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WAITING FOR KERALA ?

THE CPI has started crowing, like jackals in after the kill, over the vicarious triumph of the eight parties on July 14. Let it. Most people will be relieved that the hartal has not left a gory trail, as on March 17. With the decision of the eight-party combination to synchronise its bandh with that of the six-party combination, the risks of a blood-bathed bandh had lessened. The possibility was not, however, ruled out altogether, for it was not a single bandh but a two-in-one in which either of the rival groups might have tried to project itself at the cost of the other. The Government took full advantage of the situation. It decided not merely to alert the troops, but to call them out—a step never taken before for maintaining order during a bandh. The entire police force available with the Government was mobilised, including the para-military Central Reserve Police and Border Security Force. One of the common objectives of the two groups of sponsors of the bandh was to end police repression; by an unprecedented exhibition of its armed might the Government has shown how it proposes to respond to the demand. And now, Mrs Gandhi will appear on the scene and be gracious to the political parties, a benign goddess. The Bengalis adore both Kali and Durga.

When a common demand for an end to police repression meets with such a fate, it cannot be expected that the Government will pay heed to the demand for immediate dissolution of the State Assembly and the holding of a mid-term poll on which the left parties are divided. The CPM and its followers are fully behind this demand, maybe because they cannot hope to be in power in the present Assembly. But over this question the eight-party combination seems to have as many shades of opinion as the number of its constituents. There are parties in the EPC which still want to work for restoration of the 14-party UF, though some of them are reported to have explained, when admonished by Mr Ajoy Mukherjee at the Bangla Congress-EPC meeting for their lingering weakness for the CPM, that the slogan for restoration was being given to expose the anti-unity attitude of the CPM and need not be taken seriously. There are some other parties which would rather form a ministry with Congress(R) support than face the electorate. A third category claims to be in favour of a mid-term poll but will not

be unhappy if it can get into the government. Whether these widely divergent views add up really to the publicly declared common stand of the EPC or if the EPC's private inclinations are radically different from its public posture is being probed by the Governor and Mr Mukherjee. A decision to dissolve the Assembly would have been taken quite some time ago if the EPC was really behind its public stand. Neither the Governor nor Mr Mukherjee is prepared to go by what the EPC says; this is the reason why the Assembly was not dissolved when President's rule was imposed, and nothing has happened in the last four months which warrants a change of their impression.

Mr Mukherjee told the Governor at their meeting last Saturday that he had not discussed ministry-making with the EPC. It may be true; but if this meant that he did not propose to discuss the question with the EPC, there would have been no occasion for him to have further meetings with the Governor. That another meeting has already been fixed, perhaps to be followed by more, is significant, for, as Mr Mukherjee himself has boasted, if a new ministry is formed it is the Bangla Congress alone which will be able to make it; the Governor has to be in touch with Mr Mukherjee but not with Mr Jyoti Basu. Maybe, the talks between the Bangla Congress and the EPC were exploratory. They are trying to find out their areas of agreement. If, in the process, they can evolve a common programme, that may form the basis of a new government. Till then, by mutual consent, they will not discuss ministry-making, though that will remain at the back of all their endeavours. Mr Mukherjee has to gain time—for himself and the EPC—so that the exploration may continue. He has provided the Governor and the Centre with a pretext for not dissolving the Assembly for an indefinite period without committing that efforts are still being made for a mini-front ministry. It is in the interest of the Centre also to wait for some time. In another few weeks it may be known whether the policy of the Congress (R) and

the CPI has paid in Kerala. If the CPM is worsted there, the EPC may get over its diffidence in West Bengal and join hands with the Bangla Congress and the Congress (R) to form a ministry in the hope that Kerala will be repeated here. Mr. Mukherjee has not yet reached the end of his tenacity, nor some constituents of the EPC their capacity for intrigue.

Bureaucracy And The ARC

The bureaucratic, alias public sector must be feeling jolly good to know that 20 consumer goods have been selected for public sector production. The goods include cement, paper, electricals and other such lucrative items that may yield quick profits and brighten the dismal public sector performance. Production will possibly start after made-to-order feasibility reports and people, thereafter, will be possibly promised plenty of goods at cheaper prices.

Inclusion of fresh items in the public sector is always a matter of joy for the civil servants, for it means expansion of their promotion opportunities. Happily for them, the news of the inclusion of consumer goods almost coincides with the news of rejection of the ARC recommendations to keep the IAS functions within land revenue and magisterial responsibilities. The Home Ministry and the Secretaries' Committee turned down the Administrative Reforms Commission's recommendations on the plea that those were rather negative and would deprive the public sector or organised industries of the valuable expertise of the omniscient IAS. The Commission had however a notion, as lesser mortals had too, that the IAS was a general purpose service that had no competence to man the public sector which requires a good deal of specialised knowledge. Not that the ARC had the slightest hope that its recommendations on this issue would make any impact. In the game of the ge-

neralists vs specialists, of the IAS vs Confederation of Technical Officers, the result was foregone, for the umpires happened to belong to the IAS cadres or their mentors. The public sector management might have been critical, years in and years out, that it was much too IAS-heavy—the ruling clique could not care less.

Not that all the recommendations of the ARC were as fair or met the same sad fate. In fact, 86 per cent of its recommendations are reported to have been accepted by the Government. What these are is not yet fully known but some which have been made public in trickles nicely fit in with the bureaucratic frame. Take for example, the recommendations to reform the IPS. All big cities should have police commissioners, says the ARC. More research cells for the police. More specialised squads. Social defence squads. Public relations squads. The more the number of high posts, the merrier should be the IPS. The ARC, in its excitement over the IPS promotion opportunities, has even recommended the creation of a Police Board to advise the President when the Centre should intervene in the States in police matters, hitherto a State subject.

Few would sympathise with the members of the ARC who felt humiliated at the snuffing out of the ARC before it could complete its work. The ARC members felt particularly sorry that they could not deliver their wise judgment on defence, agriculture and public health administration. Taking four years and Rs 66 lakhs, it has produced 20 reports, which merrily tinkered with administrative problems. In fact, many in the government itself must have considered the ARC a sort of anachronism in a period when the air is thick with talk of revolution and not mere reform.

NOTICE

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Frontier
Business Manager

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Death In Andhra

A correspondent writes :

The Home Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Mr J. Vengal Rao, is a proud man today. He must have put on Bolivian airs when he called a press conference at short notice to announce the annihilation of Satyanarayana and Kailasam. The details were familiar : the police were combing the Bori hills in the Parvathipuram taluqa of Srikakulam district when they were fired upon by the Naxalites and country bombs wounded a sub-inspector. The police returned the fire, killing two.

It would be wearisome to go into the details of the numerous "armed encounters" in which the Andhra forces have wiped out scores of Naxalites while, if one is to believe official figures, only one policeman has been killed. Unofficial enquiries have exposed the practice of killing people after they are captured. The Andhra police, with the blessings of the Central Government, are most reluctant to get involved in protracted legal struggles enshrined in the Constitution. They believe in effective short-cuts, in the power of the gun. Since the Naxalites too do not swear by non-violence they are prepared to be shot without trial.

Mr Vengal Rao has promised to give Rs. 16,000 to the police party which killed Satyanarayana and Kailasam. The reward is too insignificant for the achievement.

For, Satyanarayana had become a legendary figure in the course of the movement in Srikakulam. He was the mastermind behind it. Starting as a school teacher, he identified himself completely with the arduous struggle of the Girijans against landlords, moneylenders and a system that stinks. It was his experience which led him to Maoism and once he was convinced of the necessity of armed struggle he never turned back. His dedication, courage and initiative will not be forgotten by his followers. Parties not believing in his tactics and strategy will of course pay tribute to him as an individual but at the same time be glad in their hearts that he has been removed for

ever from his people. The jubilation of the Brahmananda Reddys and the Vengal Raos is however temporary. If they look up old files, they will find a statement made as early as April 1968 by their Inspector General of Police that the "backbone of the movement has been broken and the Girijans are now demoralised". It was wishful thinking. In fact things at least in certain areas in the country are taking a turn which even the new Union Home Minister will find it difficult to check. In their desperation the ruling class turns to shows of force, as in Calcutta. There is of course a great difference between the grim road in Srikakulam, Midnapore and elsewhere and much that is happening in Calcutta, for which there is no rational explanation.

Tiger Cages

The good Americans have reportedly been scandalised by a recent disclosure that in a prison in South Vietnam the inmates are being kept in box-like tiger cages made of concrete. The fact that these prisoners are being forced to drink their own urine is also said to have come as a shocking revelation to the Senators in Washington. Now, as if to heighten their 'shock', four girl students of Saigon University who served prison terms in a women's jail have disclosed that nearly 2,000 prisoners there are being subjected to all kinds of conceivable and inconceivable torture, including mass rape. These reports, coming as they do from Saigon, need not shock, far less surprise, anybody other than the innocent Senators, for by now the world knows that there is no bestiality that the American creatures in Saigon are incapable of. They state that the prisoners in cages are "communist criminals" who by the very definition deserve such treatment. But the moral candour and holy indignation witnessed in Washington last week are not convincing.

American officials in Saigon are more honest. They have admitted that the existence of tiger cages was long known to them but these are not of American origin. Tiger cages

date back to the days of French colonialism. Disowning the parentage does not, however, alter the fact that it is the Americans who provide \$442,000 annually for the "Vietnamese correction system" (yet another anti-septic American jargon which means organised torture of prisoners) and it is an official of the Agency for International Development (sic) who supervises such corrective measures.

Whatever perfection the Saigon lackeys might have achieved in techniques of murder it is not apparently going to stave off their doom. While the countryside is in the firm grip of the PRG, the Alliance for National Democratic and Peace forces has been mobilising ever larger sections of urban people in support of the anti-imperialist struggle. After four years of relative quiescence students in Saigon have again stirred into action. For the fifth month running classes are being boycotted by the students engaged in demonstrations against American imperialism and its puppets. Last month they burnt American cars and beat up American soldiers. Continuing the battle early last week the students and other pacifist elements fought with the Saigon police protecting the American Embassy.

Meanwhile in New Delhi Sardar Swaran Singh gets ready for another non-aligned gimmick. While the puppet Government of South Vietnam continues to maintain diplomatic relations with India, Madam Nguyen Thi Binh, the Foreign Minister of the PRG, is to be received by Sardar Swaran Singh as his "personal guest". In a great show of indignation the South Vietnamese Consul General has threatened to absent himself from New Delhi during the stay of Madam Binh, knowing that the progressive government of Indira would never have the guts to tell him not to return again. Courtesy would perhaps inhibit Madam Binh from asking her host uncomfortable questions. But for the Indians it would be extremely pertinent to ask whether this small gesture to the Vietnamese people is going to be accompanied by a more concrete one—that of stopping the flow of war material to the killers in Saigon.

Front Against SS ?

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

MAJOR left parties have been meeting to decide on common action against the Shiv Sena terror. But at the final stage the PSP vetoed alliance with the CPM. The other parties are trying their best to persuade the PSP to join the partnership. Much will depend on how these parties devise their strategy in dealing with the CPM in West Bengal. For the moment the fate of the grand alliance is uncertain and there is more than one alternative: whether to collaborate with the CPM which is not yet a big force, or to toe with the PSP which commands 10,000 dock union workers, so that their services can be requisitioned in the event of a showdown against the Naik Ministry.

No party singlehandedly is in a position to challenge the Shiva Sena. The leaders of the left parties have been enjoying legislative debates going abroad and occupying themselves with party work in remote places in Maharashtra, while those in Bombay rested after lodging a ritual press protest during the height of the challenge. But they have their strongholds—SSP controls the vital union of BEST and taxi men, the PSP commands the dock workers, the CPI, the Girmi Kamgar Union and the CPM, the press workers. There is scope for a joint venture against the Shiva Sena.

The Shiva Sena is a by-product of the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti (SMS) ingredient of regional romanticism. The SMS, during the "Bombay is ours" (Bombay Hamchi Hai) movement generated provincial feelings between Gujaratis and Marwaris on the one hand and Maharashtra on the other. As a matter of fact the Gujarati and Marwari communities were under constant threat from Maharashtra. During the SMS movement, the spirit of

Shivaji was invoked. It led to the creation of a language-based chauvinism by identifying Nehru as a Mughul-Ie-Azam. The SMS exploited memories of Marathi nationalism and created a mass paranoia. After the establishment of Maharashtra with Bombay as its capital, the SMS movement receded. In literature and language, however, the Shivaji cult was placed high, provincial feelings were already whipped up. The problem of Maharashtra unemployed did not find a solution. Specialisation of trades and employment by other provincial people gave rise to a parochial ideology and thus the S.S. emerged in 1966. Bal Thakre exploited and ploughed the ground harnessed by the SMS. Being shrewd enough, he started his campaign with the bold announcement that he would drive out from Bombay the gangsters dominated by South Indians—South Indians, he thinks are the hard core of the left movement. He did not touch Gujaratis and Marwaris, thinking that they would perhaps join him as passive partners. This campaign appealed to the Maharashtra and the SS spread its influence gradually all over Maharashtra, the working class movement being weak. With the passage of time, it challenged the left movement, as a result of which left parties like the PSP entered into an election partnership with it. The CPI had to defend itself and the PWP craved for an alliance with the SS. In this manner the SS seized the initiative from the left movement.

What now enrages the left parties is not the murder of Krishna Desai or the onslaught on the minority community, but the loss of election prospects and the corrosive influence of the SS in the trade union world.

Prospects of the proposed joint crusade against the SS may be hailed as progressive, but opportunistic alliances with sectional interests as the basis can hardly make any headway against regional romanticism—a Maratha parochialism created by themselves. Particularly when the working class movement lies low.

What's Wrong With Durgapur ?

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE other day the Chairman of Hindustan Steel said with a touch of despondency in his voice that Durgapur Steel Plant workers would not co-operate to raise the productivity level, which had been dropping steadily over the last two to three months. He mentioned at the same time, to bring home the contrast, how production at the HSL's two other plants at Rourkela and Bhilai had been picking up. This no doubt was to emphasise how impossible and troublesome the workers at Durgapur were, compared to their comrades in the other two plants. This, of course, is not the first time that blame for the drop in production at Durgapur had been sought to be shifted squarely on to the shoulders of workers. But the question that needs to be asked is: if it is assumed, as it is natural under the circumstances to do, that workers of the three steel plants had more or less the same economic and social background, being drawn from the same stratum of society, how is it that their behaviour should be so divergent? If those in Rourkela and Bhilai are found to behave in a more responsible and responsive fashion than their counterparts in Durgapur, an inescapable assumption should be, perhaps, that conditions at Durgapur steel plant were somewhat different, even from those in the neighbouring Alloy Steel Plant. It can also be argued that the management has failed to get the workers, cooperation. This, it must be emphasised at the outset, is not an apologia for the Durgapur workers, mostly being, as they are bound to be, a part and parcel of the prevailing socio-political situation in West Bengal. It is an attempt to put certain things in perspective, so that the moods and attitudes at Durgapur can be better understood. Given this understanding, one unfortunate-

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ly comes across quite a few uncharitable comments in respect of the situation as a whole. For example, one, who ought to know conditions in Durgapur better than many others, summed up by likening the situation to India in 1946. That year found India in ferment and the alien rulers realised that they could continue to be on Indian soil at great cost, which they chose to avoid. Given that perception, the Durgapur management according to the knowledgeable person, should feel the same way as the British did in 1946. The parallel may seem a bit too far-fetched and exaggerated, but this brings out largely the relative attitudes of the management and the 20,000 workers. There is an utter lack of understanding. Mistrust is the dominant sentiment. And in these circumstances, it is doubtful if normal working can be restored by mere words.

But before trying to analyse why the position could so deteriorate, it is perhaps necessary to put the record straight in respect of the capacity of the plant itself, even though this involves some digging into the past. In the early construction phase, piling for one of the blast furnace foundations was found defective. It was corrected at a substantial cost. Secondly, when the plant was put into commission, it took more than the usual time to reach the rated capacity of production. For quite some time the management's argument during this phase had been that more technical knowledge was necessary to make the target, while actually the position had been that the management feared serious damage to the plant, should any such attempt be made prematurely. Of course, adequate training was necessary for the workers to be able to run a sophisticated steel plant. But that may not have been the only handicap. The government, it seems in retrospect, took a peculiar attitude. It concluded apparently that the fault for non-fulfilment of target production lay with the topmost management. Had it confined itself then to just replacing the

general manager in order to infuse new blood, many subsequent complications might have been avoided. But in its eagerness to reach the rated capacity, the government committed one of its biggest mistakes in respect of Durgapur. It appointed the head of the Consortium which had supervised and certified the plant construction, ignoring an important aspect that in spite of his being an internationally known State expert his natural tendency might be to prove that the work he had certified had been alright, irrespective of the resultant cost. To cut short a sordid story, the plant reached the rated capacity of production, but in the process its three coke oven batteries were damaged beyond repair. The Government sat over this development for a couple of years and ultimately made this expert's successor the scapegoat. Meanwhile, an inquiry committee blamed the failure of the coke ovens on bad charging of coal and maintenance. It has been decided since to rebuild all the three batteries by pulling down one after the other. This means that till the rebuilding is complete, coke oven gas, not coke so much which can be procured from outside also, will be in short supply, affecting the plant's overall production. Many say that for the time being, even though the plant capacity has since been expanded from 1 million to 1.6 million tonnes, it can produce not more than 700,000 tonnes. It will be worthwhile knowing what the HSL or the DPL authorities have to say in his respect, especially in regard to the allegation that the gas pressure is so low that certain heating processes take more than twice the normal time, without trying to hide anything. There have been other snags as well, for instance, in the rolling mill and the wheel and axle plant where, it is said, production has been hampered for quite a few years for technical and other reasons. At various phases of this chain of developments, attempts had been made to transfer the blame for falling production on to workers. But can workers alone be accused of bad

charging and maintenance of coke ovens? What have the higher supervisory and managerial personnel been doing to prevent the damage?

The HSL, therefore, plainly does not have a case if it wants workers to produce up to the 1.6 million level. That is physically not possible. But surely the management can legitimately argue that it has not been possible to work as much as is permissible over the last few months. This invariably leads one to examine the record of the plant's personnel management. Here, again, the record is not one of which any management can be proud. For years, in keeping with an unwritten fiat from the Central Government, recognition had been given to the INTUC union, irrespective of its actual following among workers and the leadership of which, in its attitude and postures, betrayed feudal features. In course of time, as part of an inexorable process arising out of such a policy, this union, in some respects, was allowed to arrogate to itself even some of the management prerogatives. Its high-handedness and strong-arm tactics became intolerable to large sections not only of workers on the shop floor, but also of a good section of officers. It is not true to say that discipline in DSP has been a recent casualty. It has been dangerously eroded even before the United Front came to power in West Bengal in 1967. For two or three successive years, even though Works Committee elections were held, these were kept defunct simply because the INTUC had been routed at the poll. There was no properly-formulated grievance procedure laid down. No promotion rules. No shop-level production or discipline committees. When these were introduced in the Alloy Steel Plant without much fuss, its management was ridiculed in HSL and DSP circles as 'softies', if not wholly pink or red. As many as 26 bilateral agreements remain still to be implemented in word and spirit. Recently the manning list for the 1.6 million stage was finalised. But contrary to the sensible and judicious practice of filling up the new posts

Communist Movement In Nepal

K. DIXIT

through partly promotions and partly fresh recruitment at the semi-skilled and unskilled levels, the management is said to have relied mainly on the principle of fresh recruitment. It does not now lie with the management to come forward and say in despair that workers are non-cooperative, even in the matter of implementing the latest decision in regard to shop-level committees for discipline, production and grievance processing. The fact is that there is absolutely no mutual trust. And unless there are genuine gestures from the management side, perhaps it is not likely to be restored ever in Durgapur. Under such circumstances, a closure or lock-out in the name of indiscipline may only be a short-sighted remedy. It will be interpreted in many circles as another example of inglorious failure of a callous management.

It is no use either talking too much of projection of politics in the affairs of Durgapur trade unions, as if it is something unique, even for West Bengal. Of course, trade unionism in DSP is in a pretty bad shape. Official recognition is now enjoyed not by the INTUC union but by a former AITUC and presently CITU union, led mainly by the CP(M) elements. Then there are other elements involved, like CPI, FB, RSP and SUC. And in their endeavour to pose as more militant than the others, excesses are likely to occur and are taking place, especially if the old general atmosphere of indiscipline is kept in view. But it is doubtful if ever the management helped or encouraged the recognised union to acquire real strength and control over its members and others, except in a perverted way in the past. What the workers at Durgapur today need most is to be convinced about the management's sincerity of purpose. This cannot perhaps be achieved by the use of the stick alone or if the present set of management attitudes persists. This underlines the need for fresh thinking on the Durgapur situation without standing on issues of false prestige, since national interests are involved.

THE Nepal Communist Party (NCP) was founded in Calcutta on September 15, 1949 by a group of five young revolutionaries whose names are recorded as Niranjana Govind Vaidya, Narain Vilash, Nara Bahadur, Durga Devi and Puspapal. Puspapal alone of the founding group has survived through the ups and downs and is at the helm of the communist movement of Nepal today. In the course of these 20 years, the NCP itself has turned a full circle. It is back to its 1949 programme of New Democracy, a people's republic in place of monarchy, land-to-the tiller, liquidation of feudal classes, and all this to be achieved through armed struggle. How has this come about?

Though in its 20 years of working it had to function underground for about 14 years, it has had the experience of leading many peasant armed struggles and also of participating in the parliamentary system of the pre-Panchayat days. The richness of its experience and the tenacity of its working have enabled it not only to survive under extremely hard and odd conditions, but also to grow to a position from where it is threatening to launch an armed revolutionary struggle in the Kingdom.

When the Nepal Communist Party was formed in 1949 it aimed at a revolutionary overthrow of the existing medieval feudal order in which the peasants and landless labourers were exploited as serfs and bonded workmen. Naturally it focused its attention on the organisation of the peasantry and the agricultural proletariat. In its programme of action it was mostly influenced by the success of the Chinese Revolution and the Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung. The reason for this lay in the fact that Chinese society prior to the Revolution had many common features with Nepalese society. Thus Nepal's peasant-based economy, the serf system,

the problem of the agricultural proletariat and dire poverty led the Nepal Communist Party from its very inception to follow closely the Chinese pattern for its own socialist revolution. As a matter of fact its extremely radical attitude prevented it from working in alliance with other forces like the Nepali Congress in the anti-Rana uprising of 1950. Indeed, the Nepal Communist Party has been specifically charged for its failure to participate in this uprising. It may be recalled how King Tribhuvan of Nepal, a virtual prisoner in the hands of the ruling Rana oligarchy, escaped to Delhi in November 1950, how armed detachments of the Nepali Congress at the same time crossed the Indian frontier and captured Birganj; how the Indian Government intervened and the famous Delhi Agreement restored partly the powers of the monarch and introduced a working agreement between the Nepali Congress and the Ranas. The Nepal Communist Party took exception to the Delhi Agreement and alleged that by accepting it the Nepali Congress had betrayed the revolution. According to the Nepal Communist Party, this Agreement in fact changed the whole course of the revolution. Latter events proved that such a working arrangement was impracticable and it failed. Because of Indian interference the Nepal Communist Party regarded the Nepali Congress as a 'stooge' of the Indian Government. But even while the Nepal Communist Party could foresee correctly the fate of the Delhi Agreement, it is unable to justify its failure to participate in the 1950 uprising. It is clear that in this respect the Nepal Communist Party being hardly one year old, could neither organise its own armed detachments which could fight independently at the time of the uprising nor found it politically advantageous to fight under Nepali Congress command.

First Few Years

The first few years of the Nepal Communist Party were devoted towards the development of the movement among the peasants. During this period 75% of the party members came from the peasantry. The party also intensified its political work among the agricultural workers, especially in Thapa, Bara and Rautahat districts of eastern Tarai. Success in this work led it towards the formation and development of people's fronts. It developed to such a strategic position that it formed in 1951 a United Front with Tanka Prasad Acharya's Praja Parishad called Jatiya Jantantrik Sanyukta Morcha. The United Front manifesto criticised the expansionist policies of imperialist powers like America and Britain and declared its preference for the Soviet and Chinese systems. During this period the party led several agrarian revolts. Some of its members successfully broke jail and set themselves and their comrades free. The revolts and rebellion under the leadership of the Morcha soon assumed threatening proportions and the Government banned the Morcha. The Nepal Communist Party, after a brief period of open activity, was forced to go underground. It remained underground for four years—until April 1956—when the ban on the party was lifted.

Life in the underground period pressed for a more liberal policy and programme of action. Moderate groups in the party criticised the policy of "closed doorism" and maintained that the left sectarian policy of the party has so far failed to achieve any impressive results. The liberals charged the 'left sectarians' with failure to see that the bourgeoisie too has certain revolutionary potentialities which needed to be canalised. The liberal attack was mounted to such a high level that contrary to the decisions of the First (Secret) Congress of 1954 of the Party, the General Secretary of the Party in a press statement supported constitutional democracy and accepted the King as the constitutional head of the State. This position made the Government's

task easy in lifting the ban. It also necessitated the holding of another Congress for the approval of the new liberal policy. The Second Congress of the Nepal Communist Party was held in June 1957. In essence this Congress stamped the liberal trend, approved the strategy and tactics to be adopted in the general elections of 1959 to Parliament. The party decided to stay away from electoral alliances. It contested 47 seats but won only 4. The failure was attributed to the sectarians' lukewarm attitude to the elections and also to lack of funds.

Soon after the general elections of 1959 a party plenum was held at Janakpur for discussing the methods and policies to be followed in Parliament. It was decided to support all progressive measures taken by the Government as well as press for the solution of immediate problems. The party started organising the 'no rent without receipt' movement. It was opposed to foreign interests and warned the Nepali Congress Government in September 1959 that the treaty it was trying to sign would promote Indian interests in Nepal.

The liberal phase of the Nepal Communist Party however was short-lived and in a sense ended with the royal coup of December 15, 1960. The coup came as a surprise but the experience and training of the party cadres during the underground period of 1952-56 helped the Party to conceal quickly any signs of its existence. As a result the physical damage to the party was not much. However, from here on it entered a phase of intense inner-party rivalry and struggle.

Inter-party Conflict

The inner-party struggle came into the open at the secret Darghanga session in 1960. The central issue was the attitude towards the King who had engineered the coup. The pro-King faction, later on dubbed as "Royal Communists," was led by K. J. Raimanjhi who had been away in Moscow at time of the coup. This faction maintained that the Nepal Communist Party should limit

itself to demanding the restoration of fundamental rights, release of political prisoners and new elections to Parliament. The Puthan group demanded the election of a new constituent assembly for drawing up a new Constitution. The anti-King faction led by Puspupal maintained that the party should demand nothing less than the status quo ante, namely restoration of the Constitution and a popularly elected government.

The inner-party struggle culminated in a division in 1962 under the shadow of the division in the world communist movement. The party's Third Congress was held in April of the same year at Varanasi. Disciplinary action was taken against some top party leaders "for provoking activities against other leading party members". K. J. Raimanjhi, the General Secretary, was expelled mainly for his renegade activities. Other leaders expelled along with him were D. P. Adhikari, Sambhu Ram Srestha and P. B. Malla. The Congress resolved that the party should strive for complete transfer of power to the people and the establishment of a supreme sovereign parliament. Tulsi Lal Amatya was elected general secretary of the party.

Today the pro-Soviet group of 'Royal Communists' is thoroughly discredited and defunct. Nevertheless it is officially recognised by the Soviet party as the legitimate Nepal Communist Party. This group attends all important functions in Moscow with the approval of the Royal Government.

Expulsion of the Raimanjhi group did not end the inner-party struggle. The decisions of the Third Congress were not all unanimous. Indeed the programme adopted by the Congress was that of the majority led by the General Secretary, T. L. Amatya. The minority led by Puspupal accepted the majority decision in the interest of party unity. The majority supported the concept of National Democracy and came to believe in a National Democratic Programme. The programme admitted limited monarchy, accepted petty feudals as

allies, believed in land ceilings and above all in peaceful transition. The majority under Puspatal believed, on the other hand, in the concept of New Democracy, overthrow of monarchy and establishment of a people's republic; no truck with any feudal sections; land to the tiller and finally collectivization and above all armed struggle.

Uneasy Peace

The uneasy peace between the two groups could not last long. Soon, in the first three meetings, it became clear that in the Central Committee the General Secretary has been reduced to a minority position and Puspatal had come to enjoy the confidence of the majority of the CC members. In the new circumstances, Amatya, it is alleged, started violating the principle of democratic centralism, refused to call Central Committee meetings and indeed started establishing liaison with the renegade Raimanjhi group supported by the Soviet leadership. A requisitioned meeting of the Central Committee decided to hold the Third Party Conference in May 1968. In the intervening period, in accordance with the decision of the requisitioned Central Committee meeting, a 'convention' was held in which a large number of districts were represented. The convention decided to dissolve the old defunct Central Committee and to set up a "Central Organising Committee" with Puspatal as its secretary. The organising committee was asked to prepare the documents for the Third Party Conference and function as the central authority of the party prior to the conference.

In line with this trend of development, when the Third Conference was held in 1968, it approved the old minority programme of New Democracy and decided to present it before the Fourth Congress. It replaced the Central Organising Committee by a Central Committee and confirmed Puspatal as general secretary. It also established five zonal organising bureaus which were to work on the authority of the Central Committee. The congress issued an

appeal to all Nepalese communists to come under the banner of the new Central Committee, to discuss the programme internally and finally to prepare and abide by the decisions of the Fourth Congress.

The party leadership feels that, since the Third Conference, the militant tradition of the party and its revolutionary image in the eyes of the Nepalese people have been restored. The group led by H. L. Amatya has been thoroughly isolated and is virtually defunct. The leadership is now able, thanks to reorganisation, to give organised shape and direction to the spontaneous students' and peasants' movements, and to mobilize the intelligentsia on the New Democratic Programme.

The party is now giving attention to every national and international issue. The leadership has come to believe that the phase of armed struggle may not be far off. In this struggle the attitude of the Nepal Communist Party to other parties, particularly the Nepali Congress, depends upon the latter's attitude towards the basic task today, the overthrow of feudalism and the Panchayat system headed by the King. If the Nepali Congress agrees on the basic task, the Nepal Communist Party can take it as an ally in the struggle.

The party supports the Chinese position in the international communist movement. The fear that, in view of the Royal Government's very good relations with the Chinese Government, the communist movement in Nepal may be affected adversely is brushed aside by the leadership. The leadership feels that if it is able to provide correct leadership to the people, keeping just national sentiments in view, it will not at all be affected adversely. Since quite a few important leaders are exiles in India and many Nepal Communist Party conferences have been held in India, it is likely that the Royal Government may utilise this fact and try to picture the Nepal Communist Party as being engaged in anti-national activities.

In a personal interview the General Secretary, Puspatal, said that holding a conference on foreign soil does not mean anti-national activity. The programme of the party is in the interest of the Nepalese people. Moreover, most of the party's work is now taking place within the boundaries of Nepal. No doubt India has been a ready place for political asylum. But the experiences of the last decade in India have not been altogether happy. Even the progressive sections in India are victims of national chauvinism. This outlook, Puspatal says, must change in the interest of the democratic movement in both India and Nepal. The friendship of the two countries, no matter at what level, must not be based on the traditional Hindu chauvinist ideology but on complete equality of big and small nations in every respect.

The Nepal Communist Party leadership foresees important political changes in Nepal in the near future, although it is non-committal as regards the details. The leadership maintains that there is growing dissatisfaction in all sections of the people against the autocratic regime of the King. The Panchayat system, which the King has been advertising as the best achievement of his rule, is in fact the centre of dissatisfaction. The ruling classes symbolised by the King may introduce minor changes for accommodating the opposition and thereby misleading the people. It is at this point that the Nepal Communist Party's intervention in the political process is called for. The leadership is preparing for this.

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Cambodia : Lessons For Africa

A. K. ESSACK

NIXON'S invasion of Cambodia produced the unexpected result of acting as a catalyst in helping to close the ranks of the revolutionary forces in the world. Actually the process began even before Nixon openly showed his hand, when the governments of the People's Republic of China, North Vietnam, North Korea, Syria, Cuba, Congo Brazaville, Mauritania, UAR, Sudan, Algeria and Albania recognised the Provisional Government of Sihanouk instead of the puppet regime of Lon Nol-Sirik Matak.

Of great significance to Africa was the fighting unity forged by the representatives of Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos when they met at the Chinese-Laotian-Vietnamese border on April 24. The representatives analysed their respective problems from the larger framework of Indo-China. They saw that the basic problem stemmed from a common source—bellicose and aggressive imperialism which had already trampled underfoot the Vietnamese and Laotian aspirations for independence, sovereignty and independence and which was encircling Cambodia.

In sharp contrast to some of the summits held in Africa where angry resolutions have been passed against this or that white minority regime followed by little or no action, this summit stated that while "liberation and defence of each country are the business of its people, the various parties pledge to do all they can to give one another reciprocal support according to the desire of the party concerned on the basis of mutual respect". This is not just empty rhetoric, for three months after the fall of Sihanouk the Indo-Chinese people, control over two-thirds of Cambodia. They have seized some provincial capitals and cut off the main highways. The capital is under constant threat. It was Nixon's plan to allow the puppets to consolidate and then be "in-

vited" by the clique to Cambodia. To further consolidate the position an Asian Conference was to be called by Suharto in Jakarta. But the speed of the liberation forces was such as to prevent them from overrunning the whole country, Nixon had to come out in the open. This is what he said: "I had no other choice than to authorise the intervention after the Communist offensive between 20th and 30th April directed against the principal urban centres. This posed an unacceptable threat to our remaining forces in South Vietnam." (*Times of India*: June 5, 1970.

The lesson then for Africa is that the Indo-Chinese people did not allow the Lon Nol clique which was a mere instrument of the CIA to dig in. The Vietnamese and the Laotian people did not regard the coup and later the U.S. aggression as something that concerned the Cambodian people alone. Years of bitter experience had taught them that freedom was indivisible and that the fate of the Cambodian people had become inextricably linked with that of theirs. Their help to their Cambodian compatriots did not in any way interfere with the sovereignty of the people for that was already violated by the coup and later by the invasion.

It is this very sovereignty and independence which imperialism tramples underfoot not only in Indo-China, but also in Africa and Latin America. In Cambodia it was naked aggression for all to see. But in other countries this takes different forms like military coups and economic squeeze. While it itself uses violence and naked aggression to achieve its purpose it sees to it that African governments and the African people do not use violence to oppose counter-revolution and reaction. To them Nixon's advice is: "use non-violent and peaceful means". Thus in his February 14 message to Congress he

said: "Though we abhor the racial policies of the white regimes, we cannot agree that progressive changes in southern Africa are furthered by force. The history of the area shows all too starkly that violence and the counter-violence it inevitably provokes will only make more difficult the task... The U.S. warmly welcomes the recent Lusaka Manifesto, a declaration by African leaders calling for a peaceful settlement of the tensions in southern Africa. The statesmanlike document combines a commitment to human dignity with the perceptive understanding of the depth and complexity of the racial problem—a combination which we hope will guide the policies of Africa and her friends as they seek practical policies to deal with anguishing questions."

This might appear to be double-talk by Nixon, after his aggression in Indo-China. This is not so. He is consistent for what he says is that it is wrong on the part of the oppressed workers and peasants to use violence against the oppressors and exploiters and that is why he commends the Lusaka Manifesto. On the other hand he arrogates the right of imperialism to use force against the coloured peoples and the oppressed workers and peasants to "advance democracy and freedom." In this respect Nixon is following the tradition laid down by other rulers who while using force ruthlessly to suppress the colonial peoples extolled national movements which were based on non-violent methods of struggle.

Cowardice, Inaction

The Organisation of African Unity was not able to protect its own founder-member Kwame Nkrumah from unknown military officers who, acting on behalf of the imperialists, staged a coup when he was outside Ghana. Instead of rallying round him, forging a fighting unity and giving him material and moral support, with the exception of one or two, all kept quiet. The African States took cover for their cowardice under an article of the Lagos Confer-

ence that no African State should interfere in the internal affairs of another State. But imperialism had already interfered, for the Accra clique would not have lasted a week were it not for the support of the colonial masters. Non-interference meant in fact giving aid to the puppets. Once imperialism succeeded in Ghana, it used similar methods of creating a chain of circumstances that finally led to the overthrow of the Modibo Keita Government in Mali. Had the military junta been prevented from consolidating their position, had they been shown to be nothing but tin soldiers, as are the puppet troops of the Lon Nol regime, it is doubtful whether imperialism would have tried to overthrow Keita's Government in Mali.

There are many who, having illusions that American imperialism would withdraw from Vietnam, were surprised at Nixon's aggression in Cambodia. But the Nixon doctrine does not envisage the end of the war in Vietnam, but rather its extension. Today it is Indo-China, but it is a question of time when it will engulf the whole of South-East Asia. Asians will be fighting Asians. If puppet troops of Saigon and Thailand are being used in Cambodia, in the case of South-East Asia, imperialism will involve the puppet regime of Suharto and even Japan. This then is the full meaning of the policy of "Vietnamisation of the war". It means the placing in the frontline America-trained and brainwashed Asian soldiers to suppress the Indo-Chinese revolution as well as other revolutions in Asia and Africa.

The Cambodian adventure exposed another set of agents, engaged in a political and diplomatic offensive on behalf of Nixon. Thus while Saigon and Thai troops were being used to suppress the Cambodians, the Indonesian puppet regime of Suharto and Japan were told to launch a diplomatic and political offensive to bring about a split in the revolutionary and progressive camp. They held a "conference of Asian States" with the outward purpose of bringing about a settlement in Cambodia but also

aimed at inducing the Indo-Chinese people to relax their vigilance. The conference was a fiasco, for the Indo-Chinese people branded it as a move to whitewash American aggression and contemptuously dismissed it. Countries like Pakistan, Ceylon, India, Burma, Afghanistan refused to attend. The conference called for a withdrawal of all foreign troops from Cambodia. Thailand, one of the signatories of this conference, implemented this by sending troops to Cambodia. And when this farce ended, Suharto flew off to the United States with a party of 40 people, much to the embarrassment of Nixon who wanted to preserve the "non-aligned" image of his stooge.

Much time is taken in Africa with conferences. There is the OAU and the Foreign Ministers' Conference. Then there are conferences of heads of state, as well as regional groupings like OCAM. In some of these resolutions have been passed condemning the oppressive regimes of Vorster, Smith and Gaetano. Very little is done to implement the resolutions. Even the pittance which is being given to liberation organisations has not been paid. Thus this year only Zambia and Tanzania paid their dues out of a total of 41 States. Very little is expected from these conferences because in the OAU are puppet States representing American, British and French imperialism. Vorster of South Africa as well as Smith and Gaetano have also a voice there in the form of Dr Banda of Malawi. These conferences are not only safety valves, they are also there to prevent real conferences where a fighting unity can be evolved. The unity of the Indo-Chinese people has shown that much can be achieved by a people however small in numbers, however small their territory. It has shown how it is possible to defeat the mightiest of powers combined with the puppet troops of Saigon, Thailand, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, provided the people know they are fighting for a just cause. The Indo-Chinese people have understood that the fate of one is linked with the fate of all

and hence their joint action has achieved results. Failure to understand this and to act upon it has led to the defeat of the anti-imperialist forces. It is with the understanding of this stark reality that Nkrumah warned the radical States: 'Either we concentrate our forces for decisive armed struggles to achieve our objectives or we will each fall to the blows of imperialism in its present stage of open and desperate offensive' (K. Nkrumah, *Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare*, Page 41).

Lloyd, one time British Minister of Defence, said that southern Africa belongs to the West and must be firmly held. There is little doubt that the three fascist Powers of Vorster, Smith and Gaetano are the bastions of imperialism in Africa. While condemning apartheid the imperialists in practice help them militarily and economically. Vorster's aggressive designs on independent African States is part of the overall aggressive designs of imperialism as a whole. Their aggression is backed by dollars on the one hand and NATO arms on the other.

Puppet Armies

However, what is not sufficiently highlighted is that, besides these bastions, imperialism has created puppet armies in African States. The most notable one in Central Africa is that of Congo Kinshasha. It has an army of 35,000 which has been trained and indoctrinated by the Americans. Its officers have been sent to Fort Leavenworth for training. In Mobutu imperialism sees excellent credentials. He caused Lumumba

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to be murdered. His army has suppressed Congolese peasants and workers and shot down students. Mobutu and his Government, while paying lip service to the freedom of Southern African peoples, imprisoned and liquidated many freedom fighters belonging to the MPLA. And it was this army that also tried to invade Congo Brazzaville. It was also U.S. imperialism's massive doses of capital that repeatedly rescued its economy from bankruptcy and now a further boost has been given by pushing it into the International Monetary Fund Group of Ten. The result is that its currency becomes acceptable anywhere in the world. American imperialism has created Congo Kinshasa as a model so as to induce and trap other States into accepting U.S. overlordship. However, events in Africa, the overthrow of the governments in Libya, Sudan and Somalia have been a heavy blow to the imperialists.

The "local war" in Vietnam, the "special" war in Laos, and the "sanctuaries" war in Cambodia will land Nixon and his henchmen deeper and deeper into the mire, from which there will be no escape. The debacle will be heavier and more crushing. Already the Indo-Chinese people have shown that the outwardly formidable U.S. machine of death and destruction can be smashed by a people who believe that theirs is a just and a noble cause. From this the people of Africa, rapidly awakening to find that their political independence has been a snare and that they still have to smash many chains, cannot but draw inspiration. In Africa too the revolutionaries will learn to close their ranks and forge that fighting unity which must drive out imperialism from the face this continent.

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JULY 18, 1970

Frankly Speaking

SANJOY

WHAT did General de Gaulle (79) and General Franco (77) talk about when they met for the first time recently outside Madrid? De Gaulle was on a holiday. It is not known whether he was accompanied by Andre Malraux whose experience of civil wars and the ability to portray them were remarkable. A sure guess would be that the two septuagenarians skipped over the Spanish Civil War which began in 1936 and brought down the Republic. But it is ironic that de Gaulle, whose contribution to the anti-fascist fight will be remembered, chose to meet in the late evening of his life one of the men most hated in the mid-thirties.

General Franco was a symbol of evil to the radical intellectuals of those days. When the socialists, anarchists and communists formed a popular front government in Spain in 1936 a new wind began to stir and leftist Europe was filled with hope. Soon came the revolt of the army and intervention by the German Nazis and the Italian fascists. Spain became a rallying point for the radicals of the day. While the Governments of England and France practised what they called non-intervention and the forces of Hitler and Mussolini helped Franco intellectuals from all over the world backed the Republican cause and some of the most brilliant writers and artists of the day joined the International Brigade, a voluntary, fighting brotherhood of men the like of which has not been seen since. Quite a number of them died. It is true that brilliant men also fought and died in the Second World War, but there is a difference between a conscripted and a volunteer army. In the first case there is no choice. The second involves an act of deliberate choice.

Who could imagine that the brave fight would come to naught and that three decades later one would still hear of Franco? But whatever the reasons for the vic-

tory of the Falangists, Spain 1936 would remain a symbol for generations to come. It is difficult to imagine or recapitulate the rapture of those days. It is hard to imagine the horrors begun in Spain which became a ground for the Nazis and Fascists to test their weapons and tactics and strategy. Towns were destroyed by air strikes. Of course, Guernica, made famous by Picasso, was destined to be obscured by the massive bombings of the Second World War and still later by American strikes against North Korea and Vietnam.

Since the Spanish Civil War, the intellectuals, whatever be the effective worth of their contribution, have seldom taken up arms as a deliberate, personal act, in a foreign land, though their participation in the resistance movement in their home countries is well known. Journalists, some of them combining brilliance with personal integrity, have been to dangerous zones and done their bit. But creative artists and writers have been lagging behind.

Are they unwanted because of their individualism and vacillation? One does not notice much hesitation in Fanon, though he is a little too philosophical. But Che Guevara, to go by his Diary, seemed to have been rather critical at times of Regis Debray, later sentenced to thirty years imprisonment by the Bolivian authorities. In a civil war, one cannot rule out the need for a strong organisation. Once decisions are taken, there must be iron discipline. Freedom to doubt, to vacillate can then be a big drawback. One of the reasons for the Republican defeat in Spain was the difference in approach of the constituent units. There were too many voices. The anarchists, socialists and communists were rather disjointed in their brave actions, and some members of the International Brigade too were divided. The Republicans perhaps failed to convert their cause into a war of the people.

Coming back to the intellectuals, it seems that it is at times easier for

them to fight it abroad rather than at home. Intervention in a civil war abroad lends a heroic stature to the participant and the agony of everyday decision-making is resolved, in the sound of firing. At home it is a long grind—meetings, writings, demonstrations to rouse the people for some cause which is often too temporary and mundane to sustain enthusiasm. Then there is the matter of involvement in a party where discipline is sometimes reduced to dogma and all dissent is suspect. Party politics can be intolerant and dirty, but since human beings are a compound of courage and pettiness, the dirt in politics is unavoidable. Intellectuals should not be too squeamish, however; they have their share of the worldly vices. Haven't we known of writers who show infinite compassion for the peasant while maintaining the parental zamindari with great care? About one such writer there is an anecdote: when told by the zamindari manager that some peasants are not paying rent, he raised his lofty brow and said he couldn't be bothered about such petty matters, but didn't father send *lathials* to tackle the recalcitrant? Or take a film director who shoots a documentary praising a mini-king by the way but still passes off as a progressive.

It must be noted, however, that existence at different levels is coming up against sterner criticism. People are not in a mood to tolerate compromisers just because they are gifted. It is an age of intolerance.

This is the point. The times are exacting and the pen somehow has ceased to be mightier than the sword. But should a writer who is otherwise not well equipped for mass contact, or an actor or an artist, try to be an agitator in a different medium and make a mess of the whole thing? A writer can be a good soldier, given the proper training, but he may stammer and make a fool of himself as a public speaker.

Do you want guns for committed

writers and artists? Well, as one Communist MP said with a sneer about the advocates of armed struggle, how would you get gun licences under the Arms Act? This problem is indeed insuperable, and the slogan of guns-for-intellectuals should not be scrawled on walls. Besides, why bother about writers and all that? Think of the men of this species in West Bengal. They have all settled down, at least mentally—some of them thanks to sponsored tours of America and Russia. Others have had other crumbs from the bourgeois table and look happy. And one curious fact: most of the so-called creative or once-creative creatures in Bengal still swear by the CPI. The dearth of such men in the CPM is painful. The one actor-writer who was a force and was drawn to Naxalism is now in near-oblivion. As for the Naxalites, it is said they have among them brilliant students but they are all too preoccupied with building up guerillas to bother about the whorehouse of urban culture.

A phenomenon is spreading in Bengal: quite a few of the committed young are going into the countryside to build up militant cadres. The countryside, so far, has almost been foreign land for the younger generation of intellectuals. The enchantment of almost alien terrain and living is there, but intervention or participation in a new kind of struggle is going to be of a different kind. It will be a protracted grind, painful, risky, at times frustrating. But perhaps those who survive the ordeal will one day, set new trends in literature and the arts. The point is for too long the so-called intellectuals have tried to interpret reality in various urbane ways; the task today is to change it. The prosperous spokesmen of middle-class culture—people who swear by the Free World or Moscow or something else—may sneer at 'infantile adventurism', but the day may not be far off when new guns will be heard in literature and the arts. The new people are activists first, then intellectuals. They know for whom the bell tolls.

Book Review

AMERICAN ATTITUDE AND POLICY TO THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT IN CHINA (1911-1921)

By Nemaï Sadhan Bose
Longmans. Rs 35.

INDIAN historians are generally insular; their outlook does not go beyond the horizon of their own country. The position being so, this work is a healthy deviation in so far as it throws light on the interaction of two important foreign countries in the formative period of the modern Far East.

Long ago Rabindranath in his *Japanjatri* remarked that America, despite all her pious wishes, was afraid of China's potentiality and was playing a disintegrating role in the Chinese nationalist movement. After fifty years Mr Bose substantiates and elaborates this view with thorough documentation. The role of the betrayer played by America in the Chinese nationalist movement from 1911 to 1921 is his basic theme. The book begins with a picture of optimism among the Chinese nationalists about adequate American help and sympathy for their cause and their firm belief in the democratic ideas of progressive American Presidents and ends with their frustration, disillusionment and indignation amidst a series of repeated injuries inflicted by the U.S. on the Chinese nationalist movement.

In 1911 the Government of Woodrow Wilson offered its wholehearted support to the notorious warlord, Yuan Shi-kai. It was the American Reorganisational Loan that buttressed his position financially and it was American official recognition and propaganda that strengthened his status in the international arena. The American officials led by E. T. Williams and Calhoun and American newspapers with one voice described the Government at Peking as the single satisfactory solution to the problems of a backward country like China and renounced Sun Yat-sen

as a hooligan. The Cabinet of Wilson nodded its head approvingly. Throughout the period the American Government to all intent and purpose remained the steadfast ally of the oppressive regime of Yuan.

Yet after the First World War, the Chinese nationalists hoped against hope that America would uphold their grievances against the Japanese occupation of Shantung at the Paris Peace Conference. Their hopes were totally belied. In direct violation of his own much-acclaimed Fourteen Points, Wilson, the idol of bourgeois liberals, capitulated to Japan. Out of the dismay of the nationalist leaders emerged the historic May 4 movement—the first death-knell of imperialism in China.

From 1919 to 1921 China underwent a rapid transformation but the American policy remained static. Obsessed with the idea of a strong man America conspired to raise another military despot, Wu-Pei-fue, to power; the new consortium refused economic aid to the democratic Government at Canton; America did not allow Sun Yat-sen's Government to be represented at the Washington Conference; the Conference itself amounted to empty talk resulting in a virtual naive compromise with Japan's imperialistic designs in China. Disillusionment with America was thus complete. The great October Revolution, Lenin's policy towards colonialism, the birth of the Chinese Communist Party and finally the rise of Mao Tse-tung gave a new turn to the Chinese nationalist movement. Mr Bose has successfully proved that America throughout the decade talked left but always acted right.

The factors behind this duplicity, the author thinks, were complete lack of knowledge of Chinese affairs, the selfish role of the missionaries, and traders. "More than anything else colossal ignorance was the most important factor in American diplomacy in China" (P. 213). The American officials in China had no understanding and always sent false and improper reports on which government policy at Washington was formulated.

Dollar Diplomacy

Mr Bose has, however, exposed admirably the working of dollar diplomacy. Between 1900 and 1920 the total value of imports of raw materials from China increased from \$28,000,000 to \$211,000,000 and exports of finished goods to China from \$24,000,000 to \$169,000,000. This was the price of American help to Yuan. Again under the pretence of democracy and so-called welfare activities of the missionaries, America enjoyed unjust privileges. For instance, timber shipped from another place in China to Peking was taxed an aggregate duty of 20% whereas the timber shipped from America to Peking was charged no more than 10%.

However, Mr Bose has failed miserably to relate the nature of American diplomacy to the character of the then American State. His emphasis on the ignorance of the American Government about Chinese affairs thanks to the inefficiency of the American bureaucracy merely highlights his inability to grasp the actual meaning of Hobson's dictum—"Liberalism is the tactics of conservation". The book at many places gives the impression that Wilson might have changed American policy provided he was supplied with adequate information. Yet this view is contradicted by the facts supplied by the author himself. He admits that on the eve of the Paris Peace Conference there was no lack of information about the proper situation in China, thanks to Reinsch (P. 178). Again from 1919 to 1921 Reinsch and John Dewey informed the American Government regularly of the important happenings in China. Despite all this, the authorities at Washington made no attempt to retrace their steps.

Mr Bose has missed the implications of certain developments in American history because he is dazzled by the glamour of "progressive" policies in the U.S. itself. But these had vanished. With the possession of the Philippines as a result of the Spanish War, the demand for an empire in the Far East grew in

business circles. Jingoism was whipped up by the worthy successors of Pulitzer and Hearst; the notion of "manifest destiny" was revived. As a cumulative effect of all these trends, America was eager to have a sphere of influence in the Far East at any cost. By the first half of the twentieth century the bourgeois democratic revolution in America had lost all its progressive qualities. She was totally on the way to imperialism. Whatever she did in China she did in conformity with the basic needs of her newly expansionist policy. To explain her behaviour in terms of childlike ignorance or blissful self-complacency is an over simplification. America had simply neither the wish nor the capacity to act otherwise. Her policy was not marked by colossal ignorance or administrative callousness but by pure hypocrisy. Mr Bose has thus stumbled blindly into the pitfalls of the liberal historian, unaware of and uneducated in the thoughts of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao. The result is that his perspective is distorted and the emphasis shifted in a wrong direction.

Another loophole is the comparative negligence shown in the treatment of the racial factor. As Ronald Segal in his work *The Race War* has observed, the democratic (?) American mind was afraid of the Black world as well as of the Yellow world. Except a brief allusion to this racial hatred in the preface and in the concluding chapter in two or three sentences, the author is almost silent about this important factor.

On the whole the book is useful for two reasons. The story of America's treacherous activities in the nationalist movement in China supplied, in the first place, adequate historical justification for Red China's antagonism towards the U.S.A. and furnished, in the second place the bleak historical background, behind the CIA's obnoxious activities in toppling popular governments and in subverting popular movements over the world. Wilsonian democracy was not far away from Nixonian policy.

GAUTAM BHADRA

Padmagolap

BY A FILM CRITIC

PADMAGOLAP by Ajit Lahiri comes as a diversion from his earlier disastrous forays into the world of historical spectacle. Starting off with quite a promise (in fact, the pre-title sequence of a car-chase in the forest is competently executed and the use of sound, especially the haunting effect of woodpeckers rattling in a dark forest heightens the mood) it gradually takes the beaten track, falling back on the much-used trick of doubles. The crime and the detection part of the film are thoroughly colourless, and pace, which is so very essential to an action drama of this sort is slow. The emotional conflicts are overstretched and heavy doses of sentimentality tend to creep into the scenes. Of course, there are moments when the director's frantic groping for visual details never eludes our notice (as in the scene when a masked dance is juxtaposed with the gradual interchanging of the twins' identity or in the night sequences inside the criminals' den), but on the whole the film is so much laden with old prejudices and inhibitions that the total effect is one of bland dissapointment. Soumitra Chatterjee as the young detective is just ordinary, but his guise of the god-fearing, cadaverous, monkey-capped school-teacher has come off pretty well. It is time he gave up his romantic play-boy roles and went in for slapstick comedy parts. All the other artistes have displayed a fair measure of professional competence, but actingwise, the film is Aparna Sen's lone show. In a difficult, conflicting double role, one a gay, vivacious girl about town and the other, a sombre, sober and subdued type, she is absolutely fine and when she is on the screen, even this mediocre film does flash into life.

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Clippings

That Man Gandhi

THERE is another class of Gandhi-protectors who are more diabolical. Ashok Rudra, writing in *Frontier*, is one of them. Frightened at the militancy of the student youth, they have switched over from direct encounter to 'guerrilla tactics'. They are not throwing abuses at the student youth, are not openly talking of setting the police on them; they are rather showing sympathy. But this sympathy is more dangerous than blunt, direct assaults. Enemies are far better than 'friends' of this kind. From what they say it would appear that Gandhi was a great revolutionary and a great man, but that his devotees have sought to gain personal ends and plunged the people into misery by distorting his knowledge and exploiting his name... Ashok Rudra is just one of those out-and-out scoundrels, whom his followers have raised to the skies as a formidable, fire-eating revolutionary and Marxist intellectual.

Don't these 'Marxist' Ashok Rudras know who this Gandhi was and what this Gandhism is and what sort of a role this Gandhi and this Gandhism have played in Indian history? They are perfectly aware of it and are deliberately suppressing the knowledge... Right from the beginning he (Gandhi) was an adept in roguery and hypocrisy. He had started his political career by extending all-out service to his British masters in ruthlessly... putting down the widespread revolt of the Zulu tribals before the First World War. From then onwards he initiated 'non-violent' agitation as the representative of the Indian merchants, i.e., the comprador... bourgeoisie... He first appeared on the Indian political stage as the agent of British imperialism during the first imperialist World War of 1914. This Gandhi had come to get men, i.e., cannon-fodder and money from India for carrying on the war. When, during

the first imperialist World War, Lenin was opposing the war and was trying to bring the working classes of Europe and Russia together to stage a revolution, Gandhi was trying, as the agent of imperialism, to get men and money from India for carrying on the war. It was Gandhi whom imperialists and the comprador bourgeoisie selected as the fittest person to stem the tide of the revolutionary upsurge of the working classes and the peasants that had taken place all over India under the impact of the First World War and the October Revolution... For, by that time, in place of armed violent struggle, Gandhi had started propagating his theory of unarmed non-violent struggle; in place of capturing power by driving imperialism out through armed revolt, he had started disseminating the principles and tactics of the *charkha*, *satyagraha*, hunger-strike, embracing imprisonment, peaceful processions and hartals as means for gaining certain 'concessions'. He had been playing the devilish game of stabbing the people's revolutionary upsurge in the back—a fact made obvious by the Jallianwalabagh massacre, the Chauri Chaura incident, the united revolt staged by Hindu and Muslim soldiers in Peshawar, and the Mopla peasants' revolt in the South... When after the Jallianwalabagh massacre the whole country had turned into a revolutionary furnace and to it had been joined the revolutionaries of the Third International under the leadership of the great Lenin standing at the head of all socialist revolutions and the new trend of anti-colonial liberation struggle, it was beyond the power of the old-style European-dressed liberal leaders of the comprador bourgeoisie to confuse and mislead it. The capacity for that Gandhi possessed in ample, more than ample, measure. There was no one then except Gandhi who had the power to recommend to his countrymen in that atmosphere the acceptance of the hateful "Chelmsford Reforms" peddled by imperialism. While the country was astir with repeated waves of workers' strikes, and armed peasant ris-

ings like the Mopla peasants' revolt were exploding here and there, no one except Gandhi could have destroyed the enormous possibilities by initiating the non-cooperation movement in league with the Khilafat Movement in the name of so-called Hindu-Muslim unity, and no one else could have initiated the sham liberation struggle under the comprador bourgeois leadership in place of the genuine liberation struggle led by the working classes. And when even in the midst of this false freedom struggle the Chauri Chaura incident took place, Gandhi at once smelled violence and withdrew his movement, leaving the country in despair and under the heels of imperialist oppression.

...When in 1930 under the impact of the worldwide slump the country was again astir with revolutionary upsurge, the soldiers at Amritsar, Sholapur and Peshawar started making history, and peasant uprisings started again in different parts of the country, Gandhi started playing a new game: the Civil Disobedience Movement; then after the sudden withdrawal of the movement, starting for England to participate in the Round Table Conference, and back from there to a movement for the Harijans' right of entry into temples... One of the events of the thirties requires special mention. The Congress Ministry in Bombay opened fire on a workers' procession, and Gandhi, the incarnation of non-violence, supported it.

...With the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 the British were again in trouble and once again the obedient Gandhi came forward. He said he would not trouble the British in their hour of peril... But when the nature of the war was transformed with the invasion of Stalin's Russia, and the comprador bourgeoisie in India came to believe firmly in the defeat of British imperialism at the hands of the fascist Axis... then all of a sudden Gandhi went over to the 'victorious' imperialists and turned virulently anti-British overnight, and in enthusiastic support of Hitler-Mussolini-Tojo,

started the 1942 movement, and went into prison after dealing a deadly blow at the worldwide anti-fascist struggle led by Stalin... when the flames of popular upsurge kindled during and after the war were about to burn up British imperialism, Gandhi tried desperately to stem the tide and helped the British to partition the country amidst the flames of communal riots, and enabled them to continue their interests in the Indian sub-continent in a new style and by novel tactics. (Sasanka in *Deshabrati*).

Suspect Police

A police source (in Calcutta) said is was not unlikely that some policemen who lived in Naxalite-infested areas, were in close contact with the extremists and passed them warnings from time to time. Such a thing was 'unavoidable' if they were to live in peace. The only remedy would be to switch these policemen over to departments not directly connected to investigation of Naxalite activities in any way. (*Hindusthan Standard*).

Land-Grab

The CPI-led agitation in U. P. for forcible occupation of land has so far failed, according to an official spokesman (Lucknow, July 10)... but the Sangharsh Samiti, which is conducting the agitation, continued to make claims of success and of government support... the Samiti stated that in quite a number of places where volunteers went to occupy surplus and waste land "the government officials also rushed and joined them in effecting the distribution of land among the landless". (*The Statesman*).

Two In A Towel

...a New Delhi court has summoned two senior editors and the printer and publisher of "The Statesman" and three other persons responsible for the publication in the June 18 issue of the paper an allegedly lewd advertisement (depicting a man and a woman, both partially nude and wrapped in a towel) to

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answer charges of obscenity under Section 292 of the Indian Penal Code.

It has been alleged that the advertisement showing an "adult nude male and female and its caption are obscene and suggest lascivious and vulgar ideas and thoughts." (*Times of India*).

Letters

Gandhi

LIKE most other great men of the world Mahatma Gandhi has been very much misunderstood by many people in the country as well as outside. Serious misunderstandings about him and his views in the minds of some of our communist friends are resulting in actions which do not augur well either for the cause of communism in this country or for the country generally.

Allow me, please, to say something about a few such misunderstandings. One of these is about his theory of Trusteeship. Every lawyer knows that a trustee is not the owner of the property which he holds "in trust" for somebody else who is the real owner, for a period defined or otherwise, because during that period, the real owner, on account of his being a minor or for some other reason, is unable to hold and manage the property himself. Now, who is the 'real owner' in this case? I do claim to have been very close to Gandhiji during nearly thirty years of his fight for India's freedom and, therefore, I know his mind on the subject. The 'real owners' of all such property and means of production, according to Gandhiji, were and are the people of India.

I may add here a few quotations from Gandhiji's writings on the subject. At one place he says:—

"I know socialists and communists who will not hurt a fly but who believe in the universal ownership of the instruments of production. I rank myself as one among them." (*Harijan*, 10.12.38).

After the October Revolution and

the establishment of Bolshevism in Soviet Russia, Gandhiji wrote in *Young India*: "I know that Bolshevism aims at the abolition of the institution of private property. This is only an application of the ethical ideal of non-possession in the realm of economics...there is no questioning the fact that the Bolshevik ideal has behind it the purest sacrifices of countless men and women who have given up their all for its sake, and an ideal that is sanctified by the sacrifices of such master-spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain: the noble example of their renunciation will be emblazoned for ever and quicken and purify the ideal as time passes." (15-11-28).

During the Second World War, Gandhiji was confined in the Agha Khan Palace. Dr Sushila Nayyar was with him. One morning Dr Sushila Nayyar gave him the news from newspapers that Soviet Russia appeared to be losing the war. At this Gandhiji almost heaved a sigh and said: "No, Russia cannot be defeated. If Russia is defeated who will be left there to support the cause of the poor?"

At one place he says: "The greatest obstacle in the path of non-violence is the presence in our midst of the indigenous interests that have sprung up from British rule, the interests of monied men, speculators, scripsholders, landholders, factory-owners and the like. All these do not always realize that they are living on the blood of the masses, and when they do, they become as callous as the British principals whose tools and agents they are. If like the Japanese Samurai they could but realize that they must give up their blood-stained gains, the battle is won for non-violence." (Tendulkar, Page 85)

About China Gandhiji at one place says: "I look forward to the day when a free India and a free China will co-operate together in friendship and brotherhood for their own good and for the good of Asia and the world." (P. 175)

Regarding economic planning for a country and referring to America, Gandhiji once wrote:—

"Any plan which exploited the raw material of a country and neglected the potentially more powerful manpower was lopsided and can never tend to establish human equality. America is the most industrialized country in the world and yet it has not banished poverty and degradation. That is because it neglected the universal manpower and concentrated power in the hands of the few who amassed fortunes at the expense of the many. The result is that its industrialization has become a menace to its own poor and to the rest of the world." (Pages 281-282.)

At one place Gandhiji writes:—

"I have no doubt that if India is to live an exemplary life of independence which would be the envy of the world, all the bhangis, doctors, lawyers, teachers, merchants and others will get the same wages for an honest day's work. Indian society may never reach that goal, but it is the duty of every Indian to set his sails towards that goal and no other, if India is to be a happy land." (H, 16-3-47)

Again it is absolutely wrong to think that Gandhiji was against the use of all machinery and wanted the country to go back to old-time cottage or village industries. I give a few examples.

When an interim Congress Government was formed in U.P. and the ban was lifted from my book *Bharat Men Angrezi Raj*, I thought that the thirty thousand big volumes of the new edition of my book might be printed on hand-made paper. Gandhiji told me in the clearest possible language that he was against paper being manufactured by hand. He drew my attention to his own practice in the matter and expressed himself almost in these words: "Why do you not look towards me? Do you not see that my mouthpiece has always been printed on mill-made paper? If I wanted I could easily have it printed on hand-made paper."

But paper must be manufactured only by the mills."

It may sound strange to some that while Mao's mouthpiece from Yenan was always printed on hand-made paper, Gandhiji's mouthpiece from Sabarmati or from Sevagram was always printed on mill-made paper. The reason was plain. In China at that time the paper industry was an important cottage industry which supported millions upon millions of Chinese village people. In India it was not so. Here the main support of millions upon millions of village people was their cloth industry. Gandhiji only wanted that this important village industry should be preserved intact, so long as we are not able to provide all those people any other employment sufficient to satisfy their daily needs.

I visited China in 1951 and saw with my own eyes how the Communist Government of China under Mao Tse-tung had taken exactly that precaution in the same way and even more scrupulously. I may not go into details here.

Of course, in a way, Gandhiji had friendly relations with some of the known capitalists of India at the time.

I am inclined to add one personal incident in this connection. Immediately after independence I was at Allahabad. Gandhiji was in Delhi. Gandhiji urgently called me to Delhi to help him in restoring, as far as possible, Hindu-Muslim relations in Delhi and in the country. I reached Delhi and put up with a friend whose house was just a few furlongs from Gandhiji's residence, Birla House. In the morning I went to meet Gandhiji at Birla House, lived with him during the whole day and in the evening took leave of him for the night. The

following conversation ensued in Hindustani on the second day. I am translating it as best as I can in English:

Gandhiji—"You are not putting up here?" (He had asked me the same question on the previous day).

I—"No, Bapu, as I told you I am putting up with a friend in New Delhi. If you order me to put up here I shall do so."

I quote below almost the exact words of Gandhiji in reply, as best as I can recollect.

Gandhiji—"Why should I order you to stay here? But, I quite understand why you do not want to stay here. You do not want to stay with monied people. That is why you are putting up with a friend like yourself. You want to enjoy life in your own way! You don't look towards me, with what agony of heart I am putting up here, as if I have gulped down a mouthful of my own blood."

Gandhiji's words penetrated deep into my heart. The next morning I went to Birla House with my small belongings and stayed with Gandhiji till the moment of his assassination and death in that very house.

I am absolutely confident that if Gandhiji had survived somewhat longer after independence, nobody would have pressed more than he for the complete 'nationalisation' of all instruments and means of production. Only in that case there would have been absolutely no question of any compensation to be paid to the present holders of all that property, because according to him the property as such would only have gone back to the real owners. 'Nationalisation' in that case would also have been very much different from our present 'nationalisation' which, although a very welcome step and great advance in the situation existing so far, is more like governmentisation or even bureaucratisation under the existing circumstances and may not yet prove very helpful or beneficial to the people at large. State capitalism or state monopoly may be a necessary intermediate step in certain cases, but surely it is not

'ownership and control by the people', as envisaged by Mahatma Gandhi.

If we coolly try to understand all this we will surely discern more of similarities and common points than we do now, between Gandhi, Karl Marx, Lenin and even Chairman Mao Tse-tung whom personally I consider the greatest revolutionary of the age.

SUNDARLAL
New Delhi

Apropos Mr Ramadhar (June 13), I cannot agree with him that Gandhiji fought ceaselessly for the emancipation of the oppressed people. There is no denying the fact that he played the role of leader in the Indian national movement. But what was the character of that national movement? It was not a working class or proletarian movement. Gandhiji always endeavoured to preserve the interests of the feudal princes, landlords and capitalists. Even Mr Nehru, a devoted disciple of Gandhiji, was extremely shocked at the feudalistic attitude of Gandhiji. In despair he remarked in his *Autobiography*: "What upset me much more was Gandhiji's defence ... of the big zamindari system.... All over the world zamindari and taluques have been broken up, and even in India most people recognise that they cannot last long... And yet Gandhiji was in favour of it." (P. 478)

In this context, mention should be made of Gandhiji's idea of trusteeship by the feudal princes, of the big landlords, and the capitalists. This is why I cannot believe like S. A. Dange that "The Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the revolt of the people alone led Gandhi himself to revolt. The loyalist in him died and the determined revolutionary came forward to lead the people". (*The Mahatma and the Masses*, S. A. Dange). On the contrary I believe that Gandhiji always championed the cause of the big landlords and the capitalists and betrayed every revolutionary step that the people took. So far ideology is concerned,

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Gandhiji was a staunchest reactionary. To quote E. M. S. Namboodiripad, "Lenin combined the militant mass movement of the working class with the most advanced ideology. Gandhiji combined it with the most reactionary and obscurantist ideologies that were current in the contemporary world". (*Mahatma and the Ism*).

Completely blind to the facts of history Mr Ramadhar has remarked that Gandhiji should be acceptable to revolutionaries of genuine variety. But it should be clearly pointed out that Gandhiji's critique of modern civilisation had nothing to do with the anti-imperialism of the oppressed people. Moreover he reposed no confidence in the people. He himself said: "We rely not on numerical strength but on the strength of character." (Tendulkar, Vol III, P. 2). Whenever he saw the people raising the standard of revolt against oppression and injustice, Gandhiji condemned it outright. That is why to him the Indian Naval Mutiny of 1946 was "a bad...example for India". (Tendulkar Vol III, P. 78-9)

BASUDEV SENGUPTA
Calcutta

Mr Ramadhar's letter in *Frontier* (June 13) defending Gandhi as a "friend and ally" of the Marxist-Leninists, is typical of the confused attitude of the non-committed intellectual.

The question is not whether Gandhi, Christ and Buddha were "friends and allies" of the poor, but whether the ideas they propounded did help

the next generations of exploiters to use them as weapons in their suppression of the poor.

Christ and Buddha were not politicians and they were hated violently in their days by the exploiters. But Gandhi was never hated by the capitalists and landlords while he was alive or dead. That shows that he never tried to shake violently the system based on exploitation. On the contrary, Birlas and Tatas were his ardent disciples.

M. N. D. NAIR
Trivandrum

Indian Maoism

Rao's "Indian Maoism—Two shades" (July 4) is a glaring instance of how a living and important subject can be reduced to a dull pointless jugglery of words. He brackets the CPI and the CPM in one category and the CPI(ML) and the RCC (Andhra) in another. The first grouping is most puzzling.

Also, did Mao prescribe two different sets of 'line of action' to be undertaken by two leading factions of Maoists on the basis of two different "principal contradictions"? It would be better if the relation between the CPI(ML) and the RCC (Andhra) remains non-antagonistic which is not at present.

AJOY KUMAR SARKAR
Sodepore 24-Parganas.

The utterances of B. T. Randive in the hoary past when the situation was yet to take a concrete shape do not constitute enough grounds to brand the CP(M) as anti-Maoist at present.

Without having regard to Mao's correct interpretation of Marxism-Leninism the so-called Maoist parties are giving a call to annihilate each other.

Modifications in Mao's analysis are

made to satisfy the ego of leaders, "Petty bourgeoisie mouthing Mao's slogans to defeat Mao".

INTIQUAB IMAM
Calcutta

Student Radicals

I wish to add something to Mr Gautam Adhikari's analysis (June 20) of what is and what should be the attitude of the Indian students on and outside the campus. On the surface the students face the establishment and the bourgeois elite, and their first action should start from there. Remember Cohn Bendits in the West and the Chinese students in the Cultural Revolution. In India, the particular problems of student life are more acute: the incredibly low per capita investment on students, utmost uncertainty facing the degree holders, the crumbling system of examination, the absolutely outdated syllabus. The standard and techniques of teaching are a shame. A high student-teacher ratio, moreover, only leads to the dehumanisation of the whole order where a student seeks his identity in vain. In a word, here is the concrete situation—the most vulnerable one. What is needed is concrete analysis and immediate action. Without breaking academic institutions the students can force them to help them. For instance, the students of social sciences can demand Marxist criticism from their teachers, thereby strengthening their own left radical viewpoints. The consciousness of the campus atmosphere will inevitably repeat that of the outer milieu.

SURJA BANDYOPADHYAY
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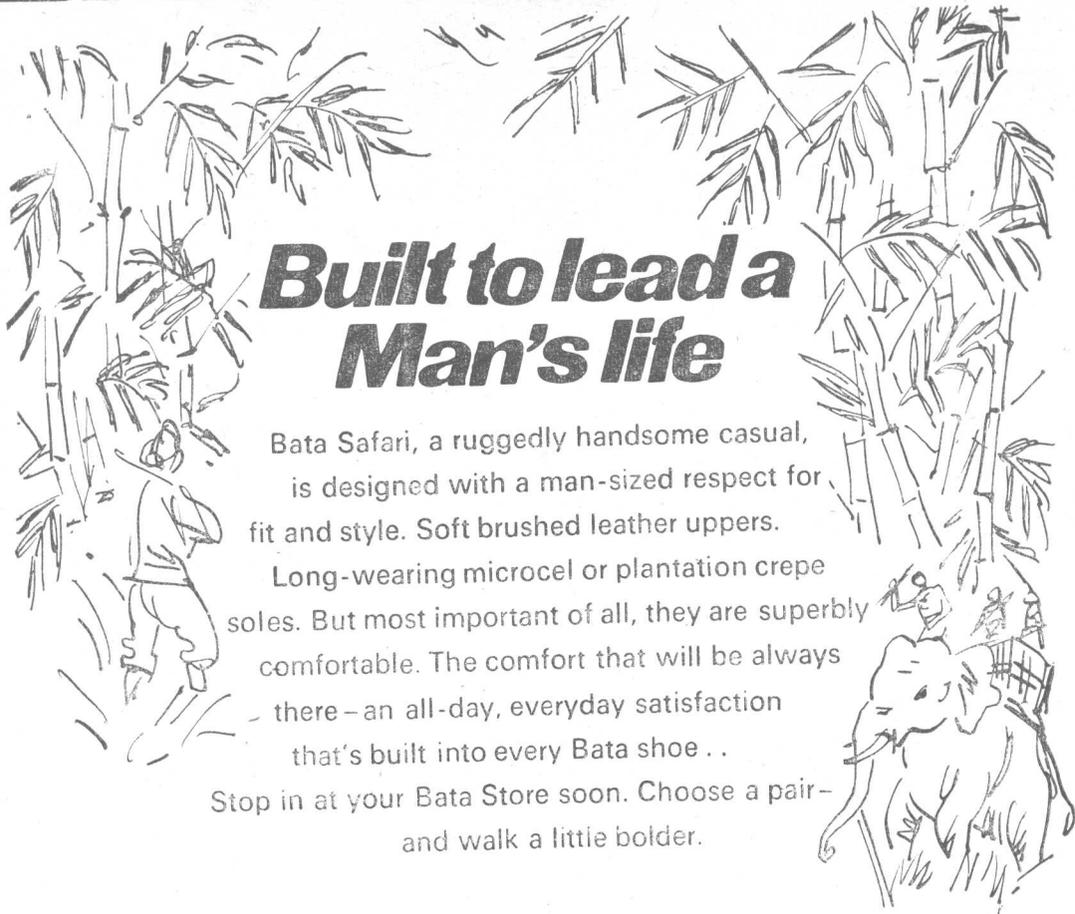
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