

## An all-out attack on people

Except for some occasional note of dissent or a critical report here and there, the monopoly-owned Press in our country has uniformly hailed the new minority Congress (I) Government led by the Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao for the maturity shown in its rule by consensus and for the sweeping economic reforms it has already initiated and other policies taken in its short span at the Centre. The Press is making out a case that here at last there is a Government at the helm of affairs steering 'a clear course which—unless it gets bogged down or backtracks—will lead to certain progress amidst all the gigantic difficulties the country is faced with and hardships the people are undergoing.

The first swift move of the newly installed Congress(I) Government at the Centre to devalue the rupee in two phases by twenty per cent has resulted in the present galloping inflation and skyrocketing price rise. As daily necessities are getting increasingly out of the reach of the people, speculation and blackmarketing are confounding their problems, but no effective steps against these evils have been taken, except for some occasional assurance by some leader or other. In this situation the effect of the Centre's latest measures like further hike of the price of petroleum products etc. will cause prices to soar ever higher and make life of the people—the great majority of whom already live below poverty line—most unbearable. The cruel irony of the Narasimha Rao Government's repeated exhortations to the people to make more sacrifices for at least two-three years for the country's progress becomes even more glaring when contrasted with the super-profits made by the monopolists and capitalists out of this price rise. And can the gesture by the President and the Prime Minister of participating in the austerity drive by taking a voluntary cut from their huge salaries obliterate this stark reality or the extravagant spending by the Government of tax-payers' money? To mention but a few, the crores and crores of rupees were spent on foreign tours, as more than half of the members of the Central Council of Ministers went abroad after the conclusion of last Parliament session. While the Central Minister for Communications went on a visit to Geneva with an entourage of forty-one, the Finance Minister went to Bangkok with twenty-five officers. What a wonderful cutdown in spending and what a sacrifice!

Declaring in Parliament that if required, further action would be taken to reduce Government spending, the Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, has said inflation

control was the key objective. And as domestic inflation came under control he expected a strong pickup in exports. But past experiences have shown that devaluation has never had the desired effects and the country's share of total world exports has gone on falling despite the previous devaluation and promises to the contrary. And how can it be hoped to reverse this trend as the position today is far more critical than it was in the Fifties and Sixties with the biggest erstwhile export markets for India in the Soviet Union and East Europe in jeopardy? And with increased import cost of essential commodities like petrol, petroleum products, diesel, edible oil and fertilisers and the resultant price hike this is directly hitting the people. Besides, through this devaluation the amount of interest alone for 1990-91, of the total foreign debt has increased by one leap by 74 per cent. That means this very act of devaluation has finally pushed the country into the debt trap of the IMF and the World Bank. Hence whatever way it may justify this step, facts and experience do not bear it out, and it is clear that the Government acted under pressure, this being one of the conditionalities of the IMF loan it was seeking to obtain to help tide over the critical foreign exchange crunch. It is quite well known that IMF loans are a means for US neo-colonial exploitation and they are imposing or pressurising recipient Third World countries into taking certain policies with devastating economic, environmental and social consequences for the concerned countries. Even Mr. J.K. Galbraith, the US economist and one-time US Ambassador to India when asked about his opinion of the IMF's prescription for Third World debtors in an interview with THE STATESMAN, said: 'I have never been a supporter of the IMF's intervention in the affairs of countries. I have never approved of the lines of the intervention....To some extent when the IMF talks about "austerity", which is a favourite word in the IMF lexicon, the reference is usually to the things that are done for the masses of the people and that are the source of social tranquility and social content.

"If you are poor and hear the IMF talking about austerity, you should know that it is likely to mean you." (THE STATESMAN 4.7.91). This being the perturbing prospects of the IMF loan could not the Government have avoided the same, despite its protestation that it had no soft option to bail out the country from the current hardships? Any Government with a minimum concern for the people and with the national interest truly at heart would have tried to tide over the difficulty of debt servicing by trying to unearth the huge amount of black money hoarded by dishonest and unscrupulous businessmen, and tried to

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# Proletarian Era

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## 68th Death Anniversary of Lenin Observed

The 68th death anniversary of Great Lenin was observed throughout the country with great emphasis in the context of unprecedented setback in the international communist movement.

### GHATSHILA BIHAR

This occasion was observed, among other places, in the Study Centre of Marxism-Leninism-Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought at Ghatshila, Bihar on January 21st last. In the morning Comrade Nihar Mukherjee hoisted the Red Flag at the main building and presented Red Salute to Lenin and other leaders of international communist movement.

In the meeting held in the afternoon, our beloved General Secretary in course of his long penetrating speech highlighted the salient aspects of lifelong struggle of Lenin and urged the comrades to meticulously grasp the teachings of Lenin, particularly the Leninist conception of party, dictatorship of the proletariat and his polemical fight against Plekhanov, Kautsky and their cohorts.

### NEW DELHI

On 21st January last, the memorial day of Comrade Lenin, the Great leader and teacher of the Proletariat, was observed by the Delhi State Organising Committee, SUCI. On that day a large colourful procession started from Feroz Shah Kotla and reached India Gate, the meeting place. The processionists carried portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong and Shibdas Ghosh.

The meeting held at India Gate was addressed by Comrade Pratap Samal, member, Delhi State Organising Committee of the party.

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## Comrade Mukherjee flays Rly. reservation fee hike

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Centre of India has in course of a statement to the Press on 28.1.92 severely condemned the anti-people order of the Railway authority to further increase the reservation fees and called upon all the Left and democratic parties and the people to rise up and develop a mighty protracted mass movement to force the Government to retrace its decision.

## Consensus politics to serve Monopolists and Foreign Multinationals

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seriously tackle the problem of tax evasion taking stern measures to recover the tax arrears from them and the rich.

In such a grave situation the most startling revelation came from the Vice-President of the World Bank, Mr. Moen Qureshi that India has not only failed to utilize twelve billion dollars of committed funds but was moreover paying a penalty of thirty million dollars every year. (THE STATESMAN 10 7 91) Of course the Government is trying to conceal this fact from the people and investigations into the matter are said to be either met by story silence or put off with a curt answer that there are no unutilised loans. Does not the Government owe some accountability to the people ?

Many people believe that since power corrupts, no matter who is criticising the Government when in Opposition is bound to do the same when in power. Hence, if any Government Minister or even the Prime Minister, for that, wanting to take some effective measure meets with the deeply entrenched resistance of vested interests and powerful lobbies' if he is really serious he will take the matter to the people, mobilize public support and thus create strong pressure for their implementation. But the minority Congress (I) Government, just like previous Governments, is not at all interested in solving problems, but rather plays with people's miseries and genuine grievances in the game of parliamentary politics for some petty advantage. Creating one Frankenstein Monster after another, at present as in the past.

In his statement in the Rajya Sabha on the new economic policy the Union Finance Minister stressed that fears of large-scale unemployment and closures as a result of the policy reforms were 'unfounded' promising that the Government would seek a 'national consensus' to deal with the problem encountered in the transition to a more 'dynamic economy'. Yet how the Government going to implement it became clear when he, a little later, sounded the warning that the Budget could not afford a drain on account of perennially loss-making units, confirming thus earlier Press reports that the Government was planning to gradually close down fifty 'sick' public sector units, as advised by the IMF and World Bank, once the November by-elections were over. As a result, lakhs of workers, employees and more than twenty thousand officers would lose their jobs and join the swelling army of unemployed. The Government has also decided, among others, to gradually retrench forty per cent of the railway staff. While depriving ever larger sections of the toiling people on whose labour and creative skill rests the very advancement of

society and civilisation, of the opportunity to earn a living condemning them to ever greater penury and threat of starvation death, the Government is spreading the dangerous confusion that along this path lies the progress of the country.

Trying to dispel the growing apprehension that his 'exit policy' would take away the employment of six million workers Dr. Manmohan Singh gave the assurance : "It is sheer nonsense. No civilised Government can take such an inhuman measure. We have formulated the personnel management in sick units to the profitable. Only those workers who prefer a golden handshake and retire will be compensated with full benefits." (THE TELEGRAPH 18 1 92). But if past and present performances of how the Congress (I) Government implements its assurances are any indication, a most grim future lies in store for the people of this country.

Apart from these, when considering the merit or otherwise of the economic policy reforms, it must never be forgotten that with the development of monopoly (capital) having become an accomplished fact, the old days of laissez-faire capitalist economy are gone for ever, and no amount of wishful thinking can change this fact. Since monopoly capital destroys even the relative balancing force of free and fair competition and hence increases the margin of profit to its maximum limit in accordance with its own inherent economic law, it unleashes ever greater economic imbalances and brings about an ever greater impoverishment of a large section of people generally, and with the consequent increasing fall of purchasing power of the people it causes ever greater crisis of market. In the ensuing frenzied competition, it is the multinational monopolies which spearhead the fight for capture of market. Because the new economic policy reflects the urge of the top monopoly houses of our country to gain access to the international market as junior partners of the foreign multinationals, and provide them with the opportunity to gain control over all other sections of the capitalist class ; the monopolists and the monopoly Press have uniformly hailed this policy. But will it help solve the unemployment problem in any way ? Already the Government has paved the way for entry of the monopoly industries into the middle and small sectors by arranging for joint partnership and raising the investment limit in these sectors. With growing strangulation by the monopoly-controlled industries a multitude of middle and small scale industries will face extinction while others would have to turn into subsidiaries of the big monopoly-controlled industries; becoming the chief source of half-finished products and labour power obtained from the ever growing army of unemployed or employed at a

cheaper rate. Hence not only will this result in ever growing unemployment but give rise to ever more naked and ruthless exploitation, imposing ever heavier loads at any 'price' and pushing the workers into ever more subhuman living conditions. Apart from this, the rise in fertiliser prices and withdrawal of subsidy to farmers will especially affect the middle and poor peasants, since sky-rocketing of prices will hit them anew and the big landlords, money-lenders and agro-industrialists will increase the prices of all agricultural implements. Hence they will lose what little land they have and be forced to migrate to towns in ever greater number as they cannot survive in the increasingly hostile environmental conditions caused by growing ecological imbalances in the rural areas.

In this grim situation, we find the imperialist countries, with the US imperialists in the lead, loudly propagating and even pressurising Third World countries towards adoption of a 'free-market economy' i.e. decontrolled capitalist market through removal of trade barriers, freer imports and foreign investment, devaluation and stepped up privatisation of public sector units, solely with the aim of increasing multinational control over the cheap labour power, raw materials and markets in the Third World. That is why we find these same imperialist countries themselves erecting state imposed trade barriers to prevent the 'free' competition of foreign goods in their own 'free economy' in their respective countries ! The infamous 'Super 301' US trade law is but another example of such state protectionism. So how can India hope to solve its problems by falling into this trap ?

Mr. V R Krishna Iyer, a former judge of the Supreme Court, has warned that the USA is using the Super and Special 301 US trade law as a weapon to ensure that India becomes a captive market for US companies. Cautioning about US insistence on giving up nationalisation of banking, insurance and other manufacturing areas to provide for commercial invasion by the USA, about its insistence on withdrawal of subsidies to Indian farmers to enable US products to pour into India, and lastly about its insistence that India change its patent laws so that the USA could take patents in this country and get long-term protection for its products, Mr. Krishna Iyer urged the people and intellectuals to resist this attack on India which challenges India's legislative sovereignty and attempts to put the Government under the dictat of the White House."

Banking on people's legitimate grievance against the evils associated with Government undertakings such as inefficiency, apathy for the people, lack of responsibility, corruption and red tapism etc. the Government aided by the monopoly owned Press

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## Only course left to people is to build up countrywide movement

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is trying to spread the confusion that liberalisation and privatisation of public sector units would do away with these evils. But will it? Big businessmen and monopolists who in our country are known to have adulterated edible vegetable fats with beef tallow or worse, and who do not even hesitate to adulterate babyfood and life-saving medicines what kind of responsibility, concern for the people or corruption-free integrity have they demonstrated already? As for the foreign multinationals, according to a report appeared two years ago in INDIA TODAY some reputed foreign multinationals have been found to produce sub standard medicine in India! Or what does the practice of powerful foreign multinationals of supplying two different editions of medical literature in connection with new medicines indicate; one edition meant for the Western countries giving all the side-effects of new drugs, and another for African and Asian countries omitting some of the serious side-effects, according to a report published in THE TELEGRAPH a few years ago.

While a lot of publicity and fanfare have accompanied the introduction of the new economic policy, it appears that some far-reaching changes in India's foreign policy, centring round the Kickleigher proposals for defence cooperation between the USA and India, have gone by almost unnoticed. Strangely, the agreements are being formalised on the Government to Government, or a ministerial level as part of a clear-cut and well-defined foreign policy, but as a military cooperation between the Indian defence headquarters and the US Pacific Command, that covers the Indian Ocean littoral and the Asia Pacific Region. Defence analyst Amar Zutshi, in an article in THE STATESMAN (Nov. 29, 91) cautioned that such agreements could prove slippery and the possibility of India being thus manoeuvred or forced into playing the role of 'regional policemen' for the USA cannot be ruled out, because: 'Having accomplished a triumphant hold in its Central Commands Region (West Asia) the USA now aims at securing a similar hold over the Asia Pacific Region which may even get directed against nations friendly with India and be totally at variance with India's own foreign policy, apart from the question of the involvement of ever higher, unproductive military expenditures, among others. All in all, these agreements conducted in the way they are, may prove detrimental to India's national interest and sovereignty in more ways than one.

As regards containing communal menace, in our country, where the mounting hardship and miseries in people's life are confounded by the growing scourge of riots erupting suddenly in the most likely or unlikely places, marked by hordes

of organised criminals swooping down instantaneously to loot property and perpetrate the gravest crimes, at least on the question of containing communal riots the step taken by the minority Government in enacting a Bill that all places of worship will retain their status quo from 1947 onwards, has been welcomed and praised by many in view of the dangerous role played by the BJP centring round these issues. But the Babri Masjid which has become the main issue of controversy in this respect and given rise to a process of riots which in the previous year alone claimed 7200 lives, according to figures published in THE STATESMAN a few months back, has remained outside the purview of this law. Is it difficult to understand that the minority Congress(I) Government at the Centre is not really interested in a solution to this problem, but rather wants to keep the issue alive or shelved so as to make use of this opportunity at the right moment to create some conflicts for some electoral gains? The Congress(I) had created many such precedents before. It is clear that the BJP has more or less come to an understanding with the Congress(I): this has been demonstrated not only in the latter's reaction to the Bajrang Dal Volunteers storming the Ayodhya shrine sometime back, and the riots in Varanasi with the Centre taking care not to embarrass the BJP in any way, but also in allowing the BJP to proceed on its Ekta Yatra in spite of the previous experience of its riot-causing Ratha Yatra. But what is more, even the CPI(M) and its allies have declared their support for this deceptive Bill, with Mrs. Malini Bhattacharya, CPI(M), MP justifying that stand on the ground that any demand for inclusion of the Babri Masjid in this would have prevented this Bill from being passed. What a wonderful logic! Keeping the main issue of contention well out of reach of a solution, keeping the problem alive or shelved, a high drama of 'solving problems' has been staged, and altogether the groundwork for a communal conflagration has been laid.

The policy pursued by the Centre in regard to the question of tackling separatism is no different. Instead of politically resolving those problems and questions the successive Governments have taken to the path of state terrorism in Assam, Punjab and Kashmir creating a horror of insecurity and deep resentment among the people. As a result instead of resolving the problems these have increasingly fostered separatist tendencies and mentality.

Today in our country the Press and some intellectuals are disseminating the idea as if to stay in Parliament for five years is in itself a proof of governmental maturity; wisdom and efficiency. They are eulogising the role of Narasimha Rao, his adept and mature handling to keep the minority Government firmly entrenched in

power and balance between the National Front-Left combine and the BJP. But by delving a little deeper it will become clear that whatever credit might be due to Narasimha Rao, much more credit is due to the class identity of the BJP with capitalism and the abject surrender of the social democratic forces like the CPI and CPI(M) to the Congress policy of serving the monopoly interests.

While serving capitalism and pushing people into ever greater poverty or impoverisation, too, in the states under their rule, the BJP is today engaged in sharing power with the Congress(I) in Parliament: if the Speaker is of the Congress(I), the Deputy Speaker is of the BJP. Even though the BJP is totally supporting the new economic policies, when the Central Budget conducive to these policies was placed, the BJP voted against the same, and is taking some programmes of agitation against the inevitable price rise. It is clear that at the root of their anti-Congress stand lies merely greed for power and there is no basic difference between them and the Congress(I). Their only difference centres round the question of who can put up a better show in posing as the champion of religion and tradition and people's integration. Yet while the Congress(I) and the BJP are trying to outdo each other in harping on the revival of great Indian (i.e. Hindu) tradition, their campaigns and struggles leave behind a trail of blood, hatred, fanaticism and upsurge of fundamentalism with increasing sense of insecurity and division among the people. Is that a tradition to be proud of, and has Indian civilisation and culture nothing better to offer? By opening the door wide with their policy of a 'free market economy' for the US and other imperialists to carry out the most ruthless neo-colonial exploitation and ravaging the country in a way even the British could not achieve is that how they uphold Indian tradition and interests of the people?

On the other hand, how can the ever-shifting and most inconsistent stand of the CPI(M)—consistent only in its inconsistency—be called other than abject surrender to the Congress policy of serving the monopoly interests by the CPI(M) leadership? To mention about their condemnation of the devaluation, criticism of the humiliating terms of the IMF loan, and the consequent anti-people Central Budget which have caused prices to soar skyhigh, it is to state that despite its criticism of the Budget the CPI(M) abstained from voting against the same—a glaring example of their policy of consensus, which is but another word for support. Will it then be wrong to say that it is only to conceal their support for the Congress policies that the CPI(M) leadership is resorting to occasional fiery statements against the Centre, and that is why they have been content to take the easy way out of a one-day bandh

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## Misdeeds of P.V. Govt.

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against the Budget instead of mobilising and organising the people in sustained movement—a thing very much in their power to do?

Besides, the CPI(M)-led Government in West Bengal itself most eagerly invites foreign multinationals to invest in West Bengal, and itself has taken a loan from the World Bank on condition that it will impose a water tax in the municipal areas. Decrying the Centre's recent decision to raise the administered price of coal and the prices of rice and wheat, and the hike of petroleum products as undemocratic and anti-people, the CPI(M)-led Government itself has steeply increased the price of milk and electricity in West Bengal. While posing as a champion of the workers it comes to agreements with the owners and forces the workers to accept retrenchment and lay off, thus hurling them into agonising starvation. The real character of the CPI(M) leadership is revealed eloquently in the Chief Minister's defence of handing over public parks to private business men with the argument that he can't afford to think only for beggars, he has to think of the wealthy people. Much before Mr. Manmohan Singh introduced all these new economic and industrial policies, Mr. Jyoti Basu said in 1986 that tears might roll down the cheeks of the workers but for modernisation of industries, surplus work force had to be dispensed with. Now Sri Basu is extending open support to the exit policy in almost all his public speeches.

That means that the extremely reactionary capitalist outlook of the BJP and struggle for power; together with the capitulationist policies of the CPI(M) are actually helping the new Congress Government to bring down such terrible attacks on workers, peasants and the middle class in the interest of the monopolists. Or else the minority Government could not have stayed in power for one single day, nor could it have passed these extremely anti-people policies in Parliament.

So that the people cannot see the truth, cannot realise that the threat of rising unemployment resulting in ever more stupendous wastage of peoples' creative power, that all the misery, insecurity and attacks on them in every sphere of life are not at all unavoidable, that there is an alternative path if they become united and organised, to avoid just that from happening the Congress(I) with the help of new education policy is trying to dehumanize the people, turn them into mere robots. Thus syllabus are increasingly overloaded with information and technical aspects of science, but without providing any comprehensive scientific knowledge, or scientific bent of mind, nor imbibing any great values, so that people can easily be led into the blind



Front portion of the demonstration in Delhi to mark Lenin Memorial Day on 21st January

## 68th Death Anniversary of Lenin Observed

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WEST BENGAL

The WB State Committee SUCI also observed the day through mass meetings in Calcutta and elsewhere. At Esplanade East Comrade Anil Sen presided over a meeting which Comrade Sukomal Dasgupta addressed. Both the CC members earlier paid floral tribute to Lenin statue nearby.

alley of fascist culture and regimentation consisting of obscurantism; spiritualism and technical aspects of science. Just as during the Renaissance, in the days of freedom movement modern education had become a means to lift people from their narrow feudal obscurantism and confines unto a higher plane of creative interaction in the sphere of science and culture, conducive to national integration and produced countless of great personalities who became a source of inspiration. But today in the changed circumstances the ruling parties with the help of language policy in particular, by devaluing the study of language, literature and keeping attainment of proficiency of English out of reach of ordinary people is increasingly hurling people into the narrow confines of fascism, unable to interact with the world at large and bombarded with inferior culture all around.

It is for the people to decide whether they want to become the victims of ever more ruthless attacks in all spheres of life or stand up unitedly and exercise their immense potential power, shaking off apathy and frustration to pressurise the Government to change its anti-people policies. While comparing both words and deeds and their effect, the people have to judge who can help them in this struggle, who can lead them along the correct path.

## Gian Singh and two others expelled

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI has issued the following statement to the Press on 16.1.92:

This is to inform all concerned that Gian Singh, Secretary, Haryana State Committee of SUCI, Vijoy Pal (alias Kashiram) and Susheel, two other members of the State Committee who have formed a coterie, engaged themselves in anti party activities aiming at splitting the party and acted in gross violation of party principles, norm, code of conduct and discipline, they have become victims of ugly bourgeois individualism and egocentricism which had led them to practise bureaucratic style in work violating party's style of collective functioning, rude in behaviour with members and vindictive against comrades who question or criticise State Secretary's wrong doing. They have thus in their activities betrayed the working class and helped the vested interest.

Gian Singh has also grabbed party properties built bit by bit at the toil and donation of the comrades and the people, both movable and immovable ones, including Fund, Bank Accounts, Press, Vehicles etc. and refused to hand over these to the Party Committee despite the decisions and instructions given by the party authority. They have refused to submit their explanations to the charges levelled against them.

Failing after prolong and continuous attempts for rectification and bringing them to the right track, the Central Committee of the SUCI has removed Gian Singh, Secretary, Haryana State Committee of SUCI, Vijoy Pal (alias Kashiram) and Susheel—two other members of the State Committee from their respective posts and expelled them from the party. The people and all those who are concerned are informed that these persons have nothing to do with the SUCI.

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