

# RED STAR

PLATFORM FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONARIES

September-2000

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**Ideology of New Social Movements**



**CPI(M) and Comprador Bourgeoisie**



**TUCI memorandum to  
2nd National Labour Commission**



**Forum Against Contract Labour System  
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**Importance of Land Reforms  
in the Reconstruction of China**



**Bal Thackeray's Arrest**



**Can Another Green Revolution  
Solve the Problem of Hunger**



**Veerappan Games**

# CPI (ML) Red Flag Observe August 15 as Anti-Imperialist Day

On this 15th August Delhi will witness a strange, but sham spectacle of Mr. Vajpayee speaking from the ramparts of Red Fort on the virtues of independence and national integration when his government has put to shame not only Narasimha Rao, but even the worst of the rajas and nawabs who betrayed and sold this country to British colonialists, when his government is becoming a convenient tool in the hands of US imperialism for its Balkanisation.

Vajpayee government's policies and actions are something like a record of sorts. Within the shortest possible time of two years it has done more than what Congress did all these years in betraying this country and the people. It has totally surrendered the country to globalisation. Its traitorous policies have led to neocolonial slavery reaching its zenith. After surrendering the commanding heights of Indian economy to imperialist interests, it organised Clinton's 'Rathayatra' through India as if he is the real lord of this land. To cap it all, Vajpayee and company allowed FBI to open its office in Delhi so that the Yankee masters can control his props more efficiently.

The days when RSS-BJP was talking about *swadeshi* are not very distant. Why even now the RSS chief Sudarshan is talking about *swadeshi* ! Talking *swadeshi* and shamelessly licking the boots of *videshis* !

Many were fooled by the talk of RSS-BJP about Akhand Bharat, Hindurashtra etc. They thought that a government led by BJP will not repeat what Indira Gandhi or Rajiv Gandhi did. But they are proved wrong. Like *swadeshi*, national integration for them is just a cliché to hoodwink the masses. In the name of national integrity home minister L.K. Advani attended the Erode convention organised by MDMK, which alongwith PMK stand for a 'pan tamil land', a step ahead of LTTE's Prabhakaran. Even when Advani was in the convention hall, speeches were going on secessionist virtues. Similarly Vajpayee and company who were very fast to reject Farooq Abdulla's autonomy call, they are ready to talk to Huriat, Hizbul like organisations who are not ready to talk anything less than secession or accession to Pakistan. Besides, to help this process RSS-BJP is consciously intensifying the alienation of Kashmiri people, by calling for trifurcation of Jammu & Kashmir on communal lines. Putting to shame the Congress leaders, Vajpayee government is consciously trying to disintegrate this country, serving US wishes.

15th August as the day of transfer of power still evokes patriotic emotion among many. But what Vajpayee and company lacks is exactly this very thing. They are not patriots, they are frantically selling the country's interests, intensifying neocolonial slavery.

So it is the duty of the patriots to expose these traitors. Let us observe August 15 as Anti-Imperialist Day and expose the traitors who are in power, who are excelling in national betrayal. □

1st August 2000

CPI (ML) Red Flag

## Vajpayee Government Responsible for Kashmir Massacres

The terrifying massacres in Kashmir once again prove that from Kargil to these massacres, the Kashmir situation has further worsened, and Vajpayee government is entirely responsible for it.

During the decades when Congress governments were proving incapable of solving this problem like all other important issues, BJP and RSS parivar behind it used to boast that once in power they will crush Kashmiri militancy in 24 hours and teach Pakistan a lesson. Instead, after coming to power Vajpayee government has dangerously worsened the situation.

If the Kargil conflict causing the loss of thousands of precious lives, and huge material loss was due to its totally inept handling of defence and internal security sectors, the hijacking of Indian Airline plane and latest massacres show that it cannot absolve itself from them by mere Pakistan-bashing. It has not tried to win over the confidence of the Kashmiri people or to provide semblance of a just administration to them.

On the contrary, through its demand for scrapping of Article 370 of the Constitution, the jingoistic utterances following Pokhran II blasts and now through moves to trifurcate the state communally, it has alienated Kashmiri people further. When J&K assembly passed the autonomy resolution, instead of trying to resolve the issue under Article 370, it rejected the autonomy demand summarily aggravating the alienation.

At the same time, under US dictates it is getting ready to negotiate with forces who are demanding secession and merger with Pakistan. It is shamelessly playing in the hands of US imperialism which is hell-bent for Balkanisation of our country. Thus the RSS outfits who were claiming themselves as advocates of "Akhand Bharat" are now serving the forces of national betrayal and disintegration.

Kashmir question can be resolved only by taking the people of Kashmir in to confidence, accepting autonomy under Article 370 and helping the people to have a just administration and development by throwing out the corrupt bureaucracy. Instead of pursuing such a political solution, by serving US interests it has worsened the situation. The result is total anarchy, chaos and massacres.

The Vajpayee government should be severely condemned for this state of affairs and held responsible for these massacres. □

3rd August 2000

CPI (ML) Red Flag

# Can Another Green Revolution Solve the Problem of Hunger ?

When estimated 40% of the Indian people live below poverty line, and about one-fifth of world population go hungry in the beginning of this new millennium, how to end hunger is the most important people's issue in this 'world of splendor and riches' which the imperialists market through their media. In the 1960s, the Green Revolution was launched with the promise to end hunger through miracle seeds. The production did go up in many countries. The granaries started over-flowing. The Food Corporation of India faces a difficult situation at harvest times and is compelled to store lakhs of tons of food grains in the open due to want of storing space. But still the number of hungry people in India and elsewhere has only increased. That is, when leaps in production is compelling countries like US, Canada and Australia to dump millions of tons of food grains in the oceans, and government of India is selling 5 lakhs of tons of it at throw-away prices to big private traders, the cost of food grains are soaring up everywhere, tens of millions more are destined to go hungry.

What is the solution to this ? Monsanto, Novartis, Agr Evo, Dupont like giant chemical-cum-biotechnology MNCs are unanimous in their answer to this question. These corporations alongwith World Bank and international agencies assert that the hungry can be saved from hunger and starvation if these MNCs are allowed to launch a new version of Green Revolution utilising the giant leaps in the field of genetical, engineering. Like information technologies, genetical engineering is put forward as the panacea for solving the question of hunger.

Ofcourse increase in production is an important factor to solve problem of hunger. But, can increase in production alone solve it ? Numerous analyses show that, after Green Revolution of 1960s, the number of hungry people has only increased the world over. As in sub-Saharan region, where people once survived relying on subsistence farming, Green Revolution and export promotion policies coupled with ethnic conflicts only brought devastation and unprecedented impoverisation leading to the starvation deaths of many millions.

Green Revolution has caused dwindling of the number of agricultural plots, concentration of land in fewer hands or farms, increased requirement of fertilisers and chemicals, increasing ecological problems, exacerbation of unemployment in rural areas, migration to cities, and creation of huge slums in all urban centres. According to World Bank's own studies in 1980s, the increase in production did not help in bringing down the number of hungry people. The *Business Week* reported : " Even though Indian granaries are over flowing now, 5000 children die each day of malnutrition. One-third of India's population is poverty-stricken".

So the World Bank itself had to admit in a 1986 study that World hunger can be alleviated only by redistributing purchasing power and resources. When power, resources and land is getting concentrated in fewer hands, the number of poor is bound to grow. 1998 Annual Report of UN showed that while in 1996, 358 richest people in the world concentrated in their hands the same amount of wealth or money as of the 2.5 billion poorest, in 1997 just first 225 held the same. So, even if the bio-technology giants launch a new version of Green Revolution and produce more, from where the people will get the purchasing power ? Will not the new GR also lead to further concentration of land, wealth and power, and to further aggravation of poverty, hunger, starvation, as is being witnessed every where ?

The imperialists, their WB-like agencies and the MNCs are only cheating the people. More production alone is not the solution. The end of hunger can be realised only through a redistribution of wealth, with radical land reforms and employment for all. But the imperialist and comprador regimes will never allow it. So human race can realise a world without hunger only by overthrowing the ruling system, in all countries and at global level. Solution to hunger is not another Green Revolution, but a Red Revolution. □

■ Press Statements 2

**EDITORIAL**

■ Can another Green Revolution solve the problem of hunger ? 3

**POLEMIC**

■ CPI(M) and comprador bourgeoisie 4

**ARTICLE**

■ Environmental organisations and the ideological positions of New Social Movements 9

**ISSUES IN FOCUS**

■ TUCI demands before 2nd National Labour Commission 13

**WORKING CLASS ISSUES**

■ Memorandum of Forum Against Contract Labour System 17

**COMMENTS**

■ Bal Thackeray's arrest 19

■ CPI (M) and anti-terrorism law 20

**STATE NEWS**

■ Bhubaneswar Slum dwellers problems 20

**INTERNATIONAL SCENE**

■ The importance of Land Reforms in the reconstruction of China 21

**NATIONAL SCENE**

■ Against Dhamara-Chandbali port 23

■ Veerappan Games 24

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# CPI(M) and Comprador Bourgeoisie

Goutham

In our brief critic of CPI(M)'s Draft Updated Party Programme (Red Star, June issue) we had pointed out that in this draft also CPI(M) is not ready to go beyond the "dual character of the bourgeoisie" theory, and it still refuses to state which of these two characters "conflicts or collusion with imperialism" is the principal one. But even for a party like CPI(M), whose leadership has totally embraced social-democracy, it is not possible to contain or suppress the feelings of those members and intellectuals in its fold who dares to look around and tries to analyse the developments taking place, in spite of their leadership. What they see around them is the selling away of all vital interests of the country in all spheres, in all sectors. What one can understand from the contribution of CPI(M)'s politbureau member Prakash Karat to the "inner-party discussions" being serialised

in *People's Democracy* (16 July) is that the once 'neatly buried question' of the character of Indian bourgeoisie has once again come up disturbing the leadership. And Karat's explanations have made the issue only murkier and more confusing to those in his party who really care to bother about such 'unnecessary matters of detail'.

The question of the character of the bourgeoisie in a country is of vital importance in deciding who are the enemies and friends of revolution. The strategy and tactics of democratic revolution in a country basically hinges on it. That is why this question came up sharply during 1960s when the ideological struggle intensified within the Indian Communist Movement leading to the first and second splits in 1964 and 1969. As far as the left over CPI was concerned (hereafter called CPI) they openly advocated Krushchovite theory of non-capitalist path of development and the line of 'National Democratic Revolution', with Indian bourgeoisie

which is mainly 'national' in character, playing the vital role. For it the question is settled for ever. Mr Bardhan and company are not bothered even about the latest developments when under globalisation all vital interests of the country are sold lock-stock-and barrel to the imperialists led by the US imperialists and the 'real' character of Indian bourgeoisie is exposed nakedly. So one can safely leave out CPI leadership from such a discussion as they have once and for all opted out of Marxist positions even in words, except for their party name, flag, and false claims to the great

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traditions of the Indian Communist Movement.

But for the leadership of the CPI(M) which came in to existence following 1964 split, matters were not so simple. Most of the rank and file of undivided party had revolted and joined its ranks. They included those who were continuously struggling against the right deviation in the party from early 1950s, who were repeatedly raising the question: why the party failed to establish the leadership of the working class and its vanguard the independence movement, and who were seriously following the polemics within the International Communist Movement (ICM). Naturally the question of the character of Indian bourgeoisie became one of paramount importance in the inner party struggle within CPI(M). It was then the CPI(M) leadership came up with the novel idea of "dual character of the bourgeoisie". It explained that the bourgeoisie while collaborating with imperialism has its contradictions with imperialism also.

The foremost ideologue of CPI(M), EMS Namboodiripad steam-rolled over those who tried to characterise Indian bourgeoisie as *comprador* with, all his might and utilising methods of mechanical logic. Karat's present argument of "a bourgeoisie with an independent base" is a repetition of the position explained by EMS during 1960s and later, utilising the situation created by the results of Keynesian policies of state intervention then pursued by the imperialist bourgeoisie and at their behest by the bourgeoisie in the former colonial/semi-colonial/dependent countries, which were by then had come under various levels of neocolonisation. These included the nationalisation of banking and insurance, pursuing import-substitution policies and putting public sector undertakings (PSUs) at the commanding height of the economy etc. In this way EMS and the other CPI(M) ideologues pursuing his footsteps were always on the offensive citing empiricist examples to befuddle and confuse their followers so that they will not try to learn from the experiences and history of the ICM and concrete analysis of the concrete situation. EMS was leading the brigade which was vulgarising Marxist positions.

Now, the situation has changed. Keynesian days are over. Import substitution is not even heard now. These are days of neo-liberalisation or monetarism, of globalisation-liberalisation-privatisation regime. Export promotion is the catchword. IMF-WB-WTO trio are dictating terms to establish omnipotence of imperialist capital and market forces. MNCs have come to commanding positions in all fields. The consecutive governments from 1980s, and especially during 1990s have totally surrendered to these policies, and under Vajpayee's NDA government the 'economic reforms' are pursued at break-neck speed. What is happening is deindustrialisation in new forms, devastation of agriculture and small scale industries under dumping, and the domination of speculative capital through FDIs, FIIs and NRIs. In spite of all these, there is not even a murmur of protest from the bourgeoisie. On the contrary FICCI,

CII like chambers of big bourgeoisie are begging on and directing the consecutive governments to submit to imperialist globalisation. Naturally, these developments have raised questions regarding the character of Indian bourgeoisie once again. When "the updated programme maintains that the Indian bourgeoisie has a dual character" (Karat) and refuses to state which of these characters is the principal one, it is compelling even CPI(M) cadres and intellectuals, atleast those who have not become part of the ruling system totally, to raise doubts. That is why Karat has come out with the present explanation. But he is having neither the prowess of EMS, nor the present situation helps him. So his explanation has come out as a bundle of contradictions and distortion of Marxist positions.

**Identity and class interests of the bourgeoisie in Afro-Asian-Latin American countries.**

According to Karat "the big bourgeoisie which is today willing to act as junior partner of imperialist capital cannot obliterate its identity and class character". What is this great identity and class character of the big bourgeoisie he is talking about ?

It is part of our history, and history of all countries like ours that the colonialists who usurped the control of these countries destroyed the nascent productive forces, if any existed, and imposed deindustrialisation to prepare them as markets for manufactured goods from imperialist centres, and sources of raw materials. For this purpose they created a class of merchants and middle men locally. This origin of the bourgeoisie in colonial /semi-colonial/ dependent countries is clearly explained by the Sixth Congress of the Communist International (CI) (1928) when it described the bourgeoisie in these countries as *Comprador bourgeoisie*, as "native merchants in trade in imperialist centres, whose interests are in continuation of imperialist exploitation. They act as agents for exploiting the masses in the colonial countries". Again, "the comprador bourgeoisie in a colonial, dependent or backward country is a

servitor of foreign imperialism concerned mainly with trade operations connected with the export of indigenous raw materials and the import of manufactured goods from imperialist countries". Both these statements quoted by Karat show that

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the CI in continuation to Lenin's studies on imperialism and *Colonial Thesis* had perfect clarity on this question of *identity and class character* of the bourgeoisie in these countries.

The CI Theses talked about the general characteristics only. But the development of this comprador bourgeois class was uneven according to concrete conditions of different countries. The CI documents reveal a lively debate on this question though there were no significant contributions from the communist leadership of India. As far as CPC is concerned, it had repeatedly underlined the significance of the CI evaluation of colonial bourgeoisie as comprador bourgeoisie and contributed to this discussion. In the case of India, like China or much more than China, the merchant class functioning as middle men were developed in to manufacturing sector also, mainly preceding and during the First World War period, under compulsions of the war situation by the British Imperialists. Through the introduction of English education, besides this comprador bourgeoisie, a comprador bureaucratic bourgeoisie was also developed to run the Indian colony. In the agricultural sector, alongwith the introduction of Jamindari system, capitalist relations were also introduced for promoting the production of cotton, indigo etc required as raw materials by British industry, and large plantations were started, with the Indian owners even if few also serving the colonial system. So Karat's argument that "It was mainly the trading bourgeoisie and

merchant capital which acted as the compradors" basically contradicts the CI analysis and the concrete situation then. The role of Indian bourgeoisie during the independence struggle when it was satisfied with a dominion status, alongwith its 'Bombay Plan' very well revealed its comprador character. The analysis of Indian situation by the Second Congress of the party in 1948 substantiate this .

**Decolonisation and transfer of power**

According to Karat "the historical era when a comprador bourgeoisie was nurtured in colonial and semi-colonial countries is over"..... "after the Second World War, (when) the process of decolonisation accelerated and political independence was gained..." By stating these, Karat is going against all the Cominform documents, the evaluations in *For lasting peace*, *For People's Democracy* and even the assessments of the second and third Congresses of the CPI. Even Karat's party CPI(M) is not claiming that 1947 transfer of power was a bourgeois democratic revolution and India became an independent capitalist country. Semi-colonial, semi-feudal characterisation of India continued for long even in undivided CPI documents and publications. So, did any basic shift take place in 1947 that changed the basic character of Indian bourgeoisie from comprador to one having dual character ?

The post-World War II period was marked by the impact of the great victory over the fascist forces by world people led by Soviet Union, the mighty advance of the socialist forces, and the upsurge of national liberation movements. It was in this situation the policy of decolonisation was put forward by US imperialists who had come to the leadership of all other imperialist forces following their weakening as a consequence of the war. Decolonisation did not lead to gaining of independence as Karat repeats. Only formal independence was granted, introducing new forms of exploitation to continue imperialist hegemony.

During this period and after "the strategic objective of imperialism have been to grab and dominate the intermediate zone lying between US and the socialist camp, put down the revolutions of the oppressed people's and nations, proceed to destroy the socialist countries, and thus to subject all the peoples and countries of the world, including its allies, to domination and enslavement by US monopoly capital" (General line document of CPC, 1963). During 1963 polemics, the CPC also pointed out that "after World War II the imperialists have certainly not given up colonialism, but have merely adopted a new form, neo-colonialism". The developments during the post-War decades have proved the correctness of these evaluations. Against these, Karat like his predecessors are basing his arguments on theories like "the disappearance of colonialism", "new stage" etc put forward by the Krushchovites.

The transfer of power did not harm the imperialist interests in the main. Not only the British possessions were taken over, but all other imperislists mainly US imperislists were also allowed to enter in a big way. The whole state structure built up by the colonial rulers was continued. Even the Constitution was drafted mainly based on 1935 Govt. of India Act. The big bourgeoisie played the leading role in this whole process. In spite of some of the reforms policies implemented under compulsion from people's struggles, and the rhetoric against imperialism, not even once the Indian bourgeoisie and the government led by it went against the basic interests of imperialists camp. The Keynesian policies being implemented were marketed as 'socialist pattern of society' to cheat the people. These facts compel even Karat to admit that the relation of bourgeoisie with imperialism was an unequal one.

### **Transformation from merchants to big bourgeoisie**

The history of each big bourgeois family in India is well chronicled. These success stories explain their transformation from merchants to big bourgeoisie, from

option traders to manufactures of hundreds of items from iodised salt and cattle feeds to steel and most modern equipments. In this whole process stretching for two centuries or more, they always remained loyal to their mentors. Their close relations with Congress leaders during pre-1947 period was a lever for the imperislists to manipulate. In the post-1947 period the closest relation of Indian bourgeoisie with the imperialist system was often lauded by the

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imperislist leaders. From Keynesianism to monetarism, there was, or is any dichotomy between them. But still Karat, like his predecessors, finds it difficult to understand how the big bourgeoisie can become comprador! It is a question of correctly comprehending the social developments.

During the last three centuries or more, after the advent of capitalism on world scene, the global situation and its main actors have undergone many changes in all fields. For example capitalism developed to monopoly capitalism, imperialism. The pre-World War II period showed imperialist division of the Asian-African-Latin American countries among themselves, fighting over them and plundering them, the phase of colonialism.

Imperialism started transfer of finance capital, speeding up, 'the recreation of the world in its own image', and transforming the merchants or middle men class to manufacturing and banking bourgeoisie wherever needed to suit its interests. As already noted the War changed the situation and imperialists

were forced to adopt new forms of plunder, the beginning of the phase of neocolonialism. Throughout this entire period, the bourgeoisie which as *The Communist Manifesto* pointed out "has played a most revolutionary part" in history, became reactionary and altogether abandoned the banner of democracy. Now they are taking up the banner of fascism to impose world hegemony. There were 'Marxists' like Kautsky who refused to see this transformation in proper perspective and went over to the side of the imperialist bourgeoisie during World War I leading to the liquidation of the Second International. It was the Krushchovites position of peaceful co-existence with the imperialist bourgeoisie, based again on an erroneous evaluation, which has led to present severe setbacks to the ICM. Still CPI(M) leadership refuse to see how the Indian bourgeoisie remained and remains comprador, in spite of its transformation from the merchant class status. The 'bourgeoisie with an independent base' is only a delusion created by them to justify their drifting and, now steep fall to the path of social democracy.

History has proved that it is not the correctness of the line pursued by CPI(M) which weakened the naxalites. On the contrary, it was due to the sectarian line pursued by them under the influence of the sectarian positions then dominating the CPC. As a consequence, all the Marxist-Leninist parties which came up during that period faced set backs. In spite of these, the developments during the last three decades have proved the correctness of the basic positions upheld by the naxalite movement like characterisation of Indian bourgeoisie as comprador and stage of revolution, the consistent struggle against modern revisionism, and the question of seizure of political power as the central question of revolution to overthrow the comprador regime. It is this fact, which has compelled Karat to once again touch upon a debate which the CPI(M) leadership has repeatedly claimed that they have irrevocably clinched with stalwarts like EMS once leading the trade against 'dogmatic naxalites'. But recent developments have only proved the utter bankruptcy of their 'dual character' theory, not the naxalite position on Indian bourgeoisie.

## The updated programme's stand

The draft updated CPI(M) programme notes "the big bourgeoisie's increased collaboration with foreign finance capital in the 1990s". But even this under statement "has revived questions about the relevance of characterising the big bourgeoisie as comprador" within CPI(M) as Karat confesses. He is trying to sideline it as a non-issue by dubbing it merely as "a query arising more out of a genuine confusion on how to characterise this "collaborationist" role of the big bourgeoisie". By this he is trying to cover-up the fact that the confusions were within the CPI(M) leadership itself while facing the fast developments of last decade.

The globalisation offensive of imperialist camp and total surrender to it by the Indian bourgeoisie, marked by very quick back-tracking even from the 'Bombay Club' resolutions by ten of its fold during 1992 and the disappearances of Bombay Club like phenomena itself, confused the CPI(M) leadership compelling it to change its positions very fast, opportunistically. First, against the globalisation-liberation-privatisation, IMF-WB dictates and GATT proposals it came forward with an alternate plan headed by its Bengal government. Soon it was dropped, as Jyothi Basu government itself started implementing the provisions of 'New Economic Policies' and put forward 'new industrial policies' in line with them. Then come the statement that India is getting 'recolonised'. Against it, CPI(M) called for a second independence movement. It declared that a civil disobedience movement will be lunched with lakhs of people filling the jails. But as the movement was dropped in Bengal itself, it was abandoned. Though it opposed the GATT proposals in the beginning, later it supported Narsingha Raos government's decision of join WTO as 'there is no alternative'. This TINA concept overtook them shortly in all respects.

But after 1996 elections, it supported the two UF governments which fully implemented the NEP

pursuing the Congress path. And the failure to allow him to lead this as prime minister irked Jyothi Basu so much that he called it a *historical blunder*. Now even that phase is over. The updated draft programme is removing the hitherto obstacles for allowing one of its leaders to lead a UF government at centre to implement the very globalisation which it is criticising and claiming to oppose in the draft.

So all these self-contradictions, 180° turns, and opportunist shifts are made by the CPI(M) leadership continuously, with every new shift taking them nearer to ruling bourgeois positions as they have abandoned Marxist positions in the class analysis and in the analysis of the concrete situation. While CPI(M) was changing their positions fast, the bourgeoisie has basically continued with their identity and class interests in tact, even while their areas and forms of operation changing, dove-tailing with the imperialist interests.

### How much anti imperialist the bourgeoisie in neocolonies can become

From the theory of 'recolonisation', CPI(M) leadership has now taken a U turn. Now Karat is vouchsafing for the bourgeoisie, certifying that "it cannot obliterate its identity and class interests", that it cannot remain long without conflicting against imperialism! He is even anticipating "the potential for conflicts arising between sections of

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the Indian big bourgeoisie and imperialism". He is even citing examples of South Korea and Malaysia for how the bourgeoisie is trying to take independent positions from imperialists. It shows how far these social democrats can go to distort the reality.

South Korea is a country which maintains a huge US army base still on its soil. It is not to help to maintain

its sovereignty, but to keep the Korea divided. The 1997 bursting of the bubble of 'economic miracle' of the *Asian Tigers* proved how much their economy is dependent on the speculative capital flow from FDIs and FIIs. The whole economy is linked to giant MNCs operating from imperialist centres. The capitalist development has taken place in these *Asian Tigers* under imperialist domination. Karat is not unaware of this naked fact.

What about Malaysia? We do not say that the bourgeoisie in all the neocolonies have sunk to the same level. Like in the level of neocolonisation, in the comprador character of the bourgeoisie and political leaders of the ruling classes also there is unevenness. Some may be totally surrendering without much protest, while others will be doing it shouting anti-imperialist slogans. None, including Karat can claim that Malaysia is out of the globalisation process, or not under IMF-WB-WTO dictates. Even Mahathir will not claim so. What he is doing is to raise loud anti-imperialist slogans and organise much publicised seminars etc. to appease the people and to put down his opponents while allowing the globalisation to dominate. It is a fact of life.

Karat may go to the extent of calling South Africa even socialist, with CPI(M) having close relations with its ruling ANC. So one wonders why he has not quoted SA also for anti-imperialist virtues. Perhaps it may be because it is the proletariat led by ANC is ruling SA! A recent example of SA's anti-imperialism was that when one of the ANC leaders was challenging the IMF and WB by joining the Washington rally against them, the ANC finance minister was chairing the very same meeting of the board of governors of the Bank and the Fund. This is the true brand of the anti-imperialism of these bourgeois leaderships.

It is one thing to appreciate and laud every anti-imperialist action or even sentiments expressed by any section these days of imperialist barbarism intensifying day by day. But it is quite a different thing to evaluate the Malaysian, South

forces and the bourgeoisie behind them as anti-imperialist or having dual character. It is this basic deviation in analysing the class character of Indian bourgeoisie, the ruling system and of the political leaderships serving ruling class interests which has given the unusual credit of joining hands with practically all the parties belonging to the ruling spectrum some time or other to the CPI(M). It is not the concrete analysis of the concrete situation which guides its line of thinking. So it could join hands with BJP in 1989 in the name of defeating Congress, and is ready now to join with Congress or anyone else in the name of defeating BJP. It is parliamentary cretinism which guides their thinking and not class analysis.

### Development of capitalism and Indian bourgeoisie

According to Karat "The anachronistic use of the term 'comprador bourgeoisie' will miss the whole development of capitalism...". This statement raises two basic questions. One, is the capitalist-imperialist system against the development of capitalism in the countries under its domination? This was settled by *The Communist Manifesto* itself. It pointed out that capitalism is recreating the whole world including the vast regions it had started dominating in its own image. Karat is repeatedly challenging this basic Marxist position by 'cutting the legs according to the size of the shoes', repeating that capitalism developed and is developing in former colonies, and present neocolonies in conflict with imperialism. It has nothing to do with the concrete reality and Marxist analysis. It is imperialism which created the merchants and middle men, characterised correctly as compradors by the CI, in the colonial /semi-colonial/dependent countries, and with the beginning of export of finance capital it is through these compradors, in the main, the capitalist production was promoted in these countries. This answer the second question coming up from his non-Marxist analysis: is comprador bourgeoisie capable of developing manufacture?

Here, one has to answer Karat's statement that "being a bourgeoisie with an independent base it (the Indian bourgeoisie) maintains an organic relationship with the imperialist bourgeoisie *without sacrificing its own capital base*". From reliance on foreign capital, technology etc to fast shifts from import substitution to export promotion, from Keynesianism to monetarism, to total dove-tailing of its operations to international capital-market system, the Indian bourgeoisie, in the main, has exposed not *its independent base*, but its comprador character. Regarding, *sacrificing its own capital base*, it is ready to do so without any hesitation, so long as its share of the loot is assured. From Tata opening Telcom area at Jamshedpur to Cummins engines forcing dumping of its own engines to waste heaps, merging Tomco with Unilever, Brilas surrendering major portion of shares

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of Hindustan Motors of General Motors, Godrej's marketing taken over by P & G Groups, besides PSUs many of the production units of the corporate houses stopping production, to once famous Parles fight against Coco-Cola finally ending with Parle finding suitable space for it within the MNC's empire..... there are numerous examples for this.

Does it mean that the bourgeoisie as a whole will integrate with global imperialist capital-market system without any protest? No, there will be opposition from a section of the bourgeoisie. As the naxalites pointed out in line with CI and 1963 Great Debate positions from the beginning, the predominant section of the bourgeoisie led by big bourgeoisie is comprador in character. They constitute the ruling class. But there is a national bourgeoisie however weak they are at present. These two

sections represent the collaborating and conflicting sections of the bourgeoisie. As the revolutionary struggle starts gaining momentum the national bourgeoisies consisting sections of small and middle bourgeoisie and rich peasants or agricultural bourgeoisie will start openly coming to the side of democratic revolution, putting an end to their present relation with comprador bourgeois sections.

If one goes through the mode of production debate which started vigorously from 1960s and in which atleast some of the intellectuals linked to CPI(M) also participated, the overwhelming conclusion was against characterising Indian bourgeoisie as CPI(M) does. Many preferred to call the pre-1997 bourgeoisies as colonial bourgeoisie also. But then and now calling Indian bourgeoisie *dependent* as some does will only confuse, with the present connotations of 'dependency theory' are alien and confusing. Like colonial, one can call them neo-colonial bourgeoisie also to show the changing face of bourgeoisie. But basically there is a continuation to this class from its origin in 18th century itself as merchants or middle men. That is why the best term presently available to call them is comprador which the CI had consistently used and Cominform continued to do.

The basic question is not how one calls it, but what is the basic class character of Indian bourgeoisie. We are calling it comprador in CI tradition. CPI(M) has gone against the evaluation of this bourgeoisie by Colonial thesis, CI, Cominform and 1963 Great Debate. What Karat is trying to perform is an impossible task of justifying the social democratic positions of his party. The Communists in this country should wage a consistent struggle against CPI(M) position which has more nakedly come out in the updated draft programme, so that there is a struggle to establish the Marxist-Leninist ideological-political line and to speed up the reorganisation of the Communist Party in India. □



# Environmental Organisations and the Ideological Positions of New Social Movements

P.K. Venugopalan

**W**HAT the so called New Social Movements think about themselves is that they are engaged in serious criticism and struggles against the existing inhuman and hegemonic system. Most of these movements and the ideological system which they rely upon have taken shape during the last quarter of the 20th century. Ideologues of these movements introduce themselves as empathic with polluted nature, oppressed peoples, social sections subjected to ethnicidal aggressions, suppressed subalterns, violated human rights and with women subjected to gender discrimination. They further claim that they function in the vastness beyond the narrow confines of politics and they do not accept the divisive concepts of class and are 'neither right, nor left, but in front'.

Almost all New Social Movements select to be active in the 'non-class' spheres of dalit liberation, women's emancipation, environmental protection, human rights and the like. It is very important to note that all these movements or related organisations have emerged by criticising the leftist and Marxist concepts and movements which are fighting the class bias and hegemonic positions of the existing system ideologically and politically.

The Marxian thought argues that the prime reason for the crises confronted by the present day societies is the anti-people state which subjugate the majority of population, and the class relations which form the base for it, and that it is impossible to resolve those crises unless and until the oppressive state structure is destroyed and a new system is established by turning the existing class relations upside down. All the anti-establishment radical movements throughout the World

have drawn energy from the ideological sources related with Marxism. Now the ideologues of New Social Movements claim that they try to get into the fields which are not dealt with seriously by Marxism, or those remained impenetrable by the analytical tools of Marxism, and they are going beyond the weaknesses and inadequacies of Marxism. This anti-Marxist strain of thought is being shared by almost all organisations in the fields of environmental protection, women's emancipation, and dalit-minorities-subaltern liberation.

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One of the general positions shared by these New Social Movements is their refusal to have a comprehensive and all embracing understanding of existing social system. They do not agree that the particular sphere of their activity is a part of the system as a whole, and the particularities of that sphere are the products of the internal contradictions of the system. They are keen to define the subjects of their interest and to resolve them as separate absolutes by detaching them from the totality of the system. They refuse to see the whole and consider some of its parts prime. That is why these movements or organisations have not taken the total transformation of the system as a part of their agenda. They believe that the

resolution of problems of various spheres is possible even while the system remains unscathed. Thus most of these New Social Movements remain 'single issue movements'.

These movements fail to see that the prevailing property relations, the power structure and the social and political institutions related with them are the real causes behind the oppression of dalits, denial of equality to women and the profit motivated pollution of environment. They think that dalit, women and environmental like questions can be resolved by ensuring participation in the existing power structure, empowerment of women, and restraint from uncontrolled consumption. They are of the opinion that the problems created by the existing system can be resolved by even without inflicting any fundamental blow to the system.

Most of these movements consider the particular sphere of activity in which they are engaged as absolute and fail to grasp the core of the existing social system. They are contented with remaining in the peripheries. They are not in a position to explore the relationships or links among various aspects of the system, or among different spheres of the society, or among various expressions of a single reality, or to unite the efforts for resolution of contradictions of the system.

Another weakness of New Social Movements in general is that they are not concerned about how the problems of the present day world have come in to existence and what their path of evolution is. They are not in a position to recognise that what is behind the crises of the present system is not the subjective interests of individuals or groups, but the social laws, that have taken root and developed in the course of history.

To be a political is another characteristic of these movements in general. Even while engaged in activities with clear-cut political implications, they declare that they are above all kinds of politics and are very particular to stress that class positions and leanings have nothing to do with resolution of social contradictions.

Social realities are subjected to a particular kind of reductionism, and

erosion of fertile soil cover, siltation of rivers and lakes, expansion of deserts, spoiling of river systems, uncontrolled emission of green house gases and consequent increase in atmospheric temperature, acid rains and fogs, depletion of the Ozone layer and the depositing of toxic and poisonous chemicals in the organic systems of animals and the like were recognised as the problems of the New World. Hitherto unknown diseases

**The movements influenced by this anti-science approaches negate science in total, instead of struggling for the employment of scientific techniques rationally and in human-friendly ways, and fighting the system of power and dominance of capital which is responsible for the irrational use of science and its principles.**

and disorders began to appear because of various kinds of environmental pollution. The reasons behind this intolerable realities were identified rightly as irresponsible industrialisation, urbanisation and development perspectives which have given least attention to ecological balance or to natural relation among various natural factors. Most of the ecological organisations coming under the broad category of New Social Movements are of the opinion that the ecological destruction is used by immoral style of living, greedy consumption and uncontrolled development.

It is a fact that there is some truth in the observations made and the explanations put forward by these movements. But they do not touch the heart or core of the matter. They see only what is on the surface. As the root cause of ecological imbalances is human intervention, according to them, the concept of a divine nature untouched by human is made sublime. Matters of vital importance like, the human being is also a part of the nature and they have the inherent power and creativity to change the nature which they are a part of is not seen. They do not recognise that even while nature without human beings is not impossible, the very concept of nature is created by human beings, and this concept itself has evolved through history.

While the nature is conceptualised as a divine entity forbidden to human beings and is set on a holy pedestal like a goddess, at least a section of these organisations are negating the very history, and the role of creative and conscious work of human beings. Activities of mankind who are capable to explore the world and themselves and are able to acquire knowledge of the laws of society and that of the universe are negated or disgraced.

Masanobu Fukuoka, who discovers that 'man knows nothing' and takes that statements as the base of his world outlook and farming activities, is still the guru of many environmental organisations. According to this line of thinking 'Homo sapiens' is just one species of organisms living subjected to the whims and fancies of some supernatural powers. This very thought questions the human concept of freedom.

This position provides a new kind of spiritualism to ecological protection movements. This spiritualisation often stumbles to the quagmire of religiosity. Present day efforts to regenerate the outdated beliefs like, "the pond may get dried, if the holy mangroves are touched" and to establish the exaggerated ecological values of godly mangroves and to make the tribal rituals and religious rites instrumental to protect environment show the abyss to which this new spiritualism has plunged into.

Many of the ecological organisations are influenced by the concept that science and technology are anti-nature as they make the man capable to intervene in nature. They define science and its methods of analysis anti-nature as it formed the base of modern industry, production and consumption. They forget that science has developed in the course of development of human civilisations itself and it is science which made human beings capable of acquiring knowledge about themselves and the nature which they are part of, and it is science that make him aware of the ecological consequences of his own unscientific intervention in nature. They fail to see that it is the interests

thus the totality of it is negated. This reductionist tendency is used as an effective instruments to divert the social attention from existing reality and to delay the resolution of its contradictions, and to support the continuance of the oppressive system. These movements and their ideological positions are being utilised at least for a limited extend to fragmentise and to weaken the struggles against the capital-based and anti-people power system. That is why many of the 'New Social Movements' are being sponsored and promoted by imperialist centres providing resources, manpower, ideas and awards.

Ideas and activities of environmental protection groups are to be analysed in the general background of the above said appraisal of the New Social Movements.

Most of the environmental protection groups of the present form and content were formed in the period after 1960. Environmental crises of the present day world are creations of the complex situation that emerged from the interaction of modern industries, urbanisation and profit oriented exploitation of nature and natural resources and the mode of development, consumption and technologies related with it. All these problems of production, consumption and resource depletion are having a clear cut relation with the power structure. Natural resources which essentially are the general property of the world and society are considered as raw material for the production and enhancement of profit of the forces of capital, and this has led to pollution of environment, resource depletion and related disturbances. It has acquired huge and frightening dimensions within a short span of time and created serious hurdles to the healthy existence of various components of nature including human beings.

Problems like the pollution of atmosphere and water resources, indiscriminate destruction of forest cover, piling up of toxic wastes, poisoning of food cycles, endangering of various plants and animal species, depletion of genetical reservoirs,

of the existing system and its power structure that make use of science or its products like technologies for promising anti-social and anti-people interests of profit and various kinds of exploitations. The movements influenced by this anti-science approaches negate science in total, instead of struggling for the employment of scientific techniques rationally and in human -friendly ways, and fighting the system of power and dominance of capital which is responsible for the irrational use of science and its principles.

Another idea that influence these movements is that modern principles of science are nothing but reiterations or interpretations of ancient spiritual and religious philosophical principles in a different language and what is fundamental is those mystic philosophies. 'Tao of Physics' of Fritjof Capra and many works of the same category have put forward many interpretations according to which science and its principles are merely the appendages of spiritual and religious philosophies. They are weaving some colourful veils of mysticism to cover the realities of present day world. As science has not developed fully to reveal the whole of the realities of micro and macro universe and as spheres of anonymity still remain unravelled, it is true that there remains space for this kind of mystic misinterpretations. Instead of liberating these dark spaces of anonymity to the light of knowledge through rational and scientific inquisitiveness, these mystic philosophies try to lead man to closed intellectual systems where all kinds of inquiries are meaningless. This very writer, Fritjof Capra, who gave some new interpretations to the anti-science philosophical views has not found anything wrong in painting Indira Gandhi who led an anti-democratic ruling system in bright colors of 'uncommon wisdom'.

As those in other parts of the world, many of the ecological organisations of India were also influenced by the 'glorified past'. They look at the nature of yester years which was not disturbed much by human interventions as is today with a sense of reverence. They approach the lost greenery with some kind of nostalgia. At least in certain points they are led

by some unreal concepts of backward journey through history. They think wishfully that if steam engine, spinning and weaving machines and other technological breakthroughs had not taken place, industrial revolution, ecological destruction and colonial expeditions and the like would not have taken place in history. They try to delink human history from what they think the primary links of the future development in an unreal world. While being nostalgic about the past when the nature remained uninjured, they are not at all concerned about the social relations of those times which were utterly oppressive and exploitative. The tribal relations, slavery and feudalism of those periods are justified in the name of pollution free ecological factors, and they refuse to see the inhumanness of those times.

***While the whole world is reeling under the globalised power structure and financial exploitation, and while the whole world is contracted into a 'global village' by means of the modern media industries and information technologies, the idea to fight it with the 'beauty of smallness' and 'folk knowledge' is something like subjective soothing and nothing else.***

The wide acceptance of concept of 'return to nature' among environmental protection groups should be seen in this context. This concept, or this slogan which is highly abstract, reflects the wishful thinking to return to an inviolated nature; but it is something that negates the historicity of human beings. When we ask the spokespersons of this argument to identify the exact point of time of the nature to which they want to return, all the glamour of the slogan gets crumbled. This slogan is incapable to explain whether we have to return to the nature of 5000 years back when no agriculture was invented, or to the nature of 300 years back before the advent of industrial revolution had taken place or to the unreal nature existing in an imaginary world. Here they try to cover up the real problem of transforming the society and nature including human beings, and to reconstruct it, with the enticing slogan of 'return to the

nature'.

Both the concepts of 'small is beautiful' and that of getting enchanted with the so called creativity of 'folk knowledge' are having the same of weakness of being subjected to wishfulness. While the whole world is reeling under the globalised power structure and financial exploitation, and while the whole world is contracted into a 'global village' by means of the modern media industries and information technologies, the idea to fight it with the 'beauty of smallness' and 'folk knowledge' is something like subjective soothing and nothing else.

Most of the environmental groups in India are influenced by the above said erroneous ideas to various extent. Eventhough many of them have failed to acquire correct and scientific ideas and to act accordingly we do not deny that they have done a good job to conscientise the Indian society that it is the duty of the society to keep ecological factors healthy and protected, that the development perspective followed presently is inhuman, and that no state or institution has the right to violate the nature so as to disturb the social life.

The emergence and growth of movements for ecological-environmental protection is comparatively a new and contemporary phenomenon. But it was pointed out even before a century with full scientific awareness that the system allowing the hegemony of capital would cause irreparable damage to nature. Marx and Engels had pointed out before a century itself that the uninhibited continuation of the methods of agriculture of those days may cause desertification, and the nature may retaliate severely to every victory of man over it. They have invited the attention of society with prophetic insight to the possible destructive effects of capital upon nature.

But, the conventional Marxists were somewhat reluctant to develop these observations rationally and to correctly approach new questions emerging in relation with the complexities of the contemporary world. They were neither serious enough to include the social and environmental issues which were

considered prime by the new social movements in the agenda of the movements which were fighting the existing system, nor to find scientific solutions to them. This reluctance on the part of Marxist movements, or when they did not give the issue necessary importance, it provided opportunity to the movements with above said weaknesses to present themselves as the sole forces taking up these issues.

These New Social Movements including the environmental organisations claiming that they are beyond all narrow confines of politics are not without politics. They have even entered into activities with the aim of political power at given contexts. Not only the 'green' parties of various European countries, and those environmental parties of New Zealand which made significant political gains and soon got absorbed within the ruling system and became irrelevant later, but the recently formed "National Alliance of Peoples' Movements" (NAPM) of India also has entered the field of

political activity, shedding the mask of apoliticism off. What they intend is to become an alternative to the left. As it is said already, these movements which are not ready to raise serious criticism against the economic relations and class domination protecting the system serve rightist positions and interests indirectly. It is also not a secret that many of these organisations enjoy financial help and ideological patronage from various funding agencies having vital relations with imperialist forces.

Most of the environmental groups functioning in India have more or less the same political positions. They do not consider that the classes like workers and peasants who have to play the role of major or leading forces of revolution, as having any important role to play in the process of social transformation. On the contrary they stand for political position beyond all class considerations.

All the environmental protection groups keeping fundamentally critical

positions against leftist ideologies, try to equate the socialist and capitalist paths of development. According to them, the development model of Soviet Union that came to existence in 1917 had nothing different from what was followed in European capitalist countries or USA. They point an accusing finger against some projects of erstwhile Soviet Union and their adverse environmental consequences, like the examples of Aral sea, Ural mountain areas and Chernobyl. It is true that many examples of developmental projects unfriendly to nature were taken up in Soviet Union. But they refuse to accept that Soviet Union was the first state in the world which recognised the responsibility of protection of nature and ecological factors, and adopted legislative measures for their

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protection. They refuse to see that what was done in Soviet Union was the first effective and meaningful model of development where, the hegemony of capital which is the major cause of pollution and destruction of nature was challenged.

This approach of theirs is not accidental. There is a deliberate politics behind this kind of blindness. The argument that the socialist path has nothing different and superior from the capitalist path is nothing but an effort to serve the rule of capital.

Most of the environmental groups fail to recognise the interrelation among economic disparity, lack of development in third world countries, and the imperialist political and economic system which try its best to perpetuate the former. They hope wishfully that the problems of environment and nature in general can be resolved by signing formal agreements, by practicing self control in questions like increase of population and consumerism, and by applying eco-friendly technologies.

It is true that nature is being polluted and ecosystems are being destroyed indiscriminately. But the causes behind them cannot be identified solely as greed of individuals, incorrect attitudes of persons or biological peculiarities. The causes for this vulnerability of human society and the nature is having deeper social and historical roots. They have to be inquired and found out in relation with the historicity of social development.

As John Bellamy Foster points out, the fundamental weakness of most of the environmental movements is that they fail to recognise that the ecological crisis of present day world is not the crisis of nature but that of the society itself. It can never be resolved by nominal reforms of technology, by using some eco-friendly products or recycling some other products. This crises can be resolved only by transforming the society so as to get a rational, healthy and dialectical relationship established between human beings and other factors of the nature, and by changing the historical relation between human beings and nature correctly. □

*(Paper presented by the other in the seminar held on 14.05.1999 at the School of Social Sciences, University of Kerala.)*

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## TUCI Demands before 2<sup>nd</sup> National Labour Commission.

(We are reproducing below the memorandum submitted by the delegation of TUCI including Comrades Sanjay Singhvi, Arun Vilaskar and Pravin Kotian to 2<sup>nd</sup> National Labour Commission at Mumbai on 4<sup>th</sup> July. When the commission members arrived at Kamgar Kreedha Kendra for the sitting there was a militant demonstration of hundreds of workers demanding basic Trade Union rights and Social welfare measures-RS).

At the outset, we wish to make it clear that we do not agree with the terms of reference of this commission. So far as the organised sector is concerned, the terms of reference restrict this commission to suggest rationalisation of "existing laws". This bears the impression that there is no need to make fresh laws and confer fresh rights on the workers in the organised sector. We believe that this is far from the truth. Many of the recommendations of the 1<sup>st</sup> National Labour Commission have still not been implemented. The concepts enshrined in the Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution of India of providing workers with a fair wage, etc. continue to remain as mere dead letters. New problems concerning closures, contractualisation and so-called voluntary retirement schemes have arisen to confront the workers and it is our fervent belief that new laws, giving much greater powers and rights to the working class are necessary to confront these problems.

The terms of reference as regards the unorganised sector are also vague. They read as though the level of protection being provided today is too high and only a "minimum" level of protection needs to be afforded to workers in this sector. We fail to see why the word "minimum" has been used at all. In the language of wage, the minimum affords mere survival – a mere animal existence. This runs contrary to the Directive Principles of

State Policy as enshrined in the Constitution of India which guarantee a fair wage (which is above even a living wage, leave alone a minimum wage).

Then again, the fixation of the said terms of reference with "rationalisation" and with "umbrella" legislation, is representative of the focus on destroying "license raj", in the era of liberalisation. However, it must be remembered that every new right given to workers will imply a new restriction upon capital and correspondingly, possibly a new license. "Simplification of procedure" must not become an excuse to reduce the substantial rights of workers.

Further, the terms of reference

**The First National Labour commission was appointed in 1967. Its terms of reference were based upon the Directive Principles of State Policy as detailed in the Constitution of India. We believe that even these directive principles fall short of the professed aim of "socialism" mentioned in the preamble of the Constitution.**

urge this commission to take into account "globalisation of the economy..." "liberalisation of trade and industry..." etc. This is a reflection of the attitude of the government, which has abjectly surrendered to the imperialists and pretends that there is no alternative to a globalised economy and to removing the protections given to Indian industry and Indian workers. They urge this commission to make the laws "conducive to a flexible labour market..." Roughly translated, this means nothing more than a return to the rule of "hire and fire".

The First National Labour commission was appointed in 1967. Its terms of reference were based upon the Directive Principles of State Policy as detailed in the Constitution of India. We believe that even these directive principles fall short of the professed aim of "socialism" mentioned in the preamble of the Constitution. Still, they

reflected the democratic principle that the state must strive towards a more equitable distribution of wealth. That it must weigh in on the side of the poor and the weak. Imperialism today is much more naked. It openly professes that the accumulation of wealth is not only morally acceptable but also desirable. The philosophy of neo-liberalism, which it espouses, restricts the state to maintaining law and order and mandates that the state shall not interfere in the daily struggle between capital and labour, between the rich and the poor, between the haves and the have-nots. The recommendations of the first National Labour Commission are still awaiting their dawn. They are now being sacrificed at the altar of neo-liberalism and the honour of tightening the noose has been awarded to the present commission.

Undoubtedly, many nice-sounding phrases like "golden mean", "budgetary constraints" and "removal of bottle-necks" will be brought into the picture to justify the legalisation of the butchery of the working class. But all these phrases cannot hide the fact that every year and, indeed, every day, prices are rising, secure jobs are disappearing and even workers homes are being ground into the dust.

We have already existed under the New Economic Policy for around a decade and under the growing swell of monetarism, ultimately leading to neo-liberalism for around two more. It is time to take stock and see what the realities are. It is all very well for the UNDP to praise India's record of social development but this cannot hide the fact that it still ranks 128<sup>th</sup> in the world in this aspect (lower than it did when we achieved independence). Recent statistics of the A.S.I. show that employment in India has grown over the past few years (see *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1<sup>st</sup> April). What this does hide is that this is merely the figure obtained by dividing the number of man-days of production by the number working days.

Let us not quibble about definitions and suppose that the employment has in fact risen. What is the quality of the employment that has

been created? The employment in the formal sector as a percentage of the total employment in manufacturing, in India, fell from 24.5% in 1972/73 to 17.4% in 1987/88 (A. K. Ghose, 1992, "Economic restructuring, employment and the safety net: a note" in Social Dimensions of Structural Adjustments in India, New Delhi, ILO-ARTEP). It is not also as if there has been any good news after this date. Total employment (in absolute terms) in the formal sector has almost stagnated since the past decade. It has hovered between 26.73 millions (1990) to 27.94 millions (1996). In the manufacturing sector, in the same period, employment has stagnated between 6.33 millions and 6.79 millions. (Statistics from the web site of the Asian Development Bank @ adb.org) Thus, we can safely conclude that the workers in India are being forcibly pushed from the formal (or organised) sector to the informal (or unorganised) sector.

Another effect of this model of development is that unionisation takes a bashing. According to the ILO World Labour Report, 1997-98, union membership as a percentage of non-agricultural labour dropped from 6.6% in 1985 to 5.5% in 1995. This report estimates that less than 2% of the workers in the formal and informal sectors in India are covered by collective bargaining agreements.

At the same time, production has grown by over 40 % in the period from 1993-94 to 1998-99. It may be true that the inflow of foreign investment has grown by around 80 times between 1990-91 to 1998-99 from 113 mn \$ to 8906 mn\$. However, during the same period the outflow of foreign investment has grown 390 times from 10mn\$ to 3913mn\$. At this rate, the outflow is soon likely to outstrip the inflow. The net inflow has peaked in 1997-98 and is now falling. Since 1990 till today, over 1.4 lakhs large and medium industrial establishments have been closed down. More statistics can be quoted to show that real wages of industrial workers have fallen. That the standard of living of the workers has deteriorated. That the super profits being enjoyed by the multinationals and the compradore capitalists do not have any trickle-down effect, But reality belies the need

for quoting such obvious figures. Papers have been written that prove that the new policies of liberalisation have driven more women below the poverty line and increased their initiation into prostitution. The government Economic Survey 1998-99 had crowed that the real wages of agricultural workers had grown by over 4% per annum for the past two years. (This was only the result of severely depressed wages earlier). It has had to eat crow this year when real wages for agricultural workers have fallen by

*The new mantras of the production "gurus" are "flexibility" and "just in time" production. In short, the Toyota system has replaced the older Ford assembly-line system. It is in such an environment that we have to devise laws to protect the rights of workers and to give effect to the constitutional goal of socialism.*

over 2%. (India's Bubble Economy Booms as Poverty Grows, by Praful Bidwai, Financial Express, Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2000)

It is therefore clear that liberalisation of the economy, and the removal of protections have not helped any growth of our economy but have only helped to increase the misery and impoverishment of the people. The new globalised economy confronts the weak and bewildered worker with huge monster Multinational corporations which have massive resources at their command. It should be clear to any one who pays even lip service to the Constitutional goal of Socialism that a globalised economy calls for *more* and not less protections for workers.

This will go against the dictates of the IMF, the WB and the WTO, which want to impose a "free-market economy" upon the labour and the capital market. They constantly require newer and newer markets to exploit, failing which they must squeeze their profits out of the heightened exploitation of the workers, the environment and the consumer. To do this they require that all legal protections against such unbridled exploitation be removed. Their cries are taken up by the local associations of the capitalists like the Federation

of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Indian Merchant's Chamber (IMC) etc. The CCI (Confederation of Indian Industries) has it stated on its web site that section 25-O of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 brings too much "rigidity" into the labour market. The same complaint is echoed in respect of sections 25-N and 9A of the I. D. Act. Mr. Hakeem of SCOPE (the apex organisation of Public Enterprises) says that the contract labour system must be allowed to exist if Indian Public Enterprises are to compete with MNCs. This is obviously a frivolous statement when it is well known that the government intends to privatise all the plum public enterprises and will most likely be selling them to those self-same MNCs. So goes the cry of the "running dogs" echoing the sentiments of their masters. The governments of both the BJP and the Congress have openly expressed their willingness to act as the midwives for this change. It is in such circumstances that this commission is launched and we hope that it will be something more than a mere doormat to welcome the depredations of the imperialists. It is with that hope that the following concrete changes in the law are being suggested.

Before getting to the actual proposals, it is necessary to bring certain ground realities to the attention of this Hon'ble Commission. Today, with the growth in technology and particularly in information technology, the earlier trend of building huge monolithic enterprises has disappeared. In its place we have the decentralised business. The new mantras of the production "gurus" are "flexibility" and "just in time" production. In short, the Toyota system has replaced the older Ford assembly-line system. It is in such an environment that we have to devise laws to protect the rights of workers and to give effect to the constitutional goal of socialism.

### **The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947**

Ever since the amendments were effected bringing into force Chapter VB and section 9A, this Act has become the focus of attack by the capitalists. In spite of their brouhaha, it is clear the sections 25-O and 25-N need to be strengthened and widened

in their scope. There is no justification for limiting the application of sections 25-O and 25-N only to the establishments employing more than 100 workers (in Maharashtra). They must instead be made applicable to all establishments. In fact, the growth of technology, which this commission has been asked to take into account, has rendered huge factories capable of being run by a very small work force. The massive leaps in information technology in recent years have allowed the earlier large plants to be broken up into several small but syncopated units. The earlier limits on strength were imposed with the intention of protecting the small capitalist. This is no longer the case. The small capitalist with independence to produce is fast approaching extinction. All the latest studies show that the small establishments exist mainly as ancillaries to large companies. Only large companies get the benefits of such protections. In such circumstances, there is no justification for continuing the limits for the application of Chapters VB and other sections. Further, Chapter VB has the larger aim of protecting workers' interest and the public interest. The smallness of an establishment can be no excuse to exempt it from either. We therefore propose that the restriction on the application of Chapter VB be removed.

In the same act, there is an unholy confusion over the meaning of "establishment". With respect to the Learned Judges of the various High Courts and the Supreme Courts, their pronouncements have done nothing to ease this confusion. As mentioned before, in today's liberalised business atmosphere, a large part of the integral work of the business is out-sourced to small establishments though the over all control over production is maintained by the parent company. We therefore propose that the words "establishment" or "undertaking" should be defined to mean all premises wherein any operation is carried out which forms a part of the production process or is incidental to or necessary for the same.

As far as section 9A of the act is concerned, we propose that the management must give notice of any condition of service that it might seek

to change. The limiting schedule 4 of the Act can be done away with and the obligation to give notice must arise whenever any condition of service is to be changed which can be the subject matter of an industrial dispute. The day is long gone when the owners of property can abrogate unto themselves the right to arbitrarily fix any single condition of service.

We also view with concern the utterances in the press, of late, about restricting the definition of "workman" to those earning below Rs. 10,000 per month. We can see no justification for such a step. In fact, the limit (then Rs. 500) for the wage of a supervisor to be considered a "workman" was set way back in the 50's. This limit needs to be revised in keeping with inflation by linking it to the price index. In keeping with the definition of establishment,

**Lastly, the rates of minimum wage are fixed abysmally low. A more scientific method must be evolved to reflect the actual essentials of life. These keep changing. National and international standards must be considered to arrive at such essentials.**

the definition of "workman" will also have to be amended to include contract workers and the workers of the out-sourced premises.

One more small point is that there is no protection provided to workers who are union leaders or who raise a dispute for the period between the time the failure report is prepared and the reference is made. This flaw must be rectified.

### **The Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1971**

Similar changes are required in this act as well to give heightened protection to workers. However, since we are a constituent of the *Thekedari Padathi Virodhi Manch*, which has submitted its own memorandum, which we have had the benefit of reading, we are happy to adopt the same.

## **Minimum Wages**

We are aghast at the recent trend of the Maharashtra Government to reduce the rate of neutralisation to below 100%. It is well settled in many matters concerning Dearness Allowance that the lowest paid workers must be afforded 100% neutralisation of the rise in prices as they cannot be expected to shoulder any part of the burden of inflation. Sadly, there are still industries which have a minimum wage wherein no Special Allowance (to obviate the rise in the cost of living) is prescribed. We therefore propose that it be incorporated in the act itself that every notification for minimum wage must prescribe a Special allowance that would totally neutralise any rise in the prices.

Further, there is no need now to prescribe different minimum wages for different industries. As capitalism grows, the rate of profit tends to equalise across industries. The cost of living also is the same for people in the same area irrespective of the industry that they might work in. We therefore propose that the minimum wage be equalised across industries and be varied only in respect of geographical zones.

Further, it is common for unscrupulous employers to pay less than the prescribed minimum wage and then to show the worker as having been absent for a large period. This must be stopped. The only way to do this is to make the minimum wage payable irrespective of the number of days worked. There is also justification for this in the argument that the minimum wage is precisely that – a *minimum*. It is calculated as the least amount of money required for the bare essentials of life. A person's absence from work cannot reduce these essentials. Habitual absenteeism will, of course, expose the delinquent to penal action. However, absence for a justified reason should not be held cause to reduce the minimum wage.

Lastly, the rates of minimum wage are fixed abysmally low. A more scientific method must be evolved to reflect the actual essentials of life. These keep changing. National and international standards must be considered to arrive at such essentials.

## The Trade Unions Act, 1926

The basic protection given to Trade unions, of immunity from civil or criminal prosecution, is under threat. The National Consumer Tribunal has held in the case of the Indian flight Engineers' Association that the prohibition under section 15 of the act does not cover the Tribunal since the Tribunal is not a "court". The Act therefore needs to be immediately amended to rectify this confusion. When the Trade Unions Act was enacted in 1926 there were no Tribunals and therefore it is clear that the use of the words "any court" must include a Tribunal. This must be made more clear.

We view with concern the attempts to curb the rights to unionise. Many formulas have been bandied around in the press about how only those unions that have 10% of the workers in a particular industry must be allowed to register a union or how no more than two of the office bearers must be honorary members, etc. These are only methods to break the united strength of the working class. On the contrary, the whole process of registration of unions must be made smoother and less cumbersome.

We also propose that recognition of Trade unions by the management must be strictly based on a secret ballot. Such an exercise must be carried out one every year subject to the right of the majority of workers to requisition a ballot at any time.

### Bonus

Today almost no workers are eligible for Bonus. The limits under the Bonus Act for eligibility and for wage are almost less than the minimum wages prescribed for many industries. By this inaction, the Government has laid low what was once touted as the epitome of socialism. The Government had devised Bonus as a formula for profit sharing. At the time when it was first enacted, the Act had fixed the eligibility limit very high (at Rs. 1600) precisely to accommodate most of the employees in profit sharing. A simple calculation will show that Rs. 1600 at that time (1965) was worth what Rs. 25000 would be today. We propose that either the eligibility and wage limits for Bonus should be enhanced

accordingly and should be linked to the price index for the future or should be done away with altogether.

The same argument about eligibility and wage limits would also apply to the *Payment of Wages Act*, *The Gratuity Act* and various other Acts.

### Dearness Allowance

Even a lay observer can gauge that the way Dearness Allowance is calculated does not reflect the reality of the rise in prices. Many of the commodities in the basket are outmoded and are not properly weighed. The calculation of the price index must be enhanced to reflect the real rise in prices faced by a worker. We propose that an expert committee of workers and their representatives be set up to make the appropriate recommendations to the Government in this behalf.

### Social Security Provisions

The First Labour Commission had suggested many social security provisions that have not so far been implemented. Workers today have no assurance of many basic amenities like housing and education for their children. Such provisions have to be enacted. Further, many employers, sometimes mala fide, seek the protection of smallness. As explained earlier, most of these "small" establishments are actually big establishments or their agents, in disguise. Such employers do not provide canteens, urinals, clinics, first aid or even drinking water to their workers. To remedy this we propose that even if a certain small establishment is genuinely an independent establishment, it must be clubbed with other such small establishments to provide these minimum facilities to their workers.

### The Process of Adjudication

There is an abject failure of the adjudication machinery today. Cases take so long that adjudication is no more a viable option. It is only the court of last resort. These delays are often the result of management tactics. The delays in hearing matters invariably favour the management, which has the advantage of the right of ownership. This can only be set

right by inverting the onus of proof in Labour Law. In other words, there must be a presumption in favour of the worker(s) in all matters. In a dismissal it must be presumed to be wrongful unless proved otherwise; in a lockout it must be presumed to be illegal and unjustified unless proved otherwise. This would obviously be more equitable than presuming an artificial equality between the workers and the owners. The Supreme Court in the case of *Dilip Kumar Nadkarni vs. the Trustees of the Port of Bombay* had hinted at such a burden. Today, when the workers are faced with the brutal attack of large corporations, this principle needs to be urgently incorporated into law.

### Right to information

Much ado has been made about workers' participation in management. We believe that as long as the concept of private property exists, there can only be a very limited "participation in management". However, the right to information has today been recognised as a legitimate democratic right all over the world. To that extent, workers must be entitled to all information that may directly or indirectly effect them. Proper legislation in this behalf is urgently necessary.

### Protection against Sexual Harassment

Though the Supreme Court has laid down some guidelines in this behalf, our laws are woefully lagging in this department. This again should be referred to a committee of workers for making recommendations to the Government.

### Voluntary Retirement Schemes

Though we crave leave to file a more detailed note on this important topic in the future, we wish to make our stand clear. It is obvious that every VRS is a change in the conditions of service of the workers (especially those who remain) and by that token, no VRS scheme can be made without first giving adequate notice and then going through the gamut as would be required for any other change. □



# Memorandum to 2nd National Labour Commission From Forum Against Contrast Labour System

(The memorandum submitted to 2<sup>nd</sup> National Labour Commission Mumbai by representatives of the Manch, Comrades Sanjay Singhvi, Dipti Gopinath and Suhas Abhyankar on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2000-RS)

This is a front comprised of around 40 unions/federations working among contract and permanent workers in and around Mumbai and Thane. We had submitted the signatures of more than 50,000 workers to the President of India protesting against the attempts of the Public Sector managements to have the judgement of the Supreme Court of India delivered in the case of *Air India vs. United Labour Union* referred to a constitutional bench. Our manch has been formed to protect and extend the right of contract workers to permanent employment. We stand for the complete abolition of the contract labour system for all work of a permanent and perennial nature.

At the outset, we are very strongly opposed to the terms of reference of this commission. The terms of reference begin with prejudice. They presume that the changes in the industrial atmosphere the world over are inevitable and desirable and that our existing laws are ill suited to the "new economy". In fact, the terms of reference of this commission reflect the anxieties of the imperialist transnational companies that seek to modify the labour laws in India for their own selfish needs. In the name of "modern organisation" and "flexibility", a "neo-liberal" philosophy is being imposed on our nation. As per this philosophy, the State is abandoning its former role as social arbiter and the field of labour is sought to be governed by the jungle law of hire and fire and a totally unregulated labour market.

The questionnaire circulated by this Commission is a clear indication of your intentions and hidden agenda. We cannot fail to note, by comparison with the questionnaire circulated by the 1<sup>st</sup> National Labour Commission, that your questionnaire has carefully, deliberately and thoroughly deleted all reference to the Directive Principles

of our Constitution on labour matters. These Directive Principles were central to the efforts of the 1<sup>st</sup> National labour Commission. To you, they are evidently unacceptable, inconvenient, and an obstacle to your hidden agenda. So you have tried to censor these Principles. This will not be allowed by the Indian working people. These Principles are precious and have formed the basis of much legal progress in the last fifty years, as far as the rights of the working class are concerned.

**It is our unfortunate duty to remind you that you are bound by the Indian Constitution, which you are trying to suppress. Your questionnaire is an eye-opener in this regard.**

It is our unfortunate duty to remind you that you are bound by the Indian Constitution, which you are trying to suppress. Your questionnaire is an eye-opener in this regard. We therefore enclose as our first Annexure, the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution for your careful perusal and we reiterate that your recommendations must be guided by these principles, which take precedence over and are more basic than your terms of reference. We also enclose as Annexure B the recommendations of the 1<sup>st</sup> National commission on Contract Labour, which continue to be relevant and need to be re-emphasized by you.

Such is the opposition to the terms of reference of your commission and its clear hidden agenda, that some of the constituent member unions / federations of our Manch have taken a decision as a union / federation to boycott the Commission. However, as a majority decision of the Manch it has been decided to submit our proposals to you, without prejudice to our extreme opposition to the Commission and belief that its broad recommendations are a fore-gone conclusion.

Every person who has studied the situation of workers in India over

the past few decades and over the last decade in particular has been forced to admit that the real wages of the workers are falling. The number of persons registered with the employment exchanges has grown enormously over the last decade. All investigators have reported that the real rate of unemployment in society has grown at least as fast. All this has given the lie to the proposition that the new economic policy will lead to plenty and prosperity for the nation and greater employment. It has proved that it was not the "protectionism" of the Indian economy that was responsible for its stagnation. In fact, it shows clearly that the workers need further and better protections in the context of "globalisation" and the new economic policy.

Our manch consists of many unions/federations, some of which will be making their own representations before the commission. As such this memorandum will restrict itself to the question of the contract labour system which it is our avowed aim to finish. Earlier, large establishments used the contract labour system to circumvent various labour laws and to avail of the concessions which were given to the small scale. For instance, an establishment, by allotting its workers to various sham contractors each having less than 10 workers could avoid E. S. I. and P. F.

Today, the establishments have a far greater need for the contract labour system. With the growth in information technology over the past few years, the new buzzwords in the corridors of industry are "flexibility" and "just-in-time" production. The strategy has changed from the massive centralising of establishments on the lines of the Fordist ideal to an ultimate degree of decentralisation with control being maintained by means of hot lines, e mail and the Internet. Due to this strategy, the expansion of the contract labour system has gone beyond all control and today industry seeks to replace the entire "permanent" workforce with contract labour.

It is a mistake to think that there is nothing wrong in capital using the new methods to expand profits and perhaps, production. All the changes that may have taken place in the industrial milieu all over the world have not changed the Directive Principles of State Policy as enshrined in Articles 39, 41 and 42 (?) of our Constitution. If we are still to be guided by the beacon light of the Constitution, then our efforts must still be to extinguish the contract labour system whatever may be its advantages to the "new economy". It is in this context that various commissions appointed by the Government and various courts in India have referred to the contract labour system at times as "evil"; at times as "pernicious", and at times even as "slavery" or "flesh trade".

### Proposed Changes to the Law Regarding Contract Labour

As the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1971 stands today, it effectively regularises and facilitates the contract labour system, with the provision for its abolition being extremely cumbersome and tardy. Any amendments to the law regarding contract labour must be aimed at increasing the scope for abolition of the contract labour system and permanent employment for contract workers. In this regard, we make the following proposals:

(1). The definition of "workman" in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, should be amended to include contract workers employed in an establishment.

(2). At present, under the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 ("the Act"), the procedure concerning the issuing of licenses and registration certificates is totally unsatisfactory. Any principal employer / contractor can obtain a registration certificate by simply filling out the prescribed Application form, following which the Licensing Authority issues the registration certificate / license. Thus registration certificates and licenses are routinely being issued in respect of work, which is permanent and perennial and satisfies all of the criteria laid down in Section 10 of the Act for abolition. In this regard, the only way that the aims and objectives of the Act can be achieved is to provide in the Act / Rules that before granting a

registration certificate / license, the Licensing Authority must carry out an investigation to find out whether the work concerned satisfies Section 10 of the Act. If so, the issuance of a registration certificate / license must be refused. Such an investigation must include visiting the establishment and investigating the work concerned and calling and giving a hearing to both the permanent employees / their union of the establishment concerned and any contract workers / their union already employed there. Further sections 8 and 14 of the Act should be amended. They should provide that if at this stage there are no contract workers employed in the establishment, then they / their union must be called by the Licensing Authority after their employment and given a hearing with

### Any amendments to the law regarding contract labour must be aimed at increasing the scope for abolition of the contract labour system and permanent employment for contract workers. In this regard, we make the following proposals:

regard to the nature of work and whether it satisfies Section 10. If at this stage the work is found to satisfy Section 10 then any registration certificate / license issued should be revoked.

In addition to the above, at the time of applying for a registration certificate / license, the principal employer / contractor must be required to give a Declaration on Affidavit that the work concerned does not satisfy any of the criteria laid down in Section 10 of the Act. If the statements made therein are later found to be false, the principal employer / contractor should be liable to perjury proceedings and criminal prosecution. (In this regard the proposed changes to the Maharashtra Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Rules, 1971, as per the Notification issued by the Maharashtra Government (NO. CLA 1095/CR 3361/LAB.1) are totally inadequate.

(3). In 1996 the Hon'ble Supreme Court passed a landmark Judgement in the case of *Air India Statutory Corporation v/s. United Labour Union & Ors.* By this Judgement, the Supreme Court laid down that on the abolition / prohibition of a contract labour system under section 10 of the Act, the contract workers concerned *automatically* become the direct and

permanent employees of the principal employer. However, ever since the said Judgement was delivered, managements throughout the country, and particularly those of the Public Sector, have been lobbying furiously to get this Judgement overturned. At their instance, the case has now been referred to a Constitutional bench of the Supreme Court for reconsideration. The right to absorption by the principal employer is the most fundamental right of contract workers. If this right is taken away or in any way watered down, the provisions of the Act vis-à-vis abolition become effectively meaningless. Alongwith the contract labour system the employment of contract workers would be abolished. It is therefore crucial that Section 10 of the act be amended to specifically provide that on the abolition / prohibition of a contract labour system under the section, the concerned contract workers will *automatically* stand absorbed as the direct and permanent employees of the principal employer.

(4). The Contract Labour Act should apply to any establishment / contractor where / who employs even 1 contract worker. That is, the limit of 20 workers provided in Section 1(4) of the Act should be removed.

(5). The Contract Labour Act should be amended to provide that all contract workers must be paid at least the wage and benefits paid and extended to the lowest paid permanent employees employed in the establishment in which they are employed. Over and above this, if the work done by the contract workers is the same kind of work done by permanent employees employed in the establishment, then the contract workers will be entitled to the wages and benefits paid to those employees, as provided in Rule 25 of the Contract Labour Central Rules, 1971. Further, this Rule 25 (and equivalent rules in the respective State Rules) should be amended to clarify that the phrase "same kind of work" refers to the *grade* (i.e. unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and highly skilled).

(6). At present, making an application for abolition under Section 10 of the Contract Labour Act is extremely risky for contract workers, in so far as very often their services are immediately terminated / the

# Bal Thackeray's Arrest

The drama staged in Mumbai in the name of arresting Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray has exposed the rulers and the ruling system thoroughly. The whole system conspired and colluded to save this arch reactionary and communal leader whose hands are drenched with the blood of thousands of innocents who lost their lives during 1992-93 riots.

Before, during and after the demolition of Babri Masjid Shiv Sena was trying to show one-up-manship atleast in Mumbai compared to Sangh Parivar. In *Saamana* editorials of January 93 Thackeray indulged in open provocation of Hindu communal sentiments. He wrote "Muslims in India are behaving as if they are Pakistani citizens". He incited "Hindus, open your eyes and see what is going on! Your funeral pyres are burning". He called for a "holy war" and he warned "If I am arrested, if the government takes any rash decision, while only Mumbai has been rioting so far, then the whole of the country up to Jammu and Kashmir will rise up". In spite of all these provocations inciting his "fiery generation of Hindus" to indulge in most heinous and criminal acts killing hundreds and making lakhs homeless, then Congress government in Maharashtra did not act. Like protecting the hoodlums who demolished Babri Masjid, Narasimha Rao government at centre also kept quiet. They allowed the blood of innocents to drench the roads of Mumbai.

It was after much public agitations the Sree Krishna Commission was constituted. But the communal forces who has penetrated state administration went on creating problems and delaying the functioning of the Commission. Coming to power of SS.BJP government saw the Commission being wound up. Again, only after countrywide protests it was allowed to work. Still through non co-operation obstacles were created. And once the Commission submitted the report it was thrown out by the communal forces in power.

The Congress-NCP alliance came to power promising to implement the report and to book the guilty. But months passed without any action. At last only when the alliance itself was facing crisis, to divert public attention the state government decided to act, that also half-heartedly. When SS goondas created troubles the police did not act. Thackeray and his goons claimed that they have a right to riot and take to the streets. Still central and state governments were reluctant to act. And when finally Maharashtra govt. decided to arrest Thackeray, the central government blackmailed in numerous ways to thwart it. Even central forces were denied. The SS-BJP leaderships proved that they are bent upon destroying even whatever bourgeois democratic institutions and rights are existing in this country.

When finally the government went through a pre-arranged mock

arrest and he was produced before a magistrate, he proved himself more loyal to Thackeray than his open goons. Going beyond all his authority, he released Thackeray and dropped the case itself. Even then the government is moving very slow to take further action not only for arresting Thackeray, but also to chargesheet the hundreds of SS men who are criminals and murderers.

With the state government reluctant to act and central government openly siding with the criminals, the Sree Krishna Commission Report is once again allowed to gather dust. Only strong democratic public opinion can change this situation. □

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contract with the contractor is terminated in order to frustrate their claim. The Contract Labour Act should be amended to provide that when an application for abolition / prohibition is pending before the Contract Labour Board, the service conditions of the workers, and their employment in the establishment of the principal employer concerned, should not in any way be changed, without the prior permission of the concerned Industrial Tribunal.

(7). At present the whole process under Section 10 of the Contract Labour Act is extremely long, with an applications often taking years

together to be decided. Therefore, Section 10 should be amended to provide that the Contract Labour Board concerned should carry out its investigation and make its recommendations to the appropriate Government within 3 months from its receipt of an application for abolition / prohibition. The appropriate Government in turn should give its decision in the matter within 1 month of its receipt of the recommendations from the Contract Labour Board.

(8). We have come to understand through highly reliable sources that the Government of India is planning to introduce a Bill in Parliament to

either repeal Section 10 of the Contract Labour Act in its entirety, or drastically reduce and water-down its scope. We also understand that similar proposals will be made before your Commission by various managements / management federations. We vehemently oppose any such moves, which go against the stated aims and objectives of the Act. We once again reiterate that any changes made to the law regarding contract workers and specifically to the Contract Labour Act, must be to strengthen and increase the scope for abolition of the contract labour system, and most certainly not to further dilute this. □

In talking about Vajpayee government's heinous communal fascist drives CPI(M) is not behind any other forces. Rather, CPI(M) leadership repeatedly claim and act as the leader of the secular democratic forces involved in struggling against these reactionary forces. It also claims leadership of all the struggles waged by the working class, peasantry and other sections against NDA government's globalisation-communalisation agenda.

In a way its claims may appear correct. CPI(M) is still the party which commands the support of the maximum number of left masses in the country. Its class/mass organisations are leading the NPMO which called for the May 11 General Strike which was a big success. And in criticising the communal fascist drives of Vajpayee government also it is in a leading position.

But what about its practice? Its compromising approach towards globalisation, on questions like state-autonomy, Kashmir etc, and how it implements the very same policies it claims to oppose in the states in which it is in power are matters of repeated discussion. How even regarding preliminary questions like democratic rights and on the question of Vajpayee government's moves to impose a new TADA it is shamelessly compromising

is exposed by the latest developments.

As far as anti-terrorism law is concerned, all progressive, democratic forces all over the country have expressed their severe opposition to it. Even the chairman of National Human Rights Commission, Justice Verma, like people have raised their voice against the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. But CPI (M)'s parliamentary party leader and member of the parliamentary consultative committee attached to home ministry, Somanath Chatterjee has wholeheartedly supported the proposal for anti-terrorisism law in the committee meeting. Even when the Forward Block member of the committee opposed it, Chatterjee stuck to his position. Outside, when journalists questioned him, he repeated his stand.

Again when Home Ministry convened a meeting of the chief secretaries of the states to discuss this question, the chief secretaries of the three states where CPI(M) led governments are ruling, Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, joined others in unanimously supporting the Bill which in essence paves the way for new TADA.

It is a most shameless action from a party which calls itself a left party. This treacherous act should be exposed. □

## Com. Souren Bose remembered

The death of Com. Souren Bose, Politbureau member of the First Central Committee of CPI(ML) and member of the CRC of CPI(ML) Red Flag on 17 August 1997 was a big blow to the revolutionary Communist Movement in India. At the time of his death he was actively involved in the efforts to reorganise the Communist Party in India based on the Fourth Conference documents of the party. He was a consistent fighter against all brands of revisionism and sectarianism/dogmatism and always stressed the importance of reorganising the party. So his departure was a great loss.

Comrades in different parts of the country including Souren Bose Memorial Committee in Calcutta organised memorial meetings on 17th August. Speakers at all these meetings highlighted the great Communist qualities of comrade.

The CRC, CPI(ML) Red Flag in a statement called on all party members to study from the life and activities of com. Souren Rose and to carry forward the task of reorganising the Communist Party at all India level, capable of leading the democratic revolution forward, which is the best tribute to him. □

## Bhubaneswar Slum Dwellers Demand Comprehensive Slum Policy

Bhubaneswar slum dwellers organisation "PAURANCHAL BASTI UNNAYAN MAHASANGHA" (Municipal Slum Development Organisation) has demanded the right to housing as fundamental right and a comprehensive slum policy from the BJD-BJP government. It has demanded legal status to all slum dwellings according to the 1990-95 slum policy, including grant of pattas for the land. In case the land is taken over for public utilities, the slum dwellers should be resettled near their place of work. The general body meeting of Mahasangha demanded an end to bull-dozing of the poor people's houses. Those poor families which are still not identified as BPL, should be identified as so immediately, and BPL card should be supplied of them. According to "Swarna Jayanti Sahari

Rojagar Yojana (SJSRJ), supply loans to the slum-dwellers for self employment, supply water, electricity, and provide proper sanitation. Give proper assistance to cyclone affected slum people. The municipality has not distributed the relief materials like carpet, bedsheets etc. earmarked for slum peoples after the cyclone. Distribute them immediately and punish those corrupt officers, employees and touts who are looting the slum people. The General Body decided to put forward these demands before the govt. through a delegation and press for them.

The meeting was presided by Com. Narayan Chandra Lenka. The aims and objectives of slum organisation were explained by Com. Binod Sahu, the general secretary of

the Mahasangha and member of Bhubaneswar area committee of the CPI(ML) Red Flag. General Secretary of the Manabika Adhikar Sangathan (MAS), Com. Biswapriya Kanungo explained the right to housing to all and the problems faced by the slum dwellers. He called for united fight for their rights. Representatives from different slums Umesh Ch. Das, Harihar Patnaik, Tofan Swain, Rajan Nayak, M. Lakshaman, Narayan Rao and others participated. The general body adopted the memorandum to be presented to the state government. □

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(William Hinton, the author of famous classic of the Chinese Revolution, Fanshen, and many more books on Chinese Revolution First went to China in 1937 during pre revolutionary days and spent much of his time there afterwards. As a friend of the revolution in China he is explaining how the revolutionary land reforms of 1950s changed China's countryside and how Deng's market socialism is snatching away the great gains of the agrarian revolution. He is explaining the class struggle going on between those who stands for socialist path and capitalist path. But Chinese people can "reactivate the principle of Mao's development ladder, break out of current rural stagnation, and create a cooperative commonwealth of unprecedented strength and productivity" as Hinton hopes, and "the land reforms of NDR would realise its full potential " only if the capitalist roaders in power and their bureaucratic state capitalist system is overthrown and revolutionary seizure of political power by the working class takes place once again. This article by Hinton, always an active supporter of Chinese revolution gives hope to the forces who are struggling with this aim in these days when capitalist imperialist system and its advocates everywhere are launching fierce onslaughts against socialist path. This article is reproduced from July-August 1998 issue of Monthly Review Magazine -RS.js

## The importance of Land Reforms in the Reconstruction of China

By William Hinton

From early 1920s through 1949 when the Peoples Liberation Army liberated Beijing, the Chinese people, rising in revolution under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, targeted domestic feudalism, bureaucratic capitalism, and foreign imperialism as the three mountains in their backs that had to be thrown off. In the 1020s and early 1930s, the landlord dominated-feudal land system was the central issue, and land reform-equal distribution of the land to all who labored on it-formed the heart of the revolutionary program. After 1937 when the Japanese embarked on the military conquest of China, their imperialist invasion, threatening China's very existence as an independent country, preempted all other political issues. Chinese revolutionaries responded by forging a united front with all forces, including those bureaucratic capitalists holding state power and those landlords in the countryside, who were willing to join in resistance to Japan. For eight years mobilization for land reform in the countryside gave way to rent and interest reduction schemes, a Communist Party policy to which all resisters gave lip service, but not all landlords and usurers put into practice.

### Land to the Tiller, The Central Issue

After Japanese surrendered in 1945, land reform again took the center of the political stage and dominated domestic politics in China throughout the period of the postwar civil war and even for several years thereafter. This dominance lasted more or less intact until all peasants everywhere-with minor exceptions such as a six year delay in Tibet-took over the land they tilled. This stage of the revolution, the anti imperialist, anti feudal stage, was called by Mao Zedong the NDR. It was a massive armed uprising, primarily of peasants, that prepared the ground for socialism but did not place socialism as such on its agenda.

The New Democratic land reform in China was without doubt the most massive expropriation and distribution of property and repudiation of debt in world history. As I wrote in Fanshen, the Draft Agrarian Law of 1947 was destined to play an important

role in China's Civil War of 1946-1950 as the Emancipation Proclamation played in the American Civil War of 1961-65. Lincoln's emancipation proclamation confiscated without compensation \$3 billion worth of property in slaves, put an end to the possibility of compromise between the industrial North and the slaveholding South in the military contest then raging; made the slave system itself rather than region autonomy, the nub of the conflict; cleared the way for the recruitment of hundreds of thousands of emancipated black men into the Union Army; the spread of the war into every corner of the Confederate territory with devastating effect.

Mao's Draft agrarian Law confiscated without compensation \$20 billion in land (no figure for the value of debts canceled are available); put an end to all possible compromise between the Communist Party and the Kumingtang; made countrywide overthrow of the landlords and compradores, rather than the defence of the liberated areas, the main aim of the wars, facilitated the capitulation and recruitment of huge block of Chiang's soldiers into the Peoples Liberation Army; inspired peasant unrest in the far corner of China; and gave impetus to demonstrations of workers, students, merchants, and professional people in urban centres throughout the Kumingtang era.

The massive distribution of the property at the core of Chinese feudalism that followed promulgation of the Draft Law enabled almost every poor peasant and hired laborers in China to fanshen, to turn over, to stand up, to acquire land, often tools, a share in a draft animal, a section or two of houses, even few clothes- in other words the basic prerequisites for self support, and this egalitarian material base undergirding peasant society remains intact to this day.

### Liberating Productive Forces

More important in the long run than the equalization, however, the thorough and universal land reforms liberated hitherto tightly constrained productive forces, primarily the surplus labor power of the Chinese peasant, and by providing returns

from land of their own as incentive, led this huge force to increase production rapidly not only on land already tilled but on land newly reclaimed, not only on irrigated fields already in place or restored but on fields newly watered, and by new sideline and industrial projects never before undertaken that added greatly to individual incomes. All this steadily increased the days worked per year from below 150 to 200,250 even 300. The latter figure became possible once cooperation pooled individual forms into collectives that could mobilize both labor and resources even larger projects and enterprises. As the utilization rate of labor power increased, output grew, as did incomes.

The liberation of productive forces through the transformation of productive relations - who owns what, who works for whom and under what arrangements-was the key. Historically when any agricultural surplus piled up in the hands of landlord they either bought more land with it, loaned it out at usurious interest rates, spent it on high living, or buried it in the ground for safe keeping. None of this added one jot to production. Most of the loans were for festivals of consumption-weddings, first year survival parties for sons, funerals-or they were for emergencies like accidents and illness. They rarely added any inputs to agriculture, except perhaps for those loans advanced for seed. The result was economic stagnation.

When the agricultural surplus piled up in the hands of peasants individually or collectively, they reinvested much of it in expanded production. They lively market created by their inputs together with their increasing demand as consumers, stimulated the whole economy. As Mao Zedong wrote in his "Ten Great Relationship," if you want to develop heavy industry you must pay attention to developing agriculture and light industry."

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The liberation of productive forces through land reform led to rapid development in China in all spheres—agriculture, light industry, heavy industry, and infrastructure. On the average during the next thirty years the Chinese economy grow from 7 percent to 8 percent a year (even when facing the declines suffered during the hardship year 1959-1961). This is one of the fastest rates of growth in the world. This growth was firmly rooted in the land reform of 1946-53 and could not have occurred without it.

Conventional wisdom has it that policy extremes imposed by Mao brought crop failure, hunger, and finally monstrous famine to China from 1959-1961. Actually severe political combat between contending headquarters inside the leading bodies of the Communist Party were tearing the party apart from top to bottom, making it difficult to carry out coherent policies to combat three successive years of bad weather—the unprecedented floods and droughts that were underlying cause of the crises. Having obscured the cause, media and academicians alike then grossly exaggerated the effects. Twenty years later, by reverse extrapolation of some dubious population statistics, they turned a phenomena that no one had noticed into the worst famine in history. Though some famine deaths did occur, consequences of the disaster were minimized by universal rationing, grain redistribution, reduced requisition, the coarse milling of foodgrains, and expanded sown acreage. Far from being the cause of the trouble, collective strength helped to overcome it.

### **Pooled Private Holdings Transformed into Use-Rights**

Collectivization, by pooling holdings and distributing income in proportion to work performed, blocked polarization—the concentration of land and productive equipment in the hands of a few exploiters. A decision made during the Cultural Revolution later transferred land ownership from local communities to the state, but reserved firm use-rights to rural land to the members of village-level collectives or brigades group-by-group, thus preserving the core function of land reform, assuring to every rural individual access to a fair share of land.

Now that the “reform” has broken up most agricultural cooperatives, the use-rights to land are apportioned not to collective groups, the teams that made up the rural brigades and kept their accounts together, but to families as accounting units, with land allocations to each based on the number of members. Thus every individual still enjoys use rights to a proportionate share of land. This method also preserves the core function of land reform—to every tiller a plot of land to till.

This underlying egalitarian arrangement makes China quite different, say, from India, Pakistan, or the Philippines

where no thoroughgoing large-scale land reform has ever taken place. There, large masses of landless and destitute people form a huge reserve army of rural proletarians with no reliable sustenance, no place to go, and no place to return to that they can call their own.

Since the Deng “reforms” began in the early 1980s many Chinese peasants with land use-rights at home have left their native places looking for something more lucrative to do than hand hoe the small strips allocated to them. In the off season as many as 100 millions roam the country looking for work, especially in the boom-bust coastal provinces and the major cities. Some find work, many do not. But all of them, when down on their luck, have the option of returning home. Non-roaming family members—women, children, old folks, the ill, and the disabled—have usually raised some corps in their absence. They can still eat and find shelter under their own roof.

Nowadays as privatization and market relations gain dominance, contradictions and tensions in the countryside, brought on by social polarization are escalating. As conflicts sharpen, the subsistence substructure provided by universal land use-rights adds greatly to the stability of a system and a situation that, if not backed up by these inalienable prerogatives inherited by hundreds of millions of rural people from land reform days, could easily become quite unstable, even explosive. Whether or not this outcome is positive can be debated. Unfolding as one of the great ironies of modern history, the vast liberating social equalization that accompanied the Communist victory in 1949 is now coming back into play by providing a huge and relatively complaint reserve army of labour for the development of capitalism—unfortunately not the brand of autonomous national capitalism familiar to the West as it developed, but a capitalism wrapped by strong comproadore tendencies that can drag China back into the kind of neocolonial nightmare that brought on the upheaval in the first place.

### **Revanchist Forces Repudiate Land Reforms**

Beginning from early 1980s, strong revanchist tendencies began to surface in China which have strengthened later. Whereas the brunt of the ‘reformist’ attacks used to concentrate on socialist collectivization, today repudiation even extends to the land reform of the New Democratic Revolution. Some localities are building People’s Life Museums, thinly disguised celebrations of gentry life as it was led in the good old days, without any hint of the sources of gentry wealth or the class conflicts which these generated. Foreign academicians, meanwhile are writing books like Friedman, Pickowics, and Selden’s *Chinese Village, Socialist State* that badmouths the whole revolution, starting

with a so-called “levelling and terror” land reform that they say had, no objective basis in land concentration, land deprivation, or the class conflicts generated thereby. These attacks are off the wall completely unjustified exercises in revanchism. By any objective standard—political, economic, social, or cultural, land reform in China must be judged as an outstanding success. The goal of the movement was to break up, once and for all, the elitist hierarchical, autocratic wasteful, corrupt and above all stagnant landlord-dominated feudal system and replace it with grassroot communities of equal, small and basically running their own affairs led by Communist Party members recruited from among the best, most active, most dedicated men and women of the locality. If the dedication did not always last after they tasted power, the potential to honest service to the community was still much greater than when hereditary entry parcelled out the posts.

On the whole, throughout the nation over a period of five or six years, peasant communities achieved their New Democratic revolutionary goals with results that exceeded expectations, whether it sidelines through mutual aid, the election of representative village councils, the empowerment of women, first step towards universal primary education, widespread literacy campaigns, or an unfolding of grassroots street theaters. What better foundation could be laid for the establishment of an expanding economy generated by self-governing members of a landed elite that knew how to exploit but not to build, yet still regarded themselves as the only worthy representatives of Chinese Civilization.

### **Social Equality Undergirds Democracy**

As the Americal Civil War ended Thaddeus Stevens asked: How can republican institutions, free schools, free churches, free social intercourse exist in a mingled economy of nabobs and serfs; of owners of 20,000 acre manors with lordly palaces and occupants of narrow huts inhabited by “low white trash”? If the south is ever to be made a safe republic let her land be cultivated by the toil of the owner and the free labour of intelligent citizens..... the foundations of their institutions must be broken up and relaid, or all our blood and treasure have been spent in vain.

America rejected Steven’s solution – 40 acres and a mule for every freed slave

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# Against Dhamara-Chandabali Port

A multinational corporation, International Sea Port, Singapore has signed agreements with the Orissa state government to construct totally mechanised Dhamara-Chandabali port in Dosinga panchayat area. This proposed port will ruin thousands of fish workers of three panchayats, named Dhaamara, Dosinga and Kaithkola. They will lose their livelihood. The whole coastal environment will be distorted.

This port construction will aggravate the danger of cyclones. After the super cyclone of 1999 it is proved that only coastal mangroves and jungles can save from the fury of the cyclone. The port construction will lead to total loss of the coastal

and white tenant. The land went back to its erstwhile owners. Rural blacks went from slavery to peonage on the cotton plantations of the South, while the race question burgeoned into a lasting course that has exacted an enormous price from all Americans ever since.

There were not many 20,000 acre manorial estates in China, and most landlords did not live in places. If anything, there was even a reverse correlation between the size of the holding and the venality of the landlord. Those with the sparsest holdings lived under the most pressure to collect the last modicum of rent lest they themselves be forced to swap their gown for a pair of work pants and a hoe. Many American academics had a hard time finding landlords in China because they could not believe that reentries collected as little and lived as poorly as many undoubtedly did. But the class standards used by the peasant associations were well grounded, and people who lived off the land but did not work it lost their holdings, whatever their size, from the Amur to the South China sea. They got back, like everyone a working peasant's share.

Thus China solved in a thoroughgoing manner what America failed to solve as slavery ended in the South, what India failed to tackle after winning independence, and what the Philippines aborted after MacArthur's return. The difference this has made is profound as any comparison of China with Mississippi, India, or the Philippines will demonstrate.

## Cooperation Between Smallholders Both Natural and Necessary.

The more or less universal equality established by land reform made possible the next great step taken by the Chinese Revolution in the countryside-cooperative agriculture through land pooling village by village. Cooperation cannot arise between nabobs and serfs, nor even between petty

jungles. Besides along the whole coastal region including Chandipur and Dhamara many projects including even missile testings are taking place.

The government has not declared any rehabilitation policy for the thousands who will be uprooted due to the construction of the port. In Orissa since 1947 from many projects areas lakhs of people were driven out destroying their livelihoods, homeland and cultivation. But neither they were given proper compensation, nor employed, nor properly rehabilitated. In these days of liberalisation profit is the main motto more than ever. The constructing company has declared that it will be a completely mechanised port, though

landlords and their tenants. Their interests are too opposed. But cooperation between equal small holders is both natural and necessary.

Conventional wisdom has it that almost three decades of cooperative agriculture in China (1956-1983) led only to disaster. In preparing to break up the collectives, which they never favoured in the first place, advocates of the individual family contract system vigorously promoted the theory that cooperation as a form of organization was generically unsuited to peasant agriculture. But in reality, after experiencing serious growing pains, the collective system has finally consolidated in the 1970s and functioned successfully. A team of young specialists analyzing the situation on behalf of "reform" leaders in the early 1980s found that 30 percent of the rural collectives, those leading the way, were doing well, an additional 40 percent in the middle were viable but faced problems, while 30 percent at the bottom were in serious trouble and required drastic overhaul. With 240 million peasants prospering through cooperation, with another 480 million in village collective units basically successful, how could it be said that cooperation could never succeed in the agricultural sector?

The *China Daily* of April 10, 1996, reconfirmed the success of rural cooperation historically. Agricultural scientists at the Chinese Academy of Science found that the average annual increase in grain production during 1949 to 1984 (a period that includes the "three hard years" of 1959 to 1961 when output fell sharply) was 7.42 percent. This kept grain production well ahead of population growth, which became universal in 1982-1983, the bulk of this higher 7.4 percent growth rate was generated by an all but universally collectivized agriculture - a major achievement that contradicts what most commentators have been affirming.

it will be a big port. So work force will be very little. Everything will be done under automation.

Even for loading unloading purposes laborers are not needed. While in Paradeep's nationalised port even now about 5 to 7 thousand workers are engaged. In this case, only a handful of people with specialised knowledge will only get any engagement.

The most important aspect is that while it is constructed by the Singapore company it will be owned and operated by US and Thai Companies for 32 years under contract. This port is constructed mainly for the export of minerals & jungle products. Imperialists want to loot Orissa's natural resources like chromite, bauxite, iron ore, coal, manganese, nickel, graphite, granite, dolomite etc and mineral soils like ilmanite, monazite etc. at throw away prices. As the port will be private and under imperialist control, it will be very easy to resort to plunder as they wish.

When in 1997 the Congress government launched the NEP, the present rulers of Orissa, BJD and BJP had apposed it. But now they have become the protectors for the imperialist interests. To oppose this anti-people project, against Dhamara-Chandabali Port, a peoples' committee consisting people of many villages of the proposed port site, "JIVAAN-JIVIKA SURAKSHYA SAMITI" is formed, with Com. Nirmalendu Pal and Prabhuram Jena as joint convenors of the samiti. The samiti started campaigning against the port project. As their first programme a memorandum is prepared, which will be given to all government authorities from local administration to state administration, and copy will be sent to prime minister, and president of india also, with signatures of thousands of people. If the project is not dropped, agitations will be started. The committee has appealed to all progressive democratic forces to help and support this movement. □

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## Veerappan Games

Following the kidnapping of Kannada super-star Rajkumar, Veerappan, the sandalwood and tusk plunderer has transformed into a new 'avathar' that of a 'Tamil militant', as the media is reporting. All newspapers and TV channels especially of the South, are full of numerous stories that two ex-naxalite Tamil extremist groups, TNLA and TNRT (Tamil National Liberation Army and Tamil National Retrieval Troops) are working in tandem with Veerappan. Their origin is linked to Tamil Arasan, a sectarian naxalite leader of yester-years who was killed while trying to escape after a bank robbery. This 'naxalite connection' of Veerappan is utilised by vested interests to tarnish the image of the great Naxalbari uprising and the formation of the CPI(ML). It is the task of the Communists to strongly condemn and repudiate this vile propaganda.

That Veerappan could survive and go through his poaching and murders in spite of the police forces of two states and Special Task Force of centre deployed to nab him, clearly shows the collusion of higher-ups in police, bureaucracy and ruling parties with him. With their help, he was flourishing. Can any one believe that the might of the two states' police forces and STF failed to grab such a forest thief, when these very same forces have ruthlessly annihilated and suppressed even leading cadres of much more organised revolutionary forces enjoying vast public support? So Veerappan's survival and image is to a great extent contributed by the ruling classes and ruling system. If he is now coming out as a 'Tamil militant' that is also to serve the ruling class interests, at a wider scale to serve the US imperialist interests of Balkanising the country. There are all possibilities for groups like TNLA and TNRT through LTTE already establishing relations with US imperialists and their agents, the new 'liberators' of world people as the national chauvinists all over the world are trying to propagate.

Apart from pocketing a huge ransom amount which is kept as well-guarded secret, and getting the release of TADA detainees of these two groups and some others, by putting forward the so-call 'pan tamil' demands, which are the forces Veerappan and those behind him are serving? Any way it is not the Tamil people's interests they are serving. Today the life of Tamil people, that is the working class, peasantry and even middle classes of Tamilnadu, like people in other parts of

India are getting devastated under barbarous globalisation policies. As a result of imperialist dictated policies both agriculture and industries are facing crises, throwing out millions of workers and impoverishing the masses. This is a fact of life in near by Coimbatore and Tiruppur industrial areas where lakhs of workers are thrown out dut to dumping. Similarly the tea leaf prices has also gone down under globalisation policies. This is a time the people of India as a whole should stand united and fight against the imperialists led by US imperialists by throwing out the rule of the compradors ranging from Vajpayee to Karunanidhi who are enslaving the country.

But what Veerappan and his associates are doing goes against this very cause. It only helps to divide the Tamil and Kannada peoples and weaken their united struggle. Whether Rajkumar is released, or any thing happens to him, in both cases vested interests will be utilising the situation, creating horrendous situation for the millions of people in border areas. Though, not reported in media, tension is already mounting in these areas as the kidnap drama continues. Such situations are utilised by divisive forces with US imperialists utilising them in all respects. While this point is clear as day light, no group interested in people's cause will play any role in this Veerappan games which will have long term ramifications. That is why TNLA, TNRT like chauvinist groups like their friends in bourgeois politics should be condemned severely. Such heinous forces have nothing to do

with the great history of the Communist movement in this country including the naxalbari movement, which is an integral part of the above.

In the early 1980s some of the naxalite sections who were advocates of extreme sectarian/dogmatic thinking, failing to comprehend the quick changes taking place in the economic and political scene, and the changing class relations, had abandoned the path of class struggle to create a new democratic india, and embraced the path of chauvinism and jingoism. Tamil Arasan was one of these petty-bourgeois anarchists. All over India, and especially in Tamilnadu, in the atmosphere of upsurge of militancy in Eezham supported by Indian ruling classes, these forces caused further setbacks to the revolutionary movement, which was already reeling under the setbacks suffered in 1970s due to its sectarian line, and was trying to recover from it. These petty-bourgeois anarchist forces have given birth to many criminal gangs playing in the hands of the ruling classes. All over the world and in India these gangs are proliferating under indirect patronage of imperialists and native rulers. While utilising them to divide and suppress the people, their activities are used to launch smear campaigns against Communists by the revanchist forces.

Veerappan like forces and TNLA-TNRT like gangs who have joined hands with him are creations of this barbarous ruling system. Like the ruling system, its monstrous creations also should be condemned and exposed uncompromisingly. □

## August 15 Observed as Anti-Imperialist Day

Yuvajanavedi observed 15 August as Anti Imperialist ay all over Kerala with demonstrations and public meetings at a number of Places. Programmes were organised by party and class/mass organisations in different states on this day. Anti-Imperialist campaigns deposing the traitorous Vajpayee government

## Mahyco Granted Permission for Transgenic Cotton

Though Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR) have found that BT Cotton cannot be a panacea for total pest control, Union Environment Ministry has permitted Mahyco which has collaboration agreements with US based multi-national seed giant Monsanto to start field trials of Transgenic cotton in various agro-climatic zones of the country. Since Monsanto holds international patent for

which is playing to the tune of imperialists led by US imperialists were organised before band. At all places Vajpayee government's object surrender before US imperialism by alongwith the opening of FBI office in New Delhi was also frightened. At all places the programmes received enthusiastic public support. □

terminator seeds, the field trials are bound to induce testing of terminator technology. In spite of strong protests from the peasant organisations and progressive forces all over the country, and the Karnataka Ryota Sangha led direct action in north Karnataka districts destroying the test plants, the government is permitting the MNC to impose the terminator technology. It calls for uncompromising opposition. □