

# Proletarian Era

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## Sly move on Ayodhya

# BJP's Nefarious Tactics to Fan up Communalism

The Ayodhya controversy has shot into prominence after a most dismal 100-day performance by the BJP-led government at the centre. In the recent outcry created by the discovery of the pre-fabrication workshop for a Ram temple in Ayodhya, accusations and counter accusations have been flying high as inflammatory statements by the Sangh Parivar have raised the tempo : a whole web of shifting arguments by the BJP and Sangh Parivar is unfolding before our eyes, — a web of doublespeak, self-contradictions and even threats, which strike an ominous note and point to a sinister design behind it all.

Soon after the BJP coalition had been installed at the centre — rocked by scandals of corruption and instability among other problems — we find the Ayodhya issue, though struck off the National Agenda, come into prominence all the same. It has been spearheaded by the VHP Central Secy B L Sharma's public insistence in a TV interview that not only is Ayodhya very much on its and the RSS's Agenda, but so is Kashi and Mathura, and that work for the building of the Ram mandir was proceeding. (*The Statesman*, 3.5.98) That such menacing assertions should not be dismissed lightly has been demonstrated once more by subsequent verification that work has indeed been

going on at some workshops in Ayodhya and Rajasthan where pillars are being carved and other arrangements made to put up a Ram temple at the disputed site at an 'opportune' time. Ashok Singhal, VHP President, claims that this pre-fabrication has been going on for the last 8 years. This shows that the wanton destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992 and the terrible bloodbath that convulsed the country afterwards, far from being spontaneous, because 'the people had lost patience' — or so the Sangh Parivar would have us believe — was a pre-planned act. Hence the solemn promise given by the BJP leaders to the

nation and the court to protect the Babri Masjid, as they amassed Kar Sevaks in Ayodhya in thousands, was sheer deception! Afterwards Advani even went so far as to hail the Kar Sevaks, calling this act of treachery a 'matter of faith' and justifying it on the ground that the Babri Masjid was not a mosque but a 'mere structure', while Vajpayee excused it as a mere 'accident'.

So, recently when the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, came under pressure by the opposition, he gave a solemn pledge to honour the Supreme Court judgment. He said : "As far as my

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## "Success" of 21 years' LF rule in West Bengal

The Left Front government in West Bengal has completed 21 years and is into its 22nd. Among all instances of continuous government this is unique, being the only one of its kind not only in this country, but also among all parliamentary democracies throughout the world." This is the first sentence of an article by Mr. Jyoti Basu, senior CPI (M) politbureau member and Chief Minister of the LF government. It was published in a 8-page special supplement carried by a Calcutta daily, *The Asian Age* on 20.6.1998, to commemorate the

'event'. The article also speaks of "success in a few fields (that) has been so glorious" and cites statistical accounts to bolster these claims, the validity of these we will examine in due course. But let us take up the first thing first : "continuous government."

In a climate of unprecedented political uncertainty in which most regional and even national bourgeois parties of India are running out of breath to complete even a single term, 21 years "continuous government" by the CPI (M) led LF government would appear, quite understandably, as an extraordinary feat and the CPI (M) would appear as, again understandably, a party of a different breed. It merits careful consideration therefore. But by which yardstick ? The choice is crucial. It is manifestly clear from Mr. Basu's own

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## Movement Against Anti-People Railway Budget

In Orissa, rail roko was held at different places. In Bhubaneswar trains were stopped from 7 A.M. to 11 A.M. led by Comrade Raghunath Das. Police arrested about 30 comrades. In Cuttack about 40 comrades under the leadership of Comrade Binapani Das observed rail roko. They were arrested. Demonstrations were organised at Rourkela and Rajganjpur. There, memoranda were submitted to station superintendents.

In West Bengal rail roko was held in almost all the big railway stations, from North Bengal to South Bengal. At Bhogpur station, Midnapore

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Demonstration in Chennai against Railway Budget on 22.6.98

# Onslaughts Most Vicious On Bank Employees

It is the irony of history that a city having a glorious heritage of militant mass movements of the bank employees in particular, is to witness a scene, where just the reverse happens, where the attack of the bankers - government combine, most foul in nature, is brought down on the bank employees, spelling doom not only to them but to the young generation of unemployed educated youths losing normal avenue of service. Calcutta has been chosen to be that city.

Seven branches of two foreign capital run banks, the National Grindlays Bank and Standard Chartered Bank, are to be wound up in Calcutta, where the CPI(M)led Left Front government boastfully reigns for twentyone years. Besides four more branches of Grindlays Bank, one each in Bombay and Cochin and two in Delhi are to be wound up. Not only that, 80% of employees of these two foreign banks are to be retrenched under the euphemistic coinage 'amicable golden handshake' of the Narasimham Committee II. This will mean shrinkage of already limited job opportunities. The protest raised so far from the bank employees in Calcutta is due mainly to the untiring efforts of the Bank Employees Unity Forum — a rallying centre of all struggling bank employees.

## GENESIS

We are to go ten years back or so since when definite attempts have been made to computerise, mechanise bank services as per the recommendations of the former RBI Governor Rangarajan led Committee. Mr Rangarajan after retirement has been appointed Governor of Andhra Pradesh. As per recommendation of that Committee high dose of computerisation started first in foreign banks and then in order to have 'a parity in the technological standard' in the words of the so venerable(!) bank employees' leaders, between the foreign and national banks a computer agreement was signed between the leaders of bank employees' established organisations and the Indian Bankers' Association (IBA) a paltry bribe of an additional increment in pay scale. This was the time of bank employees 6th Bi-partite charter settlement.

The usual technique adopted then has a marked similarity with the present one the 7th bi-partite settlement, talks of which are going on, i.e. first allow the foreign banks to destroy job potentiality by Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) and wind up branches to create the ground for large-scale displacement through automation, mechanisation and stopping at the same time recruitment of staff against normal vacancies created out of yearly retirement, then advocate for technological — and this time productive efficiency — parity for the national banks with their foreign counterparts. Out of this brand of 'patriotic' trade unionism came the computer agreement that made both types of banks technologically at par. You are to bear in mind that this 'patriotism' never appeared to oppose job destructive efforts on the part of the foreign banks so far as the big trade union leaders are concerned. What was the consideration? Was it the bank employees' interest or just the reverse, the interest of foreign capital, given guarantee by national Government as also by the faithful trade union leadership? After the computerisation part

was completed came the recommendations of the Narasimham Committee, 'Discussion Paper', circulated among the central and bank trade unions by Dr Manmohan Singh's ministerial department, when Congress government was at the Centre, giving the outline of bank restructuring. Sea changes occurred since then.

Now before going into these recommendations of the Narasimham Committee and the outline sketched in the Discussion Paper in the background of globalisation programme and reversion to market economy which mean unbridled exploitation of capital with minting of maximum profit being the sole concern, social — political commitment, a modicum of which so long wanted of welfare concept of state, losing all relevance, let us come to the present position.

## The Second Narasimham Committee recommendations — a blue print of capitalist-imperialist onslaught

In its first part of recommendations, the committee tried to institutionalise the systematic swindling of bank capital by the capitalists by giving so-called prescriptions like transparency of accounting at par with global banking which actually meant writing off debts i.e. not payment of interests as also the principal money amounting to a fabulous sum of Rs. 37,000 crore as non performance advance (NPA), confessed in Dr Manmohan Singh's 'Discussion Paper'. Rs. 20,000 crore from central government exchequer, all people's money, were sent by way of recapitalisation only to relieve the ruling gentry of any legal obligation whatsoever. Prescriptions were also for categorising banks into viable and nonviable on the basis of capital adequacy, 'productive efficiency' and depth of sickness due to severity and continuity in losses sustained. The loss was not unintended but intended as apart from the nexus working between top management, capitalists and political leaders. The bank lendings were, in the words of the 'Discussion Paper', due to extraneous factors and in the words of the Narasimham Committee II (Report of the Committee on Banking Sector Reform, April, 1998), "directed credit not to speak of cruder forms of behest lending" led to form a staggering figure of NPA which now stands at a rough estimate - Rs. 43,000 crore, even after recapitalisation to the tune of Rs. 20,000 crore. How aptly this justifies what Marx said long ago. "Banks are the cashiers of the capitalist class". (Capital Vol) In its earlier set of prescription, the Narasimham Committee wanted the banks to be cost efficient in regard to employees and work process meaning denial of benefits of technological advances to the workers while further maximisation of super profit euphemistically called productive efficiency. And Marx said "In capitalism production means production of profit"! (Ibid) Progressive lowering of Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) and Credit Reserve Ratio (CRR), withdrawal of credit progressively from priority sector, i.e. rural sector, all this is to enhance the volume of credit. "The financing requirements of Indian Corporates, whether from the DFIs (Development Finance institutions) or from the banks are now being seen as an integrated operation". Further "Indian banks are participating in growing measure in the

foreign exchange markets both in India and abroad". (Narasimham Report II) The recommendations of the Narasimham Committee are, therefore, the wishes of the ruling capitalist class at its imperialist stage of aspiration fulfilment.

The said committee in its April '98 recommendations, therefore, is quite outspoken when it visualises the Indian banking structure recast "with a few large Indian banks with an international character, some large national banks and the rest basically of regional/local banks. There is also a need to impart greater competition as between public sector banks and private sector banks".

This is the strategy of Indian monopoly capitalism which has already acquired imperialist character, to emerge as significant players at global market now that it has gained nuclear teeth. Nuclear might, strength of finance capital and lack of popular resistance are the essential ingredients to beef up imperialist course to be followed more avidly. All these efforts are calculated to enhance the credit pool for the Indian Corporates to use as working capital (confessed in Narasimham Committee II's report), but what is more, for use in outside markets. Efficiency, competitiveness and viability are the three catchwords of the Narasimham Committee's second set of recommendations serving Indian Capitals' imperialist ambition. This objective can be achieved by higher technology and less manning to streamline the procedures and operational methods, the twin pillars being information technology and instant electronic funds transfer system.

The process entails winding up of so-called inefficient branches, merger of strong units as strengthening means and providing greater opportunities of competition. by the same token, the banks not fulfilling profit making criterion may be closed or at best tested as 'narrow bank' for short term. In sum, the rulers demand wiping out of more than half a million job opportunities when the Prime Minister promises creation of 10 million jobs a year! And all the 'heroes' of the past in bank movement assure the ruling class so much that the Narasimham Committee has very graciously put on record: "there is no reason to expect that employees will not agree to cooperate or welcome efforts in enhancing the productivity and efficiency of banks". And with this end in view, the Committee recommends "appropriate Voluntary Retirement Scheme with incentives" and the most telling one: "the forthcoming wage (the 7th Bi-partite — Editor P. Era) provide an opportunity to review the existing pattern of industrywise negotiation and move over to bankwise negotiations". (Chapter IV, para 426) It means putting the clock of bank employees movement five or six decades back. When most of the banks have become sick, denuded of capital, mostly stuck in the mire of non-performing advance or advances settled not to be realised, there will be hardly any need for significant rise in bank employees' emoluments and employees on their term, haunted by the shadow of VRS, as reported by the employees of the National Grindlays' Bank, are lulled to inaction by their leaders. By the by, this particular foreign bank,

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# SUCI Attends International Conference in Athens on Media Control

An international conference on the ownership and the control of the media was held at Hotel Astir Palace in Athens from 24th to 28th May last. The specific theme of the conference was - A Twentieth Century Dialogue : A Media Run World. The purpose of the conference was to generate a new level of understanding of the modern media in the era of globalisation while encouraging the creation of an international alternative media. Delegates from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the United States participated in the conference. The total number of delegates was 50. The delegates were international journalists, scholars and anti-imperialist activists. Comrade Manik Mukherjee, Central Staff and Deputy, International Affairs, SUCI, participated in the conference. Mr Ramsay Clerk, the former Attorney General of the USA was present as a delegate.

The imperialist domination of the media was focused in the conference. It was pointed out how the media conglomerates manufacture an international crisis and eliminate any public debate and dissent in the interest of the imperialists.

Five panels were formed for conducting the discussion :

The panels were :

1. Media monopoly and the role of the media in manufacturing public opinion.
2. Censorship and the control of the media.
3. Media and war.
4. Public access to information.
5. Building international alternative media network.

Comrade Manik Mukherjee was in panel no. 4. Comrades Sara Flounders of the Workers World Party, USA and Michael Opperskalski of TOP SECRET magazine, Germany were also in the same panel.

Two hours were allotted for questions and answers after each panel discussion, Comrade Manik Mukherjee placed a paper on Public Access to Information. During question period a question was raised on Indian nuclear blast from the floor of the House. Comrade Manik Mukherjee pointed out that the blast was the outcome of political and economic compulsion of the ruling capitalist class. It was not an overnight development. Preparations were going on for a long time. Previous Narasimha Rao government and then the UF government supported by the CPI(M) and the CPI were fully acquainted with the development and all of them endorsed the preparation for nuclear blasts. The BJP government did it at a particular time to suit its political exigency. But as already mentioned, this is a compulsion of the ruling class. India is already a regional super power and it has global aspirations. Also, Indian capitalist economy is in deep crisis and to ward off the crisis further militarisation of the economy for providing artificial stimulation is very much necessary. By conducting the blast the ruling class is fanning up national frenzy and national jingoism which help trigger an arms race in the subcontinent on one hand and encourage blindness and fanaticism among a good section of the people on the other paving further the path towards fascism. The BJP government at the Centre has also taken recourse to fanning up religious revivalism, Hindu religious

revivalism in particular, centring round the blast.

This analysis of Comrade Mukherjee was highly appreciated by the audience.

From this conference a decision was taken to form an alternative media through internet to expose the imperialist misinformation campaign and motivated propaganda to mould public opinion on one hand, and to correctly project anti-imperialist movements and progressive movements in different countries on the other.

On 22nd May Comrade Manik Mukherjee participated in the 1st National Conference of A/Synechia, a revolutionary Marxist organisation of Greece. Comrade Mukherjee delivered a brief speech in this conference. Comrade Spiros Panagioton, a party leader, translated the speech of Comrade Mukherjee into Greek. The text of the speech is given below :

Dear Comrades,

I am honoured to have been asked to address on the occasion of the 1st National Conference of your organization. On my own behalf, on behalf of my party, the Socialist Unity Centre of India and on behalf of the working people of India, I convey you revolutionary greetings and wish you success in your revolutionary struggles in the coming days.

Since its birth in 1948 our Party, the SUCI, founded by the great leader of the proletariat, one of the eminent Marxist thinkers of the world, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh has been steadfastly organizing the working people of India under the banner of Marxism-Leninism towards anti-capitalist socialist revolution. Following the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh our party fought relentlessly against all shades of deviations of Marxism-Leninism and consistently upheld the banner of Proletarian Internationalism and is continuing to do the same.

Comrades, we are now passing through a critical phase in international working class movement. Since the dismantling of the socialist camp headed by the erstwhile Soviet Union, imperialist powers led by USA are going on a rampage. The aggressive designs and actions of the imperialists are endangering democracy and

freedom, economic development and security of the nations, creating obstacles in the way of their natural development, destroying the fabric of human culture and sense of values. Reckless acts of the imperialists throughout the world are on the increase ; newer and newer methods of economic exploitation are being devised ; conflicts between nations are being fomented resulting in outbreak of local wars. Political interference is growing day by day, even endangering sovereignty of many nations. The attempt of the Pentagon and the CIA to dominate other countries goes undeterred.

Comrades, the need of the hour is to build up a mighty anti-imperialist people's movement all over the world to thwart imperialist intrigue, interference, intervention and war machinations, which in its wake should give birth to a militant peace movement conducive to the struggles for emancipation of the toiling people of the world.

The ray of hope is that popular opinion against imperialist aggression and war machination is growing stronger everyday and everywhere. A broad based All India Anti-Imperialist Forum has been formed in my country for conducting and coordinating the anti-imperialist struggles in all corners of India. Anti-imperialist organisations are also being formed in several countries in Europe. The situation calls for unity of anti-imperialist forces all over the globe and to coordinate the movements on an international scale.

Comrades, history teaches us that the anti-capitalist struggle cannot advance and succeed without giving defeat to revisionism. While conducting struggles against capitalism and imperialism we shall have to wage a relentless fight against revisionism in all its forms. Only then can we establish revolutionary leadership on the working class movement and lead it to its ultimate victory.

Long live the solidarity of the fighting people and the revolutionary forces all over the world !

Down with Capitalism-Imperialism !

Down with Revisionism !

Long Live Socialism !

## School of Politics in Andhra Pradesh

A state level school of politics was organised by the Andhra Pradesh State Organising Committee of the party for four days from 24th May to 27th May 1998 at Samatha gram near Anantapur town. Comrades participated from different districts including Anantapur, Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Srikakulam, Cuddapal.

After hoisting red flag and garlanding martyrs' column by Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, member of the Central Committee of our party, the class started at 6-00 P.M. At the outset Comrade K. Sridhar, State Organising Secretary explained the necessity of the classes. He said, on the occasion of the 50 anniversary of the party, Central Committee, led by our General Secretary Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, called upon the party leaders, cadres, members to intensify ideological struggle. So the state party during the historic 50th anniversary of the party selected some writings of Marx, Engles, Lenin, Stalin,

Mao Tsetung and Shibdas Ghosh for conducting collective studies by all party units in the state. Also, the booklet Great Leader of the Proletariat Comrade Shibdas Ghosh was published in Telegu to take the noble life struggle of the great leader to the Andhra Pradesh people.

Comrade Krishna Chakraborty elaborately and penetratingly dealt with different question concerning the invincibility of Marxism-Leninism, dialectical and historical materialism and national and international situation. The power of Marxism lies in understanding the fundamentals, and applying them to the concrete situation with concrete analysis. Comrade Chakraborty discussed the emergence of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh as the great leader of the world proletariat. He also discussed party organisation, communist culture, code of conduct, and so on. The class created much enthusiasm among the comrades of the state .

# BJPs Gameplan Aims at Foisting Fascist Regime

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government is concerned, the Constitution and the rule of law are supreme"... He maintained that Ayodhya was excluded from the National Agenda "because of our paramount commitment to national security, communal harmony and socio-economic development." (*ibid*, 8.6.98) Beautiful words, no doubt. But how far can they be trusted? Just as the solemn pledge of Vajpayee brings back to memory another pledge that turned into the greatest fraud perpetrated on the nation, so too have the words of Madan Lal Khurana, the parliamentary affairs minister, struck a familiar chord when he said that "so far as the BJP-led coalition was concerned this was a 'non-issue' because it did not find mention in the National Agenda," stressing that the government was "accountable for the implementation of the National Agenda and not for the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's activities or utterances." (*Ibid*, 9.6.98) What better way to disown responsibility?

It is significant that Vajpayee has refused to condemn the preposterous threat by Ashok Singhal to 'punish' the judiciary if they delayed judgment in the Ayodhya case. "The Constitution does not have any provision for punishing the judiciary, but religious leaders have," he told reporters (*ibid*, 17.6.98), as if we lived in a society where Brahmin priests had the supreme right and power to dictate the laws of the county in Taliban style!

Though Vajpayee knows fully well that such an eventuality and its repercussions would lead to an even greater upheaval and bloodbath than in 1992, he not only refused to condemn this inflammatory statement but even subtly changed his own stand. In a subsequent heated debate on the floor of Parliament, he and his government for that matter, argued that they would not allow any illegal activity within 2 km from the disputed site in Ayodhya, while the immature BJP Ram Bhakts simultaneously insisted that a Ram temple would indeed come up there. Later when pressed again on the issue, Vajpayee reportedly said that the government would not allow anything 'wrong' to happen in Ayodhya. This is a most hollow assurance as experience has shown. For the indefensible can be easily defended by saying that there is nothing wrong with it — a habit that clings to the BJP. Whereas other BJP leaders, including Vice President K L Sharma, UP Chief Minister, Kalyan Singh and the RSS chief, among others, are raising the question of enacting a legislation in Parliament, basing themselves on the infamous precedent created by Rajiv Gandhi in the Shah Bano case. It may be recalled that he overturned a Supreme Court ruling that Muslim women are entitled to alimony. He did so in deference to some Muslim fundamentalist forces, purely for electoral gains, at the cost of democratic rights of Muslim women, and backstabbing their struggle to come out from the clutches of medieval oppression. This treacherous move gave a tremendous boost to the fundamentalist forces which had been lying low. To drown the criticism from the progressive forces and silence the outcry of the conservative and fundamentalist Hindu forces over minority appeasement, as well as to pander to Hindu sentiments with a view to garner votes, Rajiv Gandhi got the doors of the Babri Masjid unlocked — thereby reviving an old controversy created by conservative and fundamentalist Hindu forces decades ago and dragging the issue into the arena

of parliamentary election politics. But his cynical calculations didn't add up according to expectations. The arch communal Sangh Parivar, with BJP at the front, jumped into the fray with boundless zeal, unleashing a wave of communal hatred and fanaticism, on the crest of which the BJP was catapulted from a political non-entity in Parliament to a large force. We remember Advani's vote catching Ram Rath traversing the country at that time. Wherever it went, it left a trail of blood and destruction behind. Such a barbaric policy of causing well organised riots to force others to vote in one's favour out of fear for life, makes a complete mockery of civilization and democracy. Yet that is precisely what the BJP does. The *Organiser*, the mouthpiece of the RSS, whose political platform is the BJP, makes no secret of it when, in its 19 April, 1998 edition it wrote: "...Unless the Muslim masses receive a severe jolt that raises the question of their very existence they will not come out of their torpor. The Ayodhya incident served as the long needed jolt that has dispelled the stupor of the Muslim masses waking them to their actual predicament." And where does according to the *Organiser* lie their true interest? "...the Muslim masses have by now realized to a great extent where their real interest lie...A significant indication of this is by the large numbers, not in hundreds but in thousands of Muslim joining the BJP."

It is not for nothing that the press has pointed an accusing finger at the BJP concerning the recent Hyderabad riots, which brought into the open not only the meticulous planning behind it but the Union Minister's reluctance even to respond on this issue, not to speak of condemning it. The BJP boasts that in the states where it rules there are no riots. Advani when commenting on the omission of Ayodhya from the National Agenda of governance, said in April that a "large area of governance has little to do with ideology — any ideology — except the overriding principle of national interest." Hence that the BJP's governance has 'large areas' devoid of any values whatsoever — for values do not exist in a vacuum but are based on a definite ideology — has been admitted by no less a leader than Advani. What he means by 'national interest' other than most vile opportunist interest of his party he knows best, but surely not the people's interest.

So when Kalyan Singh, in April, emphasizing his governments's commitment to building the Ram mandir, stressed as reported in *The Statesman* (14.8.98) that it was connected with the 'dignity, self-respect, unity and integrity of India', how much value have his words?

So many years have passed since the demolition of the Babri Masjid and its aftermath, and still its wounds are yet to heal. Its memory remains as a shameful blot in the history of this land. And yet for the BJP leaders the erection of a Ram temple at the site of the demolished mosque, based on fraud, deceit and barbaric violence is necessary for the dignity, self-respect and unity of the country! What perverted understanding of culture and morality! And the BJP wants to appear as the saviour of the nation's cultural heritage! Today when raging economic, moral and cultural crisis is leaving people in disgust and despair, a large section of people cling to religion with all sincerity, seeking the solace and sanctity they so sorely miss in life. The BJP is playing upon these religious sentiments of the people with honeyed

words. But that there is not a shred of sincerity in BJP's religious postures, is glaringly evident from its practice of communal politics. Its hate campaign against the minority community, its machievellian moves and controversies, calculated to unleash terror, fear and communal frenzy are leading the nation towards the abyss of a deep communal divide in cynical pursuit of most vile and opportunistic parliamentary politics.

The Sangh Parivar blame and explain the present crisis as being due to minority appeasement. It is not difficult to understand from where they got that 'theory'. It is all there in the writings of M S Golwalkar, one of the main ideologues of the RSS. His admiration and praise for Hitler's treatment of the Jews is glaring illustrated when he says: "To keep up the purity of the nation and its culture Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the semitic races — the Jews. National pride at its highest has been manifested here... a good lesson for us in Hindustan to learn and profit by." (*We Or Our Nationhood Defined* p.27) Ironically, the same RSS is today upholding Zionist Israel's aggression against the Arab people as "firm attitude" necessary in our country: "In India also only by adopting a firm position, can the Hindu-Muslim problem be solved. Ayodhya has proved it." (*Organiser*, 19.4.98)

Now, as mentioned before, some of the BJP leaders are arguing for the precedent set by Rajiv Gandhi, while the VHP in turn is threatening with "the people are loosing patience" precedent set by them. And of course Khurana disclaims responsibility for the activities or utterances of the VHP, as mentioned earlier, saying the BJP was solely accountable for the National Agenda, and since Ayodhya is absent from it, it is a 'non-issue'. But has that argument any ground to stand on? Can the BJP deny that it is driven, just as the VHP, by the outlook and hidden agenda of the RSS? This is evident from some policies it has taken. Even though these are not on the National Agenda it has made, for example, Sanskrit compulsory even for science students and the introduction of yoga at schools. Besides, the Union HRD Minister M M Joshi, whose shrill calls to the Kar Sevaks in 1992, inciting them to violence, still ring in our ears, is working on a new education and culture policy. Besides, he has, according to *India Today*, (6.7.98) already removed leftists from the Indian Council of Historical Research and has set his priorities to weeding out leftists from positions of authority and influence and to establishing a youth army. Undoubtedly to indoctrinate it with BJP's brand of cultural nationalism. Or take the anti-minority bias reflected in this budget with the introduction of discriminatory taxes on the slaughtering of big animals, among others. Whereas none of these are on the National Agenda for governance, they are very much part of the RSS Agenda: its Agenda of establishing a Hindu rashtra: a Hindu rashtra where, according to Golwalkar "...the non-Hindu people in Hindustan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and revere Hindu religion, must entertain no idea but the glorification of the Hindu nation, ... in one word, they must cease to be foreigners or may stay in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation claiming nothing, deserving no

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# Assam State Committee on Present Situation in the State

The Assam State Committee of the SUCI at the end of its three-day session on 16th June '98 has issued the following statement to the press :

This meeting of the State Committee of the SUCI while expressing its grave concern over the prolonged reign of killings and terrorism in the state, notes that in the recent time communal and ethnic violence have become rampant in the state. It is not that the State Government has only failed to tackle these incidents with a strong hand, but a sense of suspicion is present that the central and state governments' encouragements are working behind such incidents. The government has not initiated any endeavour to solve the ULFA and Bodo problems through dialogue and discourse, involving the people in the process as well as taking them into confidence. On the contrary, being guided by hawkish military approach, flouting the law and constitution, the government is engaged in killing the students and youths in the name of encounters. The State Committee once again demands of the central government to shun this extremely ruinous approach and to come forward to solve the ULFA and Bodo problems, showing due regard to the legitimate aspirations of the people of Assam.

Referring to the incidents of Subashpalli of Tangla and the killing of the principal of Tangla College, the State Committee expressed grave concern over the rampant increase of the politics of individual killing. This meeting firmly opines that the politics of individual killing can solve no problems, rather it is a suicidal one as they are incurring wrath of the common people. The State Committee appeals to the concerned forces to shun this suicidal path.

The State Committee further notes that in the name of political movement some forces are blowing up bridges, damaging roads, disrupting communication system in this extremely backward N.E. region, thereby triggering acute price hike of the essential commodities, enhancing the sufferings of the common people. It is the firm belief of the party that these types of disruptive

activities can in no way bring any political benefit. Under the circumstances, the State Committee calls upon the concerned forces to ponder over the issue with a cool and calm temperament.

The State Committee also notes with grave concern the fact that after placing the railway and general budget, there is an alarming rise in prices of all essential commodities. It is certain that the prices will rise even higher when the budget will come into force. The party appeals to the people to come forward to resist this price hike.

The State Committee observes that just at the

beginning of the monsoon, the flood situation in the state has become grave. This could happen as both the central and state governments failed to take minimum measures to control flood, even the embankments which were breached during last year's flood were not repaired. While deploring this extreme callous attitude of the government, the party urged the people to develop mighty movements so that the government provides relief to the flood affected people and take measures on war footing to protect the lives and properties from the devastating flood.

The State Committee notes that the state government is engaged in internal squabbles, instead of solving the burning problems of people's life. The State Committee strongly condemns the conduct of the Government.

## Assam State Committee on creation of 'Bidhan Parishad' and other issues

The SUCI, Assam State Committee, observes with concern that the Central Government has decided to introduce a bill in Parliament for the creation of a 'Bidhan Parishad' for the State of Assam. It strongly feels that if such a 'Bidhan Parishad' be constituted, then apart from the unnecessary heavy financial burden that will be imposed on the people of the State who are groaning under extreme poverty, it will curtail to a great extent the right of the present Legislative Assembly elected through direct participation of the people and will act as a den of all reactionary forces and vested interests. As such the State Committee feels that the move to create such 'Bidhan Parishad' is highly undemocratic and decides to resist this anti-people move by developing strong movement of the people against it.

The State Committee further observes that the present central government having its full agreement with the chauvinist and parochial forces of the state, is actively considering to repeal the IMDT Act which was enacted during the Assam movement with full consent of all concerned. The Committee while expressing its mind about the need to accelerate the process of detection of all genuine foreign nationals, strongly feels that, in doing so, the genuine apprehension of all Indian

citizens belonging to minority community of dubbing them as foreign nationals should be removed. Keeping this in mind and the principle of jurisprudence the party opines that the process of detection of foreign nationals should be done strictly through judicial process where the burden of proof should lie on the complainant and on the basis of 1971 as cut off year. The party also opines as on all earlier occasions that if any person can point out any particular clause which stands in the way of detecting foreign nationals, it has no hesitation in actively considering it, and raise the demand for amending the Act if necessary and even formulating a new Act, of course keeping the above mentioned principles in tact. But the BJP government after coming to power, showing its scant regard for the necessity of coming to a decision through discussion involving all sections of people, is moving ahead to repeal the Act with a clear motive to anyhow dub lacs of Indian citizens belonging to minority community as foreign nationals to the satisfaction of the chauvinist and parochial forces of the State. This is not only highly unjust but fraught with grave danger in regards to maintaining the unity of all sections of the people. The party strongly feels that such move should be resisted by all means by developing strong movement of all section of people.

## 'LABOUR IN WEST BENGAL'

The CPI(M) led 'Left Front' government of West Bengal celebrates its 21-year uninterrupted reign in the state with much fanfare. The leaders and the ministers claim that it is their pro-poor, pro-labour attitude in governance that has earned them the protracted support of the people. We quote here some statistical data from 'Labour in West Bengal, 1997', the annual publication of the State Labour Department, to show how the government fares in this particular area.

In the introduction of the publication the labour ministry proclaims that it "would help ....to understand the progress made ....in maintaining industrial peace and harmony in the state". The government is not completely untruthful. An uneasy calm is actually prevailing in the state's labour front. By a consistent and systematic attempt the leaders of the CPI(M), the protagonists of 'responsible or harmonious labour movement' have

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Surat, Baroda and Ahmedabad units of SUCI and AIDSO conducted relief distribution on 28.6.98 for the cyclone hit people of Gujarat. The team comprised Comrades Dwarika Nath Rath, In-Charge Gujarat State, Tarun Dasgupta, Prabir Nayak, Vijaybhai, Tapan Dasgupta, Ganesh Joshi, Jayesh Patel, Meenakshi Joshi and Ami Bhatt. A scene in Navolakhi Port.

# An Exposure of 21 years LF rule in West Bengal

(Contd from page 1)

statement that he makes “continuous government” the pivotal point. He stops short of telling us about the character of this government. But it is precisely this which matters to the people. For, have we not lived through 30 years’ “continuous government” (1947-77) by the Congress at the Centre? Has not West Bengal, in (1947-67) under the same Congress? However, both these regimes were borne by the people under pain of food crisis, price rise, unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, suppression of democratic rights et al “continuous government” — a reassuring word! — does not therefore assure anything by itself, for the people. What is still worse is that it seeks to hide the real questions of life from them.

The main question before the people is thus not the ‘continuity’ but the ‘character’ of the LF government of West Bengal. Mr. Basu, although paying scant regard to his principal question, has all the same answered it, however, and deserves thanks for that. He has made it abundantly clear, even if unsuspectingly, by his great sense of satisfaction being “the only one of its kind not only in this country, but also among all parliamentary democracies throughout the world.” The parliamentary are only a particular type of “bourgeois” government, and it is known to even a bachelor of history, not to speak of a Marxist. And what ‘Marxist’ is he who prides himself in running the best and longest of “all parliamentary democracies throughout the world”? Even when and of Marxists, under special circumstances, have to run a government within a capitalist set up they do so in a way which only strengthens the democratic mass movements and consequently hastens the fall of the capitalist rule itself and along with it, the fall of the bourgeois parliamentary democratic system also. They do not gloat over being champions of “parliamentary democracies”! Mr. Basu and his party, the CPI (M), are widely publicised as also believed, by many, as Marxists. However, through his own admission, albeit unwittingly, Mr. Basu has given himself and his party away, despite all that he and his party might say for public consumption. He shows more clearly than any one else could, that the CPI (M) is no other than a petty bourgeois parliamentary party. There is no shutting of one’s eyes to the reality, then, that the CPI (M) led 21 year long LF rule in West Bengal was in fact a bourgeois rule by a bourgeois government.

However, a lingering feeling may still persist that nevertheless, is not an innings of 21 successive years a unique achievement in its own right? To this one can only reply that it is so in only the ‘bourgeois’ sense — having nothing to do with the solution of problems and satisfaction of needs of the people. Having shown the true character of the CPI (M) and the LF government led by it, then, what else remains for us to dwell upon? Nothing essential, really. In fact, so long as the exploitative capitalist system of our country is not overthrown by revolution, the people can achieve no essential gain except certain reforms and welfare measures. One way of gaining them is creating pressure on the bourgeois governments by organising conscious democratic mass movements, as conducive to the ultimate revolutionary upsurge. The other way is to receive them as ‘sops’, ‘crumbs’ and ‘benefactions’ handed down by the governments themselves with a view to keeping masses away from the path of democratic movement on the burning issues of their life. Every bourgeois government therefore tries to

delude the people with such reforms — Garibi Hatao, 20-Point Programme, Jawahar Rojgar Yojna, Noon Meal Scheme etc. Following their footsteps, the CPI (M) led LF government also puts all emphasis on how many reforms it has introduced — land reform, Operation Barga, Panchayat system, rural cooperative et al — without for once telling us what they did to organise democratic mass movements in the state in all these years. Is it an omission? No. Their attitude was clear from day one in government, in 1977, when Mr. Jyoti Basu said in the CPI (M) victory meeting at Calcutta: “We know that class struggle is a reality in our presentday society. But we will take care that it does not intensify.” (*The Statesman*, 27.6.77) Isn’t it clear what their reforms aim at? What still remains to show is that the CPI (M) does not mind even plain falsehood to trump up its claims of reform.

Take for instance the LF’s “greatest achievement”, as they claim, of land reforms. Mr. Jyoti Basu says in the same article, “From the beginning, we stressed that unless land reforms were carried out ... the panchayat system would lose out... The figures for 1997-98 indicate that 13.48 lakh acres of arable land belongs to the government, of which 10.24 lakh acres have been distributed.”

Now, the figures for 1997-98 are with the government alone, so one can not be sure either way. But, for help, we can refer to the published findings of 1993 of the Mukherjee-Banerjee Committee, appointed in 1992 by the LF government itself to review the results of the land reforms. From the report of the Committee it was revealed that out of the 12 lakh acres and 8 lakh acres of land which the government claimed to have ‘vested’ and ‘distributed’, respectively, 10 lakh acres had already been vested with the government and 6 lakh and 30 thousand acres been distributed before the LF government came to power in 1977! That leaves only 2 lakh acres that the LF government has actually ‘vested’ and 1 lakh 70 thousand acres which it has distributed. This was the ‘achievement’ — in 15 years! If Mr. Basu’s statement in the article is to be taken at its face value — “10.24 lakhs acres have been distributed” — then the LF government must have accomplished a miracle, distributing 8.54 lakh acres in 5 years, and silently!

But the two United Front governments of 1967 and 1969 distributed 3 lakh acres of land to the landless peasants within a mere 22 months of their tenure, taken together. The CPI (M) led LF government accomplished about only half of it by 1992 — in 15 years! This is “unique”, but the other way! So much for land distribution under LF rule.

The LF government’s second “achievement” of Operation Barga started in 1979. It aimed at conferring the legal records of possession of land upon the sharecroppers, estimated at 30 lakhs at that time. In 1982, the then state land & land revenue minister, Binoy Chowdhury admitted in the Assembly that by then only 12 lakh 26 thousand sharecroppers had been given records. By 1983, 73 thousand more were given it. The total number reached 13 lakh 29 thousand by 1985. There was no further government declaration on the scheme. What, then, happened to the rest 17 lakh sharecroppers in all these 21 years? So much about the “success” of operation Barga. It shows that the LF government lacked not only the sincerity to try it but also the honesty to admit it.

On the contrary, the CPI (M) leaders assert that

land reform has improved the condition of life of poor peasants! Mr. Basu echoes it in the same article, “The increase in the purchasing power of the people in the villages is evident even to the naked eye, ... This enables them to purchase industrial products ... which proves that a market has been created inside the state.” What a paradise is West Bengal under LF rule, indeed! It will suffice to expose the hollow edifice — “The increase in the purchasing power”. The rest will then follow.

The *Economic Times* of Delhi, 27.5.95, in a survey made on agricultural workers in West Bengal, noted, “Before the LF government assumed power in 1976-77, the average daily income in cash and kind together of an agricultural worker was Rs. 5.60. By 1993-94, it increased fivefold, to Rs. 28.36. ... But has it really raised the living standard of the agricultural workers? The reply is ‘No’. ... The real economic position of the agricultural workers can be understood only in terms of their real wage, i.e. by the amount of consumer goods they can purchase with their increased wage ... By this yardstick, in 1986-87 (as index year of 100), when their wage increase by monetary terms was 50%, their real wage increase was 20%. From Rs. 13.78 in 1986-87 to Rs. 15.55 in 1993-94, the increase in (average daily — Ed. P.Era) real wage has been Rs 1.77 in seven years i.e. about Rs. 0.25 annually.”

So much about the rosy picture painted by Mr. Jyoti Basu about “the increase in purchasing power” of the rural poor. The real state of things as also the real worth of the LF government’s reforms can be seen here: “Sixty per cent of the 2,24,051 sharecroppers, who received land deeds as per the land reform programme of the LF government and who owned nearly 80 thousand hectares of land, are having to sell it. Those who are purchasing them are in most cases big landowners or the rural new rich — investing in a big way in land these days.” (*The Statesman*, 25.2.95)

This sums up the LF government’s hallowed land reforms and gives a glimpse, at the same time, of which forces are gaining the upper hand over which others, in reality. Is it not itself answer to Mr. Basu’s proud claim: “we ... have shown how powers can be devolved to the lowest units of administration at the village level.” Mr. Basu alludes here to the Panchayat system, another LF government’s “achievement”. But devolution of which “power” at the village level when, as seen already, the lowest sections of rural populace under LF rule are losing their land and their real wage progressively? It is another hoax to fool the people. The intent is clear elsewhere in Mr. Basu’s article: “... if a country as large and as varied as India has to be administered properly ... then the people must have a link with policy implementation. People’s power is our strength.” Let us ignore the hyperbole on India’s variety etc. and let us remember that since 1977 itself, the CPI (M) was wary of ‘intensifying’ class struggles. The naked truth then emerges that making the rural poor subservient to the panchayats — which would function as remote ‘adjuncts’ as rural ‘outposts’ of the bureaucratic administration — is the real essence of the panchayat system, in the name of “people’s power”! It is not difficult to understand that such a system which is not built to develop peasants’ movement or ‘intensify’ their class struggles, but for ensuring government’s “policy implementation”, can only thrive on distributing partisan favours and

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## Onslaughts on Bank Employees

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i.e. National Grindlays bank, hit the headlines in connection with Rs. 25,000 crore security scam by sharing illicit gains with Harshad Mehta, the notorious man in share speculation, who reportedly gifted one crore rupees to the then Prime Minister. And in the case of the Standard Chartered bank, only the other day the Special Court, Delhi has ordered the CBI to probe again its complicity and smuggling out of illicit gains.

### Bank Employees' Unity Forum

Amidst this gloom, the ray of hope, however dim, came from the resolute efforts of the Bank Employees' Unity Forum, not a parallel body but a rallying front of all struggling bank employees. Observing sit-in demonstration on 14th of May before the IBA's Calcutta Chapter office and handing over memorandum against winding up of seven branches in the city and demonstrating, much to the discomfort of established union leaderships, were held on 23rd May before Grindlays bank (G.B.), Brabourne Road Branch Office, 30th May before G.B., Bhawanipur Branch Office, 6th June before G.B., Park Street Branch Office and 13th June before G.B., Tollyganje Branch office. The Forum also forced the recalcitrant leaders to keep up a show of protest. Everywhere the Bank Employees' Unity Forum was the most enthusiastic contingent. The traditional union leaders either deliberately played down or failed to draw the bank employees. Everywhere the clarion call was for unity and resolute fight against this sinister design of shrinkage of job potentiality of no less than half a million, premature retirements of existing employees, service conditions being reduced to that of bonded labour in civilised cloak, so on and so forth. Everywhere demand was raised — not token protest action of a day's strike or the like but a sustained united movement of bank employees drawing to its fold unemployed youths and working people in general in defence of service security and job potential.

The traditional leadership smelt politics in the demand but not in the subservience to imperial capital that they are doing. If it is politics to voice the demands of the employees and young generation of unemployed youths, well, let it be so. It is working peoples' politics vis-a-vis the politics of submission and surrender to imperial capital's demands and wishes. Let the great divide appear clearly and boldly before the bank employees and the working people in general. The Bank Employees Unity Forum has given the call to form this platform of struggle everywhere and at every level. It extends its call to unemployed educated youths, their guardians, i.e. the working people to come forward in defence of job potential already existing and for more jobs. Let the youths raise the slogan — "We want job, give us job." The message of struggle replacing the note of despondency and despair, constantly dinned in the ears of the bank employees over decades must reach far and wide. A programme is afoot for that. Let those who call themselves leaders of the bank employees prove by concrete deeds and not simply by words that they deserve what they claim.

## Backstabbing Left Movement — Biggest Success of LF Government in West Bengal

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privileges. The informed people know how deeply the LF government's panchayat system has spread opportunism, nepotism, corruption and greed in rural West Bengal over these two decades. The worst fall out of it has been the lulling of the struggling spirit of the rural poor and emasculating the peasant movement which finds itself confined within the labyrinth of panchayats. But while the rural poor had been losing, the rural rich have been thriving. In the post-1991 scenario of increasing consumerism this section along with certain industrialists have become eager to invest in land more extensively for fruit processing and other agro-industries. They want the upper ceiling on land removed. While continuing with their 'land reform' harangue, the LF government has made a u-turn and is now advocating the waiving of the upper ceiling on land!

The CPI (M) and the LF government has made similar volte-face in its industrial policy also. It has vociferated much against the New Economic and Industrial Policy of the Narasimha Rao government as also against the entry of foreign capital in India. But the selfsame government has accepted 'conditional' loans from IMF and World Bank — for the "development" of West Bengal! It has allowed private capital not only into the state-run Webel Electronics but into many others. Private owners defaulting on employees' PF payment and siphoning off the money elsewhere have gone scot free. Scores of jute mills — one of the three major sectors in the state — have been declared closed, leaving thousands of workers hapless, starving, committing suicides while the government didn't lift a finger. Mr. Jyoti basu has ably explained all these away, in the same article: "We must remember that we are living in a capitalist system. People have to face problems and crises." How very nice! People have to "face" — not fight! It is only right for a 'Marxist' leader like Mr. Jyoti Basu who said in 1977, "Strike is the final weapon of the workers, the lesseer it is used the better." (Dainik Basumati, 13.7.77)

The horrid picture of the working class under CPI (M) led LF rule was expressed in these terms, in a bourgeois daily, "If there were 500 starvation deaths of workers in the last 10 years (which is an incomplete figure — Ed. P. Era) and 75 suicides alongside, then it doubtlessly reveals a horrible picture of industrial life in the state." (Pratidin, 14.7.96)

But there is also a 'glorious' side to it, at least for Chief Minister and CPI (M) leader Mr. Jyoti

### Protest Dharna at Rohtak Against Anti-People Budget

On 12 June '98 SUCI, Rohtak District Committee, organised a protest dharna in front of Deputy Commissioner's Office, Rohtak, against anti-people budget of BJP government. A memorandum was submitted to Deputy Commissioner addressed to the President of India. The participants raised slogans. Comrade Satyawar and Comrade Anup Singh while addressing the protest called upon the people to organise a sustained movement which was the only course to safeguard people's interest. This dharna created a good response among the people.

Basu. The doyens of chambers of commerce and industry in West Bengal — and in India — have publicly praised Mr. Basu as an "able administrator" and a "mature politician"!

There are more "achievements" to the credit of the "continuous government" of CPI (M) led LF, but there is perhaps little need to relate them all. Only one aspect needs due mention. The indifference, nay, abetment and complicity — of the CPI (M) to allow capitalist exploitation and its deliberate discouragement, and suppression, of democratic mass movements of all sorts have created a dangerous void in the sphere of morality and culture as well as created an apathy to any political and social activity. It is inevitable after 20-odd years' systematic suppression of genuine democratic mass movements.

Of course there are many more "achievements" to the credit of the LF government — increasing police terror on democratic movements, widening the all pervading noose of police-mafia-cadre nexus, actively encouraging corruption down to the lowest rung of administration including the panchayats, giving birth to / creating a general atmosphere of insecurity and lawlessness, sharp increase in atrocities and indignities on women, steep decline in academic standard and atmosphere and steady deterioration in health, transport and all other civic services. The list is long. But the monstrosity of the consequences cannot be described by the list. It is known only to the suffering and somewhat to the informed. As most of these have been earlier discussed on our pages, we will not go into greater details here.

We are bound to mention one vital aspect, though. The utter indifference — nay, naked abetment and brazen servility — to ruthless capitalist exploitation by the LF government and its complete discouragement, and total suppression, of democratic mass movements of all sorts have rendered the toiling masses helpless victims of capitalist onslaught. Instead of rising in movement, the workers are perishing through starvation or by suicide. What is more, it has created an ominous void in the entire society in the sphere of sensibility, morals and culture. In particular, it has given rise to a general attitude of apathy to any social and particularly political activity. It is the inevitable result of 21 years' systematic suppression of genuine democratic mass movements. How better would one serve the ruling capitalist class? The industrialists knew it too well when they christened Mr. Jyoti Basu as an "able administrator". For their own interest, they have been propping up the LF government all the way over these 21 years. Of course, they do aid the other regional and national bourgeois parties also. But which one of them could fool the masses so as the CPI (M) does with its talk of 'Marxism' and 'revolution'? Can any one of them match the CPI (M) in spreading the all pervasive tentacles of its organisational-administrative 'machinery' down to the panchayats — and in this way 'ensure' electoral victory? This is how at the expense of democratic mass movement and leftism in West Bengal, and at the mercy of the capitalist class, the CPI (M) led LF government completes its 21 years of "continuous government."

If Mr. Jyoti Basu feels like taking pride in it, he and his party have every justification for it.

## Labour in West Bengal

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been crushing the very backbone of the state's labour movement. With the rotten class collaborationist approach, the party, in a bid to appease the management and the owners, tried to make the workers understand that strike is the last weapon in the hands of the workers and the less it is used the better.

Mr. Jyoti Basu, member of the party politburo and the Chief Minister of the State was found on more than one occasion to appeal to the industrial labourers to ponder over the future of production before launching a movement that could jeopardize production. Though he was considerate enough to appeal to the management not to forget about workers' cause! The consequence is disastrous — in the state of West Bengal, once considered to be the citadel of militant mass and workers' movement, the working class now is completely at the mercy of the management of the corporate houses who impose lock-outs, closures, lay-offs at will, trampling all labour laws through covert understanding with the labour ministry and the leaders of the TUs affiliated to the parties in power. So what we find is a gradual decrease in the number of strikes in contrast to a sharp rise in that of lock-outs — the latter having the lion's share in the compilation of the total number of mandays lost due to strikes and lock-outs in the 'LF's regime.

In the year 1997 total number of work stoppages due to the combined effect of strikes and lock-outs was 174 of which 24 cases occurred due to strikes and rest 150 due to lock-outs. To take a look at '94-'97 : the cases of strike is 22 per year as against 139 per year of lock-outs. This year's number of incidents of lock-outs of 150 is against 144 in '96, 136 in '95 and 127 in '94 i.e. the number of cases of lock-out is gradually rising. Of the total number of workers, i.e. 96,420 affected due to the work-stoppages the contribution of lock-outs is 91.87% against 7.93% of strikes. Similar picture is revealed while considering the number of mandays lost. Of the total number of mandays lost this year of 8.16 millions, 7.55 millions are due to lock-outs and the rest 0.61 millions due to strikes.

The employment scenario of the state would reveal a grim picture for the unemployed and job-seekers of the state. The number of unemployed according to the live register is rising day by day. In the year 1997 this figure rose to 5.75 million from 5.39 million in '95 and 5.48 million in '96. It is known to all that this figure never provides a true picture of the number of unemployed of the state as there are lakhs of jobless who care little to go to the employment exchange offices to either register their names or renew their cards. So the actual number is far higher than what has been recorded officially. Not only illiterates, or persons of below Madhyamik standard or of having Madhyamik - HS certificates, but also graduates, post-graduates or even engineering diploma holders, engineering graduates and medical graduates constitute this enormous army of unemployed youth. When the CPI(M) paints a rosy picture of industrialisation and thereby enhancement of job-potentiality in the state before every election, it is very astonishing to note that 7.05 lakhs of graduates/post graduates in general streams, 60,000 diploma engineers, 40,000 engineering graduates and 10,000 medical

## BJP's Gameplan

(Contd. from page 4)

privileges, far less any preferential treatment, not even citizen's right." (*We Or Our Nationhood Defined*, p.52) It is not for nothing that a VHP leader claimed that once the BJP gains full majority at the centre, it will declare India as a Hindu state.

Clearly to Golwalkar and the RSS everything of foreign origin is abhorrent, hence to them alone the Sanskrit language is suitable as link language, as expounded by Golwalkar in a *Bunch of Thoughts*, where he holds that Hindi should only be used until Sanskrit has reached that stage and castigates English because of its foreign origin.

It is not difficult to see that the BJP is pursuing a hidden agenda through the above policies — the Agenda of the RSS. Already it has given a vedic slant to education where it has been in state power and has had a chance. And more is yet to come. The BJP is smuggling religious and obscurantist thoughts into education with a view to bringing about regimentation of thinking on the basis of blind faith as opposed to a scientific bent of mind — a regimentation which thrives especially in an environment of communal fanaticism, in fear and terror, in the kind of communal politics promoted by the BJP, and creates the ground for fascism.

Still that leaves the question as to why they are resurrecting the Ram temple issue right now. The answer has been provided by the Ram Bhakts of the BJP in the Raja Sabha, just at a time when the survival of the BJP coalition seemed very uncertain. After they had shouted down everyone, one of them said that the furore over Ayodhya was welcome : it boosted the party's poll prospects. (*The Statesman*, 15.6.98) The BJP is not lagging

behind the former successive governments in trying to serve the ruling class — far from it — as is evident from its acceleration even of economic policy of liberalization and its budget despite the 'swadeshi' slogans, while continuously subjecting the people to ever greater misery and hardship. Its tall promises of providing 10 million new jobs every year, among others, have gone the same way of all big promises made by successive governments to catch voters: they are forgotten till the next election comes. Yet despite all this the BJP is unable to serve the ruling class well : so acute, deep and all-embracing has capitalist crisis and rot become, that it casts its shadow of crisis into their own ranks and is rocking the government with scandals, leaving the future uncertain. And despite their promises the BJP is having the temple issue revived, from its political exigency. It is not that the BJP, or the RSS, for that matter, is ignorant of the danger this poses, as can be seen in the *Organiser*, (19.4.98) where it is admitted that "the building of the Ram temple is fraught with danger..." while pointing to the "...unforeseen consequences of reconstruction of Ram Mandir... the sectarian riots, their international repercussions, their adverse effect on the national interests and also the problem of protecting such a disputed temple..."

Yet precisely this is the prospect, the danger that is looming large before the country, as long-standing plans are being executed and continuous work on the Ram temple is going on to put up the temple at a politically opportune time and foist another, even greater upheaval and bloodbath on the country. Will the right-thinking, democratic and peace-loving people let themselves be pushed to the abyss of a deep communal divide? Will they let the attack in the making — an attack not only on a section of the people of India but on secular and democratic values and rights of the people, on the cultural heritage of tolerance, amity and interaction between different communities and cultures — will they let this go unprotested and unresisted? The only way to protest and resist lies in the unity of the people, irrespective of creed, language, and community — a unity cemented in democratic movement against this onslaught and for the preservation and extension of democratic and secular norms, values and rights.

## Movements against anti-people rail budget

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police resorted to firing, besides lathicharge, injuring many. At blockades in every station people extended support to this movement.

In different districts of Tamil Nadu demonstrations were held against rail and general budgets. The Chennai Chengai District Organising Committee of the SUCI also held an hour long demonstration on 22nd June evening in front of V. P. Hall, near the Central Suburban Railway Station. At the conclusion of the demonstration, Comrade Narayanasamy, District Secretary, SUCI delivered a speech urging people to build up sustained movement against the budgetary and other anti-people policies of the BJP led Centre.

### At the Call of the SUCI Successful General Strike in West Bengal

The West Bengal State Committee of the SUCI called General Strike on 3rd July last against the anti-people rail and general budgets of the central BJP government and against Left Front government's anti-people policies and the unbridled price rise, due to pro-black marketeer policies. The general strike was a complete success. Comrade Provas Ghosh, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee, SUCI, conveyed revolutionary greetings to the people of all walks of life.

graduates are languishing without any job.

In this backdrop when every government should feel the responsibility of filling the notified vacancies as quickly as possible, it is heart breaking to see that the 'LF' government's response is lukewarm in this respect. Considering the total number of vacancies notified in public sector (excluding central Government offices & undertakings) and private sector and the total number of placements in the previous years following picture is revealed : In 1997 when 26,351 vacancies were notified, only 9,446 got placements. In '95 these two figures were 16,063 & 6670 and 14,663 & 8856.

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