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Pre-budget meet with Finance Minister UTUC - LS Assails the Government

In the pre budget meeting between the Finance Minister and the central trade unions held in New Delhi recently, Comrade Prithvi Chanda, President, UTUC-LS made a detailed deliberation. The essential aspects of it are given below :

While thanking the Finance Minister for giving the opportunity to the UTUC-LS to express its opinion on budget and related matters on the eve of presentation of the budget Comrade Prithvi Chanda, categorically stated that the UF government has shown nothing to distinguish it from the previous Congress government so far as people's burning questions are concerned.

The country witnesses today severe inflationary trend. The prices of daily necessities like cereals and vegetables are increasing by leaps and bounds beyond men's reach. People see to their dismay that their survival has become a serious problem. Working people are suffering from retrenchment, whether by closure or so-called VRS (Voluntary Retirement Scheme), lay offs and sickness. To the unemployed millions are added these forces of forced unemployed.

Last year when we met you the Finance Minister, the scene was not different only its dimension has been increased substantially.

Last year we submitted our viewpoints for due consideration which I am afraid has not been given. That is why the natural question is what is the use of asking the trade unions to meet with the minister before he presents his budget. The fundamental question remains what will be the outlook of the government in regard to the budget, an instrument for fiscal measures specifically speaking, to be precise whether it will be pro rich or pro people whether it will be in slavish obedience to the prescriptions given by the World Bank and IMF reflecting the interests of foreign and national finance
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SUCI Attends Anti-Imperialist Programme in Havana

With oath of total war against imperialism, Cuban Peace Council and "NINOPASTI" — the international foundation for peace and independence, jointly held a meet against "Foreign Military Bases" at Havana. Held from 28th to 30th November 1996, it was participated by 52 parties and organisations from 34 countries.

On 28th November Plenary Open Session was held. After it two separate commissions on the scheduled subject conducted discussions where delegates from different countries submitted and read their papers. Delegates deliberated on those papers. From the commissions the Declaration was finally prepared on 29th November. On 30th, in the concluding Plenary Session, the Declaration was formally adopted by the House.

India was represented by the SUCI alone. Comrade Manik Mukherjee, Central Staff and Deputy, International Department, on behalf of our party attended the meet. The paper, presented by him, was entitled "Foreign Military Bases". The paper was highly appreciated by the delegates.

Comrade Manik Mukherjee, in course of his speech, said : "The New York Times reported that the USA has military bases at 3328 places around the world. It has 70 strong nuclear-powered submarines and naval forces in seven seas, which is greater than all the naval strength of other powers taken together. The USA has naval bases in Philippines, Singapore, Japan, Australia, Indian Ocean and Kuwait and air bases in Philippines, Indian Ocean, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. The largest number of US military bases are in Western Europe. The other

area with major US military bases is the Asian Pacific region. Under cover of 'joint defence' the USA has also set up bases in Latin America. The USA has declared the Middle East as the 'zone of US vital interest' from where nearly 50 per cent of total foreign earnings is received by it. To protect this 'zone of vital interest', the US has declared to take all requisite measures not short of armed force. Many other regions of the world have also been declared as 'zones of US vital interest, and to protect these zones a 'rapid deployment force' has been set up for use in 'crisis situation' via military bases installed in the various parts of the globe. Britain has also a system of military bases like Gibraltar, Cyprus, Falkland Islands etc. France, which was also a major imperialist power before the Second World War has military bases in Djibouti, Cote d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Gabon, Senegal etc.

With revolutionary greetings, I express confidence in the success of the Cuban people led by Comrade Fidel Castro in the struggle against imperialism despite severe setback, temporary though, in the world communist movement, caused by attack from within by modern revisionism.

After analysing the root cause of war I hold that the danger of the outbreak of war lies in inter-imperialist contradiction.

Deterrent role so long played by the socialist camp being absent, the neo-colonial attack has become ruthless. In view of crisis, the imperialists have not only militarised the economy but spread their tentacles through military bases all over the world. For globalization, the military base are

used for intervention, interference, pressurization, etc. The more developed among the backward countries like India which has already developed imperialist features are trying to reach a new understanding with the imperialists.

The sovereignty, territorial integrity and national independence are jeopardized and colonial situation is created in some countries. The bases are established through pressure and use of force.

A militant peace movement is the need of the hour. Massive militarization and encirclement of the entire globe through bases are really signs of the weakness of the imperialists. They are mortally afraid of popular mass upsurges ; it is to crush them, that the imperialists have set up military bases round the globe. But the people say the final word. Cuba though in a sandwiched position can still play a great role in coordinating the anti-imperialist movements of different countries."

Besides delegates from Latin American countries, delegates were also there from China, Vietnam, Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, South Korea, Italy, Portugal, Ireland, Germany and some other countries.

All the delegates condemned in one voice the installation of imperialist military bases around the world, worldwide imperialist onslaughts either by direct military attack or by pressurising by means of threats of economic and military onslaughts, imperialist economic sanction, etc. Delegates particularly severely criticised US imperialist onslaughts against socialist Cuba to undermine socialism further by means of installing military bases around this tiny island.

Tasks of The Young Communist Leagues

(On the occasion of the 73rd memorial day of Lenin, the great leader of the world proletariat, we publish below excerpts from a speech delivered by him at the Third All-Russia Congress of the Russian Young Communist League, on October 2, 1928.

Dealing exhaustively with the correct way to learn communism, this speech is invaluable not only for the young but for all members and cadres of our party, in their struggle to build up their character and grasp Marxism-Leninism so as to become worthy of the great task of leading the people along the revolutionary path of emancipation.)

Comrades,

Today I would like to talk on the fundamental tasks of the Young Communist League and, in this connection, on what the youth organisations in a socialist republic should be like in general.

It is all the more necessary to dwell on this question because in a certain sense it may be said that it is the youth that will be faced with the actual task of creating a communist society. For it is clear that the generation of working people brought up in capitalist society can, at best, accomplish the task of destroying the foundations of the old, the capitalist way of life, which was built on exploitation. At best it will be able to accomplish the tasks of creating a social system that will help the proletariat and the working classes retain power and lay a firm foundation, which can be built on only by a generation that is starting to work under the new conditions, in a situation in which relations based on the exploitation of man by man no longer exist. And so, in dealing from this angle with the tasks confronting the youth, I must say that the tasks of the youth in general and of the Young Communist Leagues and all other organisations in particular, might be summed up in a single word: learn.

Of course, this is only a "single word". It does not reply to the principal and most essential questions: what to learn, and how to learn? And the whole point here is that, with the transformation of the old, capitalist society, the upbringing, training and education of the new generations that will create the communist society cannot be conducted on the old lines. The teaching, training and education of the youth must proceed from the material that has been left to us by the old society. We can build communism only on the basis of the totality of knowledge, organisations and institutions, only by using the stock of human forces and means that have been left to us by the old society. Only by radically remoulding the teaching, organisation and training of the youth shall we be able to ensure that the efforts of the younger generation will result in the creation of a society that will be unlike the old society, i.e., in the creation of a communist society. That is why we must deal in detail with the question of what we should teach the youth and how the youth should learn if it really wants to justify the name of communist youth, and how it should be trained so as to be able to complete and consummate what we have started.

I must say that the first and most natural reply would seem to be that the Youth League,

and the youth in general, who want to advance to communism, should learn communism.

But this reply — "learn communism" — is too general. What do we need in order to learn communism? What must be singled out from the sum of general knowledge so as to acquire a knowledge of communism? Here a number of dangers arise, which very often manifest themselves whenever the task of learning communism is presented incorrectly, or when it is interpreted in too one-sided a manner.

Naturally, the first thought that enters one's mind is that learning communism means assimilating the sum of knowledge that is contained in communist manuals, pamphlets and books. But such a definition of the study of communism would be too crude and inadequate. If the study of communism consisted solely in assimilating what is contained in communist books and pamphlets, we might all too easily obtain communist text-jugglers or braggarts, and this would very often do us harm, because such people, after learning by rote what is set forth in communist books and pamphlets, would prove incapable of combining the various branches of knowledge, and would be unable to act in the way communism really demands.

One of the greatest evils and misfortunes left to us by the old, capitalist society is the complete rift between books and practical life; we have had books explaining everything in the best possible manner, yet in most cases these books contained the most pernicious and hypocritical lies, a false description of capitalist society.

That is why it would be most mistaken merely to assimilate book knowledge about communism. No longer do our speeches and articles merely reiterate what used to be said about communism, because our speeches, and articles are connected with our daily work in all fields. Without work and without struggle, book knowledge of communism obtained from communist pamphlets and works is absolutely worthless, for it would continue the old separation of theory and practice, the old rift which was the most pernicious feature of the old, bourgeois society.

It would be still more dangerous to set about assimilating only communist slogans. Had we not realised this danger in time, and had we not directed all our efforts to averting this danger, the half million or million young men and women who would have called themselves Communists after studying communism in this

way would only greatly prejudice the cause of communism.

The question arises: how is all this to be blended for the study of communism? What must we take from the old schools, from the old kind of science? It was the declared aim of the old type of school to produce men with an all-round education, to teach the sciences in general. We know that this was utterly false, since the whole of society was based and maintained on the division of people into classes, into exploiters and oppressed. Since they were thoroughly imbued with the class spirit, the old schools naturally gave knowledge only to the children of the bourgeoisie. Every word was falsified in the interests of the bourgeoisie. In these schools the younger generation of workers and peasants were not so much educated as drilled in the interests of that bourgeoisie. They were trained in such a way as to be useful servants of the bourgeoisie, able to create profits for it without disturbing its peace and leisure. That is why, while rejecting the old type of schools, we have made it our task to take from it only what we require for genuine communist education.

This brings me to the reproaches and accusations which we constantly hear leveled at the old schools and which often lead to wholly wrong conclusions. It is said that the old school was a school of purely book knowledge, of ceaseless drilling and grinding. That is true, but we must distinguish between what was bad in the old schools and what is useful to us, and we must be able to select from it what is necessary for communism.

The old schools provided purely book knowledge; they compelled their pupils to assimilate a mass of useless superfluous and barren knowledge, which cluttered up the brain and turned the younger generation into bureaucrats regimented according to a single pattern. But it would mean falling into a grave error for you to try to draw the conclusion that some can become a Communist without assimilating the wealth of knowledge amassed by mankind. It would be mistaken to think it sufficient to learn communist slogans and the conclusions of communist science, without acquiring that sum of knowledge of which communism itself is a result. Marxism is an example which shows how communism arose out of the sum of human knowledge.

You have read and heard that communist theory — the science of communism created in the main by Marx, this doctrine of Marxism — has ceased to be the work of a single socialist of the nineteenth century, even though he was a genius, and that it has become the doctrine of millions and tens of millions of proletarians all over the world, who are applying it in their struggle against capitalism. If you were to ask why the teachings of Marx have been able to win the hearts and minds of millions and tens of millions of the most revolutionary class, you would receive only one answer: it was because

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Learn Communism

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Marx based his work on the firm foundation of the human knowledge acquired under capitalism. After making a study of the laws governing the development of human society, Marx realised the inevitability of capitalism developing towards communism. What is most important is that he proved this on the sole basis of a most precise, detailed and profound study of this capitalist society, by fully assimilating all that earlier science had produced. He critically reshaped everything that had been created by human society, without ignoring a single detail. He reconsidered, subjected to criticism, and verified on the working-class movement everything that human thinking had created and therefrom formulated conclusions which people hemmed in by bourgeois limitations or bound by bourgeois prejudices could not draw.

We must bear this in mind when, for example, we talk about proletarian culture. We shall be unable to solve this problem unless we clearly realise that only a precise knowledge and transformation of the culture created by the entire development of mankind will enable us to create a proletarian culture. The latter is not clutched out of thin air; it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the logical development of the store of knowledge mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist, land-owner and bureaucratic society. All these roads have been leading, and will continue to lead up to proletarian culture, in the same way as political economy, as reshaped by Marx, has shown us what human society must arrive at, shown us the passage to the class struggle, to the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

When we so often hear representatives of the youth, as well as certain advocates of a new system of education, attacking the old schools, claiming that they used the system of cramming, we say to them that we must take what was good in the old schools. We must not borrow the system of encumbering young people's minds with an immense amount of knowledge, nine-tenths of which was useless and one-tenth distorted. This, however, does not mean that we can restrict ourselves to communist conclusions and learn only communist slogans. You will not create communism that way. You can become a Communist only when you enrich your mind with a knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind.

We have no need of cramming, but we do need to develop and perfect the mind of every student with a knowledge of fundamental facts. Communism will become an empty word, a mere signboard, and a Communist a mere boaster, if all the knowledge he has acquired is not digested in his mind. You should not merely assimilate this knowledge, but assimilate it critically, so as not to cram your mind with useless lumber, but enrich it with all those facts that are indispensable to the well-educated man of today. If a Communist took it into his head to boast about his communism because of the

cut-and-dried conclusions he had acquired, without putting in a great deal of serious and hard work and without understanding facts he should examine critically, he would be a deplorable Communist indeed. Such superficiality would be decidedly fatal. If I know that I know little, I shall strive to learn more; but if a man says that he is a Communist and that he need not know anything thoroughly, he will never become anything like a Communist.

The old schools produced servants needed by the capitalists; the old schools turned men of science into men who had to write and say whatever pleased the capitalists. We must therefore abolish them. But does the fact that we must abolish them, destroy them, mean that we should not take from them everything mankind has accumulated that is essential to man? Does it mean that we do not have to distinguish between what was necessary to capitalism and what is necessary to communism?

We are replacing the old drill-sergeant methods practised in bourgeois society, against the will of the majority, with the class-conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, who combine hatred of the old society with a determination, ability and readiness to unite and organise their forces for this struggle so as to forge the wills of millions and hundreds of millions of people — disunited, and scattered over the territory of a huge country — into a single will, without which defeat is inevitable. Without this solidarity, without this conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our cause is hopeless. Without this, we shall be unable to vanquish the capitalists and landowners of the whole world. We shall not even consolidate the foundation, let alone build a new, communist society on that foundation. Likewise, while condemning the old schools, while harbouring an absolutely justified and necessary hatred for the old schools, and appreciating the readiness to destroy them, we must realise that we must replace the old system of instruction, the old cramming and the old drill, with an ability to acquire the sum total of human knowledge, and to acquire it in such a way that communism shall not be something to be learned by rote, but something that you yourselves have thought over, something that will embody conclusions inevitable from the standpoint of present-day education.

That is the way the main tasks should be presented when we speak of the aim: *learn communism*.

... It was the task of the older generation to overthrow the bourgeoisie. The main task then was to criticise the bourgeoisie, arouse hatred of the bourgeoisie among the masses, and foster class-consciousness and the ability to unite their forces. The new generation is confronted with a far more complex task. Your duty does not lie only in assembling your forces so as to uphold the workers' and peasants' government against an invasion instigated by the capitalists. Of course, you must do that; that is something you clearly realise, and is distinctly seen by the

Communist. However, that is not enough. You have to build up a communist society. In many respects half of the work has been done. The old order has been destroyed, just as it deserved, it has been turned into a heap of ruins, just as it deserved. The ground has been cleared, and on this ground the younger communist generation must build a communist society. You are faced with the task of construction, and you can accomplish that task only by assimilating all modern knowledge, only if you are able to transform communism from cut-and-dried and memorized formulas, counsels, recipes, prescriptions and programmes into that living reality which gives unity to your immediate work, and only if you are able to make communism a guide in all your practical work.

That is the task you should pursue in educating, training and rousing the entire younger generation. You must be foremost among the millions of builders of a communist society in whose ranks every young man and young woman should be. You will not build a communist society unless you enlist the mass of young workers and peasants in the work of building communism.

This naturally brings me to the question of how we should teach communism and what the specific features of our methods should be.

I first of all shall deal here with the question of communist ethics.

You must train yourselves to be Communists. It is the task of the Youth League to organise its practical activities in such a way that, by learning, organising, uniting and fighting, its members shall train both themselves and all those who look to it for leadership; it should train Communists. The entire purpose of training, educating and teaching the youth of today should be to imbue them with communist ethics.

But is there such a thing as communist ethics? Is there such a thing as communist morality? Of course, there is. It is often suggested that we have no ethics of our own; very often the bourgeoisie accuse us Communists of rejecting all morality. This is a method of confusing the issue, of throwing dust in the eyes of the workers and peasants.

In what sense do we reject ethics, reject morality?

In the sense given to it by the bourgeoisie, who based ethics on God's commandments. On this point we, of course, say that that we do not believe in God, and that we know perfectly well that the clergy, the landowners and the bourgeoisie invoked the name of God so as to further their own interests as exploiters. Or, instead of basing ethics on the commandments of morality, on the commandments of God, they based it on idealist or semi-idealist phrases, which always amounted to something very similar to God's commandments.

We reject any morality based on extra-human and extra-class concepts. We say that this is deception, dupery, stultification of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landowners and capitalists.

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People in Internal and External Debt Trap

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capitals. If it is so that the government has no other option to serve the foreign multinationals and Indian big capital, then the pattern of economic reform will remain to be "jobless growth and growth that leaves untouched larger sections of people." I am quoting what the honourable Minister said in his first budget speech. We have been opposing the so-called economic reforms under the behest of World Bank and IMF because of the valid ground and solid experience that nowhere in the world policies of this trend of economic reforms and liberalisation have been able to ensure job oriented growth, that is to say creation and expansion of employment opportunities as also uplifting the living standard of larger section of the people.

Since 1991 when the so-called reform policy was initiated to this day during the UF government (the 2nd year of your presenting budget) these policies, let alone creating new jobs for the millions of unemployed, could not protect even the existing jobs. My question straight to the government — have these policies been able to contain or cure industrial sickness, closure, or lockout. We will not have to go very far. Look at jute mills, engineering, mining sector and even electronic sector, the answer is obvious. Does the minister think it worthwhile that the trends of total anarchy in economy must be stopped by government measures so far as they can go?

The teeming millions are exploited by various means when their real earnings are not increasing. The rupee loses value, to be reduced to a few paise, 5 or 6, now.

If it is not a fashionable custom for the Finance minister to meet with the trade union leaderships can the Finance Minister assure right now that to stem the tide of inflation a further rise in prices of petroleum, sugar, rail, road and air transport will not be done by way of administrative fiat? Can you assure that there will be no disinvestment or privatisation of public sector units (PSU's) which have come to existence from people's money? Nay, we are hearing the talk of privatisation, ports, banks, telecommunication, etc. from responsible quarters. The process has started in some sectors. In regard to equity share participation the foreign capitals being in the multinationals are being offered 100% participation. The question that inevitably comes to the fore — what remains of the country's independent economic policy and self respect?

The Public Sector Disinvestment Commission recommendations will have direct impact on such important national organisations like HCL, Bharat Heavy Electricals, Indian Telephones, Indian Oil Corporation, etc. That is to say the government is handing over all the important and giant public sector bodies grown out of the money of the people and these are being opened to the foreign multinationals in collaboration with top Indian monopoly houses.

Now, we come to the very important aspect of fiscal policy regarding principles of taxation. Whereas any democratic government worth the salt must direct its direct taxation from the rich and corporate sector as also the rural rich, the government is pursuing just the opposite policy by increasing the proportion of indirect taxes imposed on the common people.

A cursory glance will show that 70.6% of tax revenue comes from indirect taxation while direct taxation provides 29.2% only. I am quoting from the budget figures for the year '95-'96. In terms of GDP direct tax revenue represents only 2.9% while indirect tax constitutes 7% of total GDP. No doubt this policy cannot but ignite the fire of inflation.

Say, for instance in the matter of correction, in the area of non plan expenditure what is the performance of the government? Non plan expenditure as you all know is eaten up by defence and interest payment. The payment of interest accounts for more than defence. Who gets the benefit? Surely the capitalist class. Incidentally it can be reminded that Dr. Manmohan Singh, the previous Finance Minister, said. "We are paying more to the World Bank, than what it gives us." Has not the country been dumped in a debt trap?

The total figure of non-plan expenditure for the year '96-'97 is Rs. 1 lakh 49 thousand and 775 crores. Out of this 60,000 cores have gone to meet interest payment. and Rs. 27,798 crores has gone for defense expenditure. One may reasonably ask what remains for welfare measures, for basic services to the people?

The government hangs before the people that they are to attend to the needs of the 50 lakh government employees. But our question is whether the government in any way means that the government will accept the recommendation of the ILC (Indian Labour Conference) for a National Wage Policy? The government's bonus act requires revision in respect of eligibility and proper calculation. Bonus cannot be productivity linked but should be treated as deferred wages as has been in consistent demand from our side.

Then what about rural labour meaning not only the agrarian labour but construction labour also? What about not only fixation but actual implementation of just wage? What about their job security, medical expenses and what is more, guaranteed job for the whole year?

Alternate funds in the budget should be allotted to attend to these necessities. Fund should be allotted further for the victims of industrial sickness, closure and lay offs, adequate relief is to be given to the working class against the sinister effect of inflation, that is price rise. If it doesn't show any interest in this basic pro people issues then where remains the difference of the present government from the previous one?

Now, coming to the fundamental issue we

reiterate our principled opposition to the very concept of New Economic Policy that was launched by the previous government and is continuing under the present government. Several noted economists have questioned how far the Indian economy benefits from the so-called economic reforms in a seminar organised by the Indian Statistical Institute, Economic Research Unit on "Economic reforms in India".

One economist was outspoken enough to say that the so-called economic reforms bring no gain to the Indian economy. We add — "those have given unfettered rights to loot and plunder Indian people by the foreign multinational and Indian monopoly bourgeoisie. People's misery has been accentuated further.

As we told before and reiterate at present that under Narasimhan Committee recommendations the CRR (Cash Reserve Ratio) in bank has been slashed down from 15% to 10%. The SLR (Statutory Liquidity Ratio) has similarly been cut down. The obvious intention was to provide more finance to the capitalists for investment. But the fact of the matter is there has been no worthwhile increase in investment of capital. We see, rather, the commercial banks to offload the extra money, have invested Rs 36,000 crores in government credit bonds. The interest also in the bank remains the same, nor has it decreased. There may be variation in the short term rates, but the long term interest rate remains the same.

The big companies are borrowing from private markets including the foreign ones at a cheaper rate, they claim. So the recommendations accepted with enthusiasm by the government have been no other use than propping up the anarchic state of affairs in the economic arena of the government. What benefit is accrued to the common man? The government's acts and policies have all been in the interest of big capital in our country. The interest rate payment within the country has risen tremendously, more than 1/3 of revenue incomes. The government has pushed the people to both internal and external debt trap.

We can cite a single instance to show what disastrous implication has accrued from the government cutting the import duties. The copper miners of our country have been hit directly because of the entry of foreign copper resulting in crisis and now the HCL has planned to close the country's copper mines. This means thousands of copper miners will lose their jobs. We are simply astonished that the government is talking about import of coals when there is no dearth of coal in our country.

Comrade Chanda firmly affirmed that no sweet words or promises will do. The need is solution to minimum of the burning problems of the overwhelming majority of the populace. The UTUC-LS cannot be induced to supporting the pro-rich policies. It has been since its birth and will be by the side of the toiling people.

AIMSS on Women's Reservation in Parliament

Given below is the text of the speech of Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, General Secretary, AIMSS, on this issue at a seminar held in Calcutta on 10th January last

During the framing of the Constitution after independence, reservation in a few respects was provided for the categories of the scheduled caste and the scheduled tribe people for a stipulated period of 10 years. It was held that the provision would be withdrawn after this period within which the overall condition of these people would be uplifted. In reality, however, we witness that barring the limited few among them with the privilege of education, the broader masses continue to languish in the dark as before. Withdrawal let alone, the provision of reservation is no longer limited to the categories of the scheduled castes and tribes only, but is being extended to include one more section of the people after another. Other backward castes, for instance, have been added. But the lot of the masses of all these categories has improved not a whit in all these five decades, whereas opportunities have been shrinking in every sphere resulting in fratricidal strifes, hostilities and even blood bath between the backward communities and the upper caste sections on this issue of reservation.

Again, since women are considered backward, so the question has arisen of reservation for women. With the country on the threshold of its half centenary of independence, there is now the proposal of 33 per cent reservation of parliamentary seats for women.

Already representation has been reserved for women in the panchayats and the municipalities. But women can hardly raise or are hardly given the opportunity to raise their problems in these forums. In the present exploitative social order, women are subject to the oppression of the social system, on the one hand, and to the oppression of the patriarchal society, on the other. In this society women are condemned to second class citizenship. But today women have proved beyond doubt their mettle in every field, including science, technology and epistemology, given the real opportunity. Yet they are denied their real place of honour in this male dominated patriarchal society. So atrocity on women, rape and gang rape, and burning of brides are of everyday occurrence with continually increasing numbers. Even, women are being raped by the police, the supposed custodian of law and order, in the police lockups. Dowry is claiming its toll of hundreds of women everyday.

This society has turned them into, and looks upon them, as a cheap commodity, whence the preference and utilisation of women especially in the world of modeling, beauty pageantry, display of female nudes in advertisements, sex tourism and the likes. The barrage of relentless propagation of obscenity in Doordarshan and other media exploiting women's physique has made this social position impossible to bear on the part of any woman member with a sense of honour. Inevitably, the entire social life is getting vitiated. Necessity brooks no delay to build up powerful social and cultural movements against this menace. Awareness and self-respect among women can grow only in the wake of such movements.

Women should come forward to advance the cause of their movement and to that end should take part in all forums, including Parliament, to make their representation as complementary to the broader and main goal of the movement. Women's voice must be reflected in all these forums on the questions of women's rights, a voice that is bold in self-respect nurtured on the consciousness grown from democratic mass movements. Our organisation, the AIMSS, firmly holds that women are to take part in Parliament with the twin objective of reflecting the voice of extra-parliamentary mass movement, on the one hand, and, on the other, of playing a bold role inside Parliament to restore, establish and extend the democratic rights, morals and values by resisting the attempts of the servitors of the vested interest. While constantly trying to strengthen this movement, the AIMSS is convinced of the fact that implementation of women's Reservation Bill cannot touch, let alone solve, the basic problems in women's life. With indignities and humiliation heaped on them and vulgar commodification of their physique by the domestic and foreign monopoly concerns to reap fabulous profits, the orchestrated stance of the ruling parties for getting the Women's Reservation Bill passed through cannot but raise a question about the genuineness and sincerity, calling at the same time into question this whether or not it is a grand deception to divert attention from the basic issues of women's life.

We should like all to ponder over a question. All the women's organisations want that the fundamental rights be established, yet an attempt is afoot even within this to create disunity. There are bids to create division between women among Dalits, Muslims, Christians and women of other section.

In this situation, there is no other way than to build up movements for awakening of women with demands for education and employment to each and every woman constitutional rights to equal pay for equal work, and to resist exploitation, oppression, deprivation and humiliation. Let us join strength to build a united broad based movement on all these demands.

Sit-in demonstration at Vaishali

In protest against rampant corruption, unbridled rise of the price of fertilisers, misappropriation of 'Jawahar Rojgar Jojna Fund', increasing number of cases of abduction etc., the Vaishali District Committee of the SUCI staged a day-long 'dharna' in front of the BDO office at Lalgunj on 10th December last. Comrades Suresh Roy, Ramprit Roy, Chandrasekhar, Mukesh Kumar, Rajendra Sharma and Ramjivan were among others who addressed the gathering. A delegation of seven SUCI organisers met the BDO and submitted a memorandum.

SUCI Organised Relief in Flood Affected Tamil Nadu

The north-east monsoon wrought havoc in many districts of Tamil Nadu. Lakhs of people lost their homes while crops in thousands of acres of land were completely destroyed by resultant floods.

The damage would have been much less had the state government deepened irrigation tanks, erected embankments and streamlined storm water drainage systems in cities. The callous attitude of the DMK government was proved further by the way it tried to deceive the people in the name of flood relief measures. An air was created as if they were most successfully tackling the flood situation. The bourgeois press and the electronic media were full of reports, photographs and videographs of the Chief Minister, the Mayor of Chennai city and other DMK leaders distributing relief materials to the affected people.

Continuous and torrential rain lashing the state weeks together during the months of November-December did not allow the day labourer to earn his daily bread. People rendered homeless and destitute by the floods were evacuated from relief centres without restoration of their homes and adequate help. The poor peasant and the agricultural labourers were the worst hit. Borrowing from cooperative societies and usurers at exorbitant interest rates, they raised crops. They lost everything overnight. The DMK government, instead of

waiving the loans merely made short term loan into medium term loans and medium term loans into long term loans.

The big bourgeois parties in the opposition along with the pseudo-communists vied with one another in catching the lime light at the cost of people's sufferings. But they did not come forward to organise the people and build up movement to force the government to provide adequate relief to the flood victims.

In this background the SUCI, with its small strength in Tamil Nadu organised relief programmes in the flood affected Chennai and South Arcot districts. Middle and lower-middle class people along with workers liberally contributed for the relief programme. Contributions came in the forms of funds, clothes, medicines and service.

On 5th January, 1997, two medical camps were organised in Chennai. One of them was in Pulianthope and another in Korukkupet both being densely populated with poor and downtrodden people. For these camps, doctors of Chennai city, Villupuram, Thiruthangal, Madurai and elsewhere contributed large quantities of valuable medicines. The doctors and medical personnel who participated in the camps to treat patients gave a praiseworthy service. Volunteers came from amongst students, youth and women. The camps drew appreciation from the local people.

Struggle for Emancipation

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We say that our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the proletariat's class struggle. Our morality stems from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

The old society was based on the oppression of all the workers and peasants by the landowners and capitalists. We had to destroy all that, and overthrow them but to do that we had to create unity. That is something that God cannot create.

This unity could be provided only by the factories, only by a proletariat trained and roused from its long slumber. Only when that class was formed did a mass movement arise which has led to what we have now — the victory of the proletarian revolution in one of the weakest of countries, which for three years has been repelling the onslaught of the bourgeoisie of the whole world. We can see how the proletarian revolution is developing all over the world. On the basis of experience, we now say that only the proletariat could have created the solid force which the disunited and scattered peasantry are following and which has withstood all onslaughts by the exploiters. Only this class can help the working masses unite, rally their ranks and conclusively defend, conclusively consolidate and conclusively build up a communist society.

That is why we say that to us there is no such thing as a morality that stands outside human society; that is a fraud. To us morality is subordinated to the interests of the proletariat's class struggle.

What does that class struggle consist in? It consists in overthrowing the tsar, overthrowing the capitalists, and abolishing the capitalist class.

What are classes in general? Classes are that which permits one section of society to appropriate the labour of another section. If one section of society appropriates all the land, we have a landowner class and a peasant class. If one section of society owns the factories, shares and capital, while another section works in these factories, we have a capitalist class and a proletarian class.

It was not difficult to drive out the tsar — that required only a few days. It was not very difficult to drive out the landowners—that was done in a few months. Nor was it very difficult to drive out the capitalists. But it is incomparably more difficult to abolish classes; we still have the division into workers and peasants. If the peasant is installed on his plot of land and appropriates his surplus grain, that is, grain that he does not need for himself or for his cattle, while the rest of the people have to go without bread, then the peasant becomes an exploiter. The more grain he clings to, the more profitable he finds it; as for the rest, let them starve." The more they starve, the dearer I can sell this grain." All should work according to a single common plan, on common land, in common factories and in accordance with a common system. Is that easy to attain? You see that it is not as easy as driving out the tsar, the

landowners and the capitalists. What is required is that the proletariat re-educate a section of the peasantry; it must win over the working peasants in order to crush the resistance of those peasants who are rich and are profiting from the poverty and want of the rest. Hence the task of the proletarian struggle is not quite completed after we have overthrown the tsar and driven out the landowners and capitalists; to accomplish that is the task of the system we call the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The class struggle is continuing; it has merely changed its forms. It is the class struggle of the proletariat to prevent the return of the old exploiters, to unite in a single union the scattered masses of unenlightened peasants. The class struggle is continuing and it is our task to subordinate all interests to that struggle. Our communist morality is also subordinated to that task. We say: morality is what serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the working people around the proletariat, which is building up a new, a communist society.

Communist morality is that which serves this struggle and unites the working people against all exploitation, against all petty private property; for petty property puts into the hands of one person that which has been created by the labour of the whole of society. In our country the land is common property.

But suppose I take a piece of this common property and grow on it twice as much grain as I need, and profiteer on the surplus? Suppose I argue that the more starving people there are, the more they will pay? Would I then be behaving like a Communist? No, I would be behaving like an exploiter, like a proprietor. That must be combated. If that is allowed to go on, things will revert to the rule of the capitalists, to the rule of the bourgeoisie, as has more than once happened in previous revolutions. To prevent the restoration of the rule of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie, we must not allow profiteering; we must not allow individuals to enrich themselves at the expense of the rest; the working people must unite with the proletariat and form a communist society. This is the principal feature of the fundamental task of the League and the organisation of the communist youth.

The old society was based on the principle: rob or be robbed; work for others or make others work for you; be a slave-owner or a slave. Naturally, people brought up in such a society assimilate with their mother's milk, one might say, the psychology, the habit, the concept which says: you are either a slave-owner or a slave, or else, a small owner, a petty employee, a petty official, or an intellectual — in short a man who is concerned only with himself, and does not care a rap for anybody else.

If I work this plot of land, I do not care a rap for anybody else; if others starve, all the better, I shall get the more for my grain. If I have a job as a doctor, engineer, teacher, or clerk, I do not care a rap for anybody else. If I toady to and please the powers that be, I may be able to keep my job, and even get on in life

and become a bourgeois. A Communist cannot harbour such a psychology and such sentiments. When the workers and peasants proved that they were able, by their own efforts, to defend themselves and create a new society — that was the beginning of the new, communist education, education in the struggle against the exploiters, education in alliance with the proletariat against the self-seekers and petty proprietors, against the psychology and habits which say: I seek my own profit and don't care a rap for anything else.

That is the reply to the question of how the young and rising generation should learn communism.

It can learn communism only by linking up every step in its studies, training and education with the continuous struggle the proletarians and the working people are waging against the old society of exploiters. When people tell us about morality, we say: to a Communist all morality lies in this united discipline and conscious mass struggle against the exploiters. We do not believe in an eternal morality, and we expose the falseness of all the fables about morality. Morality serves the purpose of helping human society rise to a higher level and rid itself of the exploitation of labour.

To achieve this we need that generation of young people who began to reach political maturity in the midst of a disciplined and desperate struggle against the bourgeoisie. In this struggle that generation is training genuine Communists; it must subordinate to this struggle, and link up with it, each step in its studies, education and training. The education of the communist youth must consist, not in giving them suave talks and moral precepts. This is not what education consists in. When people have seen the way in which their fathers and mothers lived under the yoke of the landowners and capitalists; when they have themselves experienced the sufferings of those who began the struggle against the exploiters; when they have seen the sacrifices made to keep what has been won, and seen what deadly enemies the landowners and capitalists are — they are taught by these conditions to become Communists. Communist morality is based on the struggle for the consolidation and completion of communism. That is also the basis of communist training, education, and teaching. That is the reply to the question of how communism should be learnt.

We could not believe in teaching, training and education if they were restricted only to the schoolroom and divorced from the ferment of life. As long as the workers and peasants are oppressed by the landowners and capitalists, and as long as the schools are controlled by the landowners and capitalists, the young generation will remain blind and ignorant. Our schools must provide the youth with the fundamentals of knowledge, the ability to evolve communist views independently; they must make educated people of the youth. While they are attending school, they must learn to become participants in the struggle for emancipation from the exploiters. The Young Communist League will justify its name as the League of

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Learn to be united

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the young communist generation only when every step in its teaching, training and education is linked up with participation in the common struggle of all working people against the exploiters. You are well aware that, as long as Russia remains the only workers' republic and the old bourgeois system exists in the rest of the world, we shall be weaker than they are, and be constantly threatened with a new attack; and that only if we learn to be solidly united shall we win in the further struggle and - having gained strength - become really invincible. Thus, to be a Communist means that you must organise and unite the entire young generation and set an example of training and discipline in this struggle. That you will be able to start building the edifice of communist society and bring it to completion.

To make this clearer to you, I shall quote an example. We call ourselves Communists. What is a Communist? Communist is a Latin word. *Communis* is the Latin for "common". Communist society is a society in which all things — the land, the factories — are owned in common and the people work in common. That is communism.

Is it possible to work in common if each one works separately on his own plot of land? Work in common cannot be brought about all at once. That is impossible. It does not drop from the skies. It comes through toil and suffering; it is created in the course of struggle. The old books are of no use here; no one will believe them. One's own experience of life is needed. When Kolchak and Denikin were advancing from Siberia and the South, the peasants were on the side. They did not like Bolshevism because the Bolsheviks took their grain at a fixed price. But when the peasants in Siberia and the Ukraine experienced the rule of Kolchak and Denikin, they realised that they had only one alternative: either to go to the capitalists, who would at once hand them over into slavery under the landowners; or to follow the workers, who, it is true, did not promise a land flowing with milk and honey, and demanded iron discipline and firmness in an arduous struggle, but would lead them out of enslavement by the capitalists and landowners. When even the ignorant peasants saw and realised this from their own experience, they became conscious adherents of communism, who had gone through a severe school. It is such experience that must form the basis of all the activities of the Young Communist League.

I have replied to the questions of what we must learn, what we must take from the old schools and from the old science. I shall now try to answer the question of how this must be learnt. The answer is: only by inseparably linking each step in the activities of the schools, each step in training, education and teaching, with the struggle of all the working people against the exploiters....

It is also a task of the League, not only to acquire knowledge itself, but to help those

young people who are unable to extricate themselves by their own efforts from the toils of illiteracy. Being a member of the Youth League means devoting one's labour and efforts to the common cause. That is what a communist education means. Only in the course of such work do young men and women become real Communists. Only if they achieve practical results in this work will they become Communists.

The Young Communist League must be a shock force, helping in every job and displaying initiative and enterprise. The League should be an organisation enabling any worker to see that it consists of people whose teachings he perhaps does not understand, and whose teachings he may not immediately believe, but from whose practical work and activity he can see that they are really people who are showing him the right road.

If the Young Communist League fails to organise its work in this way in all fields, it will mean that it is reverting to the old bourgeois path. We must combine our education with the struggle of the working people against the exploiters, so as to help the former accomplish the tasks set by the teachings of communism.

We want to transform Russia from a poverty-stricken and wretched country into one that is wealthy. The Young Communist League must combine its education, learning and training with the labour of the workers and peasants, so as not to confine itself to schools or to reading communist books and pamphlets. Only by working side by side with the workers and peasants can one become a genuine Communist. It has to be generally realised that all members of the Youth League are literate people and at the same time are keen at their jobs. When everyone sees that we have ousted the old drill-ground methods from the old schools and have replaced them with conscious discipline, that all young men and women take part in subbotniks, and utilise every suburban farm to help the population — people will cease to regard labour in the old way.

It is the task of the Young Communist League to organise assistance everywhere, in village or city block, in such matters as — and I shall take a small example — public hygiene or the distribution of food. How was this done in the old, capitalist society? Everybody worked only for himself and nobody cared a straw for the aged and the sick, or whether housework was the concern only of the women, who, in

consequence, were in a condition of oppression and servitude. Whose business is it to combat this? It is the business of the Youth League, which must say: we shall change all this; we shall organise detachments of young people who will help to assure public hygiene or distribute food, who will conduct systematic house-to-house inspections, and work in an organised way for the benefit of the whole of society, distributing their forces properly and demonstrating that labour must be organised.

The generation of people who are now at the age of fifty cannot expect to see a communist society. This generation will be gone before then. But the generation of those who are now fifteen will see a communist society, and will itself build this society. This generation should know that the entire purpose of their lives is to build a communist society. In the old society, each family worked separately and labour was not organised by anybody except the landowners and capitalists, who oppressed the masses of the people. We must organise all labour, no matter how toilsome or messy it may be, in such a way that every worker and peasant will be able to say: I am part of the great army of free labour, and shall be able to build opium life without the landowners and capitalists, able to help establish a communist system. The Young Communist League should teach all young people to engage in conscious and disciplined labour from an early age. In this way we can be confident that the problems now confronting us will be solved. We must assume that no less than ten years will be required for the electrification of the country, so that our impoverished land may profit from the latest achievements of technology. And so, the generation of those who are now fifteen years old, and will be living in a communist society in ten or twenty years' time, should tackle all its educational tasks in such a way that every day, in every village and city, the young people shall engage in the practical solution of some problem of labour in common, even though the smallest or the simplest. The success of communist construction will be assured when this is done in every village, as communist emulation develops, and the youth prove that they can unite their labour. Only by regarding your every step from the standpoint of the success of that construction, and only by asking ourselves whether we have done all we can to be united and politically-conscious working people will the Young Communist League succeed in uniting its half a million members into a single army of labour and win universal respect. (*Stormy applause.*)

“Without work and without struggle, book knowledge of communism obtained from communist pamphlets and works is absolutely worthless, for it would continue the old separation of theory and practice, the old rift which was the most pernicious feature of the old, bourgeois society....” — Lenin

Music Teachers' Rally at Karnataka

The All India Democratic Youth Organisation and Akhila Karnataka Ganayogi Sangeeta Parishat jointly organised Music Teachers' Rally from Chicka Lalb'gh to K.R. Circle. A protest meeting was held at K.R. Circle.

Speaking on the occasion Comrade A. Ramanjanappa, Secretary of AIDYO State Committee, took strong exception to the negligence of the government institutions and called upon the teachers to intensify their stir till the demands were met.

Pandit Sheshadri Gavai, the former president of Karnataka Sangeeta Academy observed that due to lack of appointment in Government Institutions the economic status of music teachers had become unbearable. He requested the government to give due consideration for teachers' appointment. Speaking on the occasion Mr Chennaveera Shastri, President of Akhila Karnataka Ganayogi Parishat, stressed the need for government grants to run music institutions.

Dr. B.R. Manjunath, President of AIDYO State Committee, stated that the entire education system had been neglected in the country. This is clear by the low allocation in annual budget of both Central and State governments. Therefore, he called upon the teachers to understand that the problem of music teachers was part and parcel of the entire education system itself. He further stressed that powerful democratic mass movement was the only solution for all the problems besetting education.

Later a delegation led by Pandit Sheshadri Gavai met the concerned government officials and submitted a memorandum.

The Education Secretary, Government of Karnataka, met the delegation and promised that all the existing posts (250 Nos.) would be filled up immediately, and in all future recruitment in Education Department music teachers' demands would be considered.

MSS Protests Nude Dance at Sonapur Fair

At the Sonapur Fair (Harihar Chhatra Mela) some theater companies, in connivance with the police and the administration, presented nude dances by women. The young girls who used to dance on the occasion were either forced out, or were put under the spell of intoxication so that the owners of the theater companies could make the best of it and reap profits. In order to stop it, the Muzaffarpur District Unit of the All India Mahila Sanskritik Sangathan issued a statement on 10th December last in which they held the police and the Janata Dal Government responsible for directly or indirectly encouraging this shameful act and urged them to stop the performance immediately, otherwise they would call upon the women to come out to

the street and resist it.

After the statement was issued the police and the administration took measures to stop it.

AIDSO Stops Nude Dance at Muzaffarpur

The Muzaffarpur District Unit of the AIDSO has successfully resisted the presentation of a nude dance performance by women at Susta Mela. The theater company which had presented

nude dances at Sonapur Fair but had to withdraw after protests from the MSS announced this performance at Susta Mela also. Having heard the news a delegation of AIDSO organisers led by Com. Lalbabu and Com. Subhaskumar met the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police and submitted a memorandum on 23 December, demanding immediate intervention by the authorities to stop it. This compelled the police and the administration to take measures to stop it.

Red Salute Comrade Amir Ali Halder

Comrade Amir Ali Halder, a fore-ranking and leading organiser of the SUCI, member, West Bengal State Committee and Secretariat of the South 24 Parganas District Committee of the party, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the AIKKMS was killed by hoodlums backed by the ruling CPI(M) on 11th January, '97 in broad daylight at about quarter to 12 noon by bomb charge. His body was also mercilessly torn by chopper by the goondas. Comrade Halder succumbed to death on the spot when he was proceeding to his house in the village Baishata of Joynagar PS, South 24 Parganas.



Comrade Amir Ali Halder joined the party during the glorious and turbulent *tebhaga* movement of the share croppers in the early fifties — a movement in which Comrade Halder took an active part. His deep and intimate relationship

which he developed with the great leader of the proletariat Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, besides the impact of his thought, left an indelible mark in the moulding of his exemplary revolutionary character. Comrade Halder not only made a tremendous contribution to organising the agricultural labourers and poor peasants of the Sundarbans in achieving their just and legitimate demands and building and strengthening the party and mass organisations in the far flung areas, he participated actively in all united left democratic movements then going on in West Bengal. He was imprisoned on several occasions in connection with anti-Congress democratic mass movements. Among the downtrodden people he was respected very much and well known for his courage and conviction. As a secondary teacher he took active part in educational movements and was respectfully called as "mastermasai". He left his job for devoting whole time for party work.

Red Flag was flown at half mast at the State and all the District party offices in West Bengal for three days as a mark of respect. All Bengal martyr's day has been observed on 13th January through erection of Martyr's Column and garlanding the same and through total bandh in South 24 Parganas in protest against the ghastly murder of Comrade Halder.

On 12th January his mortal body was taken to the State party office where wreaths were placed on behalf of the Central Committee and our beloved General Secretary Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, besides by the State Secretary Comrade Provash Ghosh and other state and district leaders of the party and mass organisations.

In his demise the party lost a valiant and unwavering fighter and the people a beloved leader.

Red Salute Comrade Amir Ali Halder !