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PR^OUT



A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis

Need For Radical Electoral Reforms

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PROUT

Progressive Utilization Theory

A
Vibrant
Magazine
which
Informs
&
Inspires

Cry of the Suffering Humanity

What is PROUT :

PROUT is an acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory. Conceptualized in 1959 by Indian Philosopher Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, PROUT is a viable alternative to the outmoded capitalist and communist Socio-economic paradigms. Neither of these approaches has adequately met the physical, mental and spiritual needs of humanity. PROUT seeks a harmonious balance between economic growth, social development and cultural expression.

Combining the wisdom of spirituality, the struggle for self-reliance, and the sprit of economic democracy, Proutist intellectuals and activists are attempting to create a new civilizational discourse. PROUT news-magazine aims at conveying comprehensive and visionary goals of PROUT theory.

PROUT magazine invites scientists, economists, politicians, artists, intellectuals and others to join us in the creation of a new, spiritually bonded society by propagating and popularising unambiguous elevating thoughts. Through Proutistic views and Neo Humanistic analysis, it strives to serve as beacon for the benighted civilization of our times.

Main principles of PROUT & Neo-Humanism :

Neo-humanism expands the humanistic love for all human beings to include love and respect for all creation - plants, animals and even inanimate objects. Neo-humanism provides a philosophical basis for creating a new era of ecological balance, planetary citizenship and cosmic kinship.

Basic necessities guaranteed to all : People can not strive toward their highest human aspirations if they are lacking the basic requirements of life. PROUT believes that access to food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care are fundamental human rights which must be guaranteed to all.

Balanced economy : Prout advocates regional self-reliance, cooperatively owned and managed businesses, local control of large scale key industries, and limits on the individual accumulation of excessive wealth.

Women's Right : PROUT encourages the struggle against all forms of violence and exploitation used to suppress women. PROUT's goal is coordinated cooperation, with equal rights between men and women.

Cultural Diversity : In the spirit of universal fellowship PROUT encourages the protection and cultivation of local culture, language, history and tradition.

World Government : PROUT supports the creation of world government with a global constitution and a common penal code.

For both civilization and science, intellectual knowledge is indispensable.

Spiritual or intuitional development is possible through the happy blending between civilization and science. - Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

PROUT

April 2012

Cry of the Suffering Humanity

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Fundamental Principles :

1. No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body.
2. There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of all mundane, supra mundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe.
3. There should be maximum utilization of the physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective body of the human society.
4. There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supra mundane and spiritual utilizations.
5. The method of utilization should vary in accordance with the changes in time, space and person and the utilization should be of progressive nature.

The cooperative model of PROUT is free from both sets of defects. PROUT is well-adjusted with human ideals and sentiments. Other socio-economic systems are ultravires to human existence and all-round elevation. Whatever is feasible and practical has been said in PROUT. Marxism built castles in the air and encouraged the people to dream a meaningless dream. PROUT has not done this nor will PROUT do it. PROUT will do that which is feasible and practical.

- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

Electoral Reform

The recently concluded election in five states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttara Khand Punjab, Manipur and Goa generated much interest in India, the largest democracy in the world. The media worked over time and generated much hype and breaking news. Many pundits said many things before the elections were held and after the election results were declared. One small fact that was drowned in the euphoria and hype is that percentage of votes garnered by a party did not match the number of seats won. In UP, the Samajwadi party won 224 seats (touted as a landslide victory) but got only 29% of the votes, whereas the Bahujan Samaj Party (the incumbent rulers) got 26% of the votes but only 80 seats. In Punjab the Akalis and BJP combine won 68 seats with 41.88% votes and the Congress won 48 seats with 40.9% of the votes. There are many such instances and this was not for the first time.

The type of democracy prevalent in India is political democracy. According to Shrii PR Sarkar the founder of PROUT, "Just to hoodwink the masses, the people were granted the right of universal suffrage. Millions of Indians are poor, superstitious and illiterate, yet the exploiters, through such practices as making false promises, intimidation, gross abuse of administrative power and vote rigging, repeatedly win over the electorate. This is the farce of democracy. Once they form the government, they get ample opportunity to indulge in rampant corruption and political tyranny for five years. In the subsequent elections – whether on the provincial or state level – the same absurdity is repeated. One of the most obvious defects of democracy is that voting is based upon universal suffrage. That is, the right to cast a vote depends on age. But there are many people above the voting age who have little or no interest in elections and are not conversant with social or economic issues. In many cases, they vote for the party rather than the candidate, and are swayed by election propaganda or the false promises of politicians. Whether or not a candidate gets elected usually depends upon party affiliation, political patronage and election expenditure. In some cases it also depends on antisocial practices. Throughout the world, money plays a dominant role in the electoral process, and in nearly all cases, only those who are rich and powerful can hope to secure elected office. In almost all the countries of the world, the masses lack political consciousness. Cunning, erudite politicians take advantage of this shortcoming to confuse people and attain power. They resort to immoral practices such as bribery, vote rigging, booth capturing and buying of votes, and stand unopposed for elections. Consequently, the standard of morality in society is declining, and honest, competent people are relegated to the background. Moral leaders have less chance to win elections".

He goes on to add, "In all countries where democracy is in vogue today, people have been deceived into believing that there is no better system than political democracy. Political democracy has no doubt granted voting rights, but it has snatched away the right of economic equality. Consequently, there is gross economic disparity between the rich and the poor, immense inequality in people's purchasing capacity, unemployment, chronic food shortages, poverty and insecurity in society. Nature has been kind enough to provide abundant natural resources to every region of this earth. Those who are guided by dishonesty, selfishness and mean-mindedness misappropriate these resources and utilize them for their individual or group interests rather than for the welfare of the whole society. Mundane resources are limited but human longings are limitless. Hence, for all the members of society to live in peace and prosperity, human beings have to adopt a system which ensures the maximum utilization and rational distribution of all resources. To achieve this, human beings will have to establish themselves in morality and then create a congenial environment for morality to flourish. People will have to opt for either political democracy or economic democracy. Political democracy cannot fulfill the hopes and aspiration of people or provide the basis for constructing a strong and healthy human society. The only way to achieve this is to establish economic democracy".

What we have seen during the recent elections is an old story. In nearly every single election in the past there has been a vast mismatch between number of votes and number of seats. This can hardly be called representative Government. Therefore the first priority is to shift the focus on economic democracy. Secondly the vote share must be at least 51% to be called truly representative. This should be first point in electoral reforms. Finally, only moralists should be allowed to stand for elections after proving their credentials. When that happens, people will vote for the person and not for the party and will not be swayed by money power or other corrupt practices. Then there would hardly be any need for a model code of conduct for elections. And the present farce of democracy repeated very five years would come to an end.



LETTERS

E mail : prout.am@gmail.com

BALANCED ECONOMY

Shrii P.R. Sarkar's article on balanced economy is the right tonic for today's problem when there appears to be little or no adjustment between agriculture and industry. When there is soaring unemployment because of this disbalance, no more time should be lost to bring about the required changes in macro economic policy.

Rajbir Singh, Sawai Madhopur

EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE

The article 'Prout Guarantees Employment' by Trond Overland was very thought provoking. Based on economic policies of Prout as given by its founder Shrii PR Sarkar, this article causes one to think about societal changes that have to occur to alleviate the misery of unemployment. One simple arithmetic is: reduce working hours and employ more men for the job. If a factory has 8 hour work shift, if it is made 4 hours, then automatically employment gets doubled. The article on page 16 - 'Case for a 21 Hour Work Week' -thinks also on the same lines. But in today's world the catch is that employers' profits would reduce. That can only happen when the people are all spiritually awakened, become moralists and greed becomes nonexistent.

Pranay Saha, Haldia

PROUT EVALUATION &

SUPPORT

Matt Openheim must be congratulated for showing us by his article about Shrii PR Sarkar's 'Samaja' movement. The fact that Proutist concepts are being practiced by a small Mayan community in the remote highlands of Guatemala shows how universal it is. No matter that Proutist principles may not have mass appeal as of today; these are portents of the future. All readers would surely share the writer's optimism that "the day will not be far off when it spreads to the whole world".

Rani Biswas, Nagpur

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS

It is frightening to read about the possible health hazards of consuming genetically modified foods. Thank you Prout for educating us.

Josephine Millard, Toulon
by mail

GROWING OLD IN AMERICA

Shocking to read about the plight of the old in America, the most prosperous of the countries of the world. It's a lonely life for them despite the so called provision of social security.

Shyama Sarvajani, Faridabad

ASIAN ALTERNATIVES

Sohail Inayatullah's incisive and well researched article brings to the fore the bright and prosperous future of Asia. It's just a matter of time when Asia will overtake Europe and America.

Ekka Sahu, Bhagalpur

APOLOGY

On page 5 of February 2012 Issue the quote "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?" is the last line of stanza 'v' of Percy Bysshe Shelley's 'Ode to the West Wind'. We submit our profound apologies for the inadvertent error.

LEO TOLSTOY

**Everyone thinks of changing the world,
but no one thinks of changing himself...**



Articles / Suggestions Invited

We invite your articles, comments, letters, wit & humour materials etc. on any aspect of human life including Spiritual, Socio-economic, Political, Cultural, Ideological, Educational and local self government. Clips, photographs and cartoons are also welcome.

Please send them at the following address :

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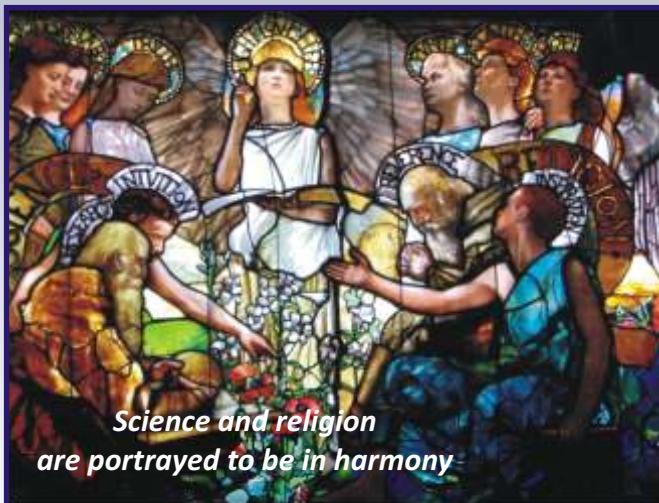
Science is Nothing But the Finding of Unity



Swami Vivekananda's first photo as a wandering monk Jaipur 1888

all science. All science is bound to come to this conclusion in the long run.

*Swami Vivekananda, at the World Parliament of Religions,
Chicago, September 19, 1893*



**Science without religion is lame;
Religion without science is blind.**

-Albert Einstein



The Importance of Society

SHRII PRABHAT RANJAN SARKAR

“Society is the collective movement of a group of individuals who have made a unanimous decision to move together towards a common goal.”

When the members of a society come to a unanimous decision, “We’ll move together, we’ll live together in good times or bad,” then their collective movement is known as Samaj or society. Some may have moved far ahead; some may have lagged behind. Some may be unable to walk due to pain in their legs. Some may have fallen on their faces. Those who do not even care

to look after their companions trailing behind them are not worthy to be called members of society. The proper thing is for all members of the society to move in unison; and while moving together, each member should feel a responsibility for every other member of society. Those who are unable to move must be carried so that the rhythm of the collective movement remains unbroken. At present, we will have to



look at everything in this world from the perspective of our solar system, even if we do not yet look at things from a cosmological perspective. We must move ahead, looking upon this solar system as one integral entity. But in the future, human beings from other planets and satellites will join our movement; we will have to build our society together with all. We will have to look upon this whole world as an integral entity.

What do we see today? In some homes people are rolling in luxury; in others people are dying of starvation. One section of society is breathing a free atmosphere of light and air while the major portion of society, perhaps 80% of the population, has been kept confined within their four walls. That is, one section of the population has been granted license to do whatever they please, and no one even raises a finger in protest, while the other section, if they make even the slightest mistake, is subjected to severe treatment by the society. This sort of discriminatory treatment cannot be tolerated.

Discrimination has been practiced for a long time. But today the gap between an educated and an uneducated person has become almost too wide to be bridged. A male member of a family may be highly educated while his wife is totally illiterate: the gap between them is extremely wide. There are various undesirable social discrepancies like this. Even if there is no acceleration in our speed, we will have to bring with us all those people who are moving slowly or who have lagged behind. If, while moving with all, my speed decreases somewhat, this will have to be accepted. But we must move together; this is the Supreme Truth. Those who wish to move together with all require sufficient physical and psychic strength. In addition to that, if they really wish to move collectively, they must possess some additional strength as well. That is why I tell you that you must not be like average people: you will have to be above average. It is not enough to move alone, you will have to take others with you, and for that you will have to acquire additional strength. You must prepare yourself accordingly.

Some time ago I said,

Trividhaduhkasya átyantrkii nivrttihi paramáarthah.

"That which brings permanent relief is



Public bathing from former British horse watering trough, Kolkata

called Paramártha."

Suppose a man has no clothes and feels cold. Having no money he cannot afford to buy clothes and having no food, he feels hungry. If he gets some money he can remove his hunger by procuring food and thus he can remove his afflictions. People buy food, clothes, etc., with money and so money in Samskrta is called artha. But it should be remembered that money is only artha and not paramártha, for Paramártha means "that which removes one's afflictions forever" – once the afflictions are gone they will never return. Suppose we buy food with money today; tomorrow we will again feel the pangs of hunger. So, money is Artha, not Paramartha. Paramartha is that which brings permanent cessation from the triple afflictions – physical, mental and spiritual.

All the afflictions in the physical sphere are due to lack of food, clothes and the like. Now the question is, to what extent can money remove these afflictions? You can at best temporarily relieve them, but the next day the trouble will return again. The only way to bring permanent relief is Paramártha. With the help of Paramártha, human beings can develop such a social order that there will never be a shortage of food and clothes, etc. This will require a fundamental change in the social order. And those who are the pioneers in such a task, what will they do? They will have to acquire far more strength than average people. The pioneers who want to travel through thick jungles will have to clear part of the jungle and build a road. Once the road is constructed, those who come behind will be able to travel easily

through that jungle.

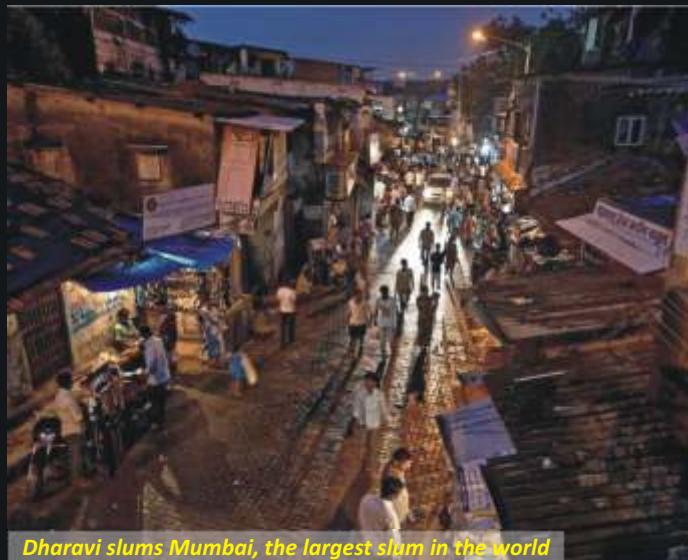
What is the nature of psychic afflictions? Suppose we remove the mundane problems forever. (PROUT was formulated for this very purpose of removing mundane problems and helping human beings attain Paramártha.) I have not said anywhere that society should give plenty of money to everyone; I have only said that the purchasing power of each and every person should be increased. Suppose the price of rice is Rs. 5 per kilo: it does not matter if the per capita income is as much as Rs. 1,000. Whether the salary is high or low is not the point: the main thing is the purchasing power. If the purchasing power of each and every individual is increased, there will be no physical trouble. But, supposing physical troubles have been removed, psychic afflictions will still remain. Even at that stage there is pain and grief, there are sorrowful feelings and sentiments. Everyone mourns the death of their nearest and dearest ones; so the psychic afflictions remain. To eradicate them, one must undergo proper psycho-spiritual training so that one's mind can be properly prepared to fight against adverse circumstances. All responsible members of society will have to do this. Here, whom do I mean? I mean those who have realized that they will have to acquire the requisite power, or even more than the requisite power, in order to equip themselves for the onerous task before them. Those who do not have the capacity to realize this, those who have understood little, are also our blood brothers and sisters; they, too, are our close relations. So in order to help them, we

must acquire a little more strength than necessary. Otherwise we will not be able to help them.

Take the case of India. We are not as developed as we should be. Why? One of the reasons is that we have kept women confined within the walls of their homes, resulting in the progress of only fifty percent of the population – the males. And as only the men are progressing, they will have to carry the load of 50% of the population. Thus the speed of progress is reduced. Ideally, women should also move with their own strength and with the same speed as their male counterparts. In the process of movement, if they feel pain in their legs, if they fall on their faces, they should be physically lifted up. But not only women may need assistance: the males may also fall down, and then it will be the duty of women to extend their helping hand to carry the load of their male counterparts. We cannot expect that, in relation to men, the position of women will remain one of subordinated cooperation: it may also be one of coordinated cooperation. The position of males may even be one of subordinated cooperation. Nothing can be said emphatically in this world. The fact is that we must move together in unison with all.

In the psychic sphere too, the same practice should be followed. Those who have begun to realize this should understand it still more deeply. As a result they will be able to comprehend the position of those who have less capacity to understand or to judge.

The third category of affliction is spiritual affliction. Whatever people might say outwardly, they know that they are the progeny of the Supreme Consciousness, and that He is always observing them. They know that they are never alone, not even for a moment. Even confirmed atheists, whatever they might say verbally, pray in their heart of hearts, "Oh Lord, please save me." So, those who say that they do not believe in God, or words to that effect, should be labelled as hypocrites for they do not speak their minds. No indulgence should be given to hypocrisy. All human beings know that Parama Puruśa belongs to them, and that they belong to Parama Purusa. But in spite of this knowledge



Dharavi slums Mumbai, the largest slum in the world



Street scene, Genoa, Italy

they cannot easily attain Parama Purusa with their whole being. The pain caused by this non-attainment of Parama Purusa is called spiritual affliction. One can overcome spiritual affliction only through spiritual practice, through meditation. The supreme and final aspect of meditation is devotion. One may not possess knowledge or intelligence; but if one has devotion, that is enough. So devotion must be aroused by all means. After coming in contact with a devotional person, thousands and thousands of people may also become devotional.

Many are aware of the fact that Mahaprabhu Caetanya Deva had a great devotee, Yavana Haridas by name, who was of a low caste. When Haridas would do kirtan, Mahaprabhu would often touch his body. The orthodox pandits would say, "You'd better take a bath in the Ganges now, otherwise you won't be able to enter the house." So, Mahaprabhu had to take a bath in the Ganges, even in the winter's cold. How troublesome for him! Haridas used to say, "Thakur, why do you touch my body? For this you have to take so much trouble at night." However, Mahaprabhu would still touch him. So Haridas used to sit at a little distance from Mahaprabhu, and when Mahaprabhu was about to touch him, he would run away as fast as he could. But Mahaprabhu was about 20 years old at the time and Haridas was much older than him. So how could he escape from Mahaprabhu? Mahaprabhu would easily

overtake him. Then Mahaprabhu would again have to take a bath in the Ganges. With tears in his eyes, Haridas complained, "Oh Lord, why do you touch me? What do you gain thereby? You simply have to undergo a lot of trouble by having to take a bath on a cold winter's night."

Mahaprabhu said, "Haridas, you are such a good devotee, you have such devotion in your heart, that I just wish to touch you and thereby make myself holier. You are full of so much devotion that you can make the whole universe holy." Devotion has tremendous power which neither knowledge nor action has. Rather, people of knowledge, the jināniis, have a subtle sense of vanity, of which common people are afraid. So they maintain some distance from the jināniis saying, "Good heavens, they are such scholars, how can we go near them?". But no one is afraid of people with devotion. Rather they think, "After all they are devotees, so let us go and sit near them for a while." So, if you can arouse devotion, then by coming in contact with you, thousands upon thousands of people will attain real Paramártha and spiritual salvation. That is, in order to attain liberation from the triple bondages – physical, psychic and spiritual – you will have to attain Paramártha: and you will have to attain it in such a way that those who are spiritually undeveloped will also be benefited by your contact.



Hunger Strikes in Solidarity With Soni Sori's Demand for Justice

* Kalpana and Nidhi

Recent letters received from Soni Sori, currently in the Raipur Jail, reveal that her health condition is steadily deteriorating, and she is suffering from pain and bleeding. However, she has been denied proper medical care and treatment despite several requests to the jail authorities. After her brutal torture at the hands of Chhattisgarh police in October 2011, she received a complete medical examination only three weeks after the incident at the NRS Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. Since then she has not received any follow-up treatment.

Women's groups and other democratic rights groups in Delhi held a day long hunger strike at Rajghat from 6 am to 6 pm in solidarity with Soni Sori.

We, adivasis, are only fated to suffer atrocities and die; dying is necessary. We, adivasis, are a business for the government. The more the Chhattisgarh government will exploit us, oppress us, commit atrocities against us, torture us, rape our women, mercilessly strip us naked, the more the government will profit.

Programmes were held also in Bengaluru, Bhopal, Jaipur, Mumbai, as well as in San Francisco and Boston.

Their Demands:

- To arrange for prompt and proper medical care for Soni Sori
- To initiate punitive action against SP Ankit Garg and all other police officials involved in her custodial torture.

Soni Sori is an adivasi school teacher from Dantewada, who had come to Delhi in end September

2011 to escape harassment by the Chhattisgarh police and to file a legal complaint. However, she was arrested on October 4th before her petition could be filed before the Supreme Court. She was remanded by the Delhi courts to the custody of Chhattisgarh Police with explicit directions to them to ensure her safety. Yet, while in police custody she was sexually tortured by the Chhattisgarh police on October 8th in Dantewada, under the direct orders of the then Superintendent of

Police, Ankit Garg. She was verbally abused, stripped naked, electric current was applied to her body parts, and objects like stones, pebbles and batons were pushed into her private parts. Evidence of such brutal torture emerged during an independent medical exam conducted on her only on 26th October at the NRS Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata, on the directions of the Supreme Court. During this medical examination three stones were found, lodged deep inside her private parts, and annular tears in her spine were also recorded.

The Kolkata medical team had given medications to Soni for 15-30 days and advised that she be taken to the hospital in a month's time for review and further treatment. This has not been done despite repeated complaints by her of pain, bleeding and request for treatment. The jail authorities claim that they do not have the discharge slips of the NRS hospital. Urgent applications to provide her with immediate medical care have been pending in the Supreme Court since January 19th 2012.

Out of frustration at not being given any medical treatment, Soni Sori was on hunger strike in the Raipur Jail from 8th February to 27th February. It has been learnt that on 27th February, the Session's Court in Dantewada finally ordered the Superintendent of Raipur Jail to ensure that she gets a medical check-up in Raipur.

While it is reassuring that the Honourable Court has taken her complaint seriously, it is important to note that this Raipur Hospital gave Soni Sori a clean bill of health in October, when she was taken there soon after her torture when she was in no position to even walk. Not only did they not recover the stones in her body, but the Medical Superintendent actually went on record to call her a "maligner" and said that she was feigning illness. In light of such callous treatment at the Raipur Hospital, the women's

groups urge that Soni Sori be transferred to an independent medical hospital in Delhi or Kolkata, which is not under the influence of the Chhattisgarh police, so that she can be properly examined and treated.

In her letter, Soni Sori also records her protest at the fact that she is continuously referred to by the jail authorities as the "Naxali" woman. While the police have accused her of helping the Naxalites, her trial is going on in Dantewada courts and none of these charges have been proved yet. Soni has strongly denied all these allegations claiming malicious victimization by the police, and has pointed out that in reality her father was shot at and injured by the Naxalites.

Soni Sori's case is not an isolated one. In one of her letters from prison she has written : "There are many other women prisoners suffering in this jail (in Dantewada). Around 60 women prisoners are here. They tell me that they were not able to fight back because there was no one to support them".

Venting her anger against the torture and insults heaped upon her, she writes, "We, adivasis, are only fated to suffer atrocities and die; dying is necessary. We, adivasis, are a business for the government. The more the Chhattisgarh government will exploit us, oppress us, commit atrocities against us, torture us, rape our women, mercilessly strip us naked, the more the government will profit." She represents the agony of many others caught in the crossfire.

In response to Soni Sori's pleas that she wanted to talk to some women about the torture she has been subjected to in custody, a team of women had visited Raipur in January to meet her. However, the team was shunted around by the officials and denied permission on grounds of concern for security of Soni Sori and the Women's Prison, and sections 692 and 695 of the Jail Manual. While Soni's repeated calls for even a hearing goes unheard, in a

shocking travesty of justice, SP Ankit Garg – Soni's tormentor - was conferred the President's Gallantry Award on January 26, 2012. By conferring this award, both the Central and State governments are condoning the sexual violence that is being perpetrated on tribal women in the name of anti-Naxal operations.

Women against Sexual Violence and State Repression (WSS), Saheli, and other concerned individuals and democratic rights organisations.

Open Letter to The Honourable Chief Justice of India and Honourable Judges of The Supreme Court of India

As citizens, we look to you, Honourable Judges of the highest court of law in our land, to protect the rights of those who stand powerless, marginalised by society due to their class, caste, gender or ethnic origins. In particular, we believe that sometimes only the Supreme Court can safeguard the right to life of citizens, when every other avenue has failed to do so.

This is especially so in the case of Soni Sori, a tribal woman on whom gross sexual torture has been inflicted while in police custody in Chhattisgarh. We write to you with deep dismay at her continued vulnerability despite her repeated pleas for protection from various courts, and urge you to give serious attention to the grave violation of the rights of a tribal woman undertrial, the facts and documents regarding which are pending before the Supreme Court in the case (WRIT PETITION (CRL) NO. 206 OF 2011).

Briefly:

* Soni Sori is a 35 year old adivasi school teacher and warden of a government-run school for

tribal children in Jabeli, Dantewada - one of the few operational schools in the area, till the Chhattisgarh Police forced her to flee from Dantewada in early September 2011. She has been arrested and is being tried as a suspected Maoist supporter in several cases.

* Soni Sori was arrested in Delhi on 4th October 2011 after she had exposed significant evidence of being framed by the Chhattisgarh Police in multiple cases, including the Essar bribery case to the news magazine, Tehelka. (http://tehelka.co/story_main50.asp?filename=Ne151011coverstory).

* Fearing retaliation while in custody, Soni Sori had pleaded before the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, District Court, Saket as well as the Delhi High Court that she be held in custody in Delhi and sought to face trial outside the state of Chhattisgarh.

* However, on 7 October 2011, Soni Sori was remanded to the custody of Chhattisgarh Police by the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Saket District Court, Delhi, albeit with directions to the Chhattisgarh Police to 'follow due process'.

This was Soni Sori's first attempt to seek protection. A plea she is still making, now in your court.

* The Delhi High Court too, in its order of 8 October 2011 ordered the Chhattisgarh Police to file by 14 October 2011 a report outlining steps taken to keep her safe.

This was Soni Sori's second attempt to seek protection against the police via the judicial process.

As Soni Sori was remanded to Chhattisgarh, there was serious apprehension of custodial intimidation and violence. Fears that have unfortunately proven to be well placed, given the evidence of sexual

violence and torture of Soni Sori while in police custody. A brazen contempt of court, of human rights law and the rights guaranteed to all citizens by the Indian Constitution.

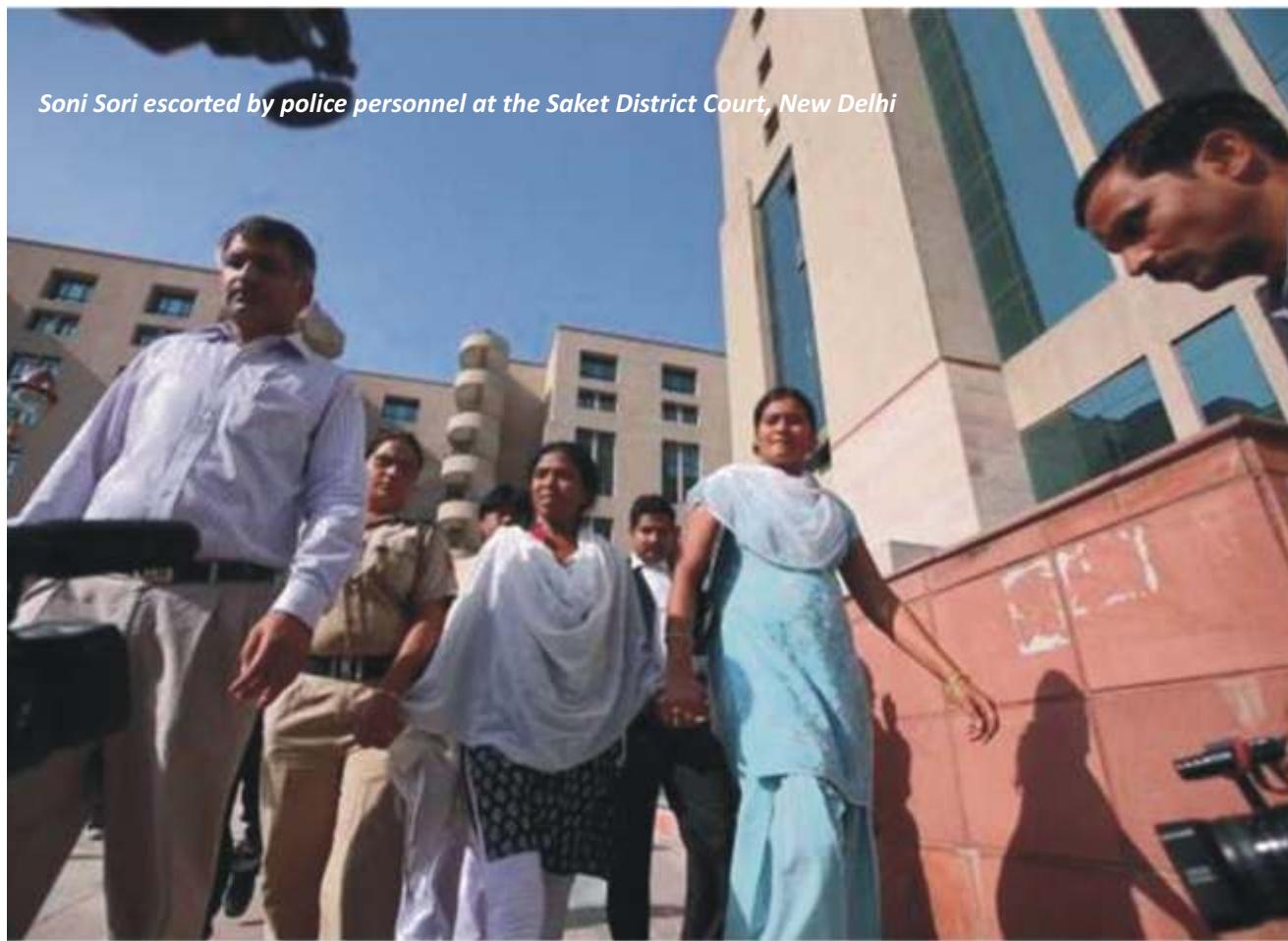
Flagrant contempt of court and violation of human rights follows.

Damning evidence of custodial sexual violence emerges.

On 10th October 2011 Soni Sori was to be produced before the Court of the Magistrate in Dantewada. However Soni Sori, who had been in perfect health when she was remanded to the custody of Chhattisgarh Police in Delhi, was in such terrible physical pain that she could not even stand up or step out of the police van and reach the courtroom. The police claimed 'she slipped in the bathroom and had hurt her head'.

That day, Soni Sori did not appear in person before the Magistrate, nor did the Magistrate see her – only a court clerk came to

Soni Sori escorted by police personnel at the Saket District Court, New Delhi



the police van and yet, it is wrongly recorded in the Order sheet that she was produced before the Magistrate who remanded her to judicial custody for 14 days.

The examining doctors at the Dantewada District Hospital and the Government Medical College in Jagdalpur have recorded that ‘she has a history of unconsciousness’, that she is ‘unable to stand due to pain in lumbar region; and that she has injuries on her head and back, and that black marks were observed on her toes’ – indicating she had received electric shocks.

In subsequent statements to relatives, her lawyer and a letter addressed to the Supreme Court itself, Soni Sori has described the custodial torture that she was subjected to. She has stated that she was ‘pulled out of her cell at the Dantewada Police Station on the night of 8/9 October 2011 and taken to S.P. Ankit Garg’s room.’ There she was stripped and given electric shocks and that stones and batons were inserted into her private parts’. When she awoke the next morning, she had severe aches all over her body, especially her neck and spine, and acute pain in her lower abdomen. She has subsequently informed her lawyer (affidavit submitted to the Supreme Court), that she found several stones inserted in her vagina, many of which she managed to remove

herself, but not all.

The Supreme Court (in WRIT PETITION (CRL)NO. 206 OF 2011) observed that the injuries against her person did not appear to be as simple as the State was making them out to be, and ordered an independent medical examination in NRS Medical College Hospital in Kolkata. The medical report, presented to the Supreme Court on 25th November, 2011 states that two stones were found inserted deep inside her vagina and one in her rectum. The MRI scan also reveals annular tears on her spine. All irrefutable evidence of custodial sexual abuse and torture that Soni Sori has suffered at the hands of Chhattisgarh Police.

Yet, on 1st December 2011, the Supreme Court ordered that Soni Sori remain in the custody of the Chhattisgarh State for an additional period of 55 days until the next hearing on 25th January, 2012. Given the prior apprehension of such violence especially in cases under the shadow of the Maoist issue, and in light of the medical examination report placed before the Court, we are distressed that no immediate action was initiated against responsible police officials, nor protection ensured for Soni Sori until the next date of hearing.

After all, it is only the Court that can insulate a victim of sexual custodial assault from her

oppressors, particularly when serious charges have been made against the senior police officer. It is only the Court that could have ensured that she is not made more vulnerable after she has spoken out about this torture, despite threats to her person and family. It is only the Court that can send out a clear signal that the rights of citizens will be protected, and that when the police abuses its powers, the judiciary will not stand by in silence. It is only the Court that can ensure that Chhattisgarh police will abide by the rule of law and if they violate the rights of citizens, they too will be held legally accountable and punished.

That Soni Sori has suffered custodial violence at the hands of the Chhattisgarh Police, in spite of the attention of the Court, the national media and the explicit orders of the Delhi High Court to ensure her safety, is extremely worrisome. It points towards a dangerous and flagrant contempt for law by the police in Chhattisgarh.

We hope that the Supreme Court will ensure that justice is finally done to this tribal undertrial woman and will set precedent to provide effective protection to the legal and human rights enshrined in the Constitution of India, especially for those placed in such vulnerable conditions.

Life without idealism is empty indeed. We just hope or starve to death. A dog barks when his master is attacked. I would be a coward if I saw that God's truth is attacked and yet would remain silent. When good people in any country cease their vigilance and struggle, then evil men prevail.

Pearl S Buck



* Anand Teltumbde

62 years ago we, as the people of India, adopted our Constitution to give ourselves a republic. The Constitution has been eulogized as one of the finest constitutions in the world, particularly for its elaborate handling of social justice. Because it took exceptional note of the people called SC/STs and provided them with protective, promotional and developmental care. It was expected that a plethora of measures devised for it would bring them on par with others in course of some time. Indeed it did so, but to a tiny section of them and unleashed the dynamics that has already aggravated the divide existing among these communities. Its republican vision promising people secularism, socialism and democracy is already marred by the consistent antithetical experiences. Over the years the state, which is constitutionally mandated to be in service of people has only shown its

SC/STs and the State in the Indian Constitution

There is this commonplace notion that our Constitution is good but the people who are implementing it are a bad lot. There may be some truth in it but certainly not the complete truth. After all it is the precise role of the Constitution to make the bad lot behave; if the people are good, there perhaps is no need of any Constitution.

fangs to the latter. If they are poorer, it bites them; to Dalits, it bites most. The state which was to protect the SC/STs has become the chief tormentor of them.

This is the most bewildering picture of performance of our Constitution over the last six years.

There is this commonplace notion that our Constitution is good but the people who are implementing it are a bad lot. There may be some truth in it but certainly not the complete truth. After all it is the precise role of the Constitution to make the bad lot behave; if the

people are good, there perhaps is no need of any Constitution. By the dictum that the taste of pudding is in its eating, we may have to problematize even our Constitution for the consistently bad results being produced under its regime. Indeed, we have to problematize everything, all holy cows around us, perhaps in an Ambedkarite iconoclastic way, to see where the rot lies.

Making of The SC/STs

Foremost, it is necessary to understand that SC/STs are the administrative identities and they do not correspond to social reality. They were born during colonial times in the process of political reforms towards giving India a responsible self-government. The Morley-Minto Reforms Report, Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms Report, and the Simon Commission Report were some of the initiatives that can be directly associated with this context. One of the hotly contested issues in the proposed reforms was the topic of reservation of seats for the “Depressed Classes”¹ in provincial and central legislatures. In 1935 the British passed the Government of India Act 1935, giving Indian provinces greater self-rule within a national federal structure and incorporated in it the reservation of seats for the Depressed Classes. The Act brought the term “Scheduled Castes” into use, and defined it as “such castes, races or tribes or parts of groups within castes, races or tribes, which appear to His Majesty in Council to correspond to the classes of persons formerly known as the ‘Depressed Classes’². The Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1936, contained a list, or a Schedule, of castes throughout the British administered provinces.

Some provinces and princely states were already using Depressed Class - lists, mainly for extending educational concessions. The 1931 census, the Franchise Committee, and the provincial authorities had deliberated over the matter and came up with somewhat different

lists, which were revised more than once before being finalized in 1935. The Scheduled Castes were to be the Untouchable Hindu castes, and were defined as “castes, contact with whom entails purification on the part of high caste Hindus.”³ The Census Commissioner, J. H. Hutton, set forth nine criteria to determine which castes were to be scheduled. The most important criterion, he said, was whether the caste suffered (1) civil disabilities like denial of access to roads, wells or schools. Five more were religious and social criteria: whether the caste (2) caused pollution by touch or proximity; (3) was denied access to the interior of ordinary Hindu temples; (4) was denied the services of “clean Brahmins”; or (5) the services of the same barbers, etc., who served high caste Hindus; and (6) was subject to the rules concerning acceptance of water. These six criteria were meant to include castes; the remaining three were meant to exclude them: the caste was not to be scheduled if (7) an educated member was treated as a social equal by a high caste man of the same education; or if pressed only because of its (8) occupation or (9) ignorance, illiteracy or poverty,

“and but for that would be subject to no social disability.”⁴ These criteria were adopted to prepare the schedule for the castes in 1936.

While these criteria were found generally applicable in many areas, they posed problems in some. In parts of the South they broke down because there were too many castes that qualified for inclusion in the schedule. If mechanically done, there would have been huge population of these parts included in the schedule. Therefore, it was decided to apply additional criteria of illiteracy and poverty to bring the number down to a reasonable level. In the northernmost provinces an opposite problem arose. There some castes tended to qualify these criteria but the disabilities they suffered were milder and variable. Therefore, again these ad hoc secular criteria, illiteracy and poverty, were applied for inclusion of certain castes in the schedule.

The process of making schedule was disputed by a number of authorities, especially in U.P. and Bengal, who expressed dissatisfaction mainly because the criteria were social and religious, which were not construed then as a



An Adivasi woman from the Kutia Kondh tribal group in Odisha



Young women of Baiga tribe

legitimate concern of the government. Some argued that the criteria were fictitious and inappropriate to define and list the scheduled castes by their ritual status. Notwithstanding these objections, the fact remains that the resultant schedule though based on a well defined criteria was not error free. While it largely included 'untouchable' castes, certain castes in South which were considered untouchables and even unseeables got excluded on adhoc criteria. Surely the castes like Nadars in Tamil Nadu and Ezhavas in Kerala may have been excluded castes. What is notable here is the tremendous progress the Nadars and Ezhavas have made vis-à-vis the castes within the schedule. In view of this observation, can it be hypothesized that the stigma associated with the Schedule rather than helping the scheduled caste has proved harmful to their progress? I do not know for sure but the insight based on these facts is surely plausible and worth exploring.

Whether or not, these excluded castes were technically 'out castes', the empirical fact that they were similarly placed as the untouchable castes that got into the schedule in 1936 but made such progress that none from the schedule could make, may point to a very disturbing proposition that the government 'schedule' rather than helping the untouchables has harmed them. The possible reasons may be hypothesized as follows. The practice of untouchability was a fact but as a part of the life world of people it was hazy and muddled. Inclusion into a schedule, the castes got official stamping of ritual

inferiority and universal stigmatization. The castes that did not get included into it in corollary escaped it and in course of time even society forgot that they were untouchables

in past. The castes in the schedule on the one hand developed vested interests in preserving their status and on the other hand became subject to bitterness by the rest of the society as undeserving beneficiaries. As a result, the schedule blocked the progress of the scheduled castes whereas the castes outside its pale could progress without this baggage. There is a scope to speculate that formalization of untouchability through the administration action could be detrimental to the subjects intended to benefit from it. It may be explained in terms of self initiative for building up social capital by communities that were excluded from the schedule, which gets replaced by reliance on the state in communities which were included in the schedule. The theory of caste as the basis for building social capital got credence by the studies of some castes like Gounders in Tamil Nadu who created Tirupur as the global center for knitwear industry.⁵ The former communities could benefit even from official upgradation of their social status widening social spaces for their development. Of course, one has to take into account the initial endowments of these communities that disqualified them to be in schedule but propelled them soon on to development path.

After independence, the Constituent Assembly adopted the prevailing definition of Scheduled Castes. The term "Scheduled Tribe" however did not exist and came into being only after the Constitution was adopted. The first serious attempt to list these communities as

primitive tribes was made during the census of 1931. In the Government of India Act (1935) a reference was made to the "Backward Tribes" and again the Thirteenth Schedule to the Government of India (Provincial Legislative assemblies) Order, 1936 specified certain tribes as backward in the provinces of Assam, Bihar, Orissa, CP and Berar, Madras and Bombay. In the 1941 census these people were recorded as "Tribes" and separate totals were furnished only for a few selected individual tribes.⁶ In pursuance of the provisions under the Art 343 of the Constitution, the president made an order in 1950 specifying certain tribes or tribal communities as scheduled Tribes and consequently another schedule for the tribes along the lines of scheduled castes was created. The actual complete listing of castes and tribes was made via two orders The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, and The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 respectively. The criteria followed for the schedule for tribes were: indications of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and backwardness. These criteria were not spelt out in the Constitution but were from the definition adopted in the 1931 Census. The 1950 schedules listed 1,108 castes across 25 states and 744 tribes across 22 states.

Unlike the defining criterion of untouchability for the SCs, the criteria for the tribal schedule were vague which were still diluted for the revision of the list based on the subsequent reports: the first Backward Class Commission (Kalekar) 1955, the Advisory Committee on Revision of SC/ST lists (Lokur Committee) 1965 and the joint committee of parliament on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill, 1967 (Chanda Committee) 1969. The tribal communities had three divisions: first, those enjoying fairly

high status within the Hindu society, e.g., Raj Gonds – so called because they had actually ruled large tracts in central India; second, partially Hinduized tribes settled in plains and third, those actually inhabited hill sections.⁷ Moreover, there being no stigma of lowliness attached to the tribes, there was no reluctance of communities to accept the tag of a scheduled tribe. Resultantly, many relatively well off communities managed to get into the schedule and deprived the genuine tribes of the benefits intended for them. These communities (e.g., Meenas in Rajasthan, Halba Koshtis in Maharashtra and most tribes in North East, which were the ruling tribes in past and today are well educated and westernized) have dominated the list of STs leaving the needy high and dry.

Making of the India's Constitution

The long colonial rule had established the benchmark for liberal democratic governance in the country. Its advent, although with colonial logic, had brought in modern institutions of administration, justice and liberal ethos and significantly impacted traditional social institutions in India. Later in response to the freedom struggle, it brought in a sense of self-governance by partially devolving power to provincial assemblies of peoples' representatives. The Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917 had opened up new horizons before the world people about the possibilities of self-governance sans exploitation which created pressure on the ruling classes to yield grounds. By the end of World War II, when the colonial powers were so weakened that they were no longer in position to directly govern their colonies, they decided to relinquish power in favour of a representative body of the local people, but not before ensuring protection of their long term interests by the new rulers. The liberal democratic model, which appeared to provide governance by

popular will but actually left ample scope for the propertied classes to maintain their control, had become a default model of governance in the non-communist world and as such it was adopted by almost all newly freed countries. India was no exception. When India attained Independence, naturally the options before the ruling classes were limited as the Congress, their representative body, had been projecting its vision of self rule in response to the aspirations of people and creating noises that raised them further. Liberal democracy meant constitutional democracy, the constitution being the rule book for the state, a mechanism of checks and balances. After the World War II formally ended on 9 May 1945, the Labour government came to power in July 1945 in the UK. It soon announced its India policy and initiated a process of transfer of power. The process included convening the constituent assembly for making the constitution.

Historically speaking, the Constitution evolved through a process which began much earlier than this, as a part of India's struggle for independence from British rule. Way back in 1895 the leaders of India's freedom struggle (Annie Besant and Lokmanya Tilak) had put forward a document called Constitution of India Bill, also

known as Home Rule Bill, which envisaged freedom of expression and equality before law for all people. In February 1924 Motilal Nehru introduced a resolution outlining the procedure for drafting and adopting a Constitution for India in the Central Legislative Assembly, which had also passed it. In 1927 Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State, challenged Indian leaders "to produce a Constitution which carries behind it a fair measure of general agreement among different sections". The Indian National Congress accepted the challenge and convened an All Parties Conference in 1928 which appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru to determine the principles of Constitution for India. The Nehru Report submitted on 10th August 1928 was in effect an outline of a draft Constitution of India. It envisaged equal rights to men and women regardless of caste, class, religion or region, free elementary education, freedom of expression to all, etc. The secular character of the state was also mentioned as one of its fundamental character. The idea of framing the Constitution by a Constituent Assembly elected with widest possible franchise, first propounded by M. N. Roy and Jawaharlal Nehru, began to gain ground. Congress included it in its



Annie Besant 1880s



Bal Gangadhar Tilak

election manifesto for 1936-37 elections to provincial legislatures. The British accepted it only in 1945 after the end of World War II. However, when the Constituent Assembly came to be formed these ideas were compromised. As an election based on universal adult franchise would require lot of preparations and time, Congress had to agree to the Cabinet Mission's scheme of electing members of the Constituent Assembly by the elected members of provincial assemblies.

Interestingly, the Constituent Assembly was convoked by the British rulers by executive action before India's independence, which even determined its composition. It was the Indian Independence Act, enacted by the British Parliament on 18 July 1947 that gave Constitutional sanction to the Indian Constitution in advance of its formulation.⁸ The total membership of the Assembly thus was to be 389. As recommended by the Cabinet Mission, 292 members were elected through the Provincial Legislative Assemblies, 93 members represented the Indian Princely States and 4 members represented the Chief Commissioners' Provinces. The Congress working committee made great effort to see the members from the scheduled castes and Tribes; Women, Christians, Parsis and Anglo-Indians were among the Congress candidates. Congress won a huge majority of seats in the Constituent Assembly. Among the elected, majority were the Hindus although Congress had given due representation to other communities. As to its communal composition, there were 5 Sikhs, 3 Parsees, 7 Christians, 3 Anglo-Indians, 5 Backward Tribes, 31 Muslims and 33 Scheduled Castes. The caste distribution among the Hindus was: 56 Brahmins, 15 Kayasthas, 11 Vaishnava and Marwaris, 9 Kshatriya and Rajput, 3 Marathas, 3 Reddies, 1 Lingayat and 1 Vokkaliga.⁹ There was also an effort to bring in the best available

talent irrespective of their political affiliations and as such there were as many as 30 members who were elected on Congress ticket but they were not its members.

Initially, the Constituent Assembly was constituted for the united India. Though the Muslim League had participated in the elections, it boycotted its proceeding to press for its demand for Pakistan. Ultimately this demand was conceded vide the Mountbatten Plan of partition announced on 3 June, 1947. Consequently, a separate Constituent Assembly was set up for Pakistan and representatives of some provinces given to Pakistan ceased to be members of the Constituent Assembly of India. As a result, the membership of the Assembly was reduced to 299.

The Constitution naturally carried the imprint of the Congress vision articulated through the freedom struggle as can be seen through various documents. For instance, it carried much of the content of the Nehru Committee report of 1928 with regard to safeguards relating to fundamental rights. Ten of their nineteen heads were carried almost unchanged in Part III of the Indian Constitution and another three appeared as Directive Principles under Part IV. The Nehru Committee Report was rejected by the Simon Commission of 1927-28 as "abstract declarations" and so "useless" but its essential demand for individual rights was repeated in the Indian Independence Resolution of 1930. Although the Government of India Act of 1935, the direct predecessor of the Indian Constitution, was enacted without any formal bill of rights, it had safeguards against discrimination in the spheres like employment, owning property, and carrying on trade or business. Interestingly, what later proved to be the weakest fundamental right—the right to property—was also included in Section 299. Since the Government of India Act mostly failed to provide effective remedies

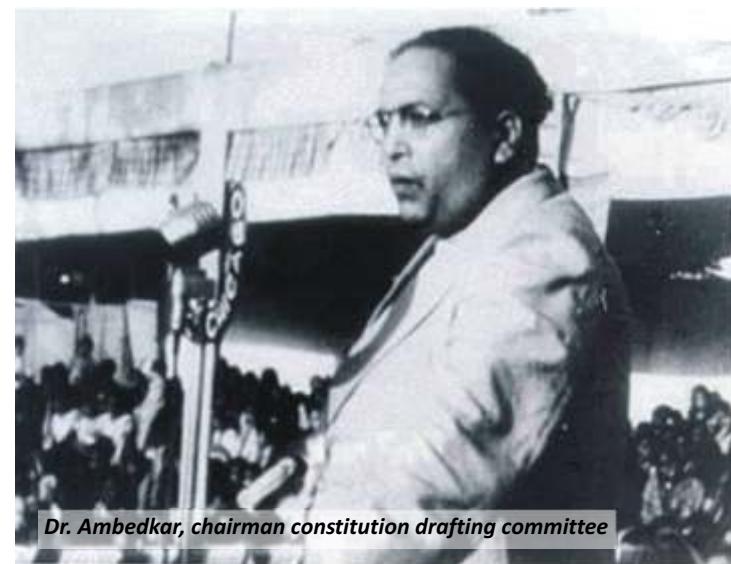
against executive despotism, the Congress repeated its demand for a bill of rights at the Calcutta session of 1937.¹⁰ World War II put an end to all such initiatives, and only the Sapru Committee Report of 1946 demanded fundamental rights as a necessary standard of conduct for all the organs of state.¹¹ While the Constituent Assembly picked up the concept of justiciable and non-justiciable rights, propounded in this report, it had to take refuge in the Irish Constitution to resolve the tension between "individual rights" and "individual responsibilities or collective rights". This led to the ultimate adoption of the justiciable—non-justiciable dichotomy of Parts III and IV of the Constitution.¹² While there is no doubt that the Constitution of India is skillfully crafted by the Drafting Committee into one of the longest and most comprehensive documents in the history of modern legislature, its content is imbued with the ideological hegemony of the Congress and conditioned by its class character. On 13 December, 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru moved the Objectives Resolution, unanimously adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 22 January 1947, which expressed the aspirations and expectations of the people that they had from independence. The Resolution inter alia said that the Assembly would declare India as an independent, sovereign republic; guarantee freedoms of thought, expression, belief, faith and vocation; provide equality and justice to all citizens; and ensure welfare of various sections of the people. It also made it clear that ultimate power would reside in people. The Resolution had thus provided a guideline and a framework for the Constituent Assembly to work out the Constitution. In spite of the ideological differences, almost all the members of the Constituent Assembly agreed with the

Objective Resolution. The Constitution as it emerged essentially reflected the spirit of the Objective Resolution. It was quintessentially an exercise in liberal democracy not quite different from the trend existed then. The most distinguishing part of the Constitution was its elaborate scheme of social justice, which reflected the strategic realization of the ruling classes to convince the multitude of have-nots that their interests would be taken care by the Constitutional regime. Despite Nehru's much publicized love for socialism, the Constitution avoided to touch the distributional aspects of the society. The dominant class character of the Constituent Assembly itself was deterrent enough to guard off any tendency to impart economic character to the Constitution.

This was briefly exposed by Babasaheb Ambedkar in one of his first speeches in the Constituent Assembly. He was invited out of turn by the Chairman, Rajendra Prasad to make his observation in connection with an amendment proposed by MR Jaykar to the Objective Resolution moved by Jawaharlal Nehru. Dr Ambedkar made a brief speech in the Constituent Assembly on 17 December 1946 wherein he echoed one of the principles propounded in his States and Minorities for the nationalization of land and industry: "Sir, there are here certain provisions which speak of justice, economical, social and political. If this Resolution has a reality behind it and a sincerity, of which I have not the least doubt, coming as it does from the mover of the Resolution, I should have expected some provision whereby it would have been possible for the State to make economic, social and political justice a reality and I should have from that point of view expected the Resolution to state in most explicit terms that in order that there may be social and economic justice in the country, that there would be

nationalisation of industry and nationalisation of land, I do not understand how it could be possible for any future Government which believes in doing justice socially, economically and politically, unless its economy is a socialistic economy. Therefore, personally, although I have no objection to the enunciation of these propositions, the Resolution is, to my mind, somewhat disappointing. I am however prepared to leave this subject where it is with the observations I have made."¹³

It is surprising that while he chose to point out the basic lacunae in the Resolution, he voluntarily added that he would not insist upon it. As a matter of fact, he would not bring it up ever again in the constituent assembly. Being totally left out from the political parleys for transfer of power and without any strength of his party in any provincial assemblies, Babasaheb Ambedkar did not have any hope of entering the Constituent Assembly. In the circumstance the Scheduled Caste Federation, his party had decided to submit a memorandum to the Constituent Assembly to be considered for the future constitution. This memorandum, which had radical provisions for what is called state socialism (with provisions such as nationalization of land and key and basic industries; parcelling the lands to village cooperatives with capital being provided by the state, compulsory insurance to all with the insurance lying in state sector, etc.) was later published in May 1947 as States and Minorities, with Ambedkar's preface dated 15 March 1947. While there was no possibility of such a radical plan being adopted through the legislative process, why Babasaheb Ambedkar should make

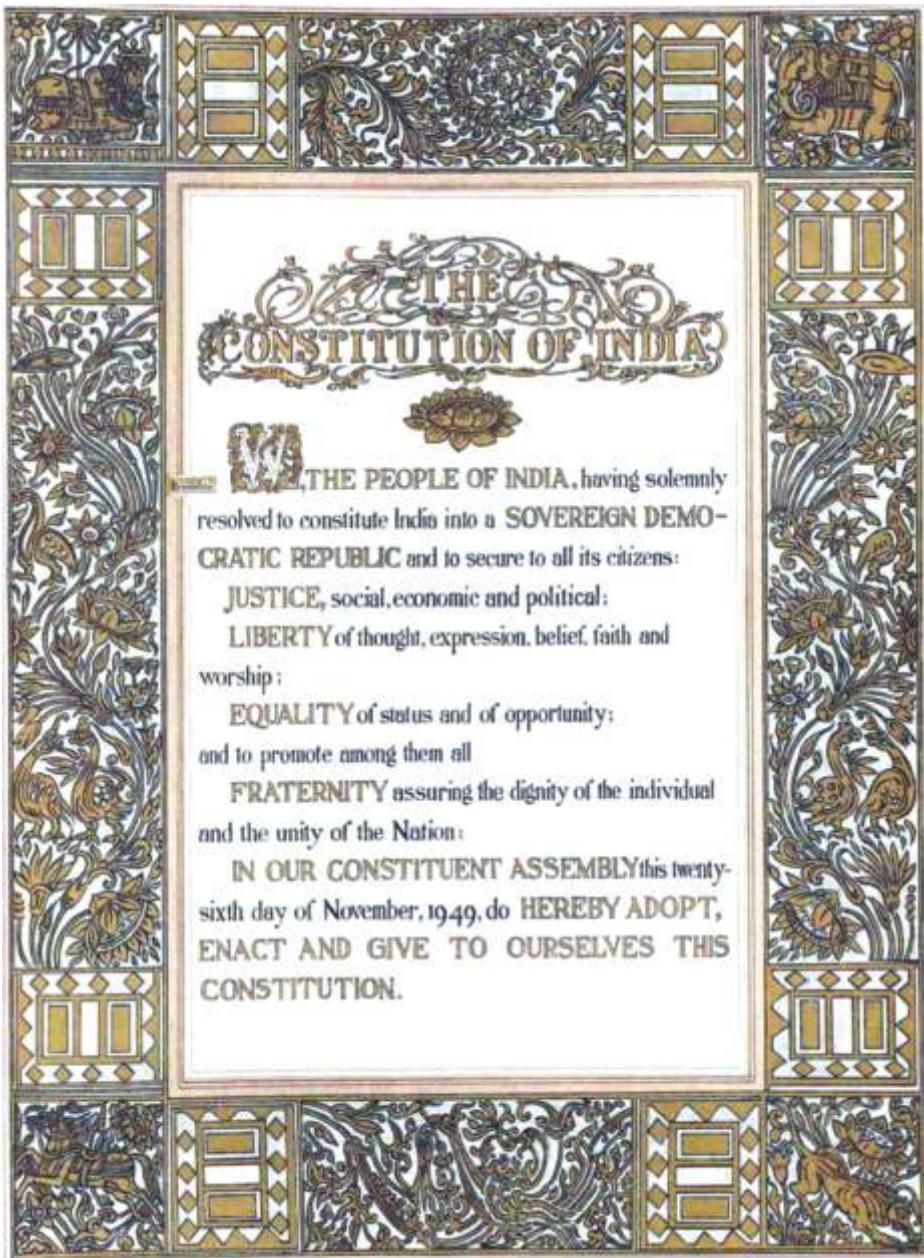


Dr. Ambedkar, chairman constitution drafting committee

it in the first place and still not even mention it shall remain a mystery!

When the Constitution was being framed India presented an impossible picture of fragmented polity: it was befogged with the communal divide between Muslims and Hindus, was faced with integration problems of 565 princely states, communist led peasant struggles with all potential to flare up into a conflagration, in addition to pulls and pushes from numerous castes, communities, linguistic and cultural groups. But the biggest long term threat was from its organic toiling masses comprising one-sixth population which was totally excluded on account of the caste system. Although fragmented into castes, this huge mass of proletariat could turn into a veritable volcano with a spark of class consciousness. It was therefore necessary for the ruling classes to devise suitable containment policy such that it would neutralize this threat and still not compromise any of its class interests. The Constituent Assembly while proclaiming equality, skillfully kept castes, the most menacing contrivance of inequality, untouched. It banished untouchability but not caste, its source. The alibi was to use caste to extend social justice to the caste-oppressed groups like SCs.

The real objective was to keep the proletariat caste bound so as to insure that they never realize their class status. The second objective was to keep them bound within the constitutional system. This dual



Constitution of India decorated and beautified by Santiniketan artists

objective was achieved through a plethora of constitutional provisions in their favour. Since they had existed in some form during the colonial times, it was easy for the constituent assembly to continue them. The task was rather to rationalize and enhance them. It is interesting that there was a kind of unanimity about these provisions in the Constituent Assembly. These provisions fall under the following three spheres:

1. Protective Measures - Such measures as are required to enforce equality, to provide punitive measures for transgressions, to eliminate established practices that perpetuate inequities, etc. (Article

17). A number of laws were enacted to operationalize the provisions in the Constitution, such as Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocity) Act, 1989, the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993 and the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993, etc.

2. Promotional Measures (affirmative action) - provides preferential treatment (reservation) in allotment of jobs and access to higher education, as a means to accelerate the integration of the SC/STs with mainstream society. Some of the constitutional

provisions are: Article 46: Promotion of educational and economic interests. Article 16 and 335: Preferential treatment in matters of employment in public services. Article 330 and 332: Reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. The general rule which exempted the scientific and technical posts from the purview of positive discrimination was applicable to the autonomous bodies.¹⁴

3. Developmental Measures - Provides for resources and benefits to bridge the wide gap in social and economic condition between the SC/STs and other communities. Under it numerous measures can be counted such as free ships to the students to the special component plan. Generally, Babasaheb Ambedkar is acknowledged as the chief architect of the Constitution. While it is true that he had borne much of the load of drafting the contentious clauses and piloting them in the constituent assembly and making it one of the most comprehensive legislative documents in the world, he should not be held responsible for its contents. Even going metaphorically, the architect does not own up the vision or the content of the house; he merely shapes it up with his skills and knowledge. The constitutional contents were predominantly calibrated by the strategy of the class of emergent bourgeoisie, expressed through their representative party--the Congress. While this strategy was enabled by the framework of liberal democracy, based on the representative structure, it would not be good enough to insure the buy in of the depressed classes. The colonial regime, with its own logic, had already introduced many measures for their development. While there was no option to rethink them, mere continuation of them also would not suffice in view of the rising aspirations of people in general. If these classes of organic proletariats were not duly accommodated, they

could pose biggest threat to the structure in course of time. None other than Mahatma Gandhi, the strategist extraordinaire of the Congress was acutely aware of it. Although he couched his arguments in moralistic terms, they were basically driven by this strategic necessity. It was the masterstroke of his strategy to get Dr Ambedkar elected to the Constituent Assembly, when his membership was annulled as a result of the partition Plan in June, 1947, and then to make him the chairman of its most important committee, the Drafting committee. He knew there was little that Dr Amabekar could do but would contribute immensely in rationalizing the contents the Congress decided and defend it in the constituent assembly with his intellectual prowess and erudition. More than his scholarship and intellectual prowess, he wanted Ambedkar's name to go as the creator of the constitution, which he saw being crucially important for the downtrodden masses upholding it. The sentimental manner in which Dalits view and uncritically uphold the Constitution as the creation of their leader proves the strategist extraordinaire in Gandhi right. Despite Dr Ambedkar's public denouncement and disowning statements¹⁵, and their own bitter experience, Dalits would stake anything to defend the Constitution.

Continuation with the reservation policy for the scheduled castes had an important embedded opportunity. Insofar as the policy took cognisance of caste, albeit with the veneer of social justice, the castes would be kept alive. It is a mute point that in the prevailing situation whether there was any option than making exception of scheduled castes for extending constitutional provisions. Perhaps there wasn't. But in the policy formulation the same could have been confined only to the scheduled castes as victims and transformed it into a challenge to the rest of the society to expiate its crime or in

other words the policy could have been termed as the countervailing measure to make the rest of the society behave by overcoming its disability (and not that of the scheduled castes) of being incapable of treating its own members equal. What instead came through the policy was association of secular backwardness with certain castes. The caste system with its graded inequality caused deprivation or granted privileges in a continuum. Backwardness therefore could not be theoretically associated only with some castes. Backwardness as a multi-dimensional outcome moreover cannot be solely attributed to a single factor like caste. Therefore, prudence demanded that since the scheduled castes were historically excluded as outcastes and a fairly homogenous people, they could be made an exception purely for their social treatment resting onus of that on the larger society.

Making of The Indian State

The Indian state was supposed to be based on India's Constitution. Whatever the limitation of the Constitution, it was an excellently executed liberal document. It distinguished itself by two things: its preamble that gave its vision and its section IV which provided the direction to state policy. The preamble of the Constitution emphasizes its republican character and explicates its vision to be a perfectly egalitarian society. It says including its amendment: "We the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic and to secure to all its citizens: Justice, social, economic and political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; Equality of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all Fraternity assuring

the dignity of individuals and the unity and integrity of the Nation." And the Directive Principles of State Policy outlines measures the state should incorporate into its policies so as to accomplish this lofty vision.

There was no attempt to remodel the state as per the new republican vision. The entire state machinery was inherited from the colonial regime and continued unchanged. It inherited colonial bureaucracy, colonial laws, colonial rules, colonial procedures and colonial operative ethos which were oriented to treat people as subject. With its alien attribution gone off it assumed rather unimpeded powers over people and behaved as such. In effect, it proved perfect antithesis of the Constitutional vision. The duality of the Indian constitution and the state replicated the traditional doublespeak of the Indian ruling classes. While the Indian Constitution professed all liberal ideals in the world, the Indian state supposed to be ordained by this Constitution trampled them all with impunity and became perfectly illiberal and tormentor of people. The state came out in its true character which is noted in the Marxist school. According to Marx, the state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another; it is the creation of "order", which legalizes and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the conflict between classes.¹⁶ Muffled by the imperative of long term ruling class interests, the Indian state can be seen as the veritable exemplar of exploitation. The translation of the constitutional welfare goals into practice have in fact remained a mere constitutional



*First day (December 9, 1946)
of the Constituent Assembly of India*



Poverty in India a telling example

chimera being far off even after six decades of independence. Within the existing socio-politico-economic power structure based on the capitalist model of modernization / framework of market economy which the democratic and constitutional state of India has adopted, it has widened sharpened disparities, frustration, estrangement, deprivation, exploitation, poverty, insecurity, oppression, unemployment, starvation, corruption and injustices of all sorts, affecting adversely the social, political and economic conditions of the vast majority of lower strata. The weaker sections are not only deprived of the development programmes in most cases, they are kept out of development process. Poverty question is a power question; it is rooted in the model of development that produces it and gets in turn reproduced.

State of the SC/STs

In order to examine the behavior of the state vis-à-vis the constitutional provisions in respect of the SC/STs, there perhaps is no better way than looking at the outcome over the republican period under three spheres of constitutional policies as outlined above.

Protective Measures

The caste system was based on the notions of purity and pollution supposedly based on Hindu scriptures. But it is grossly erroneous to treat contemporary castes as the same. The operation of castes today is a combination of several factors possibly

unconnected with any scriptural dictum of purity and pollution. The Constitution has banished untouchability as crime and law was enacted to deal with it. But the state willed otherwise and the untouchability is still rampantly practiced all over. Many surveys such as various state level surveys during 1990s, Action Aid Survey of 565 villages in 11 states in 2001-2002¹⁷ and the recent survey of 1589 villages in Gujarat by Navsarjan Trust and Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice & Human Rights¹⁸ survey have clearly found the instances of untouchability being practiced to a significant extent. The infamous two tumbler system is still extant in some parts of south India. It is not the matter with the backward parts, even in the capitalist Punjab and Haryana the practice is encountered. If one equates untouchability with the discriminating attitude, it prevails everywhere, even in the most globalized sectors of India in the metropolis. The most concrete manifestation of castes however is caste atrocities. The atrocities are arguably the best proxy for casteism. The government has developed a good system of compiling data on caste atrocities with neat classification, which makes them amenable to statistical analysis. Caste atrocities like castes are not based on scriptural notion but have to do with the changes in power relations in the countryside, the terrain where they happen. The data on atrocities show a drastic change since late 1960s in quantitative as well as qualitative terms. The

atrocities until then happened at individual level, both on victim as well as perpetrator side. But later they increasingly started happening in collective mode—many people coming and attacking a group of Dalits in a very planned and calculated manner so as to teach the entire dalit community a lesson. Kilvenmani in Tamil Nadu marks the beginning of this new genre of atrocities. It took place in the context of agriculture wage struggle led by the Communist party, in which the landlords attacked the entire Dalit locality and burnt some 44 people, mainly women and children alive on 25 December 1968. A spate of atrocities followed thereafter everywhere and flared up in Bihar in 1980s into a virtual caste war. All these atrocities are explained by the changes in political economy and not on the basis of any scriptural basis.

If one analyzed this phenomenon carefully one would find that the state policy has directly is at its root. The so called Nehruvian modernization project undertaken immediately after the independence, marked mainly by the land reforms followed by the Green Revolution pushed out the traditional upper caste landlords from villages and created in their place a class of rich farmers in villages from among the Shudra castes. It transformed traditional production relations into capitalist relations by creating input, output, credit, implements, and labour markets in villages. Consequently, it uprooted the old jajmani relations signifying the interdependence of castes, reducing Dalits as landless labourers dependent on the farm wages from the Shudra caste farmers. The economic contradiction between labour and capital, the social contradiction between the outcaste and caste, accentuated by the cultural assertion of dalits and political ascendance of the Shudra castes but their relative lack of cultural sophistication (compared to the traditional upper castes) began manifesting into

clashes expressed through the familiar faultlines of castes. This perplexing phenomenon of rising casteism with the spread of capitalism can be explained by the inverse developmental relation between the state and class in India: while elsewhere the emergent class of bourgeoisie created their state, in India it is the state that created the capitalist class. As a result, the creolized class that came into existence would pursue his accumulation objective without discarding its previous feudal advantages.

Alarmed by the rising incidence of atrocities the state enacted supposedly a stringent Act in the form of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. But even it proved useless in preventing atrocities. The next fillip to the atrocities came since 1990s, with the next wave of change in the economy. This wave was marked by the advent of neoliberal reforms, popularly called globalization. These reforms through their multidimensional operations created crisis in countryside (best manifested by the alarming incidence of farmers' suicides), which began manifesting into atrocities. There has been a consistent rise in atrocity statistics since 1990s in absolute number as well as in the intensity of atrocities represented by more serious kinds such as rapes and murders. The phenomenon may be explained by the general crisis in the middle level of agriculturists and relatively stable economic condition of Dalits coupled with their rising cultural assertion. It is not that Dalits are not affected adversely by these reforms but as the lot without stake could take any job in growing informal

sector and look relatively well off. It has thus accentuated the existing power asymmetry leading to caste atrocities. There are still heinous practices of manual scavenging extant despite there being a specific law to curb it. The Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993 has been totally ineffective because of the indifferent attitude of the state machinery. Last year the Savanur¹⁹ and Gulbarga²⁰ incidents in Karnataka state itself have effectively brought these facts to limelight.

With regard to dealing with the caste atrocities, the record as commented by many has been anything than dismal. The police machinery, hand in glove with high caste perpetrators, would not register the crime; if registered, would not investigate it; if investigated, would not present; if presented, it would not be pleaded in the courts by prosecution, and ultimately the case will fail. It is said that only the 10-20 percent of the actual number of atrocities enters the police record and still the total number of atrocities per year have been hovering above 35,000. The dismal rate of convictions that has been less than 10 percent until recently testifies to the bias in state machinery against the victims. In any case the state has thus been directly causing the rise in caste atrocities and is also guilty of dereliction of responsibility in curbing them.

1. Positive Discrimination

The most celebrated policy of positive discrimination in favour of the SCs and STs has also been lackadaisically operated. Even after six decades the reservations in public sector jobs haven't reached

the prescribed percentage in the Class A and B, where only it gains some meaning. The Class C and D being largely low paying working class jobs, dalits will be naturally found in them in significant proportion. It is interesting to note that having agreed to grant reservations equal to the ratio of SC/ST population to total population, the government still goes by the old 15 and 7.5 percent as against the current ratios of 16.23 and 8.2 percent respectively. The reservations in jobs have been rendered meaningless since last two decades. Because of the onslaught of globalization there has been negative growth in the public sector jobs. The statistics reveals that the total number of public sector jobs had reached the peak in 1997 with the euphoria of reforms but have been on consistent decline since then. If there is no net job creation in the public sector, there is no reservation! With regard to reservation in education, it particularly applied to elite/professional institutions where because of the acute competition Dalit students ordinarily would not have found a place. Moreover, unlike in jobs, the percentage fulfillment of vacancies in educational institutions has been better. These reservations indeed have catalyzed spread of education among Dalits. But with increasing privatization and commercialization of professional education, even this reservation is losing its meaning. The ethos of globalization has raised the cost of education so high even in public institutions that it is ordinarily not possible for an average SC/ST student to dream of educating in these institutions. Generally, it became the domain reserved for the well to do SC/ST persons, which is creating its own

We cannot choose freedom established on a hierarchy of degrees of freedom, on a caste system of equality like military rank. We must be free not because we claim freedom, but because we practice it.

William Faulkner

problematic for the community. Globalization has created a multi-layered education supply according to socio-economic standing of people, creating thus a neo-caste system in the sphere of education right from nursery to doctoral degrees. The recent ploy to subvert the Constitutional mandate to provide free compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14, in the form of Right to Education Act has formalized the neoliberal development in education. While the best quality education became available in the country for handful elite, the masses are left with useless education to swell the statistics. The entire rural area, with nearly 70 percent of population and with preponderance of Dalits is virtually cut off from education of any consequence. The jobless growth and informalization of jobs has drained off motivation in Dalits for education. Generally the reservation policy, the way it is formulated, leads to create an increasingly smaller class of beneficiary at the cost of rest of the community. Since caste is the only basis for being eligible for reservation, the people who have already benefitted from reservation stand better chance in grabbing it. At the very theoretical level, it is directly opposite to the intended outcome of the policy. It has already created a rift among the Dalits which is threatening to demolish whatever little they accomplished in forging their political identity. Since reservations are based on sole criteria of caste, this anomaly is also noted in caste terms. The smaller sub-castes of Dalits have accused a populous caste in the region of having grabbed their share of reservation and demanded apportioning of them to various castes. This process has created war like situation among the Dalit castes, as exemplified by Mala-Madiga conflict in Andhra Pradesh, effectively absolving the state or Constitution of its misdoing. Notwithstanding that much of it has been politically prompted to aggravate division among already fragmented Dalits, the fact remains

that ruling classes have forged reservations as weapon to divide Dalits asunder. In the context of this problem, I had written by way of intervention proposing a simple solution²¹ to change the basis of reservation from caste to a family unit over the dalit domain. It was repeated at few times and earned praise from the intellectual circles but the Dalits for whom it was meant, just ignored it.

Reservations originally meant to be an exceptional policy for the SC/STs as the ‘exceptional’ people has been forged into a weapon by the political class. As Macaulay conceived creation of a small English educated section imbibing western culture and values for effective governance of the native population in colonies, reservations worked the same way to create a small section of Dalit elite which

**There is only one caste,
the caste of humanity.
There is only one
language, the language
of the heart.**

Atharvaveda

would uphold the state and the status quo. It will thus hold majority of Dalits at bay, effectively blocking their radical demands. Indeed, reservations, meant for a minority of Dalits, who have come up to certain level so as to compete, have completely hijacked the entire agenda of Dalit masses that may be seen comprising basic issues such as land, health, quality education, and secure employment. At the level of Constitution itself reservations having been deliberately taken as a remedy for backwardness, the ruling classes could easily and skillfully proliferate their misuse. Firstly, they extended the same to the so called backward castes, when as a broad caste group they had already become economically and politically strong. Now, they are fooling people by promising them to every conceivable community in the

country. In a country with pervasive backwardness, to identify caste as the marker itself is grossly mischievous. The interesting part of this development is that when practically reservations have come to an end, the reservation discourse is reaching its crescendo.

The only reservations that have worked well as far as implementation is concerned are the reservations in political representations only because they were primarily meant for the ruling classes. Contrary to ignorant notion of most people, these reservations (and not others) were meant only for 10 years, which means they should have ended by 1960. But before they come to an end, they get extended by another term of 10 years, by the political class with exceptional unanimity, without any demand from any corner ever being there. These reservations, which have their roots in the infamous Poona Pact between Gandhi and Ambedkar, have only produced stooges (in Kashiram’s language²²) and have rather taken away winds from dalit politics. Babasaheb Ambedkar himself was seriously skeptical about it after seeing its aftermath during his own life time.

2. Developmental Measures

In terms of development, there are a plethora of schemes that the government operates in order to bridge the gap between the SC/ST and the non-SC/ST population. Looking at the results over the last six decades, one can only lament at these efforts as misplaced. While the statistics might show positive trend in development indices of the SC/STs, the gap between them and the others does not show the same. Most of these schemes have their genesis in wooing dalit voters in elections. In the context of the fact that 78 percent people live off Rs 20 per day such effort any way lose its meaning. The most celebrated programme of the government in this regard has been the special component plans. The strategy of Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan (SCSP)

You may have observed many people in the world who delivered long lectures against caste discrimination and untouchability, saying, "No, all are equal. I will take food touched by any caste. If you give me filtered water in a clean glass I will not hesitate to swallow it just watch me drink!" And the audience applauded, "Very good! Very good!" These people are called reformists; but their inner intention was to maintain the caste system. Had they really wanted to remove caste discrimination, they would have declared, "The cause of this untouchability is the caste system. Because of the caste system, discriminations have emerged between high and low, touchable and untouchable, one caste and another. So let us first of all break the bondage of caste!" If they had had the courage to proclaim this directly, they would have become revolutionaries. But they lacked such boldness, and thus they did enormous harm to humanity by delaying revolution.

Shrii PR Sarkar

which was evolved in 1979 is one of the most propagandized intervention through the planning process for social, economic and educational development of scheduled castes and for improvement in their working and living conditions. It is an umbrella strategy to ensure flow of targeted financial and physical benefits from all the general sectors of development for the benefit of SCs. Under this strategy, it entails targeted flow of funds and associated benefits from the annual plan of States / Union Territories (UTs) at least in proportion to the SC population. Presently, 27 States / UTs having sizeable SC populations are implementing Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan. Although the SC population, according to 2001 Census, was 16.66 crores constituting 16.23% of the total population of India, the allocations made through SCSP in recent years have been much lower than the population proportion. The data on total State Plan Outlay flow to SCSP as reported by the State / UT Governments for the last few years, especially since the present UPA government is in power, indicates rising allocations, which however still fall short of the prescribed level. It went up from 11.06 percent in 2004-05 to 14.80 percent in 2007-08.²³ These bland percentages do not reveal the true story. Firstly, the allocations in government parlance do not mean actual expenditure and

secondly, as the experience with Common Wealth Games and many other projects shows, there has been persistent mischief in booking general expenditure under these heads. Recently, the government has launched a new developmental measure in terms of reserving 4 percent value of all government contracts for Dalit entrepreneurs. The government which has been utterly insensitive to the needs of common masses has rushed with exemplary enthusiasm to support what is being clamored by a handful of Dalits as 'Dalit Capitalism'. Dalits trying out entrepreneurship is not a new development. The very making of the Dalit movement itself could be traced to this phenomenon among the migrant dalits to urban centers. As regards prevalence of rich individuals among Dalits also is not a new phenomenon. For varied reasons certain exceptional individuals in every reason had amassed wealth and were extraordinarily rich. This may have naturally increased with spread of education and information among dalits in modern times. But to attribute it to globalization or to colour it new way of dalit emancipation surely smacks of serving the intrigues of global capital. Be it as it may, the state attitude certainly reveals its intention to promote elements that would take pride in its anti-people policies and isolate the masses.

The above discussion may fall

under the category of 'omissions' by the state. There are the things that the state does in commission mode too. The state has actively helped the ruling classes in maintaining Dalits in dependent mode, confining them to constitutional frame. Whenever Dalits tried to articulate their independent struggle and tended to drift away from the constitutional frame, it showed its hypersensitivity in dealing with them. The age old strategies of cooptation or repression were deployed every time it happened. The disillusion with the government and the parliamentary politics of the Republican Party had set in among Dalits way back in 1970s which manifested into a rebellious phenomenon of Dalit literature and their political movements like Dalit Panthers and Dalit Sangharsh Samiti (DSS) in this state. These movements partly due to their own weaknesses but to a large extent to the intrigues of the ruling classes splintered into degenerate and opportunistic outfits. This sad aftermath pushed the sincere elements of dalit youth towards the radical left politics in certain states since 1980s. Since this politics defy constitutional boundaries and hence does not make itself available for cooptation, the state of late has taken an unconstitutional offensive to crush it. This has been the strategy to terrorize dalit youth so as to push them back into the morass of constitutional politics. Any Dalit,

speaking a radical language is targeted and harassed. The spontaneous initiative of Dalit youth in the wake of Khairlanji was similarly crushed by the state.²⁵ In recent times, scores of Dalit youth known to be active in literary, cultural and social movements have been arrested in Maharashtra labeling them as Maoists.²⁵ They are incarcerated in jails for years fighting dozens of false cases, destroying their families and their own careers. The label works well with the mainstream dalits in conveniently ignoring them. It is not the question of Maoists being right or wrong; the business of passing such value judgements really belongs to history. But what is important is to condemn the state

which comes down heavily on the movements of ‘precariats’²⁶ at the behest of the ruling classes and problematize the constitution that permits it.

Much of what I said here may have disturbed the sensibilities of many people basically because it was unfamiliar. I have faulted not only the state but the formation of the SC/ST itself as well as the Constitution. I tried to do my job in truly iconoclastic spirit, sparing no holy cows. Indeed, I believe the time has come to do ruthless introspection and plain speaking. This brief analysis may indicate that there is no solution within the system for the scores of Dalits, Adivasis, and other such poor people. It is not only in India but in

the entire world; the plight of the poor is more or less the same. They are slowly realizing that the trap of liberal democracy has been the basic culprit. It creates illusion of high sounding values but in reality preserves the status quo in favour of the ruling classes. The challenge therefore is to smash this trap as only then the real emancipation of people, including SC/STs may be possible.

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If the people of a particular caste are considered superior to other castes, economic injustice will be encouraged. In India, the so-called upper-caste Hindus perpetrate injustice on the Harijan community (the so-called untouchables). This has created a serious rift in the society. To eradicate this sort of social injustice, caste divisions should be completely abolished. In Ananda Marga, in the very first phase of initiation, a new member is taught to forget both their caste and colour. In the functions and festivals of a society based on caste divisions, the influence of caste prejudice is tremendous. In the collective functions and festivals of Ananda Marga, everyone, irrespective of caste, community or colour, can freely participate. In the society in general, the difference between castes and communities is given too much importance. Ananda Marga rejects these narrow sentiments.

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

Notes and References

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11 See Constitutional Proposals of the Sapru Committee, 256-57 (Tej Bahadur Sapru et al. eds., 1946).

12 W.H. Morris-Jones, The Government and Politics of India 83-84 (2d ed. 1967); Ray, supra note 15, at 100-01.

13 Vasant Moon (Comp), Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, Education department, Maharashtra Government, Mumbai, (From Dr. Ambedkar's entry into the Constituent Assembly to the presentation of the Draft of the Indian Constitution to the Constituent Assembly Vol. 13, p. 9.

14 Government of India, Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Office Memorandum No. 9/2/73-Esst. (S.C.T.), 23 June, 1975.

15 To the question that he was a maker of the constitution, Dr Ambedkar himself had replied saying: "Now, Sir, we have inherited a tradition. People always keep on saying to me: "Oh, you are the maker of the Constitution." My answer is I was a hack. What I was asked to do, I did much against my will." See Vasant Moon (Comp), Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, Education department, Maharashtra Government, Mumbai, Vol. 15, p. 860.

16 Cited by V. Lenin, The State and Revolution,

<http://www.marxists.org/archives/lenin/works/1917/staterev/ch01.htm>. last accessed: 23 January 2012

17 The salient findings of the survey were: In 73% of the villages, dalits cannot enter non-dalit homes; in 70% of the villages, dalits cannot eat with non-dalits; in 64% of the villages, dalits cannot enter common temples; in 53% of the villages, dalit women suffer ill-treatment at the hands of non-dalit women. See Sukhadeo Thorat, Untouchability in Rural India (Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2006).

18 Understanding Untouchability: A comprehensive Study of Practices and Conditions in 1589 Villages, <http://www.india.net.nl/pdf/UnderstandingUntouchability.pdf>. Last accessed: 23 January 2012.

19 On 20 July 2010, some manual scavengers of Savanur, a small town in Haveri district of north Karnataka performed a novel act in protest against their helplessness. They smeared themselves with human excreta in public before the municipal council office.

20 On October 15, 2010, one Dharam Kumar, a Dalit manual scavenger from Gulbarga district in northern Karnataka, poured and smeared human excreta over his head and body in front of the office of the Gulbarga City Corporation to draw attention of the city corporation officials to the issue of contracts for the maintenance of a pay-and-use toilet in Gulbarga City. The Hindu, Bangalore Edition, October 16, 2010, p.1.

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* Vidya Bhushan Rawat

Uttar Pradesh's poll results are out. Everybody claiming their poll predictions have come true. The election commission has been able to maintain its dignity and impartiality in handling the situation though political parties which are at the receiving end of the Commission's reprimand normally blame the commission for being bias against them. However, barring some small incidents they have handled the situation better so far. Yet, despite all this, the role of illicit money has not been curbed during the elections and every day reports of money being confiscated by the

Need For Radical Electoral Reforms

There is a dire need to address the follies of our electoral system which has not been able to curtail political corruption. Today, candidates are fielded not just to win, but to get some particular candidate defeated in the constituency. Money is being paid hugely to field bogus candidates who are called 'vote katua' whose sole aim would be to get his community vote and indirectly benefit the opponent.

police in these states was received.

After the results are out Uttar Pradesh has seen an unprecedented tense situation in the ground zero which is its rural areas. The Samajwadi party workers and BSP workers have clashed at many places. Those who understand Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, know it well that the litmus test for Samajwadi party now comes in Uttar-Pradesh. Elections are not development as suggested by our electoral analysts but sharing in power. And it is this which has resulted in fight among different communities and manipulations by political parties. It is not just political parties, communities are too engaged in these manipulations to gain political power and hence alliances are developed and 'villains' are 'constructed'. For millions of BSP supporters all over the country, Mulayam Singh was the villain number one but today it is Behajni's turn to face the wrath. The problem is that in the great ego of political leaders, it is the poor which is facing the brunt of the mafias and goons. It must stop now.

Though, parties have been manipulating castes to get into parliament or assemblies and our media and election commission thumping its chest even if the poll percentage was just around 60, in fact in many places it was below 60%, it is time to seriously think about a better and alternative system. The system which will give dignity to even smaller group or communities rather than taking them as either a vote bank or enemy who will be thrashed once the results are out as happening in Uttar Pradesh at the moment. We need a serious analysis of the community wise representation in the assemblies

A preliminary analysis of the data showed that Samajwadi party got 29% votes of the total vote polled yet got 56% seats i.e. 225 in an assembly of 403 while BSP which got just less than 3% votes than Samajwadi party got just 19%

seats. Congress Party's vote share in UP was 14% but the seat it could secure was just 9%.

While in Uttar Pradesh the tragedy of vote polled and seat secured is not visible that way as it shows in Punjab where Akali Dal secured 34.75% votes and got 56 seats (nearly 48%) while Congress Party got 41% votes yet 46 seats which is around 39% of the seat secured.

While poll observers may eagerly explain the 'dance' of 'greatest' democracy in Uttar Pradesh which is a laboratory for all the experiments based on caste, religious and region. In the past twenty years, Uttar Pradesh has the political parties which used these terminologies for their own purposes whether it is empowerment of Dalits or Bahujan but the fact is that in the past assembly Uttar Pradesh did not have a single MLA from Balmiki community which is very large community mainly confined in urban areas of the state. There are other most marginalized communities among the Dalits, Muslims and backward communities which would never ever get representation unless something is done to protect their interest. Tharus, one of the tribe

community in the Tarai of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, right from Maha raja g a n j , B a h a r a i c h , Lakhimpurkhiri and Khatima have virtually no representation in the assembly except for one Tharu MLA in Uttarakhand from Khatima constituency, though latest report is that he too lost during these elections. Boxas, one of the primitive tribe groups of Uttarakhand, Kols, a tribal group in Bundelkhand (Ironically, Kol crossing over to Madhya Pradesh are tribal in government list and in Uttar Pradesh are scheduled castes) are virtually unrepresented in assemblies and parliament. Such situation exists for many other marginalized communities among Muslims as well as backward classes.

The concern over reducing Muslim representation in our parliament and assemblies is not without any reasons for they do not even have reserved constituencies though the Dalits and Adivasis in particular feel that reserved constituencies have not really worked for the political empowerments of these sections of society but a few individuals from these communities who are elected on the votes of all electorates and therefore in this age of caste



BSP supporters at Ramlila ground in Ghaziabad where Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati came to address a BSP election Rally on 24th Feburary 2012.

polarization, it is the other vote that matter as political leaders take their own community votes for granted. This was the reason for Dr Ambedkar asking for separate electorate for the Dalits in the famous round table conference in London in 1932.

There is a dire need to address the follies of our electoral system which has not been able to curtail political corruption. Today, candidates are fielded not just to win, but to get some particular candidate defeated in the constituency. Money is being paid hugely to field bogus candidates who are called 'vote katuwa' whose sole aim would be to get his community vote and indirectly benefit to the opponent. This apart, some parties benefit from low turn out of the voters while some other benefit from neutral voters. There is no benefit to people who boycott a candidate as some other would vote and these voters who boycott would be used by the opponent or supporters according to their political loyalty. To curtail such an unhealthy practice and making communities as vote bank or vote k a t u a , m i x e d m e m b e r constituencies could be created to provide representations to those communities who remain unrepresented despite their huge number.

Various suggestions are being put forward to improve the system but the fault line is our parliamentary system which is based on First Past the Post System. This system gives enough chances of manipulations to

powerful groups and moneybag holders. There is no ceiling of getting minimum votes for winning a constituency which has resulted in a shocking trend of manipulation to win the election by using different methods of caste, religion and moneybags. The biggest fault of this system is that the winner vote through a minority vote resulting in a vast majority of voters voting against the candidate as unrepresented and uncounted. Is not it an irony that out of 542 members of Lok Sabha, we do not even have 2% of the members whose winning margin is over 50% of the total vote polled in his constituency. Similarly, there is a huge anomaly in voting percentage (national average or state average) and the seat won in the assembly. That too results in hugely unrepresented votes. For example, in the 2009 general elections, Congress party got 28.55% votes out of the total vote polled but it got 37.94% seats (206), similarly BJP got 18.80% votes but 21% seats. Contrary to this, the parties which belong to particular segments of our society and have been trying to create a niche for the poor remain marginalized. The Bahujan Samaj Party got 6.17% of the total votes but got only 3.87% of the seats in Lok Sabha while CPI (M) got 5.33% of the total vote polled yet got 16 seats which is 2.95% of the total seat won. Such vast gap between the votes polled and seat won need to be questioned if we want to reduce political corruption. Is not it a great joke that Nitish Kumar is the most popular leader with just 21% of total

vote polled while CPI(M) is 'wiped out' with 40% vote polled.

It is time to address these fault lines so that every party get seat according to vote polled and every winning candidate must get over 50% of the total valid votes in his constituency. Democracy in India need to go beyond symbolism and therefore it would be advisable that we slowly switch over to

Proportionate Electorate System (PES) which could address these anomalies and provide us a truly representative character of democracy. PES is widely being the main electorate system in Europe and many other parts of the world and India must start thinking on it before it is too late for us to handle the situation.

After the Punjab fiasco Congress must have courage to look into it and ponder over Proportionate Electoral System and its benefits. India must adopt a political system which strengthens its integrity yet be more representative. It is also a fact that if BSP supports PES, it has larger chances in the electoral system. Even today, as far as vote share is concerned, Mayawati has got 26% of total votes polled in UP which should have given her 105 seats in the current assembly in PES. India will pay a heavy price if we do not shift to a better political alternative which is more representative in nature and yet unite India and its diverse communities where those who do not vote to a particular party do not get thrashed as happening in Uttar Pradesh at the moment., a system which gives minorities their right to participate in power on equitable terms and not at the mercy of a dominant community. The current trend of democracy revolves around 'particular' community in each state which cobble together a few others 'like minded' while pitched in against those who 'differ'. This has resulted in chaos and virtual caste war in different parts of the country which media may be reporting some time and hiding at other. Uttar Pradesh will go through this phase now and it is the biggest challenge but then the poll results of Uttar Pradesh and Punjab are an opportunity for those who fight for genuine representative democracy to push forward agenda for Proportionate Electorate System.

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* Ganga Grace

Even dogs are awakening to the disturbingly flaunted oppression of the European people, whose lives and livelihoods are shamelessly being sacrificed at the altar of the Euro. The Euro – it's becoming clear now – is nothing but a means to a dirty end. Voracious mega-banks, in unholy alliance with the bourgeois and political elite, are hijacking national economies, forcing countries into financial prisons and stripping the peoples of Europe of their freedom, their wealth and their self-esteem.

Greece, a burning political hotspot, is becoming famous for its uncanny canine supporters. He is called man's best friend for a reason, and he is proving his loyalty again, in his unique, undeterred and

Europe at the Brink of a Revolution

| The austerity measures that the government has passed in order to receive the EU bailouts have wreaked havoc on people's daily lives.

persistent manner. Loukanikos, the Greek riot dog, has been present at nearly every recent protest in Greece in the past few years. This stray dog has ostensibly become the symbol of Greek protests against the IMF- and ECB-prompted austerity measures. In September 2011, on the occasion of a striking policemen's union marching in downtown Athens, Loukanikos, according to

eyewitnesses, was "initially confused" between two opposite sides both of uniformed policemen, but when the riot police contingent attacked their striking colleagues, the dog sided with "those who were being attacked". In protests launched by the general public, he always sides with the protesters, expressing his indignation and barking at the attacking police with

fervour.

Interesting. The Greek riot dog condemns mistreatment and instinctively stands up for the disadvantaged, the exploited, the weak. Not so the bankers however.

Greece is just one of the countries in trouble. There are several telltale signs that Europe is at the brink of an economic and political disaster. The austerity measures imposed on the people of Greece are driving them beyond recession into a deep depression. The economy in Greece has been contracting since five consecutive years and the contraction is now accelerating. One quarter of the Greek population can barely feed themselves and is now taking to the streets. Recently, more than 80,000 people flooded the streets of Athens and tried to storm the parliament.

The austerity measures that the government has passed in order to receive the EU bailouts have wreaked havoc on people's daily lives. For the past two years, Greeks have endured tax increases and wage cuts, with civil servants'

salaries slashed by 40% since 2010. The New York Times reports that approximately 68,000 businesses closed in 2010 and out of the remaining 300,000 another 53,000 are hovering near bankruptcy. People have invested \$ 75billion abroad, fearful of the instability of the Greek economy and its banks. Six out of ten households are unable to pay for their utility bills. Universities are shutting down due to lack of funding.

It's a reality that Europe is now run by large mega-banks, attempting to take over people's sovereignty, and the countries are, despite the massive bailouts, plunging into an ever deepening debt. Why? Because, Greece for example, is given the money so it can return it to the banks—with interest. Contrary to popular belief, none of the bailout money is in any way helping the people. Unemployment is now at 18.3% and at an all time high of almost 50% for those aged 20 - 30 years. The economy is annually contracting at a staggering 7%. Investors realise that these countries

are bankrupt and have stopped investing.

And there is more to it. Democracy, highly valued by Europeans, is being fast replaced by dictatorial technocratic/bureaucratic puppet governments, riding roughshod over national sovereignty and democratic accountability.

In Greece, the elected prime minister Papandreu was removed and replaced by an EU puppet, Lucas Papademos, a former Vice President of the European Central Bank. Italy has followed suit. The EU political elite decided that prime minister Berlusconi had to go. Herman van Rompuy, unelected (!) president of the European parliament, said in a recent speech: "I know you all share my deep conviction that the euro and the Union are irreversible projects. They support and embody the ideals of a peaceful, prosperous and democratic continent. It is our duty to continue this historical endeavour."

But then he turned around,



went to Italy and told the Italian people: "This is the time for action, not for election". As a result, a technocratic government, headed by Mario Monti, was set up. Monti is a former EU commissioner, who ironically worked for Goldman Sachs in the past, one of the largest global investment banking and securities firm, with staff salaries averaging £238,000 each.

Monti's response to the criticism that as an appointee he has no legitimacy whatsoever, was that due to the seriousness of the crisis, democracy must be suspended – just for a short while – "so, we can sort everything out". Europeans have witnessed this in the past: countries claiming emergency powers, as for example Hitler in Germany . He, likewise, suspended democracy because of an emergency and never gave it back to the country. The people of Greece and Italy cannot expect that their right to choose their governments will be reinstated – they will have to take it back.

The above issues are compounded by a certain air of arrogance on the part of the Pro-Euro politicians who confidently believe that they can get away with anything. These bureaucrats are now openly admitting: "Yes, we are going to set the rules and you can't vote on it. Yes, we are going to send tax collectors into your country." They are holding the cards at the moment and they are quite open about it. This may lead to an uprising, a revolution, as people are driven into hopeless poverty and have been stripped of their pride and self-respect.

Founder of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and member of the European parliament, Nigel Farage, who is also one of the most outspoken eurocritics, believes that Italy will prove to be the stumbling block for the EU. Greece may be turned into a colony and Portugal too, but Italy might prove to be just too big of a bite. With its 62 million people, it is one of the largest countries in Europe .



European Parliament's hemicycle (debating chamber) in Strasbourg

Some say that Europe is entering the most dangerous period since World War II. Hardliners of the EU are already doing what no one ever believed they would do – they are replacing elected prime ministers with dictators and taking away the sovereign rights and freedoms of previously autonomous and free countries.

There is hope that the global markets are going to break the EU before an actual revolution flares up. If not, it is fair to expect that a massive rebellion will spread across Europe . Many predict that 2012 will be a crucial year for Europe .

In the best case scenario, Greece will break away from the EU, leave the Euro, revive its own currency, the Drachma, and restart its economy. If that happens, then Portugal , Spain and Italy will want get out too. This is the fear the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, expressed recently when confronted by Nigel Farage who told her: "Chancellor, this isn't working. The taxpayers are putting huge amounts of money into bailing out the banks through the Greek government. Wouldn't it be better for everyone to admit that the Euro is a failure and let Greece leave?" Her reply to this reflects the stubborn attitude of Pro-Euro politicians who are trying to maintain the status quo against all odds: "If we let one country go, others will want to leave too and the

European project will fall apart and everyone will go back to simply being nation states." So, the people of Greece , of Ireland , Portugal , Spain and now Italy have to be sacrificed for the sake of proving that the idea of the Euro project is a success. At what price will this fantasy have to be kept alive?

What we are dealing with is an extremely devious mechanism that needs to be dismantled at the earliest – an unholy alliance of bankers and politicians. The Eurozone has been created with the purpose of stripping the general public of their assets, their rights and their liberties. The people of Europe have to wake up and refuse paying a debt created by greedy politicians and bankers due to their mismanagement.

People have to take to the streets and make the year 2012 a memorable one. The year when the EU scam has been exposed and rejected. It will be a busy season for the riot dog Loukanikos, who promises to stand by the people.

The writer is a professor of German language and literature and is an artist and performer of Indian Classical dance. She has spent a lot of time in India studying philosophy, some Sanskrit, Tantra, Carnatic vocal music, percussion and Indian Classical dance (Bharatanatyam).

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EXPLOITATION PROTESTS

* Marianela Jarroud

The police have cracked down hard on demonstrators in the southern Chilean region of Aysén, who have been protesting the area's isolation and high local prices of fuel and food for the past two weeks.

"We were being exploited," Henry Angulo, leader of the artisanal fisherfolk of Puerto Aysén, told Inter Press Service International Association (IPS), describing decades of absence of public policies that would reduce the high prices of food and fuel in the region.

Puerto Aysén, on the Aysén river, is one of several towns where protests are occurring in the region, which is 1,640 km from the capital. The region, which has a very cold climate, is far from areas producing food and fuel.

The people of Aysén formulated an 11-point petition, whose demands include putting an end to their isolation through road building and transport subsidies; compulsory popular consultation on projects planned for the region; priority distribution of the profits from exploiting natural resources within the region; improvements in health and education services; and lower prices for fuel and food.

"We have been able to unite our demands and our spirit, and that has given rise to a wonderful popular organisation. The people have risen up, but have also been capable of organising, joining hands and coming together. Such synergy is very difficult for the government to break down," Julio López, the regional head of the National Association of Fiscal Employees (ANEF).

The Social Movement for the Aysén Region (MSPRA) is aiming to get every item of their petition approved, without exception.

"None of these points is negotiable. They all reflect the region's needs. With all 11 points met, we would manage to only just



Hundreds of demonstrators outside the Governor's office in Aysén

Social Unrest On the Rise in Southern Chile

The key aim of the petition is a substantial reduction in prices of fuel like oil and gasoline, but also wood, which is essential for the daily life of the people of Aysén.

keep our heads above water. We are devastated, impoverished, and we are cheap labour for the Hidro Aysén (hydropower project) and for salmon farming; and only when we succeed with the petition will we begin to have the choice of sending our children to university," said Angulo.

The key aim of the petition is a substantial reduction in prices of fuel like oil and gasoline, but also wood, which is essential for the daily life of the people of Aysén.

Gasoline costs two dollars a litre in this region; bread, a staple food in the Chilean diet, costs three dollars a kilo; and the firewood needed to heat a home costs over 200 dollars a month. The cost of electricity per kilowatt is twice the price paid by people living in Santiago.

The protests in Aysén are reminiscent of those organised in January 2011 against the hike in gas prices in the southern region of Magallanes, 3,000 km south of

Santiago, which ushered in demonstrations on a scale unprecedented in this country since the protests led by students at the time of the return to democracy in 1990.

"The demonstrations in Magallanes were a tremendous incentive and a source of hope," said López. They showed that "a determined, organised and mobilised people can fight effectively to counter the imbalance between central power and people who live in outlying regions."

In recent past, the government of President Sebastián Piñera confirmed regional Governor Pilar Cuevas, who is criticised by the protestors, as the sole official interlocutor to negotiate an end to the crisis, when all the signs indicated that the ministers of energy, finance and transport would travel to the area.

Energy Minister Rodrigo Álvarez explained that the purpose of the decision was to coordinate the action of the executive branch in the light of the escalating protests in the region, and he said special measures were being considered.

The finance minister, Felipe Larraín, whose presence was demanded by the protestors, reiterated that it was not necessary

for him to travel to Aysén to secure improvements, and accused the leaders of the protests of being "obstinate."

In the meantime, the number of roadblocks is increasing, the threat of shortages is growing and confrontations with the police are becoming increasingly violent.

According to the protest organisers in Aysén, more than 150 people have been injured in clashes with the police. One of them, Teófilo Haros, lost an eye when a police officer allegedly shot him at point-blank range.

"The repression was to be expected, it was clear when the students were repressed (during the 2011 protests) that this (rightwing) government is a continuation of the (1973-1990) dictatorship," said Angulo.

The political right was "just waiting to get back into power to batter the people, but the battle is just beginning, and the government will be responsible for whatever happens," he warned.

According to López, "repression has reached such a level that instances of actual militarisation have occurred, and some nights the police go into neighbourhoods where there are no barricades and launch tear gas

canisters, arrest and beat up anyone they come across, and shoot pellets right at people's faces," he complained.

The interior minister, Rodrigo Hinzpeter, said that the Aysén protestors "had gone too far," and that the acts of violence "could have been avoided."

The Chilean chapter of Amnesty International expressed concern over the reports of beatings and ill-treatment of detained persons and the lack of access to medical care.

"Once again we are seeing, in the context of a social protest, a great number of complaints over excessive use of force, unwarranted use of tear gas, the use of metal pellets and possibly arbitrary detentions," said Ana Piquer, the executive director of Amnesty International-Chile.

For its part, the state National Institute of Human Rights reported it was "monitoring the situation and following the development of the demonstrations and police actions in the area, about which human rights observers have lodged complaints."

Several teams of journalists posted in Aysén were "directly attacked by the police" while reporting on the clashes, a national radio broadcaster said.





TIBETANS PROTEST

Tibet Protests

China Calls Immolators Criminals, Outcasts, Mentally ILL



* Alexa Olsen

Tibetan Buddhist monks wait to greet the Dalai Lama, unseen, during a special prayer session in Dharamsala, India.

Chinese officials sought to discredit Tibetans who have set themselves on fire to protest China's rule over their region, calling them outcasts, criminals and mentally ill people manipulated by the exiled Dalai Lama.

The Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader has said he does not encourage the self-immolations. However, Chinese officials have sought to portray the past year's wave of about two dozen immolations — as the result of outside orchestration rather than what activists say is local unrest over the government's suppression of Tibetan religion and culture.

Many of the protesters have

been linked to a Buddhist monastery in the mountainous Aba prefecture of Sichuan province.

"Some of the suicides are committed by clerics returning to lay life, and they all have criminal records or suspicious activities.

China has confirmed some but not all of the approximately 25 immolations reported by overseas media and Tibetan rights advocates since last year

"They have a very bad reputation in society," said Wu Zegang, an ethnic Tibetan who is the government's top administrator in Aba.

Wu told reporters in Beijing that the self-immolations were

"orchestrated and supported" by the Dalai Lama and Tibetan independence forces. He said that before setting themselves on fire, the immolators shouted "independence for Tibet and other slogans that aim to divide the nation."

The Dalai Lama has praised the courage of those who engage in self-immolation and has attributed the protests to what he calls China's "cultural genocide" in Tibet. But he also says he does not encourage the protests, noting that they could invite an even harsher crackdown.

At a meeting of the Tibetan delegation to the National People's Congress in Beijing, a reporter asked whether the region's leaders thought the Dalai Lama should himself self-immolate, referencing alleged online calls for the spiritual leader to do so.

Padma Choling, Tibet's governor said he didn't think anyone

should set themselves on fire.

"No matter who self-immolates, it is an inhuman and immoral act," Choling said. "If the Dalai immolates himself, that's his business and has nothing to do with me but regardless of who it is, I do not advocate it. Life is precious. I do not hope that anyone will self-immolate. What's the point?"

The most recent immolations in Aba occurred just days ago. A 32-year-old mother of four set herself ablaze and died in Aba and an 18-year-old identified only as Dorje died after self-immolating according to earlier reports from the International Committee for Tibet and U.S. broadcaster Radio Free Asia.

The official Xinhua News Agency confirmed the immolation of another woman in neighboring Gansu province, but said that the 20-year-old student may have been pushed to suicide because of pressure at school and because of a head injury.

Xinhua quoted local officials in Gansu province as saying that Tsering Kyi had been hospitalized after hitting her head on a radiator and suffered fainting spells prior to setting herself on fire.

Xinhua said her school grades started to slip, "which put a lot of pressure on her and made her lose her courage for life and study."

China has confirmed some but not all of the approximately 25 immolations reported by overseas media and Tibetan rights advocates since last year, and there are competing tallies of immolations and deaths from different groups.

Li Changping, a member of the Communist Party committee that governs Sichuan, who recently visited Aba and Sichuan's Ganzi prefecture, where several immolations have also been reported, said that "about 20 or so" people have set themselves on fire in Sichuan in the past two years.

Such acts show no signs of abating, even as China ratchets up security and seals off Tibetan areas

to outsiders, making it impossible to know what is actually happening inside.

China blames supporters of the exiled Tibetan Buddhist leader the Dalai Lama for encouraging the self-immolations and anti-government protests that have led to the deaths of an unknown number of Tibetans at the hands of police.

Authorities have reportedly detained and forced into re-education classes hundreds of Tibetans who went to India to receive religious instruction from the Dalai Lama, who is accused by China of campaigning to split Tibet from the rest of China. The Dalai Lama says he is seeking only increased autonomy for Tibet.

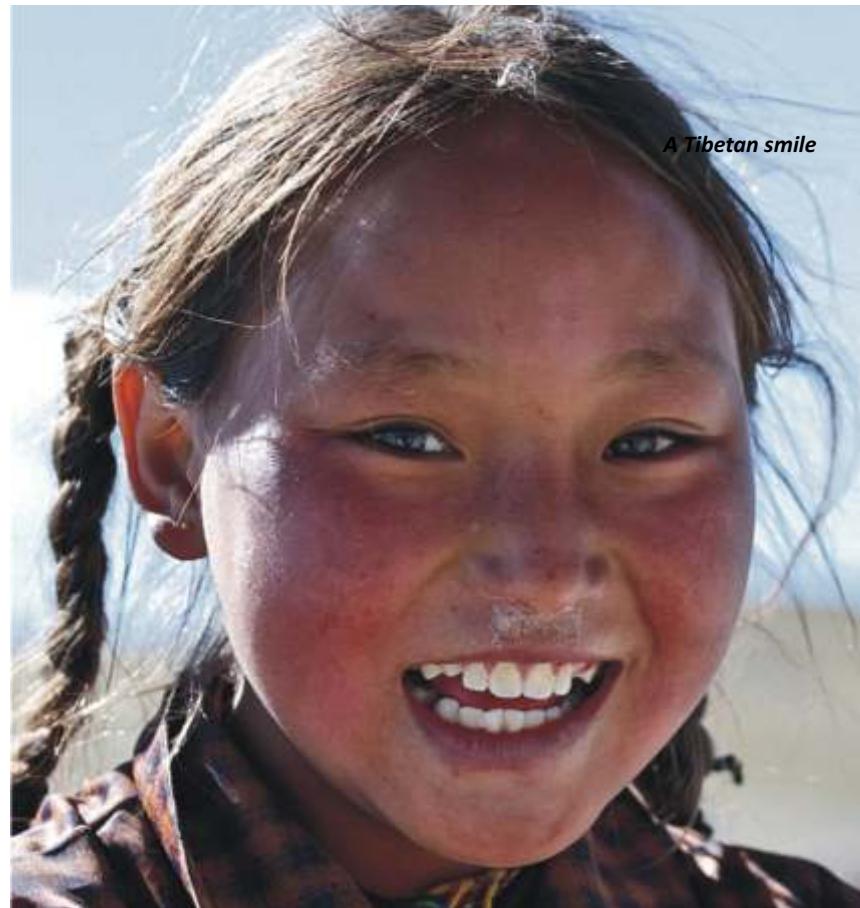
China says it treats minority groups such as Tibetans fairly, and pours tens of billions of dollars into improving living conditions in their areas.

This is a sensitive time for Tibet, and for all of China. China's annual legislative session, a time

when security is tightened across the country, has begun. It is also a time when Tibetans mark significant anniversaries, including that of the unsuccessful 1959 revolt that caused the Dalai Lama to flee, and deadly anti-government riots that rocked the Tibetan capital Lhasa in 2008.

Leaders from Xinjiang also struck a hard line on the violent separatism that periodically hits the Central Asian border region. They said stability was a precondition for Xinjiang's No. 1 goal – development – and vowed to smash what regional Communist Party secretary Zhang Chunxian called "rotten eggs and bad elements."

"When an event occurs, we resolutely smash it. When an incident occurs, we also smash it," Zhang told reporters after the Xinjiang delegation met to discuss how the government's latest policies will raise employment and improve the region's economy.





The Global Crises of Capitalism

Whose Crises, Who Profits?

The advocates of global crises argue that beginning in 2007 and continuing to the present, the world capitalist system has collapsed and recovery is a mirage



The sculpture of a sinking boat which sits in London's Thames river in front of the city's business center, Sept. 30, 2008, seemed an apt metaphor for state of the global financial market.

* Prof. James Petras



Analysis

Introduction: From the Financial Times to the far left, tons of ink has been spilt writing about some variant of the “Crises of Global Capitalism”. While writers differ in the causes, consequences and cures, according to their ideological lights, there is a common agreement that “the crises” threatens to end the capitalist system as we know it.

There is no doubt that, between 2008-2009, the capitalist system in Europe and the United States suffered a severe shock that shook the foundations of its financial system and threatened to bankrupt its ‘leading sectors’.

However, I will argue the ‘crises of capitalism’ was turned into a ‘crises of labor’. Finance capital, the principle detonator of the crash and crises, recovered, the capitalist class as a whole was strengthened, and most important of all, it utilized the political, social, ideological conditions created as a result of “the crises” to further consolidate their dominance and exploitation over the

rest of society.

In other words, the ‘crises of capital’ has been converted into a strategic advantage for furthering the most fundamental interests of capital: the enlargement of profits, the consolidation of capitalist rule, the greater concentration of ownership, the deepening of inequalities between capital and labor and the creation of huge reserves of labor to further augment their profits.

Furthermore, the notion of a homogeneous global crisis of capitalism overlooks profound differences in performance and conditions, between countries, classes, and age cohorts.

The Global Crises Thesis: The Economic and Social Argument

The advocates of global crises argue that beginning in 2007 and continuing to the present, the world capitalist system has collapsed and recovery is a mirage. They cite stagnation and continuing recession in North America and the Eurozone. They offer GDP data hovering between negative to zero growth. Their argument is backed by data citing double digit unemployment in both regions. They frequently correct the official data which understates the percentage unemployed by excluding part-time, long-term unemployed workers and others. The ‘crises’ argument is strengthened by citing the millions of homeowners who have been evicted by the banks, the sharp increase in poverty and destitution accompanying job loses, wage reductions and the elimination or reduction of social services. “Crises” is also associated with the massive increase in bankruptcies of mostly small and medium size businesses and regional banks.

The Global Crises: The Loss of Legitimacy

Critics, especially in the financial press, write of a “legitimacy crises of capitalism” citing polls showing substantial majorities questioning the injustices of the capitalist system, the vast and growing inequalities and the rigged rules by which banks exploit their size (“too big to fail”) to raid the Treasury at the expense of social programs.

In summary the advocates of the thesis of a “Global Crises of Capitalism” make a strong case, demonstrating the profound and pervasive destructive effects of the capitalist system on the lives of the great majority of humanity.

The problem is that a ‘crises of humanity’ (more specifically of salary of wage workers) is not the same as a crisis of the capitalist system. In fact as we shall argue below : growing social adversity, declining income and employment

has been a major factor facilitating the rapid and massive recovery of the profit margins of most large scale corporations.

Moreover, the thesis of a ‘global’ crises of capitalism amalgamates disparate economies, countries, classes and age cohorts with sharply divergent performances at different historical moments.

Global Crises or Uneven and Unequal Development?

It is utterly foolish to argue for a “global crises” when several of the major economies in the world economy did not suffer a major downturn and others recovered and expanded rapidly. China and India did not suffer even a recession. Even during the worst years of the Euro-US decline, the Asian giants grew on average about 8%. Latin America’s economies especially the major agro-mineral export countries (Brazil, Argentina, Chile) with diversified markets, especially in Asia, paused briefly (in 2009) before assuming moderate to rapid growth (between 3% to 7%) from 2010-2012.

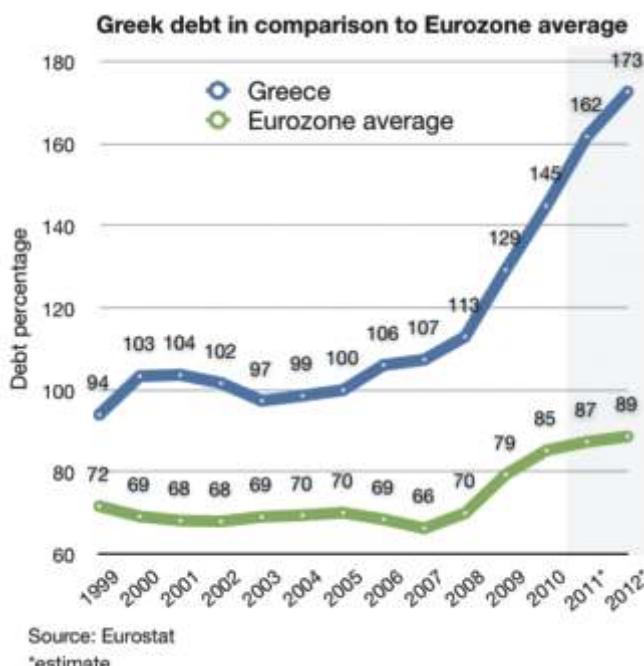
By aggregating economic data from the Euro-zone as a whole the advocates of global crises, overlooked the enormous disparities in performance within the zone. While Southern Europe wallows in a deep sustained depression, by any measure, from 2008 to the foreseeable future, German exports, in 2011, set a record of a trillion Euros; its trade surplus reached 158 billion Euros, after a 155 billion euro surpluses in 2010. (BBC News, Feb. 8, 2012).

While aggregate Eurozone unemployment reaches 10.4%, the internal differences defy any notion of a “general crises”. Unemployment in Holland is 4.9%, Austria 4.1% and Germany 5.5% with employer claims of widespread skilled labor shortages in key growth sectors. On the other hand

in exploited southern Europe unemployment runs to depression levels, Greece 21%, Spain 22.9%, Ireland 14.5%, and Portugal 13.6% (FT 1/19/12, p.7). In other words, “the crises” does not adversely affect some economies, that in fact profit from their market dominance and techno-financial strength over dependent, debtor and backward economies. To speak of a ‘global crises’, obscures the fundamental dominant and exploitative relations, that facilitate ‘recovery’ and growth of the elite economies over and against their competitors and client states. In addition global crises theorists wrongly amalgamated crises ridden, financial-speculative economies (US, England) with dynamic productive export economies (Germany, China).

The second problem with the thesis of a “global crises” is that it overlooks profound internal differences between age cohorts. In several European countries youth unemployment (16-25) runs between 30 to 50% (Spain 48.7%, Greece 47.2%, Slovakia 35.6%, Italy 31%, Portugal 30.8% and Ireland 29%) while in Germany, Austria and Holland youth unemployment runs to Germany 7.8%, Austria 8.2% and Netherlands 8.6% (Financial Times 2/1/12, p2). These differences underlie the reason why there is not a ‘global youth movement’ of “indignant” and “occupiers”. Five-fold differences between unemployed youth is not conducive to ‘international’ solidarity. The





concentration of high youth unemployment figures explains the uneven development of mass-street protests especially centered in Southern Europe. It also explains why the northern Euro-American “anti-globalization” movement is largely a lifeless forum which attracts academic pontification on the “global capitalist crises” and the impotence of the “Social Forums” are unable to attract millions of unemployed youth from Southern Europe. They are more attracted to direct action. Globalist theorists overlook the specific way in which the mass of unemployed young workers are exploited in their dependent debt ridden countries. They ignore the specific way they are ruled and repressed by center-left and rightist capitalist parties. The contrast is most evident in the winter of 2012. Greek workers are pressured to accept a 20% cut in minimum wages while in Germany workers are demanding a 6% increase.

If the ‘crises’ of capitalism is manifested in specific regions, so too does it affect different age/racial sectors of the wage and salaries classes. The unemployment rates of youth to older workers vary enormously: in Italy it is 3.5/1,

Greece 2.5/1, Portugal 2.3/1, Spain 2.1/1 and Belgium 2.9/1. In Germany it is 1.5/1 (FT 2/1/12). In other words because of the higher levels of unemployment among youth they have a greater propensity for direct action ‘against the system’; while older workers with higher levels of employment (and unemployment benefits) have shown a greater propensity to rely on the ballot box and engage in limited strikes over job and pay related issues. The vast concentration of unemployed among young workers means they form the ‘available core’ for sustained action; but it also means that they can only achieve limited unity of action with the older working class experiencing single digit unemployment.

However, it is also true that the great mass of unemployment amongst the youth provides a formidable weapon, in the hands of employers to threaten to replace employed older workers. Today, capitalists constantly resort to using the unemployed to lower wages and benefits and to intensify exploitation (dubbed to “increase productivity”) to increase profit margins. Far from being simply an indicator of ‘capitalist crises’, high levels of unemployment have served along with other factors to increase the rate of profit, accumulate income, widen income inequalities which augments the consumption of luxury goods for the capitalist class: the sales of luxury cars and watches is booming.

Class Crises: The Counter-Thesis

Contrary to the “global capitalist crises” theorists, a substantial amount of data has

surfaced which refutes its assumptions. A recent study reports “US corporate profits are higher as a share of gross domestic product than at any time since 1950” (FT 1/30/12). US companies cash balances have never been greater, thanks to intensified exploitation of workers, and a multi-tiered wage systems in which new hires work for a fraction of what older workers receive (thanks to agreements signed by ‘door mat’ labor bosses).

The “crises of capitalism” ideologues have ignored the financial reports of the major US corporations. According to General Motors 2011 report to its stockholders, they celebrated the greatest profit ever, turning a profit of \$7.6 billion, surpassing the previous record of \$6.7 billion in 1997. A large part of these profits results from the freezing of its underfunded US pension funds and extracting greater productivity from fewer workers-in other words intensified exploitation-and cutting hourly wages of new hires by half.(Earthlink News 2/16/12)

Moreover the increased importance of imperialist exploitation is evident as the share of US corporate profits extracted overseas keeps rising at the expense of employee income growth. In 2011, the US economy grew by 1.7%, but median wages fell by 2.7%. According to the financial press “the profit margins of the S and P 500 leapt from 6% to 9% of the GDP in the past three years,a share last achieved three generations ago. At roughly a third, the foreign share of these profits has more than doubled since 2000”(FT 2/13/12 P9. If this is a “capitalist crises” then who needs a capitalist boom ?

Surveys of top corporations reveal that US companies are holding 1.73 trillion in cash, “the fruits of record high profit margins” (FT 1/30/12 p.6). These record profit margins result from mass firings which have led to intensifying exploitation of the remaining workers. Also negligible

federal interest rates and easy access to credit allow capitalists to exploit vast differentials between borrowing and lending and investing. Lower taxes and cuts in social programs result in a growing cash pile for corporations. Within the corporate structure, income goes to the top where senior executives pay themselves huge bonuses. Among the leading S and P 500 corporations the proportion of income that goes to dividends for stockholders is the lowest since 1900 (FT 1/30/12, p.6).

A real capitalist crisis would adversely affect profit margins, gross earnings and the accumulation of “cash piles”. Rising profits are being hoarded because as capitalists profit from intense exploitation, mass consumption stagnates.

Crises theorists confuse what is clearly the degrading of labor, the savaging of living and working conditions and even the stagnation of the economy, with a ‘crises’ of capital: when the capitalist class increases its profit margins, hoards trillions, it is not in crises. The key point is that the ‘crises of labor’ is a major stimulus for the recovery of capitalist profits. We cannot generalize from one to the other. No doubt there was a moment of capitalist crises (2008-2009) but thanks to the capitalist state’s unprecedented massive transfer of wealth from the public treasury to the capitalist class – Wall Street banks in the first instance – the corporate sector recovered, while the workers and the rest of the economy remained in crises, went bankrupt and out of work.

From Crises to Recovery of Profits: 2008/9 to 2012

The key to the ‘recovery’ of corporate profits had little to do with the business cycle and all to do with Wall Street’s large scale takeover and pillage of the US Treasury.

Between 2009-2012 hundreds of former Wall Street executives, managers and investment advisers seized all the major decision-making positions in the Treasury Department and channeled trillions of dollars into leading financial and corporate coffers. They intervened financially troubled corporations, like General Motors, imposing major wage cuts and dismissals of thousands of workers.

Wall Streeters in Treasury elaborated the doctrine of “Too Big to Fail” to justify the massive transfer of wealth. The entire speculative edifice built in part by a 234 fold rise in foreign exchange trading volume between 1977-2010 was restored (FT 1/10/12, p.7). The new doctrine argued that the state’s

and financing are complemented by hundreds of billions in tax concessions, leading to unprecedented fiscal deficits and the growth of massive social inequalities. The pay of CEO’s as a multiple of the average worker went from 24 to 1 in 1965 to 325 in 2010 (FT 1/9/12, p.5).

The ruling class flaunts their wealth and power aided and abetted by the White House and Treasury. In the face of popular hostility to Wall Street pillage of Treasury, Obama went through the sham of asking Treasury to impose a cap on the multi-million dollar bonuses that the CEO’s running bailed out banks awarded themselves. Wall Streeters in Treasury refused to enforce the executive order, the CEO’s got billions in bonuses in 2011. President Obama went along, thinking he conned the US public with his phony gesture, while he reaped millions in campaign funds from Wall Street!

The reason Treasury has been taken over by Wall Street is that in the 1990’s and 2000’s, banks became a leading force in Western economies. Their share of the GDP rose sharply (from 2% in the 1950’s to 8% in 2010” (FT 1/10/12, p.7).

Today it is “normal operating procedure” for President’s to appoint Wall Streeter’s to all key economic positions; and it is ‘normal’ for these same officials to pursue policies that maximize Wall Street profits and eliminate any risk of failure no matter how risky and corrupt their practitioners.

The Revolving Door: From Wall Street to Treasury and Return

Effectively the relation between Wall Street and Treasury has become a “revolving door”: from Wall Street to the Treasury Department to Wall Street. Private bankers take appointments in Treasury (or are recruited) to ensure



People walk along Wall Street past the New York Stock Exchange

first and principle priority is to return the financial system to profitability at any and all cost to society, citizens, taxpayers and workers. “Too Big to Fail” is a complete repudiation of the most basic principle of the “free market” capitalist system: the idea that those capitalists who lose bear the consequences; that each investor or CEO is responsible for their action. Financial capitalists no longer needed to justify their activity in terms of any contribution to the growth of the economy or “social utility”. According to the current rulers, Wall Street must be saved because it is Wall Street, even if the rest of the economy and people sink (FT 1/20/12, p.11). State bailouts

that all resources and policies Wall Street needs are granted with maximum effort, with the least hindrance from citizens, workers or taxpayers. Wall Streeters in Treasury give highest priority to Wall Street survival, recovery and expansion of profits. They block any regulations or restrictions on bonuses or a repeat of past swindles.

Wall Streeters ‘make a reputation’ in Treasury and then return to the private sector in higher positions, as senior advisers and partners. A Treasury appointment is a ladder up the Wall Street hierarchy. Treasury is a filling station to the Wall Street Limousine: ex Wall Streeters fill up the tank, check the oil and then jump in the front seat and zoom to a lucrative job and let the filling station (public) pay the bill.

Approximately 774 officials (and counting) departed from Treasury between January 2009 and August 2011 (FT 2/6/12, p. 7). All provided lucrative “services” to their future Wall Street bosses finding it a great way to re-enter private finance at a higher more lucrative position.

A report in the Financial Times Feb. 6, 2012 (p. 7) entitled appropriately “Manhattan Transfer” provides typical illustrations of the Treasury-Wall Street “revolving door”.

Ron Bloom went from a junior banker at Lazard to Treasury, helping to engineer the trillion dollar bailout of Wall Street and returned to Lazard as a senior adviser. Jake Siewert went from Wall Street to becoming a top aide to Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner and then graduated to Goldman Sachs, having served to undercut any cap on Wall Street bonuses.

Michael Mundaca, the most senior tax official in the Obama regime came from the Street and then went on to a highly lucrative post in Ernst and Young a corporate accounting firm, having help write down corporate taxes during his stint in “public office”.

Eric Solomon, a senior tax official in the infamous corporate tax free Bush Administration made the same switch. Jeffrey Goldstein who Obama put in charge of financial regulation and succeeded in undercutting popular demands, returned to his previous employer Hellman and Friedman with the appropriate promotion for services rendered.

Stuart Levey who ran AIPAC sanctions against Iran policies out of Treasury’s so-called “anti- terrorist agency” was hired as general counsel by HSBC to defend it from investigations for money laundering (FT 2/6/12, p. 7). In this case Levey moved from promoting Israels’ war aims to defending an international bank accused of laundering billions in Mexican cartel money. Levey, by the way spent so much time pursuing Israels’ Iran agenda that he totally ignored the Mexican drug cartels’ billion dollar money laundering cross-border operations for the better part of a decade.

Lew Alexander a senior advisor to Geithner in designing the trillion dollar bail out is now a senior official in Nomura, the Japanese bank. Lee Sachs went from Treasury to Bank Alliance, (his own “lending platform”). James Millstein went from Lazard to Treasury bailed out AIG insurance run into the ground by Greenberg and then established

his own private investment firm taking a cluster of well-connected Treasury officials with him.

The Goldman-Sachs-Treasury “revolving door” continues today. In addition to past and current Treasury heads Paulson and Geithner, former Goldman partner Mark Patterson was recently appointed Geithner’s “chief of staff”. Tim Bowler former Goldman managing director was appointed by Obama to head up the capital markets division.

It should be abundantly clear that elections, parties and the billion dollar electoral campaigns have little to do with “democracy” and more to do with selecting the President and legislators who will appoint non-elected Wall Streeters to make all the strategic economic decisions for the 99% of Americans. The policy results of the Wall Street-Treasury revolving door are clear and provide us with a framework for understanding why the “profit crises” has vanished and the crises of labor has deepened.

The “Policy Achievements” of the Revolving Door

The Wall Street-Treasury conundrum (WSTC) has performed herculean and audacious labor for finance and corporate capital. In the face of universal condemnation of Wall Street by the vast majority of the public for its swindles, bankruptcies, job losses and



Protestors against fiscal bailout on Capitol Hill, Washington, USA



mortgage foreclosures, the WSTC publically backed the swindlers with a trillion dollar bailout. A daring move on the face of it, that is, if majorities and elections counted for anything. Equally important the WSTC dumped the entire “free market” ideology that justified capitalist profits based on its “risks”, by imposing the new dogma of “too big to fail” in which the state treasury guarantees profits even when capitalists face bankruptcy, providing they are billion dollar firms. The WSTC dumped the capitalist principle of “fiscal responsibility” in favor of hundreds of billions of dollars in tax cuts for the corporate-financial ruling class, running up record peace time budget deficits and then having the audacity to blame the social programs supported by popular majorities. (Is it any wonder these ex-Treasury officials get such lucrative offers in the private sector when they leave public office?) Thirdly, Treasury and the Central Bank (Federal Reserve) provide near zero interest loans that guarantees big profits to private financial institution which borrow low from the Fed and lend high, (including back to the Government!) especially in purchasing overseas Government and corporate bonds. They receive anywhere from four to ten times the

interest rates they pay. In other words the taxpayers provide a monstrous subsidy for Wall Street speculation. With the added proviso, that today these speculative activities are now insured by the Federal government, under the “Too Big to Fail” doctrine.

Under the ideology of “regaining competitiveness” the Obama economic team (from Treasury, the Federal Reserve, Commerce, Labor) has encouraged employers to engage in the most aggressive shedding of workers in modern history. Increased productivity and profitability is not the result of “innovation” as Obama, Geithner and Bernache claim; it is a product of a state labor policy which deepens inequality by holding down wages and raising profit margins. Fewer workers producing more commodities. Cheap credit and bailouts for the billion dollar banks and no refinancing for households and small and medium size firms leading to bankruptcies, buyouts and ‘consolidation’ namely, greater concentration of ownership. As a result the mass market stagnates but corporate and bank profits reach record levels. According to financial experts under the WSTC “new order” “bankers are a protected class who enjoy bonuses regardless of performance, while relying on the

taxpayer to socialize their losses” (FT 1/9/12, p.5). In contrast labor, under Obama’s economic team, faces the greatest insecurity and most threatening situation in recent history: “in what is unquestionably novel is the ferocity with which US business sheds labor now, that executive pay and incentive schemes are linked to short term performance targets” (FT 1/9/2012, p. 5).

Economic Consequences of State Policies

Because of the Wall Street “takeover” of strategic economic policy positions in Government we can now understand the paradox of record profit margins in the midst of economic stagnation. We can comprehend why the capitalist crises has, at least temporarily, been replaced by a profound crises of labor. Within the power matrix of Wall Street-Treasury Dept. all the old corrupt and exploitative practices that led up to the 2008-2009 crash have returned: multi-billion dollar bonuses for investment bankers who led the economy into the crash; banks “snapping up billions of dollars of bundled mortgage products that resemble the sliced and diced debt some blame for the financial crises” (FT 2/8/12, p.1). The difference today is that these speculative

instruments are now backed by the taxpayer (Treasury). The supremacy of the financial structure of the pre-crisis US economy is in place and thriving ... "only" the US labor force has sunk into greater unemployment, declining living standards, widespread insecurity and profound discontent.

Conclusion: The Case Against Capitalism and for Socialism

The profound crises of 2008-2009 provoked a spate of questioning of the capitalist system, even among many of its most ardent advocates (FT 1/8/12 to 1/30/12) criticism abounded. 'Reform, regulation and redistribution' were the fare of financial columnists. Yet the ruling economic and governing class took no heed. The workers are controlled by door mat union leaders and lack a political instrument. The rightwing pseudo populists embrace an even more virulent pro capitalist agenda, calling for across the board elimination of social programs and corporate taxes. Inside the state a major transformation has taken place which effectively smashed any link between capitalism and social welfare, between government decision-making and the electorate. Democracy has been replaced by a corporate state, founded on the revolving door between Treasury and Wall Street, which funnels public wealth to private financial coffers. The breach between the welfare of society and the operations of the financial architecture is definitive.

The activity of Wall Street has

no social utility; its practitioners enrich themselves with no redeeming activity. Capitalism has demonstrated conclusively, that it thrives through the degradation of tens of millions of workers and rejects the endless pleas for reform and regulation. Real existing capitalism cannot be harnessed to raising living standards or ensuring employment free of fear of large scale, sudden and brutal firings. Capitalism, as we experience it over the past decade and for the foreseeable future, is in polar opposition to social equality, democratic decision-making and collective welfare.

Record capitalist profits are accrued by pillaging the public treasury, denying pensions and prolonging 'work till you die', bankrupting most families with exorbitant private corporate medical and educational costs.

More than ever in recent history, record majorities reject the rule by and for the bankers and the corporate ruling class (FT 2/6/12, p. 6). Inequalities between the top 1% and the bottom 99% have reached record proportions. CEO's earn 325 times that of an average worker (FT 1/9/12, p.5). Since the state has become the 'foundation' of the economy of the Wall Street predators, and since 'reform' and regulation has dismally failed, it is time to consider a fundamental systemic transformation that begins via a political revolution which forcibly ousts the non-elected financial and corporate elites running the state for their own

exclusive interests. The entire political process, including elections, is profoundly corrupt: each level of office has its own inflated price tag. The current Presidential contest will cost \$2 to \$3 billion dollars to determine which of the servants of Wall Street will preside over the revolving door.

Socialism is no longer the scare word of the past. Socialism involves the large-scale reorganization of the economy, the transfer of trillions from the coffers of predator classes' of no social utility to the public welfare. This change can finance a productive and innovative economy based on work and leisure, study and sport. Socialism replaces the everyday terror of dismissal with the security that brings confidence, assurance and respect to the workplace. Workplace democracy is at the heart of the vision of 21st century socialism. We begin by nationalizing the banks and eliminating Wall Street. Financial institutions are redesigned to create productive employment, to serve social welfare and to preserve the environment. Socialism would begin the transition, from a capitalist economy directed by predators and swindlers and a state at their command, toward an economy of public ownership under democratic control.

*James Petras most recent book is *The Arab Revolt and the Imperialist Counter Attack* (Clarity Press 2012) 2nd edition.*

In a decentralized economy people do not have to leave their homes to work in an industry, and consequently they are saved from the expenditure of maintaining two establishments. Moreover, decentralization increases the possibility of saving labour, because people can earn their livelihood while simultaneously taking care of their household responsibilities. This arrangement is not possible under capitalism. Capitalism will never support decentralization, because capitalist production exists to maximize profits. Centralization means industry for profit, while decentralization means industry for consumption. PROUT's approach, which will be supported by all rational people, is production for consumption. PROUT's maxim is, "Production for consumption, not production for profiteering."

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

ACTIVITIES

PBI Candidates Contesting Delhi Municipal Corporation Elections



Aflatun Saifi

Proutist Bloc India, a political party registered with the Election Commission of India, has fielded two candidates in the ongoing Municipal Corporation Elections in Delhi. Aflatun has filed nomination papers from Subhas Mohalla, Ward no. 257 constituency and Manju Devi, from Libas Pur, Ward no. 18, constituency.

Both candidates have very clean image in their respective constituency and are well known for their social welfare activities.



Manju Devi

PBI Cadre Training Programme in Vidarbha Prout Is The Cry Of Suffering Humanity, Explain Trainers



Ghatanji (Yavatmal, Maharashtra) : Proutists of the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra state of India assembled here under the leadership of Madhukar Nistane for cadre training programme in the premises of Dilasa situated in Chaurabha village of Yavatmal district. The location of the premises was befitting for the training exercise since it was situated in the beautiful calm serene lap of the Nature.

Trainees amply benefited from the classes which spanned over three continuous days from 18th to 20th March 2012.

The national chairman of PBI , Subhas Chand Tyagi , explained the historical need of PBI. He vividly described the political scenario of India and said that there is immediate need of polarisation between moral and immoral forces active in politics today. What we find is immorals are fighting against immorals leading to the victory of bigger immoral faces which is evident from the rising graph of corruption and scandals in the country. PBI will reverse this trend by organising and uniting moralists in politics and consolidate moralist forces for the impending battle with their adversaries.

Naiim Khan, a veteran Proutist from Bilaspur of Chattisgarh state, explained the salient features of socio-economic concepts of Prout and said without the implementation of Prout , suffering humanity will continue to suffer. He said the Capitalism as well as Communism are reactionary theories and therefore they have utterly failed to eradicate poverty and remove exploitation. He also explained how the economic democracy philosophy of Prout will be able to guarantee minimum requirements of life to all. Khan also narrated the rewarding experiences of running a Consumer Cooperative which he has started at Bilaspur. It is worth mentioning that Cooperative is the core economic enterprise of Proutistic economic system.



Acarya Santosananda Avadhuta gave classes on the implementation of Prout. He said Proutist government will abolish poverty line. Instead it will impose cap on wealth. No one will be allowed to accumulate beyond a limit. There will be full guarantee of existence to every body. Proutist political system will make everybody economically self-sufficient.

Didi Ananda Hitvrata gave clarion call to womenfolk to come forward and establish their lost rights and live a life of dignity and prosperity. She asked them not to lag behind men in any department of activity.

The programme was successfully conducted due to the untiring efforts of Madhukar Nistane, Irfan, Manoj and Gyaneshwarji.



2012 European Prout Convention

ANANDA GAORII, DENMARK

July 17 – 22 (And Activist Training 22-26 July)

Through 5 days of collective living, meditating, workshopping and planning, the aim of this year's Prout Convention is to strengthen our ability to create, live and promote the Prout alternative.

The costs for the convention:

- Singles €185 • Couples €310 • Students-pensioners, and unemployed €140
- Portugal, Spain, Iceland, Greece, €140 • Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania,
 • Hungary, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Romania €100
- From the Balkan countries and other sectors, concessions will be available
 when registering in advance or at registration.

Site: Ananda Gaorii, Holbækvej 56A, 4560 Vig, Denmark Tel. +45 47314731

Contact: Prout Global Office Email: proutconvention12@gmail.com Tel.: +45 33 24 12 44 +45 33 25 66 71

Please Register. Keep checking www.proutglobe for updates on the program.

One day “Cadre Training Program on PROUT” at Dhauj, Dist. Faridabad, Haryana



One day “Cadre Training Program on PROUT” was held on 25th March, 2012 at Adarsh Senior Secondary School, Dhauj, Dist. Faridabad, Haryana. The program was attended by more than 100 participants in jam packed hall which erupted in thunderous applause when Acarya Santoshanandji told that PROUT advocates for RICHNESS LINE (Amiri Rekha) in place of POVERTY LINE (Garibi Rekha). He emphasized on morality and persuaded trainees for practicing meditation.

Next trainer Subash Chand Tyagi gave the data of rampant corruption, fund embezzlement and malafide economic policies which is making rich richer and poor poorer. He further proved with data that India has enough natural resources and food grain to feed and provide employment for more than 1200 million people comfortably.

Rajesh Singh emphasized the first economic principle, guarantee of minimum requirements and no accumulation of personal wealth without the approval of Samaj(society). He motivated the participants to rise to the occasion and overthrow the present system to build a new society based on Neo humanistic values.

Hardat Adarsh was selected President, Palwal District. Suresh Saini, the District President of Faridabad and Karan Saini, Vice President of Faridabad, Balram, General Secretary, Faridabad.

Program was a great success under the leadership of SC Tyagi and aptly executed by Yuvraj Singh Raghav. Presence of Manoj Kumar, Chairman-Haryana State Committee, RP Bainsla, Chairman- Delhi State Committee, Pranav Koul, Publication Secretary- National Committee, Bhojraj, Santlal, Aflatoon, Manju Saini, etc. was inspiring for the trainees.





I Will Move Onward With Firm Steps

TOMÁRE BHÁLOBESECHI NIRDVIDHÁ--Y 2
KANTÁK MUKUTÍ PARI----- 2
PATH SE JEMAN HOK DRIDHÁ PADE CALE JÁBO 2
TOMÁPÁNE UPAL PARI-----,
KANTÁK MUKUTÍ PARI----- 2

ÁJKONO KÁJ NAY TAVA KÁJE PATH CALÁ 2
ÁJKONO KATHÁ NAY SHUDHU TAVA KATHÁ BOLÁ 2
PRABAL PRATÁP DHÁRÍ KŚAMATÁR ADHIKÁRI 2
DÁ-NAVE TU-CCHA KARI-----
2, KANTÁK MUKUTÍ PARI----- 2

HATAŚHÁR KUĀSHÁYYADI MORE DÍHEKE NEY 2
ÁMÁR PATH CALÁ THEME NÁHI JÁBE TÁY 2
TOMÁR NÁMTÍ NIYE TOMÁRE REKHE HRIDAYE 2
CALE JÁBO KÁRO NÁ DÁRI-----
2, KANTÁK MUKUTÍ PARI----- 2

I love You unwaveringly
Wearing a crown of thorns.
However the path may be
I'll move onward with firm steps
Over rocks, heading towards You.

Today I have no duty other than
Moving on the path for Your work.
Today I have nothing to tell,
Only Your stories are told.
I shall possess might and majesty
Mastering power and dexterity
Denouncing and defeating demons.

If mists of despair envelop me,
Still my march ahead won't pause.
With Your Name
Keeping You in my heart,
I shall move on fearing no one.

(Translated from Bengali original)

ETERNAL SONG OF
The Proutists

- Shrii P.R. Sarkar

*Morality is the demand of the day.
'Prout' - the cry of the suffering humanity.
Wise you be, may not or may,
If sincere, success a certainty.
Fee fy fa fum.
Expel the demons from physical stratum.
Fee fy fa fum.
Expel the exploiters from economic stratum.
Fee fy fa fum.
Expel the brutes from psychic stratum.
Fee fy fa fum.
Expel the parasites from spiritual stratum.
Human body is to serve one and all,
Human mind to attend Cosmic Call,
Human spirit at the altar Supreme,
Surrender and be Supreme.*



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of
PROUTIST BLOC INDIA**

(A Political Party Registered with Election Commission of India)

**July 28th and 29th April, 2012
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