

# frontier

Vol. 4: No. 39

JANUARY 8, 1972

PRICE: 35 PAISE

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## PREPARING THE GROUND

IF India's political and military victory over Pakistan should have turned anybody's head, it is the Prime Minister's. But she is about the only person in the country to have kept her cool. While others are still entranced with the joy of fulfilment of a long-thwarted desire, she is going her calculated way to convert the sudden accretion of her popularity into durable political benefits at home. Not long ago she had prevailed on the Opposition leaders to agree to postpone the Assembly elections because of the emergency. In spite of the subsequent cease-fire, the emergency continues. The Prime Minister herself does not know how to describe the twilight between war and peace in which the country is; and the Defence Minister and his subordinate brass hats are daily declaring that the time has not come for India to let her guards down. Yet the Prime Minister has gone back on the earlier consensus and is bent on holding the Assembly elections two months hence.

Apart from the States where elections are due this year, some other States will go to the polls because the position of the Congress (R) in the Assemblies is not satisfactory. The only State over which some uncertainty hangs is West Bengal. The central leaders of the ruling party have declared that in this matter they will be guided by the views of the State unit, which has dutifully and promptly announced that it is in a state of preparedness for elections any time in February-March. Apparently, the State unit has taken the cue from the central leaders that the chances of an outright Congress (R) victory are now bright even in West Bengal. The Centre has not yet acted on the recommendations of the State Congress (R), but the ground is being steadily prepared for declaring that conditions for a free and fair poll have been created in the State. The Bangladesh evacuees have started returning, and it may be presumed that by February the Governments of India and Bangladesh will declare that the seven odd million evacuees are back home. About law and order New Delhi has already officially claimed that the first fortnight after the declaration of emergency was the quietest in West Bengal last year and the second fortnight was quieter than the quietest. Law and order can, therefore, be no longer an alibi for withholding the elections.

If, as the Prime Minister has said, there are still "certain difficulties" in holding the West Bengal elections in February-March, they must be

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PRINTED AT MODERN INDIA PRESS,  
7, RAJA SUBODH MULICK SQUARE,  
CALCUTTA-13 AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY  
FOR GERMINAL PUBLICATIONS (P) LTD.  
BY SAMAR SEN FROM 61, MOTT LANE,  
CALCUTTA-13  
TELEPHONE: 243202

organisational. The central leaders are not yet sure that the victory over Pakistan will ensure the victory over the CPI (M) in West Bengal; they are still haunted by the spectre of last year's election in which the victorious march of the Prime Minister was halted on the borders of this State. The Congress (R) has not grown organisationally since then; on the contrary, it seems to have become weaker with the re-appearance of factional feuds with full fury. The party's electoral hopes now rest largely on how far its student and youth wings succeed in terrorising the CPI (M) and its supporters. Organised attacks on CPI (M) strongholds, murder, loot and arson, and assault on women and worse have become a daily occurrence. The thuggery is being abetted by not merely police connivance but also a conspiracy of silence. Other left parties are impervious in the same fashion as the CPI (M) was when the CPI (ML) was the target. The party leaders are afraid of organising an effective protest lest they be detained under the numerous arbitrary laws the Government has at its disposal. If the youth and student wings of the Congress (R) can live up to the expectations of their leaders in the next few weeks and the CPI (M) fails to withstand the drubbing, the Centre will not hesitate to proclaim officially that the ground for free and fair elections in the State has been well and truly laid.

## Exciting Tasks

The Indian Army in Bangladesh is now building the infrastructure of the Bangladesh economy. Army engineers are building communication lines, roads, bridges and barges. Officers and jawans are behaving, by all accounts, admirably, and the people of the ravaged country are gratefully accepting them as godsend.

On the trail of the Army entered a Government team to prepare the blueprint of an economic assistance

plan in accordance with the assessments made by the economic advisers of the Dacca Government. The team is back. The State Trading Corporation of India has been strengthened with a financial allocation. It will now make bulk purchases of essential supplies for the fledgeling State. It has been decided that low-priced goods flowing into Bangladesh should be the best quality available.

Though private trade is for the time being kept off Bangladesh, Indian private entrepreneurs are sending swarms of field surveyors to the new market. They are finding for themselves how they can help the Bangladesh people by offering them their daily necessities.

Bengali journalists and intellectuals are rushing across the border and reporting the horrid torture inflicted upon the hapless people by the Pakistani Army. They are compensating the blackout on the genocide in the world Press with a terrific gush, commensurate with their speed, of humanism.

Bangladesh is indeed fortunate in having so friendly and affectionate a neighbour. India, as Mrs Gandhi said, would gladly and willingly accept the burden of helping Bangladesh people to stand on their feet. It is not her Great Power ambition but her concern for democracy, socialism and humanism.

It is evident that the massive reconstruction programme of Bangladesh would require substantial aid from India. The intelligent people in the emerging Bangladesh State are of course not playing up India; Bangladesh newspapers have few re-

ports and news from India, although Indian newspapers are giving wide coverage to Bangladesh affairs. It is wise on the part of Bangladesh newspapermen not to reveal too abruptly the massive dependence of their country on the military strength of their neighbour to start with and now on its economic assistance. It would not do, for example, to flash the news that in view of the exchange parity between India and Bangladesh the latter loses in import trade about Rs 7 per pound. Or the fact that the Bangladesh State Trading Corporation would be advised by the Indian STC in resuming exports of raw jute. The non-existence of foreign exchange reserves in Bangladesh will make her dependence on India entire, unless of course the Soviet Union breaks into the picture. Indian industrialists have suddenly grown buoyant. In a country where industrial production marked only one per cent growth in the previous fiscal year, industrialists are looking forward to a boom. In harmony with their expectations, the Government of India too has made a broad sweep of industrial policy changes. All firms in 54 industries, covering almost all items in the organised sector, can now raise their production to double their licensed capacity without a fresh licence. Multiple shifts are now permissible. A task force has now been appointed to find out how monopoly houses can get over legal difficulties caused by the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, so that these houses can as well enjoy the bumper New Year gift, offered by Mrs Gandhi.

## New Economic Policy

Before the Indo-Pakistan war the hawks in South Block had been clamouring for an armed solution of the problem of refugee influx as the cost of war, they argued, would be less than that of keeping the refugees. But now the same people are calling for a rehauling of the Plan because

they think that the uncertainties in the Indian economy have become "more complex and pervasive" as a result of the 14-day war. Presenting the Fourth Plan report to Parliament and then to the Press, Mr Subramaniam, the Planning Minister, said that the war had given rise to the need for

post-war reconstruction in the Indian border States and in Bangladesh. This and the aid cuts by New Delhi's Western allies for political arm-twisting have prevented the Planning Commission from working out a definitive shape of the Fourth Plan for the remaining years. No precise programme has actually been offered. Nevertheless the adjustments in the 1972-73 annual plan and the strategies indicate some broad trends in the future economic policies of the government.

Uptill now the achievements of Mrs Gandhi's government on the economic front have been hardly satisfactory. Though it has grabbed all the controlling apparatus, it could do little to arrest the price rise or remove the shortages of key raw materials. Industrial production continues to be at a low ebb (one per cent in 1971 as against 4.5 per cent in 1970). Export promotion measures have been equally ineffectual and the latest information shows that the trade gap in 1971-72 might go up further to Rs. 725 crores (it was about Rs. 535 crores in 1970-71). Only in food production can the ruling party boast of some success. There again the leadership has failed to use it to initiate growth of the economy generally; the green revolution and the accumulating buffer stock have in fact turned into a burden on the exchequer. The report admits this inability. The Fourth Plan, all in all, in the first three years of its operation, has recorded a shortfall of 10 per cent and it is likely to be very much more in case of physical targets.

As regards strategies of industrial promotion, the Minister has spoken of 'time-bound steps' meaning utilisation of the existing capacities in the short run and creating new ones in the long run, a stricter licensing system and new foreign aid policies. Although there is almost nothing new in any of these proposals, much fuss is being made about questions concerning foreign aid and economic independence. Talk of self-reliance regarding aid is rending the air. Despite this rhetoric, however, both the

Prime Minister and the Planning Minister have tended to agree on the point that the whole exercise of self-reliance is to be directed to reducing dependence on aid sources that do not conform to New Delhi's newly oriented foreign policy. Evidently they have learnt the hard way the unreliability of Western aid in any confrontation with Pakistan and now want to mend their past mistakes by transferring their allegiance to more sympathetic sources. The whole truth about this aid suspension fiasco is that the American aid-cut by itself is partial and unlikely to affect the economy in the short run. No doubt it will affect the flow of cotton bales under PL-480 and also the fertiliser programme in Kandla and Ramgundam, but it will not harm the overall financial situation of the year, as about \$120 million out of the total committed aid of about \$200 million is already in the pipe-line. President Nixon has not frozen this pipe-line aid. Actually, as indicated by the drastically reduced U.S. aid promises to the Aid India Consortium this year, the general American economic assistance to this country is going to be curtailed in the near future as part of Washington's fall-back posture as the protector of 'the free world'. Mrs Gandhi and her men have anticipated this and have changed their policy stance to fit into this new reality. Long before the recent war her spokesmen were urging the Indian investors to reduce their dependence on the West, particularly the U.S., for industrial hardware and emphasising the need for closer ties with the East European countries, above all, with the Soviet Union. Occasional talk of trade with the developing nations still emanates from New Delhi, but the main plank of this new economic policy is a hand-and-glove relation with Moscow and its allies. The Indo-Soviet treaty has underwritten this new political and economic relationship between New Delhi and the Kremlin. And the tumultuous events of last month provided the litmus paper of this new-found bond after which New Delhi has re-emerged as the

bulwark of "freedom, democracy and socialism" in S. Asia under the aegis of the Soviet Union.

## China's Plan

The inauguration of China's Fourth Five Year Plan (1971-75) was not marked by any fanfare; the world, however, knows in some detail its salient features as well as its basic policy objectives. The foundation of the Plan, as Premier Chou En-lai said, was laid by the economic effort for 1970. But what constitutes the basic guidelines for the present planned quinquennium was formulated in late 1969; the guidelines were, however, refined in 1970. With agriculture remaining the base—but with a clear State warning that this sector could no longer be subsidised—simultaneous development of small and large industries is to be encouraged. Industries too must themselves satisfy their requirements of capital, raw materials and machinery and equipment for the utilisation of installed capacity and expansion of activities. The year which has just ended has seen China making steady progress in different sectors of the economy with a desire to consolidate the gains of the past. It has also witnessed many interesting debates on economic issues. As will be seen from many provincial announcements, the development of heavy and basic industries is drawing special attention. Chekiang province thus observes, "industry mainly involves the production of coal, iron and steel. We must grasp steel as the key link. In developing the steel industry we should proceed from the mining of ores and the development of (coal) mines." Doubts have, however, been expressed whether the exploitation of mineral resources should be given particular emphasis since it is not easy to erect plants to process mineral resources. But there is no escape from the fact that the present production of coal and iron ore is wholly consumed by the steel industry and any future development of the capital

equipment sector will require increased supply of minerals. The order of priority is to ensure that the increase in the means of production precedes the increase in consumer resources. Means of production to be utilised for producing other means of production should have priority

over means of production for manufacturing consumer goods. What all this amounts to is not difficult to decipher. Although it is constantly said that State assignments should be given top priority that does not mean that local initiative is not shown respect. A recent article in *Red Flag*

has said that it is not desirable to pursue blindly Plan targets; they should rather be fixed taking into account a district's production capacity. Those who are engaged in planning are, therefore, encouraged to know conditions of districts to avoid errors in planning.

## Whither Bangladesh ?

SAFIKUL HASAN

**H**ISTORY has been unfolding itself in a manner hitherto unforeseen on the Indian subcontinent. The Government of India has liberated but not conquered East Bengal in order to implant democracy there and for "the ultimate benefit of the entire Pakistani people".

Implanting democracy was once the white man's burden. That an impeccable cause like democracy could be invoked if necessary at the cost of the territorial integrity of a weak state power used to be propounded and implemented by the United States during the fifties and sixties in Korea and Vietnam. The main danger to democracy at that time was considered to be communism.

Unfortunately for the United States, the gamble paid no lasting dividends. The neo-fascist claws of U.S. democracy had little or no cover for themselves. All "liberation gambles" were exposed as a set of machinations fostered directly by the CIA or the Pentagon. All the gambles were conducted with techniques not very subtle in character. For example, the U.S. policy of containing China—the source of all "insurrectionary troubles" in Asia—consisted of creating military or missile bases around China and giving liberal arms aid to States where avowedly anti-communist bourgeois-landlord cliques were in power. Not that all recipient countries were interested in really containing China. The actual reason why each of them came under the dollar-umbrella of the Pentagon varied from one to another. Japan and

Pakistan allowed anti-China war bases in their territories for different reasons, either for hard currency as the price for independence or for arms and technical know-how or to suppress revolutionary movements inside. Again Ceylon, Indonesia or India were blessed with the Pentagon balance of power in Asia in terms of neo-colonial inflows of U.S. capital, arms and ammunition. In one respect however all the countries offered a common assurance to the Pentagon that no state power should allow the emergence of the communists or any kind of revolutionary violence within their territory. Both Pakistan and India had projected themselves firmly as anti-communist—hence in the Pentagon's deduction anti-China in their motivation and practices. This projection secured in exchange liberal arms aid from the United States. But both of them in their external relations were more concerned with each other's armed ambitions than with an open anti-China diplomacy or an anti-communist counter-revolutionary strategy in Asia. In this sense the Pentagon's counter-revolutionary strategy against the wave of communist-sponsored liberation movements in S.E. Asia had only a limited achievement to its credit. It was true that both in India and Pakistan, communist movements were suppressed with an iron hand; in Pakistan the communist party was banned, in India so many democratically elected state legislatures having communists or even non-Congress groups in majority were kicked out by invoking the Presiden-

tial ordinance. But Pakistan never allowed its Peshawar base to be used for counter-revolutionary attacks either on Vietnam or China and Nehru's India was scrupulous enough not to support or oppose American genocidal acts in Vietnam. In other words, both Ayub's Pakistan and Nehru's India were silent witnesses of genocide in Vietnam or Laos, and were only used to parading passive hostility to Chinese ideology rather than to its state power. This was not because of any love or fear of socialist China but because of the fact that they—India and Pakistan—were more busy against each other and each of them knew that from their very inception—thanks to the Mountbatten award—they were to be poised against each other.

Whether there did exist anything like Indian nationalism or Pakistani nationalism on the basis of which Mountbatten divided British India into two States is a matter of eclecticism. If one considers an institutional religion to be the basis for national cohesion, then the creation of States like Pakistan could be justified, but in the case of India, no such positive content could be searched out in order to explain the existence of her professed nationalism. That religion cannot be the basis for the emergence of a nation-state comprising two or more sets of people speaking different languages is amply clear from the recent tragedy of Pakistan, but for India not even religion is recognised as the basis of her emotional cohesion. What was, however,

common to all the multilingual people of different religions, faiths, cultural streams or ethnological groups in the region, was the British colonial administration. This administration had sustained its long life—apart from extorting wealth and surplus—by cultivating inter-community or intra-racial discrimination. If Jinnah was the symbol of arrogant selfish Muslim feudalism feeling insecure against the clever machination of its Hindu counterpart, Nehru was the symbol of cosmopolitanism typical of a Hindu banya to whom business had nothing to do with religion or faith. The minority Muslim feudals and comprador bourgeoisie sought to snatch a part of the subcontinent to enjoy an undisturbed exercise of exploitation free from competition and manoeuvres of their more powerful Hindu rivals. If British India had Muslims in majority, possibly Hindu vested interests would have demanded a state power based on Hinduism. This antagonism between the Hindu exploiting classes and the Muslim ones can be traced back even to the days of the Mughal empire; what the British colonial power did in later times was to streamline it according to its needs and purposes. Mountbatten sought to institutionalise this antagonism by dividing the country on a basis which could be explained in no other terms except religion. Secular India had to accept religion as a fait accompli basis for its territorial consolidation. It was certainly a tactical setback for India's Hindu exploiters to concede a big chunk of British India's territory to their weaker and numerically inferior Muslim rivals. The Hindu diehards representing a section of Hindu feudal interests did in fact resent this partition in favour of Muslim vested interests. But the Hindu feudals and compradors as a whole agreed to partition, because transfer of power was the reward; by such transfer a greater elbowroom for the indigenous ruling classes' exploitative manoeuvres was assured. At the same time the Hindu ruling classes—more old, prosperous and sophisticated—

preferred waiting for the time when the Islamic Pandora's box in a bilingual Muslim State like Pakistan would face disintegration as a result of a conflict between its two wings which have nothing in common except religion. That Islam itself would act as Frankenstein to Pakistan in course of time was within the reckoning of the Hindu ruling classes of India and in this sense the West Pakistani feudal forces and the Muslim compradors by their tremendous exploitation of the economy and the people of East Bengal have in fact acted in tune with such reckoning.

The entire hoax of forming an Islamic state in order to enjoy exploitation without interruption from the competing and more resourceful Hindu sharks was no less clear to the Hindu ruling classes than it was to the Muslim sharks advocating Pakistan. As a result Pakistan was born with a suspicion against India's possible nefarious designs. If the religious basis of Pakistan is done away with Pakistan cannot stay any more, and a new India is bound to emerge over the grave of Pakistan. Therefore for its own existence, Pakistan had to be anti-India, its internal exploitative machinery had to have a cloak of Islamic brotherhood, its tyranny of exploitation in East Bengal had to refuse even a minimum democracy by which the Bengali emerging compradors could demand a share of exploitation.

On the other hand, there was no reason to think that the secular shop of Hindu banyas would silently suffer the setback due to partition. Indian secularism is British India's secularism i.e. the secularism among exploiters for the smooth operation of the exploitative machinery in a vast, multilingual and multi-racial State. It is the secularism of Singapore or Hongkong. Without secularism, India cannot stay and so many Pakistans or Bangladeshes become a logical inevitability replacing the existing India. Pakistan, or even the new Bangladesh is an antithesis to India's secularism, because Bangladesh makes Bengali nationalism the basis of its

statehood while a part of the Bengali population is with India. Therefore if Bangladesh does not become a part of Indian territory, India may have to concede West Bengal to merge with Bangladesh. In this sense, the Republic of Bangladesh is a potent danger to Indian secularism. Is India enacting a Frankenstein's monster to its secular character by granting recognition to Bangladesh? India of course gave recognition to Pakistan against her will, but in case of Bangladesh Indian recognition was an unavoidable follow-up of some other design, may be against her secular convenience.

### Secessionist?

Was the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan in pre-partition days a secessionist one? From the standpoint of British India's secularism or modern India's secularism, the answer is yes. Was Pakistan created for Muslims' welfare? The answer is no. It was primarily aimed at facilitating and accelerating the process of exploitation conducted by Muslim feudals and comprador capitalists. But in the forties, many left politicians including the communists thought it appropriate to support the demand for Pakistan as to them this demand was the demand of self-determination of a relatively backward and neglected community like the Muslims. In fact both Iqbal and Jinnah had referred to many types of economic, social and cultural discrimination, in the selection of cadres for various governmental and non-governmental institutions in favour of Hindus against Muslims in secular British India.

It is the irony of history that the Muslim leaders of the Bangladesh movement hurl the same charges against the West Pakistan Muslim rulers. In British India, Muslims had resented the Hindu monopoly of feudal and comprador interests and the socio-cultural or political discriminations meted out to the Muslims of India in general and undivided Bengal in particular. In fact this resentment particularly among the Ben

gali Muslims against the Hindu feudals and business magnates had led them to support the demand for an Islamic State. In his speech before the court, the Awami League leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, then one of the convicts in the Agartala conspiracy case, explained why he had once fought for Pakistan and the welfare of Muslims against "Hindu India". But in course of time "Hindu India" ceased to be a monster, yielding place to Islamic Pakistan in which nearly the entire exploitative machinery came in the possession of the Muslim feudals and comprador capitalists of West Pakistan. In East Bengal the relation between West Pakistan vested interests and its underprivileged Bengali counterparts became antagonistic, and the result was the movement for Bangladesh.

Therefore from the standpoint of Pakistan—an avowedly Islamic State—the Bangladesh movement cannot but be a secessionist movement conducted in the name of welfare of the exploited Bengalis. In this sense and in this sense alone Bangladesh is a logical follow-up of the creation of Pakistan in the heart of undivided British India. One was created in the name of religious brotherhood, another has been promoted in the name of linguistic brotherhood.

But does it mean that the emergence of Bangladesh on the basis of what is trumpeted as Bengali nationalism is secessionist even from the standpoint of Indian secularism? The answer should be yes. Linguistic nationalism, like religious nationalism, is certainly an anti-thesis to the Indian secularism which as yet lacks any emotive content to stand out clearly and distinctly vis-a-vis Bengali nationalism.

In a sense Bengali nationalism is a greater danger to Indian secularism or territorial integrity than Pakistan is to it. Because religion has been proved to be no basis of nationalism; on the contrary, common language is a more viable basis for nationhood. This became more than clear in the course of events associated with the problems of States' reorganisation in

India. As yet India has not been able to make an amicable settlement of the issue of the state language. From Kashmir to Andhra or Telengana, or from Nagaland or the Mizo Hills to Maharashtra, linguistic chauvinism was controlled or tailored more by the Indian Army than by anything else. In a way, the present India had to borrow the philosophy of guns and arms from its British predecessor in order to maintain the integrity of her Union.

Indian support for Bangladesh is therefore susceptible to double standards, as much as Indian acceptance of Pakistan was. India had to swallow the demand for Pakistan purely for the dictates of immediate needs; similarly India supports Bangladesh—a potent divisive force directed against her secular bond—for the dictates of immediate needs. Such needs may not be really the implanting of democracy in East Bengal or challenging the genocidal barbarity of Pak rulers or even getting rid of the huge bulk of refugees in India. One of the objectives may certainly be the weakening of Pakistan's ruling classes but that is beside the matter. The antagonism between the Indian and Pakistani ruling classes has forced India to take advantage of the antagonism between the two wings of Pakistan. After all the Indian predicament over the acceptance of Bangladesh is of a long-term character, and the Indian army has the notorious efficiency of suppressing anything in India disliked by her ruling classes. Indian needs could not therefore be repressed by the long-term consequences for her secularism. Indian needs were urgent, and that urgency does not lie merely in the weakening of Pakistan.

India does not necessarily have a concern for democracy to function in East Bengal. In fact India should not have. In India, holding elections follows the maintenance of law and order which in reality means flowering of the electoral prospects of the party holding the central power; again, the Indian President had so many times suspended so many State Assemblies having parties other than

the Congress (R) in majority with another party in a single majority. The Government of India's democracy is therefore a controlled one. Only those who are blessed with the support of the Congress (R) or the ruling class of the country can enjoy the fun of democracy. For example, in 1959, much before Pakistan went under the shadow of a military regime, Indian democracy suspended the so-called communist government of Kerala where the communists were decisively in majority. In West Bengal it is up to the choice of the Government of India whether elections would be held today or tomorrow or in the distant future. The dismissal of the first UF Government in West Bengal is certainly an indicator of how much democratic the Indian Government is. The way the Government of India perpetrated mass murders of Naxalites in streets, in houses, in jails and in any place they are found even today forfeits the right of this Government to any claim to be democratic. Mass murder of Naxalites, their relatives and friends does reflect a genocidal attitude towards anybody suspected to be a Naxalite or his kin. Curiously, such a Government seeks to implant democracy in East Bengal and shed tears for the elected representatives of the Awami League who were denied governmental powers by the Pakistani military regime. It is a case of double standards on the part of the Government of India that it harps on the murder of democracy in East Bengal while at the same time it does precisely the same job in India with the help of various detention Acts, the police and military and anti-social elements. We know that in 1941 Hitler expressed sympathy for the millions suffering from 'Russian totalitarianism'.

India's concern for genocide in East Bengal is more a piece of political demagoguery than anything else when in the Indian Union itself genocidal killing is a routine matter of the law and order operation during the past two years. Never in its history did the

Government of India protest against the protracted genocidal operations of the U.S. army in Vietnam. The Government of India's sole responsibility was to chant the slogan of 'peaceful settlement' of the Vietnamese problem and to allow the greedy Indian traders to make money in dollar-infested South Vietnam. Genocide in Vietnam is not softer than the genocide in East Bengal, or the genocide in East Bengal is not more cruel than the genocidal murders of Indians.

Then what was the actual reason which made the Government of India very much instrumental in the Bangladesh movement and its success? Certainly not the burden of the refugee influx, because influx of refugees a 24-year old phenomenon—cannot by itself provide a Government to send its army to another country's territory. It was true that the sudden rise in refugee influx was due to the Pakistan army's genocidal attacks on the unarmed people of East Bengal and to Razakar arson, looting and murder directed mainly against Hindus and their property and one cannot as such blame the Government of India for pointing out that without the suspension of torture, arson and killing inside East Bengal, the refugee influx cannot be halted. Normally, such refugee influx would have been a matter of inter-governmental negotiations had there been friendly relations between India and Pakistan. Unfortunately as things stood before or after March 25, 1971, the involvement of India was considered by Pakistan—rightly or wrongly—to be clandestine but direct. Not only that, India's full moral sympathy for the Bangladesh movement in the unanimous resolution of Parliament made her partisan in the conflict between leaders of the movement and the Pakistan authorities. In India's calculation, she had nothing to lose but gain from its moral or other support to the Bangladesh movement. Those gains are not merely confined to trade, wealth or territory. It is something much more than that.

### Russia and China

This something cannot be explained in terms of the mere balance of power arguments. India's main concern during the entire sixties has been—and in the seventies will be—to contain and crush the revolutionary resurgence of the Indian people. Pakistan sought to perform the same job by making its western wing wealthier at the cost of the eastern wing. In the western wing, although rural unemployment was increasing, the relative prosperity of agricultural kulaks along with the phenomenal rise in private industrial ventures in collaboration with various foreign agencies, gave a show of economic stability, but conditions in the eastern wing had been gradually drifting to a position beyond any repair. Thus Pakistan's two wings—socio-politically insulated from each other—had developed between themselves an economic relation between a village and a town or a colony and a metropolis. Therefore while no revolutionary situation developed in East Bengal to a critical point, in the west the built-in economic stability at the cost of Bengal made revolution a far cry and in fact in this sense West Pakistan as it stood only a few months back was enviable to the Indian ruling classes deprived of the same fortune. Pakistan resolved the problems of revolution in the western wing by accelerating a revolutionary situation in East Bengal. Had Pakistan been willing to share its exploitation of the labour and resources of East Bengal with the Indian ruling classes through full-fledged trade and collaboration agreements—what it in fact did with the Western monopoly capital, particularly the United States—Indo-Pakistani relations would not have come to the present phase of belligerence. But as we have indicated, the very inception of Pakistan negated such a possibility.

In the revolutionary situation in East Bengal, paradoxically enough, it was not so much the Pakistani ruling classes as the Indian ones which felt extreme concern. As

a matter of fact the Pakistani ruling classes allowed East Bengal to drift to a revolutionary situation by making its exploitation more ruthless, more total, thereby creating a danger to the Indian ruling classes which were having a rough time under the overall economic crisis and revolutionary movement, particularly in West Bengal. Here precisely lies the Indian interest in East Bengal affairs, i.e. to check the tide of revolutionary movement in East Bengal in order to consolidate counter-revolutionary strategy in this region of the subcontinent. India's Prime Minister repeatedly criticised the lack of 'democracy' in East Pakistan, because as the representative of the shrewd ruling classes she could realise the dangerous potentials there. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman expressed the same concern about communism and called Yahya Khan 'a fool' because he did not understand his role as a buwark against communism. Even after the crackdown on March 25, the various representatives of the Indian ruling classes pressed hard for a military solution of the Bangladesh issue lest, as they correctly apprehended, in a long-drawn guerilla war, the Maoists move into a decisive position to throw out the Awami League from the leadership of the movement. The Indian ruling classes had to intervene not necessarily for territorial expansion but certainly to thwart a revolutionary consolidation of the East Bengal masses, not to emancipate the people there but to nip in the bud the revolutionary forces. In this sense the Indian ruling classes by intervening in East Bengal have shown their counter-revolutionary foresight.

The Bangladesh issue has once more shown that as a counter-revolutionary force U.S. imperialism has its days limited and its place is going to be short-lived. Moreover, in the days to come, the centre of counter-revolution has to be shifted from the Pentagon to Moscow. China would understand this new shift in counter-revolutionary alignment of forces and that possibly explains her determined opposition to the Indian

army's entry into East Bengal. China had to adopt a position in the UN similar to that of the United States—her most immediate enemy in the now existing anti-China global strategy.

Why? Should China support Pakistan's "just struggle" against Indian "expansionists", being oblivious of the fact that it was the Pakistani ruling classes themselves who were responsible for the tremendous mass upheaval and genocide in East Bengal? On what point has revolutionary China identity of interests with the counter-revolutionary United States—her sworn enemy—against India and the Soviet Union and in favour of Pakistan which has feudals and compradors in state power? These cannot be answered without an appraisal of the Pentagon's policy in S.E. Asia and of Soviet manoeuvres in Indo-Pakistani relations.

It is really strange that in the Far East and Middle East the anti-China strategy has both the U.S. and USSR as close accomplices. If China is treated as the centre of revolutionary movement in Asia, the basic axioms of China's foreign policy are to be (i) neutralization of different state powers in Asia controlling war bases encircling her; (ii) moral support to the revolutionary movement *only* in those countries which have openly or secretly sided against her with any of the two colossal anti-China super-powers, namely the USA and the USSR; (iii) to use in her favour the latent and explicit antagonism between U.S. imperialism and the social-imperialism of the Soviet Union; (iv) to minimise the impact of the Soviet-U.S. joint alliance against China.

China's attempt to neutralise the Asian state powers of Ceylon, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Burma, Nepal has been to a great extent successful, but in case of India she has failed particularly since the days of the Sino-Indian border trouble. The reasons for this failure are many, one being the Indian ruling classes' greater manoeuvring capacity vis-a-vis the two great powers like the USA and the USSR and their own independent expansionist ambitions. Dang-

ling Chinese hostility, the Indian ruling classes secured substantial military and economic aid from the United States from 1962 to 1965 when the Indo-Pakistani war exposed the futility of U.S. efforts to make these two States a part of the anti-China united front in S.E. Asia. The U.S. chastised Pakistan for its initiative against India in 1965 and gave up the hope of making Pakistan an anti-China ally, particularly after the latter's demand for the withdrawal of the U.S. base in Peshawar. But U.S. military aid and economic assistance started flowing in to both India and Pakistan again from 1967 for the following reasons: (a) as a staunch and strong ally India it was considered, might help to satisfy the requirements of the anti-China policy in spite of the fact that the Soviet Union also sought to warm up the Indian ruling classes against China on the political front and the U.S. on the economic front; (b) neutral Rawalpindi allowed almost a free plunder of Pakistan, particularly East Bengal, by the U.S. monopoly capital in collaboration with the West Pakistani compradors who could develop no warmth with the Soviet state power because of their neutral role in the anti-China Soviet plans.

But while the U.S. failed despite the liberal dollar-diplomacy, the Soviet Union succeeded in making an entry into the area. The secret of the Soviet success lies in its realisation that the antagonism between the Indian and Pakistan ruling classes cannot be resolved by forging—despite Tashkent—a common alliance against China and that the Soviet Union has to make a choice between the two in order to contain both the economics of U.S. monopoly capital and the politics of China's revolutionary violence. Unlike the Far East and the Middle East, say Japan or Indonesia, Soviet diplomacy in South East Asia becomes both anti-American and anti-Chinese and dollar diplomacy is both anti-Soviet and anti-Chinese.

The Soviet Union made India its choice. From 1962 we saw India's growing dependence on the Soviet Union as an effective anti-China

power, reliable, more cunning and less infamous than the United States. Pakistan disowned the Tashkent deal alienating the Soviet Union further from itself and pushing it towards India. When the trouble started in East Bengal over democratic rights in 1968, India and the Soviet Union had all the time to wait inside the wings. December, 1970 provided an opening of the screen. U.S. diplomat Farland met the victorious Sheikh Mujib without any success. 25th March, 1971 changed the course of history in East Bengal in a manner anticipated by Moscow and New Delhi.

In the recent Indo-Pakistani conflict over Bangladesh, the Soviet concern for genocide and lack of democracy cannot be taken in good faith. In fact at the height of the German genocide, the Soviet Union concluded a non-aggression pact with Hitler in 1939 and at the height of the American genocide in Vietnam the Soviet Union on the one hand supplied arms to North Vietnam and on the other sent its cultural flowers to the United States with the political stand that the Soviet Union favoured a "peaceful settlement" of the Vietnamese problem. "Socialist Czechoslovakia" saw the entry of the Soviet army to disband the democratically constituted Czech government of the revisionist Dubcek. The Soviet interest in the Indian subcontinent grew with the ominous prospect of Chinese influence, thanks to the latter's geographical nearness and the possible emergence of anti-revisionist communist movements in India, East Bengal, Burma, Ceylon and other countries of the area. The U.S. interest in the area in the very recent months had a downward swing mainly because of the failure of dollar diplomacy in the region and precisely because its anti-China negative role did not bring the expected dividends in the region. That in economic terms the U.S. could hardly afford the loss of either India or Pakistan was clear both to the Indian and Pakistani ruling classes and that was why the United States had to swallow Pakis-

tan's diplomatic closeness with China and India's overall intimacy with the Soviet Union. If the United States adopted an anti-India attitude in the recent conflict, that was more out of the Pentagon's frustration with India's intransigence and Pakistan's foolery over the Bangladesh movement. The intransigence was intolerable to President Nixon particularly when it was due to another rival super-power's military instigation. Moreover U.S. interests were more secure in Pakistan than in India where the Soviet Union tends to pose a threat to these.

China's attitude on East Bengal is qualitatively different from that of the United States, although the stands adopted on the Indian army's entry into East Bengal are similar. Those China-watchers who believe that China's support to Pakistan's territorial integrity is just diplomatic lip-service to be rendered to a friendly State engaged in war against a professedly enemy State, should consult even Indira Gandhi or Kosygin for political wisdom. As a matter of fact India or the Soviet Union was not shocked by the Chinese support for Pakistan's integrity. What shocked India was the U.S. attitude which in India's reckoning should have been one of strict neutrality over her armed entry into East Bengal. China knew that the Mountbatten award was clearly designed to keep in store so many "time bombs" to be exploded one after the other for use against revolutionary movements on the subcontinent. The revolutionary movement in East Bengal could have possibly avoided this time-bomb if the region could insulate itself from the counter-revolutionary intervention from the Soviet Union through the Indian ruling classes. This was where the territorial integrity of Pakistan became a matter of supreme importance to China. A somewhat comparable situation did in fact exist in Czechoslovakia where Czech chauvinistic revisionism had reared its head making anti-Russianism a bogey because

of the exploitative relation between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. China had condemned Soviet aggression on Czech territory, not because she had any soft feeling for Czech chauvinism—in fact China had condemned it very clearly—but because Soviet intervention would ultimately be directed against that Czech revolutionary movement which was free from both Czech chauvinism and Soviet revisionism. This Chinese standpoint flowed from the ideological position that revolution in a country could not be exported and that the basic canon of socialist diplomacy was to condemn imperialism's or social-imperialism's armed intervention in the internal affairs of a foreign country in the name of "democracy" or "socialism". The United States also had condemned Soviet aggression on Czechoslovakia not because it had any real interest in Czech independence, but because its new disciple, Dubcek, was thrown out of power by the rival Soviet super-power. Therefore although the Chinese stand on Czechoslovakia was similar to the United States (the Soviet Union at that time bracketed both China and the U.S. as enemies of socialism), the actual reasons were qualitatively different. The Chinese standpoint was guided by revolutionary ethics while the U.S. standpoint was guided by the frustration over a rival's machinations. Not that some heavenly love existed between the Pakistani ruling classes and the Chinese leadership with the aim of compelling the latter to adopt an anti-India stand. It was in the interest of the nascent revolutionary movement in East Bengal that China adopted a stand fetching in fact no diplomatic advantage but causing misunderstanding among a large section of anti-imperialist masses of the subcontinent. Because a common enemy in the Pakistani ruling classes was there for the East Bengal masses under both social democrats and revolutionaries, the conflict of leadership over the masses had always gone in favour of the revolutionaries. In Pakistan's eastern wing the revolutionaries had this vantage position to

divide distinctly the ruling classes and their agents from the masses, such distinction was indeed vital for the consolidation of revolutionary leadership among the masses even under the most neo-fascist genocidal acts of the ruling classes. In Vietnam, protracted genocidal acts for years together could not demoralise or disintegrate revolutionary leadership; on the contrary, the leadership was steel-ed in the process. No Soviet or Chinese army did go there to fight the imperialist gangsters. In a civil war or national liberation movement, imperialists always send their own army to protect its anti-people colonial puppets, no revolutionary army from outside normally goes there unless the particular civil war tends to take a continental or global shape. In East Bengal affairs, India and the Soviet Union were almost certain of non-involvement of global powers, because of the U.S. predicament over the entire business. China's moves were predictable from her silent reservations about Pakistan's crimes in East Bengal or on the relationship between the two wings. That China's total opposition to Indian intervention in East Bengal affairs was guided by her concern for the revolutionary movement there was clear to Indira Gandhi and to Kosygin and that such concern could not involve China militarily was also apparent. China also realised that Indira Gandhi or Kosygin's main concern in East Bengal is not to dislodge an oppressive machinery as such, but to give it a new look under the guises of "democracy" and "socialism", and thereby to forestall the growth of a revolutionary movement threatening India's West Bengal. Rearing a revolutionary movement in East Bengal against the revisionist onslaught was the main concern of China. Because revisionism enjoys advantage over imperialism or its cohorts by the fact that it can create illusions among the masses for a longer time and the time can be used for the most cruel suppression of revolutionary movements and clandestine annihilation of revolutionaries.

In the absence of Pakistani ruling classes in East Bengal, the saviour of "democracy" and "socialism"—be they the Indira-Awami League variant or the Moscow variant, are bound to discover "Pak saboteurs" among the revo-

lutionaries and to start a killing-spree involving a very high number. But killing revolutionaries with the help of the Indian army and of built-in illusions about India and the Soviet Union should not be termed as geno-

cide or undemocratic, because "democracy" assures only election, non-violence and nationalism, and never the killing of revolutionaries having faith in violence!

Over to the future in Bangladesh!

## Agrarian Classes In East Pakistan (1949-70)—I\*

N. K. CHANDRA

**E**AST Pakistan is one of the few areas in the world today where per capita income has failed to rise at all over the last twenty years. Starting at Rs 302 in 1949-50, it slipped down in the 'fifties to a meagre Rs 278 in 1959-60 to crawl up to Rs 299 in 1969; these estimates are all in terms of factor-costs prevailing in 1959-60. (25; 38, p. 70).<sup>1</sup> National income for the province thus went up by no more than the growth rate of the population which is currently put at 2.7% p.a. by the Planning Commission (37; p. 25).

However, some important structural changes took place. The share of agricultural income came down continuously from 65.5 p.c. in 1949-50 to 55.8 p.c. in 1963-64; it remained thereabouts as late as 1969-70. (25; 38, p. 80). (From another highly reliable piece of information which remains unpublished, this proportion was 62.0 in 1959-60, 59.2 in 1963-64 and 55.7 in 1969-70, using the constant factor costs of 1959-60). Monoculture and subsistence farming are still the predominant characteristics; throughout the period rice absorbed 85 to 90 p.c. of the cultivated area, while the acreage of jute, the principal commercial crop, has fluctuated considerably at around 6 p.c. In the sixties rice yield improved signifi-

cantly; against an average of 361 kg./acre during the first seven post-partition years it rose to 440 kg./acre during the first half of the 'sixties and 558 kg./acre in 1967-68. Over the period rice acreage progressed (through multiple cropping) from 20.5 m. to 21.9 m. and 24 m. acres respectively. (37, pp. 196-9). Rice output expanded at a trend rate of 2.4% p.a. in the 1960's and for total agriculture it was 2.8% p.a.<sup>2</sup>

Water supplies to agriculture improved very slowly. From 2.8 million acres flood protection was extended to another 1 million acres; new irrigation facilities also covered 1 million acres. Fertilizer supplies increased from 54,000 to 135,000 nutrient tons. All these figures relate to the second half of the 1960's (39, pp. 270-1, 332-4). Supplies of improved seeds as also measures for plant protection remained rather static. In each case, the performance in the East was much behind that in the West, or, indeed, the targets laid down in the Plan for East Pakistan.

Agriculture's loss in the share of GNP became the gain of the 'modern productive' sector, i.e. construction, manufacturing and public utilities; the latter improved its position from under 4 p.c. in 1949-50 to 15 p.c. twenty years later; within this sector, small-scale manufacturing, which contributed most till 1961-62 rather languished and the main expansionary drive came from the large-scale factories where production went up many times; but then it started practically from scratch and is still fairly small. A construction boom, most probably in the form of house-

building for the rich, was also on and output expanded very fast, often exceeding an annual rate of 30 p.c. over a number of years; again, the original base was ridiculously small. The non-productive services sector, namely, trade, banking, insurance, transport, dwellings, etc. maintained a fairly steady share at about 30 p.c. of the national income.

Even the meagre changes in the structure of the economy are not reflected in the pattern of occupation. The proportion of the agricultural labour force in the total slightly increased from 84 p.c. in 1951 to 85 p.c. in 1961. (35)

Factory employment may have progressed at a statistically impressive rate, marking a more than 4-fold rise over the 1948-59 period; but then it came down to 115,000 in 1966 and is still a drop in the ocean. (36, pp. 54-5).

Another side of this story of relative stagnation is sluggishness in the field of investment. Through the 'fifties the proportion of *gross* investment in gross domestic product rose from 5 to 5.8 p.c. Allowing, however for depreciation of fixed assets, the net investment rate was consistently below 2.5 p.c. (20, pp. 96-9). During the Second Plan (1960-61 to 1964-65) gross investment rate apparently improved considerably to 9.4 p.c. Unfortunately, the G.D.P. is here measured at constant 1959-60 factor costs while the investments are at current prices.<sup>3</sup> The present writer's very crude *guesstimate*<sup>4</sup> of the gross investment rate in the Third Plan (1965-66 to 1969-70) is around 15 p.c. It is well-known that prices rose throughout the last decade and parti-

\* After the essay was completed Dr S. R. Bose, formerly of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, very kindly went through it and offered some valuable suggestions. Only a few of these could be incorporated. Naturally, the present writer alone bears full responsibility for any omissions and commissions.

cularly in the latter half.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, depreciation is not reckoned with. Hence the net investment rate at constant costs, we guess, may never have exceeded 7 to 8 p.c.—undoubtedly an improvement over the past, but by no means adequate.

Sheer negligence and deliberate exploitation by the Central Government located in West Pakistan can explain to a large extent this lack of investments in the East. The latter's share of gross investment in Pakistan as a whole fluctuated at around one-third for each of the three Five Year Plan periods, although East Pakistan started with a slightly lower per capita income and had always a much larger population.<sup>6</sup> In public sector outlays, the position has been changing for the better, from 24% in the First Plan to 45% in the Third Plan. (20, p. 254; 38, p. 33). But then the public sector has over the same period been losing in importance; from the height of 65% it has come down to 54% only. (37, p. 172). The Plans make paper allocation for the private sector without much effect; targets for the East go completely by the board while those for the West or for the country as a whole tend to get overfulfilled by very big margins.

#### Underlying Reasons

One need not look very deep for the underlying reasons. In the initial phase a whole series of government policies like import control and issuance of import licences to favoured parties, cheapening of imports of capital goods through overvaluation of the rupee, fantastic tax concessions to industrialists, maintenance of an internal price parity strongly boosting up industrialists' profits at the expense of the agriculturists, etc. soon

brought into being, it was officially admitted, "the first generation of industrialists, which earned its wealth at least partly through its entrepreneurial ability, (but) is now handing it over to a second generation for whom it is largely an unearned windfall... concentration is leading to pre-emption of new (investment as also foreign exchange) sanctions and bank credits by big industrial families, resulting in a denial of fair opportunities to the late comers." (39, p. 15). Two years earlier in 1968, M. Haq, then Chief Economist to the Government, had publicly announced that twenty families of W. Pakistan controlled two-thirds of the country's industrial assets, four-fifths of banking capital and seven-tenths of insurance finance. As is well known, capitalist development is always uneven. Capitalists of Pakistan were no exception and tended to concentrate around (well developed) Karachi<sup>7</sup> which had a well-developed port as well as the important Central Government offices. While special incentives were offered to industries in the East, these were diluted since the same facilities were offered to 'backward areas' in the West, including places within an hour's drive from Karachi or Lahore. (52) Official financial institutions like the Pakistan Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation, the Industrial Development Bank of Pakistan, etc. contributed around one-third of total capital formation in the private sector in the 1960's and played a direct role in stabilizing the existing disparity between the two regions. (52; 13, pp. 307-8).

Worst of all was the draining of the East for the almost exclusive benefit of the semi-comprador capitalists in industry; later, their counterparts in agriculture also had their share.<sup>8</sup> About the transfer of resources in the 1950's there is no controversy except about the quantum. Taking the overall, i.e. foreign and inter-regional, trade figures of East Pakistan, she had an average current account surplus of nearly Rs 17 crores per year. (29, p. 143). Mr Haq's estimate of Rs 20 crores per annum during the late

'fifties gained wide currency, Dr Aminul Islam's unpublished dissertation puts it at Rs 50 crores, using "shadow prices" (quoted in 43, pp. 84-5). Indeed, it is generally accepted that the trade figures mentioned above considerably understate the amount of surplus; for, in Pakistan, specially in the Eastern province, prices of agricultural goods (which made up for most of the East's exports) were very depressed vis-a-vis the prices of manufactures which accounted for a major part of the East's imports from the Western region.<sup>9</sup> On this consideration the 'real' transfer from the East would be much higher than Haq's estimate; our own guess for the decade as a whole is Rs 309 crores.\* For the 1960s the East no doubt incurred an overall deficit; from official statistics it comes to Rs 451 crores (38, pp. 69-70) for the decade;<sup>10</sup> It is surely an overestimate due to the inequitable terms of trade. Our revision would place it at Rs 223 crores only. In our view then E. Pakistan still ran a surplus over the twenty-year span. Moreover, she has always had a surplus in trade with foreign countries but was obliged to buy dearer and inferior quality goods from the protected industries in the West. Despite appearances to the contrary all her investments at least till 1964-65, were financed entirely from internal savings." (29, p. 147).

Without diminishing the importance of these external factors holding back progress we still believe that at least an equally important factor is the semi-feudal structure of East Bengal's countryside to which we may now turn.

#### Land Relations

The *zamindari* system in East Pakistan was as ubiquitous as in any other part of British India, extending over three-quarters of the cultivated area. As elsewhere sub-infeudation also made considerable progress with the result that between the *zamindar* and the actual tiller stood a large body of intermediaries with rent-receiving right; the entire chain could

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contain as many as twenty *links*. At the time of the Partition 8 p.c. of land was cultivated as *khas* land (the personal holding of the *zamindar*), 22 p.c. was tilled by non-occupancy tenants or *bargadars*, or share-croppers and the remaining 70 p.c. was in the possession of occupancy tenants, i.e. *ryots* or *under-ryots* (3, p. 120).

Very soon after the creation of Pakistan the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act was passed thanks to the preponderance of Hindus among the *zamindars* and quasi-*zamindars*<sup>11</sup> (49, p. 187). Apparently designed to abolish all private rent-receivers so that the tiller paid land revenues directly to the government, it left a number of loopholes. The original *zamindars* mostly disappeared from the scene being left with no more than 33 acres of *khas* land each. But there are doubts about the status of the intermediaries; whereas legally all rent-receiving interests were abolished, none of the reports so far categorically assert that *all* intermediaries have in practice been banished. An important loophole remained in the definition of the "cultivating tenant" who began to pay land revenues directly to the government and thus became the owners; the cultivator, under the Act, also included those who cultivated with the help of *bargadars* or of agricultural labourers. Legally, the *bargadars* lost whatever small rights they had under the old system. Subletting by owners on any terms or conditions whatever may be prohibited, but share-cropping or *barga* is not regarded as subletting at all (3, pp.121-3;1). In practice, the situation may not have been entirely different from the past; generally, the *bargadars* have never been allowed to till the same plot of land for more than three years in succession.

The Census of 1951 found that out of 9.9m male<sup>12</sup> agriculturists aged 12 years and over, 34 p.c. were owner cultivators, 47 p.c. cultivated land partly owned and partly rented or fully rented, 4 p.c. were owner or tenant-cultivators who also worked for hire, and the remaining 14 p.c. were landless agricultural labourers<sup>13</sup>

(34 table 14). The corresponding percentages in the 1961 Census were 41, 31, 8 and 19 respectively (35, table 51). The rise in the proportion of landless agricultural labourer is quite remarkable. The phenomenon acquires even greater significance if one lumps the last two categories and calls them "agricultural labourers"; their proportion goes up by as much as one-half, from 18 to 27 p.c. Looked at differently, while the male agricultural labour force increased by 21 p.c. over the decade, the number of agricultural labourers went up by 85 p.c. At the other end, the proportion of owner-cultivators also went up quite significantly<sup>14</sup> but the ranks of the part-owner-part-tenants or full tenants were drastically reduced; the size of the latter group actually came down from 4.67 m to 3.67 m. Of those who left this group one part found its way upwards but the majority went downhill, becoming farm workers.

Regarding land held under different tenures apparently no change took place. The Agricultural Census of 1960 shows that owned area accounted for 78 p.c., exactly the same as the share of *khas* land plus the area under occupancy tenants in the *zamindari* days [15].

Out of a desire to create a band of permanent friends and loyal supporters the Ayub regime raised in 1961 the land ceiling from 33 to 125 acres with retrospective effect. Whenever the original *zamindars* could be traced, they got back the difference. [23, p. 57; 39, p. 308]. Was it the reason why the officially sponsored 1963-64 Master Survey of Agriculture (MSA) in E. Pakistan found only 19.8% of the total area cultivated by non-owners, i.e. a decline of 2.2% in three years? [51].

A comparison of the MSA and the Agricultural Census reveals two other interesting features. First, the proportion of families with small holdings of 2.5 acres or less, has gone up from 54 p.c. to over 62 p.c. Second-

ly, the proportion of agricultural labour families appears to have gone up. In 1960 families with 1 acre or less made up 28 p.c. of the total. This figure seems to accord very well with the 1961 Population Census data on 'agricultural labourers' when this term is modified as suggested above. But then in 1963-64 one finds a simple intrapolation of the MSA data that around 46 p.c. of the families held a maximum of one acre each.<sup>15</sup> This is by all accounts a startling jump over a two or three-year period. Had this phenomenon really taken place it would have caused a first-rate social crisis; but none was reported in any newspapers either Pakistani or foreign. Further, personal conversations the present writer had with knowledgeable people from East Bengal failed to reveal any such developments in the early sixties. Our doubts about the MSA figures are strengthened by another factor. At the same time as the proportion of families holding up to 1 acre was going up so sharply, the proportion of cultivable land held by the same group also registers a significant increase from 3.2 p.c. in 1960 to approximately 5.3 p.c. in 1963-64. Such a paradox cannot be easily explained. Hence in our view the significance of MSA results should not be overstressed.

Nevertheless, a few conclusions about the changing tenurial pattern may be drawn on the basis of the two Population Censuses and the Agricultural Census. Although the directly feudal form of exploitation has been ended, sub-infeudation has not. In many cases the tiller has yet to become the owner. The *barga* system has probably declined, many *bargadars* being virtually turned into farm workers whose numbers have consequently increased at a very rapid rate.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, leasing out of land remains quite common. The present system of tenure therefore contains many elements of the earlier feudal epoch; the land reforms have failed to usher in a new society of peasant proprietors.

<sup>1</sup> Figures in brackets refer to source material. A complete list of books quoted will be published in the last instalment of the series.

<sup>2</sup> Official estimates of over 3% p.a. for all agriculture was contested by S. R. Bose who found it (for the period 1960/61 to 1967/68) to be no more than 2.1%; for rice output it was as small as 1.7%. Bose also showed that these rates would be somewhat higher if 1959/60 were taken as the base year. (8). In our own calculations, the exponential trend rates for the whole decade, i.e. up to 1969/70, were estimated, first with 1959/60 = 100 and then with 1960/61 = 100. The average of the two rates is shown in the text for each item.

<sup>3</sup> Haq's data for the 1950s are at 1959/60 constant costs. For the 'sixties it is difficult to obtain comparable series.

<sup>4</sup> This is calculated in an indirect and tortuous manner on the basis of statements in official literature and is subject to a wide margin of error.

<sup>5</sup> For the main investment goods for which data are available, East Pakistan wholesale prices, with 1959/60 = 100, were: metal goods 133 in 1964/65 and 182 in 1967/68, machinery 106 and 110 respectively, and cement 149 and 164 respectively. Prices increase in West Pakistan were similar; only for cement was the price rise in the West considerably smaller than that in the East. (36a).

<sup>6</sup> Ever since the late 1950's E. Pakistani civil servants and economists have been convincingly arguing the case for a larger share of national investments (49, pp. 196-203).

<sup>7</sup> It contributed nearly a third to the manufacturing output of Pakistan in 1959/60; another almost half came from other areas of W. Pakistan leaving a bare one-quarter for the East. [29, p. 152].

<sup>8</sup> To the extent that higher outlays created more job opportunities in the West, the poorer sections also gained to a small ex-

tent; but then their living standards have remained static. (24). As for the class character of the industrialists and rich farmers, I have argued the case for using the present terminology elsewhere. (11).

<sup>9</sup> Simplifying Lewis' estimates (29, p. 149) of the *relative* terms of trade in the inter-national and world markets, it may be said that for every rupee worth of agricultural goods E. Pakistan should have got one-and-half times *more* of the manufactured wares than she actually got in the fifties. In the 'sixties the situation improved and she lost only two-thirds of her "dues". Here we assume that world market prices provide a fair rate of exchange between the two sets of commodities.

<sup>10</sup> Our source gives no data for the last half of 1969-70 fiscal year; we had to double all figures for the first half to obtain our results.

<sup>11</sup> In the light of the previous footnote we have worked out in a sketchy manner (complete data were not available) the total of manufacture exports to the East and reduced the value figure using the appropriate deflator. Alternative methods are equally plausible; in any case the East's inter-regional trade deficit should be much less than that in the official statistics for each of the decades.

<sup>12</sup> Their oppression of the poor Muslim peasantry is legendary and helped considerably in consolidating the latter under the Muslim League banner. However, in West Pakistan where conditions were just as bad, the landlords were Muslims and flourish to this day.

<sup>13</sup> Due to considerable under-enumeration of female agriculturists they have been left out. (8; 16).

<sup>14</sup> According to Sir Malcolm Darling, the well-known expert on the Punjab peasantry, the proportion of owner-cultivators is exaggerated as *ryots* with heritable and transferable tenancy rights called themselves owners [quoted in 3, p. 120]. This oft-quoted figure seems to have been misplaced in the light of the data for the next Census.

<sup>15</sup> 29 p.c. held less than 0.25 acre, 42 p.c. held up to 0.75 acre and 51 p.c. held up to 1.25 acre. [51, p. 6].

<sup>16</sup> Population growth, parcellization and alienation of land belonging to small peasants may have been more important in swelling the ranks of farm workers.

(To be continued)

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JANUARY 8, 1972

scene, he must explain the allegory, ruining the art, attracting the censor's notice, and inviting the fascists' wrath upon himself and the people involved in the film.

As a film, it does not of course deserve much attention. The February 21 movement runs parallel to the story without ever meeting it. The movement is used as a backdrop, but as woodenly as background scenery is in a third-rate Indian studio. The movement, which started as a students' movement, later drawing in the whole mass of people of East Pakistan, culminating in the collapse of Pakistan, is shown in the film just as a pot pourri of slogans, processions and bullets. It never develops. The acting, the story, the treatment, are naive, dating back to our *Udayer Pathay* days. The film, as a film, will not be an abiding memory. But it is eminently documentary in spirit, throwing a flood of light on the affairs going on now in Bangladesh. Hence its relevance.

The author-director sees the political situation through the frame of a middle-class family. The sentiments, the language, the characters, the dynamism of the story, all owe to this petty-bourgeois life. It is a slice of life, as the title says, but entirely of middle-class life. The servant alone of the family dies for the country, because he is dispensable. The author-director's sentiment would not allow sacrificing any other of the characters; even the brother—who fell, hit by lathis and bullets—survived. Did the film-makers, perhaps unwittingly, try to drive home a profound truth of the whole political situation in Pakistan—that it is the proletariat and peasantry that fell for the cause of the country, while the masters got reunited? If Zahir Raihan believes that the movement in Bangladesh was a bourgeois democratic revolution, he was entirely right. But the film was shot in 1967 when they could not imagine that things would come to such a bloody shape; if Raihan could, the film would not have ended in the family reunion happiness.

## Clippings

## Pakistan's Losses

In the two-week war the Pakistan forces lost half of their navy, a quarter of their combat aircraft and about 30 per cent of their ground forces.

But the Pakistanis will perhaps feel the repercussions of this conflict more on the economic front than anywhere else.

With the birth of Bangla Desh as an independent nation, Pakistan's gross national product has automatically been reduced by 40 per cent. Foreign exchange earnings from the jute, tea and paper exports of the Eastern wing will drop by 45 per cent.

The Pakistanis will also lose a consumer market of 75 million people to India, their large jute mills and the profits of West Pakistan industry in the eastern wing. In terms of the Bengal consumer market, West Pakistan stands to lose about £120m a year.

At the same time, the blow to industry in West Pakistan will be exacerbated by the fact that large quantities of consumer goods for the Bengal market have not been shipped to the East during the past eight months and are being stockpiled in Karachi.

Tax-revenues will drop by 42 per cent, exports by 44 per cent and domestic savings by 33 per cent. With defence spending already taking 54 per cent of the budget, it is obvious that Mr Bhutto's threat of a continuous confrontation with India will have a disastrous effect upon the economy.

But perhaps even more important in the long term, Pakistan has lost the only effective political counter-balance which would have perhaps preserved the regional integrity of West Pakistan itself.

With the secession of East Bengal, the 20 million West Pakistanis belonging to the minority provinces of the Sind, Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier will feel particularly vulnerable to being dominated by

40 million Punjabis. One can foresee regional schisms developing within the Western province in the coming years.

The war has also shattered Pakistan's illusion that Islamabad's foreign policy was superior to that of India. China and America failed to come to Pakistan's assistance at the crucial stage of the war and a new feeling of isolationism has begun to set in. (Peter Hazelhurst in *The Times*, London).

## Sihanouk's Review

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the former Cambodian ruler now living in exile in Peking, said that the Cambodian Government Army no longer existed as a result of shattering defeats at the hands of forces loyal to himself.

In a wide-ranging conversation with journalists (in Peking) he also said he would be in Hanoi for consultation when President Nixon visits Peking next February. The Prince had earlier said he would be ready to meet Mr Nixon here.

The former head of state said his own forces could now easily capture Phnom Penh, but that there were no plans to attack the city because an occupation would lead to American air strikes that would reduce the Cambodian capital to rubble and cause heavy civilian casualties.

He said the Cambodian Government forces are "completely demoralized and only keep going through the support of Saigon troops and American air attacks."

Speaking of the Nixon visit, the Prince said he feared American aggression would continue despite the efforts of Mr Chou En-lai, the Chinese Prime Minister, but he did not rule out the possibility of "a pleasant surprise".

He was "certain that Hanoi and Peking are prepared to facilitate Nixon's disengagement" from Indo-China. He also said that Mr Chou and Mr Pham Van Dong, the North Vietnam Prime Minister told him "with broad smiles" last month: "Perhaps you will be able to go home earlier than expected. We are optimistic about Cambodia".

The Prince, who visited Hanoi earlier last year, said that during his three-week stay there in February, he would meet North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front leaders and the chiefs of the pro-Communist Pathet Lao from Laos. Turning to recent developments in Thailand, Prince Sihanouk claimed that the recent military seizure of power there was made under pressure from the United States. Washington, he said, wanted a military base in south-east Asia as American ground troops were withdrawn from Vietnam.

But he believed that the Thais, whom he called Asia's most intelligent statesmen, would come to realize the dangers of allowing their country to be used as an American base. He added: "I have the intuition that my old enemy number one, Thanat Khomein (former Thai Foreign Minister), will one day come to Peking like a Thai Kissinger, pledging coexistence."

Speaking to reporters in the former Chinese Foreign Ministry that is now his home, the Prince also said he was disappointed that his old friend Mr Lee Kuan Yew, the Singapore Prime Minister, had continued to allow the Phnom Penh regime to keep its embassy in Singapore.

In an interview to Sam Cohen of *Newsweek* Sihanouk was lavish in his praises of China for giving him substantial military and financial support. His opinion of the Soviet Union, however, was another matter. "Russia is no more on our side. She does not even recognise my Government. The Soviets are helping the North Vietnamese, not enough to win the war, but enough just not to lose. Look what the Russians are sending to Egypt in arms, men and money. To North Vietnam, they are sending

some old war material. Russia wants to weaken China and keep the U.S. busy in Indochina. She is not interested in an early end to the war. She is playing a dirty game." (Agency reports and *Newsweek*).

## Letters

### China And Bangladash

Ashok Rudra's "China in The Bullshop" (25th December) exposes the extreme hollowness of his political thinking. It is true that any unique turn in the history of any country creates a lot of confusion. So do the events in East Bengal and the entire subcontinent. China's role in these may raise questions even among those who are actually engaged in the work of revolution. In this sense, one certainly should encourage critical questions and critical evaluations of the present-day theoretical leaders of Marxism-Leninism in order to clarify issues and events in their proper revolutionary perspective. In other words, if one criticises Chinese foreign policy as "ill-informed, rigid, doctrinaire", one should take up the responsibility of explaining why it is so. The answer to this why must necessarily be found in the stage of development as it exists in China today. Mr Rudra should know that this is how Marxist-Leninist analyses are to be conducted. Under what logic of Marxist dialectics can he explain his discovery of two opposite faces of China—"so wise and perceptive in domestic matters" and "extremely maladroit" in foreign matters?

That Mr Rudra read Lenin only to misunderstand him is obvious from his answer to his own first question. The question is: "what is the concept of a 'just war' in terms of Marxist-Leninist theory?" His answer lies in his next questions: "Can any war be just if it is not a war waged by a people's army for the protection of their interests?" He goes on: "Can it be said that the Pakistan army is a people's army or that it is fighting in the interests of the people of East

Bengal or even that of West Pakistan?" The modern revisionist charlatans want us to answer in the negative just to buy peace or "socialism" at the cost of Leninism. If a country fights against foreign aggression, the Soviet revisionists want the working class to agitate for peace or indulge in a peace movement against this 'unjust war', if the country is under bourgeois-landlord government. But if the aggressor is none other than Soviet social-imperialism itself, the working class should take up arms against its own bourgeois government, converting it into 'a people's war.' Mr Rudra should know that Lenin's categorisation of wars between just and unjust arose mainly from his class outlook. He decried imperialist re-division of the world either by mutual agreement or by war and he wanted the working classes of the contending imperialist countries not to be swayed by their governments' war effort and the two world wars were in this sense unjust wars. But because the imperialists' war efforts are unjust from the standpoint of the working classes of all countries in general and there arises the need for a peace movement in order to paralyse such war-efforts, the war of resistance conducted by a country subject to imperialist or expansionist aggression is just from the standpoint of the working class even if the victimised country is under a bourgeois government. If in Rudra's account, Pakistan did wage a war of resistance against a war thrust upon it by Indian expansionists, then certainly Pakistan's struggle against India was a 'just struggle' even if the Pakistan army was not a people's army or Pakistan was under a bourgeois-landlord government. For example during the Second World War Chiang Kai-shek's army was not a people's army, and the Chiang Kai-shek government was a government of feudal-comprador bourgeoisie, but against Japanese imperialism it fought a just war. Thus, because any war of resistance against foreign aggression (including the one in Czechoslovakia against the Soviet social-imperialist aggression) is a just war irrespective of the

class character of the government; the working class has to support it actively under its own revolutionary banner and from its own class platforms. This was what happened in the anti-Japanese united front of the Kuomintang and the Communists.

Those who think that only revolutionary civil war is just and all other wars are unjust, are actually guilty of revisionist capitulation. This is so because the Soviet revisionists cannot shamelessly, as yet, decry revolutionary civil war, but their constant efforts are to frighten the revolutionaries against the possibility of global war arising out of a civil war or a war of resistance and lead them to peace talks for bargaining purposes. This did happen in Korea, this is sought to be created in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. In all these places, the war of resistance synchronised with the revolutionary civil war placing the working class in leadership. But where the war of resistance is conducted only by the army of the bourgeois government, notwithstanding the just character of such war, defeat becomes very much a possibility. Pakistan was defeated by India, Czechoslovakia was overrun by the army of Soviet social-imperialists.

Mr Rudra assumes impeccability of his theoretical Trotskyite knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, but in fact is guided by the logic of "world revolution." He observes: "how does it matter to China or to any revolutionary which bourgeois or comprador-feudal country violates the territorial boundary of which other comprador-feudal country?" In other words, a revolutionary should not bother about any imperialist or expansionist annexation of a relatively weak country's territory if the particular weak country is governed by comprador-feudal interests. A strange perverse logic of supporting colonialism! It becomes a matter of intellectual stupidity to invoke Lenin's fight against social chauvinism in order to support anarcho-syndicalist opportunism in favour of colonialist aggression. We request Rudra to read Lenin's "Social-Democrat and the Communist" and all

the chapters under the caption "Marxism Against Revisionism and Opportunism" (Lenin's Selected Works, Volume XI, Lawrence Wishart edn, 1939) just to get rid of his muddle-headed thinking.

The revolutionary internationalism of the working class does not do away with its component of proletarian nationalism—a completely different thing from social chauvinism. Because of the uneven development of world societies, revolutionary advancement of the different national working classes is also not uniform. Because without revolutionary maturation of the objective and subjective conditions of society, revolution cannot take place, nor should it be imported from outside, Lenin justified consolidation of revolution in a single country even under an epoch of imperialism in opposition to the Trotskyite counter-revolutionary theme of simultaneous revolutions throughout the globe. In this connection, Lenin talked of peaceful coexistence as an anti-thesis to the imperialists' worldwide consolidation, intervention and manoeuvres against national self-determination and crystallisation of revolutionary forces in a particular country. Imperialists or social-imperialists do follow a kind of gangster internationalism in the name of democracy and anti-communism and as a matter of principle it is to their advantage not to honour the territorial integrity of a state power. On the other hand, from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism, in the interests of world revolution or of crystallisation of revolutionary movements in unevenly developed world societies, revolutionaries advocate peaceful coexistence between opposing social systems and post-facto territorial integrity of a state power. It is true that intellectual sycophants of imperialism of various hues make false allegations against the revolutionaries because of the latter's proletarian international outlook that communists do not honour nationalism or territorial integrity of a State power. Rudra swallows this falsity as truth in order to vindicate the cause of Trot-

skyite opportunism—a counter-revolutionary offshoot in the ranks of the communist movement. History, however, shows that the exploiting classes at perilous moments invite foreign imperialist powers into their own territory with a view to killing a revolutionary movement of domestic origin. The examples are Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and many others.

Rudra's third question is really infantile and indeed a deduction from his 'Marxist-Leninist' rejection of territorial integrity of a bourgeois state power. He says; "What made the Soviet Union into the social imperialists they are but their line of establishing diplomatic relations with various non-socialist States and refusing to give any help (does he mean arms and armed militia?) to the communist movements within these countries, all in the name of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries?" Thank God, according to Rudra's criterion, Lenin must be a 'social imperialist', because he talked of peaceful coexistence in terms of normal diplomatic relations with the non-socialist states! It must be to his annoyance that Lenin allowed Finland to choose its place outside the USSR. Possibly Rudra is annoyed with Lenin because Lenin for the first time used the term 'social-imperialism' against the German Social Democrats including Kautsky who had supported German monopoly capital's war efforts in the name of world revolution on the plea that German imperialism would weaken the stronger British imperialism of that time. Lenin at that time abused Kautsky's queer analysis of imperialist politics divorced from imperialist economics. Rudra's analysis of Soviet social-imperialism is precisely of that type. He does not even care to know that Soviet social-imperialism's fundamental root lies not at all in its having diplomatic relations with non-socialist States or even imperialist state powers, but in the very character of so-called "economic reforms" taking place in the Soviet economy itself

and in the type of economic relations governing Comecon. Soviet social-imperialist politics is an inevitable growth of its economic foundation and such politics today amounts to capitulationist practices in order to promote counter-revolutionary wings within the ranks of the revolutionary movement.

Rudra echoes the pet revisionist allegation that "the success of the counter-revolution in Indonesia owes a great deal to the fact of the Indonesian party following Chinese advice"! Here he is irresponsible enough not to analyse the exact reasons and forms of the Indonesian counter-revolution.

Regarding the nature of the movement in East Bengal he makes a bundle of heroic assumptions on the basis of two objective events—genocide and refugee influx. We have no scope here to enter into an analysis of East Bengal affairs and the active Indian involvement in them. But Rudra, it seems, makes genocide a criterion to determine the nationalist character of the movement in East Bengal. Was it due to Jewish nationalism—if that at all existed—that Hitler resorted to genocide? Was it due to Hindu nationalism that thousands of Muslims have been killed in India during the last 24 years or was it due to Muslim nationalism that a huge number of Hindus were killed in Pakistan? Does Mr Rudra believe that the West Pakistan Government is an imperialist power out to make East Bengal a colony? Does he believe that the DMK movement for Dravidisthan, or Sheikh Abdullah's movement for independent Kashmir, or the Naga or Mizo movement or the Telengana movement for regional autonomy are all nationalist movements to be supported by the revolutionaries of this continent? We hope that Mr Rudra in his answers would not play the part of 'clipping coupons' of social chauvinism or anarcho-syndicalist opportunism.

PRABIR BASU  
Calcutta

Mr Ashok Rudra's article "China in the Bullshop" (25.12.1971) is an unnecessary exercise in intellectualism. Our 'left intellectuals' invariably indulge in such exercises on issues away from our direct involvement when there is a lot to think, explain and 'do' about more urgent and important things at home. Such exercises are nothing but sheer opportunism and dishonesty. Why don't they try to explain the quantitative or qualitative differences between New Delhi and the pre-Bhutto Islamabad?

The recent crimes of Yahya Khan were: refusing to allow the elected representatives to form Ministry/Government in E. Pakistan; arrests, repression and massacre; driving out Hindus/Bengalis from their land; and undermining the Indian economy by pressure of E. Pakistani refugees.

In the last few years in India not a few elected State Governments/Ministries were superseded or dissolved. Many were killed by the CRP, police and the army. There have been combing operations, mass arrests and killings; there are the PVA and MISA acts of repression. Were not people of Beliaghata, Tollygunje, Dum Dum, Cossipore and Baranagar forced to leave their houses and find refuge elsewhere? The East Bengal refugees are indeed a 'burden' but on an average, every Indian citizen—from the honourable President, the PM, Tata and Birla to every common individual, even the unemployed, the beggars and the new-born child in the country is committed to a foreign loan of Rs. 200 or more.

There is of course a difference in the degree of oppression here and in E. Bengal, but when 'quantity' will change into 'quality' time will tell. Certainly our left intellectuals should be able to answer these questions, if not 'do' more concrete things in practice. There is and will be plenty of brickbats for China in both bourgeois and 'communist' journals. China can take them and still grow. But why waste *Frontier's* good newsprint for the self-gratification of intellectualism? China can look

after herself—but can we dare look at our own selves?

P. K. PAUL  
Calcutta

To do away with the confusions spread by leaders of working class-peasant parties and organisations who have lived long enough in comfort and prestige, been brainwashed by liberalism and colonial inferiority propped up by philistine pretensions and thus have become tools of superpower strategy, we should read out the following:

Foreign Policy of Socialist Countries: A proposal concerning the general line of communist movement—Communist Party Publication, India, 1963, page 28 says—'According to the Chinese Communist Party, the general line of the foreign policy of socialist countries must have the following content:—

(A) to develop relations of friendship, mutual assistance and co-operation among the countries in the Socialist camp in accordance with the principles of proletarian internationalism; (B) to strive for peaceful co-existence on the basis of five principles with countries having different social systems and oppose the imperialist policies of aggression and war; (C) and to support and assist the revolutionary struggle of all the oppressed peoples and nations.

These three aspects are inter-related and indivisible.

The CPC has stated, 'No one should ever demand in the name of peaceful co-existence that the oppressed people and nations should give up their revolutionary struggle'.

The general line of the 1960 Statement says, 'On the national question the world outlook of the proletarian party is internationalism, and not nationalism and opposes reactionary nationalism. Communists expose attempts by the reactionary section of the bourgeoisie to represent its selfish, narrow class interests as those of the entire nation; they expose the demagogic use by bourgeois politicians of

socialist slogans for the same purpose'.

The atrocities of the Yahya-led government are an undeniable fact. As in the past, the people of Pakistan (both wings) would have fought him and his government and should have been left to themselves to decide their own destiny.

China's two open and clear stands regarding Pakistan in the context—to support the Pakistani people and government if and when imperialists and their henchmen interfere in the former's internal affairs and to deem the present struggle (and any such struggle) over there strictly to be an internal affair of that country—correspond to the foreign policy of socialist countries and guidelines of the 1960 statement.

USHA CHATTERJEE  
Kalna, Burdwan

The constant bogey of Indian 'expansionism' is often raised by those supporting China as an excuse for her policy towards the liberation struggle of Bangladesh. It is said, not infrequently, that India is determined to establish a government of her own choice in Bangladesh because that will serve her expansionist motives. But what is this government of her choice? The government that should have been formed would have been led by the Awami League because of its thumping electoral success. If the class character of the Awami League is not qualitatively different from that of the present ruling elite of India, the blame certainly cannot be laid at India's door.

India has committed no breach of international ethics (if there be any) by intervening on behalf of the Bangladesh liberation struggle. China has done so in other countries, especially North Korea and Vietnam. But for China's active help combined with that of Soviet Russia, they would not have been able to withstand the continuous onslaught of the awesome power of the U.S.A. If no eyebrows are raised about the Chinese inter-

vention in North Korea and Vietnam only because of the close identity of their approaches to revolution there is no valid reason why India should be singled out for censure, particularly when her political and economic stability was threatened by the unending flow of refugees.

The charges of expansionism, interference in other's internal affairs, machinations for the dismemberment of a sovereign state are, to be frank enough, quite untenable in the light of the intriguing moves on the international chessboard. "A world without change by revolutions—in which China's close friends would not be revolutionary states", Edgar Snow has written in *Life*, "is inconceivable to Peking". If this is what China wants and to achieve it, is bent on directing her foreign policy, I do not know how India can be accused of expansionist motives if she supports a movement that serves her national interests.

By supporting Pakistan, China is guided by a specific purpose. In all the Indo-Pak conflicts the Middle East countries have supported Pakistan because of "Islamic brotherhood" which has sold much better and faster there than India's secularism. So it can be said that China has, through her clever efforts to paint India as the destroyer of Pakistan (the biggest Muslim state in the world), been able to isolate India only to facilitate her clandestine intrusion into that area. It is therefore not true to say, as Mr Rudra has concluded by saying, (December 25) that China's foreign policy has been left to ignorant bureaucrats. If she wants South-East Asia to be neutralised it is simply to make it vulnerable to her influence; if she wants the Middle East to be anti-communist, it is only to see that that area is free from Soviet influence; if she is interested in maintaining perpetual tension on the subcontinent, it is strictly in accordance with her policy of keeping the balance of power intact which, in other words,

means the parity of armed strength between the two countries.

PHANI BHUSHAN GHOSH  
Ashokenagar

The name of Chairman Mao is a great moral force for people who are honestly fighting. So during the period of the massacre in Bangladesh the masses looked to the liberator of humanity. A single word from his mouth would have been a great encouragement to the resistance of the masses. People waited and waited, but not a word came, not even a word of sympathy. The Maoists of East Bengal will now be isolated from the masses and easy to kill. Those who can argue may convince a person like me but how will they convince the masses of East Bengal who have suffered so much at the hands of a close friend of China? Power politics and state relations proved more powerful than the bloodshed of the poor masses who are guilty of following the bourgeois leadership, because there was no real Marxist-Leninist Party to guide them.

MIKHI RAM  
Chandigarh

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