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To seek a breathing space Crisis-Ridden USA Strikes Iraq Again

Early in the morning of 17 December last (around 03.40 hours IST), the USA, along with Britain, launched a massive attack on Iraq deploying aircraft carriers, aircrafts and missiles. The attack, code-named Operation Desert Fox, went on incessantly for four nights before the US President Bill Clinton called it off.

The reason given out for this massive strike was that Richard Butler, the Chief UN inspector in charge of the UN special commission on disarming Iraq (Unscm) had just concluded in a report to the Security Council that Iraq had failed to restore full cooperation with the Unscm weapon experts and therefore the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (meaning nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons) continued to threaten the whole world. It may be recalled that under pressure from the USA and Britain, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution in 1997 providing for inspection of Iraqi military/weapon establishments by UN weapons experts and accordingly, the first group of UN inspectors went to Iraq in December, 1997. Since then, such inspections

have been conducted off and on with breaks on the ground of alleged non cooperation by Iraq and during such hitches, USA and Britain stepped up military mobilisation in the Gulf area and threatened Iraq with full-scale attack.

US-British justification of attack is bunkum

That attack has now been launched. Does what the USA and Britain say in justification of the attack stand to reason? Let us examine the facts. Along with the Unscm, the International Atomic Energy Agency responsible for elimination of Iraqi nuclear weapons, was also conducting inspections in Iraq. It

reported that it had received the "necessary level of cooperation"

from Iraq to enable its inspectors to work "efficiently and effectively". As for the Unscm, a team of its inspectors was turned back when it tried to enter a branch office of the ruling Baath party of Iraq on 9 December. But a report from Baghdad dated 10 December said that the developing crisis had been averted because Iraq had again allowed Unscm inspectors to resume searches

of suspected weapon sites and accordingly, fresh inspections had begun. But by the 16th., the Butler report had been submitted and it held out such a grave portent that the air strikes had to be launched within 24 hours to save the world

attack on Iraq? The Unscm is filled with imperialists particularly US imperialist agents and it is clear that their object was to provide the USA with an excuse for attacking Iraq. Scott Ritter, the former Chief UN weapons inspector, had to say this: "What Richard Butler did last week with the inspections was a set-up. This was designed to generate a conflict that would justify a bombing." (report from Washington in the Times, London).

The attack was pre-planned and the Butler report was cooked up to provide the excuse. Bill Clinton decided upon the attack, secured the concurrence of Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, over telephone and ordered the attack to be launched, disregarding the UNO. All that Kofi Annan, the UN secretary general, could say was that it was "a sad day for the UN and for the world". The Observer, London reported that when a "major divergence" occurred between Mr Annan and Anglo-American coalition leaders on their stand on the Iraqi crisis, a US Security Council delegate "tore up" the UN Chief's letter suggesting Iraq be given more time before any military action.

This is not to say that had the decision rested with the UN, it would have acted as the world's conscience and against imperialist machinations. Because, for long, US imperialism has been making use of the UN as a rubber stamp to endorse its nefarious designs. The 1991

(Contd. on page 4)

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Condemnation

Condemning the US air-strike on Iraq Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in course of a statement on 17.12.98 said:

"We unequivocally condemn this barbaric and brazen US aggression on Iraq's sovereignty, trampling underfoot all canons of international law with cynical contempts for the entire anti-imperialist peace-loving world opinion.

"We are confident that people all over the world will give this naked US overlordism a fitting rebuff."

without waiting for the Security Council to deliberate upon the report! The difference in perception of the situation between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Unscm is glaring, and revealing too. Butler cited only five incidents of Iraqi noncooperation in 300 inspections. How can these constitute the basis and justification for an

SUCI Condemns attack on Christians

Condemning the recent spate of attacks on Christian community, particularly in Gujarat, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI said in a statement on 28. 12. 98:

"The attack on the Christians and their institutions by the 'Hindu Jagaran Manch', an outfit of BJP - Sangh Parivar is a threat to the democratic unity of the Indian people.

"We demand that the state government of Gujarat must take stern action to stop this communal attack, provide full security to the minorities and exemplary punishment to the culprits."



Effigy of Bill Clinton is being burnt before USIS in Calcutta on 17.12.98

Globalisation Intensifies Landlessness

[Deba Prasad Sarkar, Vice-President, AIKKMS, attended the Asia-Pacific People's Assembly (APPA) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia held from 10-15 November, 1998. Its report and the Unity Statement adopted at the Assembly were published in the 1st December, 1998 issue of the Proletarian Era. Here we publish the paper presented by Comrade Sarkar at the Assembly. — Editor, Proletarian Era.]

Comrades and friends,

I, on behalf of the All India Peasants and Agricultural Workers' Organisation (AIKKMS) congratulate the convenors of Asia-Pacific People's Assembly (APPA) which has been organised as a parallel programme to raise effective voice of protest and to pose a counter against the ensuing 6th APEC Leaders Summit which is a centre of imposing imperialist menace in the region in the name of globalisation, liberalisation and free market. It is a privilege for me to speak in this workshop on the subject "Globalisation intensifies landlessness". I like to deal on the subject in the context of struggle of toiling rural people of India which belongs to the category of as Third World countries. To highlight the Indian farmers' and agricultural workers' struggle for land reform and also their resistance of the attack of globalisation and the onslaught of ruling capitalists it is necessary, at the outset, to have an idea of the actual picture and character of the rural economy in India.

In fact, the process of landlessness of the poor peasants began in India long before globalisation set in, although aggravated by it manifold as at present. I feel inclined to recall the Leninist teachings on this score. He categorically stated the following to be the yardstick to judge if capitalism has infiltrated in agriculture. This obviously leads to landlessness of the poor peasants at a rapid rate. They are : 1) concentration of land in the hands of a few ; 2) increase in the number of agricultural proletariat or semi-proletarian masses and 3) Conversion of agricultural products into products of national capitalist market.

Further it has to be examined whether land itself has been converted into a means of investment of more and more capital for reaping maximum profit by the capitalists and lastly whether the relations of production in the countryside is that of the owner - wage earner relation — no matter how this wage is paid and what be the form of cultivation. Studying on the basis of the above yardstick, the AIKKMS has concluded long back that excepting hangovers in the domain of culture, customs and habits etc. which are strongly prevalent in our country and which could not be fought out because of the weakness of the leadership of our freedom struggle there is no feature of feudalism in our agricultural economy today. Some statistics furnished in the latter part of my speech will bear out this truth.

In the considered opinion of the AIKKMS India is most developed capitalistically among the Third World countries so much so that it has already acquired imperialist character and has become a partner, although a junior partner, of the imperialist Trusts & Cartels since sometime past. Besides, India has appeared in this sub-continent led by an aspirant bourgeoisie as a regional "Super Power" engaged in establishing hegemony and posing threat to the neighbouring countries. Sending Indian Army to Sri Lanka in the guise of "Peace-

keeping Force" and to Maldives among so many other developments bears out this truth.

Now, in the present crisis of sky-rocketing price-rise of essential commodities including rice, onion, mustard oil, etc., — the Indian monopolists are exporting agricultural products and products of agro-based industries to foreign countries aplenty causing serious hardship in the life of the people.

Agriculture is now fast emerging as an area of hunting huge profits and so big monopoly houses are showing growing interest in investing extensively in agriculture. These changes are leading to a new form of collusion of interests despite some contradictions between the industrial and rural capitalists. Both of them intend to use Indian agriculture in a different way now and are wanting to remove forcefully such laws and regulations, which may obstruct this very purpose. Let us now examine how, with the advent of WTO with consequent opening wide of the entry of foreign capital in our economy, including agriculture, landlessness is today taking place at an alarming proportion.

With this combination of the urban and rural bourgeoisie is added the interest of the foreign financial agencies. Their mouthpiece World Bank sent a set of proposals to the government of India as far back as in 1991 to bring 'reforms' in agricultural arena. The proposals were : "1) The removal of trade restriction on agricultural commodities, 2) A drastic curtailment of food subsidy, 3) The removal of all restrictions on the choice of what to produce and where to sell, 4) Freedom of operation of Agro-business corporations, 5) Abolition of land ceiling laws". (Agricultural Challenges and Opportunities, World Bank's Economic Memorandum for India, 1993). A little probe will make it clear that despite clashes of interest these proposals are akin to the interest of both the monopolists and rural bourgeoisie of India. As a result these proposals are being gradually translated in the field of agricultural economy of our country through the New Economic Policy (NEP). But what has been the condition of the common million after this policy has been implemented for seven years in agriculture?

A damaging trend arose out of making the agricultural market a part of international agromarket by means of NEP. Due to the present thrust of turning agriculture export-oriented, stress is laid on producing and exporting such agricultural goods, which have the highest demand in the international market. As a result food production is hampered and cash crops are encouraged. By making use of the different climatic conditions of this vast country the Indian capitalists are choosing different suitable agricultural commodities for international market and laying more stress on the production of those commodities. It is seen that the land use for production of rapeseed, soybean and sunflower has increased by 63%, 173% and 163% respectively and for oilseeds and sugarcane by 34% and 19% respectively in the period from 1991-92 to 1995-96. This development has taken place mainly in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, M.P., Gujarat and Rajasthan. A large part of forest and paddy field in Kerala has been converted into rubber, coffee and coconut plantations. The situation in West Bengal under Left Front rule is no different. In South and North 24 Parganas districts of this state large areas of paddy fields are

converted into prawn and crab hatcheries, in North Bengal into tea plantations, in Nadia into tomato and floriculture. And this process of transformation by gaining strength day by day have reduced the total quantity of food grain production in our country. It is seen from statistics that whereas the total production in 1990-91 was 32 million tons it was reduced to 30 million tons in 1995-96. So it is obvious that the export of agricultural commodities has brought down the production of foodgrains, portending a danger signal to the life of the poor and their security of food. And this crisis is not only due to this shift of emphasis on domestic food production, it is also due to the introduction of the policy of withdrawal of subsidies on foodgrains. It is seen that the Central and the State Governments of the country are withdrawing subsidies on foodgrains, obediently following the dictates of the national and foreign capitalists and on the other hand offering plentiful of benefits to the kulaks of the rural areas. The declaration of support price to wheat by the Government of India is meant in reality to satisfy and assure the kulak lobby of Punjab, Haryana and U.P. After the declaration of the NEP and acceptance of new GATT and WTO the support price of wheat has increased by leaps and bounds. While the support price of wheat was Rs. 225/- per quintal in 1990-91 it stood at Rs. 475/- per quintal in 1996-97. It means that the increase is Rs. 250/- per quintal in five years, i.e. 111%. On the other hand as a result of withdrawal of subsidies on foodgrains, declaration of higher support price to satisfy the kulaks and such other measures the number below the poverty line is jumping upward at an appalling rate. Only within two years after the declaration of NEP and acceptance of new GATT and WTO the number of people below the poverty line jumped to more than 63 million.

Again with a view to further maximising profit, giant joint ventures with national and foreign capital are coming up in agricultural field. From August 1991 to December 1996, 469 joint ventures have come up in the field of food processing industry. (see table)

Item	No. of Joint Venture	Capital (Rs. in million)
1. Food processing	469	5,62,500
2. Marine Fishing	84	8,289
3. Fruits, floriculture and vegetables	308	41,046
4. Edible Oil	27	4,779
5. Fertiliser	42	24,569

(Source : *Economic & Political Weekly*, 10.5.97)

Besides these there are 163 other joint ventures in which an amount of Rs. 2,45,505 million of foreign capital is directly invested.

It shows what a massive amount of foreign capital is being invested in agro-based industries in India. And the trend of investment of both national and foreign capital in this field is increasing day by day. With the view to realising this big possibility in agriculture, particularly in food processing industry i.e. to widen the scope of looting, the ruling class is after introducing big farm holding by abolishing the small ones. Because big farms are ideal for investment of massive capital for modernisation and so it is being argued, "The small farm holdings are a handicap." This is why in order

(Contd. on page 3)

Globalisation Intensifies Landlessness

(Contd. from page 2)

to develop big farm by abolishing smaller land holdings the demand for modification and if possible total abolition of the Land Ceiling Act is being raised. The World Bank had craved 4 years ago — "The Land Act will have to be amended to encourage large land holding by the corporate sector." (*Business India*, December 1993). Demand has been raised almost in the same tune by ASSOCHAM, a leading organisation of the corporate sector in India. The government is most promptly conceding to this demand of the national and foreign capital. The Land reforms Act was never implemented in Bihar, Orissa and Rajasthan. Owing to the pressure of mass movement in the past land reforms were somewhat implemented in West Bengal through the enactment and implementation of Land Reform Act. But here also more than two years back the Left Front Government by making amendments of the Act has thrown open the state's entire land market for grabs with a view to encouraging large land holding by the corporate sector, rural an industrial bourgeoisie and the foreign MNCs and thereby nullified in effect the said Act to the detriment of interest of the poor peasants.

What a unique convergence of the ruling pseudo leftist and rightists to serve the national and foreign capital ! This convergence is helping the national and foreign capitalists to accumulate huge profits on the one hand and to wreak heavy disaster in the life of common people on the other. It is not only pauperising the people in ever increasing number by robbing them of their least means of subsistence but also swelling the rank of the landless labourers. According to 1991 census the number of agricultural labourers was 74.60 million and it is now more than 95 million. Another point is also worth noting. During the 10-year period from 1981-91, the rate of increase of agricultural labourers was 1.4% per annum. But during the last

six years this rate has jumped to 1.55%. And in West Bengal this rate is maximum about, 2.17%. It is clear that by integrating agriculture with the international market, the marginal farmers of the country are losing their land and becoming landless agricultural labourers at an accelerated pace. But curiously this rate is highest in West Bengal during the Left Front rule which claims for glorious success of land reforms.

But what is the conditions of the agricultural labourers ? Are they getting increased wages commensurate with the rise in price index ? The reality is otherwise. Report from the national Commission of Labour, 1995 states, "During the period between 1988 and 1994 Consumer Price Index for agricultural labourers increased by 434 point whereas wage rate increased only by Rs. 8 to Rs 12 i.e. 50%." It means that real wage has decreased, increasing poverty and hunger manifold. It means the more rapid will be the commercialisation and globalisation of agriculture of the country enabling the national and foreign capitalists to fill their coffers, more and more people will join the rank of the teeming proletariat and they will be rendered proletariat in the process of creating this affluence for the few. The framers of the New Economic Policy have designed this future for the people of the country. Since the ruling class has introduced this policy and demanding globalisation for the Indian monopoly capitalists to exploit further the home market and secure foothold in the foreign market it is impossible to resist the attack of imperialist globalisation and growing landlessness without fighting Indian monopoly and finance capital. So along with fighting domestic rulers we must stand united for global resistance against the onslaught of globalisation which is the need of the hour.

To create awareness in all sections of people against the danger and designs of the present-day imperialism and to build up a mighty movement

against imperialist intrigue, interference, intervention in the political, economic, social and cultural sphere and war machination all over the world particularly in third world countries a broad based platform of anti-imperialist struggle named 'All India Anti-imperialist Forum' has been given shape to in India in 1995. In the declaration of this Anti-Imperialist Forum it has categorically been mentioned that this anti-imperialist movement should be built up in such a way so that it becomes conducive to the struggle for emancipation of the toiling people. It has also been mentioned in this declaration that since the indigenous capitalists in their own interest are in favour of opening the home market to the MNCs and foreign capitalists and are joining hands with the imperialists in order to get entry in foreign market — it is impossible now-a-days to resist the attack of imperialism without fighting against the domestic capitalist rulers. In rural India day to day movements of the peasants and agricultural labourers on the demands of legitimate wage, employment guarantee for all round the year, supply of food and agricultural inputs in subsidised rates, remedial measures against price rise and eviction from land, etc., are being integrated with the anti-imperialist movement with this purpose in view. On the basis of this comprehensive outlook Indian farmers' and agricultural workers' struggle is developing and gradually gaining strength though the desired strength is yet to be achieved.

With these words and revolutionary greetings to all of you from AIKKMS I conclude and look forward for a grand success of this international peasants' meet to achieve its cherished goal.

Long Live Workers' and Peasants' Unity
of the World !
Long Live International Solidarity !

Police brutally assaulted demonstrators in Guwahati

In Assam, at Guwahati the police brutally pounced upon mass civil disobedience demonstration led by the SUCI on 15.12.98 protesting against unprecedented rise in prices of essential commodities and food articles, and injured many with lathi charge and teargas shelling.

The mass civil disobedience procession started from the party office at Ulubari and proceeded towards the Janta Bhawan, Dispur under the leadership of Comrade Kalyan Choudhury, Secretary of the Assam State Committee of the party. At Ganeshguri Chariali near Dispur, police unprovokedly resorted to barbaric lathicharge and burst teargas shells on the processionists injuring many including more than hundred women amongst whom the condition of two members of the party was critical and admitted to medical college, Guwahati. Police arrested nine persons including Comrade Jainal Abedin, and Comrade B. Nandy, members of the State Committee of the party. The police is trying to implicate them in false cases.

The mass civil disobedience movement was launched with the demand of controlling price rise, supply of all essential commodities at reasonable prices, all out state trading in food

grains and other essential commodities.

Condemning the incident of brutal attack on democratic movement Comrade Kalyan

Choudhury in course of a statement appealed to 'all the people to raise voice against this attack on democratic movement

THE NORTHEAST DAILY, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1998



Police lathicharging demonstrators in Guwahati on 15.12.98

Build up Militant Anti-Imperialist Movement to Thwart US War Design

(Contd. from page 1)

invasion of Iraq was carried out by the imperialist countries headed by the USA under the banner of the UN. The point is that the situation has reached a stage when the imperialists feel they can dispense with even the facade of UN approval if they find it inconvenient. The UN is becoming a non-entity, going the way of the League of Nations set up after the First World War.

The Butler report is a fake one, without any factual basis. The US-British plea in justification of the attack is motivated, designed to hoax the world. Is it believable that Saddam's Iraq is so powerful that it endangers the world, in the face of the nuclear teeth of the USA comprising thousands of nuclear warheads? Iraq endangers the world, but strangely, none of its neighbouring countries feels endangered or expresses concern about it, nor requests for any outside help to counter the threat! Who has accorded the right to the USA to decide which nation is guilty and is to be punished? Is this not jungle law? Saddam's Iraq is to be crushed anyhow, at any cost. That is the US objective. Why is this so? **Why this attack and what it has "achieved"**

It is because Iraq is the only obstacle to clamping down unfettered imperialist supremacy over the oil riches of the middle-east, controlled by the giant multinationals of imperialist countries, particularly the USA. Under the food for oil scheme, Iraq has been providing millions of barrels of oil to the world market in exchange for foodstuff, preventing rise in oil price. This frustrates the bid of the multinationals to increase oil price and reap superprofit at will.

Again, among the middle-east countries, Iraq is the staunchest supporter of the Palestinian liberation movement. Saddam's Iraq has become a symbol of anti-imperialist patriotism in the region and this may influence the surrounding states who obey the dictates of imperialism and generate disaffection among them. The all-out attack of 1991 failed to crush Iraq. Ever since then, the CIA has been active trying to devise ways and means to topple Saddam. It engineered a revolt in Kurdistan region of northern Iraq but that failed. Sometime before the present attack, the USA openly incited the Iraqis to revolt against Saddam. Earlier in the year, President Clinton proposed enactment of a Iraqi

Liberation Act which would provide for a grant of 60 million pounds to the forces opposed to Saddam in Iraq. It is also to be remembered that a UN-sponsored inhuman, rigid trade embargo against Iraq has been in force for the last 8 years, denying even import of foodstuff and life saving drugs into Iraq, subjecting the Iraq people to the utmost privation and taking a toll of hundreds of thousands of lives. And on top of this, there has been spates of heavy bombardment and missile attacks on Iraq, the present one being the fourth one. But all these have failed to destroy the fighting spirit of the Iraqi people. The "achievement" this time has been destruction of 19 out of the total of 85 targets (Ref: editorial in the Statesman dated 21.12.98). Moreover, even this success report seems to be unfounded because reportedly, attacks against these targets were often based on old, unreliable intelligence reports. According to Iraqi sources, 62 Iraqi soldiers were killed and 180 injured, but the loss of civilian life was much higher as hospitals, schools and residential houses were hit. During the bombardments, hundreds of thousands of leaflets in Arabic inciting the Iraqi army and people to revolt against Saddam, were showered upon Iraq. But all these have not been able to crush the indomitable Iraqi spirit. The struggle against imperialism continues. We salute the heroic Iraqi people!

Protests in Europe and Middle East

The reason held out as excuse for the present onslaught on Iraq is so flimsy that the reaction has been adverse across the globe. Although Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan and New Zealand supported the US-British action, France, which was a party to the 1991 attack, dissociated itself from the present one. Sweden and Belgium expressed opposition to the attack. In the middle east countries, there were widespread protests by the people against the attack. The Arab League strongly denounced the attack. Even Iran which had once been engaged in a long drawn out war for 10 years with Iraq, protested. Palestinians threw stones and fire bombs at Israeli soldiers and more than 100 of them were injured by the soldiers. Hundreds of protesters attacked the US and British embassies in Damascus, capital of Syria. The US flag at the embassy was pulled down and burnt. Saddam Hussain acquired hallow as a hero all over the middle east. Leaders of many countries in

the region, who normally support and toe the US line, were forced to protest the attack in the face of mass resentment for fear of getting alienated from their peoples. The USA was forced to temporarily close down most of its embassies and missions in the middle east and Africa.

Protests in USA and Britain

In the USA itself, there were numerous protest demonstrations across the country chanting "no more war" and "USA out of Iraq", and even in front of the White House at Washington. These included the demonstrations by the International Action Centre led by Ramsay Clarke. Although the Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain acted virtually as a stooge of the USA through the episode, the people in his country expressed resentment at the attack through widespread protest demonstrations.

Russia and China

Russia reacted sharply to the attack. Russian President Yeltsin said the attack "crudely violated" the UN charter and demanded that it be stopped forthwith. He cancelled a scheduled visit by his defence minister to the NATO. Moscow recalled its ambassadors from the USA and Britain. The Russian defence minister declared that Russia's relations with the NATO were threatened. The head of the Duma defence committee called for a review of all defence agreements with the West. The Duma unanimously passed a resolution against the danger of extension of NATO influence on to the Russian border that arose through the attack on Iraq. On the morrow of the attack, the Russian Prime Minister Primakov visited India. During the visit, he mooted the idea of creating a strategic "triangle" of alliance between Russia, China and India. In the joint Indo-Russian statement issued at the end of the visit, it was said that India and Russia would move towards a "strategic partnership" and sign a declaration at the summit meeting next year when President Yeltsin is scheduled to visit India. The statement advocated a multi-polar world and condemned the air-strikes on Iraq. Significantly, Russia did not press India to sign the NPT.

The strong Russian condemnation of the attack does not, however, stem from righteous indignation at the dastardly attack. Firstly, an extension of Western influence in Iraq brings the danger of deployment of NATO forces right on

to the doorsteps of Russia. Secondly, Russia is heavily indebted to the USA and is economically at its mercy. It depends on food aid from the USA. Despite Russian entreaties, the USA has not agreed to reschedule the repayment terms for US loan to Russia to make them lenient. In the present unipolar world, Russia possesses practically no means of achieving better bargaining capacity, manoeuvrability, vis-a-vis the USA. So, the attack on Iraq provided it with an opportunity for pressurising the USA through condemnation and diplomatic moves in order to gain more elbow room. As a long term measure towards the same end, a strategic military and political alliance with India, and involving China too if possible, is welcome to Russia. Further, anti-US feeling runs high in Russia for obvious reasons, and Yeltsin did not miss the opportunity of whipping up anti-US jingoism as a means of strengthening his present weak position in home politics.

China too condemned the attack on Iraq, but its protest was much weaker compared to that of Russia, and did not go to the extent it could and should have gone.

India government reaction : Indian people's condemnation

The Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee condemned the attack and called for an immediate halt to it and the Government of India expressed concern at the Iraqi civilian casualties. But we are constrained to observe that this Government's stand has not been without political interest. Firstly, widespread anti-US feeling has been generated in Asia through the air-strikes on Iraq. The Indian Government, as political agent of the aspirant ruling bourgeoisie staking claim to the status of this country as the major regional power and to the leadership of the third world, did not want to miss this opportunity of posing as the champion against US imperialism in Asia, especially since China has lagged behind in this respect because of its relatively weak reaction to the attack on Iraq, making the task easier for India. But at the same time ; the Indian Government, in the interest of the Indian monopolists, is maintaining close ties and understanding with US imperialism and so it wishes to exercise leadership over the third world without displeasing the USA too much. Hence, its opposition to the attack on Iraq has not been

(Contd. on page 6)

Historic Victory of the People of West Bengal

An event of exceptional political significance happened on 21 December 1998. The LF Govt of West Bengal led by the CPI(M) was compelled to announce, on the floor of the Assembly, the reintroduction of teaching of English at primary level which it had itself abolished in brazen defiance of all academic opinion and public outcry. By swallowing after long nineteen years its heinous policy and arrogance, it has itself proved to the hilt that it has been despotically pushing through, all these years, an education policy, which is utterly anti-people. The myth of the CPI(M) running a 'popular' government in West Bengal is thus shattered to pieces. A government suppressing, since 1979, a most legitimate educational demand of the people and thereby wreaking havoc on about 38 million poor and middle class students of primary standard — until forced by people's might to go down on its knees — is a despotic power hiding behind, and sully, the 'Marxist' name. This despotic government led by the pseudo-Marxist CPI(M) could be dealt such a crushing blow — by this unprecedentedly protracted, glorious language and education movement as not seen in free India — because it was led by an invincible power. This victory would not have been possible without people's support and participation in overwhelming numbers, from all cross sections of the society. And behind the success of this movement the great thoughts of Comrades Shibdas Ghosh has played a very important role.

Our party alone cautioned the people, explained and exposed the capitalist design of the government lurking behind this notorious decision taken in 1979 — of abolishing the teaching of English together with Pass-fail system at primary level, both in vogue in the state until then. SUCI was the only political party that unleashed an intense statewide campaign, showing that it was the disastrous design of the ruling Indian capitalist class, pursued right since 1947, of curtailing people's access to education, especially higher education. Since moribund Indian capitalist economy could not provide jobs to millions of educated unemployed, it sought to deprive them of education itself, and higher education especially, because the toiling people might not know that exploitative capitalism is the root cause of all maladies, and thus might not develop sustained movement against the capitalist system. Who does not know that the ignorance of the people is the source of strength of the despotic governments? Nothing tells it more clearly than the confession of UGC Chairman C.D. Deshmukh himself in the Sixties — 'We want to restrict education in order to restrict the number of educated unemployed.' Curtailing education, and higher education particularly, is therefore the educational policy of all capitalist governments. And there is no denying that for historical reasons English language remains, in India, as the gateway to higher knowledge. Denigrating the learning of English, therefore, perfectly serves the capitalist educational policy. And in two ways: Depriving people of jobs pleading their 'educational disqualification' among others, and — most dangerously — denying them access to higher knowledge by denying them acquaintance with English. Following this deliberate design, English was removed from the position of India's 'Official'

and 'Link' language in 1964 and its teaching systematically curtailed, subverted and annulled at school and also college level in the states, ruled earlier by the Congress and subsequently by different other regional parties as well. Of course, all in the name of 'national interest' and 'national pride'! — the 'Swadeshi' BJP being now its arch exponent. But that leaders of the ruling parties care for sending their own wards to expensive English-medium schools only while denying learning of English to the nation's poor children, proves this hidden capitalist class design. Our party exposed this treachery long back — while every other party connived with the ruling class. It is, therefore, natural that we stood alone in exposing this very scheme. After the pseudo-leftist CPI(M) came to power riding the crest of so-called popular support, it abolished English learning and examination system at primary level which even the Congress could not attempt while in power earlier in West Bengal. Moreover, like all social-democratic parties who are past masters in hoodwinking the people with popular verbiage, the CPI(M) tried in every way to cover its dirty deals with talks like 'mother tongue being like mother's milk'. The CPI(M) leaders motivatedly propagated to create confusion in the mass mind that the demand of the movement was to English as the medium of instruction. But this is a lie. Actually English had been taught in schools in the state — English-medium ones excepting — as a subject like the other subjects and never as a medium of instruction! So this question did not arise! It was a ruse to befool the people and to misdirect their genuine love for their mother tongue. A ruse to blind them to the dreadful consequences of this capitalist policy. All the while, the LF Government was letting proliferate all over the state English-medium schools apace, catering to those who can pay. More prominent CPI(M) leaders, legislators, and bigwigs, in addition to securing English-medium primary education for their children, actively encouraged and got themselves involved in the lucrative enterprise of opening new English-medium schools. The middle class parents sought desperately, and at high price, to anyhow put their children in any sort of English-medium school. Discrimination and disaster in education became evident to even rank and file supporters of LF. This was the political background and social basis of the rise of this mighty movement which forced the government to bow down and beat retreat.

The reasoned analysis and determined resistance drew greater and greater number of people into the movement, step by step since the beginning. And it was unique that it united all sections of people against the obstinate and obdurate government.

Perhaps never before in independent India had

CORRIGENDA

In the issue of Proletarian Era Vol. 32, No. 6 a factual error crept in the write up on anti-DPEP movement, where it was stated that 'World bank is pouring Rs. 40 crores to destroy primary education in Kerala'. Actually, Rs. 40 crores is being poured in every district with the same disastrous objective.

In the news on Save Education Convention at Sagar, Madhya Pradesh, published in the issue of Proletarian Era Vol. 32 No. 8, it was erroneously stated "Sagar, Gujarat". Error is regretted.— Editor, P.Era

Vice-Chancellors and professors and teachers, writers, playwrights and journalists, students and youth and women, housewife and most importantly, labouring masses like workers, rickshawpullers too — stood so solidly united.

Again, never before since 1947, did any mass resistance movement continue for so long a time for finally breaking the stubborn stand of an anti-people government. This historic movement that surged on the basis of human emotion, centring round language and education, had its foundation stone laid on knowledge that guides society to action. This has given the movement the invincible force, which was built up through deep dedication and maternal care. Quest for knowledge had been the guiding star of this historic movement, which had to make way through government threat, slander and onslaught. The thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh has been the basis of that knowledge that guided this movement. When people embrace this knowledge, how invincible it can become is shown by this language movement and its victory.

When in our country English has become essential in our education for historical reasons, when in the existing system absence of promotion on the basis of passing in examinations leads to disorder in education, the CPI(M)-led government abolishing English and Pass-fail system for students belonging to middle class and poor families and retaining them for the rich actually aimed at restricting education for the millions.

This conception of class angularity regarding education may not be accepted by many, but those who are really patriotic, dedicate themselves to the well-being of the people and are lovers of education, always stand against restriction of education. They act as the uncompromising fighters to spread education. The language movement has shown this truth with greater intensity.

So sustained a movement did not happen in independent India. And none has witnessed in West Bengal, in the course of any movement, an all-out bandh, that was held at the call of our party on 3rd February, on question of education. Although the movement was waged against the Government of West Bengal, its impact is felt in different corners of the country. Congress is now demanding introduction of English from Class I. Their real purpose is to usurp the credit of this movement. But people cannot be confused as they have witnessed how the Congress, Trinamul Congress, opposed the historic 3rd February Bangla Bandh, last year. People of course won't forget that abolition of English has been basically a Congress policy.

This movement proves that not by votes or change of government, rather sustained mass movements alone can achieve demands, if they are guided by the correct leadership. But for sustained movement people will have to organise themselves through developing people's committees, courageous and honest young men should come forward as volunteers. Only by this means not only educational demands, all legitimate demands can be achieved.

The need of the hour is to throw away all frustration, all despondency and build up sustained mass movements on burning issues of life.

Attack on Iraq

(Contd. from page 4)

strident but restrained—a fact noted by Primakov during his trip to India.

Secondly, the BJP is commonly known as a Hindu communal party in the Indian body-politic. Not only the Muslims but even Christians and other minorities are apprehensive about it and not without reason. It cannot be ruled out that by condemning the Anglo-US attack on the Muslim inhabited Iraq, the BJP Government has sought to gain the sympathy of the Indian Muslims so that the BJP is helped to shake off the stigma of communalism and camouflage its communal character which will come handy in case of a snap poll.

Otherwise, if the BJP-led Central Government is really sincere and serious about its opposition to the Anglo-US imperialist attack on Iraq, why does it not sever diplomatic relations with the USA and Britain? Why does it not order stoppage of operations of imperialist multinationals in this country? The Indian Government deplores loss of civilian life in Iraq through this latest spate of bombardment. But hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost there for years together through the trade embargo - from starvation, malnutrition and lack of medicines. What have the governments in Delhi been doing all this time? It is the Indian people who have come out on the streets all over the country to express solidarity with the valiant Iraqi people in waves of anti-US protest demonstrations. As per the decision of the CC of our party, the SUCI, protest demonstrations were

organised all over India starting from the 17 December. Demonstrations were also held by the All India Anti-Imperialist Forum in different parts of the country, demanding that the Government severs diplomatic relations with the USA and Britain and opposes the sanctions against Iraq.

Global indignation forced Clinton to retreat

After four nights of incessant attacks, President Bill Clinton called off the strike as suddenly as he had ordered it. In his speech concluding the operations, he tried to put the stoppage of attack as a humanitarian gesture in deference to the Muslim religious sentiment on the occasion of commencement of the holy Muslim month of Ramjan. This is a face-saving device which will deceive nobody since at the time of stoppage, the attacks had already run into the second day of Ramjan. The fact is that he failed to carry even the imperialist countries with him, not to speak of the world at large. That even some of the imperialist countries dissociated themselves from this attack is a reflection of the intensification of the inter-imperialist contradictions in the world compared to 1991. Unlike in 1991, strong Arab solidarity in support of Iraq has been displayed this time. This cannot but be disconcerting to the USA. Above all, it is the world-wide popular resentment at the wanton attack that has forced Bill Clinton's hands.

Imperialism-capitalism : root cause of war

The view has been expressed

from some quarters that the US President ordered the present attacks in order to stave off the impeachment against him. As it happened, the attack could only delay the impeachment procedure by a day and not shelve it. We consider that the timing of the attack could well have been influenced by Clinton's need to divert the growing resentment against him in the USA for making false statements under oath and for obstructing justice, but it is naive to presume that the attack was launched for just this purpose. The cause lies deeper. The US economy is war oriented and it needs war. It does not necessarily have to be a world war, but local wars, partial wars and war-like situations are needed to effect clearance of the stockpiled military hardware so that fresh demand can be generated. It is for this purpose that the USA tries to trigger off local wars and engineers subversion from country to country, and sends its forces here and there on the slightest pretext, even creating pretexts for the purpose. Crisis-ridden imperialism-capitalism cannot sustain itself without war. In the present era of imperialism, moribund capitalism, imperialist-capitalist economy suffering from intense endemic crises has no option but to effect militarisation of economy in its bid to stave off the crises through the artificial stimulation provided to the industries in the form of orders for military hardware. With the dismantling of the socialist camp, the apologists for the new capitalist world order started saying that with the end of the cold war and ushering in of the unipolar world, the danger of war

had disappeared. These pundits have been proved wrong. Local wars, partial wars are continuing. So long as imperialism-capitalism exists, danger of war will always be there.

War danger persists : the remedy

The imperialist countries headed by the USA talk about peace, a new world order and human rights but in practice follow the law of the jungle. US imperialism in particular has appeared as a menace to human civilisation. The present spate of attacks on Iraq has ceased, but USA and Britain have kept alive the threat of war by announcing that air strikes may be resumed anytime if necessary so long as Saddam Hussain remains in power. Further, the USA has indicated that the trade embargo against Iraq will not be lifted till Saddam is not overthrown. US and British aircrafts have already resumed violation of the air-space of Iraq in the name of enforcing the "no-flying" zones over Iraq, firing at Iraqi aircrafts and air-defence installations, as they used to do before the recent massive attack, and Iraq has been threatened that the intensive air strike itself would be repeated if it does not "behave".

So the people have to remain ever alert and vigilant. The events have shown that Bill Clinton has had to retreat in the face of mass protests and indignation across the globe. If the masses are aroused and they rise up in organised movement then that alone can provide the deterrent to imperialist machinations. The only guarantee for peace is world-wide, sustained, militant peace movement. This is the need of the hour.

Protest Against US-UK Gangsterism

Against the unprovoked, air strike on Iraq by the US-UK combine on 17th December, 1998, our party organised protest demonstrations throughout the country. Some reports are given below :

Delhi : The Delhi Unit of the All India Anti-Imperialist Forum held a protest demonstration in front of the American Centre at 1 PM on 17.12.98. The original plan was to march in a procession from Jantar Mantar to the Centre, but this was prevented by the police. The protesters therefore dispersed and reassembled in front of the American Centre and began shouting slogans condemning the attack. The banner of the Forum and placards were prominently displayed. This was the very first protest against the US action in the city and it attracted a lot of attention from local office workers and passers-by. A meeting was held. Speakers gave details of the attack drawing attention to the fact that the withdrawal of the UNSCOM team citing Iraqi non-cooperation was a unilateral and baseless action with the motive of precipitating a crisis. The US and UK's violation of international law by

launching attacks without waiting for the ongoing Security Council deliberations to be completed was condemned. Speakers also emphasized that President Clinton's motive was to create a diversion and mobilise American public opinion in his favour to stall his imminent impeachment. The isolation of the US and UK in the Security Council and in the international arena at large was highlighted. A background of the general US imperialist policy on Iraq since the Gulf War was given. The protesters demanded immediate cease of attacks, withdrawal of imperialist forces from the Gulf and resumption of diplomatic initiatives. The US imperialist threat to India on the issues of Kashmir, Indo-Pak relations and economic policies was also highlighted in the course of the meeting. The meeting was addressed by R. Rajesh,

(Contd. on page 7)



Effigy of Clinton burning at Secretariat Corner, Trivandrum, 18.12.98

Protest Against US-UK Gangsterism

(Contd. from page 6)

Arun Kumar, R.K. Sharma, Virender Dahiya and Depinder Singh.

Bangalore : The Bangalore District Committee of SUCI today organised a massive protest demonstration at 10.30 AM near Mysore Bank Circle.

Addressing the huge gathering Comrade B. R. Manjunath, District Secretary of SUCI laid bare the conspiracy of the USA. Comrade Venugopal, member, District Secretariat of SUCI, presided over the meeting. At the end, an effigy of Bill Clinton was burnt amidst thunderous slogans.

Hyderabad : In protest against savage air strikes, an effigy of the US President Mr Bill Clinton was burnt at Kothi (near Osmania Medical College) by City Committee, SUCI, Hyderabad.

Addressing the gathering, Comrade Ramesh Patnaik, Secretariat member, A.P. State Organising Committee, called upon the people to develop mighty militant peace movement against imperialism, the root cause of wars, in general and American imperialism, in particular. Comrade CH Murahari, In-charge, Hyderabad City Committee also addressed the gathering

Patna : On 18 December, '98, the Patna District Committee of the SUCI participated in a joint procession organised by various left parties including CPI, SUCI, CPI(M), CPI(ML), etc. in Patna against the brutal attack on Iraq by USA-British combine.

SUCI activists marched through important streets of Patna in a procession shouting slogans like 'US and British imperialists — Hands off Iraq.' 'Down with Imperialism' 'Long Live the solidarity of the toiling masses' etc., and joined the main procession which started from Kazipur. This processions, too, crossed important landmarks of Patna viz the historic Gandhi Maidan and Dak Bungalow crossing before reaching the Patna Junction. On behalf of the SUCI, the procession was led by Comrades Rabin Samajpati, Raghunath Gandhi, Shivlal Prasad, Suresh Kumar and others. At the Patna junction, the processionists set fire to the effigy of the US President Bill Clinton.

A brief meeting was held thereafter which was addressed by the leaders of various parties. Speaking on behalf of our party, Comrade Suresh Rai vehemently criticized the aggression on Iraq by America and Britain.

Chennai : Our party staged a demonstration in front of USIS in Chennai on 18.12.98 condemning the barbaric and brazen US aggression on Iraq's sovereignty, trampling underfoot all cannons of International law with cynical contempt for the entire anti-imperialist peace-loving world opinion.

The demonstration called upon the peace loving people all over the world to come forward and build up strong people's movement to give a fitting rebuff to this naked US overlordism.

Kerala : Instantaneous protest demonstrations were held in different cities and towns of Kerala by our party activists. Effigy of Bill Clinton was burnt at many places.

On 18th December '98, protest demonstration was held at Trivandrum and Clinton's effigy was burnt at Secretariat corner. Comrade C. K. Luckose, Secretary, Kerala State Committee, SUCI addressed the demonstrators.

A spirited demonstration was carried out at Calicut City which was led by Comrade A. Shekhar, District Secretary, SUCI. Clinton's effigy was burnt at LIC corner. In Alleppey town and in Changanehery (Kottayam) also protest demonstrations were held by our party.

Dr N. A. Karim, Chairman, All India Anti-imperialist Forum, Kerala, came out with a strong-worded statement against the heinous act of Anglo-US imperialists. Under the auspices of Anti-imperialist Forum, a militant protest demonstration was organised at Quilon on 22nd December, in which many prominent personalities took part.

Calcutta : Calcutta District Committee of our party organised a vehement protest demonstration before the USIS on 17th December around 2 PM. A long procession, decorated with placards demanding of the imperialists to stop massacre of Iraqi people and urging people across the globe to defeat US war design with mighty peace movement, started from the feet of the statue of Great Lenin at Esplanade, Calcutta, and marching through the main-thoroughfares of the city reached USIS, where police lathicharged the demonstration without any provocation. Despite the lathicharge an effigy of Bill Clinton was burnt amidst fiery slogans.



All India Anti-Imperialist Forum demonstrates before US Consulate in Delhi on 17.12.98



Demonstration against US attack in Patna by SUCI, CPI, CPI(M), CPI(ML) etc. on 18.12.98



Demonstration before USIS in Chennai on 18.12.98

Anti-communalism day observed in the states

This year at the call of the Central Committee of our party the 6th December, the blackday of demolition of Babri Masjid was observed as Anti-Communalism day through out the country. In states our party organised blackbadge wearing, meetings, rallies, and the speakers spoke at length on the danger of communal politics of the BJP and its cohorts. We publish here the news so far received at our office.

Hyderabad : A public meeting was organised at Sundarayya Vignan Bhavan under the auspices of a combination of seven left parties, SUCI, MCPI, CPI (ML Janashakti COC), CPM, CPI(ML) Liberation, Marxist-Leninist Committee and CPI (ML) New Democracy. On behalf of the SUCI Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, the member of the Central Committee of the SUCI was the speaker and Comrade K. Sridhar, Secretary, AP state organising committee was on the presidium.

Others who spoke on the occasion include comrades Bhikshmaiah of CPI (ML New Democracy), G. Vijayakumar of CPI(ML Janashakti COC).

Patna : 'Anti-communism Day' was observed in the city through taking out procession and holding series of meetings. The party activists wore black-badges and took out a procession from Biscoman Bhawan and ended at Mithapur market. On the way it staged some street-corner meetings under the presidentship of Comrade Suresh Kumar. Among the speakers were Comrade Shivlal Prasad, Rangunath Prasad Gandhi, Arun Kumar, Sakul, Mohan Singh and Indradeo Roy.

Bombay : The 'Black Day' was observed by the Bombay Thane Unit of our Party. It took out a procession from Sudha Hospital, which passed through the Film City Road and terminated at Goregoon Railway Station.

The participants were carrying banners and placards urging people to fight against the menace of communal politics in the country. The Police obstructed the procession on its way for half an hour on the plea that prior permission was not taken for holding it.

West Bengal : At the call of the Central Committee, the state unit of the party organised the anti communalism black day very enthusiastically. In all the districts the party organised series of processions, meetings and seminar which were attended by large number of the people. In the meetings the speakers severely criticised both the BJP and the Congress for their naked communal politics. They also criticised the CPI and the CPI(M) for not organising a united movement of all left and democratic forces of the country against the rising menace of communalism.

Karnataka : This day was observed in Bangalore as well as in several districts like Gulbarga, Raichur, Bellary, Mysore and Tumkur.

The All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation (AIPSO), the SUCI, the CPI, the CPI(M) and the various organisations held a rally and a public meeting for communal harmony in Bangalore. The meeting was addressed by Prof. M. A. Sethu Rao (AIPSO), Prof. G. K. Govinda Rao (leader of teachers' movement), Prof. Hasan Mansoor (PUCL), Comrades Ventakram (CPI), V G K Nair (CPI(M) and Simhadri (SUCI).



Procession being taken out on 6th December '98 to observe Anti-Communal Day in Bangalore



Demonstration in Nagpur against Pricerise and other burning problems on 16.12.98 by our party



Police resorting to brutality and lathicharging the demonstrators in Calcutta on 18.12.98. The demonstrators were peacefully participating in mass civil disobedience movement to protest against price rise and other issues

Police Repression in Bihar

On 11th December '98, the day of the General Strike, called by the national platform of the 56 mass organisations the Bihar police resorted to indiscriminate arrest throughout the state. About 108 SUCI activists were arrested from different districts. Among the arrested were frontranking state leaders like Comrades Arun Kumar Singh, Rabin Samajpati and also Comrades Shivlal Prasad, Raghunath Prasad Gandhi, Mohan Singh, G. P. Lalit,

Procession in Bombay

In Bombay under the banner of AIDYO local unit a procession was taken out in favour of the strike. It started from Sudha Hospital and passed through Dindoshi Bus Terminus, Local Market of Film City Road and ended at Market Bus Stand, Goregaon (East). The procession created much enthusiasm in the area as that was the only procession taken out by any organisation there in support of the strike.

Santosh Kumar, Rajanikant who were taken to custody from a procession held at Patna.

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