

# Proletarian Era

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## Limitless Deception : Pause and Ponder

The mid-term poll set for September '99 is drawing near and the atmosphere is getting charged. All parliamentary political parties are out to deafeningly beat their own drums, to vilify each other as much as possible, to profess lofty principles they forgot all about all these days and to hold out before the people alluring promises of a better tomorrow — of secure jobs, education and general welfare, if only the people vote for them. No doubt that this pre-poll drama with all its sound and fury is all too familiar. It is to stay for a while, till the elections are over. And then it will be over too, as always. Nevertheless, even if only for these few days, an orchestrated and explosive campaign do sweep the entire country every time like a veritable fever and grips and sways the mass mind pushing to the background the bitter and burning problems which are their constant companion. Their real issues are not touched. The sole issue occupying all attention becomes which of these parties should "govern" them. Consequently, therefore, all these parties are busy sweetly convincing the people of the "benefits" they doled out and will dole out to the people, when saddled in power. This is the refrain of Congress, BJP, SP, JD, RJD, and also of leftists like the CPI(M) and CPI. Each had been in the Centre or in the state government and many continue to be in government. However, the most basic question which they pass in silence is that so long India remains a capitalist country, in which a handful of urban and rural capitalists hold the entire economy to ransom in order to extract super-profits out of the toils of the overwhelming majority of the people, is it ever-possible to ensure for this majority real and substantial "benefits" by a mere change of government? These parties dare not face this question because their own practice from seats of government glaringly shows this absurdity and hence of all their sonorous political propaganda itself. Since independence, governments have come and gone, at the Centre as also in the states. Let us see in the facts given below what "benefits" they brought to the people.

### Abject Poverty

Fifty years after independence common people see more and more of their numbers going down to abject poverty. They have been bled both by the monopolists and other sections of the bourgeois class as also by governments both at the Centre and in states extorting taxes, duties, levies, etc. from them in the name of 'national development'. What is the reality so far as poverty level is

concerned? The World Bank estimates few years back shows: 55% or 420 million Indians as poor and 30% or 250 million as extremely poor. So far about the 'largest democracy' — with the largest number of poor people. (Source: *The Statesman* 29.1.99)

### Galloping Price Rise

We may mention only the latest hike in administered prices of cereals through Ration shops by the BJP government as a mark of its 'ability'.

	Below poverty line	General
Rice (per kg)	Rs.4.00 to Rs.5.30	Rs.7.90 to Rs.10.00
Wheat (per kg)	Rs.3.00 to Rs.3.90	Rs.5.50 to Rs.7.68

Sugar : From a hike of 60 paise per kg. an estimated amount of Rs.5,000 crore will be extracted. (*The Statesman*, 29.1.99).

Note : Sensing very adverse public reaction the BJP Government promised to hold back increase in prices for the BPL (Below Poverty Line).

### Subsidy Reduced

According to Mr Vajpayee people can be forced to bear higher cost of living enhancing power tariff, irrigation charges and withdrawal of subsidy in higher education for ensuring increased financial resources at the hands of the government. No doubt, Mr Vajpayee echoes IMF

conditionality and GATT provision ! (*Business Telegraph*, 20.2.99)

This huge amount stolen from the poor (BPL) will be doled out to the monopolists, the business gentry and rural capitalists.

Following is the amount of subsidy reduced year-wise :

Year	Amount (in crore)
1993-94	Rs.5,200 (65% GDP)
1995-96	Rs.5,500 (51% GDP)
1996-97	Rs.5,700 (46% GDP)
1997-98	Rs.5,884 (47% GDP)

Note : The increased figure in money terms should not conceal the fact of high inflation and consequent fall in expenditure in real terms. And even after this, if belts are to be still tightened, it is the lot of the people below poverty line to do it! Hence, the "Swadeshi" BJP kowtowed fully to the IMF conditionalities and WTO provision to systematically cut down subsidies. Indeed, Mr Vajpayee went still farther.

### No Drinking Water

And here is the government's concern for drinking water for the poor ! A survey shows 61,000 habitations are without the minimum facility of drinking water. It also shows 3.78 lakhs get the facility partially. (*The Economic Times*, 4.9.98)

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## UTUC-LS attends ILO Conference in Geneva

For the first time in the history of ILO, UTUC-Lenin Sarani has been included in the Workers Delegation from India, although UTUC-LS has been playing its distinct role in the country's trade union movement since long with substantial followings spread over almost all parts of the country and in almost all the vital industries and despite the fact that the organization has been recognized since 1984 by the Government of India on the basis of verified membership and criteria laid down in respect of qualification for representation in various national and international fora.

All India Committee nominated Comrade Shankar Saha, one of its National Secretaries to represent the organization in the delegation to ILO.

The International Labour Conference, attended by representatives from 174 countries across the world, this time took up, in the main, following agenda :

- the role of ILO in technical cooperation
- application of conventions and standards
- child labour and
- revision of maternity protection convention and recommendation

The workers, employers and government delegations were grouped in four committees to discuss the above agenda items and take decisions. Comrade Shankar Saha was included in the committee constituted on the role of the ILO in technical cooperation to represent workers of

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# 180 million people denied access to safe water

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## Expenditure on education dwindles

With the note of caution that increase in money term actually conceals the inflation effect, the real term is to be determined by the percentage of budgetary allocation and proportion of increase even in money term. The following budgetary allocations for education show the real concern of the government for it :

Year	Amount
1996-97	2,574 crore(revised) against budgetary allocation of Rs.3388 crore
1997-98	4,716 crore
1998-99	7,749 core

(Note : The percentage of budgetary allocation on education veers round 3-5 per cent of which the major portion goes for salary and other maintenance expenditure for the staff).

## Progress in social sector in last 50 years

The rate of 'benefit' of the poor in the past 50 years in the social services is here. Of course, this is a mere tip of the iceberg.

Area	1950-51	1996-97	rate of growth
Primary and Middle Schools (thousands)	223.3	777.0	2.7
Enrollments (millions)	22.3	152.0	4.3
Secondary High Schools (thousands)	7.4	104.5	5.9
Enrollments (millions)	1.5	25.5	6.4
Colleges (numbers)	578	8500	6.0
Number of Physicians (per ten thousand people)	1.7	5.3	2.3
Number of Hospital Beds (per ten thousand people)	3.2	10.2	2.5

(The Statesman, 13.6.98)

## Human Development Index :

And the saying goes, facts are stubborn things. So, Mr. L.K. Advani have to admit, the International Agencies report, that India's position as per the said index is 134 out of 174 countries. (The Statesman, 8.6.98)

## India ranks where ?

World Bank president Mr James D Wolfenson said that recent data on the incidence of poverty in India indicated that more than 52 % of the country's population lived on less than \$ 1 a day. "More than 180 million people are denied access to safe water and less than 50% of the villages in the country have access to electricity." (The Statesman, 2.5.99)

## Chronic malnutrition

About a third of our population does not get the minimum quantity of calories necessary for

human beings, leave aside shortages of other essential nutrients.

Over half of our children are malnourished and stunted, Over 30% of newly born babies are underweight.

In child malnutrition, India occupies second place in Asia. (The Statesman, 18.4.99)

Country	Percentage of malnutrition of children under five 1990-95
India	66%
Bangladesh	68%
Cambodia	38%
China	16%
Indonesia	40%
Pakistan	40%
Sri Lanka	38%
Nepal	49%

(The Statesman, 17.2.99)

What a heaven our children live in — a hell in relation to even Sri Lanka and Nepal ! And they grow up as child-labourer — the worst treated 'labour force' — to earn a living.

## Childhood denied

The pitiable state of children in India is revealed in the UNDP report. The report says: India has more child labourers than in any other country in the world. Twenty million work in hazardous industries and another 15 million in bondage. The report puts the number anywhere between 14 to 100 million.

The number of full-time child workers rose from 13.4 million in 1951 to 14.5 million in 1961.

Marginal child labour grew from 2.4 million in 1981 to 10.5 million in 1991.

There is a huge group of children, termed 'nowhere children'. The ILO's estimate about this group of 5-14 years to be found neither in schools nor in workforce comes to 74 million.

The combined total of full time, marginal and 'nowhere children' is 97 million i.e. 40% of age group 5-14 in the country. (The Statesman, 12.12.98) How thoroughly does capitalism exploit! It does not discriminate between the adult and the child.

## India — a 'diseased nation'

India today is literally a 'diseased nation'. Over 7 lakh children die every year from diarrhoeal disease with around 2,000 babies dying every day. Recurrent malaria epidemics are reported from different parts of the country. 28 lakh cases were reported in 1995 which could be the tip of the iceberg with over a thousand deaths.

Today every second an adult Indian is infected with tuberculosis ; according to a survey, over 20 lakh people develop active disease annually and 50,000 die from it.

## Negligible spending on health care

"The World Health Organisation (WHO) prescribes that at least 5 percent of country's GNP be spent on health. In the last two decades health expenditure as a percentage of gross revenue expenditure has been dwindling — it was 4.4 percent in 1960, it became 3.7 percent in 1978 and is around 2.6 percent today."

The bourgeois government of crisis ridden moribund capitalism shows more concern for the health of military power than that of the people. And the slogan 'Health for All' by the year 2000 has turned into a standing joke when 'Health For the Rich' is the guiding rule. Even the meagre allocation of Rs. 1600 crore was not spent. Only Rs. 1200 crore is said to have been spent between 1993 and 1995.

## Middle class people fleeced

Health care depends on the strength of money. So not to speak of the poor who can hardly afford even the middle class people who may somehow procure money are being fleeced by the "well equipped and extremely specialised hospitals in the private sector catering mainly to the rich". In absence of "decent government hospitals" middle class people are forced to go there. (The Statesman, 21. 6.99)

## N.E.Ps fall-out on economy :

However, jacking up prices, pilfering crores of rupees from social service sectors, cutting down subsidies to augment capital and exploiting cheap child labour — all proves futile. The Indian economy is in shambles. Even the panacea of 'market reforms' cannot revive it.

A critical comparison between IMF-GATT directed 'reforms' and 'adjustments' spelt out in the NEP with the pre-reform period shows the following :

Year	Industrial growth %
1989	8.5
1999	5.00 (estimated)

## Dim view of economy

This decline in economy and industry are showing through in every sphere. Production in steel has come down to 24,056 mt, i.e. 12% lower than the target for April '98 to March '99. Similar is the picture in coal, where production of 290.3 million tons was lower by 5.4% compared to the target of 306.44 million tons.

Power generation of 448.406 billion units though registering 6.8 % increase over the last year was below the target by 0.4 %.

The total cargo 2,51,680 mt for all the major ports was also less than the target by 2.4%. (The Statesman 23.5.99)

## Endemic industrial sickness and closure :

Industrial sickness has increased significantly compared to the 80's. The total number of sick/closed SSI- non-SSI Units combined rose to 2,47,924 in March,1993. The figure was 2,23,809 in March 1992. It means the number of sick/closed industries increased by 24,000 in a year. The latest figures shows the number has crossed 5,00,000 i.e., half a million. (From Reports of RBI & Board of Industrial & Financial Reconstruction (BIFR))

## Spectre of joblessness

Those who were and are employed in factories and establishments, that is to say, both blue collar and white collar employees are losing jobs because of spate of closure/lock-outs, etc. or threatened joblessness by various schemes like VRS (Voluntary Retirement Scheme), ESS (Early Separation Scheme), Golden Handshake, etc. To

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# UTUC-LS at ILO Conference in Geneva

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India in that committee.

In the committee on the role of ILO in Technical Cooperation Comrade Shankar Saha as a member of the committee in his speech and in numbers of interventions addressed committee as under :

"The Indian working class strongly believes that ILO cannot take effective programme in the field of Technical Cooperation without going into the very depth of unemployment problem throughout the globe at this stage of world economic system, especially in the era of globalized economy. I shall in the main refer to various ILO documents in support of my contention.

While releasing its World Employment Report 1998-99 on 24th September 1998 the ILO commented emphatically "Global financial crisis will trigger jump in world unemployment." "The number of unemployed and underemployed workers around the world has never been higher and will grow by millions more before the end of the year as a result of the financial crisis in Asia and part of the world" some one billion workers — one-third of the world's labour force — remain unemployed or underemployed. In addition, 25 to 30 per cent of the world workers or between 750 million and 900 million people are underemployed i.e. either working substantially less than full time, but wanting to work longer or earning less than a living wage. Thus concluded the Director General of ILO in following words, 'The global employment situation is grim and getting grimmer'".

In this grim perspective which is getting grimmer with the days passing by, when annual rate of increase in unemployment is to the tune of 10 millions and when the recession hit present economic system eats existing employment and employment opportunity far more than it creates it invariably implies that the unchecked destruction of jobs and job opportunities has appeared as an irreversible phenomenon of the crisis-ridden globalized capitalist economy, aggravated further by hi-tech industry under the cover of ensuring 'decent work'.

It would be relevant to draw the attention of the house to the Director General's comment in the World Employment Report 1998-99 where he said, "Stubbornly persisting high level of unemployment and underemployment lead to social exclusion of the young and the old, the less skilled, disabled and ethnic minority groups with strong bias against women."

India's experience is no different from other countries passing through the phase of globalization. A critical comparison of various indicators between pre-reform and post-reform period shows that the situation in all fronts is grim and getting grimmer. Overall annual industrial growth has come down to less than 5% compared to 8.5% in 1989. A Labour Ministry document placed before the 35th Indian Labour Conference apprehended that industrial sickness may grow and assume serious proportions thereby bringing about a slowdown in growth, erosion of competitiveness, stagnation in employment and general decline in the welfare of the people. According to Reserve Bank of India's report the total number of sick/closed Small Scale Industry (SSI) and non-SSI units combined rose to

2,23,809 in March 1992 and with the time passing, it would be 5 lakhs i.e. half a million by now. According to Indian Planning Commission the number of unemployed was 23 million in 1992 and at the end of the year 1997-98 the figure rises to 94 million, but according to unofficial study the figure has already touched 180 million. United Nation's Development Programme (UNDP) has commented, 'India's rural poor — more than one third of the population are paying price for reforms but are deprived of benefits'. Privatization, contractorization of permanent services have assumed massive proportions. Public sector undertakings are in the process of privatization. Government has decided to sell 74% of its share to private sector. 72,000 coal miners are under threat of retrenchment. 300,000 sanctioned posts in government services have been finally scrapped and 1.2 million government employees are to quit within 10 years. In textile sector alone 76,000 have been thrown out of employment during this period of reforms. Of late, Indian bankers have declared their firm intention to retrench one million employees. It has been officially admitted that there is no scope left for employment in formal sector. Such is the outcome of globalization in India. And lastly I like to inform that child labour situation is deplorable. They are subjected to inhuman torture and sufferings. This is due to the present economic system which results in unemployment and underemployment of their parents. Every 5th of the working children of the world is an Indian and their total number is 10 million at present, who are denied childhood and human rights.

Even the advanced capitalist countries are no exception to the devastating effect of present economic system and globalization manifested in double-digit unemployment figures which has been admitted by the ILO documents. To be specific, figures of joblessness as shown in ILO's report on unemployment 1995 are as follows :

Spain	24.0 %
Finland	17.7 %
Ireland	15.4 %
Belgium	12.7 %
France	12.0 %
Italy	11.09 %
Greece	11.0 %

The Director General could not but make the comment "The present employment situation is morally unacceptable and economically irrational. It is creating enormous wastes of resources and deepening human sufferings."

As for the USA, the leader in the camp of globalization, the situation is equally unenviable. The rate of unemployment is stated to be 5.8% but *Sunday Observer* shows 43% of Americans are living below poverty line.

The state like Japan used to be called corporate social welfare state are hard put to retain the gloss as recession is sweeping amok. The rate of joblessness is apprehended to touch 7% or more in Japan.

The *ILO Review* (Issue no.5.6 1999) has stated how the initial euphoria and optimism generated by the fall of Berlin Wall evaporated. I venture to add that working people in these countries which reverted to restoration of capitalism today compare with sadness in heart their present state of large scale unemployment, non-payment of wages, poverty, begging,

prostitution, etc., to the social security system of 'cradle to grave' protection in the previous system. And the evils afflicting their lives today in capitalist democracy were totally unknown in the now dismantled socialist system.

Coming back to our topic it would be evident from the definition of 'Decent Work', as has been formulated by the Director General, that Decent Work means productive work in which rights are protected, which generates an adequate income, with adequate social protection. From this it can be well construed that the work which is not productive and is not earning sufficient income like that in public health, education, various social welfare area and in civil service and other social development is not decent and as such need not be protected. On the plea of unproductive work, which is otherwise socially necessary, millions of workers are being thrown out of employment. We apprehend the definition of 'Decent Work' will further accelerate the pace of downsizing the vast field of socially necessary work and its work force. It is a fact that IMF and World Bank are continuously pressurizing the countries all over the world to downsize and/or privatize all socially necessary work. The definition of 'Decent Work' will create an atmosphere around the globe where increasing attacks on the 'rights to work and to be on work' assume a kind of social, psychological and operative legitimacy.

It would be further evident from the bare facts and experiences and critical and unbiased study of the socio-economic developments and events that root of non-fulfillment of objectives and fundamental principles and rights as enshrined in the ILO Constitution followed by Convention/Standard and in Declaration of Philadelphia lie in the unconvincing unwillingness of the political and business leadership of various countries and in the exhaustion of capabilities of predominant world economic system to address ills and problems like unemployment, poverty, inequality, gender discrimination, effective abolition of child labour, maternity protection etc. The ILO declared in 1919 and reiterated in Philadelphia Declaration in 1944 that the "Labour should not be regarded merely as a commodity or an article of commerce". But what else are they, if not worse than that even today ?

In this perspective, the role of ILO in Technical Cooperation should be decided upon. The House understands that in this globe where unemployment is the order of the day, right at work can hardly work. Similarly, social protection of the workers can be given only when the employment is protected and as regards the last objective of Technical Cooperation like social dialogue, it is of no use when people are not employed. We, therefore, urge upon the House to prevail upon ILO to extend cooperation in the field of employment generation and poverty elimination to raise the voice of not only right at work but also right to work and work for all; based on the principle of dignity of labour.

Intervening in the discussion Comrade Saha said: The prescription as to building small and medium scale industries for employment generation in the era of globalization and high-tech will be self-deceptive.

He further said : We strongly oppose the contention that ILO should develop partnership

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## Quit WTO, Stop Policies of Reforms, Liberalisation and Globalisation — Demands UTUC-LS General Council Meeting held at Faridabad

The 18th General Council of United Trade Union Centre Lenin Sarani (UTUC-LS) held its 2nd meeting in extended form at Faridabad, an industrial town of Haryana, on 5-6 June 1999 under the chairmanship of its President Comrade Ashutosh Banerji. The meeting began with the song on the great leader of the working class movement and departed President Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Thereafter the house stood in silence to pay homage to Comrade S. K. Pramanik, the departed adviser of UTUC-LS and one of the pioneers of Indian trade union movement and Comrade Pritish Chanda, who held the esteemed post of President of the organization till he passed away on 24th September 1998 and contributed immensely in building up UTUC-LS as a class based organization in various states and elevating the same to its present national stature. The meeting also recalled with reverence those martyrs who laid down their precious lives since the first meeting in their struggle against imperialist capitalist exploitation.

At the outset, the General Secretary Comrade Tapas Dutta placed the secretary's report to the Council. In his report Comrade Dutta made a comprehensive review of the state of the implementation of decisions taken in previous General Council meetings as well as in the subsequent Working Committee meetings relating to organization and movement in particular. The report showed that during the period under discussion 60 new unions had taken affiliation to UTUC-LS. Such unions are in engineering, defence, iron and ore mines, lignite, coal mines, State Electricity Board, road transport, health services, chemical and in various categories of unorganized labour. The states they belong to are Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Haryana, UP, Delhi and Orissa. The report further showed that notable organizational exploration and consolidation have been made in banking, power, steel, cooperative societies, health services and government employees' sector to mention but a few. Comrade General Secretary, in his report, showed in brief how UTUC-LS, its affiliated unions and the activists were engaged in battles in various sectors against the onslaught let loose by the employers-government combine as well as against the devastating consequences of the policies of economic reforms, liberalization and globalization. Comrade Dutta drew attention of the house to the challenging task historically devolved upon UTUC-LS as a revolutionary class organization of working class, in the context of all-out attack unleashed by global financial capital as well as ruling domestic monopoly against the working people and emphasized collective effort and struggle at all levels to make the organization capable of responding to the call of the hour through the process of rectification and elevation. In this direction he stressed on developing tuned cadres politically and ideologically and equipping them from trade union point of view. Pointing out to the calculated design to de-politicise trade union movement and disarm working class politically-ideologically as well as to plunge the movement deep into reformism, revisionism and legalism, Comrade Dutta said with directive assertion: 'The need to learn politics and philosophy today is greater than ever.' After rendering Hindi

translation of the highlights of Comrade General Secretary by Comrade A. Sinha, the President called upon the participants of the meeting to take the floor and deliberate on the General Secretary's Report as well as on the items on the agenda placed before the meeting. It may be mentioned in this connection that beside Comrade President Ashutosh Banerji, General Secretary Comrade Tapas Dutta, two senior leaders of the organization Comrades Anil Sen and Sitesh Dasgupta, two Vice-Presidents, three National Secretaries and representatives from 12 states and from 35 industries belonging to public and private organized and unorganized, those who participated in deliberations were Comrades Anil Tyagi, Madhab Bhonde (Maharashtra), V. N. Singh, Rajbali, Vijoy Pal Singh, Rajendra Singh (UP), A. K. Mazumdar, R. K. Sharma, Premchand, B. Singh Diah, Ranaji Singh (Delhi), Sumit Roy, B. Das, R. S. Sharma, Idris (Bihar), Purna Behera, Bijoy Sahoo, Debendra Sahoo (Orissa), Iswar Singh Rathi, Hariprakash (Haryana), Jalaluddin A., Sudersan (Kerala), K. Somsekhar, Mohan Kumar, Radhakrishna (Karnataka), S. Jawahar (Tamil Nadu), Sanat Dutta, D. K. Mukherjee, S. Thakur, Madhu Sinha, A. L. Gupta, Pranab Chatterjee, Amal Kar Gupta, Amar Roy, J. Raymandal, Dilip Bhattacharya, Samar Sinha, Bimal Jana, Hajrat Ali, Abhijit Roy, Abdus Sayeed, Sisir Mistri, Amal Sen (West Bengal), Hosain Shah (Assam). In between the sessions, office-bearers and senior members of the Working Committee met organizers of various states to interact on issues relating to organization, holding of training camp and movement. The discussions were lively, educative and inspiring.

### Resolution

In resolutions unanimously adopted after detailed deliberation while endorsing General Secretary's Report with suggested improvements and additions, the meeting strongly condemned USA-led Nato's wanton attack and bombing on Yugoslavia, demanded its unconditional withdrawal and called upon the peace-loving people of the world, trade union movement in particular, to come forward to build up sustained mass movement against imperialist menace and war designs. The General Council demanded of the Government of India to quit WTO immediately and urged the governments at the Centre as well as in the states to stop pursuance and implementation of anti-people, pro-monopoly and pro-multinational policies of economic reforms, liberalization and globalization.

The General Council further resolved to launch sustained struggle to resist such policies and their devastating consequences in all walks of socio-economic, politico-cultural life with the following central issues at the fore – to protect right to work and rights at work, existing jobs and job-opportunities as well as right to organize, strike and collective bargaining. As a part of this all-out sustained struggle, the General Council called upon the workers to build up movement everywhere against privatization of public sector undertakings, expansion of operational area of private sector, winding up/downsizing of government departments/establishments/offices, corporatization/privatization of departmental

undertakings, contractorization and casualization of perennial nature of services, V.R.S of various nomenclature as well as on the demand for social security of unorganized labour, elimination of all sorts of discrimination against women labour and effective rehabilitation of child labour.

The General Council further directed all the state and district units to organize various categories of workers in the unorganized sector who are yet not covered and chalk out an effective strategy for movement on the burning issues and problems facing them, and called upon to build up struggle committees everywhere, irrespective of sectors, particularly where we have no union of ours.

In part II of the resolution entitled organizational sphere the meeting emphasized improving and consolidating collective functioning at all levels and felt supreme attention, at this hour, should be concentrated on developing cadres equipped politically, ideologically and from trade union point of view. Among the measures decided to be taken for this purpose, the most important is to organize at regular intervals, state-level training camps for promising and potential organizers for the present. Apart from steel, coal, bank, and railway where all India co-ordination mechanism is already in progress, it was resolved to develop such mechanism in power, government services, cooperative societies and plantation sector.

Lastly, the meeting welcomed the decision of WFTU to hold its 14th World Trade Union Congress in Delhi and decided to play its due role in all respects to make the congress effective and purposive.

The two-day session of General Council ended with the *Internationale* and affirming its pledge to translate into action the decisions taken.

## ILO Conference in Geneva

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with IFIS (International Financial Institutions) in view of the fact that they do not accept workers' right to association and collective bargaining and that moreover it is self-defeating viewed in the perspective of working class interest because under pressure of World Bank and IMF the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America are groaning. They are in debt traps and many of these countries do not consume what they produce and do not produce what they need to consume. We are opposed to any cooperation in any project dictated by the donor country.

Comrade Shankar Saha circulated a speech on the Report of the Director General entitled 'Decent Work'. The contention of his speech was greeted by many members of the delegation of different countries, especially of Asia, Africa and Latin American countries. He also attended the committee meetings for child labour as and when it was possible.

The Conference concluded after adopting a Convention concerning the prohibition and immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labour and resolution on effective role of ILO in Technical Co-operation, maternity protection and application of Conventions and Standards.



# Expenditure on Education Dwindles While Military Expenditure Soars

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gauge the magnitude of displacement from jobs the following are indicative:

Textiles	76,000
Collieries	72,000
PSU	11,000

Besides 3.1 lakh sanctioned posts in central government services have been abolished over and above 12 lakhs to quit within 10 years. Banks have declared to offload one million out of 1.3 million jobs through VRS.

These unprecedented economic and industrial decline have raised what was inevitable — the spectre of unemployment in all branches of industry. (Collected from News dailies)

## Alarming increase in unemployment:

Year	No. of unemployed
1992	23million
1997-98	94 million
(End of 8th Plan)	(Estimate of the Planning Commission)

Unofficial study places the figure to 180 million

The UN Agency, UNDP comments: "India's rural poor, more than one-third of the population, are paying the price for reforms but are deprived of benefits."

While the 'benefit' of the so-called market reforms go to the pockets of the capitalists, the poor and needy of the land receives its 'brunt' only. Unemployment and starvation hits both the urban and rural people.

## Where goes people's money ?

Defence budget has been increasing at a galloping rate :

Year	Rs. In crore
1990-91	15,464
1996-97	29,505
1997-98	36,099
1998-99	45,674

## Costly Military Build up :

The much trumpeted Atom Bomb will cost Rs.25,620 crore (total) — Air Vice Admiral K K Nair discloses that a ten year plan has been devised with provision for expenditure of Rs.4,000 crore a year. The total comes to Rs.40,000 crore. (India Today,1.6.98)

40 Sukhoy-30 planes cost Rs.6,000 crore.  
Tank Rs.1 crore each  
Agni II Rs.25crore each

## Defence production — New capitalist hunting ground

That the BJP government has taken up military build-up programme for the benefits of the monopolists and other sections of the bourgeoisie is obvious from the fact that immediately after the Pokhran II blast, the Defense Minister Mr. George Fernandes met a delegation of industrialists to have talks over how military build up could provide market for them by producing and supplying arms components and arms. The government opened up Defense Lab to the capitalists for use. The latest space experiment is also for that purpose along with strengthening military muscle of Indian aspirant bourgeoisie.

## State of Economy

Despite all the efforts to sustain the rule of crisis ridden moribund capitalism, the Indian capitalist economy shows bankruptcy with the deepening of crisis, signs of acute bankruptcy considered from different aspects. Some important indicators are given below.

## Double debt trap

Indian economy is surely in a double debt trap, that is to say huge internal and external debts, the total being Rs. 800,000 crore at present (Source: *Economic Survey of India*, 98-99). The servicing charge meaning payment of interests mounts to astronomical figures.

(*The Telegraph*, 25.6.98).

## External debt — phenomenal increase in interest payment

Between 31 March, 1991 and 30 September 1998 the external debt increased from \$ 83.8 billion to \$ 92 billion. The total national debt is 55% of the GDP and the debt servicing bill is Rs. 88,000 crore. (*The Statesman*, 1.5.1999). The World Bank debt figures show India is among ten top debtor countries.

## Suicide deaths on the increase

Due to extreme poverty and want of social security, the number of suicidal deaths in the country is on the increase. West Bengal tops the list. In 1997, 13,668 people committed suicide in West Bengal alone whereas the figure was 3,690 in UP and 4,302 in MP the same year as per the report of the Union Home Ministry based on figures supplied by National Crime Record Bureau. According to the Bureau the causes of the spurt in suicides in the state are, among others, 1) poverty, 2) unemployment, 3) dowry demand, 4) decline in social position, etc. The Union Planning Commission pointed out the dismal condition in financial viability and the rate of unemployment being double the national average in West Bengal. (*Bartaman* 8.8.98)

## Prostitution — 30 % children

Prostitution in India is a Rs. 40,000 crore annual business. 30 % of them are children who generate a whopping Rs. 11000 crore for those who run the flesh trade in collusion with police and the people in high places. This has been claimed by a study on "Child Prostitution in India" by the Centre of Concern for Child Labour (CCL), an NGO. (*The Statesman* 10.11.98)

## Films and plays (for adults)

To cover up the crime of dissemination of obscenity, sex and violence to destroy the moral fibre of the people in general and the youth in particular, most of the cinema houses and theatre halls are exhibiting films and plays with 'A' under bracket. Although there is specific legal provision to stop obscenity and even punish those responsible on making it a trade, no government acts to preserve civilized code, cultural norms and values. When the youth have no future, the people without regular work and earning and a decent living, they are fed with decadent culture

just to prevent their rise against the exploitative system.

## Juvenile crime on the increase

Thanks to decadence of culture and absence of civilized norms and all-pervading frustration prevailing among the adolescents and youths, juvenile crime is on the increase as revealed in gruesome reports of murder of parents and friends in the news dailies. The TV is contributing to this rise in young criminals. Recent example of how the TV serial Shaktiman is reported to have caused death of adolescents signals the poisonous effects of deliberate bourgeois design to destroy the basic ingredients out of which human character can be formed.

## Criminalisation of politics

Apart from the evil nexus between the parliamentary political parties, police and criminals working with impunity in the social life determining the socio-politico-economic scenes, according to the admission of the Election Commission, more than a dozen of MPs in Parliament had criminal records. This is true in case of MLAs in various state legislatures. (Daily reports)

## Budget boon for the capitalists

Since India attained freedom each Central and state budget barring a few exceptions was entirely devoted to dole out fiscal bounties to the capitalists while putting tremendous financial burdens on the common people. Of the twin blades of this capitalist exploitative system one playing prominent role is newer and newer attacks on the people in fiscal field whoever may be in government.

**Bank and Financial Institutions looted by the monopolist houses and others :** the entire burden of this insoluble crisis in capitalist economy is quietly and constantly passed on to the common people by progressively increasing the taxes. But the monopolists, business houses, the rural capitalists do not repay their loans taken from the banks aggregating Rs. 46000 crore. Add to this Rs. 12000 crore of loan outstanding from the same class of IDBI and other finance bodies. The governments - the Congress, UF and the BJP all are eager to protect the ruling class from paying off loans even if these institutions become sick. Contrived, the employees face retrenchment or early retirement.

## Naked manifestation of danger of BJP's 'Positive Secularism' and 'Integral Humanism'

Besides attacks on muslim community people, 2 nuns were raped in MP.

Christian Missionary Mr. Graham Steins and his two minor sons were brutally killed in Orissa.

Christian religious centres were attacked and destroyed in Gujarat.

## Poor People's voice gagged

To stop poor people's voice to be represented in legislature deposits for Assembly  
(Contd on page 7)

# International Inquiry Commission against US & NATO

While the US warmongers and their imperialist cohorts are trying to project the devastation of Yugoslavia by US-led NATO as a victory for humanity, an initiative has been taken by some noted US citizens to form a Commission of Inquiry for an International War Crimes Tribunal. Mr Ramsay Clark, the former US Attorney General and the chairperson of the International Action Centre, announced this on 11 June. The Commission will look into US and NATO war crimes during the bombing war against Yugoslavia.

The media throughout the world, financed by the big corporate houses, have been silent on heinous crimes against peace and humanity committed by NATO through unrestricted air strikes by thousands of bombers and cruise missiles in a span of 79 days on a small sovereign country. On the contrary, the media have been busy to paint this war as a humanitarian and peace mission, launched against Yugoslavian President Mr Milosevich for his alleged atrocities against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo in his own country. But what happened actually in Yugoslavia? In the 11 weeks of "peace campaign" more than 13,000 tons of bombs were dropped by over 30,000 air strikes which wrecked untold devastation in the country. Water systems, power and heating plants, hospitals, universities, schools, apartments complexes, senior citizens' homes, refugee shelters, bridges, factories, fertilizer plants, grain silos, flour mills, trains, buses, radio and TV stations, the telephone system, oil refineries, embassies, market places and more were systematically destroyed. Even rocket attack was made on a team of doctors engaged in a medical mission for displaced Kosovars; a bus carrying refugees was smashed by smart bombs; a team of journalists was not exempted. Two third of the capital city of Belgrade ran without water and electricity for a long time. Hospitals were starved of electricity for most of the war period. Even cluster bombs, banned by all international laws and conventions, were used on non-military targets, not to speak of toxic nerve gases used, and bombs containing depleted uranium among others.

And still the International War Crimes Tribunal, set up by the US imperialists and NATO, indicted President Slobodan Milosevich for "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity". But this is very natural for an organisation which is at best a stooge of USA. But the mass media, which, by and large, preferred silence in covering the havoc done by the air-strikes, seemed vociferous in giving publicity to this indictment of Milosevich. But the fact is that "the International War Crimes Tribunal is not in any way part of the International Court of Justice, or World Court, which has been based at The Hague in the Netherlands..." It is a legal fabrication and is located at The Hague "in order to masquerade as a prestigious body...There is no provisions for such a tribunal anywhere in the UN charter." (*Workers World*, 10.6.99)

NATO war crimes have been enumerated by Captain Martin de la Hoz, a Spanish pilot who was forced to participate in the criminal assault upon Yugoslavia. He condemned this war as barbarism from beginning to end. He ruled out the possibility that NATO's repeated bombings of civilian victims and non-military targets were the result of war "errors", as claimed by the imperialists. He stressed that several times they protested to NATO commanders for selecting non-military targets. He

said that once there was a "coded order of the North American military to drop anti-personnel bombs over the localities of Pristina and Nish."

Some eminent personalities too, have contradicted the imperialist claims and condemned NATO bombings. Thus, James Bisset, Canada's ambassador to Yugoslavia from 1990-92 said that the NATO attack was "clearly in violation of international law, in violation of the UN Charter". Walter Rockler, a prosecutor at the 1945-46 Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal at the end of World War II wrote in the Chicago Tribune on May 23, 99, that the accusation against Milosevich "is a mere pretext for our arrogant assertions of dominance and power in defiance of international law."

Douglas Cassel, director of the Center for International Human Rights at Northwestern University's School of Law wrote on April 22: "At Nuremberg, leading Nazis were sentenced to death for crimes against peace, defined to mean waging a war of aggression, or a war in violation of international treaties. Because NATO's war violates the UN Charter - an international treaty - it is a crime against peace." (*Workers' World* 10.6.99)

It is highly significant that the German foreign office, in contrast to the public assertion of ethnic cleansing and genocide in justifying NATO intervention, in an internal report, continued to deny their existence as Yugoslav policy in this crucial period. This report was sent to different administrative courts in Germany. And this continued to be their assessment even in March of this year. Yet only one of the German newspapers published this information sent by the International

Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms.

This heinous design and war crimes of the US-led NATO need to be exposed throughout the world. Mr Ramsay Clark has come forward with the noble initiative for formation of Commission of Inquiry for International War Crimes Tribunal to unravel the crimes against peace and humanity. The Commission of Inquiry will include international jurists, human rights activists, trade unionists, medical personnel, environmental experts, rank-and-file soldiers from NATO countries, and people who have been in Yugoslavia during the bombing."

"Mr Clark is in the process of outlining a multi-point indictment of the US Government's conduct in the war against Yugoslavia. This indictment will serve as the basis of the Commission's work."

Hearings will be held "throughout the United States, in other NATO countries, in Russia and elsewhere". The first hearing will take place at New York on 31st July. At the conclusion of the hearings, International War Crimes Tribunal will be convened to consider all of the evidence.

After the Gulf war the International Action Centre of which Mr Clark is the Chairperson, indicted Mr George Bush, the then US President for war-crimes. It also revealed how fatal and dangerous were the so-called "conventional arms" the US aggressors and their cohorts used there to flatten and crush the tiny country of Iraq. This time also the Tribunal would reveal the truth behind the so-called "peace mission" of NATO in Yugoslavia, while anti imperialist and peace movements are gaining ground in countries throughout the world. It is very inspiring that this movement has its root deep in the soil of leading imperialist power, the United States of America.

## An Appeal

(Contd from page 6)

and Parliament polls have been hiked during the UF regime.

Assembly		Parliament	
Previous	Present	Previous	Present
Rs.250	Rs.5000	Rs. 500	Rs.10,000
			(General)
Rs.125	Rs.2500	Rs.250	Rs.5,000
			(for SC/ST)

### An Appeal

All this depicts only tip of iceberg. But all of us have to fathom the depth of the real crisis: wherein lies the source, the root of these evils in our life? The grinding machine of exploitation that has come to stay in our country far more deeply than even before for so long a period of more than half a century constantly sharpening its edge cannot be done away with either overnight or simply because we may wish so. We did not win independence at will. The history of our freedom struggle has been written in the blood of the martyrs who kindled the spirit of sacrifice, braving all odds, among a vast section of our countrymen.

Today the task is harder. The first task is to uphold the truth and to tear asunder the cobweb of confusion people are suffering due to the politics of boundless deception of all the ruling parties - both at the Centre and in the states - the BJP, Congress, SP, BSP, TDP, DMK, AIADMK, JD and the like as also the social democratic role played by the CPI (M), CPI etc.

The second task is to understand that the most important lesson that change of government and change of state are quite different. Through election what can be changed is nothing but a government which serves as the caretaker of the capitalist state. This state stands on the three organs of military, judiciary and bureaucracy alongwith police. No election can replace these three organs.

The third task is, therefore, to build up through arduous and painstaking effort protracted mighty people's movements on the edifice of higher culture on the burning problems of their life centring round economic, political, social, educational and cultural demands without which we will be pushed more and more to abysmal depth of all pervasive crisis in every sphere.

The fourth task, it should be understood, is that election, correctly viewed, should be participated to strengthen the mass movement and reflect the voice of extra-parliamentary battle on the floor of the legislature - Assembly or Parliament and elect those representatives who can uphold this task.

To help strengthen this movement our fifth task should be to form in due course People's Committees from the lower to the higher levels involving people who are politically conscious, men of integrity, possess the necessary power, ability, courage and conviction and enrolling volunteers for giving shape to volunteer corps to give defeat to this politics of deception, criminalisation of politics and perpetuation of this class rule entailing more misery and privation. Let all of us respond positively and energetically to this call of the hour. Future lies with the people.

# Muzaffarpur AIKKMS Conference

On the occasion of the 3rd District Conference of AIKKMS of Muzaffarpur, a massive public meeting was held on 28th May last at B.B. Collegiate School Ground, Muzaffarpur with Comrade Shivshankar, a renowned peasant leader and District Secretary of SUCI at the presidential chair. Before the meeting started, a well decorated procession marched through the main thoroughfares of the town voicing slogans against the WTO, Patent Bill and the anti-peasant policies of the state and central governments.

Comrade Satyawan, a well-known peasant leader of Haryana, was the main speaker and Comrades Lakhichand Rai, Triveni Singh, Abdul Rahman, Bharatlal Chowdhury also addressed the open session rally.

While delivering his speech, Comrade

Satyawan dealt with the burning problems confronting peasants' life and showed how the problems were being aggravated by the disastrous effects of the WTO, Patent Bill, and consistent anti-people's policies of the central and the state governments. He observed that while the number of the landless peasants was increasing by leaps and bounds the land was being increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few, causing a devastating effect on the socio-cultural life of the villages. Millions of agricultural labourers were roaming from one corner of the country to another in search of any kind of job and the landowners, contractors, and businessmen were reaping dividend from it and exploiting their labour power at incredibly cheap rate.

Comrade Satyawan stressed the need of

building up mighty peasants' movement throughout the country, conducive to the growth and development of the revolutionary mass movement for the emancipation of the people from the yoke of exploitation of the capitalist state machine and for the establishment of a socialist state.

Comrade Hem Chakraborty, member of the Bihar State Committee, SUCI and Guest-in-Chief on the occasion said that neither election nor the power-greedy electoral parties could solve the fundamental problems of the common masses. He appealed to all present there to learn and acquire Marxism-Leninism-Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's Thought and release the two-fold struggle of building up peasants' movement on the burning issues of their lives and relentless struggle covering all aspects of life to make themselves equal to the task time had bestowed on them.

On the following day i.e. 29th May, the delegate session was held in the B.B. Collegiate School Hall presided over by Comrade Harinandan Thakur. A 15 member executive and a 36-member Council were formed with Comrade Lakhichand Rai as the President, Comrade Kashilal Sahni as the Secretary and Comrade Ramyash Misra as the Treasurer. At the end, Comrade Hem Chakraborty and Comrade Shivshankar addressed the delegates. The house adopted a 16-point Charter of Demand and decided to release a protracted movement on its basis.

## AIKKMS March in Calcutta

The West Bengal Unit of the AIKKMS organised a march to the Rajbhawan in Calcutta with one lakh signatures collected throughout the state on 24 pt charter of demand to present the same to the Governor of the state. About eight thousand peasants, agricultural labourers including both men and women paraded different thoroughfares of Calcutta and assembled at the Rani Rashmoni Road where a meeting was held

under the conduction of Comrade Protiva Mukherjee, the President of the West Bengal Unit of the AIKKMS. Comrades Sk. Khoda Box, the State Secretary, Debendra Burman, former MP and Probodh Purkait, MLA and others addressed the gathering. Comrades Raja Ram Roy Mondal and Sajem Ali, the state committee members, went in a deputation to the Governor to submit the charter of demands.

## Road blockade by AIDYO in Bangalore

A Rasta Roko was organised on 19th June 1999 near Katriguppe circle, Banashankari III stage on demand of repair of road. The busy Ring Road that connects the three highways in Bangalore have long been a death-trap with potholes and jams and a number of mishaps — some even fatal occurred. Money allotted for repair is swindled and administration paid no heed to people's repeated appeal for action. So the AIDYO started a movement. In a meeting attended by more than 150 citizens, a programme

of road blockade was proposed on 19th June. More than a thousand people from all walks of life including Bank and government officials, the elderly and the students in teens most enthusiastically blocked the road for about two hours. One half of the city traffic got disrupted. All provocations of the miscreants were thwarted firmly by the disciplined organisers and citizens. They expressed determination to carry movement on till the achievement of the demands.



Rasta Roko on 19th June near Katriguppe circle, Banashankari III stage, Bangalore

## W B State Committee on bomb blast at New Jalpaiguri Rly. Station

Comrade Provash Ghosh, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee, SUCI, issued the following statement to the Press on 23rd June '99:

"Whatever force might have masterminded the devastating blast at New Jalpaiguri station yesterday (22nd June), causing death to 9 people and critically injuring more than 100, the abject failure of military intelligence and state intelligence department regarding this can never be denied. Whatever the state police force is now proclaiming regarding prohibitory measures after the explosion, the question that arises naturally — why they did not take these very measures, despite knowing for some time that ISI is active in this state. This thought is also natural to rise in mass mind that although backed by thousands of crores of money belonging to the poor half fed people, this mammoth force is negligent in discharging its duty to the common people.

We demand adequate compensation to the injured people and the families of the deceased, formation of a high level committee for immediate investigation of the entire incident and publishing of the report for the people, and exemplary punishment to the culprits. At the same time we call upon all the well meaning peaceloving people to remain alert so that the vested interest class, who are out to destroy communal harmony in the country, may not, in this troubled situation, become more active."

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