

frontier

Vol. 3: No. 26

SEPTEMBER 19, 1970

PRICE: 35 PAISE

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PRINTED AT MODERN INDIA PRESS,
7, RAJA SUBODH MULLICK SQUARE,
CALCUTTA-13 AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY
FOR GERMINAL PUBLICATIONS (P) LTD.
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CALCUTTA-13

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THE hawks in the West Bengal Government are on the upswing. Emboldened by the CPM's hasty retreat before their massive marshalling of force last month, they are now out to establish white terror throughout the State. The assault on some policemen in different parts of the State has come in handy; as if the police were the darling of the community so long, as if there had been no attack on them before. The Government would have the people believe that the CPI (ML) has embarked upon an amended policy of annihilation of policemen. It is one thing for a party to adopt a policy and quite another to carry it out. The Government and the left parties agree that the CPI (ML) is a fraternity of extremist fanatics and anti-social elements with no mass base. The Marxists go further and allege that the party is a willing agent-provocateur which, in collusion with the police, is creating a situation in which the Government may come down hard on the CPM. Such a party, however militant in slogans, cannot expect even a tacit approval from the people. It is the same Government which, a few weeks ago, had claimed that popular resistance was growing against Naxalite depredations in the State. How is it then that there is no popular expression of revulsion at murder of policemen? On the other hand, half of Calcutta was in turmoil for several days in protest against the death of a boy from gruesome torture at a north Calcutta police station. To assuage public feeling, the Government had to announce hastily that the Police Commissioner of Calcutta would himself inquire into the allegation of homicidal torture. Nothing has been heard of the police chief's findings. Maybe, it has been set off against the attack on some policeman somewhere.

If the Government can rid itself partly of its obsession with the so-called Naxalite pogrom, it may find a link between the recent attacks on policemen and the months of police repression and atrocities that preceded them. The State Government is crying itself hoarse for special powers, especially the Preventive Detention Act. But the police did not lack powers to lift any person they liked and let loose on him a pack of sadistic maniacs in uniform. The sanctity of home was violated at will, and no one was safe. Even the left parties, which have reduced their politics to agitating for early election and electioneering, had to raise their voice against police repression. Their rivalries and the limitations

of their politics made their protest ineffective. The popular anger found its own channel of expression. Maybe, the police are now facing more than their normal occupational hazards. But that is the lot of every citizen in the State. Who can say that he will not be a victim next moment of a bomb-attack or a police bullet? The Government may look up its own statistics to find out to what extent the risks of the uninvolved citizen have increased in the Presidential regime whose primary objective is to establish "order and normality" in the State. The police are a part of the community despite what the Government may think of them. They themselves are to blame if their share has, of late, become somewhat disproportionate; they have instigated the crimes against them.

But the Government is not in a mood to learn this obvious lesson. It is trying to find a remedy through escalating police violence. Every single act of violence against the police is now followed by mass harassment and persecution. At Krishnagar frenzied policemen appointed themselves dispensers of justice. Truckloads of them went out of the police barracks, beat up some senior officers who refused to countenance the revolt, and wreaked vengeance on innocent people, including passengers of a train just arrived. The result is that the town is policed now by the para-military CRP, Border Security Force and Eastern Frontier Rifles. They are all doing their bit to alienate the people. The Government is afraid to put back its own police to duty lest there should be an immediate burst-up. Is it the Government's contention that the entire people of Krishnagar have turned Naxalite? A similar situation was about to develop at Berhampore where the policemen were not satisfied with indiscriminate searches and arrests and wanted to deal out rough and ready justice to whomsoever they liked. The town was under long curfew for nearly a week.

Instead of frowning on these revolts, the State Government has underwritten gross police indiscipline by exhuming the Bengal Suppression of Terrorist Outrages Act enacted dur-

ing the hated regime of John Anderson. It has outdone even that regime by applying the measure to the whole of the State, for Anderson had thought the Act necessary for some districts only. Whether the Act is ultra vires of the Constitution will perhaps be decided in court. In the mean time, the State Government has shown how it proposes to use it as long as it is not scrapped. Within 24 hours of its promulgation, a dawn-to-dusk curfew (a semantic absurdity) was imposed on Behala, 1,500 houses were ransacked and their inmates harassed and humiliated, and about 200 people were taken into custody. Only a dozen of them are said to have been ultimately detained, and in the process the police have antagonised thousands of people. Will they mind if someone thinks, however misguidedly, of a reprisal? All the provisions of the Act have not been invoked yet; it also provides for imposition of collective fines, and there is no doubt that in its blind fury the Government may resort to it on a

future occasion. Not satisfied with this, the Government is thinking of declaring certain areas as disturbed to facilitate the application of the Tribunals of Criminal Jurisdiction Act. The measure will empower petty police officers to fire at will and will take certain offences out of the jurisdiction of courts. The obvious intention is to secure judicial endorsement of a sort of arbitrary police actions. The attempt to bypass normal legal processes indicates that even the judiciary, which is a wing of the Government, cannot be trusted to uphold the type of action the executive contemplates. Frustrated in its attempt to arm itself with the Preventive Detention Act, the Government is acquiring powers which, by malafide manipulation, may add up to indefinite detention without a fair trial. The law is being violated to enforce the rule of law. This is a self-defeating exercise which can lead only to an unending duel between violence and counter-violence.

The "Non-Aligned"

For the African non-aligners the journey had been from Addis Ababa, where they participated in the OAU conference, to Lusaka. The third non-aligned summit was a repeat performance for them and naturally they could have done without it. Whether the nine-million-dollar show in Lusaka would give a new direction to the foreign policies of the summiteers is anybody's guess. But this huge amount of money could have been more purposefully spent by the host country or given to the African liberation movements. Like in the previous years, the OAU conference was inhibited by the cross-currents of internal African politics. If it could not recommend sanctions against Israel, it is because many member States are having friendly relations with Tel Aviv. Even on the resolution condemning the UK, France and West Germany for sales of arms to South Africa, there was no unanimity. Besides Malawi which has unashamedly decided to be the cor-

nerstone of Pretoria's outward policy, seven other States abstained. The fear of Britain and France pulling the purse strings tight and the South African bait of economic and technical aid have led them to sacrifice the interests of the black people. There is yet no sign of any concrete action being taken to treat these States as pariah. Mr Marcelino Dos Santos, Vice-President of Frelimo, underlined the necessity of greater coordination between the OAU and liberation movements and asked certain States to increase their material support. There has to be internationalisation of the solidarity towards liberation struggles in the face of South African, Portuguese and Rhodesian repression of the black people.

The inflation of participants at Lusaka should not mean that the area of non-alignment has increased over what it was at the time of the Cairo summit. If anything, non-alignment has for all practical purposes ceased to be a force in interna-

tional politics. Non-alignment was conceived at the height of the cold war with a view to reducing international tensions. It was thought the wider the uncommitted area, the lesser the possibility of world war. Non-aligners unlike neutralists were expected to decide issues on their merits. In actuality, however, most of them have either developed an ethos of preserving themselves in their smallness or aligned themselves with the super-powers. On many occasions Mr Nehru said that non-alignment was most suitable for India considering her geographic position and necessity of economic development. There was also the urge to gain recognition by bringing America and Russia closer and playing the role of mediator in international disputes. But from cold war the super-powers have now come to live in an era of 'detente-entente'. The name of today's super-power diplomacy is paral-

lelism which enables them to work in parallel to solve international problems. Often they work towards the same objective without obvious cooperation. The new diplomacy promises to keep opportunities for mutual destruction to a minimum. The self-imposed task of the non-aligners of building a bridge between the two blocs has become redundant. It was, therefore, hoped in certain quarters that non-alignment will be redefined in the changed world context. But the issue was skipped for everyone's convenience. There were some unique suggestions like adding 'teeth' to non-alignment and creating adequate machinery to ensure continuity in development of the movement. The teeth could be of use if the policy is forcefully directed against some powers. But meetings at regular intervals do nobody any harm if they are hosted by the more affluent among the non-aligners.

it was further rescheduled in July 1968, when Adam Malik grew ecstatic describing the relation between the two countries that had "entered a new stage"! In February this year Malik made another trip to Russia to finally settle the debt question. He was happy to notice that "Soviet leaders no longer showed any untoward interest in Indonesia's internal problems, and did not press past queries about the treatment of communists".

That Malik was not indulging in wishful thinking, as many thought at the time, has now been proved beyond a shade of doubt. During his latest visit final agreement has been reached and on softer terms than demanded four years earlier. According to the terms of the 1966 agreement, repayment of the debt would have been spread over 12 years starting from 1969. But now Moscow has agreed to spread it over 30 years starting from December 31, 1970. The Russians have moreover agreed to resume their half-finished projects in Indonesia and grant new aid. The projects to be finished include a steel mill, a fertiliser plant, a hydro-electric station and an atomic power project. The amount of proposed aid is estimated at \$25 million.

Adam Malik told reporters in Djakarta that the new Russian aid was without any political strings for "we did not have time to discuss politics". They in fact hardly needed any thinking—they now think on the same wave-length. There was a time when Moscow Radio occasionally purred on the question of treatment of Indonesia's communist prisoners. That was obviously meant for home consumption. To have taken the question of prisoners seriously would have found Moscow on the side of Peking and Hanoi which have nothing but contempt for the Suharto regime—a course fraught with dangerous consequences for peace in Asia, so dear to Moscow. So the Russo-Indonesian agreement was demonstratively signed in Moscow barely three days after 5,000 of Indonesia's 75,000 suspected communist prisoners were exiled to far away Buru island. They belong to the category whom

Fortune Favours The Brave

President Suharto is a brave man. Hardly anybody would imagine that the man who did not hesitate to liquidate half a million of his country's communists for making democracy safe would scamper before a handful of exiled Indonesians demonstrating at The Hague. When the demonstrators stormed into the Indonesian Embassy there and captured the ambassador they hoped to put off Suharto's visit. But an undaunted Suharto postponed his trip, cut a three-day programme into 24 hours and yet ventured into the Dutch capital. Since the country unfortunately was not Indonesia, he could not simply machine-gun the communist demonstrators. Instead he had to be hustled in and out of the city under the strictest security known in Dutch history. The story was repeated in Amsterdam, Bonn and Munich. With thousands of demonstrators shouting against the "Indonesian military dictatorship" and "bloody Djakarta Government" on the streets Suharto had to move about like a thief in the night.

However, a hard boiled man as he is, President Suharto knows that these violent demonstrators could only spoil his autumnal vacation in Europe but not halt the flow of aid and investment to Indonesia. What actually annoyed him was that the memory of the massacre of 1965 should still rankle with the youth in Europe when the good communists in Moscow do not care a fig. Indeed in contrast how cordial was the reception in Moscow when his Foreign Minister Adam Malik visited the communist capital just before he himself left for the Netherlands!

Moscow's friendliness was not, however, a new development. The Russians were secretly happy that General Suharto had decimated the "pro-Peking" PKI. The guns used were Russian and since the bloody days of September 1965 they have never hesitated to supply the vitally necessary spare parts. In its flowing sympathy for Suharto's New Order Moscow agreed in November 1966 to reschedule the \$800 million debt. At the request of the Indonesian junta

the Government considers to be hard-core communists but does not have enough evidence for a formal trial. But this should not be interpreted as President Suharto's contempt for the law. Category A would be duly tried and punished. When this would be done is quite another matter. Major-General Sugih Arto, the Attorney General, recently said that at the present rate, to try 5,000 prisoners of Category A would take 200 years. There is, however, no question of losing heart. Major-General Arto hopes to train young graduates as judges specially to try communists. The Russians do not mind the law's delay either.

Smoky Howlers

So long the battle between Indian capital and foreign capital, in the cigarette industry, was being fought without calling names. But the battle seems to have reached a high pitch and the knights have put off the masks. The principal warriors are the foreign firm, India Tobacco, and the indigenous one, Golden Tobacco. There is no reason to hold brief for either—both have been producing bad cigarettes and pocketing good money. But being good fatalists as we are, it does not matter if we die of cancer or starvation—it is possible to calmly contemplate, like the Zens, which one to prefer: a fall over the precipice or swallow-up by the tiger. Should we say, we prefer the tiger, not because it is nationalist but because it is a more competent sophist?

One is tempted to say so, after Mr Haksar's press conference at New Delhi. The ITC chief may not have realised it but he has been badly let down by his PR men. He was supposed to take the Golden bull by its horns and steer clear of the charges that he is a comprador and represents monopolists. But the pity of it, he was provided with so many howlers to answer the questions put by Golden Tobacco.

For example, Golden Tobacco asserted that ITC was sending out a good amount of money to its foreign

shareholders. In answer Mr Haksar said that ITC was earning good foreign exchange! How does the answer refute the charge? The funny aspect of the thing, moreover, is that whenever ITC talks of export, it invariably drags in the performance of its sister concern, the Indian Leaf Tobacco Development Co. Is it because the export performance of ITC is microscopic and must be enlarged by the massive earnings of leaf tobacco by the ILTD? Why doesn't ITC state how much it pays its overseas shareholders and how much it earns by foreign exchange by itself? Mr Haksar's PR men must have known that it was not possible to go gaga over the paltry export earnings of ITC. But it being the fashion of every foreign firm to hold aloft the export banner to show how they are serving the country (implying that their export activities are a sort of sacrifice just, for the good of the country and not at all for the firms' sales!), the PR men of ITC lump up the earnings of 13 years to make them look reasonably decent. Golden Tobacco said that the cigarette exports of the country are a big flop and ITC admen are unashamed liars. Why has Mr Haksar kept mum over the point?

Mr Haksar says that his company is not a monopolist according to the law. May be true. The Monopoly Acts of the country have nice loopholes through which many monopolists have a smooth way out. ITC may not be a monopolist on paper, but what is it in fact? How much of the market does it control in India? What is the percentage of its production in comparison to the total cigarette production in the country? Mr Haksar skips over the matter.

Mr Haksar has been advised by his PR men to drive home the fact, at the press conference, that ITC is not foreign-controlled. The mere overnight change of name, from Imperial to India, does not of course make the firm Indian. Till this year, the firm was almost totally run, by foreign capital. Even now, after selling shares to Indians as an eye-wash, the shares of Indian capital control only one-fourth of the ITC capital. On this point Mr Haksar deals with ab-

solutely high mathematics. He brings in other foreign cigarette firms, without naming them of course and shows that the share of Indian capital in the industry is 42 per cent, just after committing the statement that the Indian share in ITC is 25 per cent. Why this sudden jump? And what does he mean by saying that 42 per cent of the Indian capital generates 47 per cent of the production? Percentage of which capital and of which production? A very convenient confusion has been created by omitting to state precisely what Mr Haksar tries to say. Not that he was inadvertently given slipshod copy. The copy-writers must have been advised to make it slipshod.

Food Deal

The Food Corporation of India showed the way some months ago when it sold off stocks of wheat and maize to assorted private dealers in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The temptation since then has been overwhelming, and now there is a great swelling amongst the ranks of the delinquent. First, it was the Government of Andhra Pradesh; Tamil Nadu and Mysore have followed. Another good monsoon has ensured that grain prices will remain reasonably stable over the next few months. What is the need therefore to hold excess stocks of grains, which involve carrying costs in terms of storage, freight, interest, and so on? The State governments are therefore in a mad hurry to pass on the stocks to private parties, who would move them across State borders. This latter act is of course patently illegal, since inter-State movement of rice is supposed to be the prerogative of government agencies. But given the quasi-sovereignty which, pace West Bengal, all State governments have now come to enjoy, legal bottle-necks are a mere irritant and nothing more. The Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Mysore have therefore gone ahead and inserted advertisements in the newspapers: rice is to be unloaded via tender-cum-auction, private dealers can come and get it—and move it.

This is of course folly, but not just folly alone. It makes no sense to talk of buffer stocks of foodgrains, supplemented by imports, if simultaneously the State governments are going to unload their own stocks to private dealers. The game would be akin to those famous sums we were asked to work out in our junior school days, those sums about cisterns being filled by a pipe at one end and at the same time being drained away by another.

On paper, most State governments are for State trading and for effectively protecting the poorer consumers against spiralling prices through large-scale public distribution of foodgrains. Reality spells certain other things. If you can make a fast buck by dumping public stocks with private parties, minor qualms would not prevent you from taking the plunge. If traders would want these stocks to be moved out of a surplus State and to one which is deficit in foodgrains, a price could be extracted even for allowing this movement.

This is then a regime of non-sequiturs. On the one hand, we keep importing foodgrains because we want to keep market forces in trim and to add to our buffer. On the other, we unload whatever stocks we have, because that is one manner in which we can ensure that private dealers have enough grains in their hands for speculative purposes in a period of rising prices. To the extent the public sector will have less, the private dealers and traders will have more: therefore, each process of sale of grains from the Government to private parties implies a relative weakening of the Government and a corresponding shoring up of the position of private dealers. Such transactions will see to it that the government will not have enough grains at its disposal to try to beat down price increases in case they start to occur.

Meanwhile, of course, we will continue to import grains, including rice, by spending foreign exchange. As the British would say, it is a smashing situation.

View from Delhi

Dead-End Strategy

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MRS Indira Gandhi's reply to a question on the possibility of an early election suggests that she is keeping the options open, theoretically though. She cannot risk an election just now though this year's harvest promises to be good, one of a series of good harvests. The law of probability suggests that 1971 might be a year of bad harvests and yet there are other constraints preventing Mrs Gandhi from embarking on another phase of political brinkmanship.

The setback over the privy purse abolition provides a sad commentary on her counter-productive adroitness. The executive order in the normal course should have followed the Constitution Amendment Bill, and not preceded it. But this is what happened. Had the bill been passed, the princes would have been obliged to pay homage to Mrs Indira Gandhi, even join her party, to get fair compensation. Since the bill has failed and the executive order has been issued, the princes are out to fight it to the finish.

The executive order might have saved Mrs Gandhi's face for the time being but the long-term implications are serious. When the late Mr Govinda Menon suggested an executive order to achieve the end, the Home Ministry opposed the Law Minister's advice: Unless the provisions in the Constitution protecting the princes were knocked out first, the executive order would have no meaning. The order only de-recognises the princes but does not abolish the institution or a system. All that the order has achieved is to keep the system in cold storage and a government in the future would be able to revive it through another executive order. The Government has no way out of the impasse though its leaders look unruffled and argue that there is no

need to go to Parliament again. Short of a constitutional amendment the system cannot be abolished and one fails to understand how the need to go to Parliament has ceased to exist. If an order can achieve the abolition of a system, it looks as though Mrs Gandhi went to Parliament to prove her majority and prop her own vanity and to no other substantial end.

The circumstances in which Mr Giri signed the order are now the subject of a serious controversy. On September 5, immediately after the defeat of the bill in the Rajya Sabha, a security official of the Prime Minister's staff left by a special plane for Hyderabad and was to await the "go ahead" signal from New Delhi to submit the draft order to the President for assent. The Cabinet met at 10.30 p.m. and took a decision on the executive order in about 15 minutes. To go by what Mr Y. B. Chavan told the Rajya Sabha on September 7, the President signed the order between 11.10 p.m. and 11.30 p.m. The co-axial cable from New Delhi to the South, on which telecommunications with Hyderabad, Madras, Bangalore and other southern cities depend, was snapped and it would not have been possible for New Delhi to have formally conveyed the Cabinet decision to Mr Giri and sent the draft after the decision. It is for the Government to explain in detail how it pulled off this long-distance act.

Contrary to expectations, the de-recognition of princes has not had any impact on the Kerala electorate. So it should make little difference to the outcome of the September 17 poll. No party seems really handicapped for want of funds. The CPI has the "cashew nut exporters" to finance it. The CPM's new international links have put it in money

suddenly. The Congress(R) has found new sources after the ban on company donations to political parties.

Rubber

Mrs Gandhi returned from Lusaka Saturday morning and dashed off to Kerala the same evening. In between, the Cabinet met (she was not presiding over it), with Mr Chavan in the chair, and clinched an issue pending for 16 months. The Tariff Commission had recommended a new minimum price for raw rubber but the Industrial Development Ministry, the Planning Commission and Directorate General of Technical Development had felt that the price hike

was unjustified. So a committee of secretaries of the Economic Ministry went into the question and recommended a price lower than that recommended by the Tariff Commission. Kerala has 93,000 rubber growers, most of them on small holdings, and a decision on election-eve was designed to pull the Congress-R and the CPI out. For the first time perhaps, the Government has accepted a price higher than the ruling price. An India rubber act, one presumes.

But there is more to the story. Sometime ago, a deputation of Kerala rubber growers met a Central Minister who is understood to have been entrusted with the task of raising

funds for the party. The Minister plainly told the deputation that the Government would accept the Tariff Commission's recommendation, if... The deputation was asked to meet Shriman So-and-so and settle things. Company donations to parties are illegal but there are other ways.

The outcome in Kerala, in all likelihood a repetition of the 1965 pattern with no party winning a clear majority, will not influence the elections in the rest of the country. The Congress had always been losing Kerala, except when it ganged up with other parties as it did in 1960. Even when the Congress was losing Kerala it was retaining the other States. Any significance, therefore, would lie in the expected rout of the CPI. That would demonstrate that alliance with Mrs Gandhi's party would be a liability even for a party like the CPI which by itself is no force in Kerala. The CPI has been trying to rehabilitate itself on the support of the Congress-R but the mini-front's pulling power is not so high as it looked at the beginning. The Muslim League is not able to secure the entire Muslim vote for its poll allies in Malabar and the Marxists have succeeded in splitting the middle-class vote. From the BKD in Uttar Pradesh to the CPI in Kerala, every party is certain to realise that identification with the Congress-R will be a liability with the electorate.

If the CPM fails to make it in Kerala (it is not aiming at majority for itself but hopes to be able to form a ministry with the support of the Kerala Congress), its stance vis-a-vis the Congress-R will turn more belligerent, irrespective of whether the CPI is routed at the polls or not. The cynical Kerala voter will have the last laugh.

September 13, 1970

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SEPTEMBER 19, 1970

The Deception Of Non-Alignment

A. K. ESSACK

IS non-alignment relevant to the situation in the era of the seventies? Today as ever before, the crucial problem facing mankind is—which way of life is to triumph, socialist or capitalist? Who is to triumph, the toiling masses, or a handful of exploiters? The seventies have opened up fresh vistas for the oppressed and exploited as imperialism has suffered a series of defeats and everywhere it is on the retreat. On the ideological field it has lost the battle of the mind, for capitalism can only justify its existence by parading as African socialism, pragmatic socialism or Arab socialism. Within its own body-politic it is faced with a series of internal revolts, the most serious being the student struggle in France in 1968 which brought out ten million workers from the factories into the streets. The oppressed masses in Indochina have dealt U.S. imperialism heavy blows, shattering once and for all the myth that weapons are mightier than man. In Africa its stooges like Idris of Libya and Egal of Somalia have been overthrown and its major puppet in the Middle East, Israel, has been forced slowly on the defensive as a result of mounting attacks by the Palestine resistance commandos. In southern Africa more and more areas are being liberated. Further, thanks to the mounting consciousness of the masses, imperialist attempts at counter-revolution have been thwarted. With imperialism then being thrown out of balance, the need is greater than ever before for the socialist anti-imperialist countries, together with the national liberation movements, to forge a fighting unity to deal even heavier and mightier blows so that it is never able to stand on its feet again.

The basic position of the majority of the non-aligned group is that it refuses to take a stand on this fundamental and basic struggle. The seventy odd members of this grouping come from the former colonies of the older impe-

rialist powers. The motley crowd that constitutes the non-aligned group has been described by President Nyerere as "member countries who have adopted different ideologies and pursue different internal policies. Non-alignment says nothing about socialism, capitalism or communism. Our only point of agreement is opposition to colonialism and racialism, yet even on that issue we differ on the tactics to be pursued".

The first non-aligned conference was held in 1961, followed by one in Cairo in 1964. The Lusaka gathering is the third. These conferences differ from the Bandung Conference held in 1955 in one material respect; they exclude the People's Republic of China, although by all standards China is eligible. At Bandung China's strong stand on collective action against imperialism and unconditional support for the national liberation movements was greeted universally by the oppressed throughout the world. Its participation then posed a very serious threat to imperialism and reaction. Its subsequent exclusion not only signified a change in direction, but also turned the non-aligned conference into a weak and ineffective force.

The 1961 conference justified the existence of non-alignment in that the members had declared that they would not join any party in the cold war. During World War II, there was a united front between some of the capitalist States and the USSR against fascism. With the latter's defeat, polarisation took place with U.S. imperialism leading the capitalist bloc and forming military alliances like NATO, SEATO and CENTO. Some of the newly independent countries were dragooned into joining. As a defensive measure the Soviet Union formed the Warsaw Pact with the East European countries. The period between 1946 and 1960 was known as the Cold War, the two major antagonists being the USA and

the USSR. The smaller countries believed that their security and independence was being threatened by this confrontation and hence constituted themselves as the Third Bloc.

Even by 1961 the reason for non-alignment no longer corresponded with the reality. A thaw had set in and the threatened shooting war was being replaced by a war of words between the Big Two. Confrontation was being replaced by collaboration. There was agreement on a nuclear test ban treaty and the "hot line" between the two heads of state had already been mooted. Collaboration had begun to spread all along the line and the latest is the announcement by the Nixon administration that the USA and the USSR must agree to any settlement in the Middle East and might send observer forces to guarantee its terms.

This did not mean an end to the basic conflict. Rather the Cold War gave way to the shooting war in Asia, for confronted with the rising revolutionary forces, U.S. imperialism transferred its attention there. In Indochina, that is Vietnam and Laos, and now Cambodia, it took the form of open and naked aggression, committing over half a million troops to "save the country from communism". In other parts it created and bolstered puppet regimes like Formosa, South Korea and Thailand, using these as springboards to attack Vietnam and to encircle China. The Indochinese war was a rehearsal to destroy what it believed to be another rising giant in the form of the People's Republic of China. In Africa imperialism scored several successes by toppling radical governments. Kwame Nkrumah in his latest book *Class struggle in Africa* lists 25 military take-overs from 1963 to 1969. In most of these, popular governments gave way to puppet regimes oriented towards the West.

Basic Weakness

Here then lies the basic weakness of the conference of the non-aligned. Its main aim was to exclude the big powers. But America and the other imperialist powers are well represented and becoming more and more entrenched. There simply has to be a coup and America has an additional voice in the conference. With military juntas being represented there, it has become more a conference of governments instead of the people. The non-aligned group has proved to be completely ineffective in protecting its own non-alignment. Thus only recently when one of their main stalwarts, Prince Sihanouk, was overthrown by the American-backed military regime the conference debated whether to accept the Provisional Government as its member or the puppet Lon Nol delegation as representing Cambodia. At the Lusaka Conference this cropped up again and a compromise was arrived at, meaning another triumph for imperialism.

The non-aligned countries want to pursue a political course independent of the big powers. Yet these countries are tied to the apron strings of imperialism economically. Thus many are members of the Commonwealth led by Britain, while others in the West African community are all associate members of the European Economic Community, that is the association of the older imperialist powers. The economic relationship is the same as in the colonial era in that the former colonies supply raw materials in return for manufactured goods. The result has been disastrous, for the associate States have to discriminate against fellow member States of the non-aligned to protect their goods from the EEC. They could not do otherwise for the substance of the agreement between the EEC and its associate members is that the former's goods should receive preferential treatment.

Such economic ties are continued although such associations have played havoc with the economies of the newly independent States. When Britain devalued her sterling in 1967, it was followed by a number of

countries in the non-aligned group who were members of the Commonwealth. The same disaster overtook the French-speaking West African States when all the 13 of them had to follow the road of Pompidou and devalue their currencies. These show the extent to which the former colonies are bound to the former metropolitan powers. There are some who believe that if economic cooperation between the member states of the non-aligned conference is achieved, they would not be vulnerable to outside pressures. But for this cooperation to be really effective it would mean withdrawing from the ECC and the British and French Commonwealth. With increased imperialist representation at this Conference it will be doubtful if this drastic and radical proposal can ever become a reality.

The siting of Lusaka as a venue was significant in that it is the independent African State nearest to the minority governments of South Africa, Rhodesia, Mozambique, and Angola. The last time a summit was held was when the heads of Central and East Africa met in 1969. From this came the controversial Lusaka Manifesto. Praised by the conservative and reactionary African States, lauded by Nixon as a statesmanlike document, it has been shunned by the freedom fighters of Southern Africa, for it advocated the laying down of arms by the people of Mozambique and Angola if the Portuguese Government showed any willingness to grant concessions. Consensus of opinion was to be expected at the non-aligned conference for the ending of white minority rule. But this would neither be new nor original for these regimes have been condemned in all international forums, even by the very imperialist powers which buttress these economically. Will an appeal be made for greater assistance to freedom fighters? The position is disgraceful, for 41 countries of the OAU cannot raise amongst themselves more than a million pounds while Portugal and South Africa spend £80 and £175 million annually on defence alone.

There is concern in many quarters that these conferences held with much

splendour in air-conditioned rooms are becoming a way of life for some top government ministers. At the time of writing there is a Conference of Foreign Ministers of the OAU and this is to be followed by another meeting of heads of state next month. The non-aligned are thus sandwiched in between. There is nothing wrong in conferences if as a result something concrete emerges to solve the burning problems. But that is not so. The OAU has not been able to solve even the problem of Namibia (South West Africa) or dislodge the rebel Smith regime. These conferences, which waste a great deal of money and time, have become substitutes for real and effective action. The non-aligned could thus be regarded as another safety valve through which independent countries could voice their frustrations. The danger is that while the governments spend time in such deliberations, the imperialists are arming themselves and their puppets.

Third World Contradictions

The desire to form a bloc of the Third World, independent of the big powers, reveals a contradiction within the body-politic of the independent countries. On the one hand there is the cry of the masses of workers and peasants to alleviate their poverty and backwardness which they believed independence would bring. But this could only be brought about by smashing the chains and stranglehold of imperialism and ending exploitation. This must then lead them to the anti-imperialist and revolutionary camps, the socialist countries and the national liberation movements. But the governments of these countries represent the bourgeoisie in the main and they have forged innumerable ties with imperialism. Any leftward swing amongst the masses would not only hit at imperialism but also threaten their own vested and privileged positions. It is then not a question of the weakness or smallness of a country that is at issue. Vietnam has clearly showed that a country however small can defeat a big power. Their weakness stems from the fact

that they have to satisfy both sides, imperialism and their own masses. To take sides on the question of socialism or capitalism would just expose them to imperialists whom they regard as natural allies, or before the masses whom they continue to deceive. Non-alignment saves them from showing themselves in their true colours.

Harsh reality will end the myth of an independent small nation. For 15 years Prince Sihanouk practised the policy of non-alignment, but U.S. imperialism trampled the sovereignty of his small nation. After the coup Sihanouk cast his lot with

the rest of the Indochinese people against imperialism and its puppets. It is a sharp reminder to the non-aligned that there is no place in the imperialist scheme of things for a really independent small nation. With the sharpening of struggle between the two antagonistic and irreconcilable forces of socialism and capitalism, there is little doubt that the non-aligned group will be torn apart, with each section seeking its logical home in the respective camps. This will pave the way for a truly genuine alliance of all the revolutionary forces of the world against imperialism and its puppets.

killing of two peasants while they were peacefully holding a rally organised by the CPM in Jaleswar; the indefinite incarceration of a large number of students for their alleged allegiance to the CPI(ML); the setting up of police camps on college campuses; ruthless torture to which the headmaster Jaladhar Nanda and the students of the Tendakura High School, the teacher, Nimei Biswal and a large number of students of the Bolgad High School have been subjected; the infliction of forced poverty and hunger on the families of these two teachers; the molestation of girl students of these two high schools by hired hooligans and profligates—for all this, in other words, for this systematic stripping and strangulation of democratic liberties, the Jana Congress and the Swatantra brigands must be equally held responsible.

Orissa

The Gods That Failed

MAHESH PATNAIK

THE Hyderabad statement by Mr Singh Deo, the Chief Minister of Orissa, that the possibility of a break up of the coalition Government of Orissa is past and that the Government would continue until 1972, and the remark made by Mr Banamali Patnaik, the Jana Congress Minister of Education, to journalists that his party would try to implement the policies of the Government by staying in it rather than by quitting and seeking a fresh election when his party is not equal to the task of giving a fight single-handed, did put an end to political speculation so confidently aired a few weeks ago. That was when Dr Mahatab, the chieftain of the Jana Congress, resigned from the party and also threatened to do so from the Assembly where he was returned on the Jana Congress ticket. Dr Mahatab's resignation from the party had as its motive force the unwillingness of a few members to back out of the government. The ground for quitting the government and seeking a fresh election on the basis that the people no more repose any confidence in the coalition—and thereby making

the Swatantra party alone the scapegoat for all the anti-people crimes—may be a laudable one; doesn't Dr Mahatab, now in league with the Congress(R), desire to instal a socialist regime in Orissa? But for the people, during these three years of misrule with the help of police thugs and Yankee-type bureaucrats the contribution of Dr Mahatab and his party is no less criminal than that of the other accomplice, the Swatantra? It was not the socialist designs of Dr Mahatab that made him cross swords with the Swatantra; the fact beneath the surface was that the Mudholkar commission report which tarnished his political image could not be stopped from becoming a court document.

The police atrocities in connection with the last all-Orissa teachers' strike in which several teachers were flogged and maimed; closed-door beating of students in jail cells and the brutal murder of Pradip Mishra during the 1969 students' strike, scientifically and systematically organised by the Jana Congress bandits led chiefly by Mr Surendra Patnaik; the cold-blooded

Dr Mahatab's resignation from the party was accompanied by the party resolution to quit the government and prevail upon the Chief Minister to arrange for a fresh election. This move was profusely praised. The Congress(R) leader, Mr Acharya, initiated the campaign of praising Dr Mahatab, who had turned socialist overnight. The PSP bosses also showered torrential praise, only regretting the fact that things were a bit late. The CPI's hilarity also knew no bounds—after all under the leadership of Dr Mahatab the U.S.-sponsored socialist regime of their Indira Gandhi could now be extended to Orissa. They were so much taken in by the political gestures of Dr Mahatab and his party, so much duped by their pseudo-socialist slogans—a phenomenon which has justifiably labelled them class collaborationists—that they could not desist from harbouring a desire to bring a no-confidence motion against this government in the Assembly session. Mr Banamali Patnaik's statement should open their eyes to the lurid drama of intrigues and chicanery of the Jana Congress and make them realise that in their hope of unseating the present coalition government they were merely building castles in the air.

SEPTEMBER 13, 1970

SEPTEMBER 19, 1970

What's Wrong With Delhi University ?

SURAJ SINGH

WHEN Prof K. N. Raj took over as Vice-Chancellor from his predecessor, Prof B. N. Ganguli, about a year ago, it was hoped in University circles that he would introduce some urgent reforms in the functioning of the University. He used to say so in so many words when the inquisitive students and teachers wanted to know what exactly he meant by appointing working groups for about everything in the University. More than a year has passed, the working groups have submitted their reports and the students and teachers have come out with their comments, but the University authorities are silent.

Every year in July a lot of hue and cry is raised over the question of admission to various colleges. The number of students seeking admission is so large that half a dozen new colleges are required every year. The Jana Sangh, the ruling party in the Delhi Municipal Administration, exploits this situation. It has already established as many as ten colleges under its direct supervision. Its move at the end of the last session was alarming for all who care to fight the menace of these neo-fascists. They demanded the establishment of a regional university for Delhi. The motive was clear, so clear that it compelled the Vice-Chancellor and his associates to ask the President of India (who happens to be the Visitor of the University) to pass an ordinance to allow private candidates to appear at the B.A., B.Sc. and B. Com. examinations. This was to forestall the Jana Sangh move. But they failed to visualise some of the equally dangerous consequences of their action. The day after the promulgation of the ordinance, new coaching shops began to mushroom in almost every locality of Delhi and New Delhi. These shops are in fact centres of the worst type of corruption in the educational field. Newspapers very often carry reports about their cor-

rupt practices. Another consequence of the University's action is even more alarming. It is the usual practice with Delhi students to go to colleges in mofussil towns when they are not admitted by the Delhi University colleges and departments. The colleges in the mofussil are run on the strength of such students. The ordinance and its approval by Parliament made these students stay back at their residences with the hope of passing the examinations privately without attending classes at far-off places. The result was that admissions to these colleges fell considerably. Their management bodies are retrenching the teachers. The fate of as many as 150 teachers is at stake.

The majority of the teachers in the Hindi Department of Delhi University happen to be Jana Sanghis or Jana Sangh-oriented. The students of the Department have gone on agitation a number of times for various reasons. Their demand for a judicial enquiry into the practices by a previous head of the Department has not so far been conceded by the University authorities. Instead, what Dr Raj did was to accept his resignation and appoint the next person in the Department as head. Another of his actions was to allow hundreds of policemen in plainclothes to operate in the University. They beat up students agitating for promotion to higher classes. The Delhi University Teachers Association has condemned the permission granted to policemen by the University authorities.

Those who happened to remain in Delhi during the summer vacation this year know how the leaders of the Jana Sangh and other reactionary parties, including the Indira Congress, raised a hue and cry over alleged admissions having been taken by Maoists to various classes in the University. The outcry was in fact a cover for their misdeeds in planting their own men in various courses

and disciplines in the University. Above all, CBI men have taken admission in large numbers. This became clear at the time of police patrolling on the University campus. The entire University was covered by intelligence men and police. It was difficult to talk to a friend freely.

The teachers are agitated over the question of democratisation of the University set-up. The Vice-Chancellor promised to help the teachers in this process. But it is sad to note that he has gone over to the side of principals, heads of departments, deans, big officers etc. and is making a mockery of the teachers' demands. The election to the Academic Council is scheduled for next month. The majority of the teachers are critical of the composition of the Academic Council. They demand immediate democratisation of the Council along with other University bodies. If the authorities are unable to do so immediately, let the election be postponed until democratisation is completed. There are teachers in the University who feel that participation in such a body of the University is nothing but adding credence to a reactionary set-up. They, therefore, want a complete boycott of the election.

The University authorities are apathetic to a very dangerous problem—the medium of instruction and examination. This question of the examination medium has become so explosive that, if the authorities do not mend their way, it may take the ugly shape of regionalism and parochialism. Three years ago the University allowed Hindi as the medium of examination for B.A. Honours in History. This year a postgraduate student attempted to answer the questions in Hindi. He has been declared as failed though two or three of his examiners gave him more than pass marks. Why should students be debarred from studying and attempting their answers in their own languages? In fact, the University authorities are lending a helping hand to the Jana Sangh by not meeting the legitimate demands of students.

Calcutta Diary

GYAN KAPUR

IT is barely three weeks to the Pujas but the annual shopping spree is yet to reach the frenzy it does every year. The rains and floods no doubt were big dampers but there may be other causes. The economy of course is on the way to being ruined. This has been a continuous process for this State over the last two decades but never stood in the way of higher spending every year in the home or community Pujas among sections of the people who apparently could well afford it, while others had to make do with a little less.

The business community of Calcutta, of course, can feel the pulse of the people much before they themselves know what they feel. The Marwari gaddiwalas who mainly control the business of supply to the retailers their requirements of cloth and ready-to-wear dresses long ago decided to squeeze down the supplies and credit. As a result many of the shops even now do not have the expected stocks for the Pujas and hope to get them in a week or so. Even if the sales are a little less this year, towards the end of the season there is bound to be a big rush when prices will be jacked up, taking advantage of the manipulated shortages. The customer will pay a little more, the shopkeepers may also fare the same way with lesser sales but the big men behind the trade will have the same profits. But then that is why they are big, they know how to get their cut, come wind or rain.

At long last there has appeared a small minority of young men and a few women who are not afraid of openly saying that they do not believe in idol-worship and will have nothing to do with it. Their attitude is in sharp contrast with that of others who swear by Marx and Lenin but in the name of the people do not

hesitate to join each and every Puja committee. Ultimately many of them succeed only too well. Their sole activities are limited to these committees.

Wild rumours here and there to the contrary, it is not likely that many of the community Pujas will face any attack. However, warnings have been issued in some localities to keep the Pujas free from ostentatious shows. With the State passing through the miseries of the floods, some of the organisers may choose to heed the warnings. By now the Naxalite boys have established a reputation that they mean what they say and are not to be trifled with. On this issue they appear to have taken a mature stand after all, whatever isolated groups or individuals might do or say. So far as Puja itself is concerned, they have no objection to it. But anything beyond the bare essentials should be eschewed. So far as they themselves are concerned, they would have nothing to do with the whole affair as Marxists-Leninists. There are indications that this line is causing a little rethinking in the minds of Marxists of other hues also and some of them are not so keen on their traditional activities in connection with the Puja pandals.

The expected has happened. While flood waters are still to go down from most of the affected areas, and weather forecasts are there of the possibility of heavy downpour leading to floods in North Bengal, politics has started in right earnest with flood relief. Nobody, of course, is taken in by the Government propaganda. The relief given is at best token. But that is not the point at issue. Faced with a disaster of such magnitude, even the best of governments is liable to fail. And the West Bengal Government after all is a government of bureaucrats from

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whom it is silly to expect more. If they could tackle such problems on their own, there would be no need to have representative government.

Both the EPC (dominated by the CPI) and SPC (dominated by the CPM) have jumped into the fray and accused the Government of negligently efforts at relief. Thus far it is all right. But from here on their peculiar obsessions take over. Accusations of partiality are freely bandied about as also of using relief measures, however, little, to build up the image of the Government. All this is sidetracking the main issue.

The EPC has already given the call for an all-party relief committee, adequate relief and at the same time demanded alleged partiality in relief in 'connivance' with officials. The SPC is no less vocal in criticising the Government. But its main component, the CPM has given a call for forcing the Government to give more relief and at the same time announced that distribution of such relief cannot be left to government agencies. The agency has not been

spelled out. Apparently it should be left to the people themselves which in present jargon would mean the CPM or at best the SPC. Here we have the dragon seed to raise a million monsters of inter-party conflicts all over the State.

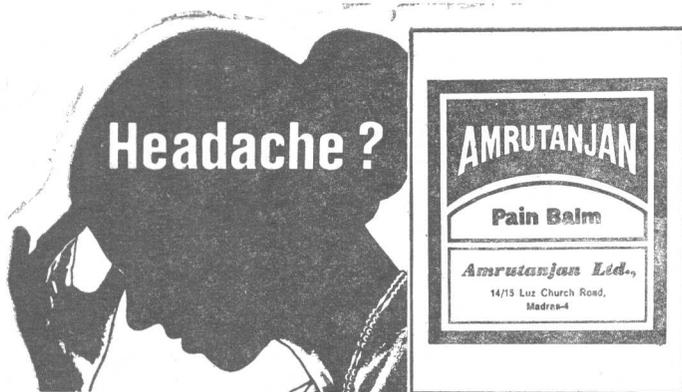
Both the combinations are shirking the main issue. In such disasters, unless the entire people come as one, no government can work a miracle alone. When Britain was faced with the horrifying prospect of having her entire army in Dunkirk being wiped out or taken prisoner, its people did not sit at home cursing the Government for not being prepared or having enough ships. Anyone who had a trawler, fishing boat or anything which could be floated over went for the coast of Dunkirk. Thanks to these thousands of private citizens, many of whom perished, practically the whole of the British Army was brought back to Britain and lived to fight against Hitler's hordes.

There are good signs that, faced with the calamity, at the base the

young men who come forward to work have tended to forget the lines dividing party and party. If the leaders are to be taken seriously about their anxiety for the sufferers, they must make up their minds finally on the issues before them.

There are only two alternatives before the parties in the present situation. They can press the Government to increase the quantum of relief. For this united action is necessary. The distribution of relief, if it is to be through non-official agencies, makes unity all the more essential. In either event, however, a truce in the cold war has to take place, whether declared or undeclared. By paralysing the Government machinery or ghraos of officials, you cannot get them to function speedily or more efficiently. The other alternative is a harder one. Those who choose to do so, can go it alone, throwing themselves back on their own resources. Anything else will smack of playing politics with the people's misery.

A great deal has been said about the inefficiency of the present Government, which merits all it gets. But the people who suffer may be wondering and asking themselves a few questions also. Two years back there were devastating floods in North Bengal and it was found that the warning system was at fault. Some time later police vans started going around Calcutta one evening warning of a storm. Why no warnings were given this time? What system was introduced when the UF Government was in power? What the UF Government did to keep the outflow channels open so that flooding should be minimal? And what has the Calcutta Corporation under the still continuing UF rule done to keep the low-lying areas of the city free from water-logging? Lastly, why must the Mayor go around begging for pumps from the Army to free the eastern parts of the city from water? Is he not unwittingly building up the image of another Central Government agency of suppression as one of the saviours of Calcutta?



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MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY

K. Ahmed Abbas' trite formula of national integration dominates the film *Saat Hindustani* in which six men from different States of India and one woman from Goa join forces in liberating Goa from Portuguese hegemony. The struggle is, of course, a non-violent one and the ease with which the liberators trek through the enemy territory leads us to conclude that either the Portuguese authority has been thoroughly baptised in Gandhian doctrines or there is no enemy at all. The freedom fighters behave like a bunch of gay picknickers and the whole movement becomes as safe and smooth as college soccer. The moments of revelation such as the murder of a spy in the train or the scenes in which some of the members express doubts, through which a genuine character study could emerge, are brief and all the episodes lack the feeling of adventure and thrill. Even the documentary evocation of Goa and its people is colourless. The trouble with Abbas is that, with all his noble intentions, he has not yet been able to master his medium. Honesty of purpose alone ultimately fails to produce anything of artistic value.

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SEPTEMBER 19, 1970

Unity Of Opposites

The human body is always a unity of opposites. The different parts of the human body are linked; they are in opposition and dependence, they join up and confine one another. Pathological change in one part of the human body can affect other parts of the body or the body as a whole and the condition of the body as a whole can affect the course of local pathological changes. Only by understanding of handling the overall relations between part and whole dialectically and correctly can we properly understand diseases and achieve our goal of curing them.

Take treatment of bone fractures for example. One school of medicine maintains that complete rest and absolute immobilisation are imperative. They consider only the fracture and ignore the limb or the body as a whole. They only see the unfavourable aspect of motion of the affected limb to the union of the fracture, and do not see the favourable aspect. They only see the favourable aspect of immobilisation to the union of the fracture and do not see the unfavourable aspect to the union of the fracture and to the recovery of the functioning of the limb.

This method of paying attention only to the part in isolation and ignoring the whole is contrary to the law of physiological activities of the limbs and hampers the activity of the limb or the body as a whole. This involves many shortcomings including delaying the union of the fracture, prolonging the period of treatment, causing the affected limb to recover function in a poor way and entailing many complications.

In the treatment of bone fractures, following Chairman Mao's teaching, 'The law of the unity of opposites is the fundamental law of the universe', Chinese revolutionary medical workers have assimilated the good features of Western medicine for correct surgical reduction and of traditional Chinese medicine in immobi-

lising the fracture with thin splints. This solves properly the relation of unity of opposites between 'passive' (immobilisation of the fractured part) and 'active' (motion of the affected limb in the early days after bone fracture) and between the part and the whole.

On the one hand, this treatment keeps the part relatively immobilised and effectively controls the activity unfavourable to the ends of the fracture. On the other, this makes it possible to keep the whole body active. The limb can be exercised during the period of union to recover function and bring into full play the favourable effect of motion to union of the fracture. As a consequence, union is rapid, the period of treatment short and recovery good and there are few complications. This is a victory for materialist dialectics over metaphysics.

(Hou Chin-men, in *Red Flag*)

Not People's Opium?

About 13,000 persons have gone back to the fold of the church during the past three years in the Soviet Union. There are now 30 million members of the Orthodox Church, besides about five lakh Baptists. This was disclosed... (in New Delhi) by Rev. Alexie Stoyan, chairman of the international department of the Baptist Union of the USSR and preacher of the Moscow Baptist church.

Rev. Stoyan is the leader of the three-man delegation of Church Ministers of the USSR... visiting India at the invitation of the World Council of Churches.

...Rev. Stoyan said that there were no missionaries in the Soviet Union, nor any religious activities outside the church. Recent trends in the Soviet Union had revealed that increasing number of young people were getting attracted to religion.

To 'Sexy Dance'

The police swooped on a show of oriental dances at the Tamil Nadu entertainment fair at Teynampet Congress Grounds... and arrested three seminude girls and the organiser of the show on charges of obscenity. The scantily-clad girls were alleged to be staging "highly provocative dances gesticulating at the audience in the most obscene and suggestive manner."

According to an eye-witness, the girls performed "sexy dances" at the fast beat of film records. One of them used to uncover her breasts shaking violently to provide a finale to the 30-minute programme. (Agency report).

Ban On Indecency

Bishop James Walsh, released... after 12 years in a Chinese prison, praised China's Government for banning all public displays of indecency and immorality. Addressing a press conference... in Rome, the fair, 79-year-old American Roman Catholic bishop said: "I have little sympathy with a regime that restricts liberty to such an extent, yet it has introduced three things which I consider a great constructive advance."

He listed these as equality of women, equality of the various Chinese races and "an absolute ban and prohibition on all manifestations of immorality and indecency in regard to theatrical displays, or publicity, or actions of any sort." (*The Times*).

Letters

Ganging Up Against CPM

It is puzzling, or maybe it is not. Everybody, yes just about everybody amongst the so-called intellectuals in this cursed city, is against the CPM. Since the rest of the respectables were already solidly arrayed against the party, it is now a most impressive phalanx: all shades of the Congress, the Eight Party combination, the Bangla Congress, the Naxalites all the newspapers beginning with the

Swatantra mouthpiece published from Chowringhee Square and ending with *Frontier*, gloat together when the CPM's fortunes are down, fume together when the CPM scores a tactical victory. One would have thought that, with so many enemies, so many honourable enemies, the party could not possibly continue for long. But there it is, growing, it seems, stronger with every day, setbacks such as Durgapur notwithstanding. If everybody who matters is against it, snipes at it, wants to do it in, how come it is still able not only to maintain, but to add to its strength and influence, with almost a frightening efficiency? Mrs Gandhi for the present would not even dream of ordering an election in West Bengal. Sceptics who, months ago, used to scoff at suggestions that the CPM would on its own nearly win the electoral battle in case one was round the corner, do not do so any longer. They remain virulently anti-CPM no doubt; but they have increasingly less and less faith that the bulk of the voters in West Bengal have an identity or similar antipathy towards the party.

Despite my weariness about the point of view of such intellectuals as those who, for example, shape the editorial policy of *Frontier*, I would not bracket them with the arch-reactionaries who are against the CPM because they would like to crush the people's movement once and for all in West Bengal and consider the President's regime as providing a wonderful opportunity for achieving that objective. I would grant that some of you, Sir, do have a left point of view, and your exasperation with the CPM is overtly linked with that particular point of view. Even granted this however, objectively the effect of your animosity to the CPM is no different from the effect of, let us say, Shri Bijay Singh Nahar's or Shri Minoo Masani's feeling of hatred about the Marxists. One can straightaway see why this has to be so. *The Statesman* says that Durgapur was a great setback to the CPM: *Frontier* leads off its main editorial that Durgapur has been a debacle for the party, and the undercurrent

of rejoicing can scarcely be concealed. Believe it or not, outside West Bengal, the State's maladies are readily identified with the evil doings of the CPM; even the Naxalites are regarded as a mere extension of the CPM. The only way to crush the waywardness of West Bengal, it is felt, is to crush, by some means or other, the CPM. If *Frontier* too joins in the game of CPM baiting, what a splendour is added to Mrs Gandhi's rationale; she can now be ruthlessly illiberal in dealing with the problems of the State, for it is not just right reaction which is against the CPM and all that it stands for, the extreme left would not be unhappy either if that abominable party could be liquidated once and for all.

Yet the party grows. The overwhelming mass of the lower middle class, the peasantry and the workers are with it. It is a ruthless, angry party, but a coherent one: at least, in the context of this State, it knows where it is going. The strategy consists of a continuous blending of the hot and the cold and meanwhile, incessant work for the further strengthening of the base. The party has no intellectual pretension; its influence amongst the upper middle class is nearly static. But there is no mistaking its plebian bias. It is a rude, crude party, representing rude, crude people, who happen to constitute a majority in the State.

The dominant bias in the CPM, gentlemen of the *Frontier* editorial board would complain, is only ersatz militant, most of its members are steeped in economism. But can the tail really wag the dog? It is only on the fringe that you come across in any cross-section even in this supra-revolution-minded State individuals who are out-and-out combat-ready: between the Bengali rhetoric and the Bengali action, falls the shadow: It is little use ignoring this facet of reality. After all, even in the last General Election, 40 per cent voted for the Congress, a large number amongst them peasants and workers. It is fantastic nonsense to suggest that the whole lot has, within a brief span of one year, been

converted into revolutionary activists. No communist party in any part of the world ever possessed that much of genius. The intermediary of economism has thus to be an integral part of the interim strategy. Durgapur should have driven home one lesson: you can, within a given period politicise your workers only up to a point, if you overreach the point, something has got to give, which will grievously damage the movement, offering the opportunity for journals like *Frontier* to write yet more invective-laden editorial pieces.

No, it would be difficult to prove that the animus which people like the editorial writers of *Frontier* bear toward what has come to be the party of the masses in this State is based on any viable ideological ground. I think the anger is precisely because it has become the party of the masses, and, under its banner, for the first time the traditional plebians have been organising, consolidating and asserting their rights. The wrath of *Frontier* and the like-minded ones is the wrath of the middle class against the rising power of the masses. The upsurge of the masses as a concept is welcome only so long as the leadership of this upsurge can be monopolised by the feudal elements in the middle class. But the moment this leadership is transferred to the crude ones who have sprung from the soil, the reaction is one of revulsion and horror. For the first time, the hegemony of the middle class is in danger of being ended in a communist party: it is a debacle, and the latent middle class instinct of *Frontier* and its friends is fighting a last ditch battle to prevent this debacle from turning into a calamity. In pursuing this fight, if objectively you play into the hands of the Swatantra party and Mrs Gandhi, ah, well, I know your response would be that it cannot be helped.

Perhaps there is another reason for the CPM-phobia. The middle class concept of the revolution is of a rarified quality, and one which stresses the role of the individual at the expense of that of the collective,

Which is why the Naxalbari-type of activities, with its emphasis on individual terrorism and which in any case is largely an all-middle-class affair, has a certain quaint charm for you. I notice, Mr Editor, that while every week your blood boils on account of the reported atrocities committed by the CPM on Naxalite cadres, there is no watching boiling of your blood when CPM workers are killed and mutilated by the other group: after all men belonging to the CPM are what Bengalis call *chhotolok*; their life cannot be as precious as that of your own, or of any of your romantic middle class friends.

A.M.
Calcutta

Role Of CPM

Contrary to what most of your Naxalite letter-writers say, the CPM considers class struggle as the kernel of revolution. It organises small and big movements so that ultimately they merge into a final battle between the exploiter and the exploited; the CPM does not believe that class struggle is accelerated by individual killing; on the contrary, it is weakened by isolated terroristic activities. One, should think of the pre-revolutionary days in Russia when 'left' diehards attacked and opposed Lenin's policies and directives and did enormous harm to the revolutionary movement. Repudiating the charges of the Socialist Revolutionary Party Lenin wrote: "First the party which rejected Marxism...considered itself particularly, 'revolutionary' or 'Left', because of its recognition of individual terrorism, assassination—something we Marxists emphatically rejected." Following the footsteps of Lenin the CPM has pledged to carry out the battle against left sectarianism to the end. Lenin has further said: "The second and immediate objective which consists of being able to lead the masses to a new position ensuring the victory of the vanguards of the revolution cannot be reached without the liquidation of Left doctrinarism, and with-

out a full elimination of its errors." The extremists want the CPM to start a revolution right now. A revolution does not occur spontaneously. A political survey will reveal that only a small percentage of people among the 550 million Indians have rallied round the left parties so far. Apart from West Bengal and Kerala and some parts of Bihar and Andhra, left forces do not have any countable influence. On the other hand right forces dominate the rest of the country. To start an armed struggle at present would be tantamount to wiping out the seeds of revolution from this soil. Lenin said, "It is not a revolutionary situation that gives rise to revolution, revolution arises only out of...the ability of the revolutionary class to take revolutionary mass action strong enough to break the old Government..."

The CPM's policy of forming united fronts in West Bengal and Kerala came under fire of the Naxalites and of Peking as well. They described it as a tool of imperialist feudal exploitation. Left sectarian criticism does not tell the truth about the CPM's policies and programmes. To accomplish a People's Democratic Revolution we should work out various interim slogans, and united front is a tactical step in that process. The objectives of forming the UF are to sharpen the contradictions within the enemy camp, to isolate the principal enemy, to win over the masses still remaining in the fold of the right wing parties. Some would say, nothing short of an armed front would satisfy them. A Leninist understanding of united fronts does not demand that the communists under no circumstances should join a front other than an armed front.

The achievements of the UF in West Bengal include: the prisoners of the Naxalbari movement along with other political prisoners were released; the UF declared that the political activities of the employees of the State Government would not, in any way, affect their service; there was an all-time high pay increase in tea, jute and in some other big industries and in Government establish-

ments as well; similar economic gains were achieved by the employees of small enterprises and rural labourers; the UF was also able to put a check to police repression on the people fighting for their demands. It is common knowledge that the benefit of a pay increase is always neutralised by price rise in a capitalist system. But so long as the present economic system persists, we should continue to wage struggles for higher pay and other economic demands. The most remarkable achievement made by the people during the UF regime was the seizure of surplus land possessed by the jotedars. The success of the UF is reflected in the tremendous increase in the mass following of the left parties throughout West Bengal and disintegration of the reactionary organisations, on an unprecedented scale.

That the CPM tries to justify the revisionist policies of the Soviet Communist Party, is a top lie. The CPM has spoken in clear terms against the Soviet policies in relation to the world communist movement, the national movements and imperialism. It has strongly condemned the Soviet policy in dealing with the revisionists of Czechoslovakia. Revisionism inherent in the Soviet leadership was responsible for the thriving of the counter-revolutionaries in Czechoslovakia who in co-operation with the agents of the imperialists, almost took over the country. If CPM's criticism of the Chinese Communist Party's left-sectarian and un-Marxist policies is interpreted as revisionism, it cannot be helped. The CPM rejects the analysis that the Soviet Union is a neo-colonial exploiter. Funny things have been voiced. We were told that the respected and beloved leader of the Korean people and one of the greatest anti-imperialist fighters of the world, Comrade Kim-Il-Seung, is a revisionist and Soviet stooge. Now we find the same people showering great praise on him. Not to speak of others, Comrade Ho Chi Minh himself was accused by the supra-revolutionaries of different countries of following revisionism and betraying the Vietnamese struggle!

revisionism and betraying the Vietnamese struggle!

To be a revolutionary, one requires something more than hatred of the class enemy and allegiance to China.

From the facts discussed above, does it not appear that the Naxalites are a detrimental factor in the Indian communist movement and that the CPM, basing itself on Leninist principles, guides the movement in the right course?

PRABIR KR. MUKHERJEE
SUMITA BANERJEE (Miss)

Questions Unanswered

Going through P.R.G.'s letter (September 5) I remembered a similar affair which I feel others should know. It was sometime in late 1967, after the Naxalbari event had taken place and when the popular UF was in power. One evening I was lucky to be present at an extended G.B. meeting of the CPM somewhere in South Calcutt. It will not be out of place to mention that I was never a member of the CPM, but was a well-wisher of the party, the status which I have even at the time of writing this.

At the GB meeting the then MLA of the locality and Mr Kesto Ghosh, the former Labour Minister, were taking part in the discussions. I, with my loyalties to the party and the class struggle, did ask my comrades how the party would remain in the front, even after the police had unleashed extreme repression on the working people of Naxalbari. While putting the question I did not forget to mention that the fight launched at Naxalbari was somewhat premature.

My point was: whatever might be the state of affairs, a Marxist party should never stand by when police oppression of the real have-nots went on. But to my utter surprise, the two leaders jumped up and pointed at me as a pro-Naxalite element. Even when one comrade was trying to give the answer, the two leaders stopped him and declared that no discussion would be allowed in that

connection. Needless to say that their attitude shocked me so much that since that evening I have never talked at any party meeting, class or discussion, only listened to, keeping mum.

So, I share his feelings with P.R.G. of Dum Dum who has been beaten up by his ex-comrades. I have never been treated in that way, probably because I have not severed my connections with the party.

P. SENGUPTA
Tollygunj, Calcutta

✓ On Annihilation

Com, Kunnikal Narayanan (August 22) in his letter tells Mr Roy that the war of annihilation is meant for the war that the Red Army engaged in annihilating the enemy forces, in making them ineffective. But it would be proper to understand the context in which such a tactic was adopted, to meet the enemy's armed forces. Unless a Red Army is developed and a base area created by guerilla warfare, such a development is merely a vision which has no practical value whatsoever at present. By enemy Mao meant, "all those in league with imperialism—the warlords, the bureaucrats, the comprador class, the big landlord class and the reactionary section of the intelligentsia attached to them." The strength of this enemy is the armed forces. In combating such an enemy, one must not commit the error of under-rating him, for, in combating the enemy outright one lacks the conditions necessary for self-preservation—defence—because of the absence of base areas. So arises the need to annihilate class enemies by guerilla warfare. With this annihilation, the suppressive forces become active against the people, retaliation for which results in the base pockets of the guerilla units. The unification of such units and such pockets result in the Red Army and Base Area. What Comrade Kunnikal suggests is to politicise the people, arm them in secret, train them so as to engage the army or the police

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units. Isn't it ridiculous to envisage a process of arming the people peacefully?

Having got a base area with red power Mao never insisted on killing the landlords or class enemies individually. At that time there was hardly any need of it, because they could be wiped out as a class by the strength the communists had achieved. Mistaking such a context for the present conditions in India is inexcusable. It is commonsense that the contradictions between the people and the enemies are antagonistic. Mao stated on many occasions that peasant uprisings in the countryside against the feudal forces were the vanguard forces in the revolutionary movement in China. The antagonistic character of the people and the enemy depends entirely on economic grounds. Thus the discrimination that is done against the enemy depends on his economic strata and his oppressive character. Speaking of the people's act against the enemy, Mao justified it, saying 'Poverty gives rise to the desire for change, the desire for action.' Thus, actions which come from people against the oppressors, resulting in the annihilation of the landlords, are justified. This is the initial process of developing a people's movement, to disarm the armed enemies, the preparation of a ground to engage the enemy by Red Army units.

MADAN MOHAN
Bombay

Masani's Democracy

In a recent speech at the Press Club of Delhi, Mr Masani, the Swatantra Party President, enlightened the audience with his theory of democracy. According to him, had it been England he would not have advocated the banning of the British Communist Party as it is insignificant but he would advocate the same in the case of West Bengal because there the communist party (all the shades included) is a potent force. For people like him democracy means a form of government where the status quo is

maintained with very little difference in the programme of the parties, leading to what Marx called the 'old democratic litany.' They forget the very basis of the system which was so forcefully expressed by Abraham Lincoln in the first inaugural: "This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it."

GORA MUKHERJEE
Karolbagh, New Delhi

Press Council And DUJ

The DUJ decision to 'boycott' the Press Council and the suggestion that the IFWJ should not include any DUJ member in the panel if the IFWJ decides to participate in the Press Council have created a good impact on other constituent territorial unions of the IFWJ. For quite some time Delhi journalists have been critical of the present leadership of the IFWJ (this started from the days of the 1968 strike) who sacrificed principles in the name of conciliation and compromise. The IFWJ case was badly presented to the Government Committee of MPs on the Press Council. The Delhi journalists who successfully conducted the agitation against the 'illegal' composition of Mr Madholkar's Council inside and outside Parliament House were not consulted. The delegation consisted of such elements whose existence in bodies like the AINEC we resent. To build up their personal image and following they compromised on fundamental principles. The amended Press Council Act is hardly an improvement following its failure to dissolve the rump of the first Press Council. When Delhi journalists were planning to protest against the participation of Union Government officials at a CIA-assisted conclave in Manila, the name of the IFWJ President was pointed out in the list of important guest-participants. The IFWJ policy was to steer

clear of cold-war and power-block alignments and international organisations serving their purposes. But now we find that the 'leftist' President of the IFWJ is spending time in the United States. At a recent meeting of the IFWJ National Council a leading Delhi unionist spoke strongly against the syndicate coterie rule in the Federation. The 'syndicate' in retaliation is trying to impose 'leadership' imported from outside.

DIPAK B. R. CHAUDHURI
Representative of Special Correspondents on the DUJ Executive,
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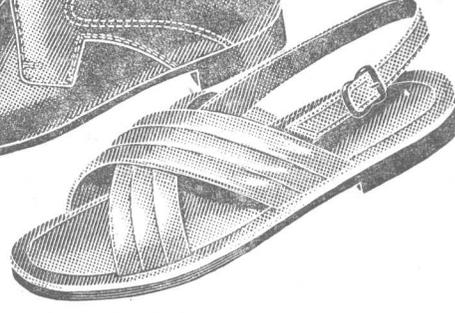
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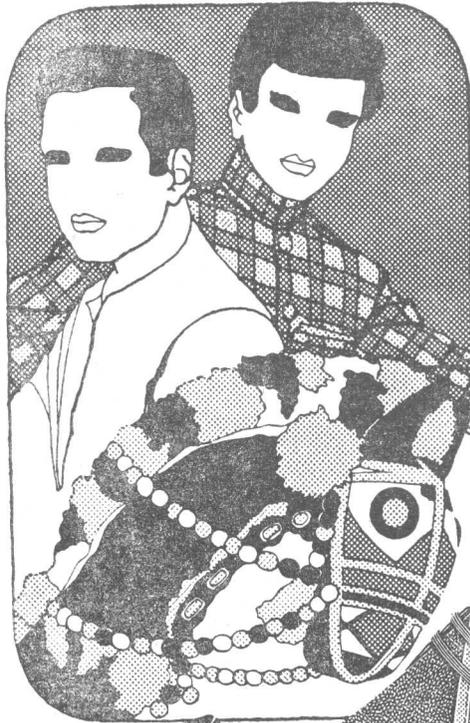


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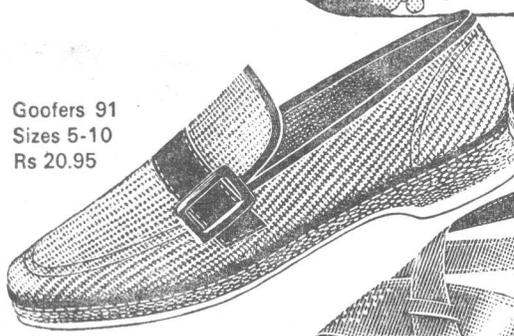


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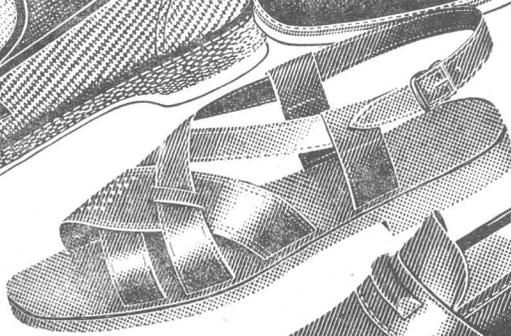
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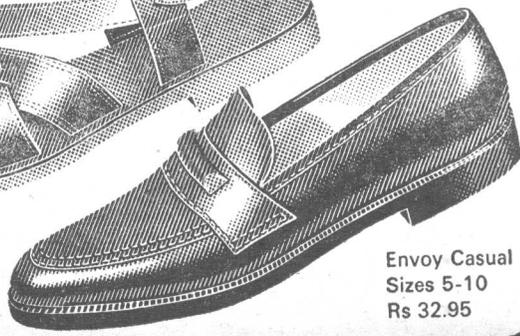
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