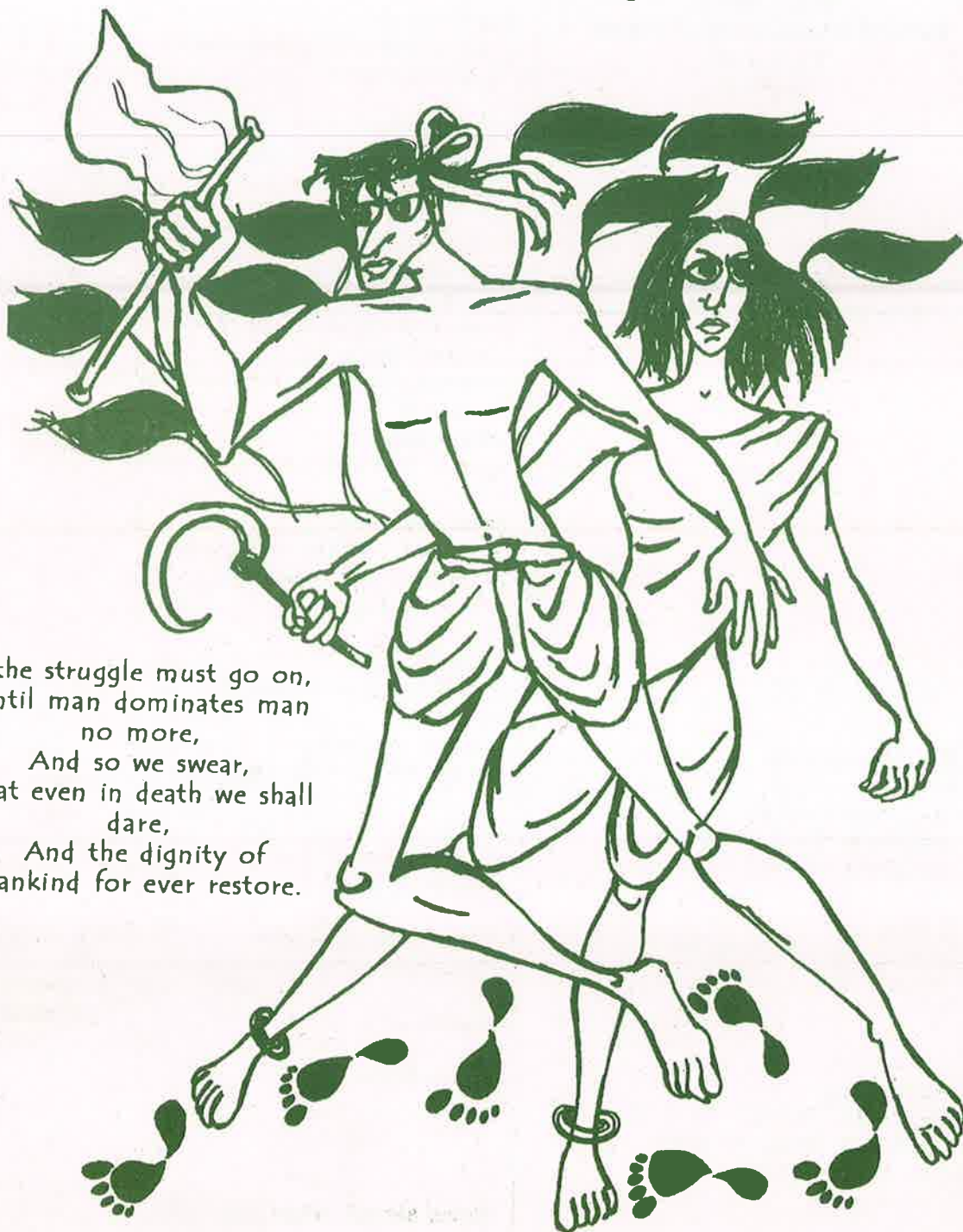


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KALAM

The Revolutionary Students' Voice



...the struggle must go on,
Until man dominates man
no more,
And so we swear,
That even in death we shall
dare,
And the dignity of
mankind for ever restore.

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Fifteen years of AIRSF: A legacy of struggle and sacrifice

March!
Let time explode like gunshells,
far behind, ...
Let's wrest joy
from the grips
of a future day!

- Mayakovsky- 1926

Thirty-four years back the speal of thunder struck India when the tribal peasants of Naxalbaria remote village in north-Bengal, raised the clarion call of armed revolt as their path of liberation from all forms of exploitation. *Naxalbari ek hi raastha*, a slogan that transcended the geographic space and time, that reverberated the length and breadth of India then, has become today the beacon of hope for the toiling masses. The song of freedom that flowed out of Naxalbari, out of the barrel of the gun, the new art to haul the Republic out of the mud, today has become part of the day to day resistance of revolutionary struggles of the toiling masses of AP, Bihar and Dandakaranya.

In a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country like India, the programme of **New Democratic Revolution** that Naxalbari envisaged with **agrarian revolution** as its central axis took **Land to the tiller** as one of the central slogans. The concrete reality that presented itself—in a backward economy ridden with the overlapping contradictions of caste, class, nationality, gender—as **an excellent revolutionary situation** made the task of New Democratic Revolution all the more necessary. It implied that under the present state structure it has become impossible to undertake any democratic tasks for the betterment of the general masses held hostage by the *comprador big bourgeois, big landlord classes in nexus with imperialism*. It meant in nutshell, the objective conditions which provide inevitable conditions to *fight the system through armed and protracted peoples' war*.

With the vast rural populace of India being illiterate, the task of raising the consciousness of the masses was also challenging. Thus the obvious call that emanated out of the concrete circumstances was the need of the students and intellectuals to integrate with the living reality of the masses. In this process of integrating with the masses, the students and intellectuals transformed themselves by being one with the masses and at the same time *conscientised* the former about their historic duty. AIRSF through its slogan of *Go to village campaigns* tried to realise this latent revolutionary potential of students. In fact APRSU had started this practice since 1978. From 1978 till date, the *Go to village campaigns* have played a vital role in raising the revolutionary consciousness of the masses, in making them understand the relation between lack of means of production and poverty; the relevance of the slogan of *Land to the tiller* in this context; the role of New Democratic Revolution in realising this end, and how *Agrarian revolution* is the axis of revolution in India. It was the understanding that the country provided an excellent revolutionary situation that inspired the students and youths to raise the revolutionary consciousness of the masses so as to ensure *the unity of the revolutionary classes, to build up a strong proletariat leadership* and also *an organisation or the peoples' army* which can wrest the ripe conditions of revolution as and when it unfolds.

This catalytic role of students that was visible throughout the days of upswing of Naxalbari was

the moving spirit of the revolutionary student movement in Andhra Pradesh (Andhra Pradesh Radical Students' Union) that took the lead in 1985 to initiate the AIRSF. By the time AIRSF was being initiated, the experience of the APRSU along with the Revolutionary Youth League (RYL) in organising *go to village campaigns* since 1978 had been attaining newer and newer heights. In 1984 APRSU along with RYL had organised a massive *go to village campaign* which comprised of 1100 members in 150 squads with 105 women in 10 all women squads. They covered 2419 villages comprising of 50, 00,000 people. In the process they organised 200 sanghams, collected around 1, 00, 000 signatures on a charter of demands, organised land struggles that occupied around 861 acres, wrote slogans on the walls in 1500 villages held 7000 street corner meetings and 1000 public meetings while collecting also Rs. 30,000 for the RYL conference. Thus from raising the issue condemning the Vietnam aggression against Kampuchea in 1979 or the Russian aggression on Afghanistan and solidarity for the nationality struggle in Assam in 1980 to mobilising public opinion among the peasantry against the massacre of tribals in Indravelli in Adilabad District in 1981 to demanding judicial enquiry into the fake encounter deaths of peasant activists of Karim Nagar in 1982 as well as demanding withdrawal of the CRPF which was perpetrating heavy repression on the peasant movement in Telengana District in 1984 or mobilising workers to the first conference of the Singareni Karmika Samakhya (SIKASA) in 1982, *go to village campaigns* organised by APRSU, by 1984, had attained manifold dimensions in carrying the revolutionary politics to the toiling masses. It was from the crucible of this practice that the need for an all India student body of the same character emerged which materialised in 1985 in the formation of the AIRSF. Thus the practice of AIRSF stood for combining the problems that students confront in the campuses to the larger political issues that the general masses confront day by day. In this process, AIRSF had to wage uncompromising struggles against the repressive state apparatus let alone the ruling class student organisations. In this regard, the comrades of AIRSF continued the legacy of the Naxalbari martyrs keeping the red flag high. The martyrdom of Com. Janardhan (Ashok), former General Secretary AIRSF, Com Arjun (RSL, Bihar), ex-EC member AIRSF, Coms. Veera Swamy and Bhujanga Reddy, President and Secretary of APRSU respectively, Com. Sajal (RSF, West Bengal), Com. Sunil (APRSU), and Coms. Naveen and Srikanth are but a few examples of *the earthiest men / women of all* who have laid down their lives for the cause of revolution.

In its formative years, AIRSF was confined only to South India. Today it has its constituents in Punjab, Haryana, Uttarkhand, Jharkhand, Bihar, Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

After a decade and a half, at hindsight, the perspective of AIRSF of linking up the student movement with the agrarian revolution has become all the more significant. This is evident in the context of the fast unfolding contradictions between the state and the larger spectrum of the masses day by day, as the former is going ahead with the project of privatisation and liberalisation of the economy. It is not that there are no protests against these anti-people policies of the government. Today we are at a juncture where spontaneous protests in it won't suffice. Whether it is a small peasant fighting for proper prices for his crop, coal miners fighting against the selling of mines to MNCs, workers of the power sector fighting against the privatisation of SEBs, workers fighting against displacement, masses fighting against state repression or students fighting against fee-hike, for reservation, for democratisation of the *modus operandi* of charting the syllabi or the student-teacher relationship and last but not the least in forging a resistance against all designs to communalise the syllabus, the need of the hour is the presence of a revolutionary force that can see through all the contradictions, and through concrete practice can prepare the masses to break down all hurdles put up by this exploitative system so as to usher in a new society.

Today the State is all geared up for an all round attack on the education system. A situation has arrived wherein what the establishment needs today from its citizens is total subservience to the system. What the state needs today is an elite professional class for whom will be set aside the fruits of quality education while the vast majority has to content themselves with an education capable of

producing a vast reservoir of cheap labour force that can be hired and fired at will. Already the government is going ahead with the policy of curtailing the employment opportunities by ten percent. The entire policy change that is being initiated today is to create an environment conducive for the anti-people policies of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation of the economy. As has been highlighted several times before, education is one of the key sectors through which the morals of a dehumanised economy devoid of dissent can be 'inculcated' in the generations to follow. With fascist communal organisations like RSS and the BJP hoodlum P.D.Chitlangia's 'Friends of Tribal Society' owning 26000 institutions (13000 each) in the education field it is evident that the privatisation of education will pave the way for retrogressive values to have its foothold in the minds of the future generation. An isolated *peripheral* struggle against these anti-people policies cannot succeed as it is *intertwined* with the *fundamental* character of the state. Any programme that does not link these struggles with the agenda for a revolutionary social change is doomed to be a failure. It is at this context the programme of AIRSF, as a revolutionary student body, attains significance.

Red salutes to the martyrs!
Stop repression on the revolutionary student movement!
Lift the ban on APRSU and AIRSF!
Fight for scientific and democratic education!
Long live Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought!
Long live New Democratic Revolution of India!

KALAM



A South Korean radical student hurls a fire bomb at riot policemen during a rally opposing the Government policy on mass lay-offs, in front of Yonsei University in Seoul on March 1st, 2001 . More than 1,000 students protested against the lay-offs in the troubled Daewoo Motor Co.

In defense of the Student Movement

- Noam Chomsky

In this particular article Chomsky dwells in detail about the problems confronting the student movement in the US in particular. Many of the issues he raises, one can see, have striking parallels with the challenges that students, as an organised force confront in the third world too. [Editor]

The student movement today is the one organized, significant segment of the intellectual community that has a real and active commitment to the kind of social change that our society desperately needs. Developments now taking place may lead to its destruction, in part through repression, in part through what I think are rather foolish tactics on the part of the student movement itself. I think this would be a great, perhaps irreparable, loss. And I think if it does take place the blame will largely fall on the liberal enlightened community that has permitted a situation to arise in which the most committed, sincere, and most socially active of young people are perhaps working themselves into a position at the end of a limb, from which they may be sawed off at great cost to all of us and to society as a whole. One development that makes me feel that this matter is of crucial importance right now is the rise on the campuses of a growing movement that I think is quite ill-conceived and that may lead to repression of student activism and destruction of what I deem the few possibilities for significant social change. I have in mind a letter (which I did not receive, though a number of my colleagues did) from the Coordinating Center for Democratic Opinion headed by Sidney Hook and a number of other people. [The organization is now called University Centers for Rational Alternatives.] The letter calls upon people to join this organization, the goals of which "will be to defend academic freedom against extremism, to promote the activism of non-extremists in all aspects of civic affairs, to foster rational treatment of contemporary problems, and to combat attacks on the democratic process, "particularly terrorist attacks and multiple varieties of putschism" such as at San Francisco State, and also "many other extremist resorts to disruption, Intimidation and violence," all of which amount to a "new McCarthyism of the left." The letter speaks of the dangers of appeasing this movement, pointing out that appeasement is both "morally intolerable

and practically disastrous." And it says that "the main thrust" of the new organization is to be "to protect and advance the freedom and democratic integrity of academic life," to struggle against the "extremist challenge," "to support the university as an open center of free thought and speech – as a meeting house of many viewpoints – not as an enclave of enforced conformity or a totalitarian beachhead in a democratic society."

It would be very difficult to find anyone who would reject these goals. It would be difficult to find anyone who would be in favor of a university that would be an "enclave of enforced conformity" or who would oppose the view that the university should be "an open center of free thought and speech." But in another and more serious sense it represents, I think, an extremely dangerous, even perhaps vicious development; no doubt inadvertently, but I think objectively. When I see things of this sort, what immediately comes to mind is some advice that A. J. Muste gave to pacifists about a half century ago. He said that their task is to denounce the violence on which the present system is based and all the evil, material and spiritual, this entails for the masses of men throughout the world. So long as we are not dealing honestly and adequately with this 90 per cent of our problem, there is something ludicrous – and perhaps hypocritical – about our concern over the ten per cent of violence employed by the rebels against oppression. I think that's a sensible remark. And in fact, even if the criticism of "McCarthyism of the left" contained in this letter and similar statements were entirely accurate, still I think Muste's words would be quite appropriate. It would be surprising that that much attention should be given to this minuscule element in the problems of society and the problems of the university.

I want to apologize in advance because later I am going to do something, in Muste's words, "ludicrous and perhaps hypocritical"; namely, spend part of this discussion on an infinitesimal part of the problems that face American society and in particular

the universities: tendencies in the student movement that strike me as irrational and objectionable and probably ultimately suicidal. My reason for doing this is precisely because I think that the student movement does have a historic mission, and I think it would be a great tragedy if the tendencies to which I have referred were to lead it into such disaster that this mission will not be fulfilled. There's no other force in society that I see from which one can hopefully expect that a comparable achievement will come.

But before turning to this important though marginal aspect of our present social problems, let me refer, obviously inadequately, to what seem to me the real problems. The basic problem is indicated by the fact that since World War II, our society has devoted something over a trillion dollars to what is euphemistically called "defense" and unknown additional amounts to subversion. We have intervened with military force to overthrow governments that we admit were popular and legally constituted and to maintain in power repressive dictatorships throughout the world that are willing to subordinate themselves to our interests. And furthermore we have at least once certainly, and perhaps several times, brought the world perilously close to nuclear destruction. Worse still, we continue to accept as legitimate the principles on the basis of which those decisions were made. So we can expect the situation to recur. It's remarkable that liberals and conservatives alike, just about all those in the mainstream of opinion, applaud this splendid performance. There is very little serious criticism of the decisions that were made, let us say, during the Cuban missile crisis, when we did bring the world very close to total destruction in order to establish the principle that we have a right to have missiles on the borders of the Soviet Union while they do not have the same right to have missiles on our border. One finds little criticism of that principle, little mention of the criminal insanity of those willing to risk nuclear war to defend such a principle, within the mainstream of opinion. What you find rather are statements like those of Presidential historian Thomas Bailey, who refers to this as a high point of the Kennedy Administration: when Kennedy showed that he knew how to play "nuclear chicken."

The dangers of nuclear war and its consequences are obviously immense and require no comment. But the problem of repression, of the institution of dictatorial forms, is one that definitely can be talked about and is very serious. For example, last year there was a good deal of reporting in the papers about political developments in Thailand. But there were a number of things that were not mentioned in these reports. In particular there was a long report

in the New York Times about the sudden reappearance in Peking of a man named Pridi Phanomyong, who was simply identified as a Communist Thai leader who had suddenly come into some prominence in China. There is an interesting background, not reported in the story, to his appearance in Peking. If one looks into the history of these developments, one finds some important things. In 1932 Pridi Phanomyong was leader of the liberal reform movement that tried to introduce parliamentary institutions into Thailand and overthrew the absolute monarchy. He himself was overthrown shortly afterward, then during World War II fought together with the American OSS in the "Free Thai" guerrilla movement against the Japanese, while Thailand was under the rule of a basically fascist dictator who had an alliance with Japan. In 1946-7 Pridi led a liberal parliamentary reform movement and won Thailand's only more-or-less free election in history. But he received almost no support from the United States and was quickly overthrown in a coup. By 1948 the fascist dictator who had been a collaborator with the Japanese was back in power. He was immediately recognized by the United States and given very substantial military and economic aid to develop Thailand as one of the supposed bastions of freedom in Southeast Asia. In fact, Thailand developed into one of the most bloody, repressive, vicious dictatorships in the world. Its enormous crimes are reported in such historical documents as a book by a Kennedy liberal named Frank Darling (one of the signers of the Hook Committee's statement, incidentally) who goes to great length to detail the repression and the role of the United States in instituting it during this post-war period after the coup. And he points out something that the Times did not bother to mention; namely, after Pridi was overthrown by a coup that was supported immediately by the United States, he remained in Thailand for a few years and then escaped to China, so that by 1954 the liberal reformer who had been fighting against the Japanese, with the Americans, was in Communist China, and the fascist dictator who had been allied with the Japanese, and had declared war on us, was ruling in Thailand, now an authoritarian military dictatorship with substantial American military support. This, Mr. Darling says, was "ironic"! He then concludes and summarizes this situation as follows: the vast material and diplomatic support provided to the military leaders by the United States helped to prevent the emergence of any competing groups who might check the trend toward absolute political rule and lead the country back to a more modern form of government. The last phrase is interesting: "lead the country back to a more modern form of government." But it is quite accurate because

the Thais had a more modern form of government in 1946-7 under the leadership of a liberal reformer who is now in Communist China; and it was American military aid that very largely created a situation in which one now hopes they might move back to this more modern form of government. This is a fairly typical example of the American impact on the less developed Countries.

If we can escape nuclear war, then the prospects for peace are really prospects for the peace of the prison or the peace of the graveyard, if present tendencies continue. It is interesting that Darling, though he deplores the consequences of our actions in Thailand, nevertheless urges that we continue about as before. He thus expresses the predominant voice in American society: What follows from our actions is deplorable, but it is not our fault, we have no choice, we must continue. Now of course this is not quite the predominant voice because Frank Darling is liberal, a CIA analyst and basically a Kennedy liberal.

There is another voice in the mainstream of American opinion that is becoming more dominant: the voice of people like Melvin Laird, who has called for a "first strike" if the situation requires it. This makes us as far as I know, the only country in the world where the Minister of War has come out in favor of "preventive war" if "our interests" demand it. And he is supported – I suppose again this makes us the only country in the world where this is true – by the leading military spokesman in the press, Hanson Baldwin, who has come out in favor of first use of nuclear weapons for what he refers to as "defensive purposes"; specifically, bolstering weak governments against subversion and aggression – where we decide, of course unilaterally, when this is taking place – as in Vietnam in 1964, when it appears a decision was made perhaps even prior to the 1964 election campaign to escalate the war and to attack North Vietnam. One recalls the rhetoric during the election campaign. This decision, whenever it was actually made, was secret and private. It was a conspiracy, an illegal conspiracy to carry out acts of war that then were put in effect in February, 1965. This conspiracy has not been challenged in the courts although it is one of very great significance, not only to the people of Vietnam but to ourselves, and although it violates domestic law insofar as international treaties are part of that law. What is investigated in the courts are other sorts of "conspiracies"; for example, the "conspiracy" by Dr. Spock and others to challenge the illegal acts of the government. It is striking that the government made clear what it regards as the basis of the Spock conspiracy. It made this even more clear at the appeals level than it did during the trial by giving a list of "co-conspirators," of whom I am one. The criterion

that identifies this set of co-conspirators is precise; the people tried at the Spock trial and the co-conspirators happen to be exactly the group that appeared at a press conference, independently, to speak their minds, to say what they thought about the war and resistance. Many of them never met before or since. This was the only link between the people named as "conspirators" in the Spock trial. I believe this indicates what is the real peril not only to academic freedom, but to the freedoms provided by the Bill of Rights.

Even if one were to agree with everything said in criticism of the student movement, this criticism would, in proper perspective, be quite insignificant. The dominant voice in American society, the mainstream opinion, is bracketed by people like Frank Darling, on the one side, and by people like Melvin Laird and Hanson Baldwin, on the other. This voice is one that was made explicit by Barrington Moore in an article in the Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science in early 1960: You may protest in words as loud as you like. There is but one condition attached to the freedom we would like very much to encourage. Your protests may be as loud as possible so long as they remain ineffective. Though we regret your sufferings very much and would like very much to do something about them – indeed we have studied them very carefully and have already spoken to your rulers and immediate superiors about these matters – any attempt by you to remove your oppressors by force is a threat to civilized society and the democratic process. Such threats we cannot and shall not tolerate. As you resort to force we will, if need be, wipe you from the face of the earth by the measured response that rains down flame from the skies.

I think if you observe American society, you find that this is its predominant voice. It's a voice that expresses clearly the needs of the socio-economic elite; it expresses an ideology that is adopted and put forth with varying degrees of subtlety by most American intellectuals and that gains a substantial degree of adherence on the part of a majority of the population, which sees itself as entering or already having entered the affluent society. This predominant voice is supported by a predominant attitude of almost total apathy that makes it possible for any atrocity to appear in the front pages as long as it is directed against alleged "communists" or landless peasants or something of the sort. And it arouses virtually no response, certainly no response commensurate with what is described. This attitude is developed from the very earliest years.

I've become more aware of that since my children have been in school. Let me give you one example that I came across. I have a daughter in the Lexington, Massachusetts, Public School. Lexington

is a very progressive, professional, largely upper-middle-class community that prides itself on its outstanding school system. My daughter had a social science reader that talked about the marvelous New England heritage. The protagonist in this reader is a young fellow named Robert, who is being told about the wonders of the colonial past, including the following: Captain John Mason made plans to capture the Pequot fort where the Rhode Island Colony and the Connecticut Colony met. His little army attacked in the morning before it was light and took the Pequots by surprise. The soldiers broke down the stockade with their axes and rushed inside and set fire to the wigwams. They killed nearly all the braves, squaws and children and burned their corn and other food. There were no Pequots left to make more trouble. When the other Indian tribes saw what good fighters the white men were they kept the peace for many years. "I wish I were a man and had been there," thought Robert. And this is his last thought on the subject.

There is no doubt that if the Germans had won World War II, little Hans would be reading similar stories about Lidice, and he would also be wishing that he were a man and had been there. But this is the fare that is fed our children from earliest school experience, that is reinforced by the mass media, and that certainly goes a long way toward accounting for the fact that it's possible to have a story exactly like this in the newspapers where one replaces "Pequots" by "Vietnamese" and "stone axes" by "B-52s" – and to find the zombie-like reaction that permits any kind of atrocity to take place with nothing said about it. Now my daughter is not being exposed to some of the more remarkable statements by New England intellectuals at the time; for example, Cotton Mather, who described that very same incident as follows: "It was supposed that no less than 600 Pequot souls were brought down to hell that day." Mather goes on to talk about the diseases that decimated the Indians after the Mayflower landing, saying, "The woods were almost cleared of these pernicious creatures to make room for a better growth."

This is a part of our tradition that people ought to be exposed to, and they ought to be shown how it relates and compares to what is happening today. In such circumstances it might be possible to maintain peace – if the oppressed peoples of the world were silent and quiet, if they were willing to continue to play the role that was once described by Philippine nationalist Jose Rizal in castigating his countrymen because their aspirations were "dreams of a slave who asks only for a bandage to wrap the chain so that it may rattle less and not ulcerate his skin." But of course, those days are over. The slaves are no longer just calling for a bandage to wrap the chains, and that is the major reason for the disorder around

the world, and the resulting disorder on American campuses.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize that the very same predominant voice is heard with reference to domestic issues. A look at the files of the New York Civil Liberties Union will explain very clearly what "law and order" means to the poor. What it means is permanent harassment by the forces of justice. You get a very clear picture of this in books by Algernon Black, for example, or Paul Chevigny in *Police Power*, where he discusses no real atrocities but just the low-level, day-to-day harassment that defines the life of poor people in their relation to the forces of order. He does not mention events like the murder of students, events which lead to a great deal of sympathetic clucking of tongues, but do not lead to the formation of any national committees to defend the rights of students. I might mention that the hypocritical role of the government in the civil rights movement is evident to everyone who had anything to do with it. My own involvement was not very great, but it was enough to make clear what was going on.

The federal government does have the authority under the United States Code to use force to defend the rights of citizens against state authorities. It has not done so. Everyone, many other people much more than I, has seen incidents of brutal violence carried out by state authorities against citizens, with F.B.I. agents standing there taking notes when they have the right, the duty in fact, to intervene to prevent this if they are given the appropriate orders, which they're seldom given.

Let me turn to another area. Ralph Nader has pointed out that in the state of Pennsylvania 2,000 miners die each year of so-called "black lung." This is not a cost that is calculated by business or by professional economists when they talk about the health of the economy. And we can be quite certain that if these miners were, let's say, to seize the mines, if they were to insist that reasonable standards be imposed, or to be more exact, that reasonable standards be enforced to prevent this, then we can be quite sure that there would be a movement to prevent "left fascism" from taking over American society; and any impoliteness or violence that would result would be blamed on the miners and headlined on the front pages, as the troops are called in to repress these multiple forms of putschism," as they were by Franklin D. Roosevelt 30 years ago.

There are more subtle but equally pernicious forms of violence. The Hook letter quoted earlier mentions San Francisco State. The letter did not mention that San Francisco is a city that is 20 per cent black, and that its college is there to serve the urban community. San Francisco State College last year had 3.6 per cent black students, down from 11 per cent seven years before, in a city that is 20 per

cent black. According to an article by Professor A. K. Bierman of San Francisco State, a bill to provide funds to help disadvantaged students to enter college passed the state legislature but was vetoed by Governor Reagan, who may well have been trying to set up a confrontation for political reasons. No national committees were formed to investigate this particular situation, let alone to deplore it; and the facts that I just mentioned are not referred to in the discussion of the "putschism" that took place on the San Francisco campus, though they surely have something to do with it.

This kind of omission makes one seriously question the judgment of people who are putting together this kind of ultimately repressive movement. I need not mention that a college degree is a certificate of entry to the affluent society. Personally I would entirely agree with the people I quoted who deplore the acts of those who shout down speakers at public meetings. Thus I deplore the acts of the "responsible" students who during the years 1965 and 1966 helped to break up public meetings against the war, to deface churches in which public meetings were taking place, and so on. In Boston in 1965 and early 1966, it was impossible to hold a public meeting on the Boston Common to oppose the bombing of North Vietnam, because it would be broken up by force by MIT students, for example, who would march over from the fraternities, with many others. And the Arlington Street Church was pelted with tomatoes and tin cans when the meetings were shifted indoors. This was all headlined on the front pages of the newspapers. In the Boston Globe on October 16, 1965, the entire front page was taken up by a description of the events that happened the day before, and the radio ran constant and detailed reports. And of course the commentators were very indignant about what was happening. They were indignant about the peaceful demonstrators who by what they were saying were inciting this reaction on the part of the responsible, short-haired students. And they were joined by liberal Senators like Mike Mansfield, who also spoke against the irresponsibility of the demonstrators for making statements that he himself was to endorse when the time came two years later. Perhaps he might even admit that, had he done so earlier, the world would be a slightly better place. Again, there were no national committees formed to protect the right of free assembly in the face of this kind of violence.

Let's turn to the matter of politicization of the universities, which is a matter that Professor Hook's committee is much concerned with and that he himself has spoken about quite eloquently many times. Professor Hook has argued that there is a *prima facie* case that Communist Party members should not be granted the rights of academic freedom, the normal

rights, because of the fact that they belong to an organization that by its own statements endorses limitations on free speech and urges its members not to tell the truth under certain circumstances. There are also other organizations that have behaved in such fashion; for example, the United States Government, which urges and in fact enjoins participants in its programs not to tell the truth on many subjects. Arthur Sylvester, director of information for the Defense Department a few years ago, said in a fit of anger that anyone who believes a word said by spokesmen for the government should have his head examined, or words approximately to that effect. Quite apart from such outbursts, it is clear that people with access to classified information are required by law to withhold relevant information, or even to lie, with respect to matters that may very well be related to their teaching and research supervision. Now by Professor Hook's argument, it should follow that in the case of people who are involved in work for the American government, there is also a *prima facie* case that they should be denied the opportunity to teach. Putting aside Hook's argument, which I do not for a moment accept, their involvement in teaching, in fact their dominance of it in fields like engineering or the social sciences, would certainly suggest a high degree of a very dangerous sort of politicization of the universities. For example, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, there are two major universities, Harvard and M.I.T. Each has an outstanding department of government and political science. The chairmen of both departments are deeply involved in the Indochina war. One is chairman of a Council on Vietnamese Studies that is ultimately responsible to the State Department. The other supervises three-quarters of a million dollars of research outside the university on such topics as counterinsurgency and pacification in Vietnam. This is not untypical, and it does indicate a high degree of politicization of the universities. We need not ask how many projects there are in which political scientists and technologists work on the question of how poorly armed guerrillas might better defend themselves against an overwhelming military force from 10,000 miles away, or how many social science projects there are to deal with the problems of, say, revolutionary development of Third World societies in anything like an objective or sympathetic manner.

Those who are sympathetic to revolution are treated rather differently. For example, Staughton Lynd was denied an appointment at Roosevelt University, a very liberal university in Chicago. The history department voted to appoint Lynd, and this decision was simply overturned by the administration. At San Francisco State, according to the information that I have been able to obtain, in one of the acts that

initiated the disorders there, George Murray was suspended without due process by the Regents for statements that he was alleged to have made. He had made some statements of which they disapproved. He was apparently suspended by the trustees over the objection of the president of the University, the mayor of San Francisco, and the police chief of San Francisco in what appears to have been another attempt to make political capital by setting up a confrontation on the campus. These are matters that ought to be explored, but no national committees are set up to defend academic freedom in the face of instances of this sort, which might be enumerated at considerable length.

Let me turn now to the other aspect of the problem of combating the politicization of the universities, the dominant and overwhelming element of which results from the national psychosis that has developed during the Cold War, with the subversion of science and technology and scholarship as they devote themselves to the goals expressed by the "predominant voice" in American society. This is the real problem of the universities. Professor Hook's group I think is right in much of what it deplores; but it is talking about a speck at the margin of the problem. It is ignoring the real problems of politicization. It is remarkable that if one wants to find a critique of the subversion of the universities, the betrayal of the public trust by the universities, if one wants to hear a real voicing of this critique, one turns not to the civil libertarians but rather to Senator Fulbright or Admiral Rickover or General Eisenhower, all of whom have spoken quite correctly about the dangers to a free society when the university associates itself with powerful social institutions.

It's remarkable that a critique of this development, which is fundamental and significant, has to come primarily from such sources. I have up to now been discussing "the violence on which the present system is based," to use Muste's words. How about the other aspect, the 10 per cent, or more accurately, the 1 per cent or less of the violence? George Orwell once described political thought, especially on the left, as a kind of masturbation fantasy where the world of facts hardly matters. Unfortunately, there is a good deal of truth to that characterization. One of the Movement newspapers once carried an article by a very distinguished professor at Harvard, an old friend of mine who has become deeply involved in radical politics lately and who says that the "goal of university agitation should be to build anti-imperialist struggles in which the university administration is a clear enemy." Now this man knows American universities very well, and in particular he knows Harvard very well. It's very difficult for me to believe that he really thinks of

Nathan Pusey as the representative of imperialism on the Harvard campus. In fact if that were true, things would be very easy. All you would have to do would be to sit in at the administration building and you would have struck a blow at imperialism. But it doesn't work like that.

The problem is far deeper. This is almost a pure fantasy. The real problem is that those who call for freedom in the universities are calling for something that exists but that is very badly misused. The universities are relatively free, fairly decentralized institutions in which the serious decisions, those that actually relate to the interrelation between student and faculty, to the curriculum, to what a person does with his life, the kind of work he does those decisions are very largely made by the faculty and very largely at the departmental level. At least this is true at the major universities I am familiar with.

Of course, the temptations are very strong to make certain decisions rather than others. For those who choose to put their talents to the service of the powerful institutions of the society, there are many rewards – or what might be thought to be rewards. There's power, prestige, and affluence – a share in the great project of designing an integrated world system dominated by American power, which many feel to be a reward. Those who make different choices can confidently expect a good deal of abuse and recrimination, perhaps the destruction of their professional careers. Hence, in one sense the choice is hardly free. In fact, the choice is approximately as outlined by General Hershey in one of his most famous statements; namely, this is the American or indirect way to insure compliance. But in a much more important sense the choice really is free. And the fact of the matter is, and I think one has to face this, that the politicization of the universities and the subversion of science and scholarship, which is quite real, is the result of a relatively free choice by students and by faculty who have been unwilling to resist the temptations and to face the real difficulties of standing outside the mainstream and of rejecting the rewards, if such they are, that are offered for compliance.

Consider the problem of developing radical scholarship in the universities. This is a category I do not believe adequately exists. I personally believe that objective scholarship will very often lead to radical conclusions in the social sciences, as in every other field. One takes for granted in fields outside the social sciences that objective scholarship will often challenge the predominant framework of thinking. Only in the social sciences is this considered somehow the mark of an alienated intellectual who has to be dealt with by psychiatric means. But the fact of the matter is that the task of developing

objective scholarship free from the constraints imposed by the American political consensus is a quite real one, and I personally believe that it will lead to radical conclusions.

The burden of proof is obviously on someone like me, who makes that assertion, who believes that objective research will support conclusions of a radical nature. And this is exactly the point that I want to stress. The failure to develop what might be misleadingly called radical scholarship, the failure to build it into the curriculum, this is by no means the result of decrees by college administrators or by trustees. Rather it results directly from the unwillingness of the students and the faculty to undertake the very hard and serious work that is required and to face calmly and firmly the kind of repression, or at least recriminations and abuse, that they are likely to meet if they carry out this work in a serious way. I would expect these to come not from the administration but rather more from the faculty, which may feel that its guild structure, the professional structure on which its security rests, is being threatened. Particularly in the social and behavioral sciences, where theoretical content is virtually nonexistent and intellectual substance is slight, the pretense of professional expertise is very often used as a defense against quite legitimate criticism and analysis. Here I think can be found one source of the abuse of academic freedom: namely, the restricting of those who try to develop objective academic scholarship that will challenge the prevailing framework of thinking in the professions and the conclusions that are often reached.

Suppose that these barriers are overcome – the barriers being, I think, the unwillingness of students to do the hard work required and the fear of the faculty that their guild structure will be threatened. Suppose that these barriers are overcome. Then it might be that the trustees and the administration would step in to erect new barriers against the implementation of study and research and teaching that leads to radical conclusions and the action programs that ought to flow from honest, serious research.

However, this is only speculation. We do not know that the universities will not tolerate programs of this sort, both as teaching programs and programs of research and action as well, because the effort has barely been made. There are cases of administrative interference and they are deplorable, but it would be a great mistake to think that they constitute the heart of the problem. They do not. I think it crucial that the effort be made. I think we very much need understanding of contemporary society, of its long-range tendencies, of the possibilities for alternative forms of social organization and a reasoned, serious

analysis, without fantasy, of how social change can come about. I have no doubt that objective scholarship can contribute to that understanding. But it is hard work and it has to be conducted in an open-minded and honest fashion.

Furthermore, I think work of that sort has a political content almost at once and can strike directly at repressive institutions. To cite one example, there's a group of graduate students and junior faculty in Asian studies at Harvard and other universities who have formed a Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars that is attempting to develop – I can only describe it in value-laden terms – a more objective and hence more humane and more sympathetic treatment of the problems of the developing Asian societies. If this attempt on their part succeeds – and I think it may, if it consists of solid and well-grounded work – it may seriously weaken one foundation stone of the national psychosis that plays a major role in promoting the garrison state with its enormous commitment of resources to destruction and waste, and its continual posing of the threat of nuclear war.

Let me mention perhaps a more important example, the problem of organizing scientists to refuse military work. For example, consider the matter of the ABM. Most scientists know that the ABM is a catastrophe, that it will not increase our security but in fact will probably endanger it by increasing international instability and tensions. But it is quite predictable that having given their lectures to the Senate committees, many of these very same scientists have gone to work to build it, knowing what they are doing. There is no law of nature that dictates that this must be the case. They can refuse individually; they can refuse collectively. They can organize to refuse. I think the real point is that lectures on the irrationality of the ABM, though quite amusing, are basically beside the point if in fact the ABM is motivated not so much by the search for security as by the need to provide a subsidy for the electronics industry. And I think there's very good evidence that that's true. The fact of the matter is that if I may quote from a paper given at the December, 1967, meeting of the American Economics Association – ... the current proposal for an ABM system has been estimated to involve 28 private contractors with plants located in 42 states and 172 congressional districts. Given the political reality of such situations and the economic power of the constituencies involved, there is little hope that the interaction of special interest groups will somehow cancel each other out and that there will emerge some compromise that serves the public interest. These interest groups are further specified as "the Armed Services, the contractors, the labor unions, the lobbyists who speak of free enterprise while they are

getting a government subsidy, the legislatures who for reasons of pork or patriotism vote the funds," and so on. These are the political realities; they have not got much to do with whether there might be an accidental nuclear explosion or the chances of shooting down one of those Chinese missiles that Melvin Laird is worried about. Incidentally, I might add that the electronics industry itself is quite aware of all of this. For example, there is a study of the Electronic Industries Association that discusses prospects for the future. It states that arms control agreements during the next decade are unlikely. The likelihood of limited war will increase and thus for the electronics firms the outlook is good in spite of the end of hostilities in Vietnam." Scientists can organize to refuse cooperation with such projects, and they can also try to organize and to take part in the mass politics that provides the only hope in the long run for countering and ultimately dispelling the nightmare that they are creating. I think that if an organization of scientists to refuse military work develops on any significant scale, then precisely because of the role that this work plays in maintaining the so-called "health" of the society, they may find themselves involved in very serious political action. I wouldn't be surprised if they find themselves involved in what is called an "illegal conspiracy," in a kind of resistance. In general, I think one can expect that effective politics – by that I mean politics that really strikes at entrenched interests, that really tries to bring about significant social change – is very likely to lead to repression, hence to confrontation.

There is a corollary to this Observation: The search for confrontation clearly indicates intellectual bankruptcy. It indicates that one has not developed an effective politics that by virtue of the way it relates to the social realities, calls forth an attempt to defend established interests and perhaps attempts at repression. One who takes his rhetoric at all seriously will work towards serious reforms, perhaps even reforms that have ultimately revolutionary content, and will try to delay confrontations as long as possible, at least until he has some chance of succeeding. The search for confrontations is a suicidal policy. Now there is an argument for the search for confrontations, and I think one should face it frankly and openly. It's put forward clearly by people like – to quote a past master in this – Daniel Cohn-Bendit. He denies being a leader, but was certainly one of the most articulate spokesmen for the French student actions. He has the following to say about "provocation," about confrontation politics. He says: Provocation is not a weapon of war except in special circumstances. It can only be used to arouse feelings that are already present, albeit submerged. In our case [the student case in France] we exploited student

insecurity and disgust with life in an alienated world where human relations are so much merchandised to be used, bought and sold in the market place. All we did therefore was to provoke students to express their passive discontent, first by demonstrations for their own sake and then by political action, directly challenging modern society.

The justification for this type of provocation is its ability to arouse people who have been crushed under the weight of repression. That is not an unfamiliar argument and one cannot discount it. But when we talk about the student movement in the United States, we are really not in any serious sense talking about people who have been traditionally crushed under the weight of repression. That's rather hyperbolic. And I think in the actual concrete situation of the student movement the idea of confrontation tactics is often a confession of the inability to develop effective politics or the unwillingness to do the serious and hard work of social reconstruction that can easily be condemned as "reformist," but that any true revolutionary would understand immediately is the only kind of work that could lead to new social forms, which might perhaps even pave the way for a revolutionary or far-reaching change in social organization. I think that confrontation tactics as they actually evolve are frequently rather manipulative and coercive and really the proper kinds of tactics only for a movement that, inadvertently or not, is aiming toward an elitist, authoritarian structure of a sort that we have had far too much of on the left in the last half-century and that in fact has destroyed what there was of a living, vital left in the Western world. There is a confusion in all of this talk about tactics that ought to be faced more clearly in the student movement. I am referring to the practice of counterpoising "radical tactics" to "liberal tactics."

This is a senseless distinction. It makes no sense at all to try to place tactics in a spectrum of political judgment. Tactics are neither radical nor conservative, nor do they lie anywhere else on the political spectrum. They are successful or unsuccessful in achieving certain goals that may be discussed in terms of their political character. But to talk about the tactics as what is "radical" or "liberal" is to make a fundamental error. Part of the style of the student movement is to focus great attention on immediate concerns that are close at hand – what do you do tomorrow, how do you relate to the people near you, and so on. This is nice in some ways. It gives an attractive style to many of the student actions, but it can be politically quite destructive, I think, if it becomes the general framework within which the movement develops. Any serious movement for social change will have to involve many different strata of the population, people who

certainly see their needs and goals quite differently, including many groups that are in no position even to articulate their goals and needs, and certainly not to bring them to public attention or to develop political action based on them.

I think that these may prove to be related and compatible goals but of course that has to be shown. The major task for intellectuals—including the student movement, which in large part has been the cutting edge of a growing movement for social change—is to try to understand and to articulate those goals, to try to assess and to understand the present state of society and how it might change, what alternative forms there are for the future, to try to persuade and to organize and ultimately to act collectively

where they can, and individually if it comes to that.

On the other hand, it is clear that if the adult community fails to act in some way to meet the real problems of the universities and society, if it contents itself with deploring the occasional absurdities of the student movement and various superficial manifestations of student protests, then I think we can expect with perfect confidence that student unrest will continue. Furthermore it is right that it should continue. Those who deplore the forms that it takes, I think might do much better to ask what they can do to eliminate the evils that constitute the core of the problems we face, and then proceed to act in a serious and committed manner to confront these problems.

KALAM

‘Mission’ Kashmir Missing in Kashmir

While the State under the present NDA government along with its puppet Farooq at J& K is trying its best to somehow bury the nationality struggle into oblivion by trying to create confusion and dissension in the ranks of the sections up in revolt against its oppressor, information is slowly pouring in about the magnitude of the atrocities resorted to by the Indian state to restore ‘normalcy’. Time and again the Indian State and its armed forces have shied away from such reports citing the hand of the ‘enemy’ or appealing to the sensibilities of ‘a larger interest of the well being of the Nation state that is India’. But the strange irony this time is that the embarrassment is coming from the horse’s mouth. CPI [M] which is part of the ruling class there in J&K - member Mohammad Yousaf Tarigami has raised this issue in the J&K assembly citing that the number of people who have disappeared in J&K has gone upto 2174. And out of the 76 cases registered, only one has been challaned so far! The list includes thousands of youth reported missing after being lifted by security forces. This also includes a recent incident of a youth from Rajouri, studying in the Jammu University being reported missing. As expected the state assembly has waxed eloquently about the efforts of the State Human Rights Commission in bringing the culprits to book which is nothing but vainglorious attempts to wash off the hands of the state from the inhuman crimes it has committed to silence a people who have decided to take their destiny in their own hands. It should be noted that in Punjab which had witnessed the fury of the Khalistan movement, the state had clamped down on the people heavily resulting in cases of disappearances becoming an order of the day. Even the CBI report which had gone into cases of disappearance in Punjab have quite grudgingly admitted that in a single district like Amritsar more than 221 families had committed suicide unable to withstand the trauma of state repression. So the case of instances of disappearances in Kashmir is a continuing saga of similar cases in Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and all those places where the exploitative state machinery is exposed to its limits by the uncompromising struggles of the masses.

KALAM

The Laughter of Hitler Echoes in Hyderabad

'I will ban all Students and Workers Organisations', thus prates Babudom

- Seema

'Eat the Alphabet'

A group of women who attended Chandrababu Naidu's pet scheme meeting called 'DWAKRA' in Sangareddy town of Medak district asked him a question. "What does literacy give us, when we don't have something to eat for days together?" They attacked him in their powerful Telangana dialect questioning his government policies. Chandrababu became quite irritated and left the scene. In fact, Chandrababu went to Medak district ('Medak' means 'a grain cooked rice'), where poverty level is very high with his new programme given by the World



Bank, *Saksharatha*, making literates of 60 lakh people before this Sankranti. The women who attended the meeting were not Naxalites. They are agricultural labourers who were recently organised by Babu's administration in women's cooperatives 'DWAKRA', to showcase them before World Bank Chief Wolfensohn or Bill Clinton and other masters of Babu who keep visiting the state. The mood of the people at the time of this meeting was set against the third round of price hike of petroleum products along with rice, electricity charges and all other essential commodities. An old woman among the group asked directly, 'Why did you come here? What did your government and you do to us? You made our lives more miserable. Now what for do you want us to learn alphabet?'

While cutting funds for both the primary and higher education, Chandrababu is going around the state with his '*Saksharatha*', a literacy programme. He is lighting *Akshara Jyothis* everywhere. But like in many of his Janmabhoomi programmes, he is challenged and questioned by the people in many places. However, he is shameless. This programme is for adults. Now let us turn to another programme.

A Cruel Farce

Chanduvukundam, let us get educated or let us get back to schools, a 5-day fete which was inaugurated with much fanfare. This time, 'Babugaru' went to a block called 'Gattu', in Mahabubnagar district, which again is the most backward one in A.P. The 'Gattu' block is reeling under severe drought for the last one decade. The

block fulfils all the classical characteristics of a drought-hit area that can be termed as a famine-struck. People migrate, value of the land declined to the minimum, starvation deaths are prevalent, for years consecutively lowest rainfall is recorded, apart from the hovering of ravens became a common sight in this revenue block of Mahabubnagar district. Newspapers wrote stories that desertification process started in this area. A newspaper wrote that people in several villages of this block have not seen vegetables in their plates. They eat rice with chilli powder. The reason that prompted the hi-tech Chief Minister to inaugurate his 5-day fete in Gattu looked like a cruel farce. Anyone can get surprised to see the hi-tech minister giving a speech there preaching the people about the importance of education and he asked them to send their children to school.

When Chandrababu went to "Gattu" to make the people there understand the significance of getting their children educated, he went with a high security - huge police and Border Security Forces. The scene resembled more of a king going on a war expedition. When the farcical drama began, some heavily armed policemen called two girls - Iswaramma and Laxmi to the side of Chandrababu. Babu asked them focusing himself before the cameras of TV channels, "What do you get if you get yourself educated?" Iswaramma repeated what the police prompted her to say on the previous day - 'We will get employment.' Camera flashes stopped. When such a cruel farce was enacted in Gattu, at the same time back in the streets of Hyderabad thousands of unemployed youth ran in a rally shouting slogans, 'Give us food or provide work'. This was a rally of educated youth protesting against Chandrababu's policies, which stated that no youth in the state should look for government employment. Moreover, he also said that he would cut down the present strength of government employees by 15 percent in the next few years, apart from not filling the vacant posts as and when they fall vacant. One feels sorry for the little Iswaramma who is made to play-act in this 'cruel farce', a form of play, which perhaps never existed in any literary century of any national literature.

Babu's programme '*Chanduvukundam ra*' itself is titled after a popular love story film, called

kolisundam ra ('Come, let's live together'), which ran in many centres this year for more than 100 days and Babu awarded the film as the first class one with the highest ranking state Nandi awards. But the Chairperson of School Education Committee of the block unintentionally spoke the truth: "In our villages here, people don't get work for even Rs.10/- a day. They don't eat two meals a day. In the abject situation of poverty here, do we have courage to ask people to send their children to school, she spoke to herself like in a pantomime, and in front of the high-tech CM. School is a luxury they cannot afford. No parent can ask their children to go to school, when he/she is not able to feed the children at least once in two days.

But the story behind this cruel farce is more interesting to know. Against the backdrop of this farce, Chandrababu closed down 1850 'our schools' ('*Ma Badis*'), which were running under the ITDA (Integrated Tribal Development Authority) in the name of unavailability of matching grants. 37,000 students who were brought to schools in a programme called 'let us go to school again' were sent back to homes. These schools were run in fact with the help of voluntary donations from the villagers and 'volunteer teachers'. The government is expected to give only matching grants through ITDA. Without addressing the question of closure of these schools, Babu now inaugurated '*Chanduvukundamra*' programme. He thinks people are fools!

The truth about primary education in a state where internet facility has reached villages (!) is that there are no schools in ten thousand villages; existing schools are not running in 21 thousand villages, teachers are not paid their salaries in several thousand schools, where only single teacher teaches.

Now the state is going to have two TV channels to broadcast lessons and educate people in hi-tech, etc. IU Net and Sankhyavahini and Special State Information Network are proposed to take this state of education in A.P. to higher levels! That is why perhaps Chandrababu Naidu is praised by the *Newsweek* as one who achieved '*Silent Revolution*'!

Let us turn to yet another high-tech fiesta in the 'state' of modern technology.

'The only property you have is education'

To offer a sense of hi-tech city to the thousands of people who visit Hyderabad everyday,

Babu arranged a digital display with a title called "For You" (*Mee Kosam*), on the banks of Hussainsagar. One of the displays reads like this: *"The only property you have is education, let it be improved."* Babu perhaps knows well that those who pass the display board are in majority cannot read this display because either they are illiterates or those who cannot read English. But for those conscious people among who can read it, it is again ridiculous and farcical in the context of education system being further and further alienated from the people in a state of high-tech governance. But the sign board spoke about a truth, when all resources of the state including ports, seas, mines and forests, industries, service sector and agriculture are handed over to the foreign companies, there is no property left over for the people in the state.

But another question also arises: How does even education of a person become a property when one cannot get employment showing his educational qualifications? When education cannot even provide a person with two meals a day, it is only farcical to say education is a property. Babu's interpretation of education as a property can only serve one purpose: That is, everything in his market-oriented policies acquires commercial qualities. Hence education, in his definition, can never retain any element that provides an individual with knowledge, unleashing of human creativity, and shaping a personality, etc., the qualities one expect in a civil society to acquire through education.

It is not a wonder to come across a digital sign board in the heart of Hyderabad, which reads "Education is the only property", where the Government gets an American Multinational Company like Mc Kensey and Co. to write down and frame a policy for a quarter-century for a whole nationality. The Vision 2020 document prepared by the Mc Kensey and Co. defined education as something, which can provide skills that can be sold in the market. Nowhere, perhaps in the world, education is defined so cheaply as in Vision 2020 document. What follows from such a definition of education in a major policy document?

Primary Education vs. Higher Education

All the universities in the state are facing financial crunch followed by the government's

decision to cut down expenditure for higher education. The World Bank advised the Chandrababu Naidu government that it should reduce allocations for higher education and spend more on primary education. This view tried to create a false propaganda that the governments are not being able to spend more on primary education because the lion's share of budget allocations for education is going to higher education. The fact is that our governments are not spending more than 0.35 percent in GNP on higher education whereas US is spending 2.7 percent of its GNP on higher education. Other examples are like Netherlands that spends 1.9 percent; Australia spends 1.6 percent of their GNP on higher education alone. The World Bank-sponsored false propaganda is that the advanced industrialised countries like the US have already privatised their higher education so that they don't have to spend much on it. This is also a gross misrepresentation of the actual situation in the industrialised countries. Most of the advanced industrialised countries give 50-70 percent subsidies to higher education and having a large part of higher education in the state sector. The subsidies are largely invested on the expenditure of individual student who goes to higher education irrespective of his position in state-owned or private educational institutions.

But in a country like India where not even 7 percent of those who come to primary education could reach higher education due to unavailability of opportunities, the World Bank argument does much harm. What is important to note here is that overall budget allocations for education are very low, which never crossed 3 percent of GNP in our country. Now this reached 1.9 percent at the central level whereas according to Kothari Commission Report, these allocations must be at a minimum of 6 percent.

Today, in Andhra Pradesh, privatisation and commercialisation of higher education is shown as the alternative. Though education in private sector always existed since the British period, yet most educational institutions in private sector were under non-profit-oriented charitable trusts. Even today, in US, most of the higher educational institutions are under such trusts, which receive huge amounts of donations and do not collect from the students, whose charges are again subsidized

by the government to a large extent.

By the end of 1999 in Andhra Pradesh, 70 percent of junior colleges, 81 percent of degree colleges, 90 percent of Engineering colleges, 89 percent of MBA and Medical Colleges and 33 percent of polytechnic colleges were already in private sector. These figures must have gone higher in the last one-year. The figures indicate the rapid commercialisation of education in the state. The process is coupled with the so-called restructuring of education in the government colleges and universities. Increasing fees, introducing self-financing courses, reducing grant allocations and lifting off certain course – all come under this restructuring of the college and university education.

As an example of what is concretely happening in this restructuring, we can closely see the situation in Osmania University, though all other universities in the state are as good examples as this.

The government stopped releasing Rs.14 crore grants, which the university was to get this year. The university scrapped about 300 teaching posts, which were mainly backlog posts for SC, ST and OBC categories. The university increased 33 percent seats in many courses under self-financing category. A self-financing seat, for example, costs: Chemistry – Rs.22, 500/-, Computer Science – Rs.19, 500/- and Genetics – 30,000/-

The restructuring also resulted in the dropping of several courses in Social Sciences and Humanities. The courses in these departments were brought into one or two university colleges closing in others in the name of shifting and reshuffling. All fees were increased to double. The University hostel messes are being privatised by giving them away to catering agents on contractual basis.

‘Think in English, Dine in Catering Shops’

While Chandrababu Naidu implements World Bank-dictated liberalisation policies in A.P. more rapidly than in any other state, the Osmania University Vice-Chancellor D.C. Reddy is over-enthusiased to take forward the hi-tech CM’s policies in the field of higher education. In the last one and half years after D.C. Reddy became the Vice-Chancellor, there is not a single day passed on the campus without protests and strikes by the

students, teachers, non-teaching and technical staff in the university.

He introduced semester system in the university, which was opposed by all student organisations in the last two decades. He insisted that the students should write their examinations in English. After a long struggle in the state by the student community and progressive teachers and intellectuals, the government some years back at the level of higher education accepted Telugu as a medium of instruction. The students say that a nation of eight crore people, which appears first among the ten nationalities in the world in terms of population cannot continue its education system in a foreign language. The university teachers largely supported this stand of the students. The VC also took a decision to close down university hostels during the vacation period, which never happened in the history of the university. Research scholars and the students who are preparing themselves for admissions into advanced courses; competitive examinations, etc. always stay back in the hostels in all vacation periods. But the VC wanted the hostels to be closed down in order to minimise university expenditure on running of the hostels.

In Osmania University and other universities of Andhra Pradesh in the last six years of Chandrababu Naidu’s rule, introduced self-finance courses with 33 percent payment seats. Already in most of the degree and PG colleges associated with the state universities under the state government, courses which were taught in Telugu Medium were cancelled and in their place, courses in Computers, Electronics, Business and Marketing, etc. were introduced with English as the the Medium of Instruction. Also, courses in Fashion Technology, Beautification, etc. were introduced. The cancellation of the earlier courses in Telugu Medium and introduction of these new courses, which suit the MNCs, alienated the rural students particularly from the backward areas like Telangana, Rayalaseema and North-Andhra. Students from upper middle class and some from middle class only would be able to join those courses. (Edit this paragraph according).

He also forced the students to pay the hostel fees every month against the tradition in the university that the students adjust their hostel fees

from their scholarships. The VC's decision affected particularly the SC, ST and BC students, who always adjusted their hostel fee against their scholarships. The SC, ST and BC students from the rural areas come to higher education without any financial support from their parents. Osmania University campus has a large population of students from rural areas particularly because of the availability of writing examinations in Telugu medium, which means that they can study in Telugu; hostel fees are adjusted against their scholarships, etc. Now the VC decided to close the flow of rural student community from socially and economically weaker sections.

The students fought all these policies of the VC tooth and nail. The professors and the non-teaching staff supported them. For the last one year, the campus became a hotbed of student struggles. Despite all these protests, the VC implemented all the policies. He refused to talk to the student organisations. He also never met the non-teaching staff, which went on strikes several times on their own demands. Finally, the teaching community also resorted to militant movement. But the VC refused to meet them. To suppress the struggles of students, non-teaching and teaching staff, the VC deployed heavy police forces on the campus. The VC went on saying that he initiated 'reforms' in the university to meet the international standards in the era of globalisation and there is no reversal to his 'reforms'.

By the end of the semester, the students boycotted examinations refusing to write them in English. The teachers are also on warpath supporting the students in their demands to scrap the semester system and English Medium as well as the teachers' demands on the payment of arrears granted by the UGC and other academic demands. The VC tried to conduct the examinations with the help of non-teaching and private colleges' teaching staff, but he failed to conduct the examinations.

The deadlock lock continues after the talks between the O.U. Teachers Association and the VC failed recently. However, the VC said, he would like to go ahead with English as a medium of instruction and examinations, even after the Higher Education minister declared in the state Assembly that the students can write their examinations in their mother tongue. The tacit agreement between

the hi-tech CM and the hi-tech VC continue to prevail over the decisions, while a radical student movement is totally suppressed on the campus in the preceding years by the state by banning and killing the leadership of APRSU. Other progressive student organisations are weak and the communal forces like ABVP ruling the roost by carrying on attacks on the progressive student organisations.

'Information technology is the Knowledge'

The Cyber CM declared that he is going to scrap all courses in Social Sciences in colleges and universities in the state. He says that Social Sciences cannot give food, they do not improve the skills and they only create unemployed youth. He dares to say all this when thousands of engineering and science graduates go without employment. His declaration caused a big hue and cry in all higher educational institutions in the state. Democratic intellectuals tried to explain to him the importance of the study of Social Sciences. Then, he decided not to take an official decision in this regard. But what is happening is that day by day, the courses in Social Sciences and Humanities are replaced by courses in Fashion Technology, Beautification, Interior Design, Marketing, Company Management, etc. with a view to prepare some skilled people to suit the requirements of the MNCs that are to come to the state. Various courses in basic Sciences are also fast disappearing, according to the belief of the Chief Executive Officer, CEO (Babu calls himself) of Andhra Pradesh Private Limited, that Pure Sciences do not inculcate any skills. What will happen to an 8-crore strong Telugu nation in the future, left with superficial knowledge?

The computer 'big bull', Chandrababu declared that there would be no jobs hereafter in the government sector and the number of the existing employees will be reduced. He also told the youth and students not to have any illusions of getting government employment in the future and prepare themselves to live with the private sector and on contractual basis. His Vision 2020 document, prepared by the Mc Kensey and Company declared that the development in the state hereafter takes a different detour and the Information technology is the axis for this model of development. The 'reforms', according to this document propose to introduce contract system in

prepare themselves to live with the private sector and on contractual basis. His Vision 2020 document, prepared by the Mc Kensey and Company declared that the development in the state hereafter takes a different detour and the Information technology is the axis for this model of development. The 'reforms', according to this document propose to introduce contract system in employing teachers at both the primary and higher levels of education.

The Babu government took a decision to introduce contract labour system in the college education. The government decided to fill 1237 junior lecturers, 1685 lecturers in vocational colleges and 500 lecturers in degree colleges. This decision affected thousands of youth who were awaiting the regular posts to be filled in the UGC and state scales in the permanent posts. The Chief Minister declared that hereafter all vacancies in the permanent posts in colleges will be scrapped.

Even in filling these 3422 lecturer posts on contractual basis, the government involved local MLAs, MPs and other political leaders in the name of College Development Committees, which recruited their own people. The highly qualified intelligent students from all poorer sections and socially backward sections did not find their way even into these contractual posts. Chandrababu has been using this kind of committee system in every move of the government to effectively create a group of supporters in every section and at every level. These committees are used at the time of elections to bring votes for his party. The school committees, the College Development Committees, the Water Management Committees in the irrigated areas, the DWKRA groups and other groups in the cooperative sector, the CMYE committees for self-employment schemes – all are created and used for the formation of strong TDP factions all over the state in all walks of life.

Chandrababu Naidu formed 'Education Committees' in every village where schools are there following the Ramakrishna Rao Commission Report. The A.P. Radical Students Union and all other student organisations opposed the formation of such committees because the feudal forces and the parties in power capture such committees and play havoc on the primary education throughout the state. All the teachers' organisations also

opposed these committees tooth and nail as the feudal forces in the villages would harass the teachers. However, Chandrababu could implement the recommendations of the above-mentioned Commission and form the 'Education Committees'



filling with feudal parties' forces only after he crushed the APRSU by brutally assassinating most of the leaders of APRSU in the name of encounters.

'Students should not have Politics'

The students of Social Welfare Hostels started a movement called 'A Cry of Hunger' against Chandrababu Naidu's policy to cut down budget allocations for those hostels apart from not releasing the allocated amounts. The students of Social Welfare Hostels have been in fact demanding an increase in the scholarships in accordance with the price hike so that the hostels meet the food expenditure and other essential facilities. The SC, ST and OBC students reside in these government hostels where now the situation is worse following the hike in the prices of all essential commodities including food items. The tribal students also organised several protests against the deteriorating conditions in Tribal

government to reduce fund allocations to the higher education and make the colleges and universities self-finance themselves. Chandrababu Naidu immediately cut 14 percent of the funds in the allocations to Osmania University during this financial year.

The students under the leadership of several students' organisations took out a rally on 23rd November in Hyderabad demanding the state government to fill the two-lakh vacant posts in various government departments. Students from all universities participated in this rally.

A United Struggle Committee of Students and Youth was formed in the state with all 'left' student and youth organisations together. The spectrum of this Struggle Committee ranged from CPI (M) to CPI (ML) Janasakthi and all other ML forces excepting a few. The radical students are not allowed to enter this committee. The Struggle Committee organised several small and big protests in the last one year but miserably failed to build a movement because of its opportunistic stand and lack of any clear perspective to channelise the anger of the students and the youth. Compared to this, the Andhra Pradesh Unemployed Struggle Committee, led by a BC community leader called R. Krishnaiah did well to focus the problems of the disgruntled unemployed youth. But it also failed to bring together many sections as this committee is seen exclusively belonging to only OBC sections. The BC Students Welfare Association also organised several protest programmes.

Several sections of students, unemployed youth raised their voices against Babu's policies. Several rallies, *dharnas*, and protests were organised throughout this year. One significant development in the course of these agitations is that there developed some unemployed organisations. They organised several *rasta rooks* (*chakka jams*) in several districts as well as in the capital Hyderabad. Joint Action Forums among students, youth, and unemployed have become quite common. There is another hidden agenda of Babu's governance according to which he wants to reduce the existing 11-lakh employees in the state government departments to 5 lakhs, more than half of the present strength.

Another important farce, which shook the student community this year, is Chandrababu

Naidu's call to the students to go to villages as part of his Janmabhoomi programme. He called upon the students and teachers to go to the villages invoking Mao's name. He said Mao made the development in China possible by sending students and intellectuals to the rural areas (Historical untruth). Generally Chandrababu vomits venom on Mao and Communists and says the Maoists in the state are an obstacle for development and hence he is determined to crush them with an iron hand. But this time, he invoked Mao's name to ask the students to participate in Janmabhoomi programme wherein the state government collected basic information of people for the purpose of what is termed by the World Bank – Micro level planning. The postgraduate, graduate, professional course students were given importance in the collection of information in the rural areas that is needed for his micro level planning.

When the students opposed his move, he told the students all over the state through electronic media that his attempt is to make them participate in the social development process of the state and he exclaimed that what else could be the better education to students than his Janmabhoomi programme!

When strong protests came from the student community – he ordered the college principals, Vice-Chancellors, Education officers to mobilise students to *Janmabhoomi* programme. When the officials expressed their inability to force the students to join *Janmabhoomi*, Babu came up with yet another idea. He told the officials to grade the work done by the students in the *Janmabhoomi* and award marks accordingly. Those who do not join *Janmabhoomi* would get zero marks. This proposal gave rise to more severe protests and even the teachers expressed their inability to do so for there can be no yardsticks to measure the voluntary work. Finally, Chandrababu asked the officials to record the work done by students in the *Janmabhoomi* programme and credits would be added in giving ranks and classes after the examinations. Finally, he concluded his *Janmabhoomi* with a few students forcefully brought everywhere and made the police heavily lathi-charge on those students in several places who protested his farcical student *Janmabhoomi*.

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India's Nuclear Tests

S.Prakash

A Brief Political History of India's Nuclear Programme

India's recent nuclear tests were the culmination of a programme that began fifty years ago. They highlight the attempts of the Indian ruling establishment to be a regional power; an approach which has been pursued by all the governments to date in varying degrees. The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) of India was set up in 1948 to coordinate the atomic/nuclear activities in the country. According to Raja Ramanna, one of the former heads of the AEC, "The AEC's aims were clearly specified and were perhaps based on the ideas of Pandit Nehru whose notes for the year 1947 state that atomic energy must be developed for all purposes." Nehru and Bhabha were the architects of India's atomic energy programme. Apart from being the Prime Minister, Nehru was the Minister of Atomic Energy and Bhabha was the Chairman of the AEC as well the Secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy. The possible use of nuclear power for military purposes as a policy option goes back to the time of Nehru. In 1960, Nehru made the following statement to the Lok Sabha: "So far as we are concerned, we are determined not to go in for making atomic bombs and the like. But we are equally determined not to be left behind in the advance in the use of this new power". In a note to Bhabha on the subject of nuclear power, Nehru wrote two years later, "Apart from building power stations and developing electricity, there is always a 'built-in advantage of defence use if the need should arise'. The completion of the plutonium extraction plant in Trombay in 1964 strongly suggests that India's nuclear energy programme has had a weapons component from its early stages. The plutonium that was used in the first Pokhran explosion in 1974 came from this plant. Two more plutonium plants were built later in Tarapur and Kalppakkam. China's nuclear test in 1964 may

have accelerated India's preparations for its own nuclear test. According to Kapur, author of India's Nuclear Option (Praeger, New York, 1976), in late 1965, the then Prime Minister Shastri approved in principle Bhabha's plan for an underground nuclear explosion. It has been reported that two other Congress governments were contemplating to carry out nuclear tests in 1981 and 1995, but they were persuaded by the U.S. government not to do so. The BJP's position on the nuclear issue has been more strident than that of any other party. It had explicitly stated in its election manifesto that it is in favour of deploying nuclear weapons, and it was able to convince its electoral allies to make it a part of their common national agenda. Even so, the timing of the recent nuclear tests took many people by surprise. Indeed, very few people if any expected the BJP-led government to give the scientists the go ahead they had been seeking to carry out the tests within two months of coming to power. In retrospect, it seems as though it was a well-orchestrated move by the BJP leaders to overcome their problems due to the pressure that was brought to bear on them by the different constituents of the government. The Defence Minister George Fernandes, who was probably used as a stalking horse to raise the issue of the so-called Chinese threat fitted very well in this strategy. Vajpayee in his letter to the U.S. President Clinton reiterated the Chinese threat and went so far as to say that it was the principal reason for India's nuclear tests. In a classic case of doublespeak, he later said that relations between India and China have been improving. It indeed looks as though the immediate reason for the BJP's decision to go ahead with the nuclear tests was the consolidation of its domestic position and not national security considerations as its propagandists have claimed.

The Aftermath of the Nuclear Tests

The public reaction to the nuclear explosions was very enthusiastic. This is not surprising given that the bomb has been made a symbol of national

pride by all the mainstream political parties. The BJP rode the crest of a jingostic wave that swept across the country. Vajpayee himself described the nuclear tests as a "great scientific achievement" and coined the phrase "Jai Vigyan". This was echoed by leaders of the opposition parties—several of them went even further and gave their support to the tests. Former Prime Minister Gujral, who is known for his doctrine that supposedly promotes peaceful coexistence between India and its neighbours has supported the tests giving the stock explanation that India needed them for security reasons. Drunk with delusions of grandeur, several BJP leaders claimed that India was on the verge of being a global power. The Home Minister Advani threatened Pakistan by linking India's nuclear capabilities to the question of Kashmir. The Parliamentary Affairs Minister Madan Lal Khurana took an equally provocative stand by saying "if Pakistan wants a fourth war, they should tell us the time and place and we shall be there". This kind of sabre rattling continued till Pakistan carried out its nuclear tests. These tests dented the euphoria in India which its own nuclear tests had generated. It was evident that Pakistan had the nuclear capability to match India's. Some of the political parties even began mildly opposing BJP's nuclear hawkishness.

The BJP-led government has clearly stated that it intends to develop and deploy nuclear weapons. This will certainly escalate the already spiralling arms race between India and Pakistan and could even lead to a nuclear war with catastrophic consequences for both countries. It is therefore important to defuse the sources of tension between the two countries by political means. The resolution of the Kashmir problem assumes special significance in this context. A just and lasting solution to this problem must incorporate the right to self-determination of the people of Kashmir.

The theory of nuclear deterrence is being currently put forward by many strategic analysts in both India and Pakistan. The idea on which it is based is that if two countries possess sufficiently large arsenals of nuclear arms, then one country would not dare to attack the other because of fear of retaliation. This approach to the prevention of nuclear wars has several loopholes. First of all it does not take into consideration accidents arising

from the problems or faults in the command, control, communications and intelligence systems, secondly it ignores the fact that both sides may be trying to outdo each other by building directed-energy weapons built using lasers or particle beams to destroy the possible long-range missiles aimed at them and finally it assumes rational behaviour on the part of both adversaries. History has proved that nuclear deterrence has serious limitations. Between 1977 and 1984 the U.S. early warning radar system indicated over 20,000 false alarms of a missile attack on the U.S. More than 1000 of these were considered serious enough for the nuclear bomb delivery systems to be put on alert.

It is certainly hypocritical of the U.S. and other P-5 countries to condemn the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests while possessing large nuclear arsenals of their own. Contrary to Article VI of the Nuclear Non proliferation Treaty (NPT), these countries have made very little effort to reduce their arsenals. This has been exploited by India to say that it will not sign the NPT or the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), even though the two treaties are not formally linked. Another reason that India gives for not signing the CTBT is that while this treaty bans underground nuclear tests it allows nuclear weapons to be tested on computers. There is indeed some truth to this allegation. Under the aegis of the Stockpile Stewardship and Management Programme (SSMP), the U.S. has undertaken a \$60 billion programme to design new nuclear warheads by using the world's most powerful computers. In addition, the SSMP enables the U.S. to carry out laser fusion experiments in the laboratory to simulate the detonation of a fusion (hydrogen) bomb using the world's most powerful laser. However, India's opposition to the CTBT is not based on moral principles. Several Indian officials have expressed the view that India may consider signing the CTBT if it is recognized as a nuclear weapons state in other words if it is admitted to the exclusive nuclear club which presently consists of five countries (U.S.A., Russia, U.K. France and China). This suggests that India is more interested in furthering its nuclear weapons programme than genuinely opposing the discriminatory international nuclear regime.

The sanctions imposed on India and Pakistan by the G-8 countries must be condemned as they send a signal to all third world countries that if they take any steps to oppose the prevailing international order or the global power of the U.S., they will be punished. This does not mean that the third world countries should take the nuclear route. On the contrary they should be convinced that it is not to their advantage to develop and test nuclear weapons and furthermore they should seriously think of pursuing an economic path that will not make them dependent on the imperialist-dominated institutions like the World Bank and IMF. The economic consequences of a nuclear arms race in the Indian subcontinent would be disastrous, and it would be further exacerbated if India tries to match China's nuclear stockpile. A "minimum nuclear deterrent" for India consisting of appropriate missile delivery systems has been estimated to cost about Rs 200 billion and it would take about 15 years to build it and a comparable amount to maintain it. This estimate does not include the cost of command, control and intelligence systems. Such a large sum of money can only be allocated for nuclear weapons at the expense of basic human needs. This coupled with the neoliberal line that has been prevalent in India for the last several years can only lead to widespread poverty and deprivation. This year's budget for the three strategic departments related to nuclear weapons—Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and the Department of Space (DOS) has gone up substantially. The DAE's budget is Rs 26 billion—an unprecedented increase of 30%. The DRDO and DOS budgets are Rs 25 billion and Rs 16 billion respectively. The former has increased by 4% and the latter by 52%.

Scientific Issues Related to Nuclear Weapons

No analysis of the nuclear tests would be complete without touching on the scientific issues related to them. It is shameful that the BJP-led government and several opposition parties including the CPI and CPI(M) have hailed the testing of the nuclear bombs as a "scientific achievement". If one goes by this logic then one cannot but conclude that the bombs that were used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki which killed over two hundred thousand people were "pioneering

scientific achievements". It is indeed preposterous to describe the making and testing of weapons of mass destruction as a "scientific achievement". But when these weapons are linked to national security, as they are in India by the ruling establishment, they become a source of pride to the common people. Arguments like national security and sovereignty can be so compelling that one often overlooks important moral issues when one falls prey to their emotive power. This is probably the most important reason why the scientists working on weapons strongly believe in what they are doing. There are of course cases when scientists have undergone a change of heart and have given up working on weapons and have even campaigned against them; but such cases are rather few and far between. Even the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has not prevented generations of scientists all over the world to work on weapons of mass destruction.

There are other reasons why scientists work on weapons. In the USA for example, over two-thirds of the science and technology budget is allocated for military-related work, and therefore a large number of scientists seek funding to do such work primarily for professional survival. In India scientists working for DAE and DRDO get far more perks and better job security than their counterparts in other science departments, and therefore many young scientists opt to work in atomic energy or defence science departments. Even if one considers India's development and testing of the nuclear bombs from a purely technical point of view, there is no justification in describing them as "scientific achievements." They contain very little new science and technology. The ideas on which they are based have been published in books and articles for at least over two decades.

Issues Confronting The Anti-Nuclear Movement in India

The nuclear tests are a forceful reminder that India since its time of independence has been squandering its precious financial and scientific resources to further its hegemonic ambitions in South Asia. In so doing, it has created a potentially explosive situation in the entire Indian subcontinent. There is a point of view that holds only the BJP responsible for this state of affairs, but the plain truth is that all the Indian governments are

collectively responsible for it. Masa Takubo, a member of Gensuikin, an anti-nuclear group from Japan, drove home this point in an interview to Frontline, "To say we will develop the capability, but not weaponise is a very risky option. Nuclear technology is a time bomb. It has to be fought at every stage." Indeed a strong anti-nuclear movement in India is the need of the hour. Such a movement should be an integral part of the fight against the ruling classes in general and the Hindutva forces in particular. It should also demand the right to self-determination of the people of Kashmir and oppose the line of the Indian government to deny the Kashmiri people this inalienable right.

It is of crucial importance for the anti-nuclear movement to see the connection between India's nuclear energy programme for civilian and military purposes. Many DAE officials have said that the latter is a by-product of the former, but it would be more accurate to say that the former is a cover for the latter. As mentioned earlier, India presently has three plutonium extraction (reprocessing) plants—in Trombay (Bombay), Tarapur and Kalpakkam and it may set up similar plants where the other commercial reactors are located. All nuclear reactors which use natural uranium as their fuel produce Plutonium-239, which is one of the elements from which a nuclear bomb can be made. One class of breeder reactors that are being developed in Kalpakkam can produce large quantities of Plutonium-239 as well. The other class of reactors will produce Uranium-233 from Thorium-232. Uranium-233 can in principle be used for making nuclear bombs. In addition to using the plutonium from commercial reactors to make bombs, India is also pursuing a path that is dedicated only to the development of nuclear weapons. The uranium enrichment plant in Ratnahalli near Mysore is one such facility. Some of the bombs that were tested recently probably used Uranium-235 that came from there. Very few studies on the effects of radiation arising from radioactive waste and plutonium reprocessing on the health of workers in the nuclear plants and people living close-by have been carried out. The Atomic Energy Act of 1962 makes such studies difficult, but they are absolutely necessary. Commenting on the effects of radiation from

nuclear sources on human health, the U.S. based Physicians for Social Responsibility point out that "Radiation can irreversibly damage genetic material in living things. Studies have linked radiation to birth defects, miscarriage, and cancers of the blood, bone, brain, thyroid, lung, kidney, liver, pancreas and ovary. But scientists still do not fully understand how radionuclides and other toxic byproducts from nuclear weapons activities interact with each other or with the human body. More research must be done on understanding the health effects of exposure and how to treat them".

In order to advance the present anti-nuclear movement in India, one must learn from the successes and failures of anti-nuclear movements in both India and abroad. It must be a movement with a comprehensive view of the contradictions in Indian society and politics and with a vision to build a just, egalitarian and sustainable world.

The Aftermath of Pokhran II

It has been now two years since the nuclear tests were carried out in Pokhran. That was followed by declarations by various government officials stating that India would be involved in the building and deployment of nuclear weapons, and as expected it was justified in the name of "national security". It therefore came as no surprise when the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) announced the Draft Nuclear Doctrine (DND) in August 1999. The primary motive of the DND is to legitimise India's nuclear weapons. It proposes to build a powerful triadic (land, air and sea-based) nuclear force and calls it as a "minimum nuclear deterrent". Indeed it would be appropriate at this stage to make a few remarks about the idea of nuclear deterrence, which many "experts" on military affairs in India and Pakistan claim can prevent a nuclear war. This line of reasoning is not only bizarre, but also a complete rejection of historical facts. Those familiar with the Cuban missile crisis know that the United States of America and the Soviet Union were on the brink of a nuclear war in 1961, even though both countries had large stockpiles of nuclear weapons. Far from deterring the two countries, those weapons actually set them on a collision course. Furthermore, accidents arising from the handling of nuclear weapons due to human and

mechanical errors can never be ruled out. In the light of these facts, India's pledge of "No-First Use" in the DND makes little or no sense.

The cost of the 400 plus nuclear weapons envisaged by the DND will certainly be astronomical. A member of the NSAB panel estimates the cost to be anywhere between Rs70,000 to 700,000 crores. Such a large sum of money can only be allocated for nuclear weapons at the expense basic human needs. The sharp increase in the budgets of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and the Department of Space (DOS) during the last two years points to this fact. The increase in this year's defence budget by Rs13,000 crore must also be seen in this context. This trend of increased spending in defence coupled with the so-called economic liberalization that has been under way in the country for several years now, can only lead to widespread poverty and deprivation.

Besides the DND, there are other unmistakable signals that the central government is pursuing a large scale nuclear weapons programme. One obvious example of this is the decision of the DAE a few months ago to take away from the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) its power to oversee the safety standards and practices in the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) and its various facilities in different parts of the country that are involved in nuclear weapons and energy related activities. The reason given for this unusual step was "national security". The AERB was set up in 1983 by a constitutional order to carry out regulatory and safety functions in the nuclear installations in the country. A. Gopalakrishnan, a former head of AERB, disclosed last year that in 1995, the AERB had prepared a list of over hundred flaws in those installations. Some of them were uranium enrichment plants. He said, "the safety standards at the older nuclear plants are so low that that severe accidents like the one that occurred at the Tokaimura uranium plant in Japan could occur here too". According to Gopalakrishnan, "the excessive secrecy in the functioning of the DAE and the constraints on the independent functioning of the AERB were responsible for the situation". The AERB works under the DAE, which can suppress

any incident or information on the pretext of national security under the Official Secrets Act. In spite of the pressure of the People's Union for Civil Liberties, the DAE had suppressed the AERB report recommending, among other things, changes in the design of nuclear reactors to meet safety requirements. It certainly looks as though the DAE considers the AERB to be an obstacle to its plans for developing nuclear weapons.

The completion of the Kalpakkam Reprocessing Plant (KARP) in September 1998 was hailed by Prime Minister Vajpayee and leading officials of the DAE. "Dedicating" it to the nation, Vajpayee said, "the completion of the reprocessing plant was a milestone in the history of India's nuclear power programme". Anil Kakodkar, Director, BARC emphasised the importance of KARP to India's nuclear electricity programme. The project manager of KARP described the facility as capable of generating "wealth" from "waste". The stated objective of KARP is to separate plutonium from radioactive waste that is produced in a conventional nuclear reactor. The plutonium will then be used as a fuel for a special type of reactor called the breeder reactor. Nuclear reactions inside such a reactor steadily produce plutonium, and one therefore ends up with more plutonium than what one had in the beginning. Despite the claim of the DAE that it intends to use breeder reactors for generating electricity, very few people take it seriously. No country has been able to generate electricity satisfactorily from such reactors because of technical problems and besides they are highly accident prone. But on the other hand, the relatively large amount of plutonium that is produced in a breeder reactor can be used for making nuclear bombs. This danger has been recognised in various countries, and strong opposition to such reactors in the US in the 1970s led to a complete halt to their construction. However, it does not seem as though that the public at large in India is aware of this grave problem. This has made the task of the DAE relatively easy to push ahead with its breeder programme. Indeed of the three stages of India's nuclear power programme, the last two, when they get under way will be based on breeder reactors. It is therefore important to see the close connection between the civilian and military aspects of this programme.

While there have been numerous discussions about nuclear weapons in the anti-nuclear movement following the Pokhran tests, the same is not true about their delivery systems. India has several aircrafts that can deliver nuclear bombs within a distance of approximately 150-1500 kilometres. The ambitious Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme which began in 1983 is aimed at producing five kinds of missiles that can deliver nuclear weapons. The Agni II missile which has a range of 2500-3000 km was tested in April 1999. When fully developed it can strike cities in China. This was preceded by Agni and Prithvi, a surface-to-surface missile. An advanced version of Agni II another missile called Surya are being planned for the future. It is therefore hardly surprising that the budget of DRDO and DOS, which have been entrusted with the task of building and testing these missiles have been steadily increasing in the past decade.

It is evident from the arguments and cases presented above that after the nuclear tests in

Pokhran, the Indian ruling establishment is relentlessly making efforts to acquire a large arsenal of nuclear arms. While the government talks about signing the CTBT from time to time because of U.S. pressure, it never seems to be very serious about it. The anti-nuclear movement in India must debate the pros and cons of CTBT, and examine whether this treaty by itself can bring and end to the proliferation of nuclear weapons worldwide. In the last two years, the DAE has planned to set up a number of nuclear reactors. Koodankulam is perhaps the best known of them. A 220 MW reactor in Kaiga has begun operating. There have been safety problems and near accidents in some of the existing reactors.

All in all, the period after Pokhran II has witnessed a growth in India's activities in the nuclear weapons and power sectors. The anti-nuclear movement has its task cut out. It must make every effort to reverse this trend in order to save the people of this country from a potential disaster of unimaginable magnitude.

KALAM

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POTA (Prevention of Terrorists Activities Act, a much more brutalised version of TADA) passed by the Parliament. Due to fierce opposition it was turned back. Now he is pushing hard to pass similar laws in a different form arming the Police with more teeth to ensure law and order. Thus here is a classic riddle wherein the lawmakers break the law with impunity so as to create lawlessness, which will enable them to press for more stringent laws!

To paint any dissent as a threat to the 'interests' of the state (in the administrative parlance, a law and order question) is an easy way by which any action of the state against its 'enemy' gets legitimised. Thus the activities of the Green Tigers or Kranti Sena in AP, the surrendered militants in Punjab, the SULFA (surrendered ULFA activists) in Assam or the Ikhwanul Muslimin in Kashmir (all mercenaries supported by the state) or the Armed Forces Special Powers Act enforced in Northeast and Kashmir are measures designed to reinforce this mindset on the masses so as to 'tame' them into the 'mainstream'. The consistent efforts of APCLC stands testimony as they with other civil liberties organisations from

all over India have exposed and fought against these nefarious anti-people character of the state at a national and international level. As per one source, in AP an officer of the rank of SP is allotted two crores a year to spend on an informer to collect information on the activities of the revolutionaries. In the same state the truth about primary education is that there are no schools in 10,000 villages, existing schools are not running in 21,000 villages and teachers are not paid their salaries in several thousand schools, where there are only single teachers!

The killings of two APCLC activists are political murders committed by degenerated elements with the connivance of the state which is motivated to forego the interest of the masses for that of monopoly capital, World Bank, IMF. The power hungry exploitative politicians and their *babus* in the administrative apparatus have demeaned to such levels that - to quote Koestler - *if you tell them that their kingdom stinks of corpses they will answer you that it has always been their favourite scent*. Only stiff resistance from all sections of the society can counter this.

KALAM

It's never too late to uncover the truth

- Patwant Singh

As the Constitution faces the prospect of further changes, it would be of interest to recall the damage previous amendments did to the lives of hundreds of thousands of unsuspecting Indians. Especially in Punjab, Kashmir and Northeast India where indiscriminate violence against people was given constitutional sanction by Parliament. Despite their efforts to obscure fact with fiction, and make heroes out of criminals in uniform, successive governments in New Delhi could not hide the most debased excesses by the state against its citizens.

Punjab bore the brunt of the Union government's capricious amendments of several statutes and acts relating to criminal justice in the Eighties which were then incorporated in the Ninth Schedule. It was done to make them immune from challenge on the grounds of violating Articles 14 and 19 which guarantee the fundamental rights of citizens. The sleight of hand gave police officers absolute power to conduct a vicious war of attrition against innocent men, women and children. The police methods were no less vicious than other bloodlettings in recent history. Milan Kundera, in his Book of Laughter and Forgetting, shows how memory becomes a casualty in the cover-ups which follow vengeful acts. "The bloody massacre in Bangladesh quickly covered the memory of the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia; the assassination of Allende drowned out the groans of Bangladesh; the war in the Sinai desert made people forget Allende; the Cambodian massacre made people forget Sinai; and so on and so forth, until ultimately everyone lets everything be forgotten."

Who, indeed, now remembers that from the end of the Eighties till 1995, Punjab saw its police forces exterminate, torture, secretly cremate, rape, imprison without trial tens of thousands of people in the name of ending militancy." Statesman-like

methods to solve political problems were abandoned in favour of amending the law to facilitate arbitrary police methods and extra-judicial killings; the amendments of the Eighties leading directly to subsequent police brutalities in Punjab. In all 30 Punjab-related Acts and amendments were enacted between 1983 and 1989, providing the police with pretexts to arrest, detain without trial, torture and kill persons. The 59th Constitutional Amendment (later repealed) of March 30, 1988, authorised the suspension of the fundamental right to life and liberty! An excessive piece of legislation, the Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act, 1983, gave officers the right in "disturbed areas" (which Punjab and Kashmir were duly declared) to destroy shelters from which armed attacks are likely to be made, and arrest without warrant a person on suspicion that he is about to commit an offense!

Many more such devices helped to obstruct justice, not facilitate it. To understand through specific case, how these affected the fundamental rights of Punjab's people - especially Sikhs - the source to turn to is the just released Enforced Disappearances, Arbitrary Executions and Secret Cremations: Victim Testimony and India's Human Rights Obligations. This Interim Report, issued by the committee for Coordination on Disappearances in Punjab, and written by Ram Narayan Kumar and two associates, reveals the degree to which the government, public and a fawning media make these crimes possible. And laud officially sanctioned criminality. It discloses that after the Congress Party's victory in Punjab in February 1992, the Beant Singh government decided to silence human rights groups before dealing with militancy. In consequence Ram Singh Biling, a newspaper reporter and secretary of the Punjab Human Rights Organisation "was picked up and

unceremoniously executed.” Then Justice Ajit Singh Bains, chairman of PHRO and retired judge of the High Court was illegally arrested, handcuffed and humiliated in April 1992. The 70-year old heart patient, admired for his integrity and independence, was held without trial for weeks, and only released after the Bar Association of India, at the urging of Fali Nariman, the Bar Association of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, and the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists protested his arrest. Jagwinder Singh human rights lawyer was picked up on September 25, 1992. “Although the chief minister and the chief secretary promised to intervene, Jagwinder Singh never returned”. Jaswant Singh Khalra, active in human rights, had in January 1995 disclosed that the Punjab police were secretly cremating thousand of dead bodies after declaring them unidentified. The police reacted menacingly, especially Ajit Singh Sandhu, Taran Taran’s senior superintendent of police, who warned Khalra that unless he “ceased his involvement in the matter, he would also become an unidentified body.” Khalra refused. As general secretary of the Akali Dal’s human rights wing he had influential friends; more importantly, he had backbone. On September 6, 1995 armed police commandos took him away from his house in Amritsar and despite the Supreme Court’s intervention, assurances by Punjab’s advocate general, pleas by human rights organisations in India, and outrage by their counterparts abroad, Khalra was never seen again, nor his body recovered.

What led to his killing was his press release of January 16, 1995. “The cases of ‘disappeared’ persons have been a source of constant concern for all human rights groups working in Punjab... some families, who cannot bear the uncertainty any more, just want to know if their son, brother, husband or daughter is dead or alive so that they can perform the last religious rites... In Amritsar district, the maximum unclaimed bodies (were) brought to the cremation grounds near the Durgiana Mandir. From 1st June 1984 to the end of 1994 about 2,000 bodies have been cremated as unclaimed...” The Supreme Court took notice of the Khalra abduction from a telegram sent by Gurcharan Singh Tohra and directed the CBI to

investigate the Khalra abduction and also the cremation of “unidentified bodies”. The CBI confirmed as fact that more than 2,000 bodies were cremated as unidentified in Taran Taran alone, and further identified about 500 bodies which the Punjab police had cremated as unidentified.

The particulars of unidentified bodies cremated all over Punjab are meticulously tabulated in the Interim Report - a direct spin-off of Khalra’s path-breaking work- even giving details of the amounts of firewood and cloth used for shrouds. To read these accounts is to experience the entire gamut of emotions: outrage, sorrow, admiration for human rights activists and dismay that these crimes were provided constitutional legitimacy by our parliamentarians. Evidence of custodial deaths was destroyed by other means too. “Punjab’s irrigation canals had (also) become the dumping ground for bodies of killed militants and their sympathisers”. In March 1992, according to a newspaper report, “the government of Rajasthan had formally complained to Punjab’s chief secretary that these canals were carrying large numbers of dead bodies into the State....that many dead bodies, with hands and feet tied together, were being fished out when water inflow in canals was stopped for repair works.” The report is replete with case histories of police abductions interrogations, deaths in custody, trauma deaths, punitive punishment of whole families, and terrorising of entire villages. “In one case, the police officer-in-charge of a post at village Bham, in Batala subdivision of Gurdaspur district, kidnapped two teenage girls, Satvinder Kaur and Sarabjit Kaur, in front of eyewitnesses in his official jeep. The officer-in-charge of the police station in Har-Gobindpur denied their custody. Four days later their naked distended bodies were recovered from a nearby canal. Officers of Har-Gobindpur police-station tried to pressurise the parents to sign a declaration that the bodies were unidentified and unclaimed, and were threatened that they would be eliminated... if they disobeyed.” In the Nineties, police could force a government medical officer to complete a post-mortem “in less than five minutes”, though this was difficult if a person wasn’t dead. “On 30 October 1993, a “deadbody,” supposedly that of Sarabjit Singh, was brought to Patti hospital by the officers of Valtaha police

station in Amritsar district for post-mortem. The doctor who was to carry out the autopsy discovered that the man who had a bullet injury on his head was still breathing. Thereupon, Valtaha police officers insisted on taking him away. After some time, they brought him back, now dead for good, and forced a different doctor to fill in an autopsy report."

The Supreme Court took notice of this case from a newspaper report and directed the CBI to investigate the case, which - prima-facie found the allegations against the police officers correct. A murder case was registered against the accused police officers and tried by the session judge, Amritsar. One sub-inspector of police was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment.

How did top police officials view their rampaging force during those years? Julio Ribeiro, former Bombay police commissioner who took over as Punjab's director general of police in March 1986, claims in his book *Bullet for Bullet* that despite requests to Punjab human rights activists "to name one innocent person' whom the police had killed, my challenge had never got a response". In the next paragraph he says "some innocent youths had died because they took fright and ran. The para-military, mistaking them for terrorists, had fired at them," adding philosophically that: "They were the unfortunate victims of a low-cost war, which is how terrorism has been aptly described". He didn't think much of Justice Bains. "He was a bitter man, and this feature of his personality surfaced very markedly..." He himself sounded bitter at the "warped reasoning... of activists like Bains," and felt the "PHRO particularly Bains, constituted a serious obstacle to more determined police action..." Though no wordsmith, Ribeiro manages to reveal his second-hand colonial mindset through his views on Punjab. "I came from another part of the country, with a different culture and different attitudes... this was tribal territory, with tribal customs and propensities." As for condoning extra-judicial killings his officers seemed to favour: "Who was I to pass judgment on them (his officers)? I realised that I had not contradicted them when they were making their submissions. My silence could be construed as assent though I was too much of a coward to agree with them openly." His chapters on Punjab are full of such "nuggets." K.P.S. Gill, who succeeded Ribeiro on November 19, 1991,

soon made his disdain for humanitarian principles, clear. During his four years in office till December 31, 1995, the state, which once reveled in the *joie de vivre* of its people, became a fetid place - dark and brooding, like the man who seemed bent on casting it in his own image. He wanted the job badly, according to Ribeiro, "Gill was angling to replace me.... he had convinced the governor and the leaders in Delhi that I did not understand the Sikhs and that I was not capable of the harder line of action that was required to put down the terrorists." What Gill did bring to Punjab was not a hard line, but state terror, whose executioners were answerable only to him. He deflected the government's - and the media's - gaze from them whenever necessary. The latter was easy. He had his acolytes in the media: some were in thrall of the raw power he exercised, others by their proximity to him, still others were elated by the occasional ride in his plane. The report shows, through carefully researched case histories, how police repression and violations of human rights reached their zenith under him. His aversion to human rights activists - who had highlighted his trigger-happy ways - is understandable. It continued till after his retirement. During a press conference on May 24, 1997 Gill was vitriolic towards those who permitted "human rights activists to thrive on India's soil - those busy bodies 'who will work with any cause that serves their personal end..." For added effect he asked "Parliament to vote for legal amendments needed to protect other courageous officers from the kind of humiliation that apparently drove Sandhu to suicide". The same Sandhu who couldn't abide Khalra!

Hopefully the committee which government is setting up to suggest new amendments to the Constitution will listen to saner voices. And also note how some previous amendments created a culture of violence and venality. Fortunately, the speech of Ram Jethmalani, Union Minister of Law and justice, delivered on January 13, 2000 in New Delhi, was reassuring. "Once the legislature takes on the power to ignore the fundamental rights chapter by putting it in the Ninth Schedule, you have made fundamental rights a rope of sand. And you have reduced the Republic to nothing. The Republic stands on the sanctity, the dignity, and the right of the individual to hold his own against the powers that be. Take away his fundamental rights and you have denigrated him to the position of a serf, or a slave, and he is no longer a citizen of free India. [Courtesy: *The Asian Age*] KALAM

Increasing attacks on the Civil Liberties Movement

- Rona Wilson

"No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law"- Art. 24, The Indian constitution

It was a Sunday evening in Nalgonda town. The venue is Ambedkar Bhavan, the condolence meeting of the slain former Joint Secretary of Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee (APCLC), T. Purushottam. He was hacked to death in broad daylight on his way home after shopping. The Nalgonda district secretary of APCLC Mohd. Azam Ali who is in charge of the meeting had come out of the venue to make some local calls. As he enters the booth he is accosted by a group of sword wielding marauders. Azam Ali tries in vain to resist. He first loses his little finger, later to be hacked to death. The killers shout "Peoples' War nayakulara - khabardar" (Peoples' War leaders - beware) and leave the place separately, some in a van while the rest by foot...

Friends, the above two incidents - the killings of APCLC Joint secretary T. Purushottam as well as the Nalgonda district secretary Mohd. Azam Ali - should raise the concerns of all democratic citizens. This new trend with striking similarities in the method of madness of the killers, who are undoubtedly hand in glove with the state, speaks volumes about the innumerable ways of repressive deeds resorted to by the Chandrababu Naidu government to stifle any form of dissent against the anti-people policies he and his cohorts have been pushing through. The kind of stories that were fed to the media after the killing of Purushottam would make any tabloid press pale into insignificance. In fact, with the killing of Azam Ali, APCLC has lost six of its activists eliminated by the state surreptitiously through its mercenaries. The others who were silenced by the moloch machine of the state repressive apparatus are Gopi

Rajanna (1985), Dr. Ramanatham (1985), Japa Lakshma Reddy (1986) and Narra Prabhakar Reddy. The civil liberties movement in the state had then resolutely fought back exposing the anti-democratic face of the government.

What are the motive forces behind this act of impunity of the state? To start with, the state had often accused APCLC as the organisation of CPI (ML) (People's War). For, the state under Chandra Babu Naidu has been insisting that the Naxalite movement in Andhra Pradesh is a law and order problem. It has been the consistent articulation of APCLC that the Naxalite movement reflects the socio-economic problems of Andhra society in particular and the country at large. Accepting this would not have permitted the state to resort to repressive measure as is visible today. The self-styled 'Sardar Patel' at the centre who has been 'proactive' in bringing the notorious terrorists - the Israeli Intelligence - to the Kashmir valley or for the matter had allowed Uncle Sam's intelligence agency, FBI to open its office in New Delhi has deemed it fit to call the Naxalite movement "the enemy of our dreams" [in the meeting of the Joint Co-ordination Committee of Chief Ministers of five states to repress the CPI (ML) (People's War)].

Thus the confrontation between APCLC and the state has essentially been that of two different perspectives on development and on the intercourse of the project of the development and civil society. The consecutive killings of two civil libertarians (both lawyers by profession) that too in short span, clearly shows the authoritarian face of the state assuming fascistic proportions. It should be noted that the 'model' chief minister of

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POEM

On The Question of Freedom

- Yevgeny Yevtushenko

Dachau's ashes burn my feet
The asphalt smokes under me
Warheads and bayonets stuck
under my nails

I'll stroke a stray strand of by beloved's hair
And I myself shall smoke
crucified Christ-like on wings of bombers
flying through this night to kill Christ's kids
My skin trembles with explosions
as if it were Vietnam
and breaking my back and ribs
the Berlin Wall runs through me

You talk to me of freedom? Empty question
under umbrella of bombs in the sky
It's a disgrace to be free of your own age
A hundred times more shameful than to be its slave

Yes I'm enslaved to Tashkent women
and to Dallas bullets and Peking slogans
and Vietnam widows and Russian women
with picks beside the tracks and kerchiefs over their eyes

Yes I'm not free of Pushkin and Blok
Not free of the state of Maryland and Zima Station
Not free of the Devil and God
Not free of earth's beauty and its shit

Yes I'm enslaved to a thirst for taking a wet-mop
to the heads of all the bickers & butchers of the world
Yes I'm enslaved to the honour of busting the mugs
of all the bastards on earth

And maybe I'll be loved by the people for this
For spending my life
(not without precedent in this iron age)
glorifying unfreedom from
the true struggle for freedom

KALAM

The new(?) division of labour: WTO and Indian agriculture

-Dipankar Basu

In India, for the first four decades of the planning era, trade flows in the agricultural sector had been actively monitored, and therefore effectively regulated by the State. Apart from the traditional exportable originating in agricultural, like tea, coffee (plantation crops), tobacco or spices (cash crops), which had always been a source of scarce foreign exchange for the economy, other agricultural commodities had never been kept under anything, even remotely resembling a 'free trade' regime.

This regulation of trade flows in agriculture had been achieved through the use of either QRs (Quantitative Restrictions) or canalisation (channeling of trade flows through various State Trading Corporations) or a judicious combination of both. The rationale for such an 'imperfect' trade regime flowed not only from considerations of domestic price policy but also due to balance of payments constraints, unfavorable movements of the terms of trade (vis-à-vis the advanced capitalist countries) and the perceived need to protect the agricultural sector from the vagaries of the world market. With hindsight, now it can be plausibly argued that this specific policy stance contributed

a lot towards the country's achieving near self-sufficiency in foodgrains production by the early 1980s.

As can be seen from the following tables 1&2, the major agricultural products exported from the country had been cash crops and fish products of various types. Whereas the percentage of agricultural products in the total value of exports declined consistently over the decades, giving an indication that the economy was finally breaking out of the colonial division of labour, the export earnings from tea, fish products and raw cotton increased considerably over the four decades prior to liberalisation and the share of manufactured goods in exports crossed the 70 percent figure.

Table 1

Percentage share of agricultural products in total exports:

Pre-liberalisation period

1960-61	1970-71	1980-81	1990-91
44.3	31.7	30.7	19.4

Source: *Economic Information Yearbook, 1996, (eds.) A.N. Agrawal & HO Verma.*

Table 2

Value of export of principal agricultural and allied products from India (Rs. crore)

Crop	1950-51	1960-61	1970-71	1980-81	1990-91
Tea	80	124	145	335	1,070
Coffee	1	7	25	214	252
Cashew kernels	8	19	52	140	447
Spices	25	17	39	111	239
Fish and fish preparations	2	5	30	217	960
Tobacco (unmanufactured)	14	15	31	124	263
Cotton (raw & waste)	17	12	16	177	846

Source: *India: Economic Information Yearbook, 1996. (Eds.) A N Agarwal and HO Verma.*

On the import side, the most notable feature has been the fluctuations in the figures for cereals (table 3). Till the early 1970s, the economy was quite heavily dependent on the import of cereals to cover the inadequate domestic production. But, with the 'green revolution' taking off, import dependence declined and by the early 1980s the country had more or less achieved self-sufficiency. Import of raw cotton was not only replaced by domestic production but the economy started producing more than was required for domestic consumption, and thus became a net exporter of raw and waste cotton.

This kind of a trade regime in agriculture had to be supported by a complementary policy regime relating to domestic production. The government made considerable outlays for infrastructure development in the countryside, subsidies were given for fertiliser, electricity, water, etc. and farmers were given various kinds of incentives to increase foodgrains production. If we take a look at the figures for the cropping pattern in India before the 1990s, these policy thrusts come out quite clearly. Till the late 1970s, the area under

Table 3
Imports of Principal Agricultural and Allied products into India
(Rs. Crore)

Crop	1950-51	1960-61	1970-71	1980-81	1990-91
Cereals	99	181	213	100	182
Cashewnut	3	10	29	9	134
Cotton (raw)	101	82	99	NA	1
Wool (raw)	6	10	15	43	182
Crude rubber	3	11	4	32	226
Animal & Vegetable oils & fats	4	5	38	709	NA

Table 4
Import of Cereals into India
('000 tonnes)

1960-61	1970-71	1980-81	1990-91
3,747.7	3,343.2	400.8	308.3

cereals and various oilseeds was continuously increasing; coupled with the increasing productivity of land, this meant an increase in the rate of growth of foodgrain production.(Table 5)

Source: *Economic Survey, 1998-99.*

Table 5
Cropping Pattern in India: Pre-liberalisation period
(Percentage of total area sown)

Crop	1950-51	1960-61	1970-71	1980-81	1990-91
Cereals	59.3	60.2	61.4	60.2	55.6
Pulses	15.6	15.5	13.6	13	13.3
Total Foodgrains	76.7	75.7	75	73.2	68.9
Sugarcane	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.5	2
Oilseeds	8.3	8.4	10	10.2	13
Cotton (lint)	4.3	5	2.9	4.5	4
Jute and Mesta	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6
Tobacco	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2

Source: *Economic Information Yearbook, 1996 (Eds.) A.N. Agrawal & H.O. Verma.*

But all this changed with the inception of the stabilisation and Structural Adjustment Programme initiated in mid-1991 by the government. Veiled as policy prescriptions to correct the imbalances in the country's BoP (Balance of Payments), the loan conditionalities of the multilateral financial institutions pushed the country onto a path which sought to considerably increase the 'degree of openness' of the economy (in terms of cross-broader flows in commodities, services and capital). Though some major changes in trade policy were announced with the devaluation of the rupee on 4 July 1991, the rationale behind the broader shifts in the overall trade policy regime was made public through the STATEMENT OF TRADE POLICY by the Ministry of Commerce, GoI, released on 13 August 1991.

As a consequence of this overall policy shift, trade policy related to agriculture has also undergone vast changes. The mechanism of canalisation has been completely abandoned, quantitative restrictions have been dismantled for a large range of importables and, parallel to this, there has been a restructuring and reduction of overall tariff levels protecting the economy. The economic survey, 1998-99 says: "As a member of the WTO, India has **bound** about 67 percent of its **tariff** lines whereas prior to the Uruguay Round only 6 per cent of the tariff lines were bound". Or again, on the issue of quantitative restrictions, this is what the same *Survey* has to say: "Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) on imports are currently being maintained on Balance of Payment (BoP) grounds for around 2300 tariff lines at the eight digit level. In view of the improvement in the BoP, the Committee on BoP Restrictions has asked India for a phase out plan for these QRs. Based on

presentations before this committee and subsequent consultations with our main trading partners, an agreement was reached with these countries, except USA, to phase out QR over a period of six years beginning 1997." Hence, all quantitative restrictions on imports will go by the year 2003. As part of this broad strategy, every year more and more commodities are freed from quantitative restriction and brought onto the OGL (Open General License) list.

As the country functions under the new policy regime, various subtle changes are taking place in the agrarian economy. Gradually, impersonal forces emanating from far-away places in the world market are changing the cropping pattern. The pattern of export and import is also changing, while, in the countryside, various kinds of contracting procedures are being brought in by the agri-MNCs. This, many studies have pointed out, is an effective method to pass on the risks of production to the farmers, while retaining the right to mop up the extra profits as and when they arise. Contract farming in India is currently being practiced by multinational firms and their subsidiaries like Cadbury (Cocoa), Pepsi Co. (potato), HLL (milk, tea, chicory and tomato), ITC (oilseeds), Cargill (seeds), etc. As a recent study on contract farming in agriculture states: "...Contract production tends to shift production in favour of export-oriented and cash crops at the cost of basic food crops for the poor. This can lead to higher prices of the food commodities and products, especially for non-contract farmers and the labour households who do not benefit from contracting in terms of higher incomes" (*Implications of Contract Farming: A Review of theory and practice Sukhpal Singh, IRMA. 1999*).

Table 6
Area Under principal Crops: Post-Liberalisation Experience
(⁰⁰⁰ hectares)

Year	Cereals	Pulses	Oilseeds	Cotton (lint)	Jute	Sugarcane	Coconut
1990-91	103,173	24,662	24,148	7,440	778	3,686	1,475
1991-92	99,330	22,543	26,774	7,661	875	4,105	1,529
1992-93	100,788	22,360	25,236	7,542	727	4,112	1,538
1993-94	100,504	22,250	26,897	7,321	695	3,422	1,635
1994-95	100,812	23,028	25,304	7,871	739	3,867	1,714
1995-96	98,732	22,283	25,964	9,035	737	4,147	1,833
1996-97	101,134	22,447	26,811	9,121	897	4,174	1,891
1997-98	191,221	22,847	26,013	8,904	920	3,967	1,898

Source: Statistical Abstract India, 1998. CSO, GOI, New Delhi.

Already, though enough time has not elapsed for the effect for these policy changes to percolate to all levels of the economy, the cropping pattern can be seen as changing. As the following table 6 shows, within less than a decade 1,952,000 hectares of land has been shifted away from the production of cereals, 1,815,000 hectares away from pulses, while area under various cash crops has increased by 2,168,000 hectares.

The composition of exports (Table 7) is also showing signs of change. The declining trend of the percentage of agricultural products in total exports has been halted; it is bound to reverse within the next decade. The import dependence of the economy in terms of cereals (Table 8) has again picked up, and the declining trend of the 1980s and the early 1990s has been unambiguously reversed.

up the question: WHY? What has prompted these dramatic shifts in policy geared, among other things, towards establishing a liberalised trade regime in agriculture?

Reasons for Liberalisation, Putative and Real

Mainstream economic thinking on trade (especially trade in agricultural products) justifies its policy prescriptions for opening up the economies of Third World countries on the basis of the Ricardian theory of comparative advantage. This theory and their attendant policy prescriptions, argue that opening up of the agricultural sector to world trade is to the benefit of both developed and developing nations. Trade increases geographical specialisation of crop production, improves efficiency of resource

Table 7
Composition of India's Exports: The Post-liberalisation Period
(Percentage shares)

	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98
Agriculture & Allied, of which	18.7	16.9	18	16	19.2	20.4	18.8
Tea	2.7	1.8	1.4	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.2
Coffee	0.7	0.7	0.8	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.3
Cereals	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.5	4.7	3.3	2.6
Unmanufactured Tobacco	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.7
Spices	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	1	1.1
Cashewnuts	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.1	1.1
Oil Meals	2.1	2.9	3.3	2.2	2.2	2.9	2.7
Fruits and Vegetables	NA	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6
Marine products	3.3	3.2	3.6	4.3	3.2	3.4	3.4
Raw Cotton	0.7	0.3	0.9	0.2	0.2	1.3	0.7
Ores and minerals	4.6	4	4	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.1
Manufactured goods	74.2	75.6	75.5	78.1	75.4	73.4	75.7

Source: *Economic Survey of various years.*

Table 8
Imports of Cereals into India
(‘000 tonnes)

93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98
402.7	80.3	64.8	664.1	1,399.4

Source: *Economic Survey, 1998-99*

With these drastic policy shifts, the stage has been all set for bringing the domestic prices of inputs into, and outputs from, agriculture closer to the corresponding set of world prices. Consideration of these wide-ranging changes is bound to throw

allocation, and thereby results in welfare gains for both the parties; per capita availability of commodities consequent to trade is higher for both the countries participating in the international exchange process.

Instead of either accepting these arguments at face value or rejecting them off hand, let us take a close look at the relevant facts. Since countries in Latin America and Africa have been following precisely the above set of policies (relating to liberalised agricultural trade) for close to two decades now, the best way to examine the claims of mainstream theory would be to study

the track record of these countries. And what has been the performance of these countries? Prof. Utsa Patnaik, in a recent study (EPW, Special Number, 1996), has drawn attention to a well known set of UNICEF-sponsored studies on the impact of SAP and liberalisation on capital formation, growth and human development indicators. These studies quite unambiguously show that in a majority of countries adopting the policy prescriptions of liberalisation and Structural Adjustment, poverty levels have risen as also have the infant mortality rates; since most of these countries had agreed to the Fund-bank conditionalities to reduce overall government expenditures, the health of social sectors like education, health-care, housing, etc., deteriorated considerably due to lack of funds. A more recent paper, which, according to Patnaik, summarises the latest IMF studies on Latin America, unfolds an even more pathetic story. "Taking all countries which implemented liberalisation and adjustment between 1980 and 1990, the per capita GDP declined by 9 per cent, the minimum wage by 31.7 per cent and agricultural wage by 26.5 per cent. The proportion of the poor increased from 41 to 44 per cent, with a large impact on the urban poor". These average figures, of course, conceal the large variations for among individual countries; in many countries the majority of the population has been pushed below the poverty line, real GDP has declined by double digit figures, unemployment has

it is true that these multilateral institutions, backed by the huge TNCs from the advanced capitalist countries, are once again trying to enforce an international division of labour that was a characteristic structure of the colonial era and which got disturbed due to the twin facts of 'really existing socialism' and the upsurge of national liberation struggles after the Second World War. With the collapse of the socialist bloc and the abandonment of the project of independent national development in the liberated colonies, ascendant finance capital is making an attempt to take us back into the future of neocolonialism!

The characteristic feature of this international division of labour is the following: advanced capitalist countries will produce and export manufactured products (which are typically high value-added) and will import primary products from the ex-colonies (Table 9). The only exception to this rule is the fact that the advanced capitalist countries will control foodgrain production! In the case of wheat and coarse grains, the control is direct and obvious; all the major exporters are from the advanced capitalist bloc. In that of rice, which can only be grown under tropical conditions, the major exporters are from the developing country bloc (except USA), and it is precisely here that the agri-MNCs like Cargill are trying to increase their stranglehold.

The above assertion about the refashioning

Table 9

Crop/product	Major Exporters	Major Importers
Coffee	Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico	USA, Canada, EU
Cocoa	Brazil, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Cameroon	USA, Canada, EU
Tea	Bangladesh, China, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia	EU, USA, CIS, Australia
Sugar	Brazil, EU, Australia, Cuba, Thailand	EU, Russia, USA, Japan
Banana	Ecuador, Costa Rica, Colombia, Philippines	USA, EU, Japan
Natural Rubber	Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Sri Lanka	USA, Japan, China, Germany, Korean Republic

Source: *Commodity market Review, 1998-99. FAO, Rome*

reached unprecedented high values, real wages have halved and infant mortality rates have shot up dramatically. In terms of per capita food availability, almost all the countries are worse off in the post-liberalisation period as compared to the earlier decades.

What is the real agenda behind these policies? It might sound like an exaggeration but

of the international division of labour can be very easily substantiated if we see the patterns of agricultural trade in the world today. Which are the major agricultural exports from and imports into the advanced capitalist countries? The following table gives the story about commercial crops.

One can very clearly notice that almost all the commercial crops, which go into the consumption basket of the advanced country consumer, are produced in and exported from the Third World Countries. And what is the relevant story regarding foodgrains, if in foodgrains we include wheat, rice and coarse grains (bajra, jowar, small millet, etc.)? The advanced capitalist countries, as we have pointed out earlier, have retained control over the production and distribution of foodgrains (Table 10 & 11).

Table 10
Export of Wheat (million tonnes)

	93-94(avg.)	96-97	97-98	98-99
World Total	93.2	97.1	98	93.3
Argentina	5.3	9.6	9.1	7
Australia	11	18.4	15.3	14.5
Canada	18.9	17.9	21.1	15
EU	16.2	16.9	14	17
USA	33.1	27	28.1	29.5

Source: *Commodity Market Review, 1998-99. FAO, Rome*

Table 11
Export of Rice (milled) (million tonnes)

	93-95(avg.)	96	97	98
World Total	17.3	19.5	19.2	26.6
Viet Nam	1.9	3	3.6	3.8
China	1.1	0.4	1	3.4
Thailand	5.1	5.2	5.3	6.4
India	2	3.6	2.3	3.1
USA	2.8	2.6	2.3	3.1

Source: *Commodity Market Review, 1998-99. FAO, Rome*

Trade and Underdevelopment

It hardly needs to be mentioned that the impact of this international division of labour would be disastrous, to say the least, for the masses of the Third World countries, both in scale and in depth. Most of the countries that have adopted the above set of policies and have opened up their agricultural sector to world trade have done so under compulsion. Almost all the countries, which have gone for agricultural trade liberalisation, are debt-burdened countries, which have had to borrow money from multilateral financial institutions at some point or other to tide over their BoP problems. In most cases, again, these were 'tied' loans, which came hand in hand with conditionalities to restructure their national economies and open up their agricultural and industrial sectors to world

trade.

With regard to the restructuring of the national economies, the thrust of the adjustment package policies, like reduction of government expenditure, retreat of the state from the social sector, reduction of tariffs, privatisation of public sector enterprises, was meant to initiate a process of income deflation in the country. This *de facto* income deflation was intended to decrease the levels of effective demand in the economy and thus release commodities for export. Parallel to this, liberalisation of the trade regime was meant to open up the economy to the pressure of metropolitan consumer demand via the world markets. These two processes, in conjunction, have been able to dramatically alter the patterns of agricultural production and exports in the debt-burdened ex-colonies. Since most of these countries could not compete with the advanced countries in industrial commodities trade, they had to perforce go in for agricultural exports to meet their rising import bills (which, in the first place, was a direct result of import liberalisation measures that these countries had been forced to adopt). As the UNCTAD report points out: "Even on the broadest definition, manufactures account for under 15 per cent of total exports in close to two thirds of countries in SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa); on a narrower definition, the proportion is less than 10 per cent in three quarters of the countries and under 5 percent in half" (*Trade and Development Report, 1998. UNCTAD*). Now, the agricultural commodities that could readily find markets in the advanced capitalist countries were precisely the cash or the plantation crops. And hence, more and more resources was shifted from the production of foodgrains to the production of cash crops destined for exports to metropolitan centres of opulence.

Food Security: The Deteriorating Balance Sheet

Behind this refashioning lay the growth of huge Trans National Corporations (TNCs) dealing with agricultural trade, based both in the US and the European Union. Their growing economic power soon found expression in the political domain whereby domestic farm policy (in the US and the EU) was made to favour the subsidization of an increasingly mechanised agriculture. Where on the one hand, the tax-payers' money was used to compensate the farmers for prices (paid by the

agri-business TNCs to procure food grains from the farmers) well below the prices of production, on the other hand, these same TNCs were encouraged to price open the markets of Third World countries through 'dumping' (the practice of selling products in foreign countries at prices below the costs of production). That this process was carried out despite, and in direct contravention of, the strict anti-dumping injunctions of Article 6 of GATT gives an indication of how much rule-governed behaviour is exhibited by the TNCs!

Domestic producers in the Third World countries could not of course compete with these economic giants (backed by various imperialist States). Even as the domestic farm sector of the developing countries was being ravaged, US and EU registered consistent over-production in agriculture. Due to the increasing import-dependence of Third World countries (Table 12), their balance of payments worsened and in time the ballooning debt burdens could only be financed

income deflationary policies of the SAP regime), this meant sharply declining domestic food consumption for the lower sections of the population.

This vulnerable position of the net food importing countries was compounded further by the following two factors. First, since more and more countries (in all, more than 80 countries came under the Structural Adjustment Programme by the early 1990s) were being forced to take up this same path, the supply of these agricultural products in the world market kept going up, and hence the prices showed a decline. This meant the terms of trade vis-à-vis the advanced capitalist countries kept worsening, and so *more exports (in volume terms) was required to cover the same volume of imports*. The extra/excess imports of food grains could then only be financed through more international credit. As a result debts increased further, more land was shifted towards agri-exports, and food availability fell even more.

Table 12
Cereal Imports of LDCs and NFIDCs (Net Food Importing Developing Countries)

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Volume (million tonnes) LDCs	11.1	13.3	12.2	10.3	13.5
NFIDCs	25.5	26	26.1	27.7	31.7
Total	36.6	39.3	38.3	38	45.2
Value (billion \$) LDCs	1.2	2.0	2.2	1.7	2.0
NFIDCs	3.6	4	5.8	5.5	5.3
Total	4.8	6	8	7.2	7.3

Source: *Commodity Market Review, 1998-99, FAO, Rome.*

through loans from multilateral financial institutions. These loans, as mentioned earlier, came with conditionalities for further opening up of these economies and within years, they become net-importers of food grains. In their bid to generate foreign exchange to deal with the vulnerable positions in which they found themselves, these countries had no other option but to encourage exports in agricultural products.

With more and more land being devoted to the production of exportable cash crops, domestic food grain production declined sharply leading to falls in the net per capita food availability. In conjunction with falling income levels (due to the

Second, since the actual forex earned through exports, as also the real import bill, depended on the value of the exchange rates, currency speculation could easily spell doom for these vulnerable countries. All these factors, acting in tandem, severely jeopardised the food security of these low-income economies and, in many cases, pushed them towards pre-famine conditions.

Output, Employment and Wages: Negative Impacts

Dismantling quantitative restrictions in favour of tariffs (the so-called process of "tariffication"), and following it up by restructuring and reducing tariffs, means that the domestic

markets of the Third World countries would be flooded with the manufactured products of advanced capitalist countries. The process of enforced deindustrialisation, so reminiscent of colonial days, ravages domestic industry and increases unemployment in the economy. Parallel to this is the fact of the government withdrawal from economic activities; which means that the government investment in agriculture to improve infrastructure, like roads, irrigation facilities,

materialises, takes place for cash-crop production in agriculture, which, by its very nature, is much more capital and energy intensive. The employment elasticity of such investment would naturally be low and so, in that direction too, a large proportion of the workforce is made redundant. But since this excess workforce from agriculture has no scope of being absorbed in industry (which is anyway moving downhill), it is forced to join the pool of the unemployed in the

The Agreement on Agriculture

Trade in agriculture has been formally brought under the jurisdiction of the WTO with the formulation of the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA). The AoA, in its present form, has three major sections, each dealing with market access, domestic support and export competition.

The section dealing with *market access* is primarily designed to provide unlimited access to the domestic market for agricultural products (especially food grains) of the various Third World countries. It will directly benefit the agri-business MNCs by increasing the size of their markets.

The section on *domestic support* is designed to protect the advanced capitalist countries against competition from the developing countries. Officially, the Uruguay round agreement calls on GATT/WTO members to reduce their spending, direct and indirect, for domestic farm programmes. What is known as the Aggregate Measure of Support (AMS) is used as an indication of domestic government support. By taking a very high historical base for the calculation of the AMS, most advanced countries will escape the mandatory requirement to reduce (indirect) subsidization of the agricultural sector, and thus only developing and least developed countries will be forced to cut back their support to their farm sectors.

The *export competition* section deals with the direct subsidization of agriculture and enjoins all countries to reduce direct, monetary subsidies to exporters in agriculture within an agreed time frame.

As can be easily seen, all the above measures are designed in such a manner that it will primarily benefit the advanced capitalist countries. The other notable agreements under the WTO that affect agriculture and food production are the agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), the agreement on Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and the agreement on Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMS). Developing country governments have rightly argued that all these agreements are essentially *disguised non-tariff barriers* meant to protect the developed world.

All these agreements taken together will not only jeopardise the food security of the developing countries, but will also, probably gradually, snatch from them even the right to produce according to local requirements and knowledge systems.

Source: GATT, WATT and Global Economics Primer 1, The Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resource Policy, 1996.

storage systems and extension services, goes down. And since it is a characteristic feature of the developing economies that private investment in agriculture is positively correlated with public investment, a fall in government expenditure leads to a fall in private investment also. And then again, whatever reduced level of private investment

country. The growing reserve army of labour pushed down the levels of the real wage rate in the economy. Declining employment and reduced real wages (for that lower level of employment) will mean declining levels of effective demand in the economy. Domestic production will be constrained by falling levels of effective demand, and the

economy will move towards a phase of prolonged stagnation or even deep recession. In fact, this is the story that has been repeated over and over again in Sub-Saharan African and Latin American countries.

Multilateral Trading: New Rules for Old Games

The international division of labour that was so far enforced through loan conditionalities, and mostly in a bilateral manner will now be concretised through the new rules of multilateral trading in agricultural commodities. Until the completion of the Uruguay Round of negotiations, trade in agriculture had been de facto excluded from the GATT system. But with the coming to being of the World Trade Organisation at the completion of the Uruguay Round, agricultural trade has also been brought under the purview of the rules of the new multilateral trading system.

GATT, it must be remembered, was formed through the same process after the Second World War, which created the other two multilateral institutions, namely, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Transnational agri-business will reap most of the benefits of the Uruguay Round. A few TNCs control a major share of the world trade in agricultural commodities, and it is to them that most of the benefits of liberalised trade will flow. Fewer than

five companies control over 90 per cent of the export market for each of wheat, corn, coffee, tea, pineapple, cotton, tobacco, jute and forest products. Just six companies, for example, largely control the world's grain supply: Cargill, Continental Grain, Bunge, Luis Dreyfus, Andre & Co., and Mitsui/Cook. The same agri-business companies that control trade in commodities also control the storage, transport and food-processing industries. It might be enlightening for all to know that for the agricultural negotiations in the long Uruguay Round, the US government had appointed a life-time official of the Cargil company – by far the largest agri-business corporation today – to draft the US proposals and to serve as the chief official negotiator! The overall impact of the implementation of the various provisions within the WTO framework is going to be an increase in the control of corporate bodies over the food production and distribution systems in the world, resulting in, on the one hand, stupendous profits for these agri-business TNCs and, on the other, unemployment, famines, environmental degradation, poverty and misery for large sections of the world's population. Whether we will allow this to happen is, of course, a choice to be made by each of us, as individuals and as members of various institutions, classes and countries.

KALAM

Contd. from page 19

Chandrababu Naidu announced soon after he won elections last year and repeated later at least three times that he would ban all student organisations. He contended that students should not have politics. (Remember that when he called upon students to volunteer in *Janmabhoomi*, he asked them to take part in the social process.) According to him, they should concentrate on studies, something that he himself did not do when he was a student. Now you see that he became the 'statesman, the best CEO of a government (!), high-tech politician and the best business administrator'.

There are two sections of people whom Chandrababu most obviously cannot tolerate: The students who have been always going on struggles and then the workers who are up against him because of the closure of industries, particularly,

state-owned ones. The peasants either commit suicide or for the revolutionaries, he handed them over to the police department. He already banned six people's organisations. But not yet satisfied. So Babu declared that he would ban all students and workers organisations if they do not stop struggles and talking politics. He advised different parties in the state to abolish their student and workers organisations. To set an example, he abolished *Telugu Vidyarthi*, a student wing of his own TDP and said that he is going to abolish TNTUC, the trade union under his party. Adolph Hitler after winning his victory in 1933 elections in Germany banned all people's organisations including trade unions, through which he used to show his strength before and after elections. Now the Hitler in Cyberabad chuckles away in the same manner.

KALAM

Letters to the Editor

I got your July-October 2000 issue. It's the first time that I am going through your magazine. It includes wonderful, valuable and complete articles on various crucial issues. But the language of these articles, are too difficult to understand. So its my suggestion, that if you want to take your magazine to each and every corner of India, you must concentrate on this issue, as this kind of language is not easily understandable for a common student, who studies in an institution, where English as a spoken medium is hardly relied on.

Rahul B, Kathua, J&K

Your suggestion is well taken. We will try our level best to make all the articles written in simple English. [Editor]

AIRSF Conference: A Note of Dissent

This is a note of dissent about the way the AIRSF 1999 Conference was conducted. Although such raising of objections may seem an irritant in the beginning, ultimately, I hope, it would contribute to the health of the organisation; besides making *Kalam* a platform for meaningful interaction.

In the first place, the main slogan chosen for the AIRSF Conference, "*The world is ours. Dare to fight Dare to win*" was too abstract in this context. So even its apparent aim of commemorating 50 years of Chinese revolution does not seem to be served. We could have given more emphasis to slogans like "Fight back communalisation of education; fight for scientific education", "Fight back privatisation and commercialisation of education". These slogans are of current relevance and are rather concrete. Moreover, slogans like "Villages are our schools Masses are our teachers" are good and especially because it is only our stream that emphasizes on students integrating with masses. Slogans opposing state repression and hailing the revolutionary movement should also be welcome. I mean, we should be careful enough to design our main slogans, from time to time, on the basis of a proper analysis of the major prevailing contradictions. Only then, I feel, we would be able to move towards a scientific, pro-people education system that would nurture critical and creative abilities both to serve class struggle and to promote production' - indeed, the two principal ends of education.

Now more importantly, an organisational conference should. I feel revitalize the organization from the roots by equipping the organisation politically and organisationally. The Manifesto and Constitution have to be discussed at every level of the organisation; units have to be formed through elections at various levels of

the organisation, thus developing collective functioning. But unfortunately, even our draft documents seemed to have been at a preparatory stage even just before culmination programme in Delhi on November 29-30. This is why I would say that this conference did not count for more than all-India seminar Spending huge amounts of people's money to conduct a ritual culmination programme in Delhi did not seem very meaningful tome. A comrade had rightly said, 'It would have been more meaningful if our students had made it to the cyclone-devastated parts of Orissa. This conference could have been postponed' 'Yes, after all, we need to have a sense of priority', said another.

Having attended the Delhi culmination programme (despite all the impeccable physical arrangements), I would say, all is not well with our revolutionary student movement. Although there were inspiring cultural performances, one hardly found pointed questions and lively debates during the Conference. My opinion is that the faulty method of functioning in the organisation has much to do with the lack of development of each and all-individual members. It is, certainly, looking into the eyes of the new generation that we could tell the future of our movement and our country. But somewhere along the way, I am afraid, we have left behind the legacy of Bhagat Singh - the keen, sharp student and the committed, passionate revolutionary. Where is our young, brilliant, critical, creative and passionate Bhagat Singh - the promise of our future?

—Gilbert S., New Delhi.

Infact on the specific slogans on education, AIRSF had already organised central seminars—one in Patna and the other in Bombay—which had dealt in detail the above said issues. Regarding the slogan of the conference, the real political message of the slogan can be taken to the students only through conscious campaigning. The third slogan that is raised was there inside the hall and is also part of our annual *go to village campaigns*.

The rough drafts of the Manifesto and Constitution had already been send to the various constituents way ahead of the conference. It was only the final draft passed in the delegate session that was being proof read on the eve of the conference. The documents were thoroughly discussed and several amendments were also made during the delegate session. This wouldn't have been possible had similar discussions not taken place at various levels. A repeat of the discussion again on the day of the conference would have proved superfluous also taking into account the limited time that was available. The conference as its primary task had taken forward the propaganda of AIRSF and its politics to a wider section. [Editor]

KALAM

POEM

Pablo Neruda (1904-1973)

Neftal Ricardo Reyes Basoalto started using the pseudonym Pablo Neruda since the age of 16, by which we all know him. He had started writing at the age of 13. Though he joined the Communist Party of Chile in 1945, he has confessed "I looked upon myself as a communist during the war in Spain" (i.e. the Civil War in Spain in 1936). His support for the Republicans during the Civil War made the Chilean government disown him. (He was then serving as the consul of Chile at India.)

He was at the 1929-Calcutta Session of Indian National Congress, where the freedom fighters had spoken to him as his "brothers". But when he came again in 1950, the suspicion and anti-Communist regime of Nehru, did not treat him well. He was harassed by the Police, who seized all his letters (though they were returned later on) including one addressed to Nehru from a scientist of France (but Nehru cold-shouldered him). He was asked by the police to leave the country at the earliest. He left India having witnessed the changed nationalists.

He was instrumental in the formulation of the popular Unity Party and campaigned for the victory of the first ever Communist-President of a country. It was Allende of Chile who won the elections in 1973, only to be killed by the CIA. Pablo Neruda, was shattered and died in September, that year. He had received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1971.

I'm Explaining a Few Things

You are going to ask: and where are the lilacs?
and the poppy-petalled metaphysics?
and the rain repeatedly spattering
its words and drilling them full
of apertures and birds?

I'll tell you all the news.

I lived in a suburb,
a suburb of Madrid, with bells,
and clocks, and trees.

From there you could look out
over Castille's dry face:
a leather ocean.
My house was called
the house of flowers, because in every cranny
geraniums burst: it was
a good looking house
with its dogs and children.
Remember, Raul?
Eh, Rafael?
Frederico, do you remember
from under the ground
my balconies on which
the light of June drowned flowers in your mouth?
Brother, my brother!
Everything
loud with big voices, the salt of merchandises,
pile-ups of palpitating bread,
the stalls of my suburb of Arguelles with its statue

like a drained inkwell in a swirl of hake:
oil flowed into spoons,
a deep baying
of feet and hands swelled in the streets,
metres, litres, the sharp
measure of life,
stacked up fish,
the texture of roofs with a cold sun in which
the weather vane falters,
the fine frenzied ivory of potatoes,
wave and wave of tomatoes rolling down to the sea.

And one morning all that was burning,
one morning the bonfires
leapt out of the earth
devouring human beings-
and from then on fire,
gunpowder from then on,
and from then on blood.
Bandits with planes and Moors,
bandits with finger-rings and duchesses,
bandits with black friars spattering blessings
came through the sky to kill children
and the blood of children ran through the streets
without fuss, like children's blood.

Jackals that the jackals would despise,
Stones that the dry thistle would bite on and spit out,
Vipers that the vipers would abominate!

Face to face with you I have seen the blood

of Spain tower like a tide
to drown you in one wave
of pride and knives!

Treacherous
generals:

see my dead house,
look at broken Spain:
from every house burning metal flows
instead of flowers,
from every socket of Spain
Spain emerges
and from every dead child a rifle with eyes,

and from every crime bullets are born
which will one day find
the bull's eye of your hearts.

And you will ask: why doesn't his poetry
speak of dreams and leaves
and the great volcanoes of his native land?

Come and see the blood in the streets.
Come and see
the blood in the streets.
Come and see the blood
in the streets!

The People

That man I remember well, and at least two centuries
have passed since I saw him :
he traveled neither on horseback nor in a carriage-
purely on foot
he undid
the distances,
carrying neither sword nor weapon
but nets on his shoulder,
axe or hammer or spade
he never fought with another of his kind-
his struggle was with water or with earth,
with the wheat, for it to become bread,
with the towering tree, for it to yield wood,
with the walls, to open doors in them,
with the sand, constructing walls,
and with the sea, to make it bear fruit.

I knew him and still he is there in me.

The carriages splintered in pieces,
war destroyed doorways and walls,
the city was a fistful of ashes,
all the dresses withered into dust,
and he persists, for my sake,
he survives in the sand,
where everything previously
seemed durable except him.

In the comings and goings of families,
at times he was my father or my relative
or (it may have been, it may not)
perhaps the one who did come home
because water or earth devoured him
or a machine or a tree killed him,
or he was that funeral carpenter

who walked behind the coffin, but dry-eyed,
someone who never had a name
except as wood or metal have,
and on whom others looked from above,
unable to see
the ant for the anthill ;
so that when his feet no longer moved
because, poor and tired, he had died,
they never saw what they were not used to seeing-
already other feet walked in his place.

The other feet were still him,
equally the other hands,
the man persisted-
when it seemed that now he was spent,
he was the same man over again,
there he was once more, tilling the soil,
cutting cloth, but without a shirt,
there he was and was not, as before,
he had gone and was back again,
and since he never had cemetery
nor tomb, nor his name engraved
on the stone that he sweated to cut,
nobody ever knew of his arrival,
and nobody knew when he died,
thus only when the poor man was able
did he come back to life again, unnoticed.

He was the man all right, without inheritance,
cattle or coat of arms,
and he did not stand out from the others,
the others who were himself,
from above he was grey like clay,
he was drab as leather,
he was yellow harvesting wheat,

he was black deep in the mine,
he was stone-coloured in the castle,
in the fishing boat, the colour of tunny,
horse-coloured in the meadow-
how could anyone distinguish him
if he were the wholeness, the element,
earth, coal or sea, in the guise of a man?

Where he lived, everything
a man touched would grow :
the hostile stones,
hewn

by his hands,
took shape and form
and one by one took on
the sharp quality of buildings,
he made bread with his hands,
set the trains running,
the distaces bred townships,
other men grew up,
the bees arrived,
and through man's creating and multiplying,
spring wandered into the market place
between doves and bakeries.

The father of the loaves was forgotten,
he who cut and walked, beating
and opening paths, shifting sand,
when everything else existed, he existed no longer,
he gave away his existence, that was everything.
He went somewhere else to work and ultimately
he went into death, rolling
like a river stone-
death carried him off downstream.

I, who knew him, saw him go down
till he existed only in what he was leaving-
streets he could scarcely be aware of,
houses he never never would inhabit.

I come back to see him, and every day I wait.

I see him in his coffin and resurrected.

I pick him out of from all

the others who are his equals
and it seems to me that it cannot be,
that in this way, we are going nowhere,
to survive so has no glory.

I believe that Heaven must include
that man, properly shod and crowned.
I think that those who made so many things
ought to be masters of everything.
And those who make bread ought to eat!

And those in the mine should have light!

Enough by now of grey men in chains!

Enough of the pale lost ones!

Not another man will go past except as a ruler.

Not a single woman without her diadem.

Gloves of gold for every hand.

Fruits of the sun for all the obscure ones!

I knew that man, and when I could,
when still he had eyes in his head,
when he still had a voice in his throat,
I sought him among the tombs, and I said to him,
Pressing his arm that was still not dust :

'Everything will pass, and you will still be living.

You set fire to life.

You made what is yours.'

So let no one worry when
I seem to be alone and am not alone,
I am not with nobody and I speak for all-

Someone is listening to me and, although they do not
know it,
those I sing of, those who know
go on being born and will fill up the world.

KALAM

Dear readers,

We need your help in improving the content of Kalam. Your valuable suggestions and contributions in terms of articles are badly needed for our efforts in carrying forward the role of Kalam as an organiser and an organ of propaganda for revolution. Send your articles and suggestions to:
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On a revolutionary situation

In this issue we are reproducing those pertinent excerpts dealing with a specific problem of primary importance—such as the theory of the proletarian revolution, the strategy and tactics of the proletarian revolution—from the writings of Coms. Lenin and Stalin. Grasping these key aspects is vital for any student body committed to be a catalytic body to the programme of revolutionary change in society so as to usher in a new day free of exploitation. The particular excerpts that are produced below are from the chapter, The revolutionary crisis and its maturing at the present stage from the volume, The theory of the proletarian revolution, one of a series of “Readings in Leninism” compiled and arranged by V. Bystriansky and M. Mishin. [Editor]

For a Marxist there is no doubt that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, not every revolutionary situation leads to revolution. What are, generally speaking, the characteristics of a revolutionary situation? We can hardly be mistaken when we indicate the following three outstanding signs: (1) It is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their power unchanged; there is a crisis of the “upper classes” taking one form or another; there is a crisis in the policy of the ruling class; as a result, there appears a crack through which the dissatisfaction and the indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. If a revolution is to take place, it is usually insufficient the “lower classes do not wish,” but it is necessary that “the upper classes be unable” to continue in the old way; (2) the wants and sufferings of the oppressed classes become more acute than usual (3) in consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses who in “peace time” allow themselves to be robbed without protest, but in stormy times are drawn both by the conditions of the crisis and by the “upper classes” themselves into independent historic action.

Without these objective changes, which are independent not only of the will of separate groups and parties but even of separate classes, a revolution, as a rule, is impossible. The co-existence of all these objective changes is called a revolutionary situation. This situation existed in 1905 in Russia and in all the periods of revolution in the West, but it also existed in the sixties of the last century in Germany; it existed in 1859-61 and in 1879-80 in Russia, though there was no

revolution in these latter instances. Why? Because a revolution emerges not out of every revolutionary situation, but out of such situations where to the objective changes mentioned above, subjective ones are added, namely, the ability of the revolutionary class to carry out revolutionary mass actions strong enough to break (or to crack) the old government, which never, not even in a period of crises, “falls” unless it is “dropped.”

[V. I. Lenin, “Collapse of the Second International”, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII]

The fundamental law of revolution, confirmed by all revolutions and particularly by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: it is not sufficient for revolution that the exploited and oppressed masses understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes; for revolution, it is necessary that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. Only when the “lower classes” do not want the old and when the “upper classes” cannot continue in the old way, then only can revolution succeed. This truth may be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a national crisis affecting both the exploited and the exploiters. It follows that for revolution it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class conscious, thinking, politically active workers) should fully understand the necessity for revolution and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; secondly, that the ruling classes be in a state of government crisis which draws even the most backward masses into politics (a symptom of every real revolution is: the rapid tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the

number of hitherto apathetic representatives of the toiling and oppressed masses capable of waging the political struggle), weakens the government and makes it possible for the revolutionaries to overthrow it rapidly.

...If it is a question of the practical activities of the masses, a question of the disposition, if one may so express it, of vast armies, of the alignment of *all* the class forces of the given society *for the final and decisive battle*, then propaganda alone, the mere repetition of the truths of "pure" communism are of no avail. In these circumstances one must count, not up to a thousand — as is really done by the propagandist who belongs to a small group which does not yet lead the masses; but one must count in millions and tens of millions. In these circumstances one must not only ask oneself whether the vanguard of the revolutionary class has been convinced, but also whether the historically effective forces of *all* classes — positively of all the classes in the given society without exception — are aligned in such a way that the decisive battle is fully matured, in such a way that (1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently confused, are sufficiently at logger heads with each other, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle beyond their capacities; that (2) all the vacillating, wavering, unstable, intermediate elements — the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democracy as distinct from the bourgeoisie — have sufficiently exposed themselves before the people and have sufficiently disgraced themselves through their practical bankruptcy; and that (3) among the proletariat a mass mood in favor of supporting the most determined, unreservedly bold, revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie has arisen and begins to grow powerfully. Then, indeed, revolution is ripe; the, indeed if we have correctly gauged all the conditions briefly outlined above and if we have chosen the moment rightly, our victory is assured.

...The main task of contemporary Communism in Western Europe and America is to acquire the ability to seek, to find, to determine correctly the concrete path, or the particular turn of events that will *bring* the masses *right up* to the real, decisive, last and great revolutionary struggle.

Take England, for example: We cannot say,

and no one is in a position to say beforehand how soon the real proletarian revolution will flare up there and *what* will serve as the *cause* to rouse it, to kindle it and move into the struggle of very wide masses who are at present dormant. Hence, it is our duty to carry on our preparatory work in such a manner as to be "well shod on all four legs," as the late Plekhanov was fond of saying when he was a Marxist and revolutionary. It is possible that a parliamentary crisis will cause the "breach," will "break the ice." Perhaps it will be a crisis caused by the hopelessly entangled and increasingly painful and acute colonial and imperialist contradiction: perhaps some third cause, etc. We are not discussing the kind of struggle that will *determine* the fate of the proletarian revolution in England (not a single Communist has any doubts on that score; as far as we are concerned, this question is settled and definitely settled). What we are discussing is the *immediate cause* that will rouse the at present dormant proletarian masses and bring them right up to the revolution.

Let us not forget that in the bourgeois French Republic for example, in a situation which, from both the international and national aspect was a hundred times less revolutionary than the present one, one out of the thousands and thousands of dishonest tricks the reactionary military caste play (the Dreyfus case) was enough to serve as the "unexpected" and "petty" cause which brought the people to the verge of civil war.¹

In England, also, it is necessary to organize in a new way, not in a socialist manner but in a communist manner, not in a reformist manner but in a revolutionary manner the work of propaganda, agitation and organization among the armed forces and among the oppressed and disfranchised nationalities in "one's own" state (Ireland, the colonies). Because in all these spheres of social life, in the epoch of imperialism generally, and particularly now, after the war which tortured nationalities and quickly opened their eyes to the truth (*viz.*, tens of millions killed and maimed only for the purpose of deciding whether the British or German pirates shall plunder the largest number of countries) — all these spheres of social life are particularly becoming filled with inflammable material and create numerous causes of conflict, crises and the intensification of the class struggle.

We do not know and we cannot know which spark—out of the innumerable sparks that are flying around in all countries as a result of the political and economic world crises— will kindle the conflagration, in the sense of specially rousing the masses, and we must, therefore, with the aid of our new, communist principles, set to work to “stir up” all, even the oldest, mustiest and seemingly hopeless spheres, for other wise we shall not be able to cope with our tasks, we will not be all-sided, we will not be able to master all weapons and we will not be prepared either for victory of the bourgeoisie (which arranged all sides of social life in a bourgeois way) nor for the forthcoming communist reorganization of the whole of social life after the victory.

[V. I. Lenin, *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*, Little Lenin Library, Vol. 20, Chaps. IX and X]

No impassable line should be drawn between a “revolutionary upsurge” and a “directly revolutionary situation”. It cannot be said: “Up to this point we have a revolutionary upsurge; beyond that—a leap into a directly revolutionary situation”. Only scholastics can put the question that way. Usually the former passes “unnoticeably” on the latter. The task consists in preparing the proletariat even now for the decisive revolutionary battles without waiting for the moment when the so-called direct revolutionary situation will “arrive”.

[Joseph Stalin, *Replies to the Questions of the Sverdlov Students*, 1930]

Lenin on the Armed Uprising as the Highest Plane of a Revolutionary Crisis

Among the most vicious and perhaps most widespread distortions of Marxism practiced by the prevailing “Socialist” parties, is to be found the opportunist lie which says that preparations for an uprising, and generally the treatment of an uprising as an art, is “Blanquism”.²

Bernstein, the leader of opportunism, long since gained sad notoriety by accusing Marxism of Blanquism; and our present opportunists, by shouting about Blanquism, in substance do not by one iota refurbish or “enrich” the meager “ideas” of Bernstein.

To accuse Marxists of Blanquism for treating uprising as an art! Can there be a more

flagrant distortion of the truth, when there is not a single Marxist who denies that it was precisely Marx who expressed himself in the most definite, exact and categorical manner on this score; that it was Marx who called uprising precisely an *art*, who said that uprising must be treated as an art, that one must *gain* the first success and then proceed from success to success without stopping the *offensive* against the enemy and making use of his confusion, etc., etc?

To be successful, the uprising must be based not on conspiracy, not on a party, but on the advanced class. This is the first point. The uprising must be based on the revolutionary upsurge of the people. This is the second point. The uprising must be based on the *crucial point* in the history of the maturing revolution, when the activity of the vanguard of the people is at its height, when the *vacillations* in the ranks of the enemies, and *in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted, un-decided friends of the revolution are strongest*. This is the third point. It is in pointing out these three conditions as the way of approaching the question of an uprising, that Marxism differs from *Blanquism*.

But once these conditions exist, then to refuse to treat the uprising as *an art* means to betray Marxism and the revolution.

Endnotes :

¹ The Right opportunist did not understand this Leninist, dialectical posing of the question, but, on the basis of their theory of organized capitalism, asserted that a revolution could arise only out of a new imperialist war.

“Lenin,” said Bukharin, the theorist of Right opportunism, “was not a whit afraid of being suspected of opportunism or some similar mortal sin and wrote that the victorious imperialist states would ‘be successful’ while on the other hand he noted the contradictions which capitalist stabilization gave rise to. And—what is of interest—Lenin connected the following revolutionary outbreak directly with the oncoming war. “As for great popular movements, he sought them in the first place in the East; there he saw a revolutionary situation and the possibility of direct eruptions of great masses of the population. Has not history fully confirmed this prognosis?” (Bukharin, *Political Testament*, Part III).

² The teaching of the French revolutionist, Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881), favouring the overthrow of the ruling power through secret plotting of revolutionaries rather than through preparation and organization of the masses led by a revolutionary party.

KALAM

On the occasion of 15 years of AIRSF **On the legacy of our martyrs**

*"Dare to serve, struggle and sacrifice
Dare to work think and win the world
World is yours, ours also, but the New World is yours."*

We have entered a new millennium. That itself does not make a new leaf in their lives. For millions and billions of the toiling masses it is still an Old World with hunger, exploitation and chains around. To wipe out the hunger and misery, to fight out the exploitation and to break the chains around, a relentless struggle also is being waged all over the world.

Students though not a class themselves, coming from different classes and studenthood not a permanent feature in ones life (though in essence every one who works for a better change of the society has to be student throughout the life) have always played a significant role, some times leading role in independence movements, nationality struggles and peoples revolutions.

In recent history, when we confine to our role of students in changing this world, May 4th movement was a significant beginning, which paved the way to the Chinese revolution. The role of students in the great Chinese Proletarian Cultural Revolution was unique in two ways. It was a revolutionary reappraisal of education and culture in production relations on the touchstone of class struggle and it was realising the dialectical relationship between the base and super structure. That's why it was a Cultural Revolution, but that of proletariat. So it was the third great revolution after Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the Chinese Revolution. It did not confine to China. It caused and influenced revolutions all over the world.

The student revolts in France and Thailand in 1968 is such two most vital movements of that period. Naxalbari movement is an important peasant struggle started with the tribals/Santhal,

which attracted mainly the Calcutta and Jadhavpur University students. The sacrifices of the student revolutionaries of Calcutta still speak volumes on the Calcutta College streets.

It was not only a movement of idol destruction, but it was also a movement for a new culture, which shapes a new human being. Prabir Roy Choudhari, Timir Baran Singh, Ashok Bari, Pradeep Róy Choudhari, Ashish Sen Gupta, Om Swaroop Tapansur, Ashu Majumdar, Swarbani Prasad Bajju, Sanjay Vasu Rai and Samir Mithura are among many known and unknown student revolutionaries, whose martyrdom is to be cherished forever.

Prithipal Singh Randhava, who built a militant student movement in Punjab laid down his life for a new world. The revolutionary movement in Andhra Pradesh is interwoven with the radical student movements and hundreds and thousands of students joining the revolutionary peasant struggle and sacrificing their lives.

From Panchadi Krishna Murti to Puli Anjaiah and Mudhusudan Raj Yadav who later rose to the position of secretaries of revolutionary parties, the political consciousness of whom were shaped in the student movements. George Reddy, Jampala Prasad, Srihari and Giraipalli martyrs have come from the students' movement.

How is that the great legacy of Janardhan (Surapaneni Janardhan) to Janardhan (Palle Ashok) being continued in the revolutionary movement in AP, particularly in building a student movement for more than two decades. Thirty years of Srikakulam movement is brightened with the blood of students like Dushyantu, Raja Ram Reddy and Bathula Venkateshwar Rao. It is not an

exaggeration if we say that it was the revolutionary students who gave the leadership not only to the revolutionary student's movement, but also to the entire revolutionary movement in the early days of Srikakulam and Jagityal struggles. It was the formation of Radical Students Union and Radical Youth League in AP giving call to students and youth to 'go to villages' to organise the people, conscientising them to form Rythu Coolie Sanghams with a programme to seize the land with an ultimate goal to seize the political power, that brought a sea change.

Now alongwith the 15 years of AIRSF movement we also celebrate the 25 years of formation of the Radical Students Union.

Radical Students and youth going to villages tested their youthful bright idealism on the touchstone of class struggle. They have learnt to serve the people. They have learnt to take them a step ahead. Thus started a legacy of student's serving, struggling and sacrificing. In that sense Janardhan, a REC student of Warangal who was killed in a fake encounter during the Emergency (25th July 1975) along with Murali Mohan, Anand Rao and Sudhakar has now become a common noun-*Sarvanama*. Gopagani Ilaiah who later become a leader of a revolutionary party, Ramakrishna and Nageshwar Rao are a few more to mention.

Palle Ashok alias Janardhan enriched that tradition by building for a decade the All India Revolutionary Students Movement in particular and the revolutionary movement in Hyderabad in general. It was a coincidence that Com. Janardhan alongwith Prasant and Ramana, student revolutionaries, was also killed in a fake encounter on 25th July, 1998 after 13 years.

This decade, cruel for its imperialist plunder and globalization, repression proved more disastrous for the well meaning education and the struggle for scientific education. Bihar, Bengal, Andhra and Dankaranya lost their cherished sons of the revolutionary students movement. Veera Swamy, President of APRSU, Bhujunga Reddy, Secretary of APRSU, Bhaskar in Visakhapatnam, Sunil in Vijayawada Naveen in Darragada near Visakhapatnam and Srikant in Dandakaranya are some of them to name who sacrificed their lives in the advancement of revolution. Let us remember their struggle and sacrifice and pass our humble homage on the occasion of 15 years of AIRSF with a pledge to carry forward the red flag which they held high as more precious than their lives to win the world, certainly a New World.

Red Salutes to Student martyrs!
Red Salutes to Revolution!

KALAM

Poem

No prayer so sure as muscle and grat.
To the devil meekness be hurled.
We - each of us -
hold in our grip
the transmission belts of the world.

- V. Mayakovsky

KALAM

STORY

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

This story by Fahmida Reyaz appeared in the July 2000 issue of HANS in Hindi. It has been translated by Avinash Kumar

"Time really transforms a person."

Lost in her thoughts Mansoorah was sitting in the moving underground train. She was thinking about Ibrahim Bhai, who was going to Pakistan. Faisalabad, where her old parents lived. Two days ago Ibrahim Bhai had told her, "No, not at all! I can't give this money to your parents. Anyway, in our country, nobody lives off one's daughter's earnings. *Arre*, many people don't even drink water at their daughters' houses...!"

Mansoorah could not do anything. Hundred pounds which she had saved from her earnings through stitching work without telling Ashfaq, had remained fluttering in her hands. The tear drops rolling down her eyes had quietly kept falling on her neck...tears which themselves had seeped into her collar. Like a sob came out of her mouth:

"Am I not their daughter? Don't they have a right on me?"

Shaking his head Ibrahim Bhai said, "*Lo*, is there any logic in that? A family runs through a male. If it was the wish of Allah-ta'la that no male child is born to your parents' house, then it's His wish. Only Allah can tell his own secrets. *Ya Haq!*" He chanted a sort of slogan while counting beads.

When the train stopped at a station, Mansoorah nervously looked out. Leicester Square had come. She had to change her tube for Oxford Circus from here. She hurriedly got up. Dragging her son Guddu with one hand and holding his push-chair with the other, she was trying to make her way through the crowd. An English woman brought Guddu down from the train. Mansoorah hurriedly got off herself

and gave a heartfelt 'thank you'. The women smiled. The automatic doors of the train closed. Across the hazy glass, the smiling face and the golden hair of the woman disappeared.

Mansoorah controlled her breathing, seated Guddu in the push-chair and tied him with the strap. She then proceeded towards the escalator. Having changed the platform, she began to wait for the train to the Central line.

It was Christmas time and a sale was on at the Oxford Street. Though sale was going on at Burkiston as well not far from Clapham South, it was Ashfaq's insistence that shopping for his relatives should be done only from Oxford Street, where there were more varieties to be found. She had the list. Trousers and shirts for all the brothers of Ashfaq, sweater for his mother, cardigan for the father and hand-bags had to be bought for the sisters. Ibrahim Sahab was to take all this stuff with him to Faisalabad.

Five years ago Mansoorah had come to London from Faisalabad after her marriage. Ashfaq had come only on a month's leave. Within that one month her marriage was fixed and she had been married off to him. In lieu of a London based son-in-law, her old parents had given their plot of land to the family of Ashfaq, who shamelessly accepted it and had even got a house built on it. At the time of her marriage, Mansoorah was studying in Inter in a girls' college at Faisalabad. Marriage had taken place before the exams itself. Since then she had not been to Pakistan even once. Now even Guddu was four years old. During this period her younger sister had done B.A., B.T. She

had got married too. But in these times of inflation how could a joint family of brothers and sisters and parents manage on a single person's income. Due to the teachers' training course her younger sister Razia had got a job of four thousand in a private school. She used to make some extra money through tuition as well. Her husband used to take every single paisa of her income. Razia was left writhing, but she was unable to offer even a little bit help to her parents. Not only hers, but this was the story of all the women from her country. Ranging from a bathroom cleaning sweeppress to all her friends who had been working for years - none of them had any right on their incomes. Sometimes she thought, "What kind of men these are, of my dear *watan* Pakistan. They force their wives to place their salaries on their palms, or throw them into a hell named heaven, viz. their homes....why can't they spend even a bit of their earnings of their own will?"

But why only Pakistani men, the same was true for Hindustani men as well. There were quite a few Hindustani and Pakistani families staying in Clapham South. Women from many Hindu and Sikh families also did the same stitching work on the electric machine in the same garment factory. Everyone's husband collected each and every penny of her daily wages. Her friend Kulwant Kaur used to whisper to her in Punjabi, "Had heard a lot about Pakistan, Pakistan! After coming here I realized that they are just like Hindustanis. Stuffing themselves to full they put the lights off and climb over us..." Kulwant Kaur was a roly-poly, fat woman. She used to give a loud and hearty laugh, "Very fair, tall and well-built are our men. They get over in three minutes, just in three minutes."

Mansoorah had become very friendly with her. Kulwant Kaur's voice was also quite sweet and the interesting thing was that she herself used to recount jokes on Sikhs. Mansoorah had learnt to cooked vegetables and also gobhi

parathas from her. Kulwant prepared even pickles in her London home, which perhaps due to some miracle, used to get ready in two-three months of London's grey sunshine.

Heaving under the burden of innumerable bags after having finished the shopping from the Oxford Street, Mansoorah was standing tired and lost. She had to take all that shopping to Burkiston where Ibrahim Bhai stayed. There was no train to Burkiston. One had to walk down from Clapham North. She didn't know whether to carry those bags or to manage Guddu, or to hold the push-chair. She almost thought of hiring a taxi, then immediately remembered, Ashfaq would murder her. Taxi! Sitting inside a taxi was a sin for a Pakistani/Hindustani housewife that she never committed.

And then something extraordinary happened. She spotted Mark coming out of some Car-parking. Upon seeing her Mark first slowed down his car and then stopped it. He said, "Want to come? - Come!" Mansoorah began to sweat in that extreme cold weather. She was in London for five years, but she had never spoken to a White. Mark stayed in the same locality and had recognised her. If it had been some other time, Mansoorah without thinking for a minute would have moved ahead saying, "No, thank you!" But all those bags from the shopping, Guddu and the push-cahir, together they all had become such a problem that the very next moment having kept all those bags on the back seat and folding the push-chair of Guddu, she was uttering, "Yes, thank you!"

Having seated herself next to Mark in the front seat, with Guddu in her lap, she mustered enough courage to glance at Mark. She was shocked to find that Mark was smiling slyly looking at her. How could Mansoorah know? Struggling with the bags this face of hers had become red; dark locks had loosened out from her *choti* and the fragrance of youth was spewing forth from her full, round body.

Together they were producing a cataclysmic effect. She never knew that she was an extremely beautiful woman. She had entered seventeenth year when she got married. Guddu had arrived in the eighteenth. When do anyway Pakistani and Hindustani husbands tell this to their wives, "You are such a beautiful woman!"

But the eyes of that Irish labour man were telling this to her. Mansoorah became nervous. She thought, as if she was being told a lie. She looked at Mark. He would be around twenty-five to twenty-six. Average height, innocent face like a child, but a spark of mischief in the blue eyes. From a distance, faces of the English people looked like paintings drawn on card-boards. Initially, all whites looked the same to her. For her it was even difficult to differentiate among them. After a year, her eyes had finally grown used to them and today - she was sitting next to a white. Suddenly she felt the smell of Mark's body. The smell of the body of a male - Mansoorah's heart began to beat fast. "How you gate-parking?" Mansoorah asked in a stranger's voice.

Mark began to laugh. He said, "Oh, I'm a plumber. I go to fix things. I get parking." Then he turned the car towards Clapham South. Mansoorah nervously told him, "Please drop me at Burkiston..." She hurriedly repeated the house number of Ibrahim Bhai.

"Fine," Mark said and took her towards Burkiston. On the way to Ibrahim Bhai's house Guddu slept off in Mansoorah's lap. Mansoorah once again thought about Ibrahim Bhai. She used to know him from childhood. His house was in her locality itself. He was not only a pleasant looking young man but was also quite talented and famous. He wrote stories that actually used to get published in the periodicals. His story entitled '*Charvaha*' (The Shepherd) had even received a lot of acclaim. Then, he was humane and his face had a sparkle of hope. He had come to London with a wish to study English literature. He used to say, 'just

a few days labour-work and then it is literature and me'. But the cruel time had not allowed him to fulfill this desire. After a few days, he opened a *Halal* meat shop, which began to do quite well. He also got married to an extremely ugly English woman. Halal meat shop introduced Ibrahim Bhai to prosperity for the first time and then religiosity took him over. He also converted his old English woman to Islam by making her recite *Kalma*. Dressed in a salwar-kameez, she too sold Halal meat in the grocery store sitting next to him. But people of Burkiston knew that for past one year something else was sold in the store - anything that makes a dent in the mind of man. Who would dare to question Ibrahim Bhai! He had a great influence over Pakistani Association and questioning him would have meant drawing the ire of the whole community. Both the sons of the Ibrahim Bhai had also grown to be young men. With great effort he had put them in a school and got them the job of security guards. He had also brought wives for both of them from Faisalabad itself.

Ibrahim Bhai came to Mansoorah's home quite frequently. Now he sported a long beard. He would be counting beads and blabbering things without any meaning in them. Craving for their *culture* in London, the less educated community had accepted him as their Pir due to such talks. He also told them secretly, "Just take a little swig, you would forget all sharab-warab! You will attain the supreme knowledge. Khuda had prepared this *booti*. What mind, what science! This electricity, these trains, this aeroplane... all these are evil inventions of the bloody Englishman. Look at me, I fly without wings with the magic of a Pir and make tall tales! 'Hoo haq'", he will chant. But as the saying goes, a mad person is always good at his work. His wealth was increasing steadily.

"What are you doing this evening?" The voice of Mark startled her. She said, "Me?...Nothing...Why?" Pointing with his hand Mark spoke in English, "Why don't you

come here with me in the evening?" Mansoorah peered out of the window. A poster was put on a vacant show-window, in which there was an invitation for a meeting written in Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu and English. "Against racism... Today evening at Seven o'clock..."

Mansoorah kept sitting with a bated breath. Leaving a long sigh she thought with an aching heart, "I, and going out? Going to any meeting?"

"It is for your people's rights", Mark said. She knew the meaning of 'right'. She could understand the rights of coloured people. But 'right' or 'haq' was not a word spoken in her or other houses like hers. And that too from a woman's mouth—it could never even be thought of.

In this very London, there were those Hindustanis and Pakistanis who came to such meetings with their wives and sisters, who were fighting against racism... But they were the people who read English newspapers... They had been converted to the Western culture... They wanted to listen to Ravi Shankar's sitar. The area where Mansoorah stayed, over there... these people were called traitors and slaves of the West. In this very London, there were those Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs who were doing researches in the universities on Islam, Hindu religion, Sikh religion and on culture and civilization. Their activities got published in the English newspapers and they were respected in that society. But in the locality of Mansoorah, they were remembered as 'Black Sahibs'.

Mark stopped the car before Ibrahim Bhai's house and began to take out the shopping bags. Then he opened the front door and took Guddu out from Mansoorah's lap. Mansoorah came out closing the door and pushed the call-bell. The call was answered by the old woman dressed in salwar-kameez. Ibrahim Bhai was standing behind her.

"Come dear, come..." He said, but was astonished to find Mark behind Mansoorah, with Guddu in his lap. At last the blabbering

old English woman made the way for them. Mansoorah came inside with the shopping bags. Mark too followed her holding Guddu with him. He introduced himself and shook hands with Ibrahim Bhai.

Mansoorah took out an envelope from her purse. Her voice was choked in her effort to stop crying. With great effort she said, "Ibrahim Bhai, Razia had called. Amma jee is badly suffering from asthma. With great difficulty I got a Pakistani doctor to write the prescription in my name and managed to procure the medicines. You at least carry these medicines for my mother. Allah will bless you".

Looking angrily at her, Ibrahim Bhai told, "And I was thinking how dare you come with a white to my house. What audacity!... Ya Allah! Such shamelessness among our women!"

"Ibrahim Bhai, you are telling this? He is my neighbour. Poor guy was kind enough to bring me here. Your wife too is English... You have got children from her..." said Mansoorah with anger and hatred.

Spitting on the floor, Ibrahim Bhai said, "I am a male! What is it to me! It's the woman who advances the breed. That is why they are our honour. Ya Haq!"

Mansoorah gave an embarrassed laugh and began to speak, "I am going to a meeting against racism, today evening. You also come." Then in her broken English she said, "Yes Mark? We go to meeting this evening..."

Mark began to explain the motives for the meeting to Ibrahim Bhai. He kept nodding helplessly and finally declined the invitation. Then he muttered in Urdu slyly, "What an utter nonsense... Even dogs and cats defend their race."

Mansoorah wanted to ask, "What are you? A dog or a cat?", but stood up with pursed lips.

Eventually Ibrahim Bhai had agreed to take the medicines to her mother and she was thankful for that itself.

She prepared to leave and woke Guddu up. Guddu woke up in the mid-sleep and sat on the front seat with Mark, still rubbing his eyes. Mansoorah was following them. Suddenly Ibrahim Bhai's hand touched her thighs. She

started like a nervous horse. His hands strayed at her thigh for the second time. Then a pinch on her bottoms below her waist...

The doors of Ibrahim Bhai's house closed down.

Shaking with humiliation and hatred, Mansoor opened the back door of Mark's car and sat inside. "Guddu come here", she dragged Guddu from behind and clasped him tightly. It seemed as if she desperately wanted to churn out some kind of poison from inside. Receiving mother's warmth, Guddu went back to sleep.

Mark turned back to look at her. "Will you really come?", he asked seriously.

"No...", said Mansoor in a low voice.

Stone-faced she was looking out at the landscape whizzing past. Lanes... Houses... then more houses. She had reached her house.

She came out of Mark's car; took out the key from her purse, opened the door and went inside. Mark kept looking at her, astonished. Then he picked up the sleeping Guddu, locked the car and entered the house behind her.

"Listen darling", he said, "Your child..."

"Lay him down", came her voice from the other room. After laying Guddu down, Mark entered the room following the voice.

Mansoor was shaking with full force.

Mark's blue Irish eyes sparkled.

"Why doesn't he switch off the light and lie over me?" But Mark was not climbing over her. God knows what he was doing... with his hands... with his lips... Oh no Kulwante! Kiss... is this how you kiss? Ashfaq never kissed anyway. So what! Do men of the East ever kiss their wives? Chhi... Chhi! This is just a waste of time...

Mark no longer remained a white or of any other colour, he was neither Pakistani nor even Hindustani, who would have exclaimed astonished at her behaviour, "Arre, where did you learn these tricks of the prostitutes?" Mansoor had turned him into a cardboard dummy in some moment wandering between the beginning and eternity, who God alone knows, what he was doing to her. And with whom she was doing things whatever she

liked. She was in Faisalabad alone in her bed... suppressing her sobs... lest Amma hears them, lest the sleeping sister hears them... she was at a majaar and she was in a trance... she was lost in a dream... she got startled only with hers and Mark's scream and came back to the world and heard her howling screams.

For the first time in life... a mother of a child for the first in her life, huffing and puffing, had allowed her suppressed screams to be released. Hai Kulwant! Will I fall in love with that white.

I... I don't even know him.

Quiet, be quiet! Kulwant Kaur with her stomach pressed, bent, whispering. The way she pressed her hands, aah! Those ages old sharing of secrets. Will slice off... belonging to eastern women... ill fated! Whatever happened, happened...

Will he come again?

Don't know... perhaps won't...

Guddu had woken up. Putting on her cloths somehow Mansoor embraced him tightly. She didn't even know when Mark had left, kissing her red lips... their teeth had brushed against each other.

For long Mansoor kept kissing her son. A wave of energy was rushing through her veins.

"The people who can love..." Kulwant Kaur had said slowly while thinking, "a woman... perhaps they can love everyone... my dear!"

Far, very far off somewhere, Amma and Abba stayed. And in Mansoor's purse was a letter with stamps from a far off country, inside it, an account number of a small branch of a bank in Faisalabad. An ordinary number, which had the cool shadow of seventeen years of love and compassion and the scorching sun of five years of separation, humiliation and the feeling of inferiority. The next day taking an hours' leave from the garment factory, Mansoor drew an umbrella over that number.

Without asking for her husband's opinion Mansoor opened a separate personal account in her name in the nearby bank.

On the path of struggle

Reports from the states

Bihar

On 22 July, Vinay Paswan was killed by the goondas of CPI (ML) Liberation in Masauri. Vinay was a member of Bharat Navjawan Sabha (BNS) state committee. Despite being crippled since birth due to polio, he was very active in all activities of DSU-BNS in Masauri area (Patna district).

DSU, Patna organised a funeral procession and later a dharna to protest against Vinay's murder. Masauri unit of DSU along with the youth organisation organised a Masauri bandh and did a press conference.

The teachers and non-teaching staff of the universities of Bihar have been on an indefinite strike since the beginning of the session. DSU did a signature campaign at some places in solidarity with their demands and also urged the university administration to meet the demands and look after the interest of students. DSU along with many other student organisations also gheraoed the education minister in Patna on the same issue in August. Again in September (4th September) DSU along with other student organisations gave a call for Patna bandh, which was quite successful.

In Bhagalpur, DSU along with other student organisations gheraoed the VC for some hostel demands—some of the demands were met.

DSU had sent an investigation team in Bedouli high school in Jehanabad in August. A peoples' court had been organised in the school to punish a boy who had misbehaved with a girl student. However as the girl belonged to the Bhumihar caste, AISA the student wing of CPI (ML) Liberation started a slander campaign saying that CPI (ML) (PW) [who had in fact organised the court] had aligned with Ranbir Sena. DSU then released its report which had laid bare the facts and conducted a press conference in Patna to expose the dubious opportunist politics of AISA.

When a lumpen caste gang supporting the boy (culprit) organised a protest rally, the police killed 2 students in cold blood. To protest against this police atrocity and also against the slander campaign by Liberation, DSU organised a dharna in Patna.

In Patna, the ex-principal of Arts College, got some paintings stolen from the college in order to defame the present one. DSU organised a protest dharna.

In Palamu, DSU organised a village campaign in which nearly 15 students and youth participated. Many units of BNS were formed during the campaign, which went on for around 15 days. On 13th September, nearly 40-50 students/youth in Palamu did a cycle rally in Daltonganj to protest against the recent price hike of essential commodities, a direct fall out of the recent increase in prices of petroleum products.

Wall magazines on general political issues were put up in Bhagalpur and Patna. An issue of the student magazine, *Abhivyakti* was brought out. A class on political economy was conducted in Patna for DSU activists. DSU state committee member who has been in Garwah Jail organised and participated in many jail struggles along with other inmates. In June, in Ranchi a fraternal organisation organised a rally in which DSU activists played a leading role.

Maharashtra

In an undergraduate college of Mumbai the issue of Girls Common Room (GCR) was taken. This GCR was not properly maintained and there were no chairs for the girls to sit. A signature campaign was done in which nearly 300 signatures of the girls were collected and the memorandum was given to the principal. Next day, the principal bowing to the demand had the toilets cleaned and

the chairs arranged in the GCR.

In the same college, students were being forced to wear their I-cards around the neck. Principal cited the reason of maintaining a check on goondas, an excuse to make the atmosphere of the college more rigid thus curtailing whatever democratic space that was there. Against this, a class to class campaign was done and signatures collected. A delegation went to meet the principal. Though the principal has so far refused to meet the demand, it has not dampened the spirit of the students are who are planning for a more aggressive agitation in the coming session.

Apart from these, in the above college, film shows, poster exhibition on 'Chinese Revolution' were also taken. VPS also took up the issue of a child-waiter working in the canteen, who was not paid by the contractor of the canteen.

In another college, the canteen being very small has not been to the benefit of the students. So to create awareness and gather opinion of the students, a poll was taken, charts were put up, class wise campaigns were done, signatures collected and a demand for the extension of the canteen was put forth. The students responded well to the campaign. A street play on the situation of education in our country was put up by the activists of VPS. A VPS activist and 10 general student conducted a study tour of the demolished slums in the Sanjay Gandhi National Park area.

The photocopying facility that was available in the Mumbai University Kalina campus library has been charging nearly 3 times more than commercial charges. Rs. 600/- was taken for library deposit and for the lending of books. Only one book was given for a week in the lending section. There were very few books in this section. Research scholars were not allowed to take their research material inside the library etc.

VPS conducted a signature campaign in 26 departments collecting more than one thousand signatures. A delegation met the pro-VC, Library committee and Students Council and received the assurance that the photocopying charges will be halved and Rs. 150/- will only be charged for the lending of books.

VPS took out an issue of *Kalam*, a Marathi/Hindi/English bulletin. Nearly 300 copies were distributed in the colleges.

West Bengal

After completing the 'Go to Village Campaign' successfully RSF and the revolutionary cultural organisation 'Nishantika' organised an industrial campaign jointly in an industrial belt of South 24 Parganas. In this 7-day campaign programme, radical activists got a good response from Jute Mill workers.

Just after the summer vacation the Jadavpur University authorities tried to implement the proposal of "fee hike". Against this decision PDSF, DSO, AISA, Chatro Andolon (Prostuti) and RSF jointly organised some protest programmes. As a result of this, the authorities have postponed the decision for the next session. In Presidency College against price hike of admission forms, Presidency College Students Association led a spirited protest in which RSF was also a part. In Kamarhatti Jute mill, against lock out 'Sangrami Sromik Morcho' held an agitation. In this movement RSF activists took a good role. In solidarity to this workers movement 5 student organisations, among which two are college based, published a leaflet jointly. RSF members organised an industrial campaign at this place. In the whole movement students stayed there and played a significant role. After receiving the news of the arrest of com. Balan (AIRSF EC member from TNRSU) along with other radical activists and the subsequent jail struggle that he had led in Vellore Central jail, RSF had sent a letter to the CM of West Bengal— jointly with 7 other student organisations— demanding his immediate intervention to release all the radical activists.

West Bengal Government recently took a decision to install an atomic reactor in Suderban area. Against this, protests are going on, led by various progressive and democratic organisations. As a part of this, in Presidency College PCSA organised a seminar in which RSF is also a part.

In the recent floods in West Bengal, RSF had gone for relief activities. Opposing the anti-people dam and river policies of central and state governments RSF collected a huge amount. Not depending on the bureaucratic apparatus set up by the state, RSF organised students and went to distribute relief in the affected areas.

Corpses have grown

- Ken Saro-Wiwa

Corpses have grown
And covered the land
The xylophone of the deceased chief
Is still, has forgot the past.
Ancestral spirits driven from home
Walk tearful abroad
The orphaned land weeps.

We have squatted before the shrines
Have bled our knees in pain
The morning libation is vain
In vain the loud name-call
At the feast of new yam
The sacrificial cocks are dumb

The old year is dead
And the new, unheralded
By shouts of laughing children,
Seeps sadly into empty homes
And the mortar falls at dusk
In the empty bridal-chamber
Where lovers twined like snakes
Made soft music to silences.

Earth echoes with alien sounds
Stuttering rifles, weird moans
And the harsh face of war
fills the land with abomination.



I was in Congress, then in CUPK. It got split and I joined PMSI and so on. Now I'm in this. What exactly does it stand for?



It's an excellent budget! If we had money we would have benefited by it.



Earthquake, Sir? No, not here. It has always been like this! Must be somewhere else, Sir!



How sad, they've lost everything and rendered homeless!



He can't decide whether to say it's pro-rich, anti-poor or pro-poor anti-rich or anti-farmer, pro-labour or anti-...in his speech!



Hold on ... till I'm off my VIP duty