

'Lalkaar-Pratibaddh' Group's Understanding of Fascism

A Menagerie of Dogmatic Blunders

(Part – VI)

○ Abhinav Sinha

15. Sukhwinder's Understanding of Social-Democracy and its Role in the Rise of Fascism: A Motley Crew of Social-Democratism, Vacuity and Plagiarism

Here, too, Sukhwinder exposes his “bare-naked” inability to understand the basics of Marxist-Leninist concepts.

First of all, what Sukhwinder has written under this subhead ‘Fascism and Social Democracy’ has clearly been plagiarized from David Beetham’s ‘Introduction’ to his anthology of Marxist writings on fascism *Marxists in Face of Fascism*. In fact, Beetham’s subhead from where Sukhwinder has plagiarized, too, is titled ‘Social Democracy and Fascism’! Readers will see that Sukhwinder discusses only the cases of Germany and Austria to demonstrate the relation between fascist rise and social-democracy and will wonder why the only other case of fascist rise to power, namely, Italy, has been left out! Because Beetham, too, has discussed only these two cases, that is, Germany and Austria! Thus, instead of reading any primary source and works from cover to cover, once again, Sukhwinder has relied on quotation-picking and plagiarism from the introductions and prefaces of anthologies. Let us first see what Sukhwinder has written, and then we will show how he has shamelessly plagiarized from Beetham in this case, towards the end of this subhead.

A. *Sukhwinder, Bernstein, Kautsky and the Marxist Theory of Immiseration: The “Bare-Naked” Display of Editor Sa’ab’s Intellectual Immiseration*

He writes:

“In the end of 19th century, *when capitalism of free competition was developing into fascism*, the leader of the opportunist faction of social democracy, Bernstein claimed that the centralisation of capital would definitely create such a situation in which capitalism will gain control over its crises. He claimed that the working class is benefitting more and more as a result of capitalist development. Its share in national income is regularly increasing instead of shrinking. Kautsky, who was then a Marxist, opposed the claims of Bernstein. But he himself committed serious mistakes in this regard. *Bernstein had rejected the impoverishment of working class in general*. He had claimed that wages were increasing not merely in absolute form but also relatively. *Kautsky demonstrated the relative impoverishment of working class under capitalism but not absolute impoverishment*.

“In a way he agrees with Bernstein that though the condition of working class is worsening relatively but it is getting better absolutely. *If the condition of working class is improving under capitalism, then why does it need to struggle for socialism?*

“This was the path (rejection of struggle for socialism) which Kautsky followed in the future.” (Sukhwinder, *op.cit.*, p. 45, *emphasis ours*)

Please focus on the italicized portions of the excerpt presented above. First, let us deal with the most infantile mistakes.

Sukhwinder argues that towards the end of the Nineteenth century, free competition was developing into fascism! Even if it is a slip of the pen, it reveals extremely poor understanding of Sukhwinder. Towards the end of the Nineteenth century, “free competition” capitalism was developing into the *monopoly stage*, that is to say, the stage of imperialism, not fascism. Fascism is a particular political tendency that emerged in the stage of imperialism. Here, too, it does not mean that fascism will emerge only in the countries which themselves are imperialist. Imperialism, in this context, refers to the world-historic stage of the development of the capitalist mode of production, from its own immanent laws of concentration and centralization of capital and the general law of capitalist accumulation. *Fascism does not refer to an economic stage of capitalism, but a particular manifestation of bourgeois reaction in a particular kind of political conjuncture, in the general conditions of economic crisis in the stage of imperialism.* Sukhwinder has equated two disparate things: one, an economic stage in the development of capitalism (“free-competition” stage) and two, fascism, which is not an economic stage, but a political phenomenon that comes into being under a particular political conjuncture, in a particular economic stage. However, for Sukhwinder, the one evolves into the other! If it is not a slip of the pen, then we need not say anything further on the intellectual bankruptcy of the Trot-Bundist chieftain. We are pretty sure that it is not a slip of the pen, given the record of Sukhwinder.

Secondly, Sukhwinder has plagiarized his account of the Bernsteinian revisionism, the critique by Kautsky of this revisionism and the weakness of this critique. Why? It is clear that Sukhwinder does not know about Marxist theory of the impoverishment of the working class under capitalism. Marx, since at least the late-1850s, never subscribed to the theory of *general* absolute impoverishment of the working class. He subscribed to the theory of *general* relative impoverishment of the working class and *periodic* absolute impoverishment of the working class, which happens during the periods of crises and stagnation and sometimes in the peripheries of world capitalism. In other words, the general theory (which must be applicable to the North-Western capitalism as well as capitalism in the so-called ‘third world’, in order to be a *general theory*) of Marx is that of *relative impoverishment of the working class*. On this question, Ernest Mandel has presented a very balanced account of the debate. Mandel writes:

“How, then, has it been possible for so many writers, for so long, to have attributed to Marx a ‘theory of absolute impoverishment of the workers under capitalism’ which obviously implied a theory of tendential fall in the value not only of labour-power but even of real wages? In the first place because Marx, in his youthful writings, did in fact hold such a theory - for example, in the *Communist Manifesto*. But this was formulated before he had brought his theoretical understanding of the capitalist mode of production to its final, mature conclusion. It is only in the years 1857-8 that we have the birth of Marx's economic theory in its rounded, consistent form. *After he had written A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy and the Grundrisse, there was no longer a trace of any such historical trend towards absolute impoverishment in his economic analysis.*

“In the second place, because so many writers confuse Marx's treatment of *the value of labour-power* (which depends upon the value of the consumer goods the worker buys with his wages) with the category of *real wages* (determined by the mass of consumer goods his wages buy). *Under capitalism, given the constant increase in the productivity of labour, these categories can move in opposite directions.*

“In the third place, because two famous passages in *Capital Volume 1* have been consistently misinterpreted. In both these passages Marx does speak about 'increasing misery' and pauperism, and about 'accumulation of misery'. But the context indicates clearly that *what he is referring to is the poverty and misery of the 'surplus population', of the 'Lazarus layer of the working class', that is, of the unemployed or semi-employed poor.* Revealing studies on poverty in rich countries like the United States and Great Britain have strikingly confirmed that the misery of these old age pensioners, unemployed, sick, homeless, degraded or irregularly working lower layers of the proletariat is indeed a permanent feature of capitalism, including the capitalism of the 'welfare state'.” (Mandel, Ernest. 1982. 'Introduction' to Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1*, Penguin Edition, p. 69-71, *emphasis ours*)

Mandel points out further:

“What we in fact have here is a theory of *a tendency towards relative impoverishment of the working class under capitalism in a double sense.* Firstly, in the sense that productive workers tend to get *a smaller part of the new value* they produce: in other words, there is a trend towards an increase in the rate of surplus-value. Secondly, in the sense that *even when wages rise the needs of the workers as human beings are denied.* This applies even to their *additional consumer needs that grow out of the very increase in the productivity of labour* which results from the accumulation of capital. One has only to think of *the unfulfilled needs of workers in the fields of education, health, skill acquisition and differentiation, leisure, culture, housing,* even in the richest capitalist countries of today, to see how this assumption remains accurate in spite of the so-called 'consumer society'. But it applies much more to the needs of the worker as a producer and a citizen - his need to develop a full personality, to become a rich and creative human being, etc.; these needs are brutally crushed by the tyranny of meaningless, mechanical, parcellized work, alienation of productive capacities and alienation of real human wealth.” (*ibid*, p. 72, *emphasis ours*)

And finally:

“In addition to this law of *general* relative impoverishment of workers under capitalism, Marx also notes a trend towards *periodic* absolute impoverishment, essentially in function of the movement of unemployment. This is closely linked to the inevitability of cyclical fluctuations under capitalism, that is the inevitability of periodic crises of overproduction, or 'recessions' as they are called today with less provocative connotations.” (*ibid*, p. 72, *emphasis ours*)

Whatever the Trotskyite convictions of Mandel might be, this succinct summarization of Marx's views on the impoverishment of the working class under capitalism is correct. Later, we will also see various quotations from Marx, which present the Marxist theory of immiseration. However, let us first see what Lenin had to say about Bernstein and the critique presented by Kautsky.

Lenin, too, recognized the fact that the workers face both, the absolute impoverishment, as well as, the relative impoverishment, but the latter is more important and *the general tendency of capitalist accumulation.* The latter refers, not to the *real wages* of the workers (which might increase or decrease depending upon the combination of the impacts of the economic factors of the rate of accumulation and the reserve army of labour, and the political factor of class struggle), but to the *decreasing share of wages in the newly-created value.* It is noteworthy that it is possible for the *real wages* (not to be confused with the value of the labour-power, which naturally decreases with every

increase in the productivity of labour in the wage-goods industries and agriculture, since the latter produces the most important wage-goods like food, raw material for other wage-goods) to increase and yet the working class might become relatively poorer since its share in the newly-produced value decreases. In fact, Marx always fought against the idea that the real wages of the workers necessarily fall, an idea also known as “iron law of wages”, promoted by various authors from Malthus to Lassalle and rejected outright by Marx in the period of his mature economic thinking.

What was the mistake of Bernstein then? The argument that since the real wages in themselves will increase in absolute terms (even if they do not increase relatively as a share of newly-created value), the working class’s living standards will improve, blunting his revolutionary edge. Also, Sukhwinder does not know that Bernstein did not reject the idea of fall in the share of the workers in the newly-created value, that is, the fact the capitalists’ consumption increases faster than the workers’ consumption, or, real wages rise slower than profits. Anyway, still, the rise in real wages if and when it happens does not have a direct correlation with the revolutionary potential of the working class. It goes without saying that it was a crude and vulgar, not to speak of politically as well economically incorrect, variety of economism, which was a mirror-image of catastrophist versions of economic analysis, which focused on the ‘final breakdown’ theory. Bernstein, further, pointed to the increasing socialization of production under capitalism as a factor that will suppress crises and promote peaceful development, by making socialist revolution superfluous. Needless to say, this, too, has been proven incorrect theoretically as well as historically.

Did Kautsky reject even the absolute impoverishment of sections of working class? *No, he did not.* In fact, he gave a concession to Bernstein on this question by limiting the absolute impoverishment of the working class to regions where capitalism as a dominant mode of production was established only recently. Kautsky focused on relative impoverishment as the general theory of immiseration, which is, essentially, correct. Also, he rejected the argument that absolute impoverishment of the working class can be a general tendency that is universally applicable. Kautsky relates the theory of absolute impoverishment, among other things, with the theory of “inevitable breakdown”, which Bernstein chose as the effigy to critique the “mistakes of Marx and Engels”. Kautsky pointed out that Marx’s theory of revolution is not based on catastrophism and “inevitable collapse”, but on the recurrent and deeper crises. On this point, Kautsky was much more accurate than the critique of Bernstein put forward by Rosa Luxemburg that veered towards the “inevitable collapse” theory.

Lenin wrote in the review of Kautsky’s book:

“Bernstein declares that everyone has abandoned Marx’s “theory of misery” or “theory of impoverishment.” *Kautsky demonstrates that this is again a distorted exaggeration on the part of the opponents of Marx, since Marx propounded no such theory.* He spoke of the growth of poverty, degradation, etc., indicating at the same time the counteracting tendency and the real social forces that alone could give rise to this tendency. Marx’s words on the growth of poverty are fully justified by reality: first, we actually see that capitalism has a tendency to engender and increase poverty, which acquires tremendous proportions when the above-mentioned counteracting tendency is absent. *Secondly, poverty grows, not in the physical but in the social sense, i.e., in the sense of the disparity between the increasing level of consumption by the bourgeoisie and consumption by society as a whole, and the level of the living standards of the working people.* Bernstein waxes ironical over such a conception of “poverty,” saying that this is a Pickwickian conception. In reply Kautsky shows that people like Lassalle, Rodbertus, and Engels have made very definite statements to the effect that poverty must be understood in its social, as well as in its physical, sense. As you see—he parries Bernstein’s irony—it is not such

a bad company that gathers at the “Pickwick Club”! *Thirdly and lastly, the passage on increasing impoverishment remains perfectly true in respect of the “border regions” of capitalism, the border regions being understood both in the geographical sense (countries in which capitalism is only beginning to penetrate and frequently not only gives rise to physical poverty but to the outright starvation of the masses) and in the political-economic sense (handicraft industries and, in general, those branches of economy in which backward methods of production are still retained).*” (Lenin, V. I. 1977. *Collected Works, Volume 4*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 201, *emphasis ours*)

Again, Lenin points out in *A Draft Program of Our Party* that absolute impoverishment is a tendency which becomes a reality *only under certain conditions*, whereas relative impoverishment is the general tendency applicable in all cases of capitalism:

“This should be followed by an outline of the fundamental tendency of capitalism—the splitting of the people into a bourgeoisie and a proletariat, the growth of “the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation.” These famous words of Marx are repeated in the second paragraph of the Erfurt Programme of the German Social-Democratic Party, and the critics that are grouped about Bernstein have recently made particularly violent attacks precisely against this point, repeating the old objections raised by bourgeois liberals and social-politicians against the “theory of impoverishment.” In our opinion the polemic that has raged round this question has demonstrated the utter groundlessness of such “criticism.” Bernstein himself admitted that the above words of Marx were true as a characterization of the tendency of capitalism—*a tendency that becomes a reality in the absence of the class struggle of the proletariat against it, in the absence of labour protection laws achieved by the working class*. It is precisely in Russia today that we see the above tendency manifesting its effect with tremendous force on the peasantry and the workers. *Further, Kautsky has shown that these words on the growth of “the mass of misery, etc.,” are true in the sense, not only of characterizing a tendency, but of indicating the growth of “social poverty,” i.e., the growth of the disparity between the condition of the proletariat and the living standard of the bourgeoisie—the standard of social consumption that continues to rise parallel with the gigantic growth in the productivity of labour. Lastly, these words are true also in the sense that in “the border regions” of capitalism (i.e., those countries and those branches of the national economy in which capitalism is only just emerging and clashing with pre-capitalist conditions) the growth of poverty—not only “social,” but also the most horrible physical poverty, to the extent of starvation and death from starvation—assumes a mass scale. Everybody knows that this is ten times more applicable to Russia than to any other European country.*” (*ibid*, p. 234, *emphasis ours*)

As the readers would already have understood, the “social poverty” refers to the relative impoverishment, whereas the “physical poverty” refers to the absolute impoverishment. Lenin clearly points out that “physical poverty” is not the *general law* but it does indeed happen periodically under certain conditions in capitalist mode of production, one of which is the conditions of absence of class struggle; whereas, the “social poverty” is the general law of capitalism even in times of prosperity and under conditions of advanced capitalism.

Thus, Sukhwinder without understanding what was Kautsky’s critique of Bernstein, what Bernstein had written and how Lenin appreciated the critique of Bernstein by Kautsky, prattles his

gobbledygook. Does Sukhwinder know on what point Lenin disagreed from Kautsky's critique of Bernstein? He might be unpleasantly surprised to know that. Let us see.

Lenin points out that one important fallacy of Bernstein that was left un-critiqued by Kautsky as well as Plekhanov was Bernstein's federalism! Lenin points out:

"To confuse Marx's views on the "destruction of the state power— the parasitic excrescence" with Proudhon's federalism is positively monstrous! But it is no accident, for it never occurs to the opportunist that Marx does not speak here at all about federalism as opposed to centralism, but about smashing the old, bourgeois state machine which exists in all bourgeois countries.

"The only thing that penetrates the opportunist's mind is what he sees around him, in a society of petty-bourgeois philistinism and "reformist" stagnation, namely, only "municipalities"! The opportunist has even forgotten how to think about proletarian revolution.

"It is ridiculous. But the remarkable thing is that nobody argued with Bernstein on this point. Bernstein has been refuted by many, especially by Plekhanov in Russian literature and by Kautsky in European literature, but neither of them said anything about this distortion of Marx by Bernstein.

*"To such an extent has the opportunist forgotten how to think in a revolutionary way and to ponder over revolution that he attributes "federalism" to Marx and confuses him with the founder of anarchism, Proudhon. And Kautsky and Plekhanov, who claim to be orthodox Marxists and defenders of the doctrine of revolutionary Marxism, are silent on this point! Herein lies one of the roots of the extreme vulgarization of the views concerning the difference between Marxism and anarchism, which is characteristic of the Kautskyites and of the opportunists, and which we shall yet discuss later." (Lenin, V. I. 2020. *The State and Revolution*, Foreign Languages Press, Paris, p. 52, *emphasis ours*)*

Oops! Sukhwinder did it again! As is clear from the above excerpt, on this question, Lenin would also have criticized Sukhwinder's particularly stupid version of bourgeois federalism. Anyway.

Also, Sukhwinder again betrays his crude and vulgar economism, which would have made a Bernstein or Kautsky blush. He thinks that the working class plunges itself into revolutionary movement only when through absolute impoverishment it has been driven into pauperism. Such a claim has nothing to do with *Marx's theory of class struggle*. Economic determinism and catastrophism of this kind was refuted time and again by Marx, Lenin and Mao, too. It is not the continuously and perpetually increasing economic poverty but *the struggle of classes* that will lead to political conjunctures which have the potentiality to result in a revolution. Can a socialist revolution take place in a country where there is no continuing absolute immiseration of the working class? *Yes, it can*. The sharpening of contradictions between labour and capital takes the political form of class struggle, and absolute impoverishment alone is not the only or even principal expression of this process.

Moreover, proletarian revolution is not generally led and organized by the most pauperized sections of the working class, who mostly come from the 'reserve army of labour', instead of the 'active army of labour', even though the former, too, participate actively in lesser or greater degree, especially during the moments of certain mass actions depending upon the overall social, economic and political context. Especially, those sections of the reserve army which are alternately attracted and repelled by the capitalist industry, depending upon the movements of profitability,

are politically more advanced. However, the sections which are constantly under- or unemployed, remain stuck in the drudgery of such life, become politically active, generally speaking, only in the particular mass moments of revolutionary process.

Besides, *economic and material hardships and thus class contradictions do not always take the form of immiseration*. Class contradictions often assume a variety of forms, from the working class's resistance to the increasing intensity of labour, increasing working day, and decreasing share of the working class in the newly-produced value, even if the real wages are not falling absolutely, to political rights of union formation, and other demands emanating from the workplace. In fact, during the last few decades itself, in India, we can safely say that most of the examples of labour militancy have resulted from these factors, manifesting the *immanent contradiction of capitalism*, namely the *fundamental* contradiction between labour and capital; and we can hardly reduce the reasons behind such instances of labour outburst merely to the absolute impoverishment of the working class.

Sukhwinder's understanding of the Marxist theory of revolution is unbelievably and extremely destitute and he does not understand politics, that is, the arena of class struggle at all. How far material pauperism propels revolution is under serious doubt, however, this much is certain that intellectual pauperism drives Sukhwinder to the unexplored frontiers of idiocy and foolishness. Despite critiquing Bernstein and revisionist Kautsky, he is actually a backbencher and mediocre student in the class of economism run by the likes of Bernstein and revisionist Kautsky themselves, though the latter must have been embarrassed about this particular student of theirs.

The second question on which Lenin criticized Kautsky's critique of Bernstein was on the question of Kautsky's serious deviation on the question of smashing of the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat, which for Kautsky was not a question of immediate importance in the controversy with Bernstein. (see p. 104-05 of the above quoted edition of *The State and Revolution*.)

We, too, wrote about the fallacy of the theory of absolute impoverishment in detail in 2021. The following long excerpt includes several quotations from Marx himself, which will clear any doubt regarding Marx's theory of impoverishment of the working class under capitalism:

"Such incorrect notions imposed upon Marx are particularly harmful because they make Marx and Marxism prone to "easy refutation". For example, it can be shown with factual evidence that the theory of absolute impoverishment of the working class cannot be sustained. One of the major bourgeois vulgar neoclassical economist Paul Samuelson (along with William Nordhaus), in fact, does precisely the same. First he proves that the notion of absolute impoverishment of the working class cannot be sustained empirically and then he argues that, therefore, Marx was wrong! That is the reason why such incorrect notions ascribed to Marx and Marxism are very harmful and some bourgeois economists intentionally impute such incorrect notions to Marx...

"As we mentioned above, one such layman's notion is that of the absolute impoverishment of the working class. Let us dwell on this for a moment. This notion argues that working class necessarily becomes increasingly poorer and more pauperized with the development of capitalism and especially so in the stage of monopoly capitalism. First of all, let us be clear that Marxism does not hold any such notion. *Marx's theory is one of relative impoverishment of the working class. This simply means the relatively declining share of wages in the newly produced value vis-à-vis profits*. This happens due to the historical decline in the value of labour-power owing to the increasing productivity of labour in the branches that produce basic

wage-goods and the branches that supply means of production to those producing wage-goods.

“As one can understand with the knowledge of basic mathematics, it is very much possible that profits as well as wages, both increase absolutely, even when wages are declining relatively as a share of newly-produced value. Marx very clearly explained that it is the historical tendency of capitalism to decrease the value of all commodities, including labour-power, in the chapter on relative surplus-value in the first volume of Capital. Those who do not understand that the value of labour-power historically declines under capitalism do not understand Marx’s theory of relative surplus-value.

“The decline in the value of labour-power does not necessarily mean decline in the real wages, though the capitalist class also depresses real wages of the working class, especially, when it is not already at the level of physical minimum and when the organization of the working class is unable prevent it from doing so for whatever reasons. The capitalist class also depresses the wages below the value of the labour-power, especially in times of crises, though it cannot be a long-term sustainable situation. Therefore, in certain periods, we do witness the absolute impoverishment of the working class as well. However, that situation is also reversed at times due to a variety of factors. For instance, in periods of boom, due to increased demand for labour, the average wages also go up. The same can happen due to a strong and organized working-class movement, given the limits posed by the accumulation of capital allow it.

“Then what are the factors that determine the movement of wages? The movement of wages is determined historically by the lower limits fixed by the bare minimum requirements of the workers (which themselves vary due to the ‘historical-moral’ element involved in the determination of the value of labour-power though it cannot be pushed below the level of physiological minimum needs for a protracted period of time, as Marx pointed out) and the higher limits posed by the accumulation of capital. In other words, wages cannot fall below the value of labour-power for a protracted period of time so that the working class is not able to reproduce itself physically or is able to reproduce itself only in a crippled state; secondly, the wages cannot rise above the value of the labour-power so much so that the accumulation of capital becomes impossible. Marx explains in the first volume of Capital:

“The ultimate or minimum limit of the value of labour-power is formed by the value of the commodities which have to be supplied every day to the bearer of labour-power, the man, so that he can renew his life-process. That is to say, the limit is formed by the value of the physically indispensable means of subsistence. If the price of labour-power falls to this minimum, it falls below its value, since under such circumstances it can be maintained and developed only in a crippled state, and the value of every commodity is determined by the labour-time required to provide it in its normal quality.”

“Marx also writes:

“On the other hand, the number and extent of his so-called necessary requirements, as also the manner in which they are satisfied, are themselves products of history, and depend therefore to a great extent on the level of civilization attained by a country; in particular they depend on the conditions in which, and consequently on the habits and expectations with which, the class of free workers has been formed. In contrast,

therefore, with the case of other commodities, the determination of the value of labour-power contains a historical and moral element. Nevertheless, in a given country at a given period, the average amount of the means of subsistence necessary for the worker is a known datum."

"Marx explains further:

"It is these absolute movements of the accumulation of capital which are reflected as relative movements of the mass of exploitable labour-power, and therefore seem produced by the latter's own independent movement. To put it mathematically: the rate of accumulation is the independent, not the dependent, variable; the rate of wages, the dependent, not the independent, variable."

"Finally, Marx shows how movement of wages is determined:

"...the relation between capital accumulation and the rate of wages is nothing other than the relation between the unpaid labour which has been transformed into capital and the additional paid labour necessary to set in motion this additional capital. It is therefore in no way a relation between two magnitudes which are mutually independent, i.e. between the magnitude of the capital and the numbers of the working population; it is rather, at bottom, only the relation between the unpaid and the paid labour of the same working population. If the quantity of unpaid labour supplied by the working class and accumulated by the capitalist class increases so rapidly that its transformation into capital requires an extraordinary addition of paid labour, then wages rise and, all other circumstances remaining equal, the unpaid labour diminishes in proportion. But as soon as this diminution touches the point at which the surplus labour that nourishes capital is no longer supplied in normal quantity, a reaction sets in: a smaller part of revenue is capitalized, accumulation slows down, and the rising movement of wages comes up against an obstacle. The rise of wages is therefore confined within limits that not only leave intact the foundations of the capitalist system, but also secure its reproduction on an increasing scale. The law of capitalist accumulation, mystified by the economists into a supposed law of nature, in fact expresses the situation that the very nature of accumulation excludes every diminution in the degree of exploitation of labour, and every rise in the price of labour, which could seriously imperil the continual reproduction, on an ever larger scale, of the capital-relation"

"Thus, within these limits, namely, the physiological minimum and the limits posed by accumulation of capital, the wages move due to a variety of factors. The most important one is *the class struggle of the working class* to increase its share in the newly-produced value, namely, wages. The other is *the overall condition of the capitalist accumulation*, in other words, whether the capitalist economy is in the phase of prosperity, stagnation or crisis. The supply and demand of labour is only a function of the industrial cycle, or the movements of accumulation, and not an independent variable as such. Under the combined impact of these factors, the wages move within the above limits. *This also means that the value of labour-power and the real wages can move in different directions in capitalist mode of production.* Those who do not understand this, actually confuse the value of labour-power with real wages. The first is the magnitude of socially necessary labour required to produce the means of subsistence of the workers; the second refers to the basket of consumer goods that a worker can buy with his money wages. However, it is essential to remember that wages, as a historical tendency, fluctuate around the

value of labour-power just like the prices of all commodities hover around the centre of gravity of their value. Marx explains succinctly in the first volume of *Capital* how the value of labour-power and real wages can move in different directions under capitalist mode of production:

“The value of labour-power is determined by the value of a certain quantity of means of subsistence. It is the value and not the mass of these means of subsistence that varies with the productivity of labour. It is however possible that owing to an increase in the productivity of labour both the worker and the capitalist may simultaneously be able to appropriate a greater quantity of means of subsistence, without any change in the price of labour-power or in surplus-value. Let the value of labour-power be 3 shillings, and let the necessary labour-time amount to 6 hours. Let the surplus-value be, similarly, 3 shillings, and the surplus labour 6 hours. Now, if the productivity of labour were to be doubled without any alteration in the ratio between necessary labour and surplus labour, there would be no change in the magnitude either of the surplus-value or of the price of labour-power. The only result would be that each of these would represent twice as many use-values as before, and that each use-value would be twice as cheap as it was before. Although labour-power would be unchanged in price, it would have risen above its value. However, now assume a fall in the price of labour-power, not as far as 1s. 6d., the lowest possible point consistent with its new value, but to 2s. 10d. or 2s. 6d. This lower price would still represent an increased quantity of means of subsistence. In this way it is possible, given increasing productivity of labour, for the price of labour-power to fall constantly and for this fall to be accompanied by a constant growth in the mass of the worker’s means of subsistence. But in relative terms, i.e. in comparison with surplus-value, the value of labour-power would keep falling, and thus the abyss between the life-situation of the worker and that of the capitalist would keep widening.”

“The historical tendency of capitalism is to reduce the value of the labour-power because productivity increases in all branches of production including the ones producing wage-goods or those supplying means of production to them. This leads to decline in the *per unit cost* as well as the price of these wage-goods. The reason is that the increase in the productivity of labour means that the same or even less amount of value will be distributed over a larger mass of *use-values*. This happens with all commodities in capitalism including the commodities that enter into workers’ consumption. Therefore, an important thing to remember is that capitalism decreases the value and therefore relative prices of all commodities, including wage-goods and, therefore, that of labour-power.” (Sinha, Abhinav. 2024. ‘Fragmentary Notes on a Few Pertinent Questions of Marxist Political Economy in the Special Context of Certain Ongoing Debates’, in *For a Proletarian Line*, Rahul Foundation, Lucknow, p. 23-28, *emphasis ours*)

We quoted this section in detail for a particular reason. The illusions that we have critiqued in this excerpt are precisely the reasons for not understanding Marxist theory of the impoverishment of the working class under capitalism, namely, the theory of relative impoverishment in general, and the theory of periodic absolute impoverishment. It is by now well-known to readers and comrades that Sukhwinder is especially tight-fisted in the realm of political economy. Sukhwinder’s travails in the realm of political economy remind you of Don Quixote’s travails in persuading Dulcinea del Toboso!

Thus, Sukhwinder critiques Kautsky precisely where he is correct in his criticism of Bernstein, namely, his insistence on the theory of relative impoverishment, and at the same time, he could not even identify the points on which Kautsky's critique of Bernstein was incorrect, namely, federalism and the question of smashing of the bourgeois state. It is quite natural given the bizarre blend of Bundism, Trotskyism, and revisionism that Sukhwinder exhibits.

Now let us see what kind of fantasies Sukhwinder harbours about Hilferding and why he fails to understand the evolution of Hilferding's revisionist position.

B. Sukhwinder on Hilferding: Spectres of Plagiarism and Phantoms of Stupidity

Sukhwinder writes:

"Another prominent leader of German Social Democracy was Rudolf Hilferding. In 1910, his book 'Finance Capital' was published. In it he claimed that cartelisation has no absolute limit in capitalism. Rather there exists the trend of its rapid expansion. Independent industries become more and more dependent on cartelised industries and in the end they are devoured by cartelised industries. As a result, a general cartel emerges. The anarchy of commodities and production comes to an end. The role of money vanishes. If capitalism correctly distributes production, then it can develop without crises.

"In this manner, Hilferding veils the fundamental contradictions of capitalism. *In 1927, Hilferding brought forth the revisionist theory of organised capitalism.* He stated that a monopoly firm could rationally plan production and free of any competition in the market, could achieve technical innovation. The superior socialist principle of planning made it possible for the same to stand on its own feet and stabilize itself." (Sukhwinder, *op.cit.*, p. 45-46, *emphasis ours*)

The fact that Sukhwinder has plagiarized this whole section from another source, will be discussed later under the ongoing subhead.

Leaving apart the inarticulate and inaccurate presentation of the issue at stake, Sukhwinder continuously makes historical mistakes and does not give any respite to the readers from his incessant bombardment of ignorance. He claims that Hilferding presented his revisionist theory of 'organized capitalism' in 1927. It is completely untrue. The theory of 'organized capitalism' was present in the very political economy of Hilferding from the times of *Finance Capital* itself. This theory continued to evolve through the 1910s and assumed fuller shape towards the end of the 1920s. In the mid-1920s, Hilferding added a couple of new elements in his theory of 'organized capitalism' which drove him closer to the neo-harmonist positions, as exhibited by the likes of Tugan-Baranovsky. However, Sukhwinder is at sea regarding the evolution of the revisionist and harmonist views of Hilferding. The reason is that he has plagiarized from the variety of sources, without understanding. Let us see.

Hilferding writes years before the mid-1920s, in *Der Kampf*:

"In place of the victory of socialism there appears possible a society organized, indeed, but hierarchically and not democratically organized, at the apex of which stand the combined forces of the capitalist monopolies and the state, under whom the working class are engaged in a hierarchy of agents of production. *Instead of the triumph of socialism over capitalist society we would have an organized capitalism, better adapted than hitherto to meeting the immediate material needs of the*

masses.” (quoted in Howard, M. C. and J. E. King. 1989. *A History of Marxian Economics, Volume 1, 1883-1929*, Princeton University Press, p. 272, *emphasis ours*)

In the mid-1920s, Hilferding clearly began to argue that this organized capitalism would be able to do away with the crises and wars. Alex Callinicos mentions this fact in his work on imperialism after presenting the above quote of Hilferding:

“But, if economic crises are caused by disproportionalities between different sectors and between production and consumption, could not an organized capitalism overcome these? In the mid-1920s Hilferding drew the conclusion that it could, and indeed that organized capitalism would rid the world of both economic slumps and imperialist wars.” (Callinicos, A. 2009. *Imperialism and Global Political Economy*, Polity, p. 56)

This was a new element in his theory of ‘organized capitalism’ which was openly proclaimed by Hilferding in the mid-1920s, but which had begun to emerge from the mid-1910s itself and had assumed quite concrete reformist shape by the end of the 1910s. There is certainly a relation between the inherent reformist and harmonist elements of the political economy of Hilferding and the reformist politics of the Independent Social-Democratic Party to which he was associated and which later merged with the SPD itself.

Why did Sukhwinder make this mistake of considering the year 1927 as the year of beginning of Hilferding’s theory of ‘organized capitalism’?

One of the reasons is that we had written in one of the papers presented during the Fifth Arvind Memorial Seminar on Imperialism, in which Sukhwinder, too, was present, that in 1927 at the time of the Kiel Congress itself, Hilferding had expressed his conviction that ‘organized capitalism’ is going to get rid of the anarchy of capitalist production! We did not say that Hilferding came up with this theory in 1927 itself. In fact, we clearly mention in our writing that from the 1920s itself, these ideas of Hilferding had congealed. In this paper, we first discussed how the Hilferding of *Finance Capital*, did accept the antagonistic form of cartelization and argued that even though there is no limit to cartelization, the single cartel that will emerge, will not do away with class antagonism. However, the seeds of the theory of ‘organized capitalism’ as a capitalism free of antagonism, were present in this political economy itself. Later, since the beginning of the 1920s itself, Hilferding *openly* moved to the revisionist and reformist political conclusions, from this erroneous political economy. We wrote in 2017:

“Hilferding also misunderstood that monopolization in the age of finance capital cannot lead to a crisis-free capitalism while doing away with the anarchy of production. He argued that finance capital has socialized production to the maximum degree under capitalism. In Germany, all production is virtually controlled by 6 banks and whoever takes over these 6 banks takes over the entire national economy. Thus, the ground for overcoming capitalism is prepared. These were the seeds of theory of ‘organized capitalism’ by Hilferding. By 1920s, he was *clearly* talking about ‘organized capitalism’. In the age of dominance of monopoly finance capital, certain degree of planning has developed. This has increased due to the intervention of the state also. Consequently, the relations between the capitalist states after the First World War came to be characterized by what Hilferding called ‘realistic pacifism.’ He still believed that imperialism is a necessary stage but he seems to believe after the war that imperialist rivalry might become less prominent feature of this stage and that imperialism itself in its colonial form might be less permanent phenomenon. *In 1927 he contended, “We are moving...from an economy*

regulated by the free play of forces to an organized economy.” (Sinha, Abhinav. 2019. ‘Marxist Theories of Imperialism from Marx to Present Times: A Contemporary Critical Reassessment’ in *Subversive Interventions*, Rahul Foundation, Lucknow, p. 404, *emphasis ours*)

Please see the italicized part. We mentioned the way new elements were being aggregated in the theory of ‘organized capitalism’ by Hilferding. By 1926-27 he began to contend that ‘organized capitalism’ will be able to do away with the recurrent crises. Almost all serious scholars know about the above-mentioned evolution of Hilferding’s theory of ‘organized capitalism’. However, as usual, Sukhwinder does not go to the original sources, never reads anything comprehensively, scrounges for quotes through index and search tool, plagiarizes from various sources (including our writings!) and consequently ends up humiliating himself again.

Second reason why Sukhwinder makes this mistake is that he has plagiarized his whole account under his subhead on social-democracy and fascism from the ‘Introduction’ of David Beetham’s anthology *Marxists in Face of Fascism*, as we have mentioned earlier. We will later see, towards the end of this section, what Beetham has written in his ‘Introduction’ and then compare this with what Sukhwinder has written. We will reproduce the words of Beetham in a little while. First, let us focus on what is Sukhwinder’s overall understanding regarding the role of social-democracy in the rise of fascism.

C. Sukhwinder’s Social-Democratic “Criticism” of Social-Democracy and its Role in the Rise of Fascism

Sukhwinder goes on to present his entire understanding of the relation between social-democracy and fascism:

“These illusions of social democrats regarding the imperialist stage of capitalism became the basis for their illusions regarding fascism. According to them, fascism is an *uncommon obstacle, an aberration in the path of technological progress and political democracy. Kautsky, particularly was the supporter and originator of such ideas. According to him political violence is a historical deviation in an industrialised world. Like the violence of Bolsheviks and communist party of Germany are futile attempts to hasten the motion of history, similarly fascist violence is an attempt to pull history back, stop economic development and an attempt to solve problems with force.* As a movement fascism is supported by ‘*short sighted capitalists*’ and the middle class which is a victim of confusion and ruination due to economic change.

“From this understanding of fascism the social democratic party of Germany and social democratic party of Austria gleaned the following practical tasks -:

- i) For the protection of parliamentary democracy an alliance should be forged with far sighted elements of capitalist class
- ii) If the alliance proves inadequate due to increasing popular support for fascism, then one should wait for the storm to pass or for the fascists to prove their economic incapability in power.

“Kautsky held that fascist violence is the other side of Bolshevik violence. Due to this thought process he preferred the creation of united front with far sighted elements of capitalist class rather than with communists.

“Hilferding held that support for Nazism isn’t just the matter of ‘near-sighted elements of capitalism” but rather it is a much wider attack on the social legislation of Weimar Republic. This attack is also on the parliamentary system which is responsible for this system. But he strongly opposed any kind of struggle against Nazism. He said that the result of any struggle against Nazism would be naked dictatorship. From such calculations he strictly opposed any program of non-parliamentary action in alliance with communists.

“Due to this capitulationist policies of the German social democratic party, it was split in 1931. In Max Sedewitz, a part of left social democrats separated from the party.

“In Austria, two “kinds” of fascism were at loggerheads with each other. One was the domestic fascist party (Celerio). Second was the imported Nazi movement which quickly expanded in 1932. In 1933 rightist prime minister Dolfuss decided for an antiparliamentary coup. The aim of this coup along with crushing the Nazis was to also crush the social democrats, which it did. The social democratic party of Austria did not immediately oppose this coup rather it tried to hold talks with Dolfuss. The assessment of Otto Bauer, the leader of the party was that the result of general strike against the coup would be a civil war which would unite both the varieties of fascism. That is why more and more concessions were made for the peaceful solution pf the situation. But there was no beneficial effect of this. Dolfuss rejected any type of discussion. He continuously stripped the rights of workers. Due to the capitulationist policies of social democracy, the working class of Austria lost all its rights one by one.” (Sukhwinder, *op.cit.*, p. 46-47, *emphasis ours*)

Please do not mind the incorrect spellings (for instance, Sedewitz, which is actually Seydwitz) and other proof mistakes. We cannot correct such mistakes in Sukhwinder’s essay, in quoting, as the readers can understand. Also, the fact that the above portion has been plagiarized, will be discussed later. Right now, we will focus on the understanding presented by Sukhwinder in the above excerpt.

It would be difficult to find a poorer account of the relationship between fascism and social-democracy, historically as well as theoretically. One is surprised to see that this is all that Sukhwinder could understand about the role that the social-democracy played in the rise of fascism! Let us understand the poverty of this account in a little detail.

Do social-democracy’s illusions about ‘organized capitalism’ and its harmonist fantasies about the stage of imperialism have anything *in particular* to do with the rise of fascism? These reformist views of social-democracy *are, in general, existent*, whether it is the conditions of the fascist regime or a non-fascist bourgeois regime. Is Kautsky’s condemnation of the Bolsheviks and his argument that fascism was the flipside of the Bolshevik adventures, *in particular*, relevant to the objective processes that led to the rise of fascism? Kautsky’s condemnation of the Bolsheviks and the Russian Revolution had started immediately after the revolution itself, when Kautsky wrote his diatribe against the Bolshevik Revolution, *Terrorism and Communism*, in 1919 and which was critiqued from the Bolshevik side by Bukharin, Trotsky and Lenin. This approach of Kautsky existed long before fascism began to rise in Italy or Germany. It is a constant that did not change. *Sukhwinder has completely missed the essence of the historical role that social-democracy plays in the rise of fascism.*

Sukhwinder has completely missed the crux of the role of social-democracy in the rise of fascism. It would be advisable to discuss this crucial role in a little detail.

Despite all his mechanistic errors, one argument of Manuilsky is broadly correct: *social-democracy is the stepping-stone to fascism*. This, too, is a little bit deterministic, because in all cases, the sins of the social-democracy do not *necessarily* lead to fascist rise, which is dependent on a variety of other political and economic factors that we have discussed earlier in this critique. However, this, too, is true that in all cases of fascist rise, social-democracy, in general, played a very significant role. What is this role?

This is precisely the question which is absent from Sukhwinder's specific subhead on social-democracy and fascism. He reduces everything to the incorrect line of the social-democrats in most of the countries to form coalitions with the saner or "far-sighted" elements of the bourgeoisie, rather than the communists. Thus, the disastrous sin of the social-democrats was simply the refusal to form alliances with the communists, while forming alliances with the bourgeois parties that were formally antithetical to fascists! Through this sleight of hand, Sukhwinder creates a mirror-image of the mistakes of the revolutionary communists: *the refusal to form alliance with the social-democrats!* Thus, both the parties become equally responsible for the rise of fascism in Germany and Italy and other countries where aborted fascist attempts were made because both refused to form alliances with each other for different reasons!

The sympathy, rather empathy, which Sukhwinder has for the revisionists becomes increasingly difficult for him to hide! Basically, Sukhwinder tried to stand on the pedestal of seeming objectivity, kind of a non-partisan position, vis-à-vis the mistakes of the social-democrats as well as those of the revolutionary communists, which are at par and comparable! He does not stand in the camp of revolutionary communism, from where a consistent immanent critique of the "left" and right deviations from the correct Leninist line, could emerge. As any student of Marxism knows, this third place or position, is nothing but a social-democratic position itself. Such positions are conjured up precisely to put the social-democrats out of the dock. Despite all their mistakes, the KPD comrades as well as the PCI comrades are our comrades and our critique of their aberrations and deviations from the correct communist line, emerges from a very different position. However, the social-democrats were not *aberrating* or *deviating* from any correct line, but that was precisely their line. We must expose the social-democratic treachery of Sukhwinder here. It is noteworthy that the social-democratic tendencies of Sukhwinder do not appear to be some kind of slips or aberrations; there is a remarkable consistency from his upholding of the line of the 'popular front' as the universal general line on the anti-fascist united front, to his defence of the social-democrats by equating their mistakes to those of the revolutionary communists.

Let us, therefore, understand what Sukhwinder has utterly failed to understand: *what is the essence of the role played by social-democrats in the rise of fascism? Is it simply the refusal to form a united front with the communists due to their harmonist illusions? The answer is a big and resounding NO! This critique of social-democracy is actually a way to absolve the social-democrats of their central responsibility in the rise of fascism.*

First point: the basic characteristic feature of the social-democracy, *in general*, is its policy of *limiting the workers' struggles within the ambit of pecuniary logic*. The economism of the social-democrats is revealed by the way it systematically trains the working class to measure all its gains only through economic demands and benefits. This is the social-democratic politics of disabling the working class from raising the political question, that is, the question of power. It goes without saying that this breed of politics emerges from the ideological line of the social-democracy itself. This ideological line is that of reformism and revisionism which effectively negates class struggle and formally and openly negates the dictatorship of the proletariat. It naturally involved the abandoning of the principle of smashing of the state, which stems directly from a non-class notion of the state itself. It is assumed that with the development of democracy (as a non-class

determination), the establishment of universal franchise, the advancement of the proletariat due to the economic and 'political' training under capitalism, and the development of workers' organizations, it becomes possible to bring socialism through the non-violent and parliamentary means itself. The best summarization of these arguments by a social-democrat can be found in Karl Kautsky's book *Hitlerism and Social-Democracy*. Similarly, Rudolf Hilferding argued that the Weimer state was not an instrument of the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Ben Fowkes has correctly summarized the views of Hilferding:

"The Kiel Party Congress of 1927 was dominated by Rudolf Hilferding's defense of coalitions. His basic theoretical justification for coalitions between the SPD and the bourgeois parties was that *the state was not inevitably an instrument of the ruling class*. The ruling class under the Weimer Republic was the capitalist class, but the parliamentary democracy set up in 1919 was not its instrument. *It was rather a special form of state that the workers should support*. The way forward was to reassert the supremacy of the state – now under threat from monarchist reaction – by intervening politically. This could be done by participating in governments alongside non-socialist parties. Coalition was therefore justified in principle." (Fowkes, B. 2003. Dobkowski, M. and I. Walliman. *op.cit.*, p. 252-53, *emphasis ours*)

In the same congress, Hilferding argued that there were two possible objectives of such coalition governments: one, to ward off the dangers of reaction and two, achieving advances for the working class, as Fowkes has shown. For Hilferding, the first objective was the central objective. Such a line stems directly from the ideology and politics of social-democracy. Kautsky, too, presents the same illusions about the class character of the state under capitalism and contends that violent overthrow of the capitalist state was a thing of the past, when the working class itself was in its infancy, had not attained higher education and culture and was politically-backward (see Kautsky's *Hitlerism and Social-Democracy*, among others). The modern proletariat would not be swayed by the seductions of violence propagated equally by the militaristic bourgeoisie of the imperialist period as well as the Bolsheviks and communists. It would stick to the "humane" and "peaceful" ways to attain socialism through democracy. For Kautsky, too, democracy was a non-class determination which is embedded into socialism itself (just as it is embedded in the politics of the republican democratic bourgeoisie!) and therefore we simply cannot talk about 'bourgeois democracy' and 'proletarian democracy'. Readers can refer to the above-mentioned work of Kautsky written immediately after the rise of Nazis to power. It is available online.

Second point: based on this general characteristic, what *particular role* social-democracy plays in the rise of fascism? Social-democracy strives to maintain certain welfare policies, higher wages, allowances and benefits, and other ameliorative measures for the working class, based on a compromise between labour and capital. It constantly persuades the bourgeoisie to accept these demands precisely as a way to ensure the longevity of the system and to prevent sharpening of the class contradictions. The concrete program that emerges from such politics is that of 'economic democracy', which simply means better share of the workers in the newly-created value; work committees at the work place to ensure a share in the economic decision-making; the admission by the bourgeoisie of the working class as a legitimate negotiating partner in the running of the economy.

Under the general conditions of economic prosperity, often the bourgeoisie or the dominant fraction of the bourgeoisie, accepts these demands to ensure industrial peace and smooth running of the machinery of profit. This was precisely the reason why such labour-capital compromise was maintained during the Weimer Republic at least till the late-1920s, after which the pressure of certain fractions of the bourgeoisie was expressing its unwillingness to continue such a

compromise, which was becoming increasingly costly for them. As soon as, the Great Depression began and the German economy began to take a nosedive, these fractions became more and more militant in their assertions. Faced with such a situation, the working class could either fight to transcend the boundaries of capitalism, which was out of question for the social-democratic leadership, or, to give in to the demands of the bourgeoisie steadily. The social-democracy adopted the latter path. Thus, from 'advancing the interests of the working class under the Weimer system' to 'defense of the Weimer parliamentary system against forces of reaction (monarchist as well as fascist)', to the policy of 'the lesser evil' (which included supporting the less dangerous option to ward off the fascist threat), the social-democracy conceded all the economic victories achieved during the first half of the Weimer period.

What is happening here was this: *social-democracy knew how to deal with a capitalist system in conditions of higher rates of profit and prosperity and better cohesion within the 'power bloc'; however, it was at complete loss when this period of prosperity came to an abrupt end, because the ruling class was no longer willing to accept the costly labour-capital compromise, faced with the crisis of profitability.* However, the organized workers' movement under the leadership of the social-democrats was intransigent in surrendering the rights of higher wages and benefits and gave in only slowly. This created a situation of 'profit squeeze' for the German bourgeoisie and forced it increasingly to various reactionary options, a search which finally ended with Hitler.

Thus, on the one hand, the social-democracy systematically contained the working-class movement within the ambit of economism, reformism and class-collaborationism, strengthened its faith in the capitalist system and thus disarmed it to deal with the bourgeoisie as a political class, while on the other, preventing it from developing into a political class, a class with a political project. Let us see what Poulantzas has written about the culpability of social-democracy in the rise of fascism.

Poulantzas points out:

"What in fact happens is that the bourgeoisie plays the card of 'class collaboration', to put it that way, at the end of the period of stabilization and the beginning of the rise of fascism. This card can be played either with social democracy in power (the German case), or via bourgeois political parties without the direct collaboration of social democracy. In other words, the move coincides with the turning point in the process of working-class defeat, and with the upturn of the bourgeoisie's offensive.

"But such a policy is a failure in these circumstances. *It does not allow the bourgeoisie to annul the political and economic gains of the working class, still less to carry the exploitation of the masses a decisive degree further.* From this point, and throughout the rise of fascism, only the political representatives of medium capital try to do things in this way. And it is an important fact that these politicians were increasingly isolated both from big capital and from their own class fractions. *Big capital for its part no longer toys with 'class collaboration' on the side, supposing it had ever done so, but turns decisively to the fascist solution.* This is clear, so long as one is not blinded by events on the political scene, and takes into account what lies behind them and the split between representatives and those they represent."
(Poulantzas, N. 1979. *op.cit.*, p. 154, *emphasis ours*)

Poulantzas immediately clarifies that he is not presenting a general scheme, but the role of social-democracy in historical cases of rise of fascism has become evident in this way. He points out further:

"The precise nature of the rise of fascism clearly demonstrates that social democracy, employed by big capital in the preceding periods, is not or is no longer an adequate instrument for carrying out its policies, even though social democracy in Germany and Italy was itself contributing to 'class collaborationism' during the rise of fascism. Its use in these circumstances relates mainly to the forms assumed by the contradictions between big and medium capital.

"All this does not of course mean that social-democratic policy towards fascism is free of grave responsibility for its success. It bears all the more responsibility, in that its mass influence was considerable. Apart from the factors already pointed out, this is because the workers' movement was on the defensive, and this as always signalled an upturn for social democracy. The capitulation of social democracy is typical of a party of class collaboration, although there was not strictly speaking any direct collusion between social democracy and fascism." (ibid, p. 156, emphasis ours)

In the specific case of Germany, after revealing the betrayal of the German Social-Democratic Party (p. 177-80), Poulantzas argues that the principal responsibility for the resistible rise of fascists turning into an irresistible rise, lay at the door of the social-democracy due to their counter-revolutionary nature, class-collaborationism, and economism:

"In conclusion, SPD policy was faithful to its counter-revolutionary nature and function. There was no actual collusion between social democracy and fascism; throughout the rise of fascism, it still tried in its own way to defend and preserve the 'economic interests' of the working class, which it had to do to keep its representational base in the class. None the less, it certainly bears the greatest share of responsibility for fascism's coming to power." (ibid, p. 180, emphasis ours)

Similarly, David Abraham in the specific context of the rise of fascism in Germany, has explained the particular role that the social-democracy plays. Abraham writes:

"Social-democratic power does not alter the core of capitalism. As we shall see, the Weimer labour movement's search for economic rationality, social justice, and political participation was inevitably and decisively constrained by the privileged status systematically accorded the logic of accumulation. It seems that the best that can be accomplished is the worst that can be done: paralyzing capitalism without being able to transform it...Having mistakenly assumed that democracy would overcome capitalism within the new system of capitalist democracy, they were at complete loss to deal with the system in distress. Having persuaded most of their members that success was to be measured almost uniquely by wage and social welfare gains, the SPD and ADGB had virtually no idea what to do once capitalism ceased producing surplus they could skim." (Abraham, D. 2003. op.cit., p. 29, emphasis ours)

We have already quoted Gossweiler earlier in this critique, who revealed the despicable treachery and betrayal of the social-democrats, which played the central role in the rise of fascism in Germany. There is no need to quote him again. Geoff Eley points out:

"The idea of a defensive social-democratic corporatism, which within the limits of this essay has to remain theoretically underdeveloped, may well be a fruitful one for the discussion of fascism. It lends a formal unity to the political crisis of Weimer, between the foundering of the Grand Coalition in March 1930 on the issue of insurance legislation, and the precipitation of the von Papen-Hitler maneuver in

December 1932-January 1933 by General Kurt von Schleicher's renewed corporatist exploration. *Mutatis mutandis*, the arguments also work for the Italian situation in 1918-22, *where the presence of a mass socialist party publicly committed to a revolutionary program (howsoever rhetorically) had effectively thrown the state into paralysis.*" (Eley, G. 2003. *op.cit.*, p. 89, *emphasis ours*)

These scholars and many others have shown with their empirical research beyond doubt that *in the structural and objective sense*, it was the social-democracy which disarmed and disabled the working class from resisting the fascist rise by preventing it from becoming a *political class* and assuming the leadership of the working masses, including various sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, through its line of revisionism, reformism, economism, trade-unionism, workerism and class-collaborationism and capitulationism.

The subjective errors of the communists stem from their "left" as well as right *deviations* from the correct line. However, they were revolutionary communists, not revisionists, whose error do not stem from their *aberration* or *deviation* from the correct line; their line itself represented the bourgeois line within the workers' movement, to use the Leninist characterization for the social-democrats. *The critiques of the revolutionary communists must take place at a different level, a critique which is immanent, endogenous and internal to the revolutionary communist movement itself.* However, Sukhwinder reserves special scorn and rebuke for the communists, whereas his approach towards the social-democracy is one of absolving it of *the chief responsibility and culpability in the rise of fascism*. One of the reasons for this is Sukhwinder's new-found love for all things social-democratic, Bundist and Trostkyite because it allows him to present a program of doing nothing, precisely because this whole group is not in a position to do anything. Another reason is that he has plagiarized from Beetham his entire section on social-democracy and fascism. Now, we shall show to the readers how our substandard plagiarizer, Mr. Sukhwinder, dons the hat of the *kharr*-boy once again.

D. New Adventures of the Kharra-Man in the Realm of Plagiarism

First of all, let us see what Beetham says in the very beginning of the section of his 'Introduction' on social-democracy and fascism:

"The present section will consider analyses by Social Democrats in Germany and Austria. Just as the parties of the Comintern failed, so the parties of Social Democracy in both countries also failed in their strategies to prevent the rise of fascism to power, the one without offering serious resistance, the other after an uprising under unfavourable circumstances." (Beetham, D. 1983. *op.cit.*, p. 40)

At the very outset, the readers can understand the reason why Sukhwinder discusses the cases of Germany and Austria only, while leaving the case of Italy. Because the source from where Sukhwinder is going to plagiarize from, namely Beetham, has done precisely the same. Moreover, readers can also understand why Sukhwinder fails to understand the difference between the Marxist-Leninist criticism of the *principal* responsibility and *structural and objective role* of the social-democracy in the rise of fascism on the one hand, and the *subjective mistakes* of the revolutionary communists on the other. Beetham does the same, broadly speaking: equating the two in weightage.

Beetham writes:

"A central theme of Social Democratic analysis in the post-war period was the idea of '*organised capitalism*', a concept given definitive formulation by Rudolf Hilferding at the SPD Congress in 1927 ...Social Democracy's conception of '*organised*

capitalism' offered a very different interpretation of capitalism's monopoly stage and its post-war development in Germany. It emphasised, first, the *rational planning* of production within the monopolistic firm and its capacity for *technical innovation* even without the immediate pressure of market competition. It was the application of this *superior 'socialist' principle of planning* that had enabled capitalism to regenerate and *stabilise itself* in the post-war period." (*ibid*, p. 40-41, *emphasis ours*)

Now look at what Sukhwinder has written:

"In 1927, Hilferding brought forth the revisionist theory of organised capitalism. He stated that a monopoly firm could *rationally plan* production and free of any competition in the market, could achieve *technical innovation*. *The superior socialist principle of planning* made it possible for the same to stand on its own feet and *stabilize itself*." (Sukhwinder, *op.cit.*, p. 46, *emphasis ours*)

Please note the italicized parts of both the quotes. Pure paraphrasing and plagiarism, without mentioning the source. Well-done, Sukhwinder!

Further.

Now, see this excerpt from Beetham:

"...the Social Democratic theory of 'organised capitalism' led it to view *fascism as an aberration, an abnormal interruption in the onward march of technical progress and political democracy*. Such a view is *particularly evident in Kautsky's work*. *For Kautsky the use of political violence constituted a historical deviation in an industrialised world where social power was determined by indispensability of economic function, and bourgeois democracy was the appropriate political form for a technically advanced society*. *Just as violence on the part of the Bolsheviks and putchism by the KPD were a futile attempt to force the pace of history, so the violence of fascism was a historical throwback, an attempt to hold back economic development and solve its problems by force...Fascism as a movement drew its support from 'reckless and short-sighted capitalist elements' and confused middle strata displaced by economic change*. Fascism as a regime was 'economically illiterate' and could only intensify the problems of economic dislocation, not resolve them. *Two practical conclusions followed from this analysis for the strategy of the SPD (and later the Austrian SOAP), when the fascist threat unexpectedly moved from backward Italy to Germany*. *First, the Social Democrats should seek a coalition with the more 'far-sighted' capitalist elements in defence of parliamentary democracy*. *But, secondly, if this alliance proved inadequate because of the increasing popular support for fascism, the only strategy was to wait, either for the storm to 'blow over', or for the fascists to prove their economic incompetence in power*. Not the strategy of 'overthrow' but the 'war of attrition' was the order of the day.

"Kautsky's analysis embodied misconceptions frequently to be found in Social Democratic thinking about fascism: *that fascist violence was the counterpart of Bolshevik or Communist violence... Such assumptions were used to justify a policy of quiescence and the search for allies among the bourgeoisie rather than the Communists*." (Beetham, D. 1983. *op.cit.*, p. 41-42, *emphasis ours*)

Now compare this with Sukhwinder's following words and focus on the italicized portions:

“These illusions of social democrats regarding the imperialist stage of capitalism became the basis for their illusions regarding fascism. *According to them, fascism is an uncommon obstacle, an aberration in the path of technological progress and political democracy. Kautsky, particularly was the supporter and originator of such ideas. According to him political violence is a historical deviation in an industrialised world. Like the violence of Bolsheviks and communist party of Germany are futile attempts to hasten the motion of history, similarly fascist violence is an attempt to pull history back, stop economic development and an attempt to solve problems with force. As a movement fascism is supported by ‘short sighted capitalists’ and the middle class which is a victim of confusion and ruination due to economic change.*

“From this understanding of fascism the social democratic party of Germany and social democratic party of Austria gleaned the following practical tasks -:

“i) *For the protection of parliamentary democracy an alliance should be forged with far sighted elements of capitalist class*

“ii) *If the alliance proves inadequate due to increasing popular support for fascism, then one should wait for the storm to pass or for the fascists to prove their economic incapability in power.*

“*Kautsky held that fascist violence is the other side of Bolshevik violence. Due to this thought process he preferred the creation of united front with far sighted elements of capitalist class rather than with communists.*” (Sukhwinder, *op.cit.*, p. 46, *emphasis ours*)

Thus, again, complete and shameless paraphrasing and plagiarizing! The only changes in words at some places is due to the fact that Sukhwinder had, while plagiarizing from Beetham, first translated from English to Punjabi and then the translator appointed to translate the pile of crap written by Sukhwinder into English, translated the Punjabi text into English again. So, again, we have a case of ‘lost in the translation’. Despite two layers of translation from and to English, via Punjabi, even a layman can see that our editor sa’ab is at it again! Plagiarizing!

Sukhwinder plagiarizes about Hilferding with equal audacity and shamelessness. Here is what Beetham has written:

“Hilferding himself was well aware that support for the *Nazis was not merely a matter of ‘reckless and short-sighted’ capitalists, but part of a much broader attack on the social legislation of the Weimar Republic, and on the parliamentary system that was responsible for it.* Yet he opposed any determined struggle against the dismantling of social welfare, especially after the Nazi gains in the elections of September 1930, on the grounds that *nothing should be done that would alarm the bourgeois parliamentary centre, and encourage it to take the Nazis into the government. Such a move would rapidly lead to outright dictatorship through the Nazi insistence on controlling internal security. It was this calculation as much as inveterate hostility that ruled out any joint programme of extra-parliamentary action with the Communists.*” (Beetham, D. 1983. *op.cit.*, p. 42, *emphasis ours*)

Now compare this with what Sukhwinder writes, paying special attention to the italicized portions:

“Hilferding held that support for *Nazism isn’t just the matter of ‘near-sighted elements of capitalism’ but rather it is a much wider attack on the social legislation of Weimar Republic.* This attack is also *on the parliamentary system which is responsible*

for this system. But he strongly opposed any kind of struggle against Nazism. He said that the result of any struggle against Nazism would be naked dictatorship. From such calculations he strictly opposed any program of non-parliamentary action in alliance with communists.” (Sukhwinder, op.cit., p. 47, emphasis ours)

Again, as the readers can see, dishonest and shameless paraphrasing and plagiarizing! Sukhwinder lacks even that amount of intellectual honesty that even a student researcher in a bourgeois academia has! Even a research student submitting his/her thesis, has to go through a process called ‘plagiarism check’ by the university department responsible for thesis submission. Had Sukhwinder submitted his thesis on fascism to a plagiarism check, the employees of the university department would have committed suicide!

Now let us come to the case of Austria. Since Beetham discusses Austria, Sukhwinder has no other options but to discuss Austria, though he does not talk about the Austrian case anywhere else in his bundle of plagiarizings. The reason is that this particular portion has been plagiarized by Sukhwinder from Beetham. See what Beetham has written:

“The Austrian political situation was complicated by the presence of two competing fascisms, a weak home-grown movement of clerico-fascism (the Heimwehr) and an imported Nazi movement which grew rapidly in strength during 1932. In the context of a parliamentary stalemate the following year, and fearing the further growth of the Nazis in the wake of their electoral success in Germany in March 1933, the right-wing Christian-Social premier, Dollfuss, decided on an anti-parliamentary coup which would enable him to govern by means of emergency powers. The ostensible aim of his dictatorship was to suppress the Nazis, which he did; at the same time he started a drive against: the Social Democrats, using the forces of the Heimwehr as an auxiliary to the police. The SOAP did not immediately resist the coup, but engaged in a series of attempted negotiations with Dollfuss through 'sympathetic intermediaries'. Otto Bauer, the Party leader, calculated that a general strike would degenerate into civil war, and bring about an alliance between the two strands of fascism, the black and brown, and the armed forces of the state. So 'we offered greater and greater concessions with a view to making a peaceful solution possible . . . all in vain - Dollfuss refused to enter into any negotiations'. Instead he proved adept at dismantling the workers' rights piecemeal, without ever providing the occasion for a decisive confrontation. When an armed rising did eventually break out, in a spontaneous and uncoordinated manner in Linz in February 1934, the Party had become too weakened to give it effective support.” (Beetham, D. 1983. op.cit., p. 45, emphasis ours)

Now compare this with Sukhwinder’s version:

“In Austria, two “kinds” of fascism were at loggerheads with each other. One was the domestic fascist party (Celerio). Second was the imported Nazi movement which quickly expanded in 1932. In 1933 rightist prime minister Dollfuss decided for an antiparliamentary coup. The aim of this coup along with crushing the Nazis was to also crush the social democrats, which it did. The social democratic party of Austria did not immediately oppose this coup rather it tried to hold talks with Dollfuss. The assessment of Otto Bauer, the leader of the party was that the result of general strike against the coup would be a civil war which would unite both the varieties of fascism. That is why more and more concessions were made for the peaceful solution of the situation. But there was no beneficial effect of this. Dollfuss rejected any type of discussion. He continuously stripped the rights of workers. Due to the capitulationist

policies of social democracy, the working class of Austria lost all its rights one by one." (Sukhwinder, *op.cit.*, p. 47, *emphasis ours*)

As the readers can see, Sukhwinder has once again proven his mettle as a shameless, crude and vulgar plagiarizer and paraphraser. We have demonstrated this in the past (regarding his position on the national question, language question, federalism, etc.) and we have demonstrated this several times, in the course of the ongoing critique of his "understanding" of fascism.

What explanation can Sukhwinder give about such notorious intellectual forgery? Can anyone take such a person seriously in the political or intellectual sense? Can such a person lead a political group? What could be the repercussions of the pitiable personal degeneration of the chieftain of the Trot-Bundists on the cadre of 'Lalkaar-Pratibaddh' group is becoming increasingly apparent now. The recent disturbing incidents in this group are not an anomaly, nor are they aberrations or deviations of certain individuals. When the leadership itself becomes politically and ideologically dishonest and bankrupt, emergence of personal degeneration of members of the leadership is a natural outcome. This is precisely what is happening. The intellectual dishonesty evident from the relentless plagiarizing and paraphrasing is not a metaphysically segregated reality from these incidents. There is a coherent and intrinsic causal link.

Finally, if the plagiarizer understands what he/she is plagiarizing, it might still help the readers to understand a certain viewpoint or position, even if that is incorrect and even if the question of intellectual dishonesty still remains. However, the curious case of the *kharr*-man of Punjab is different! Sukhwinder does not understand what he is plagiarizing. This leads him to write loads of crap around the plagiarized and paraphrased positions. As a consequence, the limited value that a plagiarized piece could have for the readers vanishes in the fog of stupidity created by the editor of 'Pratibaddh' in almost all of his articles or speeches.

We raise a simple question to the remaining honest youth still with 'Lalkaar-Pratibaddh' group: *where would such intellectually dishonest leadership lead to? What will be the consequences of the political degeneration of the leadership for you? What will be the repercussions of such ideological departure from Marxism? Just think about it.*

(To be continued...)