

# Red Star

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# AN APPEAL TO JOIN THE ALL INDIA ANTI-NUCLEAR POWER CONVENTION

**T**HE SERIOUSNESS of the meltdown at Fukushima nuclear plant in Japan following the earth quake and tsunami, however hard the corporate media and the nuclear establishment is trying to play it down, is becoming common knowledge day by day. After *Three Mile Island* and *Chernobyl*, it has exposed the catastrophic nature of the nuclear power plants at present level of development of nuclear technology and problems related to nuclear waste disposal. In spite of it, the UPA government went ahead with signing the nuclear agreements with the US and the protocols with the IAEA against the growing popular opposition to it. Based on these agreements it is going ahead with the proposed Jaitapur nuclear power plant, even when the people of the whole region, especially the farmers who are displaced for it and the fisher people are waging relentless struggles against it. Besides, new nuclear power plants are proposed in AP, MP, W. Bengal, UP, Haryana and Rajasthan besides expanding the plants in TN and Karnataka.

Besides the present Uranium mines, new mines are opened in AP and Karnataka. These are extremely dangerous steps taken up rejecting the growing popular opposition to the building of new nuclear power plants. Wherever the new plants are proposed the peasantry is in revolt against them, opposing their displacement. While it is a serious problem, apart from displacement, the danger posed by the proposed nuclear power plants and the existing nuclear plants is a matter of great importance which should be taken up at national level in the context of the international campaign developing against the threat of nuclear catastrophe.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster on 26th April an International Anti-Nuclear Day was observed with the following three slogans: 1. *Stop construction of all new nuclear power plants;* 2. *Shut down all existing nuclear power plants;* and 3. *Implement universal nuclear disarmament.* In countries like Germany a number of the existing plants are closed down and the remaining also in the process of being closed down. Internationally the campaign is gaining strength with none of the so-called developed countries are taking up construction of any new nuclear plants. At the same time they are trying to export their outdated nuclear power plants to countries like India.

In this situation, it is a matter of paramount importance for all the progressive forces concerned with the future of humanity to get together and to wage a relentless campaign to be followed by a countrywide struggle to force the

government to implement the above three slogans, developing the present struggles going on at all places where new nuclear plants are proposed to resist the displacement from their agricultural land to a comprehensive struggle against the very concept of going for nuclear energy at the present level of development of the nuclear technology. Such a campaign should take up the question of the security of the existing nuclear power plants and the question of universal nuclear disarmament also.

On 9th August the Janhit Sewa Samithi and Machimar Krithi Samithi, which are spearheading the anti-Jaitapur Movement with Konkan Bachao Samithi are organizing a Parliament March to oppose the proposed Jaitapur nuclear power plant. It is proposed that, at the same time, an All India Anti-Nuclear Power Convention may be organized at **New Delhi on 10th August at Speaker Hall, VP House** with the participation of the anti-nuclear committees which are already formed in different states, to help the coordination of the struggles going on against the proposed nuclear plants and to develop the movement to address the above three central slogans. We request you to depute your representatives to participate in this convention. ●

*Sanjay Singhvi*  
*Convener, Reception Committee*  
*All India Anti-Nuclear Convention*

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## SEVERELY CONDEMN MUMBAI SERIAL BOMB BLASTS

**M**ORE THAN a decade after the serial terrorist attacks, Mumbai faced a serial bomb blast on 13th July in which many are killed and hundreds injured. Whichever agency or outfit is responsible for it should be severely condemned. It is a dastardly action aimed at ordinary people which will only please the imperialists, especially US imperialists, and their lackeys, who are working hard to destabilize and disintegrate the region as is done in Pakistan. Remember it took place when the second round of the resumed discussion with Pakistan is about to take place, when Indian people are intensifying struggle against corruption and price rise created by neo-liberal policies, and when the communalization is becoming less severe. With these blasts those who planned it have achieved many things which will gladden only the imperialists and the compradore rulers in India. So it is done by their agents, who are enemies of the people. ●

# MAKE THE NINTH PARTY CONGRESS A GREAT SUCCESS

**T**HE NINTH CONGRESS of the CPI (ML) is being held at a very important juncture in the history of our country. More than six decades have elapsed since the transfer of power in 1947. During this period, the neo-colonization has reached its zenith and neo-liberal policies are devastating every aspect of economic, social, cultural and ecological field. As a result, all the major contradictions in the country have sharpened to unprecedented levels. Abandoning of all welfare policies and intensification of the imperialist dictated globalization-liberalization-privatization policies have pauperized the masses while a small percentage of elite classes have become super-rich. All these developments have created such a situation that, more than ever, the urgency of overthrowing the Indian state led by the comprador bureaucratic bourgeois-landlord classes serving imperialism, especially US imperialism, has come to the forefront. Or the objective condition for completing the People's Democratic Revolution and advancing towards the socialist revolution has once again matured.

An over view of the nine decades long history of the communist movement in this country shows that this is not the first time conditions for revolution under the leadership of the working class had ripened here. During the colonial times and later, following the transfer of power, such conditions had existed. But since the leadership of the Party failed to analyze the concrete conditions of the country scientifically and to develop and apply the Marxist-Leninist principles according to these conditions, in spite of excellent situation the revolution could not materialize. The Party could not be strengthened and the leadership of the working class could not be established in the independence movement and in the post-1947 Indian situation.

Once again, from the 1960s though the revolutionary situation was once again maturing, the CPI-CPI (M) forces under the influence of the Soviet revisionist line deviated to right opportunist positions and abandoned the path of PDR. Though the CPI (ML) could bring the PDR back to the agenda of the communist movement, it came under the sway of the left adventurist line dominating the CP of China then and soon disintegrated. As a result, in spite of numerous sacrifices and mass upsurges, the revolutionary offensive went on getting postponed.

It is in this situation, in continuation to the four decades long ideological struggle taking place within the revolutionary movement, analyzing the transformation of colonial forms of imperialist plunder to neo-colonial forms during the post-Second World War period and its consequences in the country, the analysis of the character of Indian State, the principal contradiction in the present situation and the Path of Revolution were adopted by the Bhopal Conference in 2009. It gave a great fillip to the revolutionary movement, spreading the Party to almost all states, building all class and mass organizations at all India level, taking active part in most of the people's movements against displacement and neo-liberal policies, initiating a broad-based platform of revolutionary left and democratic forces and developing many campaigns and struggles under its leadership. It is in this background the Ninth Congress is held to consolidate the ideological, political, organizational gains so far, and to further advance the reorganization of the Party based on the new Party Program to be adopted in the Congress. The Ninth Congress is also held in the background

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of the founding of the International Coordination of the Revolutionary Parties and Organizations (ICOR) in October 2010, uniting the organizations in 35 countries.

Recognizing the great significance of the Party reorganization process taken up, the Central Committee Had decided before the 2009 Bhopal Conference to make the draft documents available for all broad left sections, sympathizers and friends of the movement so that the discussion on the ideological political questions can be taken to the left masses. This democratization process

was taken to the level of allowing the fraternal delegates and observers attending the Conference to take part in the discussions also. The CC has decided to carry forward this method during the Party Congress also. Accordingly, as soon as the draft documents for the Congress are finalized by the CC, they will be made available for the broad left forces, revolutionary intellectuals and sympathizers and friends of the revolutionary movement for their suggestions and criticisms. The fraternal delegates and the observers from the revolutionary left organizations attending the Conference shall be allowed to participate in the open discussions also if they desire.

With the beginning of the Branch and Local level conferences from 1st June, the Conference process has already started. A political campaign on the significance of the Congress is also started. The CC has appealed to all Party members to intensify this campaign, to carry forward the Conference process in the most democratic form and to make the entire Congress a great success, further strengthening the Party reorganization process and the revolutionary struggles in all fields. ●

## THROW OUT POSCO AND ALL MNCs-CORPORATE FORCES

**T**HE VILLAGERS of Jagjitsinghpur district in Orissa are continuing their life and death struggle to throw out Posco, the MNC brought by the Navin Patnaik government with the blessings of the central government to loot the mineral wealth of the region, to stop their displacement from the vast tracts of agricultural land sustaining them. As the latest reports show, in spite of growing state terror utilized to terrorize and to displace them they are resisting with the whole families involved in the struggle. To serve this MNC, the government managed an environmental certificate also for the project violating all environmental norms. The comprador character of the

bureaucrats and the political leaderships running the government along with that of the ruling classes are fully exposed in these deals.

Not satisfied with providing facilities to Posco to loot the iron ore and other minerals of Orissa, the central government has now managed the BJP-led Karnataka government to provide more than 7000 acres of agricultural land in Gadag district in order to facilitate the looting of the rich iron ore in nearby Bellary district. Whether it is Congress or BJP or BJD of Orissa, the leaderships of all these parties like all other parties in power in different states or sharing power at center are agents of the MNCs and corporate houses. They are snatching the small pieces of land on which the lower middle, marginal and poor peasants survive to satisfy the requirements of the MNCs, corporate houses and land mafias for various projects, SEZs, real estates and so-called infra structural development.

In this situation the peasantry and agricultural workers who survive depending on this land have no other way out but to resist this displacement. As far as the broader sections of democrats and other progressive sections are concerned, it is a policy of devastation of people's lives and ecology pursued by the ruling system. Without resisting it at all costs the survival of the humanity itself is not possible. Taking all these aspects in to consideration, the CPI(ML) is actively involved in various states in the numerous struggles going on against displacement and for ecological protection. In Orissa the Party state committee is actively supporting the struggle launched by the Posco Prathirodh Samithi right from the beginning. As soon as the news of the allotment of land to Posco in Gadag district came out the Karnataka Ryot Sangha (part of the All India Krantikari Kisan Sabha) led by the Party, came out against it, organizing the peasantry to resist it. The struggle is continuing and KRS has declared that it will continue to struggle till Posco and all other MNCs are thrown out and the displacement of the peasantry in the name of development is stopped.

CPI (ML) calls upon all progressive forces to come out in support of the struggles of the peasantry for their survival. ●

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# ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE IN THE MOVEMENT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Sanjay Singhvi

**N**OBODY in their right minds can support “corruption”. No doubt this problem has today taken a dominating role in Indian society. However we have to probe this question deeper, especially in view of the debate going on in society today.

In any society where there is insufficient production to satisfy the needs of all the people, and where, therefore, a system of distribution and exchange is in place, regulated by law, there is always the possibility for corruption. Capitalist society, especially in the phase of imperialism is more prone to this than ever before.

Capitalist is the first society in which it is necessary to maintain the myth of “rule of the majority” while at the same time, maintaining, in reality, the rule of the rich and the powerful – the rule of a minority. Hence in capitalist society, to maintain their exalted status, the rich resort to two different types of corruption – one is direct or outright bribery and the second is to politically closely link big corporate houses, big capitalist interests and the government.

Engels had stated as far back as in 1884, in *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*,

**“The democratic republic officially knows nothing any more of property distinctions [between citizens]. In it, wealth exercises its power indirectly, but all the more surely. On the one hand, in the form of the direct corruption of officials, of which America provides the classical example; on the other hand, in the form of an alliance between government and stock exchange.”**

In his work *A caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism*, Lenin has quoted the above passage from Engels. He then goes on to analyse the essence of corruption in capitalist society and also how corruption changes when capitalism reaches the phase of imperialism,

**“The democratic republic “logically” contradicts capitalism, because “officially” it puts the rich and the poor on an equal footing. That is a contradiction between the economic system and the political superstructure. There is the same contradiction between imperialism and the republic, deepened or aggravated by the fact that the change-over from free competition to monopoly makes the realisation of political freedoms even more “difficult”.**

**How, then, is capitalism reconciled with democracy? By indirect implementation of the omnipotence of capital. There are two economic means for that: (1) direct bribery; (2) alliance of government and stock exchange. (That is stated in our theses — under a bourgeois system finance capital “can freely bribe and buy any government and any official”.)**

**Once we have the dominance of commodity production, of the bourgeoisie, of the power of money — bribery (direct or through the stock exchange) is “achievable” under any form of government and under any kind of democracy.**

**What, it can be asked, is altered in this respect when capitalism gives way to imperialism, i.e., when pre-monopoly capitalism is replaced by monopoly capitalism?**

**Only that the power of the stock exchange increases. For finance capital is industrial capital at its highest, monopoly level which has merged with banking capital. The big banks merge with and absorb the stock exchange. (The literature on imperialism speaks of the declining role of the stock exchange, but only in the sense that every giant bank is itself virtually a stock exchange.)”**

We might add that the situation became even more fraught with contradiction when the old colonial system was replaced by the neo-colonial system. On the one hand, due to it having to replace the colonial system and due to there being such a great prestige enjoyed by the socialist system at that time, the neo-colonial system had to adopt a “more democratic” creed than the earlier colonial system. Bourgeois democracy had to now reconcile to the fact that “all nations are equal” and that all peoples in all nations are also, therefore, equal. At the same time, the imperialist system, based on the dominance of some few nations enslaving all the rest continued, albeit, by new methods. Special institutions like the IMF, WB and others were devised to allow for such domination while maintaining the façade of democracy.

On the other hand, at the same

time, the concentration of finance capital and their control of industry reaches epic proportions under neo-colonialism. There are Structural Adjustment Programs, where the economic programs of the imperialist powers are shoved down the throats of the neo-colonies, all the while maintaining the façade of democracy.

The situation becomes even more undemocratic with the replacement of Keynesian policies by neo-liberal economic policies and by the rise of “globalisation” (which is only a globalisation of capital), where capital must be allowed to freely flow past national boundaries, with scant regard for national laws, traditions, etc.

Through all these transformations the façade of democracy has to be maintained. How is this contradiction between the increasingly undemocratic nature of the economy and the democratic principles of the political system, to be reconciled. The basic methods remain the same as pointed out by Lenin – increasing “open bribery” of the officials (like the 2G scam, CWG scam, etc.) and the ever closer link between the “stock market and the Government” (links today between the MNCs and big Indian Corporate houses and the Government). To this may be added a third phenomenon which was not present at the time of Lenin, viz. the curtailment of even the basic bourgeois democratic rights which have already been granted. Thus the right to unionise, the right to protest, the right to social security are all being curtailed under globalisation, ostensibly as a part of the fight against “terrorism”.

We can see, therefore that to really fight corruption, we need to fight the capitalist system itself. But to leave the analysis at this level would be unacceptably trite – especially when we are faced with massive social revolts against corruption all over the world, none of which have wither the stated or unstated aim of demolishing the capitalist system.’

The first half of this year has seen unprecedented people’s movements all over the world, particularly in the Maghrib and the Middle East. It is not coincidental that in all these movements, the opposition to corruption was a common factor. In Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, etc. the most important demands revolved around price-rise and corruption.

Like we have BRIC or BASIC, a new nomenclature has trundled into popular usage - “PIGS” - referring to Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain – the countries most likely to be unable to honour their public debt. It is not by chance that it is also in these countries and other debt-ridden countries, that Europe has seen the largest public protests against the Government – again targeting corruption.

All these movements against corruption, in a sense, are a godsend for imperialism. When the masses cannot see the real reasons for their plight – the imperialist system itself – when the very facets of the imperialist system itself which promote corruption are not exposed before the masses, as it were, in all their glory – when the communists have not sufficiently analysed the imperialist system – the masses are wont to blame all their misery on the corruption within the system. They cry, not for changing the system but for “plugging its loopholes”.

In India, the movements led by Anna Hazare and Baba Ramdeo are examples of such movements. While accepting that these are of the same milieu as the movements in N. Africa and in West Asia, we must also draw the contrasts. The movements in N. Africa and West Asia, were massive mass movements, in which the working class and the oppressed people were totally drawn and which extended to bringing down the governments in countries where even the façade of democracy had large chinks. In India, we face a more sophisticated and capable ruling class. Also, the movement here has not got the broad popular appeal that was the hallmark of the movements in N. Africa and West Asia. The movements in N. Africa and West Asia clearly identified US imperialism as the enemy (the case of Libya is a particular one, which has to be discussed separately) in contrast to Hazare and Ramdeo. Ramdeo is openly associated with the Hindutva forces, whereas in Hazare’s case it is only a little more masked.

In India, the movement of Baba Ramdeo stands well nigh discredited. However, it is a fact that Anna Hazare enjoys a large support base, especially among the petty-bourgeois sections and the intelligentsia representing them.

The only demand being raised, at least at present, by this movement against corruption is calling for the immediate enactment of the Janlokpal Bill at the centre and the Lokayukt Act at the state level. Though the drafts of these Acts have not yet been completed and are caught in a quagmire of negotiation between the Government and Anna Hazare’s team, we have to discuss the proposed drafts of the two sides.

The background is that there has been in existence a **Prevention of Corruption Act** since 1988. Before the present act, there was an earlier Prevention of Corruption Act enacted in 1947. In the present Act, the definition of corruption is very wide, the definition of “public servant” is wide enough to take into its ambit the Prime Minister and also any judge. Under this Act, Special Courts have been set up dedicated to the prosecution of the corrupt. However, the problem with this Act is that under Section 19 of the Act, the prior permission of the Central Government or the State Government or other person empowered to remove the alleged corrupt officer from office. Such permission is rarely given.

Anna Hazare’s team is quite correct when it raised the argument that there is no need for any such sanction. However, in place of such sanction, they propose a “Janlokpal” who will investigate the complaints made by citizens and,

after being convinced as to their veracity, will prosecute them in the same Special Courts set up under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. So, essentially, they seek to replace the obstacle of ministerial sanction for prosecution with sanction of the “Janlokpal” or “Lokayukta” (at the state level). The fact is, they only seek to replace one obstacle in the way of a citizen seeking to prosecute the corrupt with another. No doubt, there may be hope that the Janlokpal or the Lokayukta will be a more benevolent obstacle than the existing ministerial barrier, but, nevertheless, she / he will be a barrier to be surmounted. The normal citizen will first have to convince the Janlokpal that there is a good case of corruption to be made out and only then will the prosecution of the offender be taken up.

Effectively this means that the corrupt officer will have two chances of defense. At the first there will be an opportunity to convince the Janlokpal that there is no case of corrupt practise to be made out. Even if this cannot be achieved, there is still the opportunity of defence before the special court. In fact, this means that the corrupt will get a chance to test their defence and plug the loop holes before having to face prosecution.

In the first place, why should citizens not be allowed to directly prosecute corrupt officers? The argument usually given, that government officials will be constantly harassed, is not valid. In the first place, the problem is one of too many corrupt officials and not one of too much harassment of government officials. Secondly, this problem can be easily overcome with the device of not even requiring the alleged corrupt official to respond till the court is satisfied that there exists a prima facie case which is not frivolous or vexatious. In fact, by inserting a barrier, either at the ministerial level or at the level of Janalokpal, the corrupt official is only being provided with two opportunities. In the first instance, the Janalokpal has to be convinced about the guilt of such an official. Even if the Janalokpal is convinced, the corrupt official is offered a second opportunity to prove his innocence before the Special Court. The corrupt official will be given an opportunity to test his defence and to refine it and plug the loopholes in it.

There is no reason why we must suspect the common man. As things stand today, any person is allowed to make a criminal complaint against any other person, including the Prime Minister or even a Supreme Court judge before any magistrate within whose jurisdiction the offence is alleged to have occurred. We do not find millions of frivolous cases being filed against the Prime Minister or judges. There is no reason to believe that a similar self-restraint will not be exercised by the common man. On the other hand, we have seen in many cases of corruption that the corrupt officials have changed their defence and thus escaped punishment. This is the problem that the law has to solve.

The most obvious solution therefore would be scrap section 19 of the Prevention of Corruption Act. There is no need then to again introduce a barrier in the form of a Janalokpal. However, there is another manner in which the problem can also be solved, i.e. abolish the Special Courts and keep the Janalokpal as with power to investigate and also to punish. The present Janalokpal bill, both the draft of the Government and of Anna Hazare’s team have the Janalokpal only as an investigative position with no power to punish the corrupt official concerned. The plan is that, after investigation, if the Janalokpal finds that a case has been made out for prosecution, then the Janalokpal will prosecute the corrupt official concerned before the Special Courts. Both drafts accept this basic framework.

If one has to have a Janalokpal, then why one without any teeth? Why not give the Janalokpal the power to award punishment? Rather than taking matters for prosecution before the Special Courts, who are, after all, of the rank of District Judges or Sessions Judges, would it not be better for the Janalokpal to hear a

matter and award the punishment. This procedure would also cure the problem of two stages. The Janalokpal would then become a court where the corrupt are brought to book and punished. This, in fact, is the image of the Janalokpal which has been fed to the public.

The ides of the Janalokpal has been derived from the concept of the Ombudsman, which has been prevalent in Europe since many centuries. Starting from the appointment of an Ombudsman by the King of Sweden to oversee the running of his kingdom while he was to be away for a prolonged time for his campaigns in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Ombudsman became a parliamentary functionary in Sweden in 1809. In 1917, Finland adopted the concept of the Ombudsman and in the 1960s this institution has been adopted in New Zealand, the UK and the US at different levels. The ides has been of an independent functionary who has the power to hear complaints against corrupt officials and to punish them. The idea was introduced in India during earlier Congress regimes as a bill as early as in 1968. However, there has been no progress except for appointments of Lokayukts in some states with very limited powers. Karnataka has one of the most active institutions of Lokayukta. The person who is credited with having drafted the Janalokpal bill, Santosh Hegde, is the Lokayukta of Karnataka. It is surely not a pure chance that the Janalokpal bill incorporates large parts of the Karnataka Lokayukta Act. Also worthy of note is the fact that even with the existence of such a Lokayukta, corruption has hardly been curbed in Karnataka.

The very concept of Ombudsman is of a wise and venerable individual, incorruptible and above reproach – like Ceasar’s wife. Such an individual exists only in concept. In practise, he has connections in society, his own views, many likes and dislikes, blue-eyed boys and whipping



boys, etc. The Second World War was the social milieu for the creation of Superman and Captain America comics. They represented a petty-bourgeois aspiration for heroes who would liberate the people and deliver them from evil. The concept of Ombudsman, as reintroduced in the 1960's is, philosophically, a continuation of this concept of the "Superman".

The draft prepared by Anna Hazare's team is also similar. It does not see the liberation of the people from corruption, except through the process of deliverance of a hero – the Janalokpal. It sees no scope for the people liberating themselves. This is also seen by other portions of the draft made by this team.

Anna Hazare's teams draft calls for the Janalokpal to be appointed by "retired judges and IAS officers" in a transparent process. The hero is to be appointed by a collegium of heroes. As thorough democrats, we have to demand that the Janalokpal will be appointed by the people – by direct elections with the right to recall. It is the people we have to rely upon to fight corruption and it is to them that the power must be given to fight corruption. This method of appointment of the Janalokpal will ensure that the power remains with the people.

The fact that the team of Anna Hazare suggested such a Lokpal is not a coincidence. The main support base of Anna Hazare's team lies among the middle class. It is no wonder therefore, that their aspirations reflect the aspirations of the middle class – of empowering heroes.

It is only when the movement against corruption grips the working class and the peasantry that we will be able to fight corruption from the perspective of the people. This requires that the working class be put into the leadership of the struggle against corruption. It is only in this manner that a genuine answer can be given to the menace of corruption. ●

## ANATOMY OF CORRUPTION

Mukul Sinha

**R**EPORTEDELY over one crore miss calls were made to Anna in support of Janlokpal bill. Evidently none of the callers could ask Anna whether scamstars like Harshad Mehta, Ketan Parekh or Telgi could be booked under the law that Anna asserts would root out corruption from the country. These three gentlemen, Harshad, Ketan and Telgi have together siphoned more money by fraud and cheating than all the scamstars like Quattarocchi, Raja or the like involved in sarkari scams. Anna's much touted Janlokpal law however cannot even book them much less send them to jail!

Why does Anna insist on including the Prime Minister within the scope and ambit of the Janlokpal bill but exclude such illustrious gentlemen? To appreciate such apparent contradictions, we need to do an invasive anatomy of 'corruption' as defined by Anna and his team'. It may be astounding to realize that the Janlokpal bill has not even developed its own definition of this all important delinquency that it seeks to uproot. The authors of the Janlokpal bill (herein after referred to as "JLK") has in section 2(4) defined "corruption" to include anything made punishable under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (herein after referred to as the "PCA"). The definition of 'corruption' in the JLK is therefore not original but borrowed from the PCA and thus suffers from all the congenital defects of the parent statute.

The PCA was never meant to be a law to tackle corruption in general but was a law enacted to punish "public servants" indulging in corrupt practice of accepting bribe in return for doing an official act. Briefly, section (7) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 provides that "whoever, being a public servant, accepts any gratification whatever for showing any favour to any person, or renders any service to any person, be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to five years. Janlokpal bill therefore adopts an extremely truncated and restrictive definition of corruption and excludes every type of fraudulent act or cheating in either public or private domain which are punishable under sections 410 to 424 of IPC. In this situation, people like Harshad Mehta, Ketan Parekh or Telgi may even join the second freedom struggle of Anna to enact the Janlokpal bill since they cannot be booked under JLK!

The vast anger and disgust of the common people against corruption in all walks of life appears to be the motivating factor for various groups to jump into the campaign against corruption; some may have perfectly genuine intentions whereas many may be guided by their own social or political objectives. Be that as it may, the country should not be burdened with yet another useless law due to the myopic arrogance and righteousness of self appointed guardians of the civil society.

Corruption has to be understood in its historicity. It is a primitive parasite that existed from time immemorial and mutates with the change in the mode of production. With advent of capitalism and the fullest development of money as a means of circulation and exchange, corruption has become an integral part of all transactions. Whether you need an admission in the school, whether you need a job, may be a ticket in a cricket match or may be a good treatment in a hospital or a quick transmission of your official file or buy an apartment or seek a license for a 2G spectrum; someone is there to oblige you for an extra



consideration. As long as money exits and money can be exchanged for another commodity or service, corrupt practice will survive.

It is therefore required to be appreciated that rooting out corruption in the present era of globalization is a pipe dream. Money is no longer black or white. As it flows across the borders at enormous speed, visiting profitable bourses and special economic zones or tax havens, money is just green. The most important reason for the generation of 'black' money is the policies of the Government itself. The creation of SEZ or SIR and exempting the industries within such zones from all types of tax is an open invitation for tax evasion. This becomes even more pronounced when India makes treaty with other small countries for tax avoidance.

A small neighboring island Mauritius perhaps generates more black money than all SEZs put together due to the two-decade-old bilateral agreement, the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC). Foreign companies masquerading as Mauritian companies, have invested in India. Taking advantage of the DTAC they avoid paying any taxes both in India and Mauritius. The JPC probe into the 2001 stock market scam, in which the broker Ketan Parekh was the kingpin, revealed large-scale abuse of Mauritius-based companies.

It appears that a case was filed in the High Court of Delhi against the misuse of DTAC way back in 2002. The high Court nullified the Central Government's order in this connection. The NDA government had filed an appeal against the High Court order in the Supreme Court in October 2002. A consortium of international investors, represented by the Global Business Institute (GBI), joined the government in filing the appeal. Arun Jaitley, who later became the Union Minister for Law and Justice in 2003, appeared on behalf of the GBI. The Supreme Court reversed the High Court's judgment and ruled that it was the

sovereign right of the state to enter into treaties with other countries. Thus continued the DTAC and just a few days back, the sensx dipped heavily even at the rumour that the UPA Government may review the DTAC with Mauritius. The irony is that the same Arun Jaitley who appeared for GBI to argue for the Mauritian consortium to continue DTAC, was sitting at Rajghat, demanding that black money should be brought back! Such are the hypocrisy of our times.

But do Anna and his friends understand the dimensions and anatomy of corruption? The janlokpal bill which is nothing but a modified version of the Lokayukt Act of Karnataka, can hardly be an efficacious remedy against the all encompassing parasite. We do need a hard law against corrupt practices but janlokpal is a farce. May be a complete overhauling of the Prevention of Corruption Act may result in a tougher law but will the official side permit that? ●

## AIRSO PROTESTS FUEL AND BUS FARE HIKE

**T**HE All India Revolutionary Student Organization (AIRSO) Chikmagalur District committee held a protest march of students on 5th July 2011 against fuel and bus fare hike. The AIRSO agitation led to closure of three colleges (Lal Bahadur Shastri college, Independent Junior college, and Basavanahally Girls college) for the day.. Students from these colleges participated in the rally. They



assembled at Hanumanthappa circle and marching through MG Main road reached Deputy commissioner office. There a protest meeting was organized condemning the arbitrary hike of fuel prices and bus fares by the central and state government.

The AIRSO Karnataka state secretary DD Sandeep alleged that unscientific increase of fuel prices has resulted in the subsequent rise in the prices of essential commodities. District secretary KH Mahesh demanded that the government should take immediate steps to rollback the bus fare hike and issue bus passed to rural students. AIRSO district president KR Manjunath said that compulsory and free education for all should be implemented, commercialisation of education must be curbed and stress should be given for scientific education. More than thousand students took part in the rally and public meeting. ●

## LESSONS OF THE 13-DAYS SIT-DOWN STRIKE AT MARUTI

**FROM** 4 to 17 of June around two thousand young workers engaged in a wildcat sit-down strike at Maruti Suzuki factory in Manesar. It was an important strike in local terms. The two Maruti assembly plants coordinate hundreds of local supplying factories, the Manesar plant dominates a new industrial area of major importance. There has been silence at Maruti Suzuki for more than a decade: the workers in Gurgaon plant have been silenced by the lock-out in 2000/01, and they did not join the strike in June. The Manesar plant was opened in 2006/07, but the young and casualised work-force had not found their voice as yet.

It was a hard strike. The workers gave no notice to management, they stopped production completely and around 2,000 workers stayed inside the factory for nearly two weeks. The strike 'postponed' the production of 13,200 cars and caused a loss of about 6 billion Rs. Maruti Suzuki's June sales figures dropped by 23 per cent, the sharpest fall in two and a half years. In July management announced to shift one production-line back from Manesar to Gurgaon plant. Workers continued the strike despite the police stationed within the factory premises and despite strike having been officially declared illegal by Haryana government on 10th of June.

Management and state did not dare to attack the workers inside the factory - a lot of workers' struggles in the area had been attacked physically once workers left the factory. This is partly due to the management's fear that plant and machinery could be damaged during the course of a police intervention, but mainly due to fear of the state that - in the current local and global social situation - repression could cause unpredictable trigger effects. While state and management did not know how to deal with the situation, the main unions repeatedly emphasised, that 'the workers are victimised', that the workers, and not the company, are in a difficult spot.

Despite the young workers' courage and the fact that the company was hit at times of full-capacity the strike ended in a defeat for the mass of workers: they did not enforce any betterment of conditions and wages, which was their main concern. Instead the agreement included a 'punishment wage cut' of two days' wages per day of strike - something rarely seen in industrial relations in India. Another element of the agreement states that the 11 workers (union leaders) sacked during the strike were taken back, though they have to undergo an 'inquiry'.

The strike could have spread. The initial demands and underlying motivations of the Maruti workers matched the atmosphere of the young work-force in the area: more money, less work. In Manesar more than a hundred thousand young workers have similar concerns. The strike stopped production at around 200 local supplying factories, but no active connections were established between Maruti workers and the wider work-force in the territory. This might be one of the main differences to the Honda strike in China last summer and main reason for the fact that the strike was very under represented in both mainstream and left-wing global media - despite the 'emerging' position of Maruti Suzuki and 'India' in the global market.

The focus on 'formal representation' choked the dynamic of the strike. During the course of the strike, the direct demands of the workers were reduced to the question of which union-flag should be put up at the gate. The main reasons for the defeat of the strike can be summarized as follows: workers raised direct demands, but early on these demands were 'integrated' in the workers' hope that by formal recognition of an independent union their material situation would improve; then there was an attack both by management and state, cutting of electricity, isolation of workers by army of security guards, declaring the strike formerly illegal and last but not least by sacking the 11 'leaders'; the main unions then offered 'support' and at the same time focused the struggle on the question of 'taking back the leaders' and 'workers' rights' for representation. Workers did not manage neither to break out of the material encirclement set-up by company management and state nor to escape the 'embrace' by the main unions.

The fate of the strike was handed over to the 'negotiating forces'. It is naïve to repeat the phrase of 'betrayal' of the main unions. It evades the question of what gives them the power to betray in the first place. Instead one should focus on the question how workers can struggle in a way, which leads both to an immediate material gain and to 'political' experience of self-organisation and generalisation beyond the company walls - the latter becoming increasingly a precondition for the former.

*[Foot note: We have reproduced the summary of the analysis of the lessons of the strike by the 'Gurgaon workers news' above. During the two weeks of struggle, the most notable feature compared to the past when the left tu centers had powerful influence was that no solidarity action by the working class of that area of the state could be organized. No tu centre of any significance could come forward to support the struggles so that it could be carried forward further. What happened at the Maruthi factory once again point towards the urgent need of building a powerful working class movement with all India influence which can coordinate and lead these struggles forward.] ●*

# *FIGHT AGAINST UNFAIR AND UNDEMOCRATIC HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM*

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Prof. K.R. Chowdry

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**T**HE Higher education system has been under going drastic and thorough transformation by restructuring education system to suit to liberalizing capitalism since 1986. This is squarely due to the New Education policy initiated and implemented by the then Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi. It has been amply clear that the higher education system is unfair, undemocratic and anti-people, especially the poor and middle class sections of the society. This has affected adversely the interests and future of the youth of the country. It has failed totally in helping achieving the inclusive growth.

At best it served the interests of domestic capitalist corporate forces and global market forces. It is observed that higher education has helped these forces to exploit and loot the resources of people including manpower. In other words, the higher education system has been catering to the needs of the domestic and global market forces. The capitalist corporate companies and global market forces, with the active and fullest support of imperialist forces as well as the international institutions, such as international Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and World Trade Organization (W.T.O), have been dictating the Rulers to formulate and implement the pro-corporate and pro-imperialist higher education policy.

In this context, it may be pertinent to examine the following recommendations of a Committee of Corporate giants, called Birla-Ambani Committee:

i) Management of Education should be decentralized. ii) Syllabus and facilities of educational institutions should be made market-oriented. iii) Financial Assistance provided to universities should be cut and they should be taken to self-dependence. The syllabus of these should be made upto-date. iv) Institutions getting less governmental assistance should be given freedom of imagination in management and in choosing the syllabus. v) Private university Act should be enacted to open up new universities for imparting education in science, technology, management and finance. vi) Direct Foreign investment should be permitted in education. International universities should be set up in our institutions of international fame. vii) There should be an agreement among all political parties to keep themselves away from universities and educational institutions. Political activities in universities and other educational institutions should be banned. viii) The economy should be free from control, so that a market for education may be developed.

Not only the above mentioned recommendations but also the stipulations and suggestions made by the Multi National Companies, World Bank and W.T.O. are duly adopted and implemented by the Rulers of the Country, which made higher education anti-poor and pro-rich.

Higher Education, as per the suggestions cited above, is subjected to reduced budgetary provisions. The expenditure on education as a whole has declined from almost 4% of GDP to 35% of GDP. Reports received from all over reveal that educational structure is at the bottom level. Qualified teachers are

not present and teachers- student ratio is quite large. A large number of private universities and colleges are set up in recent times and a whole generation of students and teachers are suffering irreparable damage to their careers due to these trends. Self-financing courses are being offered in several institutions. Not even 10% of the total student population in India has access to Higher Education. With enhanced privatization and commercialization, the entry of students into Institutions of higher Learning would be extremely difficult. Further, in private and government-run institutions of higher learning affordable fee hikes are a general phenomenon. For the middleclass, not to speak of the poor sections, quality education is beyond reach. Institutions are pursuing a profit motive. This is the basic reason for charging huge tuition fees, apart from forced donations, capitation fee and other charges. Government has failed to regulate the fee structure and donations in these institutions.

Further, paradigm shift has taken place from human angle to commercial in higher education. Humanities, social sciences and even basic sciences are relegated to the back ground and IT, Engineering and such other Courses are given a predominant position in higher education. The value system built up over the centuries are given a go-bye. Much worse is the setting up of foreign Institutions in the country. Needless to say that higher education is going on wrong track. Hence, fighting against the elitist and imperialist oriented higher education is the need of the hour. ●



**I** CAME across the following news on economic times some days back: The nuclear disaster in Japan once again reiterated the fact of all the dangers nuclear energy poses. In response, several countries have announced steps to scale back or review nuclear power, with Germany temporarily shutting down seven of its pre-1980 plants and Switzerland suspending plans to build and replace nuclear reactors. Even China, known for its lack of respect for safety issues, has announced that it is suspending new plant approvals until it could strengthen safety standards. **But the government of the 'preamble proclaimed' socialist, democratic, republic of India launched a public-relations campaign to say Indian nuclear plants are safe and secure.** Even if I consider the elected members of the parliament as shameless, yet as a sham show of solidarity we expect some reaction otherwise. But that was not to happen and there has to be a solid good reason why not.

Nuclear Power Corp. of India Ltd. is working on at least 36 nuclear power projects with a total capacity of about 34 gigawatts. The projects include those under the country's indigenous nuclear program as well as joint ventures with Russia, France and the U.S. The bulk of these projects are expected to be completed in the next decade, which will help the state-run nuclear power producer achieve a total capacity of 20,000 megawatts.

NPCIL currently operates 19 nuclear plants, has seven under construction and has a capacity of 4,560 MW. It has already set a target of achieving a 63,000 MW capacity by 2032.

Last year, NPCIL signed initial civilian nuclear agreements with France's Areva S.A.

The Areva joint venture reactors to be set up in Jaitapur (in the Maharashtra state), have a capacity of 3,400 MW the project is expected to cost more than 300 billion rupees

## BUYING DEATH FOR NATION

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Sonali Bhattacharya

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(\$6.36 billion). The joint venture talks for the Jaitapur project are in advanced stages and around 85% of the imports for the plant are likely to be financed by French banks.

Also, locations to set up reactors of the U.S.-Japanese joint venture, GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy and Westinghouse Electric Company LLC, have been identified and land acquisition is currently on. NPCIL will build six plants each at Chhayamithi Virdi in Gujarat and at Kovvada in Andhra Pradesh for the joint venture, and each plant is to have a 1000 MW capacity. At least two projects in each of the locations will be completed by 2020.

Kepeco of South Korea is also in talks with NPCIL to explore new business opportunities. Japanese companies also are looking into possibilities (for business in India).

NPCIL will require a capital expenditure of about 1 trillion rupees over the next 8 to 10 years due to the capacity expansion projects. The company is confident of raising sufficient funds for its projects as it has 120 billion rupees in cash and will earn 20 billion rupees a year. Public companies like NTPC Ltd., Indian Oil Corp. and National

Aluminium Co. have already signed MOUs in order to be partners and will invest in future projects.

Since the Nuclear Suppliers Group gave its blessing to India(which they had to as the nuclear lobby was behind their back) at having nuclear power outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and with one trillion dollars at disposal, companies are vying for a share of the pie. Let's take a look at these reputed companies the Indian government has so much faith in that it has a nuclear park exclusively reserved, without inviting bids, for each of the four chosen foreign vendors.

### 1. Areva

Where to start with the spectacularly incompetent nuclear behemoth, Areva? This French conglomerate is currently overseeing the unbelievably troubled construction of the alleged 'state of the art' EPR reactors at Flamanville, France and Olkiluoto, Finland. Both projects are beset with massive cost and schedule overruns as well as extremely concerning safety and construction defects.

### 2. General Electric

The American multinational has a long record in the energy industry. A long record of failure, that is. In 2002, the company was ranked the fourth largest air polluter in the US. Freedom of Information requests in the US have revealed that General Electric reactors around the world have a design fault that makes it 90 per cent likely that in the event of a meltdown, radioactive material will be released into the environment.

The unfolding nuclear disaster in Japan actually is a Made-in-USA crisis: All six of the reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi plant were made by General Electric. The prototype of this reactor model - known as the Boiling Water Reactor (BWR) Mark I - was supplied to India by GE, which built the twin-

reactor Tarapur station in the 1960s on a turnkey basis. Tarapur, one of the world's oldest operating nuclear plants, has some of the same risk factors that played a role at Fukushima.

### 3. Rosatom

Rosatom also has an enriched history in the nuclear history. Despite denials in public, leaked documents suggest that Rosatom is fearful of a nuclear explosion as waste storage tanks continue to decay at the massive nuclear waste dump on Russia's Kola peninsula. Despite the dangers, Rosatom's plans for a new reactor on the peninsula are well under way.

### 4. Westinghouse Electric Co

Half of the reactors in the world use Westinghouse technology. They are the designers of the AP1000 reactor which the Indian government is hoping to buy. However, serious flaws in the reactor's design are currently delaying its approval and have prompted legal

action in the US. The much-troubled EPR reactors under construction in France and Finland are also based on a Westinghouse design.

Coincidentally, my research on this subject coincided with this WikiLeaks disclosure, A set of India-related diplomatic cables on the Indo-US nuclear deal released by it claims that an aide of Congress leader Satish Sharma had told a US diplomat that the party had paid crores to several lawmakers to ensure that they voted for the deal in Parliament.

In a cable dated July 17, 2008 sent to the US State Department , Charge d' Affaires Steven White wrote about a visit the embassy's political counsellor

paid to Rajya Sabha MP Satish Sharma.

Sharma, according to WikiLeaks, told the US diplomat that he and others in the Congress were working hard to ensure that the government would win the confidence vote on July 22, 2008. According to White, Sharma's political aide Nachiketa Kapur mentioned to an embassy staff member in an aside on July 16 that the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) had been paid Rs 10 crore to each of its four MPs.

Sharma also revealed to him that the top Congress leadership including Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh himself were in favour of the Indo-US nuclear deal and had conveyed this message clearly to the party. The UPA Government had sailed through the 2008 trust vote with 275 votes in favour and 256 against the Indo-US nuclear deal.

Now Rs. 10 crores is a paltry sum to some bigger people like Raja et al but as a number, it still has value especially when it has been given by big brothers. And sycophancy that Indians have always been known for, calls for a sense of loyalty towards our imperial rulers and capitalist behemoths. So such public-awareness campaign is a small activity that they can afford to take up. But now looking at US and allies' desperate move on Libya, the Indian governments' deft handling of issues with the army and police force, even such public campaigns are also not essential to con us. Living is a liability as it is so nuke or no nuke, even microorganisms of the soils and the stomachs are now patented and sold to us.

It is a disgust that just by sustaining corruption by inciting greed and sycophancy, the entire nation has been put to the mercy of a few who carry the power to obliterate life on entire earth but do not stop and think once about the beauty of the entire essence of life and living calibrating everything just on one fulcrum: power. ●

## KARNATAKA ANTI-POSCO AGITATION

**T**HE Karnataka Raitha Sangha called for state level agitation on 14th July, against allotment of 7184 acres agricultural land for Posco in Gadag district and 2037 acres agricultural land for Adhunik Metaliks Limited in Raichur as notified by BJP led state Govt. The Sangha took week long campaign with the slogans "Kick out Posco and SEZs from Karnataka, No land-banking, no land acquisition for MNCs and local land mafias". The agitation is successfully carried forward in Gadag-Raichur-Chikkamanglur-Koppal-Coorge and other places. Hundreds of peasants are participating in the agitation..

The chief minister of Karnataka gave a press release from New Delhi, in which he had said that "state govt shall stop land acquisition for Posco due to peoples opposition". The Congress and JD(S) like parties also had initially issued statements opposing Posco in Karnataka. Same was the case with the CPI, CPI(M) like parties , some of the mutts etc. But all of them have reversed their stand or are keeping silence when the BJP government reversed its position and started forcible seizure of land for Posco and corporate forces. In this context, KRS has decided to expose these reactionary and opportunist forces and to continue the struggle for kicking out Posco and other MNCs from the state alongwith the mafias like Reddy Brothers. ●

# THE MAOISTS AND THE CPI(M) : THE CRISIS OF THE LEFT IN WEST BENGAL

Sharmistha Choudhury

**T**HE Maoists in Bengal have once more been politically outwitted by their sworn enemy P. Chidambaram's right-hand lady in the state, Ms Mamata Banerjee.

## Honeymoon going wrong?

**IN THE** run-up to the legislative elections in the state, which saw the Trinamool-Congress combine sweep to power with a staggering majority, the Maoists had unabashedly rooted for the Trinamool. While parroting the line of 'vote boycott' in a bid to keep up revolutionary appearances, the Maoists had left no stone unturned to make use of the bourgeois electoral process to suit their own ends. Their leader Kishenji had gone on record saying that he would like to see Mamata Banerjee as the next chief minister of the state. In all areas under their influence, the Maoists had covertly and also overtly campaigned for the Trinamool. In Junglemahal, the region which had borne the brunt of brutal state repression in the last months of the Left Front's rule, the Maoists had gone all out to ensure the victory of the Trinamool.

So much so that even a communist revolutionary candidate of the region – Upanshu Mahato of the PCC-CPI(ML) – wasn't allowed to campaign for the polls. Chhatradhar Mahato, the leader of the Lalgahar movement, contested the elections from behind the bars and garnered a commendable 15,000 (approx) votes. Perhaps if the Maoists had rallied behind him with all their strength he would have won or come close to winning. Some accounts, however, suggest that the Maoists did campaign

for Chhatradhar Mahato, but the overall nature of their activities in the state 'inspired' the people to vote overwhelmingly in favour of the Trinamool instead. Elsewhere in the state, too, the Maoists did not support communist revolutionary or left-democratic contestants – indeed nowhere did they declare so much as even their solidarity for such candidates – but used all their frontal organizations and other organs of influence to ensure Trinamool victory.

The election manifesto of the Trinamool – with its open commitment to finance capital-friendly policies – went uncriticised by the Maoists. Rather, the Maoists and their 'civil society friends' were instrumental in propagating the myth that Mamata Banerjee had promised to release all political prisoners and withdraw forces from Junglemahal if voted to power. The fact, however, is that the election manifesto of the Trinamool and also their weekly journal *Jago Bangla* had made it quite clear that there was no question of unconditional release of political prisoners. Rather, the Trinamool had declared in writing that there would be a committee to examine who were really 'guilty of crime' and who, despite being innocent, had been sent to jail in an act of vindictiveness by the erstwhile Left Front government, and only the latter would be released. In other words, political prisoners 'guilty' of crimes against the state would not be released! Likewise, the Trinamool election manifesto promised 'peace and development' in Junglemahal, but not withdrawal of armed forces. Of course Mamata Banerjee made many an empty electoral promise at public meetings, but rather than expose the discrepancy between her words and her party's written positions, the Maoists took it upon themselves to uphold the Trinamool Congress as the messiah of the masses bent and broken by the ruthless policies of the Left Front regime.

So the Trinamool-Congress combine came to power with the unstinted blessings of the Maoists. And immediately unleashed a wave of anti-people measures. Pooh-poohing the demand for the unconditional release of all political prisoners, a Review Committee consisting largely of ex-bureaucrats and police was formed to determine which prisoners would be released. Even as the Maoists hesitantly demanded fulfillment of her electoral promises, Mamata Banerjee responded by throwing into prison Manoj Mahato, a popular leader of the Lalgahar movement who was agitating for the unconditional release of all political prisoners. While the new labour minister announced that militant workers' movements and strikes would not be tolerated, the chief minister declared – expertly replicating the outrageous Salwa Judum model of Chhattisgarh – that the government would recruit 10,000 local youths of Junglemahal in police forces within three months. Uncovering a seemingly bottomless basket of sops for the tribals of Junglemahal, Ms Banerjee urged the Maoists to lay down their guns and settle for talks.

## Dialogue dilemma

**THE** Maoists were – and continue to remain – flummoxed. Since they had campaigned so vigorously for the Trinamool Congress, they were naturally slow to respond to the new government's blatant pronouncements. They were



ridden by doubt – should they start agitating immediately against the new government or should they give it some time to perform? Should they cooperate with the new government in bringing about development in Junglemahal, or should they stick to their agenda of revolution? Should they accept the new government's offer for talks or should they dismiss it as a ploy to break their organization? If they created constant obstacles in the way of the new government, their credibility would take a nose-dive for had they not, only months ago, assured the people that the Trinamool was the answer to all their misery? Such is the dilemma in which the ideological bankruptcy of the Maoists has landed them. In fact, despite Mamata's failure to fulfil a single electoral promise, despite her brusque dismissal of the demand of the scrapping of the Review Committee, the Maoist leadership has had to announce that they are holding an 'undeclared ceasefire' in order to give the government time to prove its good intentions!

Worse, however, is the crisis in which they have landed the people. When the people of Bengal were seething in rage against the CPM, the Maoists made no effort to join with other communist revolutionaries and offer a fighting alternative to the people. They made no effort to convert the people's wrath into a constructive force that would challenge the system by taking a stance against both the CPM as well as the Trinamool-Congress. They made no effort to organize the people against the bourgeois state's tried and tested trick of propping up one ruling class party against the other so as to ensure that the people chose their rulers within the system. Rather, the Maoists went all out to perpetuate this very system. They preached to the masses that if the Trinamool came to power in place of the CPM, the misery of the masses would be alleviated to no mean extent. Instead of boldly proclaiming that the Trinamool and the CPM are but two sides of the same coin and the advantage of the masses lay not in bringing this one or the other to power, but rather in consolidating their own struggling unity, shunning all ruling class parties and concentrating all efforts in building the communist party that would lead them to revolution and emancipation, the Maoists did just the opposite. They made the masses repose their faith in the benevolence of the Trinamool Congress rather than acquire the conviction that no ruling party would do anything for the people unless the people brought it down to its knees on the strength of their own power – the power to agitate and win. Thus, though the Maoists preach 'election boycott' and 'ongoing guerilla war' on the plea of liberating the people from all parliamentary illusions, their practice only helps to bolster such illusions.

Now Mamata has put the Maoists in a quandary by offering to hold dialogues with them. It is, of course, a trap which the Maoists can scarcely avoid without imperiling themselves. The Maoists realize this only too well. Consider their weak-kneed response. Instead of taking the bull by its horns and accepting the offer with alacrity, they have said that if the Trinamool is sincere about its offer then it should release three jailed Maoist leaders-cum-ideologues (Himadri Sen Roy, Patitapaban Haldar and Sudip Chongdar) and hold talks with them. This is more of a delaying tactic than a challenge, and well the Trinamool knows it. Mamata is in a win-win situation. If she does not release these three, she can blame the Maoists for setting unacceptable pre-conditions with a view to avoiding dialogue and adhering to the creed of violence. Again, if she forces the Maoists' hand by accepting their demand and releasing these three comrades, then where can the talks possibly lead to? The Maoists may demand release of all their comrades from jail and Mamata will promise to 'look into it' and 'expedite matters'. The Maoists may demand that the ban be lifted from them in the state and Mamata has no reason not to accept that if the Maoists promise to renounce the gun and pursue democratic forms of struggle.

The Maoists may demand withdrawal of the joint forces from Junglemahal. But the joint forces were deployed there in the first place to counter the gun-toting Maoists. So if they agree to silence their guns, there is no reason why the joint forces should continue to remain there. Rather, it will be a political victory for Mamata – she will win national kudos for bringing peace in the region by taming the 'ultras'. Finally, the Maoists may demand development and democracy in Junglemahal – something which Mamata can well concede. As it is, she has accused the Maoists of hindering the course of development in the region, and this charge has had the Maoist leadership indignantly pleading innocence.

Maoist spokesman Bikram has gone so far as to say that if Mamata can show one single instance where the Maoists have stood in the path of development, then they will all go and lay down their guns at her feet! So the Maoists have practically no rational scope of protesting against the proposed induction of the Junglemahal youth into the police force – because it will be done in the name of development, in the name of employment generation! Their demands have been basically such reformist demands that if the state so much as hints at conceding some, they will pretty well be left agenda-less.

The Maoists have raised no

**INQUILAB**

**Organ of All India  
Revolutionary Student  
Organisation [AIRSO]  
in Hindi and English**

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demand vis-à-vis the aggression of big capital. The Trinamool's election manifesto, as well as the steps it has taken immediately after coming to power, promises to open the state to the sweeping aggression of monopoly capital. Not only has the Trinamool promised to open the retail market to corporate houses, not only has it guaranteed industrialists an industry-friendly atmosphere (read, unpolluted by workers' struggles), it has practically allowed monopoly capital a free hand in the running of the state. The stage is set for rampant privatization in the health, education and other basic amenities sector. Mamata has assured investors that Singur was a one-off case and such agitations will no longer be encouraged.

But none of this seems to be bothering the Maoists. Fighting against imperialism and its junior partner like the Mamata-Manmohan combine seems to be quite out of its agenda. No wonder the state is not at all hesitant about entering into dialogue with the Maoists. The Maoists seem to want just some reforms. They have not raised a single demand that the state cannot pretend to fulfil. Nor can the Maoists hope to stir the masses to action if the state, represented by the Trinamool, goes back on its promises – because all along they have taught the people to have faith in the Trinamool rather than consolidate their unity against it. They will either be tamed by the state into renouncing revolution or brutally suppressed after being isolated from a yet pro-Trinamool people.

### **The fate of the renegades**

**ON THE** other end of the spectrum, a shameless CPM seems unable to check its rightward swerve. As the principal opposition in the state, and a so-called 'left' opposition at that, it ought to have been its duty to expose the anti-people, pro-capitalist nature of the new Trinamool government. But 34 years of trying to safeguard a

bourgeois state has left it hopelessly inadequate to show the merest token of support or sympathy for the toiling masses.

Consider its role as the opposition. When after coming to power Mamata declared that she would return some of the acquired land in Singur to the peasants who had not accepted compensation cheques, the CPM at once jumped to point out how unfair that would be to the Tatas, how the 'law' would have to be broken to give back to the peasants what was rightfully theirs, and so on. It was inconceivable for this erstwhile left to assert that the peasants should be given back all their land, and the law be damned. Not once did they think of pointing out that Mamata had gone against the very essence of the Singur movement by creating a division between peasants who had been forced to accept compensation cheques and those who had not succumbed to pressure. Not once did they chastise the Trinamool for promising the corporate world that there would be no repetition of Singur and that they would find the going very smooth indeed. No, for the CPM the Trinamool had erred not in betraying the people but in betraying the Tatas!

Next, take the issue of Gorkhaland. Mamata conceded none of the basic demands of the people struggling there for decades. She merely delivered some very old wine in a not-so-new bottle. There again, the CPM could not imagine standing up for the right of self-determination of the people. They actually went to town accusing Mamata of pandering to 'separatist' sentiments! And then, the issue of release of political prisoners. Just when all democratic-minded people in the state are calling for the unconditional release of all political prisoners and the scrapping of the Review Committee, the CPM has taken it upon itself to affirm that the very fact that the Trinamool is 'considering' the release of some jailed Maoists, is unshakeable proof of its nexus with 'the greatest internal threat to the nation'. Even after the dreadful drubbing it received in the elections, the CPM cannot comprehend that to the toiling masses the Maoists are certainly not what Manmohan-Chidambaram insist they are, that is the greatest internal threat to the nation. The masses may not quite take a fancy to the anarchist brand of politics practised by the Maoists but they hold them in some esteem for their undeniable sacrifice and valour.

What the CPM does not realize that the people are convinced of one thing and that is, the CPM, with its bloody history of authoritarianism and state terror, with its veritable army of pet henchmen and muscle-flexing mafia, has no business branding the Maoists as butchers and murderers. Thus, while it is true that the Trinamool is beating up and terrorizing CPM activists and sympathizers in some places, in most cases people are voluntarily deserting the party in droves. In factories entire CPM-affiliated unions are going over to the side of the Trinamool Congress, in colleges CPM-affiliated unions are doing the same. This is the brute reality, much as the CPM be reluctant to admit it. And this is going to remain the brute reality as long as the CPM continues to campaign for the Tatas and Mamata merely pretends to keep her promise to the peasants of Singur.

### **On the question of an alternative**

Thus, it is evident that neither the Maoists nor the CPM can come anywhere near to leading the people in the struggle that must necessarily break out against the investment-wooing, worker-whipping measures soon to be unrestrainedly adopted by the Trinamool Congress. Neither of the two is in a position to provide a political alternative to the present government. Rather, both – each in its own way – are doing more than their bit in pushing the people to the mercy of the Trinamool. So whom can the people turn to? Communist revolutionary forces outside the Maoists? But for that to happen, communist revolutionaries need to

win back their relevance in practical politics. For that, again, they need to rethink and reformulate long-held positions.

For long, most communist revolutionaries have shunned the very idea of giving the call for a people's alternative within the existing system. Almost without exception they have maintained that the root cause of the degeneration of the CPI-CPM lay in their line of not only contesting parliamentary elections but also in going on to form a government within this reactionary system. They have generally failed to realize that the CPI-CPM's problem lay not in attempting to form or going on to form governments at the state level, but in doing so with a determinedly revisionist rather than a revolutionary agenda. As we know, the aim of the CPM in forming the initial Left Front governments in West Bengal was to 'provide relief to the people', as much as possible within the existing system. In other words, the CPM-led government was bent on preserving the supposed sacrosanctness of the bourgeois state instead of challenging its very premise of property-oriented privileges. It had no intention of acting as an organ of uprising of the people against the reactionary state. Instead of attempting to implement a revolutionary agenda and thus intensifying the toiling people's conflict with the system, and thereby giving fillip to the revolutionary struggle, it confined itself to the role of distributor of the crumbs and scraps of relief periodically doled out by the bourgeois state to stem and contain the growing discontent of the masses. Naturally, as time passed and the CPM-led government did nothing to challenge the bourgeois state, it gradually adapted itself to openly reactionary positions.

Unfortunately, the essence of the lesson gleaned by communist revolutionaries from the CPM experience was that forming a government, or raising the very call of government formation, was tantamount to ideological degeneration and would inevitably lead to the erosion of communist principles and ideology. This understanding has had a very grave and adverse impact on the revolutionary movement. It has led to the marginalization of communist revolutionaries in the field of politics. It has led to their being accepted as an honest force of struggle but a force with no intention of ushering in any significant political change before the revolution – a force incapable of handling power. So while the likes of the CPM and the Trinamool battle it out on the question of winning government power, communist revolutionaries are seen as remaining

confined to leading occasional struggles and waiting for the revolution to cure all the ills of society.

But the people, who are daily being crushed by the system represented by one or the other ruling party, cannot afford to wait for some distant future for revolution to happen. They need revolution now. Their life and livelihood are under constant threat. They must do something today. And with communist revolutionaries disinclined to provide them with a political alternative, they must in their desperation look for an alternative among the ruling class parties. So when the CPM looks all set to trample over all their rights and offer them as holy sacrifice to the altar of big capital, they must oust the CPM and bring in the Trinamool which is going to offer them some respite, for some time at least, due to the obligations of electoral politics. And when the Trinamool, in its turn, gets out of hand, they will be left with no option but to bring back the CPM for a similar short-lived respite. In the meanwhile, communist revolutionaries will simply wait for the patience of the people to wear out so that one fine day they will suddenly take to the streets and make revolution.

Not only does revolution not happen this way, this practice is also one of making guinea pigs of the masses. It is unpardonable to let the people be tossed between the devil and the deep sea in the hope that this will one day enable them to see sense. Neither do the people forgive those who indulge in this practice – they simply banish such forces to the very margins of society. This is exactly what has happened with our communist revolutionaries. If yet they do not unite, if not into a single party, then at least into a common platform that will boldly assert itself as a political and electoral alternative ready to form a people's government, they can never emerge as the leader of the people. In that case history will never forgive. ●

From First to  
Ninth Congress  
*Nine Decades of the Communist  
Movement In India*

(In English and Hindi)

KN Ramachandran

Contribution : Rs. 25

C-141, Sainik Nagar  
New Delhi - 110059



**T**HIS is probably the first time in the history of Assam that the people's struggle for livelihood has started raising its head in the midst of a long-drawn ethnic war. Under the leadership of Akhil Gogoi, the upcoming young peasant leader, the 'illegal' dwellers on the mountain areas have started their just struggle for the right of habitat. Like all other parts of the country, the people in Assam too have long been deprived of their basic amenities like food, shelter, clothes, education and health, but it has also been considered from almost time immemorial that once the ethnic war is won, all problems will be solved. Akhil Gogoi emerged in Assam politics in a big way during the last election when he raised his voice against corruption, which was essentially going against the Congress as it is the Congress which is running the government at the centre. Therefore, a brutal repression was reserved for him and his fellow friends, which gave him a lot of popularity though not enough to alter the electoral fate of the state.

### **Congress in Assam: losing popularity but gaining majority**

**THE STATE** of the Congress in Assam is almost alike CPIM's position in Bengal before 2007. The party is constantly losing popularity among the masses for its anti-people, pro-capitalist attitude. In the last ten years of Congress rule no basic problem in the state has been addressed. On the contrary, the state leadership has now started to realise that the state will no more be able to stay afloat with the centre's mercy and money that it has been constantly receiving as a politically disturbed area. Therefore, it needs to take all the necessary steps to invite the big capitalists there to invest and such steps are bound to be essentially anti-people. The Congress led central government is now engaged in a process to dismantle ULFA which will only lead to calm down the state without solving the ethnic problem the Assamese have

## **CURRENT SITUATION IN ASSAM**

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Sankar Das

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been facing since long. Therefore, it is no wonder that all the central anti-Barua leadership of ULFA is now moving freely but a leader like Akhil Gogoi is in jail. The question of infiltration from the borders, especially from the Bangladesh border, is also far from addressed.

In the meantime, the entire demography of certain areas has been changed by the migrant population from Bangladesh. In the absence of steps to alleviate poverty, this has put a lot of pressure on the Assamese people and triggered their insecurity to alarming levels. No political party in the state has taken up the issue, keeping an eye on the hefty vote bank it creates. However, the pressure of increased population on the state resources is mounting in a situation when no substantial development of the said resources is seen anywhere in sight. Sometimes the state government takes some abrupt steps. Police sometimes start to identify illegal migrants and unleash repression with inhuman irrationality.

The Congress was faced with all these factors against it before the election which massively provoked all the concerned parties to think that it would be losing power in the state. However, the results stunned most of them who discovered themselves in a pathetic condition as far as the people's verdict was concerned. The Congress won the election with a sweeping majority, even surpassing their achievements in the last elections. It goes without saying that little credit goes to the Congress for this. People found no opposition competent and skilled enough to offer them a better rule than the Congress in the last ten years.

The opposition parties were not even faithful to their cause of overthrowing the Congress ministry from power, and had miserably failed to form a pre-poll alliance despite repeated attempts. One of the senior central leaders of BJP, Arun Jaitley, said in this context, "Opposition's unity is now secondary, but people are united against Congress and it will reflect in poll outcome." Quite naturally something else was reflected in the poll outcome. Therefore, although the Congress is losing popularity in the state, it continues to enjoy the absence of a competent opposition which has helped it to bag a comfortable majority in the assembly.

### **The New Leadership**

**IN THIS SITUATION** an all-out attack on the livelihood of the people is quite likely. The government has all the logic in hand to uproot people from land, forest, hills and other places in the name of industrialisation and development. At the same time the MNCs and big capital have already started to take an entry in agriculture with their seeds and pesticide business in a big way. With the patronisation of the state Congress government, these companies are planning to take over the entire agricultural sector there with the rights in crop selection, equipment purchase, production method, sales channels etc. Already horticulture is taking an important role in this changed scenario of Assam agriculture. Now even a school-child also knows the meaning of this changing agricultural production method, which is already evident in other parts of the country where it eventually has led to a massive concentration of land in the hands of MNCs and uprooting of peasants as independent farmers. Therefore,

it has enormously fuelled the process of giving birth of a new leader who can lead the peasant resistance against this project of destruction.

Side by side Assam has a big population which depends on its vast forestland. Out of its 78,550 sq. km. of area, 36 per cent land is under forest cover. This forestland has massive bio-diversity, which is one of the targets of the MNCs. Therefore, apart from uprooting the peasant mass, the people dependent on the forest areas also have to be displaced. Another important industry in Assam is tea, which is also in a bad shape due to long negligence and all out incompetence of the owners. Now the restructuring of this industry is also going to take place under the direct leadership of a number of big companies like Assam Tea which also will bring much agony to the workers in the form of downsizing the workforce and increasing workload in the name of modernisation.

Combining all these, the emergence of a new leadership is absolutely imperative in Assam now. It seems that Akhil Gogoi will fill this gap in the absence of a radical left alternative there. Parties like CPI-CPIM are working in the state for a long time but their gradual deviation from struggle and Marxism-Leninism per se has left them in the same bracket with other bourgeois parties like Congress or AGP.

Two communist revolutionary groups, namely, PCC-CPIML and CPIML-Liberation have some history of work in the state. But even they have not made much headway in addressing the real problems of the people. As a result, the PCC appears to have lost its relevance in state politics. Although Liberation

made some progress at one time, especially in Karbi Anglong on the basis of the Karbi struggle, they compromised on the question of putting class struggle in command and, as a result, their achievements are now slipping from their hands. Akhil Gogoi's class origin is peasantry, hence, petty-bourgeoisie. However, since his is a new face with no connection with the most hated mainstream parties in any way, he enjoys some mileage over his competitors. But here the question is to lead the people's struggle to victory. This needs an uncompromising leadership which Akhil will not be able to provide for sure. If the Revolutionary Left has to take the leadership of the upcoming mass struggle in Assam it must prepare itself with a new and concrete political line based on the leadership of the working class. ●

## Questions And Answers

### QUESTION BY JAIRUS BANAJI

- 1) Do you see the CPI (Marxist-Leninist) as the vanguard of the revolution in this country or as part of a wider coalition of revolutionary forces that may emerge in future?
- 2) What is your assessment of Stalin? How come he ended up executing 90% of Lenin's Central Committee and killed more Bolsheviks than even the Tsar had done?
- 3) If India is a "neo-colony", who controls the Indian state today? Foreign companies? US imperialism ? Indian capital?
- 4) How seriously do you take the threat of fascism in India? Why is it that the Naxalite groups in general have neither confronted the Sangh parivar in any serious way nor campaigned consistently against them at any level?

### ANSWER BY COM. KNRAMACHANDRAN

Regarding Jairaj Banaji's four questions:

1. Our effort is to reorganize CPI(ML) in to the vanguard force capable of leading Indian revolution forward. During this process it should develop its capability to unite all emerging and existing revolutionary forces in to a mighty stream of revolution;
2. We are not Stalinists or anti-Stalin. Under the leadership of Stalin Soviet Union could give great contributions including the victory in the anti-fascist war. But in pursuing the 'all power to the Soviets' concept, in developing socialism in SU while giving first priority to world revolution, in developing an alternate development path etc. there were weaknesses which

later became serious and helped the post-Stalin leadership to embrace capitalist path;

3. When India is under neo-colonisation, the Party under the leadership of the working class should overthrow imperialism, compradore bureaucratic bourgeoisie and big landlord classes, make the PDR victorious and advance towards socialist revolution;

4. As imperialism in its neo-colonial phase is destroying the democratic values under bourgeois democracy and increasingly becoming fascist, it is the task of the Communists to develop the concept of proletarian democracy further.

In the Indian context, when the communal fascists organized a pogrom in Gujarat in 2002, we had played a small but significant action uniting the weak left forces in the state to resist the Modi forces In Kerala also there are instances of such actions. ●

## LESSONS OF JULY 16, 1945

**[This article from *The Hindu* of 16th July by Gopalkrishna Gandhi is republished considering its importance in the context of increasing threat of nuclear catastrophe confronting humanity, thanks to the imperialist powers and nuclear establishments of all countries which are driven solely by profit motive-RS]**

**T**HE experiences of that fateful day, which may be said to have set off the nuclear age, tell and ask countries such as India several important things. The nuclear age — our age — may be said to have begun 66 years ago on this day, July 16, in 1945. Not one but three things happened on that day, giving the world its nuclear teeth. The first was a meeting, the second was a testing, and the third was a sailing. All on the same day. The meeting took place at Potsdam, in occupied Germany. It was attended by statesmen from three future nuclear powers — U.S. President Harry Truman, Soviet supremo Joseph Stalin, and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Clement Attlee, Labour Party leader and Churchill's successor-to-be, also participated.

The discussions were on a grim subject — the terms of punishment to be meted to Germany, which had surrendered unconditionally, and to Japan, which was refusing to do so. Seeing Japan's truculence, Truman is said to have then mentioned to Stalin that the U.S. possessed an unspecified "powerful new weapon." By the time the conference ended, Japan had been given an ultimatum to surrender, or meet "prompt and utter destruction." The Allies' tenor and Japan's response were to spell disaster for humankind.

The world's first testing of a nuclear device took place, in complete secrecy, the very same day at Los Alamos in New Mexico, United States. It was witnessed by J.R. Oppenheimer, the director of the project; the physicist Kenneth Bainbridge, and a few carefully selected scientists and military personnel. At the moment of detonation, the ground swelled, shook, pummelled, rose and fell, sending up a plume of light so bright that every blade of grass in the vicinity stood out in the sharpest and most eerie relief. The Atom Bomb had arrived.

Oppenheimer is stated to have said, quite simply: "It worked." Later,

he was to turn famously to the Bhagvad Gita and quote from it: "I am become Death, the Destroyer of Worlds." Bainbridge's reaction, less known generally, was no less significant. Turning to Oppenheimer at the site he said: "Now we are sons of bitches, all."

Unaware of what Truman had told Stalin, of what Oppenheimer was saying to himself, of what Bainbridge told Oppenheimer, the crew of U.S. cruiser *Indianapolis* sailed from San Francisco on a mission that was directly related to both those proceedings. Carrying in large wooden crates parts of a device the captain and crew knew was important but not how important — or how ugly — the cruiser was bound for Tinian Island on the South Pacific. From there, bomber planes were to take off with the device, none other than the "powerful new weapon," for its twin destinations in Japan, ending the War and starting an age, the nuclear age.

The vessel reached Tinian Island, off-loaded its cargo and sailed off casually on July 29. Its operation had been kept so secret that it was on no radar of the Allied forces. This was, for the crew of *Indianapolis*, a disastrous folly. A Japanese I-58 submarine sniffed the unprotected cruiser and, creeping up to firing range, rammed two torpedoes into it. Within 15 minutes, the 9,800-tonne vessel with formidable speed and firepower was under water, 880 of its 1,196 crewmen sinking with it.

Worse was to follow. As the survivors grouped together, holding hands, hoping to be spotted by some U.S. Navy or Air Force craft, tiger sharks smelt blood. Before anyone could react, 200 to 300 of those "eating machines" were upon them. While the sorties of bombers over Hiroshima and Nagasaki were still a week away, about 400 of the men who had unwittingly carried the bombs from the U.S. to Tinian, were devoured by sorties of jaws.

On Day 3, an anti-submarine patrol spotted the surviving, struggling men surrounded by sharks. A daring rescue operation began, but only 317 of them survived.

Estimates say that within the first two to four months of the bombings, acute effects killed 90,000 to 166,000 people in Hiroshima and 60,000 to 80,000 in Nagasaki. About half of them died on the first day under the direct impact, from flash or flame burns and falling debris. *Indianapolis* was doomed by strategic miscalculation, and its men by the most unexpected retaliation from nature's autonomous dynamics.

What do the July 16, 1945 Potsdam, Los Alamos and *Indianapolis* experiences show? Potsdam shows that the tallest of statesmen can take decisions history would loathe. Los Alamos shows that the greatest of scientists can take steps humanity deplors. *Indianapolis* shows that the smartest of strategists can take paths destiny defeats. Those three experiences tell and ask countries such as India, occupied as they understandably are with issues concerning the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Nuclear Suppliers' Group, the following:

1. Nuclear statesmanship is not about using or not using nuclear weapons, but about using or not using statesmanship. It is about becoming or not becoming 'I am become Death.'

2. Nuclear intelligence is not about gathering sensitive information about nuclear activity elsewhere but about being aware that even in the 21st century, unforeseen realignments can occur, with deployments of larger-than-ever arsenals becoming as real a possibility as in the Cold War period. But more credibly, of "rogue" individuals or small groups accessing modern nuclear technology to blackmail the world.

3. *The* major nuclear challenge today being that of nuclear mega-terror, our civilian nuclear power stations (not to speak of other nuclear installations) need to be *proof* against the radioactive "core" and its stock of spent fuel-rods being vulnerable to (a) plain purloining of sensitive materials, and (b) a rogue aircraft crashing into them. Are our nuclear power stations designed to hold out against such an attack?

4. Radioactive waste from nuclear power stations remaining hazardous for an eternity, we need to seal off our N-waste in depositories in a way that will be safe against leakage via groundwater, or through fissures caused by earthquakes, or in any other way. Our disposal systems have to pass the world's toughest tests.

5. Our nuclear reactors, installations and stores having to be so safe as to stand up to earthquakes and tsunami of the Fukushima kind and other Bhopal or Chernobyl-type plant collapses, and nuclear sabotage including actual, physical

purloining of materials and parts, they should, if need be, re-designed and re-located.

6. The independent nuclear regulatory authority proposed to be set up must therefore play the Devil's Advocate, not State Counsel.

7. But above and beyond all this, the words of Lord Martin Rees, the Astronomer Royal, need to be heard: "The prime advantage of nuclear power, whether fusion or fission, is that it simultaneously solves two problems: limited oil reserves and global warming. But a preferable option, on both environmental and security grounds, would be renewable sources."

The lessons of July 16, 1945 should come to us, in Tagore's words "as a shower of mercy," and not as jaws we cannot escape from. ●

*(The author is a former Governor of West Bengal.)*

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## INTENSIFY STRUGGLE AGAINST CORRUPTION AND PRICE RISE

**W**ITH THE imposition of the neo-liberal policies in all fields, corruption which is an integral part of the capitalist loot, especially when the speculative and parasitic character of finance capital has increased manifold, has reached unprecedented levels. Earlier Bofors like scams look like peanuts in front of the present scams like the 2G Spectrum case.

When people's anger against the wanton corruption is reaching explosive levels, in order to pacify them whatever actions are taken with the CBI playing many dramas, are only touching the tip of the ice berg. The prime minister's office the senior bureaucrats behind all dirty deals and the corporate-MNC chiefs who reaps most of the benefits are not even touched. The whole Jan Lokpal bill issue is made in to a safety valve to save the out and out corrupt system.

Similarly when the inflation is reaching unprecedented levels even after much tailoring by the government, the corporate media is utilized to propagate that India is one of the countries where cost of living is the cheapest. But average cost of living for common people has become two or three times higher if all the hikes in cost of essential commodities, essential services, education, healthcare etc are taken in to consideration. In spite of it the central and state governments are refusing to take any steps to bring down this sky rocketing prices and other necessities of life.

Numerous campaigns and agitations are taking place all over the country with the participation of ever increasing number of people against the continuous hike in cost of living while the real earning of the common people is going down. Still no action is taken by the government to curb the loot by the corporate houses and business mafias engaged in hoarding and black marketing using the future trade like facilities.

In this context, CPI(ML) calls for a countrywide campaign and agitation against corruption and price rise from 9th August, anniversary of the Quit India Day, to 15th August. All Party committees are called upon to unite all forces who can be united and to launch the campaign and agitation as effectively as possible. ●



## THE BASE OR THE SUPERSTRUCTURE

**[This brief article by a young comrade Shantanu Pratap Singh dealing with an important question confronting the international communist movement is published for discussion. Any comments and criticisms received shall be published in the next issue—RS]**

**I**N SPITE of the attempts of the bourgeoisie powers to convince us that the world no longer needs Marxism, the blatant domination of finance capital in the modern era became evident once again in the context of the recent 2008 global financial crisis. Comrade Lenin's prediction has come true. However, the question arises that while this crisis has indeed shaken the foundations of the imperialists, why has it not resulted in a burst of spontaneous proletarian rebellions (if not revolutions) across the world? Why has the global financial crisis not been portrayed as the demonic manifestation of capitalist exploitation that it is?

Ideally, as comrade Lenin predicted, the age of imperialism would see the rise of finance capital, the increased export of capital to the dependent countries (as the source of cheap resources), the exploitation of the proletariat of these dependant countries and colonies and the highlighting of the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie finally resulting in revolution. But, the world seems to be trudging along with a vast majority of our proletarian brothers oblivious to the brunt of capitalist abuse that they bear each day. This article suggests that the answers lie in Mao Tsetung's analyses of dialectical materialism in his lecture "On Contradictions", particularly his ideas on identifying the principal contradiction. Starting with a theoretical analysis, Mao admitted the possibility that in certain instances in history, even the contradictions between superstructures, (particularly class culture and propaganda in the context of our analysis) can play a significant role. This will be demonstrated by a historical analysis of the immense power that the media and propaganda have played in shaping opinions, consciousness and even individuals leading up to the financial crisis.

This has not received much attention in Marxist theorisation till

today due to two reasons. First, only recently has the technological revolution place such powerful tools in the hands of the bourgeoisie – to control not only what a person does but also what a person thinks. Second, orthodoxy in Marxist doctrine does to some extent prevent exploration of aspects beyond the economic base. Theorists stick to an analysis of economic contradictions and often fail to admit the possibility that there can be several other contradictions in operation. They fail to realise that by doing so they fall into the trap of economic determinism which Marx himself was extremely guarded against. The historical perspective of the role of the popular media over the course of thirty years in shaping the foundations of the American sub prime crisis as put forward by the film maker Michael Moore provides a convincing example of the primacy of the "superstructure" in modern times. It is stressed here that this does not involve denying the stress that Marxist doctrine places on contradictions within the economic base of a capitalist society, but a recognition that perhaps these contradictions are not the principal contradictions at this point simply because of the immense power of the deceptive tools at the disposal of the capitalist. In such a situation, the deceitful veneer of harmonious accord and promises of eden must be exposed first.

One must begin with Mao's observation – "*True, productive forces, practice and the economic base generally play the principal and decisive role; But it must also be admitted that in certain conditions, such aspects as the relations of production, theory and superstructure in turn manifest themselves in the principal and decisive role.*" This is the situation prevailing now. More specifically, the tools of propaganda laid at the disposal of the capitalist setup have allowed it to utilise super structural elements to establish its "ideological hegemony" as Gramsci would have put it as a gloss over the real exploitative conditions of the bourgeoisie setup. Indeed, the state's deceptive capacity has seen an exponential increase since Gramsci's time. We have to establish with clarity what the contradictions within the system are in such a situation.

It is not just that there is a conflict between the superstructure and the economic base, between the promises of a better life the bourgeoisie culture makes and the realities of the neo imperialist mode of production. This is one contradiction but not the "principal contradiction". At this time the principal contradiction is between the bourgeoisie superstructure (as reflected through its "culture" and echoed by its intelligentsia etc.) and the proletariat parallel. This does not imply that there are no other contradictions within the current social setup. However, from a strategic point of view, further Marxist activity and mobilisation is impossible till the capitalist culture is exposed for what it really is – a sham. Today the working class is bombarded from every direction with images of what their culture should be and what their lifestyle could be. The immense potential of the powers of propaganda are utilised at every turn to dupe the proletariat into contributing towards the exploitation of their own

brothers. The only reply to this bombardment is the exposition of what the proletariat class culture should be as opposed to the consumerism of the bourgeoisie. This battle is to be fought through intellectual activity before the party can take the field. Mao goes on to say with regard to his recognition of the importance of superstructure – *“this does not go against materialism; on the contrary, it avoids mechanical materialism and firmly upholds dialectical materialism.”* Some critics might say that this analysis gives undue importance to the role of propaganda and its influence on the working class. However, a brief analysis of the Global Economic crisis of 2008 reveals the lethal role which the information media can play.

The economic explanation of the financial crisis has been put forward in great detail through several sources. But, Mr. Michael Moore’s documentary film – “Capitalism: A Love Story” draws our attention to an interesting issue – Why did the “blue collar workers of America” (in his words) start borrowing beyond their means and mortgaging their properties? (One of the main reasons of the sub prime crisis). It did not happen overnight. Mr. Moore suggests that this was a systematic propaganda campaign launched by American finance capital for fresh and new resources directly contributed by the working class of America itself right from the 1970s. It started with advertisements making promises of a better tomorrow, making innocent suggestions such as “tapping your home equity”, which in layman’s terms meant mortgaging one’s property. It was accompanied by increasing deregulation of the financial sector in the name of freeing up the economy for more and better investment opportunities. It finally culminated in putting American and even global society at the mercy of finance capital.

As we look at India today there is a foreboding sense of déjà vu around all that is occurring. The same propaganda techniques are being used, through innocent advertisements of “cheap” loans which would allow a bus driver, a rickshaw driver etc. to fulfil their “dreams”. Even the content of these dreams is planned and flashed across the country, for example, buying a Tata nano car. The promotion of a consumerist culture and the creation of a market to take up the surplus of the bourgeoisie has become the sole agendum. At the same time, we have a government much like the Reagan administration of the United States

which has time and again gone out of its way to “deregulate” the economy. This is the power of modern propaganda – it tells the proletariat what to do, what to think and how to live and it is this image of the superstructure of a bourgeoisie society which must be shattered. The proletariat must be made to realise that buying a nano is not the only “dream” that a man may have. The decadent lifestyle of the upper middle class is not the only one that should be emulated. There is the alternative of a revolutionary culture.

Considering this fundamental shift in the strategy of the bourgeoisie, as a matter of revolutionary strategy it is up to the Marxist intelligentsia to take up the cause of exposing the hollowness of bourgeoisie reconciliatory attempts and flashy popular culture. Only when this is done and the capitalist exposed in all its hypocrisy and naked thirst for blood can the revolutionary party vanguard tackle the contradictions within the economic base and mobilise the proletariat. Without it, it is very difficult to mobilise the proletariat with the promise of bread when the capitalist is ready to promise him everything else through the soothing balm of bourgeoisie propaganda. ●

## LAND STRUGGLE IN KARNATAKA

**THE** land capturing movement in Karnataka is successfully continuing in more than 62 villages. More than 6300 acres is reoccupied by the peasantry throwing out the barricades raised by the police and forest guards with more than 10,000 land less and poor peasants with women and children participating. Already 14 clashes have taken place with the police and forest guards. The agitation is spreading to more areas. (See photos on front page). ●

## DPF TO BE STRENGTHENED

**AT** a meeting of the DPF held at New Delhi on 17<sup>th</sup> July, attended by the representatives of CPI(ML), MLC(AP), NSM(Gujarat), Bahujan Vam Manch and CPI(ML) New Proletarian, the All India Convention and Parliament March

held on 27 and 28 February was evaluated as a big success. Taking in to consideration the opinion of many of the organizations who want to become members of the DPF, the meeting decided to change the name of the Democratic People’s Front to Forum ( Loktantrik Jan Manch). The meeting decided to expand the Forum and to hold its next meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> August at New Delhi to work out programs based on the ten point program. ●

***No to Reformism, No To Anarchism,  
March to Revolution***

**Documents Adopted by the All India Special  
Conference of the CPI(ML) in 2009**

***In Hindi and English***

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# AUTONOMY MUST BE ACHIEVED BASED ON THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION WITHIN A UNITED SRI LANKA

[This report contains a summary of the address by Comrade SK Senthivel and the resolutions adopted at the Fifth Northern Regional Congress of the New-Democratic Marxist-Leninist Party of Sri Lanka held at Jaffna on 26th February 2011 with delegates participating from five districts.]

**A**LTHOUGH it is more than twenty months since the war was brought to an end, the Mahinda Chinthanaya government has been unable put forward any solution to the national question, which continued to be the cause for that cruel war. The fundamental reason for it is the chauvinistic capitalist ruling class stand. The national contradiction and national oppression continue as a result. As a result the national contradiction and national oppression are prolonged. Thus, the denial of democracy and the politics of concession and development cannot obscure the reality that the national question occupies a central place in Sri Lankan politics. That is why the New-Democratic Marxist-Leninist Party continues to emphasise the need to find a just political solution to the national question through autonomy, based on the right to self-determination within a united Sri Lanka.

The Tamil people have experienced unprecedented misery and ruin as a result of the cruelty of the war and the wrong theory and practice of their struggle. The entire responsibility for it has to be borne by the chauvinistic capitalist ruling classes of the South and the narrow nationalists of the North who have been advocating Tamil nationalism. Nationalism, be it that of a country or of a nationality, could be upheld from either of two standpoints. One is progressive and the other is reactionary. The nationalism of the country that was talked about since

well before independence has been developed and put forward on a reactionary footing as chauvinism. Likewise, Tamil ethnic nationalism too has been developed and put forward on a reactionary footing as narrow nationalism. The Sinhala ruling class forces and the forces of Tamil elitist political domination benefitted from them. The consequent misery and the losses were, however, suffered by the ordinary Tamil toiling masses.

Therefore, the Tamil people should henceforth reject the blood stained policies that seek to carry forward Tamil nationalism along the beaten track of emotional politics as reactionary, narrow Tamil nationalism with the aim of gathering votes. The younger generation should understand the Tamil nationalist authoritarian political trend and come forward to adopt progressive Tamil nationalism. The Tamil people have experienced, in the form of a bloodbath with heavy loss of life during the final stages of the war, the consequences of the submission of the Tamil leadership to the forces of foreign imperialism and regional hegemony. Despite that bitter experience, for the Tamil National Alliance to wait with slavish devotion on India and the US to deliver a political solution is only to mislead the Tamil people along their reactionary, narrow-nationalist path.

All the policies and forms of struggle adopted by the Tamil leaders in the name of Tamil nationalism during the past century have met with total failure. Those leaders are now seeking to carry forward the same policies and forms of struggle under different names. They are dusting up their Tamil nationalist politics once more to present it to the people to get their votes. Some of them mask their politics of absolute surrender with a facade of empty boast. Yet others pin their faith on the 'Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam' and indulge in directionless politics. But the Tamil people observe political silence in a mood of despair. The reasons are not only the denial of democracy, the shattering of normal life, the absence of a political solution, oppression, anxiety and fear. The real and essential reason is bitterness and revulsion about the politics of the entire leadership that upheld Tamil nationalism and desired Tamil Eelam.

Under these conditions, the only remaining political path for the Tamil people is the path of mass struggle. Let us make our own policies and programmes. Let us mobilise. Let us create our own leadership. Let us ensure that the policies evolved, based on past experience, serve the interests of the working people who comprise the vast majority of the Tamil people. Let us unite the broad masses on the basis of a general programme that can rid society of caste based hierarchy, denial of social justice, oppression of women and other forms of discrimination. Let us blast away the slavish faith in foreign forces. Let us abandon narrow nationalism and join hands with the Sinhalese working masses. Let us explain the rights of the oppressed Tamil nationality to the Sinhalese

people and make them unite with us in our path of mass struggle. This alone could be the correct political choice before the Tamil people.

In a climate in which, the policies and practices adopted thus far among the Tamil people in three stages have failed leading to ruin, the opening of a fourth front based on the above approach alone could serve as a correct and far sighted approach. Unless such fresh alternative policies and practices are not considered among the Tamil people, there will be no opening to a path for liberation.

Hence, the Party declares through this Congress that, while carrying forward its own policy and programme, it is willing to collaborate on the basis of a common programme with a progressive Tamil nationalism that would emerge through the rejection of Tamil narrow nationalism.

Resolutions adopted at the Fifth Northern Regional Congress of the New-Democratic Marxist-Leninist Party:

1. Although it is nearly two years since the end of the war, the people have not fully recovered from the impact of the war and the misery caused by it. The national contradiction and oppression still persist. Hence, we emphasise that a political solution to the national question should be put forward without procrastination. We also emphasise that such a solution should be one of full autonomy within a united Sri Lanka, based on the right to self determination.
2. Resettlement, restoration and rehabilitation should not merely be in name and a situation should be created soon in which the people could live freely and normally in their areas of residence without any form of interference, threat or pressure.
3. Resettlement should be expedited in Valikaamam North and other regions where High Security Zones continue to exist.
4. The state of emergency should be lifted forthwith and the Prevention of Terrorism Act should be rescinded.
5. All political prisoners should be freed and particulars of missing persons should be published.
6. Due steps should be taken to put an end to murders, robberies and kidnappings said to be carried out by unidentified persons, and the culprits

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brought before the law.

7. Democracy and normal life should be re-established, and full civilian administration should be implemented.

8. Basic democratic and human rights and trade union rights should be protected, and the freedom of the media and freedom of expression should be established.

9. The rising prices of goods should be arrested and the rise in cost of living should be controlled. Wage increases should be granted to all employees in keeping with the rise in prices and cost of living.

10. A normal environment should be ensured where the peasants, daily wage earners and fisher folk could carry out their work freely and without fear.

11. The people should be awakened to and mobilised against the venomous effects of the consumer culture resulting from the open economy under imperialist globalisation.

12. The people should be awakened against infiltration by the US imperialist and Indian hegemonic powers that are undermining the sovereignty of Sri Lanka and unity among its nationalities.

13. Let us build up a new Sri Lanka of unity, equality, freedom and prosperity by putting forward basic demands for the welfare of the toiling Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim and Hill Country Tamil masses and mobilising them along the path of mass struggle.

14. Let us join hands with the anti-imperialist struggles of the suppressed and oppressed countries and people of the world. ●



**I**N **TURKEY** the parliamentary elections held on 12 June. The government party, AKP\* with Islamic motives became the party that will form the new government for 3rd term by increasing its votes (Its proportion of votes is 50%).

And the other state party, CHP\* remained at 26%. Racist fascist MHP\* was also able to enter into parliament by rising above 10% threshold in the elections. The Labour, Democracy and Freedom Bloc absolutely and evidentially became the winning side at this elections. The Bloc is formed by BDP\* representing the Kurdish freedom movement and some leftist parties and groups in Turkey. The Bloc has increased its votes in the elections, and has shown a great success by increasing its representation in the parliament from 22 to 36. And the ESP\*, a component of the freedom front, has supported the Bloc candidates in Kurdistan; but it has actively participated in the election process and grew its activities by fielding independent socialist candidates in Turkey's big cities. The success of the Bloc, which came about mainly because of Kurdistan and BDP, was realized despite the arrest and imprisonment of nearly 3 thousand BDP officials, Mayors, activists and workers in the recent months. The success was also realized by Kurdish People's resistance to and repelling of the Higher Election Board's (YSK) decision to veto some of the Bloc candidates during elections.

It came about through display of great will-power and resistance against fascist regime's various repressions, bans, tricks and prohibitions. Not only the great preparation and organisation at the election process, but also the organisation of people to vote, the protection and defence of ballot boxes and votes has brought about the success. Through the result, the 10% threshold -which was introduced to prevent representation of Kurdish

## ANALYSIS OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN TURKEY

people and socialist forces in the parliament, has been invalidated. The AKP who had been making nationalist and religious propagandas has been forced to retreat in Kurdistan. Its number of votes reduced. In comparison to the former elections, 14 of 15 MPs that it has lost are from Kurdistan cities.

In Kurdistan, the elections also represented a referendum. It became an absolute announcement of Kurds will power on democratic autonomy; Kurdish identity, Kurdish language and Kurdish culture. Kurdish people have forced the solution of the Kurdish problem to the regime. The new AKP government is trying to be a new war government rather than taking steps towards solving the problem. Until now, it has considered the Kurdish freedom movement's ceasefire process as a process of liquidation or delay. On 14th of June, a delegation of colonial regime has met with A. Ocalan, the PKK\* leader, in Imrali Prison. Following the meeting, A. Ocalan said that he can extend the ceasefire process for another few months for the 'democratic constitution'. KCK has agreed with A. Ocalan, the Kurdish leader. In the new period, there are internal and outer problems in front of the AKP government: internally the Kurdish question and a new constitution, and the uprisings in the Middle East and the resistance and refugee crisis with its neighbour Syria as outer matters. The new constitution project of the AKP government would mean to secure its influence in the state and its posts that it has gained, and presidential system. And its position towards Middle East and Syria will be determined according to the role that would be drawn by the imperialist policies.

As a matter of fact, Hatip Dicle's MP status, who was elected as an independent candidate from Amed with 85 thousand votes, has been dropped by the Higher Election Board. AKP's Oya Oranat, who was not elected, has been appointed to his place. Later, the other MP candidates release from prisons declined through ongoing court cases. Kurdish institutions and forces met the decision with great anger. BDP and other independent candidates of the Bloc announced that they will boycott the parliament and would not join in the oath ceremony until there is a concrete steps taken towards Dicle. The regime party, CHP members also did not attend the ceremony because of refusal on the release of Mustafa Balbay and Mehmet Demiral, who are being tried in connection with Ergenekon\* case in the courts. The parliament is now experiencing a situation of real crises when 171 MPs in total of 550 did not take oath. The decision on Hatip Dicle and other imprisoned MPs show that the colonial regime and the government are in preparation of war. It is inevitable that the parliament without BDP will be a war parliament and the government which will be formed there would be a war government. With this move, it is once more being clearly seen that the bourgeois state will not show any sympathy towards solution by meeting the minimum democratic demands of the Kurdish people, and that it would insist on its war tactics and delaying process. As well as developing the Labour, Democracy and Freedom Bloc, which was formed during elections, by involving the revolutionary forces of the west in it; the real path to the solution is to develop a political line which would bring together the Kurdish freedom movement and the political and social freedom struggle of the Turkish workers and labourers.

Kurdistan Democratic Confederation [Ergenekon] operations are the operations of the regime to re-construct the counter-guerrilla. Tens of people

were arrested at these operations, among them several retired generals, and are claimed to be members of this gang called "Ergenekon". [ BDP / ]\* Peace and Democracy Party. Party of Democratic Society (DTP), the legal and legitimate party of the Kurdish national struggle, was banned and closed down by the Turkish bourgeois state in November 2009. After that, BDP was established as an expression of the will of the Kurdish people in this field.

### IMPACT OF SYRIAN REBELLION ON TURKEY

Rebellion in Syria and the balance of forces in the region make the Turkish state hesitate from an intervention that would put Assad regime against itself. Both because of Kurdish question and the US policies, it is also fully aware of that a Syria without Assad will be completely out of control. Although AKP government's close relations with Sunni Islamist organisations, including Muslim Brothers, are known, it foresees that such organisations would not be an alternative to power in the near future. The wave of rebellion which surrounded the Middle East has also bounced into the Syria since the beginning of February. Syria is among the one of the oldest powers of the region and plays critical role in terms of the balance of forces in the Middle East. The Baas regime under the leadership of Bashar Al Assad, who tried to escape from the wave since the explosion of the first rebellion in Tunisia through reform promises, has not succeeded in this policy of appeasement. The rebellion, which was enflamed by a labourer burning himself similar to the one in Tunisia, later turned into clashes between Syrian army-police forces and people, resulting in hundreds of people losing their life.

The main demands of the movement, in which the facebook and similar social media tools also played a role, were 'freedom, human rights and the abolishment of state of emergency which has been continuing since 1963'. In the face of the working class and labourers who became the determining force of the political life in the Middle East and Northern Africa, the process in Syria has developed simultaneously with the US and EU imperialists; waging of interventions together with their attacks on Libya through ideological manipulations and which aim political superiority and gaining posts. The direction of the people's movement in a county like Syria -which is administered by Alevi minority, which has western and secular approach, when the Sunnis and other minority religious sects form the majority, which plays important role of balance in terms of the regional relations due to its role in Palestinian question and its position towards Israel, and which mainly chosen to stand by Iran and Hezbollah although it had developed new approach regarding its relations with USA and particularly with EU during Bashar Assad period -forms the centre of attraction of all countries in the region, including the Turkish bourgeois state.

For the US imperialists, although Baas power under the leadership of Assad does not represent the ideal alternative, there is still no opposition which could replace him without losing the control of regional balances and producing instabilities. Yet Syria is a decisive country in terms of the balance of forces in the Middle East, and therefore no power that has got political interests over the region would risk the destabilization of the region and do important changes by taking risky steps. Although the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt that has been suppressed or forced to be a force within the system after the killing of Anwar Saadat or the monarchists against Kaddafi in Libya are considered as a short term or long term possible alternative powers; the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria is too far to be considered as an alternative because of their harsh positions after the Hama massacre, the existence of countries in the region such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia which are administrated by Sunni sect, and which would bring more negativities regarding Israel's position in the region. It is also not possible

to talk about a bourgeois liberal opposition due to state of emergency laws for 46 years under the administration of Assad family. The bourgeois opposition forces consist of narrow organisations whose influence are limited and scattered. And the Kurdish freedom movement, which represents one of the main interlocutors of the regime in Syria, continues to protect balanced relations with Assad. It is known that one of the possible scenarios under the conditions of downfall of the Assad in Syria is the development of total liquidation process against the Kurdish freedom movement. The Turkish bourgeois state mainly acts in direction to force Assad to do reforms, in line with the US policy. The greatest fear of the Turkish bourgeois state is the realisation of reforms by Assad that would provide limited autonomy to Kurdish people; or provision of limited autonomy to the Kurds in Syria through imperialist intervention and in a chaotic situation following the downfall of Assad regime. This is why, while the Turkish state hesitates from an intervention that would put Assad regime against itself both because of Kurdish question and the US policies, it is also fully aware of that a Syria without Assad will be completely out of control.

Although AKP government's close relations with Sunni Islamist organisations, including Muslim Brothers, are known, it foresees that such organisations would not be an alternative to power in the near future. Moreover, it is also clear that because of Assad regime's relations with India, China and Russia, a direct intervention to Syria may create huge tensions between imperialist forces. This strengthens the tendency among regional and international powers to content with forcing Assad regime to reforms in connection with the needs of the imperialist globalisation process. ●

(<http://www.mlkp.info>)

The U.S. imperialist Obama regime in March of this year began waging its unprovoked and brutal war against the Libyan people. The U.S. enforced “no fly zone” was established on the basis of the U.S., European Union and NATO bombing of Libya. The savage bombing raids on Tripoli by U.S. and NATO imperialists, the death and destruction, the suffering and sorrow of the Libyan people is being carried out in the name of “protecting” the Libyan people from “genocide,” allegedly making the U.S.-led intervention a “humanitarian” crusade.

In the March-April issue of the *Ray O' Light Newsletter*, we stated “U.S. imperialism has taken these drastic actions on the basis of the flimsiest of pretexts. It is using media ‘reports’ from Libya, Egypt and elsewhere packaged by the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), established in 1981 and trained and financed by the U.S. CIA ever since. The NFSL and other such organizations are being used to ‘document’ that the Gadhafi government is killing Libyan protesters, allegedly in greater numbers than the U.S. client governments all over the rest of the Middle East are doing.” (“The Arab Masses are Taking their Future into their Hands!” *Ray O Light Newsletter*)

In an excellent editorial in the *Boston Globe*, April 14, 2011, “False Pretense for War in Libya?” Alan J. Kuperman, Professor of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, confirmed much of what we had written. He said:

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## **US-LED BOMBING OF LIBYA : CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY !**

**Pat Kelly**

“Evidence is now in that President Barack Obama grossly exaggerated the humanitarian threat to justify military action in Libya. The president claimed that intervention was necessary to prevent a ‘bloodbath’ in Benghazi, Libya’s second-largest city and last rebel stronghold.

“But Human Rights Watch has released data on Misurata, the next-biggest city in Libya and scene of protracted fighting, revealing that Moammar Khadafy is not deliberately massacring civilians but rather narrowly targeting the armed rebels who fight against his government....

“Obama insisted that prospects were grim without intervention. ‘If we waited one more day, Benghazi ... could suffer a massacre that would have reverberated across the region and stained the conscious of the world.’ Thus, the president concluded, ‘preventing genocide’ justified US military action.”

In the same *Ray O' Light Newsletter* cited above, we said, “The U.S. imperialist-led invasion and occupation of Iraq has resulted in over one million civilian deaths. Yet this same shameless U.S. imperialist state apparatus now claims to be ‘concerned’ about the killings of people in Libya by the Gadhafi government *only*.”

Continuing from Kuperman’s *Boston Globe* article:

“The actual prospect in Benghazi was the final defeat of the rebels. To avoid this fate, they desperately concocted an impending genocide to rally international support for ‘humanitarian’ intervention that would save their rebellion.

“On March 15, Reuters quoted a Libyan opposition leader in Geneva claiming that if Khadafy attacked Benghazi, there would be ‘a real bloodbath, a massacre like we saw in Rwanda.’ Four days later, US military aircraft started bombing. The New York Times already had reported that ‘the rebels feel no loyalty to the truth in shaping their propaganda’ against Khadafy and were ‘making vastly inflated claims of his barbaric behavior.’...

“On March 31, NATO formally warned *the rebels* to stop attacking civilians. It is poignant to recall that if not for intervention, the war almost surely would have ended last month.” (*Boston Globe*, 4/14/11, Our Emphasis, ROL)

U.S. imperialism is waging war against the people of Libya for the same reason it wages war against the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan, to rob them of their vast oil wealth and maximize their profits and to maintain their dominance over their imperialist partner-rivals. This is the economic and primary motive for imperialist wars. The “humanitarian” face is a cheap political lie. The future belongs to the new and rising movements of workers and oppressed people in Arabia and world-wide.

**STOP THE BOMBING OF THE LIBYAN PEOPLE!  
U.S. OUT OF LIBYA, IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN!  
VICTORY TO THE ARAB REVOLUTION!  
SOCIALISM IS THE ANSWER TO IMPERIALIST WAR! ●**

# NATO's DEBACLE IN LIBYA

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Alexander Cockburn

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**A**FTER three and a half months of bombing and arms supply to various rebel factions, NATO's failure in its efforts to promote "regime change" in Libya is now glaring.

Obviously NATO's commanders are still hoping that a lucky bomb may kill Gaddafi, but to date the staying power has been with the Libyan leader, whereas it is the relevant NATO powers who are fighting among themselves.

The reports from Istanbul of the deliberations of NATO's Contact Group have a surreal quality, as Secretary of State Clinton and British foreign minister Hague gravely re-emphasize their commitment to regime change and the strengthening of ties to the Transitional Council in Benghazi, while the humiliation of the entire NATO expedition is entering the history books as an advertisement of the dangers of political fantasy in the service of "humanitarian interventionism", appalling intelligence work, illusions about bombing and air power, and some of the worst press coverage in living memory.

Take British Prime Minister David Cameron. He can thank Rupert Murdoch, even the wretched Andy Coulson for one ironic blessing. His appalling misjudgement and obstinacy in hiring former News of the world editor Coulson has so dominated British headlines these past days that an equally staggering misjudgement in the international theatre is escaping well-merited ridicule and rebuke.

When Cameron vied with French president Sarkozy in early March in heading the charge against Qaddafi, no murmur of caution seems to have disturbed the blithe mood of confidence in Downing St. It was as though Blair's blunders and miscalculations in Iraq, endlessly disinterred in subsequent years, had never been.

Cameron, like Sarkozy, Clinton and Obama presumably had intelligence assessments of the situation in Libya. Did any of them say that Gaddafi might be a tougher nut to crack than the presidents of Tunisia or Egypt, might even command some popular support in Tripoli and western Libya, historically at odds with Benghazi and the eastern region? If they did, did they pay any attention?

The Western press, along with al-Jazeera, was no help. The early charges of Gaddafi committing "genocide" against his own people or ordering mass rapes were based on unverified rumour or propaganda bulletins from Benghazi and have now been decisively discredited by reputable organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Any pretensions the International Criminal Court might have had to judicial impartiality has been undermined by the ICC's role as NATO's creature, rushing out indictments of Gaddafi and his closest associates whenever NATO's propaganda agenda has demanded it.

The journalists in Benghazi became cheerleaders for what was from the start plainly a disorganized rabble of disparate factions. The journalists in Tripoli were reluctant to file copy which might be deemed by their editors as "soft" on Gaddafi, a devil figure in the West for most of his four decades in power. America's

progressives exulted that at last they had on their hands a "just war" and could cheer on NATO's bombardiers with a clear conscience and entertain fantasies about the revolutionary purity of the rebels.

All history shows that the dropping of thousands of bombs and missiles, with whatever supposed standards of "pin point accuracy", never elicits the enthusiastic support of civilians on the receiving end, even if a certificate of humanitarian assistance and merciful intent is stamped on every projectile. Recent pro-government rallies in Tripoli have been vast. Libya has a population of about six million, with four million in Tripoli. Gaddafi barrels around the city in an open jeep. Large amounts of AK-47s have been distributed to civilian defence committees. Were they all compelled to demonstrate by Gaddafi's enforcers? It seems unlikely.

This last week the western press excitedly relayed the news that a handful of prisoners were denouncing Gaddafi. Well, if you were a prisoner with rebel guns pointed at your head, would you proclaim your fidelity to the prime target of their fury, or murmur that you had been dragooned into unwilling service? Isn't this an item from Journalism 101. Are they "black mercenaries" or Libyans from the south who happen to be black and members of Gaddafi's militias?

Another pointer to NATO's misjudgements has been the heavy-handed dismissal of charges from African, Russian and even leaders of NATO countries such as Germany that the mandates of two UN security council resolutions passed in February and then March 17 – protection of civilian populations – were being brazenly distorted in favour of efforts to kill Gaddafi and install the ramshackle "provisional government" in Benghazi – a shady bunch from the get go.

In early March, Sarkozy, languishing in the polls, believed the



counsel of “new philosopher” Bernard-Henri Lévy, after the latter’s March 6 excursion to Benghazi, that Libya and its oil were up for grabs. On March 11 Sarkozy took the precipitate step of recognizing the Benghazi gang as the legitimate government of Libya and awaited Gaddafi’s collapse with a confident heart.

In a hilarious inside account of the NATO debacle, Vincent Jauvert of *Le Nouvel Observateur* has recently disclosed that French intelligence services assured Sarkozy and foreign minister Juppe “from the first [air] strike, thousands of soldiers would defect from Gaddafi. They also predicted that the rebels would move quickly to Sirte, the hometown of the Qaddafi and force him to flee the country. This was triumphantly and erroneously trumpeted by the NATO powers which even proclaimed that he had flown to Venezuela. By all means opt for the Big Lie as a propaganda ploy, but not if it is inevitably going to be discredited 24 hours later.

“We underestimated al-Gaddafi,” one French officer told Jauvert. “He was preparing for forty-one years for an invasion. We did not imagine he would adapt as quickly. No one expects, for example, to transport its troops and missile batteries, Gaddafi will go out and buy hundreds of Toyota pick-up in Niger and Mali. It is a stroke of genius: the trucks are identical to those used by the rebels. NATO is paralysed. It delays its strikes. Before bombing the vehicles, drivers need to be sure they are whose forces are Gaddafi’s. ‘We asked the rebels to a particular signal on the roof of their pickup truck, said a soldier, but we were never sure. They are so disorganized ...’”

When collapse did not arrive on schedule the French government breezily confirmed earlier this month it was shipping and air-dropping dropping arms supplies to Libyan rebel groups. We can safely assume Britain has its own clandestine operations in train, though the capture of the SAS/

MI6 unit by Libyan farmers was not an inspiring augury.

The NATO coalition is now falling apart, though disclosure of this development has been muted to non-existent in the US press. French defence minister Gerard Longuet gave an interview at the end of last week to a French TV station saying that military action against Libya has failed, and it is time for diplomacy: “We must now sit around a table. We will stop bombing as soon as the Libyans start talking to one another and the military on both sides go back to their bases.’ Longuet suggested that Gaddafi might be able to remain in Libya, ‘in another room of the palace, with another title’.”

If Longuet’s startling remarks were for local consumption on the eve of an Assembly vote, it clearly came as a shock to Cameron and Secretary of State Clinton. To heighten the impression of a civil war in NATO Cameron and Clinton rushed out statements asserting the ongoing goal of regime change, and that Gaddafi’s departure was a *sine qua non*, as demanded by the Benghazi gang.

But Berlusconi, his country the objective of tens of thousands of refugees from the fighting and from economic dislocation in Libya is now saying he was against the whole NATO adventure from the start. He may decline to renew in the fall current basing agreements in Italy for the NATO intervening powers. Germany has always been unenthusiastic. Initially, France and Britain nourished hopes of close military liaison but that soon collapsed for all the usual reasons — inertia, suspicion and simple incompetence.

Sarkozy’s suspicions of Germany and Turkey were apparently so intense, according to *Le Nouvel Observateur*, that he called for the sidelining the Turkish and German officers present in the command structure of NATO, on the grounds that they could undermine the war given Berlin and Ankara’s distaste for the whole exercise. Normal guidelines dictate that when the supreme commander of NATO, an American general and his No. 2, a Briton, are on leave, the No. 3, is to be a German. Sarkozy had this sequence nixed.

Obama has been playing a double game, reflective of domestic pressures and political priorities. At the start, the rush to the UN Security Council was very much Secretary of State Clinton’s initiative. In political stature early to mid-February Obama was at his nadir. There was growing talk of a one-term presidency. Clinton rushed into what she perceived as a tempting vacuum, perhaps even began to entertain some hopes of accelerating Obama’s decline and proffering herself as a potential contender in 2012. Obama, still fighting the “wimp” label, swiftly endorsed the NATO mission and defied challenges as to its constitutional propriety. Clinton soon thereafter announced she was not particularly interested in staying in national politics after 2012.

In terms of equipment the US has been crucial. According to one French general cited by *Le Nouvel Observateur*, “33 of 41 tanker aircraft used in the operation are American, most of the AWACS as well, all the drones as well, as 100 per cent of anti-radar missile and laser guidance kits for bombs. And that’s not all. The main means of command and control of NATO as the huge bandwidth for transmitting all the data is American.” The Director of Military Intelligence, General Didier Bolelli, revealed that over 80 per cent of the targets assigned to the French pilots in Libya was designated by U.S.! “They give us just enough so that we do not figure we were breaking,” says one diplomat.

Those whose memories stretch back to the Suez debacle of 1956 might recall that Eisenhower simply ordered the British, French and Israeli forces to abandon the effort to overthrow Nasser. We could well be seeing a less overt rerun of that conclusive demonstration of post World War II US dominance, with the Obama administration making the point that any effort at asserting

European primacy in the Mediterranean region is doomed to failure.

Before his retirement Defence Secretary Gates took the opportunity to twist the knife in a speech in Brussels: “The mightiest military alliance in history, is... into an operation against a poorly-armed regime in a sparsely populated country — yet many allies are beginning to run short of munitions, requiring the U.S., once more, to make up the difference.” He said ominously, “future U.S. political leaders... may not consider the return on America’s investment in NATO worth the cost.”

Even if Obama is in fact wholeheartedly for regime change in Libya the political temperature here does not favour the sort of escalation – hugely costly and much against the public mood - required in the wake of the failure of the bombing campaign.

There’s no evidence that Labour’s leader, Ed Miliband, lion-like in his eagerness to seize the reins of the anti-Murdoch bandwagon, has the political agility to toast Cameron for the Libyan farce. By disposition he’s probably keener on “humanitarian interventions” than Cameron and can only reproach him for not trying hard enough.

In sum, we on the left should rejoice that a simple colonial smash and grab is currently in a shambles, with serious long-term consequences for NATO’s credibility and pretences to respect for international law. The kangaroo cage

known as the International Criminal Court has been even further discredited, another cause for joy.

What next? The air is thick with speculations about a brokered settlement, salted with hopeful bleats from the Americans and British that Gaddafi is on the verge of collapse, that he is running out of fuel, that the rebels are tightening the noose around Tripoli, that the Russians re brokering some sort of a face-saving deal. It seems a better bet to recognize that after four and a half months, NATO and the interventionists are being humiliated. Throw in the humiliation of Rupert Murdoch and we can legitimately raise our champagne glasses even higher. ●

[<http://www.counterpunch.org>]

## NAVIN GOVERNMENT ATTACKS PEOPLE TO SERVE POSCO

**T**HE ecological license provided by the UPA government led by the IMF nominated prime minister, Manmohan Singh has emboldened the billionaire chief minister of Orssa, Navin Patnaik, to unleash state terror against the protesting people, mostly women and children, who are continuing their reistance struggle against the Posco company. His government has virtually turned the affected villages of Jagatsinghpur district in to police and para military camps, with hundreds of them deployed to crush the resistance struggle. During the independence struggle or thereafter could anyone think that after six decades of so-called independence there will be prime ministers and chief ministers in this country who will lick the boots of the MNCs and corporate lords to pocket commissions. Each and every study on the proposed blue print of Posco whether in Orissa or now in Karnataka show that except for tall claims, the thousands of affected families are not going to be provided with employment to compensate for the destruction of the regular work they are presently getting from their land, even if the income is at a subsistent level only. They have seen the fate of the predominantly adivasi and dalits population who were uprooted for the numerous projects from the time of numerous projects of the First Five Year Plan period like the Hirakud project. It is based on these experiences the people are resisting the forcible take over of the land for Posco. All the progressive sections of should come forward to support the struggle of the people against Posco. ●

## US STATE SECRETARY’S VISIT TO PUT MORE PRESSURE ON INDIA

**T**HE US state secretary visited India and attended many programs and held discussions with representatives of the central government in order to put more pressure on the UPA government to dilute the Civil Nuclear Liability Law according to its interests and to promote the sale of more US arms and equipments to India. Besides she brokered the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipe line project in place of the Iran-Pakistan-India Peace Pipe line which was shelved by the UPA government under US pressure. WekiLeaks had exposed how the US administration put pressure on the Indian government to cancel the IPI pipe line. The US state secretary ‘s statement about withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan by 2014 is part of the advanced planning to transfer many of the US tasks in Afghanistan to India, involving it more firmly with the strategic policies of US. On the whole it was a visit to intensify efforts to serve US interests at the cost of the Indian people. ●

**Rebel**

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**O**N 15 JUNE a general strike took place in Greece, combined with the protests in the central squares of dozens of cities, which started on 25 May and continue uninterrupted on a daily basis since then. In Athens, the Popular Assembly of the Constitution square called for the blockade of the Parliament. Hundreds of thousands of people took part in the various mobilizations all over the country, with the majority gathering directly in the squares during the early morning hours, joined later by the demonstrations of trade unions. The Papandreou “government”, shaking under the resolute popular protests, attempted to terrorize and put an end to the movement of the Indignados, unleashing the special police forces against the people in all their barbarity – with the kind assistance of the political police infiltrators in plain clothes and of few groups of so-called “nihilists”, who played the government’s game: “Empty the squares”.

In Athens, an incredible amount of chemicals and tear gas have been used in a desperate attempt to disperse the masses in the centre of the city and to evacuate the Constitution square in front of the Parliament. Many people who participated in the blockade of the Parliament using non-violent tactics have been arrested. In early afternoon the police, using as pretext the incidents provoked by “rioters” (in several cases they proved to be plain clothed policemen), managed to invade the Constitution square. However, within one hour the people pushed the police out and liberated the square, which became the scene of a big spontaneous concert with famous artists, celebrating the victorious resistance of the Indignados. The Popular Assembly took place later in the evening, after the concert, and confirmed the resolute stand of the Indignados, condemning the failed police attacks and declaring that “*we shall not leave until we overthrow the enemy: the*

## CONTINUING MASS UPSURGE IN GREECE

*government, the IMF-EU-ECB troika, the Agreement, the proposed ‘Middle-Term Program’ and all those who support these policies and brought us to the actual situation”.*

The movement of the squares represents the invasion of the masses in the centre of the political scene. It is not anymore a protest, but a factor that interacts directly with the political developments and directly influences their course. Wednesday 15 June was a day that proved it, as the popular factor obliged the Papandreou “government” to moves of panic (apart the failed attempt to liquidate the protest through the police attack, as described above): 1. In the morning, Papandreou visited the President of the Republic, asking him to sign a Presidential Decree that would allow the government to by-pass the Parliament, that is to impose the new Agreement without any vote. The President refused. 2. After the failure of this attempted coup, Papandreou in reality resigned, and proposed to the right-wing opposition a “government of national unity”. Under the pressure of the “squares”, the opposition refused. All the so-called “technocrats” refused to participate as well. 3. After this second failure, in late night, Papandreou announced that he will recompose the government and ask for a vote of confidence in the Parliament (in order to limit the reactions in his own party).

This “government” is trembling. Their role is to succeed to vote the new “Middle-Term Program” demanded by the IMF-EU-ECB troika. However, it is not at all sure that Papandreou & Co will manage to fulfill this task before they will be thrown in the dustbin. The movement prepares for a new blockade of the Parliament the day of “confidence vote” (probably next Tuesday 21 June). And, the most important, for a huge demonstration and a 24 hours blockade of the Parliament on the day that the government plans to put the MPs to vote for the new “Middle-Term Program” (probably on Tuesday 28 June). We are doing our best to prepare for the battles to come in the next days and weeks, with confidence in the strength of the Greek people, whose majority is united under the slogan: “We shall not leave until we overthrow all of them, including their agreements with the IMF-EU-ECB troika!”. We fully share the political aim of the popular movement, that is to get rid of this whole political establishment and to impose real democracy. As we were declaring already long before the outbreak of this movement, “*a genuine and deep political change is a prerequisite for the realization of each and every other demand of the people, towards a political, social and economic way out for the whole country*”.

We salute the maturity of our people’s movement, its patriotic and democratic character, its resolute and tenacious stand against all manipulations, provocations and repressive attacks, which produced the first victory: the confession of failure of the most dire government we have had until today, which returned the country 100 years back as far as the rights and freedoms of the people are concerned, and surrendered Greece to the IMF-EU-ECB troika and to the international profiteers.

**The people united, shall triumph! Throw out the troika and all its lackeys!**

**The criminal Agreement shall be smashed!**

**The Middle-Term Program shall not pass! The struggle continues! ●**

*(Athens, 17/6/2011, From KOE International Relations Department)*



# "REPUBLICRATS" RESCUE OF OBAMA ON LIBYA EXPOSED !

[Extracts from the publication of the Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA]

**A**T THE beginning of June, the U.S. House of Representatives acted on two resolutions, one introduced by Ohio Democratic Congressman Dennis Kucinich and the other by Ohio Republican Speaker of the House John Boehner. Both resolutions addressed the unprovoked and undeclared U.S.-led war against Libya. Both resolutions received bipartisan support.

Arguably the most progressive and "left-wing" representative in the entire Congress, Democrat Kucinich introduced House Resolution 51. If passed, HR 51 would have directed President Obama to remove U.S. armed forces from all hostilities in Libya within 15 days of its passage. Kucinich's measure invoked the 1973 War Powers Resolution arguing that Obama violated the part of the law that prohibits U.S. armed forces from being involved in military actions for more than 60 days without congressional authorization. On June 1st, the House was prepared to vote on the Kucinich resolution; and, apparently, it had a strong chance of passage. This would have been a real blow to U.S. imperialism and a support for the rights of the Libyan people, including their right to self-determination.....

This recent activity in the U.S. House of Representatives provides unimpeachable proof of the criminal political duopoly exercised by the **Republicrats**, now under the political baton of the Democratic Party Executive Branch Regime of President Barack Obama in collaboration with the Republican Party dominated House of Representatives, under the leadership of Speaker of the House John Boehner. In this setting, not only proletarian revolutionaries in the USA, but anti-imperialists, anti-fascists, civil libertarians, pacifists and many others in the U.S. "left" need to be rallied to make the mobilization of mass opposition to the new U.S. imperialist war on the people of Libya a top priority. And this unjust, unprovoked, imperialist war provides another urgent reason to smash the political duopoly defending the U.S. Empire.

## Obama Following in the Footsteps of Bush, the Emperor

**EMBOLDENED** by his political rescue by Republican leader Boehner, in response to Boehner's HR 292 (having escaped Kucinich's resolution), President Obama boldly responded that *he didn't have to consult with the Congress at all!* In taking this stand, Obama was rejecting the legal opinion of the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel. The acting head of the Office of Legal Counsel, Caroline Krass, told the President that he had to abide by the requirements of the War Powers Act. Since the 1930's, this office has served as the authoritative voice on matters of legal interpretation after hearing arguments from the White House and other executive branch departments. As Yale law professor Bruce Ackerman wrote recently, Obama's decision to have his White House counsel cronies "pre-empt the Justice Department's traditional role" is setting an even worse and more dangerous legal precedent than the fascistic George W. Bush had done in abusing his executive war powers in the early years of his war of terror. ....

Republican Speaker of the House, John Boehner, whom the media and the

Democrats have depicted as Obama's nemesis has already been exposed as Obama's most important supporter in the U.S. House of Representatives on this key question for the U.S. working class as well as the oppressed peoples of the Middle East and the world. All the Republicrats have rallied around President Obama in his unprovoked and undeclared war on the sovereign state of Libya.

## Obama: A More Sinister Adversary than Bush

**SINCE** Obama became a viable candidate for the Democratic Party Presidential nomination in 2007, we have repeatedly warned the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples that Obama would differentiate himself from the brutal and arrogant George W. Bush mainly by being a *more formidable* helmsman for U.S. imperialism, a *more dangerous and powerful* adversary of the workers and oppressed throughout the world. Since President Obama was inaugurated, there have been over two thousand six hundred arrests of activists protesting in the USA. (See Bill Quigley's "The Resistance in Obama Time," www.counterpunch.org, 5-24-2011) .....

This expansion of FBI powers is taking place simultaneously and in conjunction with the growing merger of the entire U.S. intelligence apparatus with *and under the aegis of the U.S. military*. It is worth noting in this regard that, at the end of May, it was the Pentagon which announced that Computer Sabotage coming from another country can now constitute an act of war. A military official declared: "If you shut down our power grid, maybe we will put a missile down one of your smokestacks." ("Cyber Combat: Act of War," feature story, *Wall Street Journal*, 5-31-11)

As Secretary of Defense Robert Gates leaves the Obama Administration two and one-half years after being the first Secretary of Defense (or Secretary of War) in U.S.



history ever held over from one Party's presidential administration to the other, the growing domination of the U.S. military over the entire U.S. society is becoming clearer. We are now witnessing Obama's reassignment of four star General David Petraeus to the position as Director of Central Intelligence to replace Leon Panetta who is leaving that position as head of U.S. intelligence to move up to the position of Secretary of Defense (Secretary of War), i.e. the head of the U.S. military.

And this merger of the entire U.S. intelligence apparatus, domestic as well as foreign, into the U.S. military and under its control is being worked out in a real life secret war that U.S. imperialism is waging against the people of Yemen, even as the tyrant who invited the U.S. military to carry out this war is in the process of being driven out by popular uprising.

All of this incessant and accelerating drive toward a military dictatorship in the USA is being facilitated by the connivance and collaboration of the Democratic and Republican Parties, i.e. "Republicrat Rule."

### **Wall Street Journal Worried About Republicrat Rule**

**IN MID JUNE** the *Wall Street Journal* weekend Review's entire front page was an intriguing article entitled "Death of the Duopoly." (*Wall Street Journal* "Review," June 18-19, 2011) Three sets of photos accompanied the article. Each set contained a photo of a Republican and a Democratic President and a third hybrid photo suitably captioned Republicrat. The first set included a photo of the current Democratic President, Obama, as well as a photo of his Republican predecessor, George W. Bush, and a hybrid drawing of the two together, entitled "Republicrat." The second set, also in color, gave the same treatment to Democrat Jimmy Carter and Republican Ronald Reagan and their Republicrat hybrid drawing.

Finally, the third set included Richard Nixon and his Democratic predecessor, John F. Kennedy and their hybrid Republicrat "photo".....

With the connivance of the right revisionism, reformism and pacifism of the CPUSA and of an international communist movement riddled with bourgeois nationalism, for almost fifty years Republicrat "two party-one class rule" has been so successfully unassailable and unchallengeable in the USA, that it has become ever more clearly **the special repressive apparatus** Lenin so brilliantly described in his *State and Revolution*, almost one hundred years ago. With the persistence of the global economic crisis in the USA, Republicrat rule is increasingly exposed to the masses of the USA and to the masses of suffering humanity.

Gillespie and Welch open the article with the following observation: "Nothing in American life today seems as archaic, ubiquitous and immovable as the Republican and Democratic parties.... Though rhetorically and theoretically at odds with one another, the two parties have managed to create a mostly unbroken set of policies and governance structures that benefit well-connected groups.... Americans have watched, with a growing sense of alarm and alienation, as first a Republican administration and then its Democratic successor have flouted public opinion by bailing out banks, nationalizing the auto industry, expanding war in Central Asia, throwing yet more good money after bad to keep housing prices artificially high ..."

The authors cite a 1970 Harris Poll in which 49% considered themselves Democrats and 31% called themselves Republicans. The figures are now 35% Democrats and 28% Republicans, while the numbers of independents grew from 20% to 28%. They also cite a Gallup poll from this January that shows Democrats at 31%, about their lowest point in more than twenty years, and the GOP at 29%. Meanwhile, independents are at 38% and growing.

Gillespie-Welch point out that, "There is a positive correlation between an organization's former dominance and its present-day inability to cope with change." They and the *Wall Street Journal* are concerned that the current lock on the U.S. political system that the Republican-Democratic duopoly maintains in defense of U.S. monopoly capitalism and imperialism is leaving the political-economic system increasingly remote from the people and vulnerable to a revolutionary change which they are trying to help prevent.

Tragically, the CPUSA revisionists, the labor chieftains of the AFL-CIO and Change to Win, the Black Bourgeois leadership of the NAACP, opportunist-led Latino immigrant NGO's and other social democratic props of U.S. monopoly capitalism and imperialism have been able to keep large sections of the oppressed and exploited masses in the USA contained within the Democratic Party orbit and Republicrat Rule — until now.

We believe "Republicrat Rule" is documented in this article (with the help of Congressman Kucinich's persistent opposition to U.S. imperialist war from Bush to Obama). Furthermore, we see the connection between Republicrat Rule and the alarming political trend toward fascism and military dictatorship which has continued to accelerate in the USA under the impetus of the U.S. and global economic crisis and as U.S. imperialism remains actively engaged in a number of wars against sovereign peoples and the international working class. We hope it will serve as an alarm bell that will help awaken the workers and oppressed within the belly of the beast to the need for militant struggle against our real enemies starting with the ruling class of "our own" country and in alliance with the rest of the international working class and the oppressed peoples of the world, starting with our Arab brothers and sisters. ●

## OBITUARY: COMRADE LUDO MARTENS

**COM LUDO MARTENS**, the founding president of the Workers Party of Belgium (PTB) passed away on 5th June at the age of 65. In 1965 though he entered Louvain University to study medicine, he became active in student movement, and was soon hated by the clergy, the academic establishment and the Flemish chauvinists. He was expelled for his leftist positions. While all other parties, rightist or of the left splitted succumbing to narrow nationalism along language and nationalist lines, the PTB built up by com.Ludo and his close comrades in arms, remained and continues to remain a party of all Belgian workers, Flemish and Walloons, united in the struggle against Belgian imperialism.

Influenced by the 'Spring Revolution' of May 1968 he took the student movement to left politics and following his expulsion from the university started participating in the struggles of the working class. Fighting against the Soviet revisionist influence, he and his close comrades, taking lessons from Lenin's 'What is to be done?', published a workers paper and went ahead to found the PTB. Inspired by Lenin's teachings on proletarian internationalism, in the struggle against revisionism, the PTB under his leadership started the annual *International Communist Seminars* on days immediately following the May Day celebrations to facilitate dialogue and exchange of views among communist organizations, following the disintegration of Soviet Union.

In 1999, he got himself released from the responsibilities as president of PTB and devoted his entire effort to help the building of the communist party in Congo which was a Belgian colony for a long period. He was suffering from long illness before his death on 5th June.

When the Krushchovites had unleashed anti- Stalin campaign, putting forward his contributions, he wrote a book '*Another view of Stalin*'. At a time when the communist movement in Europe as a whole was influenced by Soviet revisionism and then *Euro communism*, he firmly rejected these deviations and tried to lead the PTB along the path of Marxism-Leninism. For building up PTB and for his contributions in the struggle against revisionism of various hues, com. Ludo will be remembered.

While he fought against Soviet revisionism and various other revisionist trends, as reflected in the approach towards organizing the International Communist Seminars, instead of waging an uncompromising struggle against both right opportunism and left sectarian positions and contributing towards the analysis of the transformation in the imperialist policies and for developing the Marxist-Leninist line accordingly, more or less a pragmatic line was taken without criticizing the deviations in China and other former socialist countries like DPRK, Vietnam etc. As a result all parties ranging from those following the Soviet revisionist line like CPI and CPI(M) to the Maoists were invited to the ICSs reducing it to a mere debating society, which we had pointed out repeatedly in our contributions to the Seminars. As a result, the importance of the ICSs started getting diminished after a few years. While his death is a loss to the anti-revisionist struggles, this weakness of com. Ludo, bordering pragmatism, should also be evaluated in the context of present fierce ideological struggles to establish the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist line and practice.

The Central Committee of CPI(ML) extends its heartfelt condolences to the CC of the PTB and to his family on the occasion of his departure. ●

## AP: PEASANT DHARNA IN FRONT OF ASSEMBLY

**ON 30 JUNE** more than 150 peasants organized by the AIKKS and MLC(AP) staged a dharna in front of the Vidhan Sabha raising the demand of implementation of 'land to the tiller' slogan and against displacement of peasants from their agricultural land in the name of numerous corporate and MNC projects. Com. R.Manasayya, general secretary, com. Venkeswara Rao of MLC(AP) and com. Prabhakar, secretary, CPI(ML) state committee addressed the dharna and called on the peasantry to intensify the struggles against the anti-peasant policies of the central and state governments. On the same day a dharna was observed at Medak district headquarters also raising the same demands which also attracted good public response. The CPI(ML) state

committee and MLC (AP) have decided to mobilize more sections of the peasantry and to organize dharna at Guntur and Vijayawada in July as part of the state wide campaign before launching a movement for immediate distribution of surplus and government lands to the landless peasants. The launching of the campaign has evoked good response among the poor and landless people. ●

### ***Breaking the Shackles***

**Organ of AIRWO in Hindi and English**

**Sharmistha Choudhury**

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## POVERTY OF STATISTICS

**T**HE Government of India has always affirmed its commitment to drastically reducing the number of people living below the poverty line (BPL). Unfortunately, its policies have not helped achieve this goal.

So it seems to have found a unique and simple solution to this sticky problem. When people are not moving above the 'poverty line', just pull the 'poverty line' down, so that more people appear to have gone above the line!

Otherwise, the Planning Commission would not have set urban and rural poverty thresholds roughly at Rs 20 and Rs 15 a day, accepting the Tendulkar Committee's report. This means people with a daily income of above Rs 20 in urban areas and Rs 15 in rural areas are not entitled for to governmental subsidies and other support, such as low-cost food-grains.

What can we possibly buy with Rs 20 a day? Can our planners and policy-makers survive for a month if they are provided Rs 20 a day?

### **RIDICULOUS REASONING**

Yet, they have their own calculations and methodologies to arrive at the limit of BPL income. Without going into too many technicalities, the present limit is the improvement recommended by the Tendulkar Committee. It suggested that poverty be estimated on the basis of consumption based on the cost-of-living index instead of caloric intake. It said that the basket of goods should also include services such as health and education. Earlier, the BPL was calculated based on the calorie requirement alone — the money required to buy the food which gives 2,400 calories to the people in rural areas and 2,100 calories in urban areas. Although the Tendulkar panel, however, included health and education, in addition to calorie intake, it cut the existing calorie limits in rural and urban areas to a uniform 1,800. One of the justifications shown for this is the minimum norm recently set by the Food and Agricultural Organisation. And the admirers of Tendulkar

Committee have conveniently forgotten that the FAO had suggested this 1800 calorie norm as a minimum dietary energy requirement (MDER) for light or sedentary

activity, but, not that applicable to the manual workers in rural and urban India.

### **EXCLUDING THE NEEDY**

The Planning Commission has found that only 32 per cent of the people were below the poverty line in 2009-10, against 37.2 per cent in 2004-05. That means a large number of poor are going to be excluded from the government's anti-poverty programmes. As for the employment situation, 93 per cent of the workforce is either in employment of poor quality, unemployed or under-employed.

In contrast, there are 55 billionaires in India with combined wealth of \$246.5 billion, equal to Rs 11 lakh crore as per the Forbes India rich list, 2011. This is more than the combined GDP of Pakistan (\$174.86 billion) and Sri Lanka (\$48.24 billion). So, it is very clear that growth in India has not resulted in equitable distribution of income. What is needed is an honest effort to bring all the poor into the fold of government support system, not excluding them through ill-conceived definitions and poor quality statistics.

*[www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/article]*

### **READ AND PROPAGATE RED STAR**

"Bourgeois newspapers are maintained by large sums of capital. Workers newspapers are maintained by funds collected by the workers themselves": This statement of Lenin is more relevant today when the corporate forces have taken over the media as a whole and the workers papers have to struggle hard for survival. Red Star needs your help to bring it out regularly and to take it to more people.

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