

Resplendent in spirit of Proletarian Internationalism and Working Class Unity — eighteenth all India conference of UTUC (Lenin Sarani)

In the abyss of dark and gloom appeared an epitome of light — the worker raising his hammer to break the shackles of capitalist rule that chained the world. Posters displayed him on the maze of city walls, exhorting the drifting mass of workingmen and women to unite and rally to wage resistance against the mounting assaults by the rulers on the exploited, oppressed, humiliated and downtrodden masses. The messenger called out to tell that they had nothing to lose except their shackles and had a whole world to win. That message brought along the announcement for the Eighteenth All India Conference of the United Trade Union Centre (Lenin Sarani) from 14 to 17 March in Calcutta.

Never before had history been enmeshed in so critical a situation as of now perhaps. Humanity's prospect perhaps never stood on a crossroads as this one. The working people in every capitalist country find themselves the target of fierce assaults by the ruling class. Emboldened by the dismantling of the socialist states and restoration of capitalism in East Europe and the Soviet Union the rulers are meeting the toiling people with a heavier hand, stripping the masses of whatever rights, and smothering every resistance with a ferocity of the cruellest kind. In particular, the US imperialist clique, that bulwark of imperialism, is now on the rampage on the people of the third world countries.

In India itself the ruling class has virtually declared a war on the people. Making a plea for a 'national consensus' to meet a 'national crisis' and under cover of a new industrial and fiscal policy which clearly is tailored to subserve the interest of the national and foreign monopoly capital and the multinational capital, the minority central government of the Congress (I), the most trusted political agent of the Indian bourgeoisie, is leading a mass assault on the toiling people in connivance with the imperialist finance agencies — the IMF and the World Bank. Prices of commodities, including petrol, diesel, coal and kerosene, have been increased by administrative fiat. Budgetary measures have increased the burden manifold on the common people. Inevitably, prices of all essential commodities are soaring up phenomenally.

This government has almost finalised its steps to hand over the public sector industries to private owners. State owned so-called sick industries are going to be either closed down or be handed over to private owners in the same way. Or else, under pretext of restructuring these units, lay-off, retrenchment and 'golden handshake', which is but a compulsory premature retirement scheme,

are being planned as a step to run industry with a much depleted workforce. About 3 lakh units under private ownerships, it is almost certain, are going to be closed down. And wage freeze has been decided upon as a general policy.

Such is the abyss of dark and gloom in which the working people of India find themselves plunged. Dire poverty, staggering unemployment and menacing price rise stare them in the face while the monstrosity of neocolonial attack led by the US imperialists has begun to hunt them down.

Giving any more ground to the enemy would be perilous now. Wasting any more time would be fatal. Resistance must be built up, and united resistance put up against the joint onslaught mounted by the imperialist-revisionist combine. For the working people it is now the hour when either to fight and live, or to surrender and die. Either they rise unitedly and resist the bourgeois rulers' design, or they languish under the capitalist rule and invite doom. It is a tragedy that the central trade unions have not only failed to forge unity in this vital hour, overtly or covertly they are conniving with the owners and the government.

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Proletarian Era

Organ of the SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA
(Fortnightly)

Founder Editor in Chief :
COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

Com. Nihar Mukherjee condemns Govt. of India's refusal to supply rice to Cuba

Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao
Prime Minister
Government of India
New Delhi

Dear Sir,

We feel deeply concerned and shocked at the news item in a section of the Press that your Government has decided not to supply rice to Cuba in the face of the US threat of not supplying wheat to India.

No self-respecting nation, particularly Indian people having a glorious anti-imperialist tradition, can bow down to such a sordid politics of threat and intimidation pursued by the US imperialists with impunity since some time past.

We are confident, we reflect the aspiration of all freedom loving and democratic people of India when we urge your Government to retrace this decision forthright and help restore the age-old bond of fraternity between the Indian and the Cuban people.

In the face of the belligerent posture of the USA to crush Cuba, we strongly feel, the crying need of the hour is to raise unitedly the demand "US imperialists, hands off Cuba".

Awaiting prompt action.

Yours sincerely,
Date: 6-3-1992 Sd/- Nihar Mukherjee
General Secretary, SUCI



Public Reception to guests from abroad at Netaji Indoor Stadium on 17 March evening.

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The task, therefore, devolves now on the workers themselves to resist the assault unitedly. To fight from the grass roots level against all unprincipled compromise, opportunism, economism, legalism and reformism, struggle committees have to be built up on the edifice of proletarian culture as the workers' own instrument of struggle.

Building its programme towards this objective, the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) prepared for holding its All India Conference in Calcutta. The bourgeois propaganda orchestra seeks to induce a belief in the workers that socialism has failed and the workers must resign themselves to the rule of capital. To counter this challenge, the organization applied itself to the task of educating the workers in the ideological-political field and building unity for a relentless fight against economism, reformism, legalism, opportunism and the assaults by the capitalist rulers. For months preceding the All India Conference, leaders and cadres of the organization carried on intensive ideological-political campaigns among the workers and the broader section of the toiling masses. Performing this task painstakingly, conducting group discussions, holding meetings at the factory gates, leading door-to-door literary campaign, raising funds and mobilising the industrial workers, agricultural labourers and other sections of the toiling people, the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) organized itself towards this historic Conference in Calcutta.

Difficulties beset the campaign in every way. Inimical governmental attitude, adverse anti-revolutionary political forces and treachery by social democratic organizations besides, there stood many other obstacles on the way. The fund collected was the contribution from the poor working people who are forced to struggle for bare existence. Yet they gave with all heart whatever they could, often more than their means permitted. It was *ramzan* period for the Muslims, and for the Hindus and many others it was a period of social preoccupations. That did not prevent working people from participating in the campaign and travelling long distances from the corners of the land to join the rally in Calcutta on the occasion of the Conference. Inhospitable weather, preoccupations for earning livelihood — nothing could prove insurmountable for them to try to rise and be equal to this occasion. For, the call had kindled hope in the darkness of gloom. It set them thinking, awakened them in a new spirit. It instilled a faith and fire to set forth on the course of struggle again.

So, beneath the furore and fanfare of parliamentary politics so loudly blared out by the government and monopoly controlled media, this silent undercurrent of the workers' political resolve and action swelled into a tide in the heart of Calcutta at the Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani).

Response came from abroad, too. Fraternal delegates of trade union organizations of the People's Republic of China, Cuba, Iraq, Bangladesh and Nepal had started arriving. Road arches were built up on the route from the city airport to accord welcome to the guests. Delegates from far flung states of the country poured in. Workingmen and women from Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh came in hundreds and thousands to join the rally. From the districts of West Bengal came thousands of industrial workers and agricultural labourers. They spent the nights at the city's railway stations or under the sky on the

18th All India Conference of UTUC (Lenin Sarani)

banks of Ganga. To those thousands from adjoining states and West Bengal who reached on March 13, plain meals of rice and dal were served, which people of the different localities had donated to feed these men. Others had only roti and gur to eat. Under the scorching sun they walked down the streets as marchers, but agog, vibrant and resolute in determination to achieve their objective.

Two days before the Conference began, on 12 March, was opened an exhibition of excerpts gleaned from the teachings of the great leaders of the international working class movement at a site opposite Metro Cinema at Esplanade. It was opened by Comrade Tapas Dutta, General Secretary of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani). The quotation exhibits were displayed in very many languages — English, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Oriya, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada. Each was accompanied by an English version. Portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong and Shibdas Ghosh were befittingly displayed in between the quotation exhibits. Upto 14 March, till when the exhibition continued, people from all walks, with interest and reverence, went round the displayed quotations of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong and Shibdas Ghosh who cautioned on the dangers of economism-legalism-revisionism-reformism in the working class

MESSAGES FROM ABROAD

On the occasion of the 18th All India Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) messages of greetings were received from Vietnam General Confederation of Labour; KILUSANG MAYO UNO, Labor Center, Philippines; The French General Confederation of Labour (CGT); Coordinadora Nacional de Agrupaciones AUGUSTIN TISCO, Argentina; World Federation of Trade Unions.

Comrade Sitesh Das Gupta referred to the messages sent by different fraternal organizations wishing success of the Conference.

movement and shed light on how the workers should develop into class conscious fighters and build their organization into a school of communism to acquire the proletarian character and wage struggle to win emancipation. Fraternal delegates from abroad, who had already reached, visited the exhibition, studying the exhibits attentively while going round from row to row.

14th of March was the day of inaugural open session of the Conference. On this day, 109 years back, passed away the great teacher and leader of the working class, the international communist movement and mankind itself. For this Conference of the revolutionary organization of the working class of India to begin on, there could be no greater day than this in the historic sense. While the delegates and working people prepared for the rally at Saheed Minar ground, a solemn ceremony was held at the Central Office of the SUCI, attended by leaders and cadres of the party, where the Red Flag was hoisted and a portrait of Marx was garlanded. Slogans were raised and the *Internationale* was sung. Garlands were also placed on the statues of Marx-Engels at Esplanade by central and state leaders of the party. On this day comrades wore 'Marx Badge' as a mark of respect to the greatest leader of the world proletariat.

Streams of marchers went down the city sinews towards the rally ground of Saheed Minar. Under an intense sun of March, waving flags and banners, voicing slogans in a myriad of nationality languages, and beckoning to the people at large the light of emancipation, they marched on. Procession followed procession. From west and from east, from north and from south, like waves that swept through the crowded city streets, stalling traffic and pedestrian masses, they stepped along. The din and bustle of the busy city suddenly waned. Amidst chaotic scurry of a busy city people, emerged a flowing stream from turbulence. Pedestrians, passengers, shop owners watched with bated breath to receive that message. Countless men, but one mission. Diverse languages, but one expression. Peoples of myriad of nationalities and tribes, but one sense of identification. That epitome of the sprawling land of India, that disciplined, determined and dedicated march-down, that embodiment of an unwavering purpose, unflagging persistence and unflinching orientation to the revolutionary goal flashed like a lightning to strike the city people, kindling a hope they had almost lost and inducing a belief they had almost given up.

The marchers recalled the teachings of the great leader of the proletariat, Karl Marx, and gave him Red Salute. They voiced solidarity with proletarian internationalism. They urged the workers to build unity among the working people in their struggle against the anti-people policies of the government. They called upon the toiling multitude to frustrate the US imperialist design against socialist Cuba and demanded of the US imperialist clique to raise its hands off Iraq. They exhorted the people to unite against the neocolonial attack of US imperialism. They demanded of the central Congress (I) government withdrawal of all anti-people Acts, policies and measures.

Newspapers, radio and television made no mention of the marching workers and their Conference. Even the presence of delegates from abroad hardly found way into media coverage. This calculated blackout exposed itself to the people in its full contrast with what they saw with their own eyes that day on the streets of Calcutta and at the rally ground. Such are the two currents in mutual opposition, one with the other. Such are the two courses driving towards opposite ends, each trying to battle its way to its own goal. One current seeks to perpetuate this ruthless rule of capital, this order of injustice, exploitation, humiliation and oppression. There is the other, a countercurrent fighting to overthrow this order and substitute people's own justice, honour, prosperity and emancipation. With who shall men and women of the working masses side? The marchers beckoned the way. This communion of the marching workingmen and strata of common people who watched from roadside is stronger than the evil design of the bourgeois propaganda media to black out the workers' stride forward.

The red draped dais at the western end of Saheed Minar ground projected a huge portrait of Karl Marx encircled by a wreath of red roses. Beneath the portrait were seated Com. Pritish Chanda, President of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani), who presided at the meeting; Com. Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary of the SUCI and Adviser, UTUC (Lenin Sarani); Comrade Shankar Singh, Vice-President, UTUC (Lenin Sarani);

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Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's speech at Saheed Minar Maidan on 14 March

Addressing the gathering, Comrade Mukherjee said : It is clear from the speeches just delivered by fraternal delegates from Cuba, Iraq and even China that US neo-colonialism is today sparing no country. It seeks to erase socialist Cuba from the world map and to raze Iraq to the dust. In India, the minority Congress (I) Government at the Centre has surrendered to it. Under pressure of US imperialism, this government as well as the CPI(M)-led state government in West Bengal have contracted IMF-World Bank loans on humiliating and anti-people terms. Who does not know the nefarious role of multinational organizations? The present new economic policies of the government in Delhi are designed to open the doors to more ruthless exploitation of natural resources and labour power of India and other third world countries by international imperialism, especially US imperialism and the Indian monopolists jointly. Unless the conditions imposed by the IMF are accepted, the World Bank will not grant loans, and vice versa. And the conditions are such as are sure to bring fresh onslaughts of exploitation and oppression upon the common masses. The Central Government now seeks to do away with the public sector industries and establishment built up over the years with money obtained by fleecing the people through imposing ever-increasing tax burden. Strengthened and benefitted by using the public sector in its interest, the ruling capitalist class of India has given birth to monopoly capitalism, finance capital and financial oligarchy. Through merger of banking capital and industrial capital, Indian monopolists have laid the rock bottom economic foundation of fascism and made the Indian state totally subservient to them. This state is offering *carte blanche* to Indian and foreign capital for unfettered exploitation of the people on the one hand, while on the other it is more and more curtailing the manpower requirement in the railways, the steelworks and the heavy industries owned by it through computerisation in the name of advanced technology and modernisation and forcing the workers to lead a subhuman life. One of the first things the present government did after coming to power was to resort to drastic devaluation of Indian currency twice in quick succession. The deleterious effect of this on the economy and people's life are already discernible. In the recent budget for the railways, there has been a steep rise in passenger fare and monthly tickets as well as in goods freight. As a result, the already high prices are going up further resulting in depletion of the people's purchasing power, that is, further erosion of real wage. The whole country is teeming with the ever-increasing number of unemployed.

Continuing, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee said : The attack on the people is not in the economic sphere alone. More and more the youth are being encouraged and even forced to take up unethical means of livelihood. Reactionary, decadent and vile bourgeois culture nurturing self-centredness, the motive of self-aggrandizement at any cost and apathy to the social problems and with the emphasis on vulgar sex are being encouraged. Long back, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, great leader and teacher of the proletariat, one of the foremost Marxist-Leninist thinkers of the era and former President of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) had sounded caution against this all-out fascist conspiracy of the ruling Indian capitalist class to break the moral-ethical-cultural backbone of the nation and

urged the people to stand up and unitedly resist it.

Comrade Mukherjee pointed out : World imperialism and neo-colonialism and the Indian monopolists got the opportunity to launch all-out attack on the people through the grievous damage done to the working class movement from within by neo-revisionism which has resulted in dismemberment of the Soviet Union. However painful this is, it should be clearly understood that the present reverse is temporary. On the occasion of the present Conference starting on 14th March, the memorial day of Karl Marx, it is necessary to grasp anew that Marxism is not a utopian theory that arose from the subjective thinking, the brainwave of a genius. Karl Marx founded and developed dialectical materialism by coordinating, integrating and generalising the particular truths culled by the different branches of science. That is why Marxism is a science as well as a philosophy at the same time and dialectical materialism is the science of all sciences, basing itself on experimented truths. It was Marx who showed that the human society has traversed the long path from pre-historic times to primitive communism, the slave system, feudalism and the present capitalism through the course of class struggles; capitalism is not the last word in the onward course of civilization; through class struggle again will this capitalism be overthrown and mankind advance to the higher stage of classless communist society through the intermediate transitional phase of socialism under the dictatorship of the proletariat. For capitalism inevitably generates the proletariat, its own grave diggers.

Continuing, Comrade Mukherjee said : The question may arise — why then the present reverse ? Although the present reverse is temporary, it should not be underestimated. In one sense, such a blow was perhaps necessary to give a shake-up to the world communist movement wherein various inadequacies, shortcomings and mistakes had been accumulating for long which have caused the present setback. Communists may commit mistakes, but it is the communists who can take appropriate lessons from the mistakes to chart out the correct, scientific course of action to come out of a crisis. The point to be noted is that imperialism-capitalism, the enemy, could not destroy socialism in the Soviet Union and East Europe by launching attacks from outside. It is the damaging activity of neo-revisionism from within the movement for a long time that has brought about the present crisis.

For remedying the situation, Comrade Mukherjee pointed out : The cardinal task before the working class is to free the trade union movement from the pernicious influence of reformism, economism and revisionism and to build up the trade unions as schools of communism. He expressed the hope that the delegates assembled would make headway in this regard during the deliberations of the Conference. The need of the hour is to conduct the struggle to develop the trade unions as schools of communism through the economic and political battles on the one hand, while on the other to conduct another struggle covering all aspects of life to mould the trade union workers into true revolutionary characters on the edifice of higher proletarian culture and ethics.

Speaking about the much-trumpeted bourgeois democracy and freedom, Comrade Mukherjee stressed : In the present time when capitalism has become utterly reactionary and decadent as a



Com. Nihar Mukherjee

world force and is passing through the third intense general crisis of capitalism, bourgeois democracy cannot provide true freedom and democracy. This has been illustrated by successive general elections in India when unbridled use of money, muscle power and even all-out centralised administrative rigging were resorted to to artificially produce predetermined election results in favour of the chosen party of the ruling capitalist class irrespective of the actual mass opinion, thus making a total mockery of bourgeois democracy and its adult franchise. Negation of democracy in bourgeois democracy has been so pronounced for long that even President Eisenhower was forced to state many years back that from behind the so-called democratic setup it was an industrial-bureaucratic-military complex that ruled the USA. This fascistic trend has further grown over the years and now such coteries wield real power from behind the facade of two-party or multi-party system in all imperialist-capitalist countries including India, thus making the state machine fully subservient to the monopolists. The delegates at this Conference should give serious attention to such issues and problems.

Comrade Mukherjee pointed out : The UTUC (Lenin Sarani) is not yet adequately strong, considering the size of the country and its problems. Although it has been moving with the correct base political line, it has not yet been able to bring about on its basis the countrywide upsurge in workingclass movement historically needed. But at the beginning, adherents to the correct ideology are in the minority everywhere. Proper grasping of the correct base political line and its steadfast application in practice must inevitably swell the ranks to ultimately make it an invincible force. At this Conference, therefore, the inadequacies, defects and shortcomings and the limitations of the organization should be important points on the agenda for deliberation so that these can be overcome and the organization becomes strong enough to perform its historic task and uphold the noble banner of proletarian internationalism and communism. For this, it is necessary for the leaders, workers and sympathisers of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) to spread the noble ideology of communism among all sections of the toiling masses and to educate themselves to attain advanced communist character through all-out struggle on the path shown by the giant communist leaders Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong and Shibdas Ghosh.

Comrade Mukherjee stressed : The burning necessity is to equip and prepare the working class movements of all countries to fight imperialism-capitalism both nationally and

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18th All India Conference of UTUC (Lenin Sarani)

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Comrade Tapas Dutta, Secretary of the organization; Comrades Anil Sen, Sitesh Dasgupta, Fatick Ghosh; other leaders of the organization who came from different states; and the fraternal delegates from abroad.

The music squad sang on Karl Marx and a contingent of 109 Komsomol members, each carrying a red flag, marched in to the rhythm of drumbeat to give red salute to the memory of Karl Marx. Comrade Tapas Dutta welcomed the delegates, drawing attention of the audience to the growing attack of the ruling class on the working people of India. He hailed the people of China for their role in defeating the reactionary upsurge of Tien Anmen Square. To the people of Cuba he paid respect for their firm stand against the US imperialist conspiracy. He greeted the people of Iraq for their resolute fight against the imperialist attack headed by the US ruling clique. To the people of Nepal, he accorded greetings for their struggle for democracy, and to the people of Bangladesh for their struggle against the military autocracy.

Comrade Xu Hongfu, Deputy Secretary General of the International Activities Committee of the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), addressed the gathering, according greetings to the Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and paying tributes to the members of the organization and the Indian workers.

"In the past", Comrade Xu Hongfu observed, "the working class and people of our two countries have sympathised with and supported each other's national independence and liberation movement. The leaders of our two countries have, as early as 1950s, initiated the world famous five principles of Peaceful Coexistence to guide the relations between states having different social systems. These principles are still vital and practically significant as the guiding principles of the world today." Com Xu Hongfu emphasized that the Chinese working class and the entire Chinese people, under the correct leadership of the Communist Party of China, would firmly and

confidently march forward along the road of socialism. He pointed out that the international situation had changed in recent years, "nevertheless, peace, development and defence of workers' rights and interests are still the common tasks facing the workers and trade union organizations the world over today. Like in the past, the All China Federation of Trade Unions will continue to resolutely oppose imperialism, hegemonism and power politics, and support the just struggle of the working class and the people all over the world."

Comrade Victor of Cuba, according his greetings to the working class and peasantry of India, said that the day, 14th March, marking the death anniversary of Karl Marx had been aptly selected. "Socialism is down", he said, "but not out. We have to fight to put it up. This is what we are doing in Cuba today, fighting tooth and nail to keep socialism marching forward. Cuba is only 90 miles away from the most powerful imperialist country. Today it is under the most ferocious imperialist attack for its only crime that the Cubans had chosen socialism. But socialism has uplifted Cuba and eliminated its poverty. Why this hatred and attempt to destroy Cuba? It is because the example of socialist Cuba is a danger to the imperialist machinations. As a representative of the working class and the peasantry of Cuba I would appeal to the people of India, of West Bengal, and of Calcutta in particular, to extend their hands of cooperation to Cuba in this hour of need. The fight for socialism in Cuba is a fight for socialism all over the world, a fight for the socialist forces and the progressive people of all countries."

Comrade Jamil Salman Ahmed, Vice-President of the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU), Iraq, addressed the gathering in Arabic and his speech was rendered into English by Comrade Kais Abdul Karim, Director of International Relations, GFTU, Iraq. Com. Jamil Salman Ahmed said: "We consider this Conference and this meeting a precious and

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Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's speech at Saheed Minar Maidan on 14 March

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internationally. The Indian working class has to fight shoulder to shoulder with the working classes of other countries, not only those from which fraternal delegates have come to participate in the 18th All India Conference of UTUC (Lenin Sarani), that is, China, Cuba, Iraq, Bangladesh and Nepal, but of all countries against the doyen of imperialist-capitalist world, the US imperialism and the machinations of the Pentagon for triggering the holocaust of Star War. It should not be lost sight of that there are communists in the USA itself although they do not number many.

Comrade Mukherjee pointed out: Already the myth of invincibility of imperialism-capitalism has begun to wear off. The imperialist world is afflicted with intense, endemic crises and deep contradiction between imperialists of the USA, Japan, Germany and England among others. Already, lakhs of people have come out on the streets in the erstwhile Soviet Union with portraits of Lenin and Stalin and waving red banners. But imperialism-capitalism will not disintegrate automatically on its own. What is needed is concerted action by the world working class to push them to their inevitable doom.

In conclusion, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee gave a clarion call for all-out ideological and organizational struggle to smash up economism, opportunism, neo-revisionism and imperialism, especially US imperialism. He ended the speech with the slogans:

- Long live united working class movement!
- Long live proletarian internationalism!
- Long live communism!



Inaugural open session on 14th March — a view of dais at Saheed Minar ground. Com. Salman of Iraq addressing rally. Com. Nihar Mukherjee, Com. Pritish Chanda, Com. Shankar Singh, other leaders and fraternal delegates from China, Cuba, Bangladesh and Nepal seated in front row.

Workers will win this battle if they grasp the problem correctly and take proper lesson.

historical opportunity to appeal to people of other countries to help us resist the imperialist and Zionist design against Iraq and against all people of the world. After collapse of the Soviet Union as a superpower, the USA is imposing its contralation the whole world. They are trying to muzzle the voice of revolutionary movement all over the world and are launching aggressions on every pretext. They dropped thousands of tons of explosives to kill civilian population in Iraq, including children and women. They did it under cover of international legitimacy. Hospitals, churches, mosques and schools were targets of their bombing operation and missile attacks. They put an embargo on supply of food and medicines to Iraq. Nevertheless, the will of the Iraqi people has not weakened, has rather grown stronger. Our country is witnessing a campaign for reconstruction. The principle of solidarity calls upon you to raise your voice against this unjust embargo on the people of Iraq. Down with imperialism."

Comrade Abdullah Sarkar, President, Central Committee of the Samajtantrik Sramik Front of Bangladesh, extended greetings on behalf of the people of Bangladesh. Pointing to the struggle the people of Bangladesh have to carry on against an autocratic rule, he expressed his goodwill for the success of the All India Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and its struggle for building the workers' solidarity and movement following the revolutionary teachings of the great leaders of the proletariat.

Comrade Khagendra Nepal of the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) gave red salute to the members of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and the working people of India. Drawing attention to the Nepalese people's fight for democracy against Ranashahi, he expressed hope that the working people of India would show the way for the revolutionary battle of workers.

After the fraternal delegates from abroad had spoken, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee addressed the meeting, analysing the problems and tasks now facing the working class and all sections of the toiling masses all over the world. An abridged text of his speech appears elsewhere in this issue.

Addressing briefly, Comrade Pritish Chanda thanked the delegates from abroad for their participation at the Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani). He pointed to the international situation and said that the USSR had been erased from the map of the world, but by no means that meant the end of socialism. "It is the historical era of socialism and so socialism cannot be destroyed. The Gorbachev-Yeltsin clique cannot stop the resurgence of communism in Russia because the world forces are in favour of communism. Communism is invincible.

"On behalf of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) I say that the greatest need is to forge the broadest unity against the imperialist-capitalist bloc. You will recall that the former US President Jimmy Carter said that after the Second World War every other war saw the USA involved in it. And now they are raising a cry for human rights. I ask you also to recall what Chinese Premier Li Peng said in New Delhi. What does the talk of human rights mean to a hungry people, a people deprived of the basic needs for existence? And remember there cannot be true democratic rights without socialism. Twenty families of India have taken over almost

all the riches of the country. The new economic policy of the Central Congress (I) government is designed to serve the monopolists — Indian and foreign.

"The working class movement in India has many weaknesses. The workers must be equipped ideologically, because they are the creators of civilization. But they languish in darkness".

He said that the Conference would continue in its delegates' sessions on 15-17 March at Netaji Indoor Stadium where the delegates would deliberate on vital international and national issues affecting the people's life. He appealed: "Pledge yourselves to take forward the struggle of the working people. Down with imperialism. Victory to people."

Bhajan Dasgupta, representing the HMS, addressed the rally, wishing every success of the Conference. The meeting ended with the *Internationale*. The thousands of people who came from the very many states and from all over West Bengal now talked among themselves. Silently in their heart was etched the resolve which this meeting articulated: 'Unite and fight. Spread the message all across this land. Be equal to the task and bend all energy to win-success in the battle.'

Delegates' Sessions, 15-17 March, at Netaji Indoor Stadium

The historic background, at the international and national levels, of the Eighteenth All India Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and the decisions the organization took at the Conference gave the occasion a dimension of historic significance. For three days, 15 to 17 March, delegates' sessions were held at the Netaji Indoor Stadium in the west of the city.

From 22 states and 32 industries delegates numbering 790, and fraternal delegates and observers numbering 410 attended. Not only over the organization's day-to-day demands concerning the workers' life and living, the delegates deliberated and analysed threadbare, in their striving to advance the organization towards its revolutionary objective and thereby advance the cause of the toiling masses in general, the political, economic and cultural issues which were to profoundly affect the future of the working people, in particular their struggle for existence and emancipation. The deliberations ranged from the US imperialist neocolonial attack on the people of the third world countries, the US threat to Cuba, its military assault on Iraq, the savage onslaught being mounted by the Indian capitalist class through the central Congress(I) government, to the overriding need to forge unity among the rank and file of the working people to thwart the bourgeois onslaught.

In presence of a full house of delegates, observers and fraternal delegates from abroad, the eagerly awaited session began on the morning of 15 March with Comrade Pritish Chanda, President of the organization, hoisting the Red Flag and placing a wreath of flowers at an improvised martyrs' column in a solemn atmosphere. Comrade Fatick Ghosh, President of the West Bengal State Committee of the

organization, welcomed the delegates and observers. Comrade Tapas Dutta, General Secretary of the organization, presented a memento, as a token of love and respect, to each of the fraternal delegates from China, Cuba, Iraq, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Many died martyr's death in course of mass and class struggles in this country and abroad in the period since the last Conference in 1985. To pay respects to the memory of the martyrs and uphold the cause for which they laid down their lives, the delegates adopted a resolution and observed two minutes' silence.

Before the proceedings began, the delegates from China, Cuba, Iraq, Bangladesh and Nepal addressed the first session. They expressed solidarity of the working people of their own countries with the working people of India. That symbolised the slogan Karl Marx gave — "Workers of all countries, unite!"

Speeches by fraternal delegates

Addressing the delegate session on March 15 morning, the Chinese delegate Comrade Xu Hongfu said that he had been very impressed by the enthusiasm and discipline displayed by the participants in the Conference both at the open session at Saheed Minar Maidan on March 14, and at the delegate session, and overwhelmed by the goodwill and warmth shown towards the Chinese people. He expressed the hope that the toiling millions of China and India would fight together side by side for socialism and lasting peace and for defending the workers' cause and solidarity against imperialism and hegemonism spearheaded by the USA.



Com. Xu Hongfu - China

Comrade Xu Hongfu ended his speech by warmly appreciating the role of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) in defending the democratic and trade union rights of the Indian working class.

Addressing the delegate session, Comrade R.P. Victor, the Cuban delegate, read out a message from the leadership of the Central Trade Union Organisation of Cuba calling for developing international solidarity of workers and peasants against US imperialism.

Comrade Victor gave an inspiring account of the Cuban people's 30 year struggle against US attacks, conspiracy and economic blockade aimed at dismantling socialism in Cuba.

Referring to the questions being raised about the future of socialism in the context of the recent setback in the movement, Comrade Victor asserted that the future belonged to socialism. To think

March for Solidarity against US imperialist neo-colonial attack

otherwise meant to accept a future of poverty and discrimination for our children and grandchildren and a future of subjugation of weak and poor nations by the rich nations of the world.

Com. R. P. Victor - Cuba



Comrade Victor ended his speech with the slogan "socialism or death" coined by Comrade Fidel Castro, the leader of the Cuban people.

Addressing the delegates, Comrade Jamil Salman Ahmed of Iraq conveyed warm congratulations at the resounding success of the 18th Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani). He appreciated the role of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) in expressing solidarity with the Iraqi people and condemning the dastardly attack on Iraq led by US imperialism during those critical days when the Iraqi people had been in the thick of a life-and-death struggle against the imperialist onslaught.

Com. Jamil Salman Ahmed - Iraq



Comrade Ahmed ended his speech by expressing the hope that the Conference would help in further strengthening the united anti-imperialist struggle of the people of the world.

Speaking at the delegate session Comrade Abdullah Sarkar, leader of the Bangladesh delegation, said that the Conference was being held at a crucial juncture when world imperialism-capitalism was hatching a conspiracy to perpetuate the wage slavery of the toiling masses of the world. He expressed the hope that the Conference would show the correct path to not only the exploited people of India and Bangladesh but to the whole world.

Referring to the conditions in Bangladesh, Comrade Sarkar said that as in India, in Bangladesh too, the IMF and the World Bank were trying to influence and interfere in the internal affairs in favour of imperialist-capitalists; privatisation of public sector was on the way; black anti-people repressive acts were being enacted; lay-off and retrenchment were on the increase and a ban on strikes for years together were being contemplated by the government serving the ruling class.

Regarding the struggles of the Bangladesh Samajtantrik Sramik Front to which he belonged, Comrade Sarkar said that being inspired by the

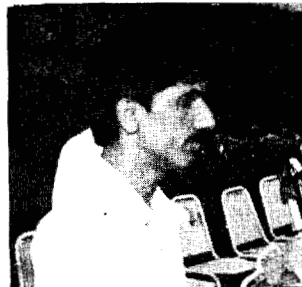
Com. Abdullah Sarkar - Bangladesh



thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the Front was fighting against capitalist exploitation and for furthering proletarian internationalism.

Addressing the delegates Comrade Khagendra Nepal said : It is certain that Marxism-Leninism is an international approach, outlook and philosophy. This is the philosophy for the emancipation of the working people. Without knowing this philosophy nobody can do anything.

Com. Khagendra Nepal - Nepal



But carbon-copying of the experiences of other countries or blind allegiance can bring no good to

the people of Nepal. I feel I should say that communist movement in Nepal now is advancing more correctly and in positive direction.

At the end he thanked the delegates and offered Red Salute !

General Secretary's Report

The situation in the International working class movement, following counterrevolution in the erstwhile USSR and some East European states and consequent upon the imperialist-revisionist conspiracy to denigrate the Red Flag and suppress the class struggle and proletarian internationalism, was the highlight at the beginning of the General Secretary's Report which Comrade Tapas Dutta now placed. "From my heart of hearts, I feel it the bounden duty of ours to renew the pledge to hold aloft the martyrs' blood-stained Red Flag, to develop trade unions as an instrument of class struggle and as schools of communism, to advance and sharpen the class struggle with a view to eliminating class exploitation and work relentlessly for the cause of working class unity and proletarian internationalism."

The Report pointed to the differences the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) had with the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) on many vital questions, and observed that the growing offensive of imperialist-capitalists against working class movement, however, required that the Federation be consolidated in spite of its weaknesses and limitations.

Addressing the trade union centres of different countries of the world, it said : "We appeal to all the trade union centres of the world to come forward and keep alive the process of continuous exchange of views with each other with the object of developing a meaningful unity of the trade unions and the working people and resist the increasing onslaught of imperialist-capitalists and the employers in this critical juncture of working



Call for all-out ideological-organizational struggle against economism, revisionism, imperialism.

class movement. We offer our service modestly and honestly in this regard."

The Report expressed grave concern over the disastrous consequences the anti-working class and pro-monopoly new industrial and fiscal policies of the minority Congress (I) government at the centre would have in every sphere of socio-economic-political life of the people in general and the working class in particular. Strongly opposing the policy of privatization, liberalisation and the 'Exit Policy', the Report commented: "However, a spate of retrenchment in both the sectors is an undisputed reality today. Lakhs of workers would be victim of the 'Exit Policy' under cover of all different names." He cautioned: "Whoever falls in the trap of 'golden handshake' or such other enticing devices and do not come forward resolutely to resist this design in reality helps the government and the capitalists to close the doors of employment on his own sons and daughters."

Sharply criticizing the government for its accepting the IMF and World Bank conditionalities, the Report said: "In a desperate bid to help the crisis-ridden monopoly capitalism to get access to the highly competitive international market and help consolidate the position of the Indian finance capital, the Congress (I) led central government did not hesitate to come to a secret deal with the IMF and the World Bank for providing concessions to the imperialist and multinational capital in so many ways, including allowing them unrestricted access to the domestic economy, and to raise the slogan of an open-door economy and for globalisation, which strikes a blow to the anti-imperialist tradition of the Indian people."

On the organization the Report observed: "Comrades, notwithstanding organised conspiracy by the government and the capitalist class to eliminate militant trade union movement and mount fascist attacks on our organization,

with direct and indirect patronage of the social democratic forces and systematic attempt of the forces to isolate the UTUC (Lenin Sarani), our organization has made remarkable advance in different states and branches of industry over these years. At the time of the Delhi Conference in 1985, we had 312 unions affiliated with us; at present the number is 416, meaning 104 new affiliations during this period. We are functioning in 15 states and in 32 industries, including jute,



Com. Tapas Dutta

textile, engineering, defence, mines, plantation, agriculture, iron and steel, electronics, electricity and transportation. The membership strength, as on 31st December 1989, is 11 lakh 97 thousand 607. If the membership of the unions affiliated during last two years and of those unions which could not submit the annual returns in time are added the figure will be much higher."

Pinpointing the weaknesses and limitations of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) the Report said: "Comrades, we must always bear in mind that the secret of our achievement and steady progress and the love, respect and prestige our organization enjoys at home and abroad lies in its following, with all limitations, the correct working class line and approach as developed and formulated by our

departed President, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, an outstanding Marxist thinker of the era."

Emphasizing the tasks before the organization, the General Secretary said: "Comrades, I like to emphasize once more that what we require is developing a dynamic and living struggle at all levels of the organization to conduct ourselves in the right direction and to advance the struggle of the working people. While I call upon you to develop this two-fold struggle, I recall what the great leader of the world proletariat, Karl Marx, had said: 'We say to the workers, you will have to go through fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and international conflicts, not only to change existing conditions, but also to change yourselves and to make yourselves capable of wielding political power.' Comrades, let us change ourselves to change the world."

Main Resolution

The main resolution which was moved next took note of the changes and the major events, both in the international and in the national level particularly in relation to the working class movement, that had taken place since the last All India Conference of the organization. Referring to the recent setback in the international working class movement, following the downfall of socialism in East Europe and the Soviet Union, the resolution said: "This Conference wants to draw the attention of the working class to the fact that this is not the first time that the working class movement is being plagued by setbacks as a result of not only direct onslaughts from outside by the class enemies, the capitalist-imperialists, but also as a result of subversion from within by class collaborators, the reformist-revisionists. In the past, the working class movement successfully survived those attacks, resisted the conspiracy and won the victory. And this time also, this



The congregation at the inaugural open session of the 18th All India Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) on 14th March, 1992 at Saheed Minar ground, Calcutta.

Workers will win this battle if they grasp the problem correctly and take proper lesson.

Conference is confident, they will win the battle, provided they grasp the problem properly and take a proper lesson from this tragic experience."

Expressing grave concern over the growing hegemonism of the USA and its naked interference in the internal affairs of different countries, including Cuba, Iraq and China, and strongly refuting the deceptive campaign for establishment of peace following disintegration of some socialist states and cessation of the so-called cold war between the USA and the erstwhile USSR, the document said: "It must be understood by all that the root cause of war does not lie in the contradiction between labour and capital, i.e. in the contradiction between the capitalist and the socialist system. That cause is inherent in the capitalist economy itself and in its inevitable market crisis. Neither the imperialist-revisionist disarmament pact between the warmonger Bush and the traitor Gorbachev, nor their declaration of reduction of nuclear arms are going to change or influence the law of inevitability of war in any way. Peace can only be thrust upon the imperialists by developing united and mighty militant peace movements free from pacifist illusions and with the working class at the core, and by combining this movement with the day-to-day anti-capitalist and democratic mass struggles in the respective countries throughout the world."

The resolution dealt with the socio-economic-political conditions of the working people in advanced capitalist countries of the world and the plight and humiliation the people in the erstwhile socialist countries faced after restoration of capitalism there.

Dealing with the grave consequences of intensification of crisis of the capitalist economy, the resolution emphasized that the "situation prevailing in the capitalist and erstwhile socialist countries once again confirm beyond doubt that the market economy cannot solve the basic problems of human life. On the contrary, with passage of time the market economy continuously aggravates the socio-economic-political-cultural problems of society."

On the industrial and fiscal policies of the government of India, the resolution said: "In the last analysis, these industrial and fiscal policies will establish an unchallengeable dominance of the monopolists in all spheres of economic life and activities. This will lead to concentration of power in the hands of the state, the government and the administration for which draconian laws with a view to curbing and suppressing the mass and trade union movements will definitely be enacted. The danger of all-out fascism which has been looming over the country since long will further materialise, consolidating its grip in all spheres of socio-economic-political-cultural life of the country." The resolution said: "The attempt to arrest democratic mass movements within the legal framework and within the cult of opportunism, economism and reformism poses a perilous threat to the onward march of the working class movement. The sole object of the scheme", for example, "is to drag the workers out from the path of class struggle and drive them along the path of class collaboration. It is a heinous attempt to make the workers sort of a partner in the bourgeois establishment and make them co-responsible for all the evils of the exploitative capitalist system. It is a dangerous and suicidal trap for the workers."

Expressing grave concern over the growing danger of communalism, parochialism and separatism and the role of the ruling parties and the aspirant opposition, it said: "The long practice of fostering and fomenting communal and divisive forces and the dirty tricks resorted to by different political parties to reap electoral benefits from this situation, together with the problem of disparity of development in different regions and of suppression and domination of the backward nationality peoples by the vested interest and the relatively advanced nationalities have contributed to the aggravation of the separatist problems in several parts of the country. As a result, the unity of the people in general and the working people's unity in particular are becoming the worst casualty to the jubilation of the employers and the capitalist class."

The resolution dealt with the plight of agricultural labourers, working women and child labour and said that "even after 44 years of independence no comprehensive laws covering rural workers have been enacted. Though this sector of production has been brought under the purview of the Minimum wages Act, and minimum wages, though not satisfactory, has been fixed, the employers do not care for paying these wages. The law-enforcing machinery is virtually protecting the violators of law." Brutal murder of union workers and the labourers, often in connivance with the police and administration, has become a regular phenomenon in rural India." On child labour it said: "Despite high sounding constitutional provisions and more than a dozen of laws prohibiting child labour, the number is on the increase. The severity of child exploitation for earning profit by paying low wages and forcing extra hours of work, denying the child the right to play, to learn and to enjoy normal childhood is an unpardonable crime. For this, our state and the rulers are entirely responsible." On the working women it said: "Even today they are being denied equal remuneration and equal opportunity in employment and other facilities. Added to this, there is sex-exploitation and sex-assault which are on the increase. Dignity and honour of womanhood is at stake."

Resolution on US imperialist design against sovereignty of Iraq

The resolution said: The Eighteenth All India Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) expresses its serious concern over the unabated conspiratorial attacks on the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Iraq by US imperialism headed by war-criminal Bush even after the cessation of the war in the Gulf area. Its constant threat of imposition of another war on the people of Iraq proves how audacious and desperate have become the US imperialists in the absence of a strong socialist opposition.

The criminal activities of the Bush administration before and after the war have confirmed beyond doubt our stand that on the pretext of protecting the sovereignty of Kuwait and implementing the manipulated UN resolution, a pre-planned and pre-prepared war was imposed in the Gulf area by the US imperialists with a view to not only protecting the massive oil empire of

US companies and ensuring unchallengeable control over the oil resources but also to establishing military and political supremacy as well as crushing the growing resistance against American interest in the Gulf region. With this motive in the main, and in connivance with the renegade Soviet clique headed by Gorbachev and taking advantage of the weaknesses of the world peace movement, the US-led multinational forces unleashed the worst kind of barbarous war the world has ever witnessed since the Vietnam War and resorted to wanton destruction of civil property, water supply system, milk producing factories, hospitals and nursery schools, killing thousands including women and children and violating all sorts of international norms. The ferocity of the crime of the US war mongers far surpassed the barbarity of the medieval age when the advancing US army buried alive some eight thousand retreating Iraqi soldiers.

This Conference considers it a duty to caution the people of all independent nations that the post Gulf-war activities of US imperialism and its overlordism, which has increased manifold of late, has not only posed an alarming threat to the independence of Iraq but to the independence and sovereignty of all the independent nations and to freedom struggle in general. Hence the working people in particular and freedom loving people in general should not allow the time to slip by; they should come forward right now to develop resistance struggle against US imperialism, the worst enemy of civilization and humanity at the moment, clearing all sorts of confusions regarding its deceptive and hypocritical peace posture."

The Conference called upon people to develop a mighty movement against the US imperialist design in Iraq.

Resolution expressing solidarity with the struggling workers and the people of Cuba

It said: "The Eighteenth All India Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) ardently expresses the solidarity of the working millions of India with the Cuban workers and the people, who, in a most critically adverse situation, have been conducting a relentless, brilliant struggle to resist a desperate and all-out offensive by US imperialism designed to destabilise Cuba, dismantle socialism there and dislodge its legal and legitimate government.

This Conference seriously feels that the consolidation of international solidarity of the working people of the world in support of freedom, sovereignty and self-determination of Cuba has become the call of the hour in the face of the notorious conspiracy hatched by the Bush administration and its allies against Cuban revolution, taking advantage of the consequences arising out of counterrevolution that took place in the erstwhile USSR and some East European countries.

On behalf of the working people of India this Conference strongly demands that US imperialism stop all forms of interference in the internal affairs of Cuba and all its acts of subversion, and withdraw the economic blockade forthwith.

This Conference calls upon the working people of the world to rally round the Cuban cause with a view to advancing the cause of socialist

movement and giving a befitting rebuff to the US imperialist design to undermine independence and sovereignty of weaker nations."

Resolution on trade union unity and united struggle

The resolution emphasized :

"This Conference seriously and honestly feels that the necessity of forging the broadest possible unity on a minimum agreed programme and a definite code of conduct with mutual respect for each other for developing sustained struggle covering all sections of the people has increased manifold in recent times and is of paramount importance. Hence, it calls upon the working people and the rank and file of all the trade unions to come forward to give a concrete shape of their unity in united action on the burning issues affecting the working people and the working class movement."

The General Secretary's Report and all these resolutions were adopted unanimously and with enthusiasm. Through another resolution the Constitution of the organization was amended. A resolution on the recent jute strike in West Bengal was adopted unanimously and also a 34-point charter of demands.

Kousal Ram Das, a distinguished trade unionist of Kerala, addressed the session. Comrade Pritish Chanda delivered his presidential address, explaining the significance of the present international and national situation and emphasizing the role the working people of India in general and the members of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) in particular would have to play in the present context.

New Committee

A new Working Committee of 38 and a new General Council of 81 members were elected unanimously at the conclusion of the delegates' sessions on 17 March with the following office-bearers.

Advisors

1. Com. S. K. Pramanik
2. Com. Nihar Mukherjee

President : Com. Pritish Chanda

Vice-Presidents :

1. Com. Shankar Singh
2. Com. Prativa Mukherjee
3. Com. V. N. Singh
4. Com. Sidheswar Sharma
5. Com. Ashutosh Banerjee
6. Com. Jalaluddin, A.

General Secretary : Com. Tapas Dutta
Secretaries :

1. Com. Fatick Ghosh
2. Com. Badsha Khan
3. Com. Sunil Mukherjee
4. Com. Achintya Sinha
5. Com. Sankar Saha
6. Com. Arulanda Samy
7. Com. Nagendra Kumar Sharma

Treasurer : Com. Sitesh Dasgupta

Meanwhile, the different mass organizations of the party met the fraternal delegates from

abroad to present addresses of honour and presents as token of love and respect from the Indian people to the people of those countries. The AIDS, DYO, MSS, Komsomol and AIDTO met the guests in Calcutta. The All India Committee of the AIKKMS and its South 24 Parganas Committee gave mementos and addresses of honour on 18 March at a public reception at the village of Bele-Durganagar under Jaynagar P.S.

Public Reception in Calcutta on 17 March to Fraternal Delegates from Abroad

The arrival of fraternal delegates from the People's Republic of China, Cuba, Iraq, Bangladesh and Nepal, their presence and the fervour with which they took part at the inaugural open session and at the delegate session on morning of 15 March made them part of this All India Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani). Silently in the midst of these activities grew a bond of love and respect between them and the organization and its workers. This bond manifested in full warmth and glow when the organizers and the fraternal delegates addressed each other at a public reception held in honour of the guests on 17 March evening at the lighted and decorated Netaji Indoor Stadium.

A huge red dais was built on the floors with a portrait of Karl Marx hung on its backdrop. It all looked resplendent in the floods of halogen light which converged from around. Hundreds of people, including delegates, observers and citizens of Calcutta were seated around the dais. Many waited outside the stadium in the dark of nightfall to listen to the speakers and get a view of the fraternal delegates.

As Comrades Xu Hongfu of China, R.P. Victor of Cuba, Jamil Salman Ahmed and Kais Abdul Karim of Iraq, Abdullah Sarkar of Bangladesh and Khagendra Nepal of Nepal took their seats in the dais along with Com. Nihar Mukherjee, Com. Pritish Chanda, Com. Tapas Dutta, and other leaders, an upsurge of emotion gripped the audience. The entire audience stood up to give red salute to the memory of the great teacher and leader of the world proletariat and mankind as the song in English on Karl Marx began. Slogans reverberated across the stadium vault, its atmosphere now changed with eager expectation.

Com. Tapas Dutta introduced the delegates to the audience. And he said : "We are very glad to have them with us here today. Our Conference concluded this morning. Among other things we took two resolutions — one each on Cuba and Iraq. We express our solidarity with the working people of all countries. Unitedly shall we strive to achieve the goal of communism."

Members of Komsomol, the young Communist League of the SUCI, went up on the dais and presented red scarfs to the fraternal delegates and the leaders of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) seated there. Bouquets were offered to the guests on behalf of the State Committees of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) of Assam, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West

Bengal. From the West Bengal State Committee of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) albums of photographs of the Conference were presented to the guests.

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Speech

Comrade President, distinguished guests from China, Cuba, Iraq, Bangladesh and Nepal, delegates and workers, and the people of Calcutta present here !

On the occasion, I along with you all assembled here, offer the warmest greetings to the fraternal delegates from abroad on behalf of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) from the depths of my heart. Comrades, we have assembled here at a historically very crucial moment, both internationally and nationally. The delegates at this Conference have applied themselves strenuously during the past three days to issues connected with the workers' movement — on building up militant trade union movement on our soil embracing all sections of the toiling masses — workers, agricultural labourers, the peasantry, the white collared employees, etc. Two momentous resolutions have been adopted at this Conference on Cuba and Iraq condemning US imperialist attacks on those countries and expressing solidarity with the Cuban and the Iraqi people and demanding trial of Bush as a criminal.

Comrades, on this occasion I wish to draw your special attention to a point. You all know about the recent setback in the Soviet Union and six East European states. I shall not discuss much on this. Those who have studied in detail know that the setback is grievous but temporary. I have dealt with this and some related questions at the open session on the 14th.

Students of social science know that the US bid to dominate the world through neo-colonial attack is sparing none today. The ruling capitalist class of our country, an inseparable part of world capitalism and suffering from the third intense general crisis of capitalism, has entered into a conspiracy with multinationals, world imperialism to jointly exploit the raw materials and labour power of this and other countries. Those with even the minimum trade union consciousness are aware of, and those who are more advanced are surely conscious of the many hurdles posed by economism, opportunism, reformism, revisionism and particularly the arch neo-colonialist blueprints of glasnost and perestroika. But there is no reason to lose heart. Civilization during the ages has moved to higher and higher stages through evolution and revolution. In the present era, it is inexorably moving from capitalism to the classless communist society through the intermediate transitional phase of socialism. All obstacles and temporary reverses will be overcome in the onward march of history and civilization.

In this connection, I wish to draw your attention to another phenomenon. It is the daily, even hourly crisis that plagues the world imperialist-capitalist world today. It appears that the world capitalist economy is heading for an all-out intense general crisis and recession in the near future. The imperialist-capitalists are frantically trying to ward it off but the more they try, the more they will sink deeper into the morass of crisis. This is the ray of hope.

Spontaneity of the working class movement means strengthening the influence of the bourgeois ideology over the workers

Through united struggle on the correct base political line, the workers fight not only for themselves but for emancipation of the whole humanity. This is the historical destiny.

The only course open for us—not only those who cherish Marxism-Leninism as the historically, experimentally proved truth or only the militant trade unions but whosoever is in quest of truth—is to pursue the path illuminated by the Marxist-Leninist philosophy as a guide to action in changing the world for the better, basing themselves on the higher edifice of morality, culture and ethics. For, capitalism is hitting not only economically but striking at the very moral fabric, bringing about an all-out moral-cultural-ethical degeneration. The vanguard sections must engage in struggle covering all aspects of life to acquire advanced communist character and build up the genuine revolutionary working class party on the soil of every country steered in class and mass struggles as the only guarantee against imperialistic-fascistic onslaught.

If all present here take a pledge that the best sons and daughters of workers, peasants, middle class and the intelligentsia, in short of all sections of the exploited masses, will rally round the noble banner of Communism and march with heads high, then the trade union movement will truly develop into school of communism culminating in victorious revolution and putting an end to all capitalist exploitation. I firmly believe, you will all proceed along this path.

Red Salute to you all and to the distinguished guests from abroad!

Speeches by guests

The Chinese delegate, Comrade Xu Hongfu began his speech with the slogans :

Long live unity and solidarity of the workers of the world !

Long live socialism !

Long live proletarian internationalism !

Long live Marxism-Leninism !

Long live trade union movement of India !

He congratulated the gathering on the successful Eighteenth Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) on behalf of the over 10 crore members of the ACFTU and 14 crore Chinese workers.

He pointed out that China and India were two great ancient civilizations. Both were developing countries and had a common history of colonial oppression. The two nations had accorded mutual support to each other during their respective liberation struggles. He wished the Indian people new victories in defence of their sovereignty.

Continuing, Comrade Xu Hongfu said that in pre-revolution China, the people had been downtrodden and the means of production had been owned by the comprador bourgeoisie, bureaucrats and landlords. But after the 1949 revolution, the working class had become the ruling class there and socialism had achieved all-round development and prosperity in the teeth of concerted attacks, embargo and trade restrictions imposed by the western imperialist powers.

Comrade Xu Hongfu stressed that China would remain socialist. Belying the imperialist jubilation at the so-called decline of socialism, socialism

lived on in China. He pointed out that the need of the hour was not President Bush's New Order but a New Order based on Panchsheel and a new world trade union movement based on these five principles.

Comrade Xu Hongfu concluded by affirming that China would continue to struggle against colonialism, hegemonism and power politics and for socialism and the ultimate victory would be for the people for socialism despite the present setback.

At the outset, the Cuban delegate Comrade R P Victor offered sincere thanks for the solidarity with Cuba expressed in the resolution adopted and also throughout the three days of the Conference. Ridiculing lack of proper coverage of the Conference by the Indian press, he requested the press to take due notice of the resolution and the thousands who had thronged to the open session and the Public Reception.

Continuing, he said that with the Chinese delegate expressing assurance and support which carried the strength and weight of China, the Cubans were doubly sure that they could defeat the US imperialism once more and that final victory of socialism was certain. But of course the Cubans had to fight for it and fight they would courageously. In order to remove social inequalities, racial discrimination and apartheid, there was no alternative to struggle. In order to solve the Palestinian imbroglio and to eradicate hunger, poverty and misery of the people, there was no alternative to struggle. He reminded the gathering of Che Guevara's saying that life of the common masses in all countries were basically the same and so also their problems — only the degree of the problems varied. The question was, whether or not to accept the present unjust capitalist order as immutable unjust capitalist order — and there was no doubt whatsoever as to what the correct course was.

Comrade Victor ended his speech with the slogans :

Long live socialism !

Long live the working class and peasantry of India !

Long live Indo-Cuban solidarity !

The Iraqi delegate, Comrade Jamil Salman Ahmed congratulated the Conference at the bold stand taken by it on Arab issues in general and the Iraqi issues in particular which had been an unforgettable experience. He continued that President Bush's proposed New Order was tantamount to domination of the whole world by US imperialism. The UN Security Council was moving in a manner subservient to US imperialism which was fanning up jingoistic Zionist racialism and sought to perpetuate the illegal, unjust Zionist settlements on Arab territories.

Continuing, Comrade Ahmed said that the imperialist powers headed by US imperialism, during their 33-day aggression on Iraq, had barbarously destroyed the factories, transport systems, schools, hospitals and even milk producing centres for the children in Iraq. Even now, after cessation of the open aggression, they had clamped an undeclared embargo on supply of foodstuff, children's food, medicines, etc., to Iraq.

Concluding, he said that the Iraqis needed support from and solidarity with people of other countries to continue the struggle to defeat the imperialist attack.

Comrade Abdullah Sarkar, leader of the Bangladesh delegation, said in his speech that those who were gleeful at the supposed end of socialism were blind and devoid of any logic or reasoning. It was they who would ultimately be overthrown and socialism would be victorious. What had been overthrown in Soviet Union and East Europe was not socialism but its degenerated form brought about by long practice of wrong neo-revisionist politics. Just as a field yielded good crop after the harmful vegetation was weeded out, there would again be luxuriant growth of socialism once the pernicious neo-revisionism was weeded out ideologically and organisationally.

Continuing, Comrade Sarkar said that the people of Bangladesh were engaged in struggle side by side with the Indian people. Basing on Marxism-Leninism and the thoughts of giant communist leaders from Marx to Shibdas Ghosh, the struggle of the Bangladesh people, the Indian people, would come out successful and revolution become victorious from country to country. The struggle was for bread and employment, for socialism. Taking class struggle as the key link, all shades of opportunism-economism-reformism-revisionism would have to be fought out.

Comrade Sarkar concluded by saying that the only way the warmth and affection for Bangladesh evinced at the Conference could be repaid by the Bangladesh people was to cherish the same in their hearts and fight for establishing socialism, Communism. He called upon the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) to continue unabated struggle for uniting the toiling masses of the world so that a new international working class leadership could emerge in the process.

Comrade Khagendra Nepal, the fraternal delegate from Nepal said that two years back, the Ranashahi in Nepal had been standing above the Constitution and lording it over the people of Nepal. United struggle of the people of Nepal had been able to bring about a change in that situation. But although a political change had not yet been achieved. There had been no improvement in the people's lot and they had to wage ceaseless struggle for their dues and rights. The struggle of the people of Nepal was inseparable from the struggle of Indian people and vice versa.

Comrade Nepal ended his speech with a call for working class solidarity and proletarian internationalism.

Now, Comrade Pritish Chanda, who presided at the reception, addressed the audience. Pointing one by one to the representatives of Cuba, Iraq, China, Bangladesh and Nepal he said : "You are from Cuba, your people are holding aloft the Red Flag only 90 miles away from the bastion of imperialism. You are from Iraq, your country is fighting against the imperialists headed by the USA. We said at the time that this was a dress rehearsal for Star War. To you from China I have

“... even if they can crush one country, they can never crush the world proletarian revolution, ...” – Lenin

this to convey that the Chinese and Indian people constitute about half of the world population. If the two fight unitedly then half of the world fights for socialism. To the peoples of Bangladesh and Nepal I say that conditions vary from country to country but the struggle is essentially the same. The working people of India stand by the democratic aspirations of your peoples.



Com. Pritish Chanda

The UTUC (Lenin Sarani) has decided to approach other central trade unions with an appeal to observe unitedly a countrywide solidarity day in support of the peoples of Cuba and Iraq against the US imperialist threat. The Chinese comrade has made a significant observation that there is need for an international working class centre. We fully agree with you and together we shall strive for it.”

A poem of Karl Marx was now rendered into song and then was sung the *Internationale*. With these the ceremony of the public reception came to conclusion.

A Rural Reception

History sends out the message to all working people to know their tasks at this vital hour and to forge unity to defend and advance their cause. The decisions of the Conference of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and the presence of fraternal delegates from abroad as an expression of solidarity of the working people of those countries with the working people of India could go a long way towards development of an international centre of the working class of different countries as the centre of unity of the workers of the world.

The spirit of the Conference is rippling across the community of toiling people of the land. On 18 March itself, the day following the conclusion of the Conference, it bloomed into comradely trust and understanding between the guests from abroad and the working men and women in a countryside in southern West Bengal.

In the dusky village of Bele-Durganagar under Joynagar Police Station in South 24 Parganas rural people of the area felicitated the guests. This countryside, inhabited largely by agricultural labourers and poor peasants, has a long tradition of militant struggle against oppression and arocity by vested interest-police-administration combine. Many of the people laid down their lives to resist the murderous assaults by this clique. The flag of struggle stained in the blood of these martyrs has been held aloft by their comrades. These people — poor and illiterate masses — have engaged in the struggle to uphold the banner of Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Shibdas Ghosh. It was they who accorded reception to the guests under the aegis of the South 24 Parganas Committee of the All India Krishak — Khetmazdoor Sangathan (AIKKMS).

From Baruipur to Bele-Durganagar—along this entire long route rural people waited in the hot sun of March to greet the guests. Arches stood out displaying banners of greetings. The big convoy of cars plodded along as enthusiastic men, women and children stopped it with all too frequency to greet the friends from abroad. They shouted slogans, showered petals of flowers, gave garlands and offered sweet water of green coconut. Mud walls of roadside huts had messages of greetings written over.

People thronged the roads of Bele-Durganagar with the arrival of the convoy carrying the fraternal delegates. The guests were offered sweets and given bouquets. The school ground where the reception was to be held was a scene of tumultuous welcome as the guests were led to the dais erected at one edge of the ground. The red dais projected a portrait of Karl Marx. Along with Com. Pritish Chanda, Com. Shankar Singh, Com. Tapas Dutta, Com. Yakub Pailan, one of the vice-presidents of the AIKKMS, Com. Debaprasad Sarkar, President at the meeting, Com. Amir Ali Haldar, Secretary of the West Bengal Committee of the AIKKMS, and other leaders of the organization the guests took their seat on the dais.

Silence descended as the strains of the song on Com. Madhai Haldar, a martyr who laid down his life on 31st August 1990 in Calcutta in the anti-fare rise and price-rise movement of West Bengal, filled the air. Then was sung the song on Comrade Lenin at whose call the partisans rose in the Soviet land. Those half-starved, ill-clad village folk who filled the meeting ground, those deprived, downtrodden souls had all emptied their heart at this congregation. That plain and self-evident truth glowed in the air as the crimson sun now dipped over the western horizon.

Truth uncovered communicates itself in the simplest of means. The unfamiliar circumstance with its unknown language ringing in the ear and an unknown culture making itself felt revealed the pains and pleasures of the downtrodden, humiliated, oppressed and exploited masses that was truth all the world over. Readily it touched the hearts of those who had come travelling from other parts of the world. Their faces glowed, their hearts throbbed with the spirit that filled the air. And five red flags with hammer, sickle and star fluttered over the dais symbolising the presence of five guests from abroad as mark of working class unity and solidarity.

On behalf of these people who lived on the lands skirting the Sundarbans, the AIKKMS gave the guests mementos of a peasant carrying his plough over shoulder, a bottle of fresh honey gathered from the jungles of Sundarbans and an address of honour, which read :

“Though economically backward the land you have stepped into today does not lag behind in carrying the glorious tradition of a long struggle. In the struggle against the British imperialists, many freedom fighters of this area courted martyrs’ death. In continuation of the same struggle, the oppressed masses have accepted the guidance and teachings of our beloved departed leader and teacher, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, and rallied under the banner of the All India Krishak — Khetmazdoor Sangathan (AIKKMS), affiliated to the UTUC (Lenin Sarani).

“We, the workers, peasants and oppressed millions have not confined our struggle within the orbit of economism. We have rallied in thousands to protest against the heinous attack by the imperialists on Vietnam in the past and on Iraq in recent times. We, the disciples of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, believe in proletarian internationalism.



Rural people of South 24 Parganas present on 18th March at the School ground, Bele-Durganagar to felicitate the foreign guests.

18th All India Conference of UTUC (Lenin Sarani)

On the principles of solidarity with world proletariat, we have vowed to protest against every imperialist attack on the toiling millions anywhere in the world.

"Comrades, your presence and brotherly feelings will strengthen our future struggles and will inspire us to shoulder greater responsibilities in the international proletarian movement."

Rising to reply, Com. Xu Hongfu of China said: "I convey to you the regards and respects of 800 million Chinese agricultural labourers and peasants. I am aware that the Indian peasants have a glorious history of struggle against British colonialism to win national independence. The Chinese peasants have great admiration for your militant struggles. The Chinese and Indian peasants have fought and will continue to fight together against our common enemy—imperialism. You know, before revolution of 1949 the Chinese peasants were very poor. Most of them were landless. They suffered exploitation and oppression by landlords. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China our peasants actively participated in the liberation struggles together with the labourers. Workers' and peasants alliance brought victory to the liberation struggle. After liberation the life of the peasants in China has greatly improved. The peasants and the workers have worked together to build socialism in China. The enemies of socialism have all combined to overthrow the socialist order in China. They have not succeeded, because of resistance from the workers and peasants. We will continue on the road of socialism and it is our firm belief that socialism will prevail all over the world and bring final victory to the working people. Long live the unity and solidarity of peasants and workers of the world! Long live Socialism!"

Comrade Victor from Cuba said: "You have given me the opportunity to be here before you as the representative of a country which is waging a struggle of 'socialism or death'. I wish to explain to you in brief why we are struggling for this slogan. Socialism which came to our land in 1959, 33 years ago, has uplifted the vast majority

of the Cuban people, particularly the peasantry of our land. But imperialism does not like socialism. And since we are so close, only 90 miles away from the USA, they are trying to crush us. But we shall overcome, because the people of Cuba stand behind socialism. Because, we have friends like you all over the world."

Com. Salman of Iraq said: "You know, dear friends, there are so many historical relations—relations of struggle binding the Iraqi and the Indian people against the common enemy. The USA has no friends. It is the enemy of all peoples of the world, and that is why our people are fighting against the common enemy—the USA. This meeting is a historic moment for me. Although I represent here the Iraqi workers, but I am the son of a peasant; so I am present among the peasants. I share the memories of peasant life of my childhood. Down with imperialism, the enemy of people!"

Com. Abdullah Sarkar of Bangladesh said: "History and culture bind you and us together. You belong to downtrodden peasantry. You cannot have two square meals a day. When independence came people hoped that the peasants would have

their democratic rights. But the reality is that the peasants have still to fight for their rights. And whenever they rise to fight their struggle is crushed. The exploitative capitalist rulers are perpetrating this crime. They conspire to divide people on religion. I appeal to you to unite and win your demands through united struggle. You will be guided in this struggle by Marxism-Leninism and the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Long live revolution!"

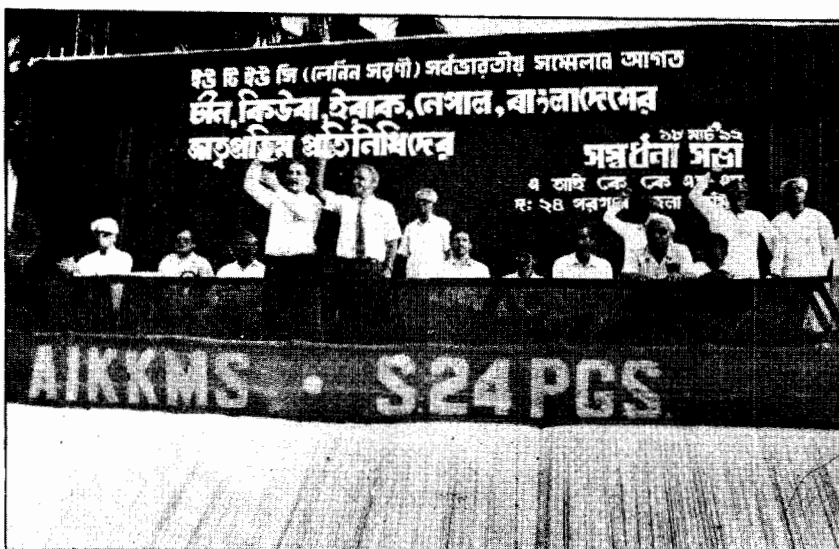
Com. Khagendra Nepal of Nepal said: "For long you have fought against feudalism. We have, too, in Nepal. Two years back the people of Nepal won the battle for democracy. But our struggle has not ended. The working people of Nepal stand by all peoples of the world who are engaged in struggle against injustice, oppression and exploitation. We are striving to establish the working class rule in Nepal. Red Salute!"

They all mingled then into one rally—the guests, the leaders and members of the AIKKMS, and the masses of people of that countryside. They led a Solidarity March against the US imperialist neo-colonial attack and walked down the muddy village roads for two and a half kilometers. Behind a huge banner marched members of the Komsomol and the guests, marched the leaders of the AIKKMS, marched the slogan raising agricultural workers and peasants. They pledged to fight shoulder to shoulder with the working people of all countries against the US imperialist manoeuvres and the design of the capitalist rulers of different countries and their henchmen. Men and women had lined up along the road. People stood on paddy fields, beside village hutments, at edges of ponds. The unity of purpose and communion of resolve winged the steps of marchers and the procession floated along the mud road amidst lush green fields. Dust rose into a hazy screen behind which the setting sun gleamed as though the capitalist west glowed before it would sink into inevitable dark. The slogans echoed and the calm village air was now agog with militance, fervour, resolve and conviction. That may be the beginning, the beginning of a tide to sweep this land, this world one day.

Few men of outside world will ever hear of this March for Solidarity against US imperialist neo-colonial attack in which so many representatives from abroad participated along with thousands of peasants in a remote countryside. The silent force with which history works inexorably towards its goal will bring to light this story one day to tell posterity of how the torch bearers fought their way inch by inch in the dark and gloom of a period of reaction.

COM. ANIL SEN ELECTED NEW CONTROL COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

Comrade Anil Sen, member, Central Committee, SUCI, and Central Office Secretary was unanimously elected the Chairman of the Control Commission. The election was held at a meeting of the members of the Control Commission on 16.3.1992. The meeting was presided over by Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI.



Guests from abroad acknowledge greetings of public at rural reception of 18 March.

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