

# frontier

Vol. 3: No. 52

APRIL 10, 1971

PRICE: 35 PAISE

## Other Pages

COMMENTS ..	2
ACROSS THE BORDER	
I ASHIM MUKHOPADHYAY ..	3
II BY A CORRESPONDENT ..	5
STORM IN THE EAST	
SISIR K. MAZUMDAR ..	8
CALCUTTA DIARY	
GYAN KAPUR ..	9
THE CHOICE IN ORISSA	
PRAFULLA KUMAR SENAPATI	10
THAT CASE AGAIN	
BY A CORRESPONDENT ..	11
THE FIRST MAN IN SPACE	
S. S. ..	12
<i>Book Review</i>	
MARXISM AND ETHICS	
ARJUN BANDYOPADHYAY ..	14
MASKS AND FACES	
MRIGANKA SEK HAR RAY ..	16
LETTERS ..	16

Editor : Samar Sen

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

TELEPHONE: 24-3202

## WATCHING THE WAR

FROM reports coming from border areas of East Pakistan or Bangladesh, the trends of the fighting going on there are now a little more understandable than they were a week ago. Eyewitness accounts from hidden reporters and refugees add up to a carnage—bombing of towns, mass killing, raping, looting and terrorising of civilians by West Pakistani troops—which accord less with the picture of a startled Administration trying to quell secessionist mobs than with the insensate behaviour of an occupation army.

On the other hand, the earlier reports from the Free Bengal Radio and Indian newspapers to the effect that the West Pakistani troops have been all driven into cantonments now appear to be more wishful thinking than normal war propaganda. It is more probable that an army of 80,000 soldiers who cannot move out in a vast countryside criss-crossed by rivers and canals to its advantage, has deliberately concentrated in cantonments and comes out to destroy the hostiles as and when it finds it less expensive in fuel and ammunition. Its logistics have been complicated by the absence of firm expectations of fulfilment of contracts with Burma and Ceylon which seem to have backed out.

The most heartening surprise sprung during the last fortnight has been the fortitude and resilience shown by the people. They were not cowered by the military strength. The popular fighting force is constituted by the First Bengal Regiment, East Pakistan Rifles and the police. The Bengal Regiment must be owing its name to Bengali officers and not jawans; therefore the strength of the rebel regiment is doubtful. Moreover, during the negotiation between General Yahya Khan and Sheikh Mujib, these officers and jawans were stealthily disarmed and disbanded; it is hardly possible that they could have taken with them many arms and much ammunition without causing disruption of the negotiations. And compared to the modern armament of the Pakistani army, the weapons in the hands of the police, mujahids and Ansars are primitive. The question therefore uppermost is not how long the rebels will be able to stand in open confrontation but how they dared to take the offensive, if they had taken it at all, at some places. As the war goes on they may be able to snatch lighter weapons through ambush but acquiring heavy arms through defeating the enemy is another matter.

The speeches that the Sheikh was making during the fortnight preceding March 25 urged people to prepare themselves against military onslaught. But the way he had conducted his partymen and supporters, who constituted 70 per cent of the adults in Bangla Desh, leads one to imagine that armed resistance was not on the Awami League cards. The way many of the party leaders are reported to have been captured and shot dead do not show that they were prepared. It takes time for such a party to get ready for armed struggle. Quite a few of the emissaries of the party crossing the borders betray their petty-bourgeois character: nationalism resembling communalism and lack of organization for popular armed resistance. Many of them talk to their own villagers in a lordly way and intensely distrust the communists who are fighting along with them the same enemy. They would not like anyone in Bangla Desh not affiliated with the Awami League to get help from across the borders.

In the absence of extensive and authentic reports from the war-riven country, it is not yet time to discern the pattern of resistance. Who are really giving the military junta a hell of a time? There can't be a homogeneous picture but significant traits must be emerging as days pass. And that must be the reason why the Big Powers are watching the scene with restraint. They are waiting to see who eventually come out as the decisive factor. India has from the beginning been supporting Bangla Desh because nothing would be more to her advantage than a disintegrated Pakistan; and a Bangla Desh under the control of the Awami League would be a double advantage.

## Controlling Foreign Trade

Indecision has become the feature of the political brass in New Delhi in all their activities and speeches. And Mr L. N. Misra's statement on the question of control of foreign

trade last week was one such commitment to this all-pervasive norm. Commenting on the control plan, the Minister said that seventy per cent of the imports has been billed out to be under official supervision and the rest is to be taken over in course of time; though he could set no date line. On the export front, he added, the public and the private sector will continue to co-exist, with the former cast in the pioneering role. To infuse an element of objectivity, he announced the decision to institute a few corporate bodies to control the Indian trade abroad.

Despite this bureaucratisation of the export and import trade, the situation in this vital sector holds little prospect of redemption in the near future. The reasons for pessimism are rooted in the inherent sickness of the Indian economy. Obviously the traditional earners—tea and jute—are sagging owing to foreign competition and slowdowns in production at home and no silver lining is in sight at the moment. Recently the Indian export bag showed some signs of diversification through increase in the sale of wares requiring larger labour inputs. But this prospect has been thwarted by a shortfall in the supply of raw material and unabated spurt in prices of all categories. Industrial raw materials have registered an across-the-board rise of 16.3% in the last year and the other price indices have followed it close on the heels. The Prime Minister has attributed "this inevitable" price increase "to the failure to increase the production of commercial crops". Whatever may be the official justification of this price rise, the message is clear. The situation portends a tight market for producers intending to figure in the overseas market, a lowering of living wages and a widening poverty line for the common folk.

On the import front the Government effort to clip off the bill has paid to a certain extent. But this is due more to rigid import control and the cutback in plans than to any effective improvement in the productive system. And here too the situation is likely to worsen because of the

necessity of importing certain raw materials to boost the dwindling stocks at home. India has already agreed to accept 2,50,000 bales of cotton from the USA under PL-480 to bolster her cotton stock.

All in all Government intervention or even nationalisation may control or direct these internal forces but it cannot stop them. Such a programme calls for a thorough overhauling of the set-up.

## Nuclear Balance

No one really expects quick results from the strategic arms limitation talks which have been intermittently held in Vienna and Helsinki since November 1969. The negotiators have come across difficulties in defining what constitutes a strategic weapon and in agreeing whether their nuclear systems are symmetric in nature. The respective negotiating positions of the Big Two have reversed since President Johnson aired the SALT idea with an anti-ballistic-missile-system-only agreement in mind. At the moment, the Americans are not much interested in the Russian proposal for matching the existing Moscow galosh system against a projected ABM defence of Washington D.C. Mr Gerald Smith, the chief American negotiator at the SALT, and many Nixon Administration spokesmen have said at different times that they would be seeking an agreement fixing a ceiling on the total number of nuclear arms vectors, including missiles fired from the ground and submarines, limitation of anti-missile networks and restrictions on the deployment of such exceptionally powerful weapons as SS-9 missiles. President Nixon in his interview with the Press in March said that an agreement had to be "some mix", covering both defensive and offensive weapons.

Is it possible to correctly measure the offensive missile strength of America and Russia on the basis of published numbers? The answer is in the negative. The general face-off is

like this : America has 1,054 Minutemen and Titans and 656 Polaris and Poseidon missiles carried in 41 nuclear submarines and Russia has 1,440 land-based and 350 submarine-based missiles. But while America has acquired numerical superiority by mounting four to 14 warheads on a single missile—Mr Laird has claimed that the U.S. strategic strike forces add up to 4,600 nuclear weapons—the Russians have packed the punch of 25 million tons of TNT in the SS-9 missiles which gives them higher deliverable megatonnage. One may note here a contradiction in the U.S. estimate of the Russian ICBM system ; at the end of the third-round SALT, Mr Laird noted with happiness that the other negotiating country had suspended deployment of SS-9 missiles beyond 250 which was the ceiling proposed by America upon weapons of this type. But in his annual report on defence to Congress, the Defence Secretary expressed doubts about the “implications” of slowing down the installation of Russian long-range missiles. The SS-9 and SS-II missiles may now be refitted with multiple warheads or the Russians are developing a whole new range of gargantuan missiles. A few days before, Senator Jackson claimed that the Russians were deploying a new generation of advanced ICBMs. In the defence report has been appended a chart spelling out the concept of “strategic deterrence” based on “credibility contingent on sufficiency and/or SALT”. The strategy of “realistic deterrence” amounts to a policy of pursuing in a period of negotiations the steady development of both offensive and defensive missile systems to keep options open for the future. A new element is the total force approach which takes into account, besides weapons, political and economic factors. Since the Kennedy days, the American approach has been to use strategic policy decisions as a means of negotiation as well as of defence. A point of contention between the Big Two is whether U.S. bombers based in West Germany and aboard the aircraft carriers of the Sixth Fleet, which could

drop nuclear bombs on Russian territory, should be included in the category of strategic weapons. Russia wants to bring this within the scope of SALT. Considering the likely reaction of her European allies, America says that this subject which must include intermediate and medium range missiles stationed in western Russia and pointing towards Central Europe should be conveniently settled between NATO and the Warsaw Pact

outside the SALT.

While the pace of introduction of the nuclear weapons systems conceived before November 1969 and the investment in military R and D may have been favourably influenced by the SALT, the Big Two taking advantage of their nuclear armoury will continue their attempts to blackmail the smaller States. A nuclear spread at this point of time may not be unwelcome.

## Across The Border—I

ASHIM MUKHOPADHYAY

**T**HE Liberation Army of Bangladesh, though virtually unarmed, has so far put up stubborn resistance against the well-equipped and well-trained West Pakistani forces. Although the information about the day-to-day incidents is imprecise, it is a fact that the Mukti Fouz has in many cases given a very good performance. In some cities and towns they have kept a large number of troops in isolation. At Chittagong, Kusthia, Jessore, Khulna and Rangpur they have proved repeatedly that though less prepared and less-equipped they are in no way inferior to the enemy. In some areas the Punjabis had no alternative but to yield when their ammunition ran out. Here is one instance: Between March 28 and April 2 despite a massacre in Jessore the Liberation Army did not retreat. At one place in the city they exchanged heavy fire with the enemy and finally captured 360 of them. The same thing happened at many other places. But at what price ?

The reports of Simon Dring of the *Daily Telegraph*, Robert Kaylor of UPI, Louis Heren of *The Times* and Indian journalists, though insufficient, provide some answers. The important cities of Dacca, Jessore, Khulna and Rangpur have been severely damaged. At Dacca, important residential areas like Dhanmandi, Green Park, Kalabagan, Jinnah Avenue are now mere heaps of

brick and dust. My informant who is a staff reporter of the *Pakistan Observer* and who himself edits a weekly, said that inside the Dacca University Campus, the soldiers blew up the Iqbal Hall, Jagannath Hall and some other important student hostels. Only some broken walls now stand and look down on a macabre scene of devastation. The port of Chittagong has been badly damaged. During my visit to Khulna district I came to know the price the Liberation Army has paid. Between March 28 and 31 there went on severe fighting at a point in Jessore. The West Pakistani soldiers numbered about 25 or 30, but they were travelling in an armoured car and all were equipped with machine-guns. The Mukti Fouz and a large number of civilians, over 1,500, rushed towards the armoured car. They had with them only a few rifles and most of the civilians were carrying spears, bamboo sticks and swords. When the armoured car came in sight those who had rifles started firing, the enemy replied with a heavy shower of bullets from their machine-guns. A large number of men died instantaneously. This continued for a few minutes. When the ammunition ran out, the Mukti Fouz rushed towards the car, many dying on the way. But those who reached the spot climbed up the car, jumped on the soldiers and snatched away the weapons. Then they pulled them

down and killed them with bamboo sticks. But more than 400 of the Mukti Fouz died in the operation. A similar incident occurred at Dacca. My source, whom I mentioned earlier, said that there a large number of people (near about 450) died and others were wounded when they tried to destroy a tank by mere numerical superiority.

All these reports no doubt show the bravery of the Liberation Army but they also point to the heavy loss of manpower, which is not ideal war strategy.

As prospects of getting substantial military aid are bleak, these heavy losses are not a healthy sign. Besides the absence of foreign aid and diplomatic support, the people of Bangla Desh are suffering from other problems also. Most of the industries have either been closed down or destroyed. From my personal experience I can say that the Khalispur industrial area in Khulna has been badly damaged. The Star Jute Mill and the Platinum Jute Mill have collapsed under incessant shelling. The Khulna Newsprint Mill has also collapsed. Industries in Jessore have met the same fate, as well as the industries of Dacca, Tongi, Chittagong.

#### Cultivation

Cultivation of the aman paddy, the principal food crop, has been badly neglected. The problem has become more acute after the last cyclone. I visited some areas where saline water has temporarily affected the fertility of the soil. So, as production in both industrial and agricultural sectors has come to a standstill, the people may have to face an economic crisis. Supply of food and medicine is still inadequate. These two things, together with arms and ammunition, are the most vital necessities for the Liberation Army.

The Mukti Fouz is still depending on two things: morale and manpower. No doubt these are the two essential prerequisites for success in warfare, but they are not all. With no satisfactory response yet from out-

side and all types of supplies scanty, only morale and manpower will do no magic. As no diplomatic and military support has rushed in, a time may come when the morale of the people will break down. In that case manpower will be useless. Or, it can be said that if the people try to overwhelm the enemies by numerical majority but get no substantial support their morale will disappear. Moreover, a movement, even if it has had enough spontaneity but is loosely organized, cannot sustain itself. Although the people are fighting well, it does not mean that the entire civilian population has been made conscious of its duty.

The men of the East Pakistan Rifles, the Ansars, the Bengal Regiment and the police compose the main fighting elements. The cadres of the Awami League and the Chhattr League are also fighting, but there is some confusion between the party and the actual fighters regarding the control of supply, transport etc. More serious is the attitude of the common people of the unaffected areas. There they are simply wasting their time in bazaar gossips. It seems that they themselves have not yet realised the gravity of the situation and no such attempt has been made on behalf of the Liberation Army or the local committees of the Awami League. When I was at Satkhira, which was quite peaceful at that time, one evening I saw some boys walking along the main roads with portable microphones and warning the people against air raids. The enemy, however, could appear any time and drop bombs. Their recent tactic is to escalate the war and thus to divert the attention and the limited force of the Liberation Army to different directions. Under these circumstances, all possible precautions should be taken in the unaffected areas. So far as Satkhira was concerned I did not find enough air-raid shelters and the people were passing their time with all sorts of war stories. But paradoxically enough they were not talking about war preparations.

So analysing all these problems it

can be said that the Liberation Army will have to change its technique to guerilla warfare.

#### Guerilla Warfare

That the people of Bangla Desh will have to resort to guerilla technique was stressed long before the fighting started by Maulana Bhasani. The ultra-leftists, including Mohammad Toaha, are also of this opinion. Maulana Bhasani, who in his vast span of life witnessed many political upheavals and is still closely connected with the rural masses of Bangla Desh, says that "liberation will not come through compromise but through bloodshed". One may now ask: if liberation is to come through bloodshed then what is the difference between the recent struggle and that planned by Maulana Bhasani? There is a difference, a very clear and simple difference. Maulana Bhasani who has seen many revolts of the peasantry and working class against the rulers thinks that face-to-face confrontation must be avoided. According to him, failure of those revolts was due to the fact that the participants came in front of the enemy and did not attack him from behind. That is why, early in 1969 when the anti-Ayub movement mounted to its climax, he gave the call of guerilla action. In several meetings he stressed the need of spreading the militant people in small organised groups over the whole country and harass the Basic Democrats, police and the army. Unfortunately, the other political parties except the radical leftists, condemned him. Some of them began to ridicule him as the preacher of "Gherao, Porao, Jalao" politics. It is true that some of those political parties believed at that time that Ayub Khan would arrange elections on the basis of adult franchise and transfer power to the elected representatives. Mohammad Toaha, who was then the General Secretary of the pro-Bhasani National Awami Party, said that Ayub had a different plan in his mind: he would if necessary transfer power to some other military man. Maulana Bhasani also

agreed with Toaha and requested all the political parties to boycott Ayub's Round Table Conference. Toaha and he said that the Round Table Conference was nothing but a plan to gain time for massive preparations or to reset in order the President's house where the possibility of a silent coup d'état was gradually gaining ground. On February 25, 1969 a vast meeting was held at Chiara (Comilla district) where Maulana Bhasani said: "I want to explain why instead of going to Rawalpindi for the 'table' talk, I have come to this distant village of Bengal. In my political career of 65 years I have seen many such conferences. But they did not liberate the peasantry and working class. Actually such conferences were secret ententes between the wealthy natives and the British against the people. The same thing is going to happen today. It is due to popular resistance that President Ayub has agreed to shower some concessions on us. It proves one fact—that if we can intensify our movement, organise it effectively, we shall be liberated soon".

Thus the leftists those days emphasized organised resistance on the basis of guerilla tactics. But their suggestions were not accepted. Even Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who has still much respect in his heart about Maulana Bhasani, was sceptical about the old leader's mental stability and publicly advised him to retire from politics. That he misunderstood Maulana Bhasani soon became clear. Yahya stepped in and replaced Ayub.

#### Split in NAP

It was again on the question of tactics of struggle that the pro-Bhasani NAP suffered disintegration and several small political parties sprang up, including the local Naxalites under the leadership of Toaha. Though Maulana Bhasani himself said that "by elections or conferences the authorities serve their own purpose, they thus get time to sabotage the movement," this time he supported the elections. Toaha left his camp

and organised his own party. Pointing out the path of future struggle, he said: "Today when elections are knocking at the door, the Awami League, the Jamaat-i-Islam, the PDP, the pro-Moscow NAP and others have been posing as the saviours of the common people. They say 'Give me your votes, I shall solve your problems'. These leaders are trying to hide behind the signboards of socialism but they should know that they cannot deceive the people".

In his letter of resignation Toaha condemned Maulana Bhasani; he said: "Maulana Sahib and his disciples have a habit of accusing anybody as an agent of the CIA. He is also accusing me because to me elections and compromise with the authorities are synonymous". Toaha said: "As the NAP is following the same track like others, it will meet the same fate. It is blood and not the ballot which will liberate us."

Although the gap between the two still exists, Bhasani finally followed Toaha. He did not participate in the elections. On the contrary, when the results of the elections were announced, he gave a press statement and said: Mujibur's victory was peoples' victory. It proves that the Bengalis do no longer want to stay under the domination of the west Punjabis. It is high time we started actual struggle to liberate East Bengal.

The attitude of President Yahya Khan and Mr Bhutto made the people suspicious about their sincerity. But they somehow managed to win the faith of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League. There is no doubting the sincerity and patriotism of Mujibur and his followers. To suspect him is to suspect the entire East Bengal. But the fact is that by their class character and political philosophy they are typical centrists who like to lead constitutional agitation with irregular and limited bloodshed. That is why they were hoping against hope. That is why, in spite of taking over the provincial administration in his own hand, Mujibur did not declare independence until

the unprovoked firings at different areas forced him.

But the people, especially the urban and rural poor who have been freed from all illusions about the ruling class, their reactions were well expressed in Maulana Bhasani's statement. On March 21 at a press conference at Panchlaish he said: "Yahya Banglar Dushman. Tar Sathe abar Alap kisher" (Yahya is the enemy of Bengal. What is there to talk to him about again?) He said: "Yahya must accept the demand of complete autonomy for Bengal under the leadership of Mujibur. If he dares refuse I want to make him understand that I shall start a war of liberation, much more fierce than that in Vietnam".

The pro-Bhasani paper *Natun Desh* in its main editorial of March 23 asked Mujibur to answer whether he still favoured non-violence.

It said: "As the wretched victims of cyclone and drought have stretched their hands with expectation for food the dogs from West Pakistan are showering bullets on them.

"As the starving people have become restless, these bastards from West Pakistan are accusing them of being rebels".

"Oh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, we ask you to read thoroughly the history of Pakistan. If you go to the prison you will still find those spots where the greyhounds of West Punjab left Ila Mitra, our girl, bleeding and prostrate. No one can forget the murder of Anwar in Rajshahi prison, no one can forget Shamsujjoha—who died of a bayonet charge. Unforgettable also is the memory of Sergeant Jahar. Can you forget them—answer oh Mujibur?"

"Did the Punjabis ever come to our rescue when we suffered from flood and cyclone?"

"Have you forgotten, Mujibur, their mood during the last cyclone in which lakhs of us died?"

"When with these very bastards you are busy in a mysterious con-

ference, some of them have killed innocent Bengalis at Jaydevpur. Isn't it enough to open your eyes? Isn't it high time for you to rise against them? Oh! Sheikh Mujibur, we are still waiting for you. Come and join with us. We shall crush the bastards of the West."

Mujibur and his men have started the struggle and the whole world has felt its impact. The army of West Pakistan has not yet succeeded against an unarmed people. However, they hope that the Liberation Army will soon collapse from the lack of supply and international support. But those who know well the history of political movements in East Bengal also know that the people have reached a point of no return and will fight to the last. It will really be a test of stamina and sincerity because in course of the fighting the class composition of the leadership will change step by step and the war itself will intensify more and more and a new record of the proletariat's leadership will be set up.

## Across The Border—II

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE dusty track meandering through vegetable gardens and shadowy bamboo groves that ushered us into Bangla Desh would hardly give the impression that we were slipping into a different land—a land in flames. So the first sight of a green jeep flying the Bangla Desh flag and carrying rifle-toting young men in trousers was just thrilling. All over the marketplace one could see tiny flags fluttering atop shops. Clusters of people along the road were discussing the latest position in Jessore up north. A middle-aged man selling *dab* (green coconut) did not understand what all this talk about strategic points was about. "All the khans", he said grimly, "must be finished off. Otherwise they will kill all of us". But what if they don't? I tried to provoke him

into discussion. "No, they will have to go. They have oppressed us far too long". To my question as to the nature of this oppression he had a simple reply. "These khans, you know, buy rice cheaper than us although we produce it here in abundance. Our Karnaphuli paper mills produce paper which my son has to purchase at 14 annas a *dista* (24 sheets) and the khans at 8 annas". A cloth shop owner joined our discussion. "These devils from the west", he said, "fleece us like anything. They would buy jute from our growers at 20 rupees a maund and sell it abroad at Rs 80 and pocket the profit". Similar sentiments, I found later, abound. And no wonder Mujib's Six Points struck sympathetic chords in their hearts.

After looking at my press credentials an Awami League volunteer agreed to take me up to Navarun. Beyond that it would be a risky venture. A street-helmeted soldier of East Pakistan Rifles (EPR) was sitting next to me with his rifle sticking out of the window. "The Punjabi troops in the Jessore cantonment", he said, "were desperate. They are making frantic attempts to break through our encirclement". He was not however very sure if their supply was actually running short. "This morning a PIA Fokker Friendship has managed to land in the airport which is well inside the cantonment. To avoid our anti-aircraft fire the plane just nosedived while landing and zoomed up straight while taking off half an hour later. They must have brought some supplies". In any case after being bottled up in the cantonment for six days the Pakistani army was showing signs of restlessness. About an hour later it was obvious that it was more than restlessness; the army was making determined efforts to cut off the EPR headquarters in Jessore from the southern supply lines nicknamed "the Indira trail".

From Navarun I managed to travel in a supply truck up to Jhikargacha, an important staging area south of Jessore. The driver looked apprehensively at the air-bag I was carrying my cameras in. "I hope there is no bombs inside", he inquired. After

being reassured he explained, "yesterday one bomb exploded in the heat of the overworked engine. These things should never be brought inside a driver's cabin". At Jhikargacha I ran into some young Naxalites from Behala who were actually operating from Navarun. "We have brought our experts", Kesto told me, "and soon the comrades here will be able to pass on the expertise farther into the interior. Although *mashla* (ingredients of bombs) is not readily available here it is cheaper than in India".

A truck was leaving Jhikargacha carrying reinforcement to defend a strategic road-junction—Chachra More—on the outskirts of Jessore town. Just about an hour back Pakistani troops had come out of the cantonment to take up position near an Agricultural Workshop on Chachra More. The EPR commander seemed a bit hesitant to take me with them. "It's a bit too risky now. They are firing mortars in all directions". A bright young boy with a rifle slung on the shoulder intervened and I was finally allowed on the truck. On board the truck I met the Behala Naxalites—five of them. All of them were barefoot, clad in trousers and pyjamas. With their unshaven growth, dusty, dry hair the boys looked tired. But once the discussion started their faces lit up. One of them was carrying a gun, another two hand-grenades, and the rest had nothing. They hoped to get some from the battlefield. "Why do you need to cross over to Bangla Desh for a fight?", I asked. Kesto's reply was prompt. "The fight here is important because we'll have an excellent rear area". The bright chap with the rifle, Nazrul, who is a student of the Jessore Government College and a member of the East Pakistan Communist Party (ML), added, "besides, the struggle here has reached a higher stage. Full-scale armed struggle against the military dictatorship is the beginning of the struggle for socialism".

### Question of Time

Nazrul had noticed my uneasiness at the care-free, almost chaotic situa-

tion prevailing at Jhikargacha. "The position in Pabna, Rajshahi and Rangpur is much better. There our party had time to organize. But this is a question of time. We have widespread support in Jessore district and I am sure we will be able to organize it effectively." He had no idea where their leaders Toaha and Huq were. But the contact between different units of the party, he claimed, was not lost after Yahya's offensive. Nazrul was very sure that in the fight they are now waging unitedly EPCP-(ML) would be able to maintain its lead. "People now have seen how correct we were in giving a call for boycott of election. Besides, the fact that our party chose to go underground and prepare for armed struggle places us in a better position". "But doesn't Chinese silence (China has broken her silence after that) weaken your credibility with the people knowing as they do your loyalty to the CPC", I asked. Nazrul paused a while. "The record of unstinted Chinese support to national liberation wars is too well known to be doubted. We are cocksuck the Chinese moral support will be behind our struggle. The present silence is tactical and, in a way welcome. The moment China openly supports our struggle the reactionary governments now helping it for reasons of their own would cut off all the lines. And given the general lack of organization and supply we cannot perhaps immediately forgo the help. So public support from China", Nazrul said with a smile, "will at the moment be more of a liability than an asset". It seemed to me that he was overstretching his arguments to defend the Chinese stance. Chinese policy towards Pakistan has perhaps more to do with the US-Soviet-India triangle against China than the infancy or unpreparedness of the struggle in East Bengal. A bearded youth in lungi and carrying a rifle was from the same college as Nazrul. "Where did you get your arms from?" Nazrul replied, "on the morning of the 26th some of our student comrades went to Jessore police station and just took them away. The Bengali O.C. did not object". But they had no car-

tridge belt. The bearded chap, Anwar, was carrying cartridges in a *gamchha* tied round his waist.

The truck jerked into a halt. Mortar shells landed about half a mile away with a loud explosion. The rattle of machine-gun fire was coming from near by. "Our forces are replying", Anwar tried to reassure me. For a moment EPR and Ansar fighters were at a loss. Nazrul took the lead. Jumping out of the truck he waived others and took up a lying position behind the shrubbery along the road. And the rest followed suit. Again a volley of machine-gun fire. Yet another explosion of mortar shell. I was taken into the driver's cabin. The Ansar commander told me that Chachra More was ahead. The way the Pakistani soldiers were shelling, it would be foolish to try to go farther along the road in a truck. We would rather try to go to the western part of the town still under the Mukti Foj by a *Kuccha* road running through Manirampur from where the road is again metalled.

Turning right the truck took a plunge into a bumpy road. The swirl of dust it left behind blurred the view of those intense young men and EPR soldiers lying on their belly and trying to figure out enemy positions. Villagers rushed to the road to greet the truck flying the Bangla Desh flag. In almost all the villages the people came forward with *dabs* and home-made bread they have collected for the Mukti Foj. They have not yet started leaving the village but they anxiously enquired how far away were the khans. As the truck laden with foodstuff moved out they shouted "Jai Bangla".

As we approached the town of Jessore the sky was overcast with monsoonish clouds. Hundreds of people—women, children and the old—were trudging along the road with their belongings—tin trunks and beddings folded into a mat. We stopped to ask what had happened. A boy with a drawn face said, "the khans are coming. They are killing everybody". All these families were from the villages on the southern and eastern outskirts of the town. A huge column of smoke was rising

from the northern horizon.

As we passed the Khulna bus stand "more" and approached the town we found one soldier frantically waiving us to go back. In a row of trenches fifty yards away from the road EPR fighters were waiting for the enemy troops to show up on the road. The Ansar commander gravely said, "that means Yahya's forces are planning to occupy all the road junctions south of the town and encircle our EPR headquarters". The truck again turned right and hacking through a dangerous dust-track we reached the Jessore station. Darkness was fast descending on the scene enveloped in storm clouds. There was an eerie silence all around, heightened still more by occasional gusts of wind blowing through tall mangoe trees. I was lodged in an empty quarters of a poultry farm near the station. Hardly had I stepped into the room, strewn with left-overs—household equipment, quilt and utensils—when two shells exploded with loud report. It was close enough to be worried. As evening wore on the rattle of machine-guns and rifles seemed to be getting more and more intense. I found EPR men carrying a small cannon tied to a jeep. The battle was really hotting up. I didn't know what to do. The whole area was deserted. Suddenly the young chap Haider who had boarded the truck on our way to Jessore for a lift showed up. "Yahya's army", he said, "as one EPR men told me, is pressing very hard towards the Khulna Bus stand "more". We must leave this place before it's too late".

#### "Just Hell"

So again I was on the road. This time on foot. As we started walking towards Manirampur across dry paddy field the clouds cleared. In the darkness we could see flashes of exploding shells on the horizon of the town we were leaving behind. After walking about four miles we reached the metalled road leading to Manirampur. We stopped a jeep on its way to Manirampur and had a perilous perch on the bonnet. The jeep was packed with members of two families fleeing from Jessore. I asked

Mr Das about the situation in the town. "Oh, don't ask me. It's just hell. The way the Pakistani army burnt houses and shot innocent people is just inconceivable. After they were beaten back we chose to stay. But now it's impossible". Mr Das seemed very sceptical of the fighting ability of Mujahids and Ansars. "Thanks to the Naxalites, the Mukti Fouj has still been holding out in many areas", he said. He was, I believe, exaggerating the low fighting spirit of the Mujahids. Of course, I myself have seen Mujahids leaving the battlefield near Jessore station in a hurry, but I have also seen them going forward courageously to meet the enemy near Chachra More.

I was dropped off in a village on the way. I contacted the Awami League office and it promptly arranged for dinner. Rice and some dry *gost*. I talked for hours with the local Awami League leader. He confessed that his party had not been able to provide effective leadership in the struggle. Of the four Members of the Provincial Assembly and the National Assembly from Jessore district one has been arrested, two have gone to India with their families. Only one leader whose family has been killed by the army is organizing supplies for the Mukti Fouz. He smiled in embarrassment. "You see, our party was not prepared for armed struggle. People took our party's candidature to become MPAs and MNAs, not to become commanders". But he was sure that they will be able to overcome the initial reverses and win final victory. "What about Chinese recognition"? He said that they were a bit confused at the silence of the big powers. Another young man intervened: "after all a liberation war has never received world recognition in a week". That was really an interesting point. The very fact that a liberation movement is clamouring for recognition after ten days of struggle is a reflection on the strength and maturity of the leadership.

Around 11-30 a.m. on tall, sharp man in *lingi*, with a rifle slung from his shoulder, came to have a chat with

me. He did not disclose his identity but later on I discovered that he was one of the top leaders of the NAP (Bhasani group). He was extremely critical of Mujib for having allowed Yahya to strengthen his position by conducting talks for days together. "He is to be held responsible for this unnecessary loss of human life. Life, the Maulana has told us again and again, has to be laid down for liberation, but not in this fashion. Unless we wage villagebased guerilla war we have to suffer heavy casualties without any tangible result". He admit-

ted that their party too was not yet very organized, on that line. The Maulana is revered and thousands flock to listen to his speech but that nebulous support is yet to be organized. "The people's feeling against exploitation is not yet matched by the desire to sacrifice. It takes time and we can wait". Meanwhile, he said, they would continue to fight shoulder to shoulder with all other elements. Although he came to talk to me in private, he was, I noticed on the best of terms with Awami League people and seemed to command their respect.

## Storm In The East

SISIR K. MAZUMDAR

**B**ENGAL is bleeding, both East and West, from the wounds of the colonial subjugation of Islamabad and Delhi. Pakistan is the product of our misguided independence movement aiming at the establishment of the neo-colonialism of Anglo-American imperialism through the transfer of administrative power to the national exploiters. The Indian National Congress had no political birth—it was more a club of upper class intelligentsia and anti-national landlords, presided over by the alien rulers. The British Governor-General used to address the annual party of the Congress, a practice which was stopped in 1896. Frankly speaking, the main purpose of the Congress was to oppose class struggle and to act covertly as the agent of imperialism. The Congress during the freedom struggle was an umbrella under which social democrats, communalists, religious dogmatists, capitalists and aimless liberals could coexist and flourish. This was a cardinal feature of the Congress since 1920. The Muslim League, on the other hand, was a conglomeration of feudal landlords, their lackeys and religious obscurantists, acting as the executive organ of British diplomacy regarding India—the policy of "Divide and Rule".

Of the discrimination practised ever since the birth of Pakistan on the

basis of the two-nation theory, let us look at the arithmetic for the eastern and western wings respectively.

(1) Revenue expenditure — 1,500 crores and 5,000 crores (rupees).

(2) Development expenditure — 3,000 crores and 6,000 crores.

(3) Foreign aid — 20 per cent and 80 per cent.

(4) Foreign import — 25 per cent and 75 per cent.

(5) Central Government Service — 15 per cent and 85 per cent.

(6) Appointment in Armed Forces — 10 per cent and 90 per cent.

Prices of daily commodities in the two wings are deliberately different. Stable food like rice sells at Rs. 50 per maund in the east but it is Rs. 25 per maund in the west; mustard oil is Rs 5 per seer in the east and Rs 2-50 in the west. Gold is sold at Rs 175 per tola in the east while it is Rs 130 in the west.

The East is now burning. Crisis in constitution-making is leading to the cracking of the two-nation theory. Pakistan today is just like a house of cards. It may crumble any time.

The chronological history of constitution-making in Pakistan has been a callous chronicle of conspiracy, sabotage and blackmailing. A constituent assembly was proposed in March 1949 and the draft committee presented an interim draft constitution on February 28, 1950 followed

by the declaration of fundamental rights on December 22, 1952. This formed the basis of the general election in East Bengal in 1954 when the ruling Muslim League was routed—it got only 7 out of 309 seats in the provincial assembly. This was the first popular outburst of East Bengal against the tyranny of West Pakistan. East Bengal constitutes 56% of the total population of Pakistan and adoption of universal adult franchise would have naturally given it a dominating position in guiding the affairs of the Central Government. This hard fact rocked the citadel of reaction in the western wing. Consequently, the then Governor-General, Gholam Mohammed, differed with the Constituent Assembly and dismissed the constitutionally elected Prime Minister, Khwaza Nazimuddin, and appointed Mohammed Ali of Bogra (then the Pakistani Ambassador in Washington) as Prime Minister. Political power passed silently from popular hands to the bureaucracy, thereby paving the way for military coup. In 1956, a republican constitution was framed in six months' time. Pakistan was declared an Islamic Republic on March 22, 1956 with a central parliament having an equal number of members from both the eastern and the western part. The concept of one man-one vote was ignored and the demand for joint electorate and provincial autonomy for East Bengal rejected. Herein lies the root of the present upsurge in East Bengal. The struggle continued. President Iskander Mirza suspended the 1956 constitution and took over the entire State power. The self-styled Field Marshal Ayub Khan captured power through an army coup on October 27, 1958. It was then his turn to play the trick. He appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Chief Justice Shahabuddin on February 17, 1960 to draft a constitution. The committee suggested universal adult franchise as the basis of election, which was unacceptable to the military dictator. Himself a wonderful innovator, he discovered 'basic democracy'. This prescribed a 156-member strong central legislature with equal representation of

both the eastern and western wings elected through an electoral college of sixty thousand Basic Democrats from each wing. A real mockery of bourgeois democracy!

The popular upsurge of 1968 threw Ayub out of power after a decade of misrule and General Yahya Khan appeared on the scene.

The explosive anger and militant disenchantment in East Bengal against the exploiting regime at Islamabad was bound to turn into active popular resistance and not passive retreat to the corridors of conciliation and compromise. The vote had already served the limited purpose of mobilising the masses against the colonial regime of Islamabad; the attitude of the people was known through their verdict. If taken any further, it would have dampened the revolutionary spirit of the masses as it has done on this side of the Padma in the past two decades. Though radical on the surface, one did smell reformism and class collaborationism in the Six-Point programme. Reactionaries on the retreat might have come back if electionism was pursued.

In a Marxist definition of a nation, as clearly stated by Stalin, Pakistan cannot be a nation because of the geographical discontinuity, dissimilar language, variant culture, antagonistic tradition and different ethnical history and the struggle for autonomy was bound to change into a liberation struggle. What was needed was resistance to the bourgeois lust for power and intensification of the class struggle on the mass front.

Western-style democracy is a hoax. It devalues man, it denigrates the human spirit, it no longer offers any salvation to those who are struggling for liberation in the semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Bourgeois democratic revolution, as it is called, failed in the China of Sun Yat-sen; it failed tragically in Africa; it failed in India to solve the basic problems. It could not succeed in Pakistan in spite of or despite the so-called Six-Point programme. Preparation for the revolutionary seizure of State power was the need of the hour and

it called for revolutionary violence. Non-violence and non-cooperation are Gandhian methods to mislead the masses, to sabotage class struggle, to prevent man from knowing his inherent potentiality. Men and ideas are always stronger than weapons.

The reactionary clique of Islamabad should remember that the empires of yesterday have gone into oblivion and those of today are bringing about their own downfall.

## Calcutta Diary

GYAN KAPUR

IN spite of natural affinities between East and West Bengal, so little of what was happening over the border actually was known on this side, that the explosion, when it came, was a stunning experience. What had been expected was perhaps outlawing of the Awami League with arrests and protracted civil disobedience movement. That East Bengal would take the final plunge and decide to fight for its independence was a thing which most found it hard to believe as a likely event. For the truth unfortunately is that if the Muslims of undivided India had been sold the two-nation theory, the other buyer, of course, was the Hindu. To the average Hindu there was hardly any difference between a Muslim and a Pakistani. The course of events in East Bengal, therefore, have been traumatic to the rulers of India no less than those of Pakistan. Through bitter experience over the years the people of East Bengal have gradually learnt the hollowness of the two-nation theory. Their common religion with the West Pakistanis has actually become the strongest chain of their economic slavery and exploitation which ultimately they decided to sever.

The first flush of excitement is already over and cold calculation has taken over. With memories of the bloody riots in Calcutta and Lahore in 1946 and 1947, it was overwhelm-

ing to listen to the radio station of independent Bangla Desh appealing for recognition by India and help from this country. The wheel has turned full circle and it was up to us to remove it and throw it upon the dunghill of history, burying forever the two-nation theory.

There has been tremendous upsurge in not only Calcutta and West Bengal but all over the country. Here we have had another 24-hour bandh to show our sympathy for the fighting people of Bengal. By the way, the bandh appears to have become a sort of conditioned reflex to all sorts of things we dislike. As far as sympathy for Bangla Desh was concerned, there was no one who did not feel strongly on the issue. Whom then was the bandh supposed to impress? With one State Assembly after another passing resolutions of sympathy and even recommending to the Centre to recognise Bangla Desh, it was nothing but a futile gesture with little purpose. Even the Gandhites among the sponsors cannot have hoped that idling away the day at home would soften the hearts of Yahya Khan and his killers.

Cruel as it may appear, already there are signs that events in East Bengal are being examined by different parties with an eye to what political capital can be made out of it. The response of the people of West Bengal and more particularly the youth has been spontaneous. In their own way they have been trying to collect funds and help their brothers across the border. For the first time perhaps in any bandh, there was little playing on the streets on March 31. The youth were busy otherwise in raising collections for East Bengal. Many of them have already delivered what little they could over the border and even brought over some youth leaders to this side the better to plead their cause.

There are reliable reports of even Government officials taking a hand in the matter of unofficially arranging supplies much needed across the border. But all this can only be a drop in the ocean of need. A multiplicity

of individuals or organizations cannot but merely touch the fringe of the problem. Of any such joint action there are hardly any signs. It is unfortunately a fact that there has been no demand jointly from the legislators of West Bengal for the recognition of Bangla Desh though a similar has been made by many State Assemblies. The West Bengal State Assembly, of course, is not in session and no one knows when it will meet. But it should not have been difficult to prepare a joint statement on behalf of all elected members given the will.

After the resolutions have been passed, the typical bania mentality of waiting for the right moment to strike a bargain has taken over in New Delhi. West Bengal could do its bit to shake New Delhi out of its complacency. The Congress(R), however, has never had it so good for a long time. The wave of Bengali nationalism which is sweeping over the State, encouraged by the Calcutta Station of AIR in a massive build-up, goes in its favour. This wave has swept everything before it. The foisting of Mr Ajoy Mukherji as the Chief Minister while leading a decimated party has gone practically unnoticed. And the CPM, who were expected to launch a 24 or 48 hour bandh for not being given the chance to form the Ministry, are forced to hold their hands, judging rightly the mood of the people.

Even if half of what is reported of happenings in East Bengal is correct, My Lai was nothing compared to what Yahya's hordes are doing. In fact the aims and results are Assyrian, the only means employed being modern American. Perhaps history will repeat itself. The invaders of East Bengal in all probability are themselves descended from the regions where the Assyrians held sway. In spite of their systematic killings, the Assyrians themselves ultimately were wiped out. We are sure the same thing will happen in the end to their modern counterparts. But presently they have all the arms and modern weapons of destruction and

killings. Unless the East Bengal people are helped and in time, even if finally they prevail it can only be at the cost of immense human sacrifice. And once the neo-Assyrians of West Pakistan start getting an upper hand, the thin trickle of refugees from across the border will become a deluge.

Such an influx of refugees this State cannot under any circumstances bear in her present state of tottering economy. All sentiment apart, it is a matter of life and death to West Bengal that the fighting should not go in favour of West Pakistan and its killers should be brought to bay as soon as possible. For this, the first step is recognition of Bangla Desh as soon as its Government can be contacted and secondly helping them with the needed supplies, particularly of modern weapons as far as possible. Any other course would be suicidal for West Bengal and finally the whole of India. The hand of friendship proffered by Bangla Desh, if not seized right now, may be withdrawn never to be offered again.

## The Choice In Orissa

PRAFULLA KUMAR SENAPATY

FIFTH March, 1971 voted Congress(R) to power at the Centre with a confident and overwhelming majority, while in Orissa the people's verdict in favour of the Congress (R) was not decisive. Although it got more seats than any other party, it did not have the requisite strength to form the ministry by itself. Next to Congress(R), whose strength has risen from 7 to 51 thanks to the backseat driving of the CPI, stand Swatantra, Utkal Congress etc. The CPI and PSP have suffered serious losses—the former is down from 7 to 4 and the latter from 21 to 4, their lost seats having been captured by the Congress(R). These two parties have paid a price for what is called opportunism in politics. The CPI(M) has increased its strength

from one to two by keeping out of such obnoxious politics and by commanding a grass-roots leadership.

The failure of the PSP and the CPI, the latter now degenerating into a social democratic party, is due to their somersaults in the elections. It was expected that election experiences would make the CPI realise that lying prostrate at the feet of the Congress would merely end in strengthening the Congress, without saving them from the disaster which is the inevitable result of a line of opportunism, betrayal and surrender to the Congress. The election-oriented land-grab movement, mouthing sterile catchwords from the revised editions of Marx and Lenin, would pay no dividends. But the post-election gestures of the Dangeites show that they still persist in playing the role of rearguard of Mrs Gandhi's party. Her blunt refusal to enter into any electoral adjustment with the CPI was no lesson for the latter in correctly assessing the character of her party. Even after the election rout the CPI can afford to honeymoon with Congress(R) in West Bengal, at the cost of the people of the province and at its own cost. Here, in Orissa, when Mr Mahatab, now made helmsman of the Orissa until of Congress(R), picks up his bandwagon to forge the ministry, the CPI, most obsequiously, found itself there. The CPI leaders were even in raptures when the formation of the ministry under Mahatab's leadership looked a near certainty. Like the masochistic wife who is happier the more she is tortured by her husband, the CPI, the more its stability and strength dwindle for its link with the Congress, the more it goes down on its knees before it.

In the elections, wherever the CPI has won, it was due to the grace and mercy of Congress(R). For example, the parliamentary seat in Bhanjanagar. Wherever it has lost, it has, due to merciless kicking from the Congress(R). For example, the assembly seat in Cuttack and the parliamentary seat in Puri. Its isolation from the masses, the students and

the youths and its incapacity to maintain a separate identity in politics have made it a running dog of the Congress(R).

The hope that the hated leadership of Mahatab would be buried for all time to come has now been belied. Mahatab, after he was declared the helmsman of the party, flew to Delhi to apprise the leadership there of the political developments in Orissa and of the prospects of forming a ministry. In the meanwhile, the Swatantra, the Utkal Congress and the Jharkhand, united under the leadership of Biswanath Das, have sent their names to the Governor, seeking his permission to install a ministry. Whether they succeed or not, that is a different matter. If they succeed, it must be recognised as the unambiguous triumph of feudal lords, mischievous bureaucrats and the miscreant police thugs and the concept that these three categories of people stand for.

The unhappy choice is between the Congress and its retainers under the leadership of Mr Mahatab or Swatantra plus its myrmidons under the leadership of Mr Das.

April 3, 1971

## That Case Again

BY A CORRESPONDENT

FIFTEEN months is a long time for public memory in a country where public memory is proverbially short. Who remembers Ananta Singh, one of the architects of the Chittagong Armoury Raid which shook one part of the British Empire in 1930 but now a 'brigand' supposed to be under trial? He was arrested over a year back, on January 10, and the case against him was "crystal clear" according to statements made at a press conference held by four top officers of the Police department.

But despite this crystals transparency his trial has not started yet. Since his arrest in January 1970 and his detention without trial Mr Singh had made several bail prayers before

the lower courts and the High Court, and all these prayers were rejected. In the third week of October, 1970 he had a serious heart attack. The jail authorities had to remove him to the S. S. K. M. Hospital where he had to remain for nearly three months under intensive medical treatment. While in hospital he moved one more prayer for bail before the High Court, on January 6, 1971. This also was rejected although no reason was given for the rejection. But at the time of rejecting the prayer, the judge, having obtained a definite assurance from the prosecution lawyer, passed an order to the effect that the trial must begin without further delay, and it must begin with those accused who present themselves before the court and their case should be split up from the case of the absconders and others who cannot be brought before the court.

On the strength of this High Court order Mr Singh's advocate pressed the Tribunal to start the trial forthwith. But the Tribunal judge said he could not hold the trial as directed by the High Court because in that case the prosecution would be unable to include Mr Singh in a case of conspiracy. As the defence advocate deemed this attitude to be contempt against the High Court, he filed a petition before the High Court and the High Court reiterated its earlier order and said the Tribunal had to abide by it.

In fact Mr Singh's case has reached a stage unheard of in the field of criminal jurisprudence. Has anyone ever heard of any case in which the public prosecutor makes a petition before the trying judge requesting him to ask the accused whether the accused (Mr Singh) is prepared to co-operate with the prosecution so that the prosecution may be helped to conduct the trial? Yet such a petition has really been made and the Tribunal President was obliged to have the petition recorded.

Again, has anyone ever heard of any accused in custody refusing to appear before the court to face trial? Yet some of the accused did so because they professed themselves to be

'Naxals' without respect for bourgeois courts of law. The Tribunal President showed a good deal of respect for their feeling and political faith and did not begin the trial. Under the circumstance and also because of his ill-health Mr Singh moved for bail before the High Court. According to the order of the High Court the Tribunal trial ought to have started immediately. But this time Providence helped the Tribunal. Several undertrial prisoners escaped from the Presidency Jail (Not Alipore Central Jail where Ananta Singh is detained). Now how can the trial start (in spite of the High Court's order) until the escapees are re-arrested? Undertrial prisoners escape from jail custody thanks to the negligence of the governmental autho-

rity, but for that Mr Singh has to suffer detention without trial for some more months. This is justice.

Thanks to the combined drive of our newspapers and the police Ananta Singh is an ordinary criminal in the eyes of the people. An ordinary criminal—yet he cannot be tried in an ordinary court of law. For him it has to be a special court, the Tribunal.

The Tribunal was set up in June 1970 and "speedy trial" was supposed to be the main purpose of the Tribunal. It is the end of March 1971 and Mr Singh stays where he was. He is now 70 years of age and seriously ill. Will the rulers keep on marking time, banking on the mortality of men? Why is the 'crystal clear' crime being hidden from the public?

Russians had been in the cold war for so long! My pilot neighbour went out, saying that unless he hurried, there would be no vodka left in the shops. Another neighbour came in, a woman of about 28; she kissed us all lustily and noisily by way of greeting and said the old woman who had broken the news to her over the telephone had so sobbed at the beginning that she thought war had begun! (On June 22, 1941, announcing the German invasion, Molotov had wept).

Work went on. Radio people were very busy. They brought people from all walks of life before the microphone. Telephone messages from world capitals were read out. At twelve-o'clock a photograph of the astronaut was shown on television. In between announcements triumphant music filled the room; lusty voices sang glory to Soviet Russia. A large number of students gathered at the Red Square at midday. The sun was up, rather shocked at man's daring and impudence.

There were moments of tension in every home. Would he be able to come back? There was so much certainty about the radio announcement, but one can never tell. Then the message was flashed—Major Gagarin had landed, he had conveyed his greetings to the Soviet Government, Party and the people. Everyone felt as if a near and dear one had come back from a thrilling, perilous journey. The official message to the peoples of the world recounted the hard journey the Soviet Union had made since 1917, but the pride was so legitimate that even the most carping did not mind.

When I went to office people were getting down to work after lunch. They must have talked themselves out while eating. They seldom referred to the news of the century, and as I scratched my head thinking of the right word to use in translating a particular sentence by Gorki, I wondered at my taciturn Soviet colleagues.

Outside, things were different. They had let themselves go in the Red Square. There were so many

## The First Man In Space

S. S.

*(This was written ten years ago, in Moscow).*

WE expected it to happen on the eve of May Day. But rumours had been going round. On April 11 my daughter heard at school that a man had gone up and was due back any moment. People had been projecting their hopes, without pausing to distinguish between dream and reality.

The morning of April 12 was rather dull. After a spell of light and warmth it had snowed again the previous evening. Winter, reluctant to part, had spread her white mantle. We did not like the cold austere look of the city, more so because at home there was no hot water. The repairers were busy. In the next room, the radio was on, but it didn't hamper my work. (One gets used to it; since people pay a fixed rate for the radio, they keep it on, sometimes even when they go on long leave). At ten-o'clock, the announcer asked people to stand by for an important announcement. At the beginning, he was serious, almost solemn, but

when he quoted Gagarin as saying that he was feeling fine, one could not but smile at the note of amused delight in his voice. He repeated the announcement at short intervals and then kept the listeners in touch with the cosmic journey, quoting the latest messages from Gagarin.

I rang up my office. Do I have to go there today after lunch as arranged earlier? Will they work? They said Gagarin was beyond their reach, but I wasn't; and people with ground under their feet must work.

My neighbour, a blue-eyed pilot of 48, came in. He was so flushed and agitated that he could hardly speak. He said he knew it was coming, he knew that seven persons had been trained for cosmic flight. Even then, when the announcement came, he was overwhelmed. When I congratulated the Russians, he said it was a victory for mankind. There was no trace of chauvinism in his voice or manner. I have more than once seen and wondered how the average Russian keeps his human dignity at moments that would intoxicate other people with a heady sense of power: After all, the

people that vehicular traffic had to be diverted. People crowded the stores to buy materials for rejoicing at home. Then they ate, drank and sang, they danced, they looked out of the window at the looming firmament which did not seem so distant now.

Forty years ago, when Russia was in ruins and hungry, Lenin signed a document saying that in the shortest possible time conditions must be created for Academician Pavlov and his co-workers to carry on their scientific work. This was the first time in history, says *Izvestia*, that a new society declared that its development was inseparable from the progress of science, from the knowledge and exploitation of Nature.

There was then a great chasm between the declaration and reality. But the will was there, the collective order had begun to function. Designs for giant hydroelectric stations were made, new methods of iron and steel production were tried and education spread among the people. Despite the civil war, economic dislocation and the Second World War, Russia went ahead. There were errors, aberrations, violations of human rights. But there was a core of sanity, there was the will to develop without which there can be no development. The man of steel did not flinch, his devotion to certain basic values was unquestioned. Though his name was not mentioned once in the past few days, many remembered him. To be afraid to name him is a legacy of the past, a legacy which still cramps the Soviet people.

We carp at several things in the

*Frontier* is sold by

PROLETARIAT BOOK

AGENCIES

22/6, S. B. Raha Lane,

Asansol

APRIL 10, 1971

Soviet Union. But her total achievement in the past 43 years is astonishing. To dismiss it as a chance occurrence would be stupid. The Russians themselves point out that the progress of science is not an isolated thing, in their country it is part of a complex and integrated leap forward, in which the basic and collective intelligence of the masses plays no mean part. The construction of spaceships requires manysided intelligence.

#### Gagarin Smile

What is the first astronaut—they call him cosmonaut here—like? Heroes do disappoint, and Gagarin at his first appearance at the Red Square seemed formal and mechanical; it seems he had been tutored to be a mouthpiece of the Party. But the first impressions of a foreigner are likely to be wrong. We saw a different Gagarin at the Press conference. He is well-knit, a featherweight by Russian standards, and not tall; he does not look his age; he has a pleasant voice and a smile that is already known in Russian homes as the Gagarin smile. He is modest, extremely intelligent, has a sense of humour. He is typical of Russian nerves and daring and a legend of our time.

Another person who was most impressive at the Press conference was the President of the Academy of Sciences, Prof Nesmyanov. He belongs to a generation that came of age during the days of the Czar, made friends with the Revolution and devoted itself to Soviet society. He is precise, businesslike, pleasant, and his wit can be acid at times. He has the finesse of the old generation and the humanity of the new. (In May, 1961 Prof Nesmeyanov was replaced by Academician Keldysh).

When Gagarin came back from his unusual journey, his two-year-old daughter asked if papa had brought a little star with him. On the 12th, to people intoxicated with happiness, the query seemed quite natural. We were on the verge of a new era, an era of stupendous scientific achieve-

ment and human welfare. But on the 15th, it is said here, the little Miss Kennedy asked if papa had brought her that 'sugarcuba'.

We have been on the verge of disaster so many times in the past and we are so much excited by "Vostok" at the moment that we believe the danger will pass. Meanwhile, all over the Soviet Union, meetings are being held to condemn the U.S. aggression (the Bay of Pigs incident). Newspapers have carried editorials declaring that the Soviet people are on the side of Castro. Newborns have been named Fidelina. Disappointment with Kennedy knows no bounds: What Eisenhower did not do, Kennedy has allowed to happen. People will not believe that it takes time to check the Dulles-Eisenhower momentum.

PLACE A REGULAR ORDER  
FOR YOUR

## FRONTIER

*Subscription Rates*

### INLAND

Six Months	..	Rs.	8.25
One year	..	Rs.	16.50
Five Years	..	Rs.	75.00
Seven years	..	Rs.	100.00

### Foreign AIR MAIL Rates (One Year)

Europe: Rs. 120 or 15 dollars

Asia: Rs. 88 or 11 dollars

America: Rs. 168 or 21 dollars

By Surface Mail

All countries: Rs. 40 or 5 dollars

Long-term Subscriptions will

help the weekly.

# Marxism And Ethics

ARJUN BANDYOPADHYAY

AS a world perspective and a definite philosophy of life Marxism must examine all types of human activity and problems—social, economic, political and also aesthetic, religious and ethical. But for some avoidable as well as unavoidable reasons it did not fulfil all its tasks. There are the profound writings of Lenin and others but Marxism definitely lacked something which was essential for a total world view. Marxists could answer the socio-economic-political questions more or less coherently but regarding matters like ethics etc. the development was practically nil. Of course there have been exceptions, Antonio Gramsci or, in a limited sphere, Georg Lukacs. After the 20th Congress of the CPSU a reaction set in towards re-examination of Marxism and of the old philosophical themes of freedom, man, alienation etc. But if the Stalinist period, in spite of its outstanding achievements had made Marxism dwarfish, the new development has emptied it of "Marxism". Marx, Engels, Lenin and others struggled ceaselessly against a merely idealist and humanist interpretation, a tendency very much perceptible now among non-communist as well as communist intellectuals. Eugene Kamenka's *Marxism and Ethics*\* is an example. His emphasis on Marx's early works reminds us of the fact that "since the 1930s Marx's early works have been a war-horse for petty bourgeois intellectuals in their struggle against Marxism".

In the introduction Kamenka says "Marx himself wrote nothing substantial or systematic on the problems of ethical theory or moral philosophy

as such ; his disciples, beginning with Engels, have distinguished themselves in the field mainly by philosophical dilettantism and consequent naivete". Nevertheless the materialist conception of history, modified, reinterpreted, 'diluted' to a sociological naturalism, can be used to develop an internally consistent relativist or subjectivist view of ethics. On this view, moralities would be ideologies in the strict Marxist sense. The concept of the free man is the basis of Marxist ethics, philosophy and ultimately the whole of social science. In the formative years of his life, between 1841 and 1845, Marx formulated a doctrine that represented as worked out a position on ethical philosophy as he ever reached and according to Kamenka it remained implicit in the rest of his work. The presupposition and the true end of ethics, of philosophy, of all human activities, is the free man. Man is potentially the only subject in a world of objects and anything that turns him into an object, subordinates him to powers outside himself, is inhuman. To Marx, the inhuman self-abasement is (self) alienation and estrangement or, later, fetishism and dehumanisation. Ethics for Marx is concerned with freedom and freedom means human self-determination, it means that man is governed by his own nature and its requirements and by that alone. Man's nature consists of a set of potentialities ; freedom allows him to go about that task of realising them to the full. It enables him to subordinate nature and his environment to his will to realise himself in work and in his intercourse with others instead of subordinating himself to demands confronting him as alien requirements, as limitations on his being and not as fulfilment of it. Not only that,

Marxism, according to Kamenka, is one of the versions of the cult of perfectibility of man and progress in history. Marx is influenced through Hegel and other sources of scholastic logic when he portrays man as the unconditioned being. It is from scholastic logic that he gets the notion that the self-sufficient, the self-determined, the always active is morally superior to the conditioned, the determined, the passive.

## *Alienation*

With all these is linked Marx's concept of alienation. Alienation, for Marx, occurs when man falls into servitude to and dependence upon his own powers or the institutions and goods he has himself created. In a bourgeois society alienation takes place in four ways ; (a) man is alienated from the things he produces and his labour producing them, (b) from other men through competitive character of the economic system based on private property which forces everybody to live at someone else's expense and which divides men into classes ; (c) from nature and (d) from society as the expression of social, collective power. Man's dignity requires the overcoming of these situations. Morality here is not a question of rules but a question of habits. Truly moral habits can only arise when man is free from these alienations. True morality, in fact, is what free, rational, self-determined men acting without external compulsions would do. Before that man's development is development in the period of alienation. In this period moralities are sectoral, class bound, conflicting, dependent on economic interests, not truly ethical, truly human. In this system man cannot become the subject of ethics. His moralities are not the expression of his humanity but reactions to his inhuman conditions. The theoretical life of this period reflects the material life : the abstract sciences, traditional philosophy, economics and ethics deal with man or human activity in isolation.

\**Marxism and Ethics*

E. Kamenka  
Macmillan & Co. Ltd. Price 9 sh.

They subject man to laws that are outside himself. Practically the contradictions of capitalism are not just mere signs of impending collapse but also systems of its inhumanity; of its failure to make the free man.

### Marx's Roots

According to Kamenka, Marx's own ethical impulse stems from Rousseau and Kant and the ethics of German romanticism; his roots lie in an important ethical and intellectual tradition and it was Marx who pointed the way to a sociology of morals, to the recognition of moral codes and moral principles as social products, framed in specific social contents derived from human activities and human and social demands. He has thus greatly increased our sophistication in talking about morals and he has enabled others—sociologists, anthropologists and psychologists—to increase it further. Not only that, Marx's sensitivity to history and to social questions is invaluable to the moral philosopher in putting questions regarding the precise social or human empirical contents of various moralities, types of ethical cooperation etc. But according to Kamenka, in the field of ethics Marx himself may be regarded as a social critic rather than a moral philosopher; his attention was devoted primarily to the lack of correspondence between social reality and alleged moral ideas. . . . His followers have on the whole maintained the habit of confusing problems of moral philosophy with problems of social reform. They claim as a virtue, instead of recognising as a theoretical defect, that they devote their attention to conditions that stand in the way of human happiness instead of asking precisely what happiness means." More precisely, Marx's "primitive" ethic is utopian and involves certain fundamental logical confusions. Moreover, alienation is not a logical concept or a category on which a theory of ethics can be founded without further examination and analysis. In Marx and neo-

Marxists it is a moral advocative term, deriving its force from moral assumptions it does not seriously examine, and from the disparity between existing social conditions and some of the hopes and expectations born of the optimism of the scientific and industrial revolutions. More important, according to Kamenka, is Marx's materialist conception of history: it has had a seriously stultifying effect on the further working out of such a philosophy, especially among the Marxists, and as much in the field of ethics as anywhere else. Here Kamenka accuses Engels heavily: it was he who said that all truth is relative. There is a contradiction between Marx's ultimate morality or an ultimate moral end and the materialist interpretation of history according to which there are no ethical truths, only moral outlooks of a definite social group in a definite period. Marxist writers including Engels reduce ethics to politics and import into ethical discussion the techniques characteristic of the political agitator (of course according to Kamenka there are some points of ethical interest suggested by the materialist interpretation of history: for example, the suggestion that moralities and moral demands are not those of individuals or groups of individuals but the demands and requirements of the productive process or of a social activity which carries with it certain norms in which people are caught up as part of carrying on the activity and which they come to accept as their own. But this important suggestion is neglected by the Marxists). In a separate chapter on ethics in Soviet philosophy Kamenka shows that the Soviet philosophers also fail to work out a responsible, coherent Marxist position in ethics.

### Current Fashion

It is clear that Eugene Kamenka's *Marxism and Ethics* is an example of the recent fashion of studying Marx and Marxism current in Western as well as Eastern Europe. In the se-

venties of this century no conscious man can deny the fact that this era is the era of Marxism. At present it is not possible for us to go beyond it, as Sartre says. But Marx the revolutionary, Marx the historical materialist, is too much for the Western intellectuals and also for some neo-Marxists and revisionists. So they try hard to bring forth a Marx, universally humanist, a Kantian; the early Marx is the true Marx to them. According to them we must admit that *Capital* is either an expression of the young Marx's philosophy or its betrayal. They forget that there are definite stages in the development of Marx's thought. It was only up to 1845 that Marx used man, the essence of man, as a theoretical principle of his world outlook and of his practical attitude. In this humanist period Marx was dominated firstly (up to 1842) by liberal-rationalist humanism closer to Kant and Fichte and then by Feuerbach's communalist humanism. To Kamenka only this period is valuable for Marx's ethical concepts. But in 1845 Marx broke radically with every theory that based history and politics on the essence of man. New concepts emerged: the concepts of social formation, productive forces, relations of production, superstructure etc. We also get a radical critique of the theoretical pretensions of philosophical humanism and the definition of humanism as ideology. So to concentrate only on the early works of Marx is to distort Marxism. Kamenka did the same thing and to him the later Marx, his historical materialism, is a denial of the early Marx. But if we have to build up a Marxist ethics we must take into account the Marx of the post-1845 period.

Secondly, up to the 1950s a common charge against Marxism was that Marx did not value the individual, his system was a system of economic determinism, no role of man was recognized. Writers like Kamenka now find in Marx the scholastic influence and the conception of man as an unconditioned being.

It was Marx who said: man makes his history but not according to his will. Had Kamenka read Marx's later writings seriously he would not have made such a mistake. Moreover, theoretical Marxist anti-humanism, in the sense Louis Althusser uses the term, should always be kept in mind: to Marx humanism itself was an ideology and it is necessary as ideology. The recognition of this necessity is not only speculative. On it alone can Marxism base a policy in relation to the existing ideological forms of every kind including ethics. To Marx's historical materialism, communist society is not free from ideology. Indeed there is no tension between Marx's conception of unconditioned being and historical materialism as Marx rejected the notion of unconditioned being. In 1879-80 Marx categorically wrote: My analytical methods do not start from man but from the economically given social period. So starting from a wrong premise and a distorted view of Marx and Marxism Kamenka fails to throw any significant light on

Marxist ethics. In this respect William Ash's *Marxism and Moral Concepts*, though not very satisfactory, is a better attempt. But we should be grateful to Kamenka, at least for this sense that Marxism is not utilitarianism: utilitarianism takes the desires and expectations of man at any given moment as an ultimate, but Marx's morality seeks to transform and enrich his wants. Utilitarianism works within a given social and political system and criticises it only where it fails to satisfy demands expressed within the system; Marxist humanism is prepared to transcend the system, to criticise the system itself for the wants and demands it creates. Sometimes even Marxists like Adam Schaff forget this distinction: in their hands Marxism takes a form very close to utilitarianism.

## Masks And Faces

MRIGANKA SEKHAH RAY

**E**LIA Kazan's *The Arrangement* reflects the angst of a modern, successful man who, after years of contentment, suddenly faces himself to find that all along he has been pursuing some hollow ends. Eddie Anderson is a dashing PR man at the top of his career, married for about twenty years during which he and his wife Florence have been floating in a world of heavenly bliss. One day, the routine goes berserk and Eddie crashes his car. As he is convalescing, a painful truth confronts him. During all these hectic years, he has been chasing an image, the elusive image of success. But now he wants to start from scratch and as he puts it, "to become himself". Even his ideal marriage turns into a hypocrisy and his love for his mistress Gwen, thrusts him back into the horrors of emotional turmoil. As the camera glides over the metropolis with its crawling traffic, we are led into the routine-bound lives of Eddie, the religious good-morning kiss, a hastily bath, an executive

breakfast with the radio babbling out the commercials and the final push-off to work; everything arranged, mapped and executed with a machine-like precision. So far so good. But as Kazan tries to develop this revolt against routine, making his hero a part of the lonely crowd, his grip over the medium flags, the imageries become cliché-ridden, the style takes on a heavy, over-literary approach and the final irony of surrender to conformism completely falls through.

*Sona Boudi* is another hodge-podge of corny, domestic melodrama of the *Prafulla* genre and some half-baked sociological bosh about the street hoodlums of Calcutta. Santi Chatterjee is the guiding angel of the family, all stainless white, a paragon of womanly virtues. But the wicked couple are at work to wreck the happiness, with temporary success. Finally, of course, everything resolves into a happy ending, with the wicked brother hauled up by the law. An inconsequential soap-opera done with shoddy techniques and the artistes strut on the screen with vulgar, crude and worn-out antics.

## Letters

### West Bengal

Your second editorial "West Bengal" (March 20) betrays an unconcealed glee at the failure of the CPM and its allies to gain an absolute majority in the Assembly, if not at the spectacular rehabilitation of the Indira congress perhaps because *Frontier's* contribution to the happy consummation was not insignificant. There is little virtue in the CPM's achievement if it may be so called for it has been ascribed to the "land-grab movement" and the "semblance of struggle" in the industrial area, for revolutionary struggle is the monopoly of the party or parties of whom *Frontier* happens to be the mouthpiece. But facts cannot be suppressed. It can hardly be denied

"The history of hitherto existing society is the history of class-struggle".

*New Drama*

**PROBAHO**

Advance Booking Open

From 15th April 1971

*Drama* —Amitava Gupta

*Direction*—Indrajit Sen (Charan Dal)

Sujit Gupta (Pada Pradip)

*Produced and*

*Skilled by* — Employees and Technicians of Minerva Theatre.

**MINERVA THEATRE**

Phone: 55-4489

that the much maligned CPM consolidated and expanded its base among the peasants by the Land movement and the Land legislation both of which it mainly sponsored and spearheaded while the efforts of the other constituents of the now defunct UF were confined to confabulations and conspiracies aimed at sabotaging the CPM-sponsored movements and the fruitless exercise of isolating the CPM from the people with the active support of the ruling party at the Centre. The Durgapur strike debacle, paradoxically paid rich dividends by way of almost sweeping electoral victories of the CPM in the industrial belts including Durgapur and Asansol. Nothing has been said about the CPM's emergence as the largest party in the Assembly, and the second big party next to the Indira Congress in the Lok Sabha, mobilising about 40 per cent and 35 per cent respectively of the votes polled, despite its fighting a lone battle against the combined opposition of all major and minor anti-Marxist parties and papers. What is no less remarkable though unpleasant is the CPM's successful bid against the pernicious personality cult based on Indira Gandhi's image which swept the polls throughout the country but was cut to size in West Bengal by the massive support of the electorate for the CPM and its allies.

The editorial is conspicuously silent about the irrefutable claim of the CPM to form the Ministry as the largest party in the Assembly and the politics of treachery that is being shamelessly perpetrated by the anti-Marxist parties to usurp power in Dalhousie Square. In fact there is little to choose between the "revolutionary opportunism" ascribed to the CPM and that breathed by *Frontier's* comment.

SOMNATH BHATTACHARYYA  
Santragachi, Howrah

The CPM's lust for power to rule over this State, anyhow, even in alliance with ULDF partners—the palki-bearers of the Indira Congress—Government to give the West Ben-

gal a non-Congress look should expose a party professedly wedded to class struggle. Conducting one or two *mbichils* and processions in support of the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese, writing a few articles supporting the 35-point formula forwarded by the Gandhite Mujibur to sabotage the armed struggle against the ruling cliche by the rebellious Bengalis on the other side of the river, and covertly supporting the ruling Congress's idea of annihilation inside jails and outside—to mention a few—are all glaring instances of the CPM's Indianised version of class struggle. And all this at a time when about 200 industrial units in West Bengal have closed down, when the soaring prices of essential commodities have touched the pockets of even those who managed to get some relief during the United Front regime, when millions of peasants are still semi-starved, semi-naked after harvesting relief offered by the UF Governments.

There are yet some who will continue to refuse to yield to the police-military establishment. Their deaths, heavier than hills, are remembered by many and felt even by militant people who are being made to run after the establishment. Boys made of this stuff may try to form revolutionary committees in the villages instead of running after the idea of a non-Congress Government, to give a foretaste of administration to the people of West Bengal and elsewhere in India. This is bound to be the new thing in the coming weeks, though there will be many odds, including stiff opposition from the pro-establishment left parties.

S. SEN  
Singur, Hooghly

### The Resurrection

The unholy ghost of the Congress has been resurrected in West Bengal. Every party in the State—extremist or moderate—had a rightful share in this job. The fact that the "free zones" of Midnapore have returned the Congress(R) candidates is a pointer. There is also the enigma-

tical North Bengal which is nearest to Naxalbari and farthest from Revolution.

AN OBSERVER  
Berhampore, W. Bengal

### "Nation Builders"

Mr Sujit Guha's letter (March 20) reflects the miserable conditions in which teachers have to exist. I for myself may state how disillusioned I feel after leaving government service to join the army of "nation-builders." The poor and irregular pay of teachers forces on them the humiliation of private tuition. And where the government does not mind letting the teachers go half-paid or without pay for months together, the guardians assume a most insultingly bargaining attitude in the appointment of private tutors for their wards. It is high time the government paid attention to this state of affairs in the greater interest of the nation. The ceremonious national awards for teachers only add insult to injury. The deprivation and humiliation of years cannot be healed by the yearly award of a shawl and a paltry sum of Rs 100. The society should be so changed that the teachers acquire genuine social recognition. It is only then that the teachers too would be effectively self-critical and contribute to the healthy growth of the nation.

K. K. RAY CHOWDHURY  
Calcutta

### CPM On The Election

The North Vietnamese Premier, Mr Pham Van Dong, sent a message congratulating Mrs Indira Gandhi on her election victory. The Vietnamese News Agency despatch gave the full text as: "the success Your Excellency and the progressive Indian people have recorded in the recent general elections is of important significance".

But according to the statement of the Politbureau of CPI(M) this victory has consolidated the forces of the status quo (*People's Democracy*, 21-3-71). The following lines from the statement reflect its po-

## FRONTIER

tical analysis: (1) The election results show that the main party of the bourgeoisie has manoeuvred in a way in which while carrying on its electoral conflict with the Rightist elements from its own class it has dealt blows against the rising democratic movement.

(2) The Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine represents a reactionary combination... all of whom demand a growing attack on the standard of living of the people and a further shift to the right in the domestic and foreign policies of the country and hence its rout in the elections is a welcome thing.

(3) But the rout of the reactionary alliance has not meant a victory of the democratic forces and the people.

(4) In contrast to the Alliance she (Mrs Gandhi) appeared to champion progressive measures and the masses finding no other viable alternative before them voted en masse for the Congress(J). The electorate no doubt showed their realism for the Grand Alliance and showed unerring democratic instinct in routing it; but it was beguiled into accepting Indira's pretensions and gave an overwhelming victory to the representatives of its class enemies.

(5) In contrast to 1967 the united front of the main democratic parties hardly existed anywhere... the field was open to the Congress(J) to do what it liked with the electorate.

Not being able to realise the political implication of the rout of Right reaction, the Politbureau has described it as a welcome thing. As for the debacle of democratic parties, it has come to the conclusion that:

(a) The most treacherous role in undermining the growing alternative of a united front was played by the leaders of the CPI whose bankrupt anti-people line gets sustenance from the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. (b) Right communists and others helped Indira to take away a large part of the democratic vote. In the name of strengthening the progressive forces they have acted as the salesmen of the

bourgeoisie, sapping the strength of the people.

Thus the PB has criticised all other parties without any kind of self-criticism. It has failed to understand the political aspect of the electoral verdict. Its way of looking at things has become subjective, one-sided and superficial. "One-sidedness and superficiality are also subjectivity because while all objective things are in reality interrelated and have an inner necessity, some people do not mirror these conditions as they are, but only look at things one-sidedly or superficially, knowing neither inter-relationship nor their inner necessity. Such a method is therefore subjective." "Superficiality means to consider neither the characteristics of the contradiction as a whole nor the characteristics of each of its aspects, to deny the necessity of penetrating into things to study minutely the characteristics of the contradiction." (Mao Tse-tung *On Contradiction*.)

The PB has failed to grasp the relationship between the contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between the remnant feudal class and the bourgeoisie, between rural petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie, between the proletariat and the rural petty bourgeoisie, between the liberal bourgeoisie and the monopolistic bourgeoisie, between bourgeois democracy and bourgeois fascism, between capitalist countries, between imperialism and colonies, between neocolonialism and developing countries.

In the international sphere, especially in South-East Asia, this election result has no doubt created a political impact but failing to see it the P.B. has commented: "President Nixon, the butcher of the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and other Asian peoples, have hailed the victory. They know it is not a victory of the anti-imperialist people, not a victory of the have-nots, nor of those who will oppose imperialist aggression in Vietnam". Contradictory things interchange into one another when certain conditions develop. "All opposite elements, e.g.

bourgeoisie proletariat, landlord, tenant, peasant, haves and have-nots are like this:—because of certain conditions they are on the one hand opposed to each other and on the other hand they are inter-connected interpenetrated inter-permeated and interdependent; this character is identity (Mao, *On Contradiction*).

In this context I hope CPM cadres and supporters should try to understand Hanoi's comment on the election results. There should be "concrete analysis of concrete conditions, which is the essential thing in Marxism, the living soul of Marxism." (Lenin)

•AJIT BOSE  
Calcutta

## East Pakistan

The people of East Pakistan have shown how to fight the oppressor. We should learn from their fighting spirit. Almost all our political parties have come forward to greet Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. It is not however known what these parties would in case of a similar uprising in this country. There is little difference between the character of President Yahya's and Mrs Indira Gandhi governments so far as the Centre State relations are concerned.

The Kashmiris' fight has been subdued with the help of rifles. Any other struggle would also be crushed.

SATYEN SINHA  
Calcutta

We wish to convey our respect and admiration to our gallant brothers and sisters of Bangla Desh.

We do hope that they would go on fighting with equal zeal and determination to establish people's democracy in their land. For freedom and prosperity of the millions.

Vietnam teaches us that brute force can never smother the liberal movement of the peoples. In the anti-colonial struggle, the people of Bangla Desh are sure to win.

ANURADHA NA  
SIKHA  
Ramjas College  
New Delhi

APRIL 10, 1971

ariat, landlord, t  
s and have-nots a  
of certain conc  
the one hand o  
r and on the oth  
er-connected int  
rmeated and int  
character is identit  
tion).  
hope CPM cadr  
uld try to und  
ment on the elect  
ould be "concr  
e conditions, wh  
g in Marxism, t  
xism." (Lenin)  
•AJIT Be  
Calcu

akistan  
East Pakistan h  
ght the oppress  
arn from  
most all our p  
come forward  
our Rahman. It  
what these par  
a similar upsu  
re is little differe  
acter of Presid  
Indira Gand  
as the Centre S  
erned.  
fight has b  
help of rifles. A  
d also be crush  
SATYEN SIN  
Calcu

onvey our resp  
to our gall  
s of Bangla De  
at they would  
equal zeal  
establish' peop  
land. For free  
the millions.  
us that brute fo  
er the libera  
peoples. In t  
le, the people  
ure to win.  
ANURADHA NA  
SIKHA I  
Ramjas Coll  
New D

APRIL 10, 19

# ASSAM BENGAL RIVER SERVICE PVT. LTD.

POWER BOAT BUILDERS & ENGINEERS

26A, EZRA MANSIONS

10 GOVT. PLACE EAST,

CALCUTTA-1

**WE ARE SOLE DISTRIBUTORS  
IN EASTERN INDIA FOR :**

**DEPEND  
ON  
US...  
YOUR  
SOUND  
COMPANION**

**MURPHY**

Radio and Transistor

**AHUJA**

P. A. Equipment, Hi-Fi  
Stereogram, Tape Recorder

**PYE**

Car Radio

**ARCEY**

**MECOM**

Car Aerial, Suppressor, Intercommunication  
Condenser

**DEBSONS PRIVATE LIMITED**

CALCUTTA • PATNA • JABALPUR  
CUTTACK • GAUHATI