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- **Left Alternative With Anti-Imperialist Democratic Programme Need of the Hour**
- **US Attacks and Sanctions Against Iraq: A Challenge to World People**
- **The "Asian" Crisis**
- **Relevance of a People's Alternative in Present Situation**
- **Democratic Movement Against Fake Encounter Killings and Incarceration of Communist Revolutionaries: Kerala Experience**
- **Budget: Last Nail in the Coffin of Swadeshi**

Condemn US Aggression Against Iraq

Statement By CC UCPB

During the night of December 17 the USA and its ally in NATO, Great Britain started the aggression against the Republic of Iraq. The concentrated rocket attack against Baghdad caused untold casualties and damage. These bandit raids lasted 4 days and the untold suffering of the people is unimaginable, besides the tremendous economic destruction.

The real aim of the aggressors is well known: they want to destabilize the political, economic and cultural situation in Iraq and to make that country the springboard in the Near East since it is the wealth of oil and gas that Imperialism is after. Imperialism wants hegemony in that part of the world in order to be able to control this strategic part of the world for future expansion. This was possible because there is no longer the Soviet Union.

American Imperialism has trampled under foot the idea of United Nations Charter or even cardinal human relations and rights. This follows other aggression against Sudan and Afghanistan, plus Yugoslavia where NATO plans are formulated to control this region and thus be close to the very borders of Russia - the underbelly of our Motherland.

This is being done since Yeltsin's Russia is practically on its knees and even though the

(From P. 24)

In its cover story *Corporate Killers* recently *Newsweek* ran the mug shots of four CEOs who had downsized their business in profitable periods and hiked their salaries. When they say that "I feel fine about this because I am just doing what the market requires", this culture spreads creating the paid assassins who repeats these corporate bosses and say "you have to understand, this is just a business, everybody has to make money". The individualism which capitalist system glorifies is turned into hyper individualism. If all are not turned into corporate killers or paid assassins as a result, it is only due to the democratic spirit still created by people's movements. When the hegemony of the capitalist-Imperialist system is perpetuated through the Corporate Killers, what is required is intensification of people's movements against the rule of MNCs and their agents as a part of the struggle to overthrow the Imperialist system itself.

present Russian regime is subservient to USA imperialism, nevertheless USA wants Russia to be dismembered into tiny fiefdoms for future plans of exploitation.

The policy of connivance by the present Yeltsin regime regarding Iraq has the Soviet people extremely worried and disturbed.

It is obvious that Yeltsin, having taken the counter revolutionary torch from Gorbachev, has supported the attacks on Iraq. The pseudo-attacks in statements by Yeltsin-Primakov now in the press, belie in actual fact the voting pattern of Russian representatives at the UN, who always vote with and sanction the actions of USA. There was no statement or criticism of USA or NATO by representatives of Russia that are stationed in NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. They are in agreement with the USA's "strategic partnership" which is supported by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

Soviet people also remember the statement by Zyuganov of the CPRF to the effect that he approves Primakov policy as if they are for the benefit of our Motherland. Is this fact not ominous that Primakov and Masluykov, member of the leadership of CPRF and guided by Zyuganov to the effect that Russia must disarm and sign the SNV-2, which basically is aimed at the complete disarmament of all the rocket-missiles defenses that Russia has at the moment.

Position of the AUCPB is based on the thesis of V. I. Lenin: that Imperialism always gives birth to wars and today is strong. The thesis of J. V. Stalin is apropos now when he said: "In order to make certain that wars do not happen, we must liquidate imperialism."

In the last while all over the continents the movements of anti-imperialist tendencies have grown and struggles against American Imperialism has activated all over the world.

AUCPB deems it necessary to state that there is absolutely a desperate need for all of the anti-imperialist forces to join together into one mighty UNITED FRONT.

Down with imperialism and its supporters!
We are appealing to all peace loving people of the world to join forces against the NATO aggression of Iraq!

(Contd. P. 5)

EDITORIAL

Left Alternative with Anti-Imperialist Democratic Programme: Need of the Hour

BJP government led by Vajpayee is exposing its policies of treason more and more. During its one year rule it has implemented the liberalisation-globalisation policies more speedily enslaving the country to IMF-World Bank-WTO trio and MNCs. The latest budget proposals are only going to intensify recession in all sectors and inflation. As a result the country is getting devastated and vast masses of people are further impoverished, widening the gap between rich and poor. Exposing the hollowness of its "Swadeshi" jargons, Vajpayee government is enslaving the country to "Videshi" interests. Amending the patent act, privatising insurance sector and selling off public sector units show that BJP is nothing but a bunch of imperialist agents.

As it is getting exposed due to these anti-people policies first it tried to hoodwink the people through Pokhran blasts. Falling in this the Sangh Parivar is engaged in rabid communalisation. It is attacking the minorities, Dalits and all democratic forces. An atmosphere of hatred and fear is being created leading to fascist threats. The BJP government and the Sangh Parivar through communal fascist agenda is causing a havoc. Their hegemonic moves calls for all out united struggles to overthrow them.

But the Congress led by Sonia Gandhi is nakedly joining hands with BJP government to adopt and implement the anti-national economic policies. As the ruling classes wish to polarise Indian politics between the two reactionary parties, BJP and Congress, Sonia Gandhi is ready to wait till it becomes capable of replacing BJP. Like in the economic policies, in the fascistisation also Congress is colluding with the BJP. That Rajiv Gandhi government opened Babri Masjid for Hinduthua fascists and allowed Shilanyas, and later Rao government colluded with

BJP cannot be forgotten. Like BJP, Congress is a party of traitors serving imperialist interests and helping the communalisation of BJP.

In this situation, when the country is facing crisis in all fields, and the working class, peasantry, dalits, advasis and all other sections are getting plundered, the question of a genuine alternative to BJP and Congress assumes cardinal importance. As far as the CPI (M), CPI leaderships are concerned they opportunistically talk of a third front which is a non-starter, and talks of waiting for a Congress victory. They have degenerated from all proletarian positions and have become apologists for the Congress. It is out and out surrender to ruling system. In this way they will only help BJP to increase its strength rather than over-throwing it in coming days.

As the last December 11 general strike and numerous struggles in all fields show people's resistance to the reactionary economic policies. These struggles are going to intensify in coming days. The toiling masses and democratic forces look forward to an alternative to the ruling system. It is in this context CPI (ML) Red Flag calls for a countrywide Left Alternative with a democratic programme. Only such an alternative can serve people's interests.

We call upon the working class and all toiling masses to rally round this Left Alternative. Utilising all forms of struggles including parliamentary struggles let us resist the neocolonisation and growing fascist threats. At all India and state levels this Left Alternative shall strive to unite all left masses. We call upon all democratic progressive forces to rally round this Left Alternative, defeat BJP and expose Congress, marching forward to democracy and socialism.

US attacks and sanctions against Iraq: A challenge to world people

US and British imperialists are continuing their over flights and bombardment of Iraq along with economic sanctions. According to US state secretary Albright "If we have to use force it is because we are America. We stand tall. We see further into future." She speaks in the most barbarian way, in the language of robber barons Clinton leads. UN is just a tool in the hands of these barbarians. And when the aggression and sanctions continue entire generation of Iraqi children suffer and hundreds of thousands of human beings perish.

Iraq is haemorrhaging under the strain of the most comprehensive sanctions ever imposed in modern history. Denis Halliday, UN assistant secretary general and humanitarian co-ordinator for Iraq, says that sanctions are 'undermining the moral credibility of the UN' and their continuation is 'in contradiction to the human rights provisions in the UN's own Charter'.

Wheat flour now costs 11,667 times more than it did in July 1990, salaries average between \$2 and \$7 per month and the UN estimates that four million Iraqis - about 20% of the population - live in extreme poverty.

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), eight years of economic warfare have resulted in the deaths of more than half a million children. Some 4,500 children under the age of five are dying each month from hunger and disease. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) reports that even with full compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 986 (the provision that allows Iraq to export oil to purchase food) the country's nutritional needs 'will progressively deteriorate with grave consequences to the health and life of the Iraqi people'.

An estimated 25% of Iraqi babies are born with low birthweights and the World Health Organisation warns that many of these children will lag in their physical or mental development leading to long-term health problems.

Rations at Iraq's 52,000 food distribution centres typically last only 20 days, forcing Iraqis

to survive by selling personal possessions, household goods and clothes to buy food. Those with nothing left to sell may be forced to beg or enter into prostitution.

Widespread shortages of antibiotics, analgesics, anaesthetics and laboratory materials have led to the re-emergence of many diseases' primarily those linked to the damaged water and sanitation systems - cholera, dysentery, malaria and typhoid fever.

Although dissent was not tolerated, oil-rich Iraqis once enjoyed a good standard of living, including free access to the region's best health care, education, social security and social welfare programmes. Today, teachers moonlight as taxi drivers to supplement their \$3 a month salaries as they attempt to cope with a severe lack of books and pencils, deteriorating buildings and malnourished students who find it difficult to concentrate.

Iraq's Irradiated South

The most enduring legacy of the Gulf War may be the more than 315 tons of depleted uranium (DU) released by US tanks and aircraft. A dense, radioactive byproduct of uranium fuel enrichment, DU (with a half-life of 4.5 billion years) was made into armour-piercing shells that exploded and burned, releasing clouds of radioactive dust that were inhaled, ingested and absorbed through open wounds. Pentagon is aware of the health risks of using DU weapons. But it refuses to alert US and Allied Forces or Kuwaiti and Iraqi officials.

A leaked UN document has reported a 55% increase in cancer in Iraq between 1979 and 1994. A growing number of international scientists are convinced that these increases are the result of DU residues in the soil, air and water.

After seeing the babies of fellow soldiers born with birth deformities, some former soldiers have refused to marry. In January, FAO officials reported that sheep in southern Iraq have been genetically altered. Millions of Iraqis

continue to live, work and play in the contaminated areas.

The Death of Hope

Earlier in 1998, a UN official, when asked what gave him hope, replied: 'Today I have no hope'. He stated that conditions in Iraq are worse than they were when he worked in Somalia. He fears that two generations of Iraqis have been lost.

What happens to Iraq's children may seem of little consequence to many Americans, but if we care about the lives of our own children, we must be concerned with the world we are creating - a world where the US remains, in the words of Martin Luther King, 'the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today.'

While many countries have urged the lifting of sanctions, the US has publicly stated that sanctions will stay in place as long as Saddam Hussein remains in power.

Congress has approved millions of dollars to destabilise the government of Iraq, while US administration and congressional leaders have called for covert and overt measures to overthrow President Hussein - all in clear violation of international laws and treaties.

The myth spread that sanctions are merely a 'kinder and gentler' way to insure another government's capitulation is a challenge to world people.

While US led imperialists perpetuate these horrendous crimes all governments remain mute spectators. All UN agencies and various assemblies of governments remain silent. The Pope who finds time to appeal for Pinochet keeps mum on Iraq. All the 'Islamic' governments of West Asia, South East Asia, North Africa and the Islamic fundamentalists remain silent, serve US imperialists, or limit their protests to hollow words. The Iraqi people are left to suffer the crimes of Yankees.

Iraq is not a socialist country. Saddam Hussain is not a Communist. Till he disagreed with US a decade ago, he was a crony of US imperialists. Still US imperialists continue their barbarous attacks and sanctions against Iraqi people to threaten world people, using Iraq as a warning against them. While the imperialist camp toe US line, governments of all countries, religious fundamentalist establishments and imperialist agents everywhere refuse to condemn or raise voice against this barbarianism.

Indian government is no exception. Like the Chandrasekhar government supported by Rajiv Congress, the Rao government, then two UF

governments, and now BJP-led government continued and continue to restrict their views to certain common platitudes. None of them dared or dare to condemn US attacks unequivocally and to extend support to Iraqi people.

It is the responsibility of the revolutionary forces to raise their voice against imperialist aggression against Iraqi people, declare firm solidarity with them, and turn this declaration of solidarity into mobilisation of public opinion against imperialist barbarism. Imperialist aggression against Iraq should be projected as a symbol of the heinous crimes of imperialist system against humanity.

(Form P, 6) etc. Similar actions take place in many other cities. This does not mean that working people are on that offensive or that a qualitative leap in the class struggle has been reached. But the impression which the bourgeois media promote of a docile US working class submitting without a fight is false!

(From P. 2)

Aggressors shall not run away from peoples wrath and eventually shall pay the supreme price for their aggression. New Stalingrads are in the making and a new Nuremberg Tribunal awaits them!

Long live the solidarity of peoples against imperialism, for socialism, and peace on this planet!

NINA ANDREEVA

General Secretary

All Union Communist

Party of Bolsheviks

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US Workers Fight For Justice in 1998

DANIEL VILLA

The fightback by workers now against the corporate agenda and the struggles of people of color against oppression in this country usually go unmentioned in the US Media. When they are reported it is usually by the local media. There is practically no national news regarding the struggles of the working class so that people in California, for example, know little of what is going on in New York and vice versa. But these struggles receive even less coverage in the foreign media so that in most countries people believe there is no fight back in the US. But of course there is...

The most significant event in labor this year was the 54 day strike by members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) in Flint, Michigan against General Motors (GM). UAW locals 659 and 651, with a combined membership of 9,200, declared strikes which shut down 27 of GM's 29 assembly plants and 100 parts plants. The labor action cost GM \$3 billion in profits and dollar 12 billion in sales.

Like last year's strike by members of the Teamsters union against United Parcel Post, this strike was very popular with other American workers. In Flint, polls demonstrated a 67% public approval, and an Internet poll by ABC showed that 74% across the country backed it.

Workers forced GM to promise it will invest dollar 180 million in Flint plant and another dollar 20 million at Delphi East. The company also agreed not to outsource work from Flint and not to sell plants in Flint and Dayton before 2000. The contracting of work to non-union shops was a major cause of the strike. GM got rid of 20,000 since 1996 in this manner. It currently employs some 200,000. After the strike GM announced plans to open a plant in China.

Workers won the strike despite their leadership. The national union did not organize outreach to other unions and at their summer convention decided not to allow the striking workers to ask for support of other UAW locals.

In the biggest victory for a union against an airline company, last July the International Association of Machinists won the right to represent 19,000 passenger service agents at United Airlines. It was also one of the biggest wins in

the private sector in years. Another important struggle is that of the United Farm Workers Union to organize some 20,000 strawberry pickers which are concentrated in California. The pickers are mostly Latino immigrants who often work for a few dollars per day, have no benefits and work in areas which are deprived of water and toilets. Pro-union workers were the targets of anti-union goons and some growers have organized phony company unions to represent workers.

Some interesting things occurred in New York this summer. Labor bureaucrats have lost control of a building trades demonstration organized to protest the city's plan to use non-union labor for a transportation project. They were caught by surprise when about 40,000 angry construction workers (police estimate) marched up and down Manhattan and had a couple of minor skirmishes with the police which resulted in over ten cops reporting minor injuries. Union leaders have refused to organize another demonstration fearing another explosion of class rage.

New York also saw an attempt to revive the Black Power movement when tens of thousands of African Americans responded to a call for a youth march in Harlem on September 5. They demanded an end to the daily murder, arrest and harassment of Blacks by the New York City Police force, jobs, reparations and an end to discrimination. Racist Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who was forced by a judge to grant the rally a permit, ordered the police to barricade the site of the demonstration making it impossible for thousands of persons to attend the rally. Hundreds of cops took over the stage and area of the activity as soon as the permit for the rally expired, roughing up people in the process. Police helicopters also flew close to the crowd in an attempt to intimidate and interrupt the activity.

Across the US there have been thousands of rally pickets, strikes, conferences and demonstrations challenging the actions of the ruling class and putting forth the interests of the working people. In New York alone a week does not go by without several street actions whether it be around labor, healthcare, police brutality,

(Contd. P. 5)

RELEVANCE OF A PEOPLE'S ALTERNATIVE IN PRESENT SITUATION

-K. N. Ramachandran

West Bengal chief minister and CPI (M) leader Jyoti Basu has offered support to Congress and repeated it within four days to form an alternate government at centre. He is arguing that as no party wants another election soon, Congress should come forward to bring down Vajpayee government. He has also stated that in present situation there is no other possibility to replace the BJP rule at centre, and that it is his desire to see a Congress victory at centre in next elections. These statements of the CPI (M) leader calls for a serious discussion.

Growing threats from BJP government

There are no differences of opinion among the progressive forces that the BJP-led government at centre is becoming a growing threat to the country and the people. Through the new budget it has speeded up the liberalisation-globalisation policies. India is converted into a dumping ground of the products of MNCs. PSUs are increasingly sold out through disinvestment, this year to the tune of Rs. 10 000 crores. Simultaneously all indigenous industries are closing down, or facing threats of closure. Foreign debt liabilities are increasing. Rupee value is falling. The hike in railway fares, freight charges, pre-budget price hikes of PDS items and cooking gas, diesel price and postal rates are going to increase inflation further. In all sense the neocolonial slavery is getting intensified. Prices of essential commodities and cost of essential services alongwith increasing unemployment are impoverishing the masses more.

People's reaction to these reactionary economic policies which serves only the comprador classes and their foreign masters, and to the nuclear explosions which only worsened India's position internationally was reflected in the continuous defeats of BJP-led forces in the elections to the four state assemblies as well as in the by-elections. So, to divert attention from growing economic crisis and to consolidate its communal vote-bank, the Sangh Parivar has once again accelerated the communal policies.

The minorities, now mainly the Christian minorities are attacked, people are divided communally in all spheres, and an atmosphere of hatred and fear is being created. All these are part of the communal fascist agenda of Sangh Parivar.

The BJP-led rule which is ruining the vast majority of people economically, destroying even existing democratic rights, encouraging the forces of disintegration and intensifying communal fascist threats should be ended as early as possible. There is no doubt about that.

Can Congress serve as alternative to BJP?

But can Congress become an alternative to BJP as Jyoti Basu states should be seriously discussed. If alternative means another government in place of BJP government, Congress can do it. But if it means an alternative to the policies pursued by BJP government, can the Congress provide it? It should not be forgotten that BJP could come to power when Congress policies led the country to economic slavery, to subservience to imperialist domination, to communal and casteist disintegration, and to all-round corruption and criminalisation and got isolated from the people as a result of all these, and when the CPI (M) led forces could not provide a progressive alternative in its place.

It is the very same policies of Congress which the BJP government is implementing at an accelerated pace. Liberalisation, globalisation policies were initiated, GATT treaty was signed and India was made a member of WTO, rupee was devalued continuously, foreign debts were accumulated, and the country was opened up to MNCs by the Congress government. Now Congress is aiding the Vajpayee government to go ahead with these policies. Congress is supporting the Patent Amendment Act and Insurance Regulatory Act moved by the BJP government and all other economic policies also. So the imperialist powers and the native comprador classes are opting for either Congress or BJP to rule over the country.

What about the argument that Congress is a secular force? From the beginning Congress governments had followed not a policy of secularism, but of appeasing all communal forces especially the Hindu forces. Instead of caste annihilation, it promoted all casteist forces, and promoted the casteist and communal based vote-banks. It was when these policies became fully naked when Rajiv Gandhi government amended the Constitution to appease Muslim fundamentalists following Supreme Court verdict on Shahbano Case, and opened Babri Masjid for Hindu fundamentalists and allowed Shilanyas that the Sangh Parivar actively took off from there and led the Rathayatra to install a BJP-led ministry at centre. Now when Sonia Gandhi visits Thirupathi Temple and allies with a section of Mahants in Haridwar along with appeasing other communal forces and encouraging communal vote-banks in her preparations for coming to power, all these show that the Congress has not changed a bit. Besides it should not be forgotten that it was Congress through its brutal suppression of people's movements and Emergency Rule which initiated criminalisation and fascistisation of Indian political scene.

In this situation, even if this Congress comes to power, it will only pave the way for the BJP to come back to power with more strength. When ousting BJP from power has become an urgent task, instead of limiting all activities to parliamentary field, what is required is the launching of powerful countrywide people's movements under independent left initiative. Instead of this, trailing behind Congress in effect only helps the communal fascist forces. But Jyoti Basu and his friends have degenerated so much to social democratic lines that they fail to recognise this reality.

Question of Third Front

The CPI (M) led 'Left Front' parties and the non Congress parties outside BJP alliance have come to understand that in spite of their repeated appeals the Congress leadership is not in a haste to pull down Vajpayee government. Congress leadership is ready to wait, if possible, till it can get a majority or near-majority in a fresh election. It is in this situation that these frustrated leaderships met at Delhi on 20th February in a 'People's Convention against communalism'. The imposition of president's rule in Bihar speeded up this move.

All the progressive forces support the rem-

oval of clause 356 from the constitution and putting an end to imposition of president's rule in the states. In that sense they oppose dismissal of Rabri government in Bihar. But this is different from supporting Laloo Prasad-Rabri Devi governments and RJD which through their 9 years rule protected Ranvir Sena like arch-reactionary forces, made the life of agricultural workers and poor peasants belonging to dalits and backward sections intolerable, and intensified corruption and criminalisation to unprecedented levels. When CPI (M) general secretary Harikishan Singh Surjeet argues that BJP can be opposed in Bihar only with the help of RJD, it is nothing but a continuation of the opportunistic argument that BJP can be opposed at centre only with the help of Congress. It is taking pragmatism to absurd limits.

Will not a Third Front formed at the initiative of CPI (M) with RJD, Mulayam Singh's SP, Moopananar's TMC, Karunanidhi's DMK, Mahanta's AGP and similar forces become a repetition of the United Front of 1996, or more opportunistic? It is part of history that this UF formed with the aim of keeping BJP out of power only paved the way for BJP to come to power. This Third Front being formed now will only become an opportunist front of the apologists of Congress. Its formation will only speed up the ruling class politics getting polarised in to Congress and BJP forces. CPI (M) is not ready to take lessons from the bankrupt policies it is pursuing even after losing the seats and votes it and CPI had in Rajasthan, Delhi and MP where elections took place recently. It will be foolish to expect anything positive from the CPI (M) leadership in this critical juncture. CPI (M) and CPI have degenerated so much to social democratic positions.

What is needed is a People's Alternative

As we have pointed out earlier many times, no government from the time of Rajiv Gandhi Government, which started the liberalisation process, could escape from people's wrath; they could not win the elections. During these years more and more sections of people joined countrywide people's movements against the governmental policies. The all India general strikes and Bharat Bandhs during last decade and more reflected this growing people's anger. Progressive forces have expressed their violent opposition to communal and casteist forces also. Tho-

Democratic Movement against Fake Encounter Killings and Incarceration of Communist Revolutionaries: Kerala experience

On 3rd March the Kerala High Court issued orders on the petitions filed by family members of martyr Comrade Varkala Vijayan and CPI (ML) Red Flag activists that the Kerala government should take necessary action to make further enquiries into the death of Vijayan in police custody during Emergency and submit its report within three months. It was an enthusiastic piece of news for the comrades of CPI (ML) Red Flag, Thiruvananthapuram district committee and to the family members, relatives and friends of Com. Vijayan who are actively engaged in organising the 23rd anniversary of his martyrdom on 8th March at Varkala municipal maldan. Earlier, when a retired police driver Dayanandan had volunteered to give evidence against his superiors who had tortured Vijayan to death and later burned his body destroying all evidences during Emer-

gency, under the leadership of the party a broad based *Action Council* was formed with Comrade Punnamcode Hussain, a retired teacher, progressive cultural activist and active supporter of revolutionary movement from the beginning as chairman and Com. R. K. Nair as its convenor.

The Action Council gave a memorandum to the chief minister demanding re-opening of the Vijayan case. Immediately after revocation of Emergency CPI (ML) Red Flag [then known as CRC, CPI (ML)] had launched a statewide movement for enquiry into the deaths of comrades Vijayan and Rajan in police torture camps during these dark days. The agitation on Vijayan and Rajan questions and court verdicts had exposed the criminal deeds of the Congress CPI-RSP-Muslim League rule, compelling then Congress

ugh these people's movements have not reached the levels of countrywide revolts taking place in many neocolonies, they are proceeding in that direction. So what is required today is a People's Alternative capable of transforming the protest movements coming up against intensifying neocolonial slavery and communal fascist threats into resistance, and then to a march towards democratic and socialist goals. This People's Alternative has great significance as an urgent programme capable of linking all forms of class struggle developing in all spheres and in all parts of the country with the protracted struggle for New Democratic Revolution, mobilising the toiling masses and all progressive democratic secular forces.

Today all pseudo-leftist utterances like liberalisation-globalisation policies will be implemented according to the needs of the country and methods to utilise WTO membership for people's benefits shall be found out if the Third Front comes to power, and the 'Swadeshi' jargon of Sangh Parivar are totally exposed. What is required is a basically different People's Alternative with an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic programme capable of mobilising the working class, the peasantry and all other pro-

gressive left masses.

The programme of this People's Alternative should include slogans like fully scrap the privatisation-liberalisation-globalisation policies, kick out IMF - World Bank - MNCs, come out of WTO, write off imperialist debt, nationalise the properties of foreign and native monopolies, and implement radical land reforms along with democratic slogans comprising immediate people's demands. This alternate programme should mobilise the people against all communal forces especially the communal fascist threat posed by Sangh Parivar and all casteist forces on a secular-anti casteist platform, ensure equality of women in all walks of life, and put forward a national and self-reliant development plan protecting ecology and ensuring all round progress of all people starting with the fulfillment of their basic needs.

The task of the genuine left forces, the revolutionary forces is to step forward to mobilise all toiling masses and progressive forces under such a People's Alternative. Only through such an independent left initiative the resistance against neocolonial slavery and communal fascism can be continuously developed.

chief minister Karunakaran, who was home minister during emergency period when CPI leader Achutha Menon was the chief minister, to resign. All the police officers involved in 'anti Naxalite actions' from DIG Jayaram Padikkal downwards had to face people's wrath and courts' strictures. *Justice Viswanath Iyer Commission* stated in its report that Vijayan was tortured to death under custody. But on the plea that the evidence is not complete since the body is not traced the Sessions Court gave only one year imprisonment to the accused police officers. Later High Court waived even that order. As Dayanandan has come forward to give further evidence, the Action Council moved the High Court also for further enquiry. A campaign and later a dharna in front of the secretariat was organised on 16th February demanding reopening of the case in which hundreds of people participated including Vijayan's relatives and comrades from all parts of the district. It is in this situation the High Court has now ordered a time-bound enquiry.

Fake Encounter Killing of Com. Varghese

The retired police driver Dayanandan's confession itself came out in the wake of the confession by another retired police constable Ramachandran Nair that under duress from his superiors he had shot Com. Varghese in Thirunelli forests of Wynad district on 18th February 1970. Com. Varghese was taken into custody from his shelter that morning, brutally tortured and later shot dead. An encounter story was propagated by the Congress-CPI ministry which none believed. There were people's demand from that time itself for punishing those responsible for the murder of Com. Varghese.

From post-Emergency years when the CPI (ML) Red Flag [later CFC, CPI (ML)] had started rectifying its line and irritated open mobilisation of the masses, Com. Varghese day was observed every year with flag hoisting in early morning at the place in Thirunelli forests where Com. Varghese was killed, and later with rally and public meeting at Mananthavadi, the taluk town. Once the confession of Ramachandran Nair came out in the media, party state committee took up the issue actively. A statewide campaign was organised demanding immediate enquiry. Memorandums were given to chief minister for ordering judicial enquiry. When the LDF chief minister and CPI (M)'s top leadership started saying that

no such enquiry is necessary and Varghese is not a Communist martyr, they were effectively refuted and massive public meetings and campaigns were organised at hundreds of places. In spite of efforts by sections of reactionary media, ex-Naxalites who have degenerated to arch-reactionary positions and some renegade groups to distort the issue, party state committee could effectively carry forward the campaign mobilising broad democratic sections and relatives of Com. Varghese demanding immediate enquiry and punishment to all accused. A petition was moved in the High Court demanding enquiry into this fake-encounter killing. Under pressure from mounting public opinion chief minister Nayanar and CPI (M) leader Achuthanandan had to reverse their positions publicly. And the High Court ordered a time-bound CBI enquiry asking CBI to file FIR within two weeks.

During the six months of political campaigns focussing on Comrades Varghese and Vijayan, CPI (ML) Red Flag spearheaded revolutionary propaganda bringing the question of struggle for New Democracy and socialism to the foreground more forcefully. This year's 29th martyrdom day of Com. Varghese was observed all over the state dedicating the whole party to carry forward the tasks left unfulfilled by the martyrs. In Wynad district dozens of public meetings and demonstrations were organised for three days mobilising broad sections of people. A martyr's memorial was symbolically erected at Thirunelli forests on the spot where Com. Varghese became a martyr. Adivasis joined in large numbers to remember the 'Peruman'. On 18th February big rally and massive public meeting was organised at Mananthavadi. Public meetings were organised at many other places also.

Every year from 1978 party state committee observes one week from March 2-8 as *martyrs week* remembering comrades Rajan, Balakrishnan and Vijayan who became martyrs on 2, 5, 8 of March 1976 during dark days of Emergency. While comrades Rajan and Vijayan were tortured to death in the 'concentration camps' organised by police to suppress Naxalite movement during Emergency, Balakrishnan in a heroic action got burned and later died while taking vengeance against a notorious police DSP. In this week the party comrades once again dedicated themselves to struggle for democracy and socialism, to combat intensifying neocolonial slavery and fascist threats from Sangh Parivar.

(contd. P. 15)

The "Asian" Crisis

[C C, Revolutionary Communist Party of Argentina (R C P A)]

(This contribution is an excerpt from the document entitled, "Resolution on the National and International Political Situation, by the Central Committee of the RCPA, dated March 16-17, 1998.)

Our Party stated that the economic crisis shaking the world since the middle of last year was called "Asian" but in fact world-wide. It was presented as a stock market crisis and later a financial one, but it is a result of the trade war and "overproduction", and is therefore deep-going. Its consequences are long term. It proceeds in waves and with a domino effect. Facts have shown this truth as well as the lies of the gurus of the monopolies which have saturated the media with a campaign of systematic disinformation.

Why do we say it is world-wide? Because it has resulted in the spiriting away of billions of dollars in European, American and Asian countries. The saying "nothing is lost, everything has changed" does not apply here. The Wall Street crash of October 1997 was "the biggest drop in points registered by the index of major stocks in the New York Stock Exchange", and this occurred because "the United States has concentrated its investments in Southeast Asia." (*Le Monde Hebdo*, November 1, 1997.) In three days, US \$ 11 billion left Brazil, constituting 20% of its reserves. The Brazilian economic situation led to the fall of FIAT stocks in Europe. Argentina was one of the most severely hit countries. The Buenos Aires stock exchange fell 30.38% between October 22 and January 15. There were stocks, like those of Renault, which lost more than 50% of its value. As *La Nacion* asked: "If the crisis is Asian, why the tremors in Brazil, Argentina and Mexico? And further: Why the shudder that keeps on running through the Swedish economy like a cold fever?" (*Beijing Review* March 24, 1998). Just a few weeks ago, the World Bank economists had to accept the fact that the Asian economic crisis "has already had consequences all over the world and very possibly would have much further disturbing effects in the near future" (*La Nacion*, November 23, 1997). The fact is that the world economy

is estimated to grow by only 2.6% in 1998, according to the World Bank, while they have projected an increase of 3.1% and the IMF has projected a growth of 4.25%.

The crisis has affected the world economy, but we have to differentiate the oppressor, imperialist countries from the oppressed, dependent countries, because they will be affected in distinct ways.

Meanwhile, the whirlwind that created the typhoon of crisis in the whole of Asia continues.

The economic situation in Russia and Eastern Europe is highly unstable. The Hungarian hyperinflation and the Russian financial insolvency continue. The Moscow stock exchange lost 40% of its value between September and October 1997 and raised its short-term interest rates in order to save the Russian rouble. During that year, the Russian stock exchange fell by 35%, the prices of the Russian government bonds tumbled, and the stockbrokers and fund managers fear that Russia would be the next crisis.

On May 11, IMF president Michael Camdessus warned not only the United States but also Western Europe against "irrational exuberance" of the stock markets caused by "excess capital fleeing Asia".

Latin America continues to be in a compromising situation. This is specially the case of Brazil and Argentina. Initially, Brazil had to raise its interest rates by 43%, and has now increased them by more than 20%, for which its external debt has damnably increased, surpassing US dollar 225 billion. Chile has been severely affected by the fall in mineral prices, particularly copper which constitutes 40% of its exports. Its Administrators of Retirement and Pension Funds (AFJP—Administradoras de Fondos de Jubilacion y Pension) lost a great sum and it had to devalue its currency by 12.2%.

Why do we say that the crisis is deep? Although it appeared as a typical crisis in such a

dependent country as Thailand, "resolvable" by means of devaluation, IMF intervention and Japanese help, why then did it rapidly spread to Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines (the "little tigers"), and later to Singapore, Taiwan and Korea (the "tigers") and throughout the world? Following the acute world-wide commercial and financial crisis which reflected the financial and stock exchange crisis, a crisis of superproduction emerged in the whole Asia-Pacific area, including China and Japan, and is threatening to explode what has been incubating in the first world capitalist power, the United States. It appeared as a series of linked-up national collapses, but it was clear that the extraordinary flow of surplus capital from the imperialist powers-particularly Japan, the United States and Europe - provoked a tremendous speculative inflation and an extraordinary overexpansion of productive capacity in relation to absorptive capacity that capitalism itself creates in the world. These (dependent) countries had been converted into a paradise of enterprise dislocation, in to export platforms controlled by the so-called multinationals which took advantage of the extraordinarily cheap cost of labour power. The saturation of the markets caused falling exports and the collapse. Japanese enterprises and their subcontractors employed almost a million of wage earners there. The over production is noted above all in the electronics sector, since a fourth of Hongkong, Taiwan and Thailand's exports and half of Singapore's are based on electronics. The price of semiconductors fell 80% in 1996. The other factor was the workers' struggles that caused the dislocation of enterprises in Korea, Thailand and other countries. This showed a world phenomenon of "superproduction", and many trace the beginning of the crisis to China's 1994 devaluation which made that country's economy "hypercompetitive" and led it to swamp the world with its cheap products, as well as to Japan's difficulties in extricating itself from the crisis which has dragged on since 1990. Since 1996, the Japanese yen has been devalued by some 60% and this helped to pull down the exports of Thailand whose currency was tied down to the U. S. dollar.

The consequences of the current crisis are long term. The Japanese say: "Europe is a region, Asia is the world". Southeast Asia was the locomotive of the capitalist upsurge of the last period. Now it is pulling the world economy backwards.

Now it has also been proven that the crisis

which started in Asia is advancing in waves and has a domino effect, since the fall of one country pulls down others automatically. We Argentinians learned from the statements of Soros, in October last year, that the Argentinian economy was saved from disaster because Hongkong did not devalue its currency.

The crisis has pushed an impressive process of mergers and mega-mergers of enterprises and banks which are trying to keep ahead of the next tremors of the crisis. It is also generating a process of deflation, of a fall in prices which has affected the price of gold, aluminum, copper and other minerals, oil and cereals, among others.

The crisis liquidated the "models" which imperialism imposed on such dependent countries as Argentina and which earned the enthusiastic support of Menem for a while. The Southeast Asian countries were "models" on fiscal matters and had a totally flexible and deregulated labour market. The IMF and the economists of imperialism (some of them Argentinians) made a real blunder. Two months before the crisis, the IMF congratulated South Korea for its "financial soundness". The IMF kept up the illusion of an upsurge that would last until the next decade. When the crisis occurred, IMF president Camdessus, about to board a plane in Barcelona that would take him to South Korea, said without a bit of self-criticism: "The economic models are not eternal; they are used and thrown off like ideas and boots".

The capitalists speak little about the most dreaded thing: the social consequences of the crisis. The workers' movement in the Southeast Asian countries, until now disorganized and paralyzed, are being remarkably reactivated. The same is true with the student movement South Korea and Indonesia are the most advanced in this respect. But there have also been great struggles in the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia. In this regard, the international bourgeoisie dreads what may come to pass in China, where big strikes and demonstrations have occurred

The Future of the Crisis

The future of the crisis now depends principally on China, Japan and the United States. China resisted the sudden attack and did not devalue its currency. Like other countries

which devalued and liquidated their commodity stocks at knocked-down prices—from watches and shirts to seamless steel pipes and cars—China's exports slowed down. In face of this, instead of devaluing, it decided—as Menem did before the “tequila” (the “Mexican crisis” of late 1994—*Translator*)—to intensify its free-market and privatisation course. It is going to privatize 100 million state enterprises. This will affect some tens of millions of workers who will stay out on the streets, in a country cited by some statistics as having more than 100 million unemployed. In Shanghai alone, the number of jobless workers who are not yet formally dismissed is estimated at 800,000. The Chinese higher-ups say that there will be a loss in terms of exports, but since they have big reserves (at 140 billion dollars, second to Japan), they are going to take advantage of the devaluations of its neighbours to buy their enterprises. The situation is difficult for Hongkong. This city is an intermediary of the corporations in exploiting millions of Chinese workers through the system of *maquila* (reassembly - *Tr.*) and miserable wages which in some cases hardly reach one or two U. S. dollars a day. Hongkong imports raw materials, parts and semi-processed goods to be transformed in the “special zones” in the People's Republic of China, in enterprises engaging five million workers. The products of these enterprises are then re-exported through Hongkong. Of the U S dollar 170 billion worth of exports from Hongkong, U S dollar 115 million are re-exports. If the parity of its currency, which is tied to the U. S. dollar, is maintained as has been promised, it will lose its competitiveness, and its external trade based on *maquila* work will deteriorate. If it devaluates, a national and perhaps international catastrophe will result.

Until recently, it was said that China emerged as the big winner from the crisis. Now there are doubts. “Far from having escaped the Asian crisis, China has already been attacked by a virulent strain ... Far from prospering in the midst of convulsions, China has already caught the Asian fever.” (Forum of the Institute for Economic Development of the World Bank, Spring 1998, article of C. Fred Bergson)

As for the Japanese economy, it is what the international bourgeoisie dreads the most. They agree that “the problem is Japan”. Japan today represents 18.5% of the world economy and it is the principal holder of US debts. This

country's banks have irrecoverable credits in the amount of US \$ 600 billion. Besides, US \$ 400 billion in US treasury bonds are concentrated in Japan, and if it decides to dispose of them to resolve its own problems, it would create a big problem for the United States. The Japanese stock exchange indices, reaching 48,000 points eight years ago, are now about 15,200 points. Japan is on the way to a great deflation of prices which will have world-wide effects.

The United States is at the zenith of an economic upsurge that has generated an unemployment rate of 4.6%, the lowest since 1973. Of course, this has been achieved by means of a great proliferation of “garbage” contracts. The United States is the principal imperialist power, a big exporter of capital by which it sucks off billions of dollars of surplus value world-wide. But the U S trade deficit continues to increase. It was 190 billion in 1997. It will be 230 billion in 1998 and will reach 300 billion by the end of the century. In turn the United States, in order to cover its trade deficits, has to run into foreign debt and the monopolies of other imperialist countries would make direct investments inside the United States. Thus, it has ended up by being a strong net importer of capital while Germany and Japan have become net exporters of capital. Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan has declared that “storm clouds are gathering over the western Pacific and seem to be heading towards us.” The Humphrey-Hawkin Commission foresees the blows of the crisis hitting the United States by our summer of 1999.

Perspectives

Although some monopolies of the United States and other imperialist countries are taking advantage of the crisis to make big deals, there is no escaping the fact that the imperialist system is being threatened by an economic crisis with catastrophic effects. It is possible to manage postponing a big crash, but for how long? We are now witnessing what we stated in our Eighth Congress and in the Central Committee meeting of November last year, when we spoke about the inordinate growth of the speculative feature of finance capital, and about a huge mass, an enormous bubble of speculative capital going around the world. Imperialism has seen and dreaded the possibility of an international financial catastrophe with thousands of millions of dollars spirited away overnight, which may

lead various countries to a cessation of debt payments (as is happening now in South Korea and Indonesia) and to an imposition of a general moratorium on debts. A monumental catastrophe for imperialism.

As the Central Committee of November last year pointed out: "The fall of the capitalist stock exchanges which we are now witnessing manifests the tough struggle of capitalism to prevent the fall of profit rates and its inability to turn the profits it has obtained in production into investments that would expand and develop it and would also be profitable. In search of a way out for this floating capital surplus and in order to avoid massive and sharp devaluation, as happened in 1929, capitalism directs these profits towards speculation. The policy of privatization, foreign indebtedness, 'dealing in futures', liberalization of international transfer of capital, monstrous overvaluation of securities and real estate property in certain countries are, among others, the consequences of the vain attempt of capitalism, fleeing ahead, to avert a crisis of 'excess capital' which provokes a massive devaluation of capital."

The economists of the bourgeoisie generally analyzed the crisis as a respite in the midst of a process of growth which definitely strengthens it. So, first they spoke of a "purge" and later of a crisis. They spoke of a "recession for self-readjustment" and of a "new scenario." This was also the case with the analysis of the "Communist Party" and its economist Gambina, who merely saw in the crisis, initially as the newspaper *Clerin* did, a speculative maneuver of U. S. finance capital. Then they spoke of a crisis. They underestimated that the crisis, according to Marx, means "the violent levelling of all the contradictions of the bourgeoisie" (Karl Marx, 'Critical History of the Surplus Value') contradictions whose extraordinary sharpening, in the current stage of capitalism, they have underestimated. These formulations found and are finding echoes in the Party. Others, as in the case of the Trotskyite leader Altamira, have predicted since October (1957) the imminence "of a final outcome". They conceive of the crisis as an explosive blow, without the prolonged effects which we have expounded. In the long term, they also underestimate the current contradictions of imperialism and view the crisis as having grave prospects but certainly having a purifying effect on capitalism. This opinion

also had echoes in the workers' movement, as the formulations of the leaders of the Argentinian Workers' Movement (MTA—Movimiento de los Trabajadores Argentinos), and in the Party.

Capitalism will not fall by itself. It will not collapse by its contradictions without the victorious struggle of the bourgeoisie's historical rival, the proletariat. It will undergo crises, temporary recoveries, and will staggeringly forge ahead if not stopped by the revolutionary labor of the proletariat.

It is certain that before the crisis, the capitalists make headway and hit the working masses to make them pay for its consequences. At the same time, crises, like wars, show in their stark nakedness the outrageous horror to which the capitalist system condemns all laborers in the city and countryside. Therefore, if the Party is capable of creating the subjective conditions for the revolution, then the crises will create the favorable objective conditions for these. The problem that the crisis always sets forth is, who will pay for it: the dependent countries or imperialism, the workers or the capitalists; in a dependent country as Argentina the oppressed classes or the dominant classes?

Of great importance in this situation is the dissemination of and the struggle for the measures which our Eighth Congress proposed for a popular government of unity against Menemism, specially the struggle for the non-payment of foreign debts and the defense of the National Bank. It is very important to spread our proposal on how to abandon convertibility and to recover our currency and demand a declaration of *occupational emergency* (cessation of all suspensions and dismissals, 35 hour workweek without loss of pay, subsidies to all unemployed, land to those who want to till it, etc.) and *economic emergency* (suspension of all evictions and terminations condonation of all usurious and tax-related debts of small and middle agriculture producers, promotional credits for these sectors, increase in tariff duties on all imports, suspension of all payments on foreign debts, etc.). This must be accompanied by *extraordinary measures of support* to all residents and to the economies of provinces swamped by the flood and of those affected by the drought.

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(From P. 10)

For the Marxist-Leninist movement in Kerala the observation of these martyrs' days and the democratic movement against the oppressive state machinery have special significance. This is a continuation of the revolutionary tradition from the days of the undivided Communist movement.

Democratic movement in defence of Communist fighters

The revolutionary peasant movement started spreading throughout Malabar (North Kerala) region from late 1930s. This anti-feudal and anti-imperialist movement was attacked by the British regime and landlord class. The resistance movements also grew. Morazha, Kayyur, Karvellur and other struggles became household names in Kerala. A powerful democratic movement was organised under the initiative of Communist Party for exemption of death sentence to Kayyur comrades and to K. P. R. Gopalan, and for release of political prisoners. While com. KPR could be saved from the gallows, the execution of Kayyur comrades led to powerful state wide movements which reverberated in other parts of India also. The Punnappra - Vayalar struggle of 1946 marks the most glorious chapter in Kerala's history which made socialist ideals a household thing all over the state. Against the most criminal suppression of the movement, with hundreds of Communist fighters becoming martyrs, once again a powerful democratic movement involving progressive forces from all walks of life was launched by the Party. This movement became an integral part of Party history. As a result a number of comrades were released in 1954. With the coming to power of the Party ministry in Kerala in 1957 all political prisoners were released.

After a long gap, it was after the Naxalbari Uprising and formation of CPI (ML), that fighting against the revisionist chieftains of CPI and CPI (M), once again the revolutionary movement came forward. During this struggle comrades Varghese and Kissan Thomman became martyrs, more than hundred comrades were implicated in various cases, and hundreds were tortured. In spite of the conspiracy between reactionaries and revisionists and heinous propaganda by the media, democratic sections raised their protests once again upholding Kerala's democratic tradition. But, as the CPI (ML) movement was under the clutches of a sectarian line no democratic

movement could be launched. During the Emergency, not only the CPI (ML) but democratic sections as a whole was suppressed with all the three central jails and dozens of sub-jails overloaded.

After the Emergency the CPI (ML) state committee, which took initiative in forming CRC, CPI (ML) in 1979, started rectification of its sectarian line, though superficially. As a part of this rectification process, it started taking initiative in supporting the democratic movements coming up in the post-Emergency period. Demands for enquiry into the torture killings of Communist Revolutionaries and 'concentration camps', alongwith the demand for release of all political prisoners were raised. But as the party had not come out of the sectarian influence fully this movement could not be made broad-based and led forward at state-level.

It was after the Party state committee launching an all round political reorganisation struggling against all manifestations of sectarianism during 1983-84 that the significance of launching a democratic movement for the release of all political prisoners was fully realised. At that time some of the Naxalite prisoners were languishing in the jails for 14 years. With the slogan 'Release all political prisoners' a broad based Political Prisoners Release Committee was formed with com. Sankaranarayanan Thampal, a veteran Communist and the speaker of Kerala assembly during the first Communist ministry, and com. K. V. K. Warriar, another veteran Communist in the leadership. A state-level mass movement was launched. For the first time this democratic movement became a platform for the CPI (ML) cadres to address the masses in a big way and to explain the politics for which the Naxalites were suppressed and kept in jail. Comrades Thampal, Warriar and later com. K. P. R. Gopalan, and many other veteran Communists who had left CPI and CPI (M), democrats, writers and artists helped to make it a mass movement. Legal steps also were taken. As a result of this powerful democratic movement all the political prisoners were released by 1985-86.

In continuation to these democratic movements, in 1989 when the fascist threats posed by Sangh Parivar had started becoming visible, party organised a massive All India Anti-Fascist Convention at Thrissur in which veteran Communists and democrats from all over India participated. Later when the state government pro-

scribed a drama under pressure from Christian fundamentalists, a much more broad based convention in defence of artistic expression and democratic rights was organised mobilising many thousands.

In all these democratic movements, continuing and at the same time developing the glorious tradition of the undivided Communist movement, the party state committee has launched struggles for the defence of existing democratic rights and for expanding them as a part of the struggle for People's Democracy and socialism. In these struggles party has succeeded in bringing together broadest sections of progressive democratic secular forces. Veteran Communists, democrats, educationists, writers and artists are brought together. One important reason why the campaign launched for immediate enquiry into the fake-encounter killing of com. Varghese in 1970 and for re-opening the case of killing of com Varkala Vijayan inside the 'concentration camp' at Thiruvananthapuram during Emergency could evoke such public response and could bring together all the relatives of martyrs and democratic forces with the party comrades is due to the continuation of the Communist tradition by the party. This has become possible because of the consistent struggle the party was waging against all manifestations of sectarianism as a part of the uncompromising struggle against the powerful presence of old and modern revisionism in the state, the revisionism transformed to social democracy and in power.

One important aspect of this democratic movement launched in Kerala is that the party is not seeing this struggle in isolation. It is linked with the struggle for democracy all over the country. Party sees that these violations of democratic rights and brutal suppression of revolutionary movement has taken place and is still taking place on a wider scale in other states. Comrades Charu Majumdar and Suroj Dutta in Bengal, Panchadri Krishnamurthi and Vempatappu Satyanarayana in AP and thousands of others in these states and elsewhere were tortured and murdered under police custody. This intensifying state terror is paving the way for unprecedented criminalisation of the society at all levels.

So, as part of the protracted struggle for the New Democratic Revolution, the party should consistently wage struggle for the defence of existing democratic rights and for expanding them uniting broadest sections of democratic forces. In this respect, as we should do

in other fields also, we should carry forward the positive lessons of the undivided Communist movement. By doing so the party state committee has achieved good experience in democratic movements in Kerala. All other state committees can take lessons from the positive aspects of this movement and apply them according to concrete conditions in each state for developing powerful broad-based democratic movements.

- Observer -

Pinochet and Pope

It was on 25 November 1998 that the highest court in England, the House of Lords, ruled that Pinochet, former military dictator of Chile do not enjoy immunity from prosecution for crimes against humanity committed in Chile in 1970s and 1980s. The people in Chile and in support of them the democratic forces everywhere were exposing and condemning the US backed regime of Pinochet for systematically committing rape, torture, murder, massacres, disappearances etc.

From 25 November itself the imperialist camp and all supporters of dictator Pinochet have unleashed a well orchestrated propaganda campaign against this court order and calling for preventing his transfer to Spain for trial on multiple crimes he and his cronies committed. Now the imperialist powers, mainly the US is afraid that such criminal suits against US military, secret service and government agents may come up for the heinous crimes they are committing around the world grossly violating all human rights. Unlike the Pinochets do everywhere, the fact that he is only legally detained, that the charges against him are not frivolous or trumped up, that he is not being tortured, that he is given all luxurious facilities plus full access to best lawyers and proper defence, that he is not languishing 'incommunicado' in a filthy clandestine prison, that he is not subjected to a 'disappearance' act with his body found floating down river Santiago, unlike done by his criminal regime to many lakhs of innocent people and democratic forces does not make any difference to imperialist vultures and their agents everywhere.

When progressive forces around the world are demanding trial and punishment of Pinochet,

Budget: Last Nail in the Coffin of Swadeshi

P. J. James

The whole set of economic policies initiated by the B.J.P government as a continuation of that pursued by its predecessor governments as per IMF-WB-WTO dictates has added a new dimension to the unprecedented recession and inflation devastating the country and its people. The first budget of Sinha, that is the budget for 1998-99, which envisaged a process of "kick-starting" of the economy, truly adhering to the mission of "deepening, broadening and accelerating" globalisation has already done immense damage to the country. The 'Economic Survey' submitted to parliament as a prelude to the budget for 1999-2000 vividly explains this. For instance, according to it, the industrial sector has sharply decelerated to the decade's lowest level of 3.5% as of now; exports have gone down to a whopping minus 5.8%; the fiscal position of the government has become very critical and that only public administration and defence have shown signs of expansion in the economy. Though agriculture is reported to be in a favourable position, much of this has been due to the growth in commercial or export oriented crops. On the other hand, the Survey was trying to cover up the negative growth exhibited in the case of poor people's staple like rice and wheat. This clearly points towards an impending threat to the country's food security itself. Among other things, the Survey has also shed light on the symptoms of an imminent balance of payment crisis too. However, if these 'confessions' by the government lead us to expect some concrete steps in the budget in the dire-

the reactionaries are waging systematic campaigns for saving him. Now Pope from Rome also has joined this symphony totally exposing where he stands, for the downtrodden or for the privileged. It is not different from the stands of earlier Popes blessing Mussolini and supporting the fascist forces.

Progressive forces should relentlessly campaign to expose and defeat the imperialist games played to suppress the democratic forces who demand the trial of Pinochet, and the heinous support to this fascist dictator extended from all corners by reactionaries. ●

ction of alleviating industrial and agricultural recession and external payments problems, then we are definitely mistaken. For using a camouflage of high-sounding rhetorics on social and human development Sinha is extending a human face on his comprador mission of what he calls "deepening and widening globalisation and accelerating liberalisation".

Rhetorics on Social Welfare Programmes

Drawing intellectual resources from Amartya Sen and various Imperialist think tanks, a major part of Sinha's budget speech was devoted to imparting a 'human face' to globalisation and liberalisation of the Indian economy. Of course, it is very revealing that at present the World Bank itself is the staunchest protagonist of decentralisation, people's participation, etc. As a result, even when making severe cuts in allocations in real terms for social service sectors such as education, health, rural development, poverty alleviation, etc. thereby progressively withdrawing the state from the *non* as per Fund B-bank conditionalities, Sinha does this under the garb of decentralisation and Panchayati Raj. Thus strictly adhering to the World Bank prognosis on the subject, under the cover of rhetorics, all the social service sectors are handed over to Panchayats, self-help groups and NGOs. For instance, Sinha envisages the creation of 50,000 such self-help groups in the immediate future. In the sphere of primary education the budget reiterates its resolve to further intensify the World Bank sponsored DPEP throughout the country. Signalling the government policy of re-structuring the entire primary education except that of elite schools on non-formal lines, the government intends to create 1.8 lakh schools in the NGO sector. Such schools where the state will have little financial responsibility will be modelled after the Education Guarantee Centres in Madhya Pradesh which have already attracted the attention of international funding agencies. A host of high sounding programmes such as the Human Development Initiative, Deen Dayal Programme, various rural schemes (replacing the already existing projects such as Nehru Rozgar Yojana, Indira Awas Yojana, etc.) are

also there to hoodwink the people. In the meanwhile, to appease the rural rich, programmes such as enhancing the number of Kisan Credit Cards from 6 lakhs to 20 lakhs are also there.

Dwindling Productive Expenditures

If Sinha's assumption regarding a 13% nominal GDP growth in 1999-2000 is taken at its face value, the total plan expenditure of Rs. 77,000 crores in the budget shows only a nominal growth of 6.9% compared to the 1998-99 budget estimate, clearly indicating a real reduction in government investment in vital economic sectors. Economic infrastructures relating to agriculture, industry, energy, etc. have lower allocations than what was the case with the previous budget. In the specific case of steel and mines, petroleum and natural gas, fertilisers and chemicals, etc., as exemplified in the budget, outlays are lower even in nominal terms. This real reduction in government's capital investment in productive sectors at a time when the country is confronting a recession will have disastrous consequences for the country as a whole.

On the other hand, the upward trend in respect of defence expenditure and interest payment which are drags on the productive sectors persists without any let up. Pegged at Rs. 45,694 crores, defence outlay shows an increase of 11%. A major part of it will be swallowed up by global arms producers and dealers in association with traitorous elements within the country. Similarly, interest payment in this budget is an all-time high of more than Rs. 80,000 crores based on modest estimates. No doubt these non-productive and reactionary outlays are a manifestation of the neocolonial character of the Indian economy, its extreme decay and degeneration.

Dismantling Public Sector and Monopolisation of Private Sector

One of the most anti-national and anti-people moves is the budgeted Rs 10,000 crores to be collected through the sale or so-called disinvestment of government equity in successful public sector units (PSUs). In fact, compared to the budget estimate of Rs.5,000 crores, the government had collected almost Rs. 9,000 crores in 199-99 through this route. It implies either distress selling (ie; at throw-away prices or at terms dictated by speculators) of PSUs'

equities or compelling them into cross-holding of their stocks. As outlined by Sinha in his budget speech, the Disinvestment Commission (the comprador-bureaucratic body set up to demollish public sector) has already submitted 8 reports regarding the disinvestment of 43 PSUs. He also pointed out that more PSUs will be referred to the commission. In a situation where the globalisation-liberalisation-privatisation process is progressively taking away millions of employment opportunities especially through so called mergers and acquisitions, and where public sector forms the only source of employment in the organised sector, this demolition of PSUs will have far reaching repercussions for the people. No doubt, the new Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS) and massive retrenchment programmes laid down in the budget will result in untold miseries to the broad masses.

As against this, the budget offers a host of economic incentives and tax concessions for further monopolisation and concentration of private monopolies. In consonance with the major trend in the imperialist world economy, the fiscal package extends certain new incentives for amalgamations and acquisitions. This will enable MNCs and global speculative financiers to swallow up Indian assets without bringing any additional capital or creating any productive capacity or employment opportunities. To facilitate this, all anti-monopoly legislations including the remnants of MRTP are being thrown to the winds. Another wave of de-industrialisation and destruction of productive forces is in the offing.

Red Carpet to MNCs and Global Speculators

The process of subjugating the productive sectors of the economy to the dictates of speculative finance is further strengthened through a series of new incentives offered to MNCs and NRIs, in the currency and capital markets. The provision of 75% equity for a range of sectors including pharmaceuticals (the new Patents Bill incorporating these aspects as demanded by pharmaceutical MNCs and WTO Secretariat is already there in the parliament and 100% automatic approval to NRIs will transform vital sectors of the country as mere captives of global capital. Of course, this is to be read along with the budget proposals to hand over the financial services such as insurance

and banking services to global financiers in accordance with the Malhotra and Narasimham Committee reports. Further, to appease MNCs and in tune with WTO conditionalities, the peak net customs duty rate has been trimmed from 45% to 40% along with the abolition of a special customs duty prevailing at present. At the same time as if to assuage certain comprador business sections and to add a tinge of 'Swadeshi' to the entire traitorous programme, a surcharge on customs duty has also been imposed.

The entire package of incentives offered to the housing sector including the raising of interest exemption to Rs. 75,000/- coupled with the abolition of Urban Land Ceiling and the reported move to throw open housing sector to MNCs and NRIs are all aimed at boosting the real estate, hotel and tourism 'industry'. Along with this, the proposal to fully exempt all incomes and dividends from mutual funds from direct taxes and the concessions extended to UTI investment is leading the country towards that like situation. As a matter of fact, the post-budget reduction in interest rates and cash reserve ratio by the RBI is also intended to boost the stock and financial markets by diverting bank deposits into them. In the ultimate analysis, all these will transfer wealth and assets into the hands of global 'hot money' dealers and speculators.

Deception and Statistical Jugglery

The fiscal deficit of Rs. 91,025 crores (5.6% of GDP) as envisaged in the budget estimate of 1998-99 finally ended up as Rs. 1,03,737 crores (6.5% of GDP) in the revised estimate. In the context of the ever-worsening resource mobilisation by the government (for instance, the tax to GDP ratio has declined from 10.9% in 1991-92 to 8.3% in 1999-2000), Sinha very well knows that the fiscal deficit for 1999-2000 would be staggering. Hence to appease his Fund-Bank masters and to hoodwink the common people he has resorted to two kinds of manipulations. The first is to leave out Rs. 25,000 crores (which approximately equals 1.3 to 1.4% of GDP) of small savings collection which goes to the states from the deficit figure in the name of a new accounting system adopted by the government now onwards. The second is to replace the old series on GDP with 1980-81 as base year with a new series on GDP with 1993-94 as base. It is common knowledge that the new series be-

ing a highly inflated one, a given fiscal deficit will yield a lower fiscal deficit to GDP ratio. These statistical juggleries alone have enabled Sinha to arrive at a deceptive and doctored figure of fiscal deficit amounting to 4% of GDP or Rs. 79,955 crores for the year 1999-2000. In other words, if the above statistical juggleries had not been used, in normal terms the fiscal deficit for 1999-2000 would be 5.8% of GDP or almost Rs. 1,05,000 crores.

Feeble and Inflationary Resource Mobilisation

As noted by us earlier, the government's resource mobilisation has been secularly deteriorating since the onset of globalisation in 1991 as manifested in the ever-declining tax to GDP ratio. The major reason for this has been the reluctance on the part of Indian state and its imperialist masters to widen the tax base and tax the rich. In spite of a 10% surcharge on corporate and income taxes (out of a population of almost 100 crores, only 1.4 crores pay income tax in India!) the tax to GDP ratio is going to decline further from 8.83% in 1998-99 to 8.3% in 1999-2000. Since the surcharge on taxes wholly belongs to the Union government, the additional revenue of Rs. 3,100 crores collected through direct taxes need not be shared with states, in spite of the rhetoric on decentralisation. On the other hand the bulk of additional revenue amounting to Rs. 6,234 crores collected through so called 'rationalisation' of customs and excise duties will be transferred to the shoulders of broad masses of people through increased prices and costs. In his budget speech Sinha has projected a 19% rise in indirect tax revenue during 1999-2000. This is based on an expected 13% nominal or 6-7% real growth of GDP in the coming year. However in the light of the recessionary trends in agriculture and industry, it may be stated that these projections are difficult to materialise. Then the much trumpeted talk on fiscal consolidation and fiscal stabilisation will become meaningless.

Obviously, under globalisation and monetarism, budgetary policy forms only a minor part of government's overall economic policy. This is manifested in the government's resource mobilisation effort itself. Extra budgetary means of raising revenues, i.e. through both pre-budgetary and post-budgetary hikes in the administered prices of essential commodities and services

News from States

Parliament March Against Anti-People Budget

Against central budget for 1999-2000 presented by BJP government serving the interests of MNCs and native rich, CPI (ML) Red, Flag Delhi state committee, and TUCI, New Democratic Youth Organisation (NDYO) and Secular Socialist Front activists organised a parliament march on 1st March. The marchers condemned the BJP government for nakedly surrendering the country to imperialist dictates thereby intensifying the neocolonisation.

The march was addressed by comrades Freddy for CPI (ML) Red Flag. John Mathews

have become a regular feature nowadays. Of course, the ruling classes have identified this as the most convenient method of shifting the entire burden of resource mobilisation to the shoulders of toiling people. Under monetarism, as the planning process itself is becoming more and more redundant, the budget is being reduced to nothing more than an 'annual financial statement' of the government. In other words the erstwhile link with budgeting and planning is becoming irrelevant day by day. Finance minister's reference to a transition to zero-base budgeting (budget that does not entertain any past commitment and therefore starts from a zero base) in the next year amply illustrates this.

Still, the budget throws light on the major trends and the direction in which the economy is moving. Instead of doing anything worthwhile to alleviate the intensifying recession in the productive sectors, the proposals in the budget, if materialised, will deepen the stagnation in agriculture and industry leading to hitherto unknown levels of unemployment, poverty and starvation of the broad masses of people. Meanwhile the neocolonial plunder over the country is moving to unprecedented heights. Only the MNCs and the local rich who are allied with them are the gainers. The sooner a political solution is found out to reverse this deplorable situation, the better.

(Convenor, TUCI Delhi Committee), Rajeev (NDYO) and Alam Sher (Secular Socialist Front). Explaining the contents of this budget all of them exposed its anti-national, anti-people character. On the one hand it opens the country further for neocolonial plunder under the dictates of IMF-WB-WTO and pampers the comprador ruling classes. On the other hand it pauperises the masses further through liberalisation policies, and by taking away even the existing welfare facilities in the name of cutting down subsidies. The public sector is further demolished surrendering all fields to MNCs. This budget will only devalue the Rupee further, intensify recession in industrial and agricultural fields, cause more inflation, and intensify price-rise and unemployment. In continuation to the freight-hikes in railway-budget these budget proposals will only ruin the vast majority of people. The March called upon all progressive democratic forces to rally alongwith workers, agricultural workers and peasantry to fight back these reactionary policies and to oust the anti-people BJP government. It gave the stirring call for advancing along the path of an anti-Imperialist democratic programme.

Discussions, Seminars and demonstrations focussing on the anti-people nature of the budget were organised in different states by party committees as well as by class and mass organisations. Large number of people participated in all these programmes.

West Bengal Bandh

A successful bandh was observed in West Bengal on 26 February demanding reopening of the enquiry into the large scale killings of CPI (ML) leaders and activists including comrades Chrau Majumdar and Saroj Dutta in early 1970s. Under different pretexts the LF ministry led by CPI (M) ruling the state for last 22 years was avoiding such an enquiry. The two judicial enquires ordered in 1977 after LF ministry first came to power were aborted to deny justice. The

bandh called by CPI (ML) Liberation was actively supported by CPI (ML) Red Flag and other revolutionary and democratic organisations.

Chennai Slum Dwellers Organisation Formed

At a convention of large number of slum-dwellers already organised under 25 local slum organisations held on 28 February a Chennai city level Slum-Dwellers Organisation (Chennai Nagara Kudusai Val Makkal Nala Sangam) was formed to struggle for the immediate demands of the slum-dwellers whose number is nearly 10 lakhs. The Convention called for (1) transferring the Slum Clearance Board (SCB) to Chennai Municipal Corporation, (2) transferring the ownership rights of SCB quarters to residents, (3) providing loans at subsidised rates to slum-dwellers to construct their houses, (4) providing construction materials at subsidised rates, (5) an end to all evictions of slum-dwellers, and (6) for providing basic amenities to all slum-dwellers.

A Chennai level committee is formed with comrades K. V. Raman, corporation councillor and freedom fighter as its president, Neendapayanam Sundaram and A. Selvam as vice-presidents, V. Natarajan as secretary, S. Vedhanayagam and R. Chinnathampi as joint secretaries and R. Gunasekaran as treasurer. A campaign and action programme to achieve the immediate demands are also chalked out.

Kerala: Martyrs memorial week

CPI (ML) Red Flag state committee observed, continuing the practice in previous years one week from 2 to 8 March. In memory of the martyr comrades Varkala Vijayan, P. Rajan and Angadipuram Balakrishnan, who sacrificed their lives in the struggle against the fascist rule during emergency. While comrades Vijayan and Rajan were tortured to death in the police concentration camps, com. Balakrishnan sacrificed his life while taking revenge against a notorious police officer during the 2-8 week of March 1976. Campaigns were organised in memory of the Comrades and the significance of anti-emergency fight and its relevance today when we are engaged in a bitter struggle against intensifying neocolonisation and communal fascist threat. Large number of people including the relatives

and friends of the martyrs participated in the public meetings conducted at various places including Varkala, Thiruvananthapuram district.

KVS State Conference

The eleventh state conference of the revolutionary student organisation in Kerala, KVS, was held on 26-27 February at Perambra, Kozhikode district. Before the state conference district conferences were held in all districts where along with district report the state reports were also presented by state leadership. The inaugural meeting was held at Com. P. Rajan Nagar. It was inaugurated by CPI (ML) Red Flag C.R.C. member Com. Somasekharan. Com. Sinimol, state president of KVS presided. It was followed by registration of delegates and the first session where com. V. K. Balraj presented the report.

A seminar on "Reforms in education sector and future of public education system" was held with special reference to the struggle led by KVS along with other democratic organisations against the DPEP system. Com. P. J. Baby who presented the subject pointed out that while changes in the curriculum and education system are required, they should not be introduced with the idea of winding up the public education itself as is done in the case of DPEP with World Bank loans. What is required is creating conditions for universal education with a national and democratic syllabus. Dr. Ajoykumar, V. K. Balraj, K. Lohia and others spoke.

The delegate session adopted the state report after a serious discussion. Resolutions demanding withdrawal of DPEP, against communalisation of education, demanding end to moves to hike tuition fees at all levels again, demanding withdrawal of Patents Amendment and Insurance Regulatory Acts, an end to attacks on women etc. were adopted. A 15 member new state committee was formed which re-elected comrades Sinimol and V. K. Balraj as president and secretary respectively. Representatives of party and class/mass organisations extended greetings to the state conference.

The conference concluded with a well attended public meeting inaugurated by com. K. T. Kunhikannan, president of Yuvajana state committee. He called on the students to organise militant struggle against the policies of central and state governments to end public

education, and to commercialise and communalise the education. The conference served as another significant step forward in developing KVS activities to all parts of the state.

International Women's Day

International Women's Day was observed on 8 March in all districts organising campaigns and public meetings focussing on achieving women's rights in all fields. In a situation when atrocities against women are increasing every where these programmes organised by Democratic Women's Organisation (DWO) were a big success.

Anti-Pollution Struggle by Yuvajanavedi

Demanding a permanent solution to the acute pollution problem created by Mavoor Gwalior Rayons and prosecution of Birla management Yuvajanavedi has launched an indefinite agitation. As a result of pollution of Challyar river and its surroundings which are heavily populated have become hazardous to people. The fish wealth of Challyar is destroyed and water has become heavily polluted. Large number of people are affected by diseases linked with pollution. Though every year the pollution issue is raised by people, consecutive governments and Pollution Control Board have failed to take any action. The TU leaderships one-sidedly see only the interests of 3000 workers employed in this factory, not of the lakhs of people affected by pollution.

In this situation mobilising the democratic forces Yuvajanavedi has demanded that the factory should be operated ensuring pollution control. The pollution control board should be activated and Birla management should be prosecuted. A district-wide campaign is organised in Kozhikode district for last one month. Public meetings, demonstrations and dharnas are organised. Now the agitation is extended to nearby districts also mobilising more forces.

Ramesan Day observed

The 19th anniversary of the martyrdom of Com: Ramesan, activist of People's Cultural Forum who was in the forefront of struggle against gambling dens in Kannur district and who was murdered by the goonda gangs of these den-own-

ers who were enraged by the success of the struggle, was observed at Kannur town on 14th March. A reception committee was formed earlier to organise it. The day was observed with Prabhathabheri, floral tributes at the martyr's column, Ramesan Day memorial speech on 'Marxism and Postmodernism' by Com: M. M. Somasekharan and a well-attended public meeting addressed by comrades P. K. Venugopalan, K.N. Ajoykumar, K. T. Kunhikkannan.

State-wide dharna on sex-racket cases

The LDF had fought last election assuring that action will be taken against all those who are involved in a number of sex racket cases that took place recently in Kerala. But once in power it has refused to take any action in these cases where large number of senior police officers, bureaucrats, rich men and political leaders including Kunjalkutty, the former minister of Muslim League are involved. With the slogans: Expose and defeat the LDF government's manoeuvres to write-off the sex racket cases, Take action against all the accused in these cases, Democratic Women's Organisation and Yuvajanavedi organised campaigns and state wide dharnas in all district centres on 24th February. The organisations have declared to continue agitation till the accused are booked.

Share of World Income

		percent of total world income			
		1965	1970	1980	1990
Population					
Poorest	20%	2.3	2.2	1.7	1.4
Second poorest	20%	2.9	2.8	2.2	1.8
Third poorest	20%	4.2	3.9	3.5	2.1
Fourth poorest	20%	21.2	21.3	18.3	11.3
Richest	20%	69.5	70.1	75.4	83.4

(America Journal of Sociology, Vol. 102, No.4, Jan-'97)

Kurdish leader arrested

The arrest of Abdullah Ocalan, leader of Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) is a serious blow to the liberation movement of Kurds spread across four countries, Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. For 15 years he was the most wanted man for Turkish government as he was leading the liberation struggle which has claimed more than 30,000 killed in Turkey alone due to the brutal attacks by Turkish army. He was taken in custody in Keniya where he had taken shelter in the Greek embassy as the movement had suffered setbacks and he had to go on exile outside the Kurdish area.

The nearly 30 to 35 million strong Kurds divided into the border regions of four countries are deprived of basic democratic rights and are treated as second class citizens in these countries. Their decades long liberation movement for the right of self-determination and the right of constituting a single Kurdish nation is brutally suppressed by all these governments. The socialist inclination of Ocalan was utilised by Turkish authorities to suppress PKK as part of its *holy war* against Communism with the support of NATO powers. The US imperialists who utilise Kurdish problem to condemn Saddam Hussain and to transform northern Iraq into a free-flying area for them are playing a heinous game by supporting massacre of Kurds in Turkey. Thus the imperialists and the comprador governments in these countries are united in denying the right of self-determination to Kurdish people.

The arrest of Ocalan has evoked strong protest from the Kurdish people. More than one million Kurds working as immigrants in Western European countries are violently protesting against this arrest and suppression of Kurdish people. However hard the imperialists and these comprador governments try, they cannot just wish away the Kurdish problem.

The progressive forces should protest against the arrest of Ocalan. They should support the right of self-determination of the Kurdish people.

US imperialists colluded in the capture of Ocalan by Turkish commandos. Now he is denied a just trial and subjected to torture in an island prison. A special court-something like a military court-is constituted for his trial. These heinous

crimes of Turkish government and the imperialists supporting it should be severely condemned.

On Calorie intakes in India

The National Sample Survey (NSS) data recently published show that the calorie intake per person in India has fallen since 1970. In rural India average calorie intake fell from 2266 Kcals in 1972-73 to 2221 in 1983 and to 2153 in 1993-94. In the urban areas it went down from 2107 Kcals in 1972-73 to 2089 in 1983 and 2071 in 1993-94. This is only half of the calorie intake in imperialist countries. The continuous fall in calorie intakes is an index of increasing impoverisation of the masses.

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Severely Condemn Barbaric US Aggression against Yugoslavia

US imperialists and their NATO allies have launched barbaric aggression against Yugoslavia. Following the criminal aggression against Iraq, this wanton attack on another UN member country by a bunch of imperialist gangster countries have made the UN practically redundant. At the beginning of the new millennium these barbaric acts have dragged down the world to a new Dark Age.

There is not a single country in the world today which is free of ethnic racial, nationalist, religious fundamentalist like questions. Everywhere especially in the former socialist countries these questions are instigated and intensified by the imperialists, not for their progressive resolution as is repeatedly proved, but to divide these peoples, to disintegrate these countries, and to impose imperialist hegemony.

The ethnic Albanian question in Kosovo is no exception. It is being utilised to further disintegrate Yugoslavia and to impose NATO hegemony all over Europe including Russia. It is a grave threat not only to people of Europe, but to world people as a whole.

We appeal to all progressive forces to come out on the streets against this heinous and pernicious aggression by the NATO forces led by US imperialists with all possible might. Clinton and the gangsters like him, the imperialist forces who are enemies of mankind, should not be allowed to escape unpunished. Let us raise the banner of anti-imperialist rebellion everywhere.

New Delhi,
29-March 1999.

All India Secretary,
CPI (ML) Red Flag,

Era of giant Corporations

In the 1999-2000 budget the BJP's finance minister has provided all facilities to the monopolies for mergers and amalgamations to make much bigger corporations. Already such mergers among industrial houses in India and amalgamation of Indian houses or firms with MNCs are on the increase. At global level these are taking place with amazing speed turning the era of imperialism into an era of giant corporations.

In US, Exxon merges with Mobil. Citicorp with Travelers, Daimler Benz with Chrysler, Bank America with Nations Bank, World Com gobbles up MCI. As a result these MNCs are becoming bigger and bigger influencing and dominating the life of people and countries. These autocratic corporations are increasingly controlling

the governments and international imperialist agencies.

Consequences of growing power of giant MNCs is increased disparity in wealth and the MNCs deciding the destiny of the world with little consideration for public opinion. In US the so-called *American Dream* is transformed into criminal, violent virus afflicting most of the elites. In his book *Corporation Nation*, Charles Derber points out that parallel to the age of robber barons 100 years ago, through the mergers of MNCs the widening gap between rich and poor is increasing very fast. Bill Gates net worth of over dollar 50 billion is more than that of the bottom 40% or 100 million US citizens. MNCs influence all decisions making with both the major parties of US—Democrats and Republicans—bought off by big business.

(Contd. P. 2)

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