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Presentday Coalition Governments

Is It Extension of Democracy or Exercise in Deception ?

In the recent past, India has witnessed a few governments at the Centre, swearing in and bowing out in quick succession. Single party rule of the Congress has apparently been replaced by multi-party coalitions. Different combinations are being tried out, led by this or that major party like Janata Dal or BJP, with Congress, too, waiting or trying for its chances. Regional parties like Telegu Desham, Tamil Manila Congress or Assam Gana Parishad and others as also those with regional influences like CPI(M), CPI, etc., join the manoeuvres and share the power or stay out for a

better chance. Parallel to it, there is a campaign mounting with these political activities : this marks the end of days of single-party rule and beginning of multi-party coalitions and hence the end of unitary system giving way to federalism; democracy is strengthened with more and more parties given chance to join the government; democracy is made more participatory with regional parties or those of regional influences finding chance to participate in the government etc. etc. — these are some of the phrases and

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SUCI on Jabalpur Quake

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee in a statement on 23-5-97 mourns the deaths at Jabalpur earthquake :

“We deeply mourn the deaths due to earthquake at Jabalpur, MP.

We urge the Central Government to take up the rescue and relief operations on war-footing so that the affected people are duly rehabilitated and compensated.

All units of the party are instructed to collect relief materials and distribute those among the victims.”

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Open Letter to the President

To
Shri Shankar Dayal Sharma
Hon'ble President
Republic of India
New Delhi

Sir,

Our party, the SUCI, sharply condemns the warm welcome accorded by your government to the Peruvian President Mr Alberto Fujimori, a despot and US-puppet, whose draconian regime has trampled and crushed all human rights activities, democratic mass movements and

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Compel Laloo to quit

The demand for the resignation of the Bihar Chief Minister Mr Laloo Prasad Yadav has gained momentum after the CBI has sought permission of the Governor to chargesheet him along with some other present and former ministers accused in the multi-crore fodder scam. While almost all the political parties have demanded his immediate resignation and a good number of leaders of his Janata Dal have advised him to quit his post, Mr Laloo Prasad has declined to do so and has clearly said that he will break the tradition and in no case resign his post. Queer indeed is the fact that in spite of his palpable involvement in such a big scam of the country, he has been delivering lectures here and there pledging eradication of corruption from the state. Perhaps everything is possible in Indian bourgeois politics ! Now, the ball is in the court of the Governor. He is deliberately killing time to grant necessary permission and thus extending a tacit support to the Chief Minister.

This incident has again exposed the bankruptcy of the present political system of our country and has proved its failure to check corruption. The petrified capitalist socio-economic-political system which is begetting corruption at every moment is averse to fight it out. Despite all attempts and pledges to eradicate it, the fact is that the corruption has penetrated all spheres of our national life. The leaders, administrators, police and the judiciary who are supposed to check this practice, are themselves plunged headlong into the mire of corruption. The advocates of this system are trying to highlight the

role of judiciary and the investigating agency before the people to show that the corruption can be checked within this very political framework and thus confine them to the labyrinth of parliamentary politics. The people, the toiling masses, will have to understand that only by changing the ministers, they will not be able to put

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Effigies of Mr Clinton, the US President and Mr Blair, the British Prime Minister are being burnt by members of the All India Anti-Imperialist Forum in protest against reported move of interference in Kashmir. (News inside)

On Palestine Question

Israeli Intrigue makes Solution ever elusive

West Asia, with its rich oil resources, is of great strategic importance to the imperialists, and the US imperialists in particular, who in the past used the state of Israel as a springboard to establish its hegemony over the region. Because of the weak-kneed and revisionist policy of the former Soviet Union the legitimate and protracted, militant anti-imperialist struggle of the Palestinian people deprived of their homeland, led by the PLO, not to speak of meeting with success, became circumscribed and weakened. Still then the very presence of the socialist camp acted as a deterrent, to some extent, against imperialist aggression. But in its absence and soaring imperialist aggression, the PLO found itself in a completely cornered position; its very existence was endangered. In the 'new world order', under globalisation Israel had lost its former importance for the US imperialists, who wanted to play among the Arab countries in its hegemonistic designs. To this end, the US imperialists, posing as champions of peace, armtwisted Israel into the Oslo agreement whereby the latter had to make some concessions that were bound to stir internal dissension among right wing forces on the one hand, an agreement that for the Palestinian people proved disastrous, a denial of their legitimate right. Even the little they were to have under the agreement is being denied to them under Israeli imperialists' aggressive moves.

Israel's latest aggressive act of constructing a new Jewish settlement in East Jerusalem, in Har Homa, that closes and completes a wall of Jewish settlements encircling Arab East Jerusalem, has raised a storm of protest among the Palestinian people, and met with condemnation of democratic people throughout the world. The feeling of outrage and anger of the Palestinian people can be understood all the better if we keep in view the fact that the status of Jerusalem, which is a 'holy' city for both Palestinian and Jewish people and claimed by both, is yet to be decided in the final phase of the Oslo agreement. This illegal settlement of Har Homa comprising 6500 housing units, reportedly built at a frantic speed, day and night, comes hard on the heels of a series of decisions by the Netanyahu Likud coalition government, to even further increase the Jewish settlements in occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to the tune of 2000 new homes, over and above those already under construction (Yediot Aharonot, quoted in *The Statesman*, 7.4.97), a move bound to create tension, all the more so as the reportedly gun toting Arab hating Jewish settlers are said to comprise the most reactionary and extremist section of the Israeli people. Moreover, the Netanyahu government has reintroduced incentives for settlers, like tax exemption. All these moves are part and parcel of Israel's expansionist imperialist policy, and its constant attempts to bring about demographic and geographic changes that in the final stage of the negotiations would work to its advantage. To take but the example of East Jerusalem. After the illegal annexation of Arab East Jerusalem, following the 1967 war, Israel expanded its municipal area threefold with expropriated village lands of surrounding Palestinian villages

(but excluding the villages themselves). And all this despite UN resolutions declaring annexation of East Jerusalem illegal. Thereafter, one Jewish settlement was built after another on such confiscated land, until the number of such settlers outnumbered even the indigenous Muslim and Christian population by 150,600 to 152,800 by 1993 (according to *New Worker*, 29.11.96). Needless to say that the new Har Homa settlement which is estimated to house about 50,000 settlers, will strongly tilt the demographic balance. What is more, being built in the one large undeveloped area of Jerusalem in the south-east, it will complete a ring of Jewish settlements and cut the last link between Arab Jerusalem and the autonomous areas of the West Bank. Thus this act of Israel is a pre-emptive move to prevent the Palestinian people from staking a claim to East Jerusalem by robbing them of all geographical justification and feasibility for doing so, before the talks about final status of Jerusalem have even begun, which has created a most explosive situation. The Israeli Security Minister, Avigdor Kahalani felt thus no compunction to brazenly declare: "The battle for Jerusalem has begun." (*The Statesman*, 4.4.97)

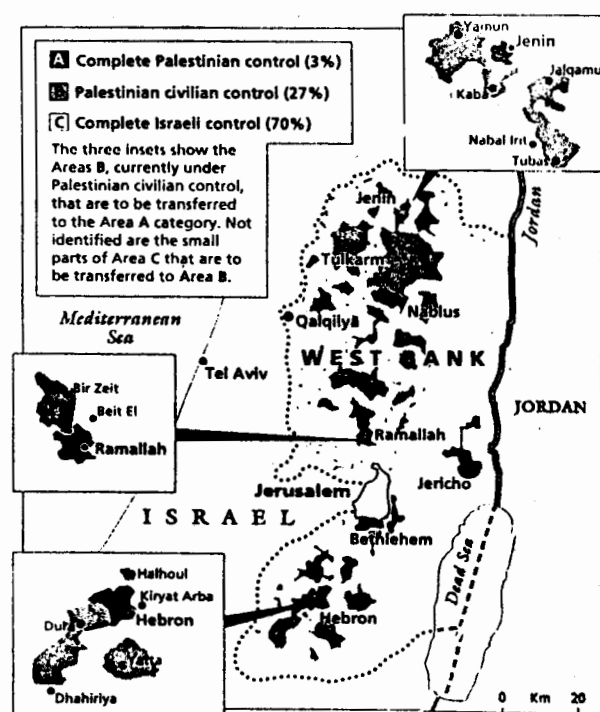
But this is not all. Even minimum respite from their sufferings is denied to the Palestinian people. On the contrary, they are being driven by the Israeli imperialists into ever worsening ghetto conditions in the name of autonomy and subsequent growing economic destitution.

It may be recalled that at the Oslo Accord autonomy was granted in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho to begin with, to be followed by autonomy over the West Bank. (*The Statesman*, 1.9.93) The two areas (which had been occupied by Israel in the 1967 war) would be considered by both sides, stated Article 4 of the Declaration, as a single territorial unit, whose integrity will be preserved during the interim period. But what is the situation today, what have the Palestinian people got? All they got is a semi-independent Gaza Strip, isolated from the West Bank and some patches of areas of different status in the West Bank, fenced in by and under the overall control of Israel. Forward, in its January '97 edition reports: "The process of transferring Palestinians into the autonomous areas has been sped up. The Israeli authorities are determined to push the Jahalin bedouin into the growing slums of nearby Arab areas designated as Zone A and B. They were once open free village neighbourhoods of Jerusalem, but have been turned into 'Palestans such as the Bophutswana bantustan in apartheid South Africa: enclaves under a Jewish control with no free entry or exit. The Jahalin are refugees from the 1948 war living on lands situated on the Jerusalem-Jericho road lands which are now on the way of expansion of the illegal Jewish settlement Ma'ale Adumim (Red Heights).

The policy is to 'cleanse' area C of as many Arabs as possible, on the presumption that in the final agreement, Israel will be able to annex those area free of Arabs."

Typically, in the first of three redeployments that Israel is obliged to undertake (by the third it is supposed to be out of the West Bank, except for

some settlements, borders, East Jerusalem and some 'specified military areas') the Israel cabinet decided to transfer only 9% of the West Bank to full or partial Palestinian control. But of this only 2% are 'new land' falling into category or Area C (exclusive Israel control) the remaining 7% is already under Palestinian civilian and Israeli security control (Area B) (*The Economist*, March 15th 97). Hence what kind of autonomy awaits the Palestinian people is also illustrated by the example of Hebron that was to have been handed over to the Palestinians. Under redeployment in this West Bank city of 120,000 Palestinians and 400 Israeli settlers — whose main settlement is at the outskirts of the city — even the heart of the city along with 20,000 Palestinians living there



has come under the control of Israel for the 'protection' of the settlers. It may be mentioned that while this includes among others, an ancient mosque — the same mosque where a settler killed 29 Arabs three years ago — the Palestinians residing there are reportedly subjected to increasing harassment and discrimination at the hands of Israeli security forces. (*ibid.* and Forward,).

Netanyahu told his deputies, in an attempt to woo the extreme rightwing elements of his shaky coalition: I want to clarify that we will not retreat to the 1967 borders, we are against a Palestinian state and we actively oppose the division of Jerusalem....I recommend the abandoning of false dreams." (*The Statesman*, 4.4.97) That this is no mere idle threat is borne out by above and the grim reality of Palestinian people's condition. Pushing them more and more into ever worsening ghetto conditions, the Israeli imperialists are also manipulating their economic conditions by various means leaving them in ever greater destitution. Leaving alone the question of Israel's manipulation of water resources to the detriment of Palestinian farmers, one of their methods is the expropriation of most fertile land for various purposes. Thus, "In the framework of the second Oslo Agreement the Israelis have expropriated in the Hebron area 2700 dunams (700 acres) of the best vineyards in the West Bank, in order to build another one of their apartheid roads for Jewish

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On Palestine Question

Israeli and Arab People must maintain unity to Fight Zionist Clique

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settlers so that they may 'by-pass' Palestinians living in the area, who are, by definition, 'dangerous'. There are of course numerous other possible routes, not least the existing roads, none, however, could satisfy the goal of destroying economic resources so successfully. In a locality called Turmousaya, the army, after being denied the right to expropriate certain lands for settler use, destroyed about 2,500 olive trees through chemical spraying. The Palestinian Land Defense Committee working from el-Bireh determined that after the Madrid conference 59,000 dunams (15,000 acres) were expropriated and 41,000 olive trees were uprooted including ancient ones.' (Forward, Jan 97)

Closing its borders arbitrarily, in violation of the peace agreement, keeping agricultural produce meant for export, Guavas to Jordan, for example, rotting at the checkpoints, with ruinous results for the farmers, is another method employed by Israel. (ibid)

After the Tel Aviv suicide bombing on March 21, Israel closed its borders for more than three weeks, throwing 50,000 Palestinians with work permits in Israel out of work, after which period less than half and only those above the age of 35 were allowed to resume work. And only then was food allowed to be lifted for Palestinian ruled areas from Israeli ports. Such a prolonged closure in 95, for example, had caused a drop in the standard of living in the Gaza Strip by 60% (ibid). Similarly, a World Bank Report stated that the closure of the West Bank and Gaza caused a loss to the economic position of the Palestinian Authority of three million dollars a day. (Mainstream, July 6, 96).

While Israel's economy has relatively flourished all the more after easing of economic boycott by different Islamic and Arab nations since the Oslo Accords, its exports having significantly increased and GDP reached a new high, Palestinian people are being driven more and more into economic destitution, from which the Israeli imperialists on the one hand, hope to derive maximum advantage in the final negotiations and wrest new and even greater concessions from them. On the other hand, the total pauperisation of the working people, growing unemployment and total helplessness is precisely what capitalism-imperialism needs under the new 'world order' to be able to purchase labour ever more cheaply and exploit it ever more ferociously, imposing ever worse conditions and a slave like existence to tide over the capitalist world crisis and attain maximum profits.

It is not for nothing that President Clinton declared the Palestinian "autonomy area" a trade and custom free zone and delegates from the USA, Israel and the PNA signed a series of documents enabling Palestinians to export custom free goods to the USA. (Ha'aretz 18.10.95, quoted in The American Trade Commissioner, Micky Kantor, Forward, Jan.'1997) It was clarified that the agreement included mainly industrial products. The Palestinian magazine has also pointed to the

industrial parks to be built in the second stage of the Oslo Accords, involving Palestinian labour and American or multinational capital, the products of which are destined for the overseas market and expected to create sufficient profit for the companies to be interested in investing in these industrial parks. One such experimental industrial park is already said to operate with much success at the Erez checkpoint in Gaza. This may be an added factor as to why Israel has today lost much of its former importance to USA. It is of course true, that the US imperialists have twice vetoed a UN resolution of the Security Council that condemned Israel in line with their anti-people character and due also to internal exigency, with a view to handling the powerful Jewish lobby in the USA itself. But at the same time the Clinton administration is bearing down immense pressure on the belligerent Netanyahu Government to come back to the negotiation table — the same Netanyahu which only the other day had threatened Palestinians with 'other non-diplomatic alternatives', when blaming the spontaneous protest demonstrations, marches of the Palestinian people and the increasing Islamic extremist forces, spawned by his own acts of violence against a deprived nation, on the PNA. However, this is not to imply in the least that the USA has suddenly turned into an advocate of peace. Rather, under the 'new world order' in absence of socialist camp, the US imperialists have stepped up neo-colonial attacks and that acts of international brigandism have become even more savage. In this context it must be borne in mind that in the present globalised economy the USA is no longer in the same need of Israel as a springboard to establish its hegemony over this region, the way it used to, and now wants to play among the Arab nations of the region. But after the Iraq war, it needed to boost its image to get a better entry into Arab and Islamic countries. Hence its dominant role in pulling off the Oslo peace accord, enforcing some concessions on Israel but at a truly devastating cost for the Palestinian people. Long back, at the time of the Camp David Accord, our party had reiterated its old caution about the conspiracy of the US imperialists to contain and ultimately liquidate the Palestinians, by trying to impose such a humiliating deal as would split the militant, anti-imperialist struggle of the Palestinian people led by the PLO, which was a thorn in the flesh of not only the US imperialists but even the Arab capitalist rulers of the region. They did not succeed at that time though. But after the Iraq war, when the PLO found itself in a very cornered position, in the then international situation, that is precisely what the US 'champions of peace' then tried to effect with redoubled pressure and arm-twisting under the pretence of peace and solution to the problem and by painting itself as a "champion of peace". Though the signing of the Oslo peace accord has caused deep dissension within the PLO, today the latest acts of Israel's aggression has united the entire Palestinian people, the militant and moderate section of the PLO as well

as Islamic forces. Though unity of all the forces opposed to imperialism, is no doubt necessary, a word of caution about the fundamentalist forces may not be out of place. For they by their very nature cannot unite but tend to divide the people, and tend to acts of terrorism that succeed only in forfeiting public sympathy for a just cause while inviting ever greater imperialist repression, which the people can ill-afford.

The Arab League in a rare sign of unity unanimously adopted a resolution calling for freezing relations with Israel until the latter agrees to implement its peace agreements with all Arab sides and stops violating the accords. (The Statesman, 1.4.97) In response to Yasser Arafat's appeal for intervention, the NAM foreign ministers that had gathered in Delhi for a two-day conference on April 7-8, unanimously adopted a declaration on West Asia calling on the 113 member-states to use every means to ensure Tel Aviv's compliance with obligations to establish a "just and comprehensive" peace in the region". The declaration warned of "further appropriate measures" if the Israeli government failed to respond positively." (ibid 9.4.97) The Press called it 'an unprecedented step' for NAM whose movement had been greatly weakened much after the dismantling of the socialist camp. It at the same time vindicates the analysis by our party at the Cuttack Plenum which held that though NAM movement and their bargaining power had been weakened in the present international situation, but that did not mean that NAM is not in a position to play a significant role. A silver lining is also provided by the fact that the people of Israel who throughout the country came out in protest on to the streets against the new settlement and in support for peace. Many people of Israel are worried that they are drifting towards war, a leading pollster there, Dr Mina Zemach, reported. According to Dr Zemach: About 60 percent want the peace process to continue ... They believe we are strong enough and they are ready to pay the price', Dr Zemach said. An unprecedented 43 percent were prepared to yield part of Jerusalem to Palestinian autonomy (Eric Silver, in The Statesman, 11.4.97)

Hence when imperialist intrigue, intrusion and expansionism is playing havoc with the just cause of the Palestinian people, depriving them, as it does the people everywhere — of social justice, peace and advancement, the unity of Palestinian and Israeli people coming in joint resistance against the conspiracy of the imperialists, there is of utmost importance while the people everywhere should come forward in fraternal support. The democratic and peace-loving people in the less developed countries, put pressure on their respective governments to conduct an uncompromising struggle against the USA and Israel imperialist aggression by mobilizing the NAM movement to its fullest potential. If people unite in worldwide solidarity in conscious anti-imperialist struggle this alone can thwart the imperialist conspiracy and change the downward trend of history.

Present-day Coalition Governments

Slogan of Federalism — A Cover for Crisis of Capitalism

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ideas that are being aired, apparently in justification of the fluid situation in the Indian politics. It must be admitted that the campaign has succeeded in creating confusion in people, even among a section of intelligentsia, not excluding some with leftist leaning.

Situation demands that we analyse it carefully and judge the merits and demerits of the campaign with a view to finding out the real implications of the present Indian political scene. We are aware that in regard to questions like what federalism is, or how does unitary rule differ from it, or questions that in a bourgeois democracy does federalism necessarily mean a greater democratic set-up and unitary rule more authoritarianism, or how far the present multi-party coalition government represents federalism in theory or practice — all these questions have their merits and demand serious consideration. But we propose not to deal with such an analysis of those theoretical aspects; rather, we will try to get at a simpler truth — why, or how is it that, this campaign on federalism, strengthening of democracy has been stepped up at a juncture of Indian history, when apparently the country is facing the worst instability of its parliamentary democracy during its tenure since Independence. Do these changes claim to strengthen and extend democracy, restore any hard-earned democratic rights of people that the capitalist rule one after another has curtailed to curb popular resentment against exploitation, oppression and injustice? Do they bring the high-handed bureaucracy and blood-thirsty police — two of the pillars of bourgeois rule, to any sense of humanity, or rather, their utterly anti-people attitude continues unabashed? Do these political changes allow the judiciary, or the major agencies, like the CBI which are supposed to work against corruption and injustice, to maintain a relative independence, an essential condition in democracy, or, the changes notwithstanding, they keep their 'committed' role unhampered — a commitment not to people, but to the ruling party or parties and the ruling class? In such a situation, how is then, this so-called strengthening and broadening of democracy going to help toiling people at large. Rather, will it not be really in service of crisis-ridden capitalism?

In fact, as a part of the global decadent system of capitalism-imperialism, the Indian capitalism has plunged into an insurmountable all-embracing crisis. No amount of liberalization, globalization and privatisation, can bring them out of this crisis. Undeterred fleecing of the working people continuously squeezes the market at home; cut-throat competition with the big imperialists, their MNCs and other countries blur the prospect of the global market; the more there are talks of liberalization, which is nothing but liberalizing the capitalist profit-making, the sharper is the unhealthy competition, the contradiction between the Indian monopolists and the MNCs, among the Indian monopolists themselves, between the monopolists and the regional and small capital still playing vital role in Indian capitalist economy, between the industrial bourgeoisie and the rural bourgeoisie; in brief, there are

contradictions among the big-s, between the big and the small, among the small themselves, in the profit-hunt spate over the country as also over the globe. In this bid of them, the monopoly houses as also the regional and small capital, try to frame opinions or influence the prevailing ones in their own favour through media or means of their choice, through political parties they interact with, or even, they themselves form to serve their own purpose. Thus this extremely fierce contradiction prevail and aggravate with deepening crisis in the capitalist camp itself, in spite of its united attempts to perpetuate capitalist rule. And it is these contradictions that are reflected in the bourgeois politics of today. The possibility of one single party serving all the varied and conflicting interests of the capitalist camp equally efficiently and satisfactorily, is fading out; and so also fades out the possibility of a single party rule; the acute crisis and contradictions therefrom, foment contradictions even within the big parties, with the result that the parties split, new parties are formed, different parties combine to frame a particular multi-party coalition or even within a single party vehemently contending groups combine and recombine to change floors. But solution eludes them. No combination seems permanent; interests clash or combine; one coalition topples down to give way to another. It is sheer exigency, the compulsion of situation, the desire to be in power or at least, be in its vicinity and wait for a chance — that acts as the sole motive, mechanism and means behind the present spell of multi-party coalition governments, the present spate of political combinations, in no way having to do anything with policy and principle. Of course, ingrained in this craze for power, is the lust for a share of the booty; once the Congress, or for that matter, the single party in government, could enjoy the booty alone; the day has now come, when others are no longer prepared to be satisfied with the crusts left over by the single-party in rule; they have joined the fray to enjoy their share — the booty amassed out of plundering the people. Thus, for instance, in the last parliamentary elections, different parties vied apparently against the Congress, which stood as a forlorn entity, battered with the charges of corruption, right from its top. The ambience, the popular opinion, drove others to take an anti-Congress stand, themselves, however, nourishing their own dreams to power. But as results turned out, none could make it, all on their own. The BJP tried its 'luck' for a few days, only to make a retreat unable to create any cleavage among its opponents in its own favour. Subsequently and consequently, communalism became the main issue; the Janata Dal could find a new leader, for, otherwise the seat of power would have eluded them; the denigrated Congress overnight became a trusted ally; those like the celebrated leftists the CPI(M), the CPI and others who could not decide as yet whether they had enough strength in parliament to carry their voice through, preferred to stay at the wings for a better opportunity. Be that as it may, there was no federalism, nor democratic principle; the only issue was to remain in governmental power or grab it; for those deprived, all options were left to knife through the

opponents and for those hesitant, it was an opportunity, for not to share the blames for failure, but enjoy the credits from the ruling class to help keep the show going on or the credits of a magnanimous opposition. The same feats of political manoeuvring were repeated later when Congress withdrew its support 'from outside' to the Deve Gowda Government but brought it back only when Gowda was replaced by Gujral. The point at stake for the Congress was, how much pressure (in the form of the CBI enquiries into the corruption charges etc.) from the Government should the Congress allow in this game of parliamentary power politics to continue to help the JD government stay in power and to help itself remain, thereby, in the vicinity of power, when it could not help otherwise. In all these activities, regional parties, or those with a regional influence under an all-India banner — assumed important role to play; for instance, the Tamil Manila Congress (vide Mupanar), the Telegu Desham (formerly Rama Rao, presently Chandrababu Naidu), etc., in the first lot, the CPI(M) and its Jyoti Basu, the CPI, etc., in the second. They act in balancing, in arbitration or mediation and finally as and when there is some settlement, they may even wrest some concession. So, it is being emphasized that, they participate in the Union politics and help their respective regions, earn prestige and prominence. Let us not disagree but how does it help their people? Does Jyoti Basu's glamour or Chandrababu's arbitration bring any relent to the plight of the people of West Bengal or Andhra Pradesh respectively? Or, for that matter, can they really ever bring any relent by such acts of helping the Union parliamentary politics to go on? The answer is an emphatic NO. Rather, this apparent importance of regional parties reflect, as indicated earlier, the role played by the regional capital in the Indian capitalist economy, where it acts in collusion and contention with the monopoly capital, their contradiction aggravating. Nonetheless the crisis of Indian capitalism has bred this politics of exigency. Under the circumstances, each time a new government is 'born', it takes oath in the name of the country and its people; the first gasp over, it assures the class that nothing is going to change to affect them; the policies catering to the needs of the capitalists are to continue unaffected. Thus modernization of Rajiv, privatisation-liberalization of Manmohan-Narasimha all filter down into Chidambaram-Budget; the universal concern on the fate of that budget expressed by all the parliamentary parties, the monopoly houses, the corporate sectors of the land and abroad and the assurance from the newly formed Gujral Government to go on with the safe implementation of that budget — all these bring out the real motive: to be in the power you need to assure the class and only when the class is assured you stand a chance to reach the power. But the price-hike is not to be checked, unemployment-retrenchment-lock out is not to wane, rather to rise with modernization-mechanization-computerization, pauperization of the majority is unabated, the market of the market economy is continuously squeezed. And hence come the words: federalism,

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Compel Laloo to quit

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an end to corruption. Ministers will come and go but the corruption will remain as long as this system lasts. One Laloo Prasad or P.V. Narasimha Rao may go but that will not mean the end of corruption. In the historic Bihar movement led by Sri Jayprakash Narayan in 1974-75, the eradication of corruption was one of the four main demands for the fulfilment of which people sacrificed their lives and fought to the last. But it is an irony that Mr Laloo Prasad who claims to be a product of that movement, is now being charged with corrupt practices. Now, Mr Laloo Prasad will have to go. But with his exit corruption will not disappear. It will certainly disappear if we can overthrow this capitalist socio-political system and replace it with a socialist one through anti-capitalist socialist revolution. With the smashing of the capitalist state structure the corruption will also cease to exist.

At present, we are demanding Mr Laloo Prasad's resignation along with other ministers accused in the scam because they are holding high government offices; they can influence the process of investigation and prosecution by using their official power. More so, holders of the government offices must have clean images. In the bourgeois politics of the olden days also, the tradition of relinquishing the post after being charged with corrupt practices was in vogue everywhere in the world. But contrary to this, Mr Laloo Prasad is to break this tradition and shamelessly stick to his post and is trying to incite the caste feeling of the people. He is trying to convince the people about a so-called conspiracy

to implicate him with false charges. On the other hand, the rise of the rightist and communal forces like BJP in the state using this issue of corruption is undoubtedly a matter of serious concern. As this government is getting unpopular day by day as a result of pursuance of anti-people policies, BJP-Samata combination is gaining ground as the only alternative. Though a BJP MLA is also involved in this scam, it is trying to project itself as a 'clean party' and in order to woo the people it is promising a 'corruption-free' administration if it comes to power. Besides, the speedy erosion of the vote bank of the Congress in the state is swelling the same of the BJP-Samata combination which is hopeful to seize the governmental power in the next election.

In spite of all these facts, the ground for a mighty movement is prepared for the Left. There is a good number of people who are not ready to support BJP-Samata combination and do like to see the Left taking initiative for a statewide movement. But the role of the big left parties like CPI(M) and the CPI who are supposed to lead this movement is utterly frustrating. Everybody knows that they are in collusion with Laloo Prasad and his Janata Dal at the Centre and in the state and they are not in a mood to sever this relation. In Bihar, they need Laloo's support in the election. So, in spite of demanding Laloo's resignation and being in the 15-Party combination, they are reluctant to spread this movement throughout the country and add dimension to it. The CPI(M) General Secretary Mr Harkishen Singh Surjeet, as reported in the press, has directed the other state committees not to take up the issue. So the

CPI(M) units in other states are conspicuously keeping silent and the CPI(M) leader Mr Jyoti Basu has been his adviser 'in this hour of grave crisis of Mr Yadav's political life. In Bihar they are demanding Laloo's resignation only to show the people that they are not involved in it and to reap parliamentary dividend from widespread peoples' resentment on this issue.

But despite all these weaknesses of the Left camp, there is a bright possibility of building up a mighty movement in the state. Fifteen political parties including the SUCI, CPI, CPI(M), Samajwadi Party, RSP, Forward Bloc, CPI(ML), etc., have come forward to forge a combination and are taking one after another programme which are attracting increasing number of people from all walks of life. Attack of the JD hoodlums on these programmes could not frustrate them. The student and youth organisations also have stepped forward to strengthen and escalate this movement. If this movement continues and can gain momentum, it will be able to a great extent to unite the people now divided on caste and religious lines and resist the rise of the right reactionary and communal forces like BJP in the state.

We, therefore, urge the people to realize the significance of building up a mighty movement throughout the state which can only check the corruption to some extent and can, at the same time, pave the way for greater struggle for establishing a corruption-free society which is possible only by replacing this outworn polity by a socialist system. This incident has again showed it clearly that retaining this system that rots, people can gain nothing. For the solution of this problem all roads are blocked except the road to movement and to revolution.

United Left Democratic Movement in Bihar

Janata Dal Hoodlums Attack SUCI Procession

The obstinate attitude of Bihar Chief Minister Mr Laloo Prasad Yadav of not resigning his post even after seeking the permission of the Governor by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for filing chargesheet against him in the Fodder Scam, has triggered a mighty movement in the state and has compelled all the left and democratic parties (except Janata Dal) to come closer and forge a combination. Though for a long time our party, the SUCI, has been trying to unite these parties and unleash a movement against corruption and anti-people policies of Janata government in the state, we could not succeed. But this time, situation has compelled them, particularly the CPI and the CPI(M) to be a constituent of the combination and to take part in the movement. Fifteen political parties including SUCI, CPI, CPI(M), CPI(ML), RSP, FB, etc. have formed this combination and chalked out a programme of action which started on 16th May with a sit-in demonstration at the feet of the statue of Jayprakash Narayan near Gandhi Maidan. Comrade Shivsankar and Comrade Arun Kumar Singh, members, Bihar State Secretariat of our party addressed the demonstrators on our behalf.

This news of united action has spread all over the state and has instilled confidence among the people.

On 18th May innumerable processions were taken out in Patna and in all the district towns where increasing number of people from all

sections of the society took part. This enraged the Janata Dal (JD) leaders and they mounted attack on the processions in different places. At Muzaffarpur, an armed contingent of JD activists pounced upon our procession and bit our comrades mercilessly with lathis and other weapons. As a result of this, Comrade Idrish, member of the Muzaffarpur district committee of the party received severe injury and was sent to hospital. But this heinous attack could not dampen the spirit of the demonstrators, rather they took pledge to strengthen the movement with their all efforts. Moreover, this cowardly attack was condemned by all sections of the people. As a result of this, our comrades worked with doubled vigour to make the demonstration before the District Collector a grand success. The demonstration was held on 20th May last. At Muzaffarpur it was really a big show. Peasants, workers, women, students and youth come to town from distant corners of the district to give a fitting rebuff to the JD leaders who planned to attack our procession.

In other places also like Patna, Munghyr, Bhagalpur, Ara, Jamshedpur, Bokaro, Dhanbad, etc. the programme was a success.

Now the 15-party combination had taken a series of programme including 48-hour Bihar Bandh and has announced that this movement will continue until Laloo Prasad Yadav and other accused ministers in the scam resign.

Annual Conference of Sukinda Valley Mines Workers' Union

The annual conference of Sukinda Valley Mines Workers' Union was held on 7-9 May last amidst much enthusiasm. Comrade Tapas Dutta, All India President of the UTUC(LS) was in the chair. The conference started with the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. About 2000 workers including 300 fraternal delegates from Boula Mines participated. Before the conference started, martyrs' column in memory of Comrade Budhia Sethi and Comrade Shyamapada Routh was garlanded by Comrades Tapas Dutta, Mayadhar Nayek, Balaram Sahoo and many workers.

In the first two days of the conference, school of politics was held under the conduction of Comrade Tapas Dutta. Comrade Dutta discussed the various problems confronting the mines workers and the ways to resolve the same. Comrade Dutta stressed the urgency of freeing the workers' movement from the trap of legalism-reformism, and conducting the same in a militant way conducive to the emancipation struggle of the working class. Without this task the building up of the trade union movement was purposeless. With much sacrifice and struggle the workers achieved many demands and their wages also increased in terms of money. But because of the erosion of real wages their condition went down. The reason was that although the employers were

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Biological Aggression on Cuba

On 21st October last, a US plane started from Florida and flew very low over the western part of Cuba on its way to Columbia via Grand Kamen island. A plane of Cuban air force flying nearby noticed a yellowish smoke sprayed from it.

Afterwards, a type of plague widely destroyed crops in that region. It came to notice first on 18 December last. An epidemic occurred in a farm. Then it spread to other areas. Examining the life cycle of the germ collected from the affected trees, Cuban scientists concluded that this germ appeared around last October, when the particular US plane in question flew over Cuba. This germ multiplies fast. Ordinary pesticides are unable to annihilate them.

This is not the first time imperialists used germs as weapons of mass destruction. One can vividly recollect how in Vietnam the US imperialists used such weapons of mass destruction. In China too, Japanese imperialists did the same.

For decades, Cuba is under strict US economic blockade, its crime being a socialist country. The US on newer pleas is aggravating aggression on Cuba. It is roping in other countries in its design of newer and newer aggressions against Cuba. It has threatened to take punitive measures against countries which will continue trade relations with or invest in Cuba. Despite facing defeats in UN on occasions regarding US blockade of Cuba, it has not refrained from it. Attacks against Cuba only is on the rise.

Let our people, who have a glorious anti-imperialist tradition, voice strong protest against US aggression on Cuba, and particularly the biological aggression against it.

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Open Letter to the President

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militant revolutionary struggles of the Peruvian people with active assistance of its patron, the arch enemy of democracy in the world today – the US imperialism.

His crafty attempt, while on visit in India, to wash his hands of the blood of countless Peruvian militants by branding them "extremists" is as brazenly hypocritical as it is a blatant lie.

To honour such a character means in effect bringing insult upon not only the Peruvian people's fight for democracy, but also upon the rich tradition of the Indian people's anti-imperialist struggle.

We strongly denounce it.

Thanking you,

Yours truly,
Sd/- **Nihar Mukherjee**
General Secretary
SUCI

27th May, 1997

All India Anti-Imperialist Forum held Protest demonstration in Calcutta

All India Anti-Imperialist Forum held a protest demonstration before the US and British consulates in Calcutta on 18th May last against the recent naked attempts of the two imperialist countries to interfere into the affairs of India, regarding Kashmir and Indian Broadcasting Bill.

A well decorated procession started from Raja Subodh Mullick Square, marched through the SN Banerjee Road, and via Esplanade. When it reached the approach of Ho Chi Minh Sarani, huge contingents of police stopped it debaring the same from reaching the consulates. A delegation from the Forum went to the offices of the two consulates and handed over protest memoranda addressed to US President Mr Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister Mr Tony Blair. The Prime Minister of India Mr I K Gujral was also sent a letter in this connection.

Britain's Labour Party made Kashmir its election issue since 1995. This year, after being the Prime Minister of UK, Tony Blair said that Britain's Labour Party government gave India independence and as Kashmir issue had its beginning at that time, so Britain had a role to play in it. This comment of the Prime Minister of UK is not only audacious, it carries a hint of the possible British interference in Kashmir issue, which no Indian can accept.

Whatever may be the contradiction between

India and Pakistan over Kashmir, it is a border state of India. Naturally, its future is to be determined by the people of Kashmir in particular and by people of India in general. People will not accept any imperialist interference in this regard.

Frank Wisner, the US representative staying in India, visited Kashmir. Besides the Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, the US Ambassador had met the acting Indian General and the leaders of the so-called militant organisation — 'Huriyat'. Reportedly, he has assured the Huriyat leaders that the US administration would keep an eye on Kashmir. According to newspaper reports, one of the main reasons of Mr Wisner's going over to Kashmir was to examine the possibilities of dividing Kashmir into autonomous zones based on religion. All these moves are taken only to create pressure on India, which, is in fact, an interference into the internal affairs of India.

In the proposed broadcasting bill, proposal has been made to limit foreign shares in radio and TV in joint ventures by 49%. Broadcasting is related to security matters as also is potentially a source of decadent imperialist culture. 49% share, in this perspective is very high. Yet, the US and British imperialists are after raising further the 49% ceiling.

Against these naked interference of the imperialists, people should come forward and resist these conspiracies.

PRESS CLIPPING

Turkish women march against Shariat

ANKARA, Feb. 16. Thousands of Turks, most of them women, marched through the streets of Ankara on Saturday in the first major public protest against the policies of the Islamic-led government.

Marchers carried signs and chanted slogans condemning what they believe are efforts to move Turkey closer to Shariat, the strict law of the Koran, which imposes many restrictions on women.

"Let Turkey shout 'Down with Shariat'," they chanted. One banner proclaimed "Women's Rights are Human Rights" while another said simply, "Women Exist."

Turkey is the most secular Muslim country in West Asia and the role of religion in public life is restricted by both the law and custom.

Turkish secularists fear that moves toward Islamic fundamentalism here may set an example for other moderate Muslim countries and the organisers of Saturday's march hoped the protest would prove that anti-fundamentalist sentiment remains widespread in Turkey.

The Prime Minister, Mr Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the Muslim-oriented Welfare Party is seeking to end restrictions on women wearing veils or head scarves in the civil service and on public university campuses.

He contends that he is simply defending freedom of choice, but critics believe he is using the issue as part of a campaign against secularism.

During his eight months in power, Mr Erbakan has not imposed any major legal changes and has, in fact, stepped back from many of the radical proposals he made while in the Opposition. He is the first Turkish leader, since the founding of the Turkish Republic 74 years ago to strongly identify himself with Islam. However, many Turks mistrust him.

"We are definitely in danger because of what's going on now", asserted one of Saturday's marchers, Mrs. Ayse Topcu, a 43-year-old housewife who carried a sign reading "We Want a Secular Democratic Turkey."

"Part of the problem is Erbakan and the Welfare Party," Mrs. Topcu said, "The other part is the Turkish people. We aren't doing anything to stop this from happening."

Women played a crucial role in supporting the secular reforms decreed during the 1920s by founder of the Turkish Republic Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and more than two-thirds of those who marched through a cold rain in Ankara on Saturday were women. Sponsors of the march included not only women's groups but also labour unions, law and medicine associations, and cultural and retirees' organisations.

"We are marching against Shariat and the darkness that aims to keep women outside of humanity," said Mr Senal Sarahan, a leader of the Modern Lawyers' Association, one of the groups sponsoring the rally.

Another marcher, Ms. Sabiha Kizilmark, 59, was draped in a Turkish flag to which she had pinned a portrait of Ataturk. "I don't want to live under a black sheet," she said "We are the real Muslims not those who want to turn back the clock."

Armoured cars and hundreds of police officers many of the women, lined the route of march, but no clashes were reported. Leaders of the Welfare Party had made no statements about the march, and officials from the secularist True Path party, which is a partner in Mr Erbakan's coalition, were divided.

Mr Hasan Ekinci, deputy chairman of the True Path, condemned the march as an attempt to divide

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UTUC-LS Attends**Fourteenth International Solidarity Affairs in Philippines**

14th "International Solidarity Affair" was organised at Manila from 28th April to 8th May, 1997. It was organised by KMU a leading Trade Union Federation of Philippines.

Comrade Sitesh Dasgupta, member, All India Committee of UTUC-LS, represented the organisation in the ISA. He was the only delegate from India. Delegates also came from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Sweden, Hongkong and USA.

The 1st May workers rally in Manila was a grand success. It was a huge rally of nearly 50,000 workers with their respective banners. Workers belonging to other unions also joined the rally in which KMU-affiliated unions were the major force. Foreign delegates with their respective trade union flags were at the front of the procession. The massive procession marched about 12 km when police barricade stopped it before the office of President Ramos. The procession stayed there for about seven hours. There, Comrade Crispin Beltron, Chairperson of KMU, besides the leaders of different independent unions delivered a long speech. On behalf of the foreign delegates, Comrade Peter Harvey from New Zealand spoke. He spoke on the working class solidarity. The main demands that were raised in the rally were 100 peso minimum wage, other democratic rights and against contractualisation.

From 2nd to 4th May, delegates visited many factories and met workers there, including workers of closed and locked out factories. Most of the factories there are run by multinational enterprises.

The main conference started from 6th May, held at southern part of Manila. Comrade Sitesh Dasgupta was nominated as a member of the Steering Committee of the conference.

On 6th May at 9 AM delegates representing different countries presented their respective papers. Other than Comrade Sitesh Dasgupta, the foreign delegates in the conference were from Sweden, USA, Japan, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Migrant Internationals from Netherlands, Hong Kong and Canada. Delegates from KMU presented papers.

From 7th to 8th May, workshops were organised, attended by the delegates divided into five groups. Comrade Sitesh Dasgupta was selected as chairman of the fourth group which was attended by delegates from Sweden, New Zealand, Australia and from KMU.

On 8th night, Solidarity Night was held with all the delegates.

On 9th, the Steering Committee along with the workshop secretaries summarised the whole affair.

The Paper on "Attacks on Labour — Economic, Political, Cultural and Ideological : Trade Union's Strategies and Actions", presented by Comrade Sitesh Dasgupta at the KMU — 14th ISA is given below in abridged form.

The Paper

Crisis-ridden capitalism, through the coercive capitalist state machine has unleashed an all-pervasive onslaught on the working millions to reap super profits. Since 1991, ruling parties and the so-called opposition, subservient to the state, are implementing pro-industrialist policies, including privatization, globalization, liberalization in line

with IMF-World Bank prescriptions, allowing unrestricted entry of multinationals to join with domestic monopolies to exploit rich resources and cheap labour of our country. The result is overwhelming unemployment, price rise and poverty.

Advocates of reforms claim that the rate of growth of GDP which was 0.8% in 1981, rose in 1995-96 to 7% at 1980-81 prices. But they conceal that the rate of growth was 10.7% in 1988-89 when reforms were not in that way in picture. They conveniently forget to explain why it came down to 0.8% in 1990-91.

Secondly, who has been benefitted by this so-called economic growth? It has been commented in 9th Plan Draft Approach Paper released by the Government of India that "the poor and unprivileged had not been benefitted from the growth pattern of the 8th Plan period (i.e. the period of reform). There is also evidence of deterioration in inter-regional disparities of per-capita income." And sometimes back UN Development Programme (UNDP) commented in course of analysis of post-reform situation, "India's rural poor, more than a third of the population are paying price for reforms, but not seeing many of benefits." In fact, this growth is delinked from poverty eradication and job creation. That is why, 'jobless growth' is becoming a feature everywhere in the capitalist world. According to the Planning Commission estimate, the number of employed persons, i.e. persons at work including those who used to get half the time's work in a week and cultivators, were 301.7 million and 23 million were employable but unemployed at the beginning of reforms. The Commission also estimated that 71 million would be in queue awaiting jobs within next 10 years, i.e. upto 2002. To be precise, reform process is pledged to provide jobs to 94 million job-seekers, although, as per various studies, job-seekers have already crossed a figure of 180 million. How many jobs including work even for a day in a week has been provided since April, 1992? As per Economic Survey conducted by the Government of India, it is only 19 million, which rather sounds a hollow claim. But the survey forgets to mention how many have lost their employment in the meantime. We may have an idea from the fact that in March, 1992, the number of closed and sick industrial units were 2,23,809 and now in 1997 the number is fast approaching a figure near about 5 lakhs. It may be mentioned in this connection that more than 95% of these closed and sick units are in private sector which is demanding dismantling of public sector on the plea of inefficiency and poor performance and advocating all-out privatization as panacea. The Banking sector after the adoption of financial sector reform and massive computerization programme have estimated a surplus of 50% of its workforce. The 5th Central Pay Commission set up by the Government of India, going beyond its jurisdiction, of late, has not only recommended abolition of 3.5 lakhs of vacancies and reduction of workforce by 30% of central government services including Railway & Telecommunication, but also has strongly advocated restructuring of the government itself by way of winding up many of its departments, limiting its involvement only in core functions of the state, thus withdrawing itself

from important essential activities related to social sectors, privatizing its functions, contracting out permanent nature of works always performed by the government and lastly introducing contract employment, if need be, thus bidding a good-bye to the concept of permanency in service or security of service. Further, a theory is advanced that wage employment is a backdated and a conservative concept as opposed to the so-called advanced concept of self-employment — the main thrust of government strategy to fight out employment by 2002. Indian trade union movement is pushed to a situation where it is finding itself busy in the fight for retaining the purchasing capacity at a particular point and protecting the same from erosion due to unabated price hike. Wage agreements effecting increase of wage in real terms is gradually disappearing. With all these, are added fiscal deficit, internal and external debts, de-control of prices, fraudulent inflation chart, concessions to corporate sectors in various forms while reduction of all sorts of subsidies for poor and underprivileged are on the increase.

Consequently, contradictions and conflicts within the capitalist class are aggravating. All pervasive instability in capitalist economy is the order of the day. This instability in the base is threatening the super structure. The void in the parliamentary democracy is exposed. Corruption and criminalisation have totally pervaded bourgeois politics. Unprincipled alliances are coming up. Religious fundamentalism is stalking the country. Worst casualty is culture, ethics and morality. Rotten imperialist culture is penetrating our socio-cultural life. Commodity approach is rapidly engulfing all finest feelings and emotions causing immense harm to working class movement. Ideological offensives have intensified particularly since the restoration of capitalism through counter-revolution in the erstwhile socialist countries. Monopoly media and servile intelligentsia aided and abetted by imperialist media have unleashed a campaign against the working class movement, trade union rights and right to collective bargaining, class struggle and working class philosophy. The capitalist-imperialists are trying to convince that in the changed international situation class struggle is irrelevant, class collaboration is the order of the day, etc. Ruling class and the compromising forces between labour and capital together are trying to transform trade unions into part and parcel of the existing exploitative capitalist system. Workers' participation in management on the plea of promoting industrial democracy and participative management is a step in this direction.

The need of the hour is to wage determined and principled struggle on all fronts — economic, political, cultural and philosophical, bringing together all the forces who could be united in building up movements against capitalism-imperialism and their so-called reforms, in the process to build up and establish a core leadership comprising revolutionary militant trade unionism with distinct class outlook. The UTUC-LS, India, and its affiliates spread all over the country are striving to organise and direct all its activities and

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International Solidarity Affairs in Philippines

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struggle in this positive direction.

Before concluding, I would like to place a few words relating to international situation. Dismantling of socialist camp and weakening of socialist movement have reduced considerably the bargaining power of the relatively underdeveloped capitalist countries. A more ruthless neo-colonial exploitation of relatively underdeveloped countries is being perpetrated by the giant multinationals and financial agencies of imperialist powers. It must also be noted that the development of the usurious character of finance capital is the most modern and ruthless weapon in the hands of highly developed imperialist countries in their neo-colonial attacks. We must equip ourselves ideologically organisationally to resist such nefarious attacks. But at the same time, we must not miss to take note of the fact that many of the developed among the developing countries are pursuing the policy of conflict and collaboration with the traditional imperialist countries. While it is necessary to correctly identify the character and role of domestic capital in all the developing countries with correct appraisal of the stages of their development in this critical international perspective, it is imperative to formulate trade union strategy to resist attacks on labour and develop united struggle against imperialism and war.

Comrades and friends, when we are here in 14th KMU-ISA and exchanging views on attacks on labour - political, economic, cultural and ideological and discussing resistance strategy of trade union movement, the working people of every country are in the midst of May Day Celebrations. This solidarity affairs programme is quite befitting to commemorate Historic May Day. Let all of us take pledge to march ahead with the ever-new slogan — 'Workers of all countries unite' and accept the central challenge of this decade — it is to uproot imperialism-capitalism, root and branch, once for all. With this and with warm revolutionary greetings to you all and the KMU, the organizer and sponsor of this international conference, I conclude. Long Live Revolution, Long Live Working Class Internationalism.

PRESS CLIPPING

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Turks, and said it was sponsored by political groups "looking for power on the streets." He said marchers were seeking to restrict religious freedom under the guise of their "so-called attitude of being contemporary."

But another True Path leader, the Minister for Defence, Mr Turhan Tayan met on Friday with organisers of the march and pledged his support.

"Know it and believe it by heart, Turkey will never be dragged into darkness," Mr Tayan assured them.

The Foreign Minister, Ms. Tansu Ciller, head of the True Path and the country's most prominent women politician, took no public position on Saturday's march. Some who participated spoke bitterly of her decision to join the government of Mr Erbakan.

— New York Times

Annual Conference of Sukinda Valley Mines Workers' Union

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compelled to concede to some of the demands of the workers because of the pressure of movement, at the same time they, controlling the national market, had been continuously increasing the prices of all essential commodities.

Comrade Dutta cited the example of jute industry and Sukinda Valley Mines where thousands of workers were retrenched. Comrade Dutta strongly condemned the policy of privatization and the scheme of voluntary retirement.

Comrade Dutta flayed those who kept the trade union movement within the bounds of legalism-reformism or went away from the path of the main emancipation struggle of them. He regretted that the sense of morality was fast eroding among the workers and cautioned that the ruling capitalist class of India, taking lessons from the history of other countries were conspiring to destroy the moral fabric of the youth and workers of the country. He urged the workers to develop new sense of moral values to attain victory in the struggle.

Comrade Dutta appealed to the women workers to come forward to build up movement to live with dignity.

Comrade Mayadhar Nayek, the General Secretary of the Union and Comrade Balaram

Sahoo, the General Secretary of Orissa Krishak O Khet Mazdoor Sangathana participated in the discussion in the school.

On the third day of the conference Comrade Mayadhar Nayek presented the report of the Union and all the delegates deliberated on this report. After that the election to the Working Committee was held. A new Working Committee with Comrade Tapas Dutta as President and Comrade Mayadhar Nayek as General Secretary was constituted.

The conference ended with the *Internationale*.

SUCI demands withdrawal of hike in postal charges

In a press statement dated 24.05.97 Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI said:

"We strongly protest against unprecedented hike in postal charges. This is another direct attack on the crisis-ridden common people by the UF-led Central Government following the footsteps of previous Congress regime.

We demand immediate withdrawal of this anti-people decision."

Present-day Coalition Governments

(Contd. from page 4)

democracy taking its root, democracy becoming more and more participatory; these are nothing but empty jargons to be used as smokescreen to cover the ever increasing crisis of capitalism and the anti-people character of these political parties. Thus what is being claimed as federalism is nothing but fragmentalism; while democracy is claimed to be taking root, regionalism, communalism and such other evils raise their ugly heads; democracy is eulogized, at the same time provisions like the Article 356 which were once much talked about and opposed, are being condoned in a changed tone by those who were in opposition then and who clamour for federalism now; while pledges are made to fight divisive forces, they earn respectability in the legislative fora, and people, on their turn, are tortured, molested, raped and gunned down. This act of embellishment thus has no other design behind it but to hoodwink people, and it has gone to such limits where the once-despised, once-cast aside words and thoughts are rekindled euphemistically to make people accept them. Capitalism is replaced by 'free market', 'market economy', imperialist, trust and cartels are named as 'corporate sectors', 'MNC-s', imperialist cosmopolitanism is renamed as 'globalization', connivance with or surrender to imperialism is rendered respectability by the term 'unipolarity' trumpeted as a panacea. Thus the present air of idealism and idealist phrases stink of deception

and crisis; the more the talk of federalism, the more there is the fanning of divisive forces, the more they plead for their bourgeois democracy, the more there are people's miseries, on one hand and corruption and exploitation by the ruling class on the other. The louder the class, the capitalists, speak for stability, the greater is the fragmentation, defection and instability. The more there are phrases of idealism, the more there is horsetrading to secure stability in parliament, the more fomented is social corruption. Hence stems the two-party system or multi-party coalition, the so-called 'federalism' reflecting the all-out crisis of capitalism in economy, in market and from these, in politics, in ideology, in questions of shunning all kinds of norms and values. They reflect capitalism groping for a solution to tide over the crisis; they reflect their failure to find a viable one.

We raise the points for the people to ponder over, to realize that this hoodwinking, the deception, the unprincipled combination in the name of a coalition — will run on unchecked till there is an alternative that will stand for the real democracy of people. It is time for people to realize that so long as capitalism is in power, the source that breeds all these instability, deception, corruption and exploitation, people are not to have any respite. And here lies the role of people in identifying and strengthening the genuine political force that will lead them to fight against capitalism and thereby to end with these days of gloom.

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