

frontier

Vol. 1: No. 14

JULY 13, 1968

PRICE 35 PAISE

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PRINTED AT MODERN INDIA PRESS,
7, RAJA SUBODH MULLICK SQUARE,
CALCUTTA-13 AND PUBLISHED BY SAMAR
SEN FROM 61, MOTT LANE, CALCUTTA-13

NASSER'S MISSION

MOSCOW has again promised to help Mr Nasser in liberating Arab territory under Israeli occupation. The UAR leader should be mature enough, after his June 1947 experience, to know that this does not mean that he can employ the Russian arms at his disposal in another trial of strength. The Kremlin believes in time and patience, and however galling the present situation in West Asia may be to the Arabs, they will have to, on a State level, put up with it till Mr Kosygin can persuade Mr Johnson to persuade the Israelis to make a gesture.

The Egyptians have been trying to put their horse in order. The army has been purged of many unreliable elements. In principle, it is acknowledged that mere arms are not enough—the six-day war proved this to the hilt; what matters is the quality of the men that handle the arms, and their leadership. Whether the Russian tactics based on time and patience are conducive to the creation of the right type of revolutionary army is debatable. Algeria and Syria think otherwise and so do the guerillas who now bear the brunt of the resistance to Israeli occupation. Their two organisations are now closer to each other and their present image is such that the King of Jordan dare not discipline them. The Israelis, now and then, exhibit their unease; it is uncomfortable to have a large, hostile Arab population within their new frontiers. Last year Moshe Dayan pointed out that the idea of guerilla warfare against Israel was unreal because the guerillas, having no local bases in Israel to operate from, would be like fish out of water. But the presence of so many Arabs in Israeli-occupied territory would alter the perspective to a considerable extent at least in those areas if the guerillas extend their organisation and operations. This would leave the Israelis with a few options: they can squeeze out the Arabs and resettle the areas with men of their faith, a process already under way, although in a limited manner; they can strike out across the border when it suits them; or they can launch another surprise, massive attack to break the Egyptian build-up in the belief that everything would again be left to the Security Council. No political option is on the cards at the moment.

The Arabs thoroughly mucked up their case last year by talk of annihilation of Israel. A State which was formed 20 years ago with the common consent of the Western Powers and Russia cannot be wished

away or wiped out. And the Israelis are tough fighters. The Arab propaganda should have been against the Zionists of Israel, and not against the entire Jewish population whose brutal persecution by the Nazis had earned them worldwide sympathy at the time of the creation of Israel (though the Arabs may still be wondering why they should pay for the sins of Hitler). Perhaps the successful activities of the Jewish terrorist organisation left memories too bitter and too humiliating to encourage any idea that Arabs and Jews can live together on friendly and co-operative terms under a new dispensation. The perfidy of 1956 buried any such idea five fathoms deep. But strangely, this idea was voiced by two Communist members of the Israeli Parliament after the June war last year. These were voices in the midst of triumphant chauvinism. One of the curious facts of history is that the Jews who did not put up much resistance against the Nazis even when they were led to the slaughter-house should exhibit so much virility and violence against the Arabs. Another irony of today is that the infernal suffering of the Vietnamese and their magnificent resistance should help another Power to parade its arms and warships in West Asia and elsewhere and at the same time proclaim and practise the virtues of peaceful co-existence and collaboration with the aggressors. Mr Nasser should beware. That the announcement of likely anti-ABM talks with Mr Johnson came on the day when the Americans had dropped 1,800 tons of bombs in North Vietnam shows the extent to which the Kremlin can go to accommodate Big Brother. In the short as well as in the long run the Arabs will have to help themselves.

Tenkasi

Krishnagar has been countered by Tenkasi. The Congress has gone down to a resounding defeat in the by-election from the latter constituency in Madras. Some of the reports in the newspapers about how the DMK influence has been declining steeply in

that State have been belied. If not anything else, Tenkasi should at least leave the lesson behind that wish-fulfilment is no substitute for detached reporting.

But Tenkasi should prove something else too, namely, that the deep South has turned away from the pattern of Aryavarta politics more or less for keeps. In most of the northern States, the Congress had come to grief in the fourth general election partly on account of internecine quarrels, and partly also because of an accretion of strength by such right-wing parties as the Jana Sangh. In State after State, Congress regimes were dethroned not because of any fundamental shift in electoral opinion in favour of more progressive forces, but because the left parties teamed up with Jana Sanghites and Congress dissidents. Even in West Bengal, the dominant elements in the Bangla Congress—the group which was marginally instrumental in defeating the Congress in the State was reactionary to the core. These polyglot combinations were against Nature, and soon started coming apart. The Congress restoration in the North, as illustrated by the results of the mid-term poll in Haryana and the collapse of rival regimes in several other States, therefore merely signified a return to a more natural state of affairs. Notwithstanding the verdict of professional optimists, Aryavarta retains its allegiance to reaction, a fact which subterfuges and artifices cannot conceal beyond brief weekends. Those professing faith in socialism and secular democracy will have to work hard and long for the mind of Aryavarta: post-election manoeuvres will be of no avail if there is no shift in attitudes at the grassroots.

This is what marks off Kerala and Madras from the rest of the country. In both these States, the disenchantment with the Congress—and the mores it represents—has reached a stage where the process has become irreversible. Kerala's Leftists may continue to wash their dialectic linen in public, the administration they are able to provide, within the limitations set by the Constitution, may continue to fall short of being exemplary, and

yet the people are not going to return to the fold of the Congress. The latter no longer remains as a viable alternative. The results of the recent municipal elections may have nurtured other notions in some hearts, but the transformation in attitudes which has come about in Kerala is abiding enough to be able to withstand such minor buffeting. And now Tenkasi, coming in the wake of a sustained Congress effort to retrieve lost ground, suggests that perhaps Madras too has gone Kerala's way. Whatever one's doubts about some of the slogans in the DMK's manifestos, there is a basic streak of progressive thinking in the manner it has gone about since assuming office in Madras: its policies on food and tenurial arrangements, its caveat on the size of defence expenditure and its general stance on such issues as language and educational system have been characterised by a nonconformism of the most welcome sort. A succession of by-elections—now capped by Tenkasi—have confirmed that this non-conformism has the unabashed backing of the Madras electorate; no amount of cajoling on the part of New Delhi will now induce them to go back on their DMK future.

News of the Madras by-election defeat has come at an awkward time for the Congress in West Bengal. The hundred quarrels within the United Front have bloomed in the newspapers, but till last week, Mr Atulya Ghosh's Congress organisation, (more about it later) totalitarian-fashion, was able to suppress all news of the rumblings of discontent within the party over the nominations for the mid-term poll. This had created an optical illusion and made the United Front appear in a poorer light as an electoral alliance. Mr B. S. Nahar's rebellion has now brought the Congress linen out in the open. To that extent, Nature's balance has been redressed. Maybe this also provides an occasion for reminding oneself that the Congress is, and remains, the main enemy at the moment, a fact that gets blurred because of the camouflage which President's rule provides to the local target.

More Of The Same

With his considerable cunning Mr Atulya Ghosh combines a certain amount of sang-froid. At least so it might have appeared during the process of his return to power in the West Bengal Congress in recent months. According to some reports, he was one of the few men present who did not lose nerve in the confusion following the landing of a missile on Mr P. C. Sen's venerable head at a Congress meeting at Kharagpur last Saturday. But then Mr Ghosh knew that it was more important than ever that he must keep his wits about. He must have been a worried man for quite some time. He could not have been unaware that his opponents in the State Congress might have lost a battle but not all their weapons. Over the weekend Mr Bejoy Singh Nahar and some others seemed determined to do battle again. Even Morarjibhai could not mollify them by taking personal responsibility for the Congress Election Committee's decisions which had so upset them. Over the telephone from New Delhi Mrs Gandhi herself promised them a hearing, which they got during the deluge; considering the Prime Minister's feelings towards the West Bengal party boss, it would not be a mere polite formality to suggest that the hearing would be sympathetic.

The course of these murky moves and counter-moves may no longer be of absorbing interest. This is a tale so often retold in the history of Congress politics, particularly in this State, that it has lost all excitement of novelty. No policies are involved, no principles need even be mentioned; it is all a matter of personal ambition and group interest, of trying to make the most in an unabashedly corrupt game played for so many years at the expense of a people forced into increasing distress. There is little to choose between those in power and those in seeming revolt; they all belong to the same disreputable lot. In fact, if one *had to* choose between the old bosses clinging to power and the so-called rebels protesting against coterie rule, one could hardly be sure

of a new era of friendship and co-sides are equally unprincipled, whatever their professions, the one which is more clever and at the same time more brazen may be the group one might prefer to deal with. There would at least be fewer false pretences.

This, of course, is a digression. There can be no real question of choosing between two forms of the evil. The latest developments should only expose the evil once again; it shows the Congress for what it really is. If some people still choose it, it is their business; whether they prefer Mr Atulya Ghosh or Mr Bejoy Singh Nahar makes no matter. Yet the developments are not without certain implications of general interest. They provide at least some explanation for the Congress party's anxiety for a postponement of West Bengal's mid-term elections. The demand for a postponement has been more than a little intriguing, for there seems no obvious reason why the Congress should be more popular in February than in November. In fact, postponement, if decided upon, would give the party's opponents a valuable propaganda weapon. Mr Ghosh and his cronies must have known this from the beginning; if they still chose to ask for postponement there must have been some inner compulsion. It now seems that the party bosses want more time in order to deal with the grave internal dissensions. Perhaps Mr Ghosh also hopes that after the next crop the jotedars and rice-millers would be in a better position to provide him with the funds he needs for the elections. But, again, all this is part of the same old story.

A New Alliance

A correspondent writes:

What is really happening in South-East Asia? With the U.S. forces of occupation sinking irretrievably in the morass of Vietnam the region is growing restless. The makers of South-East Asia's destiny are busy hopping around each other's capital (not to mention the pilgrimage to Washington) and

signing joint communiques and sundry other treaties. A dawn perhaps of preferring the latter. When both operation in this troubled part of the globe? But a probe beneath the crust of lofty speeches and communiques reveals a new pattern which is not particularly benevolent or peaceful in intention. It is perhaps only a perverse mind that looks for a snake in the garden. But then reality is no less perverse.

The emerging pattern of alliances has to be viewed against the backdrop of mounting guerilla activity in the region. After the traumatic experience of 1965 Communist guerillas are again surging back to life in Indonesia. Some areas of Malaysia are every day posing greater security problems. A murderous ambush recently mounted by Chin Peng's elusive guerilla band on a Malaysian army convoy is a serious alarm signal for Kuala Lumpur. On the mainland South-East Asia a vast ring of territory from the frontiers of North Vietnam to that of Nagaland running through the jungle-covered hills of Laos, Thailand and Burma is controlled to a varying degree by the insurgents of the respective countries. Laos, Meos and Lahus in Thailand, Shans, Kachins and Karens in Burma—the tribal South-East Asia is in revolt. But revolt of the ethnic minorities in South-East Asia is an old story. What really makes it particularly ominous to the Free World is the colour of the revolt. All the tribal insurgents are either led by or allied with people who draw inspiration from the works of Mao Tse-tung. Although between themselves the insurgents do not seem to have done anything more than exchange pledges of proletarian solidarity the governments they are fighting are too scared to sit back. And everybody from Suharto to Souvanna Phouma, from Thanom to Ne Win begins to feel that they will have to hang together if they are not to hang separately.

Examples are not wanting either. The anti-guerilla united front of the Latin American oligarchies led by the U.S.

have already got down to action. In Africa—in Angola, South Africa and Rhodesia the governments are closely cooperating in their fight against the black insurgents. They exchange not only information about the guerillas but also materiel to deal with them. In South-East Asia too regional cooperation in counter-insurgency operations is already an unpublicized but established fact. Malaysia and Indonesia are helping each other in fighting insurgency in Sarawak. The Thai and Malaysian armies are conducting joint operations against guerillas of the Thailand Patriotic Front and Malayan Liberation Army. Thailand is also sending assistance to Laos to stave off the Pathet Lao relentlessly pressing forward. Latest in the series was the agreement between non-aligned Burma and Thailand which one French journalist has termed the “largest U.S. aircraft-carrier.” During their recent meeting Generals Thanom and Ne Win agreed that troops and police of either Thailand or Burma would be allowed to enter the other’s territory in the pursuit of mopping up operations against the insurgents. They have even agreed to press into service Koumintang Chinese irregulars prowling in the intractable north of Burma and Thailand who were only yesterday the main security concern of the governments. Viewed in this context the Indo-Burma talks on border security and the Indo-Malaysian arms deal take on a new significance.

Cutting across the old lines of SEATO and non-aligned Asia a new international seems to be taking shape. But this fact does not deprive it of the blessings of the Pentagon which is already channelling massive war material to the individual members of the new alliance. And intended as it is to preserve peace and stability in the region this anti-guerilla international can also reasonably expect encouragement from the pragmatic Communists of the world. Russian accusations in the *New Times* against China for supporting the struggle against the governments of Burma, Malaysia and Singapore are a pointer.

View from Delhi

A Third Party ?

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THERE are things more profound and less psychedelic than the Communist split to talk about in respectable company. The poor Prime Minister is yet to find herself a spacious house to live in. Poor Mr Dinesh Singh had to keep off Geneva this time because Mr Morarji Desai would not allow him foreign exchange. Which should remind us that the rupee trade with the Soviet Union has resulted in a balance in our favour and Mr Dange can still hop to Moscow every weekend to sort out the problems of Indian revolution and we can still send a jumbo-jet-size delegation to the Sofia Youth Festival with no obligation to buy TU-134 planes. Mrs Gandhi and Mr C. B. Gupta have made up at last, and to believe the political grapevine, U.P.’s hegemony over India would be restored soon.

But hardly any one has cared to ask the question : would the Centre allow the third Communist party (if and when formed) to function as a party? The third party has to be formed before it could be banned and a premature ban would prevent some of the ultras from quitting the second party to join the third. It should therefore suit the Home Ministry fine to wait until all the ultras have been driven out of the CPI(M) fold. When the official leadership cannot fight the ultras on the political plane, the best expedient is to denounce them as pro-Peking as Mr Dange’s party did once, and leave the rest to the Government. Mao shirts would have been the fashion with our Communist Establishment if only the Chinese had not laid claim to territory which we believe is ours.

The CPI’s official reaction to the split, as could be seen from the communique at the end of its CEC meeting, was rather cautious. The reference was to the “Communist elements” outside the two organised parties. But the stance of some of

its leaders was sickeningly juvenile and self-righteous. One of them told newsmen that it was the logic of the split working itself out. There was ill-concealed jubilation over the CPI(M)’s discomfiture and a fond hope that some of its following would re-defect to the *sarkari* party. But the split after Burdwan was not the logic of an earlier split. If anything, it was the logic of a compromise with the so-called softliners like Mr E. M. S. Namboodiripad and Mr Jyoti Basu at Tenali.

The CPI(M)’s participation in the United Front ministries in Kerala and West Bengal seems to have taken its toll of ideology. The party’s main preoccupation now seems to be to hold power in Kerala and recapture it in West Bengal. The price: another split.

It might be an accident that the General Secretaries of both the official Communist parties are from Andhra Pradesh. But it is by no means certain that the third one would be led by another Andhra because it looks like there will be many “third” Communist parties in the country shortly, raising the basic question: can there be an all-India communist party in the real sense? Back in 1948, long before it came to be known as such, the Andhra Communists were for a Mao line but the CPI’s need to suborn its interests to Moscow’s resulted in the emasculation of the Telengana uprising. Nearly 20 years after, Naxalbari got all the headlines and Srikakulam none. If those described as “Naxalites” do not endorse what is known as the Srikakulam line or the Andhra line, logic would ordain that the Andhra extremists form their own party. Even Mao’s thought is not anyone’s monopoly.

The pressure for the expulsion of the Andhra Pradesh leaders came from the leadership in West Bengal

and Kerala which dreads a ban on the CPI(M) as nothing else because of the party's proximity to power. Anything else is expendable but not power through the United Front. But in Andhra Pradesh the party is nowhere near power and therefore a majority of its following can forsake it and call for a hundred Vietnams. It is much the same thing in Madras State where the extremists provide the most militant cadre and have managed to isolate the superannuated leadership. But the sheer size of the party and its mass character make for a qualitative difference in Andhra Pradesh. Even Mr Sundarayya has admitted that the majority of active members in Andhra Pradesh would go over to the ultras. The majority of a party's active following cannot be without a party whereas the small groups of expelled extremists can for some time be. So everything points to the formation of a distinctly Andhra party if attempts at co-ordination with other groups of CPI(M) extremists fail. In which case there will be more than one "third" red party in the country.

The CPI(M)'s repeated protestations about its faith in parliamentary methods and Moscow's anxiety to promote "unity of action" between the two Communist parties preclude any crackdown by Government on the CPI(M). But the interesting point to speculate on here is: what would be the attitude of a United Front Government with CPI(M) participation, say, in West Bengal or Kerala, to a ban on a party to be formed by the extremists? In the Lok Sabha last session, when the Unlawful Activities Bill was being discussed, a CPI(M) spokesman rushed in where others feared to tread and wanted to know from Mr Chavan whether he would ban his party or not. Mr Chavan, the master of false logic, asked a question in turn: would his party support China or not? The CPI(M)'s anxiety to ward off a ban was exploited by the Home Ministry and the strategy began paying off when the CPI(M) began disowning one group of extremists after another. The logical culmination of this trend would be the CPI(M)'s co-operation, where it is in

power, with the Centre in smashing, the ultras or any organisation they might set up.

The prospect of power through the United Front has distorted the thinking of every major political party. With mid-term elections due to take place in the entire Indo-Gangetic valley, from Uttar Pradesh to Bihar, the old compulsions have surfaced once again. It was amusing to hear Mr C. Rajeshwar Rao rationalise his party's honeymoon with the Jana Sangh in Bihar. It was a kind of metaphysics. "We may have a hundred and one principles but in life we have to make so many compromises," he said. It was not only metaphysics; it was a bit of quantum physics too. Where the Jana Sangh is not big enough to create mischief, the CPI would join a United Front with it. And again, if the SSP, another "leftist" party, insisted on having the Jana Sangh in the Bihar front to achieve left unity, the CPI would have to aim at "democratic" unity which is a euphemism for united action with the Jana Sangh.

There is no decisive index of any swing back to the Congress all over the country. The Congress won a marginal victory in Haryana and wrested the Krishnagar seat in West Bengal. But then it has lost two by-elections in Madhya Pradesh and suffered a disastrous defeat in Tenkasi in Madras. The marginal anti-Congress voter in the 1967 elections might be non-voter in the mid-term elections. In some places, the non-voter might be a decisive factor in favour of the Congress. To that extent, the outcome in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, might be unpredictable. But in large areas of the country, whatever the voter's disillusionment with the United Front or non-Congress Governments, he is not in a mood to vote the Congress back to power. Tenkasi is one such instance. The middle-class disenchantment with the DMK is almost complete in Madras State but the anti-Congress wave has not subsided. The anti-Congress vote in Madras is largely an anti-Centre vote, whoever manages to get it.

July 7, 1968

Thinking On France

B. P. ADHIKARI

THE May events in France and the June election results have evoked the expected response from present-day "left-wing" Communists that the revisionist French Communist Party has betrayed the working class in not attempting to seize political power, and from "right-wing" Communists that it was correct not to do so. Proclamations and protestations from both sides have as usual been categorical and full of an apparent conviction of truth, though diametrically opposite to each other. There is nothing new in this, as most left writing of all shades in India is too facile, the writers being either too sure of their own accurate understanding or of the wickedness or folly of others. However, there are many basic questions of the strategy of the left movement, particularly Communist, which have remained unresolved for lack of a scientific debate, which explains the frequent incoherence between profession and action in both the Communist camps in the country. It would therefore be pertinent to pose some of these questions. Since we have started talking about France, we shall discuss specifically the questions of left strategy in that country and in other industrially advanced countries of Western Europe, with the hope that someone will have the courage to exhibit similar doubts and questions regarding India in the columns of *Frontier*.

Let it be understood that by left movement we understand active mass movement by political parties with the object of putting an end to capitalist relations of production and establishing socialist relations of production. Let it also be understood that the present-day schism in this movement from the point of view of practical strategy is in advocating a peaceful transition or a violent overthrow as a necessary means to the above end.

It is well to remember when talking of strategy today, that there are only

three countries in the world—the USSR, China and Cuba—where the working people have succeeded in achieving the above objective of the left movement and that this has happened in each case through violent means. In operative terms, the working people, either through their own experience or through the political education of an organised party, have felt enough desperation mingled with hope, and enough hatred against identifiable persons or groups of persons, to use physical violence against them or to cruelly dispossess them of their property. What else would be uppermost but this hatred and desperation in the minds of the worker and the peasant of these countries? There was a backward and ill-developed industry in the midst of an impoverished peasantry, which meant for them living below or barely at subsistence level and in fear of unemployment or eviction from land. There was complete insecurity in old age, and for the family when the worker would die. The State did not participate in the economy, nor did it even create the semblance of protection of workers or restriction of the vices of capitalism. It did not care to create an illusion of power and participation among the people through a formal democracy, and the ruling classes abandoned the spirit of elementary nationalism in the face of foreign occupation or domination by an alien country. The ruling classes and the organs of State presented an unabashed picture of callousness, corruption, inefficiency and depravity which shocked the sense of morality in the common man. Finally, in the USSR and in China the ravages of war pulled the people irrevocably away from the ruling classes. In such a situation organisations of courageous and devoted men and the legendary leaders which they produced could effectively canalise the wrath of the people and give them the hope that only by a cruel and violent overthrow would they possibly open the road to an honourable survival.

Material Interests

With the full awareness of how comparisons can be odious, it is still

profitable to find a description of the French situation which, undoubtedly, will have much in common with the situation in most Western capitalisms of today. The economy is highly industrialised, with a peasantry which is neither poor nor landlord and Kulak ridden. The industrial worker does not exist face to face with an enemy army of unemployed, and the peasant does not fear eviction or feudal exaction. A majority of the working class lives much above the subsistence level and a fair number can even think of the regular intake of as many calories from food as are advocated for healthy life by experts on nutrition. Guarantees of social security and old age benefits are provided by the State which has also made lower and higher education easily available to their sons and daughters. The State participates extensively in economic activity, in mines, power generation, industry and transport, and has enacted legislation both to regulate the operation of capital and industrial relations—the latter in favour of the worker. The stigma which a politically conscious worker carried on himself of being a citizen of a colonial country has been obliterated. The last ten years have not only seen substantial economic development which has brought material benefit to the worker, he has also experienced an ample dose of nationalistic pride, singularly in contrast with what he felt during many of the post-war years. Above all this, his material interests are effectively protected and enhanced by a strong trade union movement whose voice is felt and heard both by the State and the capitalist class.

Lest I should be taken to be singing the virtues of capitalist benevolence or of being some brand of a Keynesian I should state forthwith that the sacrifices and determined endeavour of French Communists are in a large measure responsible in getting for the worker much of what he has. But here comes the rub and our problem. If the above description is broadly accepted and too many faults are not found, are the working people in France in a *mental* condition which will impel them to desperately go out

and overthrow the order of things, to pick upon identifiable persons of the capitalist class whom they would hate so much as to physically harm them if necessary? It is submitted here that the French working people are not itching for a fight to do away with the capitalist class. Nevertheless, the basic capitalistic relations of ownership and production remain intact and, by the laws of dialectical materialism, there is the standard inherent contradiction of this mode of production. How is it going to be resolved, and when? It is difficult to see that this contradiction is getting visibly sharpened in France or in several similar economies. When will such sharpening take place? Will it come on its own, if things go on as today, hastened by agitational work by a Marxist political party or will the hidden conflict suddenly come to the fore when there is a crisis of capitalism, whenever that happens? It is maintained here that quantitative working-class demands for the improvement of living conditions will not bring about the downfall of capitalism in these countries, because, willy nilly, capitalism has come to realise that the immense technological development of recent years can be so used as to give away enough to pacify the unambitious working class and keep them fairly well-fed and in fair comfort, and yet make more money than could ever be imagined.

The strategy of the revolutionary left movement will depend on the answers to the above questions, given without quotations from the Marxist classics. If, for example, the Communists of these countries *do not* know in what manner a crisis of capitalism will come, or if such a crisis will come at all, they will necessarily have to remain as mere watchdogs of the economic interests of the working class, keep up a well-oiled trade union organisation and pray that one day they may be peacefully voted to power, after which they will build socialism. If, on the contrary, they know through scientific understanding that a crisis of capitalism will certainly come, at which time capitalism will ruthlessly consign the working class

even to starvation and death, they will have to very clearly explain this to the working class and keep it organisationally and mentally prepared for the day when it would have to make the final show of strength.

Student Rebellion

How does the student rebellion and the subsequent strikes and factory occupation by workers fit in with the above description and questions? It should be noticed that wherever the workers intransigently occupied factories, they did not seriously want control either of the government or even of the factories. They only made quantitative demands of an exorbitant salary increase and the restitution of certain social security benefits—which are negotiable and were negotiated. They did take advantage of the mood created by the rebellious students, but did so for quantitative demands, if this repetition is excused. The subsequent elections do not necessarily contradict the erstwhile militancy of the workers. One may express the fear that the French worker might be developing a dual loyalty—towards the trade unions and the Communist Party for the satisfaction of their economic demands and towards the established order for the satisfaction of political aspirations. Exhibition of red flag for bread and the tricolour for “azadi” has been seen in India before independence.

What remains to be understood is the student upheaval itself. It would be pertinent to point out some facts regarding the student population of French universities, particularly the University of Paris. The students of this university do not come from the relatively poorer classes, and are mostly children of intellectuals, technicians and white-collar employees. A survey about ten years ago showed that less than 2 per cent of the 70,000 students of Paris University came from working-class families, and the proportion would presumably not have changed drastically even today. The education of a very large number among all students is financially supported from State funds to a greater or lesser degree, and many students

find it possible to change disciplines before the end of studies. There is virtually no unemployment after university education. What is it, then, which has gone wrong?

Let us look at a simple demographic exercise. It is known that in countries involved in a world war, there is a sudden increase in the number of births just after the war ends. As the large group of new borns during the five years after war grow in age, they sequentially pose serious problems of nurseries, primary schooling, secondary schooling, higher education, jobs. Besides, when these babies suddenly take the shape of a large student population between 18 and 22, there is the problem of their ideology, sense of identification and values. The students of this age today were born since 1946 and they have suffered from inadequate educational planning from the age of five. More important than this, they have grown up without having to face a challenging social or philosophical thought, without having to think and take sides in confrontation with a bold and revolutionary ideology. Their situation is in sharp contrast with the situation of the children born immediately after the First World War. The latter had the yet heretical ideology and practice of Communism to reckon with, and every thinking youth had to place himself sharply vis-a-vis this doctrine. Then, as if to save capitalistic society from the problem of ebullient youth, the Second World War started in 1939 and sucked all of them in a vortex towards death. But now 23 years have gone by and there has been no war. Communism has become a respectable commodity and there has been destalinisation on top of that. The only two things the elders have promised are peace and material well-being both of which, let us say, there have been. If for many students of science and technology at least there is real excitement, there is nothing similar for those who will study the social sciences. Moribund capitalism is still kicking, the money-dominated bourgeois social system persists with all its hypocritical values, and the students face the future life of a cog in the big wheel of the service

sector which is meant to perpetuate both. It is no longer religion which seems to be the opium of the people, but achievable material well-being and the indecent striving for it.

The rebellion of the student is perhaps more than anything else an angry protest against a general intuitive knowledge of his inevitable future. But short of a radical social change or a perspective of such change for which it would be worthwhile to stake this future, rebellion of this kind is likely to remain a memory to nostalgically remember and perhaps repeat at another moment of collective despair.

It would really help very much if there was a thinker who would sort out credibly and convincingly the interplay of social forces today, point out the most important of the contradictions and lay down guidelines of action for change. A Marxist who starts only with the materialism of phenomena and the dialectics of processes, who has driven away inhibitions of thoughts, is fearless of the establishment of left movement and has cultivated a deep insight into society—such a person seems to be a tall order today.



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The Vanguard—II

DAVID GODDARD

THE lessons to be learned from the failure of European and American labour movements to develop a revolutionary consciousness are instructive from the point of view of the potential for revolution in underdeveloped areas. In addition, the reasons for that failure provide us with an explanation of why capitalism at an advanced stage of development does not create the objective conditions for revolution in the metropolitan countries, while it does so in the underdeveloped regions which occupy a totally subservient position in the capitalist system.

The struggle between capital and labour in Western countries has been institutionalized to a high degree. Class conflict itself has been institutionalized with the development of a strong trade union movement, and socialist parliamentary parties which have been oriented to basic social and economic reforms within the context of capitalism rather than revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system. The success of the European left and the American labour movement in achieving major gains for the working class, cannot and should not be under-emphasized. But the effect of that success has been to increase the gap between the social consciousness of the workers and their real social needs. In other words, social consciousness has become progressively false and irrational to the point of total ignorance and rejection of revolutionary socialism. Nowhere is this ideological refraction of the political success of the working class under capitalism more evident and more extreme than in the contemporary United States—except perhaps Britain. The major part of the white working class has become so idiotized and befuddled that it is no longer capable of perceiving the true nature of the role the United States is playing in the world today, or if it is, of condemning it. The jingoistic nationalism of American

labour has obvious fascist implications, and a high probability exists that in the event of severe crisis (induced by events external to the metropolis), white labour would go even further right than it is already. To a somewhat lesser extent the same is true of Britain and other European countries, although the working class there, at least, has the benefit of a protective traditional socialist ideology, except that it is an ideology quite lacking in recognition of contemporary capitalist conditions. The continuing decline of Britain, with the inevitable shocks to the social structure and political life that this is bringing, is already having the consequence of increased disaffection from the left, a resurgence of an impotent nationalism, anti-Americanism, and an intensification of the racism which already contaminates the British working class to a high degree.

The development of a legitimate machinery of collective bargaining (institutionalization of class conflict) acceptable to the capitalist class has meant two things: (a) the struggle against capitalism has been narrowed to a struggle over the distribution of material rewards accruing from capitalist enterprise, so that the inequality of rewards has become the primary symbol of capitalist exploitation, effectively masking from the working class the total irrationality and ultimate tyranny of the capitalist system (*economism*). (b) The institutionalization of collective bargaining and its legitimization by the capitalist bourgeoisie is nothing else than the effective control of the working class by the bourgeoisie. Institutionalization means incorporation into the capitalist system, and incorporation means control.

Precisely the same can be said of the development of working class political parties with a legitimate position in the political spectrum and a voice in parliamentary democracy. Revolutionary socialism means rejection of bourgeois politics and political values;

it is an outright contradiction of such politics. The moment a socialist party is admitted to bourgeois democracy, it ceases by definition to be revolutionary. If, indeed, it was in the first place. The history of European socialist parties is in total accord with this contention. Contemporary European Communist parties such as the French and Italian, to say nothing of the reforming socialist parties, cannot therefore be trusted to carry out a revolutionary transformation of the capitalist system, despite their political power. They are bourgeois, reformist parties which have abandoned socialist principles of revolution. In effect, both left-wing political parties and the trade union movement have been co-opted onto the capitalist system. Moreover, a bourgeois society could not tolerate the *legitimate* existence of a revolutionary party. If it was co-opted it would have to be transformed ideologically.

Bureaucratization

The question of bureaucratization, already noted by Michels and Weber in Germany at the end of the 19th century, is also significant in respect to co-optation. Bureaucratic organization is inimical to revolution because it represents a totally inert and conservative force, and an arena for the emergence of inflexible vested interests. Administrative personnel have a deep and abiding interest in the continuation of the administrative apparatus, and develop a distrust and suspicion of the clients in whose interests the apparatus supposedly functions, but who may also represent a threat to its existence. The American and European working classes have had no little experience of bureaucratization and have had ample time to discover that it can never be a force for rapid change. The enormous British T & GWU is perhaps the most well-known case of a union organization bureaucratized to the extent that it cannot act effectively, and whose anti-democratic character has resulted in an alarming rate of apathetic withdrawal on the part of the membership. A revolutionary organization, on the other hand, has no need of and cannot afford a large-scale ad-

ministrative machine. In the interests of action, it needs a bare minimum of organizational structure. The utter simplicity of the cell-structure of the Algerian ALN and FLN, or the dismantling of "unnecessary" administration by the North Vietnamese in the interests of achieving maximum speed of response to immediate problems, are cases in point. In the same way the Chinese Cultural Revolution recognises the serious dangers of institutionalized inertia and authoritarianism inherent in bureaucratic organization. The encouragement of "criticism from below" is a major step in the deinstitutionalization of authority structures, not only because they conflict with principles of socialism, but also because they interfere with the efficient and rapid prosecution of the urgent tasks of socialist reconstruction.

While the factors already mentioned have been significant in transforming the working class into a bourgeois class, the main mechanism of bourgeoisification has been economic. While statistics of income distribution in Western countries do not show that manual workers have increased their share of national income in the last 50 years,¹ it is nonetheless true that the working class is materially better off in absolute terms than it was 50 years ago. The standard of living of workers has risen to the point where, in the United States, the majority of white manual workers enjoy a middle-class level of consumption. The same is true to a lesser extent of European manual workers, especially those in the modern rather than the traditional sector of industry (in secondary instead of primary industries). This indicates that while the share of the working class as a whole in national income may not have risen, there has been an increasing tendency for marked income differentials to appear within the working class. This is obviously true of white and black workers in the United States, in both North and South, but it is also true of the European working class. The wages of workers in the expanding engineering and consumer goods industries in Europe have risen appreciably faster than in any other indus-

trial sector. This has had the effect of creating a working class elite, differentiated from other manual workers more by income than by skill. Moreover, this elite has developed a self-consciously bourgeois style of life, as in the United States, which has entailed a rejection of proletarian values and political ideology. They have moved radically away from working class collectivism in the direction of petty-bourgeois individualism.

Divide, Rule and Profit

A distinction can be made between the traditional and modern sectors of the European working class, but it would be far less stark than the disparity between black and white in the U.S. There the white working class has enjoyed high wage levels because of the capitalist exploitation of the blacks (and because of the desire of the capitalist class to keep black and white racially divided against the possibility of solidarity action in which class interest transcends racial antagonism). The blacks have been a reserve army of unemployed who, because of the racial cleavage with white workers (fostered for a century by the bourgeoisie), have been exploited much more ruthlessly and systematically than the whites. It has, in effect, cut two ways. Capitalism has been able to exploit racism, which it itself created, to retain a cheap labour supply, by the acquiescence in racism of the white labour movement, and at the same time prevent the unification of the working class and the true development of proletarian consciousness. A classic strategy of divide, rule, and profit. A similar phenomenon occurs in Europe with the importation of foreign, unskilled workers—West Indians, Pakistanis and Indians in Britain (and traditionally the Irish), or Spanish, Greek, Turkish, and North African workers in France and Germany. The indigenous working class has moved up the occupational and income hierarchy as large numbers of foreign unskilled, often semi-literate workers have moved into the low-income, low-prestige occupations. The same course has occurred in the United States with the mass migration of

Puerto Ricans to the urban areas of the North. But the Puerto Ricans are only the latest wave of migrants, although probably the last. The United States, like Argentina, industrialized on the basis of successive waves of immigrant labour. This pattern appears to have seriously inhibited the development of a proletarian tradition of solidarity and recognition of common class interests in both these countries. Indubitably then, the total effect of migration (both historically and at the present time), has been to increase the tendency towards bourgeoisification of great parts of the working class, and thus to deepen the divisions and weaken the solidarity of that class. Instead, at a late stage of capitalism, a new solidarity is emerging among the bourgeoisified workers, a solidarity in affluence, in competition for status, and in the ethos of mass consumption.

But the true reality of bourgeoisification can only be understood in the context of imperialism and neo-colonialism. In the past 50 years, the capitalist wealth of the economically advanced countries has been derived from the massive exploitation of markets and raw materials in the underdeveloped regions. At the end of the 19th century falling rates of profit in capitalist countries led to the diversion of vast resources of surplus capital to hitherto barely exploited regions of the world. A reservoir of cheap labour made possible astronomical returns on capital investment. Capitalism moved into a new stage, the stage of super-profits, achieved not at the expense of the European working class, but at that of the "natives". Moreover, capitalism since the 19th century has become totally dependent on this super-exploitation, precisely because of the long-term fall in the rate of domestic profit. The rate of return on U.S. foreign investment is still in the region of 12% per annum, compared with often as little as 4-5% per annum on domestic capital formation. Secondly, a very small percentage of these super-profits remains in underdeveloped countries. In the case of the oil industry, for example, only about 10% of oil revenues actually

reaches the people of the underdeveloped region in the form of wages and local payment for domestically produced supplies for the oil corporations.

It is perfectly clear, therefore, that the very survival of capitalism has necessitated the large-scale incorporation of raw material producing areas and their indigenous populations into the capitalist system. In consequence, it has meant the creation of a new proletariat outside the political and territorial boundaries of Western capitalism, but nonetheless *within* the total capitalist system. (It makes no difference whether that proletariat is exploited by domestic or foreign enterprise, since domestic capital in underdeveloped regions only comes into being as a function of world capitalism.) The consequences of this for the Western proletariat have been truly momentous. Super-profits obtained through the exploitation of African, Asian, and Latin American cheap labour have made possible tremendous increases in wage levels for Western workers. High returns on investment abroad have more than compensated for a falling rate of profit at home, so much so, in fact, that the viability of capitalism is dependent to a very great degree on continued high rates of foreign investments. But high wage levels in the Western countries are an integral part of this development. High wage levels are vitally necessary to domestic capitalism in the West, because they generate a high level of effective demand for consumer products, which increases the quantity (if not the rate) of domestic private profit, in turn affecting the level of domestic investment and thus employment and income, and so on. In other words, the degree of expansion possible to domestic capitalism has, in great measure, been a function of the degree to which capitalism could successfully exploit the labour-power of the populations of the satellite regions.

Accessory

The proletariat of the metropolitan countries is, therefore, in a totally equivocal position in this historical development. Their high wages are a

direct function of low wages in the satellized nations. And if capitalist expansion in Western countries is ultimately dependent on the success of super-exploitation in the satellite countries, which generates their further underdevelopment, then increased wage-levels in the metropolis can only mean further impoverishment of the workers in the satellites. The proletariat of the West thus participates in, and benefits directly from, the exploitation of the masses in the underdeveloped world. Active or inactive, it is an accessory to imperialism. The relationship is identical to that which obtains between indigenous and migrant labour in Western capitalist countries, as discussed above. In this case, sections of the European and American working class exist parasitically on the exploitation of migrant labour, often consciously and actively contributing to that exploitation. For example, in Britain the trade unions discriminate overtly against migrant West Indian workers by controlling access to particular occupational categories.

The net result of this major historical change, a change which has only quite recently been brought to explicit theoretical consciousness in Marxism,² has, as suggested above, been to transfer the task of making revolution and taking power from the Western working class to the working class of the underdeveloped world. The Western working class has for the foreseeable future been co-opted onto the capitalist system of the metropolis and is therefore no longer a proletariat in the true sense of the word. It is a totally bourgeoisified and ossified working class without potentiality for a revolutionary consciousness. It must, however, be emphasized that the Western working class as a whole cannot be blamed for this failure, even though its leadership has too often been opportunistic and self-seeking. We should talk less of the failures and mistakes of European and American workers, many of whom today have retained a socialist consciousness, than of a historical movement which has inevitably passed them by because capitalism had not achieved its ulti-

mate form, a form by which neo-colonial peoples are completely proletarianized by the world capitalist system.

If capitalism is to fall, it will do so through the actions of this new proletariat, only recently awakened but already fighting in a dozen countries around the globe. The future of domestic capitalism in the West will thus depend in the end on what happens in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, events which will not be significantly affected by the working class of the West, except insofar as it contributes to the systematic underdevelopment of these continents through its participation in neo-colonial exploitation, whether consciously or unconsciously.

(Concluded)

¹Cf. G. Kolko, *Wealth and Power in America*. R. Titmuss, *Income Distribution and Social Change* (London, University Press, 1966).

²Principally through Baron's analysis of monopoly capitalism and the roots of backwardness in *Political Economy of Growth* (N. Y. Monthly Review Press, 1957) the major source of inspiration for Frank's *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*. The present paper simply draws certain conclusions from Baron and Frank which remain implicit in their work.

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NOTICE

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Business Manager
Frontier

Calcutta Diary

GYAN KAPUR

TIMES have changed since the days of the 1929 great depression. Then one saw the astonishing spectacle of wheat and cocoa being burned in the boilers of ships while millions hovered on the brink of starvation. Now, of course, we have PL480 assuring the USA of political piety and at the same time a market for the surplus wheat. Among those who were horrified then at the senseless destruction of food were some who today wield power in this country. But time is the great leveller and no doubt these gentlemen have attained wisdom which laughs at the folly of their younger days.

No one can really say what is the correct position but it does seem that prices on the food front had a tendency to fall owing to increased overall production in the last few months. That is if they had been allowed to fall. However, the Union Government in practice has been suffering from a phobia about the price of anything coming down, while at the same time expressing pious hopes about maintaining the price level.

It would be simplifying things too much to dismiss the transportation of wheat in open wagons as just another example of the inefficiency of Government departments. There seems to be a method in the madness all round. The theory of shortage of wagons does not really hold water. Only a few months back the railways had been crying about idle wagons and so many new departments have sprouted up on commercial lines carrying out investigations and trying to sell freight to trade and industry. Apart from that, in case of bottlenecks, the normal practice in the railways is to stop booking to or from certain stations for all or certain classes of goods. It is significant that even while wheat was being sent in open wagons exposed to rain and also lay rotting on uncovered platforms, no such restrictions were imposed. Had it been done even on a limited scale

all over the country even for a week, there would have been no problem of covered wagons. No one, however, bothered to take any such step.

It is difficult to prove any such thing but if we look at the results, we can have suspicions about the motivation behind the causes. The results have been plain for all to see. Wastage leading to a little less food and necessarily a little more support to the sagging price level. And what an open invitation to wagon-breakers to lift easily bags of wheat without the trouble of going through the complicated ritual of breaking open the wagons and facing the police when they might happen to be about, may be by inadvertence.

On top of this has come the statement of Prof N. G. Ranga which makes matters clear. Round about the time when the UF Government in West Bengal was booted out unceremoniously the price of maize flour was Rs. 2 or so a kilo and many people had to exist on it, rice being beyond their means. I had wondered what happened to the bumper maize crop and why it could not be brought to this unhappy State, the price in the producing State being less than a quarter what it was here. Now Prof Ranga's statement has provided the answer. Maize worth crores of rupees, it appears, lies rotting in wagons on wayside stations and even unloaded on different stations in Haryana all because the Union Government considered the shipments illegal and thus seized them. That the exporting State had allowed it and the railways themselves had accepted the consignments knowing full well what they contained apparently counted for nothing with the Czars of New Delhi who also did not feel it their duty to resolve the legal tangle and release the food for hungry people.

Possibly Prof Ranga may be killing two birds with one statement. On the one hand he is championing the cause of the Haryana dealers and on

the other he is angling for a foothold in West Bengal for the Swatantra Party. Be that as it may, there is no reason to suppose that his statement is not true by and large.

To come to my point, when food on a large scale is being allowed to rot and waste and withheld from the people who need it, there seems to be a method behind the madness. It cannot be simply dismissed as just inefficiency. It cannot be a mere coincidence that all this wastage and rotting has been mainly on food sent to West Bengal. Even if we grant that there has been no deliberate attempt to punish this State, the only other conclusion is that the powers that be in New Delhi were just callous and cared little one way or the other about what happened to the people. This is the price one has to pay for failure to pay homage to the Congress juggernaut so long as it holds sway at the Centre like the zamindars of old.

* * *
Of a piece with the wheat-cum-maize scandal is the Centre's reported reply to the West Bengal Government's petition for milk powder for Haringhata—increase the price or go without additional quantities. By implication we should be grateful that this condition has not been insisted upon for the existing supplies.

Obviously the present clique of officials who euphemistically go by the name of West Bengal Government are in no position to question the wisdom of the Centre. Rice, it seems, can be sold at subsidized rates in Madras and Kashmir but not milk in Calcutta. But then Governor Dharma Vira is no Annadurai to tell the Centre to mind its own business, nor is West Bengal another Kashmir. In spite of all the scare of Chinese agents, in spite even of occasional shouts of 'Mao Tse-tung Zindabad' no one has so far dared to utter on the streets of Calcutta the words 'Indian dogs' as in Kashmir not so long ago. Like the school bully, the Centre seems to understand only one language.

* * *
Whatever the recent Crime Prevention Week might or might not have done, it at least exhibited for those

interested that the tools of the trade could be quite simple. The armed robbery on the postal van resulting in a clean get-away of about Rs. 4 lakhs was carried out with pretty crude weapons, considering the haul. If truth be told, the whole episode only served to provide a little free sensation in the humdrum life of the average citizen plagued by numerous miseries.

The robbery in its own way highlighted the steadily worsening law and order situation in the State and in particular in and around Calcutta. Of course attempts have been made to build up a story that with the dismissal of the UF Government the position has improved.

Truth, however, will be out and various statements have been made by, among others, the Home Secretary, Mr S. B. Ray, to the effect that "non-political crimes" are on the increase such as use of daggers and grenades and murders.

Those whose memory is not too short will remember that in festival time during the unfortunate UF Government's reign, it was possible for even unaccompanied women and girls to go all over Calcutta even in the small hours of the morning and hardly any untoward incident was reported.

What intrigues me, however, is the use of the phrase 'political crimes' by the police bosses. Since when has political activity, even if against silly laws, become a crime? If it is a crime, then why are they still keeping under detention without trial 28 or so political prisoners? Why not put them up for trial for their 'crimes'?

* * *

The situation in Calcutta this week could be passed off as a visitation by nature—once in 50 years—but those who live in bustees know that it has been man-made over the years, thanks to the Corporation. It is time the Corporation went. But would that improve matters, with the country being run by people who, at best, should have been municipal commissioners?

* * *

It was a small town but it could boast of a daily newspaper. So, when the visiting millionaire lost his fa-

vourite dog, he phoned the newspaper office asking the editor to put in an advertisement for the lost dog—the finder to be rewarded Rs. 1,000.

The next day the millionaire waited long for the morning paper with his advertisement but there was no paper. He rang up angrily the office, to be only answered by the office boy. "Where is the Editor?" he demanded. "He went out yesterday and hasn't come back since," was the answer.

The millionaire fretted and fumed

The Press

Verdict In France

COMMENTATOR

THE reaction of the newspapers to the electoral verdict in France is quite amusing. A few weeks ago, they rejoiced over the riscomfiture of President de Gaulle and had no hesitation in declaring that he had lost his hold over the French masses. He was practically labelled as a waster who had gambled with the future of his country. They contended that the picture of French prosperity was a sham and the Gaullist regime was crumbling because of internal decay. Although no word of encouragement was wasted on the students and workers, there was an under-current of appreciation in all editorial writings of the way they were cutting down their President to size. All this has changed now, and President de Gaulle has once again become the symbol of France's stability. There is no attempt to conceal the glee over the debacle of the leftists in the election, and they have become a convenient whipping-boy for all that France had to pass through recently. The French people are being praised profusely for putting the critics of the regime in their places and for their massive mandate to President de Gaulle to work out France's destiny. It would seem the anti-Gaullist writings of Indian papers at the height of the crisis were a temporary aberration; they were overwhelmed

but there was nothing he could do. Later in the day he was called to the phone. It was the Editor. He wanted to know the colour of the dog. "What do you mean?" angrily asked the millionaire; "Why didn't you ask me earlier and publish it in the advertisement? And why have I not received today's paper?"

"What?" came the reply from the surprised Editor. "How could there be a paper this morning? I have been busy looking for the dog since yesterday."

by the sweep of events. Now that the tide has receded they are making amends for the default. This renewal of allegiance is unconditional, in spite of all that the papers said in the past. Only a hope has been expressed that President de Gaulle will not in his hour of triumph forget the revolt of students and workers and will try to remove their genuine grievances which, in effect, means that he should adapt his policy to the liking of Britain and the USA.

Going further than other papers in pleading the Anglo-American case, *The Hindustan Times* says that the wage increments offered to the workers even before the elections amount to a tidy sum and will compel the Government to think of economies. One obvious direction is to cut down the nuclear strike force, to revise, in other words, President de Gaulle's ostentatiously self-sufficient foreign policy based on *force de frappe*. President de Gaulle's deal with the Generals for army support in the face of the near revolution would make it difficult for him to take a hard decision on sizable cuts in the military budget. But the more bitter pill is the necessity of having to admit that France cannot afford his policy. The paper is also worried over the promise of workers' participation in in-

dustry which President de Gaulle had held out as his panacea for labour discontent. A definition of participation that would satisfy the workers and not alienate the conservatives who rallied to his support in the elections would tax the ingeniousness of the Government. The sweeping majority in the National Assembly is not a mandate for continuance of the "authoritarian and paternalistic" rule, and the domestic issues will have to be tackled expeditiously and with circumspection.

The Hindu says that in giving a massive vote of confidence to the General, the people of France have rejected violent revolution and voted for orderly change. For the General had both asked for a mandate to change the structure of French society and told the people that the only choice before them was between orderly progress under his stewardship or chaos into which totalitarian Communism would surely plunge the country. The vast majority of Frenchmen obviously viewed the May disorders as a preview of what might happen if a Left coalition led by the Communists should move into the seat of power. The Left coalition has been badly mauled, all constituents together getting only about 90 seats as against the 193 they held in the previous Assembly. If the massive popular backing should tempt Gen. de Gaulle into becoming inflexible and dictatorial again, that would most likely spell a return of France to May. If the stirring events of that month proved anything, it is that the French people have no more use for the General's paternalistic prescriptions. They want drastic economic and social changes, a dramatic break from the past, and if they fail to get it, they could withdraw their support to the General as quickly as they have given it now and perhaps violently again.

Discussing the effects of the election on the French left *The Indian Express* says that it has received a shattering blow at the polls. The Communist Party in particular has suffered a reverse from which it is unlikely to recover for some years to come, if it can recover at all. The irony of it

will not be lost on the French Communist Party's leadership. The official leadership more or less collaborated with President de Gaulle and Prime Minister Pompidou in the worst days of the crisis. However, the fact that the leaders of the left showed themselves to be reluctant revolutionaries did not help them at the polls. The militants in the Communist Party may now get the upper hand in the councils of the party, but their capacity for militant action has been blunted if not totally crippled. The electorate has voted overwhelmingly not only for stability but for Gaullist stability. That it has done so as a reaction to the almost anarchic situation that had developed during the student revolt and the general strike is clear enough. However, it would be a mistake to consider the results merely as a reactionary and negative swing to the right. President de Gaulle would be making a grave mistake if he interpreted his spectacular victory as a vote only for the maintenance of law and order. Stability should not be equated with the maintenance of the status quo.

Anticlimax

The Times of India calls the result of the French election as an anticlimax. Only a month ago, it looked as if the Gaullist regime, discredited in the public eye, was on the verge of collapse. Now, after a crushing victory at the polls, the regime is in a far stronger position than any Republican Government in French history. The parties of the left have lost more than half their seats in the National Assembly. Most of their middle-class supporters, taking fright at the events of May, have fled from them. It is easy to see in retrospect why the Communists were so nervous over the turn of events in May. They feared that the paralysis of life would alienate the middle-class voter and that in an extremity might even facilitate a military take-over. Where they made a mistake was in wanting to hunt with the hound and run with the hare. They gave a call for a general strike and were in a desperate hurry to settle it. They were frightened of

chaos and tried to make use of such chaos as there was to secure power for the parties of the left. What they hoped for was a revolution on the cheap. They have only themselves to blame if they have had to pay dearly for their opportunism. For the rest, the anti-climax to the events of May is a warning to young hotheads in the richer half of the world that an affluent society, however deep its neurosis, will have stability rather than change.

Pointing out that no other Government in the history of Republican France has ever had such overwhelming sway as the Gaullists now have *The Statesman* says that the Communists and Socialists, the principal adversaries of the Gaullists, have taken a thorough beating. Even more telling has been the decline in the Communist vote from a consistent 25 per cent since World War II to just under 20 per cent; and the most shattering blow to the leftists has been the defeat in Grenoble of M. Mendes-France, perhaps the most attractive and imaginative politician in France today. The Gaullists made no secret of their determination to "punish" him for having lent his powerful support to the insurrectionary students and workers, and their success is a measure of the French people's intense commitment to order against anarchy. While the Gaullists undoubtedly overplayed the threat to the Republic and many in France were clearly frightened, the groundswell of feeling in favour of stability under General de Gaulle cannot be explained away in terms of panic alone. It is noteworthy that the Gaullists have won not only in the traditionally conservative countryside but also in the citadel of revolution, the city of Paris.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS

If anyone thought that the Railway Ministry was sleeping over the series of train accidents in the country, which have become almost a daily occurrence, he would be unfair to those in charge of the railways. From Washington Krishan Bhatia reports in *The Hindustan Times* that a large group of senior railway officials was studying

the working of U.S. railways towards the beginning of this year; a smaller team of railway general managers is currently going over the same ground. It seems whatever improvements these frequent visitors to the U.S.A. are bringing about in the Indian Railways are being frustrated by wayward drivers and negligent railwaymen. Bhatia, however, is unable to understand the utility of such jaunts and wonders if the particular sub-committee of the Union Cabinet which sanctions official travel abroad earnestly inquires in each case if the journey is really necessary. He says railway officials come to the U.S. in a steady stream to study a system functioning in circumstances which have scant similarity with the conditions prevailing in India. The traffic pattern in the two countries is totally different; so are the problems facing the two railways. Also, computers and other modern gadgets that the railways in the U.S. employ extensively will not be available to Indian railways for another ten years, perhaps more. The Railways are not, however, alone in sending officials to the U.S.A. on one pretext or another. Bhatia writes that notwithstanding the eagle-eyed Reserve Bank, a team of Indian bureaucrats arrives in the U.S. almost every month, at times even oftener, on assignments ranging from formal signing of loan agreements to some vague study of market conditions in respect of a particular commodity. A Finance Ministry team was in the U.S. recently to attend the World Bank Consortium meeting and an inter-ministerial group of officials was travelling across the country to determine how Indian import of fertilizers from the country could be improved. Bhatia says that the pattern of domestic demand in fertilisers is something that an attache of the U.S. Embassy in Delhi would gladly explain to the Supply Ministry on telephone. Yet, senior officials from Ministries of Supply, Finance, and Agriculture had to make a prolonged pilgrimage to the U.S. to know the pattern of domestic consumption of fertilizers.

Book Review

THE BALANCE OF POWER

By Max Beloff
George Allen And Unwin Ltd,
London. Pages 73.

IN these three Beatty Memorial lectures given in Canada in 1967 Prof. Beloff, whose works on Russian foreign policy have been acclaimed in many quarters, analyses the changing alignments between groups of rival countries in Europe and in Asia. The emphasis is on the southern rim of Asia; Prof Beloff believes that there exists a power vacuum in the area and the difficulties of establishing a balance there are most acute. Though balance of power as a subject has long ceased to arouse much interest among large sections of enlightened people, Prof Beloff is not one of them. He considers it to be "a permanent, a necessary, and, to a large extent, a healthy aspect of all international politics... dangers arise where it is absent... and that the role of trying to preserve it within a particular system... is by no means a dishonourable one." On this assumption is based his evaluation of the contemporary international situation. As he concentrates on analysing events rather than theory he stands the risk of being overtaken by events, the more so about Asia.

Before the Second World War the balance of power in Asia was determined by the contrasting roles of the principal maritime Powers on the one hand and Russia on the other. Japan made an attempt to consolidate her Chinese conquests by applying skillfully her naval and military strength against Powers who were then involved in the European war and by exploiting the nationalist opposition to foreign rule. But Japan in the long run could not avert the collapse of her empire; the combination of the Western Powers was enough to overwhelm her and the nationalist leaders in China would not just accept Japanese domination as a substitute for Western rule. The process of decolonisation was, however, hastened by the way Japan humiliated the Western Powers on different occasions.

The composition of power relations took a new turn in the post-war period with the beginning of the U.S. policy of containment of Communism—a ring of bases throughout the world. In Asia, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines etc exposed themselves to American pressure. Many then expected the U.S. militancy to be matched by a Peking-Moscow mobilisation of power. But Russia's insistence on playing the role of "Big Brother" in the world Communist movement and that the Communist parties should practice self-abnegation to enhance her interests was soon challenged by China. This set off a chain reaction. The USSR moved closer to the USA and a new chapter in the history of international relations opened.

Prof Beloff wistfully talks of the "possibility of a new period of Japanese influence on the mainland" in the wake of the "present upheaval in China"; in another context he says that if there is no large-scale breakdown of the Peking regime and a major economic setback, China's impact as one potential great Power would be felt among her neighbours. The Professor seems to have a wrong notion about the Chinese cultural revolution.

Beloff is also wrong when he says that except in Laos and Vietnam the American policy in Asia "might seem to have succeeded." In his words this policy constitutes containment of Communism, overthrow of the People's Republic of China and her isolation from commercial and technical contracts with the West. The record, however, is different. American escalation of the war in Asia has been met by Asian counter-escalation, China's trade with the West is more broadbased and diversified than it was a few years ago, and she looks more dynamic than before.

Prof Beloff's vision is, however, clearer on other subjects—for instance—on the prospects of survival of parliamentary democracy in India and the capability of the Government to solve the fundamental problems of the country and make a breakthrough into modernism. He does not consider India any longer a "competitive adver-

tisement for parliamentary democracy."

Since the First World War international organisations have been looked upon as a means of eliminating the precarious factor of balance of power. In the League of Nations a suitable balance of power was not possible as member States were reluctant to commit their forces, being uncertain about how changes in the status quo would affect their national interests. The USA, a major maritime Power, was not a member. Though the framers of the UN Charter claimed that they had drawn objective lessons from the failure of the predecessor organisation, the UN had not been provided with automatic machinery for dealing with the balance of power. The interests of the great Powers have been adequately guaranteed through the machinery of the Security Council and the veto. Prof Beloff observes that the UN will be effective where the interests of the USA and the USSR converge. The nuclear non-proliferation treaty is an example. The newly emerging States of Asia and Africa looked to the UN for aid under international auspices for economic development. By now they have been disillusioned.

K. SANTAM

NON-VIOLENCE AND

AGGRESSION—A study of Gandhi's moral equivalent of war

By H. J. N. Horsburgh.

Oxford University Press. Rs. 27.50.

GANDHI, poor soul, will soon be smothered under cartloads of platitudes and beauties. Preparations are already under way for celebrating his birth centenary on a grand scale. Seth Govind Das has promised to teach the world nothing less than the *cosmic* significance of Gandhism. Moscow is expected to offer co-existent tributes to the Gandhian gospel of capitalist trusteeship. The Rajmata of Gwalior's darling, Acharya Kripalani, and veterans like Dr P. C. Ghosh will not surely miss the occasion to prove how right and proper it is in true Gandhian form to bash the heads of their non-Gandhian opponents. All this in good

time. Meanwhile, we have Mr Horsburgh's study of Gandhi's moral equivalent of war. If war is immoral, could it have a moral "equivalent" in its dictionary sense of being "equal in value" or "having the same result"? One wonders. Yet Mr Horsburgh exactly means that; he discusses the methods of Gandhian satyagraha as a morally preferable and comparably efficient way of achieving the ends to be obtained by warfare. But the ends sought might be territorial conquest or economic gains. How could Gandhian methods of non-violence morally justify such ends or succeed in securing those ends?

Gandhi had a few simple ideas, borrowed mostly from Thoreau and Tolstoy; these he worked over as best as he could in the light of his own experience. Gandhi didn't develop any system; on occasion he conceded even the use of violence. Mr Horsburgh has attempted to build up an elaborate system of non-violent defence. It may be a proof of his earnestness but hardly of his Judgment. Also just because his thoughts are woolly and arguments involved in a lot of 'ifs' and 'buts', his dissertation is wrapped in an impenetrable fog of verbiage. A single example will show the uselessness of Mr Horsburgh's scholastic performance. In his chapter Non-violent Defence, Mr Horsburgh writes, "In a word, although a non-violent community would employ coercive methods to protect itself from its less corrigible offenders, its system of self-protection would be clearly distinguishable from a system of punishment, first because it would not aim at the infliction of avoidable suffering, secondly, because it would return offenders to the main body of the community as soon as it was satisfied that they were prepared to conform with the essential requirements of civilized life, and thirdly because it would adopt the same attitude towards its offenders as it would adopt towards its external opponents, that is to say, it would be as ready to learn as it was eager to teach, recognizing that even a criminal's obduracy may be partly based on the perception of a need which the community is failing to

supply." "In a word", "that is to say", Mr Horsburgh has beaten the record of mediaeval schoolmen's longwinded debates on the question as to how many angels could be made to stand on the point of a needle! After Mr Horsburgh's stunning performance, one should be able to stand anything, including Seth Govind Das's promised parade of Gandhian cosmology.

Saroj Acharya

Letters

The Split

Frontier is really fine. Commentator's stricture on *The Statesman* in the June 29 issue was delightful to read, so were the first two comments in the July 6 issue—'The Left Debacle' and 'Galling'.

It was however distressing to read next to these 'The Split' by a 'A correspondent'. There are some points in it, but in the first place the whole thing is written in a loquacious way. We are used to hearing from *Frontier* a simple austere undertone combining meaning and passion in equal proportion and to regard it and its writers as part of us, as friends of the people. We always thought that they took the cause of the working people with seriousness, understanding and sympathy and that they write to serve their cause with their talents and not to create theatrical effects.

A disservice is being done to the revolutionary movement by those among the intellectuals who fight shy of internal struggle among the Communists. They are well meaning but futile people and their cries are futile. Nowhere in the world has the Communist movement come into being, nor could it have come into being, all at once, in a pure class form, ready made, like the Ganga from the matted hair of Siva. The history of Marxism is the history of inner party struggle, the history of struggle against opportunism. Not only Mensheviks but his comrades often accused Lenin of being extremely fond of controversy and

splits. At times this was undoubtedly the case. But it will be easily understood that the Bolshevik Party would not have attained its characteristic vigour and strength had it not rid itself of internal weaknesses and diffuseness, had it not expelled non-proletarian opportunist elements. The wide spread of the communist movement in India was accompanied by a certain watering down of the theoretical level which was already low. To ask for instant action and instant result in a period of theoretical chaos is like wishing mourners at a funeral "many happy returns of the day"—to use a picturesque description by Lenin.

The Indian communist movement is at present in a state of mental wavering. Whoever declares himself to be a Communist, to be a friend of the Communists must precisely define his attitude to questions which are by no means agitating the Chinese Communists alone.

Not only for the Communists but also for the masses of people, especially in India, it is essential to understand the neo-colonialist role of the Soviet Union which, jointly with America and the Indian reactionaries, is plotting encirclement of revolutionary China and in the process making India, politically, economically and militarily still more dependent on the Big Two. One of the most important reasons why this should be understood is precisely that it and the illusion it creates inevitably weaken and devitalize our struggle against opportunism. And as Lenin said—a struggle against Imperialism that is not closely linked up with the struggle against opportunism is an idle phrase or a fraud. Once we grasp the meaning of this statement, we shall be able to appreciate the fierce controversy that is raging on the question of a united front with the Soviet Union or on the question of Soviet aid to Vietnam. To understand the nature and role of the State is another essential point because, for the revolution to succeed, the question of allies is a very important one. Yet it is not these controversies but the domestic issue, the very Indian reality that Naxalbari is, which brought the division. Strangely, 'A corres-

pondent' is silent on it. All the animosities inside the ruling government and outside were forgotten in the face of Naxalbari. Congress and Swatantra, SSP and PSP, Jana Sangh and 'Communists', all joined hands "against the murderous and plundering peasant hordes". In the light of Naxalbari, comrades, loyal, unsuspecting and not so well versed in theory, found out the parties and policies. (Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes—as Marx very correctly put it.) They found that there was nothing much to distinguish the Left CPI leadership from the Right CPI. To be sure, among those who broke with the CPI(R) in 1964 there are people who substitute for Dange's straightforward opportunism the diplomatic tactics of beating about the bush when dealing with the most important and fundamental questions of working class movement. In the course of the Naxalbari struggle the so-called Communists, the Left CPI leadership in particular, left the heroically fighting peasants isolated from the broad masses and doomed the peasantry to defeat—this paving the ground for the Congress to triumph. The peasants saw in power a number of left governments which in their eyes were an embodiment of power, but not one of them put an end to peasant want, none of them gave land to the peasantry. In West Bengal the Leftists did not touch the big hoarders and profiteers, they combated the strike of the electricity workers with the result that the masses in general have again become receptive to Congress demagoguery. The progressive measures, they claim to have adopted cannot in the least ameliorate the condition of the masses. They are totally incapable of Marxist understanding that "the relations of production being what they are, the only effect such progressive measures can have is to proletarianize the masses still more."

But Naxalbari is already defeated and not succeeding—is another objection advanced by the opponents of the Naxalbari line. Strange is the logic of these gentlemen! First, they

leave no stone unturned to ensure the defeat of Naxalbari, to stop the Naxalbari flame from spreading and then they rejoice with malicious glee because Naxalbari did not spread and did not lead to victory. In and through Naxalbari the proletariat both in the city and in the town is learning the great importance of revolutionary theory. It is now learning by heart Lenin's dictum—parliamentary democracy is an out and out fraud. It is learning that self-less devotion to the revolution and revolutionary propaganda among the people are not wasted even if long decades divide the sowing from the harvest. In and through Naxalbari it is learning the role of various classes in the Indian revolution. Enriched by these lessons, the proletariat will fight its way to victory. In this complicated situation all those who are on the sidelines can at least try to understand sympathetically the weaknesses and difficulties that will inevitably arise in the course of the struggle and to persuade us not to take the tempting role of a preceptor.

A Reader
Dankuni, Hooghly.

"Aid From China"

The Kerala Chief Minister, Mr E.M. S. Namboodiripad, is reported to have stated in the State Assembly on March 26 that "it has come to the attention of this Government that a publishing house in Calicut belonging to Kunnikal Narayanan, an expelled member of the Marxist Communist Party, has been receiving financial aid from the Chinese Embassy and that it is for the Central Government to carry out further investigations into the matter". (*Deshabhimani* daily, Calicut, 27-3-1968. Translation ours).

The facts of the case are as follows: Towards the end of January, 1968, Rebel Publications of Calicut received from the Chinese Embassy a postal money order for Rs. 100. This was towards the cost of books supplied by parcel post to the Chinese Embassy against their order for copies of the de luxe edition in Malayalam of

Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung, each priced Rs. 5. In June, 1967, Marxist Publications of Calicut received from the Chinese Embassy two postal money orders of Rs. 500 each. This was the charge for translating into Malayalam the book mentioned above. As in the case of Rebel Publications, Marxist Publications also did not belong to Mr Kunnikkal Narayanan.

Apart from these two occasions, we have also received small amounts by VPP from the Chinese Embassy for books supplied by post. If doing things this way is contravention of the existing laws in the country, the Central or State Government could very well have proceeded against us according to law. Certain questions come up in our mind in this connection. "Chinta", a weekly printed and published at the Deshabhimani Press at Calicut and controlled by Mr Namboodiripad received a few months ago from the Chinese Embassy advertisements for Peking Radio. The adver-

tisement charges were received by "China" by postal money order. Is it justifiable to say that this is "financial aid" given by the Chinese Embassy to a non-expelled member of the Marxist Communist Party, by name Mr Chathunny, who happens to be its editor?

Large numbers of books from the Soviet Union, the USA and other foreign countries are published in Malayalam regularly. The embassies and consulates of these countries pay handsome amounts to various gentlemen for translating their books into Malayalam. They even take on their staff on very handsome salaries a number of Malayalam writers and translators. How can it be said that all this is "financial aid"?

Marxist Publicitions, Calicut
Rebel Publications, Calicut

Jadavpur

In addition to what a student has already said June 8), one who has a

close contact with the Jadavpur University for quite a long time may ask:

What liaison does the Student Welfare Officer maintain between the University and the local U.S. Consulate and the Information Services, and what are his real activities in and out of the campus?

How are the Special Officer, Information Officer, a Teacher of International Relations and another of Mechanical Engineering connected with the recent witch hunting of several students and members of non-teaching staff for their progressive and democratic views? How are the authorities of the University being influenced by them?

Why is a post-graduate student of Geology of dubious character being utilised as a constant trouble maker against the progressive elements who at present control the student unions of the Science and Engineering Faculties?

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Containment and Revolution

Western Policy towards Social Revolution

1917 to Vietnam

Edited by DAVID HOROWITZ

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This volume is the first in a new series called *Studies in Imperialism and the Cold War* edited by David Horowitz, who is the author of one of the earliest systematic statements of the New Left position (*Student*, 1962) and a formidable critique of recent American foreign policy (*From Yalta to Vietnam*, revised edition 1967).

Published in association with the Bertrand Russell Centre for Social Research, London.

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