

MEERUT CHITTAGONG CHAURICHAURA
 LAYALPUR SAGORI LAHORE

The NEW WAVE

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 ANDAMAN TELANGANA

July 2007



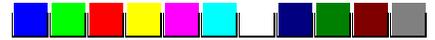
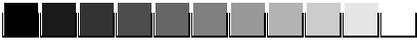
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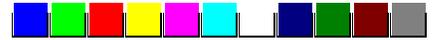
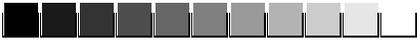
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From Meerut to Naxalbari

Officially sponsored commemorations of the 150th anniversary of the 1857 revolt and the birth centenary of Bhagat Singh by the Congress led Central government and various parliamentary parties, otherwise in keen competition to prove themselves as the foremost tools of imperialist globalisation, are telling examples of the doublespeak that is mainstream Indian politics.

Despite its varied impulses ranging from the anger of peasants to the disgruntlement of disposed local rulers and feudal lords, with inflamed religious and caste sentiments mainly supplying the ideological glue, the revolt of 1857 was united in its opposition to British rule and merciless in its mission of destroying it and all who stood by it. These were the attributes, and its broader character unlike the uprisings preceding it, that gave the revolt the character of a 'war of independence'. Yet a nation as such, let alone an 'India', was nowhere in its political horizon. Despite its broader vision the actual spread was mostly limited to the northern and central part of present India. While colonialism stamped it as a 'sepoy mutiny' and saw a reactionary backlash in the religious, casteist and traditionalist mobilisations of the insurgents, Marx and Engels were able to extract and project its essence of being a 'national ~~revolt~~' through their New York Daily Tribune articles. Their works are no doubt referred to by official commemorators of all hues, even aggressively by the CPM and CPI. What they conveniently brush over is the vital distinction between independence and dependence, however well it may be packaged. Nearly a century separated the Tribune articles from neo-colonialism. But the independence they spoke about was unambiguous, to be attained through the total overthrow of foreign domination.

It needs a stupendous amount of deceit to pass off the sham independence existing in India as the fulfilment of the aims of the 1857 revolt. But the art of juggling irreconcilable opposites have for long been the tradition of our ruling classes and their servitors. We thus have official historians, and even those who are avowedly Marxist, place both the 1857 revolt and the upper caste reforms promoted by a group of intellectuals, who were stalwarts of British rule, as vital ingredients in the making of the 'Indian national movement'. If the revolt is haloed as the 1st Indian War of Independence, the labour of these intellectuals, who did all they could to help the coloniser crush it, is revered as the Indian Renaissance! Bhagath Singh and his comrades have also suffered this fate. Their revolutionary nationalism is clubbed with the comprador postures of Gandhi, Nehru and others in the Congress leadership of that period, though their complicity in getting them hanged is well recorded.

So they commemorate 1857 and Bhagat Singh's birth centenary, and in the same breath declare the Naxalbari armed peasant revolt to be an aberration from a supposedly non-violent tradition, uniquely Indian. This myth of non-violence is tightly interwoven with the almost total elimination of the role of all struggles, other than those led by Gandhi and the Congress. But the rulers can't eliminate them from history or from popular consciousness. They must be commemorated – to strip them of their revolutionary legacy. Their uncompromising stand, which dictated their choice of violent means, is hazed over. And they are then invoked as symbols of communal amity falsely labelled



as secularism or of a patriotism defined vaguely enough to exclude any troubling questions about real liberation from imperialism. The co-option into the compradors' wretched record was thus complete, or so it seemed, till Naxalbari.

The Maoist movement born out of the Naxalbari uprising has become the greatest threat to the rulers. The strength and spread of the Maoist movement now forces them to openly acknowledge this. But its potential goes far beyond material presence. Naxalbari carried forward the determination of the great struggles of the past – nothing short of total destruction of the oppressors' rule was acceptable and

this could only be achieved through revolutionary violence. Like them it took an unflinching stand on the need to draw a sharp line of demarcation between those who side with the country and its people and with the oppressors. It unmasked the collaborators who till recent were unquestioned in their professed patriotism. Naxalbari swept away the fog of compradorism and feudal self-aggrandising in all realms of society and blew in the fresh, liberating, breath of struggle. It was a turning point that brought back the revolutionary traditions of our past; with the added power of proletarian ideology. 2007 also marks the 40th anniversary of Naxalbari.

Right from the early beginnings of colonialism in the sub-continent, starting from the Portuguese, people rose up in rebellion. There were two major common streams in this— one by the patriotic kings and feudal lords, the other by the masses, mainly the Adivasis. This continued even after the British finally succeeded in consolidating their rule. The main instrument they used to suppress these uprisings was the Indian colonial army; on the whole loyal to its masters, though there were instances of its soldiers rebelling and fraternising with the people. But this army was to become the van of a great revolt in 1857. Smouldering and shooting out sparks from early that year, the revolt took a mighty leap in May with the revolt of the Meerut cantonment and the march of the rebels to Delhi. It quickly spread

Central India. British rule points. The Empire was were heard in many parts revolt was not well not a totally spontaneous

The Great Revolt of 1857

structure was being built up within the British army and it was widely linked to the villages as well. This was also a reflection of the diverse sources which gave it the character of a 'national revolt'. Though unrecorded in official histories, the lowest of the low, Dalit landless peasants played a significant role in it along with the 'upper castes'. So too did courtesans and other sections of society. Not only the British and their collaborators, hated moneylenders too were targeted. Though the descendant of the Moguls was enthroned as the emperor in Delhi, there was a great unleashing of the masses who had scant respect for the decorum of the courts or the extravagant habits of the nobles. The British coloniser suppressed the revolt in the most brutal manner. Hundreds of thousands were tortured and summarily executed. A chronicler in Delhi recorded the killing of 1400 in a single instance. Wherever British rule was re-established the conqueror's army turned to the most rapacious loot and plunder. This was done while the British press was full of stories about atrocities committed by the rebels. Condemning the British atrocities Marx wrote, "The profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilization lies unveiled before our eyes, turning from its home, where it assumes respectable forms, to the colonies, where it goes naked."

out all over North and was restricted to a few shaken up and its echoes of the world. The 1857 organised or led. But it was one either. A secret

The British succeeded in suppressing this mighty revolt. But the spirit of the people was never defeated. The heroic rebellion and its undying spirit despite the gruesome fate it met was well captured in this pithy Dalit (Pasi) folk song— "Bani bani kati bani, ban ke bigri bani, Angrezon ke tope se urhi, phir bani rahi bani." (The village Bani was made, then destroyed, again made and again destroyed; the cannon balls of the British blew it apart, then Bani was once again made and remained Bani)*



REREADING MARX

ajith

Much has already been written about Marx's writings on India. Is there need for more? Going by the Introduction and Appreciation seen in a new collection, the answer can only be an emphatic yes.¹

Given the history of invasions of the Indian sub-continent by various forces and the empires they established, Marx raised an important question – what distinguished British rule from them? His answer was the civilisational 'superiority' of British colonialism.² Superiority is a loaded term. Our contemporary critical sense, enriched by the insights of Edward Said and many others, calls for a closer look. But that cannot negate historical progress and the superior capabilities of any new social system compared to earlier ones; in all respects, including the appropriation of their knowledge. This was as true of the incorporation of tribal societies in the Indian sub-continent into caste-feudalism as it was for colonialism. The 'superior civilisation' of the British was evidently a product of its capitalist nature and in this respect the decisive difference noted by Marx, its inflicting a 'misery of an essentially *different* and infinitely more intensive *kind*' can't be denied.³ This refutes the charge of Orientalism and exposes a basic flaw in this whole stream of reading. But that can't be a plea for avoiding critical reading itself.

The fashion of blaming the faulty and biased source materials Marx had to rely on and passing by an examination of how he used them or how they influenced him is certainly not Marxian. Marx was critical in his use of that material, but not completely so. This was influenced not only by the paucity of additional inputs but also by the Enlightenmentist milieu of that period. Explicit traces of this influence can be seen, for example, in Marx's views on the 'Hindu' religion, where he correctly criticises it for subjecting humans (the "sovereign of nature") to a brutalising worship of nature.⁴ This characterisation of 'Hindu' (properly speaking Brahmanic) religion

obviously does great injustice to its sophisticated philosophical thinking and misses the intriguing paradox of its co-existence with animism in a single belief system. We can attribute this to faulty information. But can the supposedly sovereign role assigned to human beings avoid critical correction? It even violates Marx's own views on the nature-human metabolism.⁵ Yet another example is where he reasons that the state's running of irrigation systems in Asian countries, unlike private enterprise in medieval Europe, was necessitated by 'civilisation ... (being) ... too low to call into life voluntary association' apart from the vastness of territory.⁶ Low in civilisation, yet high enough to develop technology and organisation for such enterprises?

So what does this say about 'historical superiority'? We need to be critical about the 'absolute' quality usually vested in it. It has to be tempered with the recognition that what is surpassed as inferior may well contain some superior aspects. The relativity of 'superiority' to the future as well as to the past, given by class, gender, racial and various other biases accompanying it, must never be ignored.

Even a cursory reading of Marx's writings in the light of such new sensibilities would call for acknowledging such drawbacks. But sadly enough, this collection, edited by noted Marxist historians, has chosen to remain silent. Even worse, we see Prabhat Patnaik declaring those articles to be "a real classic on Indian history!"⁷

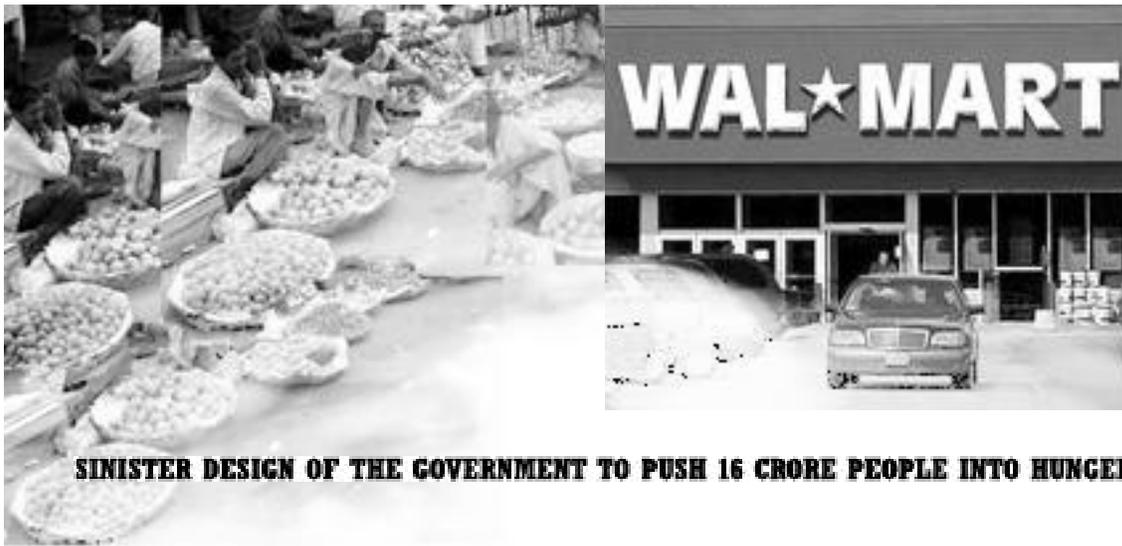
Some of Marx's views, based on faulty sources, such as the concept of an Asiatic mode of production based on supposedly stagnant village communities and a despotic state, have been abandoned by most Marxist historians. The fact that even the 'hereditary divisions of labour' congealed in the caste order (correctly seen by Marx as a decisive impediment to progress) was itself never immobile, is now widely accepted.⁸ Similarly his characterisation of hand

spinning and hand weaving as the pivots of village society, his view on the absence of private property in land, of the paralysis of productive forces for want of means of transport, of state functions as merely plunder and public works (irrigation) also stand corrected. Marx didn't know of the Harappan civilisation, of the Mauryan or Guptan empires (by no means foreign), of the productive tasks prescribed for the state by Kuatilya and its role in the expansion of settled agriculture or of the locally developed technologies in agriculture and crafts. But we do and must therefore call into question Marx's opinion that British colonialism effected the 'greatest and ... only social revolution...' in the sub-continent.⁹ To give it the halo of a 'classic' view of our history would be making a laughing stock of Marxism and a departure from the creative advances made in applying it to the study of this sub-continent. DD Kosambi, a pioneer in this matter, observed, "The advance of agrarian village economy over tribal country is the first great social revolution in India: the change from an aggregate of gentes to a society."¹⁰ Further, "Marx noted only the backwardness engendered by the caste system, the grip of the most disgusting rituals... which sickeningly degraded man. On the other hand, without these superstitions assimilated by Brahmanism at need... tribal society could not have been converted peacefully to new forms nor free savages changed into helpless serfs..."¹¹ Despite Kosambi's mistaken subscription to Marx's view that modern industry introduced by colonialism would dissolve caste¹², his characterisation of the incorporation of tribal societies through the caste order as a more or less peaceful process and his overlooking the rituals and superstitions intrinsic to Brahmanism, these insights stand as valuable stepping stones.

There is another matter. Take Prabhat Patnaik's trumpeting the "lucidity of (Marx's) exposition of the dialectics of the colonial impact". Yes, Marx correctly drew attention to the dual role of British rule, its destructive and regenerative functions. But a careful reading of what he wrote, aided by knowledge of the actual course of (C0ntd from p 4) developments, shows that his optimism about the regenerative role of colonialism was misplaced. Moreover, there was also the problem of viewing the prospects of colonial India through the prism of Western capitalism's course of development. One can summarise Marx's views as follows: through the introduction of modern industry by way of the railways and of private property in land through the zamindari and ryotwari settlements, by the political unity enforced through colonial rule, formation of a native army and the growth of a new class 'endowed with requirements for government and imbued with European science', along with the introduction of a 'free press', the British were unconsciously laying the material foundations of Western (capitalist) society. If we leave out the specificities, what stands out is a projection of an inevitable development of capitalism, more or less along the pattern witnessed in Western Europe. Furthermore, the role of force exerted by colonial political power was seen only in its transformative aspect, in breaking down the old framework.¹³ Its role as a barrier to the development of capitalism, as a protector of the old order, suitably reformed, was missed. So too was the distinct nature of the capitalism fostered by colonialism. It is surprising that this is ignored by Prabhat Patnaik in his 'Appreciation', centred on an exposition of 'a capitalist mode located in the midst of a subjugated pre-capitalist hinterland' as a *necessary* condition of imperialism¹⁴ and by Irfan Habib in his Introduction. We will come back to this later. Let us first examine the central premise Marx drew on to arrive at his conclusions on the role of colonial political power and the dialectics of colonial rule.

This was the destruction of handicraft, particularly of the weaving industry, by British commodity trade and the introduction of modern industry; the dissolution of the existent natural economy. But the insight of later historical research shows us that the period preceding the consolidation of British colonial rule saw large growth in the weaving sector and in cotton cultivation. It was stimulated by the new, external, demand created by colonial trade as well as by a growth of the internal market. Some of the salient features of this development were the growing separation of handicrafts from agriculture, greater division of labour and specialisation in the weaving sector, rapid growth of the weaver population in towns and emergence of new weaver settlements.¹⁵ In view of this new knowledge shouldn't a Marxist reflect on how, when and why the population of Dacca swelled up to 150,000, largely weavers, instead of remaining fixated on its drastic decline to 20,000 under British colonialism? Evidently the dialectics of colonial intrusion was far more complex than the destruction/regeneration noted by Marx. Too much of indigenous capitalist development cannot be read into the facts recorded above. But it was also not a mere offshoot of colonial trade.

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Finally, the international monster retailer from US-Wal-Mart- is entering the Indian retail sector, though not through the front door. Wal-Mart has made a tie up with Bharti Enterprises and launched Bharti Retail in order to enter into the foray of retail business in the country. As UPA government has not yet formally given the nod for the entry of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in retail, Wal-Mart took the option of a back door entry. In February, Bharti Enterprises formally unveiled its road map for its retail business in India. With a plan to open its first retail outlet by 15 August 2008 (how patriotic they are!), it is investing around \$2.5 billion (around Rs. 11250 crores) exclusively for front-end stores in the retail business. This is with an aim of making revenue of \$4.5 billion out of this business by 2015! They are planning to set up a number of hyper-markets and super-markets across the country. It is said that in the beginning Bharti Retail would manage the front-end and Wal-mart would be involved in the back-end, that is, procurement, logistics and supply chain. The plan behind this tie up is very clear. When the government opens up the retail sector for FDI, Wal-Mart can very easily come to the front-end of the retail business and become the monopoly. By that time it would be able to spread its retail chain across the country through Bharti Retail.

Eversince Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced in 2004 that, his government was considering to permit FDI in the retail sector and following him, Finance Minister P. Chidambaram made another statement along the same lines while making the mid year review for 2004-05, it became

one of the hottest topics of debate – whether FDI should be allowed in retail sector or not? But it is interesting to note what Finance Minister said then. He said, “On retail, the review notes that creating an effective supply chain from the producer to the consumer is critical for development of many sectors, particularly processed and semi-processed agro-products. In this context, it says, the role that could be played by organised retail chains, including international ones merits careful attention”. So it is not only about FDI, he also spoke about permitting ‘organised retail chains’ in the retail sector. These ‘organised retail chains’ are none other than big corporates like Bharti, Reliance Tata, the Birla Group, Godrej, the Mahindra, the ITC Group and Wadia — and a horde of others — who are awaiting the opening up of the retail

sector to pump in more than Rs 1,00,000 crore over the next few years. According to Chidambaram, the entire retail sector is going to be opened up for the Indian compradors as well as FDI. As far as the ordinary people engaged in the retail business are

The Wholesale of Retail

george joseph

concerned there is no difference between FDI and Indian Corporates once they are in retail. The tendency of both will be to oust the traditional retailers, monopolise and then control the sector. For the time being, just because of wide criticisms from various corners and opposition from the fake left, the government has withheld the plan to open up the retail sector for FDI, whereas, the Indian corporates are already given a free hand.

Here, the government and the organised retail lobby were quite successful in containing and diverting the whole debate in the direction of FDI question in retail sector, so that the entry of Indian corporates in retail is justified and supported. This is evident from the general opinion coming out from various corners that 'when there is enough capital here itself then why should we allow foreign capital in the retail sector?' This kind of argument fails to understand the dangers of this so called capital of the corporates. It is the very same capital that has massacred adivasis at Kalinganagar, or is snatching away the basic livelihood of lakhs of people across the country in the name of SEZ. It is the very same capital that makes huge profit out while employing very few people and helps the governments to show multi digit GDP growth while pushing millions into hunger and misery. And, it is this very same capital that is now going to snatch away the livelihood of more than 16 crore people whose life depends on the retail sector.

Meanwhile, with an aim to substantiate the need to open up the retail sector for FDI, various study reports were brought out by the government as well as corporates. The study conducted by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) came out with its report on FDI in retail

sector, strongly recommending for 49 percent FDI. It says, "In the initial stage, FDI up to 49 per cent should be allowed which can be raised to 100 per cent in 3-to-5 years depending on the growth of the sector. FDI cap below 49 per cent would not bring in the desired foreign investment". It argued that by restricting FDI, we are losing huge amounts of foreign investment which otherwise would have speeded up the growth of organised formats in the country. During the same time, towing a similar line of thinking as that of ICRIER report, another report by ICICI bank also came out. In all these reports the basic arguments in support of allowing FDI in retail are that — it will improve competition and develop the market; will generate more employment; increased sourcing by major international retailers will boost up exports; greater investment in food processing technology will reduce overall wastage and improve production and distribution cycle; will improve the life style by spending on quality products; and, in the long run it will develop tourism, improve agriculture, develop efficient small and medium size industries etc...etc...! And, finally they make a comparison of the benefit China gained from FDI in retail.

All the major international retail giants like Wal-Mart, Tesco, Carrefour, Auchan, Royal Ahold and 7-Eleven, who are consistently pressurising their respective governments to demand the opening up of retail sector for FDI in WTO, are here at our door steps to grab the first opportunity when FDI is allowed. Among them, Wal-Mart was very smart in manipulating the situation in their favour. The President and CEO of Wal-Mart International, John B. Menzer, met the Prime Minister in May 2005, to discuss about the opening up of the retail sector in this country for FDI. The Business World had reported that, 'the world's largest company, Wal-Mart, is leaving no stones unturned to lobby for its entry into India.' That was true. To prepare the ground for Menzer's visit, according to a media report, David Mulford, US ambassador to India, met the prime minister, finance minister and commerce minister. Thus, even before the Wal-Mart president's arrival, the government had publicised their intent to liberalise the retail sector for FDI.

During that visit, Wal-Mart chief remarked that they are 'ideally' interested to come with full equity in every category including food and grocery. That means they want to sell

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THE KILLING FIELDS OF GUJARAT

The Supreme Court as usual was forced to give a new twist to the attempts of the anti Modi sections within BJP to put him in trouble and the efforts of various democratic and liberal crusaders' to bring Modi to book. Opening up of the Sohrabuddin encounter case by the Supreme Court has once again opened up a Pandora's Box on the functioning of Modi and his close coterie or henchmen. The iron fisted rule of the self proclaimed Iron Man of Gujarat was getting exposed from day one of the Apex Court's decision and shocking news, one after the other, became the common fodder of the major news media for the next few days. All the cases of encounters that occurred interestingly have one man in common – DIG Vanjara. The modus operandi was simple: catch hold of some Muslims with petty criminal background, encounter them and spread the story that they had plans to kill Modi. Even feuds between lobbies or gangs were settled by eliminating one after taking money from the other. This coterie has killed more than a dozen so called terrorists. Modi holds the unique distinction of outdoing all the CMs and PMs till date. His iron fisted rule stands on the bedrock of conspiracies, hate campaigns and genocide, a record none are able to match. The State ruling strata needed a dictator since political crisis ridden Gujarat for long had not seen a CM complete his term. The man who orchestrated the worst ever state sponsored massacre and a series of similar conspiracies (like Akshardham) recently completed 3000 days in office.

The media, who shouted foul when the Abu Gharib incidents came to light, is diverting the debate from the main question – the civic right of any and every person to get a fair trial. Killing by police is equal to trial and sentencing by police and a serious violation of human rights. Overall the media was trying to develop an opinion that 'killing of innocents' is wrong but if real terrorists, militants or revolutionaries are falsely encountered it is okay. In fact the hyper-activism of Apex Court on the question of encounter killing is sending the message enough is enough, the people are losing confidence in the system. A huge amount of funds pouring in, in the name of tackling terrorism, is being grossly misused. Even US had been pumping a lot of funds indirectly to various countries and organizations, of which the Saffron Brigade is also a beneficiary. There is a common understanding between the ruling classes that "innocents" should not be killed though there are no problems if real terrorists or revolutionaries, the real trouble makers for the ruling classes and their rule, are killed, so long as 'proper' procedures are followed. It has become common knowledge that all these so called encounters are nothing but cold blooded murders. After this decision the Maharashtra government immediately changed their rules. From now onwards encounters will be carried out by State CID only (as if they are above intimidation, corruption and political control). The implication is that only few among the police are to be blamed for all the encounters. The role of state behind them is totally suppressed. It is very clear that Modi and coterie are going to go scot free.

DALIT-BRAHMIN FEAT THE NEW MANTRA FOR ELECTIONS

This Uttar Pradesh election saw the greatest surprise of this century. Experimentations at the level of caste equations got a different dimension altogether. The traditional bastions of all the parties shook, though it was the Congress and especially the BJP that faced the tune. The secret strategy of BSP in wooing the Brahmins while keeping its traditional Dalit base intact and also taking the aid of the Muslims and lower level of OBC's has brought about a big advantage to Mayawati in her first independent venture, after the death of her mentor Kanshiram. This shift in strategy was being reflected for quite sometime. The slogans were changed to accommodate the Brahmin. No big promises of development. No manifestos and program papers. No high profile celebrities canvassing. No daily press-conferences and media gimmickry in which all other parties and leaders were trying to out do each other. Successful caste-communal arithmetic has paved the way to victory, by outdoing other parties in this perpetual staple of Indian 'democracy'.

This formula of Dalit - Brahmin coalition is now being openly discussed for implementation at All India level. The BSP's Brahmin candidates in all won 51 seats. They were already disgruntled with BJP due to their appeasement of OBC politics and the rise of Kalyan Singhs and Rajanath Singhs. Another important thing to note is that for quite sometime now the Brahmins have ceased to be the main perpetrators of casteist crimes on the Dalits as they were replaced and outdone by the new power holders, mainly the upwardly mobile OBCs like the Yadavs etc. Hence they have found each other to be more compatible. How this will go about while sharing the bounties of power between the Brahmin and Dalit elite is yet to be seen and it depends on the efficient tight rope walking by Mayawati. Already this victory has given a great relief to Mayawati who has been dropped from the Taj Corridor Case in exchange for her votes for the UPA's Presidential candidate.

One of the major shifts in position will be on the question of reservations. Mayawati has already hinted on the need to have an economic criterion, which was backed by Manmohan Singh and L.K. Advani immediately. BSP's electoral victory is also giving nightmares to RSS and BJP as Mayawati has turned out to be a bigger unifier of Hindus than themselves, thus giving rise to new identity questions.

UTTAR PRADESH ELECTIONS

TO YOUNG POLITICAL WORKERS

(The birth centenary of Shahid Bhagat Singh that concluded recently saw great many books and articles on the life and works of this great revolutionary of the last century. Apart from achieving so much at such a young age and the undying spirit, the key thing that distinguished him from the rest was his capacity to gauge the needs of the revolutionary movement early on, with a balanced view. He strove to give a new turn to the terrorist movement that was going on since 1895 by advancing to Marxism. When the CPI was still overcoming teething problems and even later remained a mere appendage of the Congress throughout the independence struggle, Bhagat Singh had a clear picture as to what was necessary for bringing about a revolution. He could see and distinguish between the role and limitations of the Congress led struggle and the need for carrying out a thorough revolution led by the working class along with the peasantry, overturning the exploitative economic base and superstructure. The CPI too had a similar concept. What differentiated Bhagat Singh was his clarity that this could be realised only by breaking away from the collaborative Congress, establishing the independent leadership of the proletariat and preparing for armed struggle from the very beginning. The letter printed below gives an idea of his thinking - NW)

Dear Comrades,

Our movement is passing through a very important phase at present. After a year's fierce struggle some definite proposals regarding the constitutional reforms have been formulated by the Round Table Conference and the Congress leaders have been invited to give this * . . . (sic) think it desirable in the present circumstances to call off their movement. Whether they decide in favour or against is a matter of little importance to us. The present movement is bound to end in some sort of compromise. The compromise may be effected sooner or later. And compromise is not such ignoble and deplorable a thing as we generally think. It is rather an indispensable factor in the political strategy. Any nation that rises against the oppressors is bound to fail in the beginning, and to gain partial reforms during the medieval period of its struggle through compromises. And it is only at the last stage - having fully organized all the forces and resources of the nation - that it can possibly strike the final blow in which it might succeed to shatter the ruler's government. But even then it might fail, which makes some sort of compromise inevitable. This can be best illustrated by the Russian example.

In 1905 a revolutionary movement broke out in Russia. All the leaders were very hopeful. Lenin had returned from the foreign countries where he had taken refuge. He was conducting the struggle. People came to tell him that a dozen landlords were killed and a score of their mansions were burnt. Lenin responded by telling them to return and to kill twelve hundred landlords and burn as many of their palaces. In his opinion that would have meant something if revolution failed. Duma was introduced. The same Lenin advocated the view of participating in the Duma. This is what happened in 1907. In 1906 he was opposed to the participation in this first Duma which had granted more scope of work than this second one whose rights had been curtailed. This was due to the changed circumstances. Reaction was gaining the upper hand and Lenin wanted to use the floor of the Duma as a platform to discuss socialist ideas.

Again after the 1917 revolution, when the Bolsheviks were forced to sign the Brest Litovsk Treaty, everyone except Lenin was opposed to it. But Lenin said: "Peace". "Peace and again peace: peace at any cost-even at the cost of many of the Russian provinces to be yielded to German War Lord". When some anti-Bolshevik people condemned Lenin for this treaty, he declared frankly that the Bolsheviks **were not** in a position to face to German onslaught and they preferred the treaty to the complete annihilation of the Bolshevik Government.

The thing that I wanted to point out was that compromise is an essential weapon which has to be wielded every now and then as the struggle develops. But the thing that we must keep always before us is the idea of the movement. We must always maintain a clear notion as to the aim for the achievement of which we are fighting. That helps us to verify the success and failures of our movements and we can easily formulate the future programme. Tilak's policy, quite apart from the ideal i.e. his strategy, was the best. You are fighting to get sixteen annas from your enemy, you get only one anna. Pocket it and fight for the rest. What we note in the moderates is of their ideal. They start to achieve on anna and they can't get it. The revolutionaries must always keep in mind that they are striving for a complete revolution. Complete mastery of power in their hands. Compromises are dreaded because the conservatives try to disband the revolutionary forces after the compromise from such pitfalls. We must be very careful at such junctures to avoid any sort of confusion of the real issues especially the goal. The British Labour leaders betrayed their real struggle and have been reduced to mere hypocrite imperialists. In my opinion the diehard conservatives are better to us than these polished imperialist Labour leaders. About the tactics and strategy one should study life-work of Lenin. His definite views on the subject of compromise will be found in "Left - Wing" Communism.

... in my opinion, this time the real revolutionary forces have not been invited into the arena. This is a struggle dependent upon the middle class shopkeepers and a few capitalists. Both these, and particularly the latter, can never dare to risk its property or possessions in any struggle. The real revolutionary armies are in the villages and in factories, the peasantry and the labourers. But our bourgeois leaders do not and cannot dare to tackle them. The sleeping lion once awakened from its slumber shall become irresistible even after the

achievement of what our leaders aim at. After his first experience with the Ahmedabad labourers in 1920 Mahatma Gandhi declared: "We must not tamper with the labourers. It is dangerous to make political use of the factory proletariat" (The Times, May 1921). Since then, they never dared to approach them. There remains the peasantry. The Bardoli satyagraha of 1922 clearly shows the horror the leaders felt when they saw the gigantic peasant class rising to shake off not only the domination of an alien nation but also the yoke of the landlords.

It is there that our leaders prefer surrender to the British than to the peasantry. Leave alone Pt. Jawahar Lal. Can you point out any effort to organize the peasants or the labourers? No, they will not run the risk. There they lack. That is why I say they never meant a complete revolution. Through economic and administrative pressure they hoped to get a few more reforms, a few more concessions for the Indian capitalists. That is why I say that this movement is doomed to die, may be after some sort of compromise or even without. The young workers who in all sincerity raise the cry "Long Live Revolution", are not well organized and strong enough to carry the movement themselves. As a matter of fact, even our great leaders, with the exception of perhaps Pt. Motilal Nehru, do not dare to take any responsibility on their shoulders, which is why every now and then they surrender unconditionally before Gandhi. In spite of their differences, they never oppose him seriously and the resolutions have to be carried for the Mahatma.

In these circumstances, let me warn the sincere young workers who seriously mean a revolution that harder times are coming. Let then beware lest they should get confused or disheartened. After the experience made through two struggles of the Great Gandhi, we are in a better position to form a clear idea of our present position and the future programme.

Now allow me to state the case in the simplest manner. You cry "Long Live Revolution." Let me assume that you really mean it. According to our definition of the term, as stated in our statement in the Assembly Bomb Case, revolution means the complete overthrow of the existing social order and its replacement with the socialist order. For that purpose our immediate aim is the achievement of power. As a matter of fact, the state, the government machinery is just a weapon in the hands of the ruling class to further and safeguard its interest. We want

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SEZ : More Struggles Are Going To Be the Order Of The Day

The pseudo left government in West Bengal has massacred at least 55 people (though Buddhadeb claims the credit of only 14) in Nandigram in order to facilitate the Indonesian butcher Salim Co. to build their industrial empire in the State. Salim Co. was nurtured by Suharto who during his tenure as President of Indonesia had massacred more than a million communists in Indonesia in 1965. It is an irony of history that a 'communist' government masterminds a massacre of its own people for the sake of the capital of a communist butcher. This is what we have witnessed in Nandigram on 14th March. Though talks between the fake left and Trinamool Congress was supposed to bring peace, clashes continue in

Nandigram since the CPM is still trying to dominate with the help of the police. The fact that a huge number of people had not consented to acquisition of land in Singur (site of Tata's planned factory and a scene of struggle) has now come out. It is also known that a huge extent of land far above that needed for the project was forcibly acquired. But the CPM government is refusing to give it back with the anti-people argument that there is no law for this!

The only crime the people of Nandigram committed was that they fought against the state and its political goons to protect their only means of survival- their farm land- which the government had notified for the proposed SEZ to be set up by the notorious Salim Co. The social fascist government of West Bengal replied with torching of houses, murder and rape. It will go down in history as the first ever 'SEZ massacre' in the country.

From the statements and opinions of CPM leadership during and after this massacre it is evident that they had no ideological botheration in doing this crime against humanity. Rather, they were 'ideologically' firm to kill people for the sake of foreign investment. This is the level of the ideological degeneration of these social fascists. And they distort Marxism to justify this by saying that industry can only grow by swallowing agriculture.

Though the government says only 14 have been killed, the people of Nandigram and the joint front that is fighting their cause, 'The Bhoomi Ucchad Pratirodh Samiti', say at least 55 people have been killed by the state and CPM goons. The crimes perpetrated by the CPM goons in Nandigram with the help of state machinery were so heinous that even the Savarna Hindu fanatic and master pogromist Narendra Modi must have taken lessons from it. It is very clear from the way things have unfolded at Nandigram that the government had a sinister and systematic plan to attack that village. In order to encircle the struggling masses of Nandigram heavy police force was brought in along with CPM goons. This, on the other hand, strengthened the resolve of the masses. They resisted the entry of the enemies of the people by digging the road, removing bridges and blocking canals and by arming themselves with whatever arms they had. When more force was brought by the state, in order to break the resistance of the masses, people tried to stop them on the way by keeping women and children in the forefront. But the police and the goons started to fire at the people. They have raped and murdered women. Witnesses say children were torn apart and thrown them into canals. A 70 year old lady was stripped naked. A doctor at the Medinipur district hospital who refused to follow instructions from CPM bosses and discharge those who were brought injured was transferred within hours. The government withdrew that transfer order only after the patients and hospital staff went on hunger strike.

At the height of these atrocities, the so-called 'communist' Buddha didn't even hesitate to brand the struggling people as Muslim fundamentalists and terrorists who oppose development in the State. This is sheer Brahminic communal frenzy. In fact, out of

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It is yet to be seen what the Supreme Court's verdict on reservation to OBC's in higher education will be. But one thing is clear; the decision to form a Constitutional Bench to examine whether reservation helps to perpetuate caste and divides the nation marks a qualitative shift for the worse in the dimensions of the anti-reservation moves going on for the past three decades. Though the politicians may find ways to continue reservations for their sheer survival, no matter what the Apex Court decides, they have landed in a soup. This is the concern of all the parliamentary parties, who depend on casteist and communal vote bank politics.. These self created contradictions are going blow up in their faces precisely for this reason. The absence of real concern for the masses and genuine will to eradicate caste system and their persistent effort to push their Brahmanic agenda can't be hidden for long.

The wide spread anti-reservation agitations in favor of 'merit' by the doctors, engineers and elite students, was fueled by the Savarna dominated media and secretly cajoled on by the Sangh Parivar. This was venomous Brahmanic expressions of present day casteism, which thrives in the so-called well educated 'meritorious' elite youth of India. The debate in the media was conveniently silent on the key point that the 'question of reservation is principally a question of democratic right'. This deception is what emerged from the demands for a 'scientific, level playing field' between the highly privileged minority(9%) that grabs all opportunities and the majority that has been marginalised for ages.

In fact the 49.5% cutoff margin to total reservation is in itself a highly unscientific measure. Sachar Commission's Report, shows the inhuman conditions of minority religions that are inconsiderately kept out of the ambit of reservations. Barely 9% Savarna and 5% other privileged sections, have 51.5 % share of the total seats, whereas 25% (minority religions) are totally out of reservations fold. Yet the so called democratic media's furore is over reservations to OBC's.

The role of the Apex Court, who wants to paint a democratic, impartial and 'unscathed guardian of law', picture of itself, has been far from non-casteist. Quite to the contrary, it is more openly Brahmanic. The fact that the blue-eyed boy of the Supreme Court, Narendra Modi, has been repeatedly let off without any suo moto case even when he carried out a genocide on Muslims, while the just struggles of Gujjars of Rajasthan directed against the Government invokes the wrath of the Apex Court, declaring it as a 'national disgrace'; the fact that it accepts the existing 1930s list of OBC's for reservation guarantee in jobs but wants an updated list for reservations in higher education – all these are deliberately contradictory stances. It again goes on to establish that bringing in one Dalit or a Minority person in high places of power in this system doesn't dent its Savarna Brahmanic character. The ruling classes shamelessly puts forward sham secularist excuses to hide their Brahmanic interest by not incorporating caste in census, though caste occupies every facet of life. So we are left with the 1930 Census Report. This sham secularism has been followed by the Supreme Court when it carefully avoided directing the government to conduct a fresh caste census, even though it had no qualm in rejecting OBC reservation quota in education because it is based on the old census figure.

While defending the democratic right of reservation we must also fight against the ruling classes' tactics of using reservations to divide the masses and consolidate their vote banks. Despite all the contradictions they face today this policy is still being pursued to their gain. The way the Meenas were turned against the Gujjars in Rajasthan is an example. We must also keep in mind the limits of reservation within the existing system. The differential historical privilege of oppressed castes and tribes will inevitably reflect in their capacity to utilise the opportunities provided by reservation. Mere addition to the SC or ST list won't change this. The

49.5% cutoff imposed by the Supreme Court that prevents population wise reservation further aggravates this. The end result is the sharpening of contradictions between oppressed castes or tribes over their share in reservation opportunities, while the main culprit, the Brahmanic caste order, escapes blame and even becomes the arbitrator.



The recent attack on an exhibition which was conducted as a part of the examination at MS University's art faculty is an indication of the extent to which Hindu revivalism is imposing its cultural censorship in Gujarat. Savarna Hindu fanatics were mobilised and let loose by a local BJP leader to vandalise the exhibition, 'gods and goddesses', by a post graduate student of art and force him to close it down. They also got him arrested and put in lock up for six days. The students of the faculty who conducted another exhibition, 'Erotica in Indian Art', in protest were also attacked and the exhibits were forcefully removed. The Dean of the Art Faculty who defied the dictates of the Savarna fascists was suspended by the Vice Chancellor and he was forced to go into hiding to save himself from possible attack from RSS, Bhajrang Dal and BJP fanatics.

In another case, a fashion show, conducted as part of the examination at the National Institute of Fashion Design, Ahmedabad was also attacked by these fanatics. In all these cases the University authorities are colluding with the Hindu revivalists in suppressing freedom of expression by bringing goons and police into the campus and unleashing attack on students and professors. This exposes the extent

CULTURAL CENSORSHIP OF HINDU REVIVALISM

to which the state and its various instruments are being put to the service of Hindu fascist ideology in Gujarat. With revivalist ideologues at key academic positions, these fascist forces are let loose in suppressing freedom of expression and imposing cultural censorship.

Gujarat has witnessed a series of attack on dissenters in the recent past. In this context we must recall a similar attack on the exhibition of MF Hussein who depicted Hindu gods in his paintings. These forces could then conveniently propagate that a Muslim was tarnishing Hindu gods. Whereas, in the present case, the artist being a Hindu, they couldn't do this, though they tried to provoke Muslim's by distributing leaflets with derogatory cartoons. The

basic issue involved here is the fascist outlook on freedom of expression, not the religious belief of the artist.

BJP's State leadership is worried and is trying to put a halt to this campaign. They don't want another riot right now, considering the forthcoming assembly elections. This is forcing them to go into the defensive for the time being. On the other hand, rising public opinion against the attacks and the resistance at the all India level from progressive artists and intellectuals have also forced them to the defensive. Today, the situation in Gujarat is such that anybody with a slight Sangh Parivar connection becomes the self styled custodian of Hindu culture and issues dictates accordingly. And for this they don't require the help of any leader. This is dangerous.

An artist is sometimes a rebel in society. On occasions he/she may contest the existing, accepted, norms of society through a piece of artistic creation which may shake up social complacency. This is to be addressed and debated, or even protested, democratically on the wider plane of freedom of expression, if society is to move ahead. Any attempt to curtail this freedom in art and literature by fascist means is tantamount to the death of the creative life of the people in any society.

"Letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend is the policy for promoting the progress of the arts and the sciences.....Different forms and styles in art should develop freely and different schools in science should contend freely. We think that it is harmful to the growth of art and science if administrative measures are used to impose one particular style of art or school of thought and to ban another. Questions of right and wrong in the arts and sciences should be settled through free discussion in artistic and scientific circles and through practical work in these fields. They should not be settled in an over-simple manner."

Mao Tse-tung



PALESTINE

After months of fighting, Gaza is now controlled by the Hamas, the West Bank by the Fatah. President Mahmoud Abbas, a faithful stooge of the US-Zionist bloc, has appointed Salam Fayyad, another stooge, as Prime Minister. US-Zionist schemes to overturn the election verdict that produced a Hamas majority in the Palestinian parliament underly this turn of events. This verdict was a reflection of the disgust Palestinians have with Fatah. It has become a collaborationist, corrupt organisation. In comparison, Hamas was increasingly seen as a fighting force. But Hamas too has shown its capacity for collaboration. It was ready to arrive at an agreement with Zionists, within the limits of the capitulationist treaty that gave birth to the powerless Palestinian Authority. Hamas' victory infact sharply underscored this powerlessness. When the imperialists and Zionists cut off funding, the so-called independent administration came to a halt. For all its brave talk Hamas was forced to swallow injustice and accept a Fatah role in the government, brokered by Saudi Arabia. But US imperialism and Zionism were keen on a crushing defeat. They chose to achieve it by pushing the Fatah into confrontation. Hamas may be justified in its eviction of Fatah from Gaza. But, it won't aid the Palestinian cause much, because sectarian interests rather than a firm stand against collaboration have guided the fighting. The losers are the Palestinians. Whether the instigators, US and Israel, gain, remains to be seen.

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Maddened by the successful conclusion of the CPI (Maoist) Congress in the midst of extreme surveillance and suppression, the Central and State governments had stepped up their encirclement and suppression campaign, particularly in Dantewada. But a series of successful attacks by the PGLA and People's Militia in over the last few months gave a powerful answer. Though the counter-revolutionary Salwa Judum, an implementation of the CIA's 'strategic hamlets' strategy, is officially still on, many among the ruling class were admitting that it had failed in its objectives by the end of last year itself. Now, their security experts are saying that proper effort was not made to co-ordinate armed suppression with 'development'. Development has always been a component of counter-revolutionary strategy. The state assumes that the masses can be turned away from the revolutionary road if some economic sops are given, They can never understand that it is the totality of the exploitative and oppressive existence of the masses which leads them to revolution. Moreover, when the 'development' of the Indian ruling classes and imperialism is demanding an aggressive push, seen in the SEZ policy, opening up of the retail sector to TNCs and Indian compradors, granting of huge tracts of forest land to mining corporates even violating constitutional rights of Adivasi tribes and so many other steps, it is all the more difficult to hoodwink the masses with sops. Manmohan Singh's government has put in place a more closer role for the army in the counter-revolutionary campaigns. But its role is still indirect, though very active. In Bihar thousands of ex-servicemen have been recruited on a daily wage basis. In Chattisgarh ex-army officers are involved in planning and training. In States where the growth of the Maoist movement is expected even revolutionary mass movements are continuously harassed and suppressed. For example, this is now common in all the border districts of Kerala. The UPA government has declared that it is going to wipe out the Maoist movement in 4 to 5 years. Various governments, from right to fake left, have been claiming that and trying to do that for the past 40 years.

INDIA: MAOISTS BEAT BACK ENCIRCLEMENT

NEPAL

RISING STRUGGLE TEMPORARY TRUCE

The growing divergences seen over the past months between the CPN (M) and the 7 Party Alliance has ended for the time being in a temporary truce. Constitutional Assembly (CA) elections have now been fixed for November and the Interim parliament has amended the constitution allowing the declaration of a republic by a two third majority as well as the removal of the prime minister by a parliament vote. Earlier the government had accepted the demand to provide salaries to the billeted PLA soldiers and ensure proper facilities in the cantonments, after the CPN (M) refused to allow the UN verification to go on.

Delay in carrying out the promised CA elections, failure to deliver the provisions and ensure proper living conditions assured to the billeted PLA fighters and complicity of some sections of the Alliance in the murderous trouble stirred up by the Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha (JTMM) in Terai with the backing of Indian expansionism had led to the situation where the mutually accepted agreement leading to the formation of an Interim parliament and Interim government was on the way to collapse. As a senior leader of the CPN(M) pointed out that all these steps were part of a 'new war strategy' adopted by the Nepal Congress, advised by the US and India. Particularly, it was trying to instigate trouble in the cantonments by withholding money and rations from the fighters, provoking some of them to escape the harsh conditions and others to revolt.

On May 1st The CPN (M) announced its launching a new mass struggle. On May 13th people from eight districts were mobilised in a mammoth human chain surrounding the main power centers of Kathmandu and a petition signed by 1.5 million demanding that the state be declared a federal democratic republic from the parliament was submitted to the Speaker. The petition also demanded that the government make public those who were disappeared during the insurgency and the 19-day-long April movement, and provide special relief to families of the inmates,

disappeared, injured and martyrs; the proper management of cantonments as per the interim constitution and action against those involved in the Gaur massacre (in Terai); desisting from making any agreement related to natural resources including hydropower until the CA election is held; immediate nationalisation of the king's property, making public the report of Raymajhi Commission (which enquired into state atrocities committed during the April 2006



uprising) and taking action against those implicated by it; implementation of a revolutionary land reform programme for a long-term solution to problems caused by unequal distribution of land, waiving loans of small farmers and making arrangements for livelihood of the landless, squatters and freed bonded labours. On May 18th, activists of the Young Communist League (YCL), All Nepal Women's Association (Revolutionary) and All Nepal Independent Student Union-Revolutionary carried out a series of attacks defacing and destroying statues of the monarchy, past and present. Meanwhile a police attack on the strike by Republican Teachers Front, demanding better salaries and facilities as well as early announcement of CA election dates, was met with a day long Kathmandu bandh on the 27th. Over the past months organisations of workers, youth, students, women, various strata of urban middle class and other sections of the masses has strengthened. Thousands have broken away from reactionary and opportunist organisations to join the Maoist movement. Conferences of various mass organisations and fronts were successfully carried out. This massive organisation and mobilisation is reflected in the growing number of mass struggles and protests all over the country. The YCL has been particularly active, blocking Indian goods entry at the Pashupatinagar customs point in protest against Indian border encroachment and duty evasion done in collusion with customs officials. In another incident, YCL activists captured Sitaram Prasai, the former chairman of Nepal Cottage and Small continued on page 39

BANGLADESH

Emergency was declared in Bangladesh on last 11th January. It was imposed as a way out of the grave crisis which arose due to the severe contradiction within the ruling class on the issue of national parliament election. Even a second caretaker government was formed. According to the ruling classes and the state a "caretaker government" is a non-elected and so-called non-political government. Ruling big bourgeois class of our country introduced this system in 1990. The contradiction among the comprador bourgeoisie is very intense and nasty, centred on getting power. All of them are dangerously desperate for power, and will achieve it through any means - fraud,



terror, corruption etc. As a result, due to narrow group interests, the basic rule of bourgeois democracy, of holding election under the ruling government and handing over power to the winning group became impossible for them. As a quick remedy to this crisis, they made a stop-gap arrangement of forming a non-elected, non-democratic and 'non-political' caretaker government when the time for elections comes.

This new government is specifically formed for holding election. And they have cheated the masses by showing that this is a great victory of democracy. Thus

they tried to show that though there are quarrels among the ruling classes, yet they are resolving them democratically.

But the ruling classes themselves have busted this caretaker government system in the face of threats. The first caretaker government formed immediately after the resignation of BNP coalition government turned out to be a monopoly interest keeper of BNP-coalition; hence it was replaced in the face of growing opposition from within the ruling classes. This is a clear violation of the constitution. Thus the caretaker government system has proved to be ineffective to overcome the crisis of the ruling bourgeois class.

Fall of the first caretaker government, imposition of emergency and take over of

power by the second caretaker government — all of these were practically a disguised coup d'état,

which was committed by the imperialists (including the so-called donor group, and chief personals in the name of diplomats) and the army. Big business men, bourgeoisie intellectual groups in the name of so-called civil society, a big chunk of civil bureaucracy and some of the small bourgeois political parties are directly associated with this. They utilised the disgust and grievance of general masses against the greed for power, corruption and anti-people programs of the two big bourgeois parties — BNP and Awami League.

From the very first day this new regime created more terror by carrying out mass-arrest in the name of arresting terrorists. During the last three months, they have created a record by arresting nearly 2 lakh people. They are continuously killing people in fake 'crossfire', a practice initiated by the former government and police. Moreover custodial killing in military lock ups through barbaric physical torture and branded as heart-attacks are on the rise. They have

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ELECTIONS AND EMERGENCY

WHY DID YUNUS GET THE NOBLE PRIZE ?

Dr. Yunus is an economist; more aptly, he is a businessperson. This year he along with his Grameen Bank got the Nobel Prize for Peace. Why have the imperialists selected Dr. Yunus for this Prize? It is already being widely discussed that his small-scale credit project has attracted the imperialists' attention the most. However, the social situation of Bangla Desh itself shows that it could not play even a minimal role in the eradication of poverty and in the establishment of peace. Because of technological advancement of the modern world or in the subsequent socio-dynamics of the bourgeoisie, a so-called eradication of old type of poverty has taken place in a very limited sense, and this process is still continuing. In that particular sense, by employing more than 20 lakhs of poor women, even the bloodsucker garment industry is playing a bigger role than that of the Grameen Bank! Yet, within the prevailing system what is the special importance of Grameen Bank and Yunus for imperialism?

Grameen Bank is a new type of banking system. Its difference with the conventional banking system is that it gives loans only to the poor and that too particularly to the poor women. Dr. Yunus claims that this loan is offered without taking any security.

Dr. Yunus and his imperialists/bourgeois bosses claim, that his credit-programme is making the poor self-sufficient. Is this true?

Earlier the peasantry was taking loans from traditional moneylenders. But traditional money lending system is becoming a matter of history, because in the field of credit too, the bourgeoisie is now capable of introducing politically safer as well as economically more exploitative methods. Grameen Bank is one of them. Small-scale credit may make a few persons richer. And it happens in cases of governmental schemes of agricultural loan, youth complex loans,

etc. too. But, through these, none can reach the overall solution of the problem of poverty.

In spite of all this, if we fail to recognise that some aspects of the small-scale credit project of Grameen Bank are definitely different from the traditional moneylender's credit we won't be able to understand one of the main reasons for giving them the 'Peace Prize'. Of course, incidents where Grameen Bank has recovered the credit in the same fashion as traditional moneylenders are many. Due to this, the masses of this country have already given such epithets like Soodkhore (moneylender), Navya-kabuliwala (neo-Shylock) etc., to Dr. Yunus and his Grameen Bank

In certain instances, small credit is used in small-scale production and trade. This helps people to survive at a marginalised level. Consequently, a big chunk of pauperised masses can be kept away from the path of immediate revolt. Simultaneously, they can be bound within a separate structure led by the bourgeoisie. The more the poor masses, particularly the poor women, can be tied to worshipping Yunus, the more they will be pulled away from making social-revolution.

In conventional banking big business-persons have become defaulters, but the repayment of loans at the Grameen Bank is almost 100%. Poor people do not become defaulters. Dr. Yunus has discovered this in the interest of capital. On the other hand, the profit is two or even three times more than that of conventional banks. When a woman takes a loan from Grameen Bank, she has to pay installments towards repayment of her total loan right from the very first day. Though the total loan gradually decreases due to this, she still has to pay interest for the whole amount that she borrowed, until the end. Thus, the actual rate of interest of Grameen Bank is above 30%, and this, today, is an unbelievable rate of profit in the banking sector. If such a discoverer doesn't get the Nobel Prize in the capitalist system, who else would?

Already the capital of Grameen Bank exceeds 4 thousand crores Takas and annually it is giving loans of almost 400 crores Takas, annually earning a profit of around 150 crores Takas. Depending upon this capital it has already started various other businesses.

Dr. Yunus has opened up a new horizon in bourgeois banking before world capitalism. Through his innovation, the imperialists have got such an attractive sector to invest where it is both highly profitable and secured. Simultaneously, the method of this profiteering is blocking the motion of the poor towards discontent and revolt.

translated and abridged from the article published in 'Andolon' (7 November, 2006), a journal from Bangladesh. The complete article can be read at <http://in.briefcase.yahoo.com/thenewwave06>.

RESURGENT RUSSIA FLEXES M

The year 2007 has started with an absolute new avatar of Russia and its contradiction with US. The aggressive stand taken by Russia with regard to the deployment of missiles in Poland is an indication of the times to come. These heated exchanges are being exhaustively covered in the media in the last few months. The wounded social imperialists of over three decades – Russia, had been lying low for quite some time. But in the arena of imperialist competition where collusion between various imperialist forces is just skin deep and contention is next to their nature, rooted to the marrow, lying low doesn't mean down and out. Various forces and intellectuals have been raking their brains to know as to what is the status of Russia in what they see as a unipolar world. How long before Russia resurges? Will the world see the re-emergence of a Russian led bloc? How will the inter-imperialist contradiction unfold?

After the initial period of economic and political turbulence under Yeltsin's presidency the Russian ruling class has overcome various hurdles and have been going from strength to strength cautiously. Meanwhile its main adversary the United States, in its aggressive bid to become the all time supremo of the world, has been engaging itself in numerous wars and getting bogged down in them. Slowly but surely the Russians are building their strength. They have the world's third-largest foreign currency and gold reserves. In the last 5 years the defence budget has increased 4 times to \$ 30 billion. But it is still quite paltry compared to the annual budget of NATO which reached its all time high of over 600 billion dollars last year, contributed mainly by the US. But it shouldn't be forgotten that the Russian nuclear arsenal is largely intact. It is being continuously developed. Though marginalised at one point it was still the only country to have the potential technological expertise to give US a really tough time in nuclear armaments and missiles. That potential is now being unleashed with the new found wealth gained through oil and gas exports.

Interestingly, the speed with which US was penetrating politically in the Central Asian states, till a couple of years back, and putting Russia in a strategically difficult situation, has now been completely reversed. Russia has successfully driven out US interests venturing in natural gases in these states and taken over the Gas Pipe Line Project to Europe. Similarly the US had to vacate most of their military bases in this region. The governments in these states have shifted their loyalty to Moscow. This is the single major strategic success of Vladimir Putin, before he steps down from office early next year.

In January, the Pentagon relocated its Cobra Dane floating radar, the world's biggest radar, from the Hawaii to the Aleut Islands near Alaska, within 300 km of the Russian border. The US proposes to base interceptor missiles in Poland and a radar station in the Czech Republic, ostensibly to shoot down long-range missiles launched by what it calls "rogue states," that is Iran and North Korea. All of this is part of a global missile shield the Pentagon is building. Russia claims that these systems are aimed at it. It is speeding up the re-armament of its strategic forces with new long-range missiles. Moscow has also threatened to withdraw from a 1987 treaty with the US banning medium-range ballistic missiles and resume their production if the US goes ahead with its anti-missile plans for Europe.

Russia had sent the West a clear political signal when Putin's military officers test-fired two new missiles in a much-touted PR event. The message was that the Kremlin would no longer accept exclusion by the United States and

P o l i c e A t t a c k M

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NATO. For the first time, Putin spoke publicly of a “new arms race.”

These strategic moves are backed by a consolidation of Russian monopoly capital in different sectors of the economy and its aggressive push into the European economy and other parts of the world. But Russian imperialism is still a long way off from confronting the US. Its industrial technology and organisation still has to catch up. The present resurgence is based on the high prices of oil and gas exports, something which depends very much on the state of the world economy. Yet the reassertion of Russia is already reflected around the world. In India, for long an important arena of social imperialism, the pro-Russian lobby has started stirring. In coming days the contention of US and Russia will certainly be reflected in more visible and sharper terms.

On May 1st, International Worker’s Day, in the wake of massive ICE (Immigration Control) raids throughout the country, and the terrorizing of entire communities in Southern California, tens of thousands of people joined thousands more across the country as they marched in downtown Los Angeles (L.A.) to declare that they are human beings—not criminals or beasts of burden unworthy of basic human rights. But by the end of the afternoon, the LAPD (Los Angeles Police) gave their answer in the form of teargas and rubber bullets.

In the late afternoon the LAPD began driving their motorcycles into a crowd that had gathered to watch a group of Aztec dancers at the entrance to the park.

Outraged, more people gathered to see what was going on—and denounce the actions of the police. Then in an act of brute force and complete disregard for the lives of the thousands of people who were attending the rally, battalions of armed police charged into the park—shooting more than 240 rubber bullets into the crowd. Television news crews captured images of the police swinging their batons at an arm’s length of a frightened child who cried as he stood frozen in the chaos. The people least able to move quickly—mothers with strollers, entire families, disabled people, and street vendors were pushed, hit, and humiliated as they tried to run from the police.

Radio and television journalists were viciously attacked. A camerawoman from local Fox News Channel 11 was pushed to the ground and beaten...

Numerous people were injured as they were hit with so-called “non-lethal” missiles that can easily take out a person’s eye, or crack a baby’s skull. One man with a large and bloody bruise on the side of his stomach—who like many others had carried the U.S. flag throughout the day—threw it down in an act of indignation at the way people had been brutalized by the police, saying: “I don’t care if they kill me.” As the police cleared the park and pushed people onto a business street surrounded by apartment buildings and houses (while they continued shooting), people from the neighbourhood opened their doors to shelter people from the attack. Groups of youth came out and built small barricades in the street—fires were lit at street corners and hundreds gathered as the police finally dispersed.

The brutal police attack was clearly unprovoked. Police and their apologists have tried to justify this as a response to “agitators.” This is a bald lie. This rally had a permit to be in the park until 9 PM (the police raid came around 6 PM—only an hour after the rally began). The real “provocation” was that immigrants and their allies came out in the tens of thousands to rally and demand that immigrants be treated as human beings. This brutality is a critical part of U.S. imperialism’s program for immigrants...

abridged from Revolution, No 88.

May 1 March : U S A

the Philippines

REAPING THE FRUITS OF AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

isah antonio

The year 2006 has been a fruitful year for the New People's Army. News from the battlefield of the different regions in the Philippines reported victorious tactical offensives which garnered an impressive amount of high-powered rifles, ammunitions and other materiel, inflicted casualties and demoralized enemy troops and brought stability to areas governed by revolutionary organs of political power.

Such victories would not have been possible without the support of the peasant masses. The peasantry comprises the majority of the Philippine population and of the membership in the people's army. By waging agrarian revolution and carrying out the struggle against the existing feudal system, the movement has advanced the work in the countryside especially among the poor and middle peasants and the farm workers.

As victories in the armed struggle accumulate, so do successes in the struggle for genuine agrarian reform. The scores of successes range from distribution of land confiscated from despotic landlords to increase of crop-share of the peasants, lowering of land rent, increase in farm workers' wages, reduction of usury, establishment and development of agricultural cooperatives and mutual exchange of labor, establishment of communal farms tilled by mass organizations, improvement of working conditions and raising of farmgate prices for agricultural produce.

Reports gathered by *Ang Bayan* (The Nation), illustrate some of the most recent achievements in the struggle for genuine agrarian reform by the revolutionary forces and the peasant masses in the countryside.

A prime example of the close between the revolutionary "balik-bukid" (return to campaign was launched by the peasants in a town in one of the biggest paper and manufacturing companies in the company has been lands tilled by the peasants claimed up to 400,000 several provinces and forest only half of this concession reactionary government's Resources.



working cooperation forces and the masses is the farm) campaign. The the revolutionary forces and southern Philippines against wood products Asia. For several years now, rapaciously grabbing the in the area. It has now hectares of land which cover and mountain areas, but has been registered with the Department of Natural

It has forbidden the peasants to reside and till within its concession area. The company uses the reactionary state's military, paramilitary and police forces, including its own armed goons, to crush any attempt by the peasant masses to farm and form communities.

But the revolutionary movement persevered in the implementation of the campaign until more and more of the peasant masses settled in the areas which cannot be continuously protected by the company's armed goons. Land was distributed to the peasants according to their capacity to till the land and to the number of family members. Principal crops planted were food crops such as rice, corn and vegetables to alleviate hunger.

continued on page 30

More than 300,000 individuals in the region's three provinces have so far benefited from the agrarian revolution and the implementation of the land reform program of the revolutionary movement. Achievements included reduction of agricultural land rent, increase in crop share, reduction of interests on agricultural loans, increase in farm workers' wages and improvement in their working conditions, and reduction in the costs of production.

The correctness of waging agrarian revolution as the key factor to all-round advancement of revolutionary work in the countryside was validated. The region achieved victories not only in the economic field but also in the political, organizational, military and cultural arenas.

The anti-feudal movement has reinvigorated the anti-fascist (against wide-scale and intense militarization and violation of human rights) and anti-imperialist movements (against neo-liberal globalization, IMF/WB impositions), the legal democratic struggle, the promotion of health services and the protection of the environment.

From 1999 to 2004 the number of revolutionary mass organizations grew by 904% in the guerrilla zones and by 2,538% in the entire region, while organizing groups* grew by 532% and organizing committees* by 610%. The number of activists and mass leaders grew by 779%, and the mass base** expanded by 459% in barrios (villages) and town centers.

The peasant movement and revolutionary political power have grown stronger not only at the barrio level but also at the municipal, district and provincial levels.

Regarding carrying out socialist transformation of agriculture, the conference stated that it is not enough to merely address the bourgeois demands of the peasants for land to till but it is also necessary to advance and strengthen the socialist features until socialist transformation of agriculture can be realized.

The socialist factors that must be strengthened are the Party leadership over the peasant movement and the organs of political power, the establishment of solid cores of poor and lower-middle peasants within the revolutionary mass organizations, the organizing of agricultural workers in capitalist plantations and farms, and the conscious advancing of the socialist perspective.

The realization of the socialist transformation of agriculture relies on the victory of the national-democratic revolution.

* *organizing groups and organizing committees are preliminary forms of organizations which expand and consolidate themselves into full-pledged revolutionary mass organizations of peasants and farm workers, women, youth, children and cultural activists.*

** *the revolutionary mass base in a specific area is the total number organized into various revolutionary mass organizations, including individual activists and those actively supporting the revolutionary organs of political power.*

from Liberation International, November-December 2006.



BHUTAN: INDIAN EXPANSIONISTS KILL REFUGEES

For years the Indian ruling classes have nurtured Bhutan as a backyard concubine. Bhutan's ethnic cleansing of the past decades has left over a lakh Bhutanese as refugees in Nepal refugee camps. The development of the Maoist movement in Nepal inspired these Bhutanese and Communist Party of Bhutan (MLM) was born. The cutting to size of the Monarchy in Nepal by the Maoists has chilled



the spine of the Bhutan Monarch Jigme Wangchuk who had all along lived on the blessings of the Indian ruling classes. In 2005, the Indian

army entered the Bhutanese territory a la US style pre-emptive attacks and hunted for ULFA rebels without as much caring for Bhutan's sovereignty. It continues to stay there even today, along with its forces already stationed along the Chinese border, while the Bhutan Government watches helplessly.

Recently the King had announced a series of reforms as a check to the growing hostility towards the monarchy. Accordingly he had planned to carry out a sham general election to legitimise his rule. The refugees decide to return back to their own country given the changed situation. It serves the King better to keep these more than-a-lakh refugees out of the country and deny them their rightful citizenship. Thus the returning refugees were

denied entry. The refugees had to pass through a small portion of West Bengal to reach Bhutan. The revisionist power brokers, the CPM government of West Bengal, instructed by Delhi, attacked the refugees march to Bhutan at the Mechi bridge border, killing two and injuring many.

External Affairs minister Pranab Mukherjee has said the refugee stalemate has become an international problem and has created problem of law and order in his State. Mukherjee said "The population of Bhutan is about 600,000. If these 100,000 people (Bhutanese refugees) enter Bhutan it would create a demographic imbalance." What a shameless and cheap lie. Till 11 years back they were in Bhutan. If they return back to their own country how can it cause a demographic problem?

United States which is highly sensitive about the developments in South Asia due the growing influence of CPN (Maoist) and the Maoist movement in general throughout this region quickly doled out a carrot of immigration to US and some European countries, in an attempt to diffuse the possible revolutionary outburst. The hypocrisy of this humanitarianism is evident from the fact that it is done at a time when draconian measures are being taken to stop immigrant workers from entering US and demands for more H1 visas are being resisted. The sinister plans of all the players can be easily understood and it is being deftly carried out by the US loyalist the UNHCR. The attempts by Resettlement and International Protection Director Vincent Cochepeal and Sustainable Solutions Officer Berna Dette to woo the refugees was challenged by CBP (MLM) cadres who told them that any resettlement to a third country was out of question and nothing less than repatriation to their country was acceptable.



We allow opinion to be varied among the people, that is, there is freedom to criticize, to express different views and to advocate theism or atheism (i.e., materialism). In any society and at any time, there are always two kinds of people and views, the advanced and the backward, that exist as opposites struggling with each other, with the advanced views invariably prevailing over the backward ones; it is neither possible nor right to have “uniformity of public opinion”... But in an era in which classes and class struggle still exist both at home and abroad, the working class and the masses who have seized state power must suppress the resistance to the revolution put up by all counter-revolutionary classes, groups and individuals, thwart their activities aimed at restoration and prohibit them from exploiting freedom of speech for counter revolutionary purposes.

In Refutation of “Uniformity of Public Opinion”, Selected Works, Vol-V, page 172.

Which is better, to have just one party or several? As we see it now, it’s perhaps better to have several parties. This has been true in the past and may well be so for the future; it means long-term coexistence and mutual supervision. We should even provide for such abusive types as Lung Yun, Liang Shu-ming and Peng Yi-hu and allow them to rail at us, while refuting their nonsense and accepting what makes sense in their rebukes. This is better for the party, for the people and for socialism.

On the Ten Major Relationships, ibid, pages 296-297

Stalin, however, over a long period of time, in fact did not acknowledge that there would be contradictions

On Socialism and Democracy

in a socialist society. In Stalin’s later stages, people were not allowed to say bad things, or to criticize the party or the government. In fact, what Stalin did was to confuse the contradictions among the people with the contradictions between the enemy and the people. He considered everyone who said bad things and gossiped as an enemy, and therefore unjustly wronged many people.

Speech at a CPC Cadre Meeting in Shanghai, Comrade Mao Tsetung’s Evaluation of Comrade Stalin, page 39.

Problems like bad mouthing the government talking about the government, being dissatisfied with the government, being dissatisfied with the communist party, criticising the government, criticising the communist party, are in origin problems among the people. But there are two types of criticism; there is the enemy criticizing us, the enemy being dissatisfied with the communist party; and there are people criticizing us, the people being

dissatisfied with us; and the two must be distinguished.

On Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People, Speaking Notes, ibid, page 30.

Dogmatism has no force. One of the reasons why it has developed is because the communist party has come into power. Marx and Engels criticized Duhring and Lenin criticised Lunacharsky. They had to exert great efforts to out argue them. Stalin was different. So, his criticism was not balanced, and was very similar to a father scolding his son. “As soon as he has power in his hand, he rules by fiat”. Criticism should not rely on state power; it should use truth. If you use Marxism, if you apply effort you can prevail.

Talk at Yinian Tang, ibid, page 29.

Materialism emerges out of the comparison with and struggle with idealism. Many people hate Chiang Kai-Shek, but they don’t know what a bastard Chiang Kai-Shek really is. Therefore, we should publish the collected works of Chiang Kai-Shek. We should also publish the collected works of Sun Yat Sen and the collected works of Kang Youwei. To prohibit people from contact with ugliness, error and fallacies, idealism, and metaphysics is a very dangerous policy. It would cause people’s thinking to deteriorate and ossify; it would make them one sided and incapable of facing the world or meeting the challenge of a rival show. We Communists know too little about the opposite side, so we are comparatively monotonous and can hardly produce any persuasive statements.

Speech at the Conference of Provincial, Municipal and Autonomous Region Party Secretaries, ibid, page 27.

Mao Tsetung

Islamic Resistance, the Principal Contradiction, and the War On Terror.

ajith

What is the balance sheet almost seven years into Bush's 'war on terror'? Death, destruction, torture and all the inhumanness of imperialism, multiplied a thousand times. Yet the US and its allies are nowhere near their aims in Iraq or Afghanistan, or anywhere else in the world. The two wars in Iraq had been celebrated by the American ruling class as their coming out of the 'Vietnam syndrome', i.e. the hesitation to get into drawn out military engagements abroad out of fear of getting bogged down with all its consequences. But the current debate and dissensions within them indicate quite the opposite.

Despite pushing in additional forces into Iraq the Bush regime has failed to roll back the resistance. Losses are mounting. Within the US and its allies the pressure to pull out is building up. But this is not that easy. Pulling out troops would amount to a formal acceptance of defeat in their 'war on terror'. The consequent repercussions wouldn't be limited to those regions alone. Besides that, it would trigger off a leap in sectarian violence. Africa is sufficient proof that imperialism can live and profit from this. But sectarian violence in Iraq won't remain contained to its borders. Its spreading out has strategic implications far greater than in Africa. An internally warring Iraq will pull in neighbouring countries, affect the main oil producing region of the world and cause devastating destabilisation in the whole global economy. US imperialism is caught in a jam. It can't stay the course much longer and it can't pull out that easily. The option of engaging Iran to utilise its influence in Iraq is again contradictory. First of all, almost all imperialist think tank studies admit that Iran's role in the Iraqi Shia resistance is minimal. Moreover, conceding the

present Iranian regime a role in guaranteeing stability in Iraq would blow a big hole in US plans for West Asia. It will even weaken its hold among other comprador regimes in the region. The 'war on terror' was supposed to reap for the US the full benefit of being the sole superpower. It was to ensure that neither the peoples of the world nor its imperialist rivals would ever be able to challenge its supremacy. But the way it's being bled in Iraq and elsewhere, the way it has actually helped in exposing the military weakness of the US before the people and thus making them more confident of fighting it, this strategy is increasingly being seen as a liability. Added to this is the opportunity rendered to imperialist rivals, notably Russia, to promote their interests while the US is tied down.

Iraq and Afghanistan are not strictly comparable to Vietnam. There a revolutionary force was leading a national liberation war. Here the national war is mainly organised and led by Islamic forces. But, in terms of the situation the US finds itself today, the similarities are striking. This is rooted in their ultimate source, the working out of the contradiction between imperialism and oppressed nations and peoples, which sets the context and determines the dynamics. Unlike Vietnam, this contradiction is not manifested in West Asia and Afghanistan through a sharp differentiation brought about by a revolutionary ideology. It is further clouded over by sectarian strife pitting people against people. But this precisely is the complexity, the particular form in which this contradiction is working out, that demands analysis.

To begin with we must settle with two views which complement each other even though they look quite contradictory. One of them formally



acknowledges the reactionary character of the ideologies guiding Islamic forces and then goes on to an uncritical endorsement of these forces. The other formally accepts that they are part of oppressed and colonised humanity and then proceeds to declare their fight against imperialist occupiers as a clash between two reactionary forces. What is common to both of them is a peculiar logic by which their premises are no where to be seen in the conclusions. What is striking is the evasion of any grappling with the complexity mentioned above. Thereby both of them hamper any possible Maoist intervention; in the first case by tailing what's on the field and in the second by standing aloof from this 'messy' reality.

The essential problem with the main resistance in Iraq or Afghanistan is not that it is Islamic, or, to put it broadly, led by a religious ideology. Religious ideologies have played a progressive role in the past. They still can become the means of expressing national and democratic content because in the semi-colonial, semi-feudal conditions of oppressed countries religion is not only a spiritual affair. It is also a way of life tightly interwoven with national culture. In the specific issue under discussion, the main problem lies in the particular elaboration of this ideology, the reactionary social programs being advanced by the more determined Islamic resistance forces—their fundamentalism. Therefore, apart from seeking out why religious ideologies, rather than secular ones, are gaining acceptance, we

we must settle with two views which complement each other even though they look quite contradictory. One of them formally acknowledges the reactionary character of the ideologies guiding Islamic forces and then goes on to an uncritical endorsement of these forces. The other formally accepts that they are part of oppressed and colonised humanity and then proceeds to declare their fight against imperialist occupiers as a clash between two reactionary forces.

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must also think over why this particular type is advancing, instead of something like a liberation theology. To give a tentative answer, it could be due to a combination of various factors. A weakening of faith in progressive thought and practice in general instilled by world events (including the setback of socialism), the failure of Maoists to uphold the national banner in

oppressed countries coupled with a superficial identification of comprador modernisation with secularisation of society, the fierce and uncompromising rejection of the existent situation seen in fundamentalist religiosity that also gives it a more militant nature — all of these have contributed. Globalisation's devastations and added miseries and the conscious boost given to religious movements by imperialism and reactionaries are no doubt conducive. But we must beware of reading too much into this. To attribute a one to one relation between the weakening of religion and proletarianisation and its resurgence with de-proletarianisation is the worst type of mechanical thought and a hasty generalisation. As for the role of imperialism and reaction, admitting it as an important factor also begs the question of why they are so successful and brings up, even more forcefully, the necessity of investigating the material and cultural factors intrinsic to particular societies. Similarly, to see in the growth of these fundamentalist movements a ploy by imperialism and reaction to divert the masses from the 'real' issues of globalisation fails to explain their perceived authenticity, precisely as a response to globalisation, among their mass following, apart from leaving out questions of faith and ideology from the list of real issues.

What is the class composition at the core of Islamic fundamentalist movements or of fundamentalist movements in general in the oppressed countries? It can very well be petty bourgeois, rural

and urban, even 'modern' in education. Marxism, and the facts of life, shows us that the petty bourgeoisie of an oppressed country is an important national force, by no means outmoded historically though quite capable of being reactionary. Historical experience also teaches us that it can at times lead national movements. The petty bourgeois class composition of the core is one important reason why some fundamentalist movements are able to connect with the broad masses and don the mantle of legitimate resistance. But if analysis is guided by moral repugnance, the whole lot will just be seen as a bunch of outmoded reactionary strata, period—no suppositions to the contrary allowed. This may make it convenient in immediate terms to gain an audience among those put off by the reactionary views and practices of Islamic fundamentalists. But it won't help Maoists in understanding and grappling with this phenomenon or mobilising a revolutionary mass on that basis, either in the oppressed countries or the imperialist ones. Dismissing the resistance in countries like Iraq as a clash between two reactionary strata amounts to imperialist economism, precisely because the aspect of national resistance contained in it is denied. The distinction seemingly drawn by qualifying these strata as colonised and imperialist will be meaningless so long as its implication of the national contradiction is denied. (For that matter, those criticised of imperialist economism by Lenin too had never denied the distinction between imperialism and the colonies. The problem was that their denial of the right to self-determination including secession eliminated this distinction from their politics.) In the present situation, one outcome of this is the reversal of priority targets in the occupied countries as seen in the argument, "To truly stand with the people of Afghanistan now means opposing all of their major enemies: the Taliban, the 'Islamic republic of Afghanistan' and of course, the foreign occupiers, Canada included, who keep the Afghan Government in power."¹ This tacking on of imperialist occupiers in the list of major enemies, instead of focusing on it and the puppet state, is an inevitable expression of the imperialist economism underlying the analysis.

Assuming the petty bourgeois core of a fundamentalist movement, where does its virulent and reactionary character, so contradictory to its objective class position, emerge from? To get into this we must distinguish fundamentalism from revivalism. There can be no Chinese wall separating them. The transformation that takes place after

gaining political power is evident. But they do exhibit an important difference, right in their religiosity. Revivalist religiosity, like the Hindutva of the Sangh Parivar in India, is quite superficial. Even though there is a big heralding of rituals and symbolisms, even those abandoned long ago by 'true believers', it has no problem in accompanying this with vulgar comprador self-indulgence. All religion inevitably contains unconscious hypocrisy. But here it is conscious, though not admitted. Vulgar materialistic pursuits and the aping of imperialist culture—otherwise targeted as forces weakening the 'national spirit'—are willingly accommodated and internalised. They are very much part of the revivalist 'way of life'.

For the fundamentalists (the Khalistanis were a good example and so too the Taliban) the return to an 'uncontaminated' practice of religion is uncompromising. This spiritualism must necessarily collide sharply with the present and the powers that enforce it. In fact, going back is seen as the only way to resist and overcome the degeneration of the present. Returning to the past need not always deliver reaction. There is the example of the Lutheran reform in Europe. Its spiritualism was closely intertwined with disgust over the Catholic Church's monetarisation of redemption and other such 'unChristian' acts and it called for going back to an idyllic past. But objectively Luther's reform promoted the growth of capitalism, a society where the cash nexus rules supreme; quite opposite to what he set out to achieve. Regardless of the redeemer's desires, the social forces of capitalist transition marshalled him into their service. When we look at fundamentalism in the oppressed countries today the hopelessness of its project becomes all too evident. These are societies where each advance of bureaucrat capitalism also resurrects some feudalism too, where the dynamic of social transition is repressed, disarticulated, by national oppression. Thus the objective context pulls and shapes the fundamentalists' endeavour to surpass the present by returning to the past into a reactionary buttressing of existing social relations, even while they clash with it.

It is the impossibility of fundamentalism that gives it its rigid, fanatic character, its fierce spirituality, the source of its capacity to call forth militant self-sacrifice, as well as the root of its fascism. At its heart lies an intense reaction to national, cultural, alienation continuously aggravated by imperialist

Continued on page 34

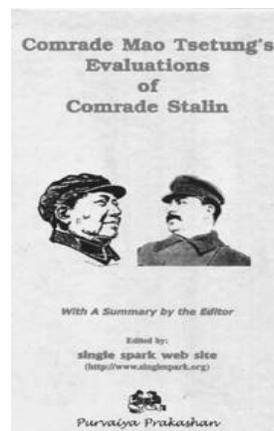
What Stalin Told the CPI

The CPI leadership has always claimed that the Telangana armed struggle was withdrawn on the instructions of Stalin. The CPM too had propagated this in an indirect manner. Now the transcript of Stalin's discussions with the CPI delegation is available [Revolutionary Democracy, September 2006] What it shows is that while Stalin disagreed with considering armed struggle as the main form of struggle he never called for withdrawing the Telangana struggle. In fact he said, "In every way it is necessary to support what has originated in Telangana. It is the first sprouts of civil war. But one does not need to rely on partisan war alone. It, of course, renders assistance but itself is in need of help." [RD, page 199] He stressed, "I have given you no instructions, this is advice. It is not obligatory for you..." Instead of supporting and rendering assistance to Telangana, not to say of using its own brains as suggested by Stalin, the CPI leadership crawled before Nehru to affect an ignominious surrender. The Tactical Line of 1951 paved the way for its degeneration into parliamentary revisionism.

While the lies of the CPI (and CPM) stand exposed, the transcript also shows that many of the 1951 Tactical Line concepts did have their root in Stalin's views. This is evident in his position on the 'Chinese path' as well as on bureaucrat capitalism. Stalin explained the 'Chinese path' as the two-stage revolution. He didn't recognise the universality of the path of protracted people's war in the oppressed countries. Hence his argument that armed struggle could not be considered as the main form of struggle was not merely an evaluation of the situation at that time. It was a more generalised view. Flowing from the Russian experience it was guided by conceiving armed struggle as the main form of struggle only when the offensive for nationwide seizure of political power is possible.

Furthermore he gave excessive emphasis to the favourable grounds created by having a friendly country as the rear. While this is certainly of great help, too much can't be made of it. After all, the Russian revolution never had a rear! Stalin correctly drew attention to the larger working class in India, its comparatively bigger industrial/urban base, and the necessity to link this up with the guerrilla struggle. But this wouldn't make the path of revolution basically different from that of China, though it adds new features. Similarly on the question of bureaucrat capitalism he denied any universal validity for this concept outside the specific context of China and failed to see the contribution of this category in grasping the particularities of capitalism fostered by imperialism. The discussion with the CPI delegation took place before Stalin and Mao met. One doesn't know whether these issues figured in their talks and whether Stalin changed his views. But it is striking that these arguments are the very ones which had to be defeated by Charu Majumdar and others in their struggle to rupture from revisionism.

Despite the drawbacks mentioned above there is much of value in Stalin's opinions, particularly his criticism of striking out in all directions and the penchant for endless discussions. The transcript actually helps testify to the leap made by Mao Tsetung, embodied in Maoism. Revolutionary Democracy's editors wish to hold up Stalin's opinions to negate this; quite expected given their ideological inclination. What is disgusting is the way the transcript is being used by the Kanu Sanyal group to justify their revisionist deviation from the Chinese path, concretised in India through Naxalbari.



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ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICE IN SOCIALIST CHINA**TURNING INDUSTRIAL WASTE INTO ASSETS**

EFFORTS by workers and technicians of the Nanking Chemical Fertilizer Plant to utilize waste liquid, gas and residue have produced good results. In the past three years, 46,000 tons of useful materials have been recovered. Nickel, pig iron, ammonia alum, sodium silicate and ammonium sulphate worth 6 million yuan literally have been picked out of the rubbish heap. They have recovered sulphur dioxide equivalent to 30,000 tons of sulphuric acid, separated hydrogen and trial-produced hydroxylamine sulphate from waste gas, and generated 4 million Kwh of electricity from waste heat.

Used catalysts had been discarded until plant workers began trying to recover rare metals from them. After 50 or so attempts and several months they succeeded in recovering 90 per cent of the elements used in the catalysts. Catalysts made from recovered rare metals proved to be more active and had a longer work life than those made from "fresh" rare metals and cost only 20 per cent of the original price. These "retrieved" rare metals now are supplied to other chemical plants to make catalysts.

Before the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution the plant had three tail gas recovery towers to reclaim some of the noxious sulphur dioxide from sulphuric acid tail gas. During the Cultural Revolution the workers made some technical innovations which simplified and improved the process and did away with one of the towers. The whole set-up now occupies only a quarter of the original space. Moreover, the chimneys give cleaner smoke with a sulphur dioxide content fully answering the low level set by state hygiene regulations.

The plant formerly recovered 200-300 tons of yellow phosphorus a year from the tail gas of its electric furnaces. As this process released vast quantities of harmful fumes, some veteran workers suggested they should make phosphoric acid instead, which would eliminate the health hazard and also produce a more valuable chemical. Backed by the workshop Party branch, a three-in-one assault team of six veteran workers, plus technicians and cadres went to work on it. After three and a half months of learning-by-doing and ransacking the plant for discarded pieces of machinery and material they built a semi-mechanical semi-automated section capable of producing 40-50 tons of phosphoric acid a month from flue exhaust.

Another successful addition was a workshop to extract ammonia alum from the residue left over from making potash fertilizer. This was profitable and also did away with the troublesome disposal problem. Again it was the workers who thought of this and who went to other factories to learn how to recover ammonia alum. They converted a disused shed for their purpose and sifted through the plant's machinery morgue for parts. With unstinted help of fraternal factories they built a workshop which could turn out 7,000 tons of ammonia alum annually for the paper, printing and dyeing and pharmaceutical industries. This alone earns close to a million yuan a year for the state.

Peking Review, June 30, 1972 (Vol-15, No-26)

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severely increased suppression campaign and fascist attack in rural areas aimed at totally destroying the Maoist and the other left progressive forces.

After coming to power, the quick implementation of imperialist programs and plans that go against the very interests of the country and its people is the major step taken by this second 'caretaker' government. Including the Noble prize winner, Dr. Yunus, who is an agent of the imperialists, the established intellectuals of civil society and big businessmen are openly hailing without any hesitation that this 'non-political' government dared to implement reform programs which none of the previous political governments could achieve for fear of people's backlash. The present caretaker government is practically carrying out this task; even through, constitutionally, this non-elected government has no power to take such policy oriented decisions.

This government has brought into force orders for denationalisation of three major banks which had been a long time demand of the plunderer big bourgeoisie and imperialists. They have increased the price of electricity which the past BNP government could not carry out for fear of public opinion going against them. They have increased the price of fuel oil by a very high rate. World Bank and imperialists were putting pressure for a long time to increase prices of all of these. This government is talking about importing electricity from India. If implemented, Bangladesh will be more dependent on Indian expansionists. Besides, they are jumping to implement many other programs like investment of Tata, the agreement with the gas lifting company Asia Energy and NICO, giving up management of Chittagong port to imperialists etc. The past government could not dare implement these things. Some NGO's and elements of civil society have become the active supporters of all of these activities.

When this government will carry out election and how long this emergency will continue — all these are uncertain. Rather, they are making conspiracy to continue this emergency for a long period on the false ground that there is no existing parliament. Although direct military rule has not been imposed due to different reasons including public opinion, pressure and influence of political parties of the bourgeois class and international situation etc, that

sword of military rule is still hanging over Bangladesh. It may also be a last step resort to overcome the crisis among the ruling class. They speak about democracy, but have practically banned all type of political activities. Thus the bankruptcy of the so-called democracy of the ruling comprador bureaucratic bourgeois class, agent of imperialism, is being exposed.

This new group of ruling class has started a so-called anti-corruption campaign after coming to power. They have arrested some notorious corrupted leaders of bourgeois parties including BNP and Awami League. But at the same time, they have released one of the most corrupted ruling class leaders in the history of Bangladesh, the ex-military administrator General Ershad, extremely hated and isolated from the people, from his punishment for corruption. This makes it clear beyond doubt that the motive of their ongoing campaign of anti-corruption is sectarian politics — it is not really meant to uproot corruption. They have imposed indescribable, inhuman situation on lakhs of people by evicting slum inhabitants and making them homeless in the name of destroying the so-called foundations of illegal activities and crime. They have rendered lakhs of poor people jobless through the eviction of hawkers and small shops. Already sky high prices of essential commodities are being further fuelled.

The ongoing situation of the country, the activities of imperialists and Indian expansionists, and the programs of their local ruling agents are closely related to the "war against terrorism" program of imperialism, particularly US imperialism. This war is basically against the world people, and in South Asia, particularly against Maoists and revolutionary forces. So, there is a great challenge in front of the revolutionary forces, particularly Maoists. Similarly this is also an opportunity for advancing the revolution.

abridged from an article of the International Department, PBSP, CC. The complete article can be read at <http://in.briefcase.yahoo.com/thenewwave06>



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Part of the "balik bukid" campaign is the formation of peasant associations and cooperatives, mutual exchange of labor and communal production. At the same time, the movement and the masses set up strict rules and guidelines so that gains made are preserved.

For example, selling of land is forbidden and so is landgrabbing. Those who violate these rules are stripped of their landholdings.

In Cagayan Valley in northern Philippines, more than 71,000 peasants in 52 barangays (villages) from eight towns benefited from the agrarian struggles despite intensive military operations and harassment in these areas. Through the peasants' concerted actions, they were able to reduce interest rates on their loans from 7% per month to 2.5%. In other areas in the province, land rent was reduced to one-fourth of net production from a previous one-third of gross production.

Video of Meher Kalan Struggle

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In other villages, tenant farmers have altogether stopped paying land rent. An additional 21,790 peasants are now working under better conditions after 920 peasant activists from 22 barangays took action against miserable working conditions.

The reactionary government was not spared from the actions of the peasants. In another province in northern Philippines, the peasants prevented the implementation of the government's Socialized Integrated Forest Management Agreement which is another scheme to grab the land from peasants for the benefit of landlords and capitalist developers.

In the Bicol region, the movement has been able to reduce land rent in over 35,000 hectares of land, thereby benefiting over 10,000 families.

The agrarian revolution is also advancing in Quezon province. Copra farmers negotiated with a local big landlord for the implementation of provisions in the minimum program of the revolutionary agrarian reform. Through united action, the farmers were able to raise their crop share from 40 to 50% and made the landlord defray the cost of coconut picking and half of the transport expenses.

They were able to raise the daily wages of the coconut pickers. At the same time, they confronted the cheating tactics done by the landlord against the farmers. The most common ways of cheating which the landlord uses are automatically taking off 15-25% from the weight of copra sold to him citing moisture of the copra, rigging his weighing scales and concealing the actual weight from the farmers.

The success and implementation of genuine land reform bring to the fore the cooperation of the New People's Army and the revolutionary masses in the guerrilla zones. In every action taken, they study and investigate each case carefully, develop the correct tactics in facing the landlords and capitalists in the area and make sure that implementation primarily benefits the poor and middle peasants and the farm workers.

In the struggle for land, the masses learn the meaning of collective action and that they have the strength and power to face their class enemy with the support of the New People's Army.

Only through a thorough-going organizing and consolidating work among the peasants could the revolutionary movement further surge forward, and defend and maintain the victories it has achieved.

from Liberation International, November-December, 2006

The much publicised peace talks had to fail as no sincere effort was ever taken in considering the demands of the LTTE; on the contrary it was only sops doled out with the intention of luring them to a compromise or dividing them. Though they did achieve some initial success it seems Prabhakaran is fully in command. Absence of war is not necessarily peace. The military's continued occupation of homes, schools, places of worship and other public spaces, the continued restrictions on fishing and the escalating harassment of civilians by the Sri Lankan armed forces personnel are the pressing concerns of the Tamil people.

The deadlock had to break and it did with a bang as LTTE launched an air attack on Srilankan Air Force, another world first for the LTTE. Though it may not be that effective, it is a major moral booster for LTTE and a psychological advantage.

The Indian ruling classes are watchful about the happenings and are seriously concerned with the developments in what they consider as their backyard. They had helped the LTTE once up on a time, and then tried to use it to pressure the Sri Lankan government. But they burnt their fingers trying to play off both sides against each other. Since then they were keeping a low profile. But that didn't mean they had stopped their intervention. Carefully calculated and controlled moves to wreck LTTE plans while not giving the Sri Lankan government too much room to go on the offensive — this has been the game plan of Indian expansionism. They are also well aware how the LTTE is an inspiring force to the home-grown nationality movements apart from the influence it has on the Tamil people.

Yet the recent comments of M. K. Narayanan, the chief security

adviser to the PM, clearly shows that the Indian ruling classes are being forced to show their hands. His insistence that the Sri Lankan government should not purchase weapons from China or Pakistan was a gross interference in Sri Lanka's internal matters. It also revealed the concern of Indian expansionism over losing its grip. Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan ruling classes, particularly the party bloc in power, are carrying out a dual tactic of aggression and suppression along with appeasement. On the one side the devolution package it proposed is woefully short of even moderate Elam Tamil expectations on federalism. Aggression against LTTE held positions continue unabated. Meanwhile, through the JVP, a proposal to grant citizenship to displaced Tamils (mainly ex-estate workers) is being moved. Ironically this was being moved right at the time as a campaign for the forced removal of Tamils from Colombo was going on. These appeasement tactics are aimed at dividing Tamil and international opinion. Evidently the government is preparing for a major offensive

SRI LANKA

INDIAN manoeuvres



Communist Party of Peru slogans in Huallaga. Media reported an ambush by PCP guerillas in May.

FDI IN RETAIL...

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everything what we purchase at present from the local grocery shop or the street vendor or from the branded shops, under one roof, that of Wal-Mart!

What is so fascinating about the retail sector here? It is nothing but the huge market potential that exists in it as far as size and revenue are concerned. According to the Global Retail Development Index (GRDI) Report of the international management consultancy firm AT Kearney, India is the second most potential destination for retail in the world after Russia. Though estimates vary widely about the true size of the retail business in India, according AT Kearney estimates, it was around Rs.4,00,000 crores in 2004 and poised to double in 2005. According to

The retail sector in India is highly fragmented. Of the total trade taking place, 98% is in the unorganised retail sector which includes all low-cost retailing, for example, the local grocery shops, owner manned general stores, small beedi shops, hand cart and pavement vendors. Only 2% is estimated to be in the organised sector which includes hypermarkets, supermarkets, margin-free shops and privately owned large retail businesses. Whereas, in developed economies, organised trade makes up over 70-80% of total trade. Actually this is one of the concerns among ruling class policy makers who have already set out to make India a so-called 'developed country'. (Akin to 'kill the poor to kill poverty' logic!) According to RNCOS report, organised retail will form 10% of total retailing by 2010. As of today, India has the highest shop density in the world. It was estimated

in 2001 that there were 120 lakh retail outlets in the country. That is 12 outlets for every 1000 people. Perhaps India may be the only one country in the world to have more than one retailer for every hundred people! Out of the 12 million outlets operating in the country

GROWTH OF RETAIL OUTLETS ('000)

| Outlets | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Food Retail | 2769.0 | 2943.9 | 3123.4 | 3300.2 | 3480.0 | 3682.9 |
| Non-Food Retail | 2769.0 | 2943.9 | 3123.4 | 3300.2 | 3480.0 | 3682.9 |
| Total | 8542.6 | 8983.6 | 9455.6 | 9966.5 | 10534.4 | 1165.0 |

Source: P.G.Chengappa, Lalith Achoth, Arpita Mukherjee, B.M.Ramachandra Reddy and P.C.Ravi, Evolution of Food Retail Chains: The Indian Context, 5-6th Nov. 2003, www.ficci.com

another report estimated by FICCI, the total retail business to be around \$286billion (roughly Rs.12,87,000 crores)¹ or 44% of GDP and food sales account for 63% of the total retail sales. A latest report, India Retail Sector Analysis (2006-2007) by the market consultancy firm RNCOS, predicts the growth of the retail sector to \$427billion (roughly Rs. 20,00,000 crores) by 2010 and \$637billion(roughlyRs.29,00,000 crores) by 2015². This shows that trade or retailing is and will be the single largest component of the services sector in terms of contribution to GDP. It is this potential that big capital is eyeing.

only 4% of them are larger than 500 square feet in size. Compare this with the average size of a Wal-Mart store, 85,000 sq.ft!

According to the report of RNCOS, the total retail market is primarily focused in rural regions, which makes up 55 per cent (equivalent to US\$ 165 billion) of the overall retail market as opposed to the urban segment, which represents 45 per cent (equivalent to US\$ 135 billion). The rural market is spread over 627,000 villages, of which a core group of 100,000 villages that makes up 50 per cent of the rural populace will be the main target at present. This is

the market potential even in rural areas the corporates are targeting for.

All these studies and reports which give primacy to capital carefully avoid any reference to the plight of the people involved in the retail business and their fate when huge capital enters. It is estimated that there are approximately 4 crore people involved in the unorganized retail sector. Where as the organized trade employs merely 5 lakh people! That is 4% of India's population is in the unorganized retail business. If we assume an average dependency of 4 persons per retailer then there are 16 crore people living on small scale retail business in the country. Approximately 2 crores are employed in this sector, mostly on day wages. The total comes to nearly 20 % of the population.

Though retailing is termed as self employment it is actually a form of disguised unemployment. The vastness of the unorganized retail sector is a visible testimony to the unemployment situation in the country. Except very few, people opt for a retail of any sort, depending on the meager capital available, when all other options of employment are closed. Those who seek employment also see it as a last resort. Government boasts about two digit growth in industry but this is nothing but jobless growth and it is continuing for many years. In a country where the total work force constitutes 50% of the population, what will be the source of income of these 55 crore people if the government does not provide them employment? So it is not the choice but circumstances that makes up a retailer. For the vast majority their capital may be of few hundreds or at the most a few thousands in contrast to the millions and billions of the 'Indian'/ Foreign big retailers. There is no way they can stand up to these big players of capital and compete with them. Whether Indian comprador capital or foreign capital, its logic will be to monopolise the market. In such a situation UPA government's plan to open up the retail sector means forcefully disappearing more than 16 crore people for some 16 odd big players! This is must be stopped.

Wal-Mart is already here. A number of other international retailers are waiting to enter. It is true that there will be huge capital investment. But who is going to benefit? Many reports have already come out exposing their skewed method of profit making and their anti-labour policies. The modus operandi of these companies is to source items at the lowest price and sell it at a very higher price, but one lower than what is current in the market. Wal-Mart chief Mr. Menzer gave a fine demonstration of this at a

lunch hosted for journalists at the US embassy in Delhi. Waving his little black wallet at everyone he said: "We sell this piece, sourced from India, at \$17 a piece in the US. Our competitor sells it for \$70." But he didn't tell the price he sourced it. In all probability he must have procured it from here for not more than \$3 or \$4!

In this effort to source items at a very low price they put undue pressure on the actual producers or suppliers for low cost production. Suppliers are forced to cut down wages and other benefits to labourers, ignore health and safety regulations, increase maximum working hours and restrict labour rights in order to reduce production costs and keep their contract going. This is the case with almost every production unit in China supplying goods to Wal-Mart. In effect they are working as 'sweat-shops' of Wal-Mart. Actually, the Chinese government is consciously allowing several lakhs of wage labourers to toil in such sweat-shops for the sake of FDI. Led by a sham Communist Party it has become perhaps the world's greatest facilitator of capitalist production.³ A lot of reports are already available on this topic. A report on ASDA Wal-Mart, a wholly owned UK subsidiary of Wal-Mart since 1999, says, "Wal-Mart's relentless pursuit of the lowest possible prices has taken a heavy toll on its employees and suppliers. Workers in Wal-Mart stores and distribution centres have seen their rights violated as a result of cost cutting, while the company's determined opposition to trade unions has denied employees essential protection and bargaining rights. Suppliers have been exposed to ever worsening conditions as Wal-Mart turns the screw on source factories in some of the poorest countries in the world".⁴ But, the self-styled champions of 'GDP based growth' who tirelessly argue for FDI and comprador capital in retail sector conveniently hide these facts from their open discussions. On the contrary, what they say is, 'see Wal-Mart, has 45 stores in China and procures merchandise worth \$20 billion from there, whereas in India, it has just one procurement office in Bangalore and outsources for only \$1 billion worth of merchandise'. 'In its investigation of factory conditions, the US National Labor Committee found that "in country after country, factories that produce for Wal-Mart are the worst." According to the Committee, Wal-Mart "is actually lowering standards in China, slashing wages and benefits, imposing long mandatory-overtime shifts, while tolerating the arbitrary firing of workers who even dare to discuss factory conditions."⁵ This can be substantiated from

what is explained by a Chinese labour official: "Wal-Mart pressures the factory to cut its price, and the factory responds with longer hours or lower pay... and the workers have no options."⁶ More than 30 million Chinese workers have lost their jobs as the old state-owned industrial base crumbled before the competitive onslaught of foreign and domestic private firms.⁷

The stories at the front-end of its operation are of closure and monopoly. In US itself, Wal-Mart's existence has led to large scale closures. A survey of Wal-Mart's impact in the first 12 years of its operation in the US State of Iowa found that 50% of clothing stores, 42% of variety stores, 26% of department stores and 30% of hardware stores had closed.⁸ Wal-Mart can dump a wide variety of products sourced from cheap destinations which will eventually affect local production units as there won't be local takers once closure takes place. In the name of supplying quality food at cheapest price it can dump genetically modified food items in the market, bypassing public knowledge and the government. It can import cheap agro products from developed countries where farm subsidy is heavy and sell them at very cheap prices here. This will have a direct bearing on the agrarian sector which is already in distress. It can force the government to change many laws, including labour laws, to suit its free operation. In other words, to use the US war language, we can say that the 'collateral damage' Wal-Mart will cause is tremendous.⁹

The fake left's opposition was all along a tactic aiming at making inroads into the trader vote banks of the BJP and Congress. Now these parties, particularly CPI(M), once critical of opening up of the retail sector for organised retail chains and FDI, have begun to talk about 'regulating the organised retailers'. Some organised retail chains have already opened their outlets in West Bengal and Keralam, where they rule. Many more are waiting. This is becoming another example for their double-speak to hoodwink the masses, as in the case of SEZ.

The hawkish Indian compradors that are entering the retail sector are as dangerous as Wal-Mart and sort. People have no other option left but to take to the streets against these blood suckers as it happened in Indonesia where large retail shops in Jakarta were attacked during the riots of 1997-98.

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⁵ Ibid

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⁷ Carl Goldstein, 'Wal-Mart in China', New York Times, Dec 8,2003

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ISLAMIC RESISTANCE...

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domination and its imposed transformation. This is the crucible. To reduce fundamentalism to the dissatisfaction of some feudal or clan elements or a mere resurgence of their ideologies would miss a very important detail— it is rather modern, a product of our times. Exposing the reactionary content of fundamentalism is no doubt necessary. The heightened awareness of women, dalits and similar sections of the oppressed masses, chained by religious traditions, provide powerful sources of energy to do this. But unless the spiritual space occupied by fundamentalism is retaken with the enlightening vision of an all round liberation, a vibrant national, secular culture and a new society free of exploitation, unless the physical space now occupied by fundamentalist resistance is regained under the revolutionary banners of a peoples' war, the Maoists are not going to succeed.

For these reasons, in the specific context of resistance against imperialist occupation, the relation between fundamentalist forces and Maoists can neither be simply antagonistic nor collaborative. It may contain both of them. The reactionary social programme of a fundamentalist force in an oppressed country does not automatically exclude it from the national resistance. Its actions against the national oppressor are just. The question of whether this reflects the contradiction of the oppressed people with imperialism or whether it reflects the contradiction of a section of the local ruling classes with a particular imperialist power has to be answered by concrete

analysis of the class composition at the core of that particular force. Sweeping generalisations, either way, are of no use. There is another aspect to this. In a context of occupation the contradiction between the nation and the occupiers becomes principal. All the contradictions, including those among the ruling classes or between some sections of them with the occupying imperialist powers, are determined, conditioned, by this principal contradiction. Therefore, even when the class core is ruling class (comprador or feudal), its resistance against an occupying force is, objectively, a part of the national resistance. That does not eliminate the reactionary interests guiding its resistance just as much as these interests, by themselves, don't exclude it from the resistance. In terms of policy, just because some force is resisting imperialist occupation that doesn't mean that Maoists should endorse it as a national liberation force or unite with it, even while they acknowledge its resistance and the objective role it plays. On the contrary, the resistance put up by a force which is fighting against imperialist occupation cannot be denied its objective role by citing the reactionary social programme it may be upholding.

Now, to approach the issue from this angle demands a proper appreciation of the advance made by Mao Tsetung in charting out the road of revolution in oppressed countries and his approach in analysing the complex tangle of contradictions met with in the world. Today it is commonly accepted among Maoist forces that the principal contradiction in the world is the one between imperialism and oppressed nations and peoples. But, quite often, this doesn't inform analysis of phenomena like the resurgence of various forms of religious movements in oppressed countries. Even worse is the case where the imperialists are taken at their word and the 'war on terror' is mainly seen, at least in its present phase, as something guided by US ruling class interests in rolling back Islamic fundamentalism. That is the declared purpose. But a closer look shows something else. Towards the end of the last century, not just US imperialism but the whole NATO bloc was engaged with the question of planning for overcoming decades of upheaval. A recent UK Defence Ministry think tank study puts this quite explicitly. It isn't difficult to understand this concern when situated within the globalisation drive of imperialism and the resistance it was bringing up. The advocacy of the particular policy put forward by the US neo-cons, later formulated as the 'war on terror', was within the ambit of this broad imperialist strategy, very much directly related to

the working out of the principal contradiction. Today armed struggle is branded as 'terrorism', regardless of its political nature. The 'war on terror', where Islamic fundamentalist terrorism is ostensibly posed as the enemy, has its antecedents in the counter-insurgency campaign in South America carried out under the banner of a 'war on drugs'. It is accompanied by a broad project of restructuring the crisis ridden agrarian sector in the 3rd world, which is identified as a potential source of 'destabilisation', in other words revolution. The 'war on terror' is a war on the peoples of the world. It is aimed at rolling back the emerging new wave of revolution. This is the dynamic that must be grasped in order to break out from the terms sought to be set by imperialism. Policies will naturally differ in the oppressed countries and in imperialist ones. Yet there are some similarities also. The terrorism of Islamic and other resistance groups is conveniently used by ruling classes in both these countries to legitimise their suppression and curtailment of democratic rights. Where the victims are the masses, terrorist acts divide them and pushes a large section towards the banners of the rulers. We must certainly draw a sharp line of demarcation between terrorism and revolutionary violence. But we must also draw a sharper line of demarcation between this Maoist position and the 'anti-terrorism' propaganda of imperialism and reaction. This cannot be done in the determined way it must be done with arguments over who poses the greater threat to humanity or who the principal culprit is, even though all of that is true. What is needed is the firm and unconditional defence of the right of an oppressed people or section of society to resist with arms. Opposition to the ideology or social programme they follow cannot be allowed to dilute this. And the only way to ensure that is to fully grasp the dynamics of revolution, of the people against the system, particularly of the principal contradiction in the present world situation. When the ongoing turmoil in the world is viewed overall from the prism of inter-ruling class or reactionary conflicts, when major turns are mainly analysed and explained in these terms and revolution is only something that is added to this rather than accepted as the principal factor it really is, the defence of the right of an oppressed to resist can only become conditional and weak.

¹ From the WPRM-Winnipeg's 'Notes on Afghanistan'.

Re-reading MARX ...

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At least in some parts of the sub-continent the potential for capitalist development was emerging even before this. British colonialism did not impose its rule over a stagnant sub-continent. Nor were the conditions met by it those of classical caste-feudalism.¹⁶ Some regions in the sub-continent were already transitional. Moreover, there is no reason to insist that capitalism must develop only through internal stimuli. The case of Japan is illustrative. There the forceful entry of Western colonial powers triggered off an internal dynamic leading to the growth of capitalism. More importantly, the later loss of interest in Japan on the part of the colonial powers, drawn to the riches of China, gave it the favourable circumstance of avoiding colonial domination and thus allowed it to take the path of capitalist development. This brings us back to the role of political power.

It wouldn't be off the mark to assume that indigenous capitalism could have developed in the Indian sub-continent under the strong stimuli of colonial and other trade. For example, Tippu's Mysore and to a lesser extent Thiruvithaamkoor under Marthanda Varma could have taken the trajectory of a development of capitalism from above, through state intervention, if they had remained independent. The consolidation of British colonial power was certainly one of the decisive factors preventing this. This implies a qualification of the regenerative role of British rule and draws attention to the dual role of colonial power. In the matter of regeneration, or the growth of capitalism, it was both transformative as well as suppressive. The various aspects noted by Marx no doubt led to the growth of capitalism, but of a certain type. It was shaped and warped by colonial interests, and this included the sustenance and regeneration of many elements of caste-feudalism. This was later recognised by the 3rd International under Lenin and incorporated in its views on the colonial question.¹⁷ But a more precise

“The Indians will not reap the fruits of the new elements of society scattered among them by the British bourgeoisie, till in Great Britain itself the now ruling classes shall have been supplanted by the industrial proletariat, or till the Hindoos (Indians) themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether.”

Karl Marx

characterisation of this capitalism and the class engendered by it came through Mao Tsetung's sparse but pathbreaking illumination on bureaucrat capitalism, a capitalism fostered by imperialism and intertwined with feudalism, and class analysis of the comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie in China. These rich analytical tools have been totally ignored by most of the Marxist theoreticians in India.

Prabhat Patnaik and Irfan Habib are definitely of the view that colonialism, particularly imperialism, has obstructed the growth of capitalism. In his Introduction Irfan Habib records this, but with a justification for Marx who "...*naturally* could not have foreseen how Britain would now use administrative measures to throttle India's industrial development."¹⁸ But why was this so natural? If the mill owners of Britain had blocked the sale of Indian textiles in an earlier period, they could surely be expected to employ colonial power to block the growth of a competing capitalism in the colony. Why did Marx miss this? The answer once again lies in his high expectations about the regenerative role of British rule and the consequent growth of capitalism in British India. He related this to the necessity felt by ascendant British industrial interests to create fresh productive powers after destroying local industry, precisely because they found that the power of consuming their goods (in British India) was contracting to the lowest possible point. Hence the conclusion, "You cannot continue to inundate a country with your manufactures, unless you enable it to give you some produce in return."¹⁹ Colonial power certainly did this enabling, but in a manner very different from what Marx expected. For a long period, the development of

productive forces was mainly in the direction of ensuring raw materials for the industrial growth of Britain. The later growth of local industry was again a 'development of underdevelopment'.

What interests us here is the contradiction seen in Prabhat Patnaik's and Irfan Habib's arguments. They have used the occasion of bringing out this new collection to introduce and argue out the thesis that the exploitation of the colonies was not merely a matter of primary accumulation. There is a certain 'divi-

sion of labour' here. Patnaik visualises Marx's articles as a window to enter into the thesis, while Irfan Habib devotes his effort to substantiate Marx's prophecies, with some inevitable amendments. But we will be justified in treating them as one because both of them accept the central argument of Marx's articles – capitalist growth induced in a stagnant society through the agency of colonial rule. Prabhat Patnaik has argued that Marx's articles "... see capitalism, necessarily, within a wider setting, not in isolation but as existing amidst and coupled to pre-capitalist formations ... which have been transformed by capitalism in accordance with its own needs, through political domination in the form of colonial rule."²⁰ The question is about the 'transformation', its nature and extent. As we saw earlier, Marx envisioned a development of capitalism due to the regenerative role of British rule. This was the basis for assuming a basic, if not total, transformation of pre-capitalist society in its future course under colonial rule. Irfan Habib, favoured by Patnaik for his 'illuminating Introduction', would have us believe that Marx's predictions on a bourgeois class emerging and taking the lead of a national movement²¹ and industry dissolving hereditary divisions of labour upon which the Indian castes rest have been vindicated.²² He does recognise contradictions thrown up by British rule. But this is linked to his view that "... the genesis of modern elements in India under the aegis of British dominance could not create any lasting groundwork for collaboration between the new classes and the British rulers..."²³ What he has in mind is not the proletariat or the new middle class but the bourgeoisie itself. This is sought to be substantiated by Marx's observations on the poor response from 'Indian Capitalists' to the East India Company's loan, obviously a case of reading too much into the temporary hesitation shown by the local rich in the immediate context of the 1857 revolt. If we accept these views then the 'finale of 1947' has produced an independent country led by a bourgeoisie strong enough to throw off the yoke of imperialist colonialism. But if that were true then there can be no reason to argue that a colonial relation, in one or another form, the exploitation of countries retained in backwardness whatever may

be its degree, is 'necessary' for capitalism or its highest stage of imperialism. On the contrary, if such exploitation is not merely a matter of primary accumulation, if it is a 'necessity' of capitalism and imperialism, we must then abandon the notion of gaining independence in 1947 and accept the bitter fact of a continued, though now semi-colonial, dependence. The reality of neo-colonialism must be acknowledged.

"The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalled the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production."

Karl Marx

Marx noted, "The world market itself forms the basis for this (capitalist) mode of production. On the other hand, the immanent necessity of this mode of production to produce on an ever enlarged scale tends to extend the world market continuously..."²⁴ The greater part of this world market of capitalism was the colonies, and at present the semi-colonial countries. The exploitation and plunder of the colonies was crucial for the primary accumulation of the emerging capitalist mode. However, this was not just a matter of primary accumulation. It has also played a crucial role in the growth of capitalism into imperialism and its continued sustenance. This recognition does not eliminate the primary internal dynamics in the emergence of either capitalism or imperialism in the West, because a mode of production develops only where the conditions for it have taken shape. Neither does it shift the locus of exploitation to exchange relations instead of at the basic level of production. The issue for us is the conditions created and enforced by colonial rule or the conditions sanctioned and imposed by imperialism in the post-colonial period. The continuous expansion of the world market necessitated by the capitalist mode of production in the metropolis demands the development of productive forces in the colonies. But the extent of this development depends on the exploitative needs of capital in the centre, which also makes subordination of the peripheries a must and also determines its nature. This is no doubt influenced and shaped by a number of other factors including class struggle and contradictions among world powers. But the element of oppression and disarticulation, which also contains the sustenance of semi-feudalism, is a constant. These conditions ruled out, and still rule out, the development of capitalism in these along the trajectory projected by

Marx.

This takes us beyond Marx's articles on British India and brings us to re-examining and developing the commonly accepted Leninist theory of imperialism. It is generally understood that the retrogressive role of colonialism was mainly a product of the shift of capitalism from progressive free trade to a reactionary monopoly phase. This does not accord with historical facts. The disarticulation of colonial economies and regeneration of feudal relations took place right from the very beginning of colonial rule, during the phase of competitive capitalism. It was forever a part of its transformative role. Therefore what is needed is a synthesis, with Lenin's theory of imperialism at its core, but critically ingesting the views of Rosa Luxemburg and of the world system school who have tried to address and situate the sustained role of the colonial exploitative relation in the capitalist system. Such a synthesis must also necessarily include Mao Tsetung's contributions, because they shed light on the particularities of capitalism promoted under the colonial relation, or at present under the form of neo colonialism.

Sadly enough, the thesis sought to be advanced, explicitly by Prabhat Patnaik and implicitly by Irfan Habib, is nowhere near this. Standing as they do on a political position that denies the colonial relation (the continued imperialist domination and control) shackling countries like India, Patnaik's argument about "...the preservation of a subjugated and degraded pre-capitalist or semi-capitalist sector, constituting the (necessary) environment within which the capitalist sector functions..."²⁵ falls lame. It amounts to nothing more than smuggling in elements of the world system school's argument in order to square the all too visible signs of imperialist domination and servility of the ruling classes (including among those they consider as communists) with their political positions on an 'independent' India and an 'independent' big bourgeoisie. There could of course be another take of this thesis whereby big industry in India is identified as the 'capitalist sector'. But this would only mean a shifting of the problem and miserably fail to address the nature of India's relation to the imperialist centres.

To come back to Marx's writings, the 'Introduction' of Irfan Habib and 'Appreciation' of Prabhat Patnaik are good lessons in how not to read Marx. Their concern to defend Marx is defeated by the glossing over of errors in recording history as well as in judge-

ment. It is also marked by what can politely be put as convenient reading. Thus Irfan Habib declares that "Marx's thesis of the union of agriculture and craft ... and an immutable division of labour ... as the twin pillars of the village economy, remains of lasting value."²⁶ What Marx wrote about is the combination of two circumstances bringing about a particular type of social system, the 'so called village system'. These were the central despotic state charged with taking care of public works like irrigation and the dispersed existence of the populace agglomerated in small centres by the domestic union of agricultural and manufacturing pursuits.²⁷ This was supposed to be the characteristics of the Asiatic mode of production. If the mode as such is abandoned and the erroneous characterisation of the role of the central state is corrected, what really remains of 'lasting value'? The domestic union of agriculture and manufacture was something commonly seen in all medieval societies, East or West. What is unique is the 'hereditary division of labour', caste. It is to Marx's lasting credit that he drew attention to this feature and projected it as the decisive impediment to 'Indian progress and Indian power'. How far has this insight, this truly unique feature, been taken up? How do we explain the hard fact that despite Marx's acknowledging caste as a 'division of labour', Ambedkar's insight on caste as also a 'division of labourers' and Kosambi's pioneering work on the role of the caste order in the incorporation of tribal societies into feudalism, the tradition in Indian Marxist thought and political practice has been to see it as a matter of the superstructure? How far *can* all these questions be addressed by those who declare that the Indian working class has more or less dissolved caste, even when all facts of their life point to the opposite?

Despite all the limitations and even errors in Marx's writings what stands out is his effort to apply materialism in the study of the history and society of the Indian sub-continent, paying keen attention to what he then knew as its particularities. It is this approach that needs to be distilled out and applied in our historical studies. And it should be tempered with Kosambi's observation, "India is not a mathematical point but a very large country, a sub-continent with the utmost diversity of natural environment, language, historical course of development. Neither in the means of production nor in the stages of social development was there overall homogeneity in the oldest times. Centuries must be allowed to pass before comparable stages of productive and social re-

relationships may be established between the Indus valley, Bengal and Malabar. Even then important differences remain which makes periodisation for India as a whole almost impossible, except with the **broadest margins.**¹⁹

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- ² 'The Future Results of The British Rule in India', from 'The First War of Independence' (FWI), Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, page 30.
- ³ 'The British Rule in India', FWI, page 14. Emphasis added.
- ⁴ Ibid, page 18.
- ⁵ "It [the labour process] is the universal condition for the metabolic interaction between man and nature, the everlasting nature-imposed condition of human existence." quoted in 'Marx's Ecology – Materialism and Nature', James Bellamy Foster, Cornerstone Publications, Kharagpur, 2001, page 157.
- ⁶ 'The British Rule in India', page 15.
- ⁷ 'Appreciation: The Other Marx', Prabhat Patnaik, KMI, page lv.
- ⁸ Combined Methods in Indology and Other Writings' (CMIW), D.D. Kosambi, ed. Brajadadul Chattopadhyaya, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2002, page 298; 'Capital and Labour Redefined – India and the Third World', Amiya Kumar Bagchi, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2002, page 143.
- ⁹ 'The British Rule in India', page 17.
- ¹⁰ Kosambi, page 308.
- ¹¹ Ibid, page 309.
- ¹² This actually contradicts Kosambi's own acknowledgement of caste as a means of control over the exploited.
- ¹³ 'Capital', Karl Marx, Volume 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, page 703. Marx points to the employment of the power of the state in the colonial system, "...to hasten, hot-house fashion, the process of the transformation of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode, and to shorten the transition."
- ¹⁴ Patnaik, page lxvii.
- ¹⁵ 'India – Changing Economic Structure in the Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries, Outline History of Crafts and Trade', Alexander I. Tchithcerov, Manohar Publishers, New Delhi, 1998, pages 53, 63-64, 74, 104 and 136.

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Industry Development Bank accused of a Rs 280 million fraud, and forced the police to take him into custody. The true concerns of the Nepali Congress leadership was revealed when this action provoked prime minister GP Koirala to accuse the Young Communist League (YCL) of degenerating into a "young criminal league", though he was silent when the police avoided arresting Prasai even as he made several public appearances and threw a lavish party at a five-start hotel in Kathmandu, inviting a host of politicians and top police officials.

The CPN (M) has recently evaluated that there is a planned and naked foreign intervention against the independence, security and self-respect of Nepal. US imperialism and Indian expansionism is openly provoking Madheshi (Terai) and other nationalities to unleash communal violence. The danger of Sikkimisation and Bhutanisation has increased very much. Nepali Congress, which is leading the interim government, is the front paw of this intervention. Hence the party has adopted a policy of intensifying struggle in the interim government, interim legislature and the streets by raising the question of republic to the level of a mass movement. Given the sharpening of contradictions in Nepal it remains to be seen how long the temporary truce will hold.

¹⁶ Bagchi, page 143.

¹⁷ Colonial Theses, 6th Congress Report of the Communist International.

¹⁸ 'Introduction: Marx's Perception of India', Irfan Habib, KMI, page li.

¹⁹ 'The East India Company – Its History and Results', Karl Marx, FWI, page 27.

²⁰ Patnaik, page lviii.

²¹ "... the formation of the Indian National Congress, from which event the formal history of the Indian national movement begins.", "... followed till the finale of 1947 contained much that should have gratified him, for it was all according to the perspective he had outlined in 1853.", Habib, page lii.

²² "This was confident prophecy; the Indian working class has largely fulfilled it...", ibid, page lii.

²³ Ibid, page lii.

²⁴ 'Capital', Volume 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, page 333.

²⁵ Patnaik, page lxiii.

²⁶ Habib, page xxxv.

²⁷ 'British Rule in India', page 16.

²⁸ Kosambi, page 50.

Bhagat Singh's Letter ...

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to snatch and handle it to utilise it for the consummation of our ideal, i.e., social reconstruction on new, i.e., Marxist, basis. For this purpose we are fighting to handle the government machinery. All along we have to educate the masses and to create a favourable atmosphere for our social programme. In the struggles we can best train and educate them.

With these things clear before us, i.e., our immediate and ultimate object having been clearly put, we can now proceed with the examination of the present situation. We must always be very candid and quite business-like while analysing any situation.

We know that since a hue and cry was raised about the Indians' participation in and share in the responsibility of the Indian government, the Minto-Morley Reforms were introduced, which formed the Viceroy's council with consultation rights only. During the Great War, when the Indian help was needed the most, promises about self-government were made and the existing reforms were introduced. Limited legislative powers have been entrusted to the Assembly but subject to the goodwill of the Viceroy. Now is the third stage.

Now reforms are being discussed and are to be introduced in the near future. How can our young men judge them? This is a question; I do not know by what standard are the Congress leaders going to judge them. But for us, the revolutionaries, we can have the following criteria:

1. Extent of responsibility transferred to the shoulders of the Indians.
2. Form of the Government institutions that are going to be introduced and the extent of the right of participation given to the masses.
3. Future prospects and the safeguards.

... Now in the first place we must see the method of the executive formation: Whether the executive is to be elected by the members of a popular assembly or is to be imposed from above as before, and further, whether it shall be

responsible to the house or shall absolutely affront it as in the past?

As regards the second item, we can judge it through the scope of franchise. The property qualifications making a man eligible to vote should be altogether abolished and universal suffrage be introduced instead ...I may here make a mention about provincial autonomy. But from whatever I have heard, I can only say that the Governor imposed from above, equipped with extraordinary powers, higher and above the legislative, shall prove to be no less than a despot. Let us better call it the "provincial tyranny" instead of "autonomy." This is a strange type of democratisation of the state institutions.

The third item is quite clear. During the last two years the British politicians have been trying to undo Montague's promise for another dole of reforms to be bestowed every ten years till the British Treasury exhausts.

We can see what they have decided about the future. Let me make it clear that we do not analyse these things to rejoice over the achievement, but to form a clear idea about our situation, so that we may enlighten the masses and prepare them for further struggle. For us, compromise never means surrender, but a step forward and some rest. That is all and nothing else.

Having discussed the present situation, let us proceed to discuss the future programme and the line of action we ought to adopt.

As I have already stated, for any revolutionary party a definite programme is very essential. For, you must know that revolution means action. It means a change brought about deliberately by an organized and systematic work, as opposed to sudden and unorganised or spontaneous change or breakdown. And for the formulation of a programme, one must necessarily study:

1. The goal.
2. The premises from where were to start, i.e., the existing conditions.
3. The course of action, i.e., the means and methods.

...We have discussed the present situation to some extent. The goal also has been slightly

Revolution means the complete overthrow of the existing social order and its replacement with the socialist order. For that purpose our immediate aim is the achievement of power. As a matter of fact, the state, the government machinery is just a weapon in the hands of the ruling class to further and safeguard its interest.

touched. We want a socialist revolution, the indispensable preliminary to which is the political revolution. That is what we want. The political revolution does not mean the transfer of state (or more crudely, the power) from the hands of the British to the Indian, but to those Indians who are at one with us as to the final goal, or to be more precise, the power to be transferred to the revolutionary party through popular support. After that, to proceed in right earnest is to organize the reconstruction of the whole society on the socialist basis. If you do not mean this revolution, then please have mercy. Stop shouting "Long Live Revolution." The term revolution is too sacred, at least to us, to be so lightly used or misused. But if you say you are for the national revolution and the aims of your struggle is an Indian republic of the type of the United State of America, then I ask you which forces are you relying on to help you bring about this revolution? Whether the revolution is national or socialist, they forces you can rely upon are the peasantry and the labour. Congress leaders do not dare to organize those forces. You have seen it in this movement. They know it better than anybody else that without these forces they are absolutely helpless. When they passed the resolution of complete independence - that really meant a revolution - they did not mean it. They had to do it under pressure of the younger element, and then they wanted to use it as a threat to achieve their hearts' desire - Dominion Status... Mahatmaji made no secret of the fact that the door (for compromise) was open. That was the real spirit. At the very outset they knew that their movement could not but end in some compromise. It is this half-heartedness that we hate, not the compromise at a particular stage in the struggle. Anyway, we were discussing the forces on which you can depend for a revolution. But if you say that you will approach the peasants and labourers to enlist their active support, let me tell you that they are not going to be fooled by any sentimental talk. They ask you quite candidly: what are they going to gain by your revolution for which you demand their sacrifices, what difference does it

the peasants and labourers... ask you quite candidly: what are they going to gain by your revolution for which you demand their sacrifices, what difference does it make to them whether Lord Reading is the head of the Indian government or Sir Purshotamdas Thakordas?

make to them whether Lord Reading is the head of the Indian government or Sir Purshotamdas Thakordas? What difference for a peasant if Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru replaces Lord Irwin!

...When you have formulated this clear-cut idea about your goals you can proceed in right earnest to organize your forces for such an action. Now there are two different phases through which you shall have to pass. First, the preparation; second, the action. After the present movement ends, you will find disgust and some disappointment amongst the sincere revolutionary workers.

But you need not worry. Leave sentimentalism aside. Be prepared to face the facts. Revolution is a very difficult task. It is beyond the power of any man to make a revolution. Neither can it be brought about on any appointed date. It is brought about by special environments, social and economic. The function of an organized party is to utilise any such opportunity offered by these circumstances. And to prepare the masses and organize the forces for the revolution is a very difficult task. And that required a very great sacrifice on the part of the revolutionary workers... We require - using the term so dear to Lenin - the "professional revolutionaries". The whole-time workers who have no other ambitions or life-work except the revolution. The greater the number of such workers organized into a party, the great the chances of your success.

To proceed systematically, what you need the most is a party with workers of the type discussed above with clear-cut ideas and keen perception and ability of initiative and quick decisions. The party shall have iron discipline and it need not necessarily be an underground party, rather the contrary. The policy of voluntarily going to jail should altogether be abandoned. That will create a number of workers who shall be forced to lead an underground life. They should carry on the work with the same zeal. And it is this group of workers that shall produce worthy leaders for the real opportunity.

The party requires workers which can be recruited only through the youth movement. Hence we find the youth movement as the starting point of our programme. The youth movement should organize

study circles, class lectures and publication of leaflets, pamphlets, books and periodicals. This is the best recruiting and training ground for political workers. Those young men, who may have matured in their ideas and may find themselves ready to devote their life to the cause, may be transferred to the party. The party workers shall always guide and control the work of the youth movement as well. The party should start with the work of mass propaganda. It is very essential... it is essential for gaining the active sympathy of and organising the peasants and workers. The name of party should be communist party. This party of political workers, bound by strict discipline, should handle all other movements. It shall have to organize the peasants' and workers' parties, labour unions, and kindred political bodies. And in order to create political consciousness, not only of national politics but class politics as well, the party should organize a big publishing campaign. Writings on the essence of all problems, enlightening the masses on the socialist theory, shall be within easy reach and distributed widely. The writings should be simple and clear.

There are certain people in the labour movement who enlist some absurd ideas about the economic liberty of the peasants and workers without political freedom. They are demagogues or muddle-headed people. Such ideas are unimaginable and preposterous. We mean the economic liberty of the masses, and for that very purpose we are striving to win the political power. No doubt in the beginning, we shall have to fight for little economic demands and privileges of these classes. But these struggles will make them conscious, alert and prepared for the final struggle to conquer political power.

Apart from these, there shall necessarily be organized a military department. This is very important. At times its need is felt very badly. But at that time you cannot start and form such a group with substantial means to act effectively. Perhaps this is the topic that needs a careful explanation. There is very great probability of my being misunderstood on this subject. Apparently I have acted like a terrorist. But I am not a terrorist. I am a revolutionary who has got such definite ideas of a lengthy programme as is being discussed here. My "comrades in arms" might accuse me, like Ram Prasad Bismil, for having been subjected to certain sort of reaction in the condemned cell, which is not true. I have got the same ideas, same convictions, same convictions, same zeal and same spirit as I used to have outside, perhaps-nay, decidedly-better. Hence I warn my readers to be

careful while reading my words. They should not try to read anything between the lines. Let me announce with all the strength at my command, that I am not a terrorist and I never was, except perhaps in the beginning of my revolutionary career. And I am convinced that we cannot gain anything through those methods. One can easily judge it from the history of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. All our activities were directed towards an aim, i.e., identifying ourselves with the great movement as its military wing. If anybody has misunderstood me, let him amend his ideas. I do not mean that bombs and pistols are useless, rather the contrary. But I mean to say that mere bomb-throwing is not only useless but sometimes harmful. The military department of the party should always keep ready all the war-material it can command for any emergency. It should back the political work of the party. It cannot and should not work independently.

...If you start the work on these lines, you shall have to be very sober. The programme requires at least twenty years for its fulfilment. Cast aside the youthful dreams of a revolution within ten years, just as Gandhi's utopian promises of Swaraj in one year were cast aside. You need not be emotional about this, nor is it going to be easy. It demands a life of constant struggle, suffering and sacrifice. Crush your individuality first. Shake off the dreams of personal comfort. Then start to work. Inch by inch you shall have to proceed. It needs courage, perseverance and very strong determination. No difficulties and no hardships shall discourage you. No failure and betrayals shall dishearten you. Whatever hardship you may have to face your revolutionary spirit should not slacken. Through the ordeal of sufferings and sacrifice you shall come out victorious. And these individual victories shall be the valuable assets of the revolution.

Long Live Revolution

2nd February, 1931

(abridged from www.punjabilok.com. The translation was checked and corrected with Chaman Lal's 'Bhagat Singh Ke Sampurna Dasthavez')

The NEW WAVE

RAMESH

P.O.BOX NO: 47, RAIPUR

CHHATTISGARH-492001

India

SEZ...

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the 14 'officially' killed, the majority are Dalits. The people of Nandigram are still continuing their resistance against the social fascist government of West Bengal. At Singur also the struggle is going on.

Even when their own government in West Bengal is killing people and forcefully acquiring land for SEZs, the central leadership of CPM makes treacherous statements against SEZ and related land acquisition in the media. Mr. Karat said while speaking on the occasion of the 41st foundation day of the Bengali daily Ganashakti, "In the name of setting up SEZs thousands of acres are being given to big companies not for the sake of industries but for promoting real estate speculation." But the West Bengal SEZ Bill 2003 clearly gives the government the right to acquire any land for SEZ. "The State Government may identify any area or areas to be a Special Economic Zone and may invite or accept proposals for the development of such area or areas as Special Economic Zone, in such manner as may be prescribed." (Section 3 (1), chapter II, WB SEZ Bill 2003) (emphasis added). They clamour about neo-liberalism and globalisation but implement its policies wherever they are in power. The Kerala government's Smart City deal is another example. This double talk and attacks on the masses are an expression of the class transformation that has taken in the PCM leadership. In West Bengal, its rural leadership is made up of old type landlords who came over from the Congress and new ones who enriched themselves through party and administrative positions. The CPM leader who was killed by the masses at Nandigram was a notorious example of this. In the cities, right down to the local level, the CPM is run by old and new exploiters, particularly entrenched in real estate speculation and construction.

One thing is clear. On the question of SEZ there is no 'left' and 'right'. Central as well as State governments are firm on the question of SEZ. For them it is the panacea for progress as it is expected to bring hopefully huge investments. And, they are ready to go to any extent.

From the statements coming from Commerce ministry it is very much clear that there is no significant change in their basic approach towards SEZ, even after the massacre at Nandigram. Within a few days after Nandigram killing, Commerce minister Kamal Nath said in an interview that the

'government will not politically wriggle out of SEZ' as 'it is already an Act of the parliament' and hence there is no going back from it. Not only that, if approvals are not done in time, 'the investors might opt out of India and take their investment elsewhere. According to him, "Nandigram was a very unfortunate incident of land acquisition but we must not confuse land acquisition with SEZ. They are two distinct things." Through this statement he is mocking at struggles still going on in various States against land acquisition for SEZ. He is very deliberately separating the land question from SEZ so as to divert the direction of attack against SEZ. It is now known to every one that SEZ is primarily a question of land acquisition, of real estate speculation, and, very particularly, forceful land acquisition by the state.

In the light of wide opposition and resistance against SEZ, the government is now planning to bring out a National Re-settlement and Rehabilitation Policy based on the land acquisition rehabilitation packages for farmers formulated by State governments.

It is nothing but another ploy to drain out the energy of the anti-SEZ struggle by luring them in to the trap of petty monetary gains. Reliance has already come out with a plan of a 'special rehabilitation package' to the peasants who are ready to part with their land in Navi Mumbai. There they are utilising the service of MIDC in acquiring land. That is, the state machinery is playing the role of real estate agents for the big business houses.

Though there was a temporary freeze on new approvals of SEZs, now it is revived and fresh approvals are going on in full swing. In the last month itself more than 100 new proposals of SEZ were approved by the committee of Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM). In order to dent the criticism on the question of the maximum size of SEZ, this committee has now put the ceiling at 5000 ha (12000 acres). Now the EGoM has prescribed a uniform processing area of 50 per cent to both sector-specific and multi-product SEZ. That means remaining 50% land is still available to the developers of the SEZ for real estate business.

What ever may be done to make the SEZ seemingly more acceptable, fundamentally it is dispossessing farmers from their livelihood for big capital through the agency of the state. With new modifications in the SEZ act, there is every chance that the government may come out aggressively to acquire land.

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The uprising of Meerut in May 1857 was only one in a chain of revolts. Yet it was a defining moment. The insurgents marched out from the confines of their cantonment and thus gave it a broad character. But in their search for a unifying, even if symbolic, leadership, they couldn't think of anyone other than the heir of the Mogul empire. They couldn't envisage the outcome of the destruction of British rule except as the restoration of that empire, even when their chosen emperor and most of the feudal lords and kings had to be forced to take up their posts. From Meerut to Naxalbari, in the little more than a century that passed, the consciousness of revolution grew at an amazing speed. Though the official historians, whether of left or right hue, would like us to believe that 1857 was the last violent 'national' revolt, history records revolts and uprisings in every following decade, including major strikes and uprisings by the newly born working class. More importantly, the ideological impulses also shifted. To give an example, the violation of caste and religious orthodoxies had once stirred up rebellion. Now the struggle against caste and for rational thought became unavoidable in the discourse of independence; how they were handled is a different matter. In a certain sense, Bhagat Singh and his comrades represent both a link and a leap in this process made up of so many streams. For them independence was no longer a matter of ending foreign rule alone. It was also a quest to build a new society free of exploitation and oppression. Yet their heroic struggles were still part of an old pattern, where the leaders stood apart from the masses, seen as passive recipients and followers. This is not to deny the transformation they, particularly Bhagat Singh, were undergoing. But this was only in thinking. It was proceeding to incorporate the revolutionary thrust of their past activity into a Marxist plan of work, while breaking with the terrorist vision. But internment limited its development and execution at the hands of the British colonialists brought an abrupt end to this promising turn. Perhaps this is a major reason why, despite the absorption of most of this stream into the emerging communist party, it failed to provide the energy for pushing this movement along the revolutionary road.

Where then can we place the old communist party in this process? It was a mixed bag. The break from terrorism, popularising Marxism and organising the struggle of the masses stand out to its credit. But, except for brief intermissions like the Telengana armed struggle, the overall thrust was thoroughly reformist and quite stuck up in the Gandhian rut. It took the ideological clarity of Naxalbari to provide that decisive revolutionary impetus and make a thorough break. The party it gave birth to, the CPI (M-L) founded and led by Charu Mazumdar, gave it conscious form and content. This was a synthesis unlike anything seen before, a unity of revolutionary vision and daring struggle.

Looking back, we must also see the incompleteness in this rupture. Despite its overthrowing of the revisionist and Gandhian legacies of the old CPI, the new party also carried over some of that old baggage. To cite some striking instances, this was seen in its theoretical and programmatic positions on the caste and women's issues. Its insistence on sinking roots among the most oppressed sections of society and the vehemence of its revolutionary assault on the old order did compensate this to some extent. But that was not enough. In recent years good advances have been made in addressing this lack. More remains to be done. Similarly, though the dynamite blast of Naxalbari gave, and still gives, a yield far wider than the military ambit of the protracted People's War it initiated, this is yet to be harvested. Some manifestations of its wholesale attack (as part of its total war) on all aspects of this system, such as the smashing of statues of comprador and feudal idols, were perhaps quite arbitrary. There was less of ideological work necessary to strip them of their haloes. But this is how it is in any revolutionary outburst. Yet it seems that the plus points of such beginnings have faded while the legacy of weak ideological and theoretical work still remains. The growth of revolutionary cultural activism is significant, but it cannot be a substitute for this.

The 40 years since Naxalbari, with all its ups and downs, has now reached a juncture where a higher leap, a higher synthesis, is demanded by theory and practice.

The Birth of the New Man

(On July 28, 1972, comrade: Charu Majumdar the founder leader of the CPI (M-L) was murdered by the Indian state. Since then this date has been commemorated as Martyr's Day. In memory of the thousands of valiant daughters and sons of the people who laid down their lives for the cause of revolution, we reprint a letter written by Charu Majumdar – NW)

Dear Comrade,

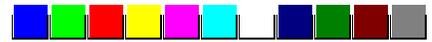
I had your letter. Comrades Gurudas, Shashi and Sudeb were your fellow workers. It is not possible for me to feel the anguish that you must be feeling. Comrade, the path of revolution is, indeed, crimson with the blood of martyrs. Price has to be paid for the liberation of the people. Every attack on us is painful and this pain gives rise to the strong resolve to make greater sacrifices and to the most intense hatred for the enemy. When those two are wedded to Mao Tsetung Thought, the new man is born. The oppressed people of India, crores of poor and landless peasants of our country, are looking forward to the birth of the new man. When the poor and landless peasantry will beget the new man, the people of India will then wipe off all their tears and break into laughter. What a flood of life will then sweep through the whole of India! Our country will blaze up like a bright star and illumine the entire world. It is through the self-sacrifice of countless men that the India of our dreams will become real. Each such death is heavier than a mountain, for they grew up much greater than what we are. That is why their deaths will create innumerable lives. That is why the dust of this road has to be washed with tears and the road made firm with blood.

Did we commit any mistake? Who can say that no mistake will be committed? But this is not the day of repentance, this is the day when one should blaze up like a flame of fire, this is the day when the blood debt should be repaid in blood. For thousands of years the poor and landless peasants of our country have shed their blood and sacrificed their lives to build up this country: it is through their sacrifice that our society, culture, wealth, riches, tradition— all these have been built up. The burden of that debt rests on our shoulders. It is our task to repay that debt. But we must correct the mistakes, if we have committed any. Without correcting them we shall be unable to sharpen the edge of our attack. It seems to me that our mistake there arises from the old political deviation, that is, the division between the tribals and non-tribals. The class enemies could unite only by exploiting that advantage. If they hadn't this advantage, each of them would have been busy saving his own skin and they would never come forward to help one another.

Out of every martyrdom arises new life. I shall live to hear the wonderful news of the rich harvest of new life the martyrdom of these three heroes will yield.

CHARU MAJUMDAR

July 6, 1970



Satisfaction

The most beautiful thing for those who have fought a whole life is to come to the end and say: we believed in people and life, and life and the people never let us down.

Only in this way do men become men, women become women, fighting day and night for people and for life.

And when these lives come to an end the people open their deepest rivers and they enter those waters forever And so they become, distant fires, living, creating the heart of example.

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Otto Rene Castillo

