or Iraq, be it North Korea or elsewhere.

The rich-poor gap has increased beyond description and is still increasing. Religion, caste, fascism, violence – all are acquiring new forms of respectability. The number of people justifying the genocides in Gujarat, Marad, etc., is increasing. Societies are becoming increasingly criminalised. The world is controlled by mafias. In most of the countries, political parties are controlled by mafias of different kinds. The 'underworld' has come to the open and has become the ruling class.

Resistance movements, too, are growing across the world. They too take different shapes.

- ?? Environment movements, feminist movements, human rights movements, peace movements... and many other such movements.
- ?? Working class movements too have begun to actively regroup on a global scale. The WSF has become a great symbol of global resistance.
- ?? Boycott of the products of imperialists, like the Colas, products of ESSO, Exxon, Nestle.. etc., is becoming a global form of struggle.
- ?? Experiments to strengthen local economies are increasing. Alternative Local Currency, Direct Trade, Fair Trade... there are many forms to it.
- ?? Several publications have come out during the past decade, exposing the arrogance and deceit of the USA, the impact of neo-liberal globalization, etc. But only a very few authors try to get out of the consumption-based progress syndrome.
- ?? A world view with mutually consistent elements, based on equality, justice, diversity, brotherhood, progress, sustainability, etc., is yet to be developed. Marxism continues to be a powerful tool in this process. However, the interpretations of the mainstream Marxists alone will not suffice. It may be necessary to read Marx in the original and reinterpret them. Other thought systems too will be useful.
- ?? It will not be possible to think of everything in advance and produce a final and finished world view. It has to evolve through practice and experience. This practice, necessarily, will be uneven and diverse across the world. At the same time, totally isolated and sporadic experiments cannot add up to become a change.
- ?? While interconnections become stronger, independence should become deeper. The experiments will challenge the existing systems, but will still be conducted within it.
- ?? Humans have needs other than the basic ones like food, clothing, shelter, education, health, recreation and rest. They need sense of security, for self and succeeding generations, they need inter-generational justice, they need sense of belonging to, self-respect, acceptance by others, etc. These are non-material or spiritual needs. They too should be satisfied.

During the days of Independence struggle, there were several expectations about an Independent India... The *Rama Rajya* of Gandhiji, the Socialist Capitalism of Nehru, the Socialism of the Communists and so on. Which of these expectations were realized? How, did we finally arrive at the present situation? What are the ill-effects and threats? What is to be done now? How does the international situation affect our actions? These questions form the content of this book. Discussions held with friends, participation in numerous national and international seminars, events like Afghan- Iraq wars have all helped the author to write this book. Still it remains, alas, largely a personal enquiry.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE SOCIALIST WORLD

It is an irony of history that working class revolutions took place, not in advanced industrialised countries like Germany or England as was conceived by Marx and Engels, but in backward agrarian countries like Russia and China, with poorly developed productive forces and only a nascent working class. There are people who argue that because of this very same reason, these revolutions were bound to collapse sooner or later. According to them, the roots of the twentieth century debacle of socialist experiments lie in their very origin itself: a premature revolution which ought not to have been carried out is bound to collapse. It is difficult to agree to this.

If this was true, the Russian revolution would not have survived the civil war as well as the imperialist encirclement. But it survived and grew from strength to strength. By the late fifties, within about four decades since revolution, it had already become one of the two super powers of the world. In many departments, especially in atomic and space technology, it had even overtaken USA. Its overall productive forces might not have been as advanced as that of contemporary USA, but certainly was more advanced than Germany or England of Marx's time. And Marx and Engels had thought that socialist revolution is round the corner in those countries. At the turn of the century, Lenin wrote his famous book "*Imperialism: The Highest and Last Stage of Capitalism.*" According to him, the world was near maturity for a total revolution. The 'general crises' in capitalism had become already so acute that its collapse was imminent. But nothing of the sort ensued. A century later, it is still going strong. It is, in fact, socialism that collapsed. This needs to be explained. What is the strength of capitalism? Why has it not exhausted its potential? How long more it can grow? Will it have to be necessarily socialism that follows? Or could it be barbarism?

The routes of revolutions of the twentieth century were different in different countries. The establishment of socialism in Eastern Europe was indebted to the Soviet Army than to internal revolutionary forces. This may be the reason for the appearance of the phenomenon called Euro-Communism and post-modernism. In Cuba and Vietnam, it was a total battle for survival. And both defeated the strongest super-power in the world – the USA. China had a long agrarian march towards revolution and its commitment to peasants remained strong till Dengian reforms.

The Soviet Union disintegrated in an explosive manner. Generally, it is considered as a 'Revolution from Above' – a revolution carried out by the leadership of the Communist Party. In our day- to- day parlance, it is called a 'counter-revolution'. But there was practically nobody to 'protect revolution'. Apparently, people too participated in it or at least did not resist it. The third generation after the Great October Revolution was a thoroughly disillusioned lot- or rather suffered from utter illusion, that capitalism can make things better. Was this a Gorbachevian counter-revolution? Perhaps not. It will be unscientific to think so. Even as early as the sixties, symptoms of a possible decay were visible. Some of them have been pointed out in the previous chapter. Some of the

observations made by the author while he was a doctoral scholar in Moscow from 1962 to 1965 are summarised below:

1. Ordinary people had distanced themselves from the CPSU(B), the distance was increasing; the feeling that Party officials were enjoying undeserving benefits was becoming widespread.
2. Establishments were becoming centres of corruption, nepotism and despotism – not much different from those in India then and now. Daniel Granin, a popular author published a novel called *Iskaateli* (The Researchers) in 1959. The theme of this novel was the plight of an honest researcher in such an institution.
3. Marxist philosophy was a compulsory subject for all university students. They found it only as a subject to get through in the examination with the necessary minimum marks. Seldom did they strive to excel in it. Never did they find in it a world view to guide their own life.
4. The red-tape in government offices had become proverbially ‘redder and longer’ – even worse than in India.
5. Neither the people in general nor the working class in particular had any interest in managing the affairs of the society. They left it all to the Party and politicians.
6. Already black market in dollar had become widely prevalent. One could get 3 to 4 roubles a dollar in place of the official exchange rate 0.9 rouble a dollar.
7. People were enamoured with ‘foreign goods’ in general and American goods in particular. They were ready to stand in queue for any number of hours for this.
8. An ordinary citizen had to stand in queue several times a day for various services – whether it was the eating place or the shopping place. Service facilities were few and queues long. A substantial part of their life was spent in queues. Nobody liked it.
9. Just as they had caught up with and surpassed the USA in nuclear and space technology, they wanted to outstrip it in the production and consumption of all commodities - whether they had any welfare value or not.

Those days, the above- mentioned issues did not affect the ordinary people seriously except creating some minor inconveniences. Compared to India or the USA of that period, USSR definitely was a paradise. Their achievements were astounding

1. Right to work, to education, to health care - all were fundamental. There was nobody unemployed.
2. Poverty had been eradicated.
3. Everybody had neat and comfortable, if not large, dwelling places.
4. Education up to 14 years of age was free and compulsory. Children were accorded ‘princely’ treatment.
5. One could easily describe the then Soviet Union as a ‘paradise on earth’.
6. No price would have been too much to pay to build such a paradise in India.

However, they had a different concept of paradise. Their concept of communism was apparently one of unlimited consumption. The category ‘need’ was an extended one, that ‘greed’ is simply a need which cannot be satisfied today, but can be tomorrow. Yes,

their concept of paradise was very much like the heaven of the Hindu Indra, a place where people eat, drink and enjoy women, doing no work. The USA was, in their eyes, closer to heaven than their own country. They strived to be like the USA. And by end of eighties, they became even worse.

Looking back, one can discern three important reasons for this:

- a) Economic centralization.
- b) Political centralization.
- c) Distorted view of progress.

In international publications, socialist countries are referred to as 'centrally planned economies.' This is in tune with the Communist Manifesto. It states:

"The proletariat will use its political supremacy, to wrest by degrees, all capital from the bourgeois, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organized as the ruling class; and to increase the total productive forces as rapidly as possible..... centralisation of credit in the hands of the State by means of a national bank with state capital and exclusive monopoly... centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.."

Centralisation was a major principle with Communists. But, just as 'dictatorship' of the proletariat was conceived, in reality, as wider democracy, it can be argued that centralization in the hands of a proletarian State is in fact is the most extensive form of decentralization. But both proved to be not true. Just as there is no dictatorial road to democracy, centralisation is no method for increased participation and democracy.

There had been no individual capitalist who could exploit the workers by virtue of the ownership of the means of production. But ultimately, by the late eighties and early nineties, Party managers had become the virtual owners of enterprises. Capitalism was re-established.

Is State ownership the only form of 'social' ownership of the means of production? How do workers effectively control production in such enterprises? In fact, in the then USSR, there was no way at all. They became more and more alienated. The larger an enterprise is, the more severe was this alienation, in spite of all subjective desires to be otherwise.

On the occasion of the 175th birth anniversary of Karl Marx, an "International Conference of Communist Parties" was held at Calcutta. In a paper presented there, Maria De Los Angeles Gracia, Politburo Member of the Cuban Party, stated :

" ... this raises a compulsory question : why did socialism collapse in these countries?"

"In Eastern Europe and the USSR, the objective contradictions inherent to the socialist development intertwined with factors alien to the very nature of socialism, circumstantial elements alien to socialism, brought about a specific political and economic model that began distancing itself from the socialism conceived by Marx, Engels and Lenin...."

"Among these direct causes (for the collapse) the denial of the democratic essence of socialism is highlighted ... it was impossible to promote real democratic relations in a situation in which there was a power monopoly without real participation of the masses.."

"This brought about the alienation of the masses from the Party, the usurpation of the legitimate power of the working class, the omnipotence of the ruling class and the corruption that prevented the masses from having the leading role in society."

Maria De Gracia was quite frank.

So was the CPI(M). In its 1992 "Resolution on Certain Ideological Issues," it stated:

"Another major distortion that needs to be noted concern the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of the class as a whole, i.e., the overwhelming majority. Often in practice, as has been revealed in the recent developments, this dictatorship of the class was replaced by that of the vanguard, the Party, and more often than not, by the leadership of the Party." (Para 5.3.9). Unfortunately, in the name of centralism, inner party democracy can become a casualty, leading to growth of bureaucratism, which is the very antithesis of democracy. Tendencies alien to socialism, such as corruption and nepotism, surfaced. An example of this was the institutionalization of privileges to large sections of the leadership of CPSU and other ruling Communist Parties....."⁽⁸⁾

Yes, quite frank. But one has to ask the question: Is that criticism applicable to the present Communist Parties of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba? Is it applicable to parties which are not ruling? How much of this disease has infected the Indian Communist Parties? Communists are characterised by theoretical clarity, organizational ability and ethical tenacity. We have read stories about great Communists in books like Sundaraya's *Telangana Struggle*, Niranjana's *Chira Smarana*, Kunhambu's *Kayyur Comrades*, in classics like Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel was Tempered* or Alexei Tolstoy's *Travel to Calvary* or Boris Polevoy's *Story of a Real Man*. Is it an unassailable law that immersed in a bourgeois society, even communists will get infected by its values? I don't think so. I think that a Communist is a Communist because she or he can resist such infection. They have built in for themselves sufficient immunity. The ruling communists in USSR and elsewhere, perhaps, had lost this immunity and become infected with bourgeois greed. The Communist Parties in these countries were still relatively big, but organizationally weak (no democracy, no resistance power) and having only very few communists – a communist party led by non-communists.

This may sound to be exaggerated to a level of absurdity. But perhaps not. It may be nearer to truth than what one may imagine. The end result: a people which had relative stability and security, which had more than what others could aspire, who lived in a relative paradise, suddenly lost everything. A counter- revolution took away everything. No social security, no job, no food....

What about China? After the debacle of 'Cultural Revolution' and getting rid of the 'Gang of Four,' China, in 1978, chartered a new course of development under the leadership of Deng Xiao Ping. The emphasis on agriculture, peasantry and re-distributive justice was replaced by one of rapid development of productive forces and industries – a path of soft socialism. Soon, especially after the landmark period of 1990-1991, it chartered a far more 'bold' course, called 'market socialism'. While we were on a visit as part of an education delegation to Beijing, the hosts were trying to explain to us, " we are capitalists in economy and socialists in politics." On being confronted with the question, "won't economy ultimately transform politics too?" he exclaimed: "Am I hearing the voice of old Communism"? The decisive role of economics was 'old communism'. However, for more than a decade, China remained as a world wonder, with a two-digit economic growth. And where is it now? Beijing, Shanghai, Canton, Kuming .. citadels of wealth, competing with New York, London or Paris. The number of five-star hotels have increased a hundred fold. So have the number of billionaires and millionaires. The Casinos, gambling dens and underworld in these cities are on par with those in any capitalist city. The gap between rich and the poor has been increasing by leaps and bounds. Villages are becoming pauperized. Peasants are selling off cultivation rights. Capitalist farmers are on the increase. Village poor are migrating into cities in millions. There, they live in ghettos, as construction workers. By the early nineties, grand slogans like " It is a virtue to become rich" were being raised openly. Corporations were named as Grow Rich Corporation, Rich More Corporation, etc. The town and village enterprises which had helped strengthen the village economy were in doldrums. Now, employment, food, health care, education – nothing is anymore a fundamental right. They are to be paid for. A large section of the poor cannot avail health care services or even send their children to school. As the GNP of China been surges forward, as it creates millionaires, social security is going backward. Initially, there was even a fall-back in life expectation and infant mortality.

Communist officials believe that this is a passing phase, but they don't have anything to offer to improve the situation of the poor, to reduce the rich- poor gap. The Party no longer claim that China is a socialist country. Socialism, they say, is a distant goal. How long it will take to reach there – one cannot say. Maybe 20 years, maybe be 50 or 100 years. A new ruling class has emerged. They come from the party leadership, high level bureaucracy and high-ranking army personnel. They control the new private enterprises. Though still weakly, within the party, people have started questioning, enquiring alternative paths.

Cuba and Vietnam. Communists all over the world get thrilled at the very thought of them. Both have resisted successfully the mighty America. The entire economic base of these countries, the soil, the forests, the water sources, was destroyed many times over by the Americans. It was with great courage that they rebuilt their economy. However, today even they are in danger. Vietnam has already taken the stand that 'There Is No

Alternative'. Having defeated America in military warfare, Vietnam is now capitulating to the economic strength of the USA. Apparently only Cuba is still trying to restructure itself under new conditions without sacrificing equity and people's power.

The experience of the last one century can be summarised as below:

"Socialism is not round the corner. There is a long way to go. There will be ups and downs, bends and turns, mounts and pits on the road. One has to hold the steering wheel – the theoretical and ideological perspectives – firmly and not press the accelerator unduly hard. It is also clear that democracy cannot be established through dictatorship, that there is no democracy without participation.

NEO LIBERALISM : DICTATORSHIP OF THE MARKET

The word 'globalization' like many other words such as 'socialism' or 'participation' has been used to denote many concepts, sometimes quite contradictory. So also is the word 'liberalism'. We use these words with a specific understanding. Globalization does not, for us, mean the ever-expanding vista of human civilization or the shortening of distance across the globe due to improved transportation and communication. It does not mean the slow, but certain, spread of science and technology and ability to survive, to far off corners. It does not mean internet and the treasures of knowledge it has made available to all who can use it. These are not the products of what we call globalization but agents which have facilitated it. We mean by globalization the incessant movement of speculative capital, of enterprises, of goods and services across the globe; we mean by it the so called free market, in fact a dictatorship of the market controlled by super-powerful transnational corporations, we mean by it the enforcement of the will of global capital, whose political and military godfather is USA, across the world through economic, political and wherever necessary, military coercion.

As was pointed out earlier, capitalism cannot survive without continuously expanding production and exchange of goods and services. For this it should have control over natural resources and markets all over the world. Capitalism emerged and evolved rather spontaneously, in Europe, four centuries ago. The story of its global expansion, of colonization, of wars for control over colonies are all well-known. No need to repeat them here. Since it all started as an opposition to feudal and princely powers, since it enlisted the broad masses of the people, it was called 'liberalism' at that stage. Capitalists required the liberation of economy from the clutches of lords and kings. They conceived the concept of "Abstract Market," an omnipotent entity capable of delivering maximum happiness to maximum number of people. It was given the best theoretical foundations by Adam Smith. The essence of this theory is that neither the State nor any other regulatory authority shall interfere with the 'free' functioning of the market, that market can regulate itself to the best interests of all. The deceptiveness of this argument has been well explained by Karl Marx and Frederic Engels. We also know that Lenin's characterization of the early 20th century imperialism as the highest and last stage of capitalism was correct. Capitalism could not have endured in that form any more. It led to two world wars. It led to persistent economic crises. Finally, liberal, market-controlled capitalism was temporarily abandoned and in place came up the concept of 'welfare state,' as advocated by Keynes. The success of the Russian revolution, the economic strength exhibited by it, the series of revolutions that took place subsequently – all these accelerated the transformation of capitalism from 'the dictatorship of the market' to the concept of a 'benevolent welfare state.' This helped capitalism to survive. Its essence still survive in the Scandinavian countries. Welfare State was not, however, compatible with the essence of capitalism, which advocates survival of the strongest in the battle-ground of the market. Quite akin to the Olympics of ancient Rome, the rules of this battle were neither fair nor just. The capitalists always had the State's support, of its police, courts, jails and army. The State was theirs.

When, towards the end of 20th century, the socialist experiments began to degenerate, more through subjective causes than through objective reasons, liberalism began to reassert. The first results were Reaganomics and Thatcherism. When the final collapse came in late eighties and in 1990, liberalism came out in its new form – neo-liberalism – controlling the sovereign states through economic bondages and wherever necessary through military force. It was liberalism in new form – neo-liberalism – because the main ‘commodity’ being exchanged in the market was ‘finance capital’ or speculative capital. The equation is no more M_1-C-M_2 , but $M_1-M_2-M_3$. Capital transactions form more than 98% of the total global trade. Capital got almost delinked from production or to put it more scientifically, productive capital is enslaved by speculative capital. And, therefore, to save the situation, many economists argue for de-linking the two. And this is the essence of ‘localism,’ which we will discuss in detail later. Before that, let us look into the present situation a little deeper.

One can see several long- term tendencies :

- (i) Increasing inequality: vulgar enrichment of a few and abject impoverishment of many;
- (ii) rapidly decreasing reserves of natural resources and increasing levels of environmental degradation;
- (iii) increasing loss of human behaviour patterns which have hitherto helped the species to survive.

All these were visible even a century ago. However, there were people who put forward the simplistic argument that the rich, after all, will have to spend their wealth in this world only and in the process it gets redistributed among the poor. When a country as a whole becomes rich, whether the rich like it or not, a part of it will reach the poor too. This argument is known as ‘Trickle-down Theory.’ In the long run the gap between rich and the poor will necessarily have to come down. This theory is not only wrong but also a falsehood. The rich-poor gap has always been increasing. The poor have become poorer, the rich, richer. Look at Table 1. It shows how much the per capita income of nine rich countries in the world has grown up from 1960 to 1990 and 2002. It also shows the situation of nine poor countries. The incomes given are in terms of Purchasing Power Parity dollar. The table is constructed from Human Development Reports of 1993 and 2004.

In the sixties, the average per capita income of the richest 20% of the world countries was 30 times that of the poorest 20%. By 1997, this has risen up to 86 times. Inequality had doubled. The wealth of three richest individuals in this world is more than the combined wealth of 35 poor countries in the world. The total wealth of the top 200 individuals exceeds the combined wealth of the poorest 41 per cent - 2400 million of the world population. One rich = 12 million poor! 2% of their wealth per annum is sufficient to give primary education to all children in the world.⁽⁹⁾

Table 3.1 Per-capita income of nine rich and nine poor countries in PPP dollars

RICH COUNTRIES				POOR COUNTRIES			
Country	Income PPP \$			Country	Income PPP \$		
	1960	1990	2002		1960	1990	2002
1. USA	9,983	21,499	35,750	1.Zaire	379	367	- -
2. Switzerland	9,313	20,874	30,010	2. Afghanistan	775	714	- -
3. Canada	7,758	19,232	29,480	3.Chad	785	559	1,020
4. Sweden	6,483	17,014	26,050	4. Africa	806	768	1,170
5. France	5,344	17,405	26,920	5. Somalia	891	834	- -
6. Inland	4,718	16,446	26,190	6. Liberia	967	857	- -
7. Austria	4,476	16,504	29,220	7. Sudan	975	949	- -
8. Japan	2,701	17,616	26,940	8. Madagascar	1,013	704	740
9. Spain	2,701	11,279	21,460	9. Zambia	1,172	744	840

Not only between countries, but also within them, inequalities have been increasing. This is particularly so in the erstwhile socialist countries after the collapse of the socialist experiment. These countries as well as the Scandinavian countries, which followed welfare economics both in spirit and body were the most egalitarian in the world. The inequality factor measured as the ratio of average incomes of the richest 20% and poorest 20% used in the range 3 to 4. Today, in the old Soviet Union areas, it is about 14. Brazil, which embraced neo-liberal globalization quite early, continues to be one of the most inequitable countries in the world, the inequity factor being about 96. USA also is very inequitable-inequality factor being 57. Even in the case of Scandinavian countries it has doubled, to 6-7. World over, inequity has increased and is increasing. In many countries, even absolute poverty has increased. This is an inevitable consequence of neo-liberalism – of the dictatorship of the market.

The experience of the initial phase of liberal economy was not different. By the middle of the 19th century India, together with many other colonies, had been forcefully linked with global market. Viceroys taught by die-hard liberal economists were ruling India. During the second half of the 19th century, under the reign of Queen Victoria, two devastating famines struck India – first during 1859-1860 and second during 1897-1901. The severe droughts had caused grain production to drop down by about 20 – 30%. But this was not the cause for famine which killed, according to the most conservative estimate, 13 million people. Some estimates put the toll at 29 million. There was no cash with the village farmers and agriculture workers. There was no employment. Whatever surplus grain they had with some farmers were exported out of the area and out of the country. The Viceroys banned relief works like food for work, grain subsidy and grant, etc. citing that such measures will be interfering with the 'freedom' of the market that is freedom to make money, causing starvation. The great Indian Railways did a yeomen service to these free marketeers by quickly transporting grains from the hinter land, where it was not safe surrounded by hungry millions to the safe coastal towns from where it could be exported profitably. ⁽¹⁰⁾

Capital Runs Amuck

In the stock exchanges across world the daily transaction of shares is amount to a trillion and half dollars. The value of goods and services produced in the entire world per day will be only about 2% of this. These money exchanges have practically nothing to do with production. They are merely speculative exchanges. A new terminology has emerged: Casino Capitalism. It is interesting to have the changes that has taken place in the character of market transactions from commodity exchange to money exchange. The different stages can be depicted as follows:

Commodity	–	Commodity	C – C	Barter
Commodity	–	Money – Commodities	C – M – C	Money as mediator
Money	–	Commodity – Money	M – C – M	Capitalism
Money	–	Money – Money	M – M – M	Casino Economy

The stock exchanges are no different from the gambling dens in Las Vegas, Atlanta City or Monte Carlo. The capital involved in stock trade has very little to do with the production process. It is no longer a part of the classical quartet: Land – Labour – Capital – Organisation. Unfortunately, through structural adjustments and liberalization of capital market, the whole economy and the productive activities of the developing countries are strongly bound to the footlose speculative capital. In order to safeguard the economy of any country, it has to de link the speculative capital from productive capital and provide protection for the later. This is partial or selective de-linking. Footlose capital impacts not only on developing countries but developed countries too. Productive capital has no qualms in flying without any notice from one country to another where it can earn more profit. Yesterday, the enterprise was working. Today ,when the workers reach the factory it is closed. The machinery may be there – but the factory has been relocated in another country. Their families are impoverished. Small shop owners, schools, banks, barber saloons and other enterprises lose customers. They too are forced to close down. The town loses its vitality. It becomes a ghost of what it earlier was. Even the US is replete with such ghost towns.

Economy: The economic insecurity engendered by neo-liberal globalization in developing countries is well demonstrated by the quick cascade of events in 1997 – 99 period which emaciated the so-called `Asians Tigers` – South Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, etc.. During the 1990 – 95 period, the net foreign direct investment in these countries was about 90 billion dollars. In the 1997-98 period, 12 billion dollars were just withdrawn. Their economy collapsed like a house of cards – the GDP came down by 11% .13 million people were thrown out of employment. The prices of essential commodities shot up. Real wage level came down up to 40-60% in Indonesia. Arson and looting became commonplace. Law and order broke down. True, they have come back to a partly stable situation, but not to the original glory. The behaviour of finance capital has become totally unpredictable. It flows madly across the globe, round the clock, thanks to internet revolution. Though it can be consciously used by the power to be to kill opposition, often even they lose control over it. Capital becomes

autonomous, free from the capitalist. Mexico, Brazil, Argentina – all have been reduced to grinding poverty by finance capital – this is neo-liberalism.

Employment: Global expansion of neo-liberal capitalism made it easy for enterprises to merge, to relocate, to dilute rights of workers, to destroy job security and to reduce social security measures. In fact, neo-liberalism demands all these. Unemployment in Chile is about 30%, in Columbia it is 39%. No wonder, it has become the narcotic capital of the world. Even Europe could not escape the vagaries of footlose capital. The unemployment level remained about 10% for more than a decade. About 35 million unemployed. All new jobs are created in the informal – totally insecure – sector.

Health: AIDS is a disease which has spread all over the world like a wild forest fire – a truly globalized phenomenon. By 1998, 33 million persons have been afflicted. Every year 6 million new victims emerge. It has spread to even isolated corners on the globe. In developing countries, every day 16,000 persons are added to the list. The life expectation in nine countries in Africa will be, by 2010, less than what it was in 1960 – 17 years less than what it is today. The Botswanian people have come to the conclusion that within one generation, they are all going to die and are in a mood to enjoy their remaining 'Decameron Nights.' In the process, they are accelerating self-extinction. And what does neo-liberalists do? Make money. Sell drugs at exorbitant prices! The more the demand for drugs, the merrier they are!

Culture: In the beginning of the last century, Gandhiji exclaimed : I don't want to be shut up within the four walls of my home. Let the cultural winds from all over the world blow into it, freely. Still I will stand firm on my soil, on my culture. I will not be blown away. Unfortunately, his followers lost their hold. They were blown away. The indigenous cultures all over the world are being blown away and replaced by one culture that of capitalism, one of consumerism. America exports more dollars worth of films – filthy ones at that – than even narcotics. It is said that in 1997 Holly Wood films have cashed, globally, 37 billion dollars. Television is the most wide spread and the quickest of all media today. Together with internet system, it has shrunk the entire globe into one village (or town!), reduced it into one mono-culture. This has created a sense of uneasiness which can not be explained, but only felt. A sense of insecurity. The overall level of real insecurity for individual human lives, integrated world over, is increasing. It could be direct physical threat from local people running berserk, it could be from road rage, it could be from wars and it could be from natural calamities triggered at by global warming and climatic changes.

The economic insecurity and the cultural degeneration are kindled in human minds their 'reptilian instinct'. This has led to unimaginable increase in crimes of various kinds. The consumption of narcotics is rocketing. Even in the former socialist countries, which earlier led a relatively stable and settled life, crimes related to narcotics increased by 8 times during the 1990 – 1997 period. Flesh trade is booming. Every year, about half a million girls and women are 'exported' to West European countries by these traders. An annual business of 7 billion dollars. The US can be proud (or ashamed!) that it has got maximum number (and percentage) of people in jails. The criminal syndicates have strong global networks. They are stronger than UNO, their annual business is about 1500

billion dollars. They can buy or bury any political leader, industrialist, police or defense officer anybody. They use information technology most effectively!

Environment: Capitalism cannot exist even for a day without expanding production of goods and services. This we have noted. Production involves use of natural resources and release of wastes to the environment. An eco-catastrophy is looming large over the horizon. Global warming, unpredictability of weather, natural disasters like tsunamis, twisters, droughts and floods, drying up of rivers, dwindling ground water wealth, desertification, declining health of soil, loss of biodiversity, reduction in marine life, ever depleting stock of fossil fuels and minerals.... all these and many others have put humans and the entire life on earth in a situation of ecological insecurity. Yes, neo-liberalism accelerates this, because it is a system of the 'dictatorship of the market,' which is ecologically insensitive.

Nation, Society: Political and communal tensions and strife's are concomitant products of the sense of insecurity described above. Instances world over are numerable: India, Pakistan, China, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Chechnya, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq, Israel the list is too long. It has been estimated that during the eight years between 1989 and 1998, 61 armed conflicts have taken place. Of these, as many as 58 were internal conflicts. Increasing bitterness of religious fundamentalism and blind terrorism result from this sense of individual social and national insecurity. The basic reason for the 9/11 suicide attack on the World Trade Centre was the criminal expansion of capitalism world, impoverisation, cultural collapse, social insecurities – all caused by neo-liberal globalization.

Species Madness: And today the entire human species has begun to lose the ability to think rationally. They have invented a new rationale to justify the present – wars, treachery, killings, profit-mongering, in fact, everything: humans are by nature selfish. Selfishness is the basic characteristic of the species. Collectivity, sense of brotherhood and even the concept of family all are qualities artificially created by the society. Basic instincts are prone to come up at the slightest provocation. There is a small element of truth in it, but much of it is false too. The basic characteristic of any human being, for that matter any life form, is to remain alive, to resist death. This is an individual, biological quality. Whatever it does can be attributed to selfishness. But the word is normally used not to connote instincts, but conscious actions. Another characteristic of any life form is reproduction – maintaining the species. For all higher forms of life this requires. To gather food and to save oneself from being eaten by others, even the less evolved life forms depend on collective action. In the case of humans, this collectivity is highly evolved. Humans were weaker than many contemporary animals. The species survived because it learnt to act collectively. Human language greatly helped this collectivity. Those individuals in the pack who lacked in collectivity, who didn't have the propensity for collective action, gradually must have got eliminated. The survivors were those who had a general propensity for collective action. Hence collectivity is not merely a cultural attribute, but an evolutionary character. Once the social environment begins to discount collectivity and uphold the animal principle of 'survival of the fittest,' the species is likely to become extinct not because of external enemies but due to internal

fighters. Humans are gradually losing the sense of being one in a community. Even the strongest ties, the family ties, are broken. This is most widespread in the so-called advanced capitalist countries. In the US, in Europe, in the metropolitan towns of the developing countries, that warm and soothing relationship amongst father, mother, brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews, nieces.... all that make humans humane are being weakened and destroyed. It is a sad fact of history that humans, while enlarging the collectivity from the family to the tribe, to the nation, to the world, did not succeed in strengthening of these ties. But, because of being humane, humans are able to realize this weakness and so can rectify it and guide its own social evolution.

But today it has to be stated that humanity is affected by a sort of 'species madness.' Many other species have become extinct because of this type of collective loss of evolutionary behaviour patterns.

Limits to Growth: One marked symptom of this madness is the greed to consume, consume more and more. As if afraid that nothing will be left behind because others will consume. This is so evident in the so-called developed – in fact, they are diseased – societies. In these societies, there is a mad growth in the number of gambling dens, five-star hotels, roads, cars, throwaway culture, etc.. One of the causes for the failure of the socialist experiments of the 20th century, as noted earlier, was its inability to distinguish human (socialistic) consumption and capitalistic consumption. Even today, China is trying to ape the US in all its follies. The 1973 Club of Rome report "Limits to Growth" was most violently opposed by socialist thinkers. Some of the figures given in it were questionable. But the essence was not. Today there is no argument regarding limits to natural resources. Table 3.2 below gives a recent (1994) estimate of the duration of availability of certain selected metals at the then existing levels of consumption. These levels are increasing, because developing countries have to increase them for mere sustenance. So, in fact, the exhaustion period could be even shorter.⁽¹¹⁾

Table 3.2 Availability Period of Certain Metals

Metal	Years
Aluminum	207
Iron	152
Nickel	59
Mercury	45
Tin	41
Copper	33
Lead	22
Zinc	20

There is the question: What do we mean by sustainability? By this we don't mean availability for one generation, not even for hundred or thousand years, but for millions of years. May be, we can discover new materials to substitute these metals. But they too have limits. The only way for long- term sustainability is the possibility of cent per cent

recycling – to get back the desired materials in the desired form from extremely diluted conditions from wastes. Technologies are to be developed for this. It will demand substantial amounts of energy. Fossil fuels will suffice for only one generation or two. The only long-term solution is the ability to extract solar energy effectively. All these have been pointed out elsewhere in this book. However, the pressing importance of this have not been understood either by politicians or by scientists. The latter includes the scientist-president of the country of Mahatma Gandhi, who speaks about nuclear bombs and missiles and not solar homes!

The conflicts which have become endemic for control over the Gulf countries, continuing for at least the past half a century, have their origin in the scramble for the last resources of oil. In essence, every conflict has at its root, this narrow economic self-interest. Today, the mode of existence of the human species is one of mutually destructive conflicts and not of creative cooperation. The great question is this: can we reverse the situation? The answer: potentially, yes.

A Paradise for Criminals: There are a few who argue that globalization offers a few goods things too, besides the above- mentioned economic – political – social threats. For example, the time contraction made possible by the information technology revolution. Information can flow in seconds today when earlier it had taken days. It has benefited researchers and also ordinary persons. But it has benefited more the stock exchanges, speculators in Tokyo and Paris, in London and New York. The transnational corporations can negotiate mergers, exchanges, freeze stocks, stop production, all on global scales. But information technology is most effectively used by criminal syndicates. The networks of illegal traffickers in weapons, in narcotics, in explosives are global and efficient. Today this is a major empire, overruling nation- states. The Sicilian mafia, the Japanese Yakusa, the Arab Al Khaida.... these are terrifying names. It is disconcerting to note that though outwardly all these are illegal setups, their leaders occupy in many countries, rulers' chairs. Politics in almost all countries is highly criminalized. This is true of the US or India, of Italy or Pakistan. All age-old social contracts are being broken down. It is urgent that humanity formulate new social contracts. If humanity is to be diverted from the present suicidal path, a new society has to be created. Another world has to be created. And Another World is Possible.

Capital is running amuck and humans too.

Chapter Four

ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE ANOTHER INDIA TOO

By the end of the 20th century, with the crash of the socialist experiments, a line of thinking began to gain ascendancy: "Capitalism has again proved its supremacy. It is invincible. There is no scope for socialism or any other social system. Capitalism is the highest form of social evolution. There is no more future, only the present. History has ended here. This is the rough outline of that thought. This deduction follows from two lines of argument. Capitalism is basically fine. Whatever small blemishes it has, can be rectified. It is possible to make it more humane. This is one line. Basically, capitalism is unsustainable, full of contradictions, inhuman.... But it is too strong today. There is no alternative. It is not possible to repeat the socialist experiments of 20th century. This is the second line. Both lines accept capitalism. Perhaps China is the best example of the second line of thought. Many other erstwhile socialist countries too fall under this group, apart from all the third world countries. The argument is something like this: socialism cannot be established without a high degree of development in productive forces. The failure of socialist experiments stems from insufficient growth in productive forces. Private profit is the best motive force for the development of productive forces. Once productive forces are sufficiently developed, the change over from capitalism to socialism – socialist revolution – can be thought of.

This is a totally fallacious argument. There are many, including the author, who believe that there is an alternative to capitalism, that this alternative or alternatives have to be rigorously perused and that if not, humanity will plunge into a catastrophe. But these alternatives are to be developed and tested in practice. Even by the late sixties and early seventies, discussions on alternatives were on the agenda. This erupted as critiques of existing socialist practices. New ideas were built up, on bases other than of economics, like environment, gender equity, world peace, issues of the blacks, the marginalized, etc. There was an element of anarchism in all these initiatives. Most of them rejected the very idea of an ideology as the overarching principle. They rejected grand or global narratives and concentrated on local and isolated issues. Their opposition to the 'dictatorship of proletariat' as it emerged in 20th century in USSR and elsewhere attracted counter offensive from organized working class movements and their political parties. They too were not ready to look into their own policies and actions self-critically. Thus on the one side, opposition to holistic worldviews and class organizations and on the other side, unwillingness to examine historical deficiencies and mistakes self-critically divided the progressive movements. They became weaker and weaker. But by the end of 20th century the inadequacies of partial views and fundamentalist attitudes became more and more clear to the 'post- modernists' – as they are often called. Many of them proved to be armchair revolutionaries.

Three major streams - the environmental movements, feminist movements and the peace movements - however, realized the limitations of their one-sided vision. They went out to build new global collective initiatives. The traditional leftists too began to change.

The most significant proof is the change in their attitude towards environment. Earlier they had called ecology as an imperialist science.

Among the new collectives that are emerging, the World Social Forum, organized initially in Porto Alegre in opposition to the World Economic Forum is one of the biggest.

WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

This is a unique mode of action. It is not an organization. It has no programme of its own. It just provides a space for all who believe that another world is possible and necessary to come together, exchange plans, dreams, programmes, forge alliances, iron out vision differences and go back more united for action. Literally thousands and thousands of organizations, movements and individuals participate in it every year. The platform, as it is called, is clearly political. It rejects neo-liberal globalization. However, it excludes formal participation of political parties, because of the fear that it may lead to more disunity than unity. It, however, does not exclude mass and class organization and even party leaders from participation. In fact, they are welcome. However, it has to be stated that in the beginning there was an element of distrust in the existing left progressive political parties. This distrust has been mutual. But over the past four years, it is heartening to note that this distrust is gradually dissolving. Francisco Whitaker, one of the founder activists of the WSF wrote about the Origin and Aims of the WSF as follows.

WSF: Origins and Aim

Early in 1998, the proposal for a Multilateral Agreement on Investments (MAI) was made public. It was to be signed by the world's wealthiest countries and then to be "proposed" to – in practice, imposed on – the rest of the countries in the world. The agreement had been discussed in secret in the OECD, the intention being for it to become a kind of World Constitution for Capital, which would give capital all the rights and almost no duties – especially in Third World countries where the "investments" would be made. The French newspaper *Le Monde Diplomatique* published a first expose prepared in the United States by the "Public Citizens" movement led by Ralph Nader, in an article by Lori Wallach, a lawyer with the movement. The outcry at the absurdities contained in the agreement led to the emergence of a social movement in protest, causing France to withdraw from the negotiations in late 1998 and finally preventing the agreement from being signed.

One of the organizations to spur this mobilization was ATTAC – at first the Association for a Tobin Tax for the Aid of Citizens, and now the Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens – that was starting to take shape in France at the time, also following a proposal in this direction by *Le Monde Diplomatique*. Today, the association has some 20,000 supporters all over France and has produced ATTACs in other countries round the world, including Brazil. The association is working to put into effect economics Nobel laureate James Tobin's proposal for a tax

on speculative capital movements as a way of controlling their present absolute freedom to circulate worldwide, with the consequences we all know so well.

From the interactions these events helped to trigger everywhere among those who refuse to accept the scenario of a world wholly controlled by the interests of capital, a number of different forms of opposition to this type of globalization began to organize themselves. Those that gained most fame by virtue of their media repercussions were the protests in Seattle against the WTO, in Washington against the IMF and the World Bank and, more recently, those in Prague, which led the government representatives gathered there to cut short their meeting one day ahead of schedule.

Now, for a good 20 years, the owners of the world had been meeting in a Forum they called the World Economic Forum, held in Davos, a small, luxury ski resort in Switzerland. Once a year – in addition to the regional meetings that it has also begun to organize – this group (that today is a major corporation) currently gathers together all those who are able to pay 20,000 dollars to hear and talk to the leading thinkers at the service of capital, as well as to hear even guest critics of globaliazation, invited along to lend legitimacy to the Forum. Davos – which attracts correspondents from all the world's major newspapers, including systematically our friend Clovis Rossi – is where the theory of world domination by capital, within the parameters of neo-liberalism, is constructed and steadily put into practice.

Well, in the light of all this that was going on, a few Brazilians decided that it would be possible to launch a new stage of resistance to this school of thought which today prevails all over the world. Over and beyond the demonstrations and mass protests, though, it seemed possible to move on and to offer specific proposals, to seek concrete responses to the challenges of building "another world," one where the economy would serve people, and not the other way round. Economists and other academics opposed to neo-liberalism were already holding what they called Anti-Davos meetings in Europe. The intention was to go further than that. The idea was, with the participation of all the organizations that were already networking in the mass protests, to arrange another kind of meeting on a world scale – the World Social Forum – directed to social concerns. So as to give a symbolic dimension to the start of this new period, the meeting would take place on the same days as the powerful of the world were to meet in Davos.

Exactly who had this great idea? Our friend Oded Grajew. I don't know if he discussed it with anyone else beforehand, but he put it to me when we met in France in February this year. Together, we decided to take it to Bernard Cassen, director of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, who is also president of ATTAC in France, to see how well the idea would be received outside of Brazil.

Cassen was enthusiastic and made the proposal to hold the Forum in Brazil. He felt it had to be in the "Third World" – because that would also have a symbolic effect – and Brazil was among the countries in a better position to host a Forum like this. His too was the idea of hosting it in Porto Alegre, capital of a state that is steadily becoming known all over the world for its democratic experiences and efforts against neo-liberalism.

Cassen then threw out a counter-challenge: if we were able to organize the Forum, we would have the support not only of his newspaper, but also of the organizations around the world that are positioning themselves against domination by capital.

Once back in Brazil, we started to find out what organizations were willing to accept this challenge and take on this huge task. On February 28, there was a meeting in Sao Paulo of delegates from 8 organizations that today have signed a "Cooperation Agreement" to hold the World Social Forum, the first edition of which will be held in Porto Alegre from January 25 to 30, 2001:

Brazilian Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (ABONG); Association for the Taxation of financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens (ATTAC); Brazilian Justice & Peace Commission (CBJP); Brazilian Business Association for Citizenship (CIVES); Central Trade Union Federation (CUT); Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Studies (IBASE); Centre for Global Justice (CJG); Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST).

In March, these organisations sent a delegation to Porto Alegre to consult Olivio Dutra and Raul Pont on the state and municipal governments willingness to host the Forum, on the understanding that the event would be promoted not by these governments, but by the civil society organizations that embraced the proposal. Once the governor and mayor had given their consent, work was begun as quickly as possible to organize and actually realize this new world meeting. This included inviting other civil society organizations to set up a Brazilian Committee in Support of the Forum.

At Cassen's suggestion, a delegation from the organizations traveled in late June to Geneva where a large part of the organizations linking up around the world in demonstrations against neo-liberalism would be meeting in an alternative "summit" parallel to the UN's "Copenhagen +5" Summit. Room was made for us to present our proposal, which was very well received. Miguel Rossetto, Deputy Governor of Rio Grande do Sul State, also traveled to Geneva to confirm that the state would host the Forum. On that very occasion, an International Committee was set up in support of the Forum.

Since then, we have been working against the clock to ensure attendance by participants from all over the world, with quotas set for each continent and each type of activity. The programme drawn up provides for two kinds of dynamics: morning panels – 4 running simultaneously on all four days, with four participants each chosen from among leading names in the fight against the One Truth; and, in the early afternoon, workshops coordinated by the participants themselves to exchange experiences and for discussions, and in the late afternoon, meetings for networking. Also planned are sessions for testimonies from people involved in different kinds of struggle, and an extensive parallel programme in Porto Alegre city for all those unable to participate directly in the Forum, which is open only to people appointed and registered by social organizations.

The Forum is not deliberative in nature and time will not be wasted in discussing the comas in a final document. It will be the beginning of a process of thinking together at

the world level on the four thematic areas dealt with in the morning panels: production of wealth and social reproduction; access to wealth and sustainability; empowering civil society and the public realm; and political power and ethics in the new society. For each of these thematic areas, questions were formulated to which we have to find answers and, for each question, there is a series of issues we have to consider.

The intention is, by thinking together also on a "globalized" basis, to make room-in greater depth each year –for the search for alternatives to the dominant model. In fact, World Social Forum 2001 will be only the first step, but an entirely new step, which is increasingly finding an echo the whole world over. Our hope is that this echo really will secure the beginning of a new period of the struggle against human submission to the interests of capital.

WSF Charter of principles

The committee of Brazilian organisations that conceived and organised the first World Social Forum, held in Porto Alegre from January 25th to 30th 2001, after evaluating the results of that Forum and the expectations it raised, considered it necessary and legitimate to draw up a Charter of Principles to guide the continued pursuit of that initiative. While the principles contained in this Charter –to be respected by all those, who wish to take part in the process and to organise new editions of the World Social Forum –are a consolidation of the decisions that presided over the holding of the Porto Alegre Forum and ensured its success, they extend the reach of those decisions and define orientations that follow from their logic.

1. The World Social Forum is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neo-liberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a planetary society directed towards fruitful relationship among mankind and between it and the Earth.
2. The World Social Forum at Porto Allegre was an event localized in time and place. From now on, in the certainty proclaimed at Porto Allegre that "Another World is Possible", it becomes a permanent process of seeking and building alternatives, which cannot be reduced to the events supporting it.
3. The World Social Forum is a world process. All the meetings that are held as part of this process have an international dimension.
4. The alternatives proposed at the World Social Forum stand in opposition to a process of globalization commanded by the large multinational corporations and by the governments and international institutions at the service of those corporations' interests, with the complicity of national governments. They are designed to ensure that globalization in solidarity will prevail as a new stage in

- world history. This will respect universal human rights, and those of all citizens – men and women –of all nations and the environment and will rest on democratic international systems and institutions at the service of social justice, equality and the sovereignty of peoples.
5. The World Social Forum brings together and interlinks only organizations and movements of civil society from all the countries in the world, but not intends to be a body representing world civil society.
 6. The meetings of the World Social Forum do not deliberate on behalf of the World Social Forum as a body. No one, therefore, will be authorized, on behalf of any of the editions of the Forum, to express positions claiming to be those of all its participants. The participants in the Forum shall not be called on to take decisions as a body, whether by vote or acclamation, on declarations or proposals for action that would commit all, or the majority, of them and that propose to be taken as establishing positions of the Forum as a body. It thus does not constitute a locus of power to be disputed by the participants in its meetings, nor does it intend to constitute the only option for interrelation and action by the organizations and movements that participate in it.
 7. Nonetheless, organizations or groups of organizations that participate in the Forum's meetings must be assured the right, during such meetings, to deliberate on declarations or actions they may decide on, whether singly or in coordination with other participants. The World Social Forum undertakes to circulate such decisions widely by the means at its disposal, without directing, hierarchizing, censoring or restricting them, but as deliberations of the organizations or groups of organizations that made the decisions.
 8. The World Social Forum is a plural, diversified, non-confessional, non-governmental and non-party context that, in a decentralized fashion, interrelates organizations and movements engaged in concrete action at levels from local to the international to build another world.
 9. The World Social Forum will always be a forum open to pluralism and to the diversity of activities and ways of engaging of the organizations and movements that decide to participate in it, as well as the diversity of genders, ethnicities, cultures, generations and physical capacities, provided they abide by this Charter of Principles. Neither party representations nor military organizations shall participate in the Forum. Government leaders and members of legislatures who accept the commitments of this Charter may be invited to participate in a personal capacity.
 10. The World Social Forum is opposed to all totalitarian and reductionist views of economy, development and history and to the use of violence as a means of social control by the State. It upholds respect for Human Rights, the practices of real democracy, participatory democracy, peaceful relations, in equality and solidarity,

among people, ethnicities, genders and peoples and condemns all forms of domination and all subjection of one person by another.

11. As a forum for debate the World Social Forum is a movement of ideas that prompts reflection, and the transparent circulation of the results of that reflection, on the mechanisms and instruments of domination by capital, on means and actions to resist and overcome that domination, and on the alternatives proposed to solve the problems of exclusion and social inequality that the process of capitalist globalization with its racist, sexist and environmentally destructive dimensions is creating internationally and within countries.
12. As a framework for the exchange of experiences, the World Social Forum encourages understanding and mutual recognition amongst its participant organizations and movements, and places special value on the exchange among them, particularly on all that society is building to centre economic activity and political action on meeting the needs of people and respecting nature, in the present and for future generations.
13. As a context for interrelations, the World Social Forum seeks to strengthen and create new national and international links among organizations and movements of society, that, in both public and private life, will increase the capacity for non-violent social resistance to the process of dehumanization the world is undergoing and to the violence used by the State, and reinforce the humanizing measures being taken by the action of these movements and organizations.
14. The is a process that encourages its participant organizations and movements to situate their actions, from the local level to the national level and seeking active participation in international contests, as issues of planetary citizenship, and to introduce into the global agenda the change-inducing practices that they are experimenting in building a new world in solidarity.

The first three WSF were held in Porto Allegre. The fourth one was held in Mumbai. It denoted a marked departure from the earlier forums in the following aspects:

- a) Besides anti-globalization, struggle against communalism and fundamentalism of every sort was brought into the agenda.
- b) There was a remarkable change in the mutual attitudes of political parties and civil society movements towards one another.
- c) For the first time, the masses of impoverished and marginalized sections of the Asian people participated in tens of thousands, giving the WSF an environment of protest, anger and determination of the poor billions.

A few unnamed social movements which participated in WSF-II came together to give out a collective call. This was an indication of the processes that were taking place.

Call of Social Movements

- 1) In the face of continuing deterioration in the living conditions of people, we, social movements from all around the world, have come together in tens of thousands at the second World Social Forum in Porto Allegre. We are here in spite of the attempts to break our solidarity. We come together again to continue our struggles against neo-liberalism and war, to confirm the agreements of the last Forum and to reaffirm that another world is possible.
- 2) We are diverse – women and men, adults and youth, indigenous peoples, rural and urban, workers and unemployed, homeless, the elderly, students, migrants, professionals, peoples of every creed, color and sexual orientation. The expression of this diversity is our strength and the basis of our unity. We are a global solidarity movement, united in our determination to fight against the concentration of wealth, the proliferation of poverty and inequalities, and the destruction of our earth. We are living and constructing alternative systems, and using creative ways to promote them. We are building a large alliance from our struggles and resistance against a system based on sexism, racism and violence, which privileges the interests of capital and patriarchy over the needs and aspirations of people.
- 3) This system produces a daily drama of women, children, and the elderly dying because of hunger, lack of health care and preventable diseases. Families are forced to leave their homes because of wars, the impact of "big development," landlessness and environmental disasters, unemployment, attacks on public services and the destruction of social solidarity. Both in the South and in the North, vibrant struggles and resistance to uphold the dignity of life are flourishing.
- 4) September 11 marked a dramatic change. After the terrorist attacks, which we absolutely condemn, as we condemn all other attacks on civilians in other parts of the world, the government of the United States and its allies have launched a massive military operation. In the name of the "war against terrorism," civil and political rights are being attacked all over the world. The war against Afghanistan, in which terrorists methods are being used, is now being extended to other fronts. Thus there is the beginning of a permanent global war to cement the domination of the US government and its allies. This war reveals another face of neo-liberalism, a face which is brutal and unacceptable. Islam is being demonized, while racism and xenophobia are deliberately propagated. The mass media is actively taking part in this belligerent campaign, which divides the world into "good" and "evil." The opposition to war is at the heart of our movement.
- 5) The situation of war has further destabilized the Middle East, providing a pretext for further repression of the Palestinian people. An urgent task of our

movement is to mobilize solidarity for the Palestinian people and their struggle for self-determination as they face brutal occupation by the Israeli State. This is vital to collective security of all peoples in the region.

- 6) Further events also confirm the urgency of our struggles. In Argentina, the financial crisis caused by the failure of IMF structural adjustment and mounting debt precipitated a social and political crisis. This crisis generated spontaneous protests of the middle and working classes, repression which caused deaths, failure of governments, and new alliances between different social groups. With the force of "cacerolazos" and "piquetes," popular mobilizations have demanded their basic rights of food, jobs and housing. We reject the criminalization of social movements in Argentina and the attacks against democratic rights and freedom. We also condemn the greed and the blackmail of the multinational corporations supported by the governments of the rich countries.
- 7) The collapse of the multinational Enron exemplifies the bankruptcy of the casino economy and the corruption of businessmen and politicians, leaving workers without jobs and pensions. In developing countries this multinationals engaged in fraudulent activities and its projects pushed people off their land and led to sharp increases in the price of water and electricity.
- 8) The United States government, in its efforts to protect the interests of big corporations, arrogantly walked away from negotiations on global warming, the antiballistic missile treaty, the Convention on Biodiversity, the UN conference on racism and intolerance, and the talks to reduce the supply of small arms, proving once again that US unilateralism undermines attempts to find multilateral solutions to global problems.
- 9) In Genoa, the G8 failed completely in its self-assumed task of global government. In the face of massive mobilization and resistance, they responded with violence and repression, denouncing as criminals those who dared to protest. But they failed to intimidate our movement.
- 10) All this is happening in the context of a global recession. The neo-liberal economic model is destroying the rights, living conditions and livelihoods of people. Using every means to protect their "share value," multinational companies lay off workers, slash wages and close factories, squeezing the last dollar from the workers. Governments faced with this economic crisis respond by privatizing, cutting social sector expenditures and permanently reducing workers' rights. This recession exposes the fact that the neo-liberal promise of growth and prosperity is a lie.
- 11) The global movement for social justice and solidarity faces enormous challenges: its fight for peace and collective security implies confronting

poverty, discriminations, dominations and the creation of an alternative sustainable society.

Social movements energetically condemn violence and militarism as a means of conflict resolution; the promotion of low intensity conflicts and military operations in the Colombia Plan as part of the Andes regional initiative, the Puebla Panama Plan, the arms trade and higher military budgets, economic blockades against people and nations especially against Cuba and Iraq, and the growing repression against trade unions, social movements, and activists.

We support the trade unions and informal sector worker struggles as essential to maintain working and living conditions, the genuine right to organize, to go on strike, to negotiate collective agreements, and to achieve equality in wages and working conditions between women and men.

We reject slavery and the exploitation of children. We support workers struggles and the trade union fights against casualization, subcontracting of labour and lay-offs, and demand new international rights for the employees of the multinational companies and their affiliates, in particular the right to unionize and space for collective bargaining. Equally, we support the struggles of farmers and peoples organizations for their rights to a livelihood, and to land, forests and water.

- 12) Neo-liberal policies create tremendous misery and insecurity. They have dramatically increased the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children. Poverty and insecurity creates millions of migrants who are denied their dignity, freedom, and rights. We therefore demand the right of free movement; the right to physical integrity and legal status of all migrants. We support the right of indigenous peoples and the fulfillment of ILO article 169 in national legal frameworks.
- 13) The external debt of the countries of the South has been repaid several times over. Illegitimate, unjust and fraudulent, debt functions as an instrument of domination, depriving people of their fundamental human rights with the sole aim of increasing international usury. We demand unconditional cancellation of debt and the reparation of historical, social, and ecological debts. The countries demanding repayment of debt have engaged in exploitation of the natural resources and the traditional knowledge of the South.
- 14) Water, land, food, forest, seeds, culture and people's identities are common assets of humanity for present and future generations. It is essential to preserve biodiversity. People have the right to safe and permanent for free from genetically modified organisms. Food sovereignty at the local, national, regional level is a basic human right; in this regard, democratic land reforms and peasant's access to land are fundamental requirements.

- 15) The meeting in Doha confirmed the illegitimacy of the WTO. The adoption of the "development agenda" only defends corporate interests. By launching a new round, the WTO is moving closer to its goal of converting everything into a commodity. For us, food, public services, agriculture, health and education are not for sale. Patenting must not be used as a weapon against the poor countries and peoples. We reject the patenting and trading of life forms. The WTO agenda is perpetuated at the continental level by regional free trade and investment agreements. By organizing protests such as the huge demonstrations and plebiscites against FTAA, people have rejected these agreements as representing a recolonization and the destruction of fundamental social, economical, cultural and environmental right and values.
- 16) We will strengthen our movement through common actions and mobilizations for social justice, for the respect of rights and liberties, for quality of life, equality, dignity and peace. We are fighting for:
- democracy: people have the right to know about and criticize the decisions of their own governments, especially with respect to dealings with international institutions. Governments are ultimately accountable to their people. While we support the establishment of electoral and participative democracy across the world, we emphasize the need for the democratization of states and societies and the struggles against dictatorship.
 - the abolition of external debt and reparations.
 - Abolition of speculative activities: we demand the creation of specific taxes such as the Tobin Tax, and the abolition of tax havens.
 - the right to information
 - women's rights, freedom from violence, poverty and exploitation.
 - total stoppage of war and militarism, foreign military bases and interventions and the systematic escalation of violence. We choose to privilege negotiation and non-violent conflict resolution. We affirm the right for all the people to ask international mediation, with the participation of independent actors from the civil society.
 - the rights of youth, their access to free public education and social autonomy and the abolition of compulsory military service.
 - the self-determination of all peoples, especially the rights of indigenous peoples.

In the years to come, we will organise collective mobilizations on these issues.

After the Asian Social Forum held in January 2003, for the first time in India, trade unions and civil society movements came out with a joint appeal.

Joint Appeal – ASF 2003

We, the social, mass and peoples' movements and organisations of Asia and the Pacific from diverse social, cultural and political backgrounds have gathered together on 2-7, January 2003 at the Asian Social Forum in Hyderabad, India. We are gathered here in the ASF to exchange our experiences and raise our voices against neo-liberal globalization, imperialism, militarism, patriarchy and fundamentalism.

We are meeting in Hyderabad, the city that is claimed to be a symbol of cyber-world in India. But it is also the capital of the state known for tragic suicides by hundreds of farmers and weavers, besides starvation deaths, due to the impact of neo-liberal globalization in recent years. The real history of the state is one of valiant peoples' struggles.

In fact, today the whole of Asia is again the center of poverty, war and intolerance, with the mass of people facing starvation, impoverishment, displacement, indebtedness, and destruction of livelihoods.

Imperialism targets Asia with its militarist and economic offensives for making strategic gains, including the greed for oil. The looming threat of war on Iraq by the United States of America imperils all of us, who have witnessed the Gulf War, the bombing of Afghanistan, and the continuing occupation of Palestine. US political and military interventions in Asia under its so-called War on Terror - particularly in South, South East and East Asia - has brought us to the brink of nuclear war. Meanwhile, all over the region, citizens are kept in check by un-democratic and draconian laws imposed by colluding regimes.

This has promoted a false discourse on terrorism and security while systematically marginalizing and assaulting people's struggles for survival, livelihoods, rights, inclusion and self-determination. All these pressures are generating ever more virulent forms of patriarchy and the oppression of Asian women.

The impact of capitalism and neo-liberal globalization continues to be felt across the region and affects the lives of every woman, man, youth and child. These effects are leading to widespread increases in levels of poverty and widening gaps between the rich and the poor. It has also led to the increasing degradation of the environment and ecology resulting in widespread disease and death threatening the very survival of the planet.

Attacks on the economies of all countries in the region have lead to total loss of self-reliance, de-industrialization, privatization and destruction of natural resources of land, water and forests, and the retreat of labor protections. Agriculture, village and small scale industries are collapsing due to imports and subsidy cuts. The promotion of capitalist

property rights and indiscriminate mechanization by governments and transnational corporations are destroying people's knowledge, skills and livelihoods. The combined actions of the World Bank, IMF, ADB, export credit agencies, ODAs and WTO are willfully and deliberately undermining our economic and political sovereignty while destroying local and national economies. Debt continues to be used by the international financial institutions and donor countries to keep our countries in financial and economic bondage.

Capitalism and neo-liberal globalization also jeopardize peoples' lives and accentuate multiple forms of exclusions for the marginalized sections. The worse affected are women, children, indigenous peoples, dalits, ethnic minorities, tribals, unorganised sector and migrant workers and other socially excluded groups. These have led to the depression of wages, mass unemployment and price increases making people more destitute, leading to tragic consequences like increase in child labor and trafficking in women and children. Education, child care, health, transport all get privatized and subsidy cuts result in denial of services and food security for the poor.

Meanwhile, instances of exclusions include the withdrawal of safety nets and affirmative action, rise in violence and discrimination against the vulnerable groups, flattening of social diversities that puts greater pressure on the minorities to conform to the dominant view and greater incidence of contrived conflict that pits these groups against one another.

There is a shrinking of democratic space within the nation-states as neo-liberal globalization with the rise of aggressively fundamentalist, intolerant and violent articulations of identities and an increase in the repressive powers of the state and the elites, leading to gross violation of civic and human rights.

We, therefore, resolve to carry forward and strengthen the solidarity for resisting imperialist domination. It will be necessary - and we will strive - in the coming days to include many more social movements into this process of resistance and to evolve democratic and transparent processes for coordinating activities and actions.

We believe that not only is Another World Possible but that Another World is Necessary!
We affirm our faith in alternatives based on equity, social justice, human rights and socialism!

In particular, we resolve to carry forward the campaigns and struggle and move towards common actions in the following areas:

- ⚡ Resist imperialism - the imminent US attack on Iraq, its escalating militarist interventions in the region, as well as, its possible unilateral declaration of war against any country. Specifically, we will organize a common day of protest action against the war in Iraq. We demand the total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

- ⚡⚡ Resist the policies and undemocratic structures of neo-liberal globalization. Specifically, derail the next WTO Ministerial Meeting in Cancun.
- ⚡⚡ Defend democracy, secular values and people's security.
- ⚡⚡ Oppose religious fundamentalism and communal, ethnic, caste and gender-based violence.
- ⚡⚡ Assert people's right to work, energy, food, water, land, other natural resources, education, health and public transport.
- ⚡⚡ Oppose privatization, disinvestment and attack on labour rights.
- ⚡⚡ Move away from development based on foreign capital and mobilize national resources to support the sustainable and equitable development of domestic economies and people's lifestyles. Demand the unconditional cancellation of debt.

The fifth WSF was held in Porto Alegre during January 2005. With it, it has become increasingly clear that more persistent efforts are to be made to rally larger and larger number of people across the globe in the battleground to fight against neo-liberal globalization. It is also felt that the absence of a focusing ideological lens is making the struggles scattered and ineffective. The fear of the dictatorship of an ideology, meaning thereby that of the ideologies of party bosses, however, still lingers. The epoch is pressing for a global, yet directed, and effective ideology based on democracy, participation, equity, sustainability and so on. It is not sufficient to say that we have socialism and nothing more is required. Experience shows that one experiment has failed in practice. We cannot simply repeat the same experiment the same way. Changes are to be made. But what sort of changes? The following chapter is an attempt to grapple with this question.

WORLD OF TOMORROW - THE FOURTH WORLD

When we discuss "Another World" or about the world of tomorrow, one thing is to be borne in mind. The term "tomorrow" is used only in a figurative sense. It could be an immediate future referring to few years. It could be, also, long-term future involving centuries and millennia. Thoughts about immediate future will be clearer. They will be more objective. There could be a concrete programme of action to realize it. On the other hand, thoughts about distant future will be, in most of the cases, statements of objectives. But even they should have a philosophical foundation and a theoretical possibility. In the following pages, we will discuss thoughts about both the immediate and long-term futures. The two will be, unfortunately somewhat mixed up, because in reality they are. What we do tomorrow has its implications to distant future too.

We saw that a multitude of movements, like movements on environment, women's liberation, social justice, world peace, etc., have sprung up the world over against the existing world order. The World Social Forums held in Porto Allegre of Brazil in 2001, 2002 and 2003, the large number of regional social forums, the fourth WSF held in Mumbai in 2004, etc., rallied thousands of organizations, movements, and millions of individuals in the fight against neo-liberal globalization. Their common slogan was "Another World is Possible," implying thereby that the present world was intolerable, other worlds were to be built up and it is possible to do so. However, there was, and there is, no consensus about even the essential features of this "Another World." There are hundreds and even thousands of different concepts about the new world. Some among them are "Capitalism with a human face," "rectified socialism," "going back to good old days", or "a variety of post-capitalist worlds." During WSF II, a few socialist movements together formulated a document titled "Call of Social Movements." This has been referred to earlier. About the economy, politics and culture of the 'post capitalist society,' there was no holistic understanding. What follows is one concept of a post-capitalist society. There could be many others too. But before elaborating it, a few words about the other major streams will not be out of place.

Sanitized or Human-faced capitalism : This is a semantic absurdity, to say the least. Capitalism per say cannot have a human face. Yet, many believe that it can be humanized, that its good aspects should be made use of. They deify competition as the motive force of all progress! Competition is considered by them as an essential biological quality. Cooperation, according to them, is only an artificially created social quality which is weak. That this is not so has been proved by evolution biologists. Propensity for cooperation too is a genetically inherited quality. Competition has always led and will lead to increased inequalities, increased exploitation of limited natural resources, increased conflicts for the control of a dwindling resource base, to world wars, etc. It is irrational to conceive that profit motive will not lead to this, to conceive that capitalism can sustain without profit motive, etc.

Rectified Socialism: A large number of movements insist that the future is socialism. They look with derision and animosity at all others who ask: what kind of socialism? They, however, do agree that there have been deviations and mistakes in the practice of Marxism in the 20th century. These can be rectified, they argue. But what exactly were the mistakes committed by the 20th century experimenters of Marxism and socialism? They are not able to give a convincing answer, except general statements about ‘deviation.’ Some felt that the socialist revolutions of the 20th century were premature, that the productive forces had not grown enough, that capitalism had not exhausted itself, that the Party got alienated from its own class, etc. Some argue that what was attempted in USSR and other countries was not socialism but social imperialism. But all of them believe that it is possible to rectify these mistakes and deviations and real socialism can be built in the 21st century. Again many believe that this may take decades and even centuries, that intermediate post-capitalist, pre-socialist worlds will be necessary. None of these groups was able to get out of technology fetishism and unlimited growth syndrome.

Back to Nature: There is a minority who opposes both the above groups. For them, the main enemy is science and technology. They oppose them. They reject modern machines and equipment. They want everybody to emulate Henry David Thoreau – but not themselves! Life without cell phones and internet is unthinkable for most of them!

Post-Capitalist Societies. Capitalism cannot be humanized. History cannot go back to a primitive age. 20th century socialist experiments required serious revisions. The new society of the ‘another world’ will be none of the above. But it will have more in common with the Socialism of the 20th century than with capitalism or primitive communism! Nobody seriously dares to draw up the details of a rectified socialism leading to communism. It has been generally accepted to be far away. Details would be hazy. So, many call it a post-capitalist society, whatever, it may mean. Can that be conceived as a precursor to ‘scientific socialism’? The culture of the post-capitalist society will have to be quite different, especially in the approach towards nature and towards women as well as towards development. As mentioned earlier, what follows is a nail sketch of one such society.

NEW WORLD

The famous social scientist Eric Hobsbawm concludes his book "*The Age of Extremes – The Short History of Twentieth Century 1914-1991*" with the following paragraph:

"We do not know where we are going. We only know that history has brought us to this point and – if readers share the argument of this book – why. However, one thing is plain. If humanity is to have a recognizable future, it cannot be by prolonging the past or the present. If we try to build the third millennium on that basis, we shall fail. And the price of failure, that is to say, the alternative to a changed society, is darkness."⁽¹²⁾

Yes, a new path has to be cut open. One such attempt was made in the last century: the Great Socialist Experiment. But the path took unexpected zig-zags and deviations and, in the end, joined the old path of capitalism. The engine of 'economics' was used to drive the vehicle of politics. But the steering wheel of culture was neglected. This might have led to the deviations.

The famous Marxist thinker and economist Samir Amin says: The modern capitalist world has a culture of its own, consisting of three important components. One: freedom of the individual, freedom in the bourgeois sense, two: rational thought freed from religious environment (in the earlier periods it was necessary to make rational thought compatible with religious principles) and three: the indissoluble relationship between freedom and rational thinking.⁽¹³⁾

This cultural revolution was not the product of an economic revolution, but as a precursor to or together with it. The argument that cultural changes (superstructure) has to necessarily follow changes in economics (bases) is not tenable. Samir Amin continues:

"In my view, the history of the unfinished socialist revolution, everywhere in retreat during this current phase of our epoch, confirms how important the dimension of cultural revolution is to it.

"Since, in my interpretation of Marxism, socialism signifies not capitalism without capitalists, but above all a different sort of human civilization, I do not regard the call for creation of a new human being (rather than the call for a 'a new man', which would exclude women! as an empty slogan."(pp.51, *Spectres of Capitalism : A Critique of Current Intellectual Fashions*).

The call for a 'new human being' is not a hollow one. Without change, without the development of a new type of human being, without cultural advancement it will not be possible to realize socialism. The new human being should be more free; should have survived the alienation caused by the market. The working of such a society has to be fully transparent! The idea of 'Cultural Revolution' was not a Chinese blunder of 1966, neither was it a palace intrigue. There is, always, an element of romanticism in the concept of socialism. This is an inalienable factor of the struggle for socialism. Today, the thoughts and actions of the world are dictated by the American culture. Its main elements are:

- a) Universal competition. In this, every individual is alone. All others are opponents. Succeed at any cost.
- b) Life is consumption. Humans live to consume and to enjoy. Human development means continuous increase in consumption.

Progress = increase in consumption
Means = free competition.

But the fact is that competition has never been free. The powerful had put in boundary conditions. Later, a new theory evolved: Might is Right – explained through the phrase ‘Survival of the fittest.’

Having realised that there is no future for the existing path, we are attempting here to cut open a new path towards a new society. What will be the culture of the new society? Many elements can be and have to be consciously cultivated.

CULTURE

Need and Greed

There is one thing common to the communist society envisioned by Marx, the *grama swaraj* envisioned by Gandhiji and anarchism, though they are quite different in most other things: each member of the society has enough wisdom for self-control. There is no necessity of army, police or jail to control them. But how do they control themselves? How will members in the society help each other? Perhaps it was Gandhiji who gave the most concrete answer to this question. Anarchists were totally vague and abstract in answering this question. The control mechanism in communist society and in *grama swaraj* are totally different.

Under communism, at least as conceived by the 20th century experimenters, the productive forces would have developed to such high levels that there is an abundance of each and every commodity, that everybody can have everything they want and hence there is no necessity for competition. The State can, consequently wither away. When each one produces according to his or her own ability, there would be enough to satisfy the needs of every one. In such a society, productive labour is a pleasure and not alienation. This abundance is the secret behind self-control under communism.

Capitalism has to expand production and exchange of commodities, indefinitely. It has to produce, above all, ‘needs.’ The necessity of realising that most of these needs are pseudo needs, that they do not contribute to welfare, was not sufficiently understood at that time. Subsequent mainstream interpreters of Marxism never found it necessary to differentiate genuine needs and pseudo needs or greed. Marx himself was not perhaps unduly worried about it. That was the period of explosive development in science and technology, a period of accelerated development in productive forces. The finiteness of natural resources seems not to have perturbed Marx as much as it did Engels. Still there is enough evidence in his writings about the concept of sustainable development - at least in land and agriculture. However, no 20th century experiment to construct socialism ever saw any ‘limit to growth.’ They were participants in a consumerist race.

Gandhiji’s vision was quite different. He wrote: ‘This world has enough to satisfy everyone’s need but not even one man’s greed’. For him, need and greed were two distinct categories. The communists did not accept them as two categories. Today’s ‘greed’ can become tomorrow’s ‘need’, according to them. The division is only a

temporary one, dependent upon the level of capability. It was difficult for Gandhi to imagine, in the India of his times, that science and technology can offer enough help to satisfy all the future needs of the millions. He preferred to rely on existing knowledge and harder work. It was hard for him to imagine during those days that science and technology can become non-violent too.

It is not possible to demarcate need and greed in a digital manner. But one can identify certain basic needs any way. If we apply the criterion of welfare value, besides use value and exchange value, one can identify a large number of 'perceived needs' have zero or negative welfare values. One can start the pruning from that end, in the case of rich and vulgarly rich societies. For most of the Latin American, Asian and African people and for few in Europe and North America many clearly identified needs remain to be satisfied. We can start from that end as far as satisfaction of needs are concerned. If we add, further, the concept of finiteness of natural resources and necessity of long term sustainability we may arrive at the golden middle, whose concrete nature will become clear only when we approach it from both ends. The new society will have to strive towards this. It has to educate the citizen that the two- need and greed – are two different categories, that we cannot survive without the wisdom to distinguish one from the other. Humans have, beyond basic physical needs, a category of spiritual needs too. Most important among them is the assurance of security – for self and children-economic and physical security. Sense of being accepted by or belonging to, self-respect, to love and being loved... there are many more spiritual or non-material needs. The new, other world, should strive to provide the multi-faceted security that these needs will be satisfied for self and succeeding generations.

Participation

Humans do not live by bread alone. They want to be accepted, to be recognized. They want to participate fully in the social life. Participation in labour is not only an economic need, but also a political and even a spiritual need. The purpose or meaning of progress is to satisfy these higher than basic needs of humans. It is not a quantitative increase in material consumption. Today, unfortunately these higher needs are not even perceived by the majority as they are bogged down by the daily effort to satisfy even basic needs. So majority of them today try to keep away from social responsibilities. The People's Plan Campaign carried out in Kerala brought this out clearly. In spite of such a massive campaign, the majority opted out of taking societal responsibilities. They believed that their only responsibility was to cast a vote in the election. Everything else was the responsibility of members and ministers. They considered that their single vote was valuable enough to entitle them to all the benefits of development. State powers were devolved to break this complacency. Panchayat members and even citizens were given substantial powers. There was even provision to nullify the ward membership of the elected member, if she or he failed to call the grama sabha for a period of more than six months. Nobody exercised that right of the citizen. They had full rights to information. Nobody exercised that right. The participation in the grama sabhas was seldom more than 10 to 15 per cent of the voters – that too to bargain for a higher share from the poverty alleviation programmes. The middle class and the rich never

participated. They never felt participation as a spiritual need. They do not accept that citizens have, in a democratic society, not only rights but also responsibilities. In the society of tomorrow, in the post-capitalist society - and also in a true socialist society – citizens will accept their responsibilities and will participate in all societal activities necessary for the sustenance and progress of the society.

Quality of Life

One of the basic characteristics of any life is the constant interaction - metabolic exchange – with the environment. The fundamental purpose is to resist death, to increase longevity. Differing from all other life forms humans, we know, change the nature to suit their requirements and change their own nature to suit changing environment. Gradually grew the concept: conquering the nature. We began to see progress in the victories against nature. Though late, humans also understood that for each such victory, nature has taken a revenge and that they have had to pay a heavy price. This is only one aspect of humans. Even during the period of transition from ape to man other changes were taking place in their character. They grew as cooperative groups – family and tribe. This was an essential element of human evolution. The species could not have survived without cooperation. Variants with less ability for cooperation, became extinct. Collectivity is an evolutionary feature. Humans were ready to sacrifice immediate self-interest for the sake of others. In the long run, it paid back. They learnt this with joy. Gradually, conquest of self- interest too became an objective of humanity just as conquest of nature. It is this objective that later developed into spirituality and religion. Here the term religion does not connote rituals or organized institutions. Though essentially dependent on sense perception, there are many aspects of thought and emotion which are different and separate from them. The mind and the body are two experimental fields – material and non-material. Marx did not deny the non-material experience. He only subordinated it to material experience. Spirit cannot exist without matter, but matter do exist without spirit. Still, he even granted a sort of relative autonomy to spirit. Even now, we cannot explain creativity, ability to write poetry or to paint or to sing, feelings like compassion, love, courage, strictly in terms of matter- atoms or molecules. This spiritual experience too is important to humans.

Longevity is an index of life's success in the fight against death. But, even until a few decades ago, per capita income was considered as the sole index of a society's progress. All else was supposed to be directly correlated to it. Even today, scholars consider per capita income as a major determinant in a society's progress. But the correlation between per capita GNP and, for example, life expectation is very weak, as can be seen from the following table:

Table 5-1

Per Capita Income And Life Expectation 2000

Country	Per Capita Income PPP US\$	Life Expectation
USA	34142	77.0
Norway	29918	78.5
Sweden	24277	79.7
Japan	26755	81.0
Costa Rica	8650	76.4
Sri Lanka	3530	72.3
Kerala	2800	76.0
Qatar	18799	69.6
Oman	13356	71.0
Saudi Arabia	11367	71.6
South Africa	10,000	48.3
Botswana	7184	40.3
Djibuti	2377	43.1

About three decades ago, the late Mehboob-ul-Haq suggested that we should measure societal progress not by income level but welfare level. The concept of human development index was developed, later, as a measure of the welfare of a society. The UNDP has been publishing human development reports since 1990. They took life expectation, education and also income as constituent factors to construct a Human Development Index – HDI. They could not do away with income as an independent factor. But the Kerala experience shows clearly that high levels of life expectation and education are possible with comparatively very low levels of income or in other words, expenditure of natural resources. Since early eighties many people have been playing with the concept of "Quality of Life." Combining all these concepts - Human Development, Quality of Life, Welfare Value, etc. - it is possible to define a logically more reasonable measure of progress in terms of physical or material quality of life and spiritual or non-material quality of life (PQL and SQL).

In the post-capitalist – pre-socialist world which we strive for, the definition of progress will be universal increase in both physical and spiritual qualities of life. The elements of PQL and SQL can be put down as below:

- ?? high life expectation;
- ?? low morbidity;
- ?? emancipation from alienation;

- ?? sustainability;
- ?? absence of undesirable events;
- ?? high level of education;
- ?? increased reading habit;
- ?? increasing participation in arts and sports;
- ?? increasing participation in economic activities;
- ?? increasing participation in politics.

Every society values these. The new society will respect these values and not wealth. There can be standardized procedures to calculate them. Discussions on them will be part of general education.

Family and Status of Women

With the appearance of private property came one of the most unfortunate episodes in the history: the fall of woman. At each stage, in the transition from barbarianism to civilization, the women was pushed one step down. The theory that "in childhood, father to protect, in youth, husband to protect and in old age son to protect—women do not deserve freedom" is not only prevalent in India but elsewhere too. With the advancement of capitalism, like in all other fields, in the approach towards woman too, deception become the rule - just like the false propaganda that both the capitalist and the labour arrive at the labour market with equality. Just as we compare the human development of different countries, we can compare the human development indices of men and women separately in any country. The 1995 HDR had a section particularly devoted for this. If the inequality between men and women is considered a negative quality, then Japan which was ahead in all other aspects, was found to slide down considerably. The labour time of women is considerably more than that of men. Women who are forced to work for the economic security of herself and the family cannot escape from home responsibilities like cooking, etc. On an average, she is forced to work for 12-14 hours a day. Her 'Liberation Index' is considerably lower than that of men. In education, in free time to enjoy arts and sports, in participation in economic and political activities- every where she is forced to be far behind men. As far as the sex assaults she has to face from men, there is no account of it. Firstly, women are forced to keep such assaults a secret, because the men and the community will find fault only with her. There is no record of the opposite - men being subjected to sexual assault by women!

Oppression of women, murder, dowry deaths, suicides – all are on the increase. Viewed from any angle, the family has become the most cruel and oppressive prison of all women. Without a basic change in the concept of family, the discrimination against women cannot be stopped. In a new society, woman can become economically free. In the countries of the 20th century socialist experiment, women had been almost fully liberated economically. But she was still bound to family responsibilities. The division of labour between husband and wife, between son and daughter was highly unequal, even there.

Like the impulse to resist death, the impulse to procreate too is basic to life. The enquiry about the nature of future family can start from this impulse. The basis for procreation are sexual intercourse, pregnancy, delivery and caring the baby. These are important factors in the life of all higher forms of life. Sexual relationship is purely a biological act. In the case of many animals, one can find males fighting each other for dominance over the female. Only humans have developed this into a long- term private relationship. One reason for this is that among animals, females are sexually aroused only for a short period each year and procreation has to be done during that period. On the other hand, human females are sexually active and can procreate round the year. The long period of infancy and childhood of the species may be another reason for this. Compared to many other animals, humans are weak. Collectivity, tool making and transformation of nature helped the species to survive. A long period of infancy and childhood is required for the child to learn all this. As time went on, the childhood of humans became longer and longer. Earlier, several millennia ago, by the the age of 8-10, a child became capable of surviving by itself. It would have become independent of parents. Today, it has become 15-20 years. The period of dependency is today about one- fourth or more of the total life.

The present nuclear family system is of fairly recent origin, less than a century old. Life-long husband-wife relationship and rejection of extra-marital sex too might be only a few millennia old. Both are artificial and regularly broken. The epics of all peoples will have one or more stories of relationship with another man or woman other than one's spouse. The concept 'others' is opposite to that of 'own.' This ownership does not have any backing of biological sciences. It started with the 'fall of women.' The reasons for this may be the increased duration of childhood of human species and the subconsciously developing division of labour.

Can we separate the sexuality of men and women from issues of family and child upbringing? Yes, it is possible. There is no objective problem. Ideas deeply ingrained in the social consciousness and hypocrisy within each individual mind are the only problems. Today, sexual relationship can be totally separated from the reproduction of the species. The taboos which evolved during times when this was not possible do not have any biological basis. Issues like social status, family pride, etc., too have no biological basis, only economic interests.

The new world, the Fourth World, will strive to bring down economic disparities and increase participation. However, it is going to be much more difficult to evolve a new attitude towards the relationship between family and sex. Long-standing concepts of morality will have to be abandoned. Without doing so, women can never be free. In the new society, we want women to be free and equal to men. A massive campaign of public education, a campaign explaining the independence of child-rearing from sexuality, is part of the struggle for establishing a new social order. One can broadly describe the desirable state of women in the new world in the following manner.

1. In all areas - economy, politics, culture - women will have equality with men.

2. Since biologically she has to bear the child, be delivered of it and breastfeed it, she would be given sufficiently long - two to three years long – maternity leave with full benefits for two deliveries. (Women will have the right to chose the time of pregnancy.)
3. The discrimination existing within the family against women and the girl child will be eradicated.
4. The family consisting of wife, husband, children and grandchildren is important both culturally and for child development. Every effort will be made to preserve it and strengthen it – of course, not at the cost of the woman. Where three generation families have become practically difficult, alternative provisions for grandparental care for children will be made. Attachment of older people to crèches and kindergartens as surrogate grandparents, not as employment, but for mutual joy, is one possible policy.
5. Extra marital sex, both of men and women will not be considered immoral (even today, it is immoral only for women!).
6. The fossilized division of labour within the family will be broken up. In all activities except delivery and breastfeeding, such as child care, cleaning, cooking, etc. men will share more than half of the load.
7. Child care will be the responsibility of not only parents and grandparents, but also of the entire community.

Children

On November 20, 1989 the UNO passed a resolution called "Convention on the Rights of the Child." It was the realization that adults were treating children with extreme cruelty that led to this convention. Adults are stronger than children. They are supposed to know more. Animal world order is based on the concept : might is right. But not the human world order. At least we don't want it to be so, though the US is constantly reminding us that we are still living in our animal world! Obviously, the violence of adults against children is considered as protection – as the US is protecting rest of the world! However, humans, through the long period of biological and social evolution, have imbibed one weakness – or is it strength? It is called conscience. It questions, often, the use of physical strength. The world convention on children held in September 1990 was the result of such a questioning. The Declaration says.⁽¹⁴⁾

"The children of the world are innocent, vulnerable and dependent. They are also curious, active and full of hope. Their time should be one of joy and peace, of playing, learning and growing. Their future should be shaped in harmony and cooperation. Their lives should mature, as they broaden their perspectives and gain new experiences.

"But for many children, the reality of childhood is altogether different.

"Each day, countless children around the world are exposed to dangers that hamper their growth and development. They suffer immensely as casualties of war and violence; as victims of racial discrimination, apartheid, aggression, foreign occupation

and annexation; as refugees and displaced children, forced to abandon their homes and their roots; as disabled; or as victims of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.

"Each day, millions of children suffer from the scourges of poverty and economic crisis – from hunger and homelessness, from epidemics and illiteracy, from degradation of the environment. They suffer from the grave effects of the problems of external indebtedness and also from the lack of sustained and sustainable growth in many developing countries, particularly the least developed ones.

"Each day, 40,000 children die from malnutrition and disease, including acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), from the lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation and from the effects of the drug problem.

"These are challenges that we, as political leaders, must meet.

"Together, our nations have the means and the knowledge to protect the lives and to diminish enormously the suffering of children, to promote the full development of their human potential and to make them aware of their needs, rights and opportunities. The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides a new opportunity to make respect for children's rights and welfare truly universal.

"Enhancement of children's health and nutrition is the first duty and also a task for which solutions are now within reach. The lives of tens of thousands of boys and girls can be saved every day, because the causes of their death are readily preventable. Child and infant mortality is unacceptably high in many parts of the world, but can be lowered dramatically with means that are already known and easily accessible.

"At present, over 100 million children are without basic schooling, and two-thirds of them are girls. The provision of basic education and literacy for all are among the most important contributions that can be made to the development of the world's children.

"Half a million mothers die each year from causes related to childbirth. Safe motherhood must be promoted in all possible ways. Emphasis must be placed on responsible planning of family size and on child spacing. The family, as a fundamental group and natural environment for the growth and well-being of children, should be given all necessary protection and assistance.

"The well-being of children requires political action at the highest level. We are determined to take that action.

"We ourselves hereby make a solemn commitment to give high priority to the rights of children, to their survival and to their protection and development. This will also ensure the well-being of all societies."

The declaration continues in this vein. Most of the world nations have ratified this convention, but practically nobody abides by it. Neo-liberal globalization has made it

even more difficult. Under the "Dictatorship of the Market," children have no value. They die like flies in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Crores and crores are malnourished. "Look at the boy and you know the poverty of his village"- this is an ancient proverb in Malayalam. Children who are all stomach, but no buttocks are a ghastly sight – kwashiorker, marasmus ... in Orissa, Bihar, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zaire...

The convention on the Rights of the Child, refer to such children. If there is, anywhere in the world, one child who is hungry, who lack health care, who is subjected to violence from the adults, the grown-ups all over the world are responsible for that. They are responsible for the suffering of children in Palestine, in Afghanistan, in Bosnia, in Chechnya, in Kashmir, in Sri Lanka... everywhere. In the world of tomorrow, in the Fourth World which we dream of and strive for to realize such ghastly scenes shall not exist. The status of the children of a community tells us a lot : not only about its present but also about its future.

Earlier, we had referred to Human Development Index, as a measure of the progress of a community. We can devise another Index, a Child Development Index as a measure of not only the present but also the future of the society. Just like HDI, this CDI too has several elements in it, broadly classified into – Physical, Intellectual and Spiritual Development. Based on certain normative values, spatial and temporal comparisons can be made. The central slogan is: "Give back to children their childhood." Parents, especially middle class parents are particularly cruel to their children. "Spare the rod and spoil the child"- this is an old saying. But parents use even more painful weapons than rods. They rob the children of their childhood. No time to play, no occasion to be naughty – strict regimentation under 24 hour surveillance! Most children break down psychologically and grow up into selfish, compassionless adults.

True, it is the genuine concern about the future of their children that instigates parents to drive them so hard. Humans are three-generational animals. They want security not only for self, but also for children and grandchildren. Once the society can give convincing guarantee about the welfare of their children, parents will start behaving differently. This is what we would strive for in the Fourth World.

ECONOMY

The economy of the Fourth World should be capable of differentiating needs from greed. This requires the guaranteed satisfaction of certain minimum conditions.

Development

The total material production will not continue to increase exponentially as it is today. The rate of growth will slow down and asymptotically approach the desirable level. In case of underdeveloped countries, the rate of growth may increase to begin with before deceleration sets in. In the case of developed countries even absolute production will have to come down. Their leisure time will increase. They will become more and

more emancipated. Human population too cannot expand indefinitely, it has to be stabilized. If not, the future is bleak. Even the present is unpleasant. How soon and at what level the population would stabilize is debatable. People expect it to stabilize by 2050 at anywhere between 12 and 15 billion. This earth can support even such a large population, if we are able to avoid wastage and ensure sustainability. As far as production of goods is concerned it has (i) to come down for developed nations (ii) go up for underdeveloped nations. The stable point may be at 10-12% of the level of the developed and at 5-8 times present level of the underdeveloped. For the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America substantial improvement in the availability of food, clothing, housing, health care, education, etc., is called for. Here, we have to integrate three important components : (i) spatial habitat pattern (ii) spatial distribution of resources and (iii) distribution of the control over resources. Today, they are all at loggerheads with each other. In areas of high population we have comparatively less resources. Countries rich in resources have only small population. The control over resources is even more skewed. Resources all over the world are under the control of a minority in a limited number of nations. Population is prevented from moving from one area to another, while resources are forcefully carried away. But the habitat pattern within a country can be planned. Its resources can be brought under the full control of its people. With the help of S &T, new resources can be found, limited resources can be recycled again and again. With some imaginative planning, the distance to be traveled by members of a family or a community can be brought down considerably. The cancerous urbanization, so eloquently opposed by Marx, is leading us to increased travel time and bumper- to- bumper traffic conditions and to what is called 'road-rage'. This can be prevented. Further, one day, anything can be converted into a resource with the help of S&T.

Equality

One picture that becomes sharper and sharper as we look into the history of humanity is that of concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands. The gap between haves and have-nots has been continuously increasing. The world 'millionaire' has given away to 'trillionaire' to 'multi-billionaire. The wealth of people like Bill Gates, or Sultan of Brunei is beyond the comprehension of human mind. It is something akin to the distance to stars, the nearest of which is four million million kilometers away. Wealth of Bill Gates is 25 million million rupees. What does that mean. The GNP of Kerala is only 0.6 million million rupees. Bill Gates can purchase the whole of Kerala and Tamil Nadu with his wealth.

Absolute poverty is increasing throughout the world. Relative poverty is increasing even faster. The majority of people in the Indian states of Bihar, Orissa... etc., and most African countries live in abject poverty. At the same time metropolitan towns like, Mumbai, Delhi, Beijing, Shanghai, Manila, Colombo are centres of vulgar richness and extravaganza – an explosion of star hotels, luxurious holiday resorts, casinos, etc. Their wastage and extravaganza will make any sensitive human being utterly sick. You will literally vomit. So dirty is the immorality of vulgar richness. The Fourth World will incessantly fight against such immoral inequalities and eradicate them. The interim objective will be to reverse the trend of enrichment and impoverishment, to establish

processes of decreasing inequalities. Economic planning can be so organized to help this. A small example will illustrate this.

The economic foundation of Kerala is weak. It has to be strengthened. There are no two opinions about it. The per capita income has to be doubled and trebled. But how? There are various ways. We can strengthen primary sector activities like agriculture, fishing, animal husbandry, etc. We can modernize and improve traditional industries like coir, cashew, handloom, brick and tile, etc. We can start new agro-processing industries-based on mango, jack fruit, banana, papaya, vegetables, tapioca, coconut, fish, meat, etc. We can strengthen conventional heavy industries like aluminum, zinc, caustic soda, chemical fertilizers, etc. Or go for modern industries like electrical, electronic and mechanical products – machine tools, computers, components, control equipment etc, we can opt frontier areas like software, biotechnology, tissue culture, GM products, high-tech tourism, express highways, etc. Each choice has different impact on income distribution. Primary sector, agro-processing and traditional industries will preferentially help the have-nots. Highway, frontier industries, etc., will make the rich more rich. Even agriculture can be so planned that only the rich benefit from it. The point is that through conscious planning, one can generate economic activities which would preferentially benefit the poor and thus reduce the poor-rich gap. Unfortunately, neo-liberal globalization insists on the opposite. Following their advice, the rich are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer. This has to be resisted.

Security

Just like food, clothing and shelter, security too is a basic human need - the guarantee that not only self, but also children and their children are assured of these basic necessities, including education and health care. If the society can assure each citizen that she/he and their off-springs will be taken care of, will be provided with all basic needs, will have the right to work and right to earn a livelihood, then the tendency /necessity to amass wealth by hook or crook can be curbed. The second- generation citizens of the erstwhile Soviet Union had experienced this. They never had any anxiety about their own future or about that of their children. The downfall of the system was not caused by the selfishness of the people, but by degeneration of the party leadership and the bureaucracy and the absence of a corrective mechanism. When the means of production come totally under the control of the society it is easy to give this assurance. Besides the needs of the existing generation, those of the future generations too can be foreseen. Even during the transition stage, much can be done. The various insurance schemes, on life, education, health, vehicle, home, etc., are indicators of what is possible. Instead of individual responsibility, this can be made into a collective programme. Can we extend their scope? Some programmes that can be thought of:

- (a) Statutory and universal public distribution system, extending the products to all common needs can be instituted.
- (b) Improve quality of public education, improve their physical amenities and continue it to be free.

- (c) Quality of services in all health care institutions, from PHCs upwards can be improved, physical infrastructure can be upgraded.
- (d) Ensure that no child is undernourished. Improve quality and quantity of school feeding- provide breakfast and evening tiffin besides noon-meal. Institute free 'kiddies' kitchens' at walkable distance from home for night and holiday meals.
- (e) Ensure income earning employment/ activity for all able-bodied persons. Provide necessary support to those who are sick or old.

One can calculate how much extra social expenditure is required to carry out the above. One can also explore whether this can be carried out at sub-national levels. An over- the- envelope calculation shows that 5 – 8% of the GNP would suffice for this. Savings from wasteful expenses on goods and services without any welfare value would be sufficient.

Sustainability

We believe that a system which allows a few to live in five star hotels, condemning the majority into slums is immoral. We try to build a world of equity. But if in the process we waste the limited natural resources, pollute the air and water, cause irreversible damage to the environment, then succeeding generations are denied of the right to even minimum needs. This shatters inter-generational equity. For humans who worry about children and grandchildren, this path is not acceptable. We want to see that our children live better than us and not worse. Every succeeding generation should live better and better. This is the essence of sustainability. Nobody has put it more beautifully and more powerfully than Karl Marx. In Capital Vol. III, he wrote: humans "are not owners of the earth. They are simply its possessors, its beneficiaries, and have to bequeath it in an improved state to succeeding generations as *boni patres familias* (good heads of households)."⁽¹⁵⁾

There are two conflicting requirements – increase in quality of life and long- term sustainability. The first demands, as per current thought, increased consumption and increased use of natural resources. Should we put limits to consumption? Long-term sustainability – how long? Millions of years? Or hundreds of years or a few generations? Definitely not a few generations. We are speaking about thousands and thousands of years, at least. This demands drastic changes in consumption pattern. We have to develop cent per cent recyclability. That would be the big challenge before S & T.

There is only one source of energy which can be used for millions of years : solar energy. Fossil fuels will be exhausted within a few decades. But we can obtain as much energy as we want from the Sun. Technology has to be developed to extract it efficiently and sustainably. It should be possible to do it in a distributed manner and on small scale.

When the desired materials exist in nature in a concentrated form we call it a 'resource'. Use of this resource leads to dilution and to transformation. For example carbon in the coal underground on burning becomes carbon-di-oxide and gets distributed in the atmosphere. It is difficult to get back the carbon from this CO₂, though not

impossible. Plants do it through photo-synthesis. None of the resources we make use of really disappears. It is only transformed and diluted – be it iron or aluminum, zinc or mercury. They are there – in the soil and in the sea. Once we develop technologies which can back extract these individual metals and other materials, using only solar energy, then the problem of resource scarcity will be solved for ever. Instead of spending money and effort to develop weapons of mass destruction and commodities with no welfare value, scientists and technologists can be asked to work on this problem.

Already human kind has released into the environment pollutants in unbearable quantities. On the one hand, it is leading to climatic changes. On the other hand, the entire bio-diversity and life itself is under threat. The nuclear wastes, which cannot be transformed are a permanent source of danger. They are under ‘safe custody’ today. But this safety has a cost on it. How can these wastes be converted into resources? There is no dearth of challenge to scientists and technologists.

It is obvious that the entire production process needs to be restructured. To help this, we can define a few more concepts like Wastage Index, Dehumanization Index, Participation Index and Self-sufficiency Index.

Wastage Index

There are certain interesting facts which one can see on looking at the history of human civilization. One fact is that the distance humans are *required* to travel over a life time has been continuously increasing. The more developed a society is, the larger is this distance. These are not pleasure trips, but forced travel to earn a livelihood. People commute from Kalyan, and even Pune, to Mumbai and back. The plight of a housewife who has to travel from Thiruvananthapuram to Kochi and back daily is really a sad one. But this is the price we are forced to pay for ‘progress’. The distance travelled by an average American citizen, throughout his / her life time for work and back is far higher than the same for an average Indian. The unscientific organization of habitat and employment is the culprit. But this is necessary for automobile manufacturers. Not only distances travelled by humans but also transportation distance of commodities have increased. A century or so ago goods required for the existence of a community used to be made within that community or in the neighbouring community. Today most of the same commodities travel from one continent to another. Production is concentrated at locations which offered maximum profit. Raw material and finished products are hauled over thousands of kilometers. Much of the hidden expenses in this are borne not by the capitalists, but by the people. Capitalists are concerned only with their individual profit. It should be possible to reduce the forced travel distance of humans and the haulage distance of commodities. The quantity Waste Index is used as a measure of the present situation. It has two components: Citizens Travel Index and Commodity Haulage Index. The Citizen Travel Index is defined in terms of the average distance travelled by a citizen per year. Tendencies are more important than absolute values. Over a definite period of time, say 10 years to what extent this has decreased or increased – this is what we are interested. It is desirable to reduce the forced travel time and distance.

Commodities are, in fact, congealed labour. This labour can be expressed in terms of hours or in dollars or in rupees. We make a detailed list of all commodities consumed by an individual over a period of one year. Each has got a price and is produced at a locally near to you or far away from you. Even in one product, different components might have been made in different places. Let us take, for example, a box of matches. Its case, its label, the chemicals used – each has been made in different places. At the end it reaches the consumer. Different commodities and different elements have travelled different distances before reaching the consumer. If we multiply the value- price- by the distance it has travelled and add them all we get the consumption in dollar/ rupee – kilometers. If this is divided by the average per capita consumption in dollars or rupees we get a ‘distance’ consumed by us. We can monitor the change in this – increase or decrease –year after year,. To put it in simple terms, it is desirable to reduce forced travel of humans as well as transportation distance of commodities. In other words material life should be localized, as far as possible. This is not applicable to culture or knowledge.

Dehumanization Index

A situation demanding the deployment of more and more police and jails to maintain law and order is not a desirable one. It means that the citizens are living in constant fear. This is, really, the case in the USA. Further if a country has to spend a substantial part of its income to maintain a huge army for defense or for offense, a situation when it has to sacrifice large number of its youth on battle fields, this too is an unenviable one. Reduction in the expenses for law and order as well as defense is an improvement in humanism. The opposite is de-humanization. Public education and health care are two very important social needs. Ability to set apart more resources for this increases the quality of life. If we divide the total expenditure on police, jail, courts, military, and administration by the total expenditure on education and health care, we get a quantity which can be termed as ‘dehumanization index." The objective should be to reduce this continuously and make it approach to zero. The US is one of the most dehumanized countries in the world.

Participation Index

When we speak about equity and justice there is one point that is to be born in mind. This shall not be the charity of the rich and the powerful in the community. It has to be a natural state for the society. If a substantial percentage of the population has to dependant on charity- pension it is not a desirable situation, even if it is done. Nobody wants to depend on other’s charity all the time. The saying that human tendency is to evade labour, to make money by hook and crook, is an exaggeration. Yes, today there are a number of very rich people who live a luxurious life without doing one hour’s work a day. This is made possible because of the recognition given by the people to private ownership of means of production and capital. The majority of the people cannot live like this, and do not want it too. Participation is both a material need and a spiritual need for them.

Economic production is carried out not individually, but collectively. It is the sum total of such collective activities that constitute the society and various forms of 'social contracts'. In this each individual has a role to play – not only in economic production but also in maintaining the necessary collectivity. Politics is an important part of this. Every individual might be involved in some or other form of public action. But some are 'full-time' political activists, some are permanent critics. This is not a good division. Every citizen has to undertake and fulfill some part of the social responsibility including politics. In India, especially in Kerala, grama sabha is an ideal platform on which every citizen can participate. The time they spend on class organization, mass organization, political parties, cultural organizations, etc., all constitute what we call 'participation'. More the time spent by average citizen in socio-political activities and less the number of 'full time' socio political workers the higher is the element of participation in it – social participation. An interesting comparison will be between the KSSP and a traditional NGO. In the latter, every person is a full time paid member. Social participation is practically nil. In the former, in the KSSP, more than 98 per cent of the activities are carried out by the members without any remuneration. Social participation is the highest there.

But, economic participation is measured differently, in terms of production, in terms of equity ratio. The average per capita income of the poorest 20% of the community, divided by that of the richest 20% gives a measure of income equity, reflecting economic participation. The nearer it is to 1.00, higher is the level of economic participation.

Self-Sufficiency

It is a common refrain that having liberated from military imperialism, the third world countries are being now subjected to economic imperialism. They are becoming less and less self-reliant, becoming more and more dependant. In the process they are losing political sovereignty too. How can they regain their sovereignty? Even within a single country there are regions where citizens feel that other regions are exploiting them. Gandhiji always spoke of self-sufficiency and not only of self-reliance. It has become, however, fashionable to argue that no town, no country can be fully self-sufficient. Increasing inter-dependence is the rule of the day. Unfortunately, inter-dependence gradually turn into dependence. It is argued here that 'self-sufficiency' is neither an unscientific concept nor an utopian one. Once we start differentiating need and greed, the criteria for self-sufficiency become clearer. Needs are to be understood in terms of Human Development as referred to earlier and not in terms of more material consumption. To satisfy needs people have to produce - convert natural resources into consumable goods. The intermediate agents are tools, skills and knowledge. They strengthen one other. Self-sufficiency increases in accordance with the growth of knowledge, skills and tools on the one hand and enlargement of the geographical area, leading to increased availability of natural resources on the other hand. Kerala cannot be self-sufficient in rice, but can be self-sufficient in calories, proteins, minerals and vitamins. India can be self-sufficient not only in food grains, but also in providing for every genuinely human need. A country's, a community's self-sufficiency can be

measured in terms of what percentage of its genuinely human needs can be met from within. A reduction in average commodity haulage, referred to above, will be possible only with increasing levels of self-sufficiency.

All these—equity, security, sustainability, efficiency, humanness, participation and self-sufficiency – are desirable. But to realise them, the entire economic-production system will require an overhaul – in planning, in decision making, in producing, in dividing everywhere. We shall proceed to think about them.

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

What would be the general structure of economy in the Fourth World? By definition it will be different from capitalism and socialism, though closer to the later. How it will be different in the case of (a) ownerships and rights (b) class structure (c) production planning (d) division of labour (e) division of products (f) decision making (g) role of market, particularly stock-exchanges (h) role of international trade, etc.

These are tricky issues. It cannot allow extraction of surplus value through exploitation of labour. It cannot be, also, simple state ownership of the means of production (State capitalism or capitalism without capitalists). Issues of manual labour, intellectual labour, agriculture, industry, village, town, limits of natural resources, tolerance to pollution, equity, role of competition and cooperation, etc. will have to be analysed and mutually consistent set of solutions will have to be arrived at. This cannot be done in one stroke, in a fully worked out plan. It has to evolve through practice. But even for practice there has to be some initial hypothesis, some tentative theory. At the very outset itself appears the problem of naming. We have called it a 'Fourth World' or a Post-Capitalist World. But this conveys too little. Shall we call it Participatory Democracy? Or Solar Democracy? (as will be explained later). But any naming is an exclusion process. To begin with, we will avoid it. Let us examine the basic/ desirable/ possible features of a Post-Capitalist Economy. Michael Albert has written a book called *Parecon :Life after Capitalism*. He has traced some elements of such a new world in that book. They can be summarised as given below:⁽¹⁶⁾

Ownership Right

The central aspect of capitalism is the private ownership of the means of production like land and other natural resources, machinery, buildings, etc., or rather the ownership right on the products resulting from the ownership right of the means of production. The ultimate regulatory power for them, is the market, the stage where goods and services are exchanged. On the one side, we have the workers who have nothing but their labour power to trade. They have to sell it immediately. Then only they can eat and maintain it. It is a sort of distress sale. On the other hand we have the capitalists who are ready to purchase the labour power at prices dictated by them. They are rich. They have reserves. They can postpone the purchase for a day, for a week or even for a year. And they have got also the backing of the police, the court and the jail - the State, in short. Free competition – as advocated by liberalism and neo-liberalism – is obviously a

misnomer. It has led to abject impoverishment of the majority including the working class and vulgar enrichment of a limited few. This is as clear as daylight. The present form of private ownership of the means of production will not allow any of the desired attributes of the future –fourth world. As Marx had eloquently put it, we are not owners of this earth only its tenants. We have to pass it on to the succeeding generations in an improved form. The policies and practice of the transition period from capitalism to true socialism and of the post-capitalist fourth world, will be such as to ‘de-link’ means of production from the product. Michael Albert proposes:

1. Means of production will not be owned by anybody. It will not come into the picture of the value of the product.
2. This means that the classical class differentiation no longer exists. This does not mean the absence of division of labour. Different types of labour will continue to exist.
3. Division of labour would be quite different from what is today. There is hard manual labour, there is soft administrative labour, there is repetitive and boring labour, there is creative and joyful labour, there is direct production, there is overseeing. Each one of these has different categories too. Every one will have to select a combination of responsibilities of all types.
4. These combinations will be decided through workers councils in each enterprise. The effort required and the feeling of sacrifice (alienation) associated with each type of labour is different. Remuneration will be calculated not on the basis of production but on the basis of effort and sacrifice. This will be quantified at the workers’ council through a process of volunteering and bidding. If there are, for example, 10 positions in the management cadre and 30 aspirants, those who bid lowest remuneration – because he or she enjoys it and wants it – will get that post. For heavy, boring and repetitive jobs there will be less takers. They can bid high. This system will automatically tend to reduce the gap between intellectual and manual labour. The division of products – the remuneration – will be more equitable. Many more details will have to be worked out and tried out.
5. Representatives of Workers Councils and Consumers’ Councils will sit together and plan the annual production of each and every commodity based on past experience and present aspiration.
6. Finally, each individual will have a say in any decision-making in proportion to the extent that such a decision will affect her or him. It will not be one- person, one- vote type of democracy. For example, if I want to construct a soak pit toilet at the edge of my compound close to the well of my neighbour, being the most affected person, he will have more than one vote strength in the village assembly.

Machines get worn out. Electricity has to be produced. Water has alternative uses. Raw materials, buildings, roads... all are, in the final analysis, products of human labour. Every small machine of today congeals within itself the labour of many a generation from far off continents! No individual or no group can, ethically, own any means of production.

A part of the present labour has to be kept apart for wear and tear, for production of more and better machines, for R& D work for the same, for transportation, for communication, for education, for health care service, for social security, etc. All of them come under one category. Of the total social product of the society, a percentage will have to be set apart for all these. Only the rest is available for consumption, which will be divided more equitably amongst all the workers in each enterprise. There are, however, many complicated issues. It is not easy to restructure the division of labour. It is not only an issue of attitudes, but also one of skills. Historically evolved division of labour and division of products (remuneration) cannot be changed over night. The issue is not limited to one enterprise alone. There are other enterprises producing the same products, others which produce other products, in one country and in other countries. It will not be possible to arrive at globally or even nationally uniform formulae. Only certain general principles can be agreed upon. The rest have to evolve through practice. It will be easier to start these within small enterprises and local communities because no meaningful discussion can take place involving thousands and millions of people at the same time and place. We can start with changes in local small- scale enterprises. Let us increase the opportunities for citizens to take local decisions affecting the economic life of local communities. Michael Albert, on the other hand, hopes to circumvent the problems of large scale – large area consultations through information technology. He has not tried or elaborated how to transcend the present consumption syndrome. Neither has he considered seriously issues like wastage, dehumanization, etc. Still *Parecon* – Participatory Economics – is a significant contribution towards the construction of a post-capitalist society.

In the immediate post-capitalist stage, in the ‘Fourth World,’ structures proposed in *Parecon* will not be feasible. What structures are feasible depends upon how capitalism is overthrown and by whom. Assuming that it is done by a broad left-democratic front and that it does not establish a dictatorship, assuming that consumer resistance and local economic activities have played a major role in this process, assuming that citizens have decided that a few people shall not live in star-styles while the majority is languishing in poverty, certain steps would be feasible.

- (a) Existing income and wealth differential will be reduced through a system of progressively increasing taxation.
- (b) Slower growth rate with decreasing inequalities will be preferred to higher growth rates with increasing inequality – reliance will not be placed in the extra incentive of private profit as the motive force for competitive growth.
- (c) The reactionary strength of national large scale manufacturers will be checked using the same techniques used against foreign transnationals – boycott and local substitutes.
- (d) Stress will be on strengthening local economy, even at the cost of reduced growth rate of national economy.
- (e) Economic development plans will be so formulated as to have a relative higher growth rate for the poorer half, the peasants, the dalits.
- (f) Increasing local self- sufficiency will be the central slogan.

All these would converge into a primary sector based development initiative, rather than a secondary sector based one. The Soviet model, and the Indian model too, was based on rapid industrialization especially with heavy industries. Currently, it is giving way to a tertiary sector- centred, IT- dependent strategy.

Strengthening local economy and increasing productivity would demand much higher levels of collectivity than is seen now. While nominal ownership of means of production will be undisturbed, the opportunities and the ability to this ownership for exploitation of labour will be considerably reduced. Agricultural operations will be upgraded from the extremely fragmented and micro-scale to amore coordinated meso-scale. Our land can absorb twice or thrice more labour and yield as many time more output, without any additional use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Increased local production can be, also, consumed locally as far as possible.

Primary Sector

Food and clothing are minimum requirements for the survival of human species. However even from the early days of industrialization this sector was consistently discriminated against. This has given rise to the proverbial antagonism between agriculture and industry or village and town. In developed countries the percentage of the population involved in primary sector is less than 10. This is accepted as progress. Present-day China aspires to progress on these lines, to reduce the number of those dependent on primary sector to less than 10%! If the entire world 'progresses,' then it will require not one earth, but many ones to find raw materials for its industries. It will have to produce more and more goods which don't have any welfare value. And also the needs for such useless goods. Since there is only one earth, clearly this is not a tenable proposition. Pricing of primary sector products will be so administered that substantial part of the historically developed inequity will be taken care of. Land, water and sunlight are very renewable resources –provided we use them carefully. These will not be wasted. Labour will be put in and crops would be raised. Nobody will be allowed to leave their land fallow for long time. One of the immediate objectives could be food self-sufficiency at local levels – village or a state or a nation.

The main elements of primary sector are agriculture, fishing and pisciculture, animal husbandry and poultry. It is a giant cycle of nutrient flows inter-connecting soil, water, animals and humans. The nutrients like nitrogen, potassium, phosphorous, etc., consumed by humans in the form of food, clothing, etc. go back to the soil through human and animal excreta, agro-wastes, life style wastages, etc. Solar radiation is the driving force in this great cycle. Industrialization and urbanization disrupted this metabolism of nature. The nutrients in human and animal excreta as well as innumerable solid wastes did not go back to the soil. Mostly they found their way to water bodies, thus polluting them. Both Marx and, later, Gandhi have argued that this rupture should be mended and that this can be done only by interspersing industry and agriculture, town and village. As noted earlier Communist Manifesto says, towards the end of Section II, as the programme of the proletariat: "Combination of agriculture with manufacture industries: gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more

equitable distribution of the population over the country." This will be one important agenda of the post-capitalist, 'Fourth World.'

It is customary to categorize agriculture as food and cash crops. Food crops include cereals, tubers, fruits, vegetables, oil seeds, pulses, etc. Cash crops include fibres, beverages, spices and narcotics. Priority will be given to food crops and fibre crops. Cultivation of narcotics will be effectively prevented. An extensive bio-fertilizer strategy will be evolved and carried out in place of the present petro-fertilizer system. Municipal / village waste management will be total. This together with sewage management and use of agro-wastes will be sufficient to recycle the soil nutrient. Another important element will be total water management. Agriculture requires necessary water at necessary place and time. Drainage too will have to be taken care of. Check dams, sub-surface dams, afforestation and other water conservation measures, scientific use of water- all these together will give a secure foundation for agriculture. Animal husbandry, poultry and wherever possible pisciculture - all these will be integrated with agriculture. The production of meat, eggs, etc., will be just sufficient to provide the necessary protein and not for export. Conversion of foodgrain into meat is an inefficient operation. No food grain will be used as animal food.

Amongst cash crops two types are very important: fibre crops like cotton, silk, jute and hemp and structural timber. The construction material for the second half of 21st century and beyond will have to be timber. That is the only renewable structural material. Instead of planting teak, we can have plantations of jackfruit, coconut, etc., which besides providing timber will provide food – fruits and vegetables – and fodder for goats. Structural timber is also a good way to back extract carbon from the environment and immobilize them in the form of doors, windows, beams, rafters...

All these measures can be initiated even under capitalism and can be carried out with increased vigour in a post-capitalist society.

Secondary Sector

The categorization of economy into primary, secondary and tertiary is a conventional one. We can classify them differently: areas of humans – nature interaction (primary and secondary sectors) and of human-human interaction (tertiary sector). The difference between primary and secondary sector is essentially that of the nature of energy exchanges involved. The major source of energy in case of the primary sector is the sun. It is mediated through photo-synthesis. An important aspect of this energy is that it is thinly distributed but almost eternal. All living organisms other than plants consume plants or plant eating animals as food. They cannot consume solar energy. Herein lies the basic difference between agriculture on the one side and animal husbandry, poultry, fishing, etc., on the other side. Agriculture is the primary source of sustenance for all human beings. Hence it is called the primary. It is an irony of history, and a self-destructive one, that it has been relegated to the third place. The supremacy of secondary sector over primary sector is unscientific, unethical and ultimately disastrous.

The secondary sector, industries require more or less intensive energy input. Where as the solar radiation is of the order of a kilowatt per square meter, many industries would require hundreds of kilowatts of concentrated energy. And what do they produce? Their number is literally beyond count. But all of them are designed to satisfy a limited number of end uses: to get light and breeze, to clean body and objects, to travel, to quench thirst, to abate hunger, to cure diseases, to mollify the environment, to enjoy and so on.

There are limits to the number of end uses. We don't require thousands of soap varieties transported all over the globe to clean our bodies; we do not require, for example, colas made in the US to quench our thirst, we need not have to have private cars, that too a new model every year to take us to the work place and back, we don't have to design houses where light and wind cannot enter and then provide for tube-lights and air conditioners... the number of things which we don't require to satisfy our limited end uses, is literally countless. But capitalism cannot sustain itself without continuously increasing production and exchange. To make this possible they, at first, produce the belief that all these unnecessary things are really necessary. It has to produce 'needs' first and then only means to satisfy them. Here one hypothesis of capitalism can be made use of, to fight it : that consumer is the king. A wisdom to differentiate needs from greed will emancipate us from the tyranny of the market. We can say: we don't want. The limited things we do really want can be, mostly produced locally, with local raw materials, resources and skills. This right, and might, of ours can be exercised not only during the transition period but also in the fight against capitalism to overthrow it.

Thus the spectrum of industrial or secondary sector products under the post-capitalist – fourth world will be substantially different. It will have far less number of "spectral lines" – product items. They will be geared to some end use or another. Once the illusory needs are eliminated, with every step in the progress of productive forces, necessary labour time comes down, leisure increases. Humans become more and more emancipated.

The US is forced to maintain control over the resources of the world and over global market only because capitalism cannot exist otherwise. To maintain this control it has to spend huge amounts of resources on army and weapons. To get peoples support it has to constantly deceive them, through mass propaganda; it has to keep a quarter of the population relatively or absolutely poorer, it has to maintain a huge establishment of police, judges, advocates and jails. Once they decide to do away with capitalism and go over to a fourth world scenario, much of this unnecessary fat in the economy can be shed. They will be able to maintain and even better their present quality of life – higher life expectation, lesser morbidity, more involvement in cultural activities, lesser crimes, high sense of security, no unemployment, etc., with each individual working only for about 12-15 hours a week in place of today's 40-60 hours a week (including commutation time).

Not only in the composition of products but also in the process of production there will be significant changes. Scales will be brought down. As far as possible, local

production will be tailored to local consumption. Difference between town and country will be progressively reduced. Solar radiation will be the main source of energy. Gradually technologies will be developed not only to make small powerful, but also convert waste into wealth. Much of this can be attempted, at least as feasibility exercises, even under present conditions.

Tertiary Sector

A country is supposed to have reached highest level of development if its tertiary sector dwarfs the combined primary and secondary sectors. Today they glorify it by calling it IT sector which is a misnomer. The trillion dollar financial transaction that take place daily in the stock exchanges of the world are made possible by the internet revolution, but hardly it is an IT industry. These transactions do not contribute an iota towards physical production. The productive capital involved in the day-to-day production process is but a tiny fraction – less than 2% of this speculative, finance capital. Gambling never increases the quality of life of any society. The opposite is the case. Las Vegas, Atlanta city, Monte Carlo... are all considered as tertiary sector capitals. There is nothing more absurd than this.

One of the first reforms that will be carried out in the post-capitalist, fourth world is to close down all gambling institutions and stock exchanges. The nature of capital will be totally different. As the composition of products, the organization of production, the scales and technologies of production, all change so will be the case with capital which, in the ultimate analysis, is only an expression of relationships. Other instruments can be designed for it. The Fourth World countries will selectively delink themselves from the global finance market and also from global commodity production. With increased self-sufficiency and self-reliance they will be able to get out of the iron embrace of the WTO.

The immense resources wastefully spend on advertisements and media blitz, do not contribute anything to societal well-being. On the other hand, they are used to manufacture consent that the pseudo needs created by the capitalists are real needs. Even today, if we make a thumb rule that anything advertised on the TV or even print media is to be viewed with suspicion we won't go wrong. In 95 out of 100 cases, what is said in advertisements is either untrue or only partially true. Good and useful commodities, especially when they are locally made do not need any advertisement. A gold pot doesn't require a beauty spot. One can see, further that bulk of what we understand as trade, administration, law and order maintainance, etc., are unnecessary, if we shift to local economy and local governance. These will not result in retrenchment or unemployment. It will reduce the working hours and increase leisure for every one, without reducing end use satisfaction.

Localism

This may sound as an ugly word, opposite to internationalism. But it is not. It is the opposite of 'globalization,' which really means globalization of neo-liberal imperialism. Contrary to what we are made to believe that we are global citizens, actually

most of us are pawns under global imperialism. One can become a citizen only when one is free. Today we are not. As citizens of local communities, we are truly becoming international citizens. We share culture, we share knowledge. We don't keep Intellectual 'Property' Rights. For us it is an extremely vulgar concept – this intellectual property. We are increasingly less dependent on long distance transport of humans and materials, as a necessity. People will still travel, not for work but for pleasure. Obviously, it does not, also, mean a total rejection of trans-national division of labour. In limited case like, for example, chips and even automobiles for smaller nations, will be collectively produced by a number of nations together, through mutual agreements worked out earlier.

Localism is not contrary to nationalism or internationalism. They all complement each other. The word 'national' would mean something different in the Fourth World. Instead of being a politico-economic category it will become a cultural category. And so it becomes necessary to save and develop the different nationalities. When politico-economic nations do not trust each other, when they find it necessary to have control over the market and natural resources, weapons of mass destruction and army become necessary. Once each nation becomes locally self-sufficient, foreign markets and resources will become less and less necessary. A dynamic society has before it only two options : either increasing competition, mutual conflicts, wars and ultimate destruction or increasing cooperation, peace and emancipation. No sane society will choose the first alternative. Thus, localism, here, is not against internationalism, but a necessary condition to realize it.

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

'Society' has played a decisive role in the very evolution of the human species. Humans were for weaker and less equipped than many contemporary animals. Still the species survived and established hegemony over all of them. It was conscious collectivity, not spontaneous reflectivity, that helped them to do so. Like articulate speech, ability to think abstractly, etc. the will to become member of a community too is a genetic nature of humans. Those variants of the species which showed less willingness for collectivity must have got extinct in the process of evolution. The many and varied tribes, many of them only a handful, face the threat of extinction, perhaps due to their innate inability to extend their collectivity to tribes/ groups outside. Anthropologists give us quite a lot of information about ancient societies. The social customs, thoughts, habits formed in different collectives and in different times are quite varied like – religion, rituals, administration, economic relations, etc. *Codes of Hammurabi* and *Arthashastra* of Kautilya are two very important works still extant, which give us some idea about ancient societies. Nation States of contemporary period have a history of only a few centuries.

When we go through the history of the past 3,000 years we see a variety of political formations like communes, oligarchy, tyranny, dictatorship, democracy (limited or universal) etc. Today, the most widely accepted political structure is that of democracy. Even the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' that existed in erstwhile socialist

countries was supposed to be a much broader-based democracy than the much-acclaimed bourgeois democracy. That they failed to transform it into a broad-based democracy was, perhaps, one of the causes of its failure. Even the concept of broad-based democracy is only a recent one. The popularity of democracy based on universal suffrage is hardly a century old. Women, those who don't own any property, slaves - there were many who were denied the right to vote. Even today, people have right only to vote, but not to recall. To be elected, say as president of the US, one has to be a multi-billionaire. To become an MLA or MP in India, one has to spend millions and millions of rupees. If we call democracy a 'Social Contract,' it is a highly unequal one. The rights of the majority, of the ordinary people, are very limited. Democracy is still rule *over* the people. It has not yet become rule *by* the people. One may be tempted to ask: over whom do the people rule, exert authority. One can say: over the remnants of the erstwhile privileged class who lose their privileges. This was the argument to call it "dictatorship of the proletariat." Ultimately, people have to rule themselves, should have control over own lives, control over inner and outer selves. They will have to acquire wisdom to differentiate needs from greed. Every moment a citizen should be a partner in sustaining the economic, political and ethical life of the community.

With increasing distance, size and complexity, universal participation becomes more and more difficult. Everything is changing at accelerating pace. Factory, field, school, office – everywhere we can see increasing levels of complexity. There are objective complexities and self-made complexities. Everybody has to upgrade their skills continuously. Education, continuing education, is the only panacea.

Increasing size is a human made problem. It is possible, and may through some tricks in calculation even become economical to concentrate all the steel production in a few plants. In each plant there could be a hundred thousand workers. None of them can have any control over production. Collective decision-making too becomes impossible in such a crowd. If humans are to have control over their own destiny, they should be able to take decisions. This is possible only if enterprises, either economic or political, are on 'human scale', as Gandhiji had put it. In a discussion in Delhi on a subject which may affect the lives of the entire people of Kerala, the 30 million Keralites cannot go to Delhi and participate in it. The solutions will be: no single decision shall be able to affect such large numbers, decisions are to be taken locally. A parliament of 1000 million people is not feasible. The Senate and the Congress have some nominal powers over the President, but the citizens of the US have none. Today, decisions taken in Washington or Delhi do affect the daily life of an ordinary citizen living in a far-off village. This we have experienced – in the American aggression on Iraq, earlier in Afghanistan and still earlier in Kuwait. Each one of them has affected the daily life of average citizens. The extent and depth of the impact of such decisions have been increasing year by year. A hundred years ago our villages had some degree of sovereignty. Today, they have none. Globalization has destroyed the last remnants of sovereignty, of bulk of the citizens.

When we think of a new structure for societal organization all these have to be born in mind. From a situation, where the rights of individual citizens and small groups to decide what they want and how to shape their future, are being continuously eroded,

we have to move to another one where these rights get continuously reinforced. Then only democracy will be real. Only then will the citizens have control over their own lives. The following conditions are to be satisfied for this:

- (1) It must be possible to take crucial decisions at the local level. It should be possible for every citizen to participate in it. Such face- to- face democracy is feasible only in small groups.
- (2) Political and social decisions do depend upon the economic organization. In a society with centralized economic activities, it is not possible to take decentralized and local political decisions. This has to be borne in mind. Politics follows and not leads economics. (The theory of China to have capitalism in economy and socialism in politics is not tenable.)
- (3) Unless small-scale enterprises become economically superior, decentralised economy is not feasible. So, the outline of a new social structure will have to be drawn after the outline of the economic structure. This new economic structure has to germinate within the existing one. It cannot be dictated politically. The argument that we have to first capture State power, then we can think of economy is not scientific.
- (4) So, as precursor to a new social system, we have to engage in S&T research and development activities to make small powerful. The People's Science Movement consider this as their primary responsibility.
- (5) The world of the future should be a network of hundreds of thousands local communities which are increasingly becoming self-sufficient. Nation-States will lose the importance they have now. Protecting the frontiers will make no sense then.
- (6) This network will have a number of levels or sub-systems – something akin to the present spatial configuration of Panchayat, Block, District, State, Country, etc. The present boundaries are not sacrosanct and can change. It will be based more on ecological and cultural considerations.
- (7) The different sub-systems will be inter-connected not hierarchically, but horizontally. The division of responsibilities among them may vary from country to country and from time to time.
- (8) If we are to have the courage to think on these lines, the belief that 'another world is possible and necessary' should become deeper and more wider. Not only that. We should be aware that we ourselves have to create this new world and those amongst us who are benefiting unduly from the present world won't want a change and would oppose it.
- (9) We should realise that human progress is not mere increase in consumption. Our aim should be to improve the quality of life, both physical and spiritual. This does not require far away resources or global markets.
- (10) There are many levels of human satisfaction. They have physical needs like food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, etc. Also security for the future of self and children. Liberation from anxiety about future is a physical need. But there are non-material needs too. Sense of belonging to a collective, being loved and respected, self- respect, self-actualization... these are non-material needs. The aim should be to satisfy both these needs.

Based on the above premises, we are putting forward one model for restructuring political institutions. Some of these suggestions can be carried out by the citizens directly if they wish to do so. Some of them may require constitutional amendment or at least State- level legislations.

One thing is crystal clear: direct democracy is possible only in small numbers. The *grama sabha* or village assembly offers a location for this. They may not have enough statutory powers now. But if they decide so, they can become powerful. But in many States, the *grama sabhas* are too large for face-to- face discussion. There are States where all the voters of a panchayat constitute the *grama sabhas*. In places like Kerala, even the ward has 400-500 households and 1000-1500 voters. In such cases, even village assemblies become too unwieldy. So, we suggest the formation of informal or formal groups consisting of 20-30 proximate households into a neighbourhood group – NHG. This is something similar to the NHGs of Porto Alegre, Brazil, formed for Participatory Budgeting (PB). Here too, we can have, besides geographical proximity, similar interests or identities as the basis of grouping – like dalits, women or any other identity feature. The principle is same: to have a basic formation of 60-80 citizens (voters), where every aspect of social life will be discussed face- to- face and threadbare. They will discuss not only issues that affect them directly and immediately, but also larger issues relating to the city, to the state and even to the nation. Beyond a size of 60-80, direct democracy will become unwieldy. Formations of larger number of citizens can be only representative. Under Indian conditions we propose the following general structure for societal management. It is desirable to limit the size of a State to a population of 2-3 crores. Indians can have 50 states. In all formations larger than NHG, i.e., in all representative formations, representation will be always done by a pair of one woman and one man.

Name	Number of members/ Pairs	Each pair representing a population of
Neighbourhood	60-80	Self
Village/ward	5-8	300-400
Panchayat	10-20	1000-1500
Block / Mandal	20-30	4000-6000
Zilla/District	30-40	40,000-50,000
State Asembly	50-80	2 – 3 lakhs
National Parliament	500-600	1.0 – 2.0 million

Any elected person can be recalled and substituted by another by those who had elected her or him. Right to recall is absolute.

NHG : Consists of all citizens above 18 years in a neighbourhood/ identity group of 20-30 families. Each family / each citizen can decide to which NHG he/ she wants to belong to, in case of proximity options. All decisions within the neighbourhood will be as far as possible through consensus and by majority, when consensus become impossible. There will not be any secret voting. Everything will be open. That is the only way to

maintain and strengthen mutual faith. Each NHG will elect one woman and one man to represent it in all representative institutions.

Each neighbourhood can constitute sub-committees to look after issues like drinking water, drainage, electricity, education of children, health care, irrigation water, employment, caring elders and invalids, women, etc. In the process we can make each and every citizen to be the member of one committee or another. This is her/ his first school for democratic participation. Here the enrolment has to be universal. In democracy nobody has the option to stay out of responsibility.

Village/Ward Assembly: This is a representative unit. All neighbourhood representatives from within the village or ward will form the Village Assembly. These will elect not from among themselves but from citizens residing in that village/ ward. a pair to represent them in the panchayat assembly. The same NHG representatives can recall those whom they have elected. The constituency being very small- less 8 to 10 election and recall can be done at zero cost. Each village assembly can have 5 to 8 pairs of members and form representative sub-committees consisting of conveners (in pairs again) of various NHG level sub-committees for water, education, health, etc.

This process can be carried forward up to the parliament. In each case, the electors – voters – will be representatives elected from a smaller group and not from among themselves. The electoral constituency will not be in any case larger than 100-120. For example, a district can become co-terminus with a Parliament Constituency and the District Council Members shall elect the M.P. Similarly, Block Panchayat Members can elect the MLA's – again in pairs, not from among themselves. In case their choice does not reflect people's choice, in case they refuse to go by people's wishes, they can be removed by those who elected them, they in turn by those who elected them. Though protracted – but in a democracy every citizen has to take part in decision making- this provides for zero -cost election and recall and makes the sovereignty of the citizen real.

At all levels, election being held only in pairs, women will have equal representation – not a share reserved at the mercy of men!

The various bodies, from NHG to Parliament can be a continuous one without expensive periodic elections. The renewal process is continuous. Citizens can recall whom they don't like, retain those whom they like, for as many years as they wish.

This may not be the most ideal situation. One can think of different systems too. But it is important that we discuss it both extensively and intensively.

There is one last thing to be mentioned here. The concept of devolving powers from the centre to the LSGs has to be reversed. The LSGs will decide what they want the State and Central governments should do. All residual powers are with the LSGs. Even those vested with State and national leadership can be resumed by the LSG as and when they become capable and confident of handling them.

A PROGRAMME FOR ACTION

A new world is not the result of one single creative act – call it revolution, call it change. It is an evolutionary product, a product of hundreds of thousands of small and big, local and wide spread struggles, a product of meso and macro creations, a product of making and breaking of mutual faiths and alliances. In an overall sense, yes it is a qualitative change in the economic system, political system and in ethics and culture. This change cannot be brought about by 'annihilating a few class enemies'. The class enemy is not a person or a few persons alone. It is also present in ourselves in the form of alien class consciousness and desires. In what form the final collapse of neo-liberalism will take place in any country, it is difficult to foresee now. All that can be said now is that an extended period of incremental changes, or small, small revolutionary struggles will have to precede any major qualitative change in the socio-economic system. The subject matter of this small final chapter is an exploration into the form and extent of these small-small transitional struggles. Broadly, we can classify them into two categories: direct struggles and indirect struggles.

Direct Struggle

This could be direct armed resistance as it took place in China, Vietnam, Cuba, etc., and is taking place in Colombia and elsewhere. But, it could also be an open economic war. As far as India is concerned, the enemies are the Indian ruling classes, together with the imperialist countries, led by the US. A direct military confrontation with them at this junction is out of question. Even the capture of the Indian State through an armed struggle cannot be thought of, not only because it is unrealistic but also because the resulting India may not be much better than the present one.

The great mantra of globalization is "Free Market." That is the great battle-ground. The enemy is strongly entrenched there. We have to face it there itself. They have forced all countries in the world to open their markets and obtained the right to sell anything, anywhere, anytime at any price. Normally, national governments can control them through duties or taxes, quantitative restrictions etc. Contemporary national governments, including the Indian government, are not interested in imposing such restrictions. But we, the people, can impose restrictions. The imperialists have compelled the national governments to yield them the right to sell. But no national government or any body else can compel us to buy. Our right not to buy their goods remains sovereign, provided we can obtain other goods which satisfy our wants. The moment we feel or decide that we cannot live without colas, mineral waters, packed foods, durable consumption goods, etc., marketed by them, we lose this sovereignty. If we can assure our own food to abate our hunger, good potable water, soft drinks like coconut water, butter milk, sherbot, etc., to quench our thirst, enough cloth to cover us, a decent space to live in – and all these we can – we keep our sovereignty. We use this as our weapon to fight them. We decide that the money in our pocket will not go into their hands. There might be instances when we might be forced to do so, for example life- saving drugs, component parts of many equipments daily used by us, instruments for research, certain types of machinery for

manufacture... these we accept. But we can reject a much larger number of items – all toiletries, all soft drinks, coffee and tea, packaged foods, including drinks, cloths, bulk of the medicines, construction materials... This list is quite long. The entire class of consumer products and substantial chunk of productive equipment, currently imported can be totally boycotted. A back of the envelop type of calculation shows that the amounts involved are enormous. The consumption of transnational consumer products by an average middle class/rich family could be anywhere between Rs 200 to Rs 1000 per month. Assuming a figure of Rs 400 and assuming 100 million families (out of 200 million) the monthly loss of turnover for them could be Rs 4000 crore. This is not a small amount. Assuming 60% of this as integrated labour component, this means 10 million 'jobs' providing Rs 2400 per month.

It is about 15 years since India capitulated to the world's imperialist powers. The people have experienced its impact. Our products are devalued. Lockouts, layoffs, loss of employment, insecurity, bankruptcy, suicides.... these are our daily experience. And we are more than 80% of the society. We are against this neo- liberal globalization.

The various groups which participated in the WSF in Mumbai opposing globalization belonged to the poor and middle classes. They represented organizations and movements, of women, organized and unorganized workers, service personnel, peasants, agriculture labour, youth, women, etc., whose total organizational membership may exceed 100 million – about 20 million families. If they decide to boycott products of transnational like Hindustan Liver, Nestle, Cadbury, etc., and go for equally good Indian products, the impact will be beyond description. This is direct engagement with the enemy on its own battleground, the market. We find no reason to believe that this will go against the interest of the poor, will cool down revolutionary vigour or anything of that sort. Only armchair revolutionaries, who don't want any revolution in the near future, can oppose it.

The impact of such a massive boycott can be really painful to the enemy. It may be painful also to a minority which are enjoying five- star global comforts today. They will oppose us. That is understandable. It is instructing to note that boycott of colas as a symbol of boycott against neo-liberal globalization, is becoming increasingly popular in Europe too.

There are hundreds and hundreds of products that could be boycotted. The problems to be faced are:

- a) Paucity of good quality alternatives.
- b) Weakness of marketing mechanism for alternative products.
- c) Entrenched consumerism brought about by the media.

How do we overcome these problems?

We have to and we can improve the quality of local products considerably. Those scientists and technologists working in the society (government)- supported R and D institutions in the country, who have some commitment towards the people, can help in

this. Many can make this as their official work. Others can help voluntarily. Continuous quality upgradation of local consumer products is one important element in this battle against globalization.

The second element is marketing. For this, two strategies can be envisaged. One is to bring the producer and the consumer as close as possible. What may be generally called localization of production. This localization would depend on many factors: technology, presently feasible scales of production, consumption intensity, raw material availability etc. etc. Certain thumb rules can be used. As far as food items are concerned, 'local' could mean very small communities. As far as computer assembly is concerned, the area could be as large as a district or State. As far as computer components are concerned it could be the entire nation or even global. As demand intensity increases and small-scale technology improves, the local becomes smaller and smaller in area. The haulage –wastage-index comes down and social control becomes stronger.

The strength of the trans-nationals, mainly, is their marketing ability. The producer should establish contact with the consumer. This is the essence of marketing. They do this through media, through wholesale/retail shops, commissions etc. By far, the strongest element in all these is the communication with the consumer, prompting him to take a decision to buy. We too shall do this. Our mode of communication is not the media but face-to-face communication. Also intensive citizen education. A proposal that is being worked out in Kerala has the following components:

- ?? In selected panchayats, form all-women marketing federations. The members of this federation shall all work, basically in door- to- door distribution. For every 200 households, there will be one member in this federation.
- ?? These members will be formally introduced to the relevant families by respected citizens of the panchayat. They will wear approved uniforms, badges and caps while they visit households.
- ?? An assurance committee of 'elders' will formed in each of these panchayats. They will take the responsibility of replacing defective goods and other losses caused to consumers.
- ?? The 'sales person' dedicated to a set of households will collect their orders, for monthly or weekly delivery and deliver the goods on the appointed day and time.
- ?? The customer can pay an advance or pay on delivery if they wish so. Those who pay in advance will be paid interest.
- ?? To begin with, the Marketing Federation will estimate locally available products, products that could be later manufactured locally, products from the same block or district, products from other parts of the State or country. Bulk

purchase some of them, clean them and repack them. To begin with, they may have 30 to 40 items for sale – some choice in toiletries, tea, etc.

- ?? Part of the monthly profit will be set apart for possible guarantee payments, part for benefits like ESI, provident fund, leave salary, maternity leave, etc. The balance will be paid in cash as monthly salary not as daily wage.
- ?? The entire programme in the pilot panchayats will be serviced by a professional marketing organization specially set up for this, with experienced professionals. Initially, the expenses of this organization will be met from some project support. Later, the panchayat which it is serving should be able to sustain it.
- ?? Massive local campaigns exhorting the people to support this programme for self-reliance and against globalization, will be carried out using various means of communication.

Through such activities, every village will become a battle-front. The multinationals can hardly face us except through buying off some of us.

The second form of direct struggle against neo-liberalism is what is called people-to-people trade, fair trade, etc. This is, in fact, an extension of internal trade to international trade. Essentially it means keeping the trans-nationals and liberalizers out of the production and trade lines. Many groups are already involved in this. It can be strengthened.

Thirdly, a campaign to impose penal taxes on the high-end consumers who earn a disproportionately large income and so are inclined to spend it in conspicuous consumption. A 50 per cent surcharge on all bill items of five-star hotels, a steep hike in the sales tax on private cars, a high surcharge on other high-price single items, a surcharge on star type of schools and hospitals, etc., can be thought of. In the long run the income disparity between the poor and the rich should be brought down. Continuous campaigns for this can be held.

Ultimately the national governments have to be responsible and responsive. People should have control over them. First, the people should become capable of intervening and controlling the grama sabha and the panchayat. At the national level, to assert the sovereignty of the people, political struggles of a new type will have to emerge. There will have to be a new class realignment, the genuine stakeholders - the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie have to re-form their political platform. Instead of fighting each other, rallying under caste, religion, loyalty to leadership, etc., they should form a united platform or party of their own. Politics should reflect class interests more genuinely.

Besides direct political struggles, different social groups like, say teachers, researchers, government servants, doctors etc. can organize their own indirect struggles. Some examples are given below.

Indirect Battle

Administration: Those who are employed in State institutions from panchayat to national government can use their own office files as a weapon to fight the class enemies. Each issue, each file, will have a class content in it. According to current administrative practice, the 'notings' start from LDC/UDC (Lower Division/Upper Division Clerk) and then travel hierarchically upwards. What the LDC/UDC writes on the file has great power. There are files which conceals great frauds on the people, big vested interests follow them, up to the secretary and to the minister. The illegal/anti- people elements in the transaction can be noted down by the LDC/UDC on the file. It will make matters more difficult for the enemies of the people. Similarly, they can expedite the decisions in favour of the deserving ordinary citizens. A government servant can be citizen- friendly, opposed to corrupt contractors and even corrupt politicians. This is the meaning of a united front of all the exploited.

Teachers: Today's teachers groom tomorrow's citizens, tomorrows world. The leaders of the freedom struggle were mostly all groomed by their teachers. All the ills of the present society, all the threats faced by human species, can be incorporated into the informal curriculum. Secular, democratic and egalitarian values can be best imparted by teachers. They can transact lessons critically in the classroom,. so that even the worst communal text books can be turned against their authors. They can educate the children about anti-people policies of the government, who loses and who benefits from a particular developmental project, how skewed cost benefit analyzes can become. There is no dearth of opportunities to them. The political struggle of teachers has to be expressed in their classroom transactions. Trade union struggles are economic struggles. Teachers of institutions owned by the government or aided by the government can attract back all the children from commercial, so- called recognized or self- financing, schools.

Doctors: They can make primary health centres effective and efficient, shall refrain from playing games with representatives of multinational companies, shall stop prescribing unnecessary drugs, can become proactive in peoples' health care.

Research workers in R and D establishments can consciously occupy themselves in the problems of benefit to poor masses and not to the rich minority. They can argue and fight with their superiors if they are not allowed. Solar energy, wealth from waste, total recyclability.... There is no dearth to exciting problems. Engaging herself or himself in such topics of research is their form of political struggle.

The point to be emphasized here is that it is necessary to improvise more and more new forms and weapons of struggle. The old forms have been mastered by our enemies long ago and are becoming increasingly ineffective.

AFTERWORD

A Tsunami of Criticisms

During the period from mid- 2003 to 2004-end , the term 'Fourth World' attracted much more media coverage than any other single issue. The total number of references will run into a couple of thousand. There are plain abuses and seemingly academic critiques from the so-called militant Left, media references to them, media's own conjectures and occasional rejoinders. The abuses generally take the following tone: The author of the Fourth World is a revisionist, is an imperialist agent, has received crores of rupees from the CIA and betrayed the revolution, has penetrated the CPI(M) to subvert it (he was not even a branch secretary, but only an ordinary member) has conspired with leaders like Dr. Thomas Isaac to destabilize the Party and so on. The people of Kerala know the author for the past three-four decades ; such abuses will not cut ice with them. However, criticisms of friends like Comrade P.Govinda Pillai, Dr. Thomas Isaac, etc. upset the public. Their chief criticism is that Fourth World is not a Marxian concept, that it is utopian and hence to be rejected, etc. Even they have not offered any substantive criticism of the economics, politics and culture of the future society as indicated in the book. Given below are the main points raised by them and the author's rejoinder.

1. There is no Marxian philosophy in the Fourth World concept. The analysis is un-Marxian.

Marxism is not something which some 'high priests' declare it to be. Marx has been subjected to interpretation and enrichment. There have been 'official' interpretations like that of Lenin, Stalin, Mao, etc. There have been heretic interpretations like that of Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, Gramsci, etc. Mine may be counted as one more heretic interpretation. Marxism is a science and not a religion as the high priests make it to be. I maintain that the relationship between means and ends, as well as that between productive forces and productive relationships are dialectical. Dictatorship, even if it is of the proletariat, cannot lead to democracy. There is no democracy without participation. Very little participation is possible in giant enterprises, whether in economics or in politics.

There is the following oft- quoted sentence in Marx's preface to 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy': "*It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness.*" The social existence is defined by the mode of production consisting of both forces of production and relationships in production. There is a tendency to equate social existence to production relations and to disregard the role of productive forces. Productive forces are supposed to be autonomous, as if they grow almost on their own, either facilitated or obstructed by production relations. Their growth is considered linear and quantitative. The transformation from quantitative to qualitative is supposed to be confined to production relations. The official interpreters of Marx do not recognise any qualitative change in productive forces.

The linear growth of productive forces leads to larger and larger enterprises with less and less control by the workers, leading ultimately to the formation of a new class – the managerial class who soon graduates into the “owning class”, as it happened in the erstwhile USSR and other socialist countries. Increasing levels of control by the workers demand ‘production by the masses instead of mass production’ or, in the words of Marx, “network of associated producers,” instead of giant State-owned enterprises. This demands small-scale, yet efficient, production for consumption - strengthening of local economies. It demands technologies which make small powerful, not merely beautiful. It demands cent per cent recycling of resources and also transition to Sun as the only source of energy in the long run. These demand conscious intervention in the development of productive forces, both in its contents and in its direction. To argue that the growth of productive forces is totally controlled by the present capitalistic relations of production is to deny its revolutionary potential. This is what the critics are doing. This is not a Marxian approach. Further, the critics make consciousness a mechanical by-product of social existence and equates it to their own consciousness. They refuse to recognise that the social existence of humans have engendered not one official consciousness but several heretic consciousnesses –environmental, gender, marginalised, etc. They are transforming Marxism into ‘fatalism’ by denying the influence of ‘being’ on existence.

2.The Fourth World Theory rejects class struggles, promotes class collaboration.

Nothing can be farther from truth than this statement. Here my detractors show least respect to facts. True, I have questioned their narrow concepts of class and class struggle. For them, the proletariat, in the phrase ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’, means only those organised workers in modern industries rallied under the CITU and the CPI(M). Peasants, agricultural workers, workers in unorganised traditional industries, teachers, clerks, and those rallying under other parties – none of them belong to the working class. Bringing all of them together is branded as “class collaboration.” The relevant sentence in the book is this: “Instead of fighting each other rallying under caste, religion, loyalty to leadership, etc., based on parties and movements, they should form a united platform or party of their own. Politics should reflect class interests more genuinely.”

The concept of class struggle requires enrichment. Presently it is limited to protest rallies, *bandhs*, *hartals* and strikes. In a class conflict, the class enemy has to suffer and not the ally. Today, often the allies or the initiators of the fight themselves are getting hurt and not the enemy. Additional forms of struggle are indicated, such as boycott, strengthening local economy, using class rooms, offices, etc., as arenas of class struggle. All these are dismissed as revisionism, utopianism, etc. For them, the job security of the workers in Cola factories and other factories owned by transnationals and Indian big capital is more important and so boycotting their products is an anti-working class activity! I do not agree with this.

3.According to the CPI(M),China is a socialist country. I question this Party position.

I plead guilty. I do not consider China to be a socialist country. Neither do they claim it to be. Further, I do not believe that China is moving towards socialism. The opposite is the truth. I do not question their subjective intentions. But I do not accept that the ‘concept capitalism in economy and socialism in politics’ is Marxism. Objectively, they are driving towards capitalism. I agree with the analysis of Paul Burkett and Martin Hard Landsberg (‘China and Socialism’ – Analytical Monthly Review July-August 2004) that market socialism is an unstable formation whose internal logic tends to marginalize socialism in favour of the market and full restoration of capitalism, that by measuring progress in terms of mainstream criteria of success, leftists tend to discount the importance of various social ramifications of Chinese policy. The growing unemployment, inequality and insecurity, the cutbacks in communal health care and education, the worsening oppression of women, the marginalization of agriculture, and the multiplication of environmental crises, all of these have come to be treated as inessential side effects rather than essential preconditions and inevitable outcome of China’s capitalist development. I plead guilty of agreeing with this analysis and of differing from the Party’s understanding.

4. I promote de-politicisation of the society.

Equally far from truth. Today politics is reserved for politicians - leaders of political parties. Ordinary citizens and even the rank and file of the Party are supposed to vote, to contribute to fund collection, to swell the rallies in numbers and to ask no questions. I do not agree with this subconscious understanding. I consider the grama sabha (village gathering) as the battle ground for the people, I consider neighbourhood groups as ideal schools for the political education of the citizens. Politics is too important to be left alone with career politicians.

5. There is no such thing as Fourth World in the CPI(M) Programme. Its economy and politics are against Party programme. It is not people’s democracy. The economic agenda of people’s democracy is “rapid economic growth.” Fourth world envisages something totally different.

True, I agree that, there is no reference to Fourth World in the Programme. It is only quite natural. It is, also different from People’s Democracy – if the latter is defined as ‘rapid economic growth’ as its predominant major objective. But it is not against the spirit of the Programme which envisages an intermediary stage between capitalism and socialism. Fourth World is suggested as the generic name for such an intermediary post-capitalistic, pre-socialist society.

The Fourth world gives more importance to equity and sustainability than to ‘rapid growth.’ But, the Party programme too speaks about equity and sustainability.

When this comes into conflict with 'rapid growth,' what position will be taken? Dr Thomas Isaac asserts that 'rapid growth' is the goal. I differ. Reducing inequity is the goal even if it leads to reduction in the growth rate.

6.The concept of 'welfare value' is alien to Marxism. It has only use value and exchange value.

True, there is no such term as 'welfare value' in Marxist or even in capitalist literature. But one can derive such a concept from his writings. I plead, again, guilty of introducing such a term. There is, however, nothing anti-Marxian and anti-people in it. Of the millions of separate and distinct consumer products and services, there are only a few which add to the welfare of human beings. A much larger number like war equipment, narcotics, etc., are positively harmful. By far, the majority belong to the category which are wasteful, which add nothing to welfare, but for the production of which humans spend a lot of time thereby reducing leisure and increasing alienated work. The people of the US can achieve even a higher quality of life if they reduce the production of such goods. They can reduce their working time to less than half of the present. This concept needs a more rigorous development, but it deserves such an effort.

7.The concept of participation is a subjective one.

If the type of neighbourhood democracy as indicated in the book (somewhat similar to what is adopted in Cuba) is highly objectionable because it will pass on the initiative from a few self-appointed Party leaders to the people at large, there is every reason to fear objective participation.

Appendix I: QUALITY OF LIFE

Basic Statements:

- ?? Every living being has to resist death and to procreate.
- ?? Humans go beyond this. They want to be consciously happy.
- ?? So they consciously strive to improve the quality of life.
- ?? The concept of improvement involves measures. Even 'quality' of life have to have a measure.
- ?? Quality of life of human beings can be expressed in two terms Physical (or material). Quality of life-PQL and Spiritual (or non material) Quality of Life-SQL.

Statements about quality of life are valid only for aggregate collectives and not for individuals. Today Human Development Indies are quoted country wise. There are countries which have only less than one million population and countries like India and China having more than 1000 million population. To apply such statistical parameters to very small groups is meaning less. A population of 20000-30000 could be the minimum size. Up to groups of about a million it makes sense. For very large groups, it glosses over regional and cross-sectional imbalances. The average quality of life for India does not have meaning. Further, if we want to compare the quality of life of the poorest 20% of Kerala population with the poorest 20% of Bihar, or of Gujarat, we have to estimate them separately.

With these understandings we develop the quality of life parameters in the following way. Physical Quality of Life – PQL – is broken down into three constituent elements:

- 1) Longevity.
- 2) Emancipation.
- 3) Sustainability.

Spiritual Quality of Life (SQL) too is broken down into three elements:

- 1) Social.
- 2) Cultural and
- 3) Participatory.

Longevity

The two parameters are: average life expectation at birth, within the group and average expected total period of morbidity in the life time. We define a quantity called:

Effective life expectation = Biological life expectation minus life-time integrated morbidity period.

For all developmental planning what is important are temporal values: how it has improved over a period of time, what has been the impact of specific measures taken. On

the other hand same time spatial figures can help us to compare the efficiency of use of natural resources by various people.

The life expectancy of most of the nations has increased over the 12 year period, from 1990 to 2002, but in some African countries it has remained stagnant or even come down. In many countries the increase is only marginal.

One can, if necessary, convert longevity from years into a numerical index, combine it with different other indexes and general composite indices. However it will not help us to plan future activities and hence is not attempted.

Emancipation

Humans are required – forced – to earn a lively hood. Nobody likes to be forced. They should enjoy working. Work should not be alienating. Eight hours work, eight hours rest, eight hours sleep- this was the slogan of the workers, a century and half ago. They have not changed it. Actually the 'hours' of work should include the hours of travel to and from the work place, overtime hours, recess-hours-all. The average working day for most of the urbanites especially in metropolitan towns is 10 to 11 hours. They do not get, virtually any time to enjoy culture. Even the rest time is tense. Morning time busy with preparation for departure to work place. In the evening they may get, at most about a couple of hours for truly human occupations. Assuming that 8 hours are to be set apart for sleep and rest and assuming that all unavoidable work, i.e., from morning 6 a.m. to 6 or 7 p.m., as alienated time, one can calculate the genuinely free time at the disposal of the individual which he/she can spend as he/she wish. This calculated as a fraction of wakeful hours – here 16 hours-can be termed as 'emancipation index.' This can be fine-tuned by giving greater than unity weightages for heavy and unpleasant work. The weightages can be collectively agreed upon. For example:

Highly creative and enjoyable work	=	0.80
Light office work	=	1.00
Heavy manual work	=	1.20

Today, an average Bombay factory worker hardly gets two hours for himself. An average New Yorker gets 3 to 4 hours. One can calculate the average for an entire population. Here too, one can make country wise – spatial – comparison or temporal comparisons. Two tendencies can be noted i) as urbanization and modernization advances, the availability of free time or own time tends to stabilize. ii) As years advance, the availability of 'own time' evens where tends to fall down.

Advancement of productive forces, instead of emancipating us from forced labour is in fact increasing the level of alienation, binding us more and more.

Sustainability

We have quoted earlier from Marx that we are only temporary possessors of this earth and that we have to pass it on to future generations in an improved condition. If we

deplete the minerals and ores, if we consume all fuels, if we pollute the environment and create irreversible climatic changes- then we are breaking our mandate. We will pass on to succeeding generations an increasingly impoverished earth. The only way of escape is to achieve cent per cent recycleability and, back absorb the polluting gases from the environment. Further, for energy source we have to shift over to the only inexhaustible source- the sun. All these are known. The degree of sustainability achieved by a society can be measured in terms of the degree of success in this. One way to calculate level of material recycling can be as follows.

$X_1, X_2, X_3 \dots \dots \dots$ different natural material used
 $W_1, W_2, W_3 \dots \dots \dots$ quantities of this
 $W_1^1, W_2^1, W_3^1 \dots \dots \dots$ quantities recycled
 $P_1, P_2, P_3 \dots \dots \dots$ international price of each of this material

$$\text{Recycling Index} = \frac{W_1^1, P_1 + W_2^1, P_2 + W_3^1, P_3 \dots \dots \dots}{W_1, P_1 + W_2, P_2 + W_3, P_3 \dots \dots \dots}$$

The table below gives the levels of recycling of certain materials in the US. Such figures, if available for all materials and all countries comparison can be made. For each country, as w^1/w increases recycling index also increases. There is no recycling possible for fossil fuels. The energy sustainability index can be, perhaps, defined in the following way. Let the average total per capita energy consumption in a country in be E. This is obtained from various sources.

- Sun for drying, etc.
- Firewood.
- Solar PV, solar heating.
- Wind.
- Hydro- electricity.
- Waves.
- Tide .
- Geothermal.
- Fossil fuels.
- Nuclear.

Here, all except fossil and nuclear energy are renewable. (In the case of fire wood, it should be limited to annual regeneration rate). Then a renewability index can be defined as: Renewable Energy/Total Energy.

The recycling index and renewability index can be combined to form a sustainability index. The best way is to multiply the two, because today increase in recycling is done at the cost of decrease in renewability index. So,

Sustainability Index: Recycling Index X Renewability Index.

These figures are not currently available for any country, but if decided, one can generate them.

Social Quality

There are certain things which every society considers to be desirable and certain others undesirable. Through the concept of social quality we are trying to indicate some way to quantify them. Every society wants maximum reduction in murders, suicides, in theft and robbery, in violence against women, in abuse of children, in child labour, in bribe and nepotism, in work evasion, in sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS, in consumption of narcotics and intoxicants, in caste-religion-politics based enmities and violence, in the necessity of increased investment on internal and external security, etc.

A society in which all these are coming down continuously is increasing its social quality of life. Reduction in one does not, fortunately, demand increase in another. One can measure the reduction in each. Combining them into a composite index does not offer any better guide to action. The steps to be taken to reduce most of them may be common. For example, the US is the richest and the most advanced nation in the world. However, in all the above parameters, it is very backward. It has got maximum number of persons in jails per 1000 population, its per capita expenditure on police, jails, weapons and defense is the highest in the world, it has got one of the highest crime rates amongst all countries. It lives in constant fear of terrorism and attack, it feels that the entire world is against it. Compare this with the situation in the USSR 40-50 years ago. The ordinary people had no anxiety about self, about children, present or future. Every body had employment, food, cloth and a place to live in. Crime rates were minimum. True jails, were full but not from crimes against ordinary people. They were mostly political prisoners – an undesirable situation. The rulers lived in constant fear. And this led to its downfall. One can surmise that democracy with full-fledged social security can bring down most of the social evils.

Culture

Humans distinguish themselves from animals in that it has got articulate speech, languages, ability to read and write, it has got songs, dance, painting and all other fine arts. It has sports of various types. When Marx hoped that human kind is on the threshold of liberation, what he meant was that with the advancement of science, technology and productive forces, humans are becoming increasingly free from animal limitations of keeping alive and getting emancipated to enjoy the truly human avocations mentioned above. Thus the cultural enjoyment of a society is one of the indications of its high quality, spiritual quality, of life. This can be quantified, crudely though it is, in the following terms.

High literacy rate.

Longer years of education.

Longer hours of reading.

Increasing participation, passive or active, in arts like singing, dancing, acting, including viewing T.V. or theatre.

Increasing participation in sports.

The first two are to be ensured directly by the society. The rest requires, to begin with increasing free time – a high level of emancipation. But that alone will not be sufficient. This time should be used for reading, for listening music, for viewing sports and the like and not for simply sleeping or drinking.

Participation

Humans have to produce goods and services to exist. For this they have to interact with each other, organize themselves into a system. Children, invalids and elders are exempted. The rest have to participate. No self-respecting adult would like live permanently on charity. Participation in economic activity is not only a material necessity for them. True, it is a material necessity of course and this participation should give them a just share of the social product, increasing economic equity. But participation is, also, a spiritual necessity, especially in social – political affairs. Economic participation can be measured though inadequately, through the ratio of the average income of the poorest pentile (20%) and the richest pentile. Participation in socio-political life is more difficult to quantify. One way is to assess the average time spend by each citizen in activities which are not directly related to self or family – for example in arts and sports clubs, in organizing library-reading room, in grama sabha and panchayat, in class and mass organizations etc. etc. Reduction of full timers' in such activities and increase in the quantum of voluntary work is a good measure of social participation.

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