

Proletarian Era

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Post Poll Situation and Tasks Ahead

50th Anniversary of SUCI

**Observe 24th APRIL
in a Most Solemn and
Befitting Way**

The costliest and the most unwanted midterm poll is over. Probably in no other earlier poll had the ever-deepening crisis of the capitalist system of our country, particularly of its parliamentary system, been so glaringly exposed as has been in the just concluded midterm poll. Though the entire bourgeois press and electronic media made a well orchestrated and persistent campaign to ensure a stable government and asked the people to elect only that party which could ensure it, and although there was a definite hint in that campaign that the BJP-combination was that very force, yet after the election the dream of a stable government remains as far a cry as it was before the election. The midterm poll resulted in another hung Parliament.

This possibility was predicted by almost all sections, and was not unknown to all the three major combinations of the BJP, the Congress(I) and the UF. This is why all of them made a frantic bid to ensure majority. Actually, even more than the previous elections, it was a mad race for power in which there was no place for even any talk of principle or morality, let alone the question of people's interest. All the parties spent crores and crores grossly violating the election

rules, resorted to different types of manipulations and manoeuvres and used all sorts of unethical means, starting from false voting to mass stamping of ballots, from booth capturing to manipulation of counting much more than in earlier times. Because of the widespread malpractice the Election Commission had to declare repoll in several hundred booths and in some cases, in the whole constituency. In fact, rigging, both violent and silent, continued from the

start of the election process to its finish, from the preparation of the voters' list to the counting of ballot papers. Though the average poll percentage has been declared to be 62.2, how much of this is genuine and how much bogus is anybody's guess. But one thing is certain that from such a type of election the real verdict of the people can never be ascertained. But the Election Commission has claimed this midterm poll to be 'free, fair and peaceful'. And how peaceful was the election? Even the official sources had to admit that in the very first round of the poll 28 lives were lost

which after the final round of the poll went up to 70 while the number of the injured is horrifying.

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The fiftieth anniversary of the Party is going to be observed at a time of deep crisis, nationally and internationally. As a result of the unprecedented, though temporary, setback in the world communist movement, the international working class movement has been greatly disarrayed. Taking advantage of the absence of the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union world imperialism headed by the US imperialism has combinedly stepped up ruthless onslaughts on the peoples of the world at large. Not to speak of revolutionary struggle, even a mighty democratic movement in any part of the globe runs the risk of facing attacks of the imperialists. Although at the same time world capitalism is in the vortex of ever deepening crisis. To stave off this crisis the imperialists headed by the US imperialists are foisting globalisation and liberalisation with the slogan of 'new world order' and compelling the less developed capitalist countries to come under the umbrella of WTO. All these have added to the problems in people's life in depth and dimension.

In the national field also the situation is no less grave. Indian capitalist system being part and parcel of world capitalist system is also in deep crisis. The ruling class is shifting the entire burden of the crisis on to the shoulder of the common people. Faced with this deep crisis the bourgeois parliamentary system is suffering from extreme and endemic crisis of instability. Under the facade of parliamentary democracy an industrial-bureaucratic-military complex is running the entire show from behind, bidding farewell to whatever little democratic norms and values were hitherto existing in the society. All the parliamentary parties are trying to protect and perpetuate the most degraded and moribund

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Comrade Nihar Mukherjee on the BJP led government

On the eve of the swearing in of the BJP-led coalition government at the centre, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, issued the following statement to the press on 18.3.98.

The BJP's coming to central governmental power by employing all unscrupulous measures and manoeuvres without precedent shows to what abyss it will push the country and its people in the near future.

Undeniably, of course, the Congress's anti-people and corrupt policies as well as the CPI(M)'s and its left allies' sheer opportunism for dallying in bourgeois power politics did offer the BJP their present chance.

We therefore urge all sections of the country's well-meaning and democratic-minded people to build up united mighty democratic movement on the burning problems of their life and thus thwart the design of both the BJP and the Congress to further vitiate the socio-political atmosphere of the country for their petty parliamentary gain, while exposing the opportunistic politics of the big left parties.

**To Observe 50th Anniversary of SUCI
24TH APRIL
CENTRAL RALLY**

Saheed Minar Maidan, Calcutta 4 p.m.

Main Speaker : Comrade Nihar Mukherjee

President : Comrade Prithish Chanda

Latest US Design Against Iraq

The first manifestation of the New World Order, proclaimed by US imperialists after the debacle in the former socialist states, we get in Iraq. The Gulf war in 1991 provided the first exposition of how the world's sole superpower, the USA, was going to handle a dispute or conflict with another country, how it was going to tackle a country that it perceived as challenging its absolute right to dominate and dictate.

In that so-called unipolar world, the US imperialists with words of peace and security on their lips, and the slogan of free market economy, proceeded to expand US hegemony all over the world on the strength of their undisputed military supremacy, driven by growing economic crisis. With unfettered aggression US imperialism moved to smash any obstacle in its way. And so outraged was it to find in a small country like Iraq a challenge to its absolute right to dictate and demand submission to its interests, to find an obstacle in its path of gaining complete supremacy and control over the oil-rich Gulf, that it rose to brutally batter and smash Iraq in the Gulf war. This was an act of barbaric aggression, an assault directed not only against the people of Iraq but against the people of the entire world.

On the basis of a got up pretext the USA used the UN to give its savage aggression the rubber stamp, the guise of a UN mandate before the eyes of the world. Through manipulation of the mass media and a gigantic misinformation campaign throughout the world, the US imperialists succeeded in creating confusion among the people. The less developed countries too, which have a role to play against imperialism, let such a barbaric act of aggression by the USA go unchallenged. Today on the question of another military attack over the weapons' inspection issue the USA is facing opposition in the UN and is growing more isolated on the question of Iraq. But at that time no less than 27 countries lined up giving active support to such US aggression against one single small country. The shadow of the New World Order, the shadow of the darkest age was descending on the world. When our party had warned about the far reaching and sinister designs of imperialism and about the brutal attack that was to come on people everywhere, there had not been many takers for our views.

But since, contrary to US expectations, its mission to install a regime subservient to its interest in Iraq through the Gulf war did not meet with success, US aggression on Iraq continued unabated in a different form. Having got passed some UN resolutions they are using these as carte blanche to flagrantly attack the sovereignty of Iraq, to emasculate it militarily and strangulate it economically. By depriving millions of Iraqi people of food and medicines for seven years through economic sanctions, the US imperialists have been waging a criminal war against the people with the sole aim of provoking their uprising against the regime. As a result more than a million people have perished. Yet the Iraqi people have stood firm. They are refusing to bow under US attack, despite starvation and boundless sufferings, setting a glorious example before the world.

Faced with increasing demands to lift the sanctions against Iraq the Clinton Administration has bluntly refused to do so as long as the Saddam regime is in power, arguing that "If sanctions are lifted, Mr. Hussein will once again try to impose

his will on West Asia and will threaten his neighbours...It is our responsibility as a leader in the international community to do what we can to contain him and prevent him from being able to do that again." Had the USA really stood for the protection of humanity for the prevention of war, it could never have waged war itself against innocent people by depriving millions of food and medicine.

So desperate have the US imperialists become because of ever growing crisis, that they wanted to bring things to a head and go in for another Gulf War by working up a crisis over the weapons' inspection issue. For seven long years the US dominated UN weapons inspection team (UNSCOM) had gone around conducting intrusive search for weapons. Still they had found nothing. But what if they had found any? What right does the USA have to single out a sovereign national country and forbidding it the possession of weapons, the USA who is itself the biggest stockpiler of weapons of mass destruction and seller of arms, that itself stands as the greatest threat to world peace! The sheer hypocrisy and falsehood of US propaganda is stunning. If the USA were really serious in implementing the UN resolution which calls for a free weapon zone, then it would not only have to get Israel to dismantle its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) that include nuclear arms, but stop the sale of arms which has soared in the region, at a time when the USA is economically totally dependent upon militarization and arms' sale.

All along the USA has been accusing Iraq with non-compliance of UN resolutions on this or that question. In reality it is the USA that had preempted and frustrated any attempt by Iraq so far to get down to serious negotiations in accordance with the terms of UN resolutions. This also happened on the question of import of food and medicines in exchange for oil each time when a consensus was being reached through negotiations by Iraq with different countries. In this context the present agreement between Iraq and the UN on weapons' inspection issue is a departure. It is because of the growing isolation of the USA in the UN, and growing people's protest worldwide against US imperialism that the US imperialists had to backstep somewhat.

What form civilization is taking under the New World Order, where globalization and liberalization reign supreme, when the socialist camp, is no more, is slowly dawning on people from their own experience, in one country after another. Earlier the anti-imperialist fervour of the people had become subdued, and they were confused, but gradually their eyes are opening and they realize the true character of the New World Order. Centering round Iraq, too, they are coming out in mass protest against the USA, the greatest enemy of the people. In country after country across the globe, from Britain to Saudi Arabia, from the Philippines to the USA people's protest against US imperialist aggression in Iraq is building up. It is heartening to note that even in the USA there is strong protest against the Iraq policy, illustrated also by the incident during the Secretary of State, Ms Albright's campaign for the US policy on Iraq when she had to contend not only with hostile questioning but booing in the Town Hall in Ohio, from students and faculty alike, recently. In our country too, one protest

demonstration after another, some organized by our party and others by the All India Anti-imperialist Forum, have followed the historic mass demonstration against US imperialist aggression in Iraq, with foreign representatives of fraternal organizations and parties from America, different European and Asian countries who had come to attend a discussion meet organised by the Forum, participating.

In the UN too, the USA is facing opposition to its Iraq policy. This is not to say that all the countries opposing USA have become apostles of peace. Far from it. But they cannot ignore people's opinion and protest. That holds especially true for the Arab countries all of which, with the exception of Kuwait and Oman, have come out categorically against US military attack on Iraq. On the other hand, it is a question of conflicting interests and contradictions. So acute have the contradictions and trade war among the capitalist imperialist countries become with growing crisis, that even the semblance of a much propagated unipolar world has crumbled. Today the leading role taken by Russia, for example, in bringing about negotiations with Iraq, stems not only from its desire to establish trade with Iraq but because of the growing contradiction with the USA caused by the latter's plans for NATO expansion in East Europe and its role in fomenting division and turmoil in former USSR territory to establish its hegemony over the strife torn region. France too, is annoyed over US attempts to monopolize control over oil resources in the Gulf and has called for an end to economic sanctions, accusing the USA of doing it solely in the interest of the region's oil.

But although the USA had to backtrack somewhat on the weapons issue, the fact that it has refused to scale down its huge military build up in the Gulf remains. There is no reason to believe that the serious threat it holds for peace has been constrained. The US imperialists have failed to obtain a UN mandate that would empower it to automatically strike against Iraq if perceived by it to violate the agreement with the resolution that has been passed. But already the USA has started claiming that that resolution does empower it to automatic reprisal against Iraq because it contains the words "severest punishment", in the way it is so habituated to twist things to fit their purpose.

By couching the most murderous aggression in lofty phrases of peace and security and constantly trying to brainwash the public through mass media and the TV in particular, the USA may think that it can confuse the people and get away with anything. But before conscious, freedom and peace-loving people, before history US imperialism stands indicted today as the greatest enemy of peace, freedom and security, as the greatest danger for world peace, a country that wrecks havoc and destruction to prop up its crisis ridden economy. In a situation where there is a crying need to resist the US aggression and gangsterism through organised world wide militant peace movement, the gradual public awareness and people's protest that are building up, provide the silver lining, the hope for mankind.

And one day the time will come when the people, who are all-powerful if united, conscious and organised, will consign imperialism in general and US imperialism in particular, to the dustbin of history — to be remembered as a chapter of horror and gloom — no more.

International Women's Day observed by AIMSS

Bangalore

On 7th March a Protest Demonstration was organised against increasing atrocities on women.

A Public Meeting was organised on 10th March at Mythic Society Hall. Comrade H.G. Jayalakshmi, State Secretary, AIMSS in her inaugural address called upon the gathering to observe International Women's Day as a day for renewal of pledge to fight for their right to equality in this society.

Smt. H.S. Parvathi, renowned Kannada litterateur was the Chief Guest.

Dr. Sudha Kamath, President, AIMSS, Karnataka stressed that even while fighting patriarchal domination, women will have to join hands with men to fight this exploitative system.

Comrade B.S. Prathibha Kumari, Vice-President, AIMSS Bangalore District Committee traced the growth and development of AIMSS in the District. Ms. Umadevi, President, AIMSS, Bangalore District Committee, presided over the programme.

Public meetings were also held in Mysore, Gulbarga, Bellary and Raichur.

Chennai

As a part of observing the International Women's day, the Chennai-Chengai District

Organising Committee of AIMSS conducted a rally on 10.3.98 from Chennai Mooremarket to Fort St. George. The rally which was led by the District Secretary of the Sangathan involved women from all walks of life.

At the end of the procession a delegation led by Comrade Padmaja, the Secretary of the District Organising Committee of the AIMSS met Mrs. Sargunapandian, Minister for Social Welfare and submitted a memorandum with a charter of demands.

West Bengal

West Bengal State Committee of AIMSS organised a protest meeting on 8 March against atrocities on women, obscenity in mass media, and in demand of reintroduction of English and pass fail system at primary stage. Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, All India Secretary of AIMSS drew attention to the significance of the education movement. Comrade Shadhana Chowdhury said where education, culture and humanity are under attack, where the future of the young generation is uncertain, women cannot play a passive role. Comrade Hashi Hore, Secretary, Calcutta District Committee and Comrade Indrani Halder, 24 Parganas District Secretary, also spoke. Comrade Menoka Basu Roy, State President, presided over the meeting

West Bengal State Conference of AIMSS

The 4th West Bengal State Conference of the AIMSS was held at Bankura from 26th to 28th December 1997. The open session held on 26th December was attended by thousands of women. On this occasion the entire Bankura town was decorated with festoons, colourful arches, graffiti and banners. The delegate session was held from 27th to 28th December last. More than one thousand delegates from different districts of the state, starting from the remotest Darjeeling district in the north to the Sunderbans in the south participated actively in the deliberations. The Conference started with the garlanding of the martyrs' column and adoption of condolence resolution in memory of the martyrs in different democratic movements of different countries.

Comrade Prativa Mukherjee, the President of AIMSS took the chair at the open session. Three resolutions, one against the US bellicosity against Iraq, second against the nasty and uncivilized behaviour of the police against women participating in the democratic movement and third against the propagation of sex and violence in the mass media. In the delegate sessions resolutions on education, health and price rises apart from the main resolution were adopted. The sessions were lively because of the active participation of the vast section of the delegates.

Comrade Tapas Datta, the Central Committee member, SUCI, a prominent mass leader, was the main speaker at the conference. He said that proper evaluation of the role of women in the Indian national struggle against the British rule had not yet been made. He pointed out that women in all the capitalist countries were being oppressed today. The women would really be free on that day when the society would be free from the shackles of exploitation. On the concluding session Comrade Provash Ghosh, Central Committee member, SUCI, and West Bengal State Secretary of the party, highlighted the different aspects of the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat on struggle for women's emancipation.

Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, the All India Secretary of the AIMSS appealed to all sections of women of the country to strengthen the organisation in order to advance the cause of liberation of women.

Comrade Sadhana Choudhury, West Bengal State Secretary of the AIMSS pointed out the importance of the AIMSS in the present situation and appealed to the delegates to work wholeheartedly to strengthen the organisation. Comrade Gayatri Das Gupta, the Vice President of the state unit inaugurated the souvenir of the Conference. Comrade Bhabesh Ganguly, a lawyer, spoke on behalf of the Legal Service Centre for Women.

With Comrade Menoka Basu Ray as President and Comrade Sadhana Choudhury as Secretary, a strong State Committee was elected from the delegate session.



International Women's Day observed in Chennai (top) and Bangalore (bottom)

Post Poll Situation

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Again, killings took place not only during the poll, but even before and after it. Free, fair and peaceful election indeed !

But even after all these, a stable government could not be ensured. Rather the instability has become so unprecedented that Mr. Vajpayee also could not hide his worries. Immediately after getting the invitation from the Rastrapati to form the government he said : "The country needed stability and that if parties set aside confrontationist politics, the flaw of the fractured verdict could be overcome". (*The Statesman*, 16 March, 1998)

One of the important features of the mid-term poll was that some corporate houses formed trusts to contribute to the political parties and foreign money also played a significant role. The BJP leaders, of course, and even these houses also wanted the BJP come to power and form a stable government. But even after getting help and support from the corporate and other industrial houses as well as from the media much more than its rivals and even after making most unprincipled alliances with the AIDMK, the Trinamul Congress, the Lokshakti, the BSD, the TDP (NTR) besides its old allies like the Shivsena, the Akali and the HVP, the BJP along with its allies could not muster absolute majority. The BJP got 178 seats while its combination all together 252. Though the position of the Congress(I) at the beginning was miserable, it improved considerably after the entry of Mrs. Sonia Gandhi in the fray with the backing of a section of the monopoly houses, and the party ultimately could manage to win 144 seats, while all the partners of the UF, LF together could not win even 100. Naturally, immediately after the declaration of the election results, all the contending combinations of the BJP, the Congress(I) and the UF got busy engaged in a fresh game of manipulations and manoeuvres. But because of the internal squabbles within the Congress, Mr. Sharad Powers' efforts could not succeed. While the efforts of the CPI(M), particularly of its General Secretary, Mr. Harkishen Singh Surjeet to unite all 'secular forces' including the Congress(I), (which it had declared untouchable during the election) got frustrated because of the refusal to support a Congress(I) government by the Convenor of the "secular UF" Mr. Chandrababu Naidu who at the beginning decided to support a BJP government but ultimately took a 'secular stand' to take a equidistant position from both the Congress and the BJP with a tilt towards the latter.

Naturally, the President called Mr. Vajpayee who submitted a list of 252 MPs on 10th March but when asked to submit letters from different parties supporting his government, he could produce a list of only 240 MPs on 12th March since Ms Jayalalitha declined to submit the letter unless her demands for dissolution of the DMK government of Tamil Nadu, making Mr. Subramaniam Swamy the Finance Minister etc., were conceded by the BJP leaders. At first the BJP leaders refused to accept these demands as they considered them to be unreasonable. But lest it should give another chance to the Congress(I) and the UF leaders to take advantage of the situation, the BJP leaders hurriedly settled the dispute with Ms. Jayalalitha by accepting all her major demands and obtained the letter of support from her. Though what is the agreement made will

never be told, but from the total change of Ms. Jayalalitha's attitude, even to the extent of the AIADMK joining the cabinet with its other allies, one thing is clear that she is highly satisfied. The BJP knows what to do when, its leaders are master manipulators. And through such process of manipulation, the BJP could manage to get the support of 264 MPs, when invited to form the government. Though through this type of manipulations the BJP may be able to just muster a majority, still the uncertainty will prevail.

But this uncertainty is not only because of the failure of any of the three combinations to muster the required number of seats for the formation of the government but also and mainly because of the opportunistic nature of the parties and the alliances they made before and after the election. In their bid to anyhow usurp power, none of them cared a bit for any principle. Naturally these opportunistic alliances could not but be with irreconcilable contradictions within them. These contradictions were not much visible during the election but have started surfacing in course of the formation of the government. These might get subsided temporarily for certain pragmatic considerations, but are sure to surface again later on under some other conditions. They have united only to split again. And this poses the greatest threat to the stability of the government, besides the group quarrels and

Latest News

The BJP led government won Vote of Confidence with the TDP support.

squabbles within those parties.

But if this uncertainty continues, and the contradiction aggravates within the ruling combination, the country may be pushed to another midterm poll or as there is strong resentment among the people against repeated polls, making that a plea there may be an attempt to push the country to a more autocratic rule — may be a presidential form or a directly elected prime ministerial form, which some bourgeois theoreticians have already started airing. The progressive and democratic-minded people cannot but take serious note of this danger and prepare beforehand to thwart such a fascistic attempt, if ever made.

The people will have to deeply understand that the capitalist system of our country is becoming increasingly crisis ridden and hence unstable. Naturally this crisis and instability of the economic bases cannot but get reflected in Parliament, a part of its political superstructure. But this crisis is getting reflected not only in the political field but also in all other fields of the superstructure — social, cultural, moral, ethical, educational, etc. More so, since capitalism as a system has become moribund, reactionary and out and out corrupt, any party serving capitalism today cannot but get corrupt. This is why the leaders of all the bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties are becoming more and more selfish, egocentric, power hungry and corrupt. And centring round them groups are arising within all these parties, leading to group rivalries and squabbles and finally to disintegration. This process of disintegration of these parties is further aggravated due to the casteist, communal, racial and regional complexes — which these very parties are instigating for their petty and

immediate gains. Added to this is the contradiction between the national and the respective regional bourgeoisie which has given birth to many regional parties. And as a consequence of all these, not only single party rule, but even the stability of a government either by a United Front or an alliance is becoming more and more uncertain.

We will have to deeply understand also that though the people are not opposed to the idea of a stable government as such, they cannot support all types of stable government. If an antipeople and reactionary party or combination forms a stable government, that can only aggravate their miseries and perpetuate oppression. 30 years' stable government of the Congress (from 1947 to 1977) at the Centre or more than 20 years' (from 1977 to this day) stable government of the CPI(M)-led Left Front of West Bengal are glaring examples of this fact.

In our country where there are a handful of exploiters, on the one side, and the vast masses of the exploited on the other, whose interests are not only different but diametrically opposite, can there be a single slogan for both ? The answer is an emphatic *NO*.

Then whose slogan was this stable government?

Stable government is always a need of the ruling capitalist class to consistently pursue its policies. But now, particularly at a time when it has joined the imperialist scheme of globalisation and entered the WTO with a dream to secure a slice of foreign market and for this the new economic and industrial policies, and the policies of liberalisation, privatisation etc. have been introduced, it requires stability all the more. Because by entering into the scheme of globalisation, it has at once entered into a risky combination and confrontation with the MNCs of the mighty imperialist countries. In this situation, if the above mentioned policies are not consistently and efficiently pursued, this risky gamble will become even more risky. Hence, a stable government is of utmost need to the Indian ruling class today, and hence the orchestrated campaign by all the bourgeois parties as well as by the bourgeois press and other media and the subtle and crafty effort to project their slogan as people's slogan — taking advantage of people's disgust against hung parliament and repeated elections.

Though the BJP, the Congress(I) and the UF-LF combine claim to have differences on many questions, but on the basic question of serving, safeguarding and giving fresh lease of life to moribund capitalism, their position is one and the same. This is why on the questions of new economic, industrial, educational and language policies and on the policies of globalisation, liberalisation, privatisation etc., there is no basic difference between them other than the so-called swadeshi label of BJP. The aim of all the three combinations is to satisfy their own greed for power, on the one hand, and to make the state more subservient to the interest of monopolies on the other. Whatever may be their outward talks or gestures, this is clear from their unanimity on all the major questions of domestic and foreign policies.

This is also clear from the fact that none of these major combinations of the BJP, the Congress(I) and the UF-LF combination fought the election on any real issues of people's life — like unprecedented price rise of all essential commodities, mounting unemployment, poverty,

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illiteracy, etc. Though all these parties made tall promises in their manifestos, all of them fought on the same slogan of a stable and an able government.

Although no single party or combination could muster absolute majority in the just concluded mid-term poll, yet the BJP has emerged as the single largest party and along with its old and new allies formed a minority government. And although it is true that the BJP could not increase its number of seats as per its claims before the election and got only 25% votes, and that, too, with the help of all its earlier allies and of the AIADMK, the Trinamul Congress, the TDP(NTR), the RSD etc., rather lost miserably in Maharashtra and Rajasthan where people have tasted its rule, yet it is to be noted that it has been able to improve its position in states where it had been an insignificant force like Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and in the North-Eastern regions, and opened account even in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu thanks to Ms. Mamata Banerjee and Ms. Jayalalitha, where it was earlier not in a position even to secure an MLA. More so, it could create an atmosphere in which a big section of non-BJP voters were also thinking of giving a chance to the BJP. Although after the entry of Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, backed by a section of the ruling class, which did not want a complete rout of its erstwhile trusted party, this atmosphere changed to an extent, yet in the main this attitude of the voters prevailed upto the end of the poll.

But how could such a situation come about? Is it simply because of the backing of the monopoly houses and their media or the manoeuvring power of the BJP? All these were of course there but, it was mainly because of the fact that there were only three bourgeois alternatives before the people of whom Congress was already a discredited force while the UF-LF was a heterogeneous combination without having any cohesion and hence could instill no confidence in the people. Naturally, in absence of a real alternative of the people as an instrument of struggle, when they found all the combinations to be opportunistic and corrupt, they tried to select a 'less corrupt' one as one selects a less rotten apple when one has no other alternative.

But from experience people know that many times appearance befools man; one comes to know about its reality only after experience. There is a widespread belief that the BJP is a very principled and disciplined party. How principled a party it is, has already been shown by the way it got MLAs defected from the BSP, the Congress and the JD in UP and the way it formed a 95 member strong ministry there by offering ministries to all the defectors — even after knowing well that many of them were having serious charges of crimes like murder and dacoity against them. No doubt this very sense of morality and principle has prompted the BJP to make alliance with the AIADMK whose topmost leader is charged with several cases of corruption. Again, to somehow form the government the BJP has conceded many of the demands of Ms. Jayalalitha, which once it considered to be most unreasonable and so unacceptable. The BJP is no less corrupt than the Congress; only it did not get the chance as much as the Congress got. Yet this character of the BJP is not totally exposed before the people — rather a halo has been created about its honesty and discipline.

No doubt the BJP is a growing and menacing

force, not only because of its unflinching loyalty to the ruling capitalist class, but also and mainly because of its organisational nature. It is not a loose organisation like other bourgeois parties of our country. It is the political platform of the RSS. Its ideology is highly reactionary while its sense of discipline is blind and its organisation is based on mechanical centralism. Its stand is, "Hinduisé politics, militarise Hinduism." This itself shows how rabidly communal it is. Its talk of Hindutva, whatever way it may try to interpret it, is nothing but a tricky slogan to utilise people's sincere and honest feelings for religion for achieving its narrow and sectarian goal in parliamentary power politics. Its recent talks of creating a powerful India with modern industry and even with nuclear power by utilising modern technology and at the same time its talk of spiritual values can only lay the foundation stone for the growth of fascism, as Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, an outstanding Marxist philosopher of this era, has shown, the philosophical basis for fascism is a peculiar fusion between the technological aspects of science with spiritualism. The BJP is opposed to all scientific thinking and secular democratic values, which cannot but lead to blindness, fanaticism and regimentation of thought. It is out to dehumanise man by destroying the logical bent of mind and power of reasoning as well as human values. And if it succeeds, it will be a great assault on humanity. Naturally, it is against the forces of progress.

But how could such a reactionary force gather such strength?

The history of the Jansangh which is now known as the BJP will show beyond doubt that the ground of its growth was mainly created by the role played by the Congress. During its prolonged rule, instead of solving the burning problems of people's life and instead of fighting illiteracy, ignorance, backward and feudal thinking, habits and practices, which create fertile ground for the growth of reactionary ideas, the Congress rule aggravated these problems. Again, instead of democratising the society, a task which remained unaccomplished during our freedom movement due to its own compromising role, the Congress, while serving the aggregate interest of the ruling capitalist class systematically took away the hard-won democratic rights of the people, trampled underfoot all secular democratic values, norms and traditions and virtually reduced the state to a multitheocratic one by patronising all religions in the name of secularism, while secularism means non-recognition of any supernatural entity and a secular state neither encourages nor interferes with religions — rather considers it to be a question of individual belief and faith. More so, either to serve its narrow party interest or to suppress democratic mass movements, it fomented all sorts of divisive tendencies like casteism, communalism, racialism or linguistic fanaticism, and even engineered communal and caste riots. All these misdeeds of the Congress vitiated the socio-cultural atmosphere of the country in which the most reactionary and backward thoughts of the BJP could flourish.

The recent conduct of the Congress (I) will also help the BJP. The way Mrs. Sonia Gandhi became the President of the Congress (I) and the Chairperson of the Congress parliamentary party flagrantly violating the party Constitution and in hot haste, informed the President of India the Congress(I)'s inability to form a government when a fresh move was very much on foot to form a non-

BJP government gave rise to speculation among a section of the press that there had been an understanding between her and top BJP leaders to save her skin from Bofors scandal.

The long absence of left democratic mass-movements in our country is also responsible to a very great extent for BJP's growth. All the major so-called Marxist parties, particularly the CPI(M), have long back deserted the camp of the working class and joined the camp of the bourgeoisie and abandoned the struggle of the toiling people. True to its social democratic character, the way the CPI(M) has been conducting the government in West Bengal and the way Mr. Jyoti Basu as the spokesman of the monopoly houses has been mediating and negotiating with the corporate houses of our country and the MNCs of foreign countries, have damaged people's regard for left forces, emasculated and gave a jolt to the left democratic movement of the country. This has created a void which has helped the BJP to grow.

However, it is quite likely that to hoodwink the people and to cover up their reactionary line, the BJP will make so-called progressive and social democratic gestures. This is already indicated by their decision to postpone for the present their agenda of Ram Mandir, Common Civil Code and regarding Article 370. But the fact is that they have done this under the pressure of some of their allies but will try to implement them whenever situation permits. Now being in power, it will also try to make all efforts to destroy whatever little secular democratic values, norms and traditions that are still prevailing in our society, destroy all scientific and progressive thinking and thus lay the cultural base for the growth of fascism. This trend is

confirmed by the appeal of Mr Vajpayee. He appealed to all parties to extend their cooperation, evolve a consensus in providing "political stability, economic prosperity and social harmony." (*The Statesman*, 16th March '98) This appeal, nodoubt, is very effective in confusing and misleading not only the common people but a section of the intellectuals, too. Those who are aware of the BJP's unflinching loyalty to the ruling capitalist class and its reactionary character will not fail to understand that the BJP's concept of stability has nothing to do with people's interest. Rather, it is an attempt to stabilise the crisis ridden capitalist system and its promise to bring economic prosperity is to help the monopolies to prosper at the cost of the working people while its talk of social harmony is an effort to bring harmony amongst the contesting and conflicting bourgeois parties and forces and disturb the real harmony of different sections of common people.

But whatever may be the promises to bring stability and prosperity, people cannot forget that with every passing day the crisis of the moribund capitalist system will get more and more accentuated and its entire burden will be thrust on their shoulders; and with accentuation of the crisis, fascist tendencies will also grow obstructing social progress.

Naturally, people will have to protect their rights and advance their struggles. The SUCI appeals to all democratic and progressive-minded people to come forward and build up country-wide powerful mass democratic movement on the burning problems of their life as well as against the growing attacks on their rights — the only course left open to them.

[This write-up was finalised on March 16, 1998]

All India Anti-Imperialist Forum demonstrates against US war threat

Bangalore

The Karnataka State Unit of the Anti-Imperialist Forum burnt an effigy of the US President, Mr. Bill Clinton to protest against the US imperialists' belligerent attitude towards Iraq on Feb 22 last after holding a large demonstration near the Flyover.

The speakers cautioned that with the collapse of the erstwhile Soviet Union the imperialist forces remained unrestrained. Under the pretext of policing the world and speaking of human rights violation, the US has already piled up sufficient arms to destroy the world. Instead of looking for arms in other countries, the US should first destroy its own weapon systems and strive for world peace.

It was decided to send a memorandum to the US Ambassador to India seeking the immediate withdrawal of US forces from the Gulf.

Trivandrum, Feb. 17

An Anti-war demonstration was held in Trivandrum under the auspices of All India Anti-imperialist Forum and Netaji Forum against the onslaught of US imperialists on Iraq. A protest

meeting was also held in front of the state secretariat.

In his inaugural address Dr. N.A. Karim, former Pro-VC of Kerala University and State President of Netaji Forum and one of the Vice-Presidents of All India Anti-imperialist Forum, said that the barbarous attack mounted on Iraq was a part of heinous design of the US imperialists to impose their hegemony in West Asia.

Sri K.P. Kosala Rama Das, a veteran TU leader and a member of the All India council of the Anti-Imperialist Forum said that the Anti imperialist convention held two years ago in Calcutta sounded the warning that if the peace forces of the world could not stand united against the imperialists headed by the USA it would jeopardize the very march of peace and progress.

Dr. Nandiyode Ramachandran, Sri Vakkom Ravindran, Sri B.K. Rajagopal also addressed the gathering.

The demonstration was led by Dr. N. A. Karim,, Sri K.P. Kosala Rama Das, Dr. Nandiyode Ramachandran, Sri S.K. Pillai, Sri Padmalayam Vijaya Kumar.

SUCI demonstrates against US threat on Iraq

Our party, SUCI held a demonstration in front of the US Consulate in Chennai on Feb 24 to protest against the war preparations being made by the USA against Iraq. Demonstrators raised slogans calling for the immediate withdrawal of troops from the Gulf region and for economic sanctions against Iraq to be lifted.

The secretary of the Chennai-Chinglepet District Organizing Committee, Comrade S. Narayansamy addressed the gathering. He said that the seven year long economic sanctions imposed by the USA, by way of its use of the United Nations as its puppet, had caused extreme misery and suffering to the Iraqi population. He concluded by pointing out that democratic-

minded, peace-loving people all over the world had to unite and firmly resist the attempts of the imperialist countries of the world, led by the USA, to threaten and undermine the sovereignty of smaller and weaker nations, which was in turn endangering world peace.

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I, Sukomal Dasgupta hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd/- Sukomal Dasgupta
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1.3.98

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Condolence Messages

Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad

At the sudden demise of Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI issued the following statement to the press on 19.3.98 :

"We are deeply shocked at the sudden passing away of Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad, a veteran freedom fighter of our country and former General Secretary of CPI(M).

"I, personally, and on behalf of the Central Committee of our party, convey heartfelt condolence to the CPI(M) members and to his bereaved family."

Smt. Malati Chowdhury

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, issued the following statement to the press on 15.3.98.

We are shocked at the news of the demise of Smt. Malati Chowdhury at 7 a.m. today at the Baje Rout Asram, Angul, Orissa.

Malati Devi, a veteran freedom fighter, had to face imprisonment several times during British Rule. Along with her late deceased husband late Nabakrushna Chowdhury she fought throughout her whole life for upholding the rights of the down-trodden people . . .

We deeply condole on her sad demise.



Demonstration against US threat on Iraq in Delhi (top) and Trivandrum (bottom)

Call of 24th April

(Contd. from page 1)

system. As a result of the crisis in the economic base the parties serving the capitalist system are splitting and combining to split again. There is decadence everywhere. Cultural and moral degradation are eating into the very vitals of the society and the ruling class is openly fostering all these things. Division and fissiparous tendencies are rearing their ugly heads, endangering the unity of the country. Various regional and parochial parties are appearing in different states, giving a fillip to regionalism and parochialism. Taking advantage of the absence of democratic mass movement and also due to sheer opportunist politics of the social democratic parties, coupled with the typical opportunist politics based on self and power practised by all the bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties, the fundamentalist forces are menacingly appearing in the national sphere. The ascendancy to power at the Centre by the right reactionary forces represented by the BJP poses a grave threat to the people.

The 50th anniversary of our party is being observed in such a background. This observance is not a ritual but an integral part of all out struggle waged by the party to create a higher social order to fulfill the aspirations of the people. It is an occasion to take stock of how much we have achieved and how far we are still to go.

The SUCI was founded on Indian soil at a critical juncture of Indian history. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and a handful of his revolutionary compatriots led by him observed correctly that with the end of the British rule the capitalist class was going to usurp the entire fruits of the independence struggle and thus emancipation of the people would remain a dream despite grim struggle of the people against British imperialism and supreme sacrifice of innumerable martyrs. And this could happen because of the absence of any genuine communist party in the country. Through penetrating analysis comrade Ghosh concluded that the undivided CPI failed to emerge as a genuine Marxist Leninist party. By applying Marxist-Leninist yardstick Comrade Ghosh showed that this party was a social democratic party, a compromising force between labour and capital. With the attainment of independence and establishment of capitalist rule, the task was to overthrow the bourgeois rule from state power through anti-capitalist socialist revolution. But this task cannot be accomplished without a real revolutionary party of the proletariat. As soon as Comrade Ghosh came to this conclusion he plunged headlong to build up the SUCI as the genuine communist party in India.

The task was stupendous. The struggle was most painstaking and tortuous against heavy odds. Those handful of revolutionaries led by Comrade Ghosh had no resources, no backing, and even they had no food and no shelter. But they had the invincible weapon of Marxism-Leninism in their hand. Comrade Ghosh concretely applied Marxism-Leninism on Indian soil and built up the party, the SUCI, on the basis of Leninist principles. It is the concrete application of the general principles of Marxism-Leninism in the concrete situation obtaining in the country. By applying this science of Marxism-Leninism Comrade Ghosh determined the strategy of Indian revolution as anti-capitalist socialist one.

By correctly applying Marxist-Leninist methodology Comrade Ghosh made important

analysis on various international and national questions since the very inception of the party. What he had said at that time was beyond the imagination of the people then. But with every day passing the developments in the international and national arena unfolded more and more the truth of all these analyses before the masses. Even during the heyday of world communist movement, amidst its glory and victory, Comrade Ghosh did not fail to notice and point out some of the serious shortcomings in the international communist movement. Comrade Ghosh cautioned that the mechanisation in the process of thinking and process of organisation, lowering of standard in ideological, cultural field, persistence of bourgeois humanist and nationalist thinking, morals and ethics, lack of dialectical relationship between different communist parties and such other serious confusions and shortcomings were bedevilling the world communist movement. Later on he gave utmost importance on fighting the danger of revisionism-reformism that played havoc in the communist movement in some countries. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat fought relentlessly against these dangers till the last breath of his life for guarding and defending the revolutionary kernel of Marxism-Leninism. He drew the attention of the leaders of the world communist movement to restore the revolutionary kernel of Marxism-Leninism to its pristine glory at every appropriate moment. By analysing the Report of the 20th Congress of the CPSU Comrade Ghosh warned about the grave danger of revisionism. Again when the international communist movement was vertically divided centring round revisionist approach of the CPSU, Comrade Ghosh appealed to the leaders of the international communist movement that there must not be any compromise on ideological questions which must be resolved by carrying out intense ideological struggle, but while carrying out such ideological struggle they must maintain unity among themselves against imperialism. Had the leaders of the world communist movement paid heed to all these warnings in time the present disaster in the international communist movement could have been averted and it would not have reached the present state.

One redeeming feature is that the international communist movement has already overcome the initial shock, and seriously searching the cause of the setback and is trying afresh to emerge again. On our part it is a matter of great pleasure that the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh are reaching far and wide transcending the boundary of our country. And these are evoking good response in some quarters of communist and workers parties of the world while we are getting wide scope of being acquainted with their analysis.

In the national sphere when the Congress government embarked upon successive five year plans after the establishment of independent bourgeois state Comrade Ghosh pointed out that all these plans were nothing but attempt toward capitalist consolidation for the freest, widest and speediest development of capitalism in India in the given international and national conditions. He emphasized that in this third phase of intense crisis of world capitalism these plans were bound to be associated with shadow of crisis, and would lay the rock bottom foundation of fascism. But due to the social democratic character, the undivided CPI and then the CPI and CPI(M)

failed to realise the true import of all these capitalist plannings, called them pro-people, and lent all out support to them and by that helped the bourgeoisie to establish and consolidate capitalism in India. When Comrade Ghosh showed that the foreign policy pursued by the Congress government was always an extension of the home policy for development and consolidation of capitalism and termed Pandit Nehru as the living microphone of the Indian bourgeoisie, these so-called communist parties hailed this foreign policy of the Congress government as progressive and praised Pandit Nehru. Immediately after the capitalist economy faced crisis, as predicted by Comrade Ghosh, the ruling class resorted to militarisation for providing artificial stimulation to the economy. But these so-called communist parties lent support to that too, betraying their true social democratic character. In this way these social democratic parties helped capitalism to grow and consolidate in India.

In the fifties and sixties these social democratic parties participated in the democratic mass movement, but that was only for gaining mileage in parliamentary politics. Today when capitalism is in the vortex of all-out crisis, these social democratic parties fail even to maintain their pro-people mask, nakedly side with capitalism and have become a partner of the present capitalist setup. Let alone releasing and supporting democratic mass movement these so-called communist parties are crushing them to serve the interest of the capitalist class where they are in governmental power.

Today crisis is writ large in every sphere of life. The abnormal price rise, massive unemployment, closures, lockouts and retrenchment are creating havoc in social life. The ruling class is launching onslaughts on education and culture. The vile polluted imperialist culture of sex and violence and consumerism is tearing apart the moral fabric of the youth of the country. Atrocities on women are increasing. These miseries in the life of the people, the degeneration and decadence in moral, cultural and political spheres and the resultant frustration of the people are pushing them back to the wall. The divisive, communal, casteist forces and fissiparous tendencies are alarmingly increasing. All these are the direct result of capitalism. As long as capitalism, which is based on exploitation and oppression will prolong, these evils will not diminish but will continue to increase, making the life of people more unbearable.

When today all the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois social democratic parties are busy in nasty parliamentary games and trying to protect and prolong this crisis-ridden and moribund capitalist system people should remember that parliamentary politics can never be an answer to the present acute problems in the life of them. It is only the SUCI, and not any other party which has been relentlessly trying to build up democratic mass movement conducive to the anti-capitalist socialist revolution on the edifice of higher culture and ethics, which alone can bring about emancipation of the masses. The path is no doubt tortuous and difficult but it is the only path. It is to be always kept in mind that no revolution can be accomplished without a genuine revolutionary party of the proletariat. The SUCI is such a party. The history of the SUCI of the last 50 years bears testimony to it. So it is incumbent on every one cherishing revolution and socialism to come forward to strengthen the SUCI, the only ray of hope before the people.

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Message to Workers' World

We received with deep sense of grief the news of Comrade Sam Marcy's sudden death. We remember Comrade Sam Marcy's fight against capitalist and imperialist oppression and exploitation, upholding the noble banner of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. Analysing the bourgeois trends in the Gorbachev doctrine of perestroika he exposed the revisionist degeneration of the Soviet party. He stood in support of national liberation movements of countries and in defence of socialist countries against imperialist intervention and counter-revolutionary intrigues.

He was uncompromising in his combat against all forms of oppression, racism and moral degradation in the American society. Undaunted by the hostile situation in the United States, throughout his life he struggled to organize the downtrodden people of America in the fight against oppression and exploitation. With resolute courage, living in the United States, he fought against US war machinations and imperialist manoeuvres. The Workers World Party of the United States is a living testimony to his unique creative ability as an organizer.

Comrade Sam Marcy is no more, but we firmly believe that the party he founded will continue with its leaders, cadres and friends the struggle to accomplish his unfulfilled tasks.

I, on my personal behalf, and on behalf of our party, the Socialist Unity Centre of India, express our solidarity with the comrades of the Workers World Party in their hour of grief and pledge our wholehearted support for their struggle against capitalism-imperialism, upholding the noble banner of proletarian internationalism.

Marx and Stalin Day observed at Ghatsila

45th death anniversary of Comrade Stalin was observed at Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Memorial Bhawan of Ghatsila in Bihar. The red flag was hoisted in the morning by Comrade Amriteswar Chakravarti, Secretary of the Bihar State Committee, and a meeting was organised in the assembly hall at 7 p.m.

Comrade Malay Bose presided over the meeting and Comrade Amriteswar Chakravarti, was the main speaker. Comrade Swapan Ghosh, member of the West Bengal State Committee also spoke on the occasion. The music squad of the Bhawan sang the inaugural mass song and the *Internationale* at the end.

14th March, 115th death anniversary of Karl Marx was observed at Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Memorial Bhawan of Ghatsila. In the morning red flag was hoisted by Comrade Tapas Dutta, member of Central Committee, SUCI.

In the evening, under the presidentship of Comrade Amriteswar Chakravarti a meeting was held at the assembly hall. The main speaker of the meeting was Comrade Tapas Dutta. At the beginning a song on Karl Marx was sung by music squad of the Bhawan and the meeting ended with the *Internationale*.

In his speech Comrade Tapas Dutta asserted that whatever be the temporary set-back, victory of socialism is inevitable.

Red Salute Comrade Baishnab Behura

Sukinda, 4.3.98 : Comrade Baishnab Behura is no more. He breathed his last on 17 February '98 at S.C.B. Medical College Hospital, Cuttack at the age of 75. Belonging to a poor peasant family, Comrade Behura came in contact with SUCI and the great leader of the proletariat, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's thoughts in 1954. Till his last he carried on his struggle to serve the class, and the party and revolution. Deeply moved by the oppressed poor peasants, khetmajdoors and tribal people, he played an important role in organising mass movements on burning problems under the banner of SUCI.

On 3rd March '98 a memorial meeting was organised by SUCI, Sukinda local Committee and Danagadi local Committee at Sukinda garh. Comrade Mayadhar Nayak presided over the meeting. Comrade Tapas Dutta, member, Central Committee and Secretary of Orissa State Committee, SUCI, briefly recalled his long association with Comrade Baishnab Behura. Comrade Dutta explained that at the early stage of our party, a few people including Comrade Behura started peasants' movements in Sukinda area. Now our party has expanded, but we should remember those aged people who have sacrificed their lives for the party. Comrade Dutta also highlighted his noble sense of values and urged the comrades to enhance the struggle under the leadership of SUCI.

Comrade Nayak said that though Comrade Baishnab Behura was poor, he never asked any help from the party, rather he was an asset of the party. We should learn from his character. Comrade Sufal Mahanto and Comrade Sudhansu Das also spoke.

AIKKMS demonstration at Balikuda, Orissa

Jagutsinghpur : The people of Balikuda and Naugan block staged a demonstration in front of Balikuda Tahasildar's office, in the district of Jagutsinghpur, Orissa under the leadership of AIKKMS. They marched to the Tahasildar's office from Balikuda weekly market to chowk in a procession with slogans. They demanded the withdrawal of hike in irrigation, cess, supply of water through canals, construction of Gavari lock, more L.I. points, removal of land revenue, waiving of agriculture and other taxes during the period of natural calamities. Comrade Raghunath Das, Secretariat member of AIKKMS State Committee, was the main speaker. Comrade Subhash Swain, Comrade Pradipta Ram also spoke and Comrade Pratap Mishra presided over the meeting. Due to the absence of Tahasildar and Add. Tahasildar their representative received the memorandum.

Massive Rally on Drought at Korkunda and Kundura

Under the auspices of our party SUCI and AIKKMS, massive rallies were held demanding immediate steps on a war footing to meet the devastating drought which has severely affected people's life for six months. The demonstrations were held at Korkunda and Kundura Block on 31 Dec. 97.

At Korkunda Block three thousand tribal peasants, women, youths and students assembled and took out a procession. After that a public meeting was held before the Block office.

The speakers condemned the apathetic attitude of the State Congress(I) government and demanded quick steps to meet the acute drought situation in the Block. At the end of the meeting a charter of demands was submitted to the BDO. The BDO received the memorandum and assured to fulfill the demands.

At Kundura Block a massive demonstration was held in which five thousand people including two thousand women and youths took part. After the procession a public meeting was held in front of the Block office.



Massive rally in Calcutta on 27/3/98 for immediate introduction of English and pass-fail system from Class. I opportunity for admission of all students and withdrawal of fee hike. It was led by Comrade Provash Ghosh, W.B. State Secretary, Manik Mukherjee, Calcutta Dist. Secretary and Debaprasad Sarkar, MLA.

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