

SUCI Policy Statement On General Election

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, issued the following statement of the Central Committee of the Party on the ensuing General Election on 1st April, 1996 :

The General Election and elections to the Assemblies in six states are taking place at a time when people's life is confronted with an all-out crisis.

The economic situation has been deteriorating so fast that 65 per cent of our people have already been pushed below poverty line and more than 16 crore of people, both urban and rural, have been rendered jobless while unbridled price-rise, inflation and increasing burden of taxation are making people's life more and more miserable. An ever-growing recessionary trend has already engulfed the entire economy leading to lay-offs and

closure of industries while concentration of land in the hands of the rural rich has caused pauperisation of the vast masses of the rural poor. Though the Narasimha Rao Government has been trumpeting that the New Economic and Industrial policies as well as signing of GATT and joining the WTO will bring prosperity to the country, the people have been already experiencing the worsening unemployment problem and further rise in prices of all essential commodities including life saving drugs as the concomitant evils of the policy of liberalization. An aim of the new economic policy as also of the GATT is to reduce subsidy in agriculture progressively which cannot but hit hard the middle and poor peasants and shoot up the prices of agricultural produces affecting all sections of the people, while acceptance of

the Intellectual Property Rights and amending the Patent Law according to the desire of the WTO cannot but hamper further research in different branches of technology and science. So, however much the Congress(I) Government may try to befool the people by singing in favour of joining the WTO, it is more than clear that other than ensuring fabulous profit for the big monopoly houses of our country and wide-opening the door to the foreign multinational companies to freely exploit the cheap labour power and raw materials of this vast land, the New Economic Policy is not going to bring any good for the people. On the contrary, it is sure to bring about a disaster in their lives.

On the other hand, the hard-won rights of the people are being systematically curtailed by enacting black

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SUCI Condemns

further blockade of Cuba

The Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India adopted at its meeting held in Calcutta on the 20th March 1996 the following resolution :

"The Central Committee of the Party notes with deep indignation that the U. S. Government has in blatant violation of international law decided to promulgate the Helms-Burton Law with the sole object to further stiffen the blockade that had already been imposed by the US imperialists upon socialist Cuba. The Central Committee firmly holds that it clearly transgresses Cuba's sovereignty and it is a naked imperialist attack launched with the nefarious design to bring socialist Cuba down. The Central Committee therefore denounces this imperialist act in unequivocal terms and demands that the U.S. imperialists desist from doing anything under this infamous black law and withdraw it at once.

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These 'Servants of People' who promote corruption, deception, division and communal politics

In the present political situation when all the major political parties and combinations have undoubtedly exposed their degree, depth and dimension of corruption as never before, when the policies pursued by these parties at the Centre and different states have enormously added to the miseries of the common people proving beyond doubt that the tall promises made by them are meant only to befool the common people and anyhow to retain or regain power throwing to the winds all ethics, norms and principles so fondly cherished by our conscientious public, the electorate today are face to face with a hard question: whom to vote and why? Gone are the days when people held parliamentary democracy as something noble and laudable. Today only the skeleton of it is staring them in the face. However may the ruling class try to extol and trumpet the neutrality and magnificence of the Judiciary and the Election Commission, the fact remains that all are working with a sole object of lengthening the lease of life of this tottering system, one that is subservient to the interest of the ruling capitalist class, the corporate houses, the urban and rural bourgeoisie in particular.

Therefore, in the present elections the main question before the people in the matter of exercising their franchise is the question of recognizing and supporting those forces which have stood the stringent trial of legitimate democratic mass movements to advance the people's cause towards amelioration of miseries in their life

and final victory to win emancipation, as distinct from the hoaxes of the bourgeois parties and deceptions of sham leftists and Marxists through fire-spitting rhetorics. Honesty must be tested on the touchstone of mass movements to distinguish it from pretensions of veiled dishonesty. Righteousness ought to be differentiated from deceitful ostentation of clandestine manoeuvres. Truth has to be gleaned from among the host of falsities masquerading as assertion of facts. When the election drum beats, the servitors of the ruling class, whatever their colour, signboards and clamour, all plunge into the game of deceiving and hoodwinking the masses to cajole them in battle of ballots, and buy their support with money and flex the muscle to ram the choice down their throat, even tamper the ballots as need be.

While problems in galore stifle the masses and they gasp for breath of life, the Congress(I) begs support for stability and prosperity, the BJP begs it for Hindutva, the Janata Dal for protection of lower castes, the CPI(M)-led Left Front for its reforms. But whose stability and prosperity does the Congress(I) safeguard? What is the objective of the BJP's Hindutva slogan? What goal does the Janata Dal wish to attain with its 'Mandal' manoeuvre? For whom the reforms of the CPI(M) and its allies? What do all these have to do with the main question before the people? Do they differ basically in regard to the major economic issues agitating the public mind, in their record on the question of corruption, in their performance from the seat of governmental power and attitude

to the legitimate democratic mass movements, in their role vis-a-vis cultural degeneration, education, women's plight and democratic rights? Experience in daily life is the evergreen means to learn from. Recall some of them.

NEW ECONOMIC POLICY : OUTCOME FOR PEOPLE

● Poverty growing apace, the increasing percentage of people below the poverty line.

Year	Rural Area	Urban Area
1989-90	37.94	32.41
1990-91	36.55	32.43
1991	42.06	32.02
1992	48.77	33.87

(Source: *Economic & Political Weekly* : 10 June, 1993)

● Work-days declining — decrease in work-days under Jawahar Rojgar Yojana speaks the fact.

1990-91, 87.46 crore ; 1991-92, 80.92 crore ; 1992-93, 78.21 crore ; * 1994-95, 47.06 crore. (Source: EPW, June 10, 1995 * June 3, 1995)

● People eating less and less — decrease in per capita consumption of foodgrains per day reflects on forced destitution.

1991, 510.1 gm ; 1992, 469.9 gm ; 1993, 465.6 gm ; 1994, 474.2 gm (Economic Survey, Union Government)

● Sliding into debt trap, step by step :

Total amount of foreign debt till March 1995 stood at Rs. 3,11,792 crore. Under Narasimha Rao's dispensation it rose by 240 per cent in a space of one year (1994-95), 88% of the increase

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Havoc Price Rise Ridicules 'Containing Inflation'

Entering the fifth year after the introduction of the so-called economic reforms, crisis-ridden Indian capitalism has thrust upon the teeming millions a life of increasing hardship and misery. The continual soaring prices of all essential commodities and medicines including those of life-saving drugs have assumed such an alarming proportion that most of the people just somehow eke out a sub-human existence.

Normally, in our country we used to experience seasonal fall in the wholesale price index followed by retail one. But for the last few years, we find hardly any seasonal fall or any sign of lowering of the price of agricultural products. The prices of almost every item of vegetables and other seasonal food items (agricultural) have been very high even in winter when the harvest continually pours into the market. This is happening because of the control over the agricultural products right from production to its trade and commerce, etc., by the 'farm lobby', that is, the rural big business. Every one badly realises that an unbelievable leap in prices has come about in a single year. Between January 1995 and January 1996, *Musur dal*, one of the principal food articles of the people rose by a staggering 85.7% (to date, it has reached hundred per cent). Equally astonishing is the rise of prices for seven items of daily consumption. In the face of this harsh reality, critics of economic reforms are being labelled as "propagators of disinformation". But as far as the people are concerned, the present trend of abnormal price rise is a testimony to a total failure of economic reforms initiated by the Central Congress (I) government. When the reality points to the abject failure in economic performance, even in so far as development in an endemic crisis-ridden capitalist country like ours is concerned, the government at the Centre is taking recourse to a jugglery of statistics, trying to show that the rate of inflation is not only falling but is fast reaching an all-time low! The government controlled mass media harps on this theme day in and day out but such a claim rings hollow to the people because their own experience gives the lie to this propaganda.

One recalls the clamour with which, on the eve of introduction of economic reforms, the Rao government proclaimed the ushering in of a new tide of industrialization and development. In the Congress(I) manifesto for the last elections, they promised creation of one crore of jobs every year and holding of the skyrocketing price line within 100 days after being elected. After coming to power, while Prime Minister Rao painted a rosy picture of the future, his Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh was harping in the parliament on the theme of bringing back the then raging inflation rate to a single digit figure and announced that price rise would be checked through building up "sound foreign exchange reserves and sufficient food stocks." Harsh reality has shown up these promises to be worthless. It is not our contention that steep price-rise has come about only after introduction of New Economic Policy. Rather, ever growing price-rise has been tormenting people's life in our capitalist economy during the entire post-independence period. But the accelerated pace with which the prices of es-

sential commodities have been rising by leaps and bounds after introduction of New Economic Policy have no parallel in the past. Any amount of statistical jugglery by the government cannot hide this stark reality. The essence of the New Economic Policy of globalization, liberalization and privatization is to give a free hand to Indian monopoly capital to exploit ruthlessly the cheap raw materials and labour power of this country jointly with imperialist capital to reap super profits. And this superprofit can be had only at the cost of the Indian people. It is they who have had to bear the brunt of the savagery embodied in the New Economic Policy. There is no doubt that this policy has caused a strong inflationary pressure which is responsible for the current soaring of prices.

In a capitalist set up when there is flow of extra money in market, equitable distribution of that extra money is impossible. The additional money, therefore, finds its way to the hands of the rich upper stratum, thus increasing economic disparity in the society. The incomes of fixed income groups, small traders, poor peasants and common people as a whole do not increase in the process. So through the expansion of money circulation through extra induction of money, their purchasing power gets further squeezed and in its wake, their want, misery and destitution increase.

Inflation means an increase in money supply compared to available goods and services in the market. The period since the start of the New Economic Policy, has witnessed a record increase in money supply. A desperate attempt was made to revive the depressing recessionary economy, caused through decades of anti-people, pro-monopoly economic, fiscal, monetary and credit policies, resulting in disproportionate monetary expansion. A large part of this expansion was the result of the attempt between 1992-93 and 1994-95, to prevent the appreciation of the value of the rupee as the outcome of inflow of foreign finance capital, which in turn led to an increase in the demand for the rupees. The Prime Minister Mr. Rao often talks about comfortable foreign exchange reserves. This, he says, as a mark of great achievement of New Economic Policy. But he prefers to keep mum about the unabated price rise. Nor does he dwell upon how the foreign finance capital is finding its entry in the country and consequently how the prices of daily necessities are shooting up due to its formidable increased circulation in the market compared to available goods and services in the market.

Deliberate price-hike of foodgrains through administrative fiat to bring them in line with international prices is also a major factor. Not only has the Central Congress(I) government raised the support price of the producers, but the issue price through the Public Distribution System (PDS) also has been raised, leading to an increase in open market price as well. The steep and dramatic hike in prices of common rice and wheat in PDS was effected by as much as 86% and 72% respectively between 1991 and 1994. Like the commercialisation of education and medical care, the main thrust of the economic reforms of both

the governments at the Centre and the States is to gradually withdraw the entire food security measures provided so far, to some extent, so as to push the teeming millions to entirely depend on the prevailing market of foodstuff. Systematic slashing down of subsidy in social welfare sectors, a policy objective of economic reforms played havoc in fuelling price rises of essential commodities. The total Central subsidy was reduced from Rs.12,121 crore (1990-91) to Rs.10,300 crore (1993-94). If depreciation of rupee is taken into consideration, the actual value of the subsidy becomes much lower. If 'sufficient food stock' is to play any role at all in bringing down prices, as the Finance Minister says it should, surely it has to be sold in the domestic market at below current market prices, enabling the targeted poverty-stricken people to buy them with their existing purchasing power.

It should be clearly understood that the raising of support price of agricultural produces by the government does not benefit the actual producers at all but is meant to bolster up the profits of the big farmers' lobby, that is, the rural bourgeoisie. The bulk of the actual producers are poor and marginal farmers who find it difficult even to secure two square meals a day. The condition of the vast army of landless agricultural labourers is even worse. Driven by acute want, the actual producers are often forced into distress sale of their produce at the harvesting time. It is the big farmers (jotedars), usurers and the traders, in a word the rural bourgeoisie that buy up the produce at throwaway prices. They resort to hoarding, cornering and manipulation of prices to reap super profits while the people groan under the impact of ever rising prices. The actual producers whom they robbed, are forced to buy back a portion of their own produce from them at exorbitant prices during the lean months. The stupendous amount of black money that circulates in the country virtually giving rise to a parallel illegal economy, plays a menacing role because one of the uses of this black money is to finance the countrywide hoarding, cornering and market manipulations resorted to by the rural bourgeoisie with the connivance of the police and the administration.

So much about the government's "resolve" to check price-rise through building up food stocks. Regarding sound foreign exchange reserves, spokesmen of the Central government boast to have augmented the Foreign Exchange Reserves (FER) to a record high and hold this out as the cardinal achievement of the New Economic Policy. They, along with a section of academics, also hold that uncontrolled, free market economy coupled with free flow of foreign capital is the panacea, the key to industrial advancement of the country.

Before examining these points in some detail, let us see what the general condition of the economy, claimed to be "healthy", actually is. The Finance Minister, in course of issuing a White Paper on the foreign debt, told us that the country was not in "danger of falling into a debt trap." But as on 31.3.95, the foreign debt stood at \$99.04 billion (Rs.3,11,792 crore) while in the

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'Glorious' record of the Ruling Parties !

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(\$ 5.61 bn) has been due to rupee devaluation.

- With internal debt touching an all-time high of Rs.3,31,308 crore in the Budget for 1996-97, government's public debt has reached staggering figures.

In 1995-96 the debts and liabilities of the Central Government will stand at around Rs. 600,559.08 crore. Payment of interest, that is what concerns most immediately, is going to cost people by Rs.52,000 crores. Which means, only the interest due to debt can be paid by the gross amount of loan. This is the debt trap. (Source V.M. Dandekar in *EPW*, 6-13 May 1995)

- The debt liability of India has increased by Rs.244 crore per day in 1993-94, according to the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. (*Times of India*, 4 May 1995)

- Open door policy has resulted in ever growing export-import deficit (in crores). Import — 1990-91 27914, 1991-92 21064, 1992-93 23237, 1993-94 23985, 1994-95 30709/ Export-18477, 18266, 18869, 22700, 26793

Deficit — 9437, 2798, 4368, 1285, 3916 (Reserve Bank of India Annual Report, 1994-95, p-72)

- The dismal picture of the Indian economy, following introduction of the new economic policy, had its new exposure when the exchange rate of the rupee plummeted to the level of Rs.36.70 a US dollar on 31.1.96.

- The trade deficit leaped by 1500 million US dollar to 3,534.86 million dollars during April-Dec'95. (*The Economic Times*, 3-2-96)

- Budget deficit which is growing ever has the outcome of a price-spiral and increasing burden of indirect taxes for the people. (in crores)

1991-92 — Deficit 11507; 1992-93 11815; 1993-94 14163; 1995-96 11504 (April-June); 1995-96 20066 (July-September) (Reserve Bank of India Annual Report, 1994-95)

- **13 monopoly houses of the country, Birlas and Tatas heading them, increased profit 2 times between 1985-90 and 12 times during the last 15 years.** Whereas, prices of all essential commodities, unemployment, poverty are increasing by leaps and bounds, factories are closing, retrenchment and layoff going up ever.

- Garibi hatao (abolish poverty) in real term means elimination of the poor. Government spending is decreasing over the years in garibi hatao schemes.

Year	Index	Govt. spending (%)	Percent of GDP
1989-90	100	2.98	0.61
1990-91	87.3	2.54	0.50
1991-92	65.7	2.05	0.37
1002-93	83.3	2.50	0.45

(Source : *Economic & Political Weekly*, 3-6-1995)

Prices of essential commodities are rocketing from year to year.

Prices in Rs/Kg (as per Central Stores)

Commodity	April 91	April 92	April 93	April 94	22-7-95*
Rice	5.50	6.45	6.80	7.80	11.00
Atta	4.15	4.50	4.60	5.00	6.20
Dal (Arhar)	13.10	15.10	14.00	15.40	29.00
Sugar	9.30	9.40	11.10	14.20	14.00
Common Salt	1.85	2.95	3.30	3.30	4.00
Mustard Oil	38.00	-	-	43.00	44.00

* Open Market

(Source : 91-94, Govt's reply in Rajya Sabha)

In most cases the prices have shot up in the last 5 years by 50 to more than 100%. Side by side, the central government and the state governments have together increased prices of supplies from fair price shops and decreased the subsidies. Consequently people are forced to buy less food, consume less and less food.

- In the last 5 years price of petrol has increased 6 times, of diesel 4 times, of cooking gas 4 times. Prices of house building materials have increased 6 to 12 fold.

- Number of sick industries has increased from 241614 in 1988 to 400,000 in 1995.

- **What the new economic policy of the Congress(I) government has brought to the economic scene:** GDP has declined from 6.8% (before November, 1990) to 2.3% (in 1994-95); Annual agricultural produce has fallen from 8.2% to 4.1%; annual industrial production has gone down from 27.1% to 20.4% (1993-94), average annual wholesale price-index has increased from 7.9% to 10.2%, point to point increase of wholesale price-index in the last 12 months from 7.5% to 8.7%; job opportunities in the organized sector have come down from 1.6% to 0.9%; increase in money supply from 38.2% to 44.7%; trade deficit from Rs.2832 crore to Rs.6213 crore; foreign loans from Rs.163001 crore to Rs.311792 crore

- Planning Commission, a wing of the Central government has had to observe that the new economic policy has failed to check poverty in any significant measure, nor has it succeeded to increase job opportunities on the expected line;

there has been decline in supply of food and investment in agriculture; 51.6% of revenues earned are spent to pay interest alone. (Interim Review Report of Planning Commission)

- Whereas, **loans taken from 27 nationalised banks by business houses have been written off, only to butter the palms of the rich. The government is selling shares of many profit earning nationalised companies at literally throwaway prices.** The money so earned, even then, is not being invested for production, and there is no creation of wealth.

- The companies have paid only 25% of their due corporate taxes, 33% of due excise duties, 33% of due import-export duties and 35% of overdue duties.

- The figure of the registered unemployed available with the 800 Govt. Employment Exchange Offices is 4 crores. It is acknowledged that the real figure, the unregistered unemployed included, shall not be less than 15 crore. Estimatedly, by the turn of the century, this figure will rise to 21 crore. About 66 lakh have lost jobs following de-nationalization by Narasimha Rao Government.

INDIA IN TOP POSITION IN CHILD MALNUTRITION

Dr. John Rode, UNICEF representative said that in India 63 per cent of children below 5 years suffer from malnutrition. India is among the countries occupying top position in child malnutrition. He also commented that the social position of women made no progress in India. (Source Ananda Bazar Patrika 22.6.94)

ONE MILLION TO BE JOBLESS IN NEW ECONOMY

About a million workers in the organised sec-

tor will be jobless in the early years of economic reforms and approximately 70 per cent of them will be from the eastern region.

This grim forecast came from Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Planning Commission Chairman at the Conference on "Economic reforms: implications on industrial relations and employment" organised by the federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and associate bodies (*Telegraph* - 3.4.94)

GROWING PUBLIC DEBT

In his report on "public debt" tabled in the Lok Sabha the CAG noted that more than half of the receipts of the Central Government comes out of borrowings and 86 per cent of internal borrowings are utilised towards debt service obligation, leaving very little fresh addition for investment to the economy. The CAG expressed concern over the growing public debt and liabilities, which stands close to 68 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (*Statesman* 24.12.94)

PRIVATE SECTOR GROSS PROFITS UP

The private corporate sector during 1993-94 witnessed a healthy growth in sales, a slower rate of growth in cost of production and a spurt in growth of gross profits..

According to a recent study conducted by the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India Ltd. (ICICI) on its financial performance, analyses of unaudited turnouts by 545 companies revealed that overall performance was dominated by a decline in the rate of growth of depreciation and only a marginal increase in interest payment.

Operating profits and net profits displayed high increase in 1993-94 over 1992-93. Profitability ratios, such as gross profit margin and operating profit margin increased considerably between 1992 and 1994.

NUMBER OF DESTITUTE PEOPLE INCREASING

The Operation Research Group has shown by conducting survey on 8300 families of the country that the people earning less than Rs. 5 per day (income of Rs. 5 per day taken as the poverty line) constitute 61 per cent of the total population. This is 63 per cent in eastern India, which includes Assam, Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal. (*Statesman* 12.12.90).

INDIA AMONG THE POOREST OF POOR NATIONS

India has gained the dubious distinction of being one of the poorest of poor countries in the world despite its modernization drive and progress in high technology.

The World Bank, in its latest atlas, records eight African countries and three Asian countries as the poorest in the world.

The three poorest Asian countries include Nepal with a per capita income \$ 160 a year, and Bhutan and Vietnam with both \$ 170 a year. **But in Asia "the poorest of the poor" include Bangladesh (\$ 220 per capita) and India (with \$ 290 per capita)** (*Statesman* 1.1.95).

- Military Budget gallopingly increasing year after year :

1980-81- Rs.3971 crores; 1990-91- Rs.15750 crore; 1993-94 Rs.19180 crore; 1994-95 Rs.23,000 crore; Interim budget 1996-97 Rs.27819 crore.

- While people are groaning under the

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None of Congress, BJP, NF-LF, etc., cares for People's Interest

(Contd from page 1)

Acts, one after another, while democratic practices, norms and values are being trampled both by the Central and the state governments. A most uncivilized Act like TADA has been indiscriminately used against the principal minority community and political opponents. Even after 49 years of independence, 64 per cent of the population remain in the darkness of illiteracy. 'National Policy on Education 1986' was introduced with a view to further curtailing the opportunity of education, particularly higher education, as well as bringing about regimentation of thought to protect the crisis-ridden capitalist system. Increasing tendency of commercialization, privatisation and vocationalization of education cannot but cause serious concern to the education loving people. Encouragement to obscene films and pornographic literature, exhibition of obscene advertisements on T.V. and other media and patronisation to drug addiction and alcoholism — all are vitiating the atmosphere.

The worst aspect of the situation is that by using mafias and anti-socials, particularly during elections, the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties have criminalised the politics, and thus created a situation in which crime is growing in the country. The unemployed youths are encouraged by all parliamentary parties to take resort to unethical livelihood. All these are done with a view to breaking the moral backbone of the people. Again, due to petty parliamentary and opportunistic politics of the major Left parties like the CPI(M) and CPI, united left and democratic mass movements are also not growing in the country; while, besides the avowed communal and casteist parties and forces, all the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties are instigating casteism, communalism and all other divisive tendencies for their petty parliamentary games as well as to divert the attention of the people from their real problems to fake ones. Naturally, in absence of a democratic mass movement, rather in this vitiated atmosphere the communal, casteist and other divisive forces are fast growing in the country, often leading to communal and caste riots and separatist movements. All these are causing immeasurable damage to the unity and united struggle of the toiling masses which is the only guarantee for safeguarding people's interest and resisting growing onslaughts by the Central and the State governments. Added to all these is the corrupt practices of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties and their leaders. After the Bofors, the security scam, sugar scandal, etc., the 'Hawala case' has revealed how not only the Congress(I), but the BJP, JD besides many top officials, are also involved in worst form of corruption. The Fodder Scandal of Bihar and the satta-don Rashid episode of West Bengal and many such facts of corruption in other states clearly show how no ruling party, Rightist or Leftist, is free from corruption; only some cases have been revealed, while many more are yet to be revealed. The Hawala case has clearly shown how the corporate houses purchase the leaders of different political parties and top officials, both of administration and military, besides converting black money into

white and transferring fabulous sums to foreign banks. The fact is that an industrial-military-bureaucratic complex has developed in the country for long which controls from behind the facade everything or even decides which party will come to power.

But why this suffocating situation? Is it only because of the anti-people attitude and policies of some parties and leaders, so that by replacing those parties and leaders by some others the problem can be solved? All the parties, which are serving the interest of the ruling capitalist class, are trying to make the people believe this and seek votes by making tall promises.

No doubt, attitude and policies of the parties and leaders matter. But there are deeper reasons behind this all-out crisis without understanding which we cannot find out the solution.

The fact is that ours is a capitalist country. Here, capitalism has grown and developed in the era of imperialism, that is, in the era of moribund capitalism and proletarian revolution when world capitalist system has entered into a general and intense crisis from which it cannot escape. Naturally, as a part and parcel of this crisis-ridden world capitalism, Indian capitalism cannot remain free from crisis. This crisis of capitalism does not mean only economic crisis — it covers all fields of social life — economic, political, social and cultural. The acute crisis in the economic base is being reflected in the political and cultural super-structure. Moreover, being moribund and reactionary, the system itself has become out and out corrupt. At this stage of development of capitalism, therefore, whoever serves this exploitative and corrupt capitalist system cannot but pursue anti-people policies and get corrupt. Only the growth of a counter-current, that is, the growth of legitimate democratic movement of the toiling masses on the edifice of a higher culture and morality can fight out this situation and create a condition for the final victory of the emancipation struggle of the exploited people.

Here, an important political development has to be noted carefully. For long there has been a systematic and motivated attempt to eliminate from the election arena the small parties, particularly the parties which are trying to reflect the voice of the people on the floor of the parliament, expose the games of the bourgeois parties and thus strengthen the extra-parliamentary movements. With this in aim, the People's Representation Act was amended during Rajiv Gandhi's time. And at present this attempt has been intensified in different forms. The present Election Commission, headed by T. N. Seshan, in the name of 'free and fair' election or in the name of curtailing election expenditure is taking certain measures which are far from achieving these aims but are sure to put the small parties in difficulties. For example, it is common knowledge that all the big parties in elections, incur fabulous expenditure for hiring mafias and criminals as well as for influencing the election machinery and purchasing votes. But instead of taking any strict measure against these unfair, rather criminal practices, the Election Commission has put strict restrictions on posterage, walling, public meetings and processions. Anybody can understand the simple fact that these measures can neither make

the election 'free and fair', nor can bring down the election expenditure substantially; on the contrary, these measures definitely curtail the right of the political parties to propagate their views and mobilize public opinion and thus put the small parties in great difficulties, parties which, like the recognized parties, do not get the benefit propagating their views through radio, television and other mass media. This negates the entire democratic process.

And it is a known fact that no election of our country is free from rigging. Rigging is taking different forms starting from false voting to booth capturing or even manipulation of counting of votes, replacement of original ballot boxes, by duplicate ones — the latter are known as administrative rigging. Instead of taking effective measures, the EC, by taking some so-called strict but palliative measures is trying to create an atmosphere in which people can be made to believe that election is truly going to be 'free and fair'. And because of the naked form of rigging people are gradually losing faith in the election itself. The bourgeois press is also trying to create illusion about the Election Commission. But only recently Mr Seshan himself has admitted that the election cannot be made truly 'fair' without suitable amendments to the People's Representation Act. And this year, the way the election schedule has been spaced over a long period, there is every doubt that rigging will take place on a wider scale and in a subtler form.

So in this very critical economic-political and

socio-cultural situation, people will have to take part in the election, defeat the anti-people forces and ensure victory of those forces which can safeguard their interest by organizing extra-parliamentary movement of the exploited masses. And for this people will have to identify both the anti-people and pro-people forces.

It is not very difficult to understand that the Congress(I) is the most dependable political party of the ruling capitalist class and hence the main enemy of the people. Barring few years, it has been continually ruling the country. During its prolonged rule, whether it has taken the policy of 'Self-reliance' during the days of Jawaharlal Nehru or the policy of Liberalization, as of today, all have been taken in the aggregate interest of the capitalist system only to suit the changed conditions and its necessities. And what is the result? Capitalism has been strengthened as much as possible under the given international and national situation while the vast masses of the toiling people have been pushed to destitution: And for this the Congress Government has although taken anti-people policies and brutally suppressed democratic mass movements, whenever they came out against these policies. To protect moribund capitalism from the anger of the people it has systematically curtailed hard-won rights of the people by enacting black Acts one after another and trampled all democratic traditions, norms and values, established a police-raj and disrupted the unity of the toiling masses by instigating all sorts of divisive forces and tendencies. Now it is drowned upto its neck in worst form of corruption and is ridden with group squabbles. Mr Narasimha Rao has asked the

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Make Victorious SUCI – Tested on the Touchstone of Movement

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people to give him stability and promised prosperity in return. People will have to understand that stability of such a government, even if possible at all, will only stabilize the system of exploitation, oppression and corruption and bring untold misery in their life.

But what about the BJP which is making frantic bid to come to power and is being projected by the bourgeois press as the alternative to the Congress(I)? A close study of the political line of the BJP will show it clearly that however vociferous it may be against the Congress(I), other than some minor differences, here and there, it has no basic difference with the pro-capitalist policies of the Congress(I) Government. This only explains why the minority Government of Narasimha Rao could so easily introduce the new economic and industrial policies even when the BJP was the main opposition party in parliament. This will be further clear from the anti-people policies of the BJP governments of different states. All these governments are implementing the New Economic Policy and inviting foreign capital just like the Congress(I) counterparts. BJP's 'drama' in ENRON deal in Maharashtra has exposed its real stand on the issue. The fact is that the BJP is also another party of ruling capitalist class. Its fight against Congress(I) is nothing but the reflection of its rivalry for power. But the BJP is not only a bourgeois party. By the demolition of the Babari Masjid and the communal holocaust that it spread all over the country, BJP has most nakedly exposed its rabid communal character. Whatever meaning it may try to attribute to its slogan of *Hindutva*, anybody can understand the simple fact that this is a shrewd attempt to exploit the religious sentiment of the majority community of the country for narrow parliamentary gains. At first the BJP decided to make 'corruption' the main issue of its election campaign. But now its own leaders, including its president, being involved in the infamous Hawala case, it has decided to take up *Hindutva* again as the main issue. It is interesting to note that though using religious sentiment to draw votes is a serious offence according to election rules and although Mr Seshan is projected by the bourgeois press as an upright officer, the BJP is allowed to use religious cards in the elections freely.

Being a party of the ruling capitalist class with open communal line, BJP has, indeed, grown as a menacing force. It was known to be a disciplined party. But the exposure of its growing group rivalries, particularly the Gujarat episode, has shattered that image, while its real culture is exposed by the revelation of the Hawala case. Not only its president, many other top leaders of the party are also involved in this infamous case. Naturally, victory of such a dangerous force will not only strengthen the exploitative system of our country but will cause immeasurable damage to united struggle of the toiling people.

So, in face of the growing crisis, when united struggle of all sections of the toiling people is the urgent need, defeat of the Congress(I), the main enemy and of the BJP, the growing menace, is an urgent task. But the question is by, which force?

The National Front-Left Front Combination is also asking the people to defeat both the Congress(I) and the BJP and is trying to project itself as the alternative to the BJP and the Congress(I). But is it truly a force to protect people's interests?

Though for a short period, Janata Dal-led National Front also had formed government at the Centre. Other than bringing some minor changes, here and there, it made no basic departure from the pro-capitalist policies of the previous Congress(I) Government. And instead of introducing any pro-people policy to give relief to the suffering people it tried to create a vote bank by using Mondal Commission as trump card and spread fratricidal blood both all over the country. People became victims of the pernicious slogan of 'Mondal' and 'Kamandal'. A careful study of the Janata Dal-led governments of Karnataka and Bihar will show beyond doubt that they have no basic difference with the new economic and industrial policy of the Congress(I) government. These governments are also implementing these policies, privatizing the public sector and inviting foreign capital, just like the Congress(I) governments. The Janata Dal governments are also brutally suppressing the legitimate democratic mass movements. Janata Dal government of Orissa, headed by Mr. Biju Patnaik was notorious for its anti-people policies and brutal suppression of all democratic mass movements. Moreover, involvement of top leadership of this party in Hawala case or in the Fodder Scandal of Bihar shows it beyond doubt that this party is also neck-deep in corruption.

That the NF-LF combination is not for the cause of the people's movement is also clear from the forces that it is trying to rope in. It is trying to include not only the break away faction of the Congress(I), the Indira Congress, led by Mr Arjun Singh, it is also trying to rope in the BSP — the rabid casteist party.

Inclusion of the 'Left Front' in the combination may, of course, create confusion, because of its Red Flag and Marxist vocabulary. The CPI(M)-led Left Front is also trying to make the people believe that NF-LF is the real people's front. But history of the CPI(M)-led governments of West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura tells a different story.

Though the CPI(M)-led Left Front was vociferous against the New Economic and Industrial Policies and made a show of some programmes against them, a careful study of the economic and industrial policies of the West Bengal government will show beyond doubt that there is no fundamental difference with the policies of the Central Government. Again, though the CPI(M) opposed the signing of the GATT and joining the WTO by the Indian Government, calling these mortgaging country's sovereignty, they were not really opposed to it. Rather, Mr Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister of West Bengal, often goes abroad to USA, UK and Japan inviting multinational corporations to invest in West Bengal in the interest of monopoly houses of our country. Like any other government, West Bengal government is also pursuing the policy of privatization. Actually, its so-called

programmes of movements against the new economic policy and liberalization are mere show of movements only to confuse its honest but politically unconscious ranks and the democratic minded people. More notable is that its attitude towards democratic mass movements and more particularly working class movements is in no way different from the other governments. Unlike a bourgeois government, a true left government is expected to take a pro-people attitude, encourage legitimate democratic mass movements and stop interference of police in such movements as was witnessed during the United Front governments of West Bengal in 1967 and 1969 in which our party, the Socialist Unity Centre of India was a constituent. But the experience of people of West Bengal about the present Left Front government is quite different. The LF government has brutally suppressed democratic mass movements whenever people broke out against its anti-people policies, and never hesitated to even open fire on those movements without any provocation. Though the Left Front often speaks of working class interest it is strongly opposed to any type of workers' movement that may 'disturb' production. Actually, it is playing a compromising role between labour and capital and thus serving the ruling capitalist class in a much better and more intelligent way than any other bourgeois party. This is why the top bourgeois houses admire their role: Finally, during the Left Front rule, crime has grown manifold and corruption has pervaded all departments.

So it is not difficult to understand that this combination of NF-LF is not protecting people's interests and upholding people's movements. Rather, taking advantage of people's grievances against the Congress(I) and the BJP, it is an attempt of these parties to come to power at the Centre posing itself as the people's alternative.

In the present critical situation of our country, the people need to develop mighty democratic mass movements to safeguard their interests and resist the growing attacks of the capitalist class and its governments, both at the Centre and in the states, which our party is organizing and conducting from its very inception. Simultaneously our party is making effort to form a front with the left and democratic parties and forces on the basis of a common agreed programme and a code of conduct. But our efforts to bring Left parties like the CPI(M)-led Left Front constituents in the arena of democratic mass movements could not materialize as these parties, true to their social democratic character, are playing a compromising role between labour and capital.

So, in this election, the people will have to ensure the defeat of the Congress(I), the main enemy, and the BJP, the menacing force, expose the non-Left and anti-people character of the NF-LF combine and make SUCI candidates victorious. Where there will be no SUCI candidates the people should make those candidates victorious who will stand by the side of the people, organize and lead democratic mass movements and consistently fight against the Congress(I) and the BJP.

Defeat 'Reforms' that spurred this phenomenal price rise

(Contd from page 2)

budget for 1996-97 the internal public debt had mounted to Rs.3,31,308 crore. Equally alarming is the growth of debt-servicing payments (payment of interest plus principal) on the foreign debt. It stood at \$10.94 billion in 1994-95. The White Paper, of course, adroitly avoided mentioning the projected debt servicing for 1995-96. Actually, in March 1995, it rose to \$15.24 billion. Moreover, the current account balance of payment deficit increased from Rs.2,237 crore in 1991-92 to Rs.6,537 crore in 1994-95. The mounting external debt along with this increasing trade deficit made its vulnerable manifestation felt in terms of alarming depreciation in the value of the rupee in the international market. Moreover, take the GDP, considered to be the overall index of performance of the country's capitalist economy like ours. Average annual growth in GDP, in the four years (1991-92 to 1994-95) following the introduction of New Economic Policy, registered a mere 4.3%, which is considerably lower than even the average growth rate of 6.7% in the GDP in the four years preceding the 'New Economic Policy'.

Now about Foreign Exchange Reserves and foreign capital inflow into the country. Can the Finance Minister say what benefit the growth of foreign exchange reserve will bring in the life of people? It is claimed that India could increase her exports from 2% to 21% to those countries where she could fetch dollars and hence this growth of reserve and it is a great success. Our question is: Have the miseries and hardship of the people been eased a whit notwithstanding the fact that the exporters from the ruling capitalist class have garnered fabulous profits? That was not to be. Neither could this export performance bring in any relief from the continuing onslaughts from ever rising prices. Rather, the average real per capita income, even in money terms, has gone down. Then again, about 650 crore dollars was invested in India in 1994-95, out of which 550 crore dollars, that is, about 85%, went to speculative activities, so-called portfolio investment, which had nothing to do with the industrialization of the country. Furthermore, it should be realized that the much vaunted foreign exchange reserve has not been generated by the gap between export earning and import expenditure. It comprises foreign capital, crores of dollars accrued from the non-resident Indians who deposited in the Indian banks, loans from the IMF and World Bank and the sale proceeds of the shares in foreign markets by the Indian companies, etc. Surely, these are not at all the incomes of the government; these are either investments or deposits for which the government has to pay interest or dividend through the Reserve Bank. So, it is clear from the above that this vast reserve, which is nothing but capital, if not channelised in any gainful investment, may cause disaster to the economy. Because if the capital remains idle and does not beget any money, the government has to pay doubly creating heavy depletion in the reserve. In any case, about 85% of the foreign capital, by virtue of being invested in speculative activities, does not contribute to the industrial

growth of the country in any way; rather it fosters inflation inasmuch as it does not create productive wealth. This in turn brings about huge price hike in essential commodities.

Still then an apt question may arise: what about the role of the balance 15-20 percent of investible finance capital in industrialization of our country? The government, in the name of restructuring the economy, has done everything possible to fatten more the monopolists, who, in spite of bad shape of the economy, have been swelling their funds at the cost of common people of our country. This is corroborated by the 'myth' of industrial growth during the last few years of the eighties, which was claimed as a direct consequence of the 'liberalization policy' adopted by late Rajiv Gandhi government. To this it may be argued that the growth of consumer durables production ruled the roost in the rate of industrial growth in the eighties. As a matter of fact, the prevailing pattern of industrial production, now obtaining in our country, which was already tilted in favour of the rich, has become even more so. The demand for these consumer durables emanates from a small privileged section of the population and the market for it gets saturated very soon. Again, since a large number of consumer durables are import-intensive, any attempt to promote industrialization based on these consumer durables would evidently have an adverse effect on the balance of payment. Any industrial growth through production of consumer durables — import-intensive as well as high-tech and capital intensive — the main offshoot of New Economic Policy cater to the needs of a mere 10-15 per cent upper crust. For the rest of the 900 million Indians, it means more misery as these hi-tech capital-intensive industries have very little employment potential.

The trend of large inflow of foreign finance capital continued upto mid-1995 when as a result of significant part of foreign investment going over to share markets, supply of foreign currency, mainly dollars, alarmingly increased compared to its demand. The impact of this feature got reflected in the lowering demand of dollar vis-a-vis the Indian rupee. Lest appreciation of the value of the rupee adversely affects export performance, the Reserve Bank of India had to intervene by way of pumping thousands of crores of rupees in the market to haul up excess dollars in order to squeeze its supply vis-a-vis the rupee. The net result: overflowing the market with thousands of crores of rupees thereby further pushing up the inflationary spiral and shooting up of prices.

Contrary to the claim of the Central government, especially its foreign minister to tie up the value of dollar around Rs.30-31, the value of rupee has continued to fall in zigzags, even crossing the rate of 38 rupees a dollar.

It is worth recalling that the fall of rupee value for the last 6/8 months owes to a great extent to the reversal of Reserve Bank of India policy to meet the needs of servicing the external debt from its foreign exchange reserves. Instead, this need was met through purchase of dollars from the

open market. In any case, the rupee has undergone unofficial devaluation, which has largely affected the internal prices with no prospect of level of exports getting better of the terms. With our inelastic export trade, industrial growth of our country depending on costly import-intensive inputs together with capital and high-tech intensive productivity can only land our economy to precariously hang on the caprices of the balance of payment crisis, the ghost of which now perpetually haunts the country. This unofficial devaluation of rupee cannot but push up the import bill of petroleum, fertilizers and cost of debt servicing.

Capitalism today is utterly reactionary, decadent and degenerated. It cannot lead the people to prosperity and well-being. The New Economic Policy, adopted to serve the interest of Indian monopoly capital, is for maximizing its profits, in conjunction with imperialist capital operating through the MNCs, as far as possible under the given circumstances. But this cannot be achieved without ruthlessly exploiting the Indian people even more than before. While this fleecing of the people goes on, our Prime Minister, Finance Minister and other advocates of the 'New Economic Policy' gloat over the "achievements" in augmenting foreign exchange reserves and rising export earnings, saying that these uphold national interest. But what have these got to do with the people's interest? Behind the fanfare of such "achievements", the people's condition goes on

worsening. The national interest the media project all the time, is, in reality, the aggregate interest of the ruling Indian capitalist class that goes against the interest of exploited Indians.

All the parliamentary parties — be they in governmental power or not — are wedded to the policy of globalization, liberalization and privatization constituting the so-called economic reforms of Central Congress(I) government. To attain governmental power anyhow is their sole concern. And to-day, they cannot achieve this without the backing of the ruling class, meaning with huge sums of money and the orchestrated media coverage with favourable propaganda. That is why, none of them can provide principled opposition to the out and out anti-people policy of the so-called economic reforms of the Centre. All the opposition parties — the BJP, the Janata Dal and even the pseudo-Marxist CPI and the CPI(M) — uphold and follow in toto the 'New Economic Policy' adopted by the Central Congress(I) government in the states where they are in government. Where they are in opposition, the pseudo-Marxists talk against the anti-people 'new economic policy' just to gain in parliamentary politics.

It is for the people, remaining at the receiving end of the onslaughts let loose by the economic reforms of Rao government, in the form of spiraling price rise with no abatement, to rise against the perfidy of 'economic reforms'. It is their sustained mass movement that alone can provide the social deterrent against the savagery of the 'New Economic Policy', fighting against illusions and confusions generated by the parliamentary parties.

'Glorious' Record of the Ruling Parties !

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grinding rule of ruthless exploitation and oppression, Govt. of India entered into Indo-US Military Cooperation Treaty. Joined Indo-US Naval Exercise in the interest of multinationals.

● **BJP's alternative budget - the other side of the same coin.**

In its alternative budget in 1993-94, the BJP made it clear that it stood for the liberalised economy of the Narasimha Rao led Congress(I) government at the Centre. It demanded total privatization of the public sector industries and financial institutions; throwing open the LIC and GIC to private ownership; reduction of import and excise duties; reduction in corporate tax from 51.75% to 45%.

● Whatever its rhetorics against the new economic and industrial policy of the Central Congress(I) Government, **the CPI(M)-led Left Front itself took enthusiastic steps to invite multinational corporations to invest capital in West Bengal**, following decontrolling and delicensing in industries. It is well-known, Chief Minister Jyoti Basu visited foreign countries, including the USA to attract foreign monopoly capital to West Bengal.

● The power sector in West Bengal has been opened to multinational corporations. The state government had earlier taken a decision to handover the state run Great Eastern Hotel to a French concern. Meendwip Prawn Hatchery has been given over to a Japanese firm. The two gas turbines in Kasba, Calcutta, has been taken over by the Goenkas. State run TV firm WEBEL has been sold to a German company. Bharat Jute Mills has gone to B.C. Jain. These are some of the measures for privatization by the CPI(M)-led government.

● Number of registered unemployed in West Bengal as on 31 December 1994 stood at 5,92,316. In 1994 only 18,899 people got jobs, including in government and private establishments.

● In 1994 number of retrenched workers in West Bengal stood at 1,50,000. 112 factories were closed. 40,000 industries were sick. In a space of 10 years the number of workers and office employees in the organised sector of industry declined by 1,21,000.

● On 12 November 1994 at a meeting of Bengal Jute Workers' Union in Barrackpore, Jyoti Basu said, although he was in the trade union organization he was in the side of owners provided the owners' interests concerned with the people's interests. Needless to say, the owners and media owned by them were all praise for this 'realistic attitude of Basu'.

PLIGHT OF WOMEN

● A recent UNESCO report says: The percentage of illiterate women in India will go on increasing into the next century. By the year 2000, there will be 2 illiterate women for every illiterate man. At present illiteracy among women in India (66.3%) is the second highest in east Asia, next only to Kampuchea.

● The report also says: India is among those countries where women and girls are regular victims of terrible discrimination. Mortality rate of girls is higher than of the boys. Infant mortality at birth is also higher for the female child than

for the male child. There has been an abominable growth in the abortion rate of the female fetus. Discrimination shadows the Indian woman in all spheres.

● Over the past 5 years sex oppression of women, bride killing, destruction of female foetus and physical and mental torture of women have increased on an alarming scale in India. Under the new economic and industrial policy job opportunities have decreased for women.

● Under the CPI(M)-led government, West Bengal has come to occupy 4th position in the whole country in the case of oppression of women. The number was 612 in 1992, 712 in 1993. Between 1982 and 1992, at least 42 women were raped or molested in **police custody** in West Bengal.

CRIMINALIZATION OF POLITICS

In 1993 a committee headed by N.N. Vohra, the then Central Home Secretary, was set up in the background of Mumbai blast to expose criminalization of politics. It took two years to submit its report, which was rather an exercise to cover the criminals. No specific name has been mentioned, neither any vicious circle of criminal named. Mr Bhora attributed this to government's unwillingness to find out the relation of political leaders with the underworld.

Regarding criminalization of politics a journalist of northern India has provided some very pertinent facts. In brief, they are the following :

● The former minister of state and Congress MLA Ramratan Singha had closeness with Vanvir, a hardened dacoit. This Congress leader was connected with three *harijan* murders.

● Surendranath Abhasthi, the Congress MLA of Barabanki used to often dine with the notorious dacoit Ranjit Bahadur Srivastav. Abhasthi helped Srivastav to become the General Secretary of 'Business Cell' of Barabanki Congress.

● Brijendra Pal Singha, the former Congress MLA of Moradabad, was arrested in 1983 in National Security Act. He had at least six criminal cases against him.

● Tilak Singha Gashi of Aligarh, Congress MLA had four cases of dacoity and murder against him.

● Babulal, former Congress MLA of Hamirpur, had seven cases against him. These besides, many Congress MLAs were connected with women related crimes, like Golder Mohammad Ugar and Pilliviter Tejbahadur. Connection of many topnotch leaders of the Congress in Maharashtra with Dawood Ibrahim is well known.

But leaders belonging to other parties do not lag behind. Mafia leader of Dhanbad Surajdeo Singh supplied money to 'socialist' Chandra-sekhar, the P.M. After Surajdeo died, Chandra-sekhar had no difficulty in continuing a very lavish life.

Mulayam Singh Yadav had, one year back, 10 members in his cabinet with underworld activities. And of 202 MLAs of his party, 45 were related with more than one murder-cum-dacoity cases. Even during BJP's regime, out of 45 MLAs of Mulayam's party, 33 had their names on police register.

BJP did not lag behind. Its 58 MLAs were put on the criminal list. BJP's Brij Bhusan Singha

and Omprakash Pashi are well-known criminals in UP. Many criminals, because of their political identity, were provided security in UP. Further the government there used to spend Rs. 2.76 crore annually (Ananda Bazar Patrika, 14.2.93)

CORRUPTION : STENCH OF DECAYING PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS

The single most morbid feature of the parliamentary parties, both ruling and opposition, is corruption at an abominable level. A whole nexus has built up in which political leaders and their parties, business tycoons, stock exchange barons, underworld dons, smugglers, self-styled Godman, bureaucrats, top level police officials, bankers and foreign business houses are striking deals to rob this country of enormous money and wealth. The Congress(I) comes foremost and on its heels are the BJP, the Janata Dal and the CPI(M), none is averse to corruption or corrupt practices.

● The history of the Congress rule is history of both misrule and scandals. The chain started unbroken since the party took over the reins after the independence and the first major scandal to surface was the Mundra scandal of 1957. Corruption got a new dimension in Indira Gandhi's regime and has virtually been institutionalized under Rajiv Gandhi's dispensation. In the last one decade the country has been rocked by one scandal after another.

● Bofors scandal of 1987 - The needle of suspicion pointed to Rajiv Gandhi, said to have accepted cutmoney of Rs.65 crore.

● HDW submarine scandal - Rajiv Gandhi covered up definite evidence of bribery to the tune of Rs.30 crore.

● Air Bus scandal of 1991 - Allegation of bribe money of Rs.200 crore left in cold storage.

● Security Scam of Rs.10,000 crore in 1992 - Prime Minister Narasimha Rao himself and his son Pravakar Rao have been charged.

● ABV Loco scandal of 190 million dollars in 1993 - Narasimha Rao took no action against the then Railway Minister Jaffar Sharief.

● Sugar scandal of Kalpanath Rai in 1994.

● Hawala scam of 1995 - For involvement in this 65 crore scandal, the CBI has already charged 10 central Congress(I) ministers and several leaders of the Congress(I), BJP, JD, Indira Congress.

● Telecom scandal of 1995 - Rules were trampled to favour a few industrial houses which is said to cost Rs.20,000 crore.

● Bailadila scandal of 1995 - Ministry of Steel handed over high grade iron ore mines to the Mittals at throwaway prices. Chromite mines of Sukinda have been leased out to Mittals and Tatas, trampling all rules and norms.

● Not only the BJP and the JD, the CPI(M)-led Left Front too has no less record of scandals. The massive corruption in the matter of appointment of primary and secondary school teachers is too well-known to need mention. It is openly discussed too how a large number of CPI(M) leaders associated themselves with the satta don Rashid Khan of Bowbazar bomb blast infamy. The biggest financial scam is the Alipur Treasury scandal in which 50 crores of rupees were

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List of SUCI Candidates in Lok Sabha Andhra Pradesh

Secunderabad	Comrade E.P.A. Rasheed
Assam	
Dhubri	Comrade Minhar Ali Mondal
Silchar	Comrade Debasis Chakraborty
Mongaldai	Comrade Bhupendranath Kakati
Bihar	
Baisali	Comrade Baleswar Rasulpuri
Kerala	
Alleppey	Comrade V. Venugopal
Quilon	Comrade B. K. Rajagopal
Karnataka	
Bangalore	Comrade B. R. Manjunath
Orissa	
Jajpur	Comrade Bhaskar Jena
Mayurbhanj	Comrade Shankha Majhi
Tamilnadu	
Dindigul	Comrade R. Baskaran
Uttar Pradesh	
Machhali Shahar	Comrade Dinesh Kant Dubey
West Bengal	
Jalpaiguri	Comrade Shankar Ganguly
Jangipur	Comrade Abdus Syed
Murshidabad	Comrade Abdus Salam
Krishnanagar	Comrade Sk. Khodabox
Barasat	Comrade Ashok Mukherjee
Basirhat	Comrade Debaprasad Bhanja Chowdhury
Jaynagar (SC)	Comrade Tarun Naskar
Mathurapur(SC)	Comrade Samir Shekhar Naiya
Tamluk	Comrade Ashutosh Samanta
Midnapur	Comrade Dilip Maity
Bankura	Comrade Bhaskar Bhadra
Birbhum (SC)	Comrade Ashim Saha

Besides 24 Lok Sabha seats our party is contesting in the assembly seats of the following states. Assam 13 seats, Kerala 10 seats, Tamilnadu 3 seats, West Bengal 81 seats, Haryana 8 seats.

'Glorious' Record of the Ruling Parties !

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deflected. The CPI(M) led government acted quickly to cover it up. Latest is the Wakf scandal involving illegal transfer of Muslim religious property valued at around Rs.1000 crore. The CPI(M) leader Abdul Halim, formerly Wakf minister and now Speaker of Assembly, has been implicated. At a public meeting a few months back the CPI(M) Polit Bureau leader Benoy Chowdhury could not but admit: 'We all are corrupt today. Who talks about corruption of whom? In childhood we learnt that government is of the people, by the people, for the people. Now we learn that government is of the contractors, by contractors, for the contractors. ... I have been in the cabinet for the last 18 years, I know only the people are getting robbed.' (Source: Report in print media in Calcutta, 18.12.95)

WEST BENGAL RANKS FIRST IN LOCKUP DEATHS

From 1977 to January, 1995 at least 183 deaths occurred in police lockups (National Human Rights)

POLICE BUDGET IN WEST BENGAL

1985-86 Rs.136.37 crore ; 1995-96 Rs.536.00 crore ;

CONGRESS - CPI(M) BEDFELLOWS

In 1994 on 1st November at a Press Conference at Himachal Pradesh Mr Jyoti Basu said that if no party gained single majority then CPI(M) would support the Congress(I). (The Statesman, 2.11.94)

Friends, should we not pause and ponder and try to realise that these so-called servants of the people whose track record has been given above in brief are really servitors of the grinding capitalist state machine that is responsible for all miseries of the people. Should we then stand as dumb spectators, and resign ourselves to fatalism and help repeat finding no way out, the same course of deception? History has shown that it is the conscious and organised people's power pursuing a correct line that can actually turn the course of history. It is high time to identify that party which has a glorious record of valiant people's movement without relent in different states for amelioration of the burning problems of their life. The SUCI is that party which does not give any false promise to the people but exhorts them always to take to the course of conscious and organised mass movement, election battle not excluded, and to make bold strides in that direction. Victory of the SUCI candidates in the elections is victory of the voice of mass movement being reflected in the legislature. So vote for the SUCI and uphold the genuine interests of the toiling masses of our country.

Cuba

(Contd. from page 1)

The Central Committee also strongly feels that worldwide mobilisation of freedom loving people's opinion against this perfidious act of the U.S. imperialists has become a very urgent need. In this hour of grave crisis the Central Committee of the party once again expresses its solidarity with the brave Cuban people."

FAX TO GHALI

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee also sent a Fax message to the Secretary General, UNO urging him to take positive measure to compel the U.S. imperialists to retrace. The same is given below :

FAX MESSAGE

To
Mr. Boutros Ghali,
Secretary General,
U.N.O.,
New York.

The Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India (SUCI) expresses its deep indignation over US Government's latest decision to promulgate Helms-Burton Law with the heinous design to further stiffen the blockade against Cuba. People of India, therefore, earnestly hope that you being the head of this great international organisation will take concrete and positive measures to compel the U.S. imperialists to retrace this heinous acts and do everything possible to guarantee Cuba's independence and sovereignty.

With greetings,
Sd/- Nihar Mukherjee,
General Secretary,
Socialist Unity Centre of India
(S.U.C.I.)

Red Salute Comrade Sajal Kanti Chowdhury !

Comrade Sajal Chowdhury, member, Assam State Committee and Secretary, Cachar District Committee of the SUCI breathed his last on 13 March 1996 after a brief suffering from cancer. Comrade Chowdhury was only 41.

After coming in contact with the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, Comrade Chowdhury joined the Party in 1977.

Born in a very poor family, Comrade Chowdhury had experienced the pangs of suffering of the oppressed multitude. Through the ideology of the Party he discovered the real path of emancipation of the oppressed people and took up the task of organizing them with all his strength and dedication. This process made him a dedicated comrade of impeccable character and endeared him to the common people of Cachar.

From his childhood, Comrade Chowdhury had to struggle against acute poverty and to continue his education had to sell newspapers. After obtaining his master's degree he joined a government sponsored higher secondary school. But being the sole bread earner of the family consisting of his mother, younger brothers and sister did not deter him to leave this job when the party selected him as its candidate for Dhalai Assembly seat in 1985.



Later on, Comrade Chowdhury joined Cachar College as a lecturer. When it was known that he was suffering from cancer, all his colleagues, large number of well-wishers and common men spontaneously came forward with financial help for his better treatment. The basis of this immense love for him was his struggling, militant and revolutionary character which developed and steered through giving leadership to the various democratic movements centring the problems faced by the common people of Cachar.

Paying his revolutionary homage to the departed comrade, the Secretary of the Assam State Committee Comrade Kalyan Chowdhury said that in his premature death, the party had lost a very dedicated comrade and the people of Barak valley lost a fighting and militant leader of their own.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE

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