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Communist Ghadar Party of India

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General Secretary of Communist Ghadar Party of India
by Comrade Chandra Bhan,
Editor of Mazdoor Ekta Lehar*

Chandra Bhan: How does Communist Ghadar Party view the problem of corruption?

Lal Singh: Corruption is the use of public office for private gain. It refers to selfish conduct by those who are supposed to serve the public.

The *Arthashastra*, formulated more than 2500 years ago, treats in great detail the numerous forms in which the State may be deprived of its revenue and the forms in which public funds may be misused or misreported. From this it can be concluded that corruption is not a new problem. It is as old as the division of society into classes with conflicting interests.

The scale of corruption is certainly much higher today than ever before. This is because of the dominant and all-pervasive role played by private property and the private profit motive in present day society.

In my childhood, it was not customary for peasant families to buy or sell milk; it was not borrowed or lent. If there was a shortage we took some from our neighbours. Most people were concerned about the collective welfare of our village. However, the development of capitalism has promoted individualism in all spheres. Most people now think only of their own individual interest. Everything that society once held as sacred has been reduced to commodities.

Everything can be bought for a price today, including government posts, ministerial portfolios and court judgments. All kinds of social activities have been turned into means for capitalists to reap maximum profits. Hospitals are business ventures. So are schools and colleges. Even God and religious worship have become lucrative business.

Capitalism has reached a stage when economic and political power is highly concentrated, and the public authority acts in the private interests of a minority of billionaires. This is true not only in our country but all over the world. There is a close alliance between

the big banks, the stock market and the government. Elected governments, which claim to have the “*people’s mandate*”, do the bidding of the financial barons and corporate chieftains.

The domination of the private profit motive and the growing domination of capitalist monopolies over all spheres of life is the principal cause for the exorbitant rise in corruption to a scale and degree never witnessed before. Selfishness has been elevated to the position of the most precious virtue.

The forms of corruption differ from one country to another, depending on the specific historical evolution of the State and of capitalism in each country.

A specific feature of corruption in our country is that it permeates the state machinery from top to bottom. We have to pay bribes even to get a driver’s licence, water supply connection or some other basic service. This constitutes additional robbery of the toiling people. It adds to the already heavy economic burden on their backs. On top of being exploited intensely at the workplace, robbed in the capitalist market and burdened with rising taxes and inflation, workers and peasants are further burdened with having to give bribes to get what is actually their right.

The extortionist character of the Indian State is an inheritance from colonial times. It is a result of the fact that the political institutions and state apparatus built to enslave India were retained by the Indian bourgeoisie after 1947.

Following the suppression of the Great Ghadar of 1857, the British colonialists established a state whose main aim was to facilitate maximum exploitation and colonial plunder of India. Our people were colonised subjects, deprived of basic rights. A minority of collaborators and traitors were rewarded with land, industrial licences and other privileges. This led to the rise of big landlords and big capitalists, traitorous classes who were willing to sell out to the enemy for the sake of enriching themselves.

The traitorous big bourgeoisie, represented by the leadership of Congress Party, decided to retain the colonial organs of power as the basis for the post-colonial Indian Republic, so as to continue with the loot and plunder, with themselves in the driver's seat.

You enter any government office anywhere in the country today. If they think you belong to the ruling elite, they will do "*jee huzoori*" and let you into the officer's cabin. If not, they will make you stand in one

long line after another. After wasting your whole day they will tell you to come again another day.

Indian corporate houses, multinational companies and global arms dealers use their money power to bribe senior officers and ministers to do their bidding. This corrupts those at the very top of the State. Big capitalists buy them with cash and with attractive post-retirement positions. In return, they get lucrative contracts, special deals and favourable changes in tax and other policies. They do not mind sharing a small part of their massive future profits with a few key members of the State. They consider it a worthwhile investment. Only a tiny part of this high level corruption gets exposed, usually as a result of inter-capitalist rivalry.

Corruption at the lowest level is where state functionaries demand bribes for providing the services that they are supposed to provide free of charge to the public. It is a case of public servants using their position to extort from the public, instead of serving them. In such cases, the giver of the bribe is a victim of the system. He or she does not benefit but suffers as a result. Those who benefit from such bribes are not merely the individuals who collect them. Bribes collected from the general public get channelled through a long chain all the way to the top, into the

hands of the Minister in charge and into the coffers of the party in power.

Another form of corruption is where state functionaries pocket part of the public funds meant for some investment project or social program. Here the general interest of society suffers, for the benefit of the private interests of a corrupt few.

All these forms of corruption exist and operate on a daily basis in our country. Private companies regularly generate unaccounted or “*black*” income, typically by over-reporting their expenses and under-reporting their profits. This unaccounted income pocketed by capitalists is used for financing unaccounted expenses, including the regular bribes, cash contributions to political parties, etc. Any unused balance is parked in real estate, Swiss bank accounts and other tax havens.

Various sections of capitalists and landed interests form their parties and invest large amounts of money on election campaigns. When they are in power, such parties consider it to be “*payback*” time.

The capitalist corporations who call themselves *India Incorporated*, headed by the Tatas, Ambanis, Birlas and other monopoly houses, wield enormous

clout over the major parties in Parliament. They even select which individual politician should occupy key ministerial positions. The central government acts in the interest of fulfilling the greed of capitalist monopolies for maximum profits.

To sum up, our Party views corruption as a serious problem and intolerable burden on the toiling majority of people. It is an intrinsic part of the existing economic system and the state which defends it. Corruption is growing in scale as a result of the growing concentration of capital in fewer and fewer hands, and the resulting domination of capitalist monopolies over the highest levels of the Indian State. While corruption is growing in all capitalist countries, it runs especially deep in our country, reaching down to the lowest level of state functionaries, because of the preservation of the colonial character of the state apparatus.

Chandra Bhan: Would strengthening institutions like the Lok Pal help to curb corruption?

Lal Singh: Many anti-corruption institutions such as the Central Vigilance Commission and state level vigilance establishments already exist. Karnataka is show-cased as an example of a state that already has a strong and active Lok Pal. But there is no evidence that corruption has declined in Karnataka.

No institution can be independent of class interests. If it is an arm of the existing State, it will defend the interest of the bourgeoisie, and not of the workers and peasants. Even a strong Lok Pal, who is not corrupt, can at best detect and convict a few individual ministers or senior bureaucrats for some specific corrupt deed. Given the extensive scale and wide prevalence of corruption in the system, putting a few individuals behind bars will not make a dent on the disease.

If corruption was merely the problem of some individual politicians, then arresting some of them could make a significant impact. But corruption is not merely the problem of some individual politicians. It is rooted in the existing state and the economic system it defends. Capitalist monopolies are not going to stop using their money power to influence public decisions in their favour. The Lok Pal cannot and will not do anything to change that.

Chandra Bhan: Would the election of an honest political party to power make a difference?

Lal Singh: What is an honest political party? In the class divided society we live in, a political party is either honest to the working class and all the exploited, or honest to the capitalist class and all the exploiters of labour.

Parties that seek recognition in the existing electoral process are required to be honest to the ruling class and spread lies among the toiling people. Even the first step in becoming a registered political party requires swearing by the lie that the existing Indian Republic and its Constitution were created by the people and represent their collective will. The truth is that the Constitution was formulated by representatives of the traitorous bourgeoisie to defend its narrow class interest.

To gain control of the executive power by capturing a majority of seats through the existing electoral process, a party has to select “*winnable*” candidates. It must have sufficient money power to match the parties backed by the big monopolies. It must learn the art of saying whatever the toiling people like to hear, and once in power, implementing what the bourgeois class wants.

A Communist Party is honest to the working class. It is committed to the cause of awakening the exploited and oppressed masses of workers, peasants and other toiling people to the true situation and showing the revolutionary way out of their problems. Only by revealing the truth and raising the level of consciousness of the working class and all progressive forces can the conditions be created for

the liberation of society from class exploitation and class distinctions.

Our Party does not fight to become the ruling party in the existing bourgeois democracy. We are fighting to bring the working class and toiling majority of people to power, by establishing an entirely new State and political process, based on a new Constitution. We may use the electoral arena for publicising our views, but never to create illusions about the existing state and its electoral process.

The idea of a party coming to power through the existing electoral process and sweeping away the cobwebs of corruption is based on two erroneous assumptions. Firstly, it assumes that the ruling party is all-powerful and can pursue whatever agenda it pleases. Secondly, it assumes that it is the people who determine the outcome of elections.

The truth is that the Indian capitalist class, headed by monopoly houses and linked with international capital, is all-powerful and sets the agenda. It uses the electoral process to select one or another political party to market and implement its pre-determined agenda.

For example, a few years before India attained political independence, the Tatas, Birlas and a couple

of other big capitalists got together with some of their economic experts to formulate a 15-year perspective plan for India's post-colonial economic development. It was called the Bombay Plan and published in two volumes, in 1944 and 1945. It was popularly known as the "*Tata-Birla Plan*". It was subsequently embraced by the Congress Party and it became the basis for the first three official five-year plans adopted by the Nehru government.

Today, too, it is the same process that is being followed. For the past two decades, Indian and foreign monopoly capitalists have collaborated in pushing the agenda of globalisation, through liberalisation and privatisation. They are collaborating to also promote the agenda of "*anti-corruption and governance reforms*".

The bourgeoisie uses pre-poll surveys and media campaigns to promote rival parties and candidates among the people. The big capitalists set the agenda and define the "*choice*" in front of the people.

The party which gets elected to power claims to have the "*people's mandate*". However, it is the bourgeois class that has entrusted it with the mandate. It is the will of the bourgeoisie that is imposed on society. The toiling majority of people are powerless in the existing system. Their role is limited only to casting their vote

at election time. Their vote lends legitimacy to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Chandra Bhan: What would it take to bring political power into the hands of the toiling majority?

Lal Singh: The existing State is an instrument of rule by an exploiting minority, headed by the monopoly capitalists. It has to be replaced by a new State which will be an instrument of rule by the toiling majority, led by the working class and its vanguard communist party.

Communists have to lead the working class in the struggle to establish the new State of worker-peasant rule. We need to mobilise the vast majority of people to fight for a new Constitution that vests sovereignty in the hands of the people and not in the parliament.

We who toil are the majority in society. We must become her master. This is a continuation of the centuries-long struggle to end the loot and plunder of our country. The system of rule and property relations established by the British bourgeoisie to rape and plunder our country has been continued and further perfected by the Indian bourgeoisie since 1947. The Ghadar that burst out in 1857, and again in 1915, is still alive.

Our goal is to create a society and state which will ensure prosperity and protection for all. This includes the basic needs of modern human life – not only food, clothing and shelter but also electricity and safe drinking water, productive employment, functioning schools and health care services.

We aspire for a society in which every member can live a productive and happy life, and participate in making public decisions and setting the course for society.

Workers and peasants must be able to select and elect their best representatives to the highest decision-making bodies, and to participate in setting the agenda. They must be able to hold those elected to account and to recall the one they elected at any time, if he or she does not perform. People must have the right to make and change laws, including the right to re-write the constitution.

We are inspired by the goal of building such a new State and system, which will ensure that those who work are respected and get to enjoy the benefits of the wealth their combined labour creates. Indian society will then rise on new foundations, as a modern civilised society. This is what we call the *navnirman* of India.

Chandra Bhan: What is the role of Aam Aadmi Party in the class struggle going on in our country?

Lal Singh: Recent years have witnessed a rise in mass protests in our country. Lakhs have joined mass demonstrations, against corruption and against unbearable inflation, against privatisation and opening the doors to foreign capital, against state terrorism, communal violence, corporate land grab, etc. Working class actions have grown in strength, as have the protests of peasants, women, tribal peoples, the victims of communal violence, of caste-based oppression and army rule.

Our Party participated actively in these mass struggles. We contested the principle of parliamentary sovereignty, which is enshrined in the existing Constitution of India. According to this principle, espoused by English bourgeois political theory, Parliament alone has the power to make or change laws. People have no power to make or change laws, including the fundamental law. We championed the demand for sovereignty to be vested in the people. The demand for “*lok raj*” caught the imagination of the people on the streets.

The situation changed, starting in late 2012, following the formation of Aam Aadmi Party. Emerging out of

an organisation called India Against Corruption, this new registered electoral party presents itself as the “*clean and honest*” alternative to all other parties. The emergence of this party has created fresh illusions about the existing system of democracy and its political process.

Reflecting the popular sentiment, Aam Aadmi Party proclaimed in its Vision document that its aim is to bring political power into the hands of common people. At the same time, this party swears by the Constitution and has become part of the parliamentary process. If the principle of parliamentary sovereignty, and the Constitution based on this principle, are not challenged, how can the people gain political power in their hands?

The leader of Aam Aadmi Party has declared that he is not against capitalism, but only against “*crony capitalism*”. He is repeating the mantra of Anglo-American imperialism. This mantra is aimed at hiding the reality that capitalism has reached the stage of monopoly capitalism. Close links between the politicians in power and the biggest monopoly capitalists are not an exception but the general rule. This is the case not only in India and other former colonies but also in the most advanced capitalist countries. There is a close nexus between monopoly corporations and banks, on the one hand, and the

highest functionaries of the State, on the other hand, in the US, Britain, France, etc.

Capitalism without cronyism, without any nexus between capitalists and the politicians in power, is a myth. It is an idle dream to think that monopoly capitalism can be turned into non-monopoly, competitive capitalism. We cannot roll back history. Monopoly capitalism can only be transformed into socialism.

Aam Aadmi Party claims to be neutral in the struggle between capitalism and socialism. However, it is not possible to be neutral in this matter. In the class-divided society we live in, any political party will have to serve either the bourgeoisie or the working class. Any party that defends capitalism serves to maintain the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The very concept of “*aam aadmi*” blurs the identity of the working class. It lowers the level of political consciousness of workers and peasants. It prompts them to forget their class identity, to think of themselves as *aam aadmi* and look towards “honest” members of the capitalist class to lead them.

Corruption is an inseparable part of the system of economy and political power in our country. Hence

the struggle against corruption must not be separated from the struggle against exploitation.

From the official National Accounts Statistics of the Government of India, we can deduce that about Rupees 31 lakh crores were pocketed by the capitalist class from the territory of India in 2012-13, in the form of profit, interest and rent income. This is the legal and accounted part, or the “white” surplus value extracted by capital in that year. An additional massive amount was extracted and pocketed outside the sphere of official accounts. That is the “black” part of surplus value extraction, which some estimate to be half of the “white” part.

Our struggle is against all forms of loot, legal and illegal, black and white. To separate the struggle against corruption from the struggle against exploitation leads to confusion and harmful illusions about capitalism and the existing Indian State.

The role of Aam Aadmi Party in the class struggle is somewhat similar to the role played by the Congress Party in the anti-colonial struggle. Congress Party played the role of being a *safety valve*, to prevent another revolutionary uprising like the Ghadar of 1857. It played the role of steering the mass anger and discontent of our people along a path that was

acceptable to the colonial rulers and favourable to the traitorous Indian bourgeoisie. It led the people along the path of winning political independence through “legitimate” means, without upsetting the colonial system of plunder, the colonial rule of law and institutions of state power.

Aam Aadmi Party is blocking the development of revolutionary consciousness by promoting the illusion that the problem of corruption can be solved without upsetting capitalism, within the existing Constitution and electoral process.

Chandra Bhan: Can you explain what you mean by the extraction of surplus value?

Lal Singh: The exchange of commodities is governed by the law of value. Commodities are exchanged with one another generally in proportion to the quantum of social labour needed for their production. In other words, the value of a commodity is determined by the amount of labour that is contained in it. This is called the law of value.

The economic theorists of 18th century Europe discovered the law of value but they could not figure out the source of the profit that capitalists make. If, on average, commodities of equal value are exchanged

in the market, how is it that one class of persons is able to constantly keep expanding the value of its private wealth? How are capitalists able to take out more than what they put into the economy, over and over again, thereby expanding their wealth all the time? Nobody could provide a clear answer to this question, until Karl Marx put forward his theory of surplus value in the 19th century.

Marx explained that when labour-power is bought and sold, like other commodities, its owner gets paid no more than the value of labour power. The workers get paid only what is required to reproduce the commodity they are selling – that is, to reproduce labour-power. Even in the best of circumstances, where workers are organised and able to defend their common interest, they get paid no more than what is needed to maintain their given standard of living and report for work every morning. They have to struggle even to maintain that standard, in the face of inflation and rising taxes.

The labour of the workers creates value in excess of what is required for maintaining themselves at the same standard of living. This excess or surplus value is pocketed by the owners of capital in the form of profit, interest and rent. A worker is in effect producing his own wages in the first few hours of work every

day. For the rest of the time, he is producing surplus value for the capitalist owners.

Peasants who till their own small plots of land get robbed in the capitalist commodity and credit markets. Part of the value that their toil creates is robbed by the trading corporations and capitalist merchants who purchase their crops cheaply, using their monopoly position in the agricultural markets. Another part of the fruits of the tillers' toil is robbed by the institutions and individuals who have extended loans and claim regular interest and principal repayments. The peasants' possession of the land they till is under threat because the State is committed to fulfil the greed of capitalists to acquire whatever land they choose for their profit-making ventures.

Workers and peasants are opposed to corruption and to exploitation of all kinds, because it is the fruits of their toil that are being robbed.

We need to fight for an immediate halt to all forms of loot of public funds and public property, an immediate halt to the corporate land grab and the privatisation and liberalisation program. We must fight for the alternative program to reorient the economy to fulfil the needs of the toiling majority, by changing the nature of ownership of the means of social production.

The means of social production in our country are at present concentrated as private property in the hands of a minority of capitalists, headed by the Tatas, Ambanis, Birlas and other monopoly groups. They must be converted into social property, to be used for guaranteeing work, livelihood, prosperity and protection for all members of society. Nobody will then be able to thrive by exploiting the labour of others. The surplus produced by human labour will be ploughed back to raise the living standards and productive capacity of the working people.

The individual property of peasants, artisans and other self-employed must be protected from the capitalist corporations. The State must extend all-sided support to encourage such small producers to voluntarily collectivise their property, so as to raise the scale of production and take advantage of modern technology.

Who can bring about such revolutionary changes? It is the working class, in alliance with peasants, who can and must bring them about. The duty of communists is to lead and organise the working class to play this role.

Chandra Bhan: Why is it that corruption has become the major topic of debate in the news media?

Lal Singh: To answer this question, it is necessary to understand who controls the media. The news media is controlled by capitalist corporations owned by big business groups.

The Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Limited, which controls CNN-IBN, entered into a deal with the Network 18 group in January 2012, to become India's biggest media group, bigger than the STAR group controlled by Rupert Murdoch. The Aditya Birla group owns 27.5% of Living Media India Limited, the company that controls Aaj Tak and Headlines Today, and many magazines including India Today. Similarly, all the major daily newspapers and TV news channels are controlled by different groups of monopoly capitalists.

The Chief Editors of daily newspapers and the anchor persons on TV news channels have to work according to the guidelines set by the capitalist owners of media companies. The reporters from the field may not know the line to be followed, but the Chief Editor makes sure that nothing that the owners do not want gets published. If some Chief Editor publishes things that the owners do not like, he or she gets thrown out of the job.

Corruption has become a major topic of discussion and debate in the media today because the big

monopoly capitalists, Indian and foreign, want to focus on it. They are putting pressure on all the contestants in the Lok Sabha elections to make political corruption the top issue. The fight among the rival parties is over which one is best suited to implement this pre-set agenda. That is why all major contenders, including Narendra Modi and Rahul Gandhi, are presenting themselves as the greatest champions in fighting corruption.

This is not the first time that corruption is being made the number one issue. In the decade of the seventies, there was an anti-corruption crusade led by Jai Prakash Narain. There was another anti-corruption crusade led by V. P. Singh in the late eighties. Anti-corruption movements have been used by the big capitalists to settle their internal dogfights. They have made no dent on the scale of corruption, which has been rising alongside the increasing domination of the monopolies.

The World Bank, IMF, UNDP and other multi-lateral agencies have for many years been pushing, alongside market oriented economic policy reforms, the agenda of “*anti-corruption and governance reform*”. This imperialist agenda aims to impose one uniform set of rules for capitalist competition in all the countries of the world, to make it easier for

multinational companies to penetrate all markets, cutting across national boundaries.

Indian big capitalists would like to bring down the degree of corruption at the lower levels, wherever possible. They want to improve the credibility of the Indian state and shore up its image internationally.

The political reason for the bourgeoisie to focus on corruption at this time is to divert the people's attention from exploitation, from the anti-social economic reform program, the criminal aggressive acts of US imperialism, from the problem of state terrorism, etc.

Chandra Bhan: What is your view on decentralisation of power?

Lal Singh: The idea that people can be empowered through decentralisation of power is erroneous in theory. Political power is that which can change social conditions. By its very nature, political power is centralised.

Can a village *panchayat*, an urban *mohalla sabha* or any such local body take complete control of local affairs, without any support from the authorities at the state and central levels? It is not possible because economic and social life has become highly

interconnected. Whether it is the question of irrigation water or road connectivity or electric power supply, problems are no longer confined to one village or locality; they depend on decisions taken at the state and central government levels. Hence it is not enough for working people to gain control over local affairs. They need to establish their rule over the whole country.

The working class has to lead the struggle of the people to gain control, not just over local resources but over the entire resources of the country.

Imperialism and the bourgeoisie promote the concept of decentralisation with ulterior motives. Their aim is to weaken their rivals and destroy their power. There are many examples that can be given.

In 1997, when World Bank President Wolfensohn visited New Delhi, Chandrababu Naidu, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, rushed to meet him and request World Bank assistance to turn his state into another “Asian tiger”, like South Korea or Thailand. In that year, the World Bank persuaded Government of India to open the door to “policy dialogue” with various State Governments, and extend policy-based loans to them. This was a strategy aimed at encouraging competition among

State Governments and weakening the control of the Central Government.

Some people think it is a positive development if the central Indian State is weakened. This is not correct. It would be positive if the revolutionary forces are weakening it in order to establish a new state of worker-peasant rule. It is a dangerous development if foreign powers are weakening the central Indian State in order to establish their hegemony.

The bourgeois class centralizes political power in its hands by excluding the majority of people from the decision-making process. The proletariat will centralize political power in its hands by including the vast majority of people in the decision-making process, based on the principles of democratic centralism.

Chandra Bhan: What is democratic centralism?

Lal Singh: Democratic centralism is the organisational principle of the proletariat. It is the principle based on which the proletarian party and the proletarian state are built.

The role of the Communist Party is to be the vanguard of the working class. Our aim is, firstly, to ensure that the working class captures political power in alliance

with the peasantry. Secondly, once the class is in power, the Party has to ensure that the rule of the working class is maintained until all forms of class exploitation and class distinction are eliminated.

The entire Party has to speak in one voice and act as one united force, in order to achieve its objective. The working class needs to have one front of action against capitalist exploitation, not many fronts pulling in many directions. Only on the basis of democratic centralism is it possible to turn the working class into one single powerful force.

In our Party, the highest decision-making power is wielded by the Congress of the Party, a convention of delegates representing the entire membership. The Congress sets the party line and elects the Central Committee, which is the highest body in between one Congress and the next. The Central Committee has no right to change any decision taken by the Congress that elected it. Another Congress has to be convened for that purpose.

We ensure centralism not on the basis of excluding the majority of members from the decision-making process. We ensure centralism on the basis of mass democracy among the members, who collectively set the party line, participate actively in arriving

at collective decisions and individually take on specific responsibilities, all the time fighting for the implementation of agreed-upon decisions. This is democratic centralism.

Democratic centralism guides the organisation of the Communist Party as well as the organisation of a proletarian state. It guides the relationship between the people and the elected organs of power in socialist society. The people wield sovereign power, a part of which they delegate to those they elect. Such a state and political process, based on democratic centralism, is best suited for the working class to mobilise the vast majority of toiling people into political activity, in order to defeat the bourgeoisie and prevent its return to power.

Bourgeois parties and states are centralised on an exclusive basis. This type of centralism is bureaucratic, militaristic and fascist. The proletariat, in order to achieve its class aim, has to include the majority of people in the decision-making process. It can do so only on the basis of democratic centralism.

It is important to recognise that US imperialism is using decentralisation as a slogan to weaken and to dismantle any state that is a potential threat or roadblock to its hegemony.

Chandra Bhan: Is there a real danger of imperialist sponsored destabilisation of India?

Lal Singh: Yes, there is a real danger. The majority of countries in the world today, especially those in Asia including ours, have to be vigilant about the diabolical plans of Anglo-American imperialism. We have been witnessing in recent decades a systematic plan of destabilisation, provocation of internal strife and engineering of “regime change” in the name of “democracy”, “orange revolution”, etc.

Ever since the victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia in 1917, the leading capitalist powers of Europe and North America have collaborated to save the imperialist system and undermine the movement for socialism. Since the end of the Second World War, US imperialism has taken over the leading role in this global effort, to undermine and sabotage any potential threat to the imperialist system.

In 1954, the Rockefellers and the Fords of US, along with selected representatives of the big bourgeoisie of European powers, formed a group that meets secretly once a year. It is called the Bilderberg Group. It consists of 130 leading financial corporations, political, military, academic and media personalities of Europe and North America. The initial core group

consisted of David Rockefeller and the chieftains of Rockefeller and Ford foundations in the US, and Prince Bernhard of Netherlands, who had been a member of the Nazi party until 1934. The CIA financed the first meeting of this group in 1954. Its aim was to consolidate the domination of the major imperialist powers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, the NATO powers headed by the United States of America.

The Bilderberg Group continues to meet secretly, to plan and hatch up schemes globally. It operates as the hidden power underlying the officially elected governments in the NATO member countries. It promotes the idea of one global government. It chooses influential thinkers and opinion makers and promotes them, in the service of the strategy of US imperialism to establish a unipolar world headed by the exceptional and superior America.

Wolfensohn, former President of the World Bank, was a member of the Steering Committee of the Bilderberg Group. Christine Lagarde attended the annual meeting of the Bilderberg Group in 2011, before she was appointed the Managing Director of IMF.

The Bilderberg Group operates through numerous foundations, to finance NGOs, civil society organisations and research foundations all over the

world. It is like a spider's web woven throughout the globe. Many personalities get caught in the web without being aware of it. The imperialists also set up underground outfits responsible for organising terror attacks, coups, ethnic and civil wars, etc. Through this global network the imperialists are pushing their agenda in different countries.

Destabilising existing political arrangements and spreading chaos, so as to create the conditions for a "regime change" in favour of Anglo-American imperialism, is very much part of the global imperialist offensive at this time.

Imperialist puppet regimes have been established, either through open external aggression and occupation as in Afghanistan and Iraq, or through covert operations to incite civil war as in Libya, and the one being attempted in Syria. US imperialism has incited instability and chaos in Ukraine, in Venezuela and many other countries. It is interfering in numerous mass movements, including in our country. It develops various potential instruments for pressure and blackmail, to be used if and when the Indian ruling class acts contrary to US imperialist interests.

The Indian big bourgeoisie also has its own network of think-tanks, research foundations, NGOs, etc.

There is an interlocking of interests between Anglo-American and Indian monopoly capitalists, while there are also points of conflict.

India occupies an important position in the Anglo-American imperialist strategy. Moreover, India offers a very large pool of English literate intellectuals.

Our country is in a vulnerable position to imperialist intervention. The ruling bourgeois class cares more about its profits than about national sovereignty or self-reliance. Moreover, the top layer of the Indian intelligentsia is completely anglicised. They think like the western bourgeois. They worship everything western.

Chandra Bhan: Why do Indian intellectuals think like the western bourgeois?

Lal Singh: This has its roots in the British colonial education policy. Lord Macaulay initiated English-medium education through his famous *Minute on Indian Education, February 1835*. Macaulay called for an education system to create a class of anglicised Indians, who would worship everything from the West and reject all of Indian thought as being backward. English became the medium of instruction in secondary education, from the sixth

year of schooling onwards, replacing Sanskrit and Persian.

At the head of the Indian intelligentsia emerged a stratum of people who were Indian in colour and appearance, but British and bourgeois in their outlook and thinking, looking down on the vast majority of Indians and on all thought material from our past.

The so-called founding fathers of the Indian Republic, those who sat in the Constituent Assembly and decided on the fundamental law for post-colonial India, were mostly from this stratum. The Constitution was drafted in English and the entire debate in the Constituent Assembly was in English. Translations in Indian languages became available only after 1950, when the Constitution had already been adopted.

Anglicised Indian intellectuals formulated the Constitution of our country by drawing mainly from the British model of parliamentary democracy. They also copied various elements from the constitutions of other western capitalist countries. They did not draw anything from the heritage of Indian political thought. They also rejected the experience of the Soviet Union.

Till today, English remains the language in all the higher courts of law. The annual budget of the Central

Government is always presented in English. The stratum of anglicised intellectuals is reproduced on a large-scale, in English-medium Indian Universities and in leading British and American universities, including Oxford, Cambridge, London School, Harvard and Berkeley. They think in English and in European categories of thought. They even speak English within their homes. They serve as a powerful means of enslavement of Indian brains to Eurocentrism.

Eurocentrism is an outlook based on the prejudice that all knowledge of relevance for modern society comes from the West, whose origin can be traced to Greek philosophy. It disregards the experience and thought material of the civilisations of Hindustan, Persia, China and other peoples of Asia, and of other parts of the world.

Westernised Indian intellectuals are spontaneously drawn to the illusions and diversions that the Anglo-American imperialists spread. They readily embrace the slogan of “decentralisation” and the notion that the problem is not with capitalism but with corrupt politicians and “crony capitalism”.

Eurocentric thought has caused great harm to the Indian working class and communist movement as well. Several parties swear by socialism and

communism while defending the existing system of bourgeois democracy, imported from England.

Referring to the movement for the emancipation of German society, Karl Marx said, "*The head of this emancipation is philosophy, its heart the proletariat*". When the proletariat, the heart of our revolution, is Indian, how can it be directed by a European head?

We need to develop and elaborate the modern Indian outlook and political theory to deal with the problems of today. Otherwise we will forever be at the mercy of imperialism and the traitorous bourgeoisie. Our Party pays serious attention to this task. We call on all Indian communists and all progressive minds to contribute to this effort.

Chandra Bhan: Can you explain what you mean by modern Indian political theory?

Lal Singh: It is not a subject that can be explained in brief. Still, let me try.

Our civilisation has given rise to a rich heritage of philosophical, political and economic thought. We have to bring forward from this thought material that which is useful for the present-day struggle for liberation, while rejecting everything that is outdated.

The declaration of the insurgents of 1857 that "*Hindustan belongs to us; We are her master!*" brought forward what is most precious from Indian political thought. This is the concept that it is the people who are sovereign.

The very word *praja* means that which gives birth to *raja*. This reveals that there existed a period in our history when the people as a whole enjoyed the right to select the supreme leader from among themselves. They gave birth to a power aimed at ensuring prosperity and protection for all. A *raja* who failed to provide prosperity and protection for all lost his right to rule. The *praja* had the right to behead such a *raja*.

The right of the people to select their leader was negated when kingdoms arose with caste-based village systems as their economic base, with the social surplus being appropriated by a minority that was "*born to rule*". The right to become the *raja* as well as the right to select who should become the *raja* was confined to a small minority of the population, a royal caste with its handpicked learned advisers.

The right of the people to select and elect their leaders and to dethrone them at any time is a useful and precious concept. So is the principle that it is the duty of the State to ensure prosperity and protection

for all. On the other hand, ruling the country cannot be considered to be the specialised function of a particular caste of persons. Such an idea is outdated and is not acceptable in modern times.

To modernise Indian theory means to bring it on par with modern conditions. Modern conditions are characterised by large-scale production using combined human labour force, which is expanding and replacing small-scale production based on individual and family labour. Modern conditions are characterised by the supremacy of collectives in all spheres. Theory has to be brought up to par with these conditions. It is not a king that the people must select and elect, but a group of persons to whom they delegate a part of their power. Those elected must be duty bound to ensure prosperity and protection for all; and be subject to recall at any time by those who elected them.

Prosperity and protection must also be defined in tune with present day conditions. Human needs include not only food, clothing and shelter, but also education and health care, drinking water, electricity, etc. It is perfectly possible to fulfil these needs for all members of society and deploy the social surplus to raise the living standards and productive capacity of the population. It is possible if and only if the greed

for private wealth accumulation is prevented from dominating any sphere of the economy or society.

Indian thought does not recognise any right without duty. Nobody must be allowed to claim a share of the social surplus as a “rate of return” on the capital they own.

Modern Indian theory is needed to guide the triumph of cooperation over competition, and pave the way for our society to advance on the high road of civilisation.

Chandrabhan: Thank you, comrade, for this interesting and enlightening interview.

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