

Scrap the Anti-Nation Nuke Deal

Thursday 6 July 2006, by [CPI \(ML\) Liberation](#) (Date first published: 4 July 2006).

As expected, the House of Representatives' International Relations Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have endorsed the US-India nuclear deal, with both republicans and democrats voting overwhelmingly in favour of the draft enabling bills. Behind the by-partisan support that ensured the smooth passage of the bills lay a couple of closely interrelated factors. One was intense lobbying by the Bush administration and democratic leaders led by John Kerry himself, as well as by at least three professional lobbying firms. Two of them were hired by the Government of India and the third - Patton Boggs, ranked number one in this field - by corporate giants like General Electric, Boeing and Lockheed Martin, which are keen to strengthen their presence in India.

No wonder, the US Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation and the US-India Business Council (USIBC), representing the largest US investors and traders with India, have very enthusiastically hailed the approval of the India-US deal by the two Congress panels. "This initiative will create lucrative opportunities for US industry, create high quality jobs for American workers, and lay the foundation for vast downstream opportunities in every sector of US business," said the senior vice president for International Affairs at the US Chamber, who is also chairman of the Coalition for Partnership with India.

In addition to dominant business interests, the other basic reason behind the quick success of the mark-up votes was that US strategic interests, everybody knew, had been sufficiently safeguarded at the cost of its junior partner's. If this was true of the Bush-Manmohan deal itself, the bias was rendered all the more glaring by testimonies before the US Congress and hearings in the US senate Foreign Relations Committee following the deal. Thus New Delhi was crudely told it must line up behind Washington on the question of Iran's nuclear program or else it should be prepared to "pay a heavy price." As we all know, India shamelessly carried out the order to the full satisfaction of the hawks, and now the bill presented before the US House International Relations Committee makes a specific reference to securing India's, "full and active participation" in the US efforts to "dissuade, isolate and if necessary sanction and contain Iran" for seeking nuclear weapons. Moreover, senior Bush administration officials demanded India's support for the multinational Proliferation Security Initiative and her help in 'building democratic institutions worldwide'.

The arm-twisting never stopped. Even the 29 July meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee introduced two amendments before approving the presidential proposal. One of these stipulated that in the event of India conducting an atomic test, the US should not only stop all nuclear supplies but also persuade other countries to do the same. Together, the recently passed bills (scheduled to become, after some legal formalities are over, a single Act by the end of July) also require India to abide by the highly discriminatory Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty and make it obligatory for the US President to report regularly to the US Congress about different aspects of the nuclear agreement, including the uranium being mined within this country and how it was being used.

The net impact of all this is clear as daylight. The American noose around our neck is getting tighter. The UPA government is making India a US slave - "in perpetuity". And this not only in the crucial energy sector and the nuclear domain, but in all areas of foreign policy, including international trade. This was demonstrated once again when commerce minister Kamal Nath, returning empty-

handed from Geneva after the failure of WTO talks, lamented he saw “no negotiating space”. Well, it’s you, your party (not to deny an equally illustrious role of the BJP) that has surrendered all negotiating space over all these decades: don’t pretend now you are a wounded soldier fighting for the Indian peasantry and our national interests!

The sacrilegious surrender of our sovereignty before the rich and the powerful, rendered more unpardonable by the official lie about US legislation being not binding on India, has evoked strong and immediate reaction from concerned citizens all over the country. At a Mumbai seminar held on July 2, defence analysts and nuclear scientists including former AEC chairman PK Iyengar and top nuclear scientist Homi Sethna expressed “great concern” over the Indo-American nuclear deal. They alleged that with this deal the Americans, who have no nuclear power building business, were trying to steal Indian technology of the “closed fuel cycle” through the safeguard mechanism. Mr. Sethna opined that the emerging arrangement would be even worse than the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), because “the NPT may be discriminatory, but we will still be allowed to exit whereas in the current Indo-US deal which is under negotiation, India will remain bound in perpetuity”.

We simply cannot tolerate this. It is time the patriotic and freedom-loving people of India rose in unison with a straight demand: Uphold national independence, Scrap the N-deal!

P.S.

* ML Update, CPI(ML) Weekly News Magazine, Vol. 9, No. 27, 4 - 11 July 2006.