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Darwinism : the natural historical confirmation for dialectical materialism

[Present article on Charles Darwin is our tribute to the famous naturalist on the occasion of his 200th birth anniversary and of the 150th year of the publication of his book *The Origin of Species* in 2009. The article will be included in our organ in parts, the first instalment being published in this issue. – Ed. Board, *Proletarian Era*]

In the annals of progression of human thought, there are milestones of triumph with the engraving: *turning point*. It is said, the revolution in natural science that began with Copernicus and scaled heights in Galileo and Newton reached its second and final stage in Darwin. While the former stage had led to a conception of the universe as a system of matter in motion governed by laws of nature, the latter, Darwin's, extended to the living world the same idea of nature as a system of matter in motion governed by natural laws. The workings of the universe, from cosmic bodies to living beings, no longer needed to be attributed to the ineffable will of the Creator, but were brought into the realm of science — an explanation of phenomena through natural laws. Pavlov extended this principle to the realm of brain physiology, and he laid the basis for investigation into the workings of human mind in respect of its own specific natural laws, thus completing the Copernican revolution of affirmation of the principle of natural laws governing matter in all its forms. Science, in its onward course, is now in the throes of another revolution, the revolution to be delivered of materialist-dialectical way of approach to fuller comprehension of character of the laws of nature, deeper penetration into truth of matter as dialectical entity in constant flux.

The storm the Darwinian revolution raised shook every nook of human thought, casting implication for man's origin, his

place in nature, his basic ethical system as conceived at the time. No other scientific theory has had such a tremendous impact on man's understanding of the world and of himself. The greatest question since eons of time — where we came from, who are we, where we might be heading — could now be answered, the foundation for it had been laid. In homage to this revolutionary in the scientific-cultural sphere of mankind, the posterity, the scientific community in particular, is preparing to celebrate the year 2009 in observance of the 200th birth anniversary of Charles Darwin (1809-1882), the English naturalist, and of the 150th year of the publication of his path-setting work *The Origin of Species*.

In its sweep, the theory of organic evolution that Darwin expounded earned the reckoning of a keystone of corroboration of the dialectical-materialist philosophy of Marx and Engels from the arena of science. In 1859, Marx wrote to Engels about Darwin's book: " — this is the book which contains the basis of natural history for our view." "Nature is the test of dialectics", wrote Engels, "and it must be said of modern natural science that it has furnished extremely rich and daily increasing materials for this test, and has thus proved that in the last analysis nature's process is dialectical." Engels cited three major discoveries of the nineteenth century as the "test of dialectics". These are :

1. the *cell theory*, based on the discovery that the cell is the unit

from whose multiplication and division the whole plant or animal body develops;

2. the *law of conservation and transformation of energy*, based on the discovery that all forms of energy can be transformed from one form to another, while its quantity remains constant;
3. the *Darwinian theory of evolution*, based on the discovery that the organic world, including man, is the

result of a long process of natural evolution.

Engels observed further : "The organic process of development, both of the individual and of species, by differentiation, is the most striking test of rational dialectics."

Darwin's great achievement was not in proposing that organisms evolve. In fact, the idea of evolution was already in the air and was old

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SUCI criticizes latest reduction in domestic fuel tariff as too little and too late

Strongly reacting against Indian government's utterly deceptive and showy move to bring down the domestic fuel tariff by less than 10%, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in course of a statement issued on 6 December, 2008, said that while international crude price has fallen from \$153 to less than \$50 per barrel, the government who had hitherto sought to justify every steep increase it effected in the prices of petrol-diesel-LPG at regular intervals on the plea of rising global crude price, has at last, after initial dilly-dally and elapse of considerable period of time during which it mopped hundreds of crores of rupees at the expense of the interest of the common people, announced under strong public pressure a token reduction widely disproportionate with the sharp decline in global oil price. This clearly shows that how fraudulent the government has been in continuously raising the domestic fuel prices queering the pitch over escalation in international crude tariff, said Comrade Mukherjee. He hastened to add that this is nothing but a shrewd strategy on the part of the hypocrite government to ensure soaring profit of domestic as well as foreign oil companies by squeezing the pockets of the common people reeling under ruthless capitalist exploitation. Comrade Mukherjee also vehemently condemned the government for not at all lowering the price of LPG and kerosene to give some relief to the poorer strata of the people. The announcement of this meager reduction, observed Comrade Mukherjee, is nothing but a deceptive move on the eve of the parliamentary election and would hardly bring to the toiling people any succour in the form of discernible plunge in the prices of essential commodities as well as transport fare.

Comrade Mukherjee called upon the people of the country to rise in protest against this gimmick of reduction and build up countrywide united movement to force the government drastically cut not only the prices of petrol-diesel but also LPG and kerosene and take appropriate measures to see that effect of the slashed fuel tariff does reach the common people by way of significant plunge in the prices of essential commodities and transport fare.

Darwin was the first to put facts together into a coherent, testable, tenable theory

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news in a way. Most of the evidence was available to the nineteenth-century contemporaries. But Darwin was the first to see around distractions, misconception, confusion, and to put it all together into a coherent, testable, and tenable theory. In a single stroke, the Darwinian theory of evolution unifies the realm of life, space and time, cause and effect, mechanism and physical laws.

Organic world : Experience down the ages has begotten knowledge that the diversity of the living world is staggering. What is impressive is not just the numbers but also the incredible variation in size, shape, behaviour, way of life, internal organization, so forth, and in complexity thereof. Organisms, that is, living beings, have the capacity of replication or reproduction, passing their traits to offspring, a process of inheritance called *heredity*. A modern discipline of evolutionary biology, genetics, is devoted to studying heredity and variation in organisms. One fundamental feature of the organic world is that organisms belong to diverse basic natural groupings among themselves, each natural grouping called a *species* in scientific terminology. A species comprises related organisms that share common characteristics and are capable of interbreeding. Some species are so close together that under special circumstances they will interbreed as in the case of horse and donkey that by appropriate cooperation can produce the mule. Speciation designates the process by which new species arrive — one parent species of organism transmuting into another, or splitting into two or more daughter species. Speciation is one of the fundamental processes of *evolution* — explanation of the transformation of one species into another species, or origin of one species from another, through knowable natural causes. The fact of interbreeding within species is of great importance for evolution in that individuals of one species share a common set of genetic characters different in some or more respects from the corresponding sets of genetic characters of members of other species. Yet another ubiquitous characteristic of organisms is *adaptation* to their environment,

that is, an attribute that enables organisms to cope with the environmental stress and pressures of their natural habitat, allowing them to live successfully in that environment.

Species question : The query to stir the mind, next to the question of what is life and how it came about here, concerns the issue of diversity and adaptability of all life forms to their environment. The originally intuitive connection between organisms and their environment was ultimately translated into evolutionary theory, that is, how all the different species came about. Evolutionary ideas were spawned first by the desire to explain the diversity of living forms, to which subsequently was added the realization that species have changed through geologic time. Biological evolution is not simply a matter of changes over time. All things change over time; but not all are examples of biological evolution because all do not involve descent through inheritance. The central idea of biological evolution is that all life shares a common ancestor. Through the process of descent with modification, the common ancestor of life on the earth gave rise to the fantastic diversity that we see documented in fossil record and around us today. Evolution means that living beings are all distant cousins. These cousins have arisen, and do arise, in space and time on the earth by way of differentiation from common ancestral stocks along divergent lineages — that is, divergent sequences of species, each species in each sequence considered to have arise from its predecessor in its sequence.

The two principal attempts to understand the mechanisms behind evolutionary change and differentiation focused on ‘use and disuse’ plus the internal ‘will’ of the organism (the Lamarck theory of inheritance), or on ‘selection of natural variation’ among organisms (the Darwin-Wallace theory of natural selection).

Darwin’s thesis : Darwin argued that organisms come about by evolution; he provided a scientific explanation, essentially correct but incomplete, of how evolution occurs and why it is that organisms have features such as wings, eyes, lungs — clearly structured to serve specific functions. Darwin’s theory is the

notion that all life is related and has descended from a common ancestor. The process of evolution produces a pattern of relationship between species. As lineages evolve and split, and modifications are inherited, then evolutionary paths diverge. This produces a branching pattern of the evolutionary relationship. Darwin observed: “The affinities of all the beings of the same class have sometimes been represented by a great tree. I believe the simile largely represents truth.” By studying inherited characteristics and other biological evidence, we can reconstruct evolutionary relationships and represent them on a ‘family tree’. This tree of life represents the basic relationship that tie all life together. When a speciation event occurs, a parent species transmutes into a daughter species, or a single ancestral lineage gives rise to two or more daughter lineages. Several times in the past, biologists have committed themselves to the erroneous idea that life can be organized on a ladder of lower to higher organisms.

In Darwin’s thesis, there is no ladder of life; there is, on the other hand, a natural branching of life tree, at the base which there is a presumption of development of life from non-life, and the thesis stresses purely naturalistic, ‘undirected’, “descent with modification”. That is, complex creatures evolved naturally from more simple ancestors over time. In a nutshell, random variations occur within the population of a species, the beneficial variations are preserved because they aid survival — a process known as **natural selection**. Then beneficial variations are passed on to the next generation. Over time, beneficial variations accumulate and the general result is an entirely different organism, not just a variation of the original.

In one sense, of course, Darwin’s theory of evolution is among the simplest scientific theories ever advanced:

- i. living things *vary* among themselves;
- ii. these variations arise *randomly*, that is, without regard to whether a given variation would be beneficial or not;
- iii. those organisms with advantageous variation tend to stick around a bit longer than others, and give rise to *more*

among themselves, hence their numbers increase.

But this apparent simplicity is deceptive. In the face of intricacies of the issues involved, the simplicity belies the hope to understand the species question in terms of simple ideas.

Charles Darwin brought something radically new to the ideas on the species question. With his theory, he concluded unambiguously that the organic world has its own history characterized by change and development. He proposed the conditions for and the mechanism of the evolutionary change. Evolution, the word Darwin had generally not used, came to mean the notion that organisms are related by descent. Evolution is “the theory in biology postulating that various types of animals and plants have their origin in other pre-existing types and that the distinguishable differences are due to modifications in successive generations.”— this way Thomas Huxley set it forth, one who is known for his unrelenting battle against the theological dogma on life and creation, and his unapologetic advocacy of scientific method.

Darwin postulated three conditions. *First*, members of any species, if left unchecked, increase naturally in number. As numbers increase, resources are consumed at an accelerating rate and become scarce. This brings about the *second condition*: competition among contending organisms for declining resources. This leads to condition *three*: survival of the few. From the three conditions or facts, the principle of natural selection is inferred: since only some offspring can survive, on average the survivors will be those variants that by ‘chance’ are better adapted to changing local environments; since these offspring will inherit the favourable traits of their parents, organisms of the next generation will, on average, become better adapted to local conditions. That is, in the competition for increasingly scarce resources, Darwin termed the mechanism that determines which individuals survive and which do not **natural selection** — nature’s way of weeding out the less fit. Those with superior adaptation would, on average, fare better in this competition, survive, and

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US Presidential election amidst much ado about so-called change

As US is the chieftain of the capitalist-imperialist world, whatever happens there becomes an event. Obviously, US presidential election is a mega-event. And above all, if a person belonging to the 'coloured' community gets elected by a huge margin trouncing the nominee of the incumbent party, it attracts attention and interest of all round the globe. In no country, such hype and commotion centering round election of a head of the state is generated with bourgeois media playing an important role in transmitting the craze on a wide scale across the border.

Election results

As known to all, Barack Hussein Obama the Democratic Party candidate has won the 44th US presidential election on last 4 November by defeating John McCain, the Republican Party nominee by a record-breaking margin. Out of 538 votes of the electoral colleges he got 349 against the Republican candidate 163 votes. (270 votes needed to win) This sweeping victory of Obama, an Afro-American or member of the 'coloured' community, is being projected by the media as something unprecedented. All the news broadcasts, telecasts, live discussions, comments, editorials, debates and analyses have been concentrating simply on this colour issue.

It is no doubt something that has not been seen in the last 150 years of US's history. Sharply divided on line of racialism with domination of the whites, the Presidents hitherto were from the dominant 'whites'. In fact, the soil of US, claimed to be headquarter of bourgeois democracy, is swamped with venomous white supremacy created over the ages through traditional taboos. It is worth mentioning here that the founding fathers of the US led by Abraham Lincoln put up a life and death struggle to end this ugly system of slavery and won. Equal social and civic rights against discrimination of the people on grounds of colour and religion were enshrined in the Bill of Rights of the US Constitution. It was during the hay-days of flourishing capitalism there. But with the passing time as capitalism, following inevitable law of the system, fell into irreconcilable crisis, the ruling capitalist class there, in order to wedge a divide among the toiling people based on race, raked up and incited the racial sentiment in the people on a wider virulent scale. The racial venom has been fed to such an extent that the coloured or black people are virtually looked

down upon as second class citizens and are often subjected to physical torture and even killing. The political masters in government connive at or pamper it. In this social milieu naturally a coloured or black person assuming the post of the US Presidency is unique no doubt. It is relevant to note in this connection that in last 100 years, US had only three black senators. And there is no relent on the part of the power that be to project this as augury of a change that US working class and common people should cheer up. It is to be seen if there is really any occasion for the US working people as well as the toiling masses throughout the world to celebrate Obama's victory as harbinger of a real change.

US on the eve of election

US presidential election was held at a time when the US capitalist economy had been mired in an acute market crisis and severe recession. The cascading effect of the severest recession is much more and widespread than the great depression of 1929-34 of capitalist economy. Already US had become the largest indebted country in the world. Its people, its companies, its government even became succumbed to debt trap. In fact, all hype created over US economy after adoption of the doctrine of capitalist globalization in early 1990's was credit-driven and not demand-pulled. All on a sudden, the bubble burst with a loud sound. A sub-prime crisis centering around bad housing loans made giant US banks and financial institutions go bankrupt overnight. It was revealed that so-called growth marked by spiralling stock market indices was nothing but overheating through large scale speculation and high dose of leveraging. Over and above that, Bush-led US regime in subserving the class interest of ruling monopolists of US launched two devastating wars on Afghanistan and Iraq for which the

US exchequer had to fork out and still has been doing so trillions of dollars. In Iraq alone the imperialist US has been spending \$2 billion a day. To meet this gigantic expenditure the US people have been extorted with massive tax, soaring price rise of essential commodities, deprivation of healthcare, education and so on. As a result of all these extortions coupled with repayment of high debt, people's purchasing power as well as ability to pay-off debt came to dreg. Concomitant to this, there had been massive retrenchment, layoff, slashing of remuneration for hundreds of thousands workers and employees. In one month alone following recession the US working class lost 400,000 jobs thus compounding the already acute unemployment due to massive outsourcing, folding up of labour-intensive units and lack of industrialization. Soaring price rise of the essentials is making it much difficult for the common people to afford a square meal a day. Exorbitant cost of public utility services including healthcare, education, and shelter for bare living has gone steadily beyond the reach of the common people. Politically also, the common US citizens have been suffocating in this utterly oppressive and repressive rule. In the name security of the country a good many democratic rights of the people, even their right to life, freedom speech are being progressively snatched away. Hundreds of thousands of people have been thrown behind the bar on flimsy political ground. People's protests against economic and political oppressions meet either with criminal indifference or tortures and imprisonment

Apart from immeasurable economic burden imposed on the teeming millions of the US working class, these illegitimate illegal wars took enormous toll of the US people as thousands of youths belonging to the invading US army were killed. While vehemently condemning these aggressions as well as butchering of hundred thousands of innocent unarmed Iraqi and Afghani civilians, the US citizens raised the very propriety of the US rulers in unleashing such genocide in alien territory and in the process cause

untimely meaningless death of US youths. Severely outraged at this criminal termination of priceless human lives just for fulfilling hegemonic aspirations, the oppressed impoverished US people often burst forth into even militant demonstrations on the streets. Under this rule of Bush the US people faced the brunt of two ghastly aggressions against two foreign small countries in Asia located thousands of miles away from the US. Massive anti-war demonstrations stalked the US streets and barricade fights were also put up.

But the plight of the black people has been even more. Being racially discriminated against and often facing social persecution, they are, in every respect the subdued wretched. Poverty and illiteracy are rampant in them. Most of these people are considered by the dominant whites as criminals and are kept behind the bars for years. Overdose of racial hatred force many of them to live in ghettos and unhygienic shanties. Politically, even after achieving the voting right in 1965 only after long and bloody battles these people are reckoned as the second class of citizens. Socially, they are still a boycotted section of people in schools and colleges and universities. After prolonged and even gory struggles, they could earn the political right to vote only in 1965. The downtrodden black population is in a state of such peril and drudgery, tormented and tortured beyond tolerance that life has lost all meaning to them. As a drowning man clutches to a straw, they have also been desperately looking at something that can provide them an iota of succour. With Obama's candidature, the repressed black community people began to nurture hope of amelioration of their miserable plight, emancipation from humiliation, insult, oppression and severe exploitation.

So it is clear that the common people were frantically seeking a change of this stifling situation. And they found in the presidential election an opportunity to give vent to their ire and register their penchant for a change. Obama also gave call for a "change" and promised to the US people in general that if elected, he would arrest economic down-turn, create 2.5 million jobs, abolish of outsourcing of jobs, stop the overseas wars, withdraw forces from Iraq within 16 months, close

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Darwinism a gun in the hands of liberalism in the period of Enlightenment

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procreate, passing on their successful adaptation to their offspring. Thus, two processes drive “descent with modification”. One is relative reproduction success — **fitness** — organisms not only have to survive, they have to successfully reproduce. The other is its prerequisite, the struggle for continuation in a particular habitat. If favourable, then the small, inheritable variations would slowly cause the species to change. Evolutionary modification resulted, then, from the preservation — by natural selection — of individuals bearing favourable characteristics. Darwin envisioned that new species derive from common ancestors by modification favoured in the natural process of selection. In his words: “This preservation of favourable variations and the rejection of injurious variations, I call Natural Selection.” Natural selection was proposed by Darwin primarily to account for the adaptive organization of living beings: it is a process that promotes or maintains adaptation. Natural selection of organisms is occurring in the environmental background of their own habitat. Thus, like a jury, natural selection does not summon up cases. It acts on those brought before it. Also, natural selection is constrained. If there is no variation, there is no choice. Variation is the raw material of evolution — natural or artificial. Evolutionary change through time and evolutionary diversification, that is, multiplication of species are not directly promoted by natural selection, but they often ensue as byproduct of natural selection as it fosters adaptation to different environments, filtering out the maladaptive. In fact, natural selection is the naturalistic equivalent to domestic breeding. Over the centuries human breeders have produced dramatic changes in domestic animal populations by selecting individuals to breed. Breeders eliminate undesirable traits gradually over time.

This is Darwin’s theory, cut to the bone — a vision that seems tame, hardly the bone of an explosive social controversy, much less the stuff of scientific revolution. His followers preferred “evolution”, because of its broad implication for a view of nature —

secularized, and embracing humankind and society as well as the cosmos. Darwin’s theory of natural selection, that is, his theory of evolutionary change, came to be known as Darwinism. Later, Darwinism became a general notion of common descent and evolutionary naturalism — that is, nature’s process, in all its forms, proceeds by slow cumulative change. In this broader sense, Darwinism was a gun in the hands of liberalism in the period of Enlightenment.

Yet in 1859, when Darwin published his ideas, they caused instant controversy — and *still* do. Why should ideas over a century old *still* excite controversy? The usual reason given is that evolutionary facts contradict religious belief. Yet many scientific facts contradict religious beliefs without raising eyebrow. What did Darwin say that was so disturbing? What Darwinism brought was a new way of looking at not only the organic part of our world but at nature in entirety — a new insight into man’s position in this world, assassinating the Creator, and with Him all His endowments to man, including social relations, and man’s relation to nature. Just as the motion of planets abides by natural laws, the evolution of species abides by the action of the laws of natural selection. Theologian philosophers believed in progress and divine perfection in nature. The Darwinian view replaced these beliefs with the concepts of adaptation to environment as law-governed necessity. Evolution is controversial because it affirms that man has descended in a lineage from animal ancestry. “Man in his arrogance thinks himself a great work, worthy the interpretation of a deity. More humble and I believe true to consider him created from animals.”, Darwin wrote. Darwin’s theory provided the framework for the first credible naturalistic explanation for human existence, including the origin, function and nature of those capacities that enable us to ponder why we have the characteristics we do. That is why many fundamentalist preachers even today fume over the mention of Darwin’s name. Anyone with a dogma to peddle is likely to take offence at the Darwinian revolution.

The theory of natural selection faced strong opposition even among knowledgeable scientists, first in England, then on European continent and in the United States. No scientific revolution can match Darwin’s discovery in degree of upset to the privilege of comfort and certainties enjoyed by those in upper echelons of society, both before and after the industrial revolution. His theory of evolution which offered biological basis for the relationship among plants and animals, including humans, promised to threaten not only beliefs of those who considered him a friend but the very structure of the society in which he lived. Then there were scientific obstacles, reproach from many scientists to whom Darwin looked with reverence. Before Darwin, the fact of presence of bewildering variations apparently without link, and that most, if not all, organisms are adapted to respective niche of environment had spawned several conflicting ideas, often to confuse the picture. Darwin and Wallace could see through such obstacles when others were stymied.

Controversies over change of organisms may occur at one of three levels. The first is whether evolution is a fact or not. Second, if a fact, then which course it takes — whether programmed progression with a built-in purpose, or just chance-directed and random, or determined at every point with chance playing its role within the framework of necessity. Third, the *mechanism* of change and variation, even if there will be concurrence over the fact of evolution and its course. Darwin’s unique contribution to the evolutionary thought was his answer to the third question. He proposed the mechanism of change — natural selection — in contrast to Lamarck’s proposition of use-disuse mechanism.

Like life itself, scientific theories are historical entities whose present forms are products of the historical past, and thus fully comprehensible only when understood against this background. This is perhaps especially true for ideas concerning evolution, because scientific controversy has accompanied evolutionary thought from the beginning. As is said, ‘no history of science is as burdened by

its past as is evolutionary biology.’ This history, naturally, is not a course of simple linear progression; it is progression through interaction, struggle, and ramification.

Historical Background

Early ideas : A belief in evolution of species has had a long and tortuous history. Evolutionary worldview is as old as antiquity. Ancient Greek philosophers such as Anaximander (610-540 B.C.) postulated the development of life from non-life and the evolutionary descent of man from animal. This might be the fruit of primitive materialistic thinking outliving into the early stage of class society. Thereafter, here and there an early thinker did suggest that living beings might ‘evolve’, but usually what was meant by a term of the sort was that a living thing belonging to a type could change into a living thing belonging to another type. In the development of western thought, as Christianity grew in power, such speculations on the possibility that organisms had evolved from one another were discouraged, and the theologian preaching came to be that living things were immutable and created all at once. In the Middle Ages, Church Fathers in Europe maintained that not all plants and animals were created by God at once, but some had developed in historical times from God’s creations. Their motivation was not scientific but religious. All the same, it bore the print of questions even tickling the theologian mind that experience with the living world might not readily seem to be accordant with the religious teachings. During the eighteenth century, the two Church doctrines provided sweeping biblical explanations for most questions about biological diversities: Separate Creation, the idea that all creatures have been created independently of one another by God and organized into a hierarchy with Man occupying the most elevated rank next to God; and the 6000 year limit on the age of the planet. The French naturalist Buffon did question the two thousand year old dogma, a hundred years before Darwin, in his *Historie Naturelle*, and wrestled with the similarities of humans and apes and even talked

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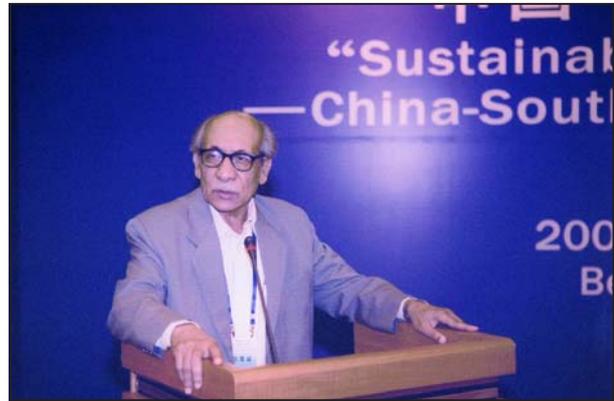
All India UTUC President and Secretary attend Trade Union Leadership Seminar in Beijing

All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) invited All India United Trade Union Centre (AIUTUC) and other major Trade Unions of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal to participate in the China-South Asia Trade Union Leadership Seminar On Sustainable Development and Role of the Trade Unions between November 17 - 26, 2008. Comrade Krishna Chakraborti, President, All India United Trade Union Centre and Member, Central Committee, SUCI and Comrade Sankar Saha, General Secretary, AIUTUC participated in the Seminar. Inaugurating the seminar on 18 November, Comrade Madam YU Hongqiu, Member of Secretariat of ACFTU welcomed the delegates and emphasized on promoting and developing the international trade union relationship based on mutual respect, equal exchange, friendly cooperation, democracy and unity.

On the first day of the Seminar, Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, delivered his address. He said, *inter alia* : Before I start, on behalf of our Organisation, All India United Trade Union Centre, I would like to convey our heartfelt thanks to the organisers of this Seminar, The All China Federation of Trade Unions, to discuss a very serious and vital issue like Sustainable Development and the Role of the Trade Unions. We are discussing this issue when the entire capitalist world is shaken to its very foundation by an unprecedented crisis. The situation is so grave that the leaders of the imperialist-capitalist countries, the leaders of G-20, have hurriedly gathered in the capital of imperialism-capitalism and are busy discussing how to rescue world capitalism from its irresolvable crisis. At that very time, we, the representatives of the working class of South Asia, are discussing how to emancipate the working class and other exploited masses from the exploitative capitalist system, which cannot but create graver to still graver crisis. The capitalists of different countries are looking to the session of the G-20, what remedies it finds out for this serious malady, while the working class is looking at us - which path we show to them and what struggle we lead them to. I hope that all the TU delegates will discuss the issue with the purpose in mind.

Friends, the bourgeois leaders, intellectuals, their financial institutions print and electronic media, all are painting this crisis as if it is just a financial crisis. It is a financial crisis, no doubt; but not just a financial crisis. It is a crisis of the capitalist system, itself. This is why, wherever it might have first exposed, it is affecting all the capitalist countries - no capitalist country can escape from this crisis. Once India was boastfully claiming that her economic foundation is so solid that she could avert it. Now she finds that there appeared many cracks in that foundation. It is true for all the capitalist countries. Lenin showed that on reaching its highest stage, imperialism-capitalism became moribund and entered into the phase of crisis. In this dying and crisis-ridden stage, it is not possible to expect sustainable development in capitalism. It does not surely mean that, there cannot be some growth at some time. It may be there. But that will not be sustainable. History confirmed this finding correct. The first general crisis of world capitalism led to the First World War. But the war could not resolve the crisis. Instead, in the post-war period, crisis intensified further. It led to the Second World War. After the war, Stalin showed that world capitalism lost even its relative stability that it enjoyed before the Second World War. From those days, world capitalism entered into its third phase of general and intense crisis, and that has now culminated in the present severe crisis. Can this dying crisis-ridden capitalism ensure sustainable growth? Those who are searching a solution within capitalist system, I will ask them to think it seriously.

Side by side, if we see the history of socialism, we will easily find its basic difference with capitalism. By the end of the First World war, first proletarian revolution became victorious in Russia, the then sickest nation of Europe. The newly born working class state of Russia, without any help from any country, rather being encircled by the hostile capitalist countries, built up socialism and a higher civilization which knew no crisis. When in the 30's of the last century, all the capitalist countries were reeling under the great depression, Russia was free from its impact, rather her growth rate was



Comrade Krishna Chakraborti addressing the Seminar in Beijing

spectacular and steadily stepping up. Even during the most devastating Second World War, the brunt of which Soviet Union had to bear most, growth rate of her economy surpassed that of Germany. This also was an important cause for the victory of Soviet Union. Again, after getting totally devastated in the war, Soviet Union became a Super-power within almost seven years competing with America - which took no less than 200 years to become so.

Before People's Democratic Revolution got victorious in China, she was also one of the most backward countries of the world. But after Revolution she also became powerful. Is it by magic? No, friends. Social developments cannot be brought about by any magic. Whether there will be sustainable development, or a fall, depends on which economic law a country chooses to work with.

As in capitalism where the entire means of production are owned by individuals and the workers are bound to sell their labour power to them and where production is meant to earn maximum profit, it cannot but ultimately end up in crisis. While, in socialism where those who work are themselves the owners of the means of production and where production is made not to earn profit but to meet the growing need of the society, both material and cultural, there only sustainable and continuous growth is ensured. The counter-revolution that restored capitalism in the erstwhile Soviet Union, also confirmed this very fact. Russia where growth and development were spectacular after socialist revolution, is now faced with severe crisis after restoration of

capitalism there. One will have tears to see that Russia which one day fed a vast part of the world is now begging.

So, history proves it beyond doubt that to search for sustainable growth and development in this dying and crisis-ridden capitalism is to run after a mirage. Even the bourgeois leaders could not find any solution in the theories of the bourgeois economists. Many of them are now turning back to Marx and Engels, even in Germany wherefrom Marx was banished one day. But in Marx and Engels, they will find that solution lies in the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and in the establishment of socialism. In this last phase of the dying capitalist system, material condition for the building of socialism is prepared. Now what is required is subjective preparedness - that is socialist consciousness and organised struggle of the working class and other exploited masses, under the leadership of the revolutionary party of the proletariat of their respective countries. The situation obliges the Trade Unions which are dedicated to protect and advance the interest of the working class to organise such a struggle. We expect that the working class of China will play a leading role in that struggle, as before.

Once again thanking the organizers, Comrade Chakraborti concluded with the slogan "WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE"!

On the same afternoon, the delegation went to the Great Hall of the People and met Comrade Wang Zhaoguo, Member of CPC, Central

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Change of government does not mean change of state character

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down infamous concentration camps in Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib. In these slogans and promises, people found a sort of signal towards major policy changes and a perceptible shift from hitherto pursued economic-political line of Bush. They thought, it is under this Republican Party's eight-year rule not only they groaned under severe economic sufferings but burden of wars were imposed on and political rights were snatched away from them. So the anti-incumbency factor was also acute. Moreover, there was no third alternative. Hence, negative voting also found expression in verdict against McCain. Accumulated effect of this got the election result going so decisively in favour of Obama.

Only people's support was not the sole factor

But it would not be correct to conclude that the people factor has been the sole determinant in securing victory for Obama. Sensing public mood, the US ruling class too wanted to have a change of guard. Moreover, in order to woo the black people and ensure that their wrath does not go beyond control, US rulers for quite sometime saddling loyal and obedient blacks in key positions of administration. Colin Powell who headed US army in the brutal occupation of Iraq was a black. Condoleezza Rice, the present secretary of state, is also from the black community. And now a suitable person has been picked up from the black community to contest presidential election as candidate of the Democratic Party. So the monopolists and large corporates pumped multi-billions dollars into Obama's fund. Obama collected record funds for election campaign. He hired at least 7 national TV networks in each of which he inserted a 30-minute advertisements daily. Even he advertised in the exceptionally costly channel, the CNN also. All his advertisements were screened at the prime time of the day. This way media and money power of the monopolists ensured people's sentiment by further influencing them to vote for Obama.

It was being widely discussed in the media columns and other fora before the elections that as Bush had resorted to a host of unfair means like tampering with voters' lists, manipulation of electronic

voting machines etc. to rig results in his favour, the same would happen this time as well. In other words, it was admitted that US presidential election had not been a free and fair affair in the past and was slated to be so in the latest hustings as well. With Obama scoring a landslide victory, it appears that the rigging machinery set up by the ruling class has clandestinely worked for him so as to project how strong and effective democracy is in US and how people overwhelmingly assert their verdict.

Burial of democracy in crisis-ridden imperialist US

But US people who are jubilant because of crushing defeat of McCain, the prodigy of despot Bush, should not be overoptimistic and presume that with Obama saddled in presidential chair, everything will be set right. State and government are not the same. Through election, there can be a change of government but not the state. All their misery and penury, aberrations, deprivations and discriminations are evolving from the exploitative capitalist system that is protected by the capitalist-imperialist state. Government is nothing but a caretaker of this state. It is more than a fact that anyone being elected to governmental power in the capitalist-imperialist state must be the loyal representative of the ruling class to manage the affairs ranging from economic, political, to cultural, of those monopolists and finally safeguarding their class interest. It is this class which brings its political managers to power everywhere in the world through providing money, media and muscle power under their control to their chosen candidate. Not only this, they also exert their influence and prepare ground for resorting to malpractice in the elections. Elections are conceived as the machinery of the class manipulating which the ruling capitalists get their desired candidates saddled to power. Hence this election cannot reflect the people's will, nor by this can the character of the state be changed. This aspect is sought to be sent to complete oblivion. It cannot be forgotten that white or black each incumbent of Presidential chair is bound by the US capitalist-imperialist interest.

Moreover, it is to be borne in mind that US today is a most centralized imperialist state having

concentrated all the powers into the Federal or central Government. However, it was not so in the past. Historically, in the initial years after independence, there established a federal system in that country. In that system the component state units and their governments were much powerful vis-à-vis the central government. It was the hay-day of flourishing capitalism. It was the laissez faire atmosphere in which the entrepreneurs were given equal scope to freely develop through largely a fair competition without any hindrance. Under the liberal policies followed, the component state governments were given adequate powers, to enjoy, with no intervention. The central government had only defence and finance to control the states. Politically and socially liberal rules guided the governments. People also in that liberal rule enjoyed many economic, political, democratic and social rights with almost uninterrupted. But with the emergence of monopoly capitalism, with the capital being concentrated into the hands of a few monopolists eliminating most of the small capitalists from the market, all those powers enjoyed by the states have been concentrated into the Central Government. Moreover, with judiciary functioning as supra-legislature organ using 'Judicial Reviews' by the country's Supreme Court as tool, the federal system has virtually turned into unitary with the Central Government being all powerful and omnipotent. The strangulating grip of the ruling monopolists over the state and government has further firmed up and consolidated. It is since this time, the political, economic, democratic and social rights of the common people started being curtailed and draconian laws were introduced to stave off the people's wrath against the capitalist class and its political managers. This is fascism which raising its ugly head has eclipsed all the capitalist countries in the world nowadays, and so the US too. And it is happening under the constitutional structure itself maintaining the multi-party or a 2-party parliamentary system, and keeping the façade of democracy as well. In reality, from behind this façade, and with the help of nexus of a military-industrial complex and bureaucracy, the capitalists-monopolists maintain their ruthless rule of administrative fascism. This is the reflection of

deepening crisis that capitalism has inherently given birth to and in which it is floundering miserably. With no possibility of overcoming this crisis, the capitalism thus takes refuge to this fascism it save itself. This has appeared as a general phenomenon in the capitalist world, as Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the founder General Secretary of our party and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, observed long back in providing detailed analysis of the features of fascism. All the features of this fascism, both economic and political vividly exist in the US. Under this overwhelming grip of the monopolists and fascistic features of the US state and administrative system, the election has been held in that country. Obama's election will only entail a mere change of government and this cannot bring any fundamental change of the capitalist system of US. US people do have experience that both Democratic Party and Republican Party notwithstanding their apparent rivalry within the precincts of 2-party democracy have been, in the ultimate, serving the class interest of the same ruling monopolists. So no one can get a presidential nomination in either of these parties unless it is approved by the ruling class of US. In the past, they have seen governmental power alternating between Democrats and Republicans but there was no abatement of gruelling economic plight, deteriorating life standard or flexing of military might. Irrespective of whether US presidential chair was occupied by a Democrat or Republic, war in Vietnam continued and war of aggression in the Gulfs intensified.

So the favour of the monopolists and corporate with their generous funds to Obama should not escape their notice. A candidate winning election on finance of the industrial houses can never do well to the general people. In a highly centralized and sophisticated imperialist-capitalist state like the US which is mainly run by a nexus of industrial-military complex and bureaucracy, no one conducting the government and its administration can be free from the bondage of this nexus. He must be a puppet caretaker or political manager serving the interest of the nexus in general, and that of industrial houses in particular. He is never an independent or free personality

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Comrade Manik Mukherjee meets Baath Party leaders in Syria

At the invitation of Maan Bashour, Chairman of the *Arab-International Congregation for the Right of Return* {Baath Arab Socialist Party of Syria}, Comrade Manik Mukherjee, General Secretary, International Anti-Imperialist and People's Solidarity Coordinating Committee (IAIPSCC) and Deputy International, SUCI recently visited Syria in the Arab world to attend an International Conference *In Support of the Rights of the Palestinian People to return to their Homeland*. Comrade Mukherjee was further requested to join the Arab leaders on the dais in the

the imperialists' support the State of Israel was founded in 1948 in a region where the Jews were in the minority. In the process, waves of Jewish immigrants poured into Palestine, the Jewish terrorist groups *Irgun* and *Lehi* organized attacks on Palestinian villages, razed them and massacred their inhabitants or forced them to evacuate or at the most made non-Jewish people accept to live as minority second class citizens. Through the war that ensued immediately after formation of Israel, its rulers grabbed much more territory than that allotted to Israel under the original UN



Comrade Manik Mukherjee with Abdullah Al-Ahamar, Assistant Secretary General of Baath Arab Socialist Party of Syria

Plenary session of the Conference. The massive conference was held at the hall of the EBLA Hotel in Damascus on November 23- 24 with more than four thousand delegates attending it. It was participated by the Palestinian leaders representing the HAMAS and the PLO. Comrade Sara Flounders, a leading member of the Workers World Party and IAIPSCC and the Co-Director of the International Action Center was also present in the Conference.

In the Conference, Comrade Manik Mukherjee presented his concise opinion on the theme on table. Delving into the history of origin of Israel state, he pointed out that this year was the 60th anniversary of the *Nakba*, the time when they lost their homeland, when the Zionist-imperialist conspiracy led to the founding of the state of Israel, as an outpost to implement the Anglo-US imperialist geo-political designs in the Middle East, a region rich in strategic oil resources. They cunningly exploited the world's sympathy for Jewish people who had suffered worst persecution under Hitler and with

partition plan, driving out more than 700,000 Palestinian people, that is about 80% of the Arab population, who had lived there for centuries. Israel occupied 78% land of historic Palestine. Through successive wars in 1956, 1967 and 1973 the Israeli rulers have aggressively and illegally annexed the remaining 22% of historic Palestine. Thus the State of Israel was founded on aggression and injustice. Even in the Israel-occupied territories the Palestinians are living as second-class

citizens imprisoned for years without charge or trial and are subjected to inhuman torture. The Israeli brigandage with full support and encouragement of the USA and other imperialist powers flagrantly violates basic human rights and contravenes most international conventions and flouts all UN resolutions with impunity.

The imperialist objective is clear: to crush the Arab national liberation movements having an anti-imperialist content. Israel, moreover, plays a strategic role in the United States global arms industry both as buyer of US arms and as the main subcontractor of American arms.

Palestinian resistance struggle grew against this historic wrong and persecution of an entire people. The intense hatred of the Palestinian people against the State of Israel found expression in the successive Intifadas, mass uprisings, that Israel tackled with unprecedented brutality. Even within Israel, opposition to the State's annexation policy and the oppression of the Palestinians was growing. As both



Comrade Manik Mukherjee, along with Arab leaders, on the dais of the Damascus Conference



During a talk (from left): Comrade Sara Flounders, Dr. Yahia Bakour and Comrade Manik Mukherjee

sympathy and admiration of the Palestinian struggle on the one hand and condemnation of the Israeli ruthlessness and oppression on the other were growing among the people all over the world, the imperialist powers conspired and forced upon the Palestinians the Oslo Accords to foil the Palestinian demand for statehood and the right of their return to homeland. Only the Gaza strip and West Bank was included in the area of so-called self-governance under the Palestinian authority. The Oslo Accords effectively left all effective control of this territory in the Israeli hands. The limited concessions granted in the Oslo Accords remained unfulfilled because of the Israeli intransigency. When HAMAS won the elections in 2006, Israel responded by blockades and closures and tried every possible means to overthrow the HAMAS - led Government. The Oslo Accords harped on the importance of economic development of Palestine for an enduring peace. But the economic policy was sabotaged by the Israel in combination with the other imperialists. The control of the economic development

programme was given to the imperialist controlled World Bank which put a low priority on the development of basic infrastructure. It rather favoured building a casino because it was a good investment! On top of it, whatever little development Gaza took place, like building Gaza airport and sea port, water treatment plants, radio and television centres, and were systematically destroyed by the Israelis as military targets.

Any solution to the Palestine problem must be based on providing justice to the Palestinian people. Simply recognizing a separate Palestinian state cannot redress the fundamental injustices meted out to them. It further needs the immediate cessation of all Israeli settlement activity, the evacuation of Jewish settlements from the Palestinian territories, the solution to the issue of Jerusalem on the basis of equal sharing, and the achievement of a just and fair solution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees. The fulfillment of the Palestinians' aspirations to statehood, independence and justice,

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Darwinism was a new way of looking at not just the organic world but at nature in entirety

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about common ancestry of Man and apes.

In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century scientific circles, opinion was sharply divided on the issue of “transmutation” of species, as evolution was then called. Did species change and, if so, how? Carolus Linnaeus (Linne) and J. B. de Lamarck illustrate the general conflicting scientific views on evolution preceding Darwin: Linnaeus thought species were fixed, they were created originally as we find them today (no evolution, fixity or immutability); Lamarck thought, species changed and progressed through time (evolution). Most naturalists at the time believed that species were immutable, separately created production. The notion of fixity meshed comfortably well with the biblical view at hand with which the western thought kept company for several thousand years. In parallel, a secular idea of mutability was appealing, but the evidence appeared ambiguous and, on the basis of the prevailing outlook or idea, seemingly it could be interpreted both ways, for and against evolution. Linnaeus devised the hierarchical system of plant and animal classification that is still in use in a modernized form. He insisted on the fixity of species, but his classification system eventually contributed much to the acceptance of the concept of evolution. What we understand today to be natural law-governed adaptation on the part of animals and plants — product of evolutionary change — to many philosophers and scientists at the time adaptation was simply evidence of care exercised by the Creator.

Design theory: William Paley (1743-1805), the British theologian, used natural history, physiology, and other contemporary knowledge to elaborate the argument from design, and this seemed forceful. A ladder is made for climbing, a knife for cutting, and a watch for telling time; their functional design leads to the conclusion that they have been fashioned by a carpenter, a smith, or a watchmaker. Similarly, the obvious functional design of animals and plants seems to denote the work of a Creator — adaptation is a God-given match of the organism to its environment. He had created the fish in waters, the birds in the air, the plants on the land. God

had endowed some creatures with gills for breathing, some others with wings for flying, and eyes for seeing, and He had coloured flowers so that man could enjoy them and recognize His wisdom. To the Creationists, the diversity of plant and animal was proof of the Creator’s almighty power. Even in the secular circles of the mid-nineteenth century, in the period of Enlightenment, the obstacles of religious holdovers to the idea of evolution were formidable even as available evidence could equally be put together in terms of a natural process of adaptation that was at the time believed to be the Creator’s design. This is a simple illustration of how religious tutelage forces itself upon man’s thinking to submit himself to fanciful subjective interpretation of objective materials! Formal or professional engagement in activities of the disciplines of science is in itself incapable of automatic deliverance of the engager’s thinking mode from the stranglehold of subjectivity or idealism.

Lamarckism : With evidence accumulating from a variety of sources, and Enlightenment fostering confidence in reason and effort at liberating human thought from mythical and religious beliefs and to construct knowledge based on scientific evidence and reasoning, the material condition for emergence of forms of scientific thought on evolution, or ‘transmutation’ as it was then called, had matured. Jean Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829), the French naturalist, subscribed to the Enlightenment perspective of his times, in which living beings represented a progression, from the simplest organisms to the most complex ones, with humans as the highest form. Lamarck aimed to go beyond the description of organisms outlined by Linnaeus, passing from the descriptive to the explanatory and philosophical. In his *Zoological Philosophy* (1809) Lamarck tried to show that various parts of the body developed because they were necessary, or disappeared because of disuse when variations in the environment caused a change in habit. For example, a giraffe develops a long neck and fore legs through the habit of browsing on tall trees, constantly having to stretch upward. If these body changes, acquired during the lifetime of the

individual, were inherited over many generations, new species would eventually be produced. Although Lamarck did not use the term adaptation, his fundamental belief was that organisms change on their part in order to suit their environment. Linnaeus understood adaptation as a God-given match of organism to its environment. By contrast, Lamarck understood adaptation as an ongoing natural process based on interaction between an organism and its environment — the organism trying to change itself to meet its needs by dint of its intrinsic power. He understood organismal change not as a direct action by, for example, a Creator, but rather as the intervention of necessity. Lamarck held that living organisms represent a progression from lower to higher forms, a process still going on and always culminating in man. This is Lamarck’s theory of **inheritance of acquired characteristics** — a nomenclature of later coinage—and it is now often referred to as Lamarckian inheritance. Linnaeus insisted on constancy and fixity of species, the sharp discontinuity between them. Lamarck, later Darwin, noted apparent intermediate species. So, Lamarck built on the postulate of non-fixity of species. He spoke to fact, course, and mechanism of transmutation. “Need” itself produced change, than inheritance. “Need” affected organism’s metabolism, and changed its internal physiology, triggered appearance of a new body part to address the new needs. Interestingly, the roots of the Lamarckian view can be traced back to the Hippocratic physicians two thousand years ago, who had suggested that differences between human populations are the result of environmental effects, especially the effects of climate and diet.

In essence, the Lamarckian thought stipulates that evolution is the result of two fundamental factors: one, the inherent capacity or ‘will’ of life for change, a capacity that is led by *nature’s* plan for the creation of different organisms; *two*, the environmental change obliges organisms to adapt themselves to new situations. Besides, the Lamarckian concept subscribes to the doctrine of gradualism, the view that nature’s action occurs bit by bit, change occurs little by little, accumulation of which over very

long periods has yielded the wide variation we witness presently.

Now, to take a *critical look* : the primary question was, if animals had evolved from one form to another, what had caused them to do so? Lamarck’s answer was that environment caused them to do so. Example: the giraffe’s neck and forelimbs. This answer, however, ran foul of difficulty. How had the giraffe developed its blotched skin? Surely no action on its part, deliberate or otherwise, could have effected the change. Lamarck’s postulation could not stand its ground.

In the view of Creationism shared by Linnaeus and Paley alike, the adapted form was externally created to match the function. Lamarck proposed the opposite view of naturalism: the functions of organs, which arise as responses to a changing environment, have led to the form we observe in each organism. Lamarck’s functionist concept was highly criticized by Georges Cuvier (1769-1832), the French paleontologist and father of comparative anatomy, who emphasized that the laws of development determine the internal structure of each organ rather than organs being modified to meet the external challenge posed by the environment. *Darwin’s version includes both perspectives.* Besides, Cuvier thought, change is not gradual, it happens when catastrophes hit — sudden action of volcanicity, floods, earthquakes, and sudden cooling of climate in the past had produced drastic changes in the surface of the earth, resulting in periodic and sudden extinction of plants and animals.

It should be understood that for Lamarck “need” or “use” was a technical term denoting the “motor” that runs evolutionary change. His theory encountered stiff opposition from the scientific circle, even ridicule. But later at least, it was acknowledged that Lamarck had made important contributions to the gradual acceptance of biological evolution and stimulated countless later studies. By vigorously defending the view that organisms evolve, he helped prepare the background for those who could solve the species question. Engels observed: “Neither Darwin nor his followers among naturalists ever think of belittling in a way the great

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Darwin emerged from amidst the scientific ethos charged with conflicting views

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services rendered by Lamarck; in fact, they are the very people who first put him up again on his pedestal. But we must not overlook the fact that in Lamarck's time science was as yet far from being in possession of sufficient material to have enabled it to answer the question of the origin of species except in an anticipatory way, prophetically, as it were." Lamarckism put up its head again and again in the history of evolutionary thought.

Darwinian Revolution

In summary, the scientific ethos was charged with cross-currents of conflicting views: for example, the Creator's design *versus* the governing principle of natural laws; fixity *versus* change; gradualism *versus* catastrophe; environmental drive *versus* inherent drive. Such was the divided climate of the early nineteenth century on the species question.

Historical requisites: All this, however, was but one strand of the process of maturation of the historical condition that necessitated, made possible, and determined the advent of the Darwinian revolution. Two other requisites were necessary: accumulation of irrefutable material evidence, and a historically conditioned subject or frame of mind that could see around

distractions and decipher the natural links between facts that appeared to have no links.

For Darwin, the theory that new needs produce new body parts was an obstacle not just because it postulated an intrinsic programmed capacity of all organisms for progression, but more because it failed to account for, strictly, the outstanding fact of their adaptation and variation. Paley's theory of creation on design was another obstacle.

The major objections to Lamarck's view were:

- i. Lamarck confused between immediate physiological change and long-term evolutionary change — an acquired character during single life-term is a physiological response and does not pass on hereditarily to offspring, viz., an enlarged arm muscle of a weightlifter does not pass on to his son;
- ii. his conception of progression of life as an ascending ladder denies organisms to adapt in their own right, but rather as improving steps along the way to a better future — the idea was rather a reflection of the technical advancement in the period of industrial revolution;
- iii. the ladder concept fails to explain: if humans evolved from apes, why are apes still around;
- iv. the modern objection to this theory is an amplification of the earlier objection based on the

lack of evidence of hereditary transmission of physiologically acquired characters to the offspring — somatic characters, i.e., body characters, acquired through use cannot be inherited; inherited traits reside in genes carried in germ cells (eggs and sperms), not in somatic cells; unlike physiological responses, evolutionary responses arise by gene mutation, not from somatic alteration due to metabolic need; environmental demands do not reach into genetic material and directly produce inherited improvements to address the new needs or new opportunities — that route does not exist in any organism's physiology. Modern geneticists do not exclude the possibility that action of the environment may bring about certain transmitted changes in simple organisms; but the Lamarckian idea as such has been demolished, they assert.

On the other side, the material evidence available at the time to the scientific community included:

- i. **the observation of the gradations of structure, from extreme simplicity to very great complexity, and of the relation of these graduated forms to one another;**
- ii. the observation of the existence of an analogy between the series

of gradations within any great groups of organisms, and the series of embryonic conditions of the highest members of that group;

- iii. the observation that large groups of species of widely different habits present the same fundamental plan of structure, and that parts of the same organism likewise exhibit modifications of a common plan;
- iv. the observation of the existence of structures, in a rudimentary and apparently useless condition, in one species of a group, which are fully developed and have definite functions in other species of the same group;
- v. the observation of effects of varying conditions in modifying living organisms;
- vi. the observation of the facts of geographical distribution of plants and animals, e.g., occurrence of same organism in widely separate lands, and occurrence of varying species on different islands but who are akin in some way or other to a species on the nearby landmass;
- vii. the observation of the irreversibly ordered geological succession of fossils, i. e., of remains of past life forms, now mostly extinct.

(To be continued)

Comrade Manik Mukherjee in Syria

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recognition of their right to return to the homelands is the key to peace, stability and prosperity for the peoples of the Middle East.

We urge the people of Palestine to appreciate that that it is imperialism and imperialist conspiracy which is at the root of their misery and deprivation. This is not a fight between Judaism and Islam. The Palestinian people can realize their sovereignty and sustain it only by defeating imperialism on its soil under working class leadership, and combining with all individuals, groups and forces who oppose imperialism and are committed to fight against it. Advocacy for installing a democratic government is an imperialist propaganda. What

devastation is caused by US-sponsored democracy is clear from the examples of Iraq and Afghanistan. The working people of all countries are in solidarity with this struggle of the people of Palestine.

After the Conference, Comrade Mukherjee met the leaders of the ruling party of Syria, namely the Baath Arab Socialist Party of Syria, including their Assistant Secretary General, Abdullah Al-Ahamar. During their discussions there was also present Dr. Yahia Bakour, Director, Arab Agricultural Commission. The Syrian leaders expressed that their Baath Party was officially accepting the invitation to join the Anti-Imperialist International Convention to be held at Beirut from 16 to 18 January next.

Red Salute Comrade Bhimsen Behera

Comrade Bhimsen Behera, Secretary, Angul District Organising Committee of SUCI, Orissa, breathed his last in Calcutta Heart Clinic & Hospital at 5.45 A.M on 24 November last at the age of 53 years. He was suffering from incurable cancer since about last four years and was treated at Acharya Harihara Cancer Hospital, Cuttack, Jaslok Hospital, Bombay and eventually in Calcutta.



Being imbued with the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and in close association with departed Comrade Tapas Dutta, Central Committee member and Orissa State Secretary, SUCI, Comrade Behera came in contact with the party around 1980 and played leading role in the historic All Orissa Students' Movement held in that year. Since then he plunged himself headlong in developing SUCI and its mass organisations in Angul District. In course of developing mass movements, Comrade Behera emerged as a popular mass leader of the district. In his premature demise, party has lost a valuable organizer and an ardent revolutionary. Comrade Behera's body was cremated at Angul on 25 November. A memorial meeting was held there on 30 November. The meeting presided over by Comrade Bhikari Pradhan was addressed by Comrade Dhurjati Das, Secretary, Orissa State Organizing Committee, SUCI, as main speaker. Other state leaders of party and mass organizations also addressed the gathering.

Political Managers of the exploitative capitalist rulers have no colour or creed

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doing work on his own. To be nourished by the backing of the ruling monopolists, he has to be instrumental in articulating the bourgeois class design. It is to be remembered, it is only the ruling class that decides everything – election including. It is this class that pulls the string from behind to its interest. For this interest the electoral process is by and large controlled and manipulated by the capitalist-monopolist class which using the vicious combination of money, muscle power and media brings their trusted political managers to power. In this electoral process people have no say in reality, unlike in the past when the bourgeois parliamentary system during its hay day of emergence and development used to bear whatever minimum democratic element in elections. This is now the story of bygone days, Obama's election is no exception. The role of the political parties instituted to govern the state with an elected leader as Bush, or Obama or McCain, is secondary vis-à-vis the role of the class, which is primary. Their entities are conditioned simply by the servitude to the class interest. Obama's tenure can not be anything other than that. May be initially, he with the approval of the class come out with some gimmicks. But with passage of time, he cannot desist himself from military aggression, economic and political intervention in other countries on pressing demand of the imperialist interest in the same way as Bush did. He has to carry out and govern the state following the diktat of the imperialists and multinational corporations of US with all their fangs and wildness and cruelty. This is why soon after election, he has toned down his rhetoric regarding the continuation of war either in Iraq or in Afghanistan. Because, as Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had explained long back, when the capitalists "cannot increase production in normal course by way of adequate industrialization, an urge for production of armaments, a tendency of militarization of the industries appears in the economies of all capitalist countries". By this

measure an artificial stimulation is created in the market, even if temporarily. In such situation government places orders and the government itself buys up the products. But the government, too, cannot buy up and stock them endlessly and without purpose. Therefore to release the war materials, they need local and partial wars. This is the basic economic feature playing at the root of the present war policy of the US. So imperialist US cannot survive without war. Obama knows it very well. He also knows that the acute accentuating market crisis is intrinsic of the very capitalist economy where motive of production is not meeting people's needs but earning maximum profit for the capitalist owners through incessant squeezing of the people. That is why, people's purchasing power dips, unemployment soars, job losses mount and prices go up. And to thwart any possible people's upsurge against this capitalist rule, the ruling class seeks to keep people divided over race, religion, ethnicity or region. So long as capitalism is not overthrown, there is no respite from this.

It may be added that when the intensity of the US economic meltdown is becoming more acute with every passing day making people belch out blood and even top-notch bourgeois economists are talking of this unprecedented crisis to not only persist for considerable period of time but unfold with further dimensions and wider ramifications, harbouring any illusion about Obama bringing about radical changes in the system overnight will be akin to living in a fool's paradise. Likewise, the ruling class, sly as it is to the core, has deftly exploited the feeling of the hapless black people to pose Obama as their saviour. Hence, any expectation of Obama upholding the cause of the poor in general and the black population in particular would indeed be self-defeating. Political Managers of the exploitative rulers have no colour or creed.

Democratic movement can only initiate process of change

To bring about the real change for people's benefit or interest, US

people must come forward and develop powerful democratic movement centring round the burning problems in people's life like formidable unemployment, closure of industries, retrenchment, layoff, absence of social security for the working class, soaring price rise, miserable plight of people's healthcare, skyrocketing cost of education, cultural decadence, etc. Under pressure of movement, they must try to wrest from the unwilling government some of their legitimate demands, secure some relief. And through such democratic movements, protracted and sustained, comprising all sections of the people, they have to overthrow the capitalist system with blow of revolution finally. It is then and then only, the real

change would come to the people, White or black alike. That is why, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, the beloved General Secretary of our party, has stressed in his goodwill statement sent on 3 November, 2008, to the National Conference of Workers World Party held during 15-16, 2008 in New York, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee stated, "...whatever be the result and whoever wins, by that the imperialist character of the US state is not going to fundamentally change. The American working class will have to continue and sharpen fight against the imperialist state and its war-mongering policy, against exploitation and oppression, against racial discrimination and discrimination against immigrants..."

All India UTUC leaders in Beijing

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Committee Political Bureau, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of National People's Congress, and Chairman of ACFTU. He welcomed the delegates and emphasized on the importance of unity of the international working class in general and South Asian working class in particular. He requested the delegates for a question-answer session. Comrade Sankar Saha took the floor and congratulated the Chairman of ACFTU for organising such an important International Seminar on a subject of immense relevance. He then wanted to know the impact of the present acute recession of capitalism on the economy of China. In his answer, Comrade Wang Zhaoguo claimed the reform and opening-up in China since 1978 has helped China develop as a giant economy, not likely to fall easily. Comrade Saha stressed further that this claim of the Chairman has nothing to do with reality. He elaborated on different aspects of the issue and referred to a news item quoting the People's Daily which said "China's President as well as Chairman of CPC, has issued a rare warning to the ruling Communist

Party, telling his officials that the global economic downturn is so severe that it could shake its (China's) 59 years grip on power", which clearly contradicted the claim.

On 19 November, 2008 an interactive session was organised by ACFTU at The China Peoples' Hotel. Vice-Chairman of ACFTU Comrade XU Zhenhuan was in the chair. Comrade Sankar Saha, in his speech, referred to the recent enactment of "New Employment Contract Law of China" which covered all type of employees in the mainland of China, including foreign-invested, private and government enterprises, agencies and organisations. While the act stipulates some financial burdens on the employers, it also clearly means that there shall be no permanency of job and job will remain totally insecure. Comrade Saha requested the Vice-Chairman of ACFTU to spell out his views on the law.

In his ambiguous answer, the Vice-Chairman submitted that it was a better law than the earlier one and that the US Administration which wanted much more flexibility were dissatisfied with the new piece of law.

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