

## **INDIA, A GREAT POWER?**

On the way to exceeding that of China with its population of over a billion people and an economic growth rate that is above the world average, India is swiftly identified as one of the growing powers of the 21st century. The purpose of this article is to express my doubts regarding this prognosis as the conditions necessary for India to successfully become a great "modern" power seem to me to be far from present.

The reason for my doubts derives from the crucial importance of the fact that independent India has not tackled the major challenge it faces of radically transforming structures inherited from its shaping by colonial capitalism. No doubt, the ruling class of independent India decided to graft a "national bourgeois" plan onto this legacy, which for the most part has been preserved. By examining the successes, limitations and even the failures of this project, I shall pose the question which dominant "modernised liberalist" discourse has evaded from the outset: whether the bourgeoisie of this country is condemned to subscribe to the compradorisation inherent in the status of the peripheral capitalist structures of the country and if, consequently, its accession to the status of great modern power is impossible without undergoing real social revolution (which does not seem to be the order of the day in the foreseeable future).

### **1. Colonial Inheritance**

British colonisation essentially transformed India into a dependent agricultural capitalist country. To this end, the British systematically established forms of private ownership of agricultural land that excluded the majority of the peasantry from access to it. These forms gave rise to the development of large dominant estates in the North of the country and were less disadvantageous to the medium-sized properties of the comparatively comfortably off peasantry of the South. The majority of the peasants found themselves transformed into a poor practically landless peasantry. The price paid for taking this "capitalist approach" to agricultural development is the incredibly poverty-stricken conditions in which the vast majority of Indian people live.

The universal way of organising land management is not through private ownership as modern minds deformed by eurocentrism automatically believe but ownership emanating from a political community. In pre-colonial India, it was the village communities that handled access to land (on the basis of highly inegalitarian principles related to the hierarchical caste system). These, in turn, were subject to a superior political community, the state (which levied taxes on the communities under its authority). The British promoted those responsible for this political management, with varying degrees of authority, to the rank of "private owners", imposing their particular model of western capitalism, which has become "universal", as other Europeans did elsewhere, in America and in the colonies of Asia and Africa. Today, World Bank officials do not have the intellectual means to comprehend that what they recommend as the sole universal approach (private ownership of the land) is merely an exceptional approach whose success in one small part of the world hides the fact that, in general (in other words, for the "rest of the world"), it is an impasse.

At the outset, Indian communists recommended that this legacy be challenged and subscribed to the most radical form of their programme of agrarian reform (“land for those that till it”, that is to say for practically all peasants). The bourgeois in Congress never carried it through and independent India reduced its promises to the peasantry to a semblance of agrarian reform with no real impact. The fact remains that, as in Western Bengal and Kerala, when the local communist powers went a little further, as far as the Indian constitution allowed, the positive results recorded in social and economic terms were significant and the popular support for the promoters of the reforms was reinforced.

However, although the fundamental question of the ownership of agricultural land had formerly been one of the major areas of debate within communism and elsewhere among “progressive” forces (including the democratic bourgeois and populists), the penetration of liberal ideology after the second world war (even before its apparently total triumph at the end of the century) succeeded in imposing the (“mistaken”) idea that the private ownership of land was “essential”, that there was no alternative to the western approach (disappearance of the peasantry absorbed by urban capitalist development) and that the demand for agrarian reform was therefore “outdated”. The World Bank put the "green revolution" and supposed forms of "market-supported agrarian reforms" in its place. The results of their implementation always ended in disaster, the reinforcement of social inequality and increased submission of agricultural producers to dominant capital (which was in fact the real, though unconfessed, objective of these policies). India is a fine example of this (cf Srilata Swaminathan’s analysis of the subject, in *"Luttes paysannes et ouvrières face aux défis du XXIe siècle"*, *"Peasants' and Workers' Struggle Faced with the Challenges of the 21st Century"*, FTM-2004). We also know that the market-supported agrarian reforms implemented by the World Bank from Brazil to South Africa became farcical. Unfortunately, the "revolutionary" left today is largely contaminated by the nonsense propagated by liberal ideology. As for the traditionalists, who aim to re-establish the original "authentic" social order, they are careful not to challenge this legacy of colonisation that benefits the privileged minorities! “Hindus” here, like the defenders of political Islam elsewhere (Pakistan in particular), submissively subscribe to the requirements of the pursuit of the expansion of forms of dependent peripheral capitalism.

In India, the hindrance to progress constituted by this colonial inheritance is aggravated by the persistence of the caste system (and even makes it worse in some respects). The “lower castes” (today known as the Dalit) and the tribal populations given the same status account for a quarter of the population of India (around 250 million people). Devoid of all rights, access to land in particular, they are a mass of “quasi slaves” and are the collective property of the “others”. Their low status, which is something akin to that of the Helotes of Sparta, allows the others to draw on this mass of available workers for any task and period of time that suits them in return for a mere pittance. The persistence of this situation reinforces the reactionary ideas and behaviour of the “others” and benefits the exercise of power by and to the benefit of the privileged minority. It plays a part in attenuating and even neutralising any protest by the exploited majority who are stuck between the minority exploiters and oppressed status of the Dalit community.

Of course, British colonisation was careful not to challenge the organisation in question, hiding behind the hypocritical pretence of "respecting tradition" (which the British did not do when it did not suit them, for example, when privatising ownership of land!). Colonial power simultaneously manipulated the situation to its own benefit by allowing some Dalit access through education to collaborative positions. It could be said that the powers in independent India have continued this tradition, which was only seriously questioned during the short time

the left alliance led by V. P. Singh (supported by the communists) was in power. The Hindu right has, of course, nothing to say on the subject! And the United States today – through the intermediary of NGOs "defending human rights " – try to manipulate the Dalit community's protests in the same way and contain them in inoffensive spaces for the management of capitalism as a whole.

Fortunately, this situation may be in the process of being overcome by the radicalisation of the struggle in the form of uprisings led by "Naxalite" Maoist peasants in particular. It is true that these uprisings have been put down, in the sense that they have not managed to establish and stabilise a popular power in liberated regions but they have, nonetheless, taken steps to challenge the property structures inherited from colonialism and the caste system and in doing so may have paved the way for revolutionary mobilizations to come. The arrival of the Dalit on the political scene, a major social event in the last two decades is, without doubt, at least in part the product of Naxalism.

## **2. Success and Limitations of the Populist National Project**

The Congress governments of independent India implemented a national plan typical of its time influenced by the victories of the national liberation movements of Asia and Africa after the second world war. The parties (political forces that were mobilised during this fight for independence, modernisation and development) henceforth in power enjoyed undeniable legitimacy but the plans they put into effect were undermined by the ambiguities that characterised the liberation movements themselves. These plans were anti-imperialist inasmuch as they fully understood that modernisation and development required national liberation first of all but they stopped there, believing they could impose the necessary adjustments on the globally dominant system (world capitalism) allowing the nations of Asia and Africa to establish themselves as equal partners and by this means progressively overcome the handicaps of their "backwardness". In spite of the success, the scope of which has never been negligible, they did not succeed in this and rapidly encountered the limitations of their strategic ideas.

The debates of the time - in India as elsewhere in Asia and Africa - specifically concerned these strategic ideas. Was it a necessary stage, described in the Marxist jargon of the time as a "revolutionary democratic bourgeois" phase, which was preparing for its own move to the left by shifting to "the construction of socialism"?

Beyond its established national dimension, the plan of those in power included "social constituents" of greater or lesser significance which the great alliance of the people against imperialism probably imposed even on those in these dominant classes who could see no further than the benefits of capitalism. Across the various situations, one common denominator connected all the legitimate powers that originated from national liberation: namely, their "populist" character, i.e., on the one hand, their will to ensure the benefits of development were shared by the whole (or the majority) of society, and, on the other, their desire to control the process by depriving the dominated classes of the opportunity to organise themselves freely beyond their control.

The communists have often expressed a clear awareness of this contradiction and the limitations that it imposed on the system's achievements but, for various reasons that I will not enter into here as I have done so elsewhere, like others under the influence of the Soviets (and attitudes recommended by them, argued in terms of the "non capitalist approach"), the

majority of communists in Asia and in Africa ended up becoming (to a greater or lesser extent "critical") forces of support for the populist national plans in question. The split that pitted Maoism against the Soviets sometimes curbed the extent of this support in Asia in particular. On the whole, in this respect, the Indian communists (both the Communist Party –Marxist Leninist- and the Communist Party - Marxist) kept their distance from Congress's populist national plan, the exception being the Communist Party of India (CPI), which, for this reason, is today marginalized. The Indian communists, therefore, held a strong position within their society that cannot be compared, for example, with that of the Arab communists whose parties almost unconditionally rallied to Nasserist, Baasist and Bumedian populism.

In spite of their limitations, the successes of Nehru and Indira Gandhi's Indian populist national plan were significant both in economic and political terms.

From the outset, the colonization carried out a systematic de-industrialisation of India – which had been advanced at the time - to the benefit of Great Britain which was in the process of industrialisation, so independent India gave priority to its industrialisation. This was envisioned with a high degree of systematisation, at least in the period of the early plans during the time of Nehru, and combined large private Indian industrial capital with public sector enterprises promoted to fill the shortcomings in the production system inherited from colonisation, accelerate growth and reinforce basic industries.

The macropolitics of regulation implemented at that time were designed to serve this modernisation plan. Price and foreign exchange control, subsidies, regulation of foreign enterprises, borrowed technology were used to secure the main objective of protecting Indian industry from the devastating effects of domination of the world markets by imperialist capital. Only second to this did the regulations in question pursue social objectives – the redistribution of wealth but above all a reduction of the extreme poverty of the popular classes. This accelerated industrial modernisation plan accompanied by a plan to develop agricultural production (food crops in particular) based on what has been called the “green” revolution (which replaced the abandoned agrarian reform - the “red revolution”!), was destined principally to make the country self sufficient in terms of food in order to allow it to channel all its export revenue exclusively to covering the imports needed by its industry.

The whole plan was well and truly capitalist in nature in the sense that the benefits of production and the technologies chosen did not challenge the fundamental rationale of capitalism although it could be said, in this respect, that the experience of really existing socialism (even in China) was not very different in spite of the exclusive nature of public property in this case. The Indian plan was, however, less radical in the sense that the degree of its production system's disconnection from the dominant world system was less systematic than it was in the USSR or China where the wages and prices - in theory planned - were really detached from any comparison with those of the global capitalist system. This characteristic of the Indian plan, which can be found in other non-communist populist national experiences (in the Arab world for example), was closely linked to the failure to challenge social structures inherited from colonisation.

The full extent of this close relationship was revealed through the option of the "green revolution", which we know reinforced rather than weakened the position of the dominant rural classes and large property-owners in particular.

These differences between the national Indian model and that of Communist China account for the visible differences in the results they brought about. The growth rate of industrial and agricultural production in India was not “bad” at that time, it was significantly higher than it had been during colonial times and above the world average for post war capitalism even though it was booming but on the whole it remained at considerably lower levels than those of China. Moreover, whereas growth in China was accompanied by a marked improvement in the popular classes’ standard of living, this was not the case in India where growth exclusively benefited the new middle classes (who were the minority although their expansion accelerated to the point of increasing in a period of some thirty years from 5 to 15% of the overall population of the country), the poverty of the dominant popular classes remained unchanged, even worsened slightly.

Liberal discourse does not take these basic realities into account which is why I do not subscribe to the "optimistic" conclusions drawn by many "futuurologists" according to which India is in the process of pursuing accelerated growth which will raise it to the status of a great modern power, following China's example. So far, China has the advantage of the legacy of its radical revolution whereas India is handicapped by the unchallenged legacy of colonisation. This is why economic growth in China, supported by investment systems that are more favourable to the development of the whole production system, continues to prevail compared with growth in India and is accompanied by a pattern of redistribution of income more favourable (or less unfavourable) to the popular classes. The fact remains that if China were to become too “liberal” and India were to pursue the ultra liberal option that it has done over the last fifteen years or so, we would not see the growth rate accelerate but, on the contrary, it would flag, placing China alongside India, even resulting in reductions in the rates in both countries. In my opinion, the "agrarian question" lies at the heart of the challenge the two countries are currently facing, by which I mean the fundamental question of the access of all the peasantry to land and production, access that people still have today in China (for how long?) but is always refused in India.

For their part, the political successes of independent India are certainly significant.

Unlike China, India is a multinational country. It was only by playing precisely on the diversity of its Indian peoples (and states) that British colonisation succeeded in imposing its power. Credit is due to the national liberation movement for its success in this domain which is unrivalled in the colonial world. This movement really succeeded in uniting the ten great nations that the country is made up of into one single “nation”. It matters little that the name of this nation (“Bharat”, giving rise to the concept of Bharatva which can be translated as "Indianness") seems “debatable” from a “scientific” (or para scientific) point of view. Since then, India has well and truly been one nation, the reality of which is obvious to all of its constituent parts and to this day, this common sense of belonging prevails over specific local factors (linguistic among others). The national liberation movement had only one failing in this respect which lay in its desire to involve the Muslims in the creation of the new Indian nation. Here, the British succeeded in undermining the Indian national plan and forcing through the creation of the artificial states of Pakistan and Bangladesh. The fact remains that even if the Muslims who remained in India (approximately 15% of the total population) sometimes seemed to "pose a problem" (a problem that Hindu culturalists unjustifiably exploit), they are fully and properly integrated into all aspects of the social and political life of the country. The reason for this success is the secularism of the Indian state which even the wave of Hindu culturalism has not succeeded in undermining. The difference in the behaviour of Indian governments and the majority of Indian society towards its Muslim “minority” and

the behaviour of Muslim-dominated governments and societies towards their Christian minorities, for example, demonstrates the value of secularism. This democratic progress is not found in other regions of the world (the Arab and Muslim world in particular).

Of course, this assertion needs to be qualified. The repression of the Sikhs' demands (that cost the life of Indira Gandhi) and the situation in Kashmir are evidence of the limitations of the regime's capacity to deal correctly with "national questions" (even if they are described in other terms). Yet the fact remains that the powers in Delhi have found ways to successfully handle problems with all the great nations of the "Indo-Aryan" north and the "Dravidian" south and thus make federal unity, which is in fact far more centralised than the terms of the Constitution provide for, a solid reality.

The experience of modern-day India demonstrates the unquestionable superiority of democracy and the futility of arguments in support of autocratic management which is claimed to be more effective. This remains true despite the evident limitations and the class content of bourgeois democracy in general, and the reality of it in India's experience. To the credit of the national liberation movement (Congress and the communists), this option was probably the only effective way of managing the various social and regional interests (even if limited to those of the privileged classes) and winning popular support for the plan of the minority making up the hegemonic block.

On the international scene, independent India applied itself to shaping the "southern front" of the time, the Non-Aligned Movement whose origins lay in the Afro-Asian Conference held in Bandung (1955) without even its head-on collision with China calling this overtly anti-imperialist strategy into question.

### **3. The Liberal and Culturalist drift**

The erosion of the national populist plan was as unavoidable in India as it was elsewhere on account of its inherent limitations and contradictions. This and the delegitimisation of power that accompanied it gave rise to an offensive by obscurantist forces which was supported by the dominant compradore class and a large proportion of the middle classes (whose expansion was dwindling and increasingly beset by difficulties) who were motivated by the discourse (and manoeuvres) of United States imperialism.

In India, these obscurantist illusions have a name: Hindutva. This term designates the affirmation of the priority of adherence to the Hindu religion defined as the "real identity" of the peoples of the country, as opposed to the concept of "Bharatva" which refers to the nation. Of course, this "Hindu" affirmation does not challenge the colonial legacy concerning land ownership or the respect for the hierarchical caste system in particular. In this respect, as Indian communists have not ceased to point out, the obscurantist illusions serve the interests of compradore and imperialist powers perfectly. The "specificities" with which their para "national", even para anti-imperialist, discourse is filled are absolutely worthless. They fuel a renewal of the practice of the (in this case anti-Muslim) "communitarism" that colonial power used, in its day, to counter the rising aspirations of secular, democratic, modernist national liberation.

Nothing in this respect differentiates this regression from that which afflicts other peripheral societies which are victims of the same erosion of the national populist plan, Arab and Muslim societies in particular. The parallel with political Islam can be observed here.

Nevertheless, this adverse drift does not necessarily seem to be as marked in India as in Arab and Muslim countries. The reason for this no doubt lies in the fact that Indian communist parties kept their distance from the Congress's plan for independent India whereas those of Arab and Muslim countries rallied almost unconditionally to similar populist plans. As a result of this, the communists in India maintained a certain amount of (even growing) popularity which protects society from regression at the very time when almost everywhere else in the world they were entering a phase of decline (electoral in particular).

The decline was therefore accompanied here by the renewed radicalisation of social struggles. Evidence of this can be seen in the Naxalite offensive which, in spite of their error of judgement regarding the real balance of forces in Indian society, did reawaken revolutionary awareness among the peasantry in vast areas (approximately a third) of India. Further evidence can be seen in the brutal entry of the Dalit into political and social combat (itself, no doubt, a result of the radicalisation of the peasantry) and in the confirmed attachment of all of the middle classes to democracy, even to secularism. The communist parties themselves, and the Communist Party – Marxist- in particular, were not unaffected by this radicalisation.

This explains why the collapse of the legitimacy which Congress had enjoyed almost exclusively did not produce a “definitive victory” (even provisional) for the right. A first right-wing government was overturned by a left-wing electoral alliance led by VP Singh who offered the communists greater influence in the political life of the country. This still fragile alliance was unable to prevent the electoral recovery of the right but, in turn, this second experience of a “Hindu-compradore” government, which wholly subscribed to the dictates of imperialism on the offensive (accelerating economic “liberalisation”), well and truly failed. The last elections (2004) put paid to the right's plan and, through the rejection of this plan by the majority of the Indian electorate, the premises of “Hindu culturalism” and liberalism promoted by the compradore bourgeoisie and its imperialist masters were jointly held responsible for the social catastrophe. This association is not made elsewhere, in the Arab and Muslim worlds in particular.

This is the case, the battle is far from being won by the Indian left. The same effects of the erosion of the forms of political management associated with the populist national phase (itself produced by the former national liberation movement) found elsewhere characterises India today. By this I mean that the loss of credibility of undemocratic forms of organisation and forms of fighting “commanded from on high by ruling teams” to which the communist parties themselves are not strangers. The conflict between the (supposedly spontaneous) “movement of the popular classes” and “aspiration for participative democracy/parties and formal organisations” is as typical of India as it is of the whole of the modern world. The formation of an alternative, which will be difficult, must meet this challenge.

#### **4. The Long and Difficult March of Alter Globalisation**

Dominant liberal discourse not only considers there to be “no alternative” to “economic liberalism” and the form of globalisation that accompanies it but also that support for this choice is “progressive” and that all people endowed with an enterprising spirit must “win”. Recognising this to be nonsense disproved by facts which do not stand up to any serious theoretical reflection is not enough. Building a progressive social alternative that would form part of real alter globalisation is still difficult and the march in this direction long.

Where India is concerned, the creation of such an alternative necessarily means that appropriate, even if progressive, responses must be found to meet the four main challenges.

*First challenge:* To find a radical solution to the Indian peasant problem based on the recognition of the right of all peasants of access to land in the most egalitarian conditions possible. This, in turn, means the abolition of the caste system and the ideology that legitimises it. In other words, India must engage in as radical a revolution as that of China or at least undertake far-reaching reforms that would ensure significant progress in this direction. The current peasant struggles are certainly not negligible: their frequency, the geographical area they cover and the violence that accompanies them speak for themselves. However, they remain confused and pursue different and at times contradictory objectives. The best organised struggles, those that are occasionally victorious here and there, or at least succeed in forcing the authorities to pull back, are those of the modern-day peasantry whose demands are in line with capitalist and market thinking and concern demands relating to the management of prices, conditions for access to input and credit. This explains why these fights are often led by rich members of the peasantry themselves also victims of the current phase of demands imposed by global capitalism, the compradore class and the state at its service. The struggles of the poor and landless, including the Dalit, are for the most part private explosions of long term strategic visions. Clearly, it falls to the communists in this respect to revive not only their “reflection” but also to contribute to the creation of suitable forms of peasant organisations, which is clearly necessary if effective strategies are to materialise.

*Second challenge:* to create a united workers' front that integrates segments of the relatively stabilised working classes and those that are not. This challenge is common to all countries of the modern world and particularly all those of the periphery of the system which are characterised by the enormously destructive effects of new poverty (massive unemployment, lack of job security, excrescence of wretched “informal” conditions). It must be recognised that the working class organisations which the national liberation movement, including the communists, succeeded in “mobilising” with some degree of effectiveness thus forming the social basis of the political forces of the former “left”, are today faced with a challenge of unprecedented proportions. The social commitments of the past, between capital - state and factions of the working classes (unionists in particular) are challenged by the imperialist and compradore offensive while new social structures have meant that earlier forms of organisation and action have lost their effectiveness. It is the duty of the unionists, communists and activists of popular movements to open the debate on these questions and invent new forms that will advance participative democracy and together be capable of defining the stages of a common long term strategy.

*Third Challenge:* to maintain the unity of the Indian sub-continent, renew the forms of association of the various peoples that make up the Indian nation on reinforced democratic bases. To defeat the strategies of imperialism which, as always, pursues, beyond its tactical options, its objective of disempowering the “great states” which are better able than microstates to withstand the assaults of imperialism.

*Fourth Challenge:* To focus international political options on the central issue of reconstructing a “front of the peoples of the South” (the solidarity of the peoples of Asia and Africa first and foremost) in circumstances that, of course, are no longer those that presided over the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement at the “time of Bandung” (1955 - 1975). To give the highest priority to the objective of derailing the United States plan for military



control of the planet and thwart the political manoeuvres of Washington whose purpose is to prevent any serious rapprochement between India, China and Russia.

The political and social forces that prevent India from moving in the above-mentioned directions are considerable. They constitute a “hegemonic block” that accounts for a fifth of the population - behind the great industrial, commercial and financial bourgeoisie and the big landowners, the great masse of well-off peasants and middle classes, the high bureaucracy and technocracy. These 200 million Indians are the exclusive beneficiaries of the national plan implemented so far. No doubt, at the present time of extreme liberal triumph, this block is collapsing under the effect, among others, of the end of the upwards social mobility of the lower middle classes who are threatened with loss of job security, even impoverishment if not outright poverty. This situation provides the left with the opportunity to develop tactics, if it can, to weaken the coherence of these reactionary forces in general and in particular their comprador approach which is the drive belt for globalised imperialist domination. However, it also offers the opportunities to the Hindu right in the event the left fails.

We often hear it said in India that this “nation of 200 million people”, which alone constitutes a large market comparable to that of several large European countries, was the country’s future whereas the majority who number some 800 million poverty-stricken Indians are nothing but a ball and chain that it is shackled with. Besides being abhorrent (should the poor be exterminated?), this reactionary opinion is utterly stupid. The “minority” is only privileged because it exploits the country's resources and workers who are the majority.

The minority that make up this block is, therefore, in a situation which excludes the reproduction in India of the historic capital/labour compromise on which the social democracy of the developed West was founded and the discourse that compares “peripheral Fordism” to the Fordism that is characteristic of developed regions is based on a huge failure to understand the impact of each of these two formulas: western Fordism shared benefits of capitalist expansion with the majority of the working classes, peripheral Fordism operates for the sole benefit of the “middle classes”. India is not the only example of this: Brazil and China today are in similar situations.

The management of the coherence of this hegemonic block through political democracy, such as it is in India, does not lessen its reactionary class dimension. On the contrary, it is the most effective way to establish it.

This hegemonic block is well and truly “integrated” into the rationale of dominant capitalist globalisation and so far none of the various political forces through which it is expressed challenges it. The reasons are therefore clear as to why the “Indian national project” remains fragile, vulnerable and incapable of delivering its own stated objective: to transform India into “a large modern capitalist power”.

This vulnerability results in the frequently opportunistic behaviour of the Indian political class, justified most often by short term “real-politic” arguments. Faced with the United States plan for “overall (military) control of the planet” and the collective imperialist alignment of the triad (United States, Europe and Japan) in spite of the concerns of some of its partners, the Indian political class has so far been incapable of producing and implementing the necessary counter measures. That would entail the creation of a front uniting India, Russia and China, all threatened in equal measure by the compradorisation resulting from the expansion of the new imperialist collective. It might also entail the more systematic pursuit of

a rapprochement with Europe depending on the extent to which the latter would keep its distance from the Washington's leading plan. India's rulers do not think this likely, including those associated with most determined government formulas to undermine the Hindu/compradore right. On the contrary, they continue to give priority to their "conflicts" with China, perceived as a potential military adversary and a dangerous financial rival on the markets of globalised capitalism. They even believe they may be able to "use" a possible rapprochement with the United States in order to become their major ally in Asia. There are others in the third world that have similar reasoning: Brazil, South Africa and even China.

The measures required to counter the deployment of new collective imperialism requires the reconstruction of a southern peoples' front. Here again, the task is far from easy. The conflicts between the countries of the South, especially in the area between India and Pakistan largely caused by "culturalist/compradore" deviation (for which the responsibility of political Islam is considerable) take precedent and reinforce the short term tactical calculations of the Indian political class.

This opportunism will not only in the long term destroy the conditions necessary for construction both of a progressive national alternative and an alter globalisation to support it, it blinds its defenders to the point of making them lose sight of the vulnerability of Indian unity and any manoeuvres by imperialism which seeks to destroy it. There are no illusions to be made in this area. Even if today Washington diplomacy chooses to "support India and its unity" for a while and for tactical reasons, its long term plan is to disable the capacity of this great country to become a great power. Submitting to demands to subscribe to the expansion of global capitalism reinforces centrifugal tendencies for this submission accentuates the "regional" inequalities of development. Do we not already hear the "privileged classes" of Bangalore (who have benefited from the expansion of new technologies) say that an independent Karnataka would make greater profit from current globalisation than the Indian state of Karnataka?