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RESIST THE MOVE TO HIKE OIL PRICES

The UF government is continuing its propaganda build up for hiking the oil prices again in the name of cutting down so-called Rs.15,500 crores deficit in oil pool account. This deficit is cited as the reason for all ills in oil sector.

But the government is misleading the people through tailored statistics and false information. Last year UF government collected Rs. 7,000 crores through oil price hike for reducing this deficit. But only Rs.2,800/-crores was adjusted against it. Rest was appropriated in the name of customs and excise duties by finance ministry. Besides, only on these duties alone about Rs.16,000 crores were collected by finance ministry from oil sector in 1996-97 besides royalty, octroi etc. This year this is expected to be about Rs. 19,000 crores or more. It shows that the government can wipe out the deficit in oil pool account merely by reducing the present exorbitant taxes.

Besides, in 1980, with the sharp fall in international prices, there was huge surplus in oil pool account. It was totally appropriated by the finance ministry. So the move to tax the people further by hiking oil prices has no justification. Even if a huge hike is imposed, only a fraction of the amount will be adjusted against the deficit and lion's share will be appropriated by finance ministry for servicing the ever-increasing foreign debt liabilities. Next year again the same arguments will be repeated for another hike in prices as the so-called deficit will continue.

In early 1980s, with Bombay High started yielding huge quantity of petroleum, there was immense possibilities for attaining self-sufficiency in oil. The huge oil pool surplus could be utilised for exploration and development of oil wells. Instead, the continuous governments were encouraging MNCs at the expense of indigenous efforts. Now, with the structural adjustments initiated by Rao government and speed up by UF government, most lucrative oil fields developed by ONGC are handed over to MNCs without even recovering the thousands of crores spent by ONGC. Existing public sector units are being surrendered to MNCs through disinvestment. Once again, it is in the interest of them, oil prices are hiked.

The argument repeated by government and

MNCs spokespersons that the hike will not affect the masses are totally false. Then whom is it going to affect? The rich? It is well known that all price hikes of controlled items and taxes ultimately affect the masses, the vast majority. A new oil price hike will hike prices of all essential commodities and services. It will further pauperise the masses.

We request all progressive forces to expose the false propaganda of the Congress backed UF government and to resist the move for a new oil price hike.

SECRETARY
C. P. I (M.L) Red Flag

Mumbai
13.6.97

US, Turkey and massacre of Kurdish people

The massive military attack against Kurdish guerillas led by Workers Party of Kurdistan (PKK) deep inside the territory of Iraq by the Turkish army is almost left unreported by media everywhere. Turkish army has claimed that so far they have killed 1750 Kurds. And it declares that the attack now 55 KMs inside Iraq will continue till Kurdish rebels are made totally inoperative.

As *Red Star* reported earlier during Iraq war US and its allies imposed a *No - Fly zone* over northern Iraq. There were attempts to organise Kurdish uprisings against Saddam Hussein. His government is prevented even now from exercising its sovereignty over Kurdish areas. US -British war planes fly sorties in Iraqi airspace to prevent Iraqi forces from "violating human rights of Kurds". All these are for protecting Kurds, the imperialists claim.

Now under air - protection of US - British forces, the Turkish army is massacring the Kurds with immunity in the very same Iraqi areas. This is how US protects human rights of Kurds! And the so-called free world, the Security Council, and the yellow media are silent on these killings.

EDITORIAL**New PDS Means End to Statutory Rationing**

The new PDS or Targeted PDS (TPDS) has not only deprived many lakhs of poor families the benefit of Statutory Rationing but has made it difficult even for the state governments to justify it after a couple of weeks after its implementation from June 1.

The TPDS provides only 10 kg of rice at the rate of Rs. 4 per kg for a section of the below poverty line (BPL) families. Prices of quantities provided in excess of it is raised to Rs. 8 per kg and will be further hiked in coming days. In short public distribution or rationing is reduced to this 10 kg per family for a section of the BPL. Subsidies for all other quantities and items are being taken away. By 2000 this TPDS will be fully in action putting an end to statutory rationing right won by the people through numerous struggles from the 1930s.

As practically all bourgeois /petti bourgeois parties ranging from Congress and BJP to CPI and CPI (M) are leading governments either at centre or/ and in states, this scheme introduced as a part of the economic package dictated by IMF-World Bank WTO combine under the monetarist regime now implemented by imperialist system was propagated as a bonanza by these parties. Either in parliament or in state assemblies this scheme did not face any serious threat or opposition. The Voluntary / Non-governmental Organisations or the advocates of 'dalitism' and social justice also did not raise voice against it. Though CPI (ML) Red Flag had called for opposing moves to undermine statutory rationing and in Kerala, the state committee of CPI (ML) Red Flag was leading a continuous struggle against the diluting of statutory rationing for long, even the revolutionary forces are silent on this important issue, by and large. That is why the implications of this reactionary move by the Congress supported UF government under imperialist dictation calls for serious study.

Even the poorest among the BPL families who are provided 10 kg of rice at Rs. 4 per kg are now finding that since they have to pay double the price for extra requirements, the total expense has increased compared to that of pre - June 1. And as the quality of this TPDS issue of rice and wheat is becoming poorer, and as the price of extra quantity will be continuously increasing even this section is going to face further impoverishment in coming days.

Since the ceiling insisted by the central government is very low even all of the BPL families are not provided this TPDS benefit. For example, in AP when state government has included 112 lakh families in its social welfare programmes for BPL population, by centre's ceiling only 32.65 lakh families are provided TPDS benefit. In Gujarat, against state government's calculation of 32.6 lakh BPL families, centre recognises only 19.95 lakh households for TPDS. In Orissa only half of BPL families are included in TPDS. This is the case with all states. As the tabulation is completed only about half of BPL families are going to get even TPDS benefit. That is about half of even BPL families are forced to purchase food items at ever increasing prices, making them impoverished more.

Even those sections like lower-middle and some middle peasants, and other poor sections who are just above poverty line constitute a big section of Indian families. They are provided with different colour ration cards on which they can get only very few items at increasing prices. Though the full impact of this TPDS is not yet felt by the people, more and more sections have started realising how they are going to face yet another pauperisation with the abandonment of statutory rationing.

This attack on vast majority of the people
(Contd P 6)

Transfer of Hong Kong to China

Hong Kong was one of the still surviving vestiges of the old colonial order. On July 1 British imperialism is transferring its rule to Chinese government after 150 years of its total hegemony. On this occasion the imperialists everywhere, their media and even the compradors in India and their media are trying to characterise this transfer from a golden age of democracy and riches to the barbarians. Of course it is not a new thing. Transfer of every colony, big or small, even to the hands of their trusted compradors was always depicted so by the old colonialists and their apologists. For this purpose they always vulgarise and distort history.

Though British colonial historians have always depicted *Opium War* of 1840 as a mere trade dispute and Hong Kong as a gift by the Chinese emperor, history speaks differently. British and other mercantile imperialists were increasing their opium trade in China to reap fantastic profits. East India Company maintained huge opium extracting plants at numerous centres in South Asia like Patna. The compradors in British India were active collaborators in making opium available in huge quantities for the greedy imperialist merchants. By 1830s the imperialists were taking 40,000 chests of opium in to China every year valued at \$5 million then. It was reducing every Chinese adult slowly into an incurable addict.

When the Chinese rulers finally reacted, destroyed opium stocks and banned the import of opium, Britain and other imperialist nations sent their armada with expeditionary forces to support its traders. In this Opium War the Chinese rulers were defeated, and Britain and its allies imposed the 1842 Treaty of Nanking by which they got the right to trade opium without any intervention by native rulers. Britain also forced China to surrender Hong Kong to it. It is this history of colonial plunder, genocide and barbarianism by the mercantile imperialism enacted in numerous heinous forms in country after country in Asia, Africa and Latin America which is being glamourised and vulgarised in their favour by the imperialists.

The imperialists and their ideologues repeat

that colonisation was a mission to civilise the 'barbarian' countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. They claim that they brought democracy and humane values to these regions. According to British ruling class and their last governor in Hong Kong, Patten, they had inalienable right to rule over these uncivilised people. So they regret leaving Hong Kong which is a duck laying golden eggs. Though they are happy that they could play an important role in socialist China's transformation to the capitalist path, and that they are transferring power only to the new class of comprador bureaucratic bourgeoisie ruling China, still they are unhappy that direct rule has come to an end. So, they have launched a propaganda offensive regarding their anxieties about the future of democracy in Hong Kong!

But the new compradors ruling China have assured the imperialists about unmitigated continuity and hegemony of market system in Hong Kong. The imperialists are really happy, in spite of their murmurs and complaints, that transfer of Hong Kong to China under the agreements now signed with Chinese government will speed up the total opening up of China very fast to market forces.

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Imperialist Policies Challenged internationally

There is a common trend behind many of the developments at international level during recent days. They repeatedly show the growing resentment among the world people against the IMF-World Bank dictated structural adjustment policies leading to monetarism in a new form. If the December 1995 revolt in France was the first major revolt against 'globalisation,' recent developments in 'Zaire,' upsurges in Latin American countries and even the election results in Britain, France, Iran and elsewhere reflect this resentment and even resistance.

The railworkers in France started the struggle against the restructuring programme that threatened the shutdown of 6000 kilometres of railway lines and corresponding cut in jobs, throwing out 73,000 workers. Cut in pension benefits and educational facilities brought other workers and students also to the streets. The debate got enlarged with opposition to 'Maast-richt Criteria' under which these cuts were imposed, or against the imperialist 'European Union' and globalisation itself. This revolt was much more widespread and class-based than the May 1968 revolt. It gave the message that the working class does exist to those who were spreading the imperialist trash that the working class in imperialist countries was no more. Only when Chirac government agreed to accept some of the demands of the workers and students this month long revolt ended.

But soon there were strike-struggles and militant demonstrations by workers and the unemployed (whose number is increasing everywhere) in other European and North American countries. They challenged the imperialist propaganda of the 'New World Order' as a 'new age of prosperity' in which all work will be done by computers and everyone else would simply have to figure out what to do with their leisure time.

Soon the struggle spread to many Latin American countries and to other Afro-Asian countries, who were subjected to intensifying neocolonial plunder. Even before the French revolt the Chiapas revolt in Mexico against the

consequences of NAFTA, against imperialist imposed globalisation had reflected the reaction of the people in the neocolonies against the imperialist dictated policies.

What is happening in 'Zaire' now renamed as Democratic Republic of Congo is a further proof for growing anti-imperialist feelings among the people. It was the CIA which made Mobutu its man in Congo after its formal independence in 1960. CIA backed assassination of Lumumba and made Mobutu president in 1965 through a military coup. According to *New York Times* "we invented the Zairean dictator, supported his corrupt regime for decades and filled his pockets with dollars" and left Zaire to decay in order to carry forward neocolonial plunder of this rich country. Now Mobutu is overthrown and Kabila leading rebel armed forces has taken over claiming to put an end to corruption. Even when US imperialism and its compradors are working overtime to overcome this setback and to bring Kabila soon to the neocolonial track, Zairean developments following the events in Somalia, Ethiopia, Rwanda and many other African countries show people's growing anger against imperialists and their compradors.

In Britain the 18 years of continuous Conservative rule with *Thatcherism* as its hallmark has come to an end with the recent sweeping victory of Labour Party in elections. Though Labour has also adopted many of the monetarist policies it could win only because of overwhelming opposition to Thatcherism. Now rejecting frantic appeals by Gaullist president Chirac, the so-called left alliance has won with huge majority in France reflecting the working peoples' opposition to elitist policies. Election results in Pakistan, Iran like countries also was due to negative votes polled against pro-monetarist policies of ruling parties. Though Suharto could win again in Indonesia the whole world knows that it is due to naked rigging of elections. But the violent protests during the campaign expressed growing peoples' opposition to imperialist dictated policies.

On the whole, the euphoria created by imperialists and their henchmen is fading. Their 'New World Order' claims are not clicking. Though it took time, everywhere people have started opposing the ruthless market-based policies through which all the welfare policies are thrown out. People in the neocolonies have started revolting against the new form of slavery imposed by imperialism in its neocolonial phase.

All these show that the present century is going to end with a positive note with people starting to challenge the capitalist-imperialist system increasingly. In spite of the setbacks suffered by the international Communist movement during the last few decades the new upsurges among the toiling people shows that soon the imperialist system is going to face serious challenges, and the revolutionary forces are going to make headway towards a new future.

(From P. 10)
feudal culture and customs are still continuing the feudal land lords are transformed into rich peasants, beside the emergence of powerful new sections of rich peasants. These big land-lords are turning into agricultural bourgeoisie linked with imperialist capital and market system or a comprador landlord or agricultural bourgeois class has emerged and their strength is increasing day by day. In the interests of these sections, that is, MNCs and other comprador sections, even existing land ceiling is removed and land concentration allowed at an ever increasing scale. Besides plantations, big mechanisation

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who are in very poor condition this threat to rationing, means threat to even their life itself. Even compared to other welfare items, providing rationed food at subsidised rates is of vital importance. By attacking it the comprador government has posed a great threat before the people. All patriotic democratic forces should realise this, and launch a big countrywide movement for defending statutory rationing.

It should be taken up as part of the overall struggle against imperialist dictated monetarist policies along with market's jungle laws and globalisation which are intensifying neocoloni-

sation and impoverishing and devastating the broad masses of people

Pepsi in India

It is in the name of ushering in a second Green Revolution and to play a different *Punjab Card* to divert attention from Khalistan issue Pepsi was allowed to enter the soft drinks and agro industries sectors. It started as a joint venture with Punjab Agro Industrial Corporation (PAIC) having 36.11 percent shares, Voltas 24 and Pepsi Co 36.89. According to agreement it was to create 50,000 new employment (25000 in Punjab alone), give 74% investment for food and agro-processing, bring new technology, export 50% of total production, etc. etc. But what in the picture today?

Using the liberalisation it has cornered 99% shares. Its motto is to use as few workers as possible. Meanwhile nearly 2 lakhs of workers have lost employment in soft drinks sector due to entry of Pepsi and Coke. Instead of helping development of technological know-how it is making even tomato cultivation technologically dependent upon it. What is exported is traditional food items plus PET containers made in Futura Polymers near Madras, a highly polluting enterprise. What they aimed at and achieved is the domination in the lucrative domestic soft-drinks and processed food sector.

Now this fully owned subsidiary of Pepsico, with Coco-cola, have established hegemony in Indian market closing down indigenous units, making a large work force unemployed, taking away fabulous profits, and helping the cultural aggression by imperialism through its advertisement drive putting profit alone in command.

This is the way MNCs "help."

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Relevance Of Telengana Experience In Present Context

The historic Telengana struggle marked the highest level to which the revolutionary peasant movement led by the Communist movement in India reached during the 1930s and 1940s. The great Naxalbari struggle two decades later was a continuation of historic Telengana. So the observation of 50th anniversary of the launching of this historic struggle which continued for more than five years is very significant in the present context when the Communists all over the country who cherish these great heritage are in the middle of a serious effort to evaluate the past history, to concretely analyse the present situation, to develop the strategic line of the democratic revolution, and to reorganise the party and the revolutionary movement based on it.

What were the significances of the great Telengana struggle? Firstly, it was not merely an armed struggle or an anti-feudal struggle. If it were so there were many more armed struggles of higher dimensions like the First War of Independence of 1857 or anti-feudal struggles in different parts of the country after the European mercantile imperialists, principally British imperialists started colonising the country. Its primary significance was that it was a great agrarian movement led by the proletarian forces linking the anti-feudal struggle with the anti-imperialist struggle for the democratic revolution as explained in the *Andhra Letter* of the Communist revolutionaries. Secondly, it called for drawing lessons from the experience of the great Chinese revolutionary movement led by C P C and Mao-TseTung for completing the democratic revolution in India. Thirdly, if in the pre-1947 period it targeted the feudal forces of Nizam and British imperialism behind them, after the transfer of power which was characterised as mere formal independence, it targeted the Nehru Government which was the continuation of the colonial rule in new form. It did not focus on land problem alone or its central slogan was not "land to the tiller" alone. It was an offensive agrarian movement developing into a political movement with democratic revolution as its goal. It started from the basic Marxist-Leninist pos-

itions and the contemporary Chinese experience, and it contained the germs for evolving the ideological-political line to lead the democratic revolution in India to victory as part of world socialist revolution. In spite of numerous efforts for distortion and vulgarisation of these great contributions of Telengana by many including some of the leaders of these movement later, they still remain part of the great heritage of the Indian Communist movement.

We cannot analyse history as a series of betrayals. It will be too simplistic to sum up the history and withdrawal of Telengana just as betrayal by the then leadership. The failure of the then leadership to draw correct lessons from Telengana and to develop the ideological-political line for the democratic revolution in India including its strategic line and concrete tactics should be evaluated in the larger context of the developments within the CPI during that period.

As pointed out in the *International Document* adopted by the recently concluded Fourth Conference of C P I (M L) Red Flag, in the *Colonial Thesis* Lenin had asserted, "there has been a certain *rapprochement* between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and that of the colonial, so that very often-perhaps even in most cases- the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, while it does support the national movement, is in full accord with the imperialist bourgeoisie, that is, join forces with it against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes". From here the CT proceeds to define the stage of revolution from '*bourgeois democratic*' to '*national revolutionary*'. It explained, "From the fundamental premises it follows that the Communist International's entire policy on the national and colonial questions should rest primarily on a closer union of proletarian and working masses of all nations and countries for a joint revolutionary struggle to overthrow the landowners and the bourgeoisie. This union will alone guarantee victory over capitalists, without which the abolition of national oppression and inequality is impossible". In the light of the fate,

of the Chinese revolution led by the bourgeoisie and other independent struggles, Comintern made it clear that the bourgeoisie in the colonial countries are totally incapable of fulfilling the national or democratic tasks of revolution. A concrete analysis of the situation in colonial India including the role of Indian bourgeoisie and leadership of Indian National Congress could establish the correctness of these positions put forward by Lenin and then Comintern. But the C P I leadership based on its subjective evaluation of Indian situation refused to take into account the comprador character of Indian bourgeoisie and the comprador nature of Congress leadership and failed to establish the independent leadership of Indian working class over democratic revolution. It failed to link the numerous anti-feudal struggles developing all over the country with the anti-imperialist movement, to establish worker-peasant alliance, and to lead the movement towards capture of political power. In effect, it tailed behind the Congress leadership. This right opportunist line dominating the then leadership prevented it from grasping the historic significance of the Telengana movement and to develop an ideological-political line based on *Andhra Letter*. Its support to Telengana was just in words alone. Negating the line of Telengana, it lauded the transfer of power as political independence. This basically right opportunist line created serious obstacles for developing an all India revolutionary movement around Telengana for the democratic revolution.

It was at this juncture the Second Congress of CPI was held in 1948. Though it rejected the hitherto right opportunist line, termed the transfer of power as mere formal independence, and called for countrywide seizure of political power, the new leadership also failed to correctly analyse the concrete situation and to adopt the line of protracted peoples' war learning from Telengana experience. Instead it put forward a left opportunist or sectarian putchist line. In the face of serious reverses this line was soon abandoned. A compromising line was adopted which later under Krushchevite influence became a modern revisionist one upholding peaceful transition to socialism collaborating with bourgeoisie and its political forces. It is no wonder that when the leadership was repeatedly failing in the concrete analysis of the concrete situation and in applying the experience of the ICM to concrete conditions here, and as

a result vacillating from right opportunist to left opportunist and then to class collaborationist positions, the possibilities inherent in Telengana and the ideological-political line put forward by it in the embryonic form were rejected and the historic struggle itself was withdrawn.

With the transformation of India from colonial to neocolonial conditions through the transfer of power, and the Indian state being led by comprador bourgeois, bureaucratic bourgeois and big land lord classes serving imperialism on the one hand, and the CPI and later CPI (M) leadership degenerating more and more to social democratic positions on the other, the land question was pushed to the background, land reforms of even most reformist type remained only on paper, semi-feudal or pre-capitalist relations continued in vast areas, and the 'land to the tiller' slogan remained a distant dream. Whatever land reforms pushed through in the formally independent or neocolonial countries in the post-World War II years, in the main, were increasingly utilised by imperialism to recreate these economies in its own image, that is in the neocolonial mould through so-called 'Green Revolution' during these post-World War II years. The basically wrong analysis of the balance of forces at international level and of the imperialist system in its neocolonial phase by Krushchevite leadership had degenerated it and the leaderships of most of the parties including CPI and CPI (M) toeing its line to apologists of neocolonialism. As a result, only by breaking loose from the clutches of this revisionist stranglehold the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal struggles could be developed in the new situation. The great Naxalbari struggle trying to follow the Great Debate positions of C P C and inspired by the Cultural Revolution led by Mao was a historic effort in this direction.

As in the case of Telengana, in the case of Naxalbari struggle also, there was, and is, an attempt by a section to reduce it to a mere land struggle. But Naxalbari was not only a struggle for land, but also for political power. Any such struggle delinked from the question of political power is bound to get reduced to economism. Marxist-Leninists view the resolution of the land question as the central task of the democratic revolution and the first step towards socialist transformation of the entire society. Viewing resolution of land question in isolation, delinking from democratic revolution, or from

the seizure of political power under the leadership of the proletariat will only lead to reformism. The sharp line of demarcation between these two lines became much evident during this period when the Communist revolutionaries led by CPI (ML) were to spread anti-feudal struggles as a part of New Democratic Revolution, various revisionist trends tried to mislead their ranks by raising slogans for land reforms in an abstract manner. In spite of these revisionist trends 'in spite of the growth of fissiparous tendencies' due to influence of Linbiaoist sectarianism within the movement, and in spite of the serious reverses suffered due to massive state repression, the Naxalbari struggle in continuation to Telengana and at a higher plane succeeded in bringing forward the question of agrarian revolution with 'land to the tiller' as its central slogan, and the seizure of political power leading to the completion of New Democratic Revolution to the forefront. This qualitative development of the ideological-political positions in Naxalbari is reflected in the fact that in spite of severe repression, many reverses and splits leading to degeneration of many of its sections, inspired by its basic revolutionary standpoints Communist revolutionaries are continuing the struggle for the victory of NDR with agrarian revolution as its central task according to the concrete conditions of today.

II

Today, five decades after Telengana and three decades after Naxalbari, upholding these great struggles should not be reduced to parroting the slogans during the period of these struggles mechanically. These slogans and basic tasks put forward by these struggles should be developed according to the concrete conditions of today. This is all the more important as the changes in the global strategy and tactics initiated by the capitalist system in the post Second World War period have created vast changes in the balance of forces between imperialist and socialist forces on the one hand, and in the social-political-economic conditions of the Asian, African, Latin American countries including India which were earlier under the colonial domination of different imperialist forces on the other.

Explaining these changes in the *Communist Debate* document CPC said in 1963: "The *Notes* are clear. After world war II the *imperialists*

have certainly not given up colonialism, but have merely adopted a new form, neocolonialism. An important characteristic of such neocolonialism is that the imperialists have been forced to change their old style of direct colonial rule in some areas and to adopt a new style of colonial rule and exploitation by relying on the agents they have selected and trained. The imperialists headed by US enslave or control the colonial countries which have already declared their independence by organising military blocks, setting up military bases, establishing "federations" or "Communities", and fostering puppet regimes. By means of economic "aid" or other forms, they retain these countries as markets for their goods, sources of raw material and outlets for their export of capital, plunder the riches and suck the blood of the people of these countries. Moreover they use the UN as an important tool for interfering in the international affairs of such countries and for subjecting them to military, economic and cultural aggression. When they are unable to continue their rule over these countries by "peaceful" means, they engineer military coups d'etat, carry out subversion or even resort to direct armed intervention and aggression.

"The US is most energetic and cunning in promoting neocolonialism. With this weapon the US imperialists are trying hard to grab the colonies and spheres of influence of other imperialists and to establish world domination".

"This neocolonialism is a more pernicious and sinister form of colonialism" (*Apologists of Neocolonialism*).

Under neocolonisation, by the late 1960s when the general crisis of the imperialist system once again surfaced after a temporary boom in the post-war years, the imperialists started intensifying their plunder of the neocolonies by starting to integrate the agrarian sector of the neocolonies also with the international market system through various measures like Green Revolution. As Marx said earlier, capitalists started recreating the world under their own image, but now in the neocolonial phase of imperialism the intensity and speed of this process was accelerated many times. The serious challenge thrown up by the imperialist forces against the socialist forces which could succeed once in bringing about one third of the world population under socialist transformation, and which is still

challenging the world imperialist system in spite of these set backs was also a very significant factor in the speeding up of neocolonisation. The general uneven character of social-economic developments under capitalist-imperialist system is much more evident under neocolonisation. As a result, different continents and countries are under different stages of neocolonisation with Latin American countries in the forefront. In general, we can call all these Afro-Asian-Latin American countries as countries under neocolonisation, or neocolonies.

In India this neocolonisation started becoming more and more evident from the 1970s and have reached a very high level with the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) of privatisation-liberalisation-globalisation under IMF-World Bank and now WTO dictates in 1991. All sector in the country are opened to penetration and domination of imperialist capital and MNCs.

Under this new regime vast changes are taking place in the agrarian sector. What was an exception under the impact of Green Revolution limited to few areas are becoming a general rule now. More and more areas are brought under cash crop cultivation. Area under plantations is increasing. Even tens of thousands of hectors of rice-fields are converted as aquafarms for export of fish items. Mechanisation and automation are also spreading fast with new agro-machinery and equipments entering the scene. Agriculture have become highly capital intensive in most areas. Imperialist and native monopolies are collaborating in speeding up this process of integrating Indian agricultural sector with world market and imperialist capital. While the inputs and outputs in this sector are becoming increasingly under the control of imperialist agencies; speculative agri-business interests of imperialist finance capital are becoming the dominant factor. These are the forces today which are retarding the growth of modern agriculture which is getting entangled in a web of remnant feudal, petty commodity and capitalist production relations.

These developments show that as continuation of the formal nature of Indian independence, under intensifying imperialist plunder Indian agricultural sector also have come predominantly under neocolonial relations. But even many of the revolutionary forces who reorgani-

se some of the manifestations of increasing imperialist penetration and even oppose IMF-WB-WTO like imperialist agencies and MNCs refuse to recognise the vast changes taking place under neocolonisation transforming the old semi-feudal, pre-capitalist relations in more and more areas. In a way their refusal to recognise these profound changes and to subject the present changes to a concrete analysis is directly or indirectly linked to the influence of Dengist 'Three World Theory.' Contrary to Great Debate positions this theory says that the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America "have shaken off or are freeing themselves from the fetters of colonialism," or that "the colonial system has fallen apart at the seams" and that the 'third world' countries have won independence. The usage 'semicolonial' to depict these countries in present situation and the refusal to recognise that they are reduced to neocolonies is an attempt to cover up the illusion created by the TWT. As a result, they refuse to see the spread of neocolonial relations in agrarian sector and growing socialist content of NDR. They continue to limit land question even today to 'land to the tiller' slogan alone.

On the other extreme, they are a large number of fringe groups and individuals who interpret the vast changes taking place in the agrarian scene as capitalist relations becoming the dominant trend, these countries becoming capitalist, and stage of revolution becoming socialist. While compelled to accept the increasing presence of imperialist domination they try to save themselves by talking about 'economic imperialism' as the Kautskyists said or even talking about 'economic neocolonialism'!

A concrete analysis of the present situation exposes the hollowness of these positions. Contrary to what both these trends repeat, that India is a country under intensifying neocolonisation, a neocolony, and that its agrarian sector is increasingly integrated to international market system are becoming more and more clear. These changes call for a new class analysis in the agrarian sector also. Unlike the landless and poor, middle, rich peasants and feudal land lords analysis of Telengana, or even Naxalbari period, today agricultural workers numbering more than 12 crores are a major or most organised and revolutionary class in this sector. Except in the areas still remaining under pre-capitalist relations, in all the other areas though

(Contd P. 6)

sed farms, and aqua farms etc are increasing. These sections are welcoming the entry of MNCs and native monopolies to the agricultural sector whole-heartedly.

Today upholding Telengana and Naxalbari means to grasp the agrarian revolution in these concrete conditions. That is why CPI(ML) Red-Flag Programme states the task of New Democratic state in the agricultural sector as, "Confiscating of all land belonging to the land lords and their redistribution among the landless and poor peasants based on the principle of land to the tillers; reflecting the changes in the concrete situation in the agrarian sector in many areas steps for co-operativisation and collectivisation to be taken up; nationalisation of plantations and farms of MNCs and compradors." In short, it shows that while the stage of revolution continues to be NDR, and its target the overthrow of the present state serving imperialism and led

by comprador bourgeois, bureaucratic bourgeois, big land lord classes, and establishment of a New Democratic state, the Socialist content of the NDR is continuously increasing under these new changes. Developing an agrarian programme according to the concrete conditions of today, thus, has become one of the most important tasks in front of the ML forces.

To sum up, the lessons of Telengana and Naxalbari demand that, one, we should never delink the land question from the seizure of political power to complete the NDR, and two, that we shall be able to resolve the land question and achieve victory of NDR in the concrete conditions of today only by recognising the changes taking place under the allround domination of imperialism in its present neocolonial phase and developing our strategy and tactics accordingly

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the reported gain of the targetted poor.

It has now become clear that the central government is committed to provide only the allocation set under the T P D S and it is reported that henceforth the state governments will be encouraged to go in for decentralised (means private market controlled by hoarders and black marketeers) procurement to meet their needs under the P D S as existing in different states. Even the allocation under TPDS will be based on the lifting from fair price shops (not FCI) during the last 10 years since the lifting from fair price shops during 1995-96 and 1996-97 was much higher as open market prices were ruling high. This will substantially reduce the allocation to states even under TPDS. Reacting to the allegation of state governments that their allocation has been reduced in the new pattern the spokesman of the central government said: "From historic pattern, we are shifting to a more realistic pattern".

Henceforth, states which do not implement the TPDS will not get foodgrains under the subsidised scheme. However, they will get their supplies for sale at fair price shops at the revised central issue price taking into consideration FCI's economic cost which works out, at present, to Rs. 7.60 per kg for wheat and Rs. 8.75 per kg. for rice. States like Punjab and Delhi have not yet launched the T P D S scheme as

the former does not "need" it and the latter has not been able to compute the population below poverty line on account of the slum-dwellers who are not exactly "poor". For the additional quantity that various states need over and above the T P D S that covers 25% of population, they will have to give the revised central issue price as noted earlier. (For instance, Kerala has added an additional 15% of population to below poverty line category while Tamil Nadu has demanded an additional 80,000 tonnes for its TPDS)

Thus available evidence indicates that the so called T P D S is the beginning of the end of India's public distribution system in foodgrains. At the behest of IMF - WB - WTO free market policies, majority of Indian people including slum dwellers and daily workers who are squeezed out of the P D S and who are unable to purchase food at open market prices is driven to the verge of famine-like situation. Unless the present policies are reversed and unless more and more vulnerable sections of people are brought into the P D S network, several Somalias and Ethiopias are going to repeat in this country continental size. It is highly deplorable that even the so called left parties who are so assiduously supporting the UF government from the left have also become ardent protagonists of TPDS, the ingenious scheme devised by imperialists and their agents in India.

Making Food Beyond The Reach Of Common People

Globalisation and the new wave of neo-colonial economic policies resulting in a progressive replacement of public intervention with ubiquitous market-based strategies are threatening even the urban-based and nominal food security in India. In consonance with the WTO conditionalities, the abandonment of all quantitative restrictions in agricultural trade including food, agriculture is being fast integrated with global agribusiness interests. Led by agribusiness MNCs, local Kulaks and real estate lobbies, vast tracts of land formerly cultivating food crops are now increasingly set apart for exportable cash crops or for non-agricultural purposes. With the connivance of the central and state governments, food crop agriculture in Punjab, Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and other states are now being transformed into agribusiness-oriented prawn farming, horticulture, floriculture, aquaculture and so on. Compared to even the meagre growth rate registered in Green Revolution days, productivity or yield of food crops, especially that of wheat and rice per acre have been stagnating all over India. It is in this background that the recent governmental policy of demolishing the existing public distribution system (PDS) in food grains at the behest of IMF-WB-WTO trio through a pricing policy that squeezes out the broad masses of people from food consumption thereby enriching the comprador agricultural sections, black marketeers and private traders becomes a matter of grave concern. In the process, the existing PDS in the country whose coverage is just 5% of the rural people at the all India level is going to be dismantled fully and in its place, trade in food grains, both internal and external, is to become one of the most profitable economic activities in the country.

An Overview of the existing Food Situation

At around 195 million tonnes of food-grain production, while the Indian rulers are boasting that India's goal of food self-sufficiency has been attained, a recent WB estimate shows that

out of more than 100 crores of starving people in the world, almost 40 crores belong to India. In fact, if one has to stick to the daily calorific intake of 2400 in rural and 2100 in urban areas as stipulated by the 1979 Task Force of the Planning Commission, then this current production of 195 million tonnes is quite inadequate to meet the requirements of the people. For, even in the midst of a whole set of anti-people Dengist policies, China with a population of 120 crores (a little over 30 percent than India) produces 440 million tonnes (136 percent more food grains than India) together with an average foodgrain import of 10 to 12 million tonnes per year. Even academic economists having access to official circles have estimated that even at the existing purchasing power and level of consumption of the people, by 2000 AD, India's barest demands can be met only if 240 million tonnes of foodgrains are produced. However, present trends indicate a production of the maximum of only 200 million tonnes in 2000 AD. And due to the IMF-WB-WTO sponsored globalisation programme, the per capita food consumption has actually declined from 510 grams per day in 1991 to 460 grams as of today.

Government's Food Procurement policy Since 1991

The government's food procurement policy which can be traced back to the beginnings of Green Revolution in the mid-sixties, aimed at reconciling the food needs of poor people who received grains through the PDS with the objective of giving remunerative prices to farmers. Food grains are procured at the minimum support price (MSP) decided by the Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP). However, since 1991 along with the policy of displacing food grains production with export crops, the government at the behest of IMF-WB combine initiated a policy of raising procurement prices to appease the Kulaks who already enjoyed a lot of benefits by way of subsidised power, fertilisers, exemption from income and wealth taxes, etc. and at the same time marking up

central issue prices by cutting subsidies to price out the poor from ration shops. The government also began to reduce its procurement operations and started to offload the huge food-grain stock with it that reached a peak of 34.5 million tonnes during July 1995. Consequently, buffer stock with the government declined to 25.73 million tonnes by the end of July 1996 and to 16 million tonnes by early 1997. During 1995-96 wheat procurement was 8 million tonnes compared to 12 million tonnes in the previous year while rice procurement declined by 30%. Meanwhile, during these years, the government had been exporting 3.5 million tonnes of food-grains on an average per year. It is also reported that taking advantage of WTO provisions, the comprador sections in India were trying to transform India as the number one country in foodgrain export, especially, rice export. Accordingly, out of the total size of international foodgrain market which is put at 17 million tonnes of rice and 100 million tonnes of wheat, India's share is reported to be 5.5 million tonnes of rice and 2-3 million tonnes of wheat. Since the "reform" process began, India has been earning foreign exchange of about Rs.3500 crores a year through rice and wheat exports. However, this is going to be a temporary phenomenon, for, in the long run the Indian comprador classes will not be able to withstand the heavily subsidised imports of foodgrains from imperialist countries. This will adversely affect food crop agriculture eventually transforming the country into a net importer of food. In this regard what happened in the case of wheat should be an eye-opener to all.

In fact, wheat stocks considered essential for the officially defined food security is 3.7 million tonnes while stocks with FCI has been only 2.73 million tonnes on May 1, 1997. This situation was reached on account of a host of factors such as diversion of area under wheat cultivation for other purposes and the consequent shortfall of wheat production to the tune of 3 million tonnes, massive export of wheat by the government, reduced procurement of wheat and above all offloading of wheat stocks by the FCI to private traders. When wheat stocks with the government fell to below the required minimum level leading to prices in the open market hit record levels (in October 1996, the market price of wheat rose by 40% in the course of a few weeks) of Rs.850 a quintal, the government allowed FCI to sell stocks through an open market scheme to private traders and

mills at a very low price to stabilise open market price of wheat. But this open market scheme which involved a multi-crore fraud never reached the common people, the entire wheat cornered by private traders and roller flour mills went to foreign markets in the form of value-added export goods. A part of the wheat was diverted to Pakistan across land frontiers in view of acute food scarcity there.

This was the context that prompted comprador sections like Sharad Joshi and BKU, who have been clamouring for a sustained rise in foodgrain prices and demanding free export, to come forward seeking a minimum support price of Rs. 550 per quintal of wheat on the eve of the harvesting season in the past months. No doubt, conceding the demands of Kulaks who want both a free market and a higher support price, the government offered the procurement price of Rs. 475 a quintal. However, rejecting the new support price of 475 which is a big leap over last year's minimum support price of Rs. 375 per quintal, led by the B J P supported Punjab and Haryana governments, the 10000 volunteers imported by Sharad Joshi into these states went on a campaign to offer wheat to their "starving Pakistani brothers." Sharad Joshi even hinted at the need for organising "Khalistani type movements" for protecting farmers' rights who were boycotting the wheat procurement operations of the Central government. It is reported that this reluctance of rich farmers to cooperate with the government's procurement operations has directly contributed to a rise in wheat prices by 33%. Of course, this was in consonance with the government's own logic that food cultivation be made more profitable and export-oriented.

The above circumstances rendered ample justifications on the part of government to enter into a contract with foreign agribusiness companies for importing 4 million tonnes of wheat at the behest of WTO conditionalities. Bulk of this already imported from Australia was reported to be highly contaminated and weed-infested. The government also released the estimated expenditure of its wheat import, according to which the landed cost of Australian wheat at Chennai was Rs. 622 per quintal as against the cost of Rs. 735 per quintal of indigenous wheat transported from Ludhiana to Chennai. Thus the hidden agenda in this operation was clear to prove that imported food is cheaper than domestic production thereby encouraging food

growers to turn to more lucrative agribusiness farming. Thus, as noted by us earlier, within a span of a few months India was forced to transform itself from an exporter to an importer of wheat due to the inherent logic of government's food policy.

Replacing PDS with market mechanism and Pricing out the poor

While imperialist finance capital and agribusiness companies hand in glove with local Kulaks are invoking what is called a second Green Revolution in Indian agriculture, the country is on the verge of severe food crisis quite reminiscent of the situation in the mid-sixties when World Bank, Rockefeller, Ford and other agencies were inaugurating the so called Green Revolution here. The PDS and a whole range of governmental measures including the FCI created since the mid-sixties to ensure food security in the country have at present become a burden and irritant to market forces who are bent on subjecting the entire agriculture to agribusiness. The central government is even contemplating to dismantle the FCI itself. Recent food policies of the government have increased the burden or cost of keeping buffer stocks several fold due to the unprecedented rise in the cost of public procurement and distribution (including storage and transportation). On account of increased expenditures on procurement, storage, interest, administrative overheads, transport, etc., the total economic cost of FCI has been mounting over the years. For instance the economic cost for rice rose from Rs. 814.70 in 1996-97 to Rs. 864.49 in 1997-98 per quintal and that for wheat from Rs. 618.14 to Rs. 671.62 per quintal in the same period. At present 17% of the economic cost for rice and 18% in the case of wheat are attributable to the uncontrollable distribution cost of the FCI. It is quite revealing that while the economic cost of FCI operations is mounting, in line with its anti-people orientation, the budget documents for the year 1997 - 98 have actually reduced food subsidies even in nominal terms—a meagre Rs. 7000 crores. The result has been a lower procurement and small buffer stock with the FCI. On the other hand, along with the increase in the cost of operation of FCI the government has been continuously raising the central issue prices of cereals—almost doubling of their prices between 1991 and 1996. The rise in food prices in

the PDS system automatically led to increases in the open market prices of food in the country.

TPDS and Squeezing the People Out of Ration Shops

It is in this overall context that the TPDS that sounds the death knell of the entire PDS in the country is to be evaluated. The new scheme that initially aims at weaning out the so called 'non-poor' or 'above the poverty line population' out of the PDS ultimately aims at the demolition of food subsidisation as such in the long run in tune with the recent governmental white paper on subsidies that characterises food as a "non-merit" good that needs no subsidy. Obviously, it is part of the overall process of eliminating all subsidies and welfare expenditures at the behest of IMF - WB - WTO trio even while a whole gamut of indirect subsidisation to the tune of thousands of crores of rupees are enjoyed by corporate giants and elites. In fact, even in the budget for 1997-98 compared with huge "implicit" subsidy to the rich, "explicit" subsidy to the poor forms only a small percentage in resource transfers.

Coming to the case of TPDS, the targeted poor who comprises 25% of the population (even according to the criteria laid down by the Lakdawala Committee during the 7th plan, 36% of the total population was below poverty line) will get only 10 kg per family of four per month at the concessional rate of Rs. 3.50 per kg of rice and Rs. 2.50 per kg of wheat. Under the TPDS which will set from July, the total allocation to all the states and Union territories would be just 8.35 lakh tonnes of rice, 6.18 lakh tonnes of wheat and 3.55 lakh tonnes of sugar. It is also estimated that out of the total food subsidy of Rs 7000 crores earmarked for the current year, Rs. 4200 crores will be spent on the TPDS. The remaining Rs. 2800 crores are available for the general population (above the poverty line population) whose requirement is estimated by independent observers at a minimum of 100 lakh tonnes per year. More than 75% the requirement of the people under TPDS will also have to be bought at the full Central Issue Price as in the case of above poverty line population. At present the central issue prices of rice and wheat respectively are Rs. 7.50 and Rs. 4.50 per kg. However, this will be raised further neutralising or fully nullifying

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Women and Revolution

(Continued from June issue)

No room for expansion and consolidation

While all these problems were besetting the revolutionary women's movement especially in the cities, the movement's campaign activities were put on a high gear, championing the cause not just of women but of the people as well. Both nationally and internationally, the open women's movement was at the forefront fighting issues against sex trafficking, rape and prostitution, sexual harassment, abuse of migrant women, and the like.

At the same time its propaganda, campaign and educational work against the removal of the US bases, economic crises, total war and other human rights violations shone brightly in the open mass movement, earning for it considerable mileage even in the bourgeois press. In 1991, at the height of the Gulf war crisis, the open women's movement was averaging two rallies per week, with mobilization peaking at 9,000 women in Manila alone.

However, the intensification of women's campaigns left the movement no room to expand and consolidate its mass base. In fact mass organizing was primarily geared towards mobilization for campaigns. At that time, the error of urban insurrectionism was catching up on the women's movement. There was the call for the revolutionary forces to intensify mass struggles even more. At one point directives were issued to revolutionary women and the masses to take over government granaries as well as various government agencies at the local level at the height of the economic crises.

The call was sounded at a time that the forces of the revolutionary movement stagnated, including those of the women's movement, and the Party was losing large chunks of its guerrilla fronts to enemy attacks as well as to demoralization of the masses in areas where grave errors were committed as a consequence of military adventurism and premature regularization.

In the cities, the advent of armed city par-

tisan (ACP) warfare transformed legal organizations of women in the communities into a combat - support machinery. No longer was distinction drawn between legal and illegal work. Members of legal organizations were trained to become insurrectionary forces, openly advocating insurrection and recruiting supporters for ACP work. Even offices and daycare centers were carelessly used as meeting places of armed city partisans. This carelessness put the women's organizations at the receiving end of fascist attacks as state troopers stormed communities and arrested suspected subversives, among them housewives.

However, the errors of Right and "Left" opportunism that remained unchecked for more than a decade did not succeed in decimating the revolutionary women's movement even in the cities where the influence of bourgeois feminism and urban insurrectionism were growing.

This is due to the fact that despite the disorientation, confusion, and deviations that marred the movement's work for many years, many cadres and forces persevered in pursuing the general line of the national - democratic revolution and upheld the basic principles of the Party, hence the erroneous line did not succeed in consolidating its influence in the movement.

All things considered, the Party and the revolutionary forces in the women's movement still had the strength to check and overcome the dangerous trend brought about by the major deviations and errors. So much so that when the Party and the revolutionary masses embarked on the second great rectification movement by 1992, cadres of the revolutionary women's movement were among the first to support the Party's stand. They actively fought the wrecking crew of counterrevolutionaries who attempted to thwart the rectification movement.

Onward with the rectification movement

The rectification movement immediately took on the character of summing up of experiences, criticism - and - self criticism, and the

repudiation and rectification of the major errors and deviations that had seriously damaged the Party and the revolutionary mass movement, including the women's movement. Lessons were drawn and basic principles were reaffirmed.

For its part, the revolutionary women's movement affirmed the correctness of the national - democratic revolution with a socialist perspective as the road to Filipino women's emancipation. Without the people rising up in arms against the ruling system, women can never hope to be liberated. For under semifeudal and semicolonial conditions, it is through armed struggle that we can overthrow the rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism that has long kept the entire Filipino nation under the yoke of oppression and exploitation.

And this struggle is not only for men but more so for women who, in the course of the national - democratic revolution, stand to gain most from the weakening and destruction of feudal-patriarchal structures in society. Hence the revolutionary women's movement has actively called for the widest participation of women in the various tasks of the national - democratic revolution

Various people's movements have responded to this call by recruiting more women into their fold, paying attention to building specific organizations of women, raising women-specific issues, and addressing problems related to housework and child care. At the helm of various people's and class-based movements are women who fight not only for the resolution of their class demands but also for their demands as women.

It is clear from the above that the revolutionary women's movement in the Philippines is an integral part of the national - democratic movement. This is because the interest of women is one with the interest of the entire nation for liberation, and more so because the national-democratic struggle builds the material foundation such as organizations of poor peasant women, women's committees in unions, associations of working women in communities etc. Women youth organizations in campuses and groups or networks of professional women are also set up. These organizations fight for their class demands and general people's issues as much as they fight for specific issues of women

In the sense that women - whether from women's organizations or not - fight for their specific demands as women makes the revolutionary women's movement distinct or separate from other movements. In the sense that women also fight for their class interests and general interests as part of the entire Filipino people makes the revolutionary women's movement an integral part of class movements as well as the national -democratic movement in general.

Worth noting too is the fact that the revolutionary women's movement in the Philippines is not limited to women's organizations but brings under its wings all revolutionary women even as they are part of various class movements. This is to rectify the error that the women's movement is exclusively of women's organizations. Whether in separate organizations or in mixed organizations, women know that they can only win their demands as women in the context of the class struggle.

At the same time, declaring the revolutionary women's movement as class-based means that its main force comes from the basic masses of workers and peasants. It is also to underscore the fact that the demands of women workers and peasants have to be fought for within their class movements. A peasant woman wanting liberation has to participate in the anti-feudal struggle along with peasant men simply because the political authority of the landlord serves as the main barrier to her liberation first as a peasant and second as a woman. So must the women worker join the workers' movement in order that her demands, say, for maternity leave or against sexual harassment in the workplace can be addressed by the union. In a broader context, womens' demands for employment, equal opportunities or freedom from violence cannot be effectively addressed without taking to task the ruling system that breeds the conditions for womens' oppression.

Meanwhile, to educate the entire Party and the revolutionary mass movements on the issues of women and their emancipation, the Party has come up with a special mass course on women that is required study for all mass activists. The course tackles the situation of women in a semifeudal and semicolonial country, the tasks of the revolutionary women's movement and specific organizing of women

Party cadres in the women's movement are

also undertaking studies on the historical roots of women's oppression and on women and socialism. Interest in theoretical studies, including writings on these particular issues by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao and Stalin, has been awakened.

To remedy the situation of a loosely developed mass base and recover from past mistakes, Party members have given priority to mass work and integration among the peasant masses in the countryside. No longer are revolutionary forces preoccupied only with launching propaganda campaigns or intensifying actions. Expansion and consolidation of the mass base now takes precedence over other tasks.

Office-based staffers are required to spend weeks familiarizing themselves with the situation of workers and peasants, sharing experiences, doing organizing, propaganda and education work. Integration in the countryside takes about three to six months and usually in the company of an NPA unit doing mass work among the peasants themselves. Deployment of cadres in the countryside is top priority.

Re-emphasis on mass work has had its fruitful results. It has not only broken what had been a growing isolation of the revolutionary movement from the masses but it has also taught Party cadres and mass activists to concretize issues about women and ground them on the everyday life of the masses. Where before the tendency was to speak of women's issues only in general terms, now these issues are given flesh and blood. The rudiments of social investigation and class analysis have been relearned. Through it, we discover the diversity of women's issues and how these should be addressed by the women's movement and their respective class movements.

By reaffirming the women's movement as integral to class movements, the revolutionary women's movement has solved a thorny issue between it and other movements. Where before the women's movement was perceived as divisive and middle-class, now other movements welcome and anticipate the growing demand for women's education, propaganda, and organizing in its ranks.

In fact Party forces within the revolutionary women's movement can hardly cope with requests from regional territorial and sectoral organs

for theoretical studies on women and sharing of summed-up experiences. Women's studies have never been as lively as it is today within the Party.

As has been often stated, the rectification movement is mainly and essentially an educational effort to recognize, criticize and repudiate the deviations, errors and weaknesses and thereby further strengthen the Party and the revolutionary movement. The objective is to bring about a higher level of revolutionary consciousness and militancy and therefore a higher level of unity within the Party. Recent developments in the revolutionary women's movement point to this trend. As the revolutionary consciousness of Party forces are raised on the woman question, so can the entire Party become ever more vigilant in combating subjectivism and impetuosity. The rectification movement is committed to win its battle against bourgeois feminism and all other ideas and notions.

In the final analysis, the masses of women wanting liberation will benefit from this.

Women and Socialism

In both theory and practice, socialism has amply demonstrated that it can create the conditions for the complete liberation of women.

Despite all the revisionist and other reactionary attacks against socialism, it is undeniable that for some decades in the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin and in China under Mao, socialist revolution and construction brought such sweeping and gigantic changes in both the objective and subjective situation of women that oppressed women in bourgeois states could merely dream of in their time.

Nowhere in the world have such monumental leaps in so short a time and in so large a scale been duplicated, involving not just hundreds or thousands, but hundreds of millions of women in Europe and Asia. Women joining the work force and working full time. Women entering professions formerly restricted to them. Women developing special skills. Women enjoying equal rights with men. Women organizing at every level.

So, too, inequalities in law redressed. Prostitution eliminated. The right to divorce

guaranteed. Daycare centers and nurseries provided in huge numbers. Public canteens, cafeterias and restaurants with subsidized meals provided. Laundry services at every block. Free education for children. More boarding schools. Maternity leaves extended. Free contraceptives. The list could go on and on.

The essential thing is this: all these changes were made accessible not just to a few women, a few from the upper and middle classes but to the overwhelming majority of working women-workers and peasants—in the proletarian state.

This could not have been achieved without socialist revolution and construction. This came immediately after the feudal system which held women in bondage was abolished through the bourgeois – democratic revolution led by the proletariat. The bourgeois-democratic revolution was a necessary step before the tasks of the socialist revolution could be carried out. This was true in the Soviet Union as well as in China.

Socialism delivers the goods

Scientific socialism promised the liberation of women and delivered the goods. Marx and Engels were clear on this, that the first major step in the liberation of women is to bring the whole female sex back into social production. The socialist reconstruction of the economy opened massive opportunities for work.

Looking toward the future, Engels remarked that women can only engage in social production if they are freed from the demands of child care and housework. Later Lenin called domestic work petty, repetitious, irritating, stultifying. Calls for participation of women in every sector of society would come to naught unless they are unchained from domestic slavery. Lenin stressed early on that in a socialist society housework including child care shall be society's responsibility.

Stalin moved for legal changes in the status of women in one fell swoop that bourgeois states had long denied women. Stalin made sure that women would have the equal right to work, to wages, to days of rest and recreation, to social security and to education—independent of the men in their family. He also called for state protection for mothers and babies through state subsidies especially to women with many child-

ren and to unwed mothers, paid maternity leaves, and the setting up of more maternity hospitals, nurseries and kindergartens

Mao further revolutionized the role of women. Aware that "women were holding half the sky", Mao called for the massive mobilization of women unheard of in recent times to attack feudal remnants in society and encouraged the participation of women on equal footing with men in all fields. The great proletarian cultural revolution which Mao unleashed against the bourgeoisie so inspired the women of China that one hardly distinguish women from men in their enthusiasm to bring about socialism and defend it against revisionism.

Socialism betrayed

However, as in the case of the Soviet Union as in China, socialism has been betrayed and defeated. The rise of a new bourgeoisie in the Party, the state bureaucracy, the economic enterprises and the intelligentsia undermined the rule of the proletariat, redirected the road of socialist construction to that of bourgeois and capitalist reforms, and changed the entire character of the state and society. Despite Mao's repeated warnings, the revolutionary party of the proletariat in China became vulnerable and was considerably weakened by bourgeois influences and manipulations.

This new bourgeoisie has proven to be the deadliest opponent of socialism and the proletariat. Still functioning as Party functionaries, these revisionists deviated from basic Marxist propositions by declaring that the "proletariat has accomplished its historic mission", that "there are no more classes", that proletarian dictatorship is old hat, and that "the class struggle is dying out". Reforms have been rationalized to restore capitalism and open the economy to imperialist penetration.

The effects have been devastating to women. As capitalism went on full speed, women increasingly lost the gains they had won in the course of revolution and socialist construction. The revisionist betrayal of socialism had turned back the revolutionary tide. Prostitution, sex trafficking, rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, sex in advertising, female infanticide, arranged marriages, discrimination, wage cuts, restrictions on benefits, among other

things, have come back with a vengeance. The phenomenon of mail-order brides and overseas employment have hit even women scientists, doctors and physicists who want to escape the crises attendant to the open restoration of capitalism (called "democratization") in these once socialist bastions.

The revisionists have indeed gained the upper hand. But the revisionist betrayal also shows the stark contrast between a socialist society under the rule of the proletariat and a society undergoing capitalist restoration under the rule of the new bourgeoisie. The "get-rich quick" mentality apart from rationalizing the bourgeoisie's penchant for capital accumulation has further sharpened class contradictions in society. The once workers' state has become a paradise for the bourgeoisie with all its property and privileges intact.

As its rapacity and greed knows no bounds it leaves behind in its trail masses of workers and peasants in the most abject and downtrodden conditions.

Strengthening women's resolve

Far from discouraging the revolutionary women's movement in the Philippines, the betrayal of socialism by the revisionists only strengthened the women's resolve to carry out the rectification campaign of the Communist Party of the Philippines against deviations and distortions in Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought not just in the Philippine context but in the world context as well.

In the Philippines, the Party's ideological campaign is raised not only against revisionists but also against bourgeois populists and anticommunist "socialists" or liberals who continue to propagate the notion that the Philippines is no longer semifeudal and that the vanguard role of the proletariat can be dispensed with.

Along with the need to clarify the character of Philippine society is a better understanding of the two-stage revolution. It is repeatedly stressed that the bourgeois democratic revolution led by the proletariat must be carried out before the socialist revolution can begin in a country where feudal and semifeudal conditions permeate. Only by putting an end to semifeudalism and semicolonialism could the socialist revolution start.

In the early period of the socialist revolution and construction, the proletariat must first build its alliance with the peasantry through land reform so as to prevail over local and foreign reactionaries. Concession must also be given to the petty and middle bourgeoisie as transitional measures.

For the peasantry, land reform will give full play to their revolutionary participation, strengthen the worker-peasant alliance and lay the basis for cooperativization and mechanization.

For the petty and middle bourgeoisie, concessions are aimed at preventing disruptions in the economy, keeping production running, and accumulating capital in the context of making positive contributions to socialist construction. The petty and middle bourgeoisie can still play a positive role in the rehabilitation and construction of the country after the civil war and in the development of the productive forces to a certain extent.

However, such measures are subject to socialist policy. While bourgeois rights are allowed, these are restricted and regulated such that they would not lead to the rise of private monopolies. This is to preempt capitalism from becoming dominant in society.

In fact the factors and conditions for launching the socialist revolution in the future are developed in the course of the newdemocratic revolution. For one, the proletariat through the Party exercises leadership over other democratic classes and strata. The people's army as well as other components of state power are under the absolute leadership of the proletarian revolutionary party. The socialist perspective is laid down as the direction of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The revolutionary women's movement is very much aware of this, having been nurtured and guided by proletarian leadership in various stages of development and without which the women's movement could have easily surrendered or been co-opted by the bourgeoisie.

Continuing to draw lessons

One advantage of the CPP is that it can continue to draw lessons from the experiences of the Soviet Union and China in the course of waging the bourgeois democratic revolution and the socialist revolution.

Facts against government's move to hike oil prices.

Today it seems the steering committee of the ruling United Front at centre, which is

An exceedingly important lesson learned, as stated in one editorial of the CPP/CC's theoretical and political journal *Rebolusyon*, "is the need to deliver the blows accurately at the enemy in the exercise of the proletarian dictatorship, dissolve the old bourgeoisie as a class, watch out for the rise of the new bourgeoisie, rely on revolutionary mass education and mobilization, raise up a great number of new proletarian revolutionary cadres and prevent anyone who has systematically espoused revisionist ideas from getting a share of power even when he says he is already repentant and reeducated."

The editorial adds that in the face of the disastrous results of modern revisionism and capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and China, Mao's "great achievements in Marxist-Leninist theory and practice are incontrovertibly proven and shine even brighter." Had it not been for Mao's criticism of modern revisionism, China would have succumbed to it much earlier. Without Mao's theory of continuing revolution and the initial practice of the great proletarian cultural revolution, socialists and communists the world over would have less confidence in building socialism and defeating the bourgeoisie in their own country at a time that imperialism has yet to be defeated on a global scale.

That the theory and practice of scientific socialism has had profound impact on humanity, and particularly on women, remains with the revolutionary women's movement in the Philippines today. That there are problems related to the building of socialism is recognized as well by revolutionary women.

But that the proletarian class struggle must be waged ceaselessly before and after the victory of socialism so as not to allow the bourgeoisie to emerge as the ruling class is a legacy that all revolutionary women must practice, uphold and pass on to the next generations who will feel prouder as they cry, "Long live socialism!"

impotent to take up even issues like resignation of Laloo Prasad Yadav or constitutional amendment for women's quota, has only one agenda before it: the oil price hike to overcome the so-called oil pool deficit. Though a consensus is still not evolved among the UF parties, at any time a price hike can be expected because not only Chidambaram but also Gujral has repeated that there is no other way out.

The interesting point to note is how the media is repeating the need to raise the prices urgently. Some of the so-called 'national' papers have even written more than one editorial on it besides numerous write-ups quoting government spokespersons or 'experts'. An air of inevitability is created by repeating that the present deficit of Rs. 15,500 crores is *unsustainable*. The 1996-97 *Economic Survey* states: "Today the development of our petroleum sector is under serious threat with crude oil production having declined, oil imports rising sharply and the deficit on oil pool account rising each day There is no economically viable alternative to adjusting petroleum prices to reflect the impact of international oil price increases. Furthermore, if we are to reap the benefits of increased investment and efficient production in all stages of the petroleum sector (ranging from exploration and development to refining and distribution) we must carry out a phased dismantling of the existing administered price mechanism in this sector. The time for initiating this reform is already overdue"

If it were overdue why was it not incorporated in the budget proposals itself? Instead, like last year this year also UF government is going for mid-year price-hike. It is nothing but a sham, heinous move to hoodwink the people and to impose another heavy burden over them. The justifications the government and the monopoly-media including the 'experts' give are totally contrary to facts. Let us examine them.

Firstly, they say the oil products are subsidised. It is a sham lie. During 1996-97 in the name of customs duties on petroleum and petroleum products, excise duties, royalty, cess, sales-tax and octroi etc. the government earned more than Rs. 16,000 crores. This year a much

more income on these accounts are expected. If these taxes are eliminated the entire oil pool deficit would be wiped out. So the talks of subsidies to petroleum products are irrelevant and contrary to facts.

Secondly, they argue that the decline in domestic oil production is due to inadequate returns to oil companies because of reduced prices. As imported oil is much more expensive than domestic production, increasing oil pool deficit is due to increasing oil imports. Considering the price given to Indian crude oil, self-sufficiency in petroleum production would have helped even reduction in oil prices. But in spite of finding out vast oil reserves in India, the continuous governments have not given any priority to oil exploration and production. Besides they have not made efforts to increase traffic by railways and water-ways which would have cut down automobiles and decreased oil consumption. Government's wanton promotion of private vehicles also has increased oil consumption. Failure of government to provide irrigation and extend electrification has increased peasants' dependence on oil - pumps, which is also increasing oil consumption.

Even then, in spite of scathing indictment by Comptroller and Auditor General, the government is privatising oil fields already explored and developed by ONGC at heavy costs. Joint ventures are already signed with Enron-Reliance consortium for the Panna - Mukta and Tapti fields, with Videocon - Marubeni consortium for Ravva field. The nearly Rs. 1000 crores spent by ONGC is not compensated giving huge initial bonanza to these MNCs. In privatising oil fields under exploration by ONGC also this criteria is followed leading to huge profits to MNCs.

That is, the government is not at all interested in making India self-sufficient in oil, it is making the country more and more dependent on MNCs which is increasing oil pool deficit and increasing the prices. This explains why the 'national' newspapers and comprador rulers are interested in hiking oil prices. They want to serve the MNCs better by helping them to reap higher profits and in turn collecting their commission.

In 1970s with the discovery of *Mumbai High* by ONGC had created the condition for

self-sufficiency. Continuous governments refused to follow it up and have created present huge imports and spiralling oil prices.

Thirdly, when there is an orchestrated cry for oil price hike, these forces are concealing that as international oil prices had fallen sharply in latter half of 1980s the oil pool account was running a surplus. Even then at that time the domestic oil prices were not lowered. This surplus was not utilised for further oil exploration and production. Instead, violating the agreement signed at the formation of oil pool account, consecutive governments utilised this surplus to fund its budget deficits. If this surplus was kept in the account there would not have been any deficit now.

So it is the responsibility of the government to reinvest the old surplus it transferred to cover budget deficits and solve the present oil - pool deficit. There is no justification to increase the oil prices now. All propagandas for a price-hike are built on sham lies and half-truths. The so-called Left which is in the UF is not raising these points as they are sold out to ruling class interests.

The progressive forces should oppose the move to hike the oil prices again uncompromisingly. They should expose how the consecutive governments of the compradors are making the country dependent on MNCs for its oil requirements, while vast possibilities exist to make the country self-sufficient in oil.

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The WTO-Sponsored Social Clause

The first meeting of the ministers of member countries of W T O in December 1996 was dominated by the *Social Clause* as the major issue. This clause links exports from a country with conformity to minimum labour and other standards like environmental issues in international trade. It prohibits exports from a country that does not comply with these standards. Right from the beginning of GATT in 1948 the governments and trade union leaderships who had degenerated to labour aristocracy, of imperialist countries have been campaigning for some kind of a social cause. They were consciously delinking the question of centuries of colonial exploitation and the post-Second World War neocolonial plunder from the backwardness of these neocolonies where all basic human rights are denied to the vast majority. In this context the debate regarding whether or not social clause linked with trade should be included in international trade agreements is reduced to a bargaining between the imperialists and the rulers in neocolonies, the former for total domination over world trade, and the latter for maintaining their share in trade. In this context it is the responsibility of the Marxist - Leninist forces and the revolutionary trade union movement to evolve a correct approach towards this issue.

The demand of the imperialist countries who are actually leading W T O to link the *social clause* embodying international labour standards in trade agreements is nothing but an attempt to crush whatever competitiveness the neocolonies are having at present in the world market. While trying to impose these conditions the imperialists conceal the fact that it is their centuries long colonial plunder and present neocolonial loot which is responsible for the cause of the social and economic backwardness of the vast majority in these neocolonies. By trying to impose the social clauses they are not helping these devastated masses as they preach, but are only trying to establish maximum domination in the world market.

But the comprador governments in the neocolonies are not ready to expose the imperialists or to dissociate from WTO. They have easily

capitulated earlier to GATT and now to WTO. At the same time as their 'competitiveness' in world market is primarily based on their cheap and highly exploited labour they try to manoeuvre out of the social clause. So the cries of the Indian government against the social clause is not an anti-imperialist or anti-WTO stand. They call it an infringement of 'national sovereignty' simply to hoodwink the masses and to get a larger share in world trade.

So it is the responsibility of the progressive forces to expose and oppose the pretensions of the imperialist forces as the defenders of the human rights in the name of their so-called defence of social clause in international trade. It is yet another gimmick of theirs to intensify neocolonial plunder. Similarly the manoeuvres of the governments of the neocolonies who shout about national sovereignty to perpetuate the exploitation of the labour for more profits also should be exposed.

Instead, on the one hand the trade union leaderships and the so-called intellectuals in the imperialist countries who have sold themselves out to imperialist masters rally with the imperialist forces to clamour for social clause. Similarly the reasons why the reactionary and revisionist central trade union and political leaderships rejecting the social clause coincide with that of the government. According to them such a clause would "erode the competitive edge of developing country exports" (INTUC), "can be read as a political weapon in the global politics against the interests of the country" (HMS), while the C I T U maintains that "now the same (ex-colonial) nations are raking up this social clause to avoid competing with 'our' products. Yes, 'we' will solve 'our' problems in 'our' own way, the West need not dictate terms". While making such solidarity statements with the comprador government, that none of these TU leaderships call for quitting WTO should be very well noted. In this way they are reinforcing the stand of the Indian government that the industry, especially the exporters should be free to exploit workers to provide the cutting edge to Indian exports. They perpetuate the bogey of 'national interest to serve the comprador ruling classes.

30th Anniversary of Naxalbari celebrated

'The relevance of Naxalbari today was the theme of the discussion organised by the C P I (ML) Red Flag district committee in Mumbai on 25th May 1997. The discussion was part of the 30th anniversary celebrations of Naxalbari.

"In the 1960s a revolutionary enthusiasm had developed in different parts of the country. But the CPM leadership refused to give leadership to the people and insteadly compromised with the ruling classes. It is then that the people spontaneously revolted and formed the C P I (ML)", said Com. Sekhar.

"Today because of the implementation of the New Economic Policies the chances of revolt is increasing. It is time that revolutionary forces understood the situation and got united", he added.

"We may have made many mistakes, but does it mean that Naxalbari was wrong?" asked Com. Sanjay Singhvi. "At one time annihilation was considered the highest stage of class war. But today we differ," he said.

"What has remained of the movement is the understanding that revolution will not be a peaceful affair. The power has to be taken forcefully", Sanjay said.

"How to analyse our country and the state is the principal question. Today our country is a neo-colony. Political control is less, but control of new types exist. Imperialism is more strong today. Because it is more strong how to face it is a problem. It is our responsibility to analyse the concrete conditions and draw out a concrete plan to bring out change in society.

"The dream dreamt by the Indian revolutionaries 30 years ago is still not fulfilled", said Com Kathy Irani.

"How is the Naxalites different from the CPI and CPM has not reached the people. Ordinary people identify Naxalites with terrorists. The state and the media has created this identity", she said.

"Other people's politics come again and again before the people. We should utilise all platforms to present our views", she said.

Unfortunately the history of the ML movement is a history of division. The objective condition for revolution is very ripe. People's faith in the established parties are gone. Less and less people participate in elections now.

The need of the time is unity", she said.

Com. K. G. Kumar of the Communist Party of Nepal insisted on the need for fighting against revisionists.

The meeting was chaired by Com. Thomas Sebastain.

Fujimori shown black flags

The Peruvian president Fujimori was greeted with blackflags and slogans of 'Facist Fujimori go back' in Mumbai when he arrived here to meet businessmen on 28th May.

Activists of different Marxist - Leninist parties came together on a platform called Indian people in support of Peruvian Struggle. They also distributed pamphlets explaining their position. The pamphlets explained the Fujimori's economic policies leading to the suffering of people and his suppression of democratic movement in Peru.

(From P. 22)

Even while opposing inclusion of trade linked social clause imposed by imperialists, there are no justifications for these trade union leaderships to mimick the stand of the respective governments in the imperialist countries and in the neocolonies.

The IMF - World Bank - WTO dictated economic order is the biggest obstacle to the rights of the working class throughout the world. While there is the urgent need to formulate, propagate and struggle for international labour rights, it should not be confined to the so-called rights proposed in the social clause stipulated by WTO. Instead the international working class movement should challenge the WTO defined exploitative system. The overriding task in front of the working class in India as well as at international level is not to get embroiled in WTO - defined agenda, but to get mobilised in their own independent, anti-imperialist international working class movement to throw out the exploitative system itself, which is denying even basic human rights to them.

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