

frontier

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HAWKS AND SPARROWS

THE scenario was well written and the staging has been near-perfect. In view of the public raving in India and the Defence of India Act, all that one is expected to do is to practise a willing suspension of disbelief. Sanity has been left out in the wilderness and hawks, with borrowed feather, have taken over. They are being cheered by chirping leftist sparrows of all sorts.

This time the contingency planning against a mighty Pakistan which attacked India on Friday evening (December 3) when she knew that she would lose her principal limb, was excellent. The ineffective air strikes were followed within minutes by a massive induction of Indian troops into East Bengal; the IAF went into action, and the morning after, the Navy. Planes from an Indian aircraft-carrier struck at Cox's Bazar and Chittagong port. The promptitude, the co-ordination were a result of intensive planning. In this hour of rejoicing that an inefficient and incompetent regime has built up such an army one cannot but dismiss a lingering doubt that all this excellence is due to our close collaboration with a super-power.

Not much is known at the time of writing of what is happening on the western front, except that Karachi port is in deep trouble. On the eastern front, the predictions are that East Bengal will be conquered by mid-December. That the Indian army had to go all out does little credit to the Mukti Bahini and the Bangladesh Government, now granted recognition by New Delhi; that freedom may be handed on a platter to the Awami League will circumscribe the nature of that freedom. No people, as a contemporary close to the Soviet Union wrote before the outbreak of war, has ever won freedom through the help of foreign armies.

What about the refugees? Will they now stream back to their homes—already occupied by other people? Will the presence of the Indian army, with whom the Awami League will co-operate, ensure their speedy resettlement? East Bengal has been ravaged by the West Pakistani army, though there are no signs of a famine, near-starvation stalks the country. The problem of feeding the population, of restoring transport and communications, will now be the responsibility of the Indian Government. There are also unknown armed elements; there are large numbers of non-Bengali Muslims. There is also the lurking distrust of Indian inten-

tions. The direct intervention of the Indian army will give rise to many complications when the present euphoria is over. But here, as elsewhere, help by the international community, that is, Soviet Russia and the East European countries, should not be underestimated.

Yahya Khan and his friends have made a bloody mess of East Bengal by their reliance on a military solution of the problem. In the same way it may turn out in the long run that

New Delhi too made a grave mistake by taking a military plunge. The temporary advantages, as we write, are obvious. But let us wait and see.

As for the leftist sparrows at home, let them beware. The hawks, now pleased by their support, will nevertheless turn on them when necessary. We have our Razakars too. They will see to it that, riding on a wave of mass enthusiasm generated by the war, Mrs Gandhi sweeps the polls next year. The voice of the people is not always the voice of God.

Small And Necessary Step

The Big Industry in India has over-reacted to the 25th Constitution Amendment Bill. When the Bill is passed by the Rajya Sabha, as it will be shortly, Parliament will have the power to, among other things, acquire private industry, and the amount the Government, will pay in compensation will not be justiciable. It is entirely uncharitable on the part of Big Industry to imagine that the Government and Parliament are manned by people who are out to destroy private capital. If this were so, why did the Government, with its enormous economic and fiscal powers, allow private capital to entrench itself squarely, the monopolists to burgeon and flourish, and create a public sector with in-built weaknesses? Let the industrialists not confuse socialist capital with state capital. It is necessary to window-dress the ugly look of private capital manoeuvring. The 25th Amendment Bill is just that and no more. Mr Subba Rao and his majority of one had of course in 1967 tried to lift the camouflage and went off the track. Worked up with the idea that the Supreme Court was being humbled, that the executive was gaining the upper hand, they put in a small impediment in the way of curtailing what the constitutionalists called Fundamental Rights. But they were thinking in a vacuum. Two hands of a body can act at variance to a very small extent; they can

never cancel each other's act completely. The executive and the judiciary of the Indian body politic come from the same class and form a homogeneous body; there is no need to fear that this trick will unhinge Parliament; the plastic girl after the circus-show will come off in one piece alright.

So the industrialists should agree with Mr S. S. Ray that the Bill was constitutionally correct, economically essential, politically proper, morally just and, after Mrs Gandhi's insistence on deletion from the Bill of ugly words like 'market value' they may add, aesthetically satisfying.

It may happen that a few enterprises may fall victim to the lifting of judicial pronouncements on Parliament's 'progressive' legislation. A few industries, not in the good books of the present bureaucrats, may be taken over without full compensation, partly because of private animus, partly to give a polish to the Government's appearance. Those will be 'small but necessary steps', to quote Mrs Gandhi in this context, albeit with a more altruistic intent. Similar small but necessary steps have been taken by Mrs Gandhi with some frequency now, the latest being the Constitution's 26th Amendment Bill, which has done away with the privy purses. Mrs Gandhi, in her latest Calcutta mass address, was ringing with promises of many more such small

steps. The 'intellectuals' of Calcutta have been nicely seduced and one such, professing leftism, has already undertaken to complement Mrs Gandhi's Bangladesh adventure with eye-witness accounts of the Jessore resistance to fascism with the help of the Indian Army (before the Army crossed the borders). Mrs Gandhi is truly the best Prime Minister the Indian intellectuals have ever had, far outpacing the Nehru of the late forties and early fifties, embodying, as she does, Russia's coexistence theory in a beguiling form.

Burma

Ne Win's socialist venture seems to have run into heavy weather. Despite the recent thaw in the Thai-Burmese relations which has helped Ne Win to defuse U. Nu's come-back plan and the friendly gesture from Peking, the situation in his backyard is hardly encouraging for him. Recently he claimed that the Burmese communist influence has been on the wane. But there are sure indications that this split-ridden party still controls the region east of the Salween river and its 4000-strong force can still give trouble to Rangoon's gendarmes.

But Ne Win's immediate danger comes, not from the communists but from the Shan guerillas of Kayah state, who have been estranged by the policies of the regime. The fact that Shans do not profess communism brings small comfort to Ne Win. The embittered hill tribe has turned to guerilla methods for redress and reports show that they are firmly based on their people and terrain. Last month they ambushed government forces in the region between Taunggyi and Loi Kaw—the capital of Kayah state—and frequently snipe at them in the region. The guerillas seem to have good contacts with their Thai counterparts across the border with whom they exchange opium for arms and the government's repeated efforts to block the traffic have yielded little

result. Apart from Shans, Kachins in the extreme north as also Karens in the Tennesim region and the Irrawaddy region have grown restive.

Force has so far been Ne Win's only mode of communication with the insurgents. He has reared a 1,45,000-strong army. Though this force is not adequate to root out the rebels in the thickly wooded regions of Burma, it is big enough to sap Burma's ailing economy. Defence spending has continued to be high and, for 1971-72, it has been increased by Kyat 490 million. But the revenue earnings have fallen by Kyat 212 million to Kyat 1,159 million due, mainly, to shrinkage in agricultural prices. This anomaly has been reflected in the yawning deficit in the national budget. And if the expected aid from outside does not come it would shoot up to Kyat 671 million. Prices, particularly of industrial raw materials and of necessities, have gone up ominously.

But the misery of the people and their growing animosity have not subdued Ne Win's socialist consciousness a bit. He has gone on with his programme of annihilation while endorsing the plans for sell-out of Burma's sovereignty by opening it up to foreign investors which include the USA, Germany, France and, recently, Japan. It has been claimed by Rangoon that by courting them it will take the country to an era of prosperity. But in view of the scars in its economy and the seething unrest in the countryside beneath a surface of tranquillity such boasting seems unreal.

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DECEMBER 11, 1971

View from Delhi

As The War Goes

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

AFTER all, the Indo-Soviet treaty, claimed by Mr Swaran Singh to be a deterrent to any aggressor, has not prevented a war in the sub-continent. Political charlatans might point out that the treaty has inhibited China from intervening in the Indo-Pakistani war but this hardly stands to reason. When a smaller country like Pakistan can commit aggression on India, China cannot be deterred from aiding Pakistan just because India has a treaty with the Soviet Union. If anything, the Soviet Union is still Pakistan's number five aid-giver while China stands far down in the list.

Judging from the course of the war as on Sunday afternoon, it looks as though Bangladesh will be a tame affair for the Indian forces which have linked with the Mukti Bahini and Indian recognition of Bangladesh is a matter of formality because Mrs Indira Gandhi described the Islamabad Government as the West Pakistan Government when she spoke in Parliament on Saturday. Hungary and the German Democratic Republic are the two socialist countries mentioned as certain to follow India's recognition of Bangladesh. Mr D. P. Dhar was in Mujibnagar the day after the war began and is supposed to be finalising the details. It is to be a "broad-based" government, as they call it, with due representation to pro-Moscow communists and their allies because Bangladesh is to be another instance of a potential national democracy.

The Bangladesh military operation might be over in a few days but the trend in the western sector is unpredictable. It might be a long-drawn out affair if the anxiety of India and Pakistan to conserve military hardware is any indication. So far, the thrust of the Pakistani armour

has been foiled with rocket fire from air or anti-tank weapons. Tanks have not been moved in to match tanks. Similarly, Pakistan has refrained from throwing in aircraft to engage Indian aircraft on bombing raids. Similarly, most of the Pakistani aircraft shot down in the western sector were hit by ground-fire or missiles and were not downed by interceptor or fighter aircraft. The operations might last longer than expected. After a fierce round, there might be lull and renewed fighting, even after Pakistan has lost Bangladesh. This assumes that there would be no cease-fire because India's stand so far has been clear and equivocal.

The Soviet veto in the Security Council seems to be the only tangible benefit of the Indo-Soviet treaty so far. But then, the Soviet Union might have exercised the veto even without the treaty. Could it be that General Yahya Khan launched the war as an alibi for losing Bangladesh and convincing his hawk generals that with the best of military efforts Pakistan could not have retained Bangladesh.

The marked hostility of the Western press towards India during the last week or so has surprised many. The British press was supposed to be getting closer to the Indian viewpoint when it effected a neat volte face. There was so much talk about inevitability of war in the Western press when the hostilities broke out.

The war has certainly cramped the CPI(M)'s style. Though it tried to move amendments, to the Defence of India Bill, Mr Jyotirmoy Basu chose not to move his amendment on the motion to extend President's rule in West Bengal. It looks as though the CPI(M) has decided on a political truce with Mrs Gandhi and the Centre. But surprisingly, the Alipore jail riot compelled

even the Jana Sangh to condemn the outrage. The Sangh's radical image, complete with a demand for ceiling on urban property, should have surprised Mrs Gandhi and her party because it is competition in slogan-mongering.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman was virtually forgotten the moment the war began. In sheer desperation the Pakistani regime might liquidate the Sheikh but one possibility hardly realised is that he could be saved. From all accounts, there will be mass surrender of the Pakistan troops in Bangladesh as the mopping up phase begins. The Pakistani regulars would rather surrender to the Indian army than to the Mukti Bahini. Whatever the class origin of the ranks, the officers belong to families of Pakistan's political elite. A day or two before the war began, a few PIA Boeings ferried families of these elite officers and their valuables like jewellery to the western wing. Since the officials would be among the prisoners (there is no escape possible with the Indian navy blockading the approaches to the Bangladesh ports), the government to be in Dacca can bargain for the release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

New Delhi has reason to feel relieved that there has been no significant movement of Chinese troops on the border. Nevertheless, New Delhi has proceeded on the assumption that China will not intervene militarily in a conflict. What Pakistan's military objective would be is still a matter of speculation. Whether the Pakistan war machine would attempt to grab areas of the Kashmir valley or cease war the moment Bangladesh is gone is hard to say. For the present India's effort seems to be to fight a strong holding action in the western sector until the Bangladesh operation is over.

December 5, 1971

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A Digression

By A CORRESPONDENT

AT the UN there have been numerous attempts to define aggression. Way back in 1951-52, a Russian draft proposal on the subject had outlined: "That in an international conflict that State shall be declared the attacker which first commits one of the following acts: (a) Declaration of war against another State. (b) Invasion by its armed forces, even without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State. (c) Bombardment by its land, sea or air force of the territory of another State or the carrying out of a deliberate attack on the ships or aircraft of the latter. (d) The landing or leading of its land, sea or air forces inside the boundaries of another State without the permission, particularly as regards the length of their stay or the extent of the area in which they may stay. (e) Naval blockade of the coasts or parts of another State. (f) Support of armed bands organised in its own territory which invade the territory of another State, or refusal, on being requested by the invaded State, to take in its own territory any action within its power to deny such bands any aid or protection" (Yearbook of the UN: 1951; p 837).

In the UN deliberation of January 1952, "a large number of representatives took the view that a definition was possible and was necessary or highly desirable from legal standpoints". Pakistan was one of the countries that took the above view. India, however stayed close to the USA and the UK, and voiced with them that the UN General Assembly "should not attempt to formulate a definition of aggression holding that no satisfactory definition could be found" (ibid; 834).

Eventually, the UN General Assembly entrusted the International Law Commission with the responsibility of defining aggression. "The Commission drew up a draft code and men-

tioned following nine offences as illustrative of aggression: "1. The use of armed force for purposes other than self-defence. 2. Threat to resort to aggression. 3. Preparation for the employment of armed force for purposes other than those approved. 4. The organisation or encouragement or toleration of armed bands operating against other States. 5. Fomenting civil strife in other States. 6. Undertaking or encouraging terrorist activities in other States. 7. Violations of treaties restricting or limiting armaments, military training, fortifications etc. 8. Annexation of another State's territory by means of acts contrary to international law. 9. Intervention in another State's internal or external affairs by means of economic or political coercion in order to obtain advantages of any kind. The characterisation though it has not been adopted by the UN, is an expression of expert opinion, and has been regarded as authoritative, and for our purposes, the acts thus specified furnish a serviceable yardstick for an objective appraisal" (*Times of India*, 3.2.1966).

At a time when U.S. imperialism overwhelmingly dominated the UN and was itself committing one aggression after another, it is to be expected that neither the USSR draft proposal nor the ILC draft code had any chance of being adopted in the UN. There has been endless discussion to codify aggression but till date nothing has fructified in the UN. In 1967, the USSR stressed on the 'urgency to define aggression'. But since 1968, even the Russian sense of 'urgency' has been lacking.

However, it is not aggression alone that must determine our attitude towards war. Kautsky once rightly said that "it was often impossible to make out—especially at times of patriotic excitement—whether a particular war had been brought about with defensive or aggressive aim". Lenin added to it to say: "Social-democrats may find themselves in a position to demand offensive war, if they determine their attitude to a war by analysing whether

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it is defensive or offensive". Lenin emphatically said that, "it is obvious that on this question (just as in discussing 'patriotism') it is not the defensive or offensive character of the war, but the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat, or—to put it better—the interests of the international movement of the proletariat—that represents the sole criterion for considering and deciding the attitude of the Social-Democrats to any particular event in international relation".

At the same time Lenin pointed out that "a Marxist must first analyse the nature of war...ascertain above all the objective conditions and concrete environment of the...war". He said that it was "absurd to divide wars into defensive and aggressive". To Lenin wars were national or im-

perialist. "The wars of the late eighteenth and entire nineteenth centuries...were all national wars which accompanied and promoted the establishment of national states. Those wars marked the destruction of feudalism and epitomised the struggle of the new, bourgeois society against feudal society.

On the other hand, an imperialist war is imbued with at least one of the following characteristics (i) that the war is initiated directly by one of the imperialist powers, (ii) that it would help or promote the interest of at least one imperialist power, (iii) that it is against the interest of the socialist countries and socialism in general, and (iv) it enslaves the working people and uses them as cannon fodder rather than libera-

ting them from the yoke of exploitation and misery.

A civil war is "an armed struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, for the expropriation of the capitalist class in the advanced capitalist countries for a democratic revolution... (a democratic republic, an eight-hour working day, the confiscation of landed estates), for a republic to be formed in the backward monarchist countries in general, etc" (Lenin). It is not enough to define a civil war and that is why Lenin also pointed out that "the conversion of the present imperialist war into a civil war is the only correct proletarian slogan, one that follows from the experience of the Commune and is outlined in the Basle Resolution (1912)". That is the people's path in Pakistan (East or West) or be it in India.

An Analysis Of The April Events In Ceylon

BY A CEYLONESE MARXIST-LENINIST

THE gun shots that rang out on April 5, 1971 at Wellawaya, heralding the outbreak of the foredoomed insurrection by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), not only killed the policeman on duty at his desk. It also effectively demolished several myths about Ceylon which had been sedulously cultivated by the bourgeois press and politicians.

Despite the notorious fact that our crime rate was about the third highest in the world, Ceylon was supposed to be a peaceful country, wedded to the doctrine of "maithiri" and non-violence, the Dhamma Deepa, whose protection had been entrusted to the special care of Indra by Sakra on the specific request of Lord Buddha just before he passed away. Despite the brutal violence witnessed during the communal troubles of 1958, when men were burnt alive because they belonged to the wrong race, the myth was created that the people of Ceylon were wedded to the democratic life and were opposed to revolution and violence. In fact at a public meeting

held at Kandy a few weeks before the beginning of the insurrection, Mrs Bandaranaike claimed that the country had been spared violence because it was specially protected by the gods!

But the biggest myth propagated about Ceylon was that its people were firmly wedded to the principles of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, that they were the only country that had zealously learnt the art of democratic government from the British overlords, that they had successfully changed governments by the democratic process and that Ceylon was an oasis of stable government in an otherwise turbulent world.

All these theories lie shattered on the ground today. The readiness and the dedication with which numerous young men and women came forward to sacrifice their lives, irrespective of the fact that they were misguided, badly led and followed completely wrong tactics, once and for all disposed of the theory that our people were not revolutionary. They are second to none. Let this be a warning to

the reactionaries and an encouragement to the revolutionaries.

Secondly, the most "democratically" elected government is having to rule with the most brutal dictatorial powers. Bourgeois democracy in Ceylon had always been a farce. Beginning as far back as the 1956 MEP government of the late Mr Bandaranaike, rule by a state of emergency had become a practice. Both the 1960 government of Mrs Bandaranaike and the 1965 government of Dudley Senanayake competed with each other as to which government shall rule under a state of emergency for a longer period. The UNP beat the SLFP by a small length. Anyway, both governments ruled for the greater part of their period under a state of emergency. That was democracy a la Ceylon.

But the record has been improved under the present United Front government of Mrs Bandaranaike. Coming to power with an unprecedented parliamentary majority of over two-thirds, it could not complete one year

of its life without proclaiming emergency. It is unlikely that it can lift the state of emergency during its span of life—however short or long it turns out to be. At the time the United Front Government came to power in May 1970, Marxist-Leninists pointed out that the very vastness of the parliamentary majority contained within itself the seeds of its own destruction. The United Front, while in opposition, had been lavish in its promises to the people. There was nothing they did not promise. Its leaders even boasted that during the five long years they spent in opposition, they had drafted a master plan which would be put into operation as soon as they climbed into the seats of power. They asked of the people only one thing: Give us an absolute majority so that we need not be dependent on other parties or groups. The people did more than that. They gave the UF a two-thirds majority. There was apparently nothing to stop the government from implementing its promises. A prostrate opposition also pledged its support. There could be no possible excuse for inability to implement the election programmes; and very soon signs were not wanting that the people were not willing to listen to excuses. They had done what they had been asked of them and now they wanted results.

Warning

Even before the election victory of May 1970, the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, in calling upon the people to reject the farce of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, and not participate in the general elections in any way, had warned that, so long as the present imperialist-feudalist-big bourgeois economic framework was

not broken and the repressive bourgeois state machinery that acted as its watchdog not smashed by force, whatever be the government that came to power through the means of bourgeois parliamentary democracy would not be able to solve the fundamental problems of the people.

The warning proved correct. Parliamentary democracy in Ceylon has been a sort of a game of musical chairs between the Senanayake and Bandaranaike families. From 1947 to 1956, for a period of 9 years, the Senanayake clan ruled. For the next nine years, from 1956 to 1965, the Bandaranaike—husband and wife—took over. Then, from 1965 to 1970, the Senanayakes took over. Now the pendulum has swung back to the Bandaranaike onto whose bandwagon in the meanwhile had crept the LSSP and the Keuneman revisionist clique (Ceylon's revisionist Communist Party). But no fundamental change took place in the social and economic structure. Ceylon continued to be a neo-colonial and semi-feudal country. The commanding heights of the economy continued to be occupied by foreign imperialism. The greater part of the tea and rubber plantations which still brought in the greater share of the national wealth of the country, the majority of the country's banks, the import-export trade, shipping—all remained in foreign imperialist hands. The puppets that danced on the political platform were made in Ceylon but the invisible strings with which they are manipulated are still pulled from London and Washington.

Despite all the loud and empty talk of socialism no fundamental changes were made in this situation after the United Front Government came to power in May 1970. Instead, the people were treated to the sight of intellectual imbeciles holding forth about building socialism while the majority of the country's money spinners—the tea and rubber plantations—and the banks continued in foreign imperialist hands. New definitions of socialism were invented. People were told that socialism meant greater discipline, hard work and tighten-

ing of belts. But they saw no matching sacrifices at the top. Members of Parliament voted themselves additional allowances. "Socialist" ministers built themselves new air-conditioned offices. The Prime Minister's children went abroad for their education. The number of Benz cars and palatial buildings was on the increase. Not even the much publicised rent restriction laws could be brought into effect because some of the country's biggest house owners were inside the Cabinet. The much-promised declaration of the assets of the MPs never came.

In the meantime, the cost of living kept skyrocketing. The already insurmountable problem of unemployment was made worse by the new government's action in taking political revenge and dismissing thousands of workers engaged by the last regime in many of the State Corporations—including 10,000 from the Land Army recruited by the former regime. Only China's generosity in supplying rice and interest-free loans enabled the government to fulfill its promise of granting a second measure of rice on the ration and to just carry on. Men who had been the most vehement critics of the former government's policy of seeking loans from the World Bank, overnight became mendicants with begging bowls and implored loans from the same World Bank.

It was no wonder that frustration and disillusionment swept the country—particularly the youth. The disillusionment was made worse by the fact that people had expected a lot from the Trotskyites and the revisionists who were now part of the government and who, in their time, made the most revolutionary speeches and even more revolutionary promises. But no sooner had they donned the robes of ministerial office and occupied their air-conditioned offices, they became the most stout defenders of the establishment and the status quo. Correctly did Lenin describe a coalition government as a joint cabinet of the bourgeoisie with the renegades from socialism.

There cannot be any doubt that these erstwhile left parties had com-

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pletely forfeited the confidence of the people and, more particularly, of the youth. The April events exposed them nakedly as a bunch of counter-revolutionaries who did not have the slightest compunction in condoning the worst blood bath and mass murder that Ceylon had seen as well as in condoning the detention without trial, for over already 7 months, of more than 14,000 people of all political hues.

The present state of affairs where all civil and democratic rights including the right of Habeas Corpus and the right to hold public meetings have been suspended and a virtual military rule exists under a rigorously enforced state of emergency and a strict press censorship, has completed the disillusionment about bourgeois parliamentary democracy. The people's government which was supposed to have been elected by an overwhelming majority (actually, it was only 49%) cannot today show itself before the people without a show of armed police might. The "People's" Prime Minister can hardly move out of her house without heavy armed escort.

Real Power

The Marxist-Leninist analysis that, whichever of the bourgeois parties occupy the seats of power, the real power resides with the army, navy, air force and the police forces, the real guardians and watchdogs of exploitation, whose officers are still trained at Sandhurst and New Scotland Yard, has been proved to the hilt. An un-elected minor minion of the bureaucracy, like a village official eg. a grama sevaka, was able to get an MP or an MMC into jail while an elected House of Representatives looked on helplessly and impotently and even devoid of the power of speech. The performance of Ceylon's House of Representatives, which counts in its ranks some of the loudest tub-thumpers that Ceylon had produced, will surely go down in the history of bourgeois parliamentary democracy as one of the most impotent ones. One and all were scared; and no one dared go to their electorates for

quite some time. Even the Prime Minister's appearance in Parliament became a rare occasion. The military and the police had the government exactly where they wanted it. Ceylon had perfected another first—a military government with a civil facade.

It is these twin factors—people's disillusionment with bourgeois parliamentary democracy and with the former left parties—coupled with the bankruptcy of the UF Government to solve the people's problems that paved the way for the JVP to win support among a certain section of the rural youth who, in Ceylon, constitute a big share of the population.

The exposure of both the bankruptcy of bourgeois parliamentary democracy and the betrayal and treachery of the Trotskyites and the modern revisionists and the advocacy of a revolutionary path as the only means for a social change were really done in Ceylon most consistently and systematically by the Marxist-Leninist Ceylon Communist Party ever since it split from the revisionist party and constituted itself as a separate party in 1964.

But, just as in 1956, the late Mr S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, with the addition of a judicious appeal to issues of religion, language and race, ran away with the radical slogans popularised by the left movement before his time, so now the JVP reaped the benefit of the work of the Marxist-Leninists by adding an appeal to communalism (anti-Indianism) and caste. In the past, politicians from D. S. Senanayake to R. G. Senanayake and Hema Basanayake and K. M. P. Rajaratne combined communalism with reactionary politics. The JVP tried out a new mixture. They rapped up a crude appeal to anti-Indianism (the plantation workers of Indian origin, who form a substantial portion of Ceylon's working class, were portrayed as pawns of Indian expansionism) with revolutionary phraseology. In this they seemed to have been more successful. For additional measure, they also subtly exploited an appeal to caste.

Most of the leaders of the JVP belong to one caste.

This brings us to an analysis of the character of the JVP. Most of the analyses made by the leaders of the government are devoid of any seriousness. Starting from an analysis that the JVP was an agent of the reactionaries, they ended with the analysis that they were extreme left adventurers. What is the real nature of the JVP?

The first point that must be made is that, whatever be the questionable nature of the leadership, the rank and file seems to have been honestly revolutionary minded, with a sense of dedication that must be admired and a willingness to sacrifice even their lives—unheard of before in Ceylon. The pity is that such sacrifice was made in vain.

There is little doubt that this movement was called into being to oppose the growing influence of Mao Tsetung Thought in Ceylon. Since the theories of Trotskyism and the revisionist theories of peaceful co-existence and peaceful transition through parliament were getting increasingly discredited, the pseudo-revolutionary theory associated with the name of Che Guevara was preached in order to distract the attention of the youth from the revolutionary truths of Mao Tsetung Thought. They popularised the theory that a relatively small group of armed bravados or guerillas could capture the state machine and thereafter attract the people to itself. This is the favourite theory of the petty bourgeoisie, with its strong individualism and its distrust of the working class. It rules out mass participation and is the very anti-thesis of the theory of people's war as expounded by Mao Tsetung.

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Business Manager
Frontier

Mao taught us that "The revolutionary war is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilising the masses and relying on them". The lack of mass support and a near complete isolation from the organised working class was one of the most noticeable characteristics of the insurrection by the JVP.

Their military tactics were also derived from adventurist theories of a quick victory in a one-day revolution. This sprang from a complete lack of understanding of the real strength of the enemy as well as of the well-known theories of a protracted people's war advanced by Mao Tsetung. The tactics employed by the JVP in simultaneously attacking so many police stations which are the centres of the strength of the enemy was almost infantile in conception and could only result in the mass slaughter that took place.

The JVP itself was not organised as a political party in any sense we know. It held no conferences—secret or public. Its leadership was not elected while the leader was surrounded by the most unimaginable and false cult of personality. Despite calling themselves Marxist-Leninists, they were innocent and ignorant of democratic centralism. This was an ideal situation in which agents provocateurs and even hidden reactionaries could function and direct the movement from behind for their reactionary ends.

The anti-Indian communal campaign carried out by the JVP is undoubted. They even talked of oceans of Tamil blood through which the Sinhalese would have to wade to protect the Sinhala State. This accounts for the fact that hardly any worthwhile incident occurred in the Northern and Eastern provinces and the plantation districts where the Ceylon and Indian Tamils live. It is also a fact that there were no Tamils among the membership or leadership of the JVP.

The timing of the insurrection itself, without giving sufficient time for the new government to get exposed and isolated from the people, betrayed either political immaturity or the pre-

sence of agents provocateurs. We have already referred to the idiocy of the tactics of attacking all police stations simultaneously—considering the fact that the government's armed forces could, at any time, have mustered much larger forces—as, indeed, they did.

The JVP also had no clear-cut political programme—apart from the criticisms of the government and certain points picked from earlier programmes of the left parties. The political maturity of the membership of the JVP was low. All their political education was condensed to a bare five lectures and they were not encouraged to read outside it. There was also the practical difficulty of the paucity of books in Sinhala on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Therefore, a mixture of crude communalism and revolutionary phraseology was passed off and accepted as Marxism-Leninism.

In fact, it was this low political level and haphazard method of recruitment that brought about the situation under which many of those arrested turned informers and gave information to the CID.

The JVP also made no attempt to build a united front of all revolutionary classes and groups against the common enemy.

Positive Aspects

At the same time, we must be objective and point out the positive aspects of this movement. The JVP preached the gospel of revolution. But, in this they were not unqualified like the Marxist-Leninists because the JVP supported the UF candidates in the last election and, even after the government was formed, declared their willingness even to dissolve themselves if the government would build socialism. Thus, the illusion in parliamentary socialism was kept going. But the main emphasis was on revolution.

They also did correct by concentrating on the rural students and youth. This was a generation which had not listened to the political classes conducted by the LSSP and the CP in

their earlier revolutionary period. The sense of dedication with which they imbued these youths was truly remarkable. Their earlier tactics of carrying out all their activities in secret was correct although they negated this after the UF election victory and started functioning openly and concentrating on mobilizing all their resources for spectacular public meetings—thereby revealing their cadres openly and permitting infiltration of their movement. The resourcefulness they used in collecting arms and training at least a section of their members in their use was also praiseworthy.

But all these factors do not distract from the fact that the main section of the leadership did not correctly answer the question: Who are our main enemies? Who are our friends? In other words, they had an incorrect understanding of the stage of the revolution and the nature of its immediate tasks. Glaring proof of this was the fact that not a single imperialist lost his life nor was any damage inflicted on imperialist or feudal property. Nor were big capitalists or big landlords among the casualties.

There was also a complete lack of an effort to build a united front of all revolutionary forces that could be united against the common enemy. We have already commented on the completely wrong and infantile military tactics used by the JVP leadership, without any thought for the countless young, revolutionary lives that were to be sacrificed as a result. Sacrifice is unavoidable in any revolutionary struggle. But revolutionaries must avoid unnecessary sacrifices.

But all this was no excuse for the mass repression that was let loose by the Government and its reactionary state machinery—principally the police-military. Under the rigorous state of emergency and complete press censorship, the country was virtually placed under military rule. Ceylon underwent a blood bath it had never dreamed of in its history.

Professor Rene Dumont, who was then in Ceylon at the invitation of the government, wrote in *Le Nouvel Ob-*

servateur, Paris: "From the Victoria Bridge I saw corpses flowing down the river which flows from the north of the capital, with hundreds of immobile onlookers. This was on the 13th of April. The police who had killed these people, let the bodies float with the current in order to terrorise the people."

Wilfully exaggerating the extent of the danger involved to the government, not only were all the local reactionary armed forces let loose on the people, the foreign assistance of the Indian expansionists, the Western imperialists and the Soviet social-imperialists was pressed into service. The Indian Navy and helicopters, Russian MIG jets and Anglo-American arms and ammunition were used to hunt down and terrorise the people in an unprecedented manner. At one stage, there was even talk of calling in the U.S. fleet. Anti-Korean and anti-Chinese provocations were resorted to. The staff of the North Korean Embassy were packed off despite subsequent protestations about the non-involvement of any foreign forces. The Chinese News Agency's office as well as the Bandaranaike Memorial Hall site where the Chinese engineers and workers were putting up a Rs. 35 million project free were also raided by the police. Hundreds of books by Mao Tsetung and his pictures were confiscated and, in at least one case, the police made a bonfire of all Chinese literature.

It was only the correct diplomatic behaviour of the Chinese and their generous aid (actually offered before the insurrection) that prevented the government sliding completely into the imperialist camp. But it was worthwhile to note that the Cabinet took one month to announce to the public the Chinese offer of a Rs. 150 million interest-free loan.

Mrs Bandaranaike has worked overtime to prove that the military aid she received from the imperialists, the social-imperialists and the Indian expansionists was the supreme justification of her government's policy of non-alignment. In actual fact, it was nothing but blatant inter-

ference in the internal affairs of another country. In particular, the prompt action of the Indian Navy in throwing a "protective" ring round Ceylon sounded ominous for the future and in the light of declared expansionist views in certain Indian quarters. If it is true that this government's survival was due to foreign military assistance, then it can no longer lay claim to the title of a people's government. Where were the people in the hour of need? Even if they did not actively side with the insurgents, why did they not rise in support of the government they elected?

Popular Apathy

One reason for this popular apathy was the unheard of brutalities that were inflicted on the people, guilty or innocent, by the police and the military. People were shot at night, and arrested by the hundreds on mere suspicion or false complaints, women raped and young people subjected to unmentionable sadistic tortures that have left many crippled for life. It is only the existence of the state of emergency and full dictatorial powers granted to the armed forces that has so far saved them the revenge of the people.

In many respects, the insurgency was a godsend to the reactionary forces within and behind the government. They made wholesale arrests of any and every person who had been critical of the government or did not support it one hundred per cent—irrespective of whether such a person was connected with the insurgency or not. In particular, all revolutionary and potentially revolutionary forces felt the heavy hand of repression. Several leading members of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party as well as leaders of trade unions led by it were detained and continue to be so detained. Among those arrested was the general secretary of the Party. The Party's headquarters was raided, its press wilfully damaged and hundreds of Sinhalese and Tamil translations of works by Mao Tsetung as well as other books removed and ne-

ver returned. Thus, the reactionary forces hoped to silence the revolutionary movement once for all. Included among those arrested and detained were several prominent members of the SLFP who were known to be pro-Chinese.

Also arrested was an LSSP MP and president of its Youth League, on the charge of being a member of the JVP. The failure of the LSSP, the second biggest partner in the United Front Government, to obtain his release will go down as one of the most shameful episodes in the history of the LSSP. In contrast was the way in which Mr J. R. Jayawardena got his son released within four hours of his arrest on similar grounds. This was a shrewd investment for the government because it effectively shut the mouth of Mr Jayawardena, Leader of the Opposition, on all fundamental matters concerned with the emergency and the detenus. But it also showed the class bias of this government. After all, the Jayawardenas and the Bandaranaikes belong to the same class!

Apart from these, over 15,000 people, mainly the youth, were arrested and are being kept detained without trial. Several thousands surrendered on a solemn promise of an amnesty by the Prime Minister. But, they too, are being kept in continuous detention. One aspect of these arrests that cannot escape comment is the fact that not a single Trotskyite was arrested despite the fact that Ceylon boasts of a number of Trotskyite groups and that the leaders of some of these groups had appeared on a common platform with the JVP and were quite close to it. That is another mystery which we cannot unravel.

Prices Raised

But, it is on the economic front that the Government took hold of the opportunity with both hands to introduce anti-popular measures which even previous UNP governments had not dared to do. Taking shelter under the bayonets pointed at a helpless people who had been de-

nied the right of assembly, speech or strike or any other form of protest, the Government proceeded to fulfill almost all the conditions laid down by the American-dominated World Bank before it would grant Ceylon a loan. Bus and train fares, postal and telephone rates, electricity charges were all upped. The prices of bread, sugar, milk, petrol, cigarettes were increased. The rice subsidy was slashed while a charge was made for health services which was hitherto free. The cost of living soared still higher. The UNP's supporters greeted this year's budget by the LSSP's Dr N. M. Perera with lighting of crackers!

Accompanying the heaping of all these huge burdens on the people was the terrific increase of expenditure on the armed forces. This island of peace, the repository of the pure doctrine of non-violence preached by Lord Buddha, is to increase the strength of the armed forces and the police by 25% during the current year. The total Army vote in the 1971 budget has gone up from Rs 81,069,093 to Rs 151,779,255. The Navy vote has gone up from Rs 23,778,540 to Rs 36,601,880. The vote for purchase of arms and ammunition and stores has gone up from Rs 1,490,000 to Rs 4,800,000. Ceylon is well on the way to becoming a police state.

The conditions are all being laid for Ceylon to be the beneficiary of neo-colonial aid from the World Bank which will still further tie our economy to the chariot wheels of foreign imperialism. The United Front Government has proved that no matter whether Rama rules or Ravana rules, so long as the present economic set-

up continues unbroken, the system of imperialist, feudalist and capitalist exploitation will continue uninterrupted.

The masses are now being told that socialism means greater discipline and hard work. This is bunk. Socialism means the abolition of capitalism and this is precisely what Messrs Bandaranaike, N. M. Perera and Pieter Keuneman have not done and never intend to do. Hard work has to be a common factor for both capitalism and socialism. Under capitalism, the results of the back-breaking toil of the workers goes to enrich the capitalists and landlords. Under socialism, the benefit of hard work should go to the workers and peasants. No amount of dishonest sophistry by men with double doctorates can hide this simple truth.

What, then, is the remedy? An immediate priority is to step up an agitation to restore civil liberties, release the detenus or bring them to trial and rescind the state of emergency. The Government is not going to respond to these requests easily. It knows that it is completely isolated among the people—if not positively hated. It knows that the relations and comrades of those brutally massacred by the armed forces (many of them innocently) are only waiting to take revenge.

The only thing that protects the government and its leaders is the state of emergency and the bayonets of the army and the police. How long can such a situation last? It depends on the people and the leadership of the revolutionaries, who must learn not only to talk revolution but also carry it through, using correct tactics to unite all the forces that could be united under the leadership of the working class against the common enemy which is foreign imperialism, feudalism and the comprador bourgeoisie.

Despite the temporary setback to the revolutionary movement and the increased military preparedness with which the Government will meet all future attempts at revolution, there need be no room for gloom or des-

pondency. The bubble of bourgeois parliamentary democracy has burst—leaving a stench that reaches to the high heavens. Our youth have shown that they have ideals for which they are willing to sacrifice even their lives. The government is thoroughly isolated. It is up to the revolutionary movement to prevent any attempt that will be made to bamboozle the people to try the UNP again and to direct them instead on the revolutionary path.

In the context of an excellent international situation where the forces of Marxist-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought are daily gaining strength, if we only rectify our mistakes and more thoroughly master Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and learn to apply it to the actual conditions in our country, we can and will march forward to victory.

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More About The Bengal Renaissance

N. DAS GUPTA

BISHNU Dey introduced his article on Madhusudan, the nineteenth century Bengali poet (Michael o amader renaissance) with an apt quotation from the despatch of Lord Canning, to the Board of Directors of the East India Company in 1817: 'I apprehend nothing to be so little useful by analogy from Europe to India'.

What tradition, or a vital sense of it, was at the root of our "renaissance"? Which past was revived by English education and to what extent? Can the apostles of our "renaissance"—the banians, mutsuddis, white-collar job holders, the urban middle class, the bhadralok, whose existence was absolutely dependent on the colonial rule and who were completely alienated from the illiterate, toiling masses of rural Bengal—be compared to the merchant princes of Renaissance Europe? Is the job-centred change that came in the life of the English-educated middle class in the wake of foreign rule analogous to the several-centuries-long process of emergence and development of the Western bourgeois civilisation of which the sixteenth-century Renaissance was an efflorescence?

David Kopf, in his book* has not apparently fallen into the trap of analogy. But he, like the Bengali historiographers, has skilfully evaded these questions relevant to any scrutiny of the nineteenth-century phenomenon, the so-called Bengal renaissance. We get an idea of his approach from the introductory and concluding chapters: Instead of pinpointing the renaissance on any model circumscribed by historical period and region, it should be treated as a broad, universal, evolutionary process. The common denominator of all rena-

*British Orientalists and the Bengal Renaissance: The Dynamics of Indian Modernisation, 1773-1835. Indian edition.

issance is the classic preoccupation with a golden age which can be effective in the transformation of an old traditional society, as is evident in the Bengal renaissance. Under the benign guidance and patronage of the farsighted British rulers like Warren Hastings, Lord Wellesley and Marquiss Hastings, who were sympathetic and responsive towards the Indian cultural tradition, William Jones, H.T. Colebrook, William Carey, H. H. Wilson and other British orientalists (most of them products of the eighteenth century world of rationalism, classicism and cosmopolitanism) and ardent votaries of relativity and plurality of cultures) offered to the Bengalis 'creative syncretic schemes in which alien and indigenous traits were combined meaningfully to produce a desired change. The new cultural policy of Hastings and Wellesley (i.e. instead of imposing alien institutions on Indians, to work within the existing indigenous institutions on the basis of a proper understanding of them) aimed at creating an Orientalized service elite competent in Indian languages and responsive to Indian traditions. They aimed also at providing the means by which Indians might revitalise their own culture and set up the Asiatic Society and the Fort William College for that purpose.

The Orientalists, with the help of the new Bengali intelligentsia, implemented that policy through them. Hastings-inspired scholars like Jones and Colebrook initiated vedic studies and projected a vedic golden age, when Hinduism was not polluted by polytheism, idolatry and other contemporary vicious practices, the rigidity of casteism, kulin polygamy and immolation of sati. Wilson reconstructed the post-vedantic golden age of India. The rising Bengali intelligentsia avidly accepted those reconstructions as their legacy.

In the opinion of Kopf, there is a

correlation between the reconstruction of the classical Hindu golden ages and modernization: 'The reason the intelligentsia responded so well to H. H. Wilson's syncretic schemes for social improvement was that they believed that the Orientalists aimed not at the wholesale Westernisation (or the partial eradication) of their culture but at Hindu revitalisation. In spite of their willing transformation, the intelligentsia were simply not prepared to disavow their heritage. On the contrary, they required a sympathetic cultural ideal projected historically to rationalise their desire for change'. In fact, it was the British Orientalists 'who transmitted a new sense of identity to Bengalis that enlarged what Robert Bellah has called 'the capacity for rational goal setting, an instrumental process in the development of modern outlook'. To sum up, the soul of the Bengal renaissance—inspired by the British rulers and Orientalists—is syncretism and its process is acculturation.

Of course, Kopf faces problems or difficulties and is eager to show that he is not unaware of them. But how easily he solves them! Take for instance the case of acculturation. Kopf says that the process was broadly defined as a 'culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous culture systems'. The type of acculturation with which his book is concerned is the process that results from an extreme power differential between a Western society that is technologically and militarily superior and a non-Western society that is not.

Specifically, what changes did occur to either Europeans or Indians under British colonialism? The scholarship of West-non-West contact under recent European colonialist expansion has tended to define acculturation in terms of the patterned response of the weaker society to the impact of the dominant society. The author of the Bengal Renaissance rejects such one-sided definition. According to him, what developed in nineteenth century Calcutta was a two-sided process of

acculturation, or the merging of interests and identities by representatives of civilizations in encounter'. It is 'straightforward' institutional-functional type of sociological interpretation that explains 'how the need for implementing British cultural policy led to a widening set of relations with Indians and which resulted in a merging of interests between the two communities. The significant factor in the merger of interests, it seems evident, was the Englishman's net appreciation for the Indian heritage and culture.

Kopf has clearly demonstrated his averseness to patterns and systems. He is loud in his praise of Guy Metraux, who, in the preface of a UNESCO book of studies by various authors entitled *New Asia*, (in the language of Kopf) 'expresses a tolerance derived from a conviction that stresses unity over diversity, process over pattern. Metraux is distinguished from the nineteenth-century system builders—whether Marx or Macaulay—in that he completely lacks a narrow, European-centred view of the static orient'. (Was Macaulay so great a system builder as to be equally ranked with Marx? Or, should Marx's diagnosis of the decay of the ancient civilization of India and Macaulay's insolent and crude, vitriolic attacks on the Asiatic civilization be placed in the same category?). Though Kopf is aware of the importance of the economic factor, he has waged a sort of crusade against the economic interpretation of the British-Indian relationship: 'For many persons of to-day, the problem of interaction between India and the West is reduced neatly to the grim record of economic exploitation in India and economic drain to England. This study of the Orientalist period does not deny such a record but simply expose these images as plausible half-truths that obscure the complexity of cultural contact and acculturation'. And he adds... 'the nineteenth-century historical literature that dealt with the transmission of ideas in a colonial setting without a thorough analysis of the psycho-cultural relations between

the native elite and the alien overlord seems almost absurd. The evidence seems to suggest strongly that Bengalis responded well to foreign ideas and customs when introduced by sympathetic Europeans (Orientalists) who were themselves highly responsive to the Hindu way of life. To express this in another way, so long as the European masters viewed modernization as cosmopolitan rather than parochial in nature, the Bengalis offered little resistance to cultural change'. In the Bentinck era (1828-1835) this older response pattern collapsed because 'modernization' took the guise of Macaulayism, i.e. the movement initiated by Macaulay and backed by the Derozians of the Hindu college which set forth arrogantly the credo that all patterns of reform were an integral part of Western civilization and that all Asian civilizations were almost by definition static and decadent.

Even from a casual reading of Kopf's book it is clear that he has actually built up a pattern, a sort of modern procrustean bed, which, apparently without doing violence to anything, smoothes over the rough edges of problems, suavely dissolves contradictions and fits the disparate elements into a neat picture of acculturation. He does not allow any consideration of the economic background to mar the neatness of the picture. But can it be so easily brushed aside? The British Orientalists had to work in the framework of the colonial rule. But Kopf has tried to create the belief that the colonial setting failed to cast any shadow on the acculturation, that it was a merging of interests and identities by the Europeans and the natives.

Warren Hastings bled India white through his brutal and shameless exploitation. He stooped to any amount of cruelty and baseness to serve his personal and imperial interests. But Kopf seems to see a fine, agreeable dichotomy between Hastings the imperialist agent of Britain and Hastings the enunciator of a benevolent cultural policy. Kopf (after casually mentioning his misdeeds) finds 'a fund of understanding of and benevolence

toward the Indian masses' behind the expediencies of his policy: 'His basic conventions became the credo of the Orientalist Movement: to rule effectively, one must love India, to love India one must communicate with her people...' He quotes approvingly Hastings' letter to N. Smith, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the East India Company: 'Every accumulation of knowledge, and specially such as is obtained by social communication with people over whom we exercise a dominion founded on the right of conquest, is useful to the state: it is the gain of the humanity.' But Hastings had not stopped at his thought of the gain of humanity. In the next portion of the letter, he was more explicit: 'in the specific instance which I have stated (i.e. the translation of the Mahabharat into English by Charles Wilkins), it attracts and conciliates distant affections; it lessens the weight of the chain by which the natives are held in subjection'.

In his cultural policy also, Hastings was primarily concerned with the consolidation of the British Empire. The British rulers wanted to have an elitist Hindu-comprador class, the *bhadralok*, who would serve as a link between the alien rulers and the masses. Naturally they tried to foster the Hindu ego of the *bhadralok*, of course, with some adjustments with the new framework of British rule. In the so-called Orientalist era, the British, still not so secure in their recent transformation into rulers from traders in India, were also afraid of the consequences of interference with the culture and religion of the natives. In the 'Orientalist period', the British overlords, who used to show so-much enthusiasm for the traditionalist Sanskrit (and Arabic) education, did not evince any serious interest in the spread of English education. Sibnath Sastri (who was not a votary of Macaulayism), in his *Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalin Bangasamaj*, deplored their apathy to English education thus: While there was so much urge for English education the Governor-General and his Council were busy with the printing of old Sanskrit and

Arabian texts and the proposal of setting up Sanskrit colleges at Nadia and Trihut.

How was Hastings' 'fund of understanding of and benevolence toward the Indian masses translated into actuality? *The Economic History of India: 1757-1837* by Ramesh Chandra Datta provides the answer: after the Great Famine Warren Hastings wrote thus to the Board of Directors on 3rd November, 1772: "Notwithstanding the loss of at least one-third of the inhabitants of the province, the nett collection's of the year 1771 exceeded even those of 1768...It was naturally to be expected that the diminution of the revenue should have kept an equal pace with the other consequences of so great a calamity. That it did not was owing to its being violently kept up to its former standard.' Datta's concluding remarks on Hastings' rule are: 'there is a verdict on the conduct of great rulers which is more true and more abiding than that of historians, and that verdict is the verdict of the people. The people of India look back with pain and horror on the administration of Hastings which impoverished the country. And on the socio-cultural level, this evidence is also revealing: In 1801, Dr Hamilton, a Company civil servant, took a census of the newly formed Bakharganj district. He found the population consisting of 9,26,723 heads, but did not see a single pathshala or primary school there (*Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalin Bangasamaj*). But Kopf has overlooked the realities of the British rule and termed the Bengal Renaissance as 'Hastings-inspired popular renaissance'. Popular in what sense? Seen in proper perspective, the Orientalism of Hastings or Macaulayism of Bentinck (it indicates only a change in the method of consolidating the Empire), boils down to, in the language of Gunnar Myrdal, the old, colonial pattern of building up a highly educated elite...while leaving the population at large in a state of ignorance.'

Kopf never pries to evaluate or probe deeply into the problems of Bengal Renaissance. He always ex-

plains away or justifies things. Take for instance, his explanation of the contradiction in Rammohun Roy: 'Rammohun Roy's adherence to the spirit of utilitarian rationalism, his affinity for Sufi mysticism, his admiration for Christ, his emotional identification with the Vedic age, and his reluctance to part with the Brahmanical sacred thread were not simply the logically inconsistent beliefs and practices of a superficially rational Westernized intellectual. Regarded in the light of his own milieu, Rammohun was a sensitive human being who apparently had already reconciled two indigenous traditions in his mind when he found it necessary to readjust to the British culture pattern. Indeed, the intellectual eclecticism, the disparity between word and deed, public performance, and private behaviour which many find disturbing about such a man as Rammohun Roy, and which persisted in other Bengalis throughout the century, simply reflected the struggle to avoid sinking into the quicksand of impending modernization.' But were not those contradictions the contradictions of the Bengali middle class? Rammohun Roy, being severely humiliated 'at the hands of' Sir Frederick Hamilton, a collector, remonstrated (in the letter addressed to Lord Minto) that a person of 'caste and rank' like him ought not be ill-treated in that way: 'If natives, therefore, of caste and rank were to be subjected to treatment which must infallibly dishonour and degrade them, not only within the pale of their own religion and society, but also within the circle of the English societies of high respectability into which they have the honour of being most liberally and affably admitted, they would be virtually condemned to close confinement within their house from the dread of being assaulted'...To get redress for his wounds from 'the impartial justice, liberality and feeling' of the benevolent British ruler, 'the guardian of the just rights and dignities' of native gentlemen, he meticulously mentioned the traditional distinctions of his birth, fortune, educa-

tion' and company. Kopf has mentioned Rammohun's 'emotional identification with the Vedic age' as a remarkable feature of the Bengal Renaissance. But we find that he strongly opposed the teaching of the Vedanta in his famous advocacy for Western education: 'Nor will youths be fitted to be better members of society by the Vedantic doctrines which teach them to believe that all visible things have no real existence.' His cultivation of the Vedanta did not stem from any deep-rooted conviction. Rammohun had to resort to the Vedanta only because, in the context of the onslaught of the Christian missionaries on Hinduism, he, with the trappings of it, wanted to give it a clear, monotheistic image so that it might become acceptable to the English educated Hindus. The Bengal Renaissance was not so securely grounded on the conception of a Hindu golden age, as Kopf thinks.

In Kopf's reckoning, *Vedanta Chandrika* of Mrityunjay Vidyalankar 'is extremely important in the historiography of the Indian renaissance because it contained a crude form of the same kind of Hindu revivalism that Vidyasagar...expressed so meaningfully in prose...at a later date.' Can Vidyasagar be called an exponent of *Chandrika*-type Hindu revivalism simply on the basis of the subject matters of his prose writings which were taken from classical Sanskrit literature? Iswar Chandra did never show any enthusiasm for religion. In his tracts on widow-remarriage, Vidyasagar said he was forced to quote the scriptures in support of his argument, because the people of this country were so blindly addicted to the sastras that they would not listen to anything unless corroborated by them. In his memorandum submitted to the Council of Education on 4th September, 1835, he described the philosophy of the Vedanta and Samkhya as erroneous. To his contemporaries, Vidyasagar was an enigma so far as religious opinions were concerned. To some he was an atheist or agnostic, some smelt scepticism in him. That he was not a genuine Hindu re-

vivalist; these speculations seem to agree with.

To Kopf, *Samachar Chandrika*, Dharma Sabha and its leaders, Bhabanicharan Bandopadhyay and Radhakanta Deb were not at all conservative. They easily fitted themselves into the syncretism of the British Orientalists and the cultural changes initiated by them: 'under Orientalist guidance and sponsorship, cultural change was seldom considered a threat by any prominent member of the Hindu elite in Calcutta'. The so-called conservative group's opposition to the abolition of Sati 'was essentially an argument against the cultural interference of foreigners' and 'the Calcutta elite defended their position against abolishing sati not by condoning an inhuman act but by pointing to all previous Governor-Generals who had respected the custom (however misused) as a vital aspect of Hinduism. They questioned the right of a foreigner to interfere with a people's religion and ethics'. But, 'on other issues, however, the *Chandrika* reflected the enlightened attitude of the Calcutta intelligentsia.'

But how can we be sure that the *Chandrika*-group wholeheartedly participated in the British Orientalists' syncretic schemes that aimed at social improvement, 'a desired change' into modernisation? Did the Orientalists launch any movement, offer a concrete programme of action that aimed at the radical reformation of the existing social evils (a sure step towards modernisation) and thus throw a challenge to the Hindu gentlemen to prove the genuineness of their desire for real change? Did the schemes and programmes of the Orientalists involve such crucial tests? Or was sati so small an affair as to be left outside the purview of the Orientalists' programme of social action? When that challenge came in the Bentinck era, the *Chandrika* and its followers, who were 'as committed to education and enlightenment as were the *Kaumudi* and the *Darpan*', did not feel ashamed to resist stubbornly the abolition of self-immolation. Did these gentlemen, inspired

with the spirit of eighteenth-century-enlightenment-fed Indian Renaissance, ever suggest that if the alien rulers would refrain from interfering with their customs and rites, they would, of their own accord, try to eradicate sati? The *Chandrika* group, so bitter over the cultural interference, had never expressed a feeling that sati interfered with basic human values. We do not find any sign of contrition or serious questioning in their defence of sati. *Samachar Chandrika* (12th May, 1831) published the news of burning of some satis (which took place after the suppression of the rite) and proudly commented: These reports show that the vows of the satis had not been broken and the God-ordained decrees of fate cannot be reversed. None will be able to prevent those women from burning with their husbands to whom God has apportioned it as the inevitable fate.

Does this reflect an enlightened attitude?

An enlightened intelligentsia, when confronted with serious social problems, must come into conflict with their society and suffer pangs of alienation from it. Though inhibited by the limitations of colonial middle-class existence, Rammohun Roy and Vidyasagar took a positive stand against the social evils and faced the consequences. Vidyasagar, in his struggle for social reform, was badly mauled by the Hindu society. The pressure of the traumatic experience almost broke his heart and he had to leave Calcutta (where, according to Kopf, a 'socio-intellectual revolution had taken place') and take refuge among the Santals of Karmatar. The tragedy of Vidyasagar's life shows how incomplete and crippled our renaissance was. To explain historically, the British rulers, in the process of consolidation of their Empire, had to generate willy-nilly some forces which prepared the background of structural changes in the Hindu society. Rammohun and Vidyasagar were its forerunners, not men like Mrityunjay Vidyalkar (Kopf describes him as the man who epitomised

socio-cultural revolution), Bhabanicharan Bandopadhyay or Radhakanta Deb. Macaulayism or no Macaulayism, the schism (though very limited), or, in the language of Kopf, the 'disruption of the Hindu society', was bound to occur on such questions of social reform like the abolition of the sati, Kulin polygamy, etc. It was not a simple psychological affair of love-hate relationship.

Polish Films

BY A FILM CRITIC

THE recent festival of Polish films contained two Wajda pieces and a couple of others which, albeit on varied themes, still demonstrated how war rankled in the Polish ethos and how there was no getting away from the memories of persecution perpetrated on them. The wound goes deeper than surface. Indeed, as the protagonist of Aleksandr Ford's *First Day of Freedom* tells his comrades, Polish pride is in choosing death in war rather than surrender to fascist threat and blackmail. War as a theme understandably offers an obsessive singleness of tone to the Polish directors and even the passage of a quarter of a century has not washed out a fragment of the bitter memory.

First Day of Freedom concerns five Poles from a concentration camp whose first day of liberty is beset with problems of a new magnitude. The Nazi stragglers are out for a last-ditch battle. Meanwhile, two girls—one ravished by soldiers and the other not unwilling to fill her void with male company—and their father seek shelter with them. They are suddenly faced with questions they never had occasion to bother about before. The protagonist is the real sufferer and he finds his moment of truth when he discovers that the girl he himself has killed is the one who was given shelter by him. Nothing is resolved, only the senselessness of it all becomes manifest. Both in *First Day* and in Morgenstern's *And*

All Will Be Quiet there is an authenticity about the devastation of war brought out chiefly by stark black and white photography seldom matched in other war films. And that gloomy surface is often lit up with individual anguish. Once again the conscience is pitted against the senseless cruelty

Happily, Wajda's *Ashes and Diamonds* (1958), shown in Calcutta before, was screened again. It expresses in telling terms the individual resistance fighter's struggle not to get lost and to find his real identity in a situation in which he finds himself trapped and from which there is apparently no escape route. The anti-hero(?) is played memorably by Cybulski whose death occasioned another film, *Everything For Sale* by Wajda in 1968. The actor's personality, his relationship with the director, his wife and mistress are all depicted in a heart-warming way. 'An actor knows how to live', his friends say when the film is shot and 'he died as he lived'. There is a James Dean type of restlessness in the hero whose screen life and real life merge and mingle in the film made by Wajda. He is one of those who is never at peace with himself. In his tribute to his friend, Wajda tries to make a film without the hero's physical presence but discovers that it is perhaps idle to try to reincarnate somebody because even the overwhelming impact of memory is a poor substitute for one's real presence. As a stylistic exercise this film in colour is an exquisite experience.

Morgenstern's *Yovita* has as its principal character a sportsman who wants to settle every score and start life afresh. An elusive girl, Yovita, leads him through a maze of experiences which are bizarre and which make the film quite brittle.

Red and Gold has visual beauty in its prettified surface, and its slightly improbable tale is rendered a little more credibility in its masterly handling of the story. The longing of the older characters for yesteryear and the seeking to get away from loneliness make them take what comes their

way. Its enchanting milieu, picturesque locale and very creditable performance make it an agreeable experience.

The Days of Mathew is remarkable for the performance of Pieczka in the main role who is sort of an overgrown child heavily dependent emotionally on his sister. Here we find nature in its most serene and elemental character. The characters are simple, living in a world tucked away from the bustle of civilisation. Only occasionally an invisible jet hovers in the sky leaving a white trail. A motor car intrudes and just stops short of knocking down the absentminded hero. In this world arrives an outsider and in his reactions, not made obtrusive, we find that the world around him is slowly sinking. Its breathtaking photography heightens the impact and all round extraordinary performance makes it a genuine feast.

Aparajita

BY A DRAMA CRITIC

Bohurupee's latest, *Aparajita*, by Nitish Sen, has certain distinctive features to recommend itself. Using satire as its medium it exposes the social and economic relationship of the middle-class milieu, but instead of going the whole hog and drawing the inevitable conclusions it stops short with the assertion of individual liberty. Through typical situations it reveals the smug, self-seeking world of the bourgeoisie.

The play consists of a dramatic monologue by Aparajita Roy, a divorcee residing with her brother's family, relating episodes from her life while she waits for a fateful phone-call about confirmation of a job with a professional theatre company.

Approaching conventional sequences with pragmatism and pungent satire, the playwright weaves the thread of his plot around a number of experiences in Aparajita's life. Instead of bringing the numerous characters

on the stage the dramatist makes her relate her experiences of them and in the process develops her character. Apparently the narration about other characters has been used to balance the presence of a single person on the stage. Also the various climaxes concerning Aparajita's relationship with characters like Amal, Baccha-buri, Purna and Sanjibda infuse the play with a dramatic rhythm. Instead of shunning sentiment and melodrama the playwright has used them with vituperative force to shatter the veneer of middle-class society. In the end Aparajita overcomes her inhibition and asserts her independence. Her revolt, however, remains a purely personal one.

Bohurupee's production not only held up a mirror to the vices of bourgeois society but stripped bare its rotteness. Yet it seemed as if the dramatic impact was dissipated by the indiscriminate inclusion of details and the episodic nature of the plot.

Tripti Mitra's performance in the title-role was virtuoso. Her nuances of tone and abrupt change of mood showed her maturity as an actress. The set, with its implications of a cage, though competent, was not imaginative.

Clippings

E. Bengal : Arms And The Men

..When the Mukti Bahini was first formed in early April, the Awami League leaders and their student wing the Chatra League, saw to it that leftists of every hue were screened out. As the Army cracked down on East Bengal, the leaders of the pro-Bhashani National Awami Party, better known as pro-Chinese Leftists and the Muzaffar National Awami Party (pro-Moscow) also fled the country with the Awami League leaders.

The Government of Bangladesh in exile was, however, formed excluding

these partymen though the Awami League was appealing for all-out co-operation from all parties in the fight for liberation. The old enmity inside the country was carried outside. But the Indo-Soviet treaty made all the difference and the pro-Moscow Nap found themselves to be more assertive than before.

The Indian Government also saw to it that there was unanimity among those who had together fled the country so that a strong united leadership was established. A section of Awami Leaguers have swallowed the bitter pill but do not fully concede the idea of any other party other than the Awami League to lead the freedom fight.

..It was on the advice of the Indian Government that an all-party co-ordinating committee was formed with four members of the Awami League, one each from the pro-Bhashani Nap, pro-Muzaffar Nap and Pakistan Congress. Among the last named parties, except the Bhashani group no one counted much as a political force in East Pakistan.

The co-ordinating committee meets from time to time to advise the Cabinet on the freedom struggle, but the Cabinet remains an all-Awami League affair. This is where the Awami League refused to budge. In the Mukti Bahini itself, the pro-Moscow Leftists are having their own units and getting fair share of the arms and ammunition, a facility so far denied them. They argue that since most of the weapons for the Bahini are coming from "East European sources" (a claim that cannot be verified), they have a right to use them. In the 100,000 strong Mukti Bahini, the pro-Moscow Nap claims to have 5,000 to 6,000 of their party volunteers.

..Though Maulana Bhashani has openly "seceded" from the Chinese faith, his volunteers do not get the necessary arms and ammunition. Nor are they favoured as part of the Bahini, except those who are getting training without disclosing their party-affiliation. Most of the pro-Bhashani volunteers have not crossed the border

and are still in action inside East Bengal. They claim the credit for all the actions in Dacca. There are reports that some of the Bengalee Army officers are sympathetic to these volunteers and passing on arms to them.

The extremists among the Leftists, the Naxalites, are active inside East Bengal both against the Pakistani Army and the Mukti Bahini. It is reported that they are getting arms from Chinese source but how the arms reach them is yet to be ascertained. The Naxalites propagate that the liberation struggle and the class "struggle should be conducted side by side. Therefore they are fighting both the Army and the Awami League, "the representative of bourgeois interests". The Mukti Bahini had a number of clashes with them at places like Jessore, Khulna and Noakhali. The outnumbered Naxalites were massacred in all these places and Alauddin, one of their top leaders, was killed in one of the encounters ..At Noakhali, in the inaccessible islands that were ravaged by the cyclone in 1970, Mohammad Toha is fighting both the Army and the Mukti Bahini.

In one of the islands, the Army had to land paratroopers to comb the area. The Naxalites have, however, been divided on the Bangladesh issue. One of the factions headed by Sikdar have openly sided with the freedom fighters.

Meanwhile, a group of young Awami Leaguers, especially students who were known as extremists before the Army crackdown, are resisting the infiltration by the Leftists both inside the Bangladesh Government and in the real freedom fight. In the post-election period in East Bengal early this year, a number of Naxalites were eliminated by them in Pabna. Khulna and even in Dacca. About the pro-Moscow Nap they recall how Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman had rejected their offer for a united front for the elections. The Sheikh had told them to change the sign board and merge with Awami League.

Amusingly the pro-Moscow and other Leftists are quite aware of their future once the Sheikh is out and in

case there is any talk for political solution. A spokesman of the pro-Moscow Nap told me. "We are having enough freedom fighters to face a new situation in case of betrayal. And as they have, we have also enough arms. None can count us out now, not even the Sheikh".

As a political move, they have already raised a hue and cry about "the infiltration of CIA agents" in the Government. Two Ministers in the Bangladesh Government are "already branded" as working "in liaison with the Americans".

(A. B. MOOSA
in *Hindusthan Standard*)

Letters

Added "Confusion"

In "The Year of Confusion" (November 6) Mr Prasad has evidently added 'confusion' instead of reducing it. He has tried to project two opposite views reportedly prevalent among the French leftists, on China's policy regarding East Pakistan affairs. In the process, the author has made a deliberate attempt to lay emphasis on Hamza Alavi's views by pointing out that Alavi's article was not from just any magazine but from Jean Paul-Sartre's magazine. It must be pointed out that the tactics of establishing a certain viewpoint by merely quoting or associating it with a noted scholar or a philosopher is basically a kind of coercion. Not many in India are, perhaps, aware that in France, Sartre is not only not the last bastion of the Leftists but also since 1968-69 he is no longer a greatly revered figure among the French Leftists.

Going into Alavi's views one cannot fail to notice quite a few gross discrepancies: (1) Movement of Bengali nationality started in undivided Bengal and that too after the birth of the Bengali bourgeoisie. It is erroneous to say that the Bengali nationalist movement had come into existence before the Bengali bourgeoisie was born.

(2) To say that "there is little proof of Indian military intervention"

and that there was only "intervention through diplomatic activity and propaganda" and that the Indian Government aimed at "setting up an Awami League government in Dacca through international pressure", amounts to not only over-simplification but to blatantly denying the facts. One inquisitive visit to border areas will be more worthwhile than to argue on this issue. The Tripura border is perhaps the best example to refute Alavi's notions. It would be correct to point out that the Indian Government amassed troops on the E. Pakistan border immediately after the election there and before the elections in W. Bengal.

(3) To "believe that the Maoist left of E. Bengal is the vanguard of the united struggle for national liberation along with other left groups and the militants of the Awami League who have preferred armed struggle to withdrawal into India", is not realistic. There is no organised Marxist-Leninist party with a people's army, and a base area in E. Pakistan till date. A fragmented EPCP(ML), without a people's army, cannot possibly carry out this struggle. There is no organised 'liberation' force in E. Pakistan and thus the question of supporting such a one, in the name of proletarian internationalism, is too hypothetical to be reckoned with. To slander China on this hypothesis is therefore a heap of junk. To support the Awami League sponsored capitulationist fight for secession, with the help of the foreign Indian Government, would therefore amount to cooperating with U.S. imperialism, which Alavi himself admits, "overtly supported, encouraged and infiltrated the Awami League".

(4) It is not the thinking of Alavi alone, but very many among us would like to see that the role played by the liberation forces—and not the orientation of the Awami League leadership—which will determine the course to be followed by the Bangladesh government. Unfortunately, there is no objective basis at the present time for such wishful think-

ing. In the absence of a people's army the Marxist-Leninists of E. Pakistan cannot possibly resist military intervention as a force distinguishably separate from that of Yahya's. Thus for the present, they have to militarily support the effort to thwart Indira-Jagjivan's threat, while maintaining a separate political identity without ever forgetting the class struggle. Not to do this would mean becoming secessionist, which in turn would inevitably jeopardise the "common struggle for socialism" in Pakistan as a whole and to which Alavi has rightly attached "importance".

Finally, (5) to say that, "an Awami League Government cannot but depend on the people because in East Bengal there is no repressive apparatus" is to believe in utopia. The EPR, the EBR and the newly enlisted 'Mukti Bahini' with Indian and captured guns in their hands would become in no times a formidable instrument of bloody suppression of the working people of E. Pakistan.

It must be added that without a discernible revolutionary movement of the people, it becomes well nigh impossible to provide support on the basis of 'proletarian internationalism'. A revolutionary movement must be either an anti-imperialist struggle or based on armed class-struggle or, better still, a combination of both in the colonies and semi-colonies.

AJOY BARUA
Calcutta

At The Crossroads

In his article "CPI(ML) At Crossroads" (20-11-71), Mr Banerjee rightly emphasised the need of "an analysis of the mistakes and a suggestion of the next move to help whatever remains of the movement to gather momentum and steer a more scientific course". Such criticism must necessarily be factual, which Mr Banerjee has not done. He accuses the CPI(ML) for "blind worship of the Chinese Party". But the fact is that

the CPI(ML) did not follow its own slogan: "China's path is our path". It deliberately deviated from the path of Telengana and Naxalbari. The first deviation came when it was expounded that the 'enemy' in India is not very strong in the cities; hence, unlike the course adopted in China, it would not be a necessity for all the active cadres of the CPI(ML) to leave cities and go to the countryside. The CPI(ML) did not organise the working class but continued to swell its ranks by including an increasing number of students, petty-bourgeoisie and, worst of all, the lumpen-proletariat. Admission of the latter was initially resisted by most of the members. However Charu Mazumder exercised his sole authority by reportedly commenting that "anyone who joins the party in the name of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, will be accepted". The swelling ranks of city-revolutionaries were not organised into anti-imperialist struggle; but they had to be given work and that too involving the use of weapons. After all, the CPI(ML)'s then prevalent line was that armed struggle was the *ONLY* form of struggle and that it can be successfully carried out at any point in India. Thus started meaningless destruction of statues (not that I have any fancy or weakness for them) and individual killings—most of them uncalled for and harmful to the cause of revolution at its present stage. Following closely on the heels, came the theory that since every point on Indian soil is explosive, therefore it is not necessary to differentiate between the cities and the countryside. In short, the CPI(ML) line resembled the Li Li-san line.

However, this is not to say that one must mechanically follow the 'Chinese path'. Even the CPC never advocates mechanical adoption of its experience by the people of other countries. The CPC and Mao Tse-tung did not accept 'Comintern control' over specific strategy and the tactical lines, but I am not aware of any major disagreement between Stalin and Mao Tse-tung. It is on

record that Stalin on many occasions pointed out the mistakes in assessment of the Chinese revolution by Mif, Radek, Trotsky etc. Stalin had repeatedly pointed out the difference in character between the Russian revolution and the Chinese revolution that was being carried out.

Mr Banerjee's stress on an "independent" Communist Party stems possibly from his residual nationalism, which is evident in his handling of the East Pakistan issue. He considers the 'sober line' of SM as 'more in tune' and thereby ignores India's armed interference and intervention in the internal affairs of Pakistan. By now it is well accepted that there is nothing anti-colonial about what the Awami League is trying to do in E. Pakistan with the active help of the Indian army. Ashim Chatterjee's 'dangerous line' (which has correctly taken full cognition of India's role of armed intervention) is dangerous in that he gives out a near-insurrectionary call to use 'land mines' etc. for 'sabotage' and allied activities. If the CPI (ML)'s strength had not dwindled, if its central and general organisation had not been frittered away, if it had a strong enough people's army, if it had a base area and above all if it had successfully carried out sufficient exposure of the government's role and adequate political work to align the Indian people in its favour, if it had organised popular opinion against India's anti-people war with Pakistan, then the Ashim Chatterjee faction's line would most definitely have been correct and realistic. In the absence of such necessary preconditions his call amounts to Herveism. (At the Stuttgart International Congress of 1907, Herve made a noise that "every war be answered by a strike and an uprising", Lenin had criticised and established that Herveism was a "semi-anarchist view" which is obviously dangerous). To challenge every scheming and intrigues of the ruling class, regardless of the armed strength of the people under the leadership of the communist party, is a blunder. The initiative to attack the ruling class *militarily* must necessarily and always re-

main in the hands of the working people and its vanguard section.

However, Ashim Chatterjee has not been criticised on this count. He has been criticised for drawing a parallel between Yahya and Sihanouk. Let us not forget that during the March days of 1970, there were many to shout and slander that China was supporting a "prince". Today, that 'prince' has become more acceptable than others. In any case the Ashim Chatterjee faction has already accepted that ideological difference on this specific count is not an impediment to unity of action by the CPI (ML) as a party as a whole. Therefore, it boils down to the fact that Mr Banerjee criticises the CPI (ML) basically, for not supporting the Awami League-sponsored, Indian army trained and backed "Mukti Bahini".

The price the CPI (ML) has paid for its mistakes has been heavy and perhaps some more will have to be paid. But the movement will start again. However, for that one cannot "wait another spell of political and economic crisis in the country, which may not be very far away". Mr Banerjee has merely tried to echo the CPI (M) leaders: "time is not yet ripe for revolution", "revolutionary organisation has to be built up first before embarking on the road to revolution" and such other ministry-seeking jargon-mongering. Good CPI (M) cadres have already started to realise this, and not without paying the price of precious lives at the hands of the Congressi 'storm troopers'. To keep on waiting for the inevitable to happen, for a major crisis to take place on its own is to betray the revolution.

S. LAL
Calcutta

More Of The Same

On November 1, between 35 and 40 policemen of Magrahat P. S. came to Udaypur village and arrested three revolutionaries of the MCC, Subodh (Saral Bhattacharyya), 21 years, Bidya (Pravash Sarder) about 14 years and Ganesh (Subir Ganguli), about

19 years. They were taken to Hatnagar village and shot dead.

This is not all. The police went to arrest the local peasant leader of the MCC, Jogai Sardar. He was not at home. Unable to find him, the police beat up Comrade Sardar's mother (67 years) and dragged out his wife, Fullara (17 years), assaulted and raped her.

ASIT MITRA
Calcutta

The Universal Curse

I am sending herewith a mini-poem which appeared in *The Monthly Review*, New York, in September 1966.

A 'FRONTIER FAN'
Calcutta

We've licked pneumonia and T.B.
And plagues that used to mock us,
We've got the virus on the run—
The smallpox cannot pock us.
We've found the antibodies for
The staphylo-strepto-coccus.

But oh, the universal curse
From Cuba to Korea,
The bug of bugs that bugs us still
And begs for panacea!
Oh who will find the antidote
For Pentagonorrhoea?

by E. V. HARBURG

Human Rights

The Hon'ble Mr Justice B. C. Mitter of Calcutta High Court (who is tipped for the Supreme Court) and the former Advocate General of West Bengal (during the first United Front Government), Mr Ajit Kumar Datta, have recommended to the Chief Justice who is the ex-Officio President of the Indian Law Institute, West Bengal State Unit, that Shri D. C. Mukherjee, Inspector General of Prisons, West Bengal, former District Magistrate of Howrah and Nadiia, etc be awarded the fellowship for a "Study in Human Rights with special reference to Indian Fundamental Rights". This, after the killing in Alipore and other jails! And the Hon'ble Mr Justice B. C. Mitter is to enquire into the Alipore jail killing!

An Advocate
Calcutta

DECEMBER 11, 1971

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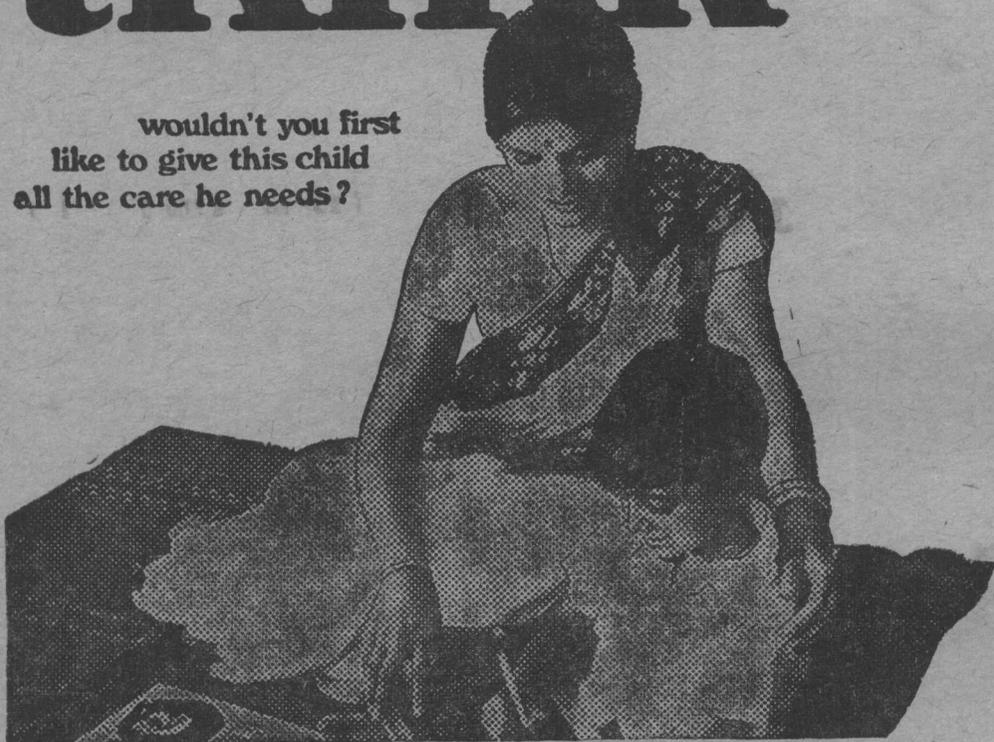
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