

POLITICAL RESOLUTION OF NEW INDIA COALITION

In 1947 the people of India won independence from colonial domination in the hopes that self-government would bring rapid economic and social progress. Instead, their aspirations for a better life were met with further exploitation by a growing domestic ruling class and police state apparatus.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PLIGHT OF THE INDIAN MASSES

In theory, the political leaders and economic planners of India speak of alleviating the burdens of mass poverty through a system of better production and its distribution. Yet the performance of the socio-economic system shows that since 1947 the plight of the Indian masses has worsened.

Compared to 35% in 1951, today 70% of the population lives below the subsistence level, and the policies of the ruling Congress Party give no indication that the above trend will be reversed. The outmoded agrarian structure fiercely maintained in the interest of the landlords continues to place obstacles to the idea of greater production and its just distribution. The domination of industry and commerce by a handful of big capitalists, on the other hand, plays a similar exploitative role. Given the fact that the function of production and exchange in India is geared to satisfy the privileged, with secondary regard to social imperatives, it is virtually impossible to eliminate poverty.

Market Economy -- Contrary to the "socialist" claims of the Congress hierarchy, India's system of mixed economy helps to serve the interests of the owners of land and capital. Considering that prices in India are basically determined by the manipulation of the principles of supply and demand India's economy has to be regarded as anti-socialist. Even state enterprises, under the guise of "socialism", are so operated as to provide a free infrastructure on which large private-sector industries can build profits -- a happy compromise between the needs of the ruling bureaucrats and the big capitalists.

Decline in Purchasing Power -- For the last three decades the inflationary spiral has severely eroded the purchasing power of the vast majority of the people. While the government has recently said much about the apparent stability of prices, this price stability is at best temporary because of the coincidence of exceptionally good monsoon rains and resultant good harvest. Moreover, the freeze on wages and fringe benefits and the contraction of the money supply have more than cancelled out the benefits of price stability.

Rising Unemployment -- Against the background of a sluggish economy, the statistics show that number of the unemployed and the underemployed is on the increase; this not only denies a substantial portion of the population from earning livelihood, it also prevents many from contributing to the productive process. Presently, the numbers of the unemployed and underemployed stand at an estimated 25%.

Growing Intrusion of Imperialism -- Contrary to the governmental proclamations for a greater self-sufficiency and increased production, the country continues to rely more and more on foreign imports. Consequently, the trade deficit has shot up from Rs.4,020 million to Rs.10,960 million during 1974-75. The encouragement given to the multinational corporations to invest with majority holdings not only compounds the ability of imperialism to exploit India's resources but it also further endangers the sovereignty of the Indian people. Long-term political and trade concessions rendered to the two superpowers in exchange for economic and technical assistance of doubtful value have had the effect of reducing India to a subservient position.

Moreover, "assistance" particularly from the United States has always favoured the imposition of Western imperialist concepts, as incorporated in the "green revolution" and the new program of forced mass sterilization.

Soviet political influence through the Communist Party of India in coalition with the Congress Party seeks to sabotage the struggle of workers by endorsing the current wage freeze, overtime without pay, and ban on labor grievance procedures and strikes. While, unlike in some other Third World countries, imperialist powers do not constitute the primary source of exploitation of the Indian socio-economic fabric, the United States and the Soviet Union continue to be actively seeking inroads into the Indian economy, which ultimately result in massive long-term debts to the latter and hence dependency relationships. The working and exploited people of the Third World are thus united not only through their common history of opposition to colonialism and racism, but also through the present-day common struggle against neo-colonialism and imperialism.

SUSPENSION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES: A NEW STAGE IN THE ATTEMPT TO PERPETUATE THE POWER OF THE RULING CLASSES

Being unable to deliver the promises repeatedly given to the masses of India, the Indian Government and its masters, the capitalists and landlords, have tried to contain popular agitation for social justice and better living and working conditions. This could only be accomplished by a dramatic expansion of the paramilitary and police forces to nearly 1 million men today. The central budget for internal security has risen 5100% since independence. Some 25,000 political prisoners have been held since 1969 under the MISA, DIR, and PDA -- all but a few without trial and under false charges. During the national railway strike of May 1974, over 30,000 railway workers were arrested from their homes, of whom about 5,000 remain under detention today. The detention and imprisonment of an estimated additional 140,000 at various times, during the first year of the state of "emergency" is only the latest phase in a long term trend toward state repression. Many have been tortured and killed in jails and during arrests, political activists hanged, journalists jailed and educators and students beaten up. All these acts, which are in gross violation of the Human Rights Commission charter, have been incessantly encouraged by the state machinery and actively participated in by the different parliamentary parties.

Since independence, president's rule has been imposed innumerable times to quell opposition movements and in response to the breakdown of Congress state governments.

The recent suspension of fundamental rights of freedom of press, speech, assembly, movement, and court trial are only the latest manifestation of attempts by the ruling classes to preserve their power position in the face of the growing frustration of the vast majority of exploited people in India.

THE HOAX OF INDIA'S DEMOCRACY

For the last three decades, the Indian parliamentary system has failed to reflect the true aspirations of the overwhelming majority of its citizens. The decision-making process affecting the society continues to reflect the interests of the tiny minority inspite of the ballot box. The socio-economic system dominated by the capitalists, bureaucrats, landlords, and rural moneylenders has served to manipulate the expressions of the majority through police repression, propaganda, false promises, economic sanctions, etc. Failing to fulfill the rising expectations of the restless masses, the regime has often engaged in patchwork reforms. Such piecemeal measures have failed to bring about any fundamental change. While the government congratulates itself on the passage of so-called progressive legislation, intentional loopholes and general lack of will and desire prevent their implementation. Land reform is a prime example of an issue which has been championed in words by the Congress government since independence, but which has actually resulted in the transfer of less than 0.3% of rural landholdings. Income redistribution, creation of employment opportunities and relief of backward castes all remain examples of the same gene.

How can there be democracy when the majority of the Indian people do not enjoy even a measure of socio-economic equality? How can there be national sovereignty when India as a nation remains heavily dependent on external resources to meet its basic need as food? Socio-economic inequalities make a farce of democratic socialism and a hierarchical class structure gives ample opportunity to imperial powers to make further inroads and undermine popular self-determination. Nothing less than drastic structural change will alleviate the misery of the Indian people.

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