

# frontier

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## MUJIBS ALL

ONE or two Young Turks in the Union Ministry are unlikely to thrill, not to speak of the country, even the CPI, on whom the realisation has dawned that the present Government of India is committed to the preservation of the capitalist structure. The talk of alliance with "progressive" Congressmen persists however. What the CPI leaders would practise, as before, is beyond doubt: it is the role of willing lackeys of the ruling Congress. The new note struck by the CPI in New Delhi was perhaps meant to warn the Congress(R) not to be so cocksure in the distracted State of West Bengal and not to indulge in any pranks in Kerala where the smooth Mr Achutha Menon finds his company rather restless. But the Congress in West Bengal is perhaps confident that even if the Democratic Coalition Ministry goes, the famous Indira wave will sweep the polls, likely to be held in 1972 or even earlier. They forget that there also is a tide in the affairs of women, as seen, for instance, in the Delhi civic elections, and that there are many imponderables in West Bengal.

The overwhelming majority in Parliament has gone to the head of the Prime Minister. Instead of even a slight shift to the left, the country, it is reported, will be gifted with an ordinance on the maintenance of internal security, which will include all the substantive provisions of the erstwhile Preventive Detention Act. Of course, the ordinance will not be something novel for West Bengal which continues to be ruled under any number of draconian laws, reinforced by a massive concentration of the army and CRP. Repression goes on in full swing but does not hit the headlines these days. Inter-party division is so deep that the left parties have been rendered toothless and there is no perceptible public resistance to the daily repression and violence.

One of the reasons likely to be advanced for the proposed ordinance is the general air of insecurity and uncertainty in the wake of the military action in East Bengal and the consequent refugee influx, no end to which is in sight. There are border clashes and border violations. Of course, we on this side are all angels and there is not the slightest doubt about the villain of the piece. But, surely, the Government of India knows what is what and that it will have to pay some price for the border initiatives it is taking. After Ceylon, it cannot declare from house-tops that it does not believe in intervention.

Where the border tension will lead the country, however, depends on the super-powers. The proposed ordinance may be part of a bigger design. Meanwhile, any protest at home, it

is now evident, will be met with the utmost ruthlessness. But no parliamentary party seems to be prepared for what may be coming. We are Mujibs all.

that Indian export gains have been always fortuitously caused. It is quite possible that in 1971-72 Indian exports might record a 10 per cent increase; one good reason is that the jute industry in Pakistan is going to go awry because of the savage attack on East Pakistan; a situation that is bound to prove advantageous to the Indian jute magnates and, on paper, to Indian exports.

## Indira's Blue-Eyed Boys

Indian exports, like an expert runner who puts on a spurt only towards the end of the race, have won the laurels—of course from Mr L. N. Mishra, the Foreign Trade Minister. They have increased by Rs 118 crores over 1969-70, a 8.5 per cent rise and are expected to reach Rs 1,531 crores. Mr Mishra is ecstatic, because the exports performance, which had declined by 0.5 per cent in the first half of last year and had been booted all the way by the cynics, had suddenly picked up and even improved upon the plan target of 7 per cent. A miracle! All the more, because the three foreign exchange spinners in India, tea, jute and cotton, have fared even worse than in 1969-70, which was a year of abysmally low performance.

A solid base to anchor high optimism indeed. Mr Mishra is expecting not only a repeat performance and fulfilment of the Plan pledge; he is confident even of a ten per cent growth in exports. In short, he implies that Indian exports have acquired a built-in tempo of expansion. There's the rub!

Even if one is not an inveterate disbeliever who refuses to accept any governmental figures, there is enough reason why the present export statistics should be scanned. First, the world market prices of the commodities that India traditionally exports (non-traditional exports are there for ornamental purposes merely to please the government-lovers) have risen. Therefore, the 8.5 per cent rise reflects a lesser increase of the quantity of Indian exports. Second, the rise as stated by the Minister is against the 1969-70 performance, which had recorded in its turn only a 4.5 rise against its previous year.

Therefore, the comparison of this year's result with last year's is meaningless in the context of the Plan target of an even rise by 7 per cent. Third, India has recovered partly the markets she lost last year and so this year's achievement is only restoration and no improvement. Fourthly, the present export boost has been effected by an increase in imported raw materials; which means that the gap between earnings on export and expenditure on import is going to widen. Mr Mishra is silent on this point.

The export performance should be studied critically because Mr Mishra's optimism seems to be generated not by economically sound reasons but by the desire to spin some political yarn. Apart from the fact that the export targets set by the Planners are fantastically low in this period of booming world trade, it is also known

On the import scene, Mr Mishra has announced a good number of items which will be taken over by the public sector. The act was anticipated and to be honest was dreaded by the private sector. It will again be sought to prove that Mrs Gandhi is being true to her pledge to convert India to socialism by very peaceful means. But between the bureaucratic capital, which will be strengthened by this new canalisation, even if marginally, and socialism falls the shadow of failure of the leftists. Meanwhile the organised sector of the Indian industries, some of whom are the chief exporters and who will be given liberal import licences because of their good export performance, will continue to be the blue-eyed boys of Indira and thrive by shady export deals.

## Cambodia: Making Money

Everything is scarce these days in Phnom Penh but the scarcest commodity is news. Availability of news is in direct proportion to the stability of the regime. The deeper the government sinks into mire the stricter are the censors. For the last two weeks, for example, the world outside was kept guessing about who would be the premier in Cambodia. Only early this week came the news that 'Marshal' Lon Nol (a title that was conferred on him by the National Assembly to raise his diminishing stock vis-a-vis the people) had finally agreed to form a new cabinet. Continuous news blackout, with an occasional trickle like the above, how-

ever, reveals much more the rottenness of the regime than what it is intended to do—hide.

The anniversary of the overthrow of Sihanouk which passed on March 18 was expected to be celebrated with much pomp by the brave new republic set up by the generals. But judging by official Cambodian accounts the celebration was a tame,

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Business Manager  
Frontier

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almost gloomy affair. It could not be otherwise. The writ of the republic presided over by Lon Nol ran scarcely beyond the municipal limits of Phnom Penh. Barbarous bombing by the Americans and deployment of South Vietnamese and Khmer Serei mercenaries (who take out the liver of slain Cambodians to add to their menu) have failed to halt the relentless drive of the pro-Sihanouk forces. With Highways 6 and 4—the lifelines that ensure supply of foodstuff and fuel to Phnom Penh—completely under the mercy of the guerillas the encircled capital has been living on borrowed time.

The American masters, alarmed at this fast rate of decay, have been frantically searching for a solution. On the military plane they can only offer more of the same: further intensification of the bombing and increase in the MEDT (Military equipment delivery team) personnel in Cambodia. Apart from another dose of dollars to stem the economic rot the only other solution the Americans could find is devaluation of the riel. But that would only drive the miserable population of Phnom Penh fathoms deeper in poverty and starvation. To finance the war General Lon had merrily printed currency notes. This, along with dwindling internal revenues and almost non-existent exports, have brought the Phnom Penh regime to the verge of bankruptcy. The budgetary deficit which was \$40 million last year is estimated to be a staggering sum of \$400 million this year. With Nixon willing this gap can of course be bridged. But what next?

The generals and ministers are busy making hay while the Americans sun still shines over

Phnom Penh. Deputy Premier Sirik Matak, the dedicated democrat who voluntarily renounced his princely title to take up that of Lieutenant-General, has floated an air-transport company to mint some quick money while the roads remain cut off. The children of the Deputy Premier and Finance Minister too have taken up all kinds of business including running of dancing clubs. Others have taken to operating gambling dens and blackmarketing. But the thieves

have fallen out among themselves. With one accusing the other of being thief and the generals mobilising their troops in Phnom Penh to fight it out, there is coup in the air of Phnom Penh. General Lon Nol's threat to resign and later agreement to form a clean cabinet was a kind of shock therapy for the quarrelling generals and ministers. We must hang together, General Lon has persuaded them, if we don't want to be hanged together.

## Double Talk ?

The bickering between Zambia and South Africa has reached a peak point. Last month Mr Vorster alleged that when Dr Kaunda was making fierce attacks on South Africa in speeches he was negotiating for a meeting with Dr Vorster. Lusaka, on the other hand, has described this as a useless smear campaign. As proof it published a score of documents last week which show that a number of notes had been exchanged between the feuding capitals though there is no evidence of meetings between the two.

One thing that the documents give out is that Kaunda never shied to respond to Vorster's overtures to talk over the question of minority rule in Rhodesia though he always made it a condition that such proposals should be based on the principle of equality between blacks and whites. Because of her common frontier with Rhodesia and Mozambique, Zambia has for long been used as a staging area by the liberation fighters of these countries. And Lusaka, besides Tanzania, has gone to the top of its bent to back the insurgents. Occasionally it has had to stall attacks from across the borders by the armed men in pursuit of the withdrawing guerillas. Small wonder, therefore, that Kaunda will not mind seizing any chance of a diplomatic dialogue with South Africa which has done everything to buoy up the ragged minority regime in Salisbury.

For quite some time a new pattern is emerging in the scenario of African politics. Madagascar and Malawi have flung open their economy to the South African investors for fat pickings. Probably for long-term gains Ghana and Ivory Coast are not unwilling to chat with Pretoria. And a host of other tiny States are awaiting their turn to go to the talking table. But despite this obvious enough willingness to court the racial supremacists of South Africa, most of the African states are firmly committed to the Lusaka Manifesto of the OAU which holds that the validity of the principles of human equality and dignity extends to the Republic of South Africa. And this is particularly true for the Zambian leaders who have been the most vociferous opposers of racism.

Perhaps in his zest to humble Kaunda with exposure Vorster has lost sight of this crucial aspect of the politics of dialogue. Or perhaps he has done so wittingly to wreck Kaunda's image at home where he is already in trouble with his political dissenters. But in the process Vorster has overstepped a rule of the political game which is bound to backfire. African leaders will henceforth count thrice before nodding to feelers sent by the racists. Even Vorster's subsequent assertion in Parliament that he is no violator of diplomatic codes will not undo this breach of confidence.

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## Diplomatic Debacle

FROM A POLITICAL  
CORRESPONDENT

UNDOUBTEDLY New Delhi has lost the initiative in the escalating diplomatic war even if the Foreign Office is making a brave effort to look that it has not lost. The real issues around independent Bangladesh have been pushed to the background. The peripheral issue, of ferrying members of our mission in Dacca and their families to safety, became everything. One waited anxiously for the "ultimatum" to expire at 11.30 a.m. that morning and it turned out that nothing happened.

What did New Delhi achieve by publicising the fact that a clear reply had been asked and the time limit set? Secondly, what is the profound implication of setting 11.30 a.m. as the deadline, just 30 minutes before the mission in Dacca was to shut shop? The episode is an epitome of the diplomatic logjam over Bangladesh and the schizophrenic approach to the question of recognition. The euphoria built up

during the earlier weeks of the war by the two news agencies (one of them winningly described as the premier one), the big business press and All India Radio has worn off even before the monsoon could set in. Most of the stories could have originated from South Block as well and not necessarily from "across the border."

Nobody discusses the recognition of Bangladesh anymore. "The story is dying," the cynical newsmen say. It is, if the sharp drop in the number of foreign and Indian correspondents on the job in New Delhi, Calcutta and on the border is any indication. Either it will be a collapse like the Spanish civil war or a prolonged Vietnam-type war.

Even the issue of recognition is dying quietly in New Delhi though political pot-boiling for the budget session of Parliament is yet to begin. The Soviet attitude to Islamabad has softened since the famous Podgorny letter of which Mrs Indira Gandhi had knowledge before it was despatched. The second Soviet missive is just soft because the Soviets want an early political settlement in East Bengal and not a military decision one way or the other. Together with pressure on General Yahya Khan to find a political solution, the Soviets have been responsible for cramping New Delhi's style. Recent pronouncements from Washington suggest that the United States has decided to leave to the Soviet Union the job of policing this part of the world. The USA would rather see a Sino-Soviet clash of interests in Asia. This is the purport of Mr William Rogers' statement recognising China's legitimate role in Asia.

Had New Delhi recognised Bangladesh, it would have the juridical alibi for extending military aid. But it is too late for any military aid even if the Government decides on it. Secondly, if the report that Mujibur Rahman has been taken back to Dacca is correct, there is a remote possibility of a political settlement even at this point. Suppose General Yahya Khan (believed to be the

"prisoner" of eight military-fascist generals around him) is in a position to accept the Six-Point programme and the Sheikh is prepared to give it a fair trial, the issue will slide back from one of independent, sovereign Bangladesh to mere autonomy. This is the kind of political solution the Soviets might have in view. Recognising Bangladesh would put India in an awkward position besides exacerbating the relationship with Pakistan. One appreciation is that Pakistan might venture a low-risk operation during the monsoon lull on the Kashmir front. It would be a short, six-day war. Another is that Pakistan might utilise the monsoon stalemate for a massive push across the East Bengal borders to massacre the refugee camps scattered all along, if India were to recognise Bangladesh.

All the arguments in favour of immediate recognition have been stated with gusto. But the bona fides of some of those who compile the arguments are open to question. If Bangladesh has all the attributes of sovereignty as they say (it indeed does.) the Provisional Revolutionary Government in Vietnam ought to have been recognised first by India. Those who condoned New Delhi on PRG are most vocal about Bangladesh. Even the communist parties have developed a weird pattern of priorities. Bangladesh deserves recognition, not for the reasons listed by these parties but because it is as legitimate as a government as the PRG. But it would suit the two establishment communist parties to de-link the issues.

### Silent About Ceylon

The two communist parties have so far been silent on the Ceylon insurgency, for different sets of reasons. The unseemly haste with which super-powers and mini-powers have rushed to aid the Sirimavo Government suggests a fierce super-power competition to get a foothold in the form of a naval base in the sensitive Indian Ocean island. But for India's timely

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military aid, the Guevarist insurgency would have pulled it off. The uprising was not linked to any mass movement and this was its biggest weakness. It is significant that the Ceylon army chief has laboured hard to establish that no foreign arms have been recovered so far and no foreign currency has been found with the insurgents. But the Sirimavo government went out of the way to seek arms aid even from a country like Thailand (and in return got only a hundred tons of rice and sugar).

The South-East Asian region is becoming politically radicalised and there can be no solution to its problems within the existing institutional framework. The Soviet answer to the challenge is a direct or indirect military presence in the region. With the new orientation in the United States attitude to the region, the Soviets would be in a better position to secure a submarine base in Ceylon as a permanent deterrent to upheavals in the region.

Soviet sniping at the Chinese last week underlines Soviet intentions. The *New Times* article charging China with interference in the affairs of India, Burma, Ceylon and other countries was followed by a major polemical attack on the ideological plane, designed to debunk Maoist theories on revolution. The strident attacks in a section of the Indian press on China's "ping pong diplomacy" have a corollary in the effort of the pro-Moscow journalists in India, quoting mythical Awami League leaders to prove that the contribution of the Maoists to the Bangladesh struggle is nil. On the ideological plane, the Khrushchevian theory of national democracy is being reasserted with vigour from Moscow. The 1969 world communist conference almost forgot this formulation, made in the famous 1960 Moscow statement. But the recent 24th CPSU Congress went out of the way to reiterate the continuing validity of the concept and spokesmen like Academician Ulyanovskiy had been put on the job long before the congress met.

May 2, 1971

MAY 8, 1971

## East Bengal

# The Next Stage

K. SEN

THE war in Bangladesh is over a month old now. President Yahya who had reportedly boasted that he would be able to crush the movement in 48 hours must be wondering at the continuance of a struggle in which militarily the odds are definitely against the other side. Financially the Pakistan Government is feeling the pinch as is evident from its agreeing to devalue the currency. On the other hand thousands of refugees continue to cross into Indian territory and even if a fraction of what they say is true, then it is not a *Sonar Bangla* they have left behind. The towns are almost empty and the vast countryside, for the most part, lies ravaged.

Yet the fighting goes on. There is as yet no evidence of the Mukti Fouz deciding to call it a day. And with the choice generally being between dying fighting and simply dying it is going to be a protracted war, the first phase of which seems to be drawing to a close. As a Dacca journalist, who has crossed over, observed recently, soon there will be a period of lull which will be the period of regrouping. And that, according to all accounts, will be an interesting period to watch.

For there cannot be a protracted war without political leadership. The Mukti Fouz, as constituted at present, is an odd assortment of para-military forces and other elements. So far its main task has been to resist as best as possible the onslaught in which it has not been as successful as is made out in euphoric Press reports. Which, in the context of a general lack of preparedness, is understandable. But now that the Army has been able to find a footing in Bangladesh the job will be to get it out. And with a negotiated settlement seemingly out of the way the search for the

political leadership which can take the protracted struggle to a successful end, has already begun in Bangladesh.

The December elections brought the Awami League into the foreground and the Pakistani authorities' disregard for democratic principles further added to its prestige in the subsequent days. Mujib thundering away at Paltan Maidan and elsewhere was the man to be looked forward to. Bengali nationalism had reached a new height. Then the Army struck. And today, with a number of Awami League leaders sojourning on this side of the border, a fact which has disappointed many on the other side and the *Joy Bangla* spirit not as fresh as before, the time has come to question whether the AL still has a dominant role to play in Bangladesh.

The Awami League, as is well known, is at best a bourgeois democratic party and has always sought to do what in the ultimate analysis can be termed replacement of the non-Bengali ruling class with the Bengali. His only aim being to gain greater economic rights for the Bengali bourgeoisie, Mujib had till the last refrained from demanding an independent Bangladesh; when he did so it was more at the pressure of some younger elements within the party than anything else. But all the time he was hoping to have an agreement with Yahya. As the talks dragged on it was a sad Mujib who remarked in desperation that if the Army continued to be intransigent then ultimately the Communists would take over the leadership of the movement. His anti-communism is well known. A practical politician, he knew that his party was neither organisationally nor ideologically prepared for a long-drawn

struggle. Perhaps he was also able to realise that a national liberation struggle could not succeed without active participation by the Communists. And today, 'accounts' from Bangladesh suggest, his fears are about to come true.

Mujib's fears are also shared by the Indian Government which explains its hesitation in supplying the much sought for arms to the Mukti Fouz. Delhi must have known by now that the Awami League on its own will not be able to deliver the goods in Bangladesh. And Mrs Gandhi and her supporters are in no hurry to see arms falling into the hands of "undesirable elements" and maybe later finding their way back on this side of the border. The Government is in no position to take any action in Bangladesh without considering the possible impact in West Bengal. On the other hand Delhi, because of its relations with Islamabad, cannot hope to mediate for a peaceful settlement and see the Awami League in power in Bangladesh. It is also doubtful whether Delhi is entirely comfortable in a situation where an anti-Centre slogan has been raised with such force. Like Mujib, Indira also seems to be in a fix.

Meanwhile the Communists in Bangladesh are active. The underground Purba Bangla Communist Party, led by Abdul Motin, Alauddin Ahmad, Tipu Biswas and others, which is somewhat akin to the CPI(M) in West Bengal, is conducting guerrilla war in Bogra, Rajshahi Chittagong, Mymensingh, Comilla and Pabna. It had considerable influence among the working class and the peasantry; proof of this is the magnificent resistance to the Pakistani forces by about 40,000 dock workers

in Chittagong. The PBCP has as a close ally the Co-ordination Committee of Zaffar Menon and others who are very active among the militant students. The National Awami Party led by Maulana Bhasani is also working on similar lines in Mymensingh, Rangpur, Sylhet, Rajshahi and elsewhere. A disadvantage at present felt by the Communists is the campaign against them which the Awami League had carried on for many years now; the EPR, the East Bengal Police and the East Bengal Regiment people also have little love lost for them. However, in a protracted struggle it is the people who ultimately count and there is little chance of the Communists losing their support.

The Purba Pakistan Communist Party (ML), led by Mohammed Toha, the former general secretary of the pro-Bhasani NAP and now a Maoist, enjoys a strong base in Jessore and Khulna; even conservative estimates put the party's committed supporters at 10,000. The Maoists are, however, lying low at the moment. For one thing they are not prepared to expose their trained fighters at this stage of the movement. But the possibility of their joining hands with the PBCP in forming a National Liberation Front is not entirely ruled out by competent political observers in Bangladesh. A redeeming feature is that the difference between the PBCP and the PPCP (ML) is essentially on the ideological plane and has not degenerated into personal hatred. And this difference certainly cannot stand in the way of united action against a common enemy.

This being the situation it is clear which direction the political leadership of the movement will take in future. This is not to say that the Awami League will be done away for good. There are militant elements in the party, particularly among the lower cadres, whose continued participation in the future struggle seems certain. As for the gentlemen in Calcutta and Mujibnagar, for all practical purposes they seem to have done their bit.

## The War Of Words—I

ASHIM MUKHOPADHYAY

WHEN our attention is centred mainly on the news of fighting and the devastation and atrocities committed across the border by the Pakistani army, some people have been carrying on a sinister mission quite unnoticed. The constant shelling and bombing by the army and the chaos that follows have given them a cover under which they have been working with ease.

They are the orthodox Muslims to whom there is nothing important or worthwhile except Islam and Allah. The war has irritated them, not because lakhs of their fellow countrymen have been killed and cities and villages razed to the ground or because the economic infrastructure has been smashed, but because the Islamic State of Pakistan is facing disintegration. These mullahs have been shocked by the increasing godlessness of people not only in cities and towns but also in the rural areas, especially at places where the Awami League and the National Awami League have built up pockets of influence. The pro-India attitude of these parties is another cause of irritation to the mullahs. They fear that, through them, India has a plan to endanger both Islam and Pakistan. New Delhi's stand about the war in East Bengal has reinforced their apprehension and they have now started calling it India's Pakistan war.

Much has been written about the battles of guns and planes, but the story of this silent war of the mullahs is still unknown or what is known is not enough to give an idea of the success of their mission.

When the results of the December elections were announced Dacca Radio broadcast various opinions and analyses by intellectuals, artists and common men. Silent were the high civil and military officials. The consensus was that it was a victory of liberalism over conservatism, a victory of humanity over sectarianism.

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Many people, both here and across the border, said the old had been replaced by the new, that henceforth a new life would come, a new spirit would be lit and fresh air would drive away the polluted air. But it has turned out otherwise. It now appears that defeat at the polls is not real defeat. Had it been so, those orthodox political parties which were hopelessly routed in the elections could not have dared to cry themselves hoarse for Islam and Pakistan as they are doing now. The Awami League was so confident as a result of its sweeping victory that it did not care to take the conservatives into account, but the latter did not lose heart. On the contrary, they were thinking of preserving their strength and resources and canalising them in a subtle way to hit back at their enemy at the opportune moment.

A brief note on their activities may be interesting. *Dainik Sangram* and *Azad*, two dailies run by the Jamiat-e-Islami and the Council Muslim League respectively, have printed thousands of copies of pamphlets written by the main brains of their parties, i.e., Ghulam Azam, Mian Mumtaz Daultana, Abul Ala Maudoodi etc. Although the exact figure of such printed nuisance is unknown it may be round about thirty-five to fifty thousand. These pamphlets have richly coloured jackets, the printing is very clean and done with great care. The themes are stereotyped and include distorted analyses of the Six Points, false allegations against popular leaders, misstatements about the fighting and direct incitement to rioters against secular-minded Muslims and Hindus. A few extracts may be of interest,

#### 'Dont Blame Centre'

A pamphlet on the Jamiat-e-Islami's ideas about the movement for autonomy first attacks the Six Points and distorts the Awami League programmes. In one place it says: "A certain interested section has been blaming the Central Government for the miseries of East Pakistan. The way they talk of the

Centre leads one to believe that it is a foreign government. The Centre is not at all responsible for the disparities. It is the East Pakistanis themselves who have created their own problems. There are many criminals in East Pakistan who describe themselves as leaders but they are the real trouble-makers. They are the people who have enlisted themselves in the Central Government's services and been exploiting the East Pakistanis. To blame the Centre is to blame Allah."

It then throws a challenge to that "interested section" to prove the allegations it has brought against the party. It says, "It is the Jamiat-e-Islami which alone still sticks to the ideology of Islam and Pakistan. It is the party which alone remained aloof from the competition for the gaddi. It is the party which alone propagates communal harmony and believes in non-violence. Those who criticise us, those who raise the slogans of 'Jai Bangla', those who consider China as the haven of the poor, are all idiots. They are the agents of the CIA. They are the agents of the imperialists."

It is not difficult to guess the targets of attack. They are the Awami League and the pro-Peking National Awami Party of Maulana Bhasani. The pamphlet seems to make the two NAPs its principal target: "Two sections of a particular political party, one pro-Moscow and the other pro-Peking, have been working as agents of the imperialists. They are shedding crocodile tears for the grief-stricken masses. They are the people who want to sell the independence of their country to the imperialists. But the Jamiat is there, it will chop off their dirty hands."

Another Jamiat production describes Sheikh Mujibur as a traitor and paid agent of India. It says: "The destruction of lives and property in East Pakistan is solely due to the arrogance and insanity of Sheikh Mujibur. His Six Points which have been prepared mainly by the then top ranking officers of the Indian Deputy High Commission are a cons-

piracy to transform the eastern wing into a colony of India. President Yahya has not done any wrong. Being the Head of State, he cannot sit idle and allow the country to break into pieces. Had the Sheikh been in his position, he also would have done the same, if not more."

Addressing the common people the pamphlet declares, "You are true Muslims, you were born with the name of Allah and will continue to have it on the day of *kijamat* (the last day on earth). Do not forget that Allah does not forgive a Muslim who mixes with a Kafir (Hindu)... Sheikh Mujibur is a gaddar (traitor), He has sold himself and his boys to the Kafirs of India. Do not trust him any longer. Look! Your parents have been killed, the decomposed bodies of your beloved brothers, sisters and other near relations are strewn all over the fields and village streets, vultures are eating them up. Your huts have been burnt down, your fields have been destroyed, your granaries have been looted. But all this is due to the folly of the Awami League and its leader Sheikh Mujibur. In some places they have performed these crimes in collaboration with the soldiers of Uttar Pradesh. These soldiers also have a white complexion and can speak Urdu. So when they massacred the innocent villagers the latter thought that they were West Punjabi Muslims."

#### Air Dropped

Hundreds of thousands of mini-pamphlets (5"×3" in size) have been circulated in different parts of East Bengal. It is interesting to note that planes and helicopters are also being used to shower such pamphlets over remote villages. Besides the distribution of pamphlets, the Islamic political parties have resorted to other means to crush the movement. It is a fact that during the anti-Ayub movement of 1968-69, the mullahs and their relations, who were the real backbone of the ex-President's Basic Democracy, were tortured by the volunteers and workers of

the Awami League and the NAPs. They had had another good beating after the overwhelming victory of the Awami League in the elections. Now, in retaliation, these mullahs and rightists contact the troops and supply information about the whereabouts of the EPR and the Awami League volunteers. As a result, peaceful hamlets hitherto undisturbed by death or massacre are suddenly encircled by army convoys and the people gunned down. In Chittagong, Dacca, Rajshahi and Bogra some non-Bengali Muslims would leave a cross or some other sign during the night on the walls of the houses of their enemies. The following day troops would come, kill the men and then set the huts on fire. A large number of Muslim refugees who have crossed the border and have taken shelter in Bongaon have many such sordid tales to tell.

The mullahs and their followers have also started a door-to-door campaign in remote villages where till now no disturbance has taken place. The ignorant villagers have become very panicky over the news of killing and devastation that is leaking in from outside. There the mullahs stay with them and tell them that it is a gross betrayal of the Khudatalah to revolt against the Government and the President of Pakistan. The mullahs warn the villagers that if they support the Awami League or other political parties against the Government, Pakistan will lose her independence and the Muslims will find themselves in bondage.

### Vocal And Daring

In cities and towns where protection from the army is easily available, the mullahs and their fellow rightists seem to be more vocal and daring. There they openly hold meetings, arrange processions and torture innocent inhabitants. Their activities may remind one of communal riots. This time the only difference is that the victims are mainly Muslims.

In Dacca, their most important citadel, the mullahs have let loose a reign of terror. A brief account of

a meeting held there recently by them may help to form some idea of the situation.

On April 13 the Dacca City Peace Committee arranged a large procession to "demonstrate against the armed Indian infiltration into East Pakistan". Well-known rightist leaders like Khan Sabur Khan, Khwaja Khairuddin, Professor Gulam Azam, Pir Mohsenuddin and Mr Shafiqul Islam led the procession. The processionists carried big-size portraits of Jinnah, Liaquat Ali, President Yahya Khan and Tikka Khan, and shouted "Quaid-i-Azam Zindabad", "Yahya Khan Zindabad", "Tikka Khan Zindabad", "Agents of India Beware!" etc. In chorus they chanted, "Pakistan Ka Matlab, La Ilaha ilallah", "My leader, your leader, Yahya our leader". The procession started from the Baitul Mukarram and terminated at the New Market. There, Mr Khwaja Khairuddin and Prof Ghulam Azam made brief speeches. They praised the participants' enthusiasm and offered 'Munajaat' praying for the solidarity and integrity of Pakistan.

The number of such processions and meetings is increasing every day.

The freedom fighters of East Bengal have to try to isolate these elements from the poor, illiterate masses. If the war is to be long and protracted, popular support is the first and foremost requisite of success against a superior enemy.

## The War Of Words—II

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE Indian Press is once again at its favourite game, China baiting. The war in Bangla Desh and the Chinese Government's supposed lack of support for the freedom fighters have given the hawks in Chowringhee Square, Prafulla Sarkar Street and elsewhere a fresh opportunity to lash out against the Chinese Communists. The impression that is sought to be created is that China has come out in

her true colours, that she is no less bloodthirsty than West Pakistan or others engaged in similar action elsewhere.

It all started long before the Chinese Government's note to President Yahya. Immediately after the outbreak of atrocities in East Bengal, Indian newspapers started carrying stories of Chinese arms having been used by the Pakistani army. That certainly is true. But no mention was made of the American arms that have also been used. Indeed having no munitions industry of its own, West Pakistan has to depend wholly on arms procured from outside. Yet this aspect of the situation was carefully avoided and great pains were taken to impress upon the people on this side that it was China and China alone who had helped West Pakistan build up its military might now being used for such brutal purposes. Stories appear almost everyday of towns and villages having been bombed or strafed by the Pakistan Air Force. Has there been a single instance when newspapers have described the aircraft engaged in such operations as "U.S.-made"?

And not only are "Chinese arms responsible for the genocide" in Bangla Desh. Recently one learnt from newspapers that some Chinese military officials were conducting the war, that these gentlemen had all along forced Yahya's hands. The story, bearing an Agartala dateline, had been credited to a resident of Brahmanbaria who had crossed over seeking shelter. One can only say that with newsmen finding it increasingly difficult to cross over a few miles on the other side and then reporting from "somewhere in Bangla Desh", they are bound to dish out more such stuff presumably to justify, among other things, the expense bills they are bound to submit to their respective offices.

Indeed the Press has touched a new low in irresponsible reporting. What-

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ever is heard is printed without considering for a moment that at times such as these, exaggeration knows no limits. Take for instance the Agartala story. It is inconceivable that news with such serious political implications could be used relaying only what one individual—whose identity is not disclosed and hence his judgment cannot be beyond question—might have said. Would the Indian Press have its readers believe that it is possible for anybody in any remote village to know the details of what takes place at the topmost level in Pindi? Yet that is exactly the impression one gets from reading the story. This tendency to get into print anything that is heard recently resulted in *The Statesman* carrying two stories on the front page, one crediting the Mukti Fouz with victories in the Jessore sector and the other contradicting it. While the former bore a Kushtia district dateline, the other was reported from the Indian border at Bongaon. It is a sad commentary on the state of affairs in the Indian Press that while reporters here have been filling pages with vague stories of brutalities, it has had to depend on foreign correspondents for detailed on-the-spot coverage. Mr Collin Smith's account of the Dacca situation may be mentioned in this connection. On our part we have had stories from correspondents who claim to have toured three or even four districts in course of 48 hours or so, a remarkable achievement in these disturbed times. Only each story is a repetition of the other, tending only to further complicate the already confused picture.

#### Humour

There are moments of humour also. For instance a vernacular daily carried a story which said a helicopter carrying food for the troops was being

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escorted by two Sabre jets; another, in the same paper, had earlier said that a Sabre jet had been brought down by mortar fire. Not only are we gullible but the ignorance of our "war correspondents" about basic technical matters is also abysmal. In this connection one can't help mentioning the reporter who, certainly out of genuine hatred for the Pakistani army, had said that Punjabi troops had opened fire when a hailstorm hit them, never having experienced it before. Just imagine an organised Army going berserk just because some hails had hit it. Incidentally, the term "Sabre jet" seems to have become very popular with the Indian Press. A contribution perhaps of the 1965 war. Now we are waiting for Patton tanks to appear on Bangla Desh soil.

Other blunders have also been committed. Over-zealous reporters have been filing stories almost daily of the military strategy of the Mukti Fouz little realising that thereby they were simply helping the enemy. Of course one is not sure of the veracity of these stories and hence their utility to the enemy.

The Press is up in arms at the massacre of unarmed civilians in Bangla Desh, a fit cause to be so. Indeed one cannot help being indignant at the sordid happenings only a few miles away. But what happens to this very free and bold Press when reporting events at home? Has a single line been written against the cold-blooded murder of young, and mostly unarmed, men in Calcutta and elsewhere by the police? The Awami League's and now the entire East Bengal people's demand for greater autonomy and now complete independence is supported. Yet, the same Press goes wild condemning a particular political party because it demanded more funds for West Bengal from the very revenue it helped the Centre earn. We are all liberals abroad and it is time those who seem to prize the "support" from the Indian Press realised it.

## Blacks And The Chinese Revolution—I

ORVILLE SCHELL

IN the Spring of 1969, the University of California, Berkeley, became the target of a strike led by the Third World Liberation Front. The TWLF was composed of blacks, Asian Americans, Mexican Americans and Indians. They demanded that the University become more aware of their needs as unique minority peoples. They asked for larger enrolment of the Third World students, for various ethnic studies departments, and more generally for greater control of their learning experience at the University. They protested that although the university offered an Asian Studies programme, courses on the South and slavery and some anthropology courses on the American Indian, there was little in any of the existing curricula that related to their lives in an important way. The Administration argued that there was no money for new programmes. A number of renowned liberal professors spoke against establishing new ethnic studies programmes because they were "a-disciplinarian", because the material to be dealt with was "unscholarly" and "unacademic". Advocates of the ethnic studies programmes were accused of "myth-making" rather than indulging in hard-nosed academic research and education.

A month after the strike had begun, after daily picket lines had marched through the campus in an almost daily barrage of tear gas, after many classes had been disrupted and windows smashed, after the University had in effect become an occupied community with police marching in combat formation throughout the grounds, two professors of Asian studies called a meeting of Asian Americans to find out what their grievances were. About twenty people including some blacks and whites showed up. Many were wearing red Mao buttons.

One professor, the head of a centre for the study of Asia, said that he could not understand what was happening and why no one had come to talk to him. He mentioned that he had office hours. Another professor with a European background had a long and heated argument with several Japanese Americans about what it meant to be an Asian American. He claimed that the whole idea of ethnic studies programmes through which the third world people could gain a better understanding of their unique position in the U.S. was preposterous. He claimed that they were Americans like anyone else and would receive no special treatment. He ended by proclaiming that he knew what it was like to be in a minority group because he came from a Belgian background.

Both professors expressed disapproval of the "violent techniques" used by the TWLF students. They saw these techniques as senseless, lawless, disruptive and provocative of the right wing. They urged the students to rethink their goals, and then to try to implement their demands "through the system". They expressed anger over the disruption of the "educational process" and said that the TWLF students would gain nothing by continuing it. One student said something about learning by doing. He was cut off. The white students began to dominate the discussion and speak for the TWLF students who seemed to have greater trouble expressing themselves forcefully. Many were cowed by the arguments of the professors and stopped speaking out (although they had spent the day confronting the police on the picket lines.) One Japanese American girl even began defending the professors against the mounting attacks of the white students by saying that she had never noticed any discrimination (although her father had been put in a concentration camp during World War II). She said that the courses offered told her all she needed to know about Asia. She said that she could not understand why the TWLF students were causing so much

trouble. She was challenged by a Chinese American boy who asked her why the Japanese in America had always been so submissive and inconspicuous. He called most of the Chinese Americans "uncle Wongs", and said that there were no courses in the University which helped him understand who he was. He explained that the TWLF had made repeated requests for reform without any response. "Now," he said, "we are on strike and were going to keep this place shut down".

There seemed to be no meeting ground. The students called the professors irrelevant to their interests and to real life, authoritarian in their approach to education and completely unable to appreciate what the TWLF students hoped to derive from education: an understanding of those subjects studied which would help them as unique individuals better relate in a humane way to their own people and to be more effective as actors in the world at large.

#### Fanon

Finally, the door opened and three black students walked in. They sat and listened for a while. Then one of them, holding a copy of Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*, swaggered to the front of the class room and faced the professors (one of whom became extremely agitated), and said, "Listen, you motherfuckers, you gone to shut up for just a minute and let me run you down on where me and my brothers and sisters are at." He sat down again and began to coolly leaf through Fanon. The Belgian minority group professor began to protest the intrusion. The black rose again and said, "Hey man didn't I tell you motherfuckers to shut up for once and let some one else do some rapping?". Everyone sat quietly for about three minutes while the black intruder thumbed through Fanon. Finally he found what he was looking for and read it out aloud, "The existence of armed struggle shows that the people are decided to trust violent methods only. He of whom *they* have never stopped

saying that the only language he understands is that of force, decides to give utterance by force. In fact, as always, the settler has shown him the way to take if he is to become free. The argument the native chooses has been furnished by the settler, and by an ironic turning of the tables it is the native who now affirms that the colonialist understands nothing but force. The colonial regime owes its legitimacy to force and at no time tries to hide this aspect of things." (*Wretched of the Earth*, p. 66)

Now it is not my intent to write about the TWLF strike here at this time. I had hoped that by recounting this anecdotal experience to point out an important dimension in the Third World and black revolution which impresses me as being distinctly new. I must hasten to add that I am not black, and that I come to write about the Black Revolution through my interest in China. I began my inquiry by trying to determine just what the Chinese Revolution has come to mean to black revolutionaries, many of whom are reading Mao and have come to identify with the whole Chinese revolutionary experience.

But, of course, Mao is not black, and blacks are not reading Mao in China. They are reading Mao because they live in America. And so I soon found that I was not so much asking, "What have black people learned from Mao as a revolutionary teacher?" (which seems to be considerable), but rather, "What have blacks contributed to the thought of Mao Tse-tung to make their own ideology and their revolution?" It seemed to me that this was the more significant question given the fact that conditions for revolution in the U.S. and the Western world share more dissimilarities than similarities. Just as Mao "creatively applied Marxist-Leninist thought to China", so one would expect other movements to do the same. Indeed, militant blacks have done just this. Most have read Mao (at least the Red Book). But they have added a new dimension born of their own expe-

rience to the thought of contemporary revolutionary thinkers, of whom Mao stands out at the titan. One of the foremost of these black revolutionary thinkers is Frantz Fanon.

Fanon was black. He was born in the French West Indies. He was trained as a psychiatrist in France, and then went to Algeria where he practiced among patients who were victims of the revolution. Finally he joined the FLN against the French.

After he joined the revolution he wrote extensively about the psychological meaning of being what he called a "colonialized" person, and the therapeutic value of struggle for the oppressed. But the implications of his work transcended the Algerian people and their revolution. In writing about the Algerians' struggle for independence, he was writing about the struggle of all peoples of colour who have been "colonialized" or psychologically dominated by the white Western world. And, of course, he was also writing about himself and his own struggle as a black man in white French culture and society. This is Fanon's uniqueness and the reason, I think, why so many blacks in the U.S. today have taken him as a revolutionary mentor. Fanon writes about himself at the same time he is writing about society. He writes about the need for psychological revolution. He is interested in peoples' heads at the same time that he is interested in the society that shapes their heads. He concludes that revolutions in the outer world (public) must be accompanied by revolutions in the inner world (private) of man's psychic being. What does all this have to do with Mao and the Black Revolution?

### Mao Tse-tung

Mao is a sociologist. He has always sought to understand the world and his own society so that he might be better able to take the lead and change it. As Mao put it, "For the purpose of attaining freedom in society, man must use social science to understand and change society and carry out social revolution". (*Red*

*Book*, p. 204) The purpose of study, for Mao, is not simply to know, but to know how to act correctly according to the interests of the people. And, of course, Mao has always seen Chinese society through the class prism. There are the exploited and the exploiters. Their interests are in conflict. "Classes struggle, some classes triumph, others are eliminated. Such is history, such is the history of civilization for thousands of years". (*Red Book*, p. 8). Mao recognizes, as Marx had, that the struggle between classes will often take a violent form. "A revolution is not a dinner party," he says, "or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely, so gently, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another." (*Red Book*, p. 11.)

Violence for Mao is a functional social tactic by means of which society is purged of its inequities and restored to health. The peasant overthrows the landlord, the worker overthrows the capitalist factory owner and thus an end is brought (in theory) to the oppressive and exploitative economic relationships which hold the old society frozen in its feudal past. Violence is very much a part of this process of change. Mao knows that those who rule, since they rule in their own interest, will protect their power at all costs. His life is a living testament to the tenacity with which an old economic, social and political order will hold on unless it is violently uprooted and destroyed. Mao speaks as one who has lived the experience of an enemy with whom there is no possibility of final compromise. There can be only struggle, followed by victory or defeat. And struggle often means warfare. "War is the continuation of politics by other means. When politics develop to a certain stage beyond which it cannot proceed by usual means, war breaks out to sweep the obstacles from the way... When the obstacle is removed and our po-

litical aim attained, the war will stop..." (*Red Book*, p. 59.)

Mao understands that violence and war can be both good and evil. He tells us that, like everything else, they have a class nature. War on behalf of the exploited is good. War on behalf of the exploiter is evil. He makes no such liberal abstractions as, "All violence is reprehensible." Some is, and some is not. It all depends on the goal and in whose behalf it is committed.

It did not take Mao long to realize that the Chinese peasant could not improve his lot in any substantial way by waiting and using peaceful means. Hunan in 1926 taught him the fallacy of this argument. There he learned that the peasant both must and could take power into his own hands and overthrow the status quo. The peasant had no alternative. Violence and revolution were his only hope of initiating a breakthrough from the social system in which he lived.

### Silent' Meek, Peaceful

One would expect any exploited or oppressed person to identify with the Chinese experience in this regard. It is clear that blacks are in a situation which is in many ways similar to that of the Chinese peasant in the 1930s. They are at the bottom of the social hierarchy with little hope of rising as a class. One could understand how a poor black might identify with the Chinese peasant who rose up under the leadership of the CCP and "fan-shen'ed" society, or tipped the whole social structure over by violent revolution. "The last shall be first and the first shall be last," says the Bible. One would expect a black sharecropper to become angry and violent, if violence had been made permissible by a movement leader such as Mao. But such anger and activism has not always followed. Even under the grossest injustices and the most oppressive of circumstances men have remained silent, meek and "peaceful". Peasants have watched their wives raped, their children sold, their

labour exploited, their property stolen and stood dumbly aside feeling no anger. One is reminded of Vietnamese civilians in the "pacification camps", listless and emotionless. Blacks have been enslaved, lynched, beaten, cheated and underpaid. And yet history is not replete with slave rebellions and uprisings. The most oppressed have often proved to be the least revolutionary. Violence as a defensive measure has often been justified, but men have failed to organize and revolt. What of the passivity of the Jews in the German concentration camps? Why should it be so? What would Mao, the apostle of violence for the oppressed against the oppressor, have to tell us about these strange situations? Has he any remedies for the passivity of the violated? Is the answer simply ideology and organization?

Mao is very vague on this matter. At best, he approaches the problem obliquely. He believes in learning by doing, in mass participation and involvement as the best teacher. His theory of knowledge stresses experience as the foundation of all knowledge. "If you want to know the theory and methods of revolution," he says, you must take part in revolution. All genuine knowledge originates in direct experience." (*Red Book*, p. 209.) Mao's whole experience as a revolutionary has seemed to tell him that one does not truly learn, or is not made strong by words and theories alone. Stressing practice (which he distinguishes from theory), Mao strongly implies that one can only become a revolutionary by becoming revolutionary. Mao has spent his life trying to show that the only way for the exploited to end their ex-

ploitation is through revolution. Society must be changed. The experience of the Chinese revolution has proved this beyond a shadow of doubt.

Simply, then, we may say that Mao is interested in a transformation of society. And because of his interest in "society", which is a collectivity, he is primarily concerned with collective consciousness or class consciousness, which he usually refers to as "correct thought" or "firm and correct political orientation." And toward correcting this collective consciousness, the Chinese Communists have laid heavy stress on ideological remoulding, through reform, criticism and rectification of ideas. The object is to create a correct mass consciousness. Mao is primarily concerned with collective liberation rather than individual liberation as the end of struggle and revolution. In fact, individual liberation would be viewed by Mao as an unacceptable bourgeois goal. This is not a new idea. Marxists have often been suspicious of Freudians for just this reason. They have been accused of stressing the remoulding of individuals rather than of the mass group. Their object has been to liberate individuals within society through psycho-analysis rather than classes within society through social revolution.

Mao's prescription for the passive but oppressed would probably be couched, then, within a larger analysis of the world and the social structure in which he lived. He would probably analyse these circumstances in the hope that this man would come to understand them and realize that the only practical realistic way out was through some sort of aggressive collective action. But as far as one can gather, Mao has not said much about the psychological aspects of this man's inaction. Granted, he might say that he was habituated to oppression, but what suggestions has he for breaking this psychological stranglehold? This is a rather individual matter, and Mao has little to say about it.

*To be concluded*

## Technology In An Under-Developed Society

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE countries which pursue aid or foreign investment as a source of foreign exchange for their development, find the going increasingly harder and will be obliged to offer more and more favourable terms directly and obviously detrimental to their national interests, thus comments Mrs Han Suyain, a non-Marxist. The optimistic remark by one of the recent contributors to *Frontier* that "coming down to our times, one must admit that despite much bungling there is now something of a technological base in India", is premature. Indigenous technology remains as pathetically dependent as before on importation of technical know-how with all its attendant evils: production of goods at the dictates of the powers from where aid is being begged, importation of personnel, often no better than skilled technicians, under the dubious label of experts, products manufactured in outdated, often archaic machinery dumped in at prices much above the prevailing world market rates and then, with the shrewd anticipation of the Indian monopolists, and capitalists, coupled with the cunning connivance of the managerial personnel manning the public sector industries, the products are sold to private sector industries at prices and terms dictated by the latter, to produce goods of 'pseudo-mercantile' character; or sometimes the Government is forced to sell the products in foreign markets after heavy subsidies from the state exchequer. The comatose public sector industries, the state of their production, manufacturing and sales wings since their inception, are a glaring testimony of this bitter reality.

The fact is that maintenance and operation are, as in the past, still our field of existence rather than innovation, construction, planning and design. But even in sophisticated main-

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tenance work or during renovation or remodelling of plants or their expansion in the most stereotyped fashion, importation of foreign 'experts' at fees and amenities unthinkable even for the topmost executives of the state, continues as before. The reasons: during planning, design and construction and procurement and sometimes during the initial starting-up period, either for the outright purchase of know-how or for award of contracts on turnkey basis, Indian personnel who have been recruited for running the plants are either sent to the aid-giving countries for some dubious training of short duration ranging from 6 to 12 months. The period is generally spent on sightseeing, procuring foreign consumer articles for relatives and friends or attending dinners and parties thrown by the companies supplying the machinery. These engineers and technicians are not allowed by the foreign technicians to enter where the actual work is in progress. This covert prohibition is imposed under direct instructions from the top bosses and often with the encouragement of the chief executives of the projects who, more often than not, in their eagerness to shake off the technical responsibility and cover up their own technical ignorance and incompetence, prefer administrative routine work. They cheerfully say yes to everything done by the 'foreign experts', while their subordinate engineers and technicians, despite their desire to learn and pick up new things, remain ignorant. So the mistakes or loopholes left by the builders of the plants to prevent smooth and uninterrupted operation remain undetected. From the very inception defective plants and machinery with faulty design are passed over to the borrowing countries.

Thus, the poor performance of the thermal power stations constructed by the public sector undertakings under the aegis of foreigners and their Indian counterparts, coupled with the lamentable lack of maintenance of equipment and instruments due to paucity of 'spares' (the latter supplied along with plant for generally 7/8

years of operation are exhausted within 6 to 12 months of operation) makes the producing units barren and idle. Add to this the near-absence of the machine-building and precision equipment manufacturing units, and a complete picture would emerge of how, for continuous supply of spares, India has remained utterly dependent on the neocolonial powers since she began her 'tryst with destiny' in 1947. The miserable condition of the power plants at Bandel and Durgapur, under WBSEB and DPL respectively, within six months of their starting up and endemic breakdowns of heavy equipment and failure of the protective system, the lacerated and spasmodic condition of the power plants at Durgapur and Chandrapura under DVC, at Barauni, as also the wretched condition of the power plants under different State Electricity Boards are examples that require no further emphasis.

### Steel Plants

The steel plants at Rourkela and Durgapur have remained sick from the beginning of their operations and are yet unable to stand on their own legs. About the plant at Bokaro that is now being set up with Russian help the less said the better. It is already a scandal. Apart from the fact that the commissioning date of even a single unit of the plant still remains unpredictable, the plant, if ever it starts operation, would begin to limp as the electrical equipment imported from Russia has already rusted, and tenders worth several lakhs of rupees have been invited for repair and remaking of those equipment prior to installation. Anyone who is acquainted with the Bokaro Steel affairs knows what all this means in terms of delay and execution of contracts by a group of contractors and suppliers who are favourites of State ministers.

The prestige power plant at Tarapore under AEC has faced a series of troubles since its coming to the operational stage, and thereafter frequent failures of conventional, rather of the nuclear equipment, have been

haunting it. It needs no emphasis to recall that the project was executed under a turnkey contract by the USA. In the case of atomic power plants and the nuclear complex, personal predilections and prestige rather than the proven dictum of producing power for prosperity and progress have been the guiding factor. The authorities have been oblivious of the fact that investment in this field presupposes investment of large sums of the order of Rs 6 crores to 8 crores over a short period of time, say 5 to 10 years for the nuclear station, and simultaneous investment of equal, if not larger, amounts in the development of industry and the agro-industrial complex.

A review of the performance of the heavy electrical equipment units set up by the Government would show that equally unenviable and pathetic conditions exist there also. For the production of the larger units of generators, switchgears and transformers or motors the managements depend heavily on foreign assistance both in terms of materials and technical skills. And the performance of the Heavy Engineering Corporation units at Ranchi and Durgapur is no better, if not worse: 75% of the machinery and 98% of experienced engineers and technicians remain idle as the contracts bagged by the Corporation from other public sector units like Bokaro Steel, etc had been sub-contracted to private sector units (Tata Robinson Fraser of Jamshedpur and Macnely-Bird of Kumardhubi), creating a deep sense of frustration and dejection among officers and employees. In our mad rush to become 'industrially developed' overnight we have borrowed 'technology' and 'technological pseudo-experts' helter-skelter, forgetting that for the development of indigenous technology in any branch of engineering no ideal condition has been created. Think of the units set up under the Heavy Electrical Industries by the Government. The Bhopal unit has been set up with help from the UK, the unit at Hardwar with Russian help and the unit at Ramchandrapu-

ram with Czechoslovak help—a curious admixture of international neo-colonialism. With each aid-giving country having its own axe to grind, it has become next to impossible to standardise and streamline the products, to adapt them to Indian conditions despite the praiseworthy attempts by the CWPC.

Thus the country remains under the shackles of the aid-giving countries despite the somewhat 'technical base' built up at enormous cost during the last 25 years. Equally obvious but less discerning is the presence of foreign technicians—the so-called experts who virtually rove around the plant sites. No wonder, therefore, that there is continuous brain drain from these public sector undertakings. Only those with ministerial pulls and backing from highly placed bureaucrats in State and Central Government services remain, assured as they are of rapid promotions.

#### Those Laboratories

If this is the condition of the 'technological base of India' developed during the last 25 years under the patronage of neo colonial powers and their indigenous stooges holding the reins of state power, the picture of the 'scientific base' as reflected in the works of the laboratories set up under the CSIR is equally repugnant. The laboratories with their imposing buildings and neatly decorated colonies tucked far away from the maddening crowd and the humdrum existence and turmoil of daily life of the average Indian, are, to say the least, hotbeds of corruption, nepotism, intrigue and mean politics and mutual mud-slinging of directors and a few senior officers designated as 'scientist'. Perhaps the most telling comment about these establishments came from Dr C. V. Raman, the only scientist worth the name who continued and pursued scientific activities to the last day of his life. "The free India has not produced a single scientist worth the name". He totally disapproved of large expenditures on laboratories, denouncing them

with characteristic pungency as stables. "Sajahan built the Taj Mahal to bury one of his favourite women. The national laboratories were built to bury scientific instruments." Equally caustic and trenchant was the comment of the late Prof Joliot Curie. While visiting the Power Research Institute at Poona accompanied by the late Prime Minister he wondered how a poor country like India could spend such an amount in construction of such a palatial building when she had hardly anything to pay to foreign countries to feed her teeming millions.

The position in the field of imparting technical education is no better, especially in the four higher technological institutes set up by the Government of India in collaboration with the USA, the UK, Russia and other foreign countries. Take for example the courses now being conducted at the Indian Institute of Technology at Kanpur. The topics, the curriculum, are so divorced from the conditions existing in the industrial field that the engineers coming out of this institute find hardly any suitable employment compatible with the subjects they have studied. A professor of electrical engineering of the Durgapur Engineering College told this writer that the whole course of all the branches of engineering at the IIT Kanpur has been so oriented by the American experts that the engineers coming out from this institute would, finding no employment in India, have to set sail either for the USA or for other developed countries.

Before any decision is taken to go in for any particular method or technology the pros and cons of the problems thrown up by the desire to undertake any project should be discussed threadbare with especial emphasis on whether it would develop a self-generating economy to enable the country to sell its products at competitive prices in the world market instead of being spoon-fed by the neo-colonial powers. As things are, the catastrophic economic course followed by the Indian rulers has raised the number of Indians living in con-

ditions of absolute poverty from 50 per cent in 1960-61 to 72 per cent in 1967-68 (according to a recent review by the Reserve Bank).

### Clippings

## A Tale Of Slaughter

**H**UNDREDS of bodies of rebels, many of them headless, are drifting down the rivers from the jungles to the sea in a grisly procession demonstrating the savagery of Ceylon's civil war. Security forces fighting nationwide insurrection by youthful Che Guevarist insurgents have taken to burning the bodies in huge funeral pyres away from centres of population. But the muddy waters still tell a tale of slaughter in the hills, jungles and swamps of this tropical island.

Few residents of Colombo are unaware of the river-borne casualties, although local newspapers are forbidden by Government censors to publish any details.

Buses running from the international airport to the capital regularly stop by river banks while drivers point out floating bodies to passengers.

Ceylon's military command says that 450 rebels are positively known dead by body count (in the first three weeks of fighting), but this estimate is regarded as too low since the youthful rebels always try to carry off corpses of their comrades. The toll could run into thousands with no end in sight of the revolution aimed at overthrowing the Government of Mrs Bandaranaike.

The Kelani river, which has its source at Adam's Peak east of Colombo, has become a canal of calamity with bodies floating daily to the sea.

### Confusion

Eye-witnesses have seen the bodies of five young girls, little more than children, brought down the river. They had been tied together (Agency Report).

The confusion (in Ceylon) was

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worse confounded this time because both the United Front Government and the United National Party Opposition started blaming each other for harbouring and encouraging the insurgents. That the Guevarists backed Mrs Bandaranaike in the elections and even celebrated her victory by beating up UNP workers is an established fact. But so is their sudden *volte face* and attack on the Government.

...The rival charges cannot perhaps be brushed aside easily. Mrs Bandaranaike said in her broadcast on Saturday (April 24) that the insurgency had been instigated by "power-hungry and treacherous rejects of all political parties." This lends credence to reports, circulating in Colombo but neither confirmed nor contradicted by the Government, that several MPs belonging to almost all parties, including the Prime Minister's own Sri Lanka Freedom Party, are under arrest.

According to unconfirmed but reliable reports, even a Minister and the wife of another of Mrs Bandaranaike's colleagues are under surveillance. (Inder Malhotra in *The Times of India*)

### Now, The CPM's Turn

Army personnel caught hold of Comrade Dulal Ghosh in front of his house in village Ghoshpara under Bally police station in Howrah district and beat him brutally despite protests from his old father. After some time they took the unconscious Comrade Ghosh in an army truck to the Shibpore military camp. At about 2.30 in the afternoon an army Major took him, still unconscious, to the Howrah General Hospital and got him admitted as "an unidentified person". A little later the same Major came back and demanded the return of the "unidentified person". The doctor on duty refused. Comrade Ghosh died at about 9.30 at night.

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Comrade Dulal Das, Secretary of a CPI(M) Branch in Netajinagar (Tollygunj), Vice-President of the Chopra Motor Workers Union and a local leader of the Democratic Youth Federation, was shot dead by CRP personnel on April 18. Along with some others, he was said to have been arrested but he was not taken to the police station but shot dead on the street at about 11 in the morning.

... Advocate Bhavadish Roy of Burdwan was shot thrice by some well-known Congressite goondas in a lane next to the police station while he was proceeding to the court in a rickshaw on April 19. He died on the way to the hospital. An eminent lawyer and a sympathiser of the CPI(M), he has been for long conducting cases in which Party comrades, workers and peasants are involved, particularly after the toppling of the second United Front Government when the police have involved a large number of persons in such cases.

...Once the police is given the licence to shoot, kill, rape without any questions being asked, no section of the people is spared. There is the shocking report of the barbarity committed in Ghoshpukur where a large number of Muslim women were brutally beaten, some of them stripped naked and bayoneted or dragged along the road.

The murder and mayhem which began under President's Rule continues and has become even more intense under the aegis of the Congress-dominated coalition Government of Ajoy Mukherjee.

...During the first fifteen days of the Government, 85 people have been killed in the State in attacks by the armed forces and goondas, among them fourteen CPI(M) leaders and workers. Barbarous attacks are being launched against women. ...Workers and peasants, students and youth, have been killed by hired gangsters. But no arrests have followed.

On the other hand, the Central Reserve Police and the State constabulary with the help of the army, have arrested hundreds of workers, peasants, employees, teachers, students and women, and countless others have been inhumanly tortured. The barbarities are specially concentrated on the CPI(M) cadre and people supporting the Party.

This is the way in which the Congress coalition is implementing its programme of restoration of law and order. The monopoly-controlled Press is asking the reactionary coalition for far more stringent action. And the Government by preparing a list of several hundred CPI(M) cadres as well as leaders for physical liquidation and another list of several thousands for arrests is responding to that call.

Attacks have already started on the poor peasants by evicting them from the land they have occupied, by looting their harvest and by combing operations by the police and the army in numerous villages. Inspired by the Government, the private sector employers have also taken to closure and lockout of factories.

(*People's Democracy*).

### Just Out

## LIBERATION WAR (4)

Editor—Asit Sen

### Contents :

Marx—The Mortal Enemy of Capitalism. Marx and his Historic Manifesto. Jai Bangla War—Its nature and prospects. Historic Peking Manifesto. Historical contrast between China and India. Build up broad United Front in the rural area. Portrait of a revolutionary.

and other articles.

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## The Slide Area

MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY

ALMOST all the films of James Ivory harp on the same theme, the incompatibility of the conflicting cultures of the East and West. This basic contradiction contains some other conflicts inside the issues. In *Shakespearewalla* it is the problem of adjustment between the artistic aspirations of some theatre people devoted to pure Shakespeare and the bastard culture of the popular movies. In *Guru*, it is a clash between the pop and the classical in the world of music. In his recent film *Bombay Talkie*, Ivory has gone into the glamorous world of the celluloid and its manifold tangles. But as always, barring the solitary exception of *The Householder* which has a kind of delicate sensitivity, all his films display a singular lack of understanding of the milieu and the people and a basic superficiality in approach. *Bombay Talkie* begins in a film studio where Lucia Lane arrives to find her dream-hero, Vikram, a popular film-star. A kind of silent tension starts brewing as Hari, an impecunious cynical writer, tries to share Lucia's love. A trite triangle melodrama develops, right out of the pages of a woman's magazine, with some backwash of Forster thrown in for variety and respectability. All the usual tourist attractions are there in the film, including Usha Iyer and a saffron-clad Swamiji. The characters are not properly related to the background and as such the motivations are not clear and the real purport of the story is lost in a confusing maze of distracting by-plots. The artistes suffer from the listless direction and merely go on parroting the lines. Two excellent cameos, however, are rendered by Nadira as a nymphomaniac film actress in her fading years and Pinchoo Kapoor as a garrulous maharshi. Subrata Mitra's colour photography succeeds, in creating some poetic passages in half-tone, but that could hardly salvage the film, which is, at best, a well-mounted nonsense.

## Old Guard

A retrospective session of Indian films is always hard to bear. For the historians and the film aesthetes, it is only a tiring routine, a quaint museum-piece surviving only on sufferance; to some doddering old bags it might provide some sort of a nostalgic euphoria; but to a generation exposed to the revolutionary impact of the international cinema, it has nothing to offer, no inspiration to draw on, nothing to form a cumulative tradition of film-making. Even the best productions of Bengal and Bombay during the thirties look miserably stale today. Techniquewise, there are no innovations; the visual qualities are almost nil and the hackneyed literary narrative style is cramped and dated on the whole. Bad literature, worse cinema. A study of these old films also reminds us of the painful truth that all throughout these years, the progress in the Indian film world has been very little and, a few exceptions apart, the bulk of our films has still remained in the rut. In the choice of subjects, however, the old films, especially the Bombay film-makers of the thirties and early forties, scored over their modern counterparts. They used to draw more on the topical social subjects, a rare thing in cabaret-crime-infested Bombay films of today. But they were not able to turn it into a plus-point because in their films they have failed to blend the subject with the medium and the result was a pallid, turgid affair. Only the old songs which have a haunting quality even now, have stood the test of time. This, of course, does not mean that the songs have anything to do with the cinematic construction. This is not so. But those are invariably well composed, beautifully tuned and masterly rendered, a happy diversion from the hybrid cacophony of the Shankar-Jaikishan genre. But only some good songs do not make a good film. Still, however painful the ordeal might be, it is always good to see the old Indian films. It will help us to dispel some sacred but false

motions and this kind of healthy iconoclasm is always congenial to film appreciation.

Recently a programme of old Hindi films (Mehboob's *Aurat* and *Roti* and Bombay Talkies' *Achhutkanya*) organised by Calcutta Film Society gave us an opportunity to reassess the contributions of our film veterans.

Mehboob in his films focuses his camera on the realities of his period. *Aurat* portrays the struggle of an Indian peasant woman against hostile surroundings. The beginning is quite fresh, and the documentary pocturisation of the rural society is somewhat sensitive. But gradually melodrama gets the better part of the thing; sentimentality and lifeless contrivances spoil the promise of a truly human drama. *Roti* goes into the complex pattern of a modern industrialised society and touches upon the highly interesting problems of adjustment between the sophisticated city people with sordid intrigues and the simple tribals with their primitive nobility of character. But here also the authentic emotions are lost in a web of clumsy narrative and the film becomes a monstrosity.

A product of Indo-German collaboration, with Franz Osten directing and Himansu Rai producing, *Achhutkanya* dwells on the problem of untouchability, a topical subject for the period. But the intricacies of the issue never come to the fore and the film degenerates into mere song-dance routine. The film even lacks the technical flourish of the team's earlier ventures like *A Throw of Dice* and *Light of Asia*. The acting style is loud and stagey. Ashok Kumar looks a pansy, but Devika Rani's coyish charm is still compelling.

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## “Chand Baniker Pala”

RANJAN GHOSE

BASED on the familiar Chand Sadagar-Lakhinder episode of Manashamangal Kabya, Chaturanga's newest production *Chand Baniker Pala* is an allegorical play, though what the playwright intends to say is not intelligible.

“Truth is our path, our thoughts are truth, what we follow is truth. Victory will be ours”—this is the main slogan of the play. But what is that truth? What Chand Sadagar, a rich merchant, realises as truth may not be the same to his poor fellow-travellers, or for that matter, the realisation of the playwright and his readers may not be the same. The selection of the episode is interesting. Here the rich merchant, Chand Sadagar, takes the leadership when so many common people are present on the stage. Does it signify anything? As a matter of fact, in bourgeois art and literature rich characters always dominate.

Chand Sadagar is a worshipper of hashish, loving Shiva as the god of knowledge, and hashish, indeed, is a source of knowledge. The Sadagar hates Manasha, the goddess of snakes, and as a result his six sons die of snakebite. Chand makes a sea-voyage in search of fortune leaving his pregnant wife at home. A completely vanquished Chand returns home after several years to find his seventh son Lakhinder quite grown up. Lakhinder blames his father for his failure and finally Chand promises his son a merchantship and other necessary arrangements for a sea-voyage. Thus the search for truth, that is wealth and fortune to Chand or Lakhinder, continues. For modern sadagars fortune comes itself in the form of dollars and roubles. This is an age of finance-capital.

Audibility is the primary condition of acting. The actors of Chaturanga failed to keep in mind this simple thing—75 percent of the dialogue was unheard even from the front

rows. Mihir Chatterji in the role of Chand Sadagar did laborious acting while Shyamal Ghosh (Nakshatra) was a misfit in the role of Lakhinder. Lighting was imaginative but music and sound effects failed to synchronise with acting.

### Letters

## East Bengal

On the happenings in Bangla Desh I have got the following questions:

(1) What is the class character of Sheikh Mujib? Does he represent the national bourgeoisie or monopoly capital? Do any comprador bourgeoisie exist in Bangla Desh? If so, how far would the Six Points of the Awami League strengthen their cause?

(2) In the process of national liberation war arms have passed into the hands of workers and peasants. Many of the upper class Awami League members have crossed the border with their families. Would they silently hand them back to the bourgeois leaders after the expulsion of the Pakistan army from the soil of Bangla Desh?

(3) Is it a fact that once Mao Tse-tung in explaining the reasons for taking to armed struggle wrote that the Chinese people were denied even formal democracy and freedom of speech so customary in a bourgeois democratic government? Has Pakistan been enjoying, under the continuous spell of Martial Law, any minimum democratic rights, e.g., the right to criticize the Martial Law Administrator?

(4) Is it a fact that the FLN people received open assistance from an anti-communist like Nasser in their war for freedom against France and after gaining freedom Algeria did not become a colony of the UAR?

(5) Isn't it a fact that Pakistan has not yet severed its formal relationship with SEATO and has been getting regular arm supplies from both the social-imperialists and imperialists?

(6) In a war of liberation don't border regions generally become restive and the main trouble spots as we see in the case of Cambodia, Palestine and Burma?

(7) Whether from a Marxist point of view Bangla Desh has the right to fight for self-determination or not? Does it fulfil the definition of a separate nationality?

(8) Is it a fact that the hijacked plane was destroyed before the full view of Pakistani authorities and the hijackers were given political asylum?

S. P. BASU

Ballavpure, Midnapur

A sweeping anti-China campaign is now on over the issue of the liberation struggle in Bangladesh.

When, why and under what perspectives communists should support a national movement? To them, “The national problem is a part of the general problem of the proletarian revolution, a part of the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat”. (Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*).

Should the communists support every national movement? According to Stalin, “Support must be given to such national movement as tends to weaken, to overthrow imperialism and not to strengthen and preserve it. . . . The question of the rights of nations is not an isolated self-sufficient question, it is a part of the general problem of the proletarian revolution” (*Problems of Leninism*). Lenin said, “The national movement of the oppressed countries should be appraised not from the point of view of the actual results obtained, as shown by the general balance sheet of the struggle against imperialism, that is to say not in isolation but on a world scale” (Lenin, *Collected Works*).

Judging the situation in Bangladesh from this perspective, we see that there is no utterance against American imperialism, the main enemy of the people of the world, in the six-point programme or in the declaration of the Bangladesh Government. On the contrary, men like Tajuddin and

and Bhasani are seeking moral and material support from President Nixon and the British Prime Minister, Mr Heath. They are getting actual support from the reactionary government of Mrs Indira Gandhi.

Since the spearhead of the movement launched under the leadership of the Awami League is not directed against American imperialism, it cannot get the support of the world revolutionary movement. The imperialists and the reactionary Government of India are practically trying to export counter-revolution, to crush the real revolutionary movement of the workers and the peasants against the brutal oppression of Yahya Khan on the one hand and the internal reactionary forces on the other.

China knows that the revolutionary forces in Bangladesh will have to make great sacrifices to achieve freedom from semi-colonial and semi-feudal oppression; that guerilla warfare is the only way by which the people of Bangladesh can carry out the national liberation movement.

In the above perspective China, by declaring the situation in Bangladesh as an internal affair of Pakistan, is practically opposing imperialist intervention in Bangladesh. Thus China is protecting the revolution in Bangladesh, allowing it grow and develop, basing on its own resources.

SOUMEN BANERJEE  
Baruipur, 24-Parganas

Perhaps the point has not been stressed enough that the present regime of Pakistan could yet retrace its basically incongruous steps in the eastern wing.

The elections that brought Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League to indisputable majority in the National Assembly of Pakistan—in the eastern region without any challenge—had been ordered by that very regime. The latter was committed to the transfer of power from the military authorities to a civil government in a constitutional way. Further, aren't the present rulers of Pakistan wholehearted champions of the right of

self-determination for Kashmir? That the momentum of history can never be checked nor reversed, must be well known to them. The people of East Pakistan have opted for the exercise of the right of self-determination and formed a new State, and this could be trusted to develop into a bridge-builder between India and Pakistan. Likewise, the Kashmir people could acquire such a desirable role provided they are allowed to exercise the right of self-determination to the logical extent. The Government of Pakistan would be within the frame-work of national and international justice if the cause of freedom be championed in Kashmir and East Pakistan with strict impartiality.

It is not suggested that Pakistan should ask for the right of self-determination to be granted in Kashmir as a quid pro quo for its agreeing to this principle in East Bengal, but it is possible to lay the groundwork of an internationally arranged settlement of the Kashmir problem along with that of the former, *now*.

It is not yet too late for the Pakistan Government to initiate the process in consultation with and co-operation of world powers, who have already indicated their willingness to help in a solution. Surely it is not beyond the reach of the collective goodwill of the major nations of the world to make a move for ending the present phase of repression and massacre in East Pakistan and convene immediately a special meeting of the UN for the purpose.

R. RAM  
Lucknow

Doubts have been expressed in your correspondence columns about the class nature of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League. The CPI(ML) has already described him as an agent of imperialism and predicted his failure and the victory of Toha. I am sorry to see the repetition of what happened in Indonesia, Burma and India in 1948 when the communists in these countries declared all-out war against Sukarno,

Aung San, U Nu and Nehru, describing them in the same terms as those now being applied to the Sheikh. The shades of Musho, Tan Malaka, Surino, Than Tun, Ghoshal and Ranadive are haunting East Bengal.

I would like to know whether Marx declared that destruction of the bureaucratic-military state machine was the pre-condition for every people's revolution (Marx's letter to Kugelmann on April 12, 1871).

According to Emile Burns, Marx never considered the struggle for parliamentary democracy against feudal monarchy and autocracy purposeless though he clearly knew it was only a part of the whole struggle and cannot by itself bring the new order of society. That is why Marx always stressed the importance of the fight for parliamentary democracy against the various forms of autocratic government existing in Europe during the last century," (E. Burns: *What is Marxism?* p. 47).

We know that Engels himself participated in a movement led by capitalists against the Prussian Emperor.

I have seen CPI(ML) posters supporting the national liberation movement launched by Phizo and Laldenga. What is their class nature? Did the charter of demands of the Federal Naga Government and MNF, also of the Biafran war of independence contain promises for the benefit and emancipation of the working class and peasants? Do they have such a following as the Awami League has?

Mr Vivek Rakshit interestingly hints that Pakistan is gradually moving towards socialism by winding up military bases. (24-4-71). Then India must be more progressive because she has not at all joined any bloc nor allowed any country to set up bases. Incidentally, Mr Rakshit is supporting the CPI's view that a country's independence is determined by its foreign policy.

MANJU DEY (SMT.)  
Calcutta

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