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CONTINENT OF CIRCE

THE sweeping election victory of a party in opposition is not surprising, nor that of a party in power which has been able to deliver the goods promised to the people. Mrs Bandaranaike of Ceylon and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman of East Pakistan were in the opposition. But Mrs Indira Gandhi heads a government whose performance, before and after devaluation, has not been all too bright. In many areas of this sprawling country unemployment is spreading, prices are rising, exports falling, the foreign debt is staggering and industrial production has been sluggish; despite pockets of prosperity and the benefits of the Green Revolution accruing to a section of prosperous farmers the poverty line is widening. In the political field our reputation is low. But in spite of the bleak situation Mrs Indira Gandhi has, like Circe, been able to charm huge masses of people into a bleating loyalty to her. A strange subcontinent! But what was the alternative?

As the ruling party at the Centre the Congress (J) no doubt had many resources to utilise for the elections. But money cannot buy such a massive verdict. The people voted for Mrs Gandhi because she held out hopes of relief. She told people that she had broken the old Congress, nationalised fourteen banks and tried to do away with princely purses and privileges, but her efforts were being frustrated by vested interests. As she knows the art of political drama to perfection, the mass response to her 'Garibi Hatao' (Remove Poverty) slogan was impressive. In spreading her myth, she used the CPI—and the CPM in the initial stages—and placated Big Business in many not-too-subtle ways.

The performance of the united front governments in States since 1967, the year in which Congress monopoly was broken, has operated in the short run of four years to the advantage of the Congress. Perhaps the prospect of a coalition government at the Centre filled people with apprehension. The shady grand alliance of the Congress (N), Swatantra, Jana Sangh and the SSP, it now appears, is what made people vote en masse for Congress (J) even in the Hindi heartland. The leaders of the alliance fell like nine pins, and the parliamentary stable will now be less variegated. Mr Kamaraj and Mr Morarji Desai will be there to smile or scowl at each other—if they do not decide to join the Congress (J).

The victory of Mrs Gandhi has been a defeat for the leftist parties which believe in and practise parliamentary politics but were unable to put up any alternative or front. Unlike in 1967 in the State elections, the verdict is for stability, for gradual, moderate change through constitutional means. Counting in terms of votes and all that, this looks like a period of political recession. Hopes are at a low key, confined to big has of land, bank credits, pesticides, fertilisers, some jobs, a few more rupees and not reaching out to a fundamental restructuring of class relations. An ideal world for social democrats. But just because of the low, even tempo of stagnation, more and more radicals are likely to be attracted by extremism for a breakthrough. Of course Mrs Gandhi knows how to tackle them through her henchmen in the States—the barrel of a gun.

West Bengal

The malign side of Mrs Gandhi would have been an eyesore to the voters in West Bengal where her representatives have released forces of terror as never before. The CRP and the police in the countryside and in cities and towns have never had it so good. Countless people have died, scores of them in daylight, in firing. Thousands are in jail. And at the moment, using the elections as a pretext, the State seems to be under siege, with the army deployed all over. But pre-occupied with their sectarian gains, the parliamentary parties squealed only when their members and supporters were touched. They did not hammer it home that the police terror was the result of a well-considered policy at the Central level and that Mrs Gandhi as the Union Home Minister cannot be held not guilty of the repression, the torture, the killings in West Bengal. Perhaps they could not, because of their own manner of acting which resulted in a sharp rise in inter-party clashes and murders after the elections were announced. Some parties, though con-

demning the police terror, welcomed police and army deployment to humble their rivals.

In this murky scene, it was no wonder that the Congress (J) would come back, riding on the pro-Indira wave. Faces which we had forgotten are back on the scene, some of them quite sinister and evil. The years between 1967 and today seem to have been an interregnum if one thinks of the Assembly and the Secretariat. But unlike at the Centre, in West Bengal, where the economic situation is more desperate than elsewhere and people are watching with intense interest what is happening across the border, the CPM posed an overriding challenge, in parliamentary terms, as the one party which could provide an alternative to the Congress (J). The party had controlled the 'mass line' portfolios in the second UF Ministry, had shown some militancy when the President took over and was confident of an absolute majority in the Assembly. It almost did it. But something went wrong in Calcutta, North Bengal and some other parts of the countryside. Would the rural vote for the CPM have been higher had it not halted the land-grab movement as soon as the UF Ministry failed, when police neutrality could no longer be taken for granted? The semblance of struggle in industrial areas has helped it to retain and increase its hold there. On the other hand, land-grabbing might have affected its prospects in the rich-peasant-dominated rice-surplus districts of Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura and even Midnapore. In Calcutta things went awry because on the one hand some last-minute murders were contrived and, on the other, Mr Promode Das Gupta and Mr Jyoti Basu kept threatening their opponents with bloody consequences if returned to power. The lost Calcutta seats made a biggish difference.

A dismal but deserving fate has overtaken the Bangla Congress and the Eight Party Combination, except the SUC. The BC has been reduced to 5 from 33, the CPI to 13 from 30 and the Forward Bloc to 3 from

21. The SUC is 7, as before. By failing to win at Baranagar Mr Ajoy Mukherjee has damaged his claim to Chief Ministership. The arrogance of so-called non-violence has been humbled.

Violence as an issue touched the hearts of many Calcuttans but had no effect on the industrial belt and large areas of the countryside. Even in Burdwan district, where the murder of the Sain brothers led to a propaganda barrage, the CPM won more seats than ever. This is a fact one should note.

What the Congress (J) will do if installed in power can be imagined. The terror of the police will increase. What will the CPM do? Counting the impressive number of seats it has captured in the Assembly and parliamentary polls—111 and 20 respectively—against heavy odds will not satisfy the restless cadres who were promised power in Dalhousie Square. That is why the leadership has called upon the rival ULDF—so long described as Congress agents and killers—to help in forming an anti-Congress ministry. If the Hindus had buried and not burnt their dead, the 212 or so CPM men allegedly killed by these agents in collusion with the police and Naxalites would have turned in their graves at this piece of revolutionary opportunism. If the attempt at ministry-making fails, the cadres and sympathisers would be asked to prepare for another big political battle, on the correct assumption that no government can be lasting in West Bengal.

Stable Centre, Unstable States

The general election for the Lok Sabha seems to have done for Mrs Indira Gandhi what Hercules did to the Augean stables. Assembly elections in most of the States are due about a year later; but the sweep that has taken Mrs Gandhi and her party firmly to the Lok Sabha has in its course loosened the ground on

which the coalition and Congress (Nijalingappa) ministries stand. Funny enough, the three State Assembly elections in Orissa, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu have not been touched by the pro-Indira tidal wave as much as in other States. The Congress-(J) has gained in Orissa and West Bengal due mostly to the split in non-Congress votes and not in proportion to its gains in other States. But as Macbeth said it, fear looms larger in imagination than in reality. The ruling parties in non-Congress-(J) States are in mortal fright imagining disaster in the next Assembly elections. The rats in the stables are ready to move in search of securer shelters.

The unhappiest State, in this context, is Mysore where the Congress (J) won all the 26 Lok Sabha seats. Mr Veerendra Patil enjoys a comfortable majority there; but the grand alliance of the Congress (N), Jana Sangh, Swatantra and SSP has been smashed as spectacularly as elsewhere. To keep the members of his party stay, Mr Patil has promised expansion of the ministry. But if his colleagues quake to see their national leaders fall, the lure of ministership will be a temporary tranquilliser.

The same is true of Gujarat, where the election has not brought in any significant change in the existing pattern. Mr Hitendra Desai's party, Congress (N), has retained all its existing 11 Lok Sabha seats. But the Congress (J) has risen on the ashes of the Swatantra. Weights being even now on either side, it will be a matter of days when the Congress (N) members defect to the Congress (J); assuming that Mr Nijalingappa is sure that his party itself will not defect, lock, stock and barrel.

With the dwindling of the Akali Dal and Jana Sangh in Punjab and the swelling of Congress (J) in the State, the Badal Ministry, is also counting its days. The accretion to the Congress (J) strength, from 7 to 10, out of the 13 Lok Sabha seats, does not however reveal the true picture. The Congress (J) has become more powerful here, but was hoodwinked by the

CPI which got two Lok Sabha seats without the requisite base just because Mrs Gandhi was not too sure about her election success.

The SVD ministries in U.P. and Bihar too are uneasy. The Congress (J) has now 72 (against its previous 43) out of U.P.'s 85 Lok Sabha members; in Bihar 39 (against the previous 24) among 53. The demolition of the Jana Sangh, SSP, Congress (N) and BKD will surely give rise to the demand for immediate dissolution of the Assembly houses.

Neither does the Kerala ministry seem too stable, even though the Kerala Congress is now willing to join the bandwagon of the UF and Congress (J). But how long will the Congress (J), after its resurgence, stay put, with its 34-strong legislature party abiding by the dictates of the 16-strong CPI legislature party?

The massive loyalty shown to the Congress (J) appears to suggest that the regional, disintegrating factors have vanished from the national scene. Mysore, for example, is a State where Mr Patil could not hold back the voters by crying that the Maharashtra-Mysore border dispute could not be solved by the Congress (J) in favour of Mysore. But Orissa and Andhra Pradesh do not conform to this integration picture. Mr Biju Patnaik may have been defeated but his Utkal Congress has gained significantly, from 22 Assembly seats to 32, by the regional slogans of Utkal for the Oriyas. The Swatantra too has fared none too badly, retaining 32 seats out of 49, by promising to invest Swatantra capital in Orissa. That the Congress (J) has risen from 2 to 51 is true; but at the expense of the Jana Congress and PSP.

The Andhra Pradesh results too are glaring in this respect. With the Telengana, Praja Samithi gaining 10 Lok Sabha seats out of the 14 it contested, it is clear that at least 80 seats out of the 111 Telengana constituencies will go to the separatists. At present therefore the Congress (J) is simply usurping 60 seats in the Telengana region. Mr Brahmananda Reddy is out to dissolve the Assembly

with the hope that he will bag all the 187 seats in the non-Telengana region. But the mandate for separation is too strong; not to speak of the eventual deadlock in the Telengana Regional Committee where the TPS majority will block passage of any issue.

The handsome win of the Congress (J) in Jammu and Kashmir—5 out of 6 Lok Sabha seats—cannot again hide the fact that Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad, the Congress (J) nominee, lost in Srinagar to an unknown independent, in spite of all the pro-Indira sweep and alleged rigging of votes.

Tamil Nadu again is not a happy proposition for Mrs Gandhi. Although she traded Lok Sabha seats for the Assembly seats and helped the DMK come back replenished, the point remains that the Congress (N) might have lost 26 Assembly seats out of its previous 41 but it pulled 5,405,856 votes against the DMK's 7,610,766 votes. It can be hardly said that the Congress (N) has been wiped out in Tamil Nadu, just as it was folly to imagine that the Congress was wiped out in West Bengal after 1967 and 1969.

What Next In Pakistan ?

The stony silence which greeted President Yahya in Dacca on Monday was much more disturbing than the hostile slogans and barricades he was originally afraid of. Although 21 guns did not boom to salute a visiting head of state, Mujib's description of him as a "guest" in Bangla Desh should have been enough to scuttle the proposed talks between the two. For the first time President Yahya Khan could faintly realise how it was like to be treated as an alien in what one considered one's own country. But this realisation could not lead to any softening of his attitude to the oppressed people of East Pakistan. The first thing he did on arriving at Dacca was to issue a warning that he would not submit before force. Force, Pre-

sident Yahya obviously believes, is the monopoly of the uniformed thugs he has despatched to East Pakistan. But the General must be knowing that his long-postponed visit is possible only because the people of Bangla Desh have so far restricted themselves to the use of moral force and nothing more. The Awami League has taken over political power in East Pakistan without firing a shot. It now rests with President Yahya to prove that power after all depends on guns.

Mujibur Rahman's 35 directives announcing the take-over of civilian administration in East Pakistan, however shocking it might be to General Yahya, Bhutto and the 22 families dominating the State, lay in the logic of history. The December elections in Pakistan were viewed by the people of East Pakistan as a plebiscite and the overwhelming verdict was not so much for the Awami League as for the complete autonomy of their land. The groundswell that was created could not be controlled by gimmicks and political manoeuvres. The six-point programme for autonomy which Mujib outlined ceased to belong to him after the elections. It was not for nothing that Mujib called upon a post-election gathering "to bury alive any member of the party including myself" if they backed away from implementing the six-point programme. After the issue was thus settled once and for all it was only natural that Bhutto's manoeuvres to nibble away the right of taxation and foreign trade from the claim of autonomy staked by East Pakistan would fail. And once they failed the choice was between resigned acceptance of a constitution granting full autonomy to East Pakistan and an armed showdown. Bhutto while advising President Yahya to postpone the meeting of the Constituent Assembly thought he had discovered a middle course—a means to soften up Bengali resistance by wearing out their patience. But he could not be more wrong. Patience did wear thin but led to the opposite of what he expected. Messrs Yahya and Bhutto should rather be thankful to Mujib that he weathered

the storm that burst and led it to the path of non-violent civil disobedience. Thereafter the take-over of the civilian administration of East Pakistan was the one logical step Mujib could take. The massive response to the call of civil disobedience put the Awami League in de facto control of the administration which was only made de jure by Mujib's declaration on Monday.

Meanwhile Mr Bhutto has called for a "just partnership" between the two wings and expressed support for the four-point demand made by Mujib at the time of launching the civil disobedience movement. But these gestures cannot any longer reverse the course of history. All is not however lost to Islamabad. Dacca Betar Kendra while broadcasting patriotic songs and citations from the *Gita* still continues to relay news from Radio Pakistan. It was President Yahya Khan's decision to postpone the meeting of the Constituent Assembly that decided the timing of the unilateral declaration of autonomy. It is again Yahya Khan who will decide if there is going to be any Vietnam in Bangla Desh.

18 Sadat's Tactics

President Anwar Sadat has launched a new diplomatic offensive with the ostentatious purpose of bringing international pressure on Israel to make a reciprocal gesture to his peace overtures. But it is too much to expect Tel Aviv, whose professed policy amounts to holding action, to be forthcoming. The Golda Meir Cabinet has been rationalising that if by tenacity the Egyptians could be made to give up the war of attrition and accept the Rogers proposals, the same will be found good enough to wrest major concessions in any border settlement. This to be successful will require of Israel to hold out for an indefinite period, which she is in a position to do because of her military superiority. Mr Sadat has been fondly hoping that America will do some arm-twisting in Tel Aviv; but President Nixon has

made it abundantly clear that the United States is not contemplating to help secure any concessions from Israel. On the arms supply issue, the present arrangement will not be changed lest the present military balance is disturbed. In course of an interview with a Western journalist, Mr Sadat has, however, noted "a significant change" in the American attitude. He has "always hoped" that the U.S. Administration which is the "key to peace" would demonstrate its "responsibility towards peace based on justice". The Egyptian President took considerable political risk, as his moves were being keenly watched by the more militant Army officials, in offering navigation facilities to Israeli ships in return for a withdrawal to a line behind El Arish and agreeing to the stationing of an international force at Sharm el Sheikh. Besides, he is willing to sign a formal peace agreement and recognise the inviolability and political independence of Israel.

What is, however, most shocking is Mr Sadat's attempt at disengaging from the Palestinian issue; the wording of his address to the Palestine National Council was to drive home the fact that a peace settlement will not be conditioned by a satisfactory resolution of the Palestinian problem. The council has in a political programme vowed to step up guerilla warfare against the Zionist State and warned the Arabs that America is helping Israel to consolidate occupation of territories seized in the June war. As the revolution's aim is the liberation of all of occupied Palestine, the Council has rejected categorically the establishment of a Palestinian State on the occupied Western Bank of Jordan.

It provides an interesting contrast in attitudes that while Egypt is psychologically ready to sign a document embodying the existence of Israel no Government in Tel Aviv can really bring itself to the point of signing away, on any terms, the annexed territories. This is why Israel has stalemated peace talks by insisting that she will not return to the pre-1967

war borders, which is not compatible with the contractual agreement notion laid down by Mr Abba Eban last month.

Taking Over Firms

To the five thousand starving workers of Braithwaite Company Delhi's decision to take over the concern must have been of more immediate concern than the events at the hustings. On January 18 the Braithwaite management shut down its Clive Works for alleged shortage of steel and in the process threw the workers out of job. The business world hailed the move as a pioneering feat. But an enquiry instituted by the government, led to serious misgivings regarding the management of the company, revealing an almost laconic disregard for the workers' fate. And the government, after being satisfied that the management had been detrimental to the public interest, announced the take-over. After this the government took over another firm—Gresham and Craven of Calcutta—and the reason was again failure on the part of the management.

A set of reasons may be put forth by the political commentators for this show of alacrity by New Delhi; and it may be that the impending poll was one of them. But even this gesture can hardly touch the malaise of West Bengal, much less solve it. For its living the State depends on the three industries of tea, jute and engineering. Of these, tea and jute—the two most important foreign exchange earners—have for long been deep in the woods. And no respite is in sight in the near future. A recent estimate shows that jute production is likely to fall short by 500,000 bales this year and overseas competition is likely to be fiercer this time. But the Centre's response to this has consisted only of financial grants as and when needed. And recently the authority instead of taking steps to spruce up the disabled units instituted an expert body to advise the government on setting up new units in

other States on the plea of regional parity. A similar perverse policy is being pursued in case of tea plantations where also only ad hoc palliatives have so far been introduced. But the situation is most dismal in the engineering sector which is in reality an appendage of the wagon industry. A cut in the wagon orders by the Indian Railways owing to pruning of its plan had a crippling effect on this industry and the economy of the State. About a hundred big units and numerous tiny shops had to close down; thousands of

workers joined the existing ranks of unemployed.

A complete post-mortem of the economic situation in West Bengal is long overdue. But despite consensus on this point, any serious gesture to concert action is yet to come. Or perhaps New Delhi knows that even its current radicalism cannot effect the changes necessary to cure the ills. The Left Establishment on its part is so enamoured of the utility of parliamentary means at the moment that it cannot bother itself with the problem.

Arms And The CPM

PRABIR BASU

IN at least theoretical terms, the CPI (M), in contrast with other parliamentary parties of the so-called Left, enjoys some distinctive position because it has committed itself to some kind of armed revolution as an unavoidable requirement for a radical socio-economic infrastructure of transformation. Precisely on this point the undivided Communist Party of India faced a split in 1964 and the CPI (M) came into existence.

It is to be noted that the undivided party also believed in some kind of armed revolution as an unavoidable requirement for a national liberation movement in India to reach its logical conclusion. But never in its full course of life from 1928 to 1964 did it spell out in concrete terms what should be the broad strategy of armed revolution in Indian conditions and in theoretical terms as to why armed revolution is unavoidable. This was because at that time no revolutionary exponent of Marxism came to answer, in theoretical detail, these two very important questions confronting the communist movement in every country; the only answer was either waiting for the directive of the Comintern as regards the time and stage of armed revolution in a particular country or discretion of the national leadership in choosing out the answer from its own study of the

national correlation of economic and military forces. The second path was followed by the Communist Party of China, under Mao Tse-tung and the Communist Party of Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh.

Mao's formulations concerning the strategy and tactics of revolution, mostly in the thirties and forties, were mainly addressed to Chinese conditions and he never at that time claimed their validity for the revolutionary movement of all countries. On the contrary he harped on the view that it was by and large the prerogative of each national communist party to find out the answer to the two vital questions from its own understanding of the national political situation. This attitude however did not prevent Mao from (i) taking lessons from the October Revolution and (ii) formulating some philosophical aspects on (a) proletarian methods of work in the villages; (b) revolutionary practice and understanding of contradictions in an individual class, group or nation; (c) as to why the organisational tasks of the communists should among other things centre around the strategy of class-war in general, revolutionary war in particular. In other words, Mao's search for answers to different questions of national liberation movement led him to some formulations on philosophi-

cal issues of revolutionary strategy which to be valid in diverse conditions require to be valid for the whole world and in some cases for the underdeveloped world.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union under Stalin or even Lenin could not adequately answer the questions in their necessary details. The CPSU under post-Stalin leaders however tried the same but with a result which diametrically opposed the formulations developed by Mao as early as the 'thirties and 'forties. Therefore although apparently the Stalin issue was the cause, in essence it was the two alternative formulations which resulted in the famous great debate between the CPSU and the CPC and the corresponding tension in their mutual relations. The Stalin issue was only the cudgel to be picked up in order to start the deep-seated ideological warfare.

Was it the same difference on broad philosophical questions which gave rise to the CPI(M)? It is difficult to answer a priori unless one carefully scans the writings of CPI(M) leaders or theoreticians from 1964 to the days of the Naxalbari movement in 1967. As a matter of fact from its very inception, this party, having a declared loyalty to the CPC—in particular in the latter's theoretical dispute with the CPSU—contained theoreticians of different followings of Mao's thoughts; as a result the theoretical journals and the party's propaganda papers reflected as uneasy heterogeneity.

On the other hand, the CPI's declared loyalty to the CPSU line of thinking gave it as much consistency as the CPSU could have in the present international situation.

The CPSU at its 21st Party Congress and afterwards advocated that in the present international situation where socialist economic achievement is an accomplished fact, widening through peaceful competition between capitalist and socialist blocs the class-consciousness of the workers throughout the world, and when capitalism's failure to sustain itself without resorting to war is conspicuous even to the national bourgeoisie of the underdeveloped countries, no use is left for

any armed revolution except strengthening the imperialists' pretext for unleashing war—if necessary nuclear war. As a domestic variant of peaceful competition between imperialist and the socialist countries, parliamentary struggle is considered a feasible instrument for the communists' ascent to state power.

More Homogeneous

In this sense, the CPI's ideological position was more homogeneous than that of the CPI(M) from the very outset. While the CPI(M) broadly inherited the ideological position of the undivided party vis-a-vis armed revolution, with its vital questions unanswered the post-1964 CPI deviated on this point from its parent body and in very clear terms spelled out its new course of action centring around the parliamentary path of struggle as its strategy and mass movement as its tactics. To the CPI(M), the CPI is revisionist, taking its cues from the CPSU and acting as a saboteur of the revolutionary movement in India because of its renouncing the path of armed struggle.

With an open allegiance to the cause of armed revolution in India and criticism of revisionism as the main danger against the same, the pattern of organisational and political activities adopted by the CPI(M) is more in harmony with the pattern once pursued by the undivided party than with one which can claim to have broken a new path of revolutionary struggle, with the difference that the CPI(M)'s present parliamentary mode of struggle was not in the programme of the undivided party.

What was the mode of struggle in the days of the undivided party? With a belief in violence as an instrument of the national liberation movement, the main body of the tasks of communists centred around economic movements both in villages and towns. Such tasks required the building up of mass movements and mass actions, with the aid of political but un-armed nuclei, on economic issues of a relief nature. Some such mass actions, specially in villages, led to spontaneous violence of a very high

dimension, but the party dubbed them "premature" or "adventurist" although such adventurists used to get party laurels every now and then.

From 1964 onwards, the CPI(M) did not disown the heroic struggle of the Indian people under the leadership of the undivided party, rather owned it with all its right and left deviations. The deviations were explained in two broad terms: (a) the undivided party did not adequately perform the political tasks and engaged in economism; (b) it had not so long recognised the role of the peasant movement in fostering the national liberation movement in an agrarian country like India where feudalism has no basic contradiction with highly developed monopoly capital. Because in practice the revolutionary working class of India compels the latter to use the feudal forces as its effective lever for maintaining state political power, it is necessary for the CPI(M) to accentuate economic as well as political struggle in the countryside to disrupt monopoly capital's rural lever of political power. The present-day strategy of the CPI(M) is therefore to accentuate class struggle in villages through mass movements and mass actions so as to harmonise them with the class struggle in towns and cities. Its parliamentary mode of struggle is declared to be a mere technical requirement in order to raise class struggle to a higher peak and to effect synchronisation of the mass movements of industrial workers and the rural peasantry.

The CPI also does not disown its past but points out that the international and the national situations have considerably changed. Armed revolution is an outmoded instrument for the seizure of political power in the new Indian situation where the conflict between the national bourgeoisie and monopoly capital on the one hand, and the former and feudal forces on the other is being intensified with the deepening of the economic crisis. Thus the national bourgeoisie playing a "progressive" role can cooperate with the communists in a parliamentary seizure of

power through mass movement and mass actions.

It is to be noted that even from the theoretical standpoint, both the CPI(M) and the CPI admit that (i) the present Indian situation does not warrant any armed uprising; (ii) the parliamentary mode of struggle is required to accentuate class struggle in India; (iii) mass movements and actions on a non-violent basis are to be the basic modes of operation to weaken the position of their class enemies and politicise the masses.

Beliefs

Where they differ, they differ in beliefs. The CPI(M) believes that without armed uprising, no revolutionary solution will come up, whereas the CPI believes in just the opposite. The CPI(M) believes that the national bourgeoisie has not played any progressive role not because it is, at this stage of the Indian economy, incapable of being an ally of the revolution but because the communist movement is not adequately strong to neutralise it or to get it as an accomplice in revolutionary tasks, whereas the CPI believes, that the national bourgeoisie has already unfolded its progressive character through plan-making, expansion of public sector investments and introduction of land reform measures etc; now it is the task of the communists to cooperate with it in implementing these "radical" measures.

For tomorrow, they differ. For today they agree. Such political rules of the game can however be extended between any two Indian parties, say the SSP and the Congress (R), but as in the very beginning we have already admitted that the CPI(M) is the solitary parliamentary party committing itself to armed revolution, one cannot brush aside the CPI(M) as a party of sheer political gimmicks playing within those rules of the game.

Is there any speciality in the CPI(M)'s mass movements and mass actions in villages or towns? If any, then what purpose do they serve in fulfilling its long-term objective of armed revolution?

When we stated that the CPI(M)'s

pattern of organisational and political activities is more in harmony with the pattern pursued by the undivided party, we talked of the form, not the content. If content of the movement undergoes a revolutionary change, then it is likely that in course of time the form or the pattern is bound to change. In China for example, during the period of the Northern Expedition, the basic form of movement was of social democratic nature i.e. organisation without politics and mass movements without armed nuclei were its special features. When the Canton Kuomintang turned reactionary and started armed assaults, the whole movement collapsed like a house of cards. But as the political slogan or the content of the movement was correct, the party could take lesson from the failure of the form, the pattern of movements, underwent a radical change in the subsequent periods.

Revolution cannot come within the elbowroom of such relief movement and in reality it does not come in the course of the CPI(M)'s labour movements. If politics at all comes, it comes with a sporting mood and narrow partisan face at the time of union elections or parliamentary elections once or twice in five years. Armed revolution is far away to even the political hard core within the labour movements.

In students' or teachers' or office employees' movement, the situation is possibly worse. Being relief movements in essence, petty bourgeois and counter-revolutionary tendencies find a nice breeding ground here. With no explicit commitment to industrial workers or rural proletariat, the exclusive accent of these service associations is placed on money bags or quantum of sterile middle class people on the membership roll. The movement of the service association type of trade unions has no function except that of feeding mass rallies frequently organised by the party or raising party funds or electing party members in various municipal or Assembly elections. The students' movement concentrates as usual on union elections and strike calls apart

from its recent anti-Naxal slant in the programme of activities.

In Villages

In villages however, the situation is somewhat different, because there even a social democratic movement meets the toughest enemy in the forces of feudalism. As a matter of fact, if the communists ever met an effective challenge from the ruling classes, they met it in villages in Kakdwip or Telengana. And in recent times in Naxalbari. This particular phenomenon amply proves that in any country of rich agricultural heritage and feudal civilisation reaction builds its citadel in villages and that is why in a predominantly feudal society of modern times revolution declares its arrival in spontaneous peasant revolts. Indian society being predominantly feudal has in its villages the most poor and wretched people—poor and landless village population—and the most powerful

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sections of the community like jotedars and the rich peasantry. The economic relation between these two sections of the village community is one of mutual dependence and therefore contains an explosive potential for class hatred. The role of the middle peasantry has traditionally been that of the middle-of-the-roaders, although it is also exploited by the jotedars or rich peasantry and in turn exploits the poor peasants, though not on an ambitious scale. By its very status, the middle peasantry has a tendency to depend on the rich in order to gain economic favours like monetary loans, loans of seeds and fertilisers, test relief, pursuit of litigation matters etc. Furthermore, placed between rich peasants and poor ones, the middle peasantry enjoys the privilege of acting as a communication link. Therefore, the Congress always tried to have the maximum number of middle peasants within its organisational fold.

Unlike the CPC of 1928, it is however doubtful as to what extent the content of the mass movements launched by the CPI (M) is revolutionary in character.

In towns and cities, the main issues on which day-to-day movements of the working class are based are economic in character. Apart from the economic nature, issues are tackled on relief basis. Most of anti-retrenchment and anti-lock-out movements generally follow autonomous movements for higher wages or bonus. Wage or bonus movements generally follow employers' repressive measures like selective or mass-scale retrenchment and in extreme cases lock-outs of the factory or the workshop. The original wage or bonus movements yield place to anti-retrenchment or anti-lock-out movements; the employer dictates terms to his advantage, what the political nucleus does is to increase the membership of the worker's union and collect a quid pro quo for the union. This is typical social democratic manoeuvring within a democratic movement.

The Politics of Revolution

The CPI (M) sought to win over

this middle peasantry through various economic relief measures during the two United Front regimes. In this they succeeded and the success can be measured by the fact that in many areas of Burdwan, Birbhum or south 24-Parganas, almost all the members of the Krishak Sabha belong to this section of the peasantry. Taking West Bengal as a whole, the middle peasantry constitutes a great bulk of total Krishak Sabha members.

This is however not to suggest at all that the CPI (M)-sponsored Krishak Sabha does not have considerable following among the poor peasants or landless labourers. During the period of the second UF Government this section of the peasantry rallied round the Sabha in seizing vested land and the hidden surplus land of jotedars and reaped some economic benefit. In many places however this did not succeed in actual materialisation of the Sabha's 'land to the tiller' slogan. The odds were heavy—court injunctions, CRP deployment and jotedars recapturing their land with the help of the police. Even if in places where the odds were not present the occupied vested land or private land could not be distributed either because there were too many landless having too little land or because the Sabha without making any *pattah* arrangement conferred unofficial title deeds on some influential Sabha members, so that the actual sale proceeds flow to the Sabha's coffer.

The sharecroppers' movement was this time almost silent except in very few places. The rich peasants lay low, adopting the policy of wait and see. Others were drawn to the anti-Naxal stance of the CPI (M) and taking the Congress as a spent force accepted the CPI (M) as the temporary alternative. There were again others who exploited inter-party peasant clashes by evicting the sharecroppers of a disliked political party and installing sharecroppers belonging to a rival political party's peasant wing. As a matter of fact, even the Congress (O), not to speak of others, formed organisations of landless peasants in some areas of Burdwan and

Hooghly and fought for their cause against some rich peasants having political allegiance to the Congress (R), the SSP etc.

From the point of view of programme the CPI (M) policy on the peasant front was not different from that of other parties. The organisation was oriented to serve the purpose of a partisan electorate for panchayat or parliamentary elections and the Sabha, lacking any ethical inhibition against violence of any kind, always sought to tailor the peasant militancy or peasants' violent uprising to electoral purposes and the subsequent police repression as an emotional issue to achieve its limited objective of electoral victory in the countryside.

Such CPI (M) militancy in the countryside has its grave dangers, because the peasant leadership knows that if the volcano of class violence erupts, its whole policy of using it as election-fodder will be swept away and in the face of subsequent police or military repression the Party hard core, not to speak of the innumerable peasants, will be totally eliminated from the particular base. That was why it was necessary for the CPI (M) to get at least the Home Portfolio in the Ministry, so that the police could be neutralised and the whole game of electoral chicanery performed with partial violence of a partisan character. With a view to extending the Krishak Sabha's electoral bases through various relief movements and through partisan violence, the party could hardly afford any militant confrontation with the police or the military.

It is obvious that either in towns or villages, the nature of CPI (M)-sponsored mass movements or mass actions lays stress on organisation without politics, arms without any militant plan, and peoples' mobilisation without accentuation of class conflict. To put it in positive terms, organisation is meant for extending the areas of influence for the social democratic purpose of bargaining with the ruling class; arms are collected and used for narrow partisan purposes, to protect the petty-bour-

geois organisation against the rival social-democratic parties or interests and never to confront agents of the ruling class; the object of people's mobilisation is to parade its strength to the rivals, or the ruling class in order to secure a better bargaining position vis-a-vis the Establishment.

Therefore is it not the height of hypocrisy on the part of the CPI (M) leadership to talk of armed revolution?

It is no matter whether a revolutionary situation exists today or not, and in this respect the CPI (M) assessment may be correct or otherwise. What matters here is the revolutionary norm and practice of a communist party in methods of work in the villages, towns or cities. Such methods of work "must be for the victory at the front and the organisational work must be subordinated to this political task."

Whether parliament should be used for accentuating class struggle or not is to be decided in terms of the overall long-term strategy of revolution. Such a strategy to develop its detailed tactical ramifications requires answering certain vital questions. They are:

(a) Why armed revolution should be unavoidable in a proletarian movement?

(b) What should be the form of armed struggle in a vast country like India which has military power and a communication system developed to the advantage of the ruling classes?

(c) In the rear areas or at the front during war or peace what should be the scientific or Marxist methods of work?

Some theoretical answers in conformity with the Marxian theory of dialectics applied to social movement and war can help in chalking out the broad strategy of the Indian path of revolution be it people's democratic or national democratic.

It is the operation of social dialectics which precipitates armed revolution independent of the likes or dislikes of capitalists or communists. The CPSU-brand revisionism does not take cognisance of this reality and is of the view that unless the bourgeois

state machinery starts aggression in its naked form, communists should not touch arms. Surprisingly, the present thesis of the CPI (M) General Secretary is just an echo of the Soviet revisionist outlook in this regard.

The broad strategy of armed revolution may differ between an industrially developed country and an agrarian country, or a small country like Cuba and a big country like China. India being a vast agricultural country under feudal-monopoly subjugation may have to adopt the path of protracted civil war. In course of this civil war, it is not unlikely that some change in the alignment of class enemies may transform it into an anti-imperialist liberation war, but notwithstanding this realignment of forces, the fundamental path will have to be one of revolutionary civil war.

Mao contends that in a programme of protracted civil war "the deepest source of the immense power lies in the masses of the people." Guns assumed importance because in his view during the days of the Northern Expedition in 1926, sheer mass movements failed because these lacked the armed nuclei and could not meet Kuomintang repression. Therefore unarmed mass movements lead to *flightism* (Mao's italics) and arms without mass support bring about *desperadoism* (Mao's italics).

Action Programmes

It is not being suggested that a communist should wait for a mass upsurge in order to use guns for a revolutionary purpose. That will be depending on spontaneity. In his methods of work in villages, Mao elaborates his view that at any time revolutionary potential exists; the task of the communist is to develop and nourish it carefully. To understand the stage of development "action programmes" should be undertaken to test the situations. In his view, "action programmes" are dialogues between communists and the masses and in such dialogues "some excesses" on the part of both are "*unavoidable and necessary*" (Mao's view in his Hunan report). As revolution is not cooking, revolutionary excesses are in

fact the criteria for determining the correct path; if the party is diffident but the revolutionary masses commit excesses, violating the precise point of ordering of priorities in say annihilation campaigns, that would mean the party requires correction of its understanding of the masses and lead them properly. If on the contrary, people are diffident and not subjectively prepared but the party's actions are considered "excesses", then it is the party which is to come forward and educate the people to eliminate the subjective gap between it and the masses and correct its mistakes.

The theoretical details of methods of work in villages or towns strengthen the overall strategy of protracted revolutionary civil war and help the proletarian party to determine whether and to what extent the nature of activities of the revolutionaries should be parliamentary or not, secret or open; or to determine how the subjective gap between revolutionaries and the masses should be minimised and in a specific situation of the country which of the three stages of civil war—mobile, guerilla and positional—should yield best results from the standpoint of revolution, or in a particular region which of the two guerilla tactics—that of guerilla areas or of guerilla base areas—should be adopted or mutually transferred.

The CPI (M) has no theory of armed revolution in India. What it is doing is to use arms in order to strengthen and consolidate its parliamentary forces. By resorting, just like the Left Kuomintang of the China of the thirties, to armed consolidation of its electoral base areas, in the name of armed revolution, it is cheating the revolutionary masses. The Left Kuomintang once branded the CPC under Mao's leadership as the party of Chiang Kai-shek, claiming itself to be the actual revolutionary party committed to radical land reforms and various relief measures. History however proved otherwise. In the critical days of the early thirties, the Kuomintang joined hands with Chiang Kai-shek to crush the communists.

Report On Srikakulam

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

THE Regional Communist Committee (Marxist-Leninist), Srikakulam, issued a document in November 1970 which (a) traces the history of the movement in Srikakulam and (b) contains a list of specific tasks to be carried out. The document says that on 3-11-70 *Andhra Patrika*, a bourgeois paper, carried the story that "the Naxalite leadership is now willing to give up the struggle if the Government agrees to constitute a separate hills district (within Srikakulam i.e. the Agency part of it) and announces a general amnesty." This document may be taken as a denial of the newspaper report and as a general call for the mobilisation of all revolutionary forces to continue the struggle.

In the first part i.e. the history of the movement, it is stated:

Two years ago the Gidijan peasantry of the Agency had started a struggle for the capture of political power armed with Mao Tse-tung Thought. This struggle immediately spread to other parts of the district and as a result many class enemies fled the villages to hide in towns. The movement subsequently spread to other parts of the country as well. The peasantry won many victories but the ruling class through its police and the army unleashed terror on an unprecedented scale: they burnt villages, they tortured people in various ways. The heroes caught by the police were put in concentration camps. Comrades Appalasuri and Tejeswara Rao were among those who were subjected to such brutal treatment, but they refused to divulge a single secret. Nor did the struggle discontinue; the people gave shelter to the fighters. Even today the people are prepared to make more sacrifices; they are now our allies in the struggle.

We have also had our losses but these are temporary. The power of the people can never be vanquished. Our setbacks are the result of tacti-

cal errors. We learn by our mistakes. The Government, on its part, tried to put an end to the struggle by other means: nationalisation of banks, sanction of new projects, financial schemes that are supposed to help the poor and so on. But the truth is that none of these schemes will improve the lot of the poor peasants. This is a standard trick of the ruling class; whenever the revolutionary peasants begin to intensify their struggle the Government promptly announces various economic measures. But the fact is that although our district is rich in resources, the people are desperately poor. On the other hand the rich become richer, aided by the ruling class.

Bobbli Raja has made lakhs of rupees through many corrupt practices like blackmarketing, counterfeiting etc. He was an open supporter of the British but today he passes off as a *Desa Bhakta*. Boddepalli Rajagopala Rao is another blackmarketeer who operates on an international scale. He has murdered many poor peasants in their homes. Gorrela Srivamulu Naidu is an exploiter of the coastal region, who has murdered many people. He is known as Ravana in this region. Majji Tulasi Das was originally a rich peasant. After exploiting the poor continuously for 23 years he is now a big landlord. The people know that these murderers are instigating the police to torture the revolutionaries. There is no doubt that they will be reduced to ashes.

Today the police are indulging in acts of fascist terror, despite the socialist veil of Indira. They have killed and maimed many of our comrades. Vempatapu Satyanarayana, Panchadri Krishnamurty, Adibhatla Kailasam, Dr Chaganti Bhaskara Rao, Tamada Ganapati, Subbarao Panigrahi, Dr Devineni Mallikharjunudu, Ramesh Chandra Sahu, Panchadri Nirmala, M. V. Ramana Murty,

Reddy Appalaswami Naidu were among those revolutionary heroes killed.

But the struggle will continue. A protracted war to achieve victory will be waged.

The portion dealing with the tasks for the future states:

"We have gained a lot of experience in the last two years. We have made some tactical errors. We are trying to rectify these mistakes. It is right to regard the enemy with contempt; our tactical line also reflects this. We act accordingly, taking into consideration the objective political and social conditions that prevail. We have decided to mobilise people under the leadership of the CPI (ML) for fighting all kinds of exploitation. Appropriation of excess land and land illegally occupied by the landlords, refusal to pay interest on usurious loans, appropriation of stocks of grain held by landlords and selling such grain at fair prices, refusal to pay the so-called dues being collected by the revenue officials of the Forest Department—these are some of the issues on which the people should fight. The struggle should intensify in those areas where it already exists and we should also attempt to extend it to new areas. People should be mobilised to appropriate the present harvest.

"Our class enemies are doing all kinds of false propaganda to discourage people. In the bourgeois papers and over the radio the story is spread that the movement is finished, the leadership killed and most of the squads caught. They say that the struggle has ended in the Agency and that there are only a few fighters left in the Sompeta area. This is totally false. We have elected a new leadership and all our squads are as strong as ever.

"The Indian Revolution is a part of the struggle of the people the world over against the forces of reaction."

For FRONTIER contact
SANYAL BROS.
26, Main Road, Jamshedpur-1.

MARCH 20, 1971

A Draft Programme

SUMANTA BANERJEE

THE plight of the people of West Bengal is causing concern among all. The problems of the State are well known—over-population, unemployment, limited land for agriculture, extremist politics encouraging indiscipline among labourers leading to closure of factories and industrial stagnation and violence among the youth.

The Central Government in Delhi is of course trying its best to prevent West Bengal from lapsing into a state of anarchy. To enable the people of the State to elect their government in a free and fair atmosphere, it deployed two and a half divisions of the army who, with their guns aimed at hidden enemies, patrolled the streets of Calcutta and helped 100,000 policemen, the Central Reserve Force and the Border Security Force to maintain peace and order.

But, as agreed by all, in our present circumstances when the country's borders will have to be protected from the raids of the hostile neighbours—Pakistan and China—undue pressure on our brave jawans should be avoided. It is not possible also to give several crores of rupees to West Bengal as demanded by the State's politicians, when the entire nation has to make sacrifices for development.

It is therefore necessary to seek a less expensive solution to the problems of West Bengal. Unfortunately, the plans proposed so far are usually made with an eye for the economic solution, without ascertaining whether it is possible for the people of West Bengal to take advantage of economic developments. It is essential to go to the roots of the problem, namely an understanding of the psychology of the people whom the Centre wants to help.

It will be found from past experience that the Bengalis as a rule are too unenterprising to take advantage of financial incentives and too lazy to work, which explains the proliferation of strikes in the State. Added

to this, as pointed out by many learned observers of North India, they are garrulous and individualistic, which explains the multiplicity of their leftist parties. They are also sentimental which is the reason for the present spate of violence in the unfortunate State. We are sure that a research programme undertaken by any American sociologist would corroborate these observations.

The present crisis in West Bengal therefore is something that is deeply rooted in the inherent characteristics of the Bengali people. What is more dangerous is that unmistakable signs of similar characteristics are appearing elsewhere in India; strikes, hartals and violent incidents are on the increase. These invariably pamper the ego of the Bengali who quotes approvingly that unfortunate comment made by Gokhale in a careless moment: "What Bengal thinks today, India thinks tomorrow."

It is necessary immediately to prevent the canker from spreading and ruining the nation.

Surgical Operation

A surgical operation designed to eliminate the source of the corruption is necessary. Since the Bengalis are too lazy to undertake the task, it would devolve on the Centre to carry out the operation. We can only suggest the method.

After an exhaustive study of past experiments, we feel that chemical agents will be best suited for the purpose. They can ensure a hundred per cent success besides saving the nation a huge amount of money which otherwise would have to be spent on bullets, shells and other conventional weapons.

Two chemical compounds, known by their code names—GB and VX—are available in the USA. The first is stockpiled, while the second is still being manufactured at the U.S. Army's plant in Newport, Indiana.

GB is an odourless, colourless, volatile gas that can kill in minutes in dosages of one milligram, approximately one-fiftieth of a drop. Known also as sarin, it kills by paralysing the nervous system.

But in West Bengal conditions, perhaps VX would be more suitable. It is odourless, but does not evaporate rapidly or freeze at normal temperature. Because of its low volatility, it is effective for a longer period of time. Once used, the slowly evaporating VX turns the target area into a verbal no-man's land for days and probably longer. The gas can be absorbed by vegetation and remain lethal. Thus the jute and paddy fields can be kept intact, while the indisciplined cultivators who are grabbing the fields and killing the landlords can be easily eliminated.

Before spraying the chemical, the Centre however will have to plan out the operation properly. There are 40 million people in West Bengal. Of them 28.26% are from Bihar, 6.27% from Orissa, 18.99% from Uttar Pradesh, 1.56% from Madhya Pradesh and 4.5% from other States. These people should be taken out temporarily from West Bengal before the operation starts.

Among the Bengalis also there are people who deserve to be saved like Lot and his family who escaped God's wrath during the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The first among these will be the police, particularly the senior officers, who have been working in the most trying circumstances to save West Bengal. After them comes the minority of big farmers who with proper guidance by the Green Revolutionary farmers of Punjab, could develop into enterprising individuals. Then there are the few Bengali industrialists who in a peaceful atmosphere, would be able to emulate prosperous industrialists elsewhere and contribute to the nation's development. Last but not least are the venerable editors of newspapers who have been trying tenaciously all these years to draw the attention of the nation to the need of saving West Bengal from the Bengalis.

We suggest that an Un-Indian Activities Committee be formed to screen those among the Bengalis who need to be saved and those among the non-Bengali residents of the State who have already been infected by

Bengali habits, like participation in strikes and violent activities and therefore deserve annihilation.

The advantages of our proposed scheme are many as well as of the highest importance.

First, this will be a non-violent method of reaching the same that an armed manoeuvre would have brought about. It will be in keeping with the spirit of winning independence through a bloodless revolution. Chemicals, by killing silently or insidiously—a lethal gas can be inhaled before the victim knows he is in danger—will thus serve the cause of non-violence, so dear to the Father of our Nation.

Secondly, an armed attack would have left many injured. Taking care of them would have been a problem. But if the Centre takes care in administering enough doses of the chemicals, it will ensure foolproof success.

Thirdly, as already indicated, this would save the nation a lot of money. Conventional warfare would include high explosives and costly weapons.

It would also involve large military forces and take a long time. Chemical agents, on the other hand, would be less costly and provide a quicker way. They would reduce, according to scientists, bomb-loads to one-twentieth or less of what is usually necessary. Moreover, one of the assets of chemical warfare is that it does not depend on extraordinary delivery systems. By any means—grenade-throwers, aircraft missiles—the chemicals can be sprayed. Commercial transport aircraft could be modified without great difficulty to drop or spray the gas.

Fourthly, if the Centre embarks on chemical warfare, it would expand the scope for further collaboration with the USA. In view of the similarity of the nerve gases to some modern insecticides, there is no doubt that the chemical industry of India, could go over to nerve gas manufacture without much difficulty. Help of U.S. experts can be sought and the expansion of existing chemical manufacturing firms would generate more employment.

Fifthly, the use of chemicals like VX would cause the minimum destruction of property and fixed installations. By only annihilating the people, the Centre can retain the agricultural land, industries and other establishments which can be taken over by enterprising, hard-working, honest Indians from other parts of the country who have remained uninfected by Bengali habits.

Finally, the Centre would be able to improve relations with Pakistan if it synchronizes the timing of the operation with the beginning of the norwester in West Bengal. As the wind will blow from west to east, part of the gas will be led towards East Pakistan and destroy a portion of the population there and incapacitate the rest. Thus, our Government would render a service to the Pakistan Government by crippling a constant source of tension for ever.

These are only a few of the advantages accruing from the implementation of our proposal. We are sure that more can be extracted if officials of different Central Minis-

tries, particularly Home, Defence and Finance Ministries, put their heads together and study the proposal meticulously.

A Surfeit Of Idealism

MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY

BISWAJIT, in *Pratibad*, seems to possess some kind of Aladin's magic lamp which, coupled with an unlimited credit with the grocer, provides all the daily necessities for the family, while the hero devotes all his time and energy to his idealistic missions. He is the leader of the Harijans, a sort of Bhangi Colony idol, preaching temperance and literacy among them. This job of redeeming the down-and-out is almost a fulltime one, although Biswajit does not fail to take time off for romantic and musical interludes. Moushumi Chatterjee is always there as an inspiration to him and when the villain succeeds in tempting the girl, misunderstanding clouds the relationship. But the doubts are short-lived and the reunion is not long in coming. However, the film has not yet come to an end. The villain is out to frustrate Biswajit's attempts. A deliberate poisoning campaign against Biswajit and a free booze temporarily dislodge him from the trust and confidence of his comrades. But idealism triumphs and Biswajit wins back their faith and love. Now the villain has lascivious designs on the heroine and in the usual manner of a film crook, decoys her into his chamber. But the hero is no less a celluloid gallant. Promptly he appears on the scene. A violent encounter follows and Biswajit, with a true Gandhian contempt for bloodshed, throttles the villain to death. So vice is punished and virtue rewarded. Biswajit, of course, has to serve a prison sentence, but he has a consolation as Moushumi would be waiting for him. Technically a poor film, its inane and stupid story is just another commercial sop to those movie-going masses who are easily taken in by a surfeit of priggish idealism and a canful of silly harangues.

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Pale Adaptation

ABHIJIT MUKHOPADHYAY

WHEN death stalks the streets art and culture become incongruous if these are meant for nothing. To this scribe at least, it seemed so the other day while sitting in the cosy Shri Sikshayatan Hall where the Sandhyaneerh group presented *Banalata Mitter* adapted from Henry Francois Becque's *La Parisienne*.

Once again one saw how, for sheer lack of comprehension on the part of an adapter, the adapted version becomes a mere trifle. The more so when the original is rather great as in the case of *La Parisienne*, for Becque was the precursor of naturalism in the French drama. Yet there is no use adapting him for the present-day Bengali stage if the purity and verve in his play get lost in the process. Mr Asoke Sen, however, has missed this point, for which his version becomes a lack-lustre copy of the original, far from being a 'tranche de vie'. His *Banalata*, quite unlike Becque's *Clotilde*, is not at all an amoral creature in the 'milieu' who changes lovers to help her cuckold climb up the social ladder and yet maintains a veneer of bourgeois propriety, but is a lovable wayward middle-class housewife. The hypocrisy of *Banalata* as well as of the other characters of the play has been toned down with an eye on middle-class consumption trends and this leaves the taste of a radio play usually dished out by AIR Calcutta rather than that of a 'comédie rosse'.

On the production side also, Mr Sen has very little to offer. The play has been produced without much serious preparation. The artistes failed even to memorise their dialogues. The hoarse voice of a prompter always came at the top. Mrs Binata Roy as *Banalata* tried hard to pull on but to no avail. Mr Arun Chatterjee as the husband was the only actor who made a successful bid to raise the standard.

MARCH 20, 1971

Book Review

THE DISINHERITED STATE—A STUDY OF WEST BENGAL, 1967-70

By Sankar Ghosh
Orient Longman, Calcutta, 1971.
Price Rs. 30/-

AS he is one of the rare Indian journalists who has always been keener to understand than pontificate for the supposed benefit of his clientele, Sankar Ghosh's study raised rather high expectations. Some of these, alas, remain unfulfilled.

The first part of 60 pages contains some interesting information on the socio-economic problems of West Bengal. Mr Ghosh has marshalled enough facts to prove that as against many other States West Bengal has been discriminated against by the Centre, as a result of which economic development here has been in many respects among the slowest in India. He has particularly stressed the all-pervading feeling of alienation; the Marwari and Gujarati capitalists dominate trade and industry without a sense of belonging to this part of the country while the Bengali *bhadralok* who have monopolised political leadership in the State hanker after the lost glory of the yesteryears when they enjoyed certain privileges either as the feudal exploiters or as the chief clerk of British colonialism. Not that the author has completely forgotten about the Bengali working class or the peasantry; but these sections fail to catch the limelight. Indeed, the title itself proves the point: the Bengali *bhadralok* may rightly feel disinherited, but the toiling masses cannot grumble much about lost property. Of course, with rising population and shrinking employment opportunities the question of survival becomes more and more acute. However, the picture is equally grim for the labouring people in most other States. The author also has not gone in for an analysis of the root cause of our malaise which lies in the countryside; a few pages here and odd paragraphs there do speak of land-relations but these are not enough.

Part Two accounting for over four-fifths of the total length is mainly about the rise and fall of the two United Front Governments between 1967 and 1970. The writing is quite competent and the style attractive. The narration relies exclusively on reports appearing in the Calcutta Big Press; other sources, specially the various dailies and weeklies published by the parties could throw up a good deal of information not available elsewhere. The story is too often interspersed with rumours and allegations used as proxies for "explanations" or "motives". There is not an inconsiderable bias against the CPI (M); this is evident as much in the choice of incidents as in that of rumours-cum-explanations.

Among the main theses of the author is that the internal bickerings within the UF government were very much like the feuds inside a one-

FOOTPRINTS OF LIBERTY

Speeches and Writings of

TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI

Politically nurtured by Deshbandhu C. R. Das, a member of the Central Legislative Assembly from 1923 to 1930, nicknamed 'the Tiger of Swarajya Party' as Motilal Nehru's chief whip, one among the Big Five of Bengal, a brilliant orator, T. C. Goswami played a prominent role in India's struggle for freedom. This volume gives a vivid inside view of the nature and direction of India's political struggles in the 'twenties and 'thirties. 26 plates. Rs.28.00

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party government and that the UF would have continued in the absence of a Congress split. The role of the Bangla Congress in forcing the split is emphasised while the CPI seems to be more or less exonerated. The alternative thesis that even without a split in the Congress the UF as it was constituted, could not continue because of the intensification of the class struggle (e.g. land-grab and industry-wise strikes), is neither mentioned nor rebutted indirectly.

The author, without being quite explicit, seems to be concurring with the CPI(M) antagonists that the party "would not ultimately find any ideological bar to cooperating with the Prime Minister." Since "the Prime Minister chose a subtler way of disrupting the Front by outdoing it in socialist profession and *practice*" (our italics) what has prevented the long-expected marriage from taking place? Neither the story as recounted by the author nor the preface written in December 1970 gives us a clue to this question: why does the CPI(M) evoke so much hostility in and out of Parliament from everyone of the all-India parties? If love for the *gaddi* were so overweening the party could not have approached the electorate with hardly an ally on its side.

A valuable feature of the book is its sympathetic and fairly objective account of the Naxalite movement. Although excerpts from Kanu Sanyal's classic post-mortem on the Naxalbari uprising are given in an appendix, there is not enough material on the modus operandi of the Naxalites in the countryside. He could easily have included a larger slice of Sanyal's report as well as the other equally important report on the Debra-Gopiballavpur area. Why and how organised terror against isolated class enemies came to be the CPI(ML) slogan is practically unknown to outsiders.

There should have been a list of tables and appendices at the beginning and an index at the end. For a reporter's book, as it is described, some photographs would have been appropriate, considering the price.

N. C.

Clippings

"Hungry New Markets"

When Rudolph Peterson (President, Bank of America) spoke of "hungry new markets", he meant just what he said. India's 500 million people, imprisoned in poverty and always close to mass starvation, were set firmly in Peterson's sights. The impoverished farm labourers had built the bank's wealth in California, and now Peterson saw "one of the most interesting profit opportunities in the last third of the Twentieth Century... in the political imperative of agribusiness development in the lesser developed countries... We are in a unique position because we are the only large international bank with extensive experience in this field." The bank opened its first Indian branch in Bombay in 1964.

Indian farming desperately needed more fertilizer. Food production was not keeping pace with population. A growing grain deficit had to be made up by imports that reached six million tons even in 1964-65, a year of bumper crops. Strenuous efforts had been made by the Indian government to build more fertilizer plants under government ownership, but it could never borrow enough from the Western lenders to finance such developments along socialist lines. The Western oil and chemical corporations wanted to build and operate the fertilizer plants themselves, on their own terms. A blue-ribbon line-up of U.S. corporations was waiting for the chance. It included Armour & Co. (backed by Bank of America), Standard Oil of Indiana, Bechtel, Allied Chemicals and Phillips Petroleum.

Bechtel Corporation, head of a syndicate which included Texaco and Gulf, was pushing the Indian government to approve a scheme to build five giant fertilizer plants that would quadruple India's fertilizer production. Bechtel wanted to hold majority ownership of the plants, bypass

India's government-controlled price and distribution system, and obtain a guarantee of a total profit rate of about 20 per cent a year, "to recuperate the capital... about five years from the start of the operation." according to the *New York Times*. Besides all that, Gulf and Texaco wanted the plants to buy naphtha, the raw material for the fertilizer, from their Middle Eastern sources, even though India already had a naphtha surplus from its own government-owned refineries. It was extortion, corporate style. India turned it down.

In mid-1965, two disasters hit the Indian economy. First, the summer monsoon failed, causing a severe two-year famine. Second, the old Kashmir dispute with Pakistan broke into full-scale warfare. The U. S. decided the time was ripe to impress upon India a more obliging attitude toward foreign investment. The Food-for-Peace agreement expired in June 1965, and President Johnson refused to authorize a new agreement. Shipments were put on a month-to-month basis, with India never being sure whether the grain ships would continue to arrive in time to ward off mass starvation. Then in September Johnson suspended all U.S. foreign aid. The U. S. controlled World Bank tightened the squeeze by slowing down its loans. India, which relied on \$1 billion a year in Western aid just to be able to make the payments on its old Western 'timeplan' loans, lurched toward bankruptcy.

By December, the Shastri government had enough. It announced that foreign investors in fertilizer would be allowed to set their own prices and handle their own distribution. This might have been sufficient a year earlier, but now it was not enough. The corporations held back, and President Johnson offered no new aid agreement. "President Johnson is reported to be making India's progress in signing agreements with private fertilizer investors a major

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condition for the resumption of aid," reported the *New York Times*.

In April 1966, the new Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, flew to Washington and delivered her total capitulation to U. S. demands. The corporations were given the right to majority control of fertilizer plants, because, said the *New York Times*, "private bankers in the U. S. would not approve loans" otherwise. India agreed to a drastic 36.5% devaluation of the rupee, raising the buying power of the U.S. investment dollars. Eleven days later, President Johnson announced that the U. S. would resume full-scale humanitarian aid and economic assistance to India.

Bank of America got its cut with a deal to finance a \$70 million fertilizer plant to be owned jointly by the bank, Armour & Co., U. S. Steel and India's privately owned Birla Industries. The World Bank's International Finance Corporation eased the way with some low-cost financing, and the U. S. government's AID gave the project a free "extended-risk" guarantee against war, revolutions, expropriation and loss—under a plan worked out the year before by Francis X. Scafure, a Bank of America vice-president.

In December 1969, at the time of his retirement as Bank of America President, Rudolph Peterson pointed to the Indian fertilizer deal as one of the bank's finest achievements.... (Michael Sweeny in *Ramparts*, November 1970).

Proletarian Journalists

China is urging soldiers, workers and peasants to try their hand at journalism but they are told not to expect bylines... 'Bourgeois ideas of fame and profit are the great enemy of carrying out Chairman Mao's press line' said a recent editorial in the *Kwangsi Daily* broadcast by Nanking Radio. 'Without such ideas it is impossible in press work to persist in giving prominence to proletarian politics. Unless bourgeois ideas of fame and profit are destroyed the

proletarian force of journalism will be corrupted and the proletarian power over the press will be in danger of being lost again.'

Chairman Mao Tse-tung, a poet and writer himself, decreed in 1968 that newspapers must be run by the people and not by a few persons working behind closed doors (bourgeois specialists).

Since then large numbers of workers, peasants and soldiers have been recruited as news correspondents and Peking boasts that the intellectuals' monopoly on journalism has been smashed.

In China the press is an important political instrument and major editorials are carefully studied at mass readings. Policy is often laid down in editorials prepared jointly by Peking's three major journals, the *People's Daily*, official organ of the Communist Party, the Armed Forces newspaper the *Liberation Army* and the *Red Flag*.

Peking's attitude to journalism was summed up by the *People's Daily* by describing it as a weapon for class struggle, a tool for the building of socialism and a platform from which Marxism may be taught to the people and therefore must remain in the hands of the party.

Some of the fiercest political battles of China's Cultural Revolution were fought in newspaper offices. The first shot of the revolution that rocked China from 1966 to 1969 was fired by the Shanghai daily *Wen Hui Pao* which attacked a historical play written by Wu Han, the Deputy Mayor of Peking.

Wu Han and Peng Chen, the Mayor and the First Secretary of the party of Peking, who apparently opposed Chairman Mao's plan to conduct the Cultural Revolution were sacked soon after.

Editors of many Chinese newspapers and periodicals were assailed by Maoist Red Guards as ringleaders of the counter-revolutionary clique in literature and art.

The 22-year-old *People's Daily* has a much wider readership than its circulation, believed to be 1.5 million copies. It is distributed to party and

Government cadres who read its contents to illiterate factory workers, farmers and soldiers. Its important articles are broadcast over the radio and reprinted in virtually all provincial papers.

China's main information outlet abroad is the New China News Agency, a government organisation with correspondents in over 50 countries and more than 30 domestic bureaus which control the dissemination inside China of news from the outside world.

Set up in 1952 as the Red China News Agency it projects Chinese revolutionary theories so vigorously that a number of its correspondents have been expelled from various countries for alleged espionage and subversive activities.

Letters

Two Deaths

Two revolutionaries died last week. One was 57, the other 25. One died in bed of a heart attack, the other shot it out, alone, revolver in hand with two truckloads of the Indian Army. The old one had run the full gamut of Bengal's recent revolutionary past: the terrorist days, the early communist movements, the battle against revisionism, Naxalbari, the Co-ordination Committee, the CPI (ML), and finally the battle against left adventurism. The young one had crammed the courage and intensity of several lifetimes in his five years of political work. One was seemingly at the very pinnacle of revolutionary power: Member of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the CPI (ML), and of the West Bengal State Committee, with a price of Rs. 5000 on his head. The other was a local leader whose power of death over his enemies was exceeded only by his deep involvement in the life of the people of that area. Comrade Sushital Roy Chowdhury died last week and so did Comrade Ashu Mazumdar.

The dissimilarities are but super-

ficial. Much more fundamental are the similarities. Both were ardent fighters of the CPI (ML). Both wanted freedom, democracy and revolution for the Indian masses and fought for these throughout their conscious lives. Both were loved and respected by all those who knew them. Both were immensely honest. Both served the people and their deaths were heavier than the hills: seen by all and felt by many. Finally, Sushital Roy Chowdhury and Ashu Mazumdar did not only share a purpose in life but also the cause of their death.

There will be a time and place to recount the deeds of these valiant dead. To honour them and to mourn them. But now the mind is too angry for such an exercise. Too many have been falsely and cruelly driven out into the cold, isolated, ostracised—like Sushital Roy Chowdhury—because they chose to question an adventurist “authority”. Too much young blood—wonderful, idealistic blood—has run down city streets in futile urban “actions”—like Ashu Mazumdar’s. The past cannot engage the mind as long as there is the killer present.

To say that Sushital Roy Chowdhury was killed by a heart attack or that Ashu Mazumdar was killed by the five bullets they shot into him (including two *after* his arrest and removal from the place of capture) would be merely to touch the cold dead *surface* of their death. They died because of the dangerous and destructive line put forward by a section of the CPI (ML) leadership. They have used the blind, dedicated, passionate allegiance of our petit bourgeois youth to lead the party into a line where death is the only reward and blood the only sign of success. For six terrible months of 1970-71, the flower of Bengal plunged into the abyss of adventurism. Frustration fed their faith. Their feudal-colonial past and culture, their very bitterness made them unquestioning, almost fanatic. The martyrdom of their comrades along with the emotional outpourings of their leaders pushed them—as if on an assembly line—to the altar of sacrifice. It was magnificent. But it was *not* war.

Sushital Roy Chowdhury died fighting against this line. Ashu Mazumdar died implementing it. Both died because of it.

The CPI (ML) carried the seeds of ‘Left’ and Right deviation from its birth. This was inevitable. Right opportunism was the main danger. It still is, except that one must remember that in revolutionary times, during passages of revolutionary advance, after every success in the battle against revisionism—right opportunism manifests itself in the guise of ‘left’ adventurism and tries to wreck the party. In the beginning, in the CPI (ML) the signs were there. But they were few: isolated bits of unreason, sudden short bursts of fanaticism over-reliance on conspiracy, a tendency to stick to the city, repeated instances of directing appeals mainly to youth and students rather than directly to the toiling masses, thereby shifting the emphasis. But all those appeared to be mere flotsam in the strong, clean river of revolution. So they went unnoticed. Perhaps it was a mistake. But the fact remains that these piled up and collected and a whole range of “theories” appeared. The “theory” began, qualitatively, by describing the mechanics of individual assassination to be achieved by a conspiracy. In the beginning, this was to be a take-off point, a link between political propaganda and organisational work and the formation of guerilla forces and liberated zones. This was in March 1970. In April/May it was raised to the level of being the *only* way, the *only* link. Immediately thereafter it was announced to be *the strategy* for all the stages of the People’s Democratic Revolution. Those who accepted this theory in March failed to see that by making conspiracy the only method of organisation, by placing this conspiratorial organisation outside the control of the party unit and by *narrowing the definition of ‘annihilation’ to mean only the slitting of throats*—this ‘theory’ was fundamentally against Mao Tse-tung Thought. The rapid success of this line—measured in terms of throats slit—made all questions evaporate or appear revisionist.

As long as the pre-conditions laid down by the original article were maintained “successes” were few and the sphere of activity remained confined to the village, the deviation was not alarming. It was capable of correction. But then came the city ‘actions’ followed by the city annihilations. New ‘theories’ began to gush from the fountain-head.

1. The theory that the all-India bourgeoisie was comprador.

2. The theory that all intellectual or petit bourgeois leaders of the past respected by the present society were dalals of imperialism.

3. The theory that more you study the more stupid you become.

4. The theory that destruction of statues and schools, colleges, laboratories was correct, revolutionary and akin to the great proletarian cultural revolution of China.

5. The theory that *one* activist represents his entire class. Thus the participation of one landless poor peasant in one annihilation means that the *entire* landless poor peasant mass is ready to participate in the annihilations.

6. The theory that propaganda, organisation etc. are unnecessary, that only by annihilation would all these be achieved. Annihilation must come first.

7. The theory that oppression is necessary to revolutionise the people. Also the theory that every murder of the enemy must be paid back by a murder. Instant revenge became the credo.

8. The theory that the urban petit bourgeois youth need no longer go to the villages. By destroying statues, schools, colleges etc. they were integrating with the rural masses.

9. The theory that in India, in the present age city and village, town and countryside are the same, indivisible. The work in both is the same, tactics in both shall be the same. The *only* work in the cities is armed guerilla attack.

10. The theory that Comrade Charu Mazumdar is the only authority, only he understands Mao Tse-tung Thought, that he is the Party, that he must be obeyed *unconditionally*.

ally and not to obey him is not to be a communist. Comrade Lenin in 1918 or Chairman Mao in 1950 did not get nor did they demand this sort of blind, superstitious, unreasoning obedience.

11. The theory that to attack only when one is sure of winning is revisionist.

12. The theory that the rich peasant is an enemy and can be annihilated.

Sushital Roy Chowdhury fought all this. His hopes and revolutionary discipline kept him silent for a long time. Then when he began to speak he was insulted, isolated and abused as a centrist, a revisionist, a coward. His love for the Party and his unflinching loyalty to the international leadership sustained him in his fight. He had nothing else.

The Party leadership refused to give him information reports, shelter. For a long time they stopped his allowance. This and worse, was the fate of many others—whenever chose to oppose the leadership.

Sushital Roy Chowdhury, revolutionary and patriot, died, hounded by the police. This was natural, and he accepted it joyfully. But it was the abuse, insult and suspicion from his comrades which broke his heart. It was their complete deafness to the repeating teachings of the international leadership (evidenced by the Indian language broadcasts of Radio Peking) which tore at his hopes for revolution. It is this betrayal of faith and comradeship which killed him.

Ashu Mazumdar, made up for his inexperience by his fiery zeal, his fantastic courage and his capacity to organise. He obeyed the Party. In this obedience he put everything he had; in the end his life. Ashu was not responsible for what he was asked to do. What he was responsible for he did magnificently. His toughness had no cruelty. His command led off with repeated examples of death defying courage. His respect for elders—all elders, his affection for the local people—all people, was apparent in every action. That is why when Ashu died people wept.

Ashu Mazumdar had the courage and intelligence, the initiative and dedication necessary to be a revolutionary cadre. Had these integrated with the rural poor, the revolutionary tinder, Ashu might have caused a conflagration. But no, Ashu was in the suburbs of Calcutta. Ashu's death is great. It has the bravery and sacrifice of the supreme martyr.

But to what purpose!

To what purpose?

It is time the people and the revolutionaries asked this question. How wonderful were those days! The days of shining hope, of daring to think and daring to act. The days when we investigated, inspired and integrated. When we came under a common banner which rose like a high flame and could be seen from far away. Think of those days when we led not only politically, but also *morally*, when the whole people answered for us whenever the enemy dared to abuse us. Think of those days when we were feared by the oppressive few and loved by the many. What happened? Why do so many fear us? Why whenever there is an unreasonable murder do all of us tremble and hope that it was not the work of 'our boys'? Where is the working class who will lead our revolution? Where is the roused peasantry? Where is the People's Army so flauntingly announced in 1970? Why did so many vote so overwhelmingly in spite of all the threats, the bombs, the pipeguns? Shall we be blind to all this? Two hundred 'annihilations', three hundred martyrs: fresh young blood spilled on pavements, for what? What answer have we got for the locked-out worker, the land-hungry debt-ridden peasant, the people suffocated by a spiral of prices—aching under brutal oppression and cynical betrayal, to the invasion of Cambodia, Laos? The CPI (ML) leadership have only one answer, annihilation, squeezed implistically to mean only one thing—slitting an individual's throat.

Now this leadership, decimated by arrests, death and expulsion, is again changing its line. Economic work among the peasantry, concentration

upon the urban classes (working), building of rural bases, downgrading of annihilation of the class enemy—all these are being put forward. But there is no accompanying analyses, valuation, self-criticism. Thus this leadership goes on, sowing confusion and reaping death. Sushital Roy Chowdhury and Ashu Mazumdar were the latest harvest.

S. Roy
Calcutta

Delhi University

Mr Suraj Singh's letter (February 13) once again points out the undemocratic state of Delhi University. Last year many B.A. and B.Sc. students of Calcutta University, including myself, applied for admission to the M.A. and M.Sc. course of Delhi University. This was not anything new but some RSS-led students raised a hue and cry and demanded that not a single student from Bengal be admitted because "they are all Naxalites and will poison academic life"! No logic or common sense is expected from the Jana Sangh, but the strange part of the story is that under their pressure the University authorities passed a resolution restricting the admission of students from West Bengal. By what right these people could stop the migration of students from one part of the country to another which incidentally is stated to be the capital of the world's largest 'democracy' in unknown to us. What we know is that not a single student from West Bengal was admitted to the M.Sc. course only because they appeared potentially dangerous to a fascist party, namely the J.S. And, think of it, all these took place before the very eyes of those guardians of democracy who cry themselves hoarse in parliament over individual rights, not to mention the Marxists. Without a bit of shame they are appearing again in another election to seek our votes in the name of democracy!

Apart from MPs, the silence of Delhi University students over this disgraceful act was also depressing.

Maybe fear of harassment by the police and the RSS got the upper hand of the conscience of those not yet tainted by ganja and charas.

This year again perhaps some students from West Bengal will seek admission to Delhi University and perhaps this silent drama is going to be staged once again. As Suraj Singh has pointed out, it is time the Delhi students rose to free their university from the agents of reaction.

P. Roy
Calcutta

How They Behave

On February 17 we were waiting near the college gate to gather information regarding the B.Sc., Part I examination when we saw one of our friends approaching us. We cheered loudly and asked him to join our gossip (by no means political). Suddenly, three CRP men marched out, and one of them ordered us to stop cheering, at gunpoint. He used abusive language like "soor ka bachcha", and threatened us with dire consequences. Soon, a lorryload of CRP men entered the college, followed by a police jeep. Such is the behaviour of the police with ordinary students, leaving aside girl students, who are victims of constant booing and laughter from them.

Elsewhere our brothers are being shot dead in cold blood, our sisters molested, and our elderly neighbours given Assyrian torture by the police.

SOME STUDENTS OF
PRESIDENCY COLLEGE
Calcutta

Overtime

Mr Gyan Kapur in his Calcutta Diary (February 20) wrote about overtime work. The Government rule restricting it to 10 hours in any month and 120 hours in a year has had little effect in the majority of establishments. Also, after 48 hours per week of normal work, 50 hours of overtime within a three-month period

is being observed in some government undertakings. Is there any difference in overtime rules for Government employees and for those in other Government undertakings?

About nine months ago a worker in a jute factory in Vizianagram (Andhra Pradesh) refused to do overtime. When the management charge-sheeted him all the workers went on strike; the factory was locked out. After conciliation talks the trade union leaders agreed to submit an apology from the worker and the dispute ended. Where some rules are observed such is the freedom of the worker! What about workers where no rules are observed and no proper duties and designations laid down, as in some establishments and small factories and contractors' concerns?

We hear that in socialist countries the working hours per week have been reduced as a result of full employment and modern machinery. With unemployment raging here, most of the wage-slaves and trade unions are crying for overtime, risking health and also helping the process of exploitation further.

A WHITE-COLLAR WORKER
Visakhapatnam (A.P.)

Plight Of 'Nation-Builders'

The recommendations of the State Pay Commission have been out but the status of the secondary teachers of the State is yet to be officially announced. We do not know if their scale has been revised or if the irregularities they experience in getting their monthly pay or D.A. have been removed. While all the employees of the State receive their D.A. with their monthly pay packet, the secondary school teachers receive the pay and D.A., especially in rural areas, every four or five months, thus defeating the very purpose of payment of the same. In some cases, aided schools receive their aid half yearly. Thus teachers are not only ill-paid but also, to add to their miseries, irregularly paid.

So much so about teachers in service. Teachers in training have to go

without pay for at least three months before their deputation allowance is "regularised". But the so-called regularisation again is not complete in one stage. Even after the payment for the first three months in one instalment, the deputed teachers have again to go without pay for months together. When in these hard days one can hardly manage one's affairs with one's pay, it can easily be appreciated how difficult it becomes for a poor "nation-builder" to manage his own with no pay for months together. If the Government cannot do anything to improve the teachers' lot, can it not at least ensure that a teacher gets all his dues on the first of every month?

SUJIT GUHA
Calcutta

Holidays

Dear Editor, Sir, it is awfully tiresome to request you not to stop printing *Frontier* now and then. I wonder when the future of the whole country and of the people is at stake, how can you stop the publication of your paper only to enjoy Holi and the Election—the festivals of the ruling class? Will you please take the trouble of reading the history of *Pravda* and *Iskra*?

ASIS SANKAR SARBADHYAKSHA
(Whether the paper can be brought out or not in a week of holidays depends, not on the editor, but on the press.—Editor).

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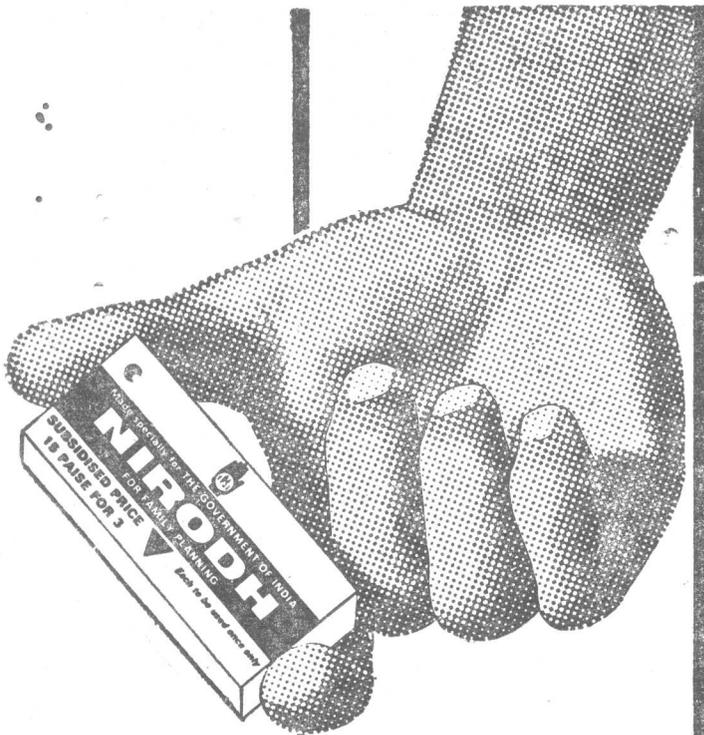
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