

'AGNI' FLIES BUT PEOPLE STARVE!

The intermediate range ballistic missile 'Agni' was testfired from the Balasore missile testing range in Orissa. The Indian rulers are claiming it to be a major achievement for India. But the protest of the hapless villagers around the test site, who were forced to evacuate their homes fell on deaf ears and the blast of 'Agni' drowned their protest in deafening sound. The pictures of these poor uprooted villagers as appeared in some of the national dailies speak volumes about the attitude of the government to the common people.

The anti-people policy of the government is reflected not only in its attitude to these uprooted villagers but in its attitude to the entire people of the country. When the common people of our country are getting pauperised day by day, when they are denied even the basic amenities of life, when they suffer alternately from drought and flood every year, when the literacy rate in our country is the lowest in the world, when infant mortality rate of our country is the highest in the world, when the people of our country cannot find any ray of hope from the curse of unemployment which is continuously rising, in such a grim situation the Government of India can boast of 'Agni'! When there is a complete breakdown of all services to the civilian population at least in one field the government can boast of success and that is in the field of military buildup. With the successful testing of 'Agni' India is the sixth country of the world, which possesses indigenously produced intermediate range ballistic missile. If half of the Indian people live below poverty line so what?—Indian state can boast of the fact that it is the member of the exclusively elite club of six though it is at the top on the question of poverty. But this successful testfiring of 'Agni' is not just an isolated event free from other aspects of the military buildup of India but it is a part of the total preparation. As a matter of fact Indian government has been pursuing this policy of militarisation since long, whatever may be its public posture about non-alignment and

peace; the Indian rulers have been building up a massive military build up since sixties. But whom they want to defend? Is this military build up necessary for the security of the nation or this is necessary for a few people? If the national security is endangered it is the patriotic people who come forward to defend the country from foreign aggression. But these very people are on the verge of physical extinction because of capitalist exploitation and heavy taxation by government. And yet the government is making massive military preparation by extracting money from the people.

At the time of inde-

GROSS EXPENDITURE ON DEFENCE

(Rs. in crores) Year	Revenue expenditure	Capital outlay
1950-51	181.82	4.18
1955-56	187.97	17.59
1960-61	270.69	33.38
1965-66	792.76	122.58
1970-71	1127.53	147.83
1975-76	2386.16	221.15
1980-81	3717.76	326.39
1985-86	7279.01	967.36
1986-87 (Revised)	10193.95	1227.09
1987-88 (budgeted)	13438.77	3997.97

(Source : Public Accounts estimate as shown in various budget estimates)

pendence India had an army of 3 lakh, an airforce of two fighters and one transport squadron and a navy comprising four sloops, two frigates and some harbour defence crafts. But, at present, Indian military with approximately 1.3 million men is recognised as one of the largest regular forces. India has now the world's fourth largest

standing army, fifth largest airforce and the eighth largest navy. With about 40 ordnance factories, 8 public sector defence undertakings, and number of research laboratories Indian indigenous defence sector is the largest among the Third World States in values, volumes, diversity of manufacture and research and development facilities. (Source : India's Armed Forces Year Book 1981-82).

ANNUAL INCREASE OF MILITARY BUDGET

India's defence budget has doubled during '80s though this does not give the complete picture about defence spending as many items which were previously shown under the head of defence budget are now shown under civil head. The following table will show how the gross expenditure on defence has been galloping year after year to an astronomical figure :—

The increase as shown above however does not reflect the correct picture as inflation has not been taken into account. According to one study by the Indian Express the capital expenditures at constant prices increased by 2.5 times from 1962-63 to 1984-85 and within revenue expenditure the ex-

(Contd. on page 2)

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Resolution of Orissa State Committee, SUCI

The Orissa State Committee of SUCI adopted the following resolution in its meeting held at Cuttack from 3rd to 5th June, 1989 while discussing on the ensuing general election in the backdrop of the present situation.

"Noting the grave situation, pervading all spheres of the lives of the common people created due to the anti-people policies of the Congress (I) governments—both at the centre and in the State—the State Committee reiterated its appeal to all Left, democratic and Opposition parties to forge an united platform as a viable alternative which will help opening a new vista of united people's movement against the Congress(I), misrule and in course of it ensure a crushing defeat of the Congress(I) in the ensuing general election as an incidental to the people's movement.

"As such the State Committee likes to underline the following general principle which should guide the object of the proposed Left, democratic and Opposition front against the Congress(I) misrule and basing on which the concrete electoral aggrement on seat adjustments are to be made :

(i) To fight against all anti-people policies of the Congress(I) Government.

(ii) To fight against corruption and nepotism which are eating into the very vitals of the moral and cultural fibre of the

public life, particularly that patronized and practised by the individuals at the helm of the Government, not sparing even the Prime Minister of the country as revealed from the recent incident of Fairfax, Bofors, German Submarines, Swiss Bank Account scandals etc.

(iii) To fight against all sorts of parochial, communal and divisive forces.

(iv) For restoration, preservation and extension of civil liberties and democratic rights, parties should be pledge-bound to repeal all black ordinances, bills and acts like MISA, ESMA, NSA, Disturbed Areas Act, Trade Union and Industrial Disputes (Amendment) bill 1988, Hospital and other Institutions (redressal of grievances) bill; 59th amendment of constitution etc; declaration of the policy of non-interference of police and administration in all legitimate democratic mass movements, if voted to power.

"Basing on the above guiding principles, the State Committee feels that the Left, democratic and Opposition parties should nominate candidates who are upholding these principles in deeds and not depending on mere election promises. For that purpose the candidates to be nominated should :

(i) have no charges or practice of corruption and nepotism,

(Contd. on page 6)

Massive Military buildup by India

(Contd. from page 1)

penditure on stores at constant price increased by more than 3 times from 1962-63 to 1984-85. During the same period the expenditure on pay and allowances rose by 2.32 times at constant prices and the research and development expenditure increased by nearly eight times at the same constant prices.

The government of India maintains that India's military expenditure is shown in a lopsided way and points out that on per capita basis India's defence spending trails far behind that of Pakistan. That this argument is meant only to befool the people and an out and out trickery is best exposed by the fact that by population India is eight times as big as Pakistan.

The colossal military expenditure can best be compared by calculating what percentage the military budget constitutes of the annual budget. In annual budget it is shown that about 16 to 18 per cent of the budget is allocated to defence. But this is a fraud in as much as the anatomy of the military budget estimates shows that those expenditures that should have been shown under the defence estimates are included as part of the civil expenditure. For example the allocations for defence public sector undertakings which were shown as part of military spending upto 1970 are now shown as part of civil expenditure under the head 'capital outlay on Industrial and Economic Development'. It is clear that the government is deliberately misleading the people to hide the fact of increasing the military spending in a situation where the fifty per cent of the Indian people live below the poverty line. Not only that. The colossal amount spent on nuclear and space research programmes for defence purpose are not shown in defence budget! The salaries and pensions of

certain categories of employees belonging to defence development are shown in civil estimates. Border roads constructed in Bhutan and other places for military purposes are included in civil estimates. These practices only show that the government is bent on hiding the actual percentage of budget spent on military. The government faces criticism for increasing the military budget from various quarters and so this attempt of hiding the actual size of military spending. According to Sri Ravi Rikhye an Indian defence analyst, hidden, reclassified and subsidised items push the military spending to more than eighteen thousand crore of rupees.

INDIAN ARMY, AIR-FORCE AND NAVY

With this huge expenditure India has built-up a modern mechanised military. Indian army is equipped with Soviet T-72 tanks which are being assembled at Avadi. The tanks are replacing older type Vijayanta, the British designed tanks. Indian military is also developing the Arjun, which will correct the problems of the Vijayanta with modern navigation and fire control computer. India has quadrupled its military research and development budget since '82 and is spending a colossal amount for building-up missiles and light combat aircrafts. "Since 1986 India has ranked as the world's largest arms importer; in 1987 it purchased from abroad weaponry valued at \$ 5.2 billion, more than Iraq and Iran combined and twelve times as much as Pakistan. Largely to gain foreign exchange needed to pay its arms import bill, India is preparing to enter the world arms bazaar as an exporter." (Time April 3, 1989).

The Indian Air Force is a large, modern force with a total of roughly 850 aircrafts. These aircrafts include some of the most modern type. Its recent acquisition of

French Mirage 2000 and Soviet MIG-29 has steadily improved the quality of its air combatress. India is also acquiring the latest air to air and air to ground munitions.

Indian Navy is a formidable force and no navy of the region is able to compete with the Indian Navy on the sea. India has acquired aircraft carriers and assault tank landing ships. India is also building its anti-submarine warfare capability. In Karnataka a super port is being built for submarine, surface vessels including a planned 30,000 ton aircraft carrier and long range reconnaissance aircraft able to patrol as far away as Africa and Australia.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND MISSILE CAPABILITIES

After the Pokhran test in 1974 India has traversed a long way in developing nuclear weapons. An official spokesman claims that atomic weapons components are on the shelf and India can produce nuclear bomb overnight. Before successfully testfiring the 'Agni', IRBM, India successfully carried out test of 150 mile range ballistic missile that can carry a load of 2000 lbs which is more than enough for a nuclear warhead. With the successful launching of the 'Agni', India is now poised to be a member of the nuclear club capable of delivering nuclear warheads to a host of countries surrounding India.

REAL MOTIVE

But what does India intend? Indian leaders speak of the threats from Pakistan and sometime invoke China as the real threat. But what is the reality now? India is undoubtedly the major power of the region and the margin of military superiority of India has increased since '71 war vis-a-vis Pakistan. Indian state has unquestionably established its hegemony in South Asia and no

one can dare to question its supremacy in this part of the globe. Again as regards China, India faced no threat from that country during the last two decades. Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi recently visited China and Pakistan and claimed that relations between these countries with India are improving. But the improved relations make no difference in military spending. As a matter of fact this colossal military spending is getting accelerated and in a situation when grovelling poverty of the people is most incompatible with this military buildup. India is out to find a threat from outside as the justification for its military spending! An official of the External Affairs Ministry presented even such a farfetched argument that one reason India needed blue water Navy was the present and future turmoil in Southern Africa (Time, April 3, '89). With the extended maritime jurisdiction claimed on the basis of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Indian rulers too expect like Dr. Kissinger "Indian influence to radiate in the Indian Ocean and down to Singapore." (From the Statesman) On occasions the officials of the External Affairs Ministry have described not only Maldives but also Seychelles and Mauritius, the two Indian Ocean countries closer to Africa than to India as part of New Delhi's sphere of influence. In Australian parliament questions have been raised regarding the acquisition of a nuclear powered submarine and Soviet-built long range reconnaissance planes by India and in Djakarta one army officer has said that his country feels concerned about India's long term intentions and this is the main reason for which, he explains, Indonesia is building-up the large naval base in Sumatra that would provide a quick access to the Bay of Bengal. Whether this is the main reason for building up a naval base in Sumatra is a different question; for we know that Indonesian economy, being a capitalist one has its own con-

pulsion for militarisation but the fact is that Indian military build-up is so massive that even as a plea a distant country like Indonesia cites it for its own militarisation.

It is thus clear that India's military build-up is not prompted by any threat from any of the neighbouring countries for the present or in the near future. It is some other compulsion that forces India to get militarised and in order to find the rationale for such a huge military build-up Indian rulers cite the possible threat from Pakistan and China. After attaining independence the Indian bourgeoisie resorted to capitalist planning. But in this epoch when capitalism has become moribund any capitalist planning is bound to be associated with a shadow of crisis and Indian capitalist planning has also been no exception. After the launching of the first and second five year plans industrial sectors showed some growth rate because of the injection of state funding in the economy. But this growth rate cannot be sustained because of ever-shrinking purchasing power of people and lack of external market. Because of ruthless capitalist exploitation the Indian people are pauperised and have been no purchasing power at all to absorb the production of the industrial sector and again penetration in external market is difficult in view of the fierce competition from the powerful imperialist countries of the world. Being confronted with such a situation, the economy faced recession after the Third Five Year Plan.

The purchasing power of the people is decreasing because of capitalist exploitation. Indian capitalist class cannot bring about radical land reform in the present situation when the world capitalist market is in deep crisis, when the internal market is in deep crisis and when the unemployment problem is growing. Because modernisation and mechanization of agriculture

(Contd. on page 6)

Students' Organisations of South Asian Countries Meet

Under the auspices of the Asian Students' Information Centre (ASIC) a meeting of the students' organisations of South Asian countries was held on 3-4 June, 1989, at Yuva Kendra, Calcutta, to discuss "academic and social problems of female students and youths of South Asia". Representatives of Bangladesh Students' Union from Bangladesh, All Nepal Nationalist Free Students' Union and Nepalese Federation of Students' Union from Nepal; AIDS0, AISF, SFI and SB from India together with those of ASIC participated in the discussion. A leading member of the Students' Council of the USSR and one of the secretariat members of the International Union of Students (IUS) also attended the meeting and took part in the discussion. At the end of the two-day meeting a joint communique was issued calling upon all concerned to develop social awareness about the academic and other disparities among the women, to demand removal of these disparities, to organise movement against the ongoing assaults and oppression on the women and to make the women more and more conscious of their social role and involve them in greater number in democratic movements and political activities.

In this meeting on behalf of the AIDS0 Com. Ashoke Mukherjee, member of the All India Secretariat and Com. Sujata Banerjee, a member of All India Council took part in this discussion and presented a paper on the topic focussing the condition of the women in India.

The paper is reproduced below in full :

This paper prepared by the All India Democratic Students' Organisation (AIDS0) will concentrate on the conditions of the social and educational problems of the Indian women, the role of the AIDS0 in particular and of student movement in general in fighting for solution to these problems.

ACADEMIC PROBLEM

Like all class divided societies, based on exploitation, Indian society is also no exception in pursuing a discriminatory role against women in all social and public affairs. In the educational field the discrepancies between the boys and girls, make this discrimination quite vivid. Today, after more than four decades of independence and nearly forty

years of constitutional rule, girl students constitute about 33 per cent of the total number of Indian students. India's position is very deplorable even in comparison to the African and Asian averages, as shown in the table No. 1.

Participation of women in education as teachers is another index of their achievement. The picture in that regard is no better. (Table—2)

TABLE—1

Percentage of Girl Students : 1982

	Primary level	Secondary level	Degree level
World Average	44	40	43
African Average	45	39	43
Asian Average	41	27	32
Indian Average	38	33	26

(Source : UNESCO Report—1982)

TABLE—2

Percentage of Female Teachers : 1982

	Primary level	Secondary level	Degree level
World Average	52	36	12
Afro-Asian Average	48	34	—
Indian Average	39	32	18

(Source : Ibid.)

If we take a detailed picture of the enrolment of girl students we come to see that although number of total students decreases at the successively higher stages of education, out of the total enrolment, the boy : girl ratio gradually becomes more skewed against the girls, the higher the level of education. (Table—3)

The discrimination may be further elaborately shown by splitting the figures at the level of higher education. (Table—4)

TABLE—3

Enrolment of Girl Students As Percentage of Total Number of Students

Level	Boys	Girls
Pre-primary	54.55	45.45
Primary	67.07	37.93
Middle	64.94	35.06
Secondary	70.84	29.16
Higher Secondary	72.90	27.10
Higher Education	72.34	27.66

(Source : Education in India : 1891-82 ; Vol. 1.)

TABLE—4

Women in Higher Education

Level	Boys	Girls	Level	Boys	Girls
B.A.	62.09	37.91	M.Com.	82.27	17.73
B.Sc.	70.11	29.79	Ph.D./		
B.Com.	79.11	20.89	D.Sc./		
M.A.	61.80	38.20	D.Phil	68.86	31.14
M.Sc.	66.93	33.07	B.E.	94.00	6.00
			M.B.B.S.	70.50	29.50

(Source : Selected Educational Statistics, No. 107, 1987 Ministry of Human Resources Development.)

It is, therefore, apparent from above that the position of women is lagging far behind the general position of the country in education, while the problem of increasing female enrolment is not an isolated one but closely connected with the general problem of expanding education for all, it demands some specific attention too, on which more later.

SOCIAL CONDITION

The social condition of the women with respect to enrolment, security, health etc. also presents an equally dismal picture. According to official sources, in the year 1985, the reported number of women raped in India was 6356, that kidnapped 8440, and those

murdered by burning 3837. Number of dowry victims in the first six months of 1986 alone was 2429 (Speech in Reply of Mr. P. Chidambaram, Union Minister of State in Rajya Sabha on 24 November 1987). In this, however, the incidents of 'suicides' resulting from dowry-quarrels have not been included, because these are seldom recorded by the law enforcing machinery. Female youths in India are nowhere safe—neither in their home, nor in the places of their occupation, the offices, firms, hospitals, institutions etc. not also in the streets, day or night makes no difference. Purchase and sale of

INSIDE STORY

Now in the background of such a gloomy picture for the women, it is indisputable that student organisations and student movement have a lot to do to improve the condition and bring the female students and youths at par with the rest of the students and youths in terms of access and success in the educational and social affairs. But student movement, however powerful it is, and a student organisation, however strong its hold, cannot achieve this unless they have a correct grasp of the problem and a correct solution in sight. Hence, at this place, we feel, probe into the etiology of this problem is necessary.

From the brilliant teachings of Marx and Engels we know that with the advent of private property and class division, class exploitation and male domination over women went hand in hand upto the capitalist stage of social development. Even the bourgeois democratic revolutions in many countries of Europe in spite of raising slogans of emancipation of the women and eliminating many feudal fetters upon them, could not ultimately do away with sex-discrimination. Lenin, Stalin and Mao, applied the Marxist teachings on their contemporary problems and showed how to correlate the women's liberation movement with the general proletarian revolutionary struggle of a country.

young women in the open just like cattle, at home and abroad, for flesh trade are too well known!

Apart from this absolute insecurity in social life, the other factors, as shown by a study group are as follows : In 1985 female literacy stood at 25.18 per cent as against overall literacy rate of 36 per cent; females employed 14.44 per cent of the total work force; among them 6.27 per cent in the unorganised sector; registered female job-seekers 11 millions out of total 380 millions; death rate of female children 71 per cent and the number of female foeticide was 78,000 in the period 1978-82. There is hardly any necessity to dwell upon these facts.

Coming to the Indian situation, we have the pleasure to recall some important teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, a great Marxist thinker of our era, which can enlighten us on the point in question. He pointed out that the national freedom movement, which was the bourgeois democratic movement in our country was led by a bourgeois class which was, for the obvious historical reasons, compromising in character, in their attitude to imperialism and feudalism. As a result, the

(Contd. on page 7)

'Left Front' Government surrenders cause of Labour in West Bengal

Nearly twelve years have passed since the CPI (M) led 'Left Front' assumed power in the State of W.B. During this period it has created a halo among some people in other states, who are not conversant with the facts, that it has been able to present a pro-people Government in the State. But the real picture there is quite different. The people there can hardly distinguish it from any other Government running elsewhere by a different party. The '88 edition of the "Labour in West Bengal" featuring the performance of the department of labour under 'Left Front' rule during the year '88 has recently been published. Even in its own document it could not but admit the sorry state of the affairs in the labour field of the State. Its own confession amply states how the CPI(M) claiming to be a Marxist-Leninist party can play havoc with the life of the toiling people after assuming power.

Let us see what are the revelations in the document.

"The spate of lock-outs, 'suspension of work', 'suspension of business' etc. resorted to by the employers had sharply increased in the year under review. The employers in general had been trying to force the workers to accept derogatory terms of employment like reduction in work-force, moratorium on wages, even actual reduction in wages in some cases, freezing of dearness allowance, curtailment of other existing benefits so long enjoyed by the workers, imposing of higher work-load etc. A still more serious cause of concern was the attempt by some owners of jute mills who are trying to impose on their workmen wages less than wages fixed in the tripartite settlement....". Thus starts the first paragraph of the chapter, "Industrial Relations" of the document, "Labour in West Bengal". It goes on, "...in certain cases the employers had resorted to lockouts for their financial problems" and in some cases the employers "are citing rigorous and derogatory terms as a pre-condition for obtaining loan from financial institutions".

It revealed further that the employer tried to "pass the entire burden of the economic crisis on to the shoulder of the working class" and even in some cases misappropriated the large amount of the workers' provident fund and ESI (MB) scheme benefits.

"In some units the workmen are deprived of the benefits of the ESI (M) scheme as the contribution deducted from the wages/salaries are not deposited with ESIC Authorities. A large number of employers are not depositing the provident fund contribution to the Provident Fund Authority". It is to be noted here that the ESI and PF benefits enjoyed by an employee are largely contributed by himself through deduction from his gross-salary. So misappropriation of this fund amounts to a criminal offence. But who will take steps against the corrupt management? The Government? The most sordid picture is that the Government even cannot wash its hands of the similar corruption charges. One such case of financial irregularities has been brought to light where Government-appointed school boards were involved in misappropriation or diversion of funds as high as Rs. 17.88 crores which was to be deposited to treasury. (The Statesman 15.5.89).

Now when such "unprecedented and unilateral acts of onslaught" were brought down upon the workers, what was the role of the CPI(M), the leading partner of the 'LF'? It was naturally expected that the 'Marxist' labour minister

would take legislative action against the unlawful activities on the part of the owner. It was also expected that in the states like W.B. series of militant movements would be organised to undo the conspiracy of the management. But what really happened? During the twelve years from the very outset the 'LF' rulers appealed to the good wishes of the capitalists to be liberal to the workers and took recourse to the policy of class-collaboration. They discouraged people's legitimate movement against all sorts of oppression and exploitation and appealed to the workers to maintain industrial peace. The result was alarming—there was virtually no protest, no movement, no strike. The statistics as published in the document spoke in the same vein. In the 1980 edition of the document it was stated. "As far as strikes are concerned, apart from the year 1984, there has been a steadily decreasing trend. (In 1989 there was an industrial strike in jute). The same cannot be said about lock-outs. There has been a pronounced increase in the number of lock-outs over the past five years. The document said that last year lock-outs were responsible for 88.2 per cent of total loss of man days, while strikes accounted for only 11.8 per cent. Stating the data in other way during the said year about 228 cases of lock-outs were reported against only 34 cases of strikes. In controlling the number of gheraos the 'LF' Government has got probably the full marks. From 1982 to 1986 the number of yearwise gheraos as reported in the document is 28, 13, 4, 5 and 2 respectively and during 1987 and 1988 the number became absolutely nought. So the 'LF', the so-called instrument of struggle, wiped out the struggle altogether.

Now what benefit for the workers could be

reaped by this policy of class-collaboration and appeasement of the management? Has the working condition of the workers been improved? Has their service-benefit been enriched? Have lock-outs, closures, retrenchments, lay-offs been reduced? Absolutely it could not be. From the document it was found that during the previous year closures were reported for about 25 cases of which only 5 cases were re-opened. During the period of 1982-88 about 23,447 persons were laid off, 4,394 were retrenched while 27,511 men lost their job for good due to closure. In the year under review in the State about 1,55,700 men were thrown out of job for lock-outs—the number which was nearly as high as 50 per cent of the total number of workmen rendered jobless throughout the country. (The Statesman 11.5.89). Though this is a mere fraction of the total unemployed contingent of the State which was 45.64 lakhs at the end of 1987 as per number of applicants on the live-register of employment exchanges, the highest among all states of the country.

Whenever any strike broke out, the employers came down heavily upon the strikers and dictated terms for the settlement at the threat of lock-outs or closures. The workers, finding the 'instrument of struggle' (!) sided with the management, had to succumb to the pressure to reach an anti-labour agreement. To cite an example, the management of BATA Shoe Co. brought the workers to heels through an ever worst anti-labour agreement. After the agreement the management became so adamant that within three months it sacked three labours and very recently another one for just smoking inside the office. Scores of such instances can be cited where the workers had to swallow ever more ignominious terms and conditions. So whenever any agreement was reached that was done at the cost of worker's inter-

est and the workers had to resume their duties bowing their heads down and with their appalling misery multiplied further.

Now when this unprecedented and onesided attack was brought down upon by the unscrupulous management how did the 'Marxist' ministers react? When the employers were citing rigorous and derogatory terms as a pre-condition for obtaining loan from financial institutions, the 'LF' government, taking note of the 'economic hardships' (!) of the owners even extended in some cases "some concession in repayment of arrear sales-tax" etc.

To save management from militant labour movement, they worked hard to restrain the workers. After coming to power, they appealed to the workers to sit with the Government on their demands without launching movement first and announced that strikes should be their last resort. Whenever any strike was called the govt. ministers and the CITU leaders forced the workers to agree to the employers' term.

Regarding modernising and computerising the existing industrial infrastructure, which the workers opposed, the situation was very smooth in West Bengal for the employers. Here the so-called Marxist ministers saw eye to eye with the management on this very question. In the document the Government stressed the fact that in the State "most of the industrial units are traditional and labour intensive" and "there have been, however, no attempt on the part of the employers for modernisation, diversification, introduction of new technologies and proper maintenance of their units." It thus concluded that there "are large contributory factors for sickness in industry". To fight this phenomena "the State Government and Trade Unions have already stated that any

(Contd. on page 8)

Anti-Obscenity Convention in Kerala

A convention against obscenity was held in Ernakulam district in Kerala on May 24 last by the MSS District Committee. Com. Chhaya Mukherjee inaugurated the convention. Shri C. Radhakrishnan, a noted progressive litterateur, in his speech said that obscenity has gone to such an extent that along with the children it is becoming very difficult to go to the streets, go for a film or view a TV programme. Continuing, he remarked that since in a capitalist society like ours where profit motive is the guiding force of production, obscenity, here in our society has become such a factor as to enhance the profiteering motive of the owning class. Respective administrative authorities wedded to serve the interest of money bags, do show scant concern for rampant obscenity obtaining everywhere in the field of culture.

Sm. Neelina Abraham, a litterateur also addressed the gathering.

Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, all India MSS leader, said that if people's movement is not

developed against the menacing danger of obscenity swamping the country rapidly, the concerned authorities will not pay any heed to any just criticism in a convention like this. Instead of taking any step against this menace, the authorities knowingly allow obscene films and obscene culture to thrive and thus pollute the whole young generation. In such a sorry state of affairs the young generation who are incapable of distinguishing against its good and bad aspects is sure to fall prey to it. Naturally, they will not find any urge for a sustained fight against this social menace. She appealed to her audience to come forward and take initiative to develop adequate consciousness against this social malady so as to be able to develop sustained movement against it. Others who spoke on the occasion included Comrades Lalitha Mathew, president in the convention, Shyla K. John, Com. Usha, State Secretary thanked the speakers and the audience alike.

Protest against Milk price rise in Calcutta

In sharp reaction to the hike of milk-price effected by the Mother Dairy, a Central Govt. controlled organisation Com. Gayatri Dasgupta, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee, MSS, in course of a statement on 4th May last said, "Every pro-people government supplies a few essential commodities with subsidized price. Milk is one among them, whose price has been raised steeply. . ." Com. Dasgupta appealed to the people to turn their protest into a well organised movement to pressurise the government to withdraw the proposed price rise.

Demonstration in Tamilnadu for drinking water

Nearly two hundred people, mostly women demonstrated in front of Pollachi Municipal Commissioner's Office and demanded for adequate drinking water supply to their area. When the chairman arrived at the scene, he was gheraoed by the women-folk gathered there. Instead of giving any assurance to them, the chairman told he knew who were behind this movement and accordingly would teach them a good lesson. Comrades Sarevena Kumar and Manoharan led the demonstration and gave a memorandum to the chairman.

MSS Conference in Assam

The first Assam State Conference of All-India Mahila Sanskritik Sangha was held on 3rd and 4th June, 1989 at Guwahati Nabin Bardoloi Hall. Hundreds of women from different districts of the state joined the conference.

Besides the delegates many women and people from other sections joined the inaugural open session on 3rd. The meeting was presided over by Com. Chandralekha Das. Com. Prativa Mukherjee, the all India leader of the organisation, inaugurated the conference. In her speech she dealt at length about the various forms of social injustices on the women-folk, its real cause and the need of social move-

ments for the emancipation of women. Com. Asit Bhattacharyya, the renowned public leader who attended the conference as Chief Guest in his speech, while explaining the economic and political situations of the country, emphasized that without attaining the economic independence the real freedom of women cannot be achieved.

In the delegate session held on 4th June, a

presidium consisting of Comrades Chandralekha Das, Rebati Das, Anowara Begum, Manisuala Singh conducted the session. Com. Ina Hussain placed the organisational report, which was unanimously accepted. Seven different resolutions were adopted in the session.

The conference elected unanimously a 15-member State Executive Council with Comrades Chandralekha Das as President, Rekha Bhattacharjee and Rebati Das as Vice-Presidents, Ina Hussain as Secretary, Anowara Begum, Mira Kawaty, Sikha Bhattacharjee and Publu Dey as Assistant Secretaries and Jelly Mondal as Treasurer.

Save Education Press Conference By SUCI Convention In Maharashtra Assam State Committee

On 19th March '89 a meeting was organised against New Education Policy at Rashttra Bhasa Prachar Samiti Hall Nagpur at 1-30 P.M.

Prof. P. S. Muktibodh, in his introductory speech, disclosed the anti-education and fascist design of the NPE. Prof. R. V. Ranade, member of the Presidium of the All India Save Education Committee presided over the meeting. He dwelt on the topic in detail and showed how the NPE was anti-people. Mr. Rajendra Gangotri, another speaker, explained how by it poor and weaker section would be deprived of education. From the meeting a preparatory committee was evolved comprising 26 teachers and students.

MEETING AT CHANDRAPUR

All India Save Education Committee (Chandrapur) held a meeting against NPE at local City School.

In the meeting Mr. Dilip Kshirsagar introduced the guests. Prof. Muktibodh delivered the introductory speech. Dr. S. V. Khandiwale explained how this NPE was borrowed from America and Britain to serve crisis-ridden capitalism. Mr. Rajendra Gangotri

A press conference was held on 14th June 1989 at the office of the SUCI, Assam State Committee. Com. Asit Bhattacharyya member of the Central Committee of the party spoke in the conference. The press handout is given below.

The most alarming aspect of present political situation of the State is that a spate of separatist movements has been raging Assam and this has brought in their wake untold sufferings to the people; loss of life and property has become a daily phenomenon. Of all these movements Bodo movement led by ABSU has assumed a dangerous proportion. Innocent Bodo students and youths are dying everyday as a result of violent police action. Fratricidal conflict is also taking a heavy toll.

The sadest aspect of the situation is that no solution of this grave situation is in sight with Government of Assam unwilling and unable to take any bold and imaginative initiative to break this impasse and on the

dealt on the danger of vocationalisation.

Mr. Dada Jugle presided.

A provisional Chandrapur Save Education Committee was formed with 11 members.

other end the ABSU leadership sticking to its adamant attitude with respect to its demand for a separate State.

Whereas it has become explicitly clear that formation of separate States like Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya carved out of Assam has served no purpose so far as mitigating the acute poverty and sufferings of the concerned tribal people other than evolving a mechanism in which certain people can become ministers and high officials to rule the people in the same oppressive manner so as to serve their capitalist masters, whereas main concern of the Bodo people was improvement of their deplorable living condition and removal of all hindrances so as to ensure their freest growth, it is a pity that the ABSU leaders instead of raising concrete demands which can adequately meet the legitimate aspirations of the Bodo people, have introduced a new dimension to the problem by insisting upon formation of a

(Contd. on page 8)

Orissa State Committee

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(ii) have no patronization of big money-bags and black money,

(iii) have a record of participation in people's movement for at least last five years,

(iv) have no overt or covert relation with any communal, parochial and divisive forces,

(v) have committed to resign from the post, if elected, either voluntarily or if recalled by the people, failing to act according to their public commitment.

"The State Committee strongly feels that election being a part and parcel of the people's movement, people's committees should be formed immediately from the grassroots level, which will act on the one side as the committees to steer people's movement from below upwards and simultaneously, on the other side, provide as the watch-dog committees to guard the commitment made by its representatives before and after the election.

In this context the State Committee has declared following programmes:—

1. All-out industrialisation of Orissa.
2. Reopening of all closed industries and mines.
3. Till the employment problem is completely solved stop introduction of automation, computer and other modern technical devices.
4. Employment to all and for that Constitutional guarantee for right to work to be ensured.
5. Land to all landless.
6. Employment to the agricultural worker throughout the year.
7. Exemption of the poor peasants and the agricultural workers from repayment of all sorts of agricultural loans and provide seeds, fertilizer and other agricultural appliances in subsidised rates.

8. Irrigation facilities utilising all possible water resources of the State.

9. Control of prices of all essential commodities and supply of it according to the purchasing capacity of the people.

10. All-out state trading on food and other essential commodities.

11. Exemplary punishment to black marketers, hoarders, adulterators and such other unscrupulous businessmen.

12. Proper rail and road communication throughout the State. Immediately construct Talcher-Bimalagarh, Sambalpur-Talcher, Bolangir-Khurda, Takhpur-Banspani railway links.

13. Constitutional provision for right to recall of elected members of Parliament and Assembly.

14. Repeal of all black ordinances, bills and acts like MISA, NSA, ESMA, ESMA (Orissa bill), Trade Union and Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill, Hospital and other Institutions (redressal of grievances) Bill, 59th Amendment of the Constitution etc.

15. Open adequate number of schools and colleges for universalisation of education and withdraw moratorium on opening of new schools and colleges.

16. Repeal NPE and introduce secular, democratic and scientific education for all.

17. Repeal Orissa Universities Act (1983) and ensure autonomy of educational institutions.

18. Ban donation and capitation fee system.

19. Ban obscenity.

20. Adequate arrangement of drinking water, electricity and medical facilities in all villages.

21. Ensure all-out development of tribal people and ensure protection of their natural rights of jungle and land.

22. Proper rehabilitation and adequate compensation for the persons

People must build up movement to thwart military buildup

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will make millions of people unemployed and the Indian capitalist class cannot provide them with employment as the industrialisation has come to a halt. So in order to maintain some semblance of stability it requires artificial stimulation of the market. And that artificial stimulation is not to depend on the purchasing power of the people but to make the industry running through government spending. Only way to do it is to increase defence production and to increase military budget. Here the government is purchasing and consuming in military sector. In the industrial policy resolution of 1948 and 1956 private sector was debarred from defence production and it also did not clamour so long for a share of the defence production. But after the recession of the mid-60s the industrial houses began to voice the demand for a share in the defence production. Initially their demand for a share in defence production was rather modest embracing a few items like clothing, electronic and communication equipment, caps, trucks etc. They also demanded that the government must come forward to help them by granting financial help and subsidies for participating in de-

displaced and affected due to industrialisation and different other projects like NTPC Super Thermal at Talcher.

23. Ensure political right of the teachers and fulfil all legitimate economic and political demands of the teachers.

24. Stop proposed BALCO project which will create ecological imbalances.

25. Stop NTR in Baliapal and ITR in Chandipur.

26. Permanent solution of Natural calamities in Orissa.

fence production. The government conceded to the demand of the industrial houses and gave a defence orientation to the annual plan. But the industrial houses virtually dictated what this defence orientation should mean. The Times of India organ of a group of the monopoly houses wrote in editorial, "the concept of a 'defence orientation' of the economy must be broadly interpreted to mean general economic and industrial support to the country's defence preparedness. This would include agriculture, exports, alloys and special steel, heavy chemicals, oils, electronics and mechanical engineering and transport industry to mention only some of the obvious category. Apart from the ordnance items and military hardware, defence orientation as such means plan as a whole."

In tune with this general guideline the government oriented the whole plan for defence build-up which embraces practically the entire private sector. At the time of independence there were 14 ordnance factories which partially cater to the needs of the defence department. After the recession of the mid-60s the government started setting new ordnance factories and expanding the existing ones. By 1971-72 the number of ordnance factories became 30 and at present there are 40 ordnance factories. The value of production increased from Rs. 65 crores in 1965-66 to Rs. 1356 crores in 1985-86.

Besides these ordnance factories a number of public sector undertakings were set up for military production. Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., which manufactures and overhauls various types of aircrafts and helicopters, Bharat Earth Mover Ltd., for manufacture of rail coaches and heavy

equipments, Mazagon Dock Ltd., Goa Shipyard Ltd., and Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers which are engaged in the production of frigates, patrol crafters and many other vessels for both civilian and defence needs, Bharat Dynamics Ltd., which looks after the production of missiles weapon system and anti-tank missile rockets for the army and the navy, Mishra Dhatu Nigam which produces special metal and alloys for strategic industries—all these public sector undertakings were set up with huge investments.

INDIGENOUS PRODUCTION AND EXPORT OF ARMS

One feature of this military buildup is that while India imports arms from all possible sources without making any discrimination in the matter of arms purchase, it at the same time makes rapid stride in indigenous production for substitution of import. In this respect India has a special position among the Third World countries in so far as the indigenous production of defence equipments is concerned. And these defence productions are needed not only for its own military buildup but for exports to other countries as well. India government has entered international arms bazaar in a big way on commercial basis. Three years prior to 1971-72 defence stores worth Rs. 3 crores were exported annually and in 1983-84 total sales were reported to be \$ 37 million (International Defence Review, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1986).

Surely this massive military buildup is not in the interest of Indian people most of whom are denied even two square meals a day. These hapless people are taxed to the extreme to foot the military bill only

(Contd. on page 7)

AIDSO presents paper on social and educational problems of women at Students' Organisations' Meet

(Contd. from page 3)

compromising role of the Gandhite leadership in the Indian National Congress, despite their personal honesty and beliefs, not only led to a truncated political independence with a partition of the land but also to the carry-over, almost unchanged, of the feudal value system, into the society, polity and mentality of the free India.

Indian capitalism has consolidated itself through ruthless exploitation of the people in the last four decades, all fruits of social labour being usurped by the capitalist class. Education has been planned and designed to serve the profit-oriented production, its scope has been curtailed to cope with the problem of educated unemployed. Unemployment due to the crisis of the economy, has become an alarming problem. So boys and girls in general have been confronted with the problem of their growing demand for education and job and the capitalist state offering both in diminishing quantum. Discrimination against women being a part of any class-divided society, they have naturally suffered worse than the male members.

Secondly, the feudal outlook and values, most of which have been preserved in our society by most of the nationalist leaders of the past as well as by the ruling capitalist class and its parties in the political system, are powerful factors against women's taking increasingly prominent role in social affairs — education, production, political activity etc. Like casteism, polygamy, etc. many of the obnoxious feudal rites and customs like 'Sati', 'Devdasi', submissiveness to men, marriage-oriented outlook, all of which are derogatory and degrading for women have been given virtually

constitutional and institutional sanctions through various measures. Not to speak of laymen, even leaders of the ruling parties are known to have practised female foeticide, infanticide in their families. The Central Government, in its new education policy, considered the need for female literacy more for birth control than for other broader objects. Women-specific as well as sex-stereo courses and texts are widely in vogue in this country. Thus the tasks of secularisation and democratisation of the entire society, which alone could develop a new democratic outlook towards women, have been left incomplete. Even in educated and enlightened families male chauvinism in the outlook of men and submissiveness in the outlook of women prevail.

Thirdly, as an inevitable and concomitant result of capitalism, the entire society has been engulfed in a tremendous crisis of ethics and values, in perversion and degradation in all respects. Naturally, students and youths in particular and the people at large who have fallen victim to this moral degeneration cannot, in most cases, reflect the respectful attitude towards the dignity and worth of women in society. This has contributed to the growing insecurity of the women at home and outside.

TASK BEFORE THE STUDENT MOVEMENT

Once these dimensions of the problem are properly realised, the tasks before student movement in general and the student organisations in particular become obvious enough.

First of all it must be borne in mind that just as students' problems are not isolated from the general social problems, so also the female students' problems, or,

for that matter, women's problems as such are not separate problems, unrelated to one another. And both must be viewed in the background of the capitalist exploitative system of India. So all broad-based democratic student movements, while fighting for the solution of students' problem as a whole, while demanding education and job for all, must at the same time fight for achieving and ensuring special facilities for greater enrolment of girl students, more absorption of female job seekers etc. They will have to stand by the movement of the women against the assaults on women, against the callousness of the administration on question of their security as well as against the evil, anti-social mafias who perpetrate such atrocities. They will have to demand for secularisation of education in its entire course, content, outlook and method, for expunging those elements which reinforce the feudal sex-specific attitude among both boys and girls. They will have to demand for democratisation of the entire society and the political system in a way that all the derogatory and discriminatory taboos against the women may be scrapped for ever. AIDSO has been fighting for all such demands and supporting all such movements with these aims in view.

Secondly, in course of fighting for all such demands, every student organisation has to inculcate among its ranks the democratic attitude towards dignity and worth of the women. Unless this is done, no matter however powerful a movement be, how many individuals may participate in it, the women, even when they are joining the movement, will not feel the security and enjoy the dignity required for motivating them towards greater and more active participation in socio-political activities.

An organisation can carry out this job only when it is trying to build up every movement of the edifice of higher culture, ethics and values, resisting the tide of moral degradation engendered by capitalism. Communist movement in all countries could attract women in large numbers in exerting as enthusiastic and active a role as men only by cultivating a higher moral values in the life, character and activities of the individual members as well as the organisation as a whole and thereby showing the women a way of life and struggle where they could work with dignity and worth. In our country, AIDSO can modestly claim to have been striving to build up its organisation, rear its ranks and organise movements with this ideal set before itself, in the light of the teachings of all Marxist authorities from Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao to Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. This is one of the reasons that AIDSO has been able to involve in all its movements quite a large number of girl students in taking initiative and coming to leadership.

Thirdly, every student organisation has to foster that sense of dignity, that firmness of personality in every girl student it involves, with which she can free herself of the age-old dead-weight of feminish outlook, timidity, phillistinism and sense of helplessness without male support. This is a task not only of the women's organisations and the women's liberation movement, but of all democratic organisations including the student organisations which, for obvious reasons, recruit girl students too in their membership and therefore have the responsibility to rear them as equally active, responsive and responsible fighters in the social cause. AIDSO has committed itself to this task too since its beginning.

BEFORE CONCLUSION

We are placing these observations of ours on

the basis of the knowledge and experience gathered in course of our struggles, before this forum of the student organisations of South Asia. We also hope to gain more from the experiences of student movement in other South Asian countries. We are participating in this round table talk with the view to promoting and strengthening through such mutual exchange of views, student movements in all these countries for the legitimate and democratic demands including those being discussed here.

Military Buildup

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to make the wheel of capitalist production running. Moreover, after attaining imperialist features as an inexorable law of capitalism. Indian capitalist class needs this military backing for intervention and interference in the neighbouring countries of the region. The cases of Sri Lanka and Maldives are glaring examples. After the 'relief' aggression on Sri Lanka by the Indian airforce, the Sri Lankan Government was pressurised to station about 1 lakh Indian Peace Keeping Force and even after the expressed desire by the Sri Lankan President for withdrawal of IPKF within July 29, '89 India is keeping its option open. In Maldives, a sovereign country, India intervened to promptly suppress a coup there. These activities of the Indian rulers are the reflections of imperialist characters and are against the genuine wishes of the peace-loving people of India and an affront to the desire of peace and friendship of the Indian people with the people of our neighbouring countries.

But curiously when India has built up such a military might enabling it to emerge as a regional super power, when it successfully test fires 'Agni' and is capable of arming the IRBM with nuclear warhead within

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LABOUR IN WEST BENGAL

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scheme of modernisation of the existing units should be combined with diversification of products and expansion for providing jobs to the workmen who may be rendered surplus". Thus the management were assured that CITU could restrain the workers.

It was just contrary to the experience of the workers during United Front ministry in '67 when for the first time since independence workers had the real taste of their right to develop movements being completely free from police interference. So the present state of affairs is the result of a well planned move by the CPI(M) leadership. It has long since resigned itself to parliamentary politics leaving democratic movement. For clinging to power it has taken recourse to the policy of

appeasement, it has created a hoax of industrial peace, it has given a free-hand to the management and owners for imposing lock-outs, lay-offs, etc.

Being out and out social-democrat, it would give lip service to movement and raise anti-congress(I) slogans to cash it in on the election. It would continue to play this dubious game so long as this tactic would serve its purpose of hoodwinking the voters in each election and coming to power for another term. Unprecedented assault would let loose on the workers and a party, social democratic in character, would be the ultimate saviour of capitalism. Standing on the corpse of the toiling millions it would go on ensuring industrial peace. So, workers must rise up holding their heads high and expose this social-democratic character of the CPI(M)

INDIAN MILITARY

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a very short span of time and when it is intervening and interfering in the internal affairs of the neighbouring countries, even in such a situation we hear from the CPI and the CPI(M) that India is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country! The CPI and the CPI(M) even hailed the atomic blast at Pokhran in 1974 and these parties do not oppose the massive increase in military budget every year though it is known to any conscious man that this military buildup will ultimately be used against people's movement and revolution.

While the Indian rulers have been waxing eloquent on nonalignment and peace, they have been at the same time, making the necessary groundwork for this massive military buildup. Because this is the economic compulsion of the class they repre-

sent. Our party pointed out on many occasions that this policy of non-alignment and peace is nothing but an exigency of the Indian ruling class and this policy will be thrown asunder if so necessary for the interest of the bourgeois class. The recent testfiring of 'Agni' without caring a whit the public reaction both at home and abroad betrays the true face of the Indian bourgeoisie. Sri Rajiv Gandhi said the other day that those who opposed the increase in military budget were antinational. But by nation whom does he mean? Does he mean the ninety-nine per cent of the poor exploited people or one per cent of the exploiting people? The interest of the exploited masses is to have two square meals a day, to have a roof over their head, to get safe drinking water and other minimum basic necessities of life while the interest of the

Bodo movement

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Bodo homeland carved out of Assam, which very much hurt the sentiment and feelings of the people of Assam, who are very much aggrieved today, having seen their state dismembered several times. The other aspect of this grave and grim situation is that the AGP Government of Assam instead of doing away with the anti-tribal discriminatory policies practised by all the ruling parties since the days of independence, have not only followed the same path but also chosen the path of bloody confrontation with the down trodden Bodo people and have virtually let loose a reign of terror, making thereby the problem far more intractable.

Protest against Milk price rise in Ahmedabad

In Ahmedabad, Gujarat, MSS came forward jointly with Democratic Youth Organisation to raise voice of protest against abnormal milk price hike. Needless to say, it would not only hit people at large but more importantly it will badly affect babies, patients, aged and poor people at large. The leaders of both the MSS and DYU exhorted common people to continue the movement while holding a massive demonstration for withdrawal of the increased price.

exploiting class is to get maximum profit and in order to ensure that profit militarisation of economy is a must. But will the common peace-loving people of India allow this? Every right thinking man cannot but feel concerned at the growing pace of militarisation and they must come forward to build up a mighty movement to force the ruling class to retrace its step.

While calling upon the Government of Assam to abandon this suicidal policy of brutal suppression, it is urged upon to redress at once all the legitimate grievances of the Bodo people, concede all their just demands.

At the same time we also appeal to the Bodo people and the ABSU leadership to realize reality and also the futility of

formation of a separate state, and to be one with the people of Assam who have genuine feeling of living together as equal brothers and sisters.

At the same time we fervently appeal to the Left, democratic and other Opposition parties to come forward to exert due pressure upon the Government of Assam so that it sees the correct path and also to release a bold initiative which makes a negotiated settlement of the problem an immediate reality.

Various Democratic Demands Voiced By SUCI In M. P.

Crisis is ravaging the people of Madhya Pradesh due to the Congress(I) Government's criminal policies and apathy. MP State Committee of the SUCI called upon the party units to take up protest programmes against it and as a part of it Jabalpur District Committee of the party held a district level demonstration on 22nd May last demanding solution of severe crisis of water, mass sanitation for people of slum areas, cleansing drains and roads, firm steps against the alarming deteriorating law and order situation

in the district and protesting against the price hike of milk. The huge procession, comprising party workers, supporters sympathisers and general people from different localities reached the Collectorate Office where a mass meeting was held. It was addressed by Com. Bhabani Ghosh, an important party organiser. Then a five-member delegation led by Comrade Ghosh handed over a memorandum to the Additional District Collector, who discussed with the party delegation and assured to take adequate steps.

Protest Against 'Pati-Parameshwar' in Calcutta

In Calcutta, the Mahila Sanskritik Sangha (MSS) had strongly protested against a film, 'Pati Parameshwar' which had depicted women in a very humiliating way. Even the Censor Board could not but refuse it permission from filming. But later, surprisingly, the Bombay High Court gave it permission. The Calcutta District Committee of the MSS held a protest meeting before a cinema hall where it was being exhibited. Comrade Menoka Basu Ray, Cal-

cutta District Secretary MSS, Comrade Bharati Ray and other MSS leaders spoke there. Protest demonstrations were given to the halls, where the film was being exhibited. Comrade Prativa Gupta, President, Comrade Usha Sen, Vice-President and Comrade Menoka Basu Ray led the deputations.

It is noteworthy to mention that a section of the audience in the halls tore their tickets in response to the appeal of the leaders of the MSS.

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