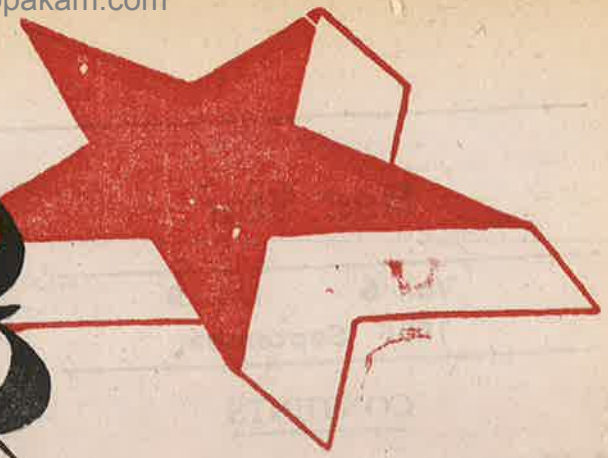


RED STAR

PLATFORM FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONARIES



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CONSENSUS FOR TREASON

“Would you invest in a country where a state government closes down a KFC outlet on the ground that two flies were found in it? (!) Or, where a state government cancels a \$ 2.6 billion power project of Enron? The answer surprisingly seems to be yes. Despite the bad publicity India received over these two incidents, government approvals of foreign direct investment went up from \$ 4.5 billion in 1994 to \$ 10 billion in 1995, and the actual inflow of foreign equity doubled to almost \$ 2 billion. In other words, multinationals see India as a good bet, not withstanding political uncertainties and the opposition to some sorts of foreign investment by some political parties”. This comment by *The Economist* in February 1996 is fully vindicated by the post-general election developments.

As far as the KFC incident in concerned, either *The Economist* was misinformed or consciously distorted facts. Not two flies, but people's protest compelled the closing down of KFC outlet at Bangalore. But Gowda, then chief minister of Karnataka moved fast, got the protestors thrown behind the bars, and gave police protection to the re-opered outlet. The signs were clear enough. Besides the SS-BJP government in Maharashtra had already signed a bigger contract with Enron.

If any doubts or apprehensions were left, they were soon removed by the 13 day Vajpayee government and Gowda government soon following it. Vajpayee government promised to

accelerate the economic policies pursued by Rao regime and gave counter-guarantee to Enron agreement. Following it Gowda government during the last three months have more than fulfilled the confidence of the imperialists and the MNCs about investing in India.

During the last five years the imperialist think-tanks and the comprador ideologues in India were working hard to create a consensus among the various ruling class parties and even among the social democratic ones like CPI(M) and CPI for the market economy and globalisation. With the announcement of the CMP and presentation of 1996-97 budget by the Gowda led UF government, it is proved that the imperialist efforts for creating a consensus to toe structural adjustment policies have succeeded to a great extent irrespective of the irritants in between, and the populist outbursts like 'swadeshi' or 'taking foreign investments putting country's interests in the forefront' etc. by these parties occasionally to hoodwink the masses.

Coming in to existence of such a consensus among the ruling classes and the political parties representing their interests is vividly manifested in the lack of any powerful protest movements when the petroleum prices were heftily hiked or when the pension bill was hastily passed in both houses of parliament or when Gowda government's lack of enthusiasm to book the culprits of the numerous scams and hawalas and pay-offs is becoming more and

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more clear. Enron, Cogentrix like MNCs are given warm welcome at their terms. The whole consumer sector is increasingly surrendered to MNCs. Deceptive moves are made to amend patent laws surrendering to WTO conditionalities. Even the existing land reform acts are given silent burial. Agrarian sector is integrated to international market. Land accumulation in the hands of rich landlords and foreign and native corporate houses is the increasing trend.

These consequences of the IMF-WB dictated policies are already oft-repeated. What is comparatively new is the consensus arrived at by the parties ruling at centre and in the states in implementing these policies of course with their own brand of justifications. What is also new is the increasing chorus raised by the petty bourgeois intellectuals who were till recently vocal advocates of radicalism, in support of these policies. Some others are lamenting on the 'demise' of Keynesianism and repeat that there is no other way out to privatisation—liberalisation regime.

All these developments make clear that inspite of whatever contradictions existing between imperialist forces and Indian ruling classes, and among the latter, all of them are colluding with each other for plundering the people; inspite of the cut-throat competition among the various political parties for coming to power at centre and in the states, they are ready to arrive at any form of coalitions to share power in the atmosphere of broad consensus arrived at by them.

This does not mean that there are no differences among the Congress, BJP and the UF parties. What is pointed out is that they are one as far as the basic economic policies are concerned. To that extent a polarisation is taking place among them against the vast masses.

This point needs repeated assertion in order to help the mobilisation of the broad masses against this coalition of anti—people forces. It also help us to work for a polarisation of the revolutionary left forces to emerge as the centre around which the masses can be mobilised.

The imperialist camp and its native compradors of all hues have put forward their agenda clearly. It is now the duty of the revolutionary left forces to cast away all ambiguities and work for a united effort to mobilise the masses for democracy and socialism against the forces of reaction.

Global Inequalities and the Internet

People who surf around on the Internet often get dazzled by the information and pictures that pop up with a flick of a keystroke. With the right equipment and connections, it is possible to browse through library records in a German university, or check out the photographs that a Japanese artist put in his computer gallery. People can find articles from newspapers around the world of check out literally *thousands* of wide-open discussion groups, or buy books, or "chat" with other Internet users, or just bop around like a tourist cruising some huge city, pecking in here and there. The Internet is not yet tightly and directly regulated—there are lots of Web sites and discussion groups where you can get information and news that is ordinarily suppressed by the system's corporate media.

After the U. S. government opened the Net for non-government use in the late 1980s the number of users started doubling every year. In May 1995 there were 93 countries hooked up to the internet. By August 1995 there were over 208.

It's no wonder, in many ways, that people start to imagine that the Internet could "bring the world closer" and create a new "global community" where ordinary people can check each other out, and where hateful dictators and TV anchors can no longer censor the flow of information.

At the same time, the cyber-reality is that *this* Internet has been created and developed under capitalism. Those who control this system have no

intention of allowing new technologies to "empower" the masses of people in ways that seriously undermine the system. They intend to use this new communications system to rationalize, stabilize, and strengthen their worldwide networks for making profit. And *those* interests have shaped the Internet at every stage of its growth. And increasingly, as the importance of the Internet becomes obvious to the U.S. ruling class, extremely calculated political and military decisions are being made about how to even more tightly control the way computers circulate information.

How the System has Distributed Computers

Though the Internet now has at least *some* subscribers in almost every country—it remains fundamentally a network radiating out of the U.S.—tying all kinds of scientific and technical elites more closely together and tying privileged strata in other countries more closely to the U. S.

Internet access requires a computer, a modern hookup to telephone lines and some kind of arrangement with a "host" computer that is connected to the Internet itself. For the masses of people in the world, those things are simply not available. The Internet is one more arena labeled "not for you".

There are about 5 billion people on Earth today. Only 150 million of them *have access* to computers—only 30 in every 1,000 or 3 percent. By comparison, 1.3 billion people on the

planet live in absolute poverty—about 260 in every 1,000 without even a basic survival diet.

The way the system has *distributed* computers makes access even more unequal: the computers are *overwhelmingly* concentrated in a handful of the wealthiest imperialist countries, especially the U.S.

The U. S. alone, with only 5 percent of the world's people, has *half* of the world's computer capacity. Three-quarters of the world's phone lines are concentrated in the imperialist countries, where only 15 percent of the world's population lives.

For vast, vast stretches of this planet there are essentially no computers. Those that show up are overwhelmingly concentrated in the hands of various military forces or the offices of imperialist corporations. A quarter of the world's countries have more than 100 people for every working phone. In fact, about half of the people in the world have never even used a telephone! (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, May 1996).

In short, in oppressed Third World countries that contain the overwhelming majority of humanity, computers are beyond the reach of all but the most wealthy. And even for the wealthy, there is often no regular electrical current or stable connections to the global telephone networks that tie the Internet together.

The Intense Inequalities of Internet Access

The Internet itself reflects this same global lopsidedness of imperialism/capitalism.

Over 200 countries are now hooked up to the Internet. But *The Internet Report*, an investment analysis by Wall Street's Morgan Stanley, estimates that well over half of the host computers on the Internet are in the U. S.—and the 188 poorer countries put together have less than 5 percent of the Internet's host connections. (Hosts are the computers of institutions like universities, corporations or internet providers, that then make internet connections available to individual users.)

Though estimates vary, about 30 million people—about 6 in every, 1000 people - are said to

have sent or received computerized letters called "e-mail." And far fewer, an estimated 10 million people in the world—about 2 in every 1,000 people—used the Internet's "World Wide Web" in 1995. *Boardwatch* magazine has argued that such typical estimates are exaggerated, and calculates the real number of Internet users is currently closer to 7 million.

Whatever the precise number, those Internet users are distributed extremely unequally. Very few - almost none - are among the billions of people who live in the peasant villages or Third World shantytowns. According to a Georgia Tech survey, about

75 percent of the Internet's users live in the U. S. And two-thirds of them are male.

Scientific American (May 1995) published an article entitled "Information Have-nots: A vicious circle isolates many Third World Scientists." The article documents how the intensifying poverty of many oppressed countries is making Third World universities and research institutes increasingly unable to even subscribe to scholarly journals. Researchers in much of Africa and Asia are similarly unable to get modern computers and access to the Internet. According to this article, "The explosive growth of networks and CD-ROM drives that promises to open up science publishing in the U. S. and Europe to a larger audience thus threatens to strangle the South's [the Third World] access".

Michael Kidron and Ronald Segal write in their *State of the World Atlas*: "CNN (the satellite-distributed news network), and the Internet (the transnational matrix of computer networks) together reach no more than two percent of the world's population".

In short, the rapid increase in worldwide computer communications is not "democratizing" access to information. On works of people more access to valuable information, it is widening the gap between the "info-rich" and the vast majority of people who are "info-poor". Only a tiny sliver of humanity is involved in the Internet. And though students and middle class people in the U. S. have been getting themselves on-line, that sliver remains overwhelmingly concentrated in the scientific, corporate and military elites of the imperialist countries, especially the U.S.

what is the internet

Over the last decade more and more people have started to use computers to talk to each other—sending computer letters called "e-mail" over telephone lines and connecting to different kinds of bulletin boards, information archives, and graphic pages called "Web sites".

The biggest network for this is the Internet—a kind of "network of networks" that connects thousands of smaller regional networks and millions of computers. It is based in the wealthiest imperialist countries, but now reaches almost every country in the world.

On the Internet, computer users are able to set up discussion groups that quickly pass around news and opinions over long distances.

Progressive activists, especially college students in US have started using the Internet to "post" information exposing the system and organizing demonstrations. During the 1992 Gulf War, the Internet played a significant role in organizing antiwar protests. There are Internet discussion lists that defend affirmative action and expose government attacks on immigrants. When armed peasants rose up in Mexico a few years ago, news and manifestos from Chiapas were posted on the Internet and read in dozens of countries. And throughout the ongoing campaign to save the life of imprisoned Black revolutionary Mumia Abu-Jamal several Internet sites have provided information and commentary to Mumia supports, including a popular Web site maintained by Refuse & Resist!.

At the same time, the ruling class has shown increasing concern that some corners of this Internet may work against them. Behind the scenes, the political police are highly active on the Internet—observing, spreading disinformation, and disrupting activities.

The "global community" that the Internet binds together closely mirrors the oppressive inequalities and power relations of the world capitalist market.

Internet Inequities Within the U.S.

"The rich can afford big houses and-if they have taste-beautiful houses. The middle class is asked to downgrade their expectations and to live more of their lives in cyberspace. So the rich get the real world, the middle class get the cyber-world and the poor are increasingly being shunted off into one sort of enclave or another".

Bob Stein, founder of Voyager, a company publishing interactive media for computers

Within the U.S. too, capitalism has developed the Internet in ways that reflect and intensify the inequalities of class society.

About 40 million people in the U. S., 160 in every 1,000, have some contact with personal computers (PCs). Much of that is through various kinds of data entry in office jobs—it usually doesn't involve much of a "window into cyberspace".

In the U. S., only 100 out of every 1,000 use their computers for communication — receiving and sending e-mail. Only 80 out of every 1,000 people in the U. S. have used the Internet. And only 30 in every 1,000 have used the Internet's World Wide Web.

Who gets access? Basically, those with money and those with connections to corporations and universities who encourage Internet use.

The majority of Internet users in the U. S. get their connections through corporate or university Internet hosts—where there is often considerable

control over what *kinds* of Internet sites people are allowed to explore. A recent survey by Dataquest showed that 60 percent of medium-to-large U. S. corporations surveyed had some kind of Internet hookup in all their departments. The Georgia Tech study suggests that even with university connections the access is limited: it reports that only a quarter of Internet users in U. S. universities are students.

At the same time, there has been a rapid rise in the numbers of people in the U. S. buying personal accounts with private computer networks or the Internet. But here too, the barriers of class are intense. Working people can rarely afford home

computer setups with modems—or even the \$ 20 a-month for an Internet account. Many already have enough trouble just paying their monthly telephone bills!

A 1995 survey of the U. S. Department of Commerce showed how much computer usage in the U. S. is restricted to certain classes of people. Only 4 to 8 percent of people in poor families—making under \$ 10,000—have any access to a computer. In families with middle incomes—about \$ 34,000 a year—only about a quarter have access to computers. In those families making over \$ 75,000, computer use jumps to 65 percent.

The vast majority of poor folks have *no connections* at all

In the first half of this century, U. S. capitalists hired armies of workers to lay railroad lines for the first time in Central America—connecting the rural interiors to the "outside world".

Such new connections served the capitalists. Honduras, for example, did not get a transportation system that united the country and its economy. Instead, the railroads led straight from banana plantations to the harbors along the coast—so the United Fruit Company could quickly move fruit to the world market. And Honduras' capital Tegucigalpa was *completely* bypassed by those new rail lines and remained without rail connection to the coast or the country's plantation areas. That's how *imperialist* development works.

A similar, updated version of this same process marks the structure, use, content and growth of the internet. Like the Yankee railroads once penetrated rural Honduras—the internet is linking key economic sectors, key research institutions and key strata throughout the world more and more closely to the United States and other imperialist countries—and to the corporations and militaries of those imperialist countries.

Many people are righteously working to use openings on the Internet to serve the people. But overall, the capitalist imperialist system is twisting such new communications system to serve its class interests—creating an Internet that reflect and reinforces all the intense and criminal inequalities of today's capitalist world market.

The Internet has caused many people to dream about worldwide communications between people—breaking down barriers of nation and class. But this capitalist system perverts everything it touches shapes the technologies under its control into new means of oppression and exploitation.

to computers or the Internet. And poor kids aren't being trained for it. Students in poor neighborhoods often get decent textbooks and sometimes have to study in gyms or hallways because of crumbling class rooms. The system is obviously not financing these poor schools with the kind of expensive computers and computer training that have become "normal" in the wealthy suburban schools!

That's why millions of people say, "The information super-highway don't stop in my hood".

As PCs have become an everyday part of entry-level office work in the U.S.—millions of people feel themselves being further and further cut off from even that. Meanwhile, the computers are eliminating many kinds of clerical jobs in business—and are used to "rationalize" all kinds of production and inventory to further reduce jobs and speed up work. Poor and working people are not only largely shut out of the "computer revolution"—but that "computer revolution" is also helping to shut them out of jobs and opportunities that were once open to them.

Control the Use and the Content

From the beginning of the Internet, capitalism has also maintained considerable control over what information is available in cyberspace. The Internet wasn't set up to encourage solidarity among oppressed people! Some people are working to do that on the Internet—and the system is working to place increased obstacles in their path, including censorship, spying and outright police attacks. But from the start, the Internet was intended to serve imperialism. It started during

the 1970s as a secret system for connecting U. S. military researchers.

As it has grown, it has remained heavily dominated by the U. S. and by the English language. If you want access to this world of information, you're forced to learn the language of the dominant imperialist power.

And the content of the Internet has heavily reflected the reactionary values and needs of the system—from massive military traffic during the Gulf War, to the heavy focus on "technology for profit".

Just one example: *The Internet Report* casually describes pornography as a "major, early-stage driver" of Internet development. Thanks to capitalism, global computerized communications immediately became a new vehicle for the exploitation

of women. Huge Internet resources are dedicated to circulating pornographic pictures. And the Internet has become a market place where men with money can browse "personal page" catalogues where hundreds and hundreds of Third World women are offered for sale.

In a typical reactionary twist; this capitalist pornography then becomes the justification for carrying out government censorship of the Internet—which will inevitably be turned against anti-capitalist currents on the Net.

Elaborate plans have been worked up to more tightly control what will be available on the Internet—to restrict the flow of "dangerous" information, to increase the security of banking transactions, to more easily

(contd. P. 8)

Bangalore is the boom town of India's "Computer revolution". Citibank, American Express, General Electric, IBM, Reebok, Texas Instruments, Hewlett-Packard, and Compaq Computer are a few of the many companies that depend on computer software custom—developed in Bangalore and other Indian cities. AT&T's NCR and Motorola both have facilities at Bangalore. And to supply computer parts to this growing industry international corporations like Fujitsu, Compaq, and Dell are paying Indian workers about \$ 50 a month to manufacture computer hardware—like key boards and mother boards.

There is only one reason for this explosion of investment and activity: under imperialist plunder people are extremely poor. Computers programmers can be hired for less than dollars 10,000 a year—one fifth of the salaries paid in imperialist countries.

Investors constantly remark that India has the second largest scientific community in the English-speaking world—more than 3 million scientists and technicians. Bangalore alone has 14 engineering colleges, 47 poly technics and many research institutes. Though centuries of colonial domination, the Indian upper classes have been trained in English to serve imperialism better.

Now imperialism, especially US imperialism, has found a new high-tech way of making money from India's poverty and low wage technical classes.

Africa and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought

[Extracts from a paper presented by representative of Union of Progressive Movement (UMP) Zaire, now called Congress of Progressives for Liberation (CPL)- Zaire, at Hyderabad Seminar in March 1995. Reproduced from International Newsletter, published by JCG—R.S]

We do not need any expert to confirm the deterioration of the material conditions of the people of Africa, particularly south of the Sahara. Social collapse and genocide have become the keywords to describe the situation in Africa. At the same time we do not see any stirring of social forces aimed at bringing down the neocolonial order which is responsible for the disaster of our times, despite the existence of the working masses. The ideologues of imperialism speak of the recolonization of the continent as a solution to its problem. American "scientists" even undertake research on the blacks genes to prove the source of their incapacity. The African revolutionary movement seems to be on the ebb. Therefore, we understand that the ripening of the objective conditions alone cannot generate revolution as long as the subjective conditions fail to ripen.

The role of revolutionary theory in all social movements for the overthrow of the oppressive order cannot be denied. The most important merit of Marx and Engels, says Lenin, is that they gave a theoretical foundation to the historical role of the proletariat as an imposing revolutionary force capable of destroying the capitalist regime and establishing a new society, a communist society. They showed the proletariat and the

working masses the way to emancipation, proved the necessity of the communist party as a leading force in the workers' movement, and elaborated the scientific foundations of its strategy and tactics.

Today the necessity of Marxism-Leninism for the national liberation movement in Africa is unquestionable. The existing poverty of the African revolutionary movement shows that the essential elements of the classics pointed out by Lenin are still relevant. Correct analysis of the neocolonial system and the confidence that the revolutionary way is the only means to liberate subjected peoples cannot be the result of a simple report of local daily deterioration. Use of the theory is indispensable in order to understand and assimilate one's own experiences and those of other struggles all over the world—the struggle of the proletariat against capitalism, and the struggle of the peoples against imperialism. So, Marxism-Leninism is in fact important for the national liberation struggle and social emancipation in Africa.

The reduction of Marxist influence in Africa has made the introduction of all kinds of neocolonial, petty-bourgeois and confusing theses possible. Instead of the establishment of parties representing the working class interest, the establishment of non-governmental organisations were recommended as the solution to the fundamental problems of the masses of the people. The international community, we mean the IMF and the World Bank, have suppressed all local collective initiatives. In such confusion, it was difficult for the people to realize the alliance of the pro-

letariat and the peasantry, which is a necessary condition to form a striking force of the African revolution. Marxist-Leninist parties are, in the present conditions, the only effective instrument to prevent the extermination of the African people. The extent of the genocide in Rwanda is partly due to the absence of such a party. On the national level, we know now that the military superiority of the neocolonial regime was not enough to eliminate one million people in three or four weeks. The agents of neocolonialism has spread the ideology of the extreme right.

This has been decisive in reducing the resistance of the Rwandese people to nothing, leading a part of the population to collaborate with the fascists. On the international level, the propaganda line of the imperialist-controlled mass media has hindered the solidarity of democrats and revolutionaries of the world with the people to denounce the Western powers who supported the slaughterers. The political conflicts related to the neocolonial crisis are presented as conflicts caused by ethnic hatred among the blacks and are explained away by the line that they are used to killing each other. Only a Marxist party capable of making a correct analysis of African societies and educating the working masses could, on the one hand protect them from the influence of the ideology of the extreme right and, on the other hand furnish on an international scale the necessary means to refute imperialist propaganda.

The October Revolution and the Chinese revolution, fruit of Marxist thought, did not leave the African people unco-

cerned. They were the best examples of liberation and produced reliable allies. The national liberation movement became more radical. We had unquestionable victories over imperia-

lism, even if some of them ended in an impasse. In the fifties and the sixties, nobody could call himself revolutionary without having had any contact with Marxism-Leninism and

Mao Zedong Thought, even if only sporadically. Several mass and guerrilla movements called themselves Marxist. These included the insurrections of Congo-Kinshasa, Congo-Brazzaville, Cameroon, the guerrillas of Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and many others. We do not know of any large progressive mass movement that did not come in contact with Marxism-Leninism: some closely and others distantly. Although the contact between Marxism-Leninism and African revolutionary movements is a reality, it remains nevertheless

California's Silicon Valley is a worldwide symbol of high-tech promises. People are told that the spread of computers and the Internet will "revolutionize" human society—bringing about a prosperous "post industrial" world where information replaces labor—where humans make and remake their world using putty-colored keyboards and optical telephone wires. Overnight millionaires from Silicon Valley are featured on magazine covers and toasted on Wall Street—as if a new age has been flowing from their little capitalist heads.

A recent cover story on the struggle of janitors in Silicon Valley, *Nation* magazine (May 27), reports that fully a third of the workers in Silicon Valley itself make less than \$15,000 a year. And many of their \$6 or \$7-an-hour jobs have gotten shakier—thanks to the system-wide trends of daywork, subcontracting, and no benefits that have all been accelerated by computerization.

One Internet report for stock investors estimates that "the PC industry has created more than \$250 billion in net shareholder value". There is nothing "post industrial" about this wealth: the whole "computer revolution" is built on the exploitation of working people, often women, at extremely low wages, in the belts of factories concentrated around the Pacific Rim—in South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, and the U.S.

Every computer screen and system board is made by human hands. Every robot on every computer assembly line is wired, machined, and programmed by human labor. The new corporate palaces of Silicon Valley were built, wired and landscaped by working people. The computers themselves are packaged, and then moved across the world by rail and ship—by armies of working people. All this work and creativity is sucked up by the financiers of an ever more monopolized industry.

Next door to Silicon Valley is East Palo Alto where many of the lower paid workers from Silicon Valley live. In fact, you can look across the freeway from the "corporate campus" of Hewlett Packard and see the barrio streets of East Palo Alto. In one year, the sales of Hewlett-Packard jumped 26 percent to \$31 billion. Meanwhile, official figures show that the poverty rate among local children has grown from 10 to 13 percent during the last seven years of Silicon Valley's "gold rush".

In East Palo Alto, immigrant workers often sleep crowded together on apartment floors. Here, just a few miles from the nerve center of capitalism's so-called "computer revolution," East Palo Alto doesn't even have a single ATM machine for computerized banking—let alone a "wired" school for the children of the workers.

(from P. 6)

reach every corporate and military outpost in the world. The system is being rapidly "privatized"—which means that all kinds of corporate "firewalls" will be used to screen information and access. New commercial "gates" are already being set up—where people will need to identify themselves and pay digital money to move from one part of the Internet to another.

As the Internet becomes more important in ordinary business dealings, reactionary governments are exploring new ways to remain open to imperialism's economic penetration, while maintaining tight control over the political activity of Internet users in their countries. For example China's counterrevolutionary government is pioneering an "intranet" operating within China that will then be hooked up to the international Internet in tightly controlled ways. "There will be nothing illegal on the network so censorship will not be a problem", said Joyce Wong, vice president of China Internet Corp.

[Mike Ely in Revolutionary Worker]

Heroic Struggle of Umraniye Prisoners

[The hunger strike struggle of Turkish political prisoners has started enthusing massive people's action on the streets. The martyrdom of the first revolutionary prisoner after 63 days of hunger strike for democratic rights is continuing with more prisoners joining hunger strike till death or victory. International solidarity is called for in support of this struggle—R.S.]
On 4 January 1996, "secur-

ity" forces of Turkish fascist dictatorship (gendarme, special teams and prison guards) mounted an attack on political detainees and prisoners in the high security Umraniye prison in Istanbul. Three revolutionaries had been killed on the scene and a fourth died in hospital a week later. More than thirty revolutionaries were wounded, most of them seriously. Doctors and nurses in the hosp-

itals where the wounded were taken, told the press that almost all the wounded revolutionaries had received serious blows on their heads. This clearly showed the homicidal intentions of the torturers and hangmen of the regime, who without doubt acted on orders from "high" places. The heroic resistance of revolutionary detainees and prisoners prevented the death toll from rising. They

small and superficial. Marxism-Leninism penetrated Africa more through revisionist misrepresentation which robbed it of its revolutionary essence. "Marxist" works did not go beyond the petty bourgeois sphere. Marxist thought are practically not translated into African languages south of the Sahara. So the theory is not accessible to the broad masses. The immediate consequence is that African Marxists do not care to make profound studies in order to understand the specific problems of Africa. For example, in many regions, the issue of peasant demand for land is not a big problem. What specific slogans should be used in order to mobilize the peasants so that they join the revolutionary movement? In Zaire and Cameroon, the rural guerrillas did not have a long lasting impact. Among other reasons, the revolutionary leaders of these movements simply plagiarized Mao's texts about working among the peasants. The work of revisionism has been disastrous: putschism replaced people's war, the petty bourgeois party replaced the proletarian party.

Among those who were

presented as great Maoists who recommended popular struggle we saw that they only retained its rebellious spirit, its tactic of surrounding the city from the countryside. But they did not retain much of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism directed at the necessity of concrete analysis of concrete conditions and of the existence of the party. This practice is not the exclusive right of African revolutionaries; many parties and Marxist-Leninist currents throughout the world have regularly committed the same mistakes.

Many "Marxist-Leninists" have abandoned the positions of the great thinkers of Marxism-Leninism. Marx, Lenin and Mao, throughout their practice, were not simply content with the conclusions of their predecessors. They systematically developed theory at all times, which led them back regularly to dialectical and historical materialism. They knew that the best way to understand the conclusions of others was to be certain of the method used. They could thus correctly relate the conclusions to the context of the period when the thinker made his studies. For example, Lenin complemented Marx when

he designated the poor peasantry as the proletariat's ally in the revolution in a backward country. Mao complemented Lenin when he elaborated the strategy of protracted people's war.

All this means that even if we have a high opinion of a Marxist thinker, we should never dwell only on his practical conclusions. Without belittling the practical victory of socialism as a means of stimulating the revolutionaries to draw their inspiration from Marxist classics, we should, in the Marxist spirit, further make profound studies of all big problems that we encounter in organizing society in waging class struggle, and in building the party.

The African revolutionaries have the urgent task of making Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought penetrate deeply into the working masses by translating them into the people's languages, making specific studies, and founding proletarian parties. That is vital necessity because the salvation of Africa will come only with the mobilization of the people against imperialist domination and the building of a new society, a socialist society.

A Gigantic Strike Wave

(Reproduced from Red Dawn, MLCP of Turkey—R. S)

Through September October 1995, Turkey was shaken by the strike and struggle of undreds of thousands of public sector workers. This gigantic strike wave began to rise on 8 September with the strike of 32,000 agricultural workers employed in public sector. In time they were joined by workers employed in various sectors, such as railroads, marine transportation, leather and shoe manufacturing, highway construction and maintenance, petrochemicals, coal mining, iron and steel works, paper production etc. The immediate cause of this strike wave, embracing at its height more than 300,000 workers, was the deadlock in talks over

wage hikes between labour unions and directors of public corporations. As usual, increases in wage levels were outrun by the galloping inflation, which has been on the order of 90—100 per cent in 1994 and 1995. Fascist dictatorship of collaborationist monopolist bourgeoisie, who with the prompting of IMF and World Bank had been trying to get out of the mire of economic recession by lowering the already low standard of living of toiling masses, had intensified its efforts toward privatization and deunionization, especially following the implementation of 5 April 1994 austerity program. These attempts
(contd. P. 12)

put up barricades and fought back against their oppressors. Scores of prison guards and soldiers were wounded during the clashes.

The authorities tried to justify this preplanned barbaric attack of theirs on the ground that there had occurred a so-called "uprising" in Umraniye dungeon. Of course everybody knows that this is a despicable lie of US-backed reaction who has been trying to "pacify" the glorious resistance of revolutionary detainees and prisoners, especially since the military-fascist coup d'etat of September, 1980. But it has failed miserably. It has not been able to prevent prisons from being transformed into revolutionary schools and one of the most important foci of resistance against fascism.

Communist, revolutionary and anti-fascist forces, including the relatives of revolutionary prisoners, progressive intellectuals and some mass organizations all over Turkey organized various protest actions against his latest outrage of fascist regime, during some of which, clashes occurred with the "security" forces of reaction.

One of the most notable of these actions were the detention of scores of prison directors and prison guards by revolutionary prisoners in Bayrampasa (Istanbul), Merkez Kapali (Ankara) and Buca (Izmir) prisons. These hostages, who were not harmed in any way, would be released about a week later, upon the acceptance of various demands of imprisoned revolutionaries by the authorities.

Fascist regime, whose blood-thirsty features were thoroughly exposed and who was politically defeated in this particular confrontation, tried to avenge its fiasco by detaining more than 1,000 people during the funeral procession of three martyred revolutionaries (Riza Boybas, Orhan Ozen and Abdulmecid Seckin) on 8 January and by destroying the wreaths to be laid upon the tombs, including that of Human Rights Association. Among those that were detained, a revolutionary press correspondent (Metin Gokepe) would also be massacred in police custody. His funeral procession, held on 11th of January was also transformed into a mighty anti-fascist rally.

MLKP (Marxist Leninist Communist Party) issued a declaration on 5 January 1996 in response to the massacre in Umraniye dungeon. In sum it said:

"Fascist dictatorship of capital shedded blood in dungeons again. Hordes of murderers massacred three revolutionaries and wounded tens of them in their attack on Umraniye Prison. These attacks are planned beforehand. The regime aims to destroy revolutionaries, who do not capitulate and reject enslavement. Defenseless captives who are interned behind prison walls are massacred with rifle butts, iron bars, clubs and with bullets where the former remain inadequate. The wounded and gravely ill revolutionaries are abandoned to death. This is nothing but the practical application of General Evren's (head of the junta that carried out the US inspired fascist coup d'etat of September 1980) policy, who has gained notoreity for saying "shall we feed the (interned) revolutionaries, instead of hanging them?"

More on the question of NGOs

Note: Recently we received a letter from Mr. Radhanath Pradhan, president, Samajvadi Janaparishad, Orissa expressing his view that he is in full consonance with the position of Red Star on NGOs/VOs. He noted that Prof. Noam Chomsky left out this important question of NGOs during his speeches in India. "He (Chomsky) failed to mention that the fantastic mushrooming of NGOs under the cloak of social service in the third world is never a matter of sheer chance, coincidence or philanthropic exercises. The proliferation is being calculatedly promoted by the same imperialist forces patronising GATT, IMF, World Bank etc. The inroads of MNCs in to third world economy and the overwhelming multiplication of the NGOs on the socio-cultural and political grassroots front are the two sides of the same neo colonialist-imperialist coin".

So Mr. Pradhan wrote to Chomsky pointing out this question. We are reproducing relevant aspects of his letter. To this letter Chomsky replied and relevant parts of this also reproduced from the copies of the letters Mr. Pradhan has send to us for publication. In this letter to us, he has expressed his differences with Mr. Chomsky's reply as follows: "I have a difference of opinion with regard to Prof. Chomsky's letter when he says "some NGOs have been engaged in constructive work". I want to assert that "constructive work" at the micro level is of no consequence and hence it must be no excuse to overlook the real dangers that lie at the macro level. If moral degeneration and depoliticisation are the net outcome of the NGOism, what actually matters is what comes out finally at the macro levels- this stark reality one must note lose sight of". And Mr. Pradhan intends, to continue this debate with Prof. Chomsky on this vital subject.

These are days when increasing number of intellectuals including "recognised" left intellectuals are becoming ardent advocates of NGOism. "Atleast they are doing something" is the justification heard everywhere. Also they ask "are not a good number of the young men and women working in these NGOs sincere?" Yes they are doing "something" and no one deny the sincerity of many of these young men and women. But that is not the basic

question as Mr. Pradhan explains. At macro level what are the results of this NGO ideology and the plans hatched by the NGO leaderships and the forces behind them are the basic question. Are they not consciously replacing social revolution with reformism, and socialism with cosmic changes within the neo colonial system? When the toiling masses around the world are coming under all forms of exploitation and repression increasingly, this ideology is becoming a tool of imperialism to divert them from the path of class struggle for fundamental changes. And this ideological struggle against NGOism as a tool of imperialist system is necessary even to win over the tens of thousands of youth who are now recruited by these organisations.

It is in this context we have launched an ideological struggle against NGO/VOs in these columns. So we have pleasure to publish the letter of Mr. Pradhan and Prof. Chomsky's response to it on this issue.

Extracts from Mr. Pradhan's letter dated 22 March '96

.....The controversial new economic policy of 'liberalisation' pursued at the behest of GATT, IMF and the World Bank by the present Union Government run by the Congress (I) party and hypocritically opposed by all other big political parties in India has obligingly ensured the emergence of a new phenomenon now common to all other third world countries adopting the same policies. I call this phenomenon NGO Boom. NGOs or nongovernmental organisations are proliferating in these countries in alarming rate. Colossal amounts (in term of us the Third Worlders) of foreign funds from the developed countries are flowing into the third world through a host of funding agencies for carrying out broad spectrum social works. Literally speaking the third world is littered with innumerable NGOs designed to spend overseas funds on development projects of various hues and colours offered by American and European donor agencies camping at all over third world. Registered themselves with Governments of third world countries, these NGOs work on just every front and sphere of society engulfing all aspects of

education, nonformal education, health and human rights to forest, environment, agriculture, farming, industry, science, arts and what not. Whatever their declared objectives and roles may be, such is the approach, attitude and character of the NGOs in the name of generating mass awareness, people's self reliance, sustainable development, resource management etc. that the effects of their operation in the long run are becoming that of depoliticisation/depoliticalisation of people, deification of bureaucracy, mental incapacitation and intellectual enslavement of educated masses of these countries. Finally, it all amount to what can be termed 'derevolutionisations'. For me, and for many others like me in India.

it seems that the multinational corporations and their proteges, i.e., the World Bank, IMF and many UN agencies are promoting and patronising the NGO Boom in the third world as a roundabout complementary strategy to strengthen privatisation and weaning away governments from their own responsibilities. Seen at the macro level, the NGOs are used as instruments to render poor countries morally and governmentally weak and spineless on the one hand, and on the other, at the microlevel, these instruments are meant to reduce the masses, especially the educated youths into corrupt, detached, nonserious and relief minded nincompoops slavishly dependent on extraneous and unearned funds.

(from P. 10)

had paved the way for a series of militant working class actions right after the announcement of this IMF-inspired step. September and October 1995 actions of public sector workers were an aftermath, an extension of strikes and demonstrations that characterized 1994.

These strikes of public sector workers did not proceed in a peaceful and passive manner. At the beginning of strikes, in a lot of factories and workplaces workers commemorated with joy the long-awaited action. Strikes were accompanied with marches, demonstration, protest actions against employers and the governing bourgeois party, putting up of placard, reciprocal visits between striking workers etc. The 15 October meeting of workers in Ankara was the culmination of this gigantic strike action. 250,000 workers and their supporters came together on that day despite the threats of interior ministry of fascist dictatorship and sabotage of trade union bureaucrats. The police and gendarme took a series of measures to prevent masses of workers from coming to Ankara. MGK (NSC=National Security Council), a powerful body comprising top governing civilian politicians and chiefs of armed forces, the intelligence organization and the police, had already threatened workers and labor unions at the end of September and alleged that they wouldn't allow anyone "to infringe upon the laws". These measures included mobilization of local police and gendarme every where to

prevent workers' groups from leaving their home towns, issuance of stern warnings directed against bus companies transporting workers to Ankara and putting up of barricades at the gates of Ankara to deter workers from joining the meeting. At various places there occurred clashes between workers' groups and the police gendarme who tried to stop the marching masses. Workers, who lacked a revolutionary leadership and who despite all their militancy could not break the hegemony of trade union bureaucrats over themselves, overcame the barricades of 'security' forces and marched to Kizilay Square shouting various slogans such as, "We've Overcome the Barricades, We're in Ankara!", "We've Overcome the Barricades, Now It's Time to Overcome Capital!", "Long Live the unity of Workers!", "A Single Fist, A Single Barricade Against Capital!", Militants and sympathizers of Marxist Leninist Communist Party actively participated in the strike movement in general and the great meeting in Kizilay Square in particular. Together with the militants and sympathizers of other revolutionary organisations they contributed a lot to the heightening of morale and fighting mood of the masses. But this didn't suffice to ensure the victory of September-October 1995 strike action. All the same this strike action served as a revolutionary school both for communists and class conscious and ordinary workers and displayed once more the immense revolutionary potential of fighting proletariat.

The National Question in Africa

[Extracts from a paper presented by Com. Shambuyl Kalala of CPL-Zaire at New Delhi Seminar of February 1996 and reproduced from International Newsletter of JCG—R. S.]

The past ten years have witnessed the implosion of a number of African states followed by a wave of unheard-of violence. The case of Rwanda has so far been the most spectacular: in a space of three months, it lost about 15 percent of its population.

(from P. 12)

This is no place to deal at length with the phenomenon and I suppose, you are not unaware of it. Rather, I hope that you might have already given the necessary thought to the nature and implications of the NGO Boom. But contrary to my expectations, there was no reflection either in your interview or in the accompanying articles. Perhaps it was because there was no question put to you in this regard since journalists, intellectuals and statesmen in general largely seem to be ignorant of the devastating repercussions of the Boom.

I am very curious as also serious to know as to what you have to say on the matter—the NGO Boom or NGO phenomenon or, let me put it sarcastically, the Enjoy phenomenon. This phenomenon attracts still more indepth and extensive investigation. The thing must be seen in the light of 'globalisation' and from the perspective of the greedy interests of the developed countries, especially the United States. It urgently calls for a complete exposition which no research scholar or academic, as far as my knowledge goes, has systematically and comprehensively attempted at or, atleast appears to be interested in doing so. It also has got its own reasons, however.

April 22, 1996

Dear Mr. Pradhan,

..... On the policy of 'liberalisation', I would like to stress, as I did in several talks in India, that it is not really new in its major outlines. It is a variant of the policies that were imposed on India by force from the 18th century, while Britain resorted to massive protect-

Long before the Rwanda tragedy, Africa had experienced other tragedies: Uganda, Sierra Leone and Somalia. Other countries in the Great Lakes region, namely, Burundi and Zaire, are on the verge of exploding. The peoples of Africa, already decimated by famine and endemic diseases and confronted with a never-ending economic crisis, lead lives dominated by uncertainty. The bourgeois ideologues who control the world communications system point to ethnic differences (in some cases non-existent as will be seen below) as the explanation

and other violation of market principles is did the United States after it freed itself, from British rule, and every other developed society until the present day. That pattern proliferates throughout the world, and is a good part of the reason for the current divide between the first and third world. It would be more accurate to say that a form of "liberalisation" is being imposed by the International Financial Institutions—to be sure, with the assistance of local elites—while the wealthy and powerful continue to protect themselves from market discipline, notably in the United States.

On the NGOs, in the interview, as you suspected, I didn't comment because I wasn't asked. But I didn't discuss the matter much in my talks either, though perhaps I may add something if I write them up for publication as I've been asked to do. The phenomenon that you describe is indeed an interesting and important one, and the processes of depoliticization, mental incapacitation, etc., are of fundamental significance. I have written about some of these matters, though not specifically about NGOs. To my knowledge, the record with regard to NGOs is somewhat more varied than you indicate, and some have been engaged in constructive work, in combatting the processes you mention. But the general phenomenon you describe is surely real and very important and should be addressed in a serious way, all its variety. That requires close familiarity with the range of relevant cases, which is a small task, and one that should be undertaken by those on the scene.

Noam Chomsky

for the self-destruction of the peoples of Africa. They continue to regard Black people as savages, incapable of living harmoniously with each other and finding solutions to their most vital problems. Important questions such as those of colonialism and its consequences in Africa and the degree attained by the organization of class struggles along class lines are deliberately covered up.

It is not sufficient to be knowledgeable about events in order to understand the phenomenon of "self-destruction" afflicting African countries. One needs to go beyond the so-called scientific explanations offered by the dominant media and look for those which do not reflect their self-serving purposes.

Aspects of the National Question

The national question in Africa can be presented under two aspects: on the one hand, the resistance of the peoples of Africa against imperialist domination and, on the other, the internal confrontations often taking the form of ethnic conflict. These two aspects cannot be separated from each other because in both cases the common objective boils down to seeking to control state power.

Nationalism Against Imperialist Domination

Towards the end of the 50's, Sub-Saharan Africa entered the great movement of national liberation against colonial domination. Several countries attained political independence at the beginning of the 1960s. This nationalist movement, essentially of an anti-imperialist character, was mainly one of bringing the people together because they were all subjected to the same brutal domination of the Western powers. With his call for Pan-Africanism, Nkrumah sought to bring all independent African nations together into a single political community. Most of the political parties identified themselves by using "African" or "national" to their names, e. g. ANC (South Africa), PSA (Congo-Zaire), ZANU (Zimbabwe). There were political parties with regional tendencies, but on the whole they were marginal.

The various civil wars which broke out during this period pitted the neocolonial or

colonial state openly supported by Western military forces against the people led by nationalist organizations. Zaire was the first country to start an armed struggle against a neocolonial power. The popular insurrection of 1964 took over three-fourths of the country. It was brutally suppressed by the NATO interventionist troops, particularly from the United States and Belgium. That operation took a toll of 500,000 civilian lives. Armed struggle continued in countries still under colonial rule in the '70s, as in Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa.

In most of the independent countries, imperialism for the time being has defeated the popular insurrections that erupted against its domination. Through various maneuvers (coups, fake or bought elections), the neocolonial agents have taken over state power. Once they secured political power in the African countries, the Western military powers launched, without much trouble, their plans for economic exploitation. This plan was carried out in two phases and brought ruin and misery to the African peoples.

The first phase was that of "industrialization projects". The monopolies extracted enormous profits from the procurement of machinery, goods, parts and services and from the short-term loans of Western banks. Zaire alone landed three such projects which accounted for 30 percent of its external debt: a steel plant, a huge hydroelectric project coupled with the installation of a 2,000-km. long high-tension power line. Sure enough, these projects proved useless later on.

The second phase was that of structural adjustment programs which forced the African states to drastically cut social services in order to pay the interests on their foreign debts. This led to pauperization and triggered social tensions. In many African countries, colonial conquest had destroyed most of the traditional structures which provided collective security to all members of the community. Following the dismantling of colonial infrastructures, itself caused by relentless uncontrolled neocolonial exploitation, the state imploded. Tottering neocolonial structures sought to prop themselves up by resorting to ethnicity.

International Conflicts and Ethnicity

Whereas the crisis of the '60s was understood as a struggle of the nationalists against the colonial or neocolonial state, the crises of the '80s and the '90s are experienced as struggles between ethnic groups. With the weakening of the anti-imperialist movement in Africa, ethnic confrontation became identified with the crisis of the neocolonial state.

When the ideologues of the media monopolies speak of the African peoples, it has always been in a derogatory and contemptuous fashion, as if mutual hatred is endemic in Africa. Peaceful periods are presented as coinciding with the coming of Europeans who neutralized the antagonists. In other words, the same discourse which justified colonialism is refurbished today to justify neocolonialism.

Historically, such a description of mutual intolerance among the Africans is not sustained by evidence. In the 16th century, the Kongo Kingdom (which straddled the areas covered today by Angola, Zaire and the Republic of the Congo) included several diverse groups with different cultural affinities coexisting peacefully. Burundi has been a kingdom since the 17th century. The power of the kings rested on magico-religious conceptions, and the king was the one who ultimately guaranteed good harvests and the fertility of cows and women. The accumulation of capital was based on the accumulation of cattle as living capital. The society was composed of pastoralists (Abatutsi), cultivators (Abahutu) and another group which was neither pastoralist or agriculturist (Abatwa).

According to the European conception, a nation is a cultural community living on the same territory and, therefore, self-determination should mean having one's own state. The African reality is different. Several different cultural communities have begun to coalesce into a single political community.

The current so-called ethnic conflicts are much more the consequence of colonialism and neocolonialism. The carving up of Africa at the Berlin Conference in 1855 between European powers created territorial boundaries which did not take into account cultural, linguistic or religious ties. Many African countries today are like a mosaic of ethnic groups, some of them often straddling across two or three different states. Through their educational system, the

colonizers imposed a hierarchical view of the different groups in a single country. Thus, in Rwanda, the Tutsi were described as more intelligent and hardworking than the Hutu who were described as lazy.

The absence of serious agrarian reform has condemned the majority of the population to the level of subsistence, deprived of the benefits of scientific and technological progress in health and sanitation. A minority, generally intellectuals allied to the imperialists, was able to enrich itself by virtue of its positions of control in the state apparatus. To maintain itself in power, this minority scapegoats ethnic or regional antagonisms for the generalized poverty. The masses are drawn into these conflicts, deceived into believing that they have found an answer to their daily problems.

Most of the conflicts in Africa follow the logical predatory economies in the dependent countries. Political programs are presented by the warring sides as mere texts to satisfy the needs of "political marketing". In their practice, the authors of such manifestoes do not even follow them.

Exacerbation of Conflicts and Extreme Right Ideology

When one talks of ethnic conflicts resulting from colonialism or neocolonialism, some react by saying that we deliberately ignore the differences which characterize African communities. Far from it, the differences stemming from the culture or any other aspect still exist in all societies. But the question that concerns us is the one related to conflicts which might arise from these differences and especially the magnitude of self-destruction which follows. Colonialism and neocolonialism did not only create objective conditions which exacerbated the divisions. They also brought to it modern methods and techniques to buttress the ideological messages. The extreme Right in Africa is effectively used by imperialism.

Reactionary nationalism does not have clear-cut demands. In Katanga (Zaire), there has already been a regionalist movement which went after the people from Kasai (themselves also Zaireans), leaving 200,000 dead and more than a million displaced people. The Katangese nationalists treated the Kasais as though they were foreigners while treating the Belgian colonialists as though they were brothers.

On Socialism and the Re-making of Man

P. C. Joshi was the youngest of the accused in the Meerut Conspiracy case (1929-33). He later became the general secretary of the CPI from 1936 to 1948. It was a period when Marxism-Leninism as the great liberating ideology was enthusing countless fighters all over India to take up people's cause and fight for it organising the workers, peasants and other revolutionary sections against imperialism and feudalism. But in those crucial years in Indian history while the revolutionary struggle of organised workers, peasantry and other sections were growing from strength to strength, the central leadership of the party failed to lead this class struggle towards seizure of

political power by mobilising the masses with a clear-cut ideological political line. Though the Second Congress in 1948 removed P. C. Joshi from the CC itself and he was asked to make self-criticism for the policies of class-compromise, very soon, by the time of Third Congress in 1953, the central leadership once again embraced the very same policies of class compromise with Ajoy Ghosh as its general secretary. Without an objective analysis of this period during which the Communist movement in India went through many twists and turns, any evaluation of P. C. Joshi will remain incomplete. This is the major weakness of the 'Third P. C. Joshi Memorial

Lecture' by Hiren Mukherjee delivered in 1995 under the auspices of JNU's Archives on Contemporary History. This basic weakness is quite natural when H M is still reluctant to make a forthright evaluation of the movement in which he also played a not too insignificant role for a long time.

Still his P. C. J. M Lecture on "Socialism and the Re-making of Man: A Far Cry? Yet the Prime Proud Quest" * is significant that after four decades of deviations, at least some of the leaders of the undivided party of yesteryears like him are coming forward to criticise some of the errors and deviations of this period, and to criticise the imperialist system. While

The colonialists' divisive framework remains the same even if the conflicts are called ethnic. A group of intellectuals is supported by a foreign power and seizes state power. It then creates a base for itself. Lacking a serious program, it falls back on the tribe, the region or the clan—already confronted with poverty and miserable living conditions—in order to use them as its social base. All it needs to do next is find the imaginary enemy: cultural or physical differences which are the easiest to exploit.

Towards Which Kind of Solution?

It is clear that the major conflicts and the generally miserable conditions are the product of the impasse in which the continent has been trapped by the neocolonial system. The national and democratic revolution remains a valid response to such a situation. Its realization will create the opportunities for the African peoples to learn to better defend themselves against foreign domination and against the centrifugal forces that bring self-destruction. Such a

revolution will also increase their own self-confidence in learning to rely on their own positive traditions of solidarity so that they can eventually bring about the material and moral conditions which will contribute to their own prosperity.

Despite all the trauma it has gone through, from slave trade to colonization and neocolonization, Africa is in a constant process of redefining itself. Sustained revolutionary education can bring about a type of democratic society in which peoples are no longer looked at through the ethnic prism. It is necessary to build revolutionary parties of a new kind. The mere fact of these parties formulating clear and real demands and turning them into the demands of the masses of the people is already a powerful means of fighting against the kind of intoxication fomented by those who manipulate ethnic feelings. A real debate on politics at the service of the peoples of Africa understandable to all, can be one of the most serious ways of helping them defeat neocolonialism and its nefarious effects.

talking about the grievous setbacks to the ICM he cautions: "This disastrous disavowal of Stalin's long unheeded warning about intensification of class struggle with the advance of socialism and this stupid disregard of Mao's perennially precious instruction: 'never forget the class struggle', must be shed, or not only the struggle for socialism but a credibly human society would be soon a lost cause".

Then he cites some of the reasons for this deterioration: "Allergy towards ideology, erosion even repudiation of proletarian internationalism, growing illiteracy in Marxism in the leading ranks, indifference towards revolutionary ethics, minimisation of the strength and guile of the class enemy, growing contentment with lollipops from 'democracy's electoral confectionary', inability to sense and to repair breaches in the link with ever-suffering masses etc represent the cumulative causation of the debacle whose foul shadow hovers heavy over our good earth. History does nothing; it has no obligation to help our wishfulfillment; it is man, proud man who has to act and shape his destiny. Our moral - political stagnation, our acquiescence in wrong doing, our forgetfulness that we have to change ourselves before we can change the world—all this and more has led to the crisis that plagues civilization". In this context he quotes Lenin: "The alluring assurance that 'the historical locomotive' would reach us to our goal had its dangers and long ago Lenin warned Plekhanov against the illusion that things were pre-determined. 'The historical locomotive' can move if there is varied, exacting and prolonged human activity". Then he wonders "if the rot could not be traced to the 1943 self-dissolution of the Com-

munist International, prompted by perhaps ineluctable contemporary needs by contributing to a kind of slackness and an invitation to Yugoslov and other types of free lancing".

"Thoughts of easy and early triumph have enfeebled socialism even as its enemies ceaselessly sharpened their claws. Far more vile than we imagined, the world bourgeoisie, whatever their internecine dissensions, never forgot their failure to strangle the infant Soviets, never forgot the Soviet victory over fascism in spite of 'democratic' guile, never forgave the post-World War II stir for freedom in many continents, never relented in the resolve to destroy the 'focus of evil' Soviet Union, never stopped lulling socialism in to 'democratic' coma. While Stalin's warnings were disregarded except in China" we indulged in fantasies. "The enemies of socialism were more realistic".....How to get out of this mess should be the predominant concern for the socialist movement which, unhappily, is still dazed and debilitated by 'democratic' delusions".

Then HM confesses: "In 1956 the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, revealing ugliness in Soviet reality, made formulations that, though good in parts, were damaging to the roots of revolutionary belief and caused a schism debilitating the world struggle. People's China had responded then with its 'Long live Leninism' calls but.....the movement's response was tepid and worse. Confabulations of 'Twelve' (1957) and the 81 (1961) parties were insipid, the heart having gone out of the movement..... international tasks were shelved, the splendid Communist led upsurge in Southeast Asia fum-

bled and fell, the ghoulsh massacre (1965-67) of millions in Indonesia where Communism had spread roots could take place and by clever 'democratic' propaganda now even wiped out of Asian memory. Perhaps what we learn from history is that we do not learn from history".

Now "denigration of the Soviet role in the defeat of fascism (1941-45) and resistance subsequently to the Vilenesses of neocolonialism has been thrust down our throats..... How I wish that in these days of 'globalist' near-frenzy, of pragmatist pilgrimages for foreign investment and five star bonanzas, there were a few voices at least echoing Gandhi's statement in Court (1922): "the miserable little comforts of the town-dwellers (the bourgeoisie) in India represent the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, the profits and the brokerage being sucked from the masses. I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and the town-dwellers in India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unparalleled in history". But such utopian wishes could not lead one to uncompromising struggle against the colonisers and their brokers. By refusing to point it out HM proves that though he is compelled to react positively due to the pressure of new developments, basically he is still in the condition when he wrote 'Nehru', the Colossus".

It was in 1980s when HM visited Soviet Union "the fear entered my mind that the party, mammoth sized and infected by the craze for consumerism spreading in the age of electronics was failing its Mao given role of 'the social intellect, the social heart, and th

conscience of its time'. Thus, a Yeltsin..... needed one look at a western department store to sing the virtues of capitalism'. The imperialist could crush socialist hopes "with 'the end of ideology', 'the end of history', globalisation of the economy guaranteeing an eternal empire of greed and exploitation" with "Manmohan Singhs and 'Left' economists jubilating over globalism". One can easily recognise the anguish of HM when his one-time colleagues do not bother at all about what Marx said, "the inhuman, sophisticated, unnatural and imaginary appetites bred by private property that does not know how to change cruder need in to human need." Then HM tries to assert: 'there can be no devaluation however of such things as Sergei Eisenstein's view (1925) of the impact of revolution: 'I' turned into 'we', and in this 'we' there was a place for 'me'.'

In these days when his long time colleagues like Indrajit Gupta are enjoying working for the native ruling classes and imperialism openly, the fact that HM has said so much about the aspirations of socialism as the only positive goal before humanity, and about the degeneration of the forces from within to capitalist path itself is positive. But he exposes the very subjective and emotional character of these outbursts when at the end of his lecture he touches upon the possible remedies. He says "we in India seem to have no thoughts about intermediate technology, the small is beautiful' idea, the linking of socialism with the best in our own past".

It reminds us of the net result of the research work done by P. C. Joshi and that of K. Amodaran in JNU till their

last days. In spite of being involved in the practical movement for a long time such theoretical geniuses could contribute very little to the movement to get over the severe set-backs it is facing because of their refusal to stand firm on basic Marxist - Leninist positions in the fight against modern revisionism. They rejected the attempts of CPC under Mao's leadership in this direction and often opted for 'NewLeft' positions.

When HM talks about 'linking of socialism with the best in our own past' it is positive if it means carrying forward the struggle for socialism learning from the one century of Communist struggles and applying those lessons to the concrete conditions of today. But his calls for 'intermediate technology' and 'small is beautiful' as propagated and practiced today

shall only once again lead to reformist delusions. Most of the 'left' intellectuals getting frustrated by CPI, CPI (M) *realpolitik* are now embracing such reformist ideologies and even becoming spokespersons for VOs/NGOs. They refuse to heed the Marxist-Leninist teaching 'never forget the class struggle'. They refuse to study from history. They are 'impatient' about doing something and surrender to pragmatism.

In this context what HM has repeatedly stressed about giving primacy to theoretical studies to get over present set-back, learning from history, and not forgetting class struggle are very relevant. To that extent HM's evaluation of the past is more positive than those made by most of his contemporaries.

-Karthik

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AILRC CONFERENCE

The sixth biennial conference of the All India League for Revolutionary Culture (AILRC) was held at Madras, on 9th and 10th of August 1996. The organising committee comprising of three constituent units of AILRC from Tamil Nadu, People's Art and Literary Association (PALA), People's Art Forum (PAF) and Makkal Panpattu Peravai (MPP-People's Cultural Forum) gave leadership in organising it.

The conference started at the morning of 9th August with the hoisting of AILRC flag by Com: Sentharagai, poet and activist of Makkal Panpattu Peravai while the delegates from various constituent units of AILRC sung the song 'we are communists' by Com: Subbarao Panigrahi. It was sung in Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Hindi, Bengali etc. It was followed with the homage to martyrs. Delegates paid homage to all martyrs who laid down their lives for the cause of revolution and revolutionary culture and offered flowers at the martyr column. The conference Nagar named after the martyr *Comrade Appu* reverberated with slogans raised in different languages in honour of martyrs.

The art exhibition organised in honour of the great revolutionary artist Chitta Prasad was opened in the campus.

The inaugural session held at Com: Balan hall was presided over by Com: Varavara Rao, the General Secretary of AILRC. Com: L. Govindaswamy of PAF welcomed the delegates and guests on behalf of the organising committee. Dr. K. O. Kesavan the chief guest in his inaugural speech expressed his gratitude for the opportunity given to him to inaugurate the conference. He put forward certain ideas and views on the very concepts of revolution, culture, caste and its social forms etc. which were controversial in nature.

Prof. Hargopal of APCLC presented his paper on Education. In his paper he explained in detail about the pro-imperialist character of present day system of education in India. He has taken the subject out of the confines of the academic education system and explained on the educational functions of various media and related things. Prof. Hargopal stressed on the need of evolving people's concepts of education and to get it implemented against the pro-

imperialist educational concepts propagated and implemented by the state.

The evening session, ie the seminar on 'Imperialist onslaught-Our Cultural Resistance' was started with the presentation of paper by Com: Somasekharan on 'political economy of cultural Hegemony'. He spoke in detail on imperialist onslaught in cultural front exposing the close relationship between the imperialist economic supremacy and the structure of cultural hegemony. He stressed on the importance of the comprehensive understanding of imperialism and its neocolonial phase to strengthen the resistance of the multifaceted expressions of the same, culturally and ideologically. He pointed to the prominence of communication sector and the media in propagating the decadent imperialist culture. Criticising views like *cultural imperialism* put forward by writers like James Petras, Com. Somasekharan explained the link between the cultural industry and the process of imperialist capital formation. All the communication techniques like electronic media, tourism, educational and cultural exchanges are being used to promote the globalisation of capital. Com. Somasekharan pointed out that the contemporary cultural fashion of post modernism raised its head from the problematic premises where all scepticism of the future of capitalism is shed and the contemporary imperialism is considered as the end of history. The so-called post modernist philosophy which deliberately negates and dismisses the decisive role of class and class struggle is that it conforms with the cultural interests of imperialism. He opined that any reluctance or laxity from the part of revolutionary cultural activists and organisations to confront with the ideologies propagated by imperialists and their allies head on, with firm Marxist-Leninist understanding would be suicidal to revolutionary cultural practice.

Com. P. Varavara Rao, presented the Report about the activities taken up by AILRC and its various units after the last conference held in Hyderabad in September 1993.

In the *poet's session* poets from various states presented their poems. The session was co-ordinated by Com: Dorai Shanmugam of PALA.

Messages and greetings from various organisations and eminent personalities to the con-

ference were read out in between various speeches. Books like the Tamil Translation of 'Indian Big Bourgeoisie' of Suniti Kumar Ghosh (released by Com. C. Prasad), Tamil translation of W. C. Deb's book on Mao Tse Tung Thought (released by Com. P. K. Venugopalan) Telugu poetry on the late Com: Kumari-Jana Natya Kumari-Tamil book on struggling Singareni Mine Workers (released by Com: C. S. R. Prasad) and the audio cassette of Bengali Revolutionary Songs Sung by RWAIA Comrades (released by Com: Rambali Yadav) were released.

The programmes of the second day was begun with the seminar on 'imperialist onslaught on Cultural Front' and three papers were presented.

Com: Varavara Rao presented the paper on 'Literature in captivity' in which he stressed that it is the bounden duty of the revolutionary cultural activists to break the captivity imposed upon by the imperialists attempts of globalisation and homogenisation. He pointed out that the operation of imperialists in the realm of culture is so subtle that it becomes difficult to understand it superficially. Its manifestations are generally not easy to recognise or identify. Even those who can grasp the imperialist plunder and domination find it difficult to comprehend their penetration in literature. He said that imperialism's criteria for literature is enjoyment against enlightenment, individual against society, and statusquo against change. It tries to "manufacture consent" for bourgeois ideology, and the literature fostered by imperialism serves a counter-revolutionary objective. It is meant to create a submissive consciousness and to distort the people's efforts to bring about change. Com: V. V. stressed that a protracted struggle against imperialism is needed to throw the literature of this submissive ideology to dustbin.

Com: Natarajan of MPP presented the paper on 'cultural scene in Tamil Nadu' and Com: Maruthaiyan of PALA presented the paper on 'Globalisation and Nationalism-cultural challenges'.

The cultural procession started at 4.30 in the evening and wound its way to end at Sovidpet and thousands of people participated in the procession alongwith colourful cultural teams.

The public meeting held there was presided over by Com: Varavara Rao elected for another term as General Secretary by the General Body meeting held on 9th of August. The Gen-

eral Secretary introduced all the new executive committee members of AILRC to the public meeting including two Assistant Secretaries Com: Raj Kishore of KBS, Bihar and Com: P. K. Venugopalan of J. K. S. V, Kerala and the treasurer Com: C. S. R. Prasad of RWA, AP. Com: Govindaswamy, Kaliyappan, Kathiravan, Natarajan and Maruthaiyan also addressed the public meeting. Cultural programmes of various units were also presented.

The General Body of AILRC was convened on 11th of August and serious discussions took place on many of the vital issues related with revolutionary cultural practice. The necessity of stressing on a correct ideological orientation and to evolve effective and comprehensive programmes were emphasised. The General Body meeting elected a new editorial board for 'Amukh', the Hindi organ of AILRC comprising of Comrades Kanchan Kumar (Delhi) Raj-Kishore (KBS Bihar), P. K. Venugopalan (JKS V Kerala) and the General Secretary as ex-officio member.

The General Body and the conference unanimously passed the resolutions exposing the Deve Gowda ministry, which is a lackey of imperialism, condemning the brutal massacre of peasants at Bethani Tola in Bihar by Ranbir Sena; condemning the govt. policy of issuing licences to foreign trawlers and calling upon the democratic forces to unite with the struggling fisherfolk, and to expose the true character of NGOs who pretend to lead it; calling upon progressive forces to come forward to fight against the govt. policy of promoting sex tourism; condemning the state repression in Andhra, Bihar, Dandakaranya and other parts of the country and demanding to lift the ban on CPI (M L) People's war and six mass organisations in AP and KKC in Bihar; condemning the new economic policy followed by central and various state Govts; and calling upon all progressive secular forces to fight the efforts from the part of communal forces especially Hindutua forces to divide the working masses an communal lines.

As it paved way for serious discussions on basic issues of revolutionary cultural practice, the sixth conference of AILRC was of decisive importance. The discussions took place in the General Body showed that AILRC can march forward with a revolutionary line only if it shows maturity to take up the issues related with ideological orientation and cultural practice with due seriousness.

---Kumar---

INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Indonesia: State Suppression

Once again Indonesia is in the news. Suharto's military-fascist regime is challenged by working class and other toiling masses. Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of Sukarno, who was overthrown in a most bloody military coup three decades ago, is leading the popular revolt.

In 1965-66 the US imperialists, Islamic fundamentalists and military led by Suharto conspired to overthrow, to seize power, and to massacre the Communists and all radical forces. They killed more than 1.5 million wiping out Communist challenge to their fascist regime. From that time onwards Suharto regime has run the country in fascistic way surrendering to intense neo-colonisation. Suharto is very reliable comprador for US imperialists all these years.

Election of Megawati as chairperson of Indonesian Democratic Party three years ago created a centre for mobilisation of all democratic forces against the military-fascist regime. As IDP started giving expression to people's discontentment, army and state authorities started becoming panicky. They conspired with fifth columnists within IDP, recently organised a so-called 'national convention' of it, and replaced Megawati with a stooge of Suharto. As the military forcefully occupied IDP headquarters there was resistance. Police action has led to many deaths, hundreds of people getting injured and thousands of arrests.

But the agitation is taking a countrywide character. Suharto regime is going to be increasingly challenged in the coming days.

Monetarism in France

This crisis of imperialist system has caught France in its vortex. The 1997 ansterity budget cutting down several thousand public service posts in a bid to reduce government's deficit is going to intensify the crisis. Already France has one of the highest unemployment rates in Western Europe with over 3 million or 12% of country's active population out of work. In July alone the joblessness rose by another 28,000. Teenagers and those in their twenties are worst affected.

The crisis has made the French people afraid of the future. Those who have money prefer to save it rather than spending. As a

result building and construction industry has slumped. Small shops and petti businesses are folding up. High interest rates act as a disincentive to investment. Newspapers say 'joblessness up as consumer spending falls still further'.

Trade unions are demanding massive reduction in working hours of the workers. They also call for retirement at 55 years. They see that these measures will create new jobs. Meanwhile public opinion polls show that people anger against the imperialist ruling system is mounting. What is lacking is a party of the proletariat to channelise the mounting people's discontentment towards a revolutionary change.

End to welfare measures

US president Clinton has put an end to the 60 years old welfare programme created by Democrats during the New Deal of 1930s. He justified it by arguing that it would help to balance the Federal Budget. Meanwhile Republicans have claimed that it is their victory with their presidential candidate Dole claiming that "Clinton is climbing on board the Dole welfare reform proposal." Under pressure from the Republican majority Senate and House of Representatives Clinton has adopted this bill to win support of the monopoly bourgeoisie who want total abolition of all welfare policies.

As a result of this Clinton action which will salve \$ 55 billion over six years welfare aid given to 12.8 million and food stamps to almost 25.6 million will be cut. It would affect almost one fifth of the families with children as benefits given to them are withdrawn. The bill will eliminate 61 year old Federal guarantee of cash assistance for the poorest children. Responsibility for welfare is shifted to the states. As the Federal aid is stopped the states also will heavily cut these meaasures.

With this bill the barbarism of the imperialist system is becoming clearer. It will spend hundreds of billions of dollars for armament including nuclear arms and to promote subversion and policing all over the world, but it has no money to provide welfare for those who are made poor by the very same system.

How safe is nuclear energy?

Even 10 years after Chernobyl nuclear reactor explosion on 25 April 1986, and numerous incidents

INDIAN SCENE

Patents and WTO

It was against the wishes of Indian people expressed through countrywide protest movements the traitorous Rao government signed the imperialist GATT treaty on April 15, 1994. Following this India was asked to amend its 1970 Patent Act according to the provisions of the TRIPs of the GATT treaty by 31 December 1994.

On the one hand IMF-WB combine are compelling the debtor countries like India to implement liberalisation—privatisation—globalisation regime and to bring everything under market system. And WTO is supposed to be formed for ensuring free trade at international level. But patenting as envisaged in TRIPs goes diametrically against it. It promotes monopolies which should not have any place in free trade. Agreeing to patent provisions of TRIPs means surrendering to patent holders, which invariably now means surrendering to imperialist powers.

To comply with US deadline for amending patent act, keeping the parliament in the dark Rao government went for a presidential ordinance. But it was rejected by parliament in Feb 1995. Though in March an amended patent act managed to go through the Lok Sabha, it failed

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nts in many nuclear plants, the nuclear lobby is propagating and promoting nuclear energy option vigorously. The relevant point is that no sensible people will oppose nuclear energy potential if it can be produced and supplied without the danger of nuclear radiation. So the debate is not whether nuclear energy should be utilised or not as its present promoters claim. The debate is whether nuclear energy as it is today with numerous instances of nuclear radiation leakages and after Long Island and Chernobyl should be used till development of nuclear science and technology to ensure safe generation and supply is ensured.

Nuclear power stations are dangerous not only because they can blow up. They are dangerous even when they do not blow up at the present level of nuclear technology. After Chernobyl in a research conducted in 10 Russian plants it was found that water in surrounding areas were polluted and people became sick. Between 1991 and 1993 there were 152 nuclear

to muster support in Rajya Sabha. The bill lapsed due to 1996 elections. Now on July 2, the US has issued notice to parade India before the WTO for non-compliance of TRIPs provisions. As US government supports its huge pharmaceutical and fertiliser lobby which wants to capture the world market without fear of competition this pressure to amend even the 1970 Patent Act is going to mount in coming days.

On December 14, 1993, the Gujral Committee of parliament had expressed that a change in the patents regime (especially in relation to medicine) is disastrous for India. It added: "There is no denying the fact that the final outcome (of the new GATT) is not in the best interest of India on every count." Many state governments have filed suits in Supreme Court that GATT would destroy whatever federalism exists in India. Many retired Supreme Court judges have opined that the GATT is against Indian constitutional provisions. It is also pointed out by the democratic forces that while US is putting pressure for India to open up and accept the new GATT regime, US, EU, Japan are enforcing protectionism to safeguard their own market interests.

It is in this context the traitorous acts of Rao government to push through with amendments to patent act was condemned by the

catastrophies in 14 countries including US. In 1989 alone there were 860 stoppages of plants because of imminent danger.

The international nuclear lobby try to conceal these facts. When there are already nearly 500 reactors with 65 in Russia and 110 in US with possibility for radiation leakages and even an explosion at present level of its technology, it is ridiculous to talk that there is no other way out but to go for more reactors.

With present technology it is virtually impossible to make a reactor safe. The nuclear lobby which is concealing this fact should be resisted without compromise. It is profit motive behind MNCs and the imperialist agencies which creates and maintains this lobby. The comprador governments and comprador technocrats and bureaucrats work with this lobby for sharing the loot. So the struggle against nuclear reactors till the technology for safe reactors are developed should be waged uncompromisingly.

patriotic democratic forces all over the country. But now the silence on this issue by UF government both in its CMP as well as in budget or policy statements is ominous. There are all possibilities for the government to knuckle down before imperialist pressure.

It is the task of the patriotic democratic forces to raise their voice against patent sell-out to imperialists by the Gowda government.

Nagarhole project against adivasis

The World Bank aided eco development project for Nagarhole National Park is threatening the forcible displacement of more than 7000 adivasis from their traditional homeland in Kodagu and Mysore districts of Karnataka. It started with a Rs. 55 crore project in 1972 covering 180 sq. km. In 1975 the area was increased to 145 and in 1992 to 643sq. kms. Altogether 57 adivasi hamlets within this area will be removed.

Though the government is repeating that all evicted families will be suitably rehabilitated, experience teaches that it is not going to happen as in numerous other cases. It is propagated as if adivasis are the only obstacle to forest protection. On the contrary, timber contractors and poachers with the help of forest officials and ruling political leaderships are responsible for it.

Adivasis are leading a miserable life in this area as Forest Department is preventing them from collecting forest produces and from agricultural activity. From these two districts as pauperisation intensifies more than 25,000 adivasis have left for seeking employment outside.

The problem can be resolved at Nagarhole or anywhere else only by involving the adivasis in forest development and management. If this is worked out no WB 'aid' with huge interest liabilities will be required for forest protection. Instead, in the name of forest protection more and more forest areas are systematically destroyed.

All the progressive forces should extend all support to the struggle of adivasis in Nagarhole Project area against eviction.

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Now speculation is growing that the currency may be devalued any time. It can lead to a financial crisis similar to the one Mexico faced last year when investors ran for cover. Stock market index has already tumbled by 5%. Investment bankers and stock analysts are predicting further sharp declines in stocks and bonds as panic selling has started. The billions of dollars of foreign investment attracted by Cavallo's policies may disappear in no time.

The workers unions who organised the July 26 demonstration have called for a national strike in August which is expected to cripple the trucking and transportation lines besides other important sectors.

"Human development report 1996" of UN says India ranks 135th among all countries with very few countries like Bangladesh below it in health standards, sanitation, treatment of women and other indicators related to quality of life. UN report says that living standards worldwide between the wealthy and the poorest - both within and among the countries—are widening fast. In South Asia, notably in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan, 29% live in extreme poverty and 62% in conditions that could adversely affect their futures. The report also says that 358 billionaires control more than the combined income of countries with 45% of world population.

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Black flags greet Indrajit Gupta

On August 12 during the union home minister Indrajit Gupta's visit to Thrissur (Kerala), CPI (ML) Red Flag activists and supporters organised a militant black flag demonstration protesting against the massacre of agricultural workers and poor peasants as in Bhojpur, killing of communist revolutionaries in fake encounters, and against ever-intensifying state terror.

During Rao regime the state repression and attacks on the oppressed masses by landlord forces had reached unprecedented levels. Today the constituents of the UF regime are those who had protested, against these policies. But under Gowda regime these are pursued with more vigour exposing the real class character of Indian state and its functioning. Even after

TADA has lapsed, thousands of TADA detenees are still rotting in jails. New black laws like the one enacted by SS-BJP government in Maharashtra are imposed for imprisonment without trial. Army is continued to be deployed in large areas in the name of putting down 'disturbances'. At the same time fascist outfits like Ranavir Sena are promoted. Police, administration and ruling class parties of all varieties work hand in hand with these outfits. Gowda regime as well as the state governments led by different parties and coalitions are no exception to this general rule. Explaining these facts the demonstrators distributed handbills.

The demonstration evoked good people's response.

Gowda meets Thackeray

Dewagowda's meeting with Tackeray has exposed the hollowness of all secular credentials of the UF, the basis on which heterogenous parties including the 'Left Front' came together to form it. The justifications given by Gowda for this has only exposed his opportunism further. By now his regular visits to Rao's residence, and his 'pilgrimages' to the residences of various Congress leaders are seen as attempts to work out a support base of his own. Like Rao, Gowda is ready to go to any extent for this, and ready to seek support from any quarter. As a result, like he is protecting Rao from numerous scam cases, he is ready to help SS chief Thackeray to escape from the murder charges raised against his close relatives.

These manoeuvres of Gowda further exposes the level to which ruling class politics has degenerated.

Argentina on Mexico's path

Five years of economic reforms under finance minister Domingo Cavallo have ruined the life of vast majority of Argentines. Unem-

ployment has reached a record 17%. People are leaving the countryside migrating to the cities for subsistence. The shantytowns are mushrooming in urban areas. Unemployed are queing up even for menial jobs. No of beggars and prostitutes have increased alarmingly. In such a situation a series of cost-cutting measures announced by Cavallo in mid-July to bridge a budget deficit of \$ 2.51 billions have provoked organised working class and other sections to struggles.

On July 26 more than 30,000 demonstrated demanding the government to quit. Sensing people's mood president Menem sacked Cavallo replacing him with Roque Fernandez who is also expected to follow the same policies.

Under restructuring of economy adopted to check run away inflation all social welfare measures are cut. Education, healthcare and housing are becoming totally out of reach for majority. TV stations have broadcasted pictures of poor people eating even cats in the town of Rosario. This situation has compelled even Catholic Church to compare Menem government to the earlier military dictatorship that killed thousands of people and left the economy in ruins in the 1970s. Now family allowances to workers are cut. Their food vouchers are taxed. Opinion polls show that 70% of people oppose the economic reforms implemented under dictation from IMF-WB.

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