

Reject the American Design of Asian NATO! Free Indian Waters from US Warships!!

Monday 10 September 2007, by [CPI \(ML\) Liberation](#) (Date first published: 4 September 2007).

Even as Sonia Gandhi and Manmohan Singh continue to pay lip service to the rhetoric of 'non-alignment' and 'independent foreign policy', real life leads us to ever-closer encounters with the myriad layers and dimensions of India's growing strategic partnership with the US. We have seen 'non-aligned' India vote 'independently' against Iran at the IAEA, not once but twice. We are seeing the Indian waters emerge as a hot favourite 'playground' for US warships. And now in India's joint naval exercise with the US, Australia, Japan and Singapore we can hear the footsteps of a developing 'Asian NATO' as advocated by US military ideologues. The Japanese PM of course used a different term for this emerging alliance during his recent visit to India - he simply called it 'Greater Asia'!

The original NATO was founded in the wake of the Second World War with the explicit aim of containing the Soviet Union. But while the Soviet Union has disintegrated, there has been no matching dismantling of the NATO alliance. On the contrary, the US-led military alliance has been steadily stretching itself eastward treating capitalist Russia in much the same way as the socialist Soviet Union of yesteryears. But as far as the US is concerned, the utility of NATO has not been limited to the mere containment of Russia. The alliance has come in handy for the US to exercise its military supremacy over Europe even as the European Union has emerged as a powerful economic contender. Beyond the borders of Europe, the alliance also serves as a 'multilateral' war machine dedicated to the strategic goals of unilateral US hegemony. The people of Afghanistan are currently experiencing this brutal truth as they count the growing civilian killings in NATO-led air strikes.

An Asian replica of the NATO model will obviously be aimed at containing China by promoting rivalry between China and Japan and between China and India. Such an arrangement will also effectively throw spanners in the wheels of possible cooperation between China, Russia and India and retard the prospects of a multipolar world. The Japanese PM's rhetoric of a Greater Asia may reflect the image of a resurgent Asia, but since when have the US and its loyal Pacific partner, Australia, become honorary members of Asia? It is one thing to advocate closer ties between India and Japan, but dragging India and Japan into a quadrilateral partnership with the US and Australia and pitting such a 'Greater Asia' against China is an entirely different exercise. China is India's northern neighbour and it is in India's interest to have good neighbourly relations with China without in any way letting the US meddle in India's relations with her neighbours and destabilise peace and normalcy in the Asian neighbourhood bordering India.

The Congress has clearly adopted a two-pronged tactic to sell its gamut of pro-US policies including the 123 Agreement. The Sonia-Manmohan team is working overtime to create a deafening self-congratulatory noise which it hopes will drown the growing voices of public criticism and opposition on the subject. To this end, it has also succeeded in roping in its UPA partners, most notably Lalu Prasad's RJD which adopted a special foreign policy resolution in its recent national conference to congratulate Manmohan Singh for the nuke deal and welcome the Japanese call for a Greater Asia. Lalu Prasad is busy telling everybody how the deal with the US is going to take care of rural India's demand for electricity! At the same time, the Congress is also promoting a massive disinformation and slander campaign against the Left. During Bush's India visit too, Sonia and Manmohan had dismissed the anti-imperialist opposition as an exercise in 'Muslim appeasement' while justifying the

UPA government's pro-US policy as an 'enlightened expression of India's national interest'!

The BJP has now made it abundantly clear that it is not opposed to the 123 Agreement, let alone the gamut of indo-US Strategic Partnership policies. The BJP's concern is limited to a few clauses of the Hyde Act and Advani would like us to believe that India can neutralise the Hyde Act by legislating India's own version of 'Hyde Act'. He expects us to conveniently ignore the crucial difference between the US and India. The US is in a position to control the supply of nuclear reactors and fuel to India while India will merely be a recipient. The Hyde Act is an India-specific US law which empowers the US to terminate the Agreement or suspend all nuclear supply whenever the US so chooses, but how can any US-specific Indian law, if India chooses to have one, bestow India with similar powers? Is it at all realistic to expect any other country to jump to India's rescue following any termination or suspension of the 123 Agreement by the US when India negotiates with the IAEA and countries of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group precisely on the basis of a positive recommendation from the US? Advani's latest proposal is therefore as good as a covert withdrawal of the BJP's erstwhile limited opposition to the nuke deal.

The battle lines are now clearly drawn. As the UPA and NDA connive and collude in their mutual strategic partnership (tactical differences notwithstanding) and competitive capitulation to the US, communists must lead the patriotic camp in a powerful anti-imperialist national awakening. As the country gets ready to observe the 100th anniversary of Bhagat Singh's birth, it is time to collectively echo his clarion call "down with imperialism". Let us confront Manmohan Singh with the clear ultimatum: Scrap the Deal or Quit!

Massive Protests against Joint Naval Exercise and Indo-US Nuclear Deal Scrap the Deal or Quit

CPI(ML) organised protests throughout the country on Sep. 4 against the joint naval exercises in the Bay of Bengal with the US and three other nations. The Party has called for a month long September Campaign against this exercise and the Nuclear Deal which will culminate on 28 September, 100th Birth Anniversary of Shahid-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, in New Delhi in the form of a massive march by students, youth and cultural activists who will assemble there from all corners of the country. Protests are also being held at all the important coastal centres along the Bay of Bengal, from Kanya Kumari to Kolkata, against these joint naval exercises.

In Patna, thousands of protesters assembled at party's state office and marched through main avenues of the city, led by Party General Secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya. They also burnt the effigies of Bush and Manmohan. State Secretary Nand Kishore Prasad, PB member Ramjatan Sharma, CCMs Ramji Rai, KD Yadav, Dharendra Jha, Saroj Chaube, Mina Tiwary, AIALA State President Pawan Sharma and many other were also present in the march. A meeting was also held at Railway Station crossing which was presided over by Ramji Rai.

Comrade Dipankar said in the meeting that it is such a pity that the rulers of our country have made India a war horse of USA after 60 years of independence. The people of the country will never allow this to happen. It is the beginning of a new era in country's politics that the government of our country has shun the path of independent national development and the values inculcated through the long struggle for our independence. India will be a strategic ally of the US, the enemy number one the people of the world, if the nuclear deal was finally implemented, he added. India will be an unequal partner in this agreement and will have to be a part of the US' war against 'terror' which is nothing but naked attempts by US for imperialist loot and domination all over the world. India could not do anything which was not liked by US, if this deal came into force and will be viewed only as an ally of US which is known for devastating Vietnam and Iraq. India will lose its respect in among the third world nations. This will also have dangerous implications internally and will further increase US intervention in our national affairs, particularly our precious resources will be in the hands of US

multinationals and their war industry. And much more dangerous consequence will be the import of US sponsored international terrorism which will give a new lease of life to the communal fascist forces in the country. Democracy and secularism will certainly be the first victims of this agreement. But the patriotic people of the country will not keep quiet and accept this sorry plight as its destiny. They will not let go in vain the sacrifices of lakhs of our martyrs made towards building a people's and democratic India, he said, and called upon all left, democratic and patriotic forces to unitedly fight against this surrender before the US-led imperialism.

While a protest dharna was organised in Lucknow in UP, effigy burning and protests were also held at many other centres in the state including Allahabad, Varanasi, Kanpur, Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, Chandauli, Pilibhit, Gazipur, Faizabad, Ambdeknagar, Mau, Lakhimpur-Kheri and many other districts. Akhilendra Pratap Singh led the dharna at GPO park in Lucknow where he said that this agreement is a document of modern slavery and a betrayal with the people of the country. He called upon the left parties led by CPI(M) to shun the path of negotiating on technical aspects of the agreement and, instead to go for a vote on it in the Parliament. The government must be forced to cancel the deal or it should be ousted, he said. The dharna was also addressed by Tahira Hasan of Tahriq-e-Niswan, Shiv Kumar and AICCTU leader Raghunath Prasad.

A protest march was held in Ranchi in Jharkhand where effigies of Manmohan Singh and Bush were burnt at Albert Ekka Chowk. This was led by Subhendu Sen, State Secretary of the Party, who condemned the UPA Govt. for mortgaging country's sovereignty into the hands of the US. Jarandan Prasad also addressed the protesters.

Demonstrations were held all over Tamil Nadu on 4 September against anti-national Nuke Deal and Indo-US Joint Naval Exercise. Our slogan demanding the Congress government to "Scrap the Deal or Quit the seat of power" attracted wider attention from various quarters particularly in the backdrop of the CPI(M)-led left's dilly-dallying position of support to the UPA government. Hundreds of CPI(ML) demonstrators shouted anti-imperialist slogans in Chennai while holding the protest march. The demonstration was presided over by AS Kumar and was addressed by Balasundaram, CCM, G Radhakrishnan and Sekar. Balasundaram came down heavily on the central government for attacking communists opposing the Deal. He called upon the people to overthrow the Congress regime that mortgaged the country of anti-imperialist legacy to the American imperialism through Joint Naval Exercise and Nuke Deal. Demonstrations were also held at the coastal district of Nagappattinam, at Sirkazhi. The demonstration was led by SCM Gunasekaran. SCMs Ilango and Kannaiyan addressed the gathering. An impressive demonstration in front of the Salem Collectorate was led by Chandramohan, SCM and addressed by Mohanasundaram and Narayanan. Youth participated in large numbers while Graduate Teachers Association also joined the protest in solidarity. The demonstration at Krishnagiri was also impressive which was led by district incharge Babu and addressed by AIALA leader TKS Janardhanan. Demonstrations at Dharmapuri and Namakkal were led by K Govindaraj and A Govindaraj respectively.

In Andhra Pradesh, similar protests were held in Kakinada, Machhalipatnam and some other places. Protests were also held in other parts of the country including Puducherry, West Bengal, Assam, et

Stop the Anti-India Nuclear Deal!

Combat Anti-Communist Hysteria!

Intensify the Indian People's Struggle against US Imperialism!

Unable to answer the specific objections to the Indo-US nuclear deal voiced primarily by the Left, the Indian ruling classes and the corporate media are trying to tackle the debate by whipping up a veritable anti-communist hysteria. Even as George Bush is described as India's best friend, and the nuclear deal with the US as the greatest victory till date for Indian diplomacy and the ultimate recognition for India's 'emerging power' status, communists are once again being dubbed pro-China and pro-Pakistan! The desperation of the ruling classes is not difficult to understand - they have been caught red-handed mortgaging the country's strategic autonomy.

Manmohan Singh would like us to accept him as the greatest defender of India's independence and believe that the deal is a wonderful bargain which will spawn enormous economic benefits for the country without in any way compromising his government's 'independent foreign policy'. In the year of Bhagat Singh's birth centenary we do not need to learn about 'independence' from Manmohan Singh. A man who still cannot open his mouth in England without expressing his gratitude to his former colonial masters and who wants us to accept George Bush as India's best friend has no business lecturing us about independence. And as

Prime Minister of India, he cannot be allowed to mortgage the country's strategic autonomy to his 'best friend'!

We are being told that the new 123 Agreement with the US will go a long way in meeting India's growing energy demand by significantly increasing the quantum of nuclear energy generation. But should we not take a close look before taking this 'leap', especially when we have our own bitter experience of a previous 123 Agreement on nuclear cooperation with the US?

Yes, in 1963 in the wake of the border war with China, 'non-aligned' India was seduced and arm-twisted by the US to sign a nuclear cooperation agreement. The terms of the 1963 treaty look far more benign today compared to the stringent conditions that are written into the present agreement. There was no question of India granting eternal supervision rights on all her civilian nuclear facilities. Nor was there any India-specific law like the Hyde Act to govern the operation of that agreement. Yet following India's 1971 friendship pact with the Soviet Union and the 1974 nuclear test, the US terminated fuel supplies for the Tarapur plant and unilaterally suspended the operation of the treaty which eventually lapsed in 1993.

We can forget and ignore this experience only at our own peril. Today governed by the Hyde Act (true, the 123 Agreement does not mention the Hyde Act but it does not hide the fact that as far as the US is concerned domestic US laws will prevail and that includes the Hyde Act in particular), the terms of the 123 treaty are loaded unmistakably heavily in favour of the US and the geo-political situation of the world too are likely to permit it to further manipulate the operation of the already unequal treaty and blackmail India's weak rulers to wrest high economic and political prices. In the narrow context of energy security and sufficiency, India will thus fall prey to US-controlled energy-dependency relying increasingly on imported nuclear reactors and imported nuclear fuel. And in the wider and deeper context of the future of India and her international role, the country will become increasingly vulnerable to imperialist manipulation and intervention on virtually every question of strategic significance.

Those who claim that the US has gone out of its way to accommodate Indian concerns in the current deal are either naive or are telling a plain lie. The 'accommodation' of Indian interests and concerns is limited to certain linguistic expressions, like the catchword 'consultation', an empty euphemism for American unilateralism.

We can never be a party to such deceptive wordplay when it comes to defending the vital interests of

the people and the country in the face of mounting imperialist offensive. The opposition of the patriotic Indian people and all revolutionary communists and democrats to the deal and to India's growing strategic subservience to US imperialism is firm, consistent and total. The CPI(M)'s talk of pressing only the 'pause' button till its concerns are addressed (the passage of the deal so far and the rapid development of the underlying context of India's strategic partnership with the US is enough indication as to how such concerns have been addressed and accommodated by the UPA) smacks, on the contrary, of its characteristic centrist vacillation and parliamentary opportunism which has historically prevented the party from offering any decisive opposition at every major juncture.

The cumulative impact of the ideological illusion sown all these years by the CPI(M) and the CPI regarding the 'independent' nature of the Indian big bourgeoisie and political concessions granted to the oldest and biggest party of the Indian ruling classes at various junctures, can now be seen and felt so clearly. We have all along been accused by these two parties of underestimating the so-called anti-imperialist potential of the Indian big bourgeoisie as we still characterise India as a semi-colonial society and the Indian big bourgeoisie as comprador, collaborationist or dependent. Our insistence on giving primacy to anti-feudal, anti-imperialist struggles and our consistent emphasis on communist ideological independence and the independent political assertion of the working people have all along been ridiculed by them as a line of adventurism and isolationism. The principled ideological-political identity of the communist movement has been allowed to get blurred and compromised all too often by them in the name of secular unity with bourgeois parties. The result is now evident for all of us - when the CPI(M) and CPI leadership finally draw the line at the nuclear deal, they find themselves ridiculed and disowned by the very sections of the liberal opinion that have all along applauded their pragmatism!

The corporate media is an important mechanism through which the ruling classes manufacture and impose (articulate and sell, if you will) their ideas - the ruling ideas, as the Communist Manifesto put it. We should not therefore be surprised to see the terms of the dominant discourse on the deal in the 'mainstream media' in India - they only reflect the basic class nature of our society and polity. But recent times have often shown how the discourse of the ruling classes has been challenged and rejected by the people through their own struggles. We know what happened to the "India Shining" campaign of the BJP or how the people of this country are responding to the SEZ Act passed unanimously by Parliament. Let the BJP shed its pseudo-nationalist pretension and expose along with the Congress its shared subservience to imperialism. Genuine communists, democrats and patriots must close ranks and intensify the battle against imperialism and its desi collaborators in the face of all odds. The people of India will never forgive the imperialist collaborators who are mortgaging the country to obtain certificates of good conduct from American Presidents.

** From ML Update, a CPI(ML) Weekly News Magazine, Vol.10 No. 36, 4-10 SEP 2007.*

No to Nuke deal, No to Strategic Partnership with America

For National Sovereignty and Dignity,

Against Manmohan's Surrender to America!

Join CPI(ML)'s September Campaign from Kanya Kumari to Kolkata,

Massive Protest Rallies against Joint Naval Exercise, on September 4

Patriotic Student-Youth and Cultural Activists March to Delhi on September 28

On September 4, when Manmohan Govt. starts Joint Naval Exercise with America, in the same Bay of Bengal towards which once Americas dreaded 7th Fleet had moved to subjugate India in 1971, it will truly be the beginning of a new era, saying final farewell to our long cherished values of the freedom struggle espousing sovereignty and independent path of national development. India will not remain the same after the conclusion of Indo-US Nuclear Deal and the consummation of the Strategic Partnership with America, the enemy number one of the world people. This unequal treaty will mean joining American bandwagon, sending Indian troops when demanded, to fight Americas war against 'terror', an euphemism for Americans' naked pursuit of imperialist loot and domination while forcing India not to forge any ties beneficial for its interest but disliked by US for whatever reason. India will no more remain the proud leader and friend in need in the eyes of third world countries, but an ally and junior partner of the butchers of Vietnam and Iraq, the Americans.

Internally it can only mean mortgaging India to the Americans, endangering our national security by deepening American penetration into our internal national life, wasting our scarce resources for the benefit of American business specially their war industry, the ever growing neo-liberal offensive resulting in the islands of billionaires amidst the ever expanding ocean of pauperization, famines, starvation deaths and suicides. With American forces standing on our shores in their civilizing mission, Indo-US strategic partnership can only mean constant threat for our democracy and peoples movements. Joining American bandwagon in its 'crusade' against 'terror', a quid pro quo for barbaric American aggression in the middle-east, is obviously facilitating dangerous import of international terrorism to Indian soil. With communal fascist forces waiting in the wings, it is fraught with serious consequences for democracy and secularism in our country.

Thus, tying the fate of this great nation with US, the rulers are endangering our sovereignty, democracy, secularism and the battle for social equality. They are pushing our motherland on this disastrous path of subservience and misery in their selfish sectarian vested interests, however the patriotic people of Indian will not accept it as their fate accompli. They will not let go in vain the battle of millions of our martyrs who sacrificed their life for a sovereign, peoples democratic India.

CPI(ML) invites all patriots who love India, to join hands in this great war against US imperialism and its domestic collaborators. CPI(ML) has organized a month long campaign in September starting with protest demonstrations and rallies in all major coastal cities along the Bay of Bengal, the sight of the Joint Naval exercise. The first phase of the campaign will come to an end on Sept. 28, the concluding day of the Birth Centenary of Shaheed-E- Azam Bhagat Singh, when thousands of student-youth and cultural activists will converge to Delhi to express their resolve for an uncompromising and unrelenting battle against US imperialism and the treacherous Manmohan regime.

** ML Update, a CPI(ML) Weekly News Magazine, Vol.10 No.35, 28 AUG - 3 SEP 2007.*