

PROUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis

Marginalisation of the Tribal People of Jharkhand

In a tribal state, and at a police station set up to redress atrocities against scheduled castes and tribes, a glimpse of the indifference, brutality and convenient roadblocks encountered by the marginalised looking for a modicum of justice.

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 spirit 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 Philosophy.

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 and 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

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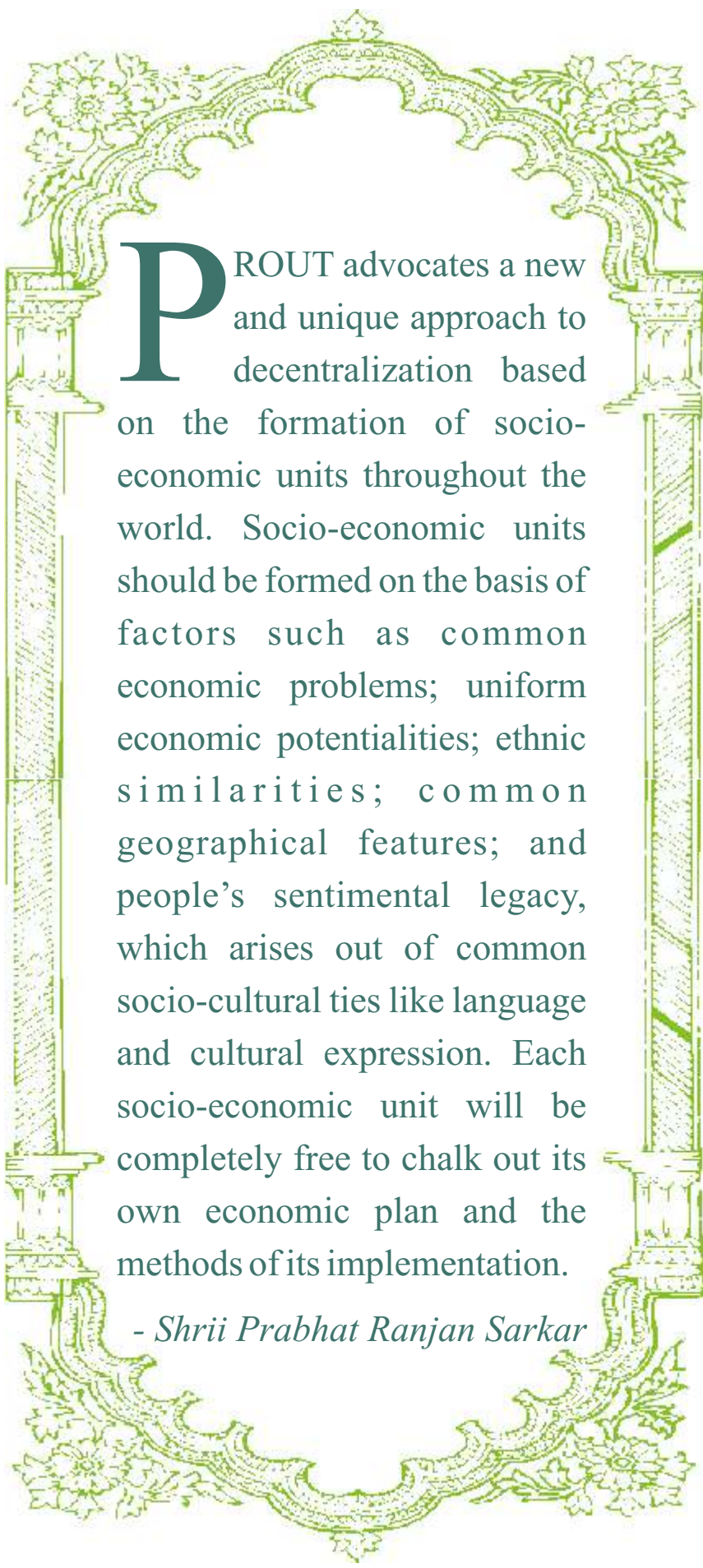
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Fundamental Principles :

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.



PROUT advocates a new and unique approach to decentralization based on the formation of socio-economic units throughout the world. Socio-economic units should be formed on the basis of factors such as common economic problems; uniform economic potentialities; ethnic similarities; common geographical features; and people's sentimental legacy, which arises out of common socio-cultural ties like language and cultural expression. Each socio-economic unit will be completely free to chalk out its own economic plan and the methods of its implementation.

- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

Mafia Writ on Governance Moralists to Confront

Mafia is a term that describes certain family or culturally based organized crime syndicates. The best known of these, and the originator of the term, is the Sicilian Mafia that emerged in the mid 19th century in Sicily, Italy. Today it has come to metaphorically mean criminal organisation. The mafia in India as elsewhere in the world is no exception and more specifically the Mumbai underworld has been a topic of great fascination for Indian filmmakers and audience alike. Besides Mumbai there are mafias active in the rest of India including cities like Kolkata and Bengaluru.

Today mafia has begun to influence government in India as the recent case of an honest and upright young officer Durga Shakti Nagpal illustrates. It is difficult to pinpoint when this began. Initially, they operated clandestinely and common people were not affected as they got what they wanted easily after satisfying greedy politicians, bureaucrats and police. But years of comfortable existence under the protection of the authorities multiplied their numbers and diversified their operations. Now, in full public view, they loot the public of their legitimate due, the exchequer of taxpayers' money and the earth of its vitals.

The first public admission of their operations was made by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1985 when he actually expressed helplessness by saying for every one rupee sent to the common man, only 17 paise reached him. Nearly a quarter century later in October 2009, Planning Commission deputy chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia told a seminar that a panel study on Public Distribution System (through which highly subsidized food grain is distributed to the poor) concluded that only 16 paise out of a rupee reached the people it was meant for. Who took away the colossal amount of money that was spent on paper between 1985 and 2009? In this year's budget, the earmarked amounts are: NREGA Rs 33,000 crore, PM Gramin Sadak Yojana Rs 21,700 crore, mid-day meal scheme Rs 13,215 crore, Integrated Child Development Scheme 17,700 crore, Backward Region Grants Fund Rs 11,500 crore. So, considering the estimates by Rajiv and Ahluwalia, it would mean 85% of these funds too will end up in the pockets of politicians, bureaucrats, police, contractors and the mafia? On July 9, 1993, PM Narasimha Rao constituted a committee under N N Vohra, then home secretary, to "take stock of all information about the activities and links of mafia organizations/elements, for further action". With inputs from Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, and the heads of the CBI, Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), Vohra produced a 100-page report on October 5, 1993. Because of its explosive nature it was immediately suppressed but great public pressure reflected through people's representatives forced the government to table it in Parliament on August 1, 1995.

These few excerpts are real eye openers: "There has been a rapid spread and growth of criminal gangs, armed senas, drug mafias, smuggling gangs, drug peddlers and economic lobbies in the country which have, over the years, developed an extensive network of contacts with bureaucrats/government functionaries at the local levels, politicians, media persons and strategically located individuals in the non-state sector. Some of these syndicates also have international linkages, including foreign intelligence agencies. In certain states like Bihar, Haryana and UP, these gangs enjoy the patronage of local level politicians, cutting across party lines and the protection of governmental functionaries. Some political leaders become the leaders of these gangs, armed senas and over the years get themselves elected to local bodies, state assemblies and the national Parliament. Resultantly, such elements have acquired considerable political clout seriously jeopardizing the smooth functioning of the administration and the safety of life and property of the common man causing a sense of despair and alienation among the people. The big smuggling syndicates having international linkages, have spread into and infected the various economic and financial activities, including hawala transactions, circulation of black money and operations of a vicious parallel economy causing serious damage to the economic fibre of the country. These syndicates have acquired substantial financial and muscle power and social respectability and have successfully corrupted the government machinery at all levels and yield enough influence to make the task of investigating and prosecuting agencies extremely difficult; even the members of the judicial system have not escaped the embrace of the mafia. Certain elements of the mafia have shifted to narcotics, drugs and weapon smuggling and established narco-terrorism networks especially in the states of J&K, Punjab, Gujarat and Maharashtra. The cost of contesting elections has thrown the politician into the lap of these elements and led to a grave compromise by officials of the preventive/detective systems. The virus has spread to almost all the centres in the country, the coastal and the border states have been particularly affected".

How could anyone running the country remain silent after reading the report? With no tangible action taken on the ground to decimate the mafia in every sector and corroding governance like termites, there is little hope of the rupee reaching the poor and honest civil servants getting a pat on their back. Durga Shakti Nagpal and other honest officers in Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh and elsewhere have paid a heavy price.

Prout's founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar has rightly said way back on January 1, 1983, "*More the honest people are firm on morality, more the evil forces will be active against them. So all moralists of the universe should remain organised and confront the evil forces unitedly*".

**HOMELESSNESS**

I have just received an e-copy of your beautifully produced journal courtesy of Alanna Hartzok, General Secretary of the International Union for Land Value Taxation etc. It would appear that the homelessness about which your journal is so well illustrated and informed, is the result of poverty. However, this is an assumption which is unproven and untrue.

The cause of homelessness is due to BAD GOVERNMENT and the failure for the local government to provide suitable sites on which the unemployed poor may build their homes. Control of the land is deliberately (and probably corruptly) allowed to be placed in the hands of a comparatively small number of greedy monopolists, the land owners. Their involvement is in the amount of rent that is possible to squeeze out of the tenant farmers, in terms of much of their hard-won crops. These same owners are also involved in the rise in land prices, after their speculation in the value of the land has caused its price to have risen. Part of this rise is due to the resulting scarcity of the available land for use and part of this rise is because of it being held out of use pending population increase and land sale after its price has gone up. Land prices depend on local population density, so the few improvements in the roads, schools, water supplies, etc. (which are the result of tax payers money anyway), reflect indirectly in what gain eventually comes to the land owner.

Clearly this is a government matter and not one of relieving poverty alone (for should this be done by charitable donations the money would temporarily benefit the poor, but then find its way to the monopolists, who also control the sale of the produce). So many people seem to think that poverty relief by giving money or food is vital, when in the long-run it is the knowledge of how to eliminate it is what really counts. So much panic results from an outbreak of a disease, when its basic existence is due to a lack of care by governments, including a shortage of housing in the first place. But so little understanding is spread about how the social system could function, so as to avoid unhygienic conditions.

So this journal should be directed toward the government not the academics per se. The power in the land should be shared between the people so as to provide them with the opportunity to help themselves. As Alanna rightly suggests, a tax on land values instead of on produce and labour would help to restore this imbalance of working and residential opportunities.

David Chester,
Petach Tikva, Israel, by email

Agreed, poverty is not the only cause of homelessness. It is more due to governmental policies which ought to be pro-people. For this a systemic change is a must. The problems of poverty and deprivation will continue to exist till capitalistic psychology which goads one to thrive by exploiting others exists. We need genuine pro-people, nay pro-all forms of life order so that society is rid of such like agonising problems.- Editor

**WOMEN THE WAGELESS
SLAVES**

Shrii PR Sarkar's article so lucidly explains how women were treated during various phases of social cycle of humans. While the warrior class respected their women, the intellectuals kept exploiting them. This is indeed a sad commentary on human affairs, when actually with intellect the situation should have improved. Sadly wisdom was lacking and greed came to the fore.

Shyambhavi, Jaipur

**GLOBESITY &
WORLSTARVATION**

The terminologies are quite apt. Food is indeed the most important

life sustaining commodity on planet earth, not only for humans but also for all forms of life. Among all the billions who are starving or undernourished there are 1.6 billion people who suffer from diseases of over-eating. The images on page 15 portraying anger of the people say it all. The portents of the future are grim indeed. Equitable distribution under the aegis of PROUT is the only cure to ward off the impending disaster.

Santosh Sinha, Silchar

**CORPORATOCRACY –
COOPERATOCRACY**

An incisive eye opener by Apek Mulay. It goes to fully illustrate how corporate takeover or influence of

Government bodes ill for the people. Reminds me of an old Gujrati saying, "Jab Raja bano vyapari praja bano bhikari" – When the king becomes a merchant the subjects become beggars.

Rambhai, Okha

ABUNDANT FUTURE

The way we are going today spells doom for planet earth with resources being depleted at a rapid rate. Ravi Logan rightly points out that the future can truly become abundant if economic policies of PROUT together with social policy of neo-humanism are followed.

Ray Brian D'Souza,
Puerto Rico by email

My Mom Only Had One Eye



My mom only had one eye. I hated her... She was such an embarrassment. She cooked for students and teachers to support the family. There was this one day during elementary school where my mom came to say hello to me. I was so embarrassed. How could she do this to me? I ignored her, threw her a hateful look and ran out. The next day at school one of my classmates said, "EEEE, your mom only has one eye!" I wanted to bury myself. I also wanted my mom to just disappear. I confronted her that day and said, "If you're only going to make me a laughing stock, why don't you just die?" My mom did not respond... I didn't even stop to think for a second about what I had said, because I was full of anger. I was oblivious to her feelings. I wanted to get out of that house, and have nothing to do with her. So I studied real hard, got a chance to go abroad to study. Then, I got married. I bought a house of my own. I had kids of my own. I was happy with my life, my kids and the comforts. Then one day, my Mother came to visit me. She hadn't seen me in years and she didn't even meet her grandchildren.

When she stood by the door, my children laughed at her, and I yelled at her for coming over uninvited. I screamed at her, "How dare you come to my house and scare my children! Get out of here! Now!!!" And to this, my mother quietly answered, "Oh, I'm so sorry. I may have gotten the wrong address." – and she disappeared out of sight.

One day, a letter regarding a school reunion came to my house. So I lied to my wife that I was going on a business trip. After the reunion, I went to the old shack just out of curiosity. Neighbours said that she died. I did not shed a single tear. They handed me a letter that she had wanted me to have.

"My dearest son,

I think of you all the time. I'm sorry that I came to your house and scared your children.

I was so glad when I heard you were coming for the reunion. But I may not be able to even get out of bed to see you. I'm sorry that I was a constant embarrassment to you when you were growing up. You see.when you were very little, you got into an accident, and lost your eye. As a mother, I couldn't stand watching you having to grow up with one eye. So I gave you mine.

I was so proud of my son who was seeing a whole new world for me, in my place, with that eye.

With all my love to you,

Your mother."

~ Author Unknown



In the Vipra Age those who tried to bring about even a little social change in the interest of the common people either died smashing their heads on the hard bricks or broke the bricks with their hammers and strong arms.

SHRII PRABHAT RANJAN SARKAR

Great Personalities

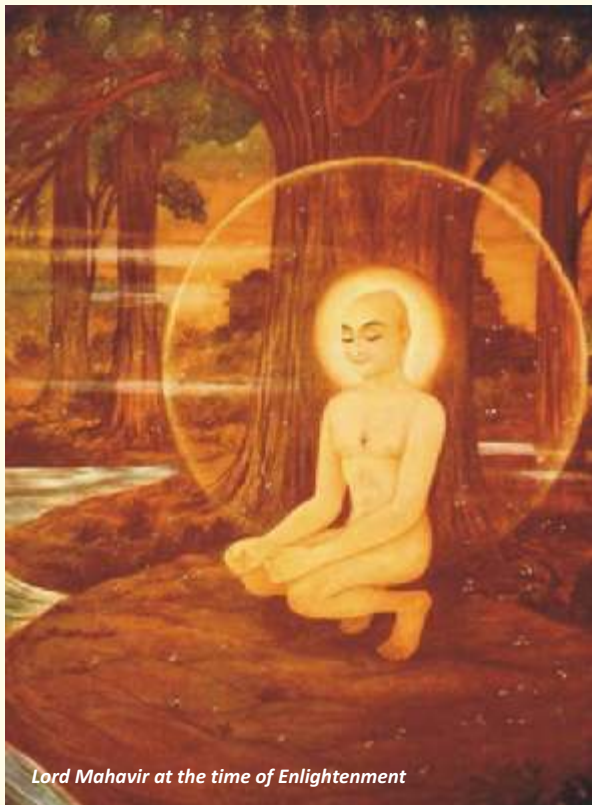
In the Ksatriya Age society had been like a well-arranged stack of bricks, as at the brick kiln, but in the Vipra Age the bricks in the stack became cemented together into a firm structure. Just as new stacks of bricks can be built either according to necessity or according to one's liking, in the Ksatriya Age the social system was rearranged

from time to time according to people's needs and desires. In the Vipra Age, however, the strongly-cemented edifice could not be rearranged at will. In order to change the edifice strong arms and a strong hammer would have been needed.

We can say that in the Vipra Age the leaders of society were more concerned with preserving the



existence of their strongly-cemented edifice than with building society according to people's needs. It seemed as though their social edifice was not created



for people, but rather people for the edifice. The sole aim of the vipra leaders became to preserve their edifice, without considering the interests of the people – without thinking about their happiness and sorrow, their pains and agonies – without listening to the supplications of humanity.

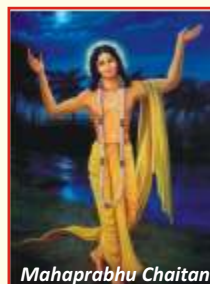
In the Vipra Age those who tried to bring about even a little social change in the interest of the common people either died smashing their heads on the hard bricks or broke the bricks with their hammers

and strong arms. Those who hammered in this way were welcomed with open arms by the downtrodden masses, but vested interests defamed them. This indirectly helped those great social leaders to popularize their causes. Such great leaders included Shrii Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Vardhamana Mahavira, Hazrat Mohammed, Mahaprabhu Chaitanya, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishvarchandra Vidyasagara.

In the middle period [of Indian history] Shrii Kṛṣṇa united all the kings of India in order to apply force and to destroy those powerful leaders who were doing evil and who, in the name of morality and justice, were encouraging unrighteousness within the accepted structure of society. He gave a clarion call to the human race and declared that the human body is the medium through which dharma is realized. However, it should not be utilized only for performing spiritual activities and breathing through alternate nostrils in a darkened room. People also have to become karma yogiis so they can destroy the root causes of sin in society. They should even mercilessly take up arms against their relatives if necessary. On behalf of the common people Kṛṣṇa declared war on a social system built on a base of selfishness in order to smash it. He stood defiantly against the systems of exploitation of the gurus and priests and propounded his own psychologically-based karmavāda [doctrine of action].

Vardhamana Mahavira tried to evolve a new ideology based on a scientific outlook. Hazrat Mohammed offered a new way of life to the ignorant and oppressed who were swirling endlessly round and round in the muddy whirlpool of superstition. He clearly declared that all the people of the world belonged to one caste.

Kabir and Mahaprabhu launched open revolts against the casteism which had kept Indian society crippled by creating a tremendous complex of self-aggrandizement in one section of society and a terrible inferiority complex in another section. Although Mahaprabhu had been born into a well-known Brahman family, he suffered many insults because of his opposition to casteism. Despite this he remained steadfast in his ideology.



Burning innocent women to death was once considered by Hindus to be a part of their religious life. Raja Ram Mohan Roy opposed this practice and with the help of Lord William Bentinck did not rest till he had stopped it. As a result many attempts were made on his life. Vidyasagara did not rest till he had compelled the Hindus in his region to recognize widow remarriage.



Raja Ram Mohan Roy



Ishvarchandra Vidyasagara

All historians know that the paths of Shrii Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Mahaprabhu and Mahavira were not strewn with roses. Even today the standard bearers of vested interests do not sympathize with such personalities.

Among people who today appear to us as moral leaders, those who protested against prevailing customs and superstitions, such as Lenin, George Bernard Shaw and Manavendra Roy, were criticized and made the victims of false propaganda. They were

machinery of exploitation.

The most distinctive feature of the vipras' [social system] was that it had supposedly been built for the welfare and greater good of the people, but where their convenience or the thought of their welfare conflicted with the vipras' intellectual exploitation, the vipras ruled in favour of their own exploitative system. For this reason the principle of the Kṣatriya

Age, *Viira bhogyā vasundharā* ["Might makes right"], was replaced by a new principle in the Vipra Age, *Buddhirasya balam tasya nirbuddhestu kuto balam* ["Where there is intellect there is might; where there is no intellect there is no might"].

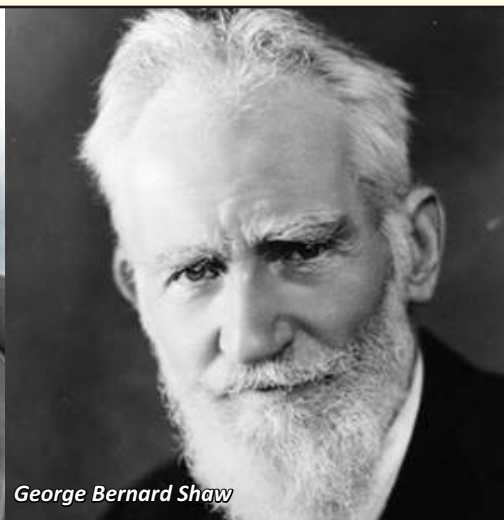
Parents and Gurus

Though on the one hand the vipras became lazy and physically weak due to the constant exercise of their intellects, on the other hand, in them the sweetness of humanity became fully expressed. The idea that children should do something in return for their parents' love and affection had first awakened in the

Kṣatriya Age, but the fact that the mental satisfaction gained from rendering service to one's parents in this way helps the child to progress towards higher feelings was first deeply felt by the vipras. That is why in the Vipra Age service to parents ceased to be limited to the repayment of a debt, but came to be considered part of one's dharma sadhana [spiritual practice].



Vladimir Lenin



George Bernard Shaw



Manavendra Roy

opposed and abused at every step for no reason at all. Their only crime was to deal a blow at the vipras'

And why stop at service to one's parents alone? The vipras deemed all those who bestowed physical,

mental or spiritual wealth as a gift of love – as an expression of affection – to be one's gurus. Duty towards such gurus was not a purely worldly duty, but became an important sádhana of jaeava dharma [duties enjoined on unit beings].

The sweet relationship between parents and their children made family life in the Vipra Age a lot happier than it had been in the Ksatriya Age. The children of the Ksatriya Age only took care to preserve the heroism, traditions and prestige of their parents, but the children of the Vipra Age learned to think about more than this. Just as parents and other elders in the Vipra Age prayed, Putrádicchet parájayam ["One should long to be outshone by one's children"] or Shísyádicchet parájayam ["One should long to be outshone by one's students"], their children not only tried to uphold the prestige of their families and of the lineages of their gurus, keeping in view their families' and gurus' traditions, but also, in carefully preserving that prestige, kept an ideal uppermost in their minds and moved towards that

ideal. That is why the society of that era kept progressing step by step in the intellectual sphere: the thought of the ideal gave it no respite. Thus Vedic rsis [sages] always exhorted people to move forward, saying that the mantra of a living society was Caraeveti, caraeveti ["Move on, move on"].

Vipra society was far more firmly-knit than ksatriya society had been. In ksatriya society it had become necessary to select suitable brides and grooms for marriages in order to maintain the continuity of social traditions, but the personal wishes of the brides and grooms themselves were not disregarded. Grooms and families were selected after giving due consideration to the opinions of the brides and grooms themselves. But this was not the practice in the Vipra Age, when maintaining the continuity of social traditions became the primary consideration. Hence in the Vipra Age the scope for independent decisions regarding marriage disappeared, as undue importance began to be paid to the selection either of families or of grooms.

True leaders don't create followers
They create more leaders





14th of this month marks the 31st anniversary of Prabhat Samgiit – songs of awakening composed by Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar – PROUT's founder, beginning from the first song in Deoghar a quiet hamlet in Jharkhand, India. This piece commemorates that historic and auspicious event that marks the threshold towards a new crimson dawn of a universal society.

Prabhat Samgiita

Songs of

Awakening Beyond Millennia

✶ Arun Prakash

Acarya Nityasatyananda Avadhuta a renowned poet lyricist and singer himself, who spent many years in Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's company and also sang for him on many occasions observes, "One who was never known to sing composed 5018 songs and gave their tunes in his twilight years. What a phenomenal and amazing achievement!" That was Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, Prout's founder whose spiritual name is Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, or simply 'Baba' (father), who was born in Jamalpur, India on Vaishaki Purnima, 1922.

Since childhood he attracted people with his deep love for humanity and guided them along the path of self-realisation. In 1955, while leading a normal family life as a railway official, he formed the organisation Ananda Marga 'The Path of Bliss', and began training

missionary family members, monks and nuns to spread his teachings of 'self-realisation and service to humanity' all over India and later throughout the world in over 180 countries with over four million members.

Universal Vision

Reflecting the broadness of his universal vision, Ananda Marga has become a multi-faceted organization with different branches dedicated to the upliftment of humanity through education, relief, welfare, the arts, ecology, intellectual renaissance, women's emancipation, and humanistic economy of PROUT (Progressive Utilisation Theory) for the collective welfare of the entire society that would provide maximum utilisation and rational distribution of all resources and potentialities of the world — physical, mental and spiritual and the creation of a new, humanistic social order of harmony and justice

for all. Towards this end, he led his avowed mission till his departure from this world on October 21, 1990. Besides being a spiritual Guru, he was a great visionary stimulating international attention with over 200 books on art, literature, social theory, history, anthropology, psychology, economics, biology, geology, parapsychology, linguistics, medicine, philosophy and philology. Ananda Marga and PROUT have today become a powerful force for global social change, working ceaselessly towards a golden dawn of a universal society.

Immortal Songs

Over and above these phenomenal achievements, he composed the lyrics and melody for 5018 songs in a short span of eight years. These immortal songs known as Prabhat Samgiita encompass his vision of the certainty of mankind's ultimate victory over darkness and evil that would herald a bright new



world. The first song was composed on September 14, 1982 in Deoghar, an ancient town in Bihar (now Jharkhand), India and the last one on October 20, 1990 at Calcutta, a day before he departed from his mortal frame. An amazing fact to note is that, he did not compose a single one of these exquisite verses in his own hand in the privacy of solitude and calm reflection, but dictated all these songs extempore and sang their tunes to his aides on the spot in unusual circumstances e.g. on walks, travelling in cars, while having meals and at times even on his way to the restroom.

Beacon of Hope

As did our ancient sages, Shrii Sarkar also believed that lyrics, melody and dance, all combine to make a song which exists not only in the material world but in the spiritual dimension as well. That is why from ancient times our great ancestors have given these three art forms much importance and encouragement. Hence these three aspects flourish in abundance in the world of Prabhat Samgiita. Once he began, the wonder of creativity burst forth like a fountain to a small stream into a mighty river to finally merge into the fathomless boundless sea of supreme consciousness. Wherever he went, be it Jaipur, Gwalior, Gorakhpur, Delhi, Jammu or Varanasi these outpourings came regularly at all times of the day and

at unearthly hours at times. As Acarya Nityasatyananda says, "At times I was summoned to his room at midnight. He told me to write 'udasi hiyate kajla rate keno je eman kare' – 'in a dark night why a heart distressed feels restless'. Another time it was before break of dawn 'sonali bhor jivane mor avar ki re asche phire' – 'is the golden dawn returning to my life again?' These songs with depth of feelings, language, melody, rhythm are interwoven in such a unique style that they immediately strike a chord in the heart conveying a universal message.

All these songs are not like *shrutis* that came out from the lips of our ancient sages; they are not compositions of outpourings of the heart and soul - they are not songs of worship alone as in Ramprasadii and Rabindra Sangeet - they are blessings from the very heart of the Supreme.



These could well be called satgiiti or satsamgiita – one that uplifts one's entire life – such is their promise and potential.

Socio – Spiritual Renaissance

He wished that the suffering multitudes devoid of hope that only see darkness in their lives should sing and dance with laughter and forge ahead upon the path towards divinity. Like the ancient sage Bhagirath who brought the sacred Ganga from the heavens down to earth for the deliverance of mankind, these songs bursting with the rhythm of laughter and tears descend like a flood from the world of music upon this earth. They raise the spiritual consciousness among people, especially among those who are assailed with doubts about their ability to tread the spiritual path. Doubts are cleared by singing the simple words, which act as star signs for seekers of the mystical unknown.

"Mysticism is the never ending endeavour to find a link between the finite and the infinite" said Shrii Sarkar. These songs filled with a rare exquisite beauty carry us to the magical world of mysticism upon the subtle wings of our inner spirit. A number of songs raise social consciousness among humans – the most thoughtful and intelligent beings - making them rise above humanism towards neo-humanism with feelings of universalism that advocates a cult of love for all created beings of the universe including inanimate ones. Between the material and spiritual



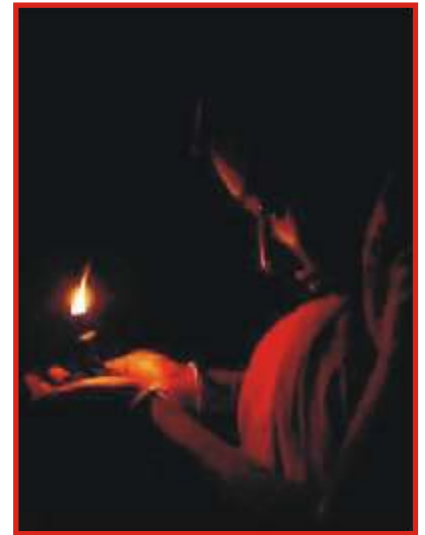
world lies the world of intellect. For the enhancement of this human intellect and its liberation there are many songs on neo-humanistic themes best described in his words, “Let humans do all they can for the benefit of humanity but they should remember that animals, birds and insects are not alien to them. Even plants wish to survive”.

There are songs describing the tears of a dying tree, the glory of a dust particle and the *viraha* (yearning for the Lord) of flowers. As this gains expression in society moving along the path of spirituality can one truly proclaim the song of human triumph and glory. Also by introducing the concept of PROUT in some of his songs he has enshrined the noble human philosophy of service and fight against exploiters who have become demons, where devotional poetry has been fused with social

commitment of service. His catchwords ‘Art for service and blessedness’ is a beacon for artists of the future and such songs are rays of hope in the dark depressing world of today. All this is for creating a society that would be free from exploitation in the not too distant future.

Shibokti and Krishna Liila

Before the advent of Lord Shiva around 7000 years ago people sang and danced and there was music of sorts but all were rather rowdy and wild. Shiva – Sadashiva also known as ‘Nataraja’ – ‘King of the Dancers’ with his dexterous hands framed the fundamental spirit of dance, instrumental music and song on scientific lines. He bequeathed to the world the priceless gift of tandava the primordial phase of oriental dance. The devas, the Tantrics of that era learned tandava and felt that there



should be musical expression for the general public and Shiva who was ‘Nadatanu’ – ‘music personified’ did just that. And 3500 years later Lord Krishna with notes of his melodious flute and his liila enchanted his many devotees. In the celebrated tomes ‘Namah Shivaya Shantaya’ and ‘Namami Krishnasundaram’ Shrii Sarkar has thrown new light on the life and ideals of Lord Shiva and Lord Krishna the two great historical personages of India – nay the world. In Prabhat Samgiita there are more than a hundred songs devoted to them. These songs inspire devotees and lift their spirit to levels sublime.

Panorama of Songs

When the father of neo-humanism composes songs, nature is in the forefront. These songs





besides describing the glory and beauty of nature remind us about their Creator too. That is the reason why such songs do not remain within the bounds of physical beauty alone but elevate the mind to the heights of divinity. These songs play a very important role in our lives. When viewed through spiritual eyes Nature takes on a different dimension as a metamorphosed form of the Supreme Consciousness.

Then there are songs of seasons that reflect the change of dress of Mother Nature, these do not simply describe the external visuals that eyes observe, but also provide deep insight into the joys and sorrows that accompany them as well as their symbolic meaning in the psychic and spiritual realms.

Social functions play an important role to create goodwill among the people. These songs laced with the nectar of spirituality evoke boundless joy and depths of feelings and dwell upon solemn and auspicious events in human society viz. births, deaths, marriages, children's naming ceremony, birthdays, 'griha pravesh' (entering a new home for the first time, called housewarming in the west).

For festivals too there are songs, important ones like Diipavali (festival of lights), Holi (festival of colours) and many others like spring festival, harvesting new rice crop etc.

For children our future, there

are many songs. Children with their unblemished minds wish to fly in a world of fantasy. Prabhat Samgiita provides a wealth of songs that appeal to children's minds; develop creative talent, making them soar on melodies' waves towards strange and unknown worlds with winged horses and fairies among clouds and golden lotus in the deep blue sea on the wings of fantasy.

This assumes special significance in today's world where the wealthy young generation is growing up on laptops, notepads and mobile phones with the marvel of technology – the touch screen – where the world nay the universe is literally at their finger tips. It assumes even more significance for children growing up in slums whose minds are bruised by ill treatment.

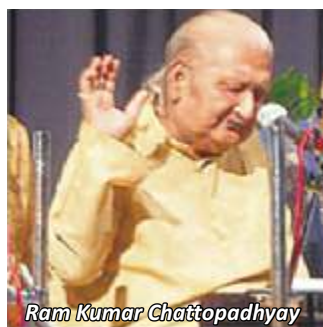
Lyrics and Tunes

It has been rightly said, "The essence of joy works very widely; music inspires human beings and its meanings lead them towards its inner meaning". Prabhat Samgiit does not draw its sustenance only

from superlative melodies of India; it is in fact a fusion of both the East and West. Even old and forgotten melodies nearly lost due to disuse have been revived.

Besides Bengali, he composed songs in seven other languages, Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, English, Angika, Magahii and Maethili. The language of most of them is simple. In some, deep sonorous words and old Vedic words (unused for long) have been used, which add variety of expression to the Bengali language. Folk songs too have a place. Jhumur songs in Rarhii dialect of Bengali enrich the genre of popular folklore. Though their tunes are catchy the songs lack feelings of spirituality. This deficiency has been made up in more than good measure in Prabhat Samgiita. The soul of a song is its melody. The tunes given by him were selected from a wide variety of traditions ranging from Indian classical and folk tunes to Persian, Israeli, Chinese, Scandinavian and Iberian. These in fact enhance their universal appeal.

His compositions included Indian ragas and raginiis like Bhaeraviii, Yogiya, Ashvarii, Tori, Bhiimapalashrii, Pilu, Iman, Khambaj, Bageshrii, Kafi, Chandrakosa, Tilak Kamod, Kedar, Behag, Malkosa, Chayanat, Darbarii Kanara, Desh Bahar, Jayajayanti, etc. To create richer expression of feelings he at times blended more than one raga. He selected the apt raga to transform the lyrical image of a song into melody with ease. The words never had to wait for its tune; both flowed together out of the heart of such an august personage as Shrii PR Sarkar.



Ram Kumar Chattopadhyay



Baul singer

Tappa and Baul

Tappa came from the Punjab and took Bengal by storm captivating audiences in the nineteenth century through superb compositions. Tappa songs of Prabhat Samgiita through their ideational leanings, language and tunes have given this form a place of honour. The famous singer Ram Kumar Chattopadhyay who has excelled in Tappa and has sung many a Prabhat Samgiita remarked in his characteristic style, "His songs contain all expressions of elements of life and the world and urge humanity to march towards progress". The far western fringe of Rarh, where the Suvarnaksha, Kansavati and Damodar river valleys meet is the cradle of Rarhi and human civilisation. And in this land, Baul songs with its style and tunes have had a great influence on the folk songs of the people who tread their beloved red soil with bare feet and whose souls always stirred with mystical longing for the infinite.

Ghazals and Qawallis too, find pride of place with their spiritual quality, depth of feelings and richness of language using many Urdu, Arabic and Persian words giving them special significance.

RAWA

Shrii Sarkar who on January 26, 1958 began the renaissance movement on the banks of the holy River Ganges in the village of Trimohan, district Bhagalpur, Bihar,



India. On that very day he founded Renaissance Universal and thus was born the same day the Renaissance Artists and Writers Association (RAWA) to deal with life's finer and aesthetic values like music, all dance forms, painting and sculpture. Its goal as a cultural organisation is to unite writers and artists under a single banner to usher in a cultural renaissance in the world. The uniting factor draws sustenance from true civilisational values of feelings of love for the Supreme Creator, love for fellow human beings, flora and fauna. These with inspired artists and writers would surely lead to a higher state of existence for humanity through the medium of culture. Since then

RAWA has expanded worldwide and conducts cultural programmes and is the main platform for spreading Prabhat Samgiita with performing artists of song dance and music, whose images feature in this article are from such programmes in various cities and towns of India and, overseas. All these songs with their lofty thoughts, beautiful language and sweet melodies have ushered in a new dawn of music to guide and provide solace to suffering humanity.

Whenever songs would come to mind Shrii Sarkar would softly sing them in the tunes of his own creation. Those early days there was a select group who would take down the songs in longhand as well as the musical notation. These included Acaryas Sarvatmananda, Cetanananda, Krishnatmananda and his bodyguard Pratap. As tape recorders were not allowed, some songs may have lost few of their original lines.

Later a small cassette recorder was procured and in a room on the 5th floor at Tiljala a studio was opened, and with just a harmonium and table rudimentary recordings of songs began sung by Smt. Kalyani Ghosh, Didi Anandabina, Prashanta (then a professor in City College



Calcutta who much later was ordained as a monk as Acarya Priyashivanada) and Rudrashish. These were first checked by Dada Sarvatmananda and later the composer would hear them and correct the tune or the words if required. Sometime towards the late 1980s the first professional



recordings began in Studio Vibration of the famous singer Usha Utthup and the first round of cassettes were produced for public distribution.

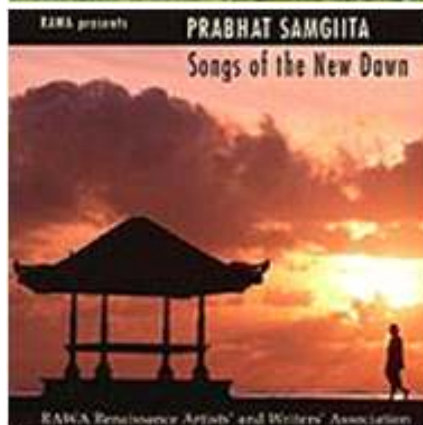
By mid 1990 Studio Renaissance was commissioned and recordings continued in full swing and production of compact discs too commenced.

V Balsara and Prabhata Samgiita

Prabhat Samgiita have been given the magic touch of the genius of the famous music maestro Vistas Ardeshir Balsara whose music according to many stalwarts, will remain a treasure trove for future generations.

Born in June 1922 he learnt music from his mother Nazamaye and gave his first solo performance at the age of six with the pedal harmonium, in use those days. He loved the Piano which he learnt from Hildafeld a German musician and also Univox and Melodica.

After close contacts with Bengali musicians Balsara left



Bombay for Calcutta and settled down in the cultural capital of India in 1954. His love for music continued throughout his life and he composed music for 32 Bengali films and 12 Hindi films with over 200 albums to his credit. In 1994 he received from the Sangeet Natak Akademi the award for Creative and Experimental Music.

Balsara passed away on March 24, 2005 and lived a life rhythm and beauty. He said, "If I am asked to pray for one thing, I would only say give me strength to live a life full of rhythm and beauty and lead a life of dreams that never die".

His close association with Prabhat Samgiita began sometime early 1990s and these excellent performances recorded in audio cassettes and compact discs under the auspices of RAWA have attracted millions of listeners worldwide like bees to honey, and the numbers keep growing.

Bright Future

Prabhat Samgiita has ushered in a new dawn on the horizon of the

world of music and Bengali songs are being sung and enjoyed all over the world. In Brazil and Argentina there is a growing interest in Prabhat Samgiita, and the locals have begun a movement 'Prabhat Samgiita for All' – 'Prabhat Samgiit Para Todos' in Portuguese and Spanish. This in the main is due to the untiring efforts of Shri Kirit Dave who was born in Bhavnagar (Gujarat), India and now lives in the USA. Since childhood he was very much interested in music and then came under the influence of Shrii Sarkar and fell in love with Prabhata Samgiita and took them as a mission. Says he, "Every year I do one month tour of Brasil to popularize and teach Prabhat Samgiita. I visit various cities and give workshop and training. Baba had told me personally about the necessity of tabla, so I bring a good tabla player from Argentina who also travels with me and teaches taals and tabla. This year 2013 we added tabla workshop also. We imported good harmoniums from India and so a nice PS team is



Prabhat Samgiita programme in Madhu Karuna Germany and in Sao Paolo, Brazil

mission of uplifting the poor and toiling masses to herald the dawn of a new renaissance, an awakening beyond millennia with new light and hope for mankind.

Prabhat Samgiita's, sweet melodies besides stirring the soul always evoke a hope for a bright future. While humanism was the cry of the European renaissance, Prabhat Samgiita and neo-humanism plays a significant role in a world shaken by conflicts and strife, plagued by poverty, hunger, ignorance and disease to usher in a new renaissance that would turn planet Earth into a paradise in the not too distant future. These songs are like a breath of

fresh air in today's dark days and point towards a golden dawn of the morrow. We may end with the composer's words, "I am an optimist. In all matters big or small humans must be optimistic. I have sung songs that show a bright future for mankind. I shall continue to sing them, because I believe, one whose goal is the Supreme Entity, for him victory is certain".

*The writer has translated
all 5018 songs into English.*

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In Sarkar's conception, the goal is to create a new class – the sadvipra - who can use aspects of each class in progressive ways. They are service-based, protective, innovators, and wealth-creators, respectively.

The Sarkar Game

in

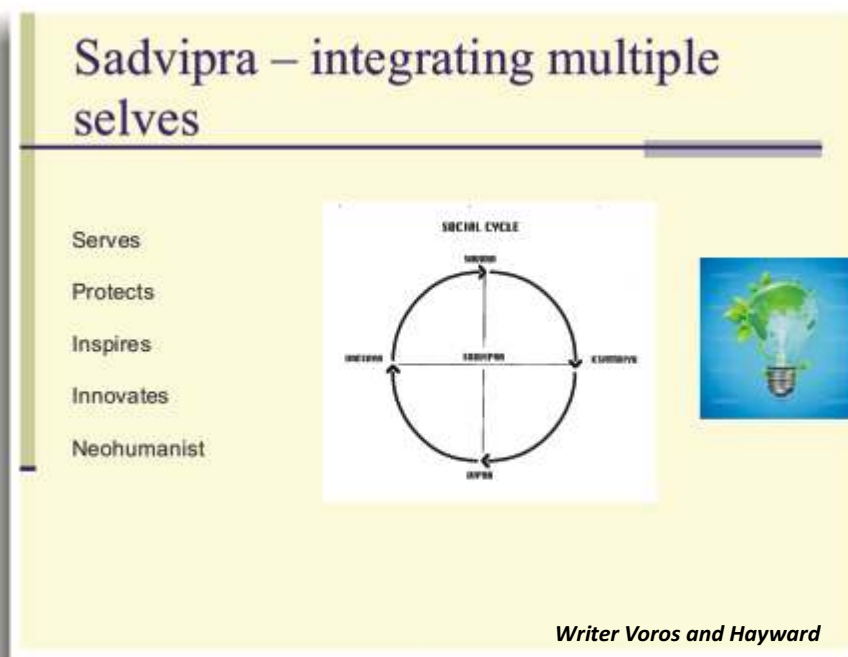
Action

Transforming Leadership through Understanding and Embodying Power

✱ Professor Sohail Inayatullah

Invented by academics Peter Hayward and Joe Voros, the Sarkar game is based on the theories of social change of Indian macro-historian, and spiritual mystic, P.R. Sarkar. While I will not articulate his theory extensively, it is worth noting that for Sarkar the purpose of understanding history is to enhance agency so that an alternative future can be created. Even while he posited a cyclical theory of social change, his intent was to create a new form of leadership that could transform the cyclical into a spiral, wherein the patterns of the past are transformed for a progressive future.

In Sarkar's conception, the goal is to create a new class – the sadvipra - who can use aspects of each class in progressive ways. They are service-based, protective, innovators, and wealth-creators, respectively. By having a sense of the whole, the integrated, sadvipras can judge which skills are required for the good of all. They thus cannot be beholden to either their own personal, ego needs, or to religious,



nation-state or other narrow forms of identity, but rather they must think and act for the entire planet. This expanded sense of identity Sarkar called Neohumanism. Neohumanism, for Sarkar, liberates the intellect, allowing for deeper ways of knowing and the inclusion of the other. It is an escape route to

ensure that the sadvipras do not slip into a particular class, which would ensure continued social stagnation.

While Sarkar framed his theory in planetary terms, it is equally applicable to organisations and institutions. Thus, participants can ask in a workshop setting, is a particular type of power dominant?

Workers – shudra (peasants, serfs)

Present
focused

Can be
chaotic

Toil –
daily
struggle

*working
9-5*



**Warriors are given plastic guns,
and the following script:**

Has a group stayed too long and thus not allowed the other ways of knowing to be expressed? What can be done to keep the cycle moving? Can the cycle be transformed into a spiral?

P. R. Sarkar's 'Social Cycle' elegantly demonstrates how easily 'social roles' are adopted and how these roles bring forth partial and limited understandings of change and change processes. As a macrohistorical model of social change and as an embodiment the process of social construction, it is a pivotal learning element (Inayatullah, Bussey & Milojevic, 2006, p. 285).

The intent of the Sarkar game is to take theoretical ideals and embody them in role-playing situations so individuals experience

the "reality" of social change and discover more of their inner selves and the strengths and weaknesses of the organizations and institutions they inhabit.

The Script

The game begins by dividing the participants into four groups. Each

group is given a script and tools. Workers get tools for labour, with the following script (adapted from Hayward & Voros, 2004):

I am a worker or a simple peasant. I have individual wants; first - safety, security, food (to be free of my environment). When these are met I want belief, inspiration, faith (to be free from my suffering and fear of death). When these are met I want material comfort and wealth (to be free from want, work, discomfort and struggle). My power is chaos, the ability to disrupt. When satisfied I am quiet (for a while) and then I want, and demand, more from the system. I can stand against the system and bring it or myself down.

We are the warriors. We honour loyalty, courage and unity. We serve to protect the system from danger and chaos. We bring order where there is none. We enforce the wishes of the system. Our power is the ability to dominate the environment. Only we have the weapons.

We are the intellectuals. We search for the

truth. We remove error and confusion. We use words and speech to convey ideas that give knowledge. We value ideas. Some of us have knowledge of scientific reality and some of us have knowledge of spiritual reality. Some of us as well use art, poetry and story to understand the past and present and create different futures. Our power is ideational. Only we can create

Intellectuals – vipras, priests, scientists

The future
(after death
and in the
material
world)

Multiple
perspective
s

New ideas
"and the
economy?"



**Capitalists are given cash,
and the following script:**

ideas to believe in. We create the enlightenment.

We are the capitalists. We seek to apply ideas to create material growth. We seek opportunities to be successful. The more we have the more power we have. Our power is economic. Only we can create material wealth.

The workers are asked to begin the game. As they work – build, clean, type - (or not), after a few minutes the warriors are invited into the game. They may suggest improvements, for the workers to work harder or with more honour, or they may construct the workers as lazy and shoot them.

As a discussion between workers and warriors begins, after five minutes or so, depending on whether there is "regression", the intellectuals are brought in. They may engage in dialogue directly with the workers or with the warriors. After another five minutes or so, the capitalists are brought in. They can negotiate with any of the

Warriors – ksatriya, samurai, knights

Military police

Protective or
coercive

Dynastic

Past-based

Honor



Intellectuals are given books, and the following script:

Merchants - vacshyans, capitalists, entrepreneurs

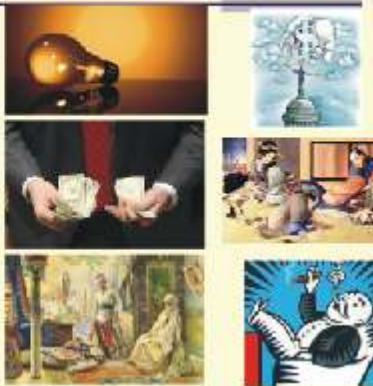
Use past, present and future to create wealth (eg. farmers)

Accumulate wealth

Create innovation (engineers)

Stop the money from rolling

Use regulators to control others



other three groups. At this stage, all four groups are active in playing out the dynamics of power. The game can then conclude, either with a resolution or a total system collapse. Timing when the next group is brought in and when the game should be concluded is somewhat intuitive. It is important for the facilitator to allow individuals to role-play and not judge, i.e. "this is how the game is meant to be played." It is best to bring in the next group if there is a natural lull in the action or conversation, or if it appears that there is a deadlock; a new type of power or energy is required.

After the game ends, it is crucial that there is a reflection period for the four groups and for the individuals in each group. What did they experience? How did they experience the other groups? What was their self-learning? What does this tell them about their own organisation? What is needed in terms of governance at the planetary level? After reflections, the game is complete.

Case Studies

The game can go a number of ways. Sometimes there is extensive negotiation between all parties and attempts are made to move toward consensus. Other times, violence is used to make a point.

While warriors begin with the guns they do not always end up keeping the guns - guns can be sold

he is no longer an active player (though "dead" players do attempt to speak from beyond the grave). And there are times when, once a number of players are killed, participants reflect and negotiate until a solution is reached. While it may appear that the warriors have the real power, this is not the case. All have power, just of different types.

At one workshop, a worker lay on a nearby couch, resting. Although there was bloodshed around her, her refusal to commit to any solution that did not respect her human rights led to a protracted negotiation through which she won the right to rest. She did not actively engage the others; rather she removed herself. My conclusion is that non-violent creative resistance can work, as Otpor clearly showed in the downfall of Slobodan Milosevic in the late 1990s. However, for capitalists this is not an option.

Capitalists are least successful when they do not spend their money, and instead only show it. When they spend their cash, they can quickly move to a dominant position. They can use their cash to purchase weapons, to hire intellectuals to create more effective productivity schemes, or give workers incentives to keep on producing. Intellectuals, to some extent, have the most challenging task. When they inquire into the conditions of others, they tend to be successful. However, when they claim exclusivity of

or simply taken away. Recently, I have used water pistols, so that in case there is a shooting, the person who has been "killed" is marked (and usually moves to the floor) so everyone can see that she or

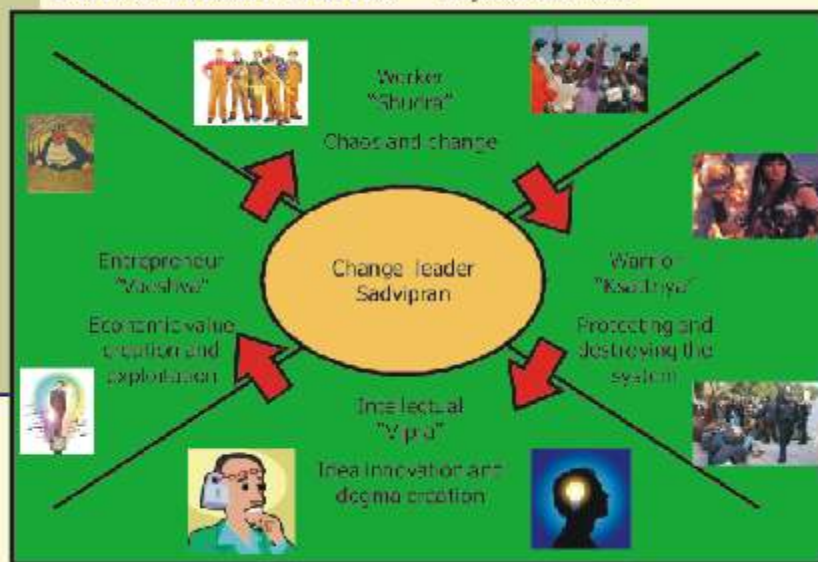
knowledge, then they are either ignored by the other classes or eliminated rather quickly by the warriors.

Warriors that are overly prone to use their weapons ensure that the entire system fails. In a recent game with a regional department of health in Australia, the warriors first shot the workers, then the intellectuals and then the capitalists. I had earlier asked three players to judge the process, to give an award to the person they felt had won the game, the person who was the most effective. The evaluators gave the award to one of the intellectuals, who they felt had attempted to work for the system as a whole. The warriors, having eliminated their labour force, and their sources of ideas and capital, had reached a dead-end.

I then asked the entire group to reflect on the outcome. They suggested that the health system was reactive, short-term-oriented, risk averse and that it acted as if threats were everywhere, within and outside the system. Thus, the immediate response was to eliminate all potential threats; the result was that the entire system fell apart.

An international policing group followed a similar pattern. However, the warriors in this workshop did attempt to negotiate with the other parties before eliminating them. Wisely, the warriors kept two of the capitalists alive so that cash would keep coming to them. Again, the evaluators judged that the intellectuals had won since they attempted to create win-win solutions. Recently, at a course for senior executives in Australia at the Mt Eliza Executive Education Centre, the warriors quickly bullied the other classes, eventually killing quite a few. However, one of the intellectuals convinced the warriors to put down their weapons and negotiate with the other classes to create a productive economic system for all parties. However, this was only possible once it dawned on

The Sarkar Game — Hayward and Voros



participants that they were eliminating the very people they needed to succeed. Thus, quite swiftly, a learning cycle emerged in which those who survived realised – in real-time – that the victory of one group was occurring at the cost of other groups; indeed, of the system as a whole. They adapted and optimised conditions so that it became possible to move to a higher order level.

Through sadvipra leadership, the cycle had become progressive, creating a spiral. With one group of deans in Southeast Asia, over time (almost 20 minutes) almost everyone sat down in one group. All weapons had been put away and a shared vision created. When I asked for the secret to their success, they said, “In the West, people agree to disagree. We, here, agree to agree.” This was quite remarkable and showed the power of deliberation, of trust and of a few taking a leadership position and convincing others that the good of all was primary.

In a recent Sarkar Game held in Italy for a UNESCO project, the workers managed to hold centre stage by literally camping out in the middle space. Like “Occupy Wall Street” protesters, they moved chairs into the middle of the game space, and refused to move. They

negotiated with the warriors to create win-win solutions, listened to intellectuals and discussed financial incentives with the capitalists. Even when they were threatened they were unwilling to move from centre state, where they were resting after a long day’s work.

The other groups became hesitant, uncertain of their strategy. A capitalist did attempt to purchase a gun from a warrior, but she refused to give up her weapon as she suspected that her honour and integrity would be compromised. The intellectuals were successful in selling their ideas to the capitalists: in total, two books were sold. However, beyond that, the intellectuals reflected that they were the most marginalized.

Insights

Insights vary post-game. Scientists at one federal-level agriculture department understood that, while they saw themselves as intellectuals, the executives in the Ministry – senior bureaucrats –, and the owners of the Ministry, had adopted a capitalist worldview, and saw them as workers. The insight allowed them to understand why they felt undervalued. As one senior scientist said, “Now I understand. I see myself as an international scientist. But the Minister sees me as

his lackey worker.” This insight helped the scientist rethink his strategy when approaching the Minister and his staff.

In one national department of statistics, the Sarkar Game helped the participants to understand that those who collect field data, while seeing themselves as workers, wished to be warriors. Field workers – data collectors – asked for warrior-like uniforms and titles like “Data Force”. They believed that they needed the uniforms to protect them from rude citizens, untethered dogs and other obstacles. Managers in the Statistics Department began to understand that they needed to see field data collectors through their own lens, and not the lenses that they had been using; i.e. not as intellectuals but as “data warriors”.

While from the outside it may appear that certain groups were given more resources, this is not the case. Each group had resources that they could use and resources they could decide not to use. While certainly the warriors could quickly ensure that there were no winners, they could also negotiate. In one game, for a National policing board, the warriors refused to use their weapons, even when provoked. Later, on reflection, these police officers argued that the National Police is meant to negotiate first; weapons are a last resort, a strategy which, they argue, differentiates them from their south-of-the-border neighbours.

In a Sarkar Game held in a Confucian country, one intellectual took the money he had been offered by the capitalists (to engage in activities to help the capitalists to control the other groups) and threw it on the ground, stating: “I cannot be bought.” The power of his declaration swung the game dramatically and allowed the intellectuals to frame the discussion.

Individual Insights

While this is a collective game, insights for individual players are also possible. One worker regretted that he let the leader of his own group take over, saying to me

afterward that it wasn't a fun game, because X had taken over. For this disgruntled participant, the game became an opportunity to explore his passivity. Another warrior, pre-game, had constructed herself as a practitioner of *ahimsa*. She was serene, pregnant and very much the Gaian mother; but during the game, she quickly used her weapons to eliminate all who resisted. On reflection, she could see that, in her day-to-day life, she had disowned her aggressive or warrior self. Having done so, instead of owning or asserting power – commanding power – she demanded power, and when unable to do so, “killed” others. A gentle CEO, as well, quickly became a “killer” during the Sarkar Game. It was obvious on reflection that he was tired of always being the pleasant negotiator. He needed to learn warrior-like skills to become a better leader. Monks playing this game commented that they failed at the capitalist role

because they did not spend the funds they had been given. They felt uneasy in the merchant role and thus did poorly. This alerted them to the skill development required, not in order to become capitalists, but to better understand money and the economy.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

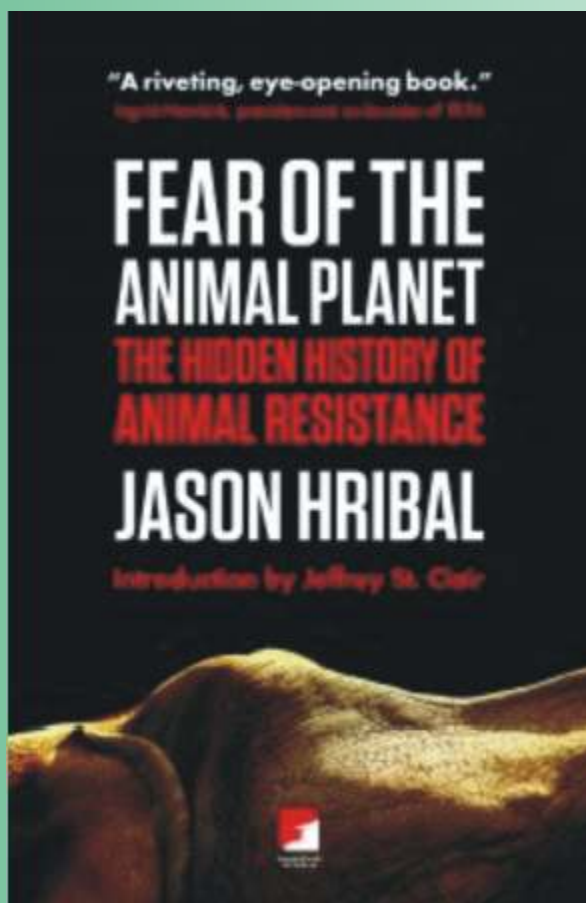
For organisations, the Sarkar Game aids in exploring what aspects of leadership are weak or missing, and what aspects need to be nurtured and integrated. It offers an understanding of the dynamics of power. Most significantly, the Sarkar Game offers a way forward in changing history and the future.

The Sarkar Game thus allows not just for an understanding of the deep structures of power, but creates the possibility of new forms of leadership, of a transformation of history and self. It leads to a number of insights. First, it helps individuals understand how patterns of power

operate in organizations and society. Their own preferences can emerge, as well as what they have disowned. From this process, they can seek to integrate power types within that are yet undeveloped. Second, it helps organizations to understand what aspects of power are they missing, what have they not fully developed. Third, it helps individuals and organizations move toward a *sadvipra* and Neo-humanistic space, creating a possible spiral from the cycle of history.

While one may argue that this is just a “game” and Sarkar’s intent was to transform the future not just role-play, my experience suggests that these two frames are not in contradiction. One can play and change, and change and play.

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A Siberian tiger at the San Francisco Zoo leaps a 12-foot high wall and mauls three visitors who had been tormenting her, killing one. A circus elephant tramples and gores a sadistic trainer, who had repeatedly fed her lit cigarettes. A pair of orangutans at the San Diego Zoo steal a crowbar and screwdriver and break-out of their enclosure. An orca at Sea World snatches his trainer into the pool and holds her underwater until she drowns. What's going on here? Are these mere accidents? Simply cases of animals acting on instinct? That's what the zoos and animal theme parks would have you believe. But historian Jason Hribal a historian and educator tells a different story. In the most provocative book on animal rights since Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation*, Hribal argues persuasively that these escapes and attacks are deliberate, that the animals are acting with intent, that they are asserting their own desires for freedom. *Fear of the Animal Planet* is a harrowing, and curiously uplifting, chronicle of resistance against the captivity and torture of animals.

Prepare to have your illusions of security shattered as Jason Hribal shows us that a revolution is brewing among those frustrated leaping orcas, elephants in headdresses, and tigers kept behind bars. Animal spectacles, shows, and exhibits, it turns out, pose a deep, dark threat not only to Nature herself but also to those who impose their will on wild spirits and those who pop in for a few hours to watch. A riveting, eye-opening book.

—Ingrid Newkirk,
President and Co-founder of PETA

Garlic



Garlic kills tens of thousands of brain cells and desynchronizes the left and right brains waves.



Should It Be a Staple Food?

★ Ravi Logan

For Theravada and Mahayana schools of Buddhism, garlic is one of five pungent spices not to be taken (along with onions, leeks, scallions and chives). Yogis strictly avoid it. Taoists consider it to be one of five vegetables that are harmful to the organs, and that it not only turns your breath foul, but also your chi or life force energy. Brahma Kumaris and Hari Krishnas don't eat it. Young children have an aversion to it. Animals ordinarily won't touch it. Yet, for most people in the West who eat a whole foods vegetarian diet, garlic has become virtually a staple food.

Dr. Robert Beck, in a lecture at the 1996 Whole Life Expo, explained why people who are concerned about the quality brain functioning should avoid eating garlic: "Garlic kills tens of thousands of brain cells and desynchronizes the left and right brains waves. The reason garlic is so toxic that the sulphone hydroxyl ion penetrates the blood-brain barrier and is a specific poison for brain cells. We discovered this when I was the world's largest manufacturer of EEG feedback equipment. We'd have people come back from lunch that looked clinically dead on an encephlograph, which we used to calibrate their progress. "What happened?" we'd ask. "Well, I went to an Italian restaurant and there was

some garlic in my salad dressing." So we had them sign an agreement that they wouldn't touch garlic before classes or we would be wasting their time and their money."

Dr. Beck also recounted, "I was in flight test engineering in the 1950's. The flight surgeon would come around every month and remind all of us: 'Don't you dare touch any garlic 72 hours before you fly one of our airplanes, because it'll affect your reaction time. You're three times slower than you would be if you'd not had the garlic.'"

After observing the disruptive effects of garlic during biofeedback therapy, Dr. Beck funded a study on garlic that was done at Stanford University. Talking about the findings, he said: "They found that it's a poison. You can rub a clove of garlic on your foot and you can smell

it shortly later on your wrists. So it penetrates the body. The sulphone hydroxyl ion penetrates all the barriers including the corpus callosum in the brain."

As a demonstration of garlic's effects on the brain, Beck suggested the following: "If you know anyone who has low-grade headaches, or attention deficit disorder, or they can't quite focus on the computer in the afternoon, just do an experiment. Take these people off garlic and see how much better they get very shortly. And then let them eat a little garlic after about three weeks. They'll say, 'My God, I had no idea that this was the cause of my problems.'"

Garlic, of course, has a wide range of medicinal benefits, including a capacity to boost the immune system. There are





You can rub a clove of garlic on your foot and you can smell it shortly later on your wrists. So it penetrates the body. The sulphone hydroxyl ion penetrates all the barriers including the corpus callosum in the brain.

- Dr. Robert Beck

occasions when it may have value for its healing properties. But does this justify making it a common food in one's diet?

Paul Pitchford, in his book *Healing with Whole Foods* (the most authoritative text on the subject of food as medicine), gives this perspective: "Garlic has been promoted as a near cure-all for an extensive list of ailments. But it is helpful to remember that powerful and strongly medicinal foods ought to be used cautiously in the normal diet." Pitchford goes on to warn that, "Garlic disperses mental concentration. . . . [It] brings excessive desires and mental dullness to the person, making mental/spiritual equilibrium difficult."

For those interested in vitality and clarity of the mind, and for those seeking spiritual receptivity, the ancient teaching on garlic remains: Better to avoid it.

Dr. Andrew Nicholson, a nutrition expert and advocate for change in school lunch programs, points out that there is also a sound

physiological reason to avoid garlic. One of garlic's recognized medical benefits is its potent antibacterial activity. "However," says Nicholson, "there are many bacteria in the human digestive tract which are essential to its normal function. Killing these bacteria may not be beneficial." When sick, eating garlic (or taking antibiotics) may be necessary. "But this not the case for otherwise healthy people."

Dr. Nicholson also claims that garlic's toxic effects are not limited to micro-organisms. Research studies say that he cites link in garlic consumption to asthma, conjunctivitis, contact dermatitis, and the skin disease, pemphigus.

Joshua Smith, in an article on the uses of garlic printed in the Spring 2006 *Permaculture News*, notes that garlic is an exceptionally effective insecticide. As such, it's the only insecticide that people commonly eat. While considered non-toxic to animals, it is worth noting that garlic plants never gets bothered by slugs, snails, birds, or herbivores. Is it not strange that

while other animals avoid garlic, humans should choose to eat it so extensively?

Finally, consider the view of garlic expressed by Annabel Perkins, who was lead chef at Food For All, one of the first whole foods restaurants in England, and author of the cookbook, *Vegetarian Food For All*. In the introduction to her book, Perkins urges people cooking with whole foods to "experiment liberally with a wide variety of herbs and spices and gain the confidence to move away from the inevitable garlic that swamps every subtle flavor in Western vegetarian food."

This advice speaks to the sensibilities of many who eat a natural foods diet and who are known for venturing beyond commonplace foods and filling their gardens and dinner tables with diverse varieties of fruits and vegetables. To so consistently overwhelm the subtle tastes of heirloom cultivars, wild crafted edibles, and new hybrid fruits and vegetables with garlic seems a culinary loss to be avoided.



**In what garlic is to salad,
insanity is to art.**

- Augustus Saint Gauden, American sculptor

Augustus Saint Gauden



"In our condition as colonial slaves, we could not observe: that "Western Civilization" disguises behind its showy facade a picture of hyenas and jackals. That is the only name that can be applied to those who have gone to fulfill such "humanitarian" tasks in the Congo. A carnivorous animal that feeds on unarmed peoples. That is what imperialism does to men."

- Che Guevara - December 11, 1964, 19th General Assembly of the United Nations

The Fall of the American Empire *and*

✱ Garda Ghista

I. Proof of Empire - Military Empire

"War and imperialism are Siamese twins joined at the hip. Each thrives off the other. They cannot be separated. Imperialism is the single-greatest cause of war, and war is the midwife of new imperialist acquisitions."

- Chalmers Johnson

We need to climb out of these economic boxes and step outside into the fresh open air of new visions of economic and social justice.

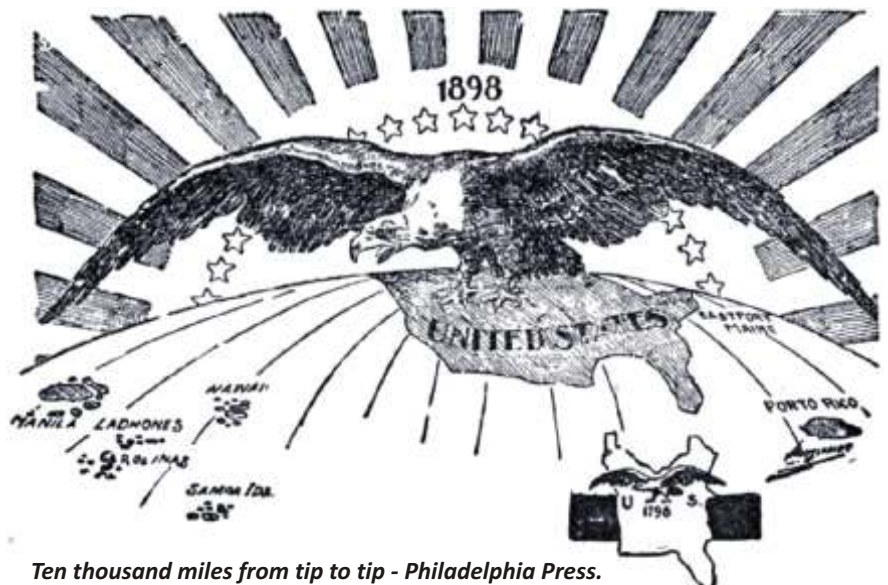
While other nations realize it full well, Americans do not want to accept that the United States dominates the world through military power. Due to the extreme secrecy of the present administration, the American people are completely ignorant of the fact that the United States "garrisons the globe." There is a huge network of military bases in more than 170 countries. It is called the new empire. It is the American Empire. Our government employs more than half a million soldiers, spies, technicians, teachers, dependents and civilians as well as

The Rise of a New Economy

civilian contractors all over the world. In addition to officially listed bases, the US has numerous secret bases not to be found on any government listing. Some of these bases are engaged in listening to people all over the world, including American citizens – keeping track of

what they are saying, faxing and emailing.

This Empire began back in the 19th century, when the US declared Latin America as being under its "sphere of influence," and proceeded to enlarge its territory while ignoring or slaughtering those



Ten thousand miles from tip to tip - Philadelphia Press.

who stood in the way; i.e., the indigenous peoples of North, Central and South America. Today we have a similar group of imperialists in power who, under the guise of the “war on terrorism” are expanding American bases all over the world, particularly in Middle Eastern countries.

It was after World War II that America emerged as the richest nation and became a natural successor of the British Empire, which floundered economically due to the heavy costs of the war. The Cold War of the 1970s justified the US government creating scores of more bases, all to fight the communist threat. Government officials of course denied that the bases indicated global imperialism.

In 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed and there was no need for the US to continue maintaining bases in numerous countries. But, the US was too accustomed to controlling other countries and had no intention of giving up their authority. Thus we saw the continuation of various wars and so-called “humanitarian interventions” in the Panama, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Colombia and Serbia. It was an informal empire but quickly becoming formalized.(1)

The attack on 9/11 caused dangerous changes in the mindset of our political leaders, who decided that the US is now equivalent to the Roman Empire, that it is no longer bound by international law or the opinions of allied and other non-allied countries. While during the Clinton years the nation had at least a semblance of multilateralism, now its actions became completely unilateral, and completely arrogant. Thanks to the American mainstream media, the common people knew nothing of its government and what it was doing in foreign countries. The Patriot Act came and only a handful of politically conscious people protested and continue to protest.

The Patriot Act stripped Americans almost entirely of the

political liberties granted to them in the U.S. Constitution two centuries ago. Since then numerous other laws have laid the foundation for a police state. Earlier we were referred to as the lone superpower. But today, we are called the American Empire. To question this, to voice dissent, is to question Obama's war on terrorism, which remains akin to treason.

The media is completely complicit in the building and maintaining of American Empire, using politically appropriate vocabulary such as “collateral damage” (instead of “slaughtered innocent human beings”), regime change (instead of “imperialist invasion and occupation”), “illegal combatants” (meaning any civilian who does not toe the line of US occupation of Iraq and any other country it chooses to attack) and “preventive war” (There is no such thing as preventive war. Wars involve aggressive invasion by one country of another country.). With these cosmeticized terms in hand, the American public remains clueless about the crimes of our present government both outside and inside its borders.

There are presently more than 725 American military bases located all over the world. Generally these bases are established near oil pipelines, and its inhabitants are there to protect those pipelines above all else. While the US has had bases in places like Saudi Arabia, United Emirates and Qatar for several years, new ones have been built in Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. As Chalmers Johnson writes:

“Our militarized empire is a physical reality with a distinct way of life but it is also a network of economic and political interests tied in a thousand different ways to American corporations, universities, and communities but kept separate from what passes for everyday life back in what has only recently come to be known as “the homeland.”(2)

Our present administration has let it be known to other countries that

it prefers to deal with them through the use of threats, bullying or force instead of negotiations, commerce or cultural interactions. Now the US deals with countries through military-to-military confrontations instead of civilian relations. As Bush has mentioned in several speeches, we need to be ready for preemptive action whenever necessary to defend our liberty and defend our lives. Obama has continued this legacy.

Historian Arthur Schlesinger wrote after 9/11:

“One of the astonishing events of recent months is the presentation of preventive war as a legitimate and moral instrument of U.S. foreign policy ... During the Cold War, advocates of preventive war were dismissed as a crowd of loonies .. The policy of containment plus deterrence won the Cold War. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, everyone thanked heaven that the preventive-war loonies had never got into power in any major country. Today, alas, they appear to be in power in the United States.”

As Johnson writes, there is bound to be payback for the misdeeds of Empire. A nation reaps what it sows. He says that it would take nothing less than a revolution to bring the Pentagon back under democratic control, or to abolish the CIA. But today, in the Congress and the Senate, the motto is: “Don’t ask, don’t tell.” He further says,

“As militarism, the arrogance of power, and the euphemisms required to justify imperialism inevitably conflict with America’s democratic structure of government and distort its culture and basic values, I fear that we will lose our country... The danger I foresee is that the United States is embarked on a path not unlike that of the former Soviet Union during the 1980s. The USSR collapsed for three basic reasons – internal economic contradictions driven by ideological rigidity, imperial overstretch, and an inability to reform.... The similarities are obvious and it is nowhere written



that the United States, in its guise as an empire dominating the world, must go on forever.”

Roman republic was also replaced by a dictatorship. The Romans eventually were overwhelmed by the number of enemies they had created. Until the end, they continued to claim that they represent the people of Rome. Yet then, as now, empires do not give up their empires voluntarily. The US government justifies its Empire in many ways: by claiming to spread American ‘market democracy’ via globalization; by open warfare against Latin American drug cartels and indigenous political reform movements; by isolation of ‘rogue states like Syria today;’ and most of all today by an endless ‘war on terrorism’ which gives it the ‘freedom’ to do anything, including ‘preventive intervention’ against anyone.

Hitherto there had always been some constitutional restraints on the US armed forces. However, by 2002 these restraints vanished. The US no longer had a foreign policy; it had a military empire. This empire comprises the vast number of permanent naval bases, military airfields, army garrisons, espionage listening posts, and strategic enclaves on every continent of the earth. (3) So America has, not an empire of colonies (as in the British Empire) but an empire of military bases closely interwoven with and

supervised by the US military-industrial complex. The bases are not there to fight wars. They are there as “pure manifestations of militarism and imperialism.” (4)

The US military enters countries on the pretext of liberating Afghan women from Islamic fundamentalists, or a natural disaster in the Philippines, or more recently Aceh, Indonesia, or claiming to protect Bosnians, Kosovars or Iraqi Kurds from campaigns of “ethnic cleansing.” But invariably what happens is that after the crisis is over, the Americans do not leave. They remain in their new bases to strut around in arrogance in their newly acquired territory. It is a short mental hop from imperialism to racism as a way of life. As David Abernathy writes, people who have superior power will quickly decide that their superiority extends also to intellect, morality and civilization.

From war come armies. From armies come debts and taxes. Armies, debts and taxes are the instruments for keeping many under the domination of a few. It was Woodrow Wilson who developed the rhetoric of ‘exporting democracy’ to the rest of the world, which is now used by today’s imperialists to justify their colonialist, capitalist invasions.

There is no longer any accountability of the Defense Department budgets. As Insight magazine reported, in May 2001 the

deputy inspector general at the Pentagon admitted that \$1.1 trillion was “simply gone and no one can be sure of when, where or to whom the money went.” (5) The amount is larger than the annual amount of \$855 billion that Americans pay in income taxes. Yet, nobody minds or protests regarding this missing money.

The onset of militarism can be identified by three prominent characteristics: (1) the emergence of a professional military class and the glorification of its ideals; i.e., producing soldiers who will fight simply because they have been ordered to fight and not because they believe in what they are doing. It also includes civilian militarism. Reagan and Bush I learned that foreign policy should be more in the hands of so-called national security managers “who operated without the close scrutiny of the media, the oversight of Congress, or accountability to the involved public.”

These new civilian militarists, who themselves never served in war, take more and more power over the actual military/Pentagon. Hence we have people like Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, who themselves never served a day in the military, running American military operations around the world. The older military generals who dedicated a lifetime to serving in the US armed forces call these civilians “chicken hawks.”

Tragically, it is noted that civilian militarism leads to an intensification of the horrors of warfare. Civilian militarists anticipate war more eagerly than the actual soldiers who know what war is. They also play a major role in making the actual combat more absolute, more terrible than ever before. Iraq is an example. People today involved in determining strategy over relations with China are militarists, not discriminating foreign policy thinkers and academics.

(2) The second characteristic of militarism is the preponderance

of military officers and people from the arms and munitions corporations in high government positions. Colin Powell and Richard Armitage examples. Peter Teets, former CEO of Lockheed Martin Corporation was made undersecretary of the air force. Former brigadier general and Enron Corporation executive Thomas White was made secretary of the army. James Roche, former executive with Northrop Grumman and former brigadier general was made secretary of the air force. The list continues: Former ambassador Richard Gardner figures that the present US administration spends sixteen times more money on preparing for war than on trying to stop war.

(3) The third characteristic of militarism is devotion to policies in which military readiness is the highest priority of the country. The US spends more than any other country on its military. It also spends more than any other country on global arms sales. Since the economic debacle of 2007 the arms industry is the backbone of the US economy. The American nuclear arsenal, with its ability to destroy the entire earth many times over, is staggering. It comprises of 5,400 multiple-megaton warheads atop intercontinental ballistic missiles on land and at sea; 1,750 nuclear bombs and cruise missiles ready for launching by B-2 and B-52 bombers; another 1,670 nuclear weapons classified as 'tactical.' Ten thousand more nuclear warheads are stored in bunkers all over the US.

What is the new American dream? It is to dominate the world militarily until the end of time. Is it realistic? No, because all empires one day fall. The US never hesitated to invade countries like Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo in the name of humanitarian intervention. Yet where were their responsibilities to the Rwandans, Chiapans, Chechens, Tibetans, Kashmiris, East Timorese and Palestinians? Chalmers Johnson writes as follows about the new American Empire:

"From the time of the Romans and the Han dynasty Chinese to the present, all empires have had permanent military encampments, forts, or bases of some sort. These were meant to garrison conquered territory, keeping restless populations under control, and to serve as launching points for further imperial conquests. What is most fascinating and curious about the developing American form of empire, however, is that, in its modern phase, it is solely an empire of bases, not of territories, and these bases now encircle the earth in a way that, despite centuries-old dreams of global domination, would previously have been inconceivable."

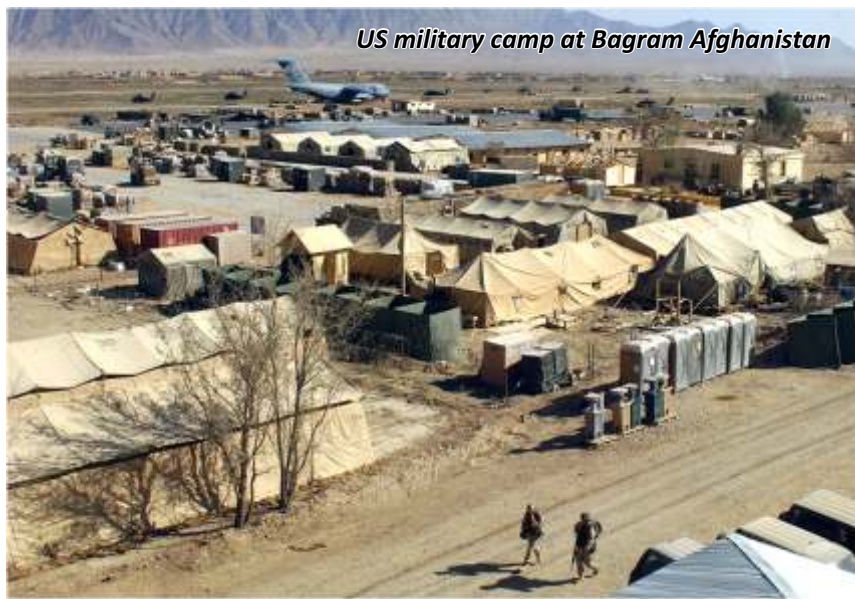
"Yet, although our own nation is filled with military installations – there are 969 separate bases in the fifty states – ours has, oddly enough, never been a warrior culture. Our people are largely not in uniform, nor (until the recent "war on terrorism") were military uniforms common in our cities and airports;

our streets seldom see a military parade; our concerts are rarely filled with martial music; and yet ours is also a thoroughly militarized empire – though our model of a warrior seems most likely to be a military bureaucrat. The modern American empire can only be perceived, and understood, by a close look at our basing policies, the specific way we garrison the earth. To trace the historical patterns of base acquisition and to explore our basing systems worldwide is to reveal the sinews of what has until very recently, for most Americans, been a largely hidden empire."

Since 2000, the US government functions completely unilaterally in decision-making and in actions. A report put out by the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research and the Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy analyzed US response to eight major international agreements, including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and concluded that the US has violated, compromised and acted to undermine every treaty mentioned. This is in continuation of their violation of treaties with Native Americans. They further do not honor treaties that were ratified in previous administrations. They walked away from the Kyoto Protocol. They also walked away from the UN conference on racism in 2001.

Today the US administration abides by international treaties only if it is personally convenient and not otherwise. Most stunning is its complete disdain and disregard for the International Criminal Court (ICC), the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal. It says to the world that the US is not accountable to anyone for its actions – or its crimes against humanity! As journalist David Moberg wrote: "... Bush wants the United States to serve as the world's investigator, policeman, prosecutor, judge, and executioner. This is an imperial

US military camp at Bagram Afghanistan



ideal, not an assertion of sovereignty.” (7). Obama has with a stick tongue been even more autocratic than Bush. So is there some fear on the part of Bush and his colleagues that one day the ICC may start proceedings to prosecute them for their war crimes?

“Two and a half years into the Bush administration, most of our allies had left us, our military was overstretched, and no nation on earth doubted our willingness to employ military power to solve any and all problems.”

- Chalmers Johnson

Today the federal government can tap into our phone calls, faxes and email transmissions if it wants. The federal government has also begun arresting and imprisoning not only naturalized but also native-born citizens along with immigrants without bringing charges against them. Essentially the government does what it likes, and the president alone decides who is an “illegal belligerent” – another new term of this administration which can mean anything Bush wants it to mean. All of these actions are signs of a national security state – militarism.

Included in this global militarism is US domination of space. The Space Command’s policy statement says that “the globalization of the world economy will continue, with a widening gulf between ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots,’ and ... the Pentagon’s mission is therefore to ‘dominate the space dimension of military operations to protect US interests and investments.’ A crucial goal of the US government is therefore “denying other countries access to space.” (8)

Today the Department of Defense has given a new interpretation to federal law and says that if any part of a university denies access to military recruiters, the entire university will lose all federal funds forthwith.

In 1878 the Posse Comitatus Act was passed, in order to prevent the military from ever again engaging in police activities without

the consent of Congress or the President. It means the standing army will not have any role in policing American citizens in their own country. This distinction is nowhere today. Today the Pentagon is in the domestic policy business. Thanks to the very nebulous, flexible term of “terrorism,” the Pentagon today can do whatever it wants to American citizens. In the summer of 2002, the Bush administration directed its lawyers to review the Posse Comitatus Act and any other laws that could potentially restrict the Pentagon’s ability to engage in domestic law enforcement. In 2003 the Bush administration proceeded to tuck in an interesting proposal (within a broader intelligence authorization bill) which gives the military as well as the CIA authority to require Internet providers, credit card companies, libraries and many other organizations to hand over all kinds of records on US citizens – including phone records, bank transactions and email logs. Hitherto only the FBI could seek this information and that too only with a judicial warrant. Hence in just four years we have witnessed the transformation of the United States government from one following some semblance of democracy to one in which the executive branch in collusion with the Pentagon are operating more and more as a totalitarian democracy, including over its own citizens. Enemies are portrayed as “both white and black-skinned but have one trait in common – nearly all of

them are unshaven.”

Another habit traditional for empires is to recruit foreigners to do the dirty work. Replacing homeland soldiers with local cannon fodder is at the top of the list for imperialist rulers. Since the wars with Native Americans, setting one indigenous group against another indigenous group is also traditional for maintaining empire, as if the two groups are fighting (witness Sunnis and Shiites) it makes it easier for Empire to control them all and keep them down where they belong. It is not American soldiers who guard military checkpoints in Baghdad, but Nepalese gorkhas. Furthermore we have in Iraq today not necessarily the US military in charge but rather numerous private military companies who work hand in hand with the CIA and other intelligence agencies. It is the privatization of the US armed forces. It is these private military companies that have become indispensable to the military and who in fact keep the Empire running.

The total value of 725 recognized American military bases around the world is \$118 billion. Of these, \$38 billion are in Germany (with more than 47 bases) and \$40 billion are in Japan – remnants from World War II, in the form of a secret enclave of military airfields, submarine pens, intelligence facilities and CIA safe houses in Okinawa). (9) Bases in South Korea account for \$11.5 billion. The Pentagon did not yet include in its



financial calculations the new military bases springing up like mushrooms all over the Middle East!

The high tech war and the fanatic attention to controlling mainstream media coverage of the war are the latest signs of American-style militarism and imperialism – or can we say, totalitarianism?

Economic Empire

“At the August 2002 world summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg, the delegates wore badges asking, “What do we do about the United States?” Chalmers Johnson

The new American Empire of bases is militarized and unilateral. Since the last three-four years it has subverted commerce and globalization because militarism weakens international law and reciprocal norms on which trade is based. In the age of American militarism, globalization takes on a simple new definition, which is to force (if necessary) all countries to open themselves up to American exploitation and American-style capitalism. Libyan leader Muammar al Qaddafi's recent capitulation right after the capture of Saddam Hussein is a stunning example. Rather than bringing peace, this weakness paved the way for invasion and complete destruction of the country by US sponsored Jihadis.

According to Johnson, the aftermath of September 11 has spelled the end of globalization. While Clinton propagated economic imperialism, Bush propagated military imperialism. Obama never had the integrity or courage to chart a new course. Bush espoused unilateral preemptive military action, thereby flouting international rules and norms of globalization. Today in America, militarism has displaced and discredited US economic leadership.

WTO was created in 1995 and thereafter world trade expanded from \$124 billion to \$10,772 billion. It worked well, so long as the trade

balance favored the US, and so long as the US could dictate the terms for trade so as to derive maximum benefit for US corporations.

In the mid-1980s Japan had replaced the US as the world's leading creditor nation while America's fiscal deficits and inability to cover the costs of imported goods quickly turned it into the world's largest debtor nation. For this reason, the conservatives took action by reviving 19th-century capitalist fundamentalist theory, which they dubbed 'neoliberalism.' It meant, withdrawing the state as far as possible from economic participation; opening domestic markets to international trade and foreign investment; privatizing investment in public utilities and natural resources; ending protective labor laws; creating powerful domestic and international safeguards for private property rights, including the famous “intellectual property rights;” and carrying out conservative fiscal policies regardless of the impact on the welfare of the common people. In academic circles the term 'neoliberalism' became known as 'neoclassical economics.' In the public domain it was referred to as 'globalization.' It was a 'gigantic repackaging' of classical liberalism.

Clinton actively propagated globalization. George Bush promoted “Free Trade Area of the Americas” – FTAA. The effect of these policies and regulations on Third World countries was devastating. As Peruvian Ambassador to the WTO, Oswaldo de Rivero, said, “the cost of the Soviet version of development was shortages and lack of freedom; today, that of the neoliberal, capitalist variant is unemployment and social exclusion.” (10)

In fact, globalization promotes both racism, genocide and ruthless, ravaging exploitation of third world, non-white-skinned people to the extreme. Hence the instruments of globalization, be it the World Trade Organization, World Bank, Free

Trade Area of the America, or International Monetary Fund, must be charged with crimes against humanity! The damage they have wrought to third world countries is immeasurable.

Joseph Stiglitz, former director of research at the World Bank and Nobel Prize winner gradually concluded that the international trade agreements are grossly unfair to countries in the Third World. There is not a single Third World country that has benefited in any way, shape or form from globalization. Rather, the per capita GDP, the plight of the common people in every country has been made far worse by this neoliberalism. De Rivero wrote that what globalization produced was not NICs (newly industrialized countries) but about 130 NNEs (nonviable national economies) and sometimes UCEs (ungovernable chaotic entities)!! (11) Chalmers points out the following:

“In 1841 the prominent German political economist Friedrich List (who had immigrated to America) wrote in his masterpiece, *The National System of Political Economy*, ‘It is a very common clever device that when anyone has attained the summit of greatness, he kicks away the ladder by which he has climbed up, in order to deprive others of the means of climbing up after him.’ Much of modern Anglo-American economics and all of the theory of globalization are attempts to disguise this kicking away of the ladder.” (12)

In countries where the leaders had no option but to obey the US and its imperialist affiliates- the WTO, WB and IMF, where they began allowing ‘free’ trade, sell-offs of public utilities, no controls over capital movements – the results in those countries were a catastrophe.

The American people need to know that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are simply surrogates for the US Treasury. Both organizations are located at 19th and H Streets,

Northwest, in Washington, D.C. The voting rules of both organizations guarantee that they can do nothing without the approval of the secretary of the US Treasury.

The other cunning capitalist innovation carried out by the US was the system of fixed exchange rates among the currencies of all capitalist nations. Every other financial system was tied to the US dollar with an American guarantee that the dollars would be exchanged for gold if requested. Of course, the gold has long since gone out the window. Both Britain and the US were dedicated to the idea of a world economic order maintained by “enlightened governments” – aka the US and Britain, of course. It was Nixon who ended the gold standard and also the system of fixed exchange rates. From then on, currencies of different countries could float their currencies, whose values were set by demand in the international markets.

Since profits were huge and costs were low, American banks like Citicorp and Banker Trust began to make huge, risky loans to Third World countries. In economics this is called “moral hazard” – where bankers make outrageously irresponsible loans without any risk of having to absorb the loss or make good the money they might lose in the transaction. This was in the 1970s. By the end of the 1970s every country in Africa was in debt up to its eyeballs. In 1982 the US government put the IMF and the World Bank in charge of making loans to Third World countries, with the following instructions: (1) Keep those poor debtor countries paying something so as to avoid official defaults, and (2) squeeze as much money out of them as possible. (Sort of like our credit card companies do to the ordinary citizens here in America!)

So what exactly does the World Bank do to Third World countries? It gives loans. But there are conditions on the loans. To get the loan, the poor country must agree to the imposition of drastic socioeconomic conditions

which feed the neoliberal agenda of transnational corporations. If the poor country does not agree to the terms of the World Bank, the Bank refuses all loans, thus helping to destabilize its economy. If the country still does not agree, then the World Bank will aid in setting up the country for a coup d’etat, organized by the CIA. The case of Chile comes to mind, along with the CIA-sponsored overthrow of democratically elected Salvador Allende and the CIA-installation of Augusto Pinochet who proceeded to torture, ‘disappear’ and slaughter thousands of his own citizens. In this manner, and under these threats by the World Bank and IMF, impoverished Third World countries quickly came into line and thus, by the late 1990s about 90 third world countries were getting “structurally adjusted” by the World Bank and IMF.

What are these “structural adjustment” programs of the so-called benevolent World Bank and IMF? In such a program, the IMF and WB require that the poor country in question give foreigners (which translates to American multinational corporations) free access to its economy. Further, the country is forced to reduce spending on social programs such as health care and education, in order to divert that money to repay their debt to the IMF/WB as well as foreign corporations. All subsidies to local agriculture must be eliminated – making local agriculture economically nonviable. Instead subsidies to agro-businesses growing crops for export are increased. The IMF further demands that countries allow foreign investors to buy up any state-owned enterprises they please – such as electric companies, power companies, telephone and transportation companies, natural resources and energy companies – yes, that would be the local oil companies or the future gas pipelines in Syria.

And last but not least, the country must agree to maintain the

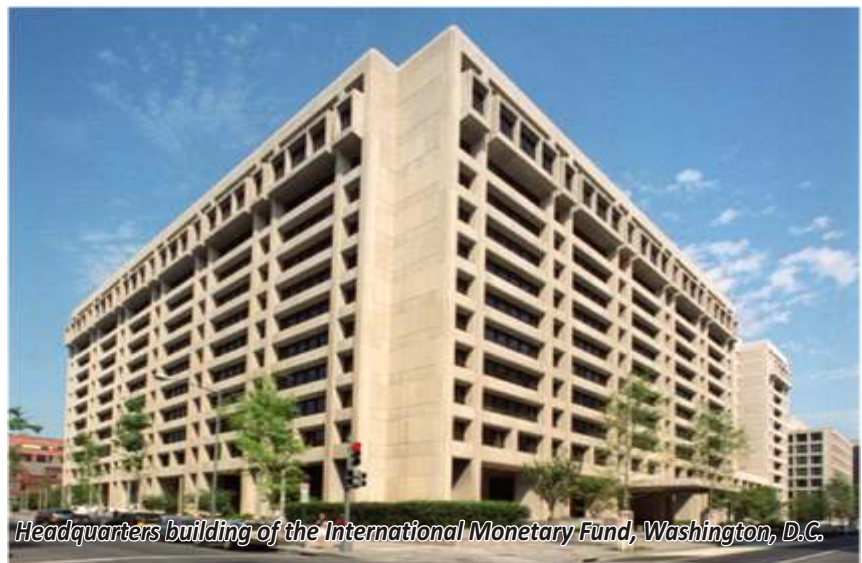
convertibility of its currency. In other words, it must not prohibit the exchange of its own money for the money of another country. Maintaining free convertibility, regardless of the exchange rate, makes speculation about the currency’s future value possible. So how does any country benefit from such loans, with such draconian strings attached? It benefits in no way at all. It never achieves any kind of economic recovery from the loans. Instead it moves towards total economic collapse. It leaves governments of those countries so weakened that they often decline into kleptocracies – governments characterized by rampant greed and corruption!

Cases in point would be the bankruptcy of Mexico in 1995, followed by Thailand, South Korea and Indonesia in 1997; Brazil and Russia in 1998; the horrendous collapse of the Argentinian economy in 2000, and Venezuela in 2002. These countries, in a state of near anarchy, continued to be compelled to depend on blood-sucking American corporations for virtually all their consumer needs. In the words of the great Filipino activist Walden Bello, IMF and WB loans result in nothing but “failure, spectacular failure.” (13) In signing papers with these two institutions, Bello said, they “signed away their right to development.” (Again, it reminds one of the credit card companies in the US – sucking the life force out of debtors with their 29 percent interest rates, and driving millions of simple citizens, unable to calculate the extreme capitalist exploitation of these banks, into bankruptcy!)

With clear proof of the unbounded destruction of the IMF and World Bank, the catastrophic consequences on the little people struggling to climb out of abject poverty, the question arises: Why do we need the World Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO), or the IMF? The WTO was created because the US found it could be created, to use as a tool to make

more money. The WTO's two objectives (on behalf of US corporations) was (1) to manage the growing trade rivalry between western industrialized countries like the US, the EU and Japan; and (2) to make sure that Third World countries could not use trade as a means to their own industrialization – which would negatively affect the neoliberal global economic structure, i.e., the cessation of incoming profits to US. Before the creation of the WTO, agriculture was an independent entity in Third World countries. But with the advent of WTO, both the EU and the US could force the Third World to open up new markets (cash crops) for export. To succeed in this endeavor, the WTO had to first put local farmers out of business – drive them into bankruptcy. Second, those local farmers were to be replaced by giant agro-businesses.

At the “Uruguay Round” of agricultural negotiations which took place in Uruguay in 1995, the European Union (EU) and the US excluded all representatives from Third World countries and decided amongst themselves what would be the global rules concerning agriculture. They further prohibited Third World countries from protecting their own agriculture but exempted their own subsidies. Consequently, a huge mass of agricultural products began to inundate third world countries, driving local farmers bankrupt and forcing them to migrate to cities in search of survival. It means that the European Union also is an exploitative tool of capitalism. Really speaking, it means that Third World countries should not do any kind of business with First World, western, industrialized countries, because invariably western countries will exploit them. Western countries are not looking to help impoverished countries. Look at how Russia was looted after communism. Rather, by entering into any kind of business negotiations with wealthy countries, the Third World countries begin to



experience unbounded economic hardship. Not the political leaders, but the masses – the common people!

As if this were not enough, the WTO introduced Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights – also known as TRIPS, which allowed American and other transnational corporations to claim patents on indigenous products already used in Third World countries for centuries.

The neem tree in India is an example. The common people have utilized the healing properties of its leaves and bark through the ages. Suddenly, Indians were faced with demands that it could no longer be used locally, as an American corporation now held the patent on this indigenous plant. Another example is the case of Rice Tec, Inc. of Alvin, Texas, who in 1997 patented a hybrid of Indian basmati rice, which in fact has been grown in India for more than two centuries. These are just two examples of medical and agricultural exploitation of Third World countries by American corporations on the basis of laws incorporated into the WTO – an entity serving capitalism and capitalists alone! The WTO is nothing but a tool of American economic imperialism, controlled by rich nations who exploit and oppress poor nations.

Globalization and the WTO started sinking into trouble with the Asian Tiger collapse of 1997. This collapse, a direct result of neo liberalist policies of the US, caused the overthrow of the Indonesian government when the IMF tried to impose draconian reforms as a

precondition for desperately needed loans. IMF policies began to generate a deep-seated hatred of US, which spread across the East Asian continent. Western powers tried to deflect this hatred, falsely claiming that the Asian countries collapsed due to internal corruption. According to New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman, globalization is the inescapable reality – and globalization has no name.

But in Seattle, Washington in 1999, outraged NGOs fighting for justice found some names to match the crimes – the names of IMF and World Bank officials responsible for creating the policies that wreaked economic havoc on Third World countries! These good people unmasked the imperialist, expansionist motives of the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO. They exposed how IMF voting rules are rigged to favor the rich countries. Only the US has the power to elect the president of the World Bank. By 2002 anti-globalization movements had spread around the world, doing their utmost to expose the exploitation of these capitalist institutions. As a result of the protests, the IMF changed the name of its program from “structural adjustment policies” to the new name of “poverty reduction and growth facility.” They are meaningless, hypocritical words invented to hoodwink the simple masses who have unbounded suffering and who do not understand the cause of their suffering or who creates all their torture.

When Argentina went belly

under in 2000, the IMF agreed to help it with the same draconian stipulations: fire large numbers of government workers, cut pensions, reduce wages, and eliminate fringe benefits. The IMF gave loans telling the government to keep squeezing the poorest sections of the society so as to be able to repay the loans. No government could realistically meet the demands of the IMF. Those demands were the embodiment of cruelty, of torture, to the little people in the country. Finally the IMF refused to give more loans and Argentina collapsed through the floor – all thanks to neo liberalism, globalization and the IMF.

How has globalization changed since the year 2000? After 9/11, globalization was gradually replaced by munitions and war profiteering. There is no way for capitalists to make more money than to take a country to war and to get into the munitions business. The military-industrial complex and the Pentagon play a huge role in this kind of economy. However, arms manufacturing does not follow the rules of globalization. Normally there is one customer (the government) and it is not subject to market discipline. Risks of profit and loss are not taken into consideration. Hence, making and selling munitions is not an example of “free enterprise.” Rather it is state socialism. (14) While “industrial policy” is outlawed by the WTO, there is one glaring exception – that is the production and sale of weapons. So even while IMF imposes severe restrictions on a country in spending on health care or pensions for its common citizens, it will allow the same country to purchase unlimited number of weapons from – you guessed it – American munitions corporations.

An example is when in October 2002 Columbia was about to purchase 40 Super Tucano light attack aircraft from Embraer of Sao Paulo, Brazil’s biggest exporter, for \$234 million. Instead, General James T. Hill, head of the US Southern Command, wrote to

Bogota saying that purchasing from Brazil would have a negative effect on support for future military aid to Columbia. General Hill instead suggested that Columbia buy C-130 airplanes from Lockheed Martin in Georgia. (15) Columbia dropped the deal with Brazil and coalesced with the US. Did it have any choice? However, with the election of Luis Lula da Silva, also in October 2002, the days of bending to US exploitation and arm-twisting may be over.

As Andre Gunder Frank said, the Pentagon is the world’s largest planned economy, with their goal being to redistribute income from poor to rich at home and abroad to blackmail friend and foe to do the same. Rumsfeld completely privatized the war in Iraq. Between 1994 and mid-2003 the Pentagon made over 3,000 contracts valued at more than \$300 billion. More than 2,700 of those contracts were given to just two companies: Kellogg Brown and Root (KBR), subsidiary of Cheney’s Halliburton, and to Booz Allen Hamilton. The result is called private military companies – PMCs. The number of mercenaries employed by PMCs is greater than that employed by the US and British military combined. (16)

However Shrii Sarkar notes that the most insidious forms of imperialism are cultural and linguistic, through the propagation of corporate pseudo-culture. It is an open secret that the internet thrives on the pornography industry which often involves female slaves. It is an open secret that wherever the US Army goes we see a rise not just in the trafficking of drugs but in the trafficking of women as well. This has been seen in Bosnia, Iraq and other places around the world. The spread of pornography is best described through a story from Orissa, India. In rural Orissa in the 1990s vans would drive out into the villages. They would show the men pornographic movies and give them free alcohol. This continued for a week until afterwards money was demanded. The addicted villagers

soon lost all their lands. The destruction of tribal languages goes hand in hand with the seizure of tribal lands, the enslaving of tribal men and the prostitutionizing of tribal women. The key to this is the control of the local media by Western capitalists. Through the corporate pseudo-culture created by the media the youth are goaded towards selfish enjoyment (at the expense of family and community), viewing women as sexual objects, alcoholism, drugs and violence. This is why we see paradoxically regions with high literacy having the highest suicide rates. As Shrii Sarkar has stated:

"This exploitation in the cultural sphere is accomplished by the propagation of pseudo-culture. Every honest, virtuous, rational person must fight against this pseudo-culture, and inspire others to do the same. If this is not done, the future of humanity will be sealed. It is proper for human beings to struggle for political freedom, for social emancipation; but if their cultural backbone is broken, then all their struggles will end in nothing – like offering ghee into a fire that has died out.

If one’s spine is shattered, it is impossible to hold one’s head erect. Can those whose necks and backs are crushed under the weight of pseudo-culture, be expected to hold their heads high in any sphere of life? Hence it is the bounden duty of every rational person to save innocent people from pseudo-culture."

To be concluded.

Notes

1 Chalmers Johnson, *Sorrows of Empire*, New York, Metropolitan Books / Henry Holt and Company, 2004; 2 Ibid, p. 5; 3 Ibid, p. 23; 4 Ibid; 5 Ibid, p. 58; 6 Ibid, p. 60; 7 Ibid, p. 74; 8 Ibid, p. 81; 9 Ibid, p. 199; 10 Ibid, p. 261; 11 Ibid, p. 262; 12 Ibid, p. 262; 13 Ibid, p. 268; 14 Ibid, p. 277; 15 Ibid, p. 280; 16 Andre Gunder Frank, “Geopolitical Catch 22: Uncle Sam’s Paper Tiger Dollar,” at Center for Research on Globalization.



The NSA has built an infrastructure that allows it to intercept almost everything. With this capability, the vast majority of human communications are automatically ingested without targeting



NSA Whistleblower Reveals Identity, Exposes US Government's “Architecture of Oppression”

★ Thomas Gaist

Former CIA employee Edward Joseph Snowden has exposed systematic police-state surveillance conducted under the Obama administration by the National Security Agency. Snowden, who is 29 years old and has served as an undercover intelligence employee, referred to the massive surveillance program as an “architecture of oppression” with virtually limitless

aims: “They are intent on making every conversation and every form of behaviour in the world known to them.” The leaks have uncovered a government spying program that includes the accumulation of detailed phone records on nearly every individual in the United States, as well as a program of Internet spying spanning the globe involving the close collaboration of major tech companies, including Microsoft and Google.

According to the data released

by Snowden, in addition to the collection of data from millions of US citizens on a daily basis, the NSA also snoops on the rest of the world. Employing a program known as Boundless Informant the NSA collected no less than 3 billion pieces of metadata from individuals and businesses across the continent of Europe in the space of just one month. Every European state was subject to surveillance but, on the basis of a color-coded map, it emerges that the continent's biggest

economy, Germany, was subject to the most scrutiny by the US program. The US spying operation has huge international implications. In a commentary on the revelations the British Financial Times expressed its concern about the consequences of the US spying for international diplomacy and business, while the Observer newspaper condemned the hypocrisy of Obama who recently harshly criticized surveillance operations conducted by the Chinese government. In an interview with the Guardian's Glenn Greenwald Snowden detailed the vast spying capabilities assembled by US government agencies: "The NSA has built an infrastructure that allows it to intercept almost everything. With this capability, the vast majority of human communications are automatically ingested without targeting..."

"The NSA specifically targets the communications of everyone... I sitting at my desk certainly had the authority to wiretap anyone, from you or your accountant, to a federal judge or even the president if I had a personal email." Snowden added, "I don't want to live in a society that does these sorts of things. I do not want to live in a world where everything I do and say is recorded. That is not something I am willing to support or live under." Snowden currently works for Booz Allen Hamilton, a defense contractor in Hawaii, but has fled to Hong Kong. Speaking of his motivation in leaking evidence of a massive dragnet carried out under the Obama administration, Snowden added, "Everyone, everywhere now understands how bad things have gotten—and they're talking about it." Snowden rejected claims that the spying programs are focused on foreign communications: "The NSA routinely lays in response to congressional inquiries about the scope of surveillance in America... We collect more digital communications from America than we do from the Russians."

"We hack everyone everywhere," he added.

Asked about the possibility of effective countermeasures against the surveillance, Snowden responded, "You are not even aware

of what is possible. The extent of their capabilities is horrifying. We can plant bugs in machines. Once you go on the network, I can identify your machine. You will never be safe whatever protections you put in place." Snowden said he was motivated by a desire to defend the public against a vast expansion of state power. "Allowing the US government to intimidate its people with threats of retaliation for revealing wrongdoing is contrary to the public interest," he said. "It's important to send a message to government that people will not be intimidated."

Snowden stated that he lives "a very comfortable life," but is "willing to sacrifice all of that because I can't in good conscience allow the US government to destroy privacy, Internet freedom and basic liberties for people around the world with this massive surveillance machine they're secretly building." Snowden made clear that he fears for his safety as a result of his actions: "Yes, I could be rendered by the CIA. I could have people come after me. Or any of the third-party partners. They work closely with a number of other nations. Or they could pay off the Triads [organized crime syndicate in China]. Any of their agents or assets," he said.

Snowden's fears are entirely justified, given the punishment of whistleblowers meted out by the Obama administration. The US military is currently prosecuting Bradley Manning for releasing to WikiLeaks evidence of massive criminality abroad. Responding to statements by journalist Steve Clemons that he had overheard intelligence officials arguing that the reporter and leaker of the story should be disappeared, Snowden said: "Well, I am a spy and that is how they talk. Whenever we had a debate in the office on how to handle crimes, they do not defend due process—they defend decisive action. They say it is better to kick someone out of a plane than let these people have a day in court. It is an authoritarian mindset in general."

Snowden has announced that he will seek protection from foreign governments: "I intend to ask for asylum from any countries that believe in free speech and oppose

the victimization of global privacy," Snowden told the Washington Post. Obama administration officials have already threatened to arrest and prosecute the leaker of the information on domestic spying. Speaking to NBC, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said, "This is someone who for whatever reason has chosen to violate a sacred trust for this country... I hope we're able to track down whoever is doing this."

In a recent speech, Obama brushed aside media coverage of the surveillance programs as "hype," saying that systematic spying on telephone records and Internet usage amounted to no more than a "modest encroachment" on rights protected by the US Constitution. Snowden said he "watched as Obama advanced the very policies that I thought would be reined in [with the departure of the Bush administration]," and as a result, "I got hardened." "What they're doing," Snowden said, poses "an existential threat to democracy."

Bangalore: India is one among the top five countries most widely monitored by the National Security Agency (NSA) a U.S government agency tasked with foreign surveillance claims a Boundless Informant, said a U.K newspaper. In March 2013, NSA recorded 6.3 billion pieces of intelligence from computer networks in India placing it fifth on the list of most extensively monitored countries. Iran topped the list with 14 billion pieces of intelligence followed by Pakistan with 13.5 billion, Jordan in the third position with 12.7 billion and Egypt with 7.6 billion in the fourth. The agency collected 97 billion pieces of intelligence from computer networks worldwide and has developed a powerful tool for recording and analyzing the top-secret documents about the NSA data mining tool, called Boundless Informant. It details and even maps by country the voluminous amount of information it collects from computer and telephone networks.

It is the latest information in the series of revelations that features the top-secret surveillance and data monitoring programs managed by NSA.



For the first time in the history of sexual violence law reform in India, issues pertaining to physically challenged women are being flagged as important items on the reform agenda.



Physically Challenged

Women

✱ Shampa Sengupta &
Saptarshi Mandal

What difficulties do physically challenged women face in accessing the legal system and navigating the trial process? And what are the consequences for them of making sexual assault gender-neutral for perpetrator and victim?

For the first time in the history of sexual violence law reform in India, issues pertaining to physically challenged women are being flagged as important items on the reform agenda. Sexual violence against physically challenged women is rampant, both within the supposedly safe zone of the 'home' - be it familial or custodial -- and without. A small number of cases

manage to get reported and legal actions are initiated. But most of these cases that reach the courts end in acquittal. Some of the reasons behind the low rate of conviction are common to all rape cases: faulty investigation by the police, biased conclusions reached based on medical examination of the victim and the accused, general attitude of distrust towards the victim and so on. But there are also factors that are specific to the cases of physically challenged women, such as not recording the testimony of the

victim during the trial or recording the testimony without following the procedure laid down in law, which weaken the prosecution case at the appellate stage and result in acquittal.

The Justice Verma Committee, constituted by the central government to look into sexual assault law reform after the Delhi gang-rape and murder last December, gave many of us working on these issues an opportunity to place some of these concerns before the government. The committee responded positively and a large number of its recommendations addressed difficulties faced by physically challenged women in accessing the legal system and navigating through the trial process. Among other things, the committee recommended that the assistance of interpreters or special educators be taken at the time of recording of the complaint by the police and also during the trial, that the process of identification of the accused be videographed and that physically challenged women be exempted from recounting their testimony



once again at the time of cross-examination in cases of sexual assault. The recommendations also addressed issues of sexual abuse within institutions for the physically challenged and suggested oversight mechanisms for both state and privately run institutions. The recommendations of the committee were welcomed by women's groups and disability groups, including the ones that we are associated with.

However, when the government hurriedly introduced the Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance just three weeks before the upcoming session of parliament, we were faced with a dilemma. The ordinance, which was promulgated purportedly to give effect to the recommendations of the Verma Committee, incorporated a majority of the disability-specific ones. But longstanding demands made by women's movements such as recognising marital rape, rape by security forces, compensation for rape victims, rejection of the death penalty as a punishment and such others, which were recommended this time around as well, were left out of the ordinance. As activist and researcher respectively, we were familiar with the travails of physically challenged women within the legal system in rape cases. Hence we were acutely aware of the relevance of the disability-specific clauses in the ordinance and were happy to have been part of the process which had led to those changes. But we were also politically aligned with the women's movement and thus found it difficult to endorse the ordinance, which had left out issues which were fundamental to reconceptualising sexual offences in a manner that protected the rights of victims of sexual violence.

Leading from the personal/political dilemmas regarding our position on the ordinance, we wondered if the disability-specific recommendations were so readily accepted by the state because

disability was seen as a 'safe', sympathy-inducing issue that posed no threat to the established orders. Demanding that marital rape be recognised as an offence on the other hand, definitely threatened the gendered/sexualised ordering of heterosexual marriage and family. Was this the reason, we wondered, why the two movements rarely spoke to each other in the course of the sexual assault debates, although they raised similar questions pertaining to the body and violence, power and vulnerability? We also wondered whether the predominantly service-providing nature of the disability sector was in any way responsible for it being viewed as a 'safe' issue. If, for the state, disability was a 'safe' issue and gender a 'disruptive' one, then what did it mean for movement politics -- the business of building alliances and solidarities across sectors while engaging with the state? And at a much smaller level, what did it mean for our own work where we try to think through both these axes of power and vulnerability?

While we still do not have clear answers to any of these questions, we want to flag some cautionary notes on sexual violence against physically challenged women and the legal response to the same. Protecting the rights of the physically challenged against sexual assault requires us to think beyond provisions for interpreters and special educators, and engage with the domain of power and sexuality as well. In the context of sexual assault law reform, one issue that has created sharp divides between the state and women's rights groups, women's rights groups and queer and child rights groups, and amongst women's rights groups as well, is the proposition of making sexual offences gender-neutral. In the year 2000, the 172nd Report of the Law Commission mooted the idea of substituting the words 'man' and 'woman' in Sections 375 and 376 of the Indian Penal Code with the word

'person' so as to bring instances of same-sex sexual assault and sexual assault on male children by adults within the scope of the law. The idea was rejected by a wide section of the women's movement which argued that sexual offences took place within a framework of gendered power relations and the legal system which tried these offences was heavily biased against women. These realities, it was argued, could not be wished away just by changing words in the law. Similarly, a number of lesbian women's groups expressed concerns that in the absence of any affirmative legal recognition of same-sex relationships, a gender-neutral rape provision could be used by disapproving families to lodge false complaints against same-sex lovers.

In the last 12 years, several developments have taken place: decriminalisation of adult same-sex sexual acts by the Delhi High Court in 2009, greater public awareness and discussion about child sexual abuse, and much more documented evidence of sexual violence against gay, transgender and transsexual persons. With the result that by the time the government introduced the Criminal Law Amendment Bill in June 2012, there was agreement on certain things among the groups involved in these debates. Thus most groups agreed that victims of sexual assault must be defined in a gender-neutral manner so as to provide protection to men and transgendered persons, in addition to women. But the perpetrator should be kept as male alone, as, making the perpetrator gender-neutral would weigh heavily against women. Thus the 2012 Bill, which proposed gender-neutrality with respect to both the victim and the perpetrator, was opposed by women's groups as well as some queer groups.

Cut to 2013, and the Verma Committee recommended that rape be retained as a gender-specific offence and provided separately for same-sex sexual assault. However, despite strong opposition, the

ordinance stuck to gender-neutrality with respect to both the victim and the perpetrator, and till the time a new Criminal Law Amendment Bill is introduced and passed to replace the ordinance, it remains the operative law.

Surprisingly, disability groups have not been part of these debates, though making sexual offences gender-neutral clearly has consequences for physically challenged women. A stereotypical view of physically challenged women, particularly those with intellectual or psycho-social disability, is that they are unable to control their sexual urges. Such a view, historically propagated by the medical establishment, is prevalent among the police, doctors and judges. In the course of handling cases of sexual assault on physically challenged women, we have often heard the authorities sympathising with the accused based on the belief that 'such women' are prone to making sexual advances on men, and later charge them with sexual assault. In 2001, in a case where a speech- and hearing-impaired girl was raped by two policemen inside a prison van in Kolkata, the officer-in-charge had said to one of us that activists should not follow up such cases. When asked why, he said it was common knowledge that physically challenged girls were 'sex starved' and it was the girl who had in fact attacked the policemen. More recently, in the course of inquiring about a case of sexual assault on a female inmate by a male staffer at a Kolkata mental health institution in April 2012, the superintendent of the institution told one of us that he himself was scared of going inside the female ward for fear of being 'molested'. He even asked us if there was any law to punish such women who first molest/tempt and then complain against hapless men.

In such a scenario where such attitudes are presented as medical 'truths' and where authorities put the blame on the victims and their lack

of sexual discipline, what might be the implications of a gender-neutral rape law, where even women can be made assaulters and men their targets? Court judgments reveal how physically challenged women's accounts of sexual assault are treated with suspicion by judges. For instance, in an Orissa High Court case the prosecutrix was deaf and mute and had not revealed to anyone that she had been raped; it was discovered only when she became pregnant. The court, while granting bail to the accused observed that a case of consent on the part of the woman could not be ruled out since (a) the woman was about 30 years old and still unmarried and (b) she could have at least communicated it to her mother knowing that her mother would naturally be anxious about her marriage. Again in *Meeraj Alam vs State of Bihar*, the Patna High Court kept on repeating throughout the judgment that 'the victim girl was a grown-up lady who was unmarried because of such infirmity and that her younger sister was already married, having children from before'. How were the marital statuses of the victims of any relevance here, unless the judges were trying to implicitly suggest that the women in these cases were sexually mature and yet were not 'getting any' because they were physically challenged and hence one should be suspicious of their motives? Earlier a standard defence by an accused in a rape case used to

be that the woman (physically challenged or not) had consented to the sexual intercourse, which then would be proved with reference to her dress, conduct, sexual history, etc. Now, if the perpetrator is made gender-neutral, whenever a physically challenged woman complains of sexual assault, the alleged assaulter might file a counter-complaint that it was he who was raped by the woman. And we have good reason to believe that given the widely held view regarding physically challenged women's hypersexuality, such counter-allegations by men will be believed and sympathised with, by investigators and adjudicators.

Thus gender-neutral definition of the perpetrator in sexual offences, as is currently the case, is not in the interests of physically challenged women. The government is preparing to introduce a Criminal Law Amendment Bill, 2013 soon to replace the ordinance. From media accounts, it seems the government is undecided about the formulation of the offence in the final Bill. But whatever it is, it is about time disability groups appreciated the implications of it, took a stand on the issue and made it known to the state.

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Physically challenged women honoured



In a tribal state, and at a police station set up to redress atrocities against scheduled castes and tribes, a glimpse of the indifference, brutality and convenient roadblocks encountered by the marginalised looking for a modicum of justice.



Marginalisation of the Tribal People of Jharkhand

✱ Garga Chatterjee

In the public imagination Jharkhand is a 'tribal' state. In reality Jharkhand defies such characterisation with disturbing regularity. I say disturbing because the movement for a Jharkhand state, long after its inception, was really a broad movement to secure rights and dignity for the tribal people of the

Chhotanagpur and Jangal-Mahal areas. The subsequent betrayal of that spirit is now out in the open. I recently saw a full-page advertisement put out by the Jharkhand tourism department with the caption 'Divinity Reigns Here'. Eight of the 13 tourist destinations listed also detailed religious sites. Not a single 'divinity' of local Jharkhand extraction was on that list.



The marginalisation of the tribal people of Jharkhand cannot be starker in a province created in their name and nurtured by the dead bodies of their ancestors. Sometimes the state itself unwittingly lays bare its socio-political priorities even as it maintains a different rhetoric for public consumption. The advertisement in question was one such instance, and it provides an analogy for the tale I am going to tell. There is another part of the tale - one of law. In 'liberalism', there is a certain fiction about equality before the law and state which helps a large number of people sleep well at night. It is this fiction that helps create inward-looking technocratic bubbles among uppity deshies. Again, it is this fiction that helps newspapers pull off front-page stories about the protocol in the Rashtrapati's coronation or the details of the Formula 1 circuit in Noida, in a land with the world's largest number of hungry and the world's largest number of internally displaced people. The middle class needs a certain idea of reality and justice to enjoy their morning cup of tea. This tale is also a small snapshot of how fast that illusion can be

shattered if we step out of the bubble, even for a minute.

The events in question happened on January 13, 2010, but really they have been going on since 1956-57. I was in Ranchi at the time. The Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC), a public sector company, had been given huge swathes of land in Dhurwa, in the vicinity of Ranchi. The storyline is sadly familiar. The dispossessed were largely adivasis (indigenous peoples) who were thrown off their ancestral lands without compensation, though not without the promise of compensation. By 2010, HEC was unable to use most of the land. However, by now, this land was prime real estate. Just the unused land was 3,500 acres. Of this, HEC had 'sold' 158 acres to the Central Industrial Security Forces (CISF) to set up a camp. Setting up a CISF camp was hardly industrial use of the land, the purpose for which the land had been originally acquired. How many times original intent has been set aside to swindle indigenous people in the Indian Union we will never know. But in this case, people cried foul the moment the plan was floated. Since the land was clearly not being used for the original intent for which it had been acquired, they demanded the return of the land to its original owners. Most of them remained uncompensated, nearly 60 years after the acquisition.

Dayamani Barla, an outspoken leader against the exploitation of adivasi resources, was at the forefront of the struggle from the start. After CISF began construction, the protesting adivasis dug in, staging a dharna at the site. (CISF began construction even though the matter was being heard in the high court at Ranchi.) The vigil went on for over six months, with desperately impoverished people often forsaking their daily wage to devote time to the movement. They were part of the Visthapit Morcha, inhabitants of the 36 villages that were uprooted, and had been

keeping the resistance alive for generations. They also planted the Sarna flag nearby, a sacred symbol of indigenous religion and identity.

At dawn on January 13, CISF jawans uprooted the Sarna flag. Women at the dharna site who pleaded with them not to uproot the flag were beaten up. News spread and people assembled at the site. CISF jawans brutally beat the assembled people, men and women, including many elderly people. At least 20 people were seriously injured. The intimate and vigorous contact that a lathi-charge requires attests to the dehumanisation people suffer at the hands of these 'keeper of the law'. When an ideology makes it possible for an armed 30-year-old to beat and bloody an unarmed 65-year-old woman, it raises serious questions about all levels of the chain of command and the brutalising ideology that keeps this chain well oiled. Many of the injured were hospitalised in a nearby facility run by HEC itself. People from Murma, Aani, Jaganathpur, Kute and Labed villages joined in. Such solidarity does not wait for the theoretical ideas of participatory democracy that are a favourite pastime in Delhi and its surrounds.

My firsthand experience of a day on the other side of the law began when I joined Dayamani Barla as she visited the protest site shortly after noon. We arrived in a rickshaw and shortly after we got down, people assembled around Barla. We met people who were bandaged and bore clear signs of the recent trauma. For about two hours, the assembled people chanted slogans. There were a few press-wallahs too. The wounded and the violated poured their hearts out. Notes were taken. An agent of the local Congressman arrived, said that the MLA would have come himself but was 'busy'. The assembled people heard him. They seemed to have heard things like this before. A little distance away, in the makeshift CISF camp, a column of cars



arrived. Smart men in khaki emerged and went inside. Salutes were exchanged. Life was going on as usual. At this point, it was suggested that a case be registered with the police. The process was, for me, a real eye-opener.

In liberalism, I was taught that the process went something like this. I am aggrieved. I go to the police and lodge a complaint. A case is registered. The police pursues the case, investigates it, and books the guilty (if any). After that, the law takes its own course. This is indeed how it works when we pursue domestic help suspected of stealing. The disused police station for handling cases of atrocities against dalits and adivasis. The next few hours made it plain exactly how and with what systematic indifference and brutality the odds of receiving a modicum of justice are stacked against the marginalised. And how I was not one of them. The first thing was the police station itself. It was not any police station but a special one set up with much fanfare-exclusively to deal with atrocities against people from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. This was the 'tribal' state living up to its promise. The station itself had an abandoned dilapidated look. In front was a board that had the names and cell phone numbers of the officers. The officers were not present. They were not on a mission; they were simply not there. A look at the police

station showed why. The male and female lockups meant to temporarily hold those who had prima facie committed atrocities against people from scheduled castes and tribes clearly had not been used in a while. The female lockup was being used as a temporary store for sundry things. The thick film of dust on the male lockup showed that it too hadn't had a visitor in days.

If this was evidence of a lack of atrocities being committed against the marginalised, that idea was soon dispelled. After all, we were there to lodge exactly such a complaint. The policeman on duty wanted to avoid everything; how could we prove that anyone had been hurt by the lathi-charge, he asked. Several injured men and women old enough to be his parents stood right in front of him. He told us to give him medical certificates from the doctors who had treated them. We were at a loss as the staff at the HEC-run hospital had made sure that the treatment happened without any admission records or discharge certificates. After all, it is not easy to see through the ulterior motives of an establishment that is bandaging your wounded arm. Thereafter, the story changed. The lone policeman said that there was no one to take the complaint. Dayamani Barla pointed out that he himself could do it. At this point, he called a higher-up on his cell phone. Then he said to us: "I have been told that this will be investigated thoroughly; there is no need for a written complaint."

The gathered crowd insisted that he take the complaint. It was written up and handed to the policeman. The policeman simply kept it. We asked for a receipt. He said he could not give us one. At this point, I told him I was a journalist and that what he was doing was unfortunate. I also asked him his name. I did not look like an adivasi from the area and I had also spoken a smattering of English. Ironically, being non-adivasi or non-marginalised has some serious advantages in this adivasi province.

For starters, my presence was acknowledged! The policeman agreed to put his name to the complaint copy as a receipt. However, a random name without a stamp and designation means nothing. He knew this, and so did we. He said that the stamp was in a cupboard which was locked, and that he did not have the key. Also, there was not enough ink on the stamp-pad. Barla, being a veteran activist, tried to pull strings to get the complaint received and stamped by calling a known adivasi in the police chain of command. The key suddenly materialised; so did a fresh stamp-pad. The receipt was stamped with the seal of the Union of India, four lions and all.

After the ordeal, sitting outside the police station in a tea stall, we noticed that a new multi-storey swanky police quarter was being built: white, clean, and impeccable. Later, Superintendent of Police Mohit Bundas told the press: "The matter is simple. Everything was set right immediately." That is what you and I read in the news the next morning. All was quiet on the western front, as we would love to believe. This was a glimpse into how even the bare minimum that is required to form the basis of legal action is denied to most people. And this is not an error of omission but systemic, procedural and regular

commission. It is not dug deep in the system; it is the system. The sheer number of well-devised roadblocks in something so apparently basic as lodging a complaint, and how those roadblocks materialise or disappear based on who the complainant is, is something that positive beneficiaries of the Union of India need to understand. They need to understand the cost of their peace of mind, the uninterrupted revelry at the Blue Frog, the banter at Dilli-Haat and the positive confidence of the likes of Ramchandra Guha discussing who is the 'Greatest Indian'.

Justice, it is said, is blind. It does not see who the parties involved are. It simply delivers its judgment based on what it hears -- the pure stream of logic and evidence. However, in the Indian Union, the lady of justice has posted at the door an agent who regulates admission. This agent is not blind, but deaf. He looks for those fit enough, safe enough, docile enough to admit. They need to be docile for they are the ones who will not want to examine the nature of the cloth that the lady of justice purportedly blindfolds herself with.

The writer is an ex-physician, is a cognitive scientist at MIT and Harvard and an observer-commentator on South Asian politics





War and Water:

Hydropolitics Propel Balkanization in Africa

✱ Wayne Madsen

The Nile Basin is seeing record fragmentation of nation-states by secessionist and other rebel movements, some backed by the United States and its Western allies and others backed by Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Yet other secessionist groups are backed by regional rivals such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, and Sudan.

Ethiopia has announced that its Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project on the Blue Nile will begin diverting the Blue Nile at the end of 2014. Ethiopia's decision has set off alarm bells down river in Sudan and Egypt, which are both critically dependent on the Nile for drinking water, irrigation, and in the case of Egypt's Aswan High Dam, electric power. A 1959 agreement between Egypt and Sudan guarantees Egypt 70 percent and Sudan 30 percent of the Nile's water flow.

Egypt's government has warned Ethiopia, a historical rival, not to restrict the Nile water flow to the extent that it would adversely affect the Aswan Dam or Egypt's water supply. Sudan has voiced similar warnings. Cairo and Khartoum are also aware that their mutual enemy, Israel, has close relations with Ethiopia and the Republic of South Sudan, the world's newest nation. The independence of South Sudan would not have been possible without the backing of Israel's leading neo-conservative allies in Washington and London.

The White Nile flows from the Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, through Uganda and South Sudan, to Sudan. Egypt and Sudan have also been concerned about Israel's heavy presence in South Sudan. The South Sudanese secession put tremendous pressure on the future territorial integrity of Sudan, which faces additional Western- and Israeli-

backed breakaway movements in Darfur and northeastern Sudan.

Independence for South Sudan was long a goal of former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and her god-daughter, current U.S. ambassador to the UN Susan Rice. The splitting of Sudan into an Arab Muslim north and a black Christian and animist south was also long a goal of Israel, which yearned for a client state in South Sudan that would be able to squeeze the supply of the Nile's headwaters to Egypt and north Sudan.

South Sudan's independence was cobbled together so rapidly, its Western sponsors were not even sure, at first, what to call the country. Although South Sudan was finally agreed upon, other proposals were to call the nation the «Nile Republic» or «Nilotia,» which were rejected because of the obvious threatening meaning that such names would send to Cairo and Khartoum.

Wherever there are reports of melting glaciers and a future of diminished water resources, there is an increasing Balkanization of nation-states. Those who manipulate world events for maximum profit understand that it is much easier to control water resources if one is dealing with a multitude of warring and jealous mini-states than it is to deal with a regional power...

* Ronald Abraham
Andrew Fraker



Bihar's child malnutrition rate is higher than any country in the world (Menon et al 2009, Grebmer et al 2011). Over half of the children under five years of age are underweight or stunted, indicating chronic malnourishment (NFHS-3). Recognising this, the Bihar state government and the central government have committed over Rs. 1,100 crore (\$200 million approx.) per year for the



Bihar's Malnutrition

Crisis and Potential Solutions

The prevalence of underweight children in Bihar is higher than in any country in the world, and the provision of public services to address malnutrition is poor. Based on an assessment of the government's nutritional support to mothers and children, this column sheds light on the grim public service delivery, likely causes, and ideas to address the problem.

Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) administered by the Directorate of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). However, programme funds are regularly pilfered, and on-the-ground public service delivery is lacking. We, together with our team at IDinsight, conducted a study to quantify the extent and sources of this pilferage using unannounced visits by independent surveyors (IDinsight 2013). We find that 53% of SNP funds are not spent on the ground, amounting to an annual loss of nearly Rs. 600 crore (\$110 million approx.). The two main components (and sources of

leakage) for SNP are hot cooked meals for three to six year olds, and take-home rations (THR) for pregnant and lactating mothers and children younger than three. Each anganwadi (government run pre-school) is provided with around Rs. 4600 (\$ 80 approx.) and Rs. 5800 (\$ 105 approx.) per month for hot cooked meals and THR respectively. We find that 71% of funds meant for hot cooked meals and 38% of THR funds are pilfered. Finally, it should be noted that this study is not about the efficacy of SNP itself. There is no clear evidence that SNP, even if functioning well, reduces malnutrition (Lokshin et al 2005). In fact, owing to SNP's low coverage poor targeting of impoverished households (Gagnolati et al 2006) and intended beneficiaries within households, and lack of focus on very young children, it may not have the desired nutritional impact. However, while these design issues should be addressed, improving the status of SNP is vital from a public service delivery point of view. This requires an understanding of potential causes of poor performance, design changes to address these, field pilots to optimise design changes, and rigorous impact evaluations to learn if they have the desired effect. This is a model for how social sector organisations can diagnose problems, experiment with ideas, and scale up ideas that are proven to work. Our study, in fact, serves as the foundation for such an approach, in which two interventions to improve public service delivery in Bihar ICDS will be piloted and rigorously evaluated.

Sources of Fund Leakage

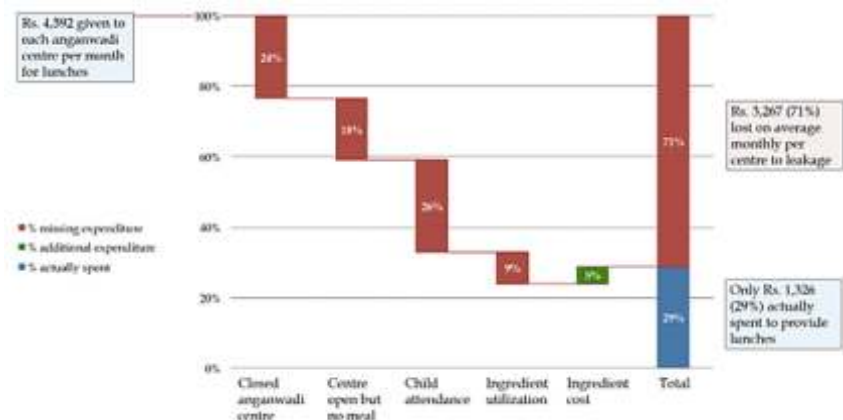
In unannounced visits to 200 anganwadis across three districts of Bihar, 24% of them were closed during times they should have been open, and meals were only served on 59% of the days they should have been served. When anganwadis were open and meals were served, only 22 children on average out of 40 that should attend were present. And in these meals, only three

quarters of the stipulated nutritional ingredients were used. Figure 1 below illustrates how each of these factors contributed to the final tally of 71% of funds allocated for hot cooked meals not being spent. Closed anganwadis and poor child attendance together account for two-thirds of the missing expenditure. Interestingly, ingredient prices are fixed by ICDS across Bihar and are sometimes not adjusted for 2 to 3 years, despite high inflation. Due to this, ingredients needed to prepare the meals cost around 20% more than the amount allocated by ICDS. However, because of the low expenditure in the first place, this only increases expenditure by 5 percentage points (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Missing expenditure on hot cooked meals

Approximately 38% of funds are missing from THR, which

or the proverbial 'last mile problems' of ICDS. There are few mechanisms to hold service providers accountable. From the demand-side, beneficiaries do not seem to be aware of their entitlements. Parents have often told us that they are "satisfied" because their children at least get "something". Additionally, anganwadi workers seem to have significant discretion in choosing beneficiaries, and families may worry they will be struck off the beneficiary list if they complain. In many surveys, beneficiaries made efforts to ensure that we did not record anything negative about their local anganwadi worker. We also found that parents may not consider their children malnourished. Therefore, SNP is likely treated as just a little extra food rather than a fundamental necessity (since the



provides bags of rice and lentils to young children and mothers. Although, 84% of beneficiaries reported receiving some rice and lentils during the past month, two thirds of the missing expenditure under the THR component is due to low volumes of rice and dal. Often, beneficiaries lament that they only got a handful of lentils, while books showed that the anganwadi worker provided them with 2 kilos of lentils.

What factors contribute to this status quo?

Our team's extensive field visits and stakeholder interviews have shed light on the possible causes for the widespread pilferage

problem of hunger is not as acute as that of malnourishment in the state), further reducing its demand. On the supply side, monitoring by ICDS officials is highly infrequent. According to our study, only 21% of anganwadi workers (rather than the expected 60% if the official ICDS guidelines are followed) had received visits from their Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) in the past three months. In addition, the anganwadis where supervisors visited were no more likely to provide a meal, suggesting the ineffectiveness of the current monitoring system. Moreover, performance tracking of the entire

ICDS hierarchy (and not just the anganwadi workers) is inadequate. Systemic issues within ICDS in Bihar may encourage front line workers to fudge accounts or steal, which is a slippery slope for larger amounts being pilfered.

For example, anganwadi workers almost never get paid on time. They receive honorariums for six to nine months in one go, and typically with a significant and unpredictable lag. Some workers have admitted to us that, given this situation, it is only natural to siphon off SNP funds, which arrive monthly. Similarly, some anganwadi workers are reputed to have paid huge sums of money to attain their positions. In such cases, siphoning off SNP funds is viewed as a “right” of the anganwadi worker, as they feel justified in getting monthly pay-offs given their large upfront “investment”. As mentioned earlier, food prices are fixed by ICDS and are lower than market prices. Our study found that market prices were on average more than 20% higher than ICDS stipulated rates. Therefore, even the most honest anganwadi workers buy less than the stipulated quantity. This then makes it very difficult to hold errant workers accountable, as market prices provide a ready justification to explain non-provision of meals (“money ran out”), or lesser quantities of key ingredients (“lentils are too expensive”).

Ideas to improve Bihar's nutrition programme

Leadership at Bihar's Department for Social Welfare and ICDS has proposed two interventions to improve SNP and requested rigorous evaluations of the same. The first intervention uses technology to facilitate demand- and supply-side accountability. On the demand side, a call centre will randomly call beneficiaries to solicit information on the functioning of their local anganwadi, and to pass on information such as guidelines on their entitlements, updates on financial transfers to their anganwadi worker, an assessment of their local anganwadi etc. This could solve the above mentioned problems of beneficiaries not knowing their rights, and the risk of losing benefits when demanding better service. However, it remains to be seen whether information alone is sufficient to empower the beneficiaries to demand better service, given on-the-ground caste and power dynamics between anganwadi workers and beneficiaries.

On the supply side, supervisory officials will receive smartphones with an anganwadi-monitoring application, GPS and camera to increase the frequency, quality, transparency and verifiability of their monitoring reports. Data from these monitoring visits and from beneficiary reports will be aggregated to suit different

stakeholders, and made available publicly. To be effective, the information generated through this intervention should be consistently used to manage and incentivise all levels of the ICDS staff. The second intervention is to administer SNP via JEEViKA self-help groups. This has the potential to increase demand side accountability, as 50% of ICDS beneficiaries in JEEViKA-operated blocks are members of these self-help-groups. This would address the previously mentioned problem of beneficiaries being afraid to demand better services on their own. Here too a rigorous evaluation will be critical to determine the efficacy of this intervention, especially given this will be a new role for JEEViKA.

Concluding thoughts

There are no sure solutions to reduce leakage and improve the provision of food to Bihar's millions of malnourished children and mothers. We plan to iteratively pilot the suggested interventions on the ground to optimise their design, and undertake rigorous evaluations to measure their effects on nutritional service delivery and beneficiary outcomes. The eagerness of the Government of Bihar and ICDS to innovate and adjust programme design, and to use rigorous evaluations to inform their decisions, provides hope for millions throughout Bihar.

This column is a direct result of extensive deliberations within IDinsights India team, which includes Neil Buddy Shah, a Founding Partner at IDinsight, and Associates Apurva Bamezai, Anand Kothari, and Stuart Shirrell.

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Editor's Note : The current Bihar Government has been in power for a long time and has been unable or unwilling to establish law and order in the State administration. To place the future of Bihar's children in the hands of such people would be suicidal. Unless the people of Bihar rise and establish participatory budget spending like in Brazil, there is little hope short of another freedom struggle.



Institutionalised Corruption in Philippines



✱ Deo Palma

In a country where millions of people survive on just a dollar a day, Janet Lim Napoles' claims that she comes from a humble family are hard for many Filipinos to accept. Her 23-year-old daughter Jeane, fresh out of college in the US, owns a \$1.89m condo at the Ritz-Carlton Residences in Los Angeles. That's apart from the \$9.5m worth of properties the family has across California. The Napoles matriarch is known for her generosity, subsidising Catholic priests and giving out a \$1,500 engraved Montblanc pen to a Philippine senator.

But in mid-August, Napoles went into hiding. The businesswoman, who reportedly owns at least 28 luxury houses in the Philippines, was accused of funneling \$232m in government funds intended for farmers through ghost projects linked to senators and more than a dozen congressmen. The scandal has ignited a wave of public anger that led to mass anti-corruption protests on Monday, attracting an estimated 100,000 people in the capital Manila and other major cities.

The protesters were demanding the abolition of the "pork barrel", the practice of appropriating public money

for local projects through Congress. A legacy of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, the practice has remained untouched and has become a source of massive corruption. While the Philippine economy has posted solid gains over the last decade, protesters say the country will continue to be stuck in poverty if institutionalised corruption persists - a problem that now bedevils the popular President Benigno Aquino III.

From college students to members of the clergy to regular citizens, the rain-soaked protesters marched, chanting in Filipino, "No more pork".

"This scandal is so gut-wrenching," Peachy Rallonza-Bretana, the public face of the social media-driven demonstration, said in an interview with Al Jazeera. "That's 32 percent of income tax and 12 percent sales tax that I pay to the government. It's so personal it makes you angry."

Bretana, an advertising executive who has never led a protest before, said the recent corruption case drove her to post a comment on Facebook that snowballed into a call for "a million people march". Last week's massive flooding and the much-criticised government response only drew more attention to the scandal. "We have been duped for far too long," she said. "We want the pork barrel abolished, and we want a transparent investigation and prosecution of those who are guilty."

President under pressure

On Friday, seeking to defuse the growing public pressure while navigating the political realities in Congress, President Aquino - a former senator and congressman - changed course and announced plans to implement reforms.

"The shocking revelations of this misuse are truly scandalous," he said in a national address. "Now, we will create a new mechanism to address the needs [of constituents], in a manner that is transparent, methodical and rational, and not susceptible to abuse or corruption."

After hearing the details of the multi-million dollar scam, however, many were in no mood to accept Aquino's proposal. Former national treasurer Leonor Briones told Al Jazeera that Aquino did "not address the very source of corruption itself, which is congressional and senatorial interference in the budget process".

"The pork barrel, historically, has always been abused regardless of the administration, regardless of party affiliation, and all of us know that," Briones said, adding that no president has dared to confront Congress on the issue.

Briones, now head of the watchdog group Social Watch Philippines, also said that the pork barrel is only the "tip of the iceberg", pointing to the president's own annual discretionary fund, which this year is at least \$7.2bn.

For now, though, much of the ire is being directed at Napoles, who before going into hiding declared that "not a single peso" of their wealth came from the government. One of Napoles' lawyers added that her client's family started out trading meat products including chicken and pork, and later expanded into the export business.

What enraged the public were the details of Napoles' alleged dealings with top government officials, in which 60 percent of the pork-barrel funds reportedly went to legislators.

One of the witnesses in the scandal told the local broadsheet Philippine Daily Inquirer that bags of money were stashed in the bathtub of Napoles' master bedroom in a posh condo in a Manila suburb. The money was reportedly distributed as bribes to lawmakers.

While this was going on, Napoles still managed to get involved with Catholic charities, providing shelter for prominent priests and foreign clerics inside the Philippines' most exclusive subdivision.

Napoles and her family also reportedly maintained at least 415 bank accounts that are now subject to a government freeze order. 'This is just the beginning'

Edly Aparejado, 55, comes from a squatter community in the Manila suburb of Caloocan. She said

I see some of my neighbors who are unable to eat three times a day. They could have benefited from that stolen money.

- Edly Aparejado, protester

she was saddened after hearing about the scandal.

"They could have used that money to build houses for the poor," Aparejado, who joined the protest, told Al Jazeera. "I see some of my neighbors who are unable to eat three times a day. They could have benefited from that stolen money."

For Homer Castillo, 38, the father of two grade-school students, the protest "has been a long time coming". He added that many poor families share the same sentiments, but were unable to join the protest because they couldn't afford to do so.

Law student Eric Joven, another protester who voted for Aquino for president, said he hopes the demonstration will have substantial results, such as the imprisonment of those involved in the scam and the passage of the Freedom of Information Bill, which seeks to open government records to public scrutiny. "This is just the beginning, and I hope that the people will remain vigilant," he said.

Meanwhile, Bretana, the march's spokesperson, said social media will be critical in sustaining public engagement on the issue after the protests have died down. "We cannot let this chance go, and we have to hold onto this to effect change," she said.

Proutists Join Million People March at Philippines

The Million People March was a protest in the Philippines calling for the abolition of the PDAF (Priority Development Assistance Fund) (also referred to colloquially as "Pork Barrel") caused by the Priority Development Assistance Fund scam. Calls for the protests circulated through social media, mainly on Facebook and Twitter, to conduct a protest on August 26, 2013 in Luneta Park in Manila and other cities around the Philippines and the world. A Facebook page entitled "Abolish Pork Barrel" was created to invite participants to the protests. One of the organizers, Peachy Rallonza-Bretana, said that there is no main group organizing the protest and described the protests as "snowballing at great speed". The day before the protests, 18,000 people had already arrived at Luneta Park.

Proutists also joined the movement under the Proutist banner Ang Ka Sama in big number.

The scam was first exposed in the Philippine Daily Inquirer on July 12, 2013, with the six-part exposé of the Inquirer on the scam pointing to businesswoman Janet Lim-Napoles as the scam's mastermind after Benhur K. Luy, her second cousin and former personal assistant, was rescued by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation on March 22, 2013, four months after he was detained by Napoles at her unit at the Pacific Plaza Towers in Fort Bonifacio. Initially centering on Napoles' involvement in the 2004 Fertilizer Fund scam, the government investigation on Luy's testimony has since expanded to cover Napoles' involvement in a wider scam involving the misuse of PDAF funds from 2003 to 2013.

It is estimated that the Philippine government was defrauded of some? 10 billion in the course of the scam, having been diverted to Napoles, participating members of Congress and other government officials. Aside from the PDAF and the fertilizer fund maintained by the Department of Agriculture, around? 900 million in royalties



earned from the Malampaya gas field were also lost to the scam. The scam has provoked public outrage, with calls being made on the Internet for popular protests to demand the abolition of the PDAF, and the order for Napoles' arrest sparking serious discussion online. Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle made a surprise appearance in Quirino Grandstand. His speech condemning those who were ignorant of the poor further angered the protesters to go against the pork barrel.

The protests were mainly held at the Quirino Grandstand in Luneta Park in Manila, the capital. Protests were also held in other key locations throughout the country, including Bacolod, Baguio, Cebu City, Cagayan de Oro, Davao City, Dagupan, Digos, Dumaguete, Iloilo City, Kidapawan City, Legazpi, Naga City, Puerto Princessa, Tacloban, Zamboanga City and Negros Occidental.

Overseas Filipinos also gathered at several locations overseas to protest against the Priority Development Assistance Fund. Protests were held in Dammam and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, Geneva in Switzerland, Bangkok in Thailand, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York in the United States, London in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Canada, Taiwan, Vietnam and the United Arab Emirates.

Economics for Conscious Evolution Conference, London

Thirty six speakers from five continents addressed participants at the Economics for Conscious Evolution conference held in London from 24 – 28th of July 2013. Conference sessions may be viewed from the livestream replay <http://www.ustream.TV/channel/the-IU-conference-2013>

Topics explored included the following:

- Land and Geo-Justice • Sharing the “Land Rent Commons” • Critique of Current Financial Policies
- Claiming Water, Fish and Oil Commons • Land Value Tax: Funding Transport and Affordable Housing
 - Why Socializing Rent and Untaxing Production is Good for Labour
 - Case Study: Argentina – From Public Debt to Abundance for All
- Climate Change and New Economics • Inequality: Cause and Cure • Land Trusts & Eco-villages



PBI Launches The Election Campaign for Delhi State Assembly Election

With its first public meeting in Karawal Nagar constituency on 18 August, 2013 Proutist Bloc, India launched the election campaign for Delhi state assembly elections to be held in November. All the top office bearers of PBI were present there to support the vice-chairman of PBI, Baljit Aditya, who is the party's candidate from Karawal Nagar constituency. The meeting was addressed by Subhash Chand Tyagi (Chairman), Rajesh Singh (General Secretary), Acarya Santosananda Avadhuta (Public Relation Secretary) and R P Baisla (Chairman-Delhi State) besides some prominent local leaders and residents. All the speakers unequivocally emphasized the need of moral leadership in politics. They said that only PBI can present the alternative to corruption-ridden politics and sick economy.



Acarya Santosananda Avadhuta said that the rule of immoralists cannot be tolerated even for a moment. The sole objective of PBI, he said, is to create this confidence in the minds of the moralists that they too can enter politics and serve the society. He called upon all the moralists of India to unite and wage a ceaseless war against immoral forces. National General Secretary Rajesh Singh said that economic policies of all the successive governments after 1947 have led to the concentration of wealth in the hands of few and made the life of the common man difficult. He said only PBI's Ideology, PROUT, is the way out. Party President S C Tyagi observed that the educational policy of the present government is detrimental to the progress of the students. Party spokesperson Jitendra Tiwari highlighted the local problems and told how the past MLAs blatantly neglected the development of the area and squandered away the public money. While speaking about the local issues and expressing PBI's resolve to solve them, Baljit Aditya charged up the audience with his electrifying poems.

One of the speakers said that it is pleasant to see that unlike other parties PBI has not resorted to cheap political gimmicks and tactics to pull the crowd, and that the party's beginning may be humble but its future is glorious.

Agitation by Proutist Bloc India (PBI) at Ghatanji, Vidarbha

The people of Ghatanji taluka had been agitating for a long time for according it the status of subdivision by including the Arni Block in it with headquarters at Ghatanji. Their agitation was organised by Proutist Bloc India (PBI) and Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) jointly.

Government finally yielded to their agitation and announced formation of an independent subdivision. People were expecting Ghatanji to be the headquarters of the Sub Divisional Officer (S.D.O.). But the Law and Justice Minister of the state Shiwaji Rao Moghe who is also M.L.A. from here manipulated things to suit his political interests. He did not lose time in announcing inauguration of S.D.O. office at Arni instead of Ghatanji which is totally an unjust act.

The office of S.D.O. at Arni was to be inaugurated on August 15. Having learnt about it the PBI activists along with BJP workers organised protest meetings and dharna (sit-in) in front of the office of the Commissioner and submitted a memorandum demanding headquarters at Ghatanji. Simultaneously they also filed a writ petition in the High Court and made a request to stop the inaugural function at Arni and cancel the government's order to have the new subdivision's headquarters at Arni. High Court allowed the request of agitationists and stayed the government order granting Arni the status of headquarters of the new sub division.

Ghatanji has a just claim for being the headquarters since there is Municipal Corporation, Tehsil and Courts here. Arni does not have courts, it is a newly formed Block and Municipal Corporation has also recently come into existence here. Besides people here have been agitating for a long time for the subdivisional status.



Advancing from Darkness Towards the Light

A'R KONO KATHA' - A'MI MA'NI NA' -, MA'NITE CA'HI
NA' -, CA'HI NA' -- A'NDHA'R HOITE CALI A'LOR PA'NE---
GAHVAR HOTE CHUT'I TA'RA'R GA'NE---
SABA'R MANER VYATHA' NIYE PARA'N'E---
A'R KONO KATHA' - A'MI SHUNI NA' -
SHUNITE CA'HI NA' -, CA'HI NA' ---,
MA'NITE CA'HI NA' - CA'HI NA' --

NA'CER CHANDE CALI TOMA'R PA'NE---
PRA'N'ER MA'DHURI BHARI TOMA'R GA'NE---
SABA'R MANER KATHA' NIYE PARA'N'E---
A'R KONO KATHA' A'MI JA'NI NA' -,
JA'NITE CA'HI NA' - CA'HI NA' ---
A'R KONO KATHA' A'MI MA'NI NA' ,
MA'NITE CA'HI NA' -, CA'HI NA' -----

I'll not accept anything else
I don't, don't want to accept.
Advancing from darkness
Towards the light
From the abyss I rush
To songs of the stars.
The pain of all minds
I carry in my life force.
I don't want to hear anything else
I don't, don't want to hear.

In the rhythm of dance
I rush towards You
Filling life's sweetness
With Your songs.
The stories of all minds
I carry in my life force.
I don't want to know anything else
I don't, don't want to know.

(Translated from Bengali original)

Purport: Ignoring all obstacles and pebbles along the way, I am moving together with the minds of all people on earth, with all their pleasures and pains. And at the same time I want to remove their pains and sorrows as I move ahead.

I am moving towards You and You alone, so I will listen to Your words only, to no one else's. I will accept no one else but You – and I do not want to know anything else.

*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.*

ETERNAL SONG OF

The Proutists

- Shrii P.R. Sarkar

Join PBI for a Poverty-Free and Crime-Free India



Subhas Chand Tyagi
Chairman, Proutist Bloc India

Our dear country India--rich in its cultural and spiritual heritage--is passing through all round crises today. There is horrible poverty everywhere, purchasing power of common man is on continual decline, corruption always raises its ugly head. No political party, nor a political leader, has proved equal to the challenging task before the nation. Consequently crisis is deepening, and the soul of humanity here is profusely bleeding.

In this deep crisis of national disaster on all fronts, Proutist Bloc India has appeared on the political scene to rid country of the dragon of immorality, poverty and exploitation.

I appeal everybody to enrol themselves as a member of this party and strengthen the power of moralist forces. Your inspired cooperation is a must for the success of this moralist political movement.

Come One

Come All

website : www.pbi.co.in