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GOING FUNDAMENTAL

THIS seventh Governor of West Bengal is preoccupied with fundamentals. At a time when one-fifth of the State is under water and ten million villagers and town-dwellers have their houses washed away, when people in unending processions are wading through muddy water in search of dry places or are precariously perched on rooftops where roofs have not collapsed, when people, without food and water for days, live marooned, Mr Dias has given orders and set up a technical committee to determine why floods occur. Not that he does not know; an ex-ICS can't but know everything, geography of West Bengal included. Moreover, several master plans and committee reports, some thirty years old and some brand new, must be lying on his table, detailing the measures that have to be taken to save the State, north and south, from floods.

Then why this feigned ignorance? Because Mr Dias can do nothing. It is not within his gubernatorial magic to stop floods. A true bureaucrat, he knows how to overcome hurdles, natural and bureaucrat-made. Trying to be fundamental when nothing else pays can be a great help. And in this, he must have taken a leaf from Mr Y. Chavan vis-a-vis the Brahmaputra Control Commission. The Government of Assam insists that it is the Centre alone which can tackle the Brahmaputra because the control project would cost Rs 5,000 crores, which no State can manage to spend on flood control only. Besides, in July, the Prime Minister agreed, along with her Cabinet colleagues, to take over the Commission. But Mr Chavan has shelved the decision. Impartial as he is, he can't be so generous towards one State, ignoring similar demands from others. Therefore he has asked Assam to prepare a nice case and master plan, stating why Assam cannot spend Rs 5,000 crores on flood control, why Assam deserves special attention and so forth. Meanwhile let specialists from Harvard come over for research. Let it be decided first which should be given priority, the main Brahmaputra or the tributaries.

So that's the way. When the Government is bankrupt, or allows itself to go bankrupt by throttling the masses and fattening a few, by causing an in-built weakness in agricultural and industrial productivity, by lavishly expending hard-earned money on boosting the military and

the police force, what else can it do but be fundamental when floods ravage and famine stalks the land, prices spiral, workmen strike or young men go violent?

Mr Dias, Mr Chavan and the tribe will however get away with it. Floods are a yearly thing in India, at some places they are recurrent, but every year they seem to be the last ones to occur. Once the floodwaters recede, it takes some fortitude indeed to spend Rs 1,000 crores to salvage just one-fourth of the flood damage, which has been the calculated cost, over the entire country. There is no lobby to pressurise the parliamentarians and carry forth the decided measures, because the deaths and distress caused affect millions of scattered villagers. The economic damage is no matter either. This year Rs 300 crores of property, moveable and immovable, has been lost due to floods, in UP, Bihar, Assam and West Bengal. The loss is mostly in crops. The peasants may starve a year in the fundamentalist Indian spirit; and the businessmen, in modern Indian style, will manipulate prices and make good the loss. Loss of houses is again no matter. Hut-dwellers can build huts next year, if the going is not worse, by starving again. Those who lost pucca houses will get doles and never-repayable loans and get their houses built better. That has been our new tradition.

Of No Use

Parliamentary interregnums provide ministers with opportunities for public relations not merely within the country but also outside. Some of our ministers and their like are already scouring different parts of the world on missions of a sort, while some others are waiting their turn in the queue. The Prime Minister herself proposes to undertake a longish tour which will take her to many countries on both sides of the Atlantic. Before she goes out on this trip, the details of which are still to be

finalised, she proposes to be done with the public relations job within. That is why she was in West Bengal last week and may be here again some time this month. Her time here was divided equally between the evacuees from Bangladesh and the indigenous population of West Bengal, perhaps to perpetuate the myth that their problems are, and will remain, separate, that the evacuees will go back one day leaving the Centre to grapple with the native problems of the State.

Her programme in Calcutta was different from what she usually goes through in other States. Her public relations had little to do with the public. She flew into the city from Dum Dum in a helicopter, and that is how she flew out also. In between she was cooped up largely in Raj Bhavan granting audience to the so-called elite who, firstly, are nearly as much removed from the reality in West Bengal as the Prime Minister is and, secondly, have a vested interest in keeping her uninformed. It is doubtful if the Prime Minister wondered why she was being made to fly into the city. If it was for security reasons, it was then a far more telling commentary on the law and order situation in the State than any information that she could elicit from officials. If the reason was road conditions in Calcutta during the monsoon, that was proof of the huge waste of public funds that is going on in the name of development of the Calcutta metropolitan area much to the benefit and glee of certain people. But the Prime Minister was not serious. What she could have inferred from her programme sitting in New Delhi she did not find out even during her visit. In a way, she condoned the lapses by agreeing to grant the concerned officials interviews whose briefness precluded any serious and worthwhile discussion.

Nobody expects the Prime Minister to perform a miracle, to solve West Bengal's problems during a brief visit. But it is certainly up to her to watch if the solvent that has been devised is being given a fair trial, if

people in responsibility are honest and sincere. It has been reported that the Prime Minister took copious notes of what she was told by the officials, as if all these could not be found in the files of her own Home Ministry. They could not have told her anything which they had not already conveyed to New Delhi repeatedly in writing. And it goes without saying that the burden of all this representation, oral and written, is that they themselves are angels and it is only others who are constantly throwing spanners in the works. It was not necessary for the Prime Minister to come to Calcutta to be entertained with such fabrications. Nor will her visits serve any useful purpose as long as she allows herself to be influenced by a group of people who are sabotaging whatever "plans" she may have for this State's "regeneration." She is so obsessed with one category of saboteurs that she has become totally oblivious of another, though the latter may ultimately prove more redoubtable.

The Soledad Tragedy

Violence has come to stay in California's way of life or for that matter in any society's life-style where social ramifications allow one section to rule over the other. But even in this pervasive atmosphere of violence, the Soledad brother episode stands out not only because of the personal tragedy involved in it but because it exposes poignantly the notorious role of a penal system in compounding the violence.

Mysterious is the situation that led to the death of George Jackson, the eldest of the three Soledad brothers who were accused of killing a guard in the Soledad prison last year. The official briefing says that Jackson freed other inmates with a smuggled gun, slashed the throats of three guards and two white prisoners and was running to escape when he was shot dead. But the blacks, who include Jackson's father, challenge the official

version and claim that this innocent militant has been coolly bounced off. The failure of the prison authorities to substantiate adequately the story of gun smuggling within the prison gives credibility to this claim.

Jackson was sucked into the criminal world of the American ghetto quite early in his life. At about eighteen he, along with a friend, was convicted for robbing a petrol station of \$70 even after he had confessed his guilt, and received a sentence of "one year to life". Though the professed purpose behind this indeterminateness in the legal system was to make it flexible so that an individual could be let out as soon as he could correct himself, the descendants of the early penologists have turned it into a handy instrument to lock up anybody as long as they please. And Jackson became a victim of this perverse law. Last year a daring bid was made to rescue him which resulted in the death of his younger brother and the arrest of Angela Davis, his comrade-in-arms, for abetting the attempt. He was put in the more secure cell of San Quentin Jail.

While fighting to earn his freedom, he was using his incarceration for studying and this transformed this juvenile delinquent into a spokesman of black militancy. In a series of letters written to his friends he laid bare the dehumanising process of prison life and raised his 'voice of resistance' against this oppressive system. He attributed the origin of crime to "simple economic oppression or psycho-social effect of an economic order" that is decadent and spoke about a "new unitarian and progres-

sive movement" among political prisoners. But even to this conscious and hardened militant the physical and psychological torture of an indefinite term and the racial tension within the prison were unbearable. It all culminated in the abortive attempt to break out that cut short this talented life.

To Jackson's friends and admirers, his end is an 'agonising loss'. But to the innumerable militants fighting racial violence and social oppression, it is yet another evidence that adds credence to the claim that anybody actively opposing the system will be done in despite an occasional smile of modernity from the ruling class. There are reportedly 35,000 such prisoners in California serving various terms—which is perhaps a little more than there are in West Bengal jails. But the situations are strikingly similar. Despite the spatial difference the manners and mores of the oppressors are the same and the motive is identical.

Danger From Japan

In one of his dispatches from Peking James Reston said that the revival of Japanese militarism poses the most immediate threat to China. Chou-En-lai is more concerned with the Japanese state of mind than the \$16,000-million defence programme running over five years. Yukio Mishima, well known for his portrayal of the intricacies of social relationships, committed harakiri last year for the cause of the revival of those militaristic disciplines and unquestioning loyalties which the world fears most about Japan. He represented the basic yearning in the Japanese character which had been frustrated during two decades of rapid economic progress—a desire to wield power and to be respected for that. Militaristic nationalism has been always trying to assert itself and now there is a distinct movement toward the right. The Nixon doctrine has only encouraged the militarists to match

economic growth with military expansion. Peking, it is said, will be willing to sign a non-aggression pact with Tokyo if it gives up its ambitions on Korea and Taiwan. But the conclusion of a four-power non-aggression pact "must go through a whole series of steps." Mr Chou En-lai is concerned that if Washington does not handle the Taiwan and Korean questions carefully, Japan will move in when America pulls back. Japan, because of her huge investments in Taiwan, wants it to survive in its present form and is directing her efforts to deny China her proper place in the United Nations. The proposed U.S. move to give China one of the five permanent seats in the Security Council and accommodate Taiwan in the General Assembly will not work. Taiwan is very important to China—it is part of her national territory. Besides the question of principle, security considerations are there. (Peking's relations with the U.K. are stalemated because of the British Consulate in Taiwan; Ottawa and Rome found a way of establishing diplomatic relations with Peking by noting its position on Taiwan. Many other countries are likely to take this lead). When China is admitted to membership of the UN, she will become a natural leader of the third world not only because she is herself going through a process of economic development but also because she has been bringing together the developing countries to foil the blackmailing efforts of the super-powers, one of which is trying to bolster Tokyo's morale by offering its friendship at a time when there is so much concern over Japan's over-presence in Asia.

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Foreign Policy Tantrums

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THERE is a credibility gap between what the PRO-correspondents hovering around Mr D. P. Dhar are made to write about New Delhi's patronising "we don't mind a dialogue with China" stance and what the high-politicking super Foreign Minister is aiming at. The gap was sought to be filled with the story of yet another non-exploit of Mr D. P. Dhar, this time a dash to Peking when he was in a nursing home. The charlatans talk of the birth pangs of a new China policy while their commissars write pages about the need to remould India's foreign policy and offer gratuitous advice to Mr D. P. Dhar but without saying a word about China. Some division of labour, as Marx would have understood it, indeed.

It is now fairly certain that all that New Delhi is seeking to achieve is just the right diplomatic posture and an image of rectitude by restoring the 1961 position by exchanging ambassadors. In 1961, New Delhi was in desperate haste to call Mr G. Parthasarathy back home and Peking waited well over eight months before recalling Mr Pan-zu Li from New Delhi, purely for reasons of protocol. In between, the late Mr Nehru went on record in Parliament that he did not see the need to send an ambassador to Peking while a few minutes earlier, Mr Dinesh Singh, then a Deputy Minister of External Affairs, gave a more guarded reply about the continuing vacancy in Peking.

The risk of a rebuff is implied in New Delhi's gesture and rebuff would indeed be well deserved. In 1961, when a trade union delegation was invited for some celebrations in Peking, New Delhi not only rejected it but treated Peking to a sanctimonious string of homilies and all the talk of illegal occupation of Indian territory and what not. Secondly, when in

1961 the Right. Hon. Ivor Montague of the international table tennis body took the initiative for the visit of an Indian team to Peking, New Delhi shot down everything. But last week, the Government was dying to get an invitation for the table tennis team.

The desire for the rectification of the diplomatic posture does not necessarily imply a change in policy. On the contrary it could mean a new phase in the same policy, in the game of counterpoise. New Delhi, after the treaty with the Soviet Union, might be trying to play China against the Soviet Union and quietly seek a new level of relationship with the USA. Why all those feelers about Mrs Gandhi's visit to Washington which is off today and on tomorrow?

The orchestrated support to the treaty is coupled with assertions that the Soviets are trying to normalise relations with China and therefore there could be no question of anybody inhibiting us from a dialogue with China. It is also pointed out that the suave Mr Dhar had at least two meetings with his Moscow counterpart long before Dr Kissinger went to Peking. The suggestion is that New Delhi has discovered a new clan in its foreign policy and all the old digests don't mean anything anymore. But look at what the Prime Minister had to tell the CPI veteran who is also the Secretary-General of the World Peace Council about Vietnam. She equates all the "foreign forces" in the region and wants their pull-out and the United States forces are mentioned as among the foreign forces and nothing else. In 1966, when Mrs Gandhi made her debut in Washington as Prime Minister, she said about the same thing, extolled Lyndon Johnson's virtues as a man of peace and what have you. It was explicitly understood at that time that in return for U.S. economic aid India

would refrain from criticising the U.S. policy on Vietnam.

Mrs Gandhi has to visit Washington sooner or later because aid is the thing. After the treaty and the manoeuvre of a dialogue with China, the leverage with Washington over aid should be higher, Bangladesh notwithstanding. The implied United States approval of the treaty and Mrs Gandhi's slide-back on Bangladesh provide the meeting point.

The Soviet leadership is about to launch a major diplomatic offensive: Mr Podgorny for New Delhi and Hanoi, Mr Kosygin for Algiers, and Mr Brezhnev possibly for Eastern Europe. The Chinese drive in Eastern Europe, the Arab world and South-East Asia is the reason for the jitters in Moscow. The *Red Star* publishes picture reports of the mock battle with the Chinese and the Soviet press has been keeping a steady barrage of propaganda to remind the national democracies in the making that the vile Chinese are engineering movements against Mrs Indira Gandhi's government and providing the ideological encouragement to the "Left Trotskyites" in Ceylon (Right Trotskyites are a respectable lot, one presumes). Rumania's determination to stand up to the bullying and the "single centre" of communist arrogance has already invited veiled threats. In addition to Albania, Yugoslavia, and Rumania are on the Chinese side in Eastern Europe. The new polarisation has weakened the Soviet position considerably.

The developments in the communist world will have their impact on the pattern of communist politics in India. The CPI leadership is confident that a North Vietnamese party delegation will attend their Cochin Congress and might be headed by Mr Le Duan. The CPI-M had considered itself close to the "independent" bloc of parties—North Vietnamese, North Korean, Rumanian and Cuban. But its exercise in Bangalore was rather exasperating, trying to bracket the Soviet Union and China both in criticism and in praise. Mr Jyoti Basu, when he went to at-

tend the Rumanian Party Congress recently, is known to have held talks with the Chinese delegation and was told that if his party got out of the parliamentary system, the Chinese would recognise it as India's only genuine communist party. Telling this to Jyoti Basu, of all people! Minus the parliamentary system and Writers' Building, what is politics to Mr Basu? If any CPI(M) leader stands the chance of becoming a Chief Minister, you know who has it...

The Sino-Soviet ideological dispute is about to enter a new phase and there will be regrouping of the com-

munist parties all over. But there should be little doubt about the CPI's position, more loyal than the baton as it should be. The CPSU might consider the CPI the main instrument in the implementation of the ever historic treaty but it might not be long before Mrs Gandhi decides to ditch the CPI now that she has all the voting robots she needs in Parliament. If she wants, she can quietly topple the ministry in Kerala and synchronise the poll there with elections to other State assemblies, maybe in February next. The only inhibition stems from the utility of the CPI in West Bengal to fight the CPI(M).

September 5, 1971

China And Pakistan

T. KARKI HUSSAIN

AS of today, evidence has piled up to suggest *equally* (a) that China is determined to support the West Pakistani regime wholeheartedly against the nationalists fighting for statehood in Bangladesh; and (b) that China has kept her options open and that it is quite possible that her present stance on Bangladesh may shift radically according to the direction the Bangladesh struggle takes. If the first proposition is acceptable then ideology would no more play an important role in China's foreign policy decisions. If the second is taken as correct, then ideology still remains a dominant factor in her policy-making. Perhaps it would be more correct to suggest that there is an element of truth in both these propositions. To say this we have to examine also the factors—historically, ideologically and diplomatically identifiable—which in their totality determine the Chinese view of the Bangladesh struggle.

These factors can be categorised as follows:—

- (1) Chinese policy on nationalities from the point of view of her own national experience;
- (2) Chinese view of the struggle for self-determination in other

countries (Biafra and Kashmir as case studies) :

- (3) Chinese understanding of the internal developments in Pakistan and the class character of the Awami League movement in East Pakistan; and
- (4) China's immediate diplomatic stakes in the sub-continent.

China's stand on nationalities differed radically from that of Soviet Russia. On the other hand the thinking on struggles for self-determination underlined China's commitment to certain ideological objectives. The immediacy of China's diplomatic aims and the ideological line, as we shall attempt to show, seems to have brought about a compromise in her present stance on Bangladesh.

Whatever might have been the Soviet practice, there is a long tradition in the history of the Soviet communist movement to theoretically define the right of self-determination of nationalities. The official line as advanced by Stalin defined a nation as a "historically evolved stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up, manifested in a community of culture". Interpreting the nation thus,

Stalin proclaimed its right of self-determination. "It has the right to arrange its life on the basis of autonomy. It has the right to enter into federal relations with other nations. It has the right to complete secession. Nations are sovereign, and all nations are equal". (Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* pp. 8 & 19). Lenin had later realised the differences in the theoretical approach to the question of nationalities and its practice in the Soviet Union. In his last days he was very much worried about Great Russian chauvinism which he warned should be suppressed so that the "weaker" nationalities need not exchange class exploitation for exploitation by the Great Russians. Lenin had declared war to the death on Great Russian chauvinism in a letter to the politbureau on October 6, 1922 (Louis Fischer, *Life of Lenin* N.Y. 1964, p. 610).

In the Soviet Constitution also, the principle of self-determination was consecrated in the provision that the various republics retained the right to secede from the Soviet Republic. Although Soviet practice has universally contradicted this principle, the fact must nevertheless be noted that in the total Soviet ideological position, national self-determination has been accorded a very important place.

In contrast, the Chinese People's Republic does not concede the right of secession even in theory. Mao considers the national minority problem as a class problem and class struggle is the main theme of the Chinese communist policy on national minorities. By 1962, the Chinese leadership was asserting the fact that there are no contradictions between nationalities but only between classes. (Mosley, *China Quarterly*, No. 24, October-December 1965, p. 16). Elucidating the point further, Liu Chiun, Member, Nationalities Committee, Third National People's Congress, argued in 1964 that "the unreformed national and religious upper strata elements of the national minorities... would try to incite national contradictions in

order to protect or rehabilitate their class interests. A bourgeoisie still exists in some of the national minorities, and the bourgeoisie and the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie are the root source that gives rise to nationalism. It is quite clear that the nationality question in our country at present is still essentially a class question and its root cause is still class, class contradictions, class struggle and the struggle between the two roads". ("The current nationality question and class struggle in our country", *Hung Chi*, No. 12, June 30, 1964, translation in *Selections from China Mainland Magazines*, No. 428, August 4, 1964, p. 14).

The most immediate and practical instance of the Chinese position is the Tibetan uprising in 1959 which was conceded by the Chinese to have been based on class struggle—a counter-revolutionary movement engineered by a handful of upper strata feudal reactionaries against the Tibetan people.

The class view of the Tibetan revolt was merged with the Chinese fear that China's territorial integrity was being interfered with by outside powers, including India. It would be seen that since 1949 China's main aim has been to bring border areas under centralised control as a step to defend and strengthen her territorial integrity. This process, however, has to be justified in terms of class struggle just as the Soviets in practice also suppressed the nationalities in Central Asia during the Stalin period. Thus as far as China's internal experience with the nationalities is concerned, political consolidation and territorial security have been the primary motives with ideology coming as a weak cover.

The Chinese attitude to self-determination could be best illustrated from the stand China has taken on Kashmir and Biafra. Notwithstanding her close diplomatic relations with the military regime in Islamabad, China has not changed her basic understanding on Kashmir i.e. she supports the just struggle of the Kashmiri people for self-determination. Al-

though this stand has been interpreted as a product of China's anti-Indian stance, it should be noted that it does not support Pakistan's official policy either. The Chinese view of self-determination of the Kashmir people provides them with the option of either (1) keeping their independence or autonomy from both India and Pakistan or (2) choosing India or Pakistan. As to what means should be followed to obtain the views of the Kashmiri people on either of these choices, China has said that the pledge given to the Kashmiris should be honoured by India and Pakistan.

On Biafra which represented the secessionist movement of the Ibo minorities of Nigeria, the Chinese stand was a more committed one in terms of material support in the form of small arms through other African countries. But whereas some African States (Tanzania, Zambia, Ivory Coast and Gabon) and France recognised Biafra, China did not extend diplomatic recognition to it. This might indicate that the Chinese were watching the developments in the Nigerian civil war. At the same time China's pro-Biafra attitude was motivated by the fact that the superpowers were trying to divide the African continent into their respective spheres. The Chinese stand therefore resembled that of France which was also aiming at curbing the growing influence of the big powers. It, however, differed from France because of ideological inhibitions as to whether the movement in Biafra was engineered by bourgeois class interests.

Paradoxically, the Chinese stand on Kashmir reflects adherence to the Soviet ideology of self-determination without a Chinese commitment to support the Kashmiris materially. On the Biafra issue, on the other hand, the Chinese stand had no such ideological basis giving it at the same time the leverage to the extent of materially supporting the Biafrans.

What is the Chinese understanding of the situation in East Bengal? First of all, the question arises as to how the Chinese identify the character of

the Bangladesh movement? What direction is the movement taking? On these questions, it is as yet too early to define the Chinese responses. It is clear that China would not be deterred by the pervasive apprehension of escalation of the struggle as India would be. Instability in East Bengal and a protracted struggle would hurt the interests of the power-elite in India rather than that of China. The reasons are not far to seek. For, if the struggle escalates, it may have serious repercussions on West Bengal which at the moment is the most troubled area of the Indian Union. Since there is already an extreme left movement in West Bengal, the spread of instability across the borders might further help these elements. In such a situation, the Chinese might interpret the developments in ideological terms.

It could be asked why China does not help escalate the situation in Bangladesh from the point of view of supporting it. This can be only answered on the basis of what has been already discussed about the Chinese understanding of the nationality question. China cannot express sympathy with the Awami League movement because it is a bourgeois-dominated movement. Secondly, since the Awami League leaders have close contact with India, the Chinese would naturally not be sympathetic at the moment. For, any success of the Bangladesh struggle under Awami League leadership may only mean a gain for India. There could be a third consideration as well. It is because India stresses the democratic aspect of the movement in Bangladesh that China might also consider that such a movement goes against her revolutionary concepts. Unlike the Soviet Union, China has not considered parliamentary democracy as a step in the direction of socialist development. A successful democratic struggle in Bangladesh may then in China's view become an obstacle to a revolutionary class struggle. Hence, China's non-support to the present struggle led by the Awami League may as well mean support to a left-

oriented movement at an opportune time.

The diplomatic stakes can be measured in terms of (1) Chinese suspicion of Soviet expansionist schemes in South Asia where India is a complementary factor; (2) Chinese support to the Pakistan regime originates from their assessment of the sixties about India playing a hostile role against their interests. In other words support to Pakistan has been governed by the well-known principle "the enemy of your enemy is your best friend". (3) Whatever may be the character of the military regime in Pakistan, the Chinese think that a revolutionary movement is most likely to succeed in Pakistan because parliamentary democracy has not yet become the main instrument of the bourgeoisie to consolidate its position in Pakistan.

In the immediate future therefore China would like to keep the posture of verbal support to Pakistan and threat to India of possible measures she would take in case India intervened in East Bengal. This is also a legalistic stand in so far as international standards on secessionist movements are concerned. The world order did not come in support of Biafra because it considered that the movement would lead to the disintegration of a sovereign independent State, the single important constituent that makes the world society. This minimum posture helps her second objective, that of keeping Pakistan as a viable unit to oppose the joint schemes that the Soviet Union and India might impose on South Asia. In other words, the status quo in South Asia helps China's revolutionary stance, whereas the posture of the Soviet Union and possibly India if she is to succeed would have to consider a radical change in the status quo. That is to say, the present non-committal attitude of China (which includes traditional, moral and some material support to Pakistan) leaves room for escalation of the Bangladesh movement into a class struggle involving India and Pa-

kistan. In order to prevent this situation, India has to see the immediate success of the Bangladesh struggle under Awami League leadership.

It is possible that because Pakistan played an intermediary role in the current trend towards a Sino-American detente, China would not like to see any widespread disruption leading to

a collapse of the regime in Rawalpindi.

On Bangladesh China has shown that a minimum posture can bring maximum benefit in terms of the present. As to the future, the doors are wide open. It is up to Peking to interpret the developing situation in Bangladesh either in terms of ideology or realpolitik.

Utilising Waste

KALYAN CHAUDHURI

TARGETS set by the State plan for total output value in China's industry and for output of major industrial products like steel, iron, coal, oil and heavy machinery are reported to have been overfulfilled in the first year of the 1970s, according to a Radio Peking broadcast.

The radio broadcast which was a long one was based on a report prepared by the Writing Group of the Tientsin Municipal Revolutionary Committee. The report claimed that in the first six months of 1970, the total value of industrial output in China reached over 53 per cent of the whole year's plan. It represented a big jump of 30 percent compared with the corresponding period of last year and was equal to the total value of industrial output for the entire years of 1965, the year before the Cultural Revolution.

The report points out that the three most significant aspects of the 1970 industrial upsurge are mass movements for technical innovations, rapid progress of local industries and the "multipurpose usage of resources" with a view to fully utilising all waste products. The importance of multipurpose use that makes a rational utilisation of resources in developing socialist production was seriously felt in 1968 by the end of which China is said to have redeemed all her national bonds and became absolutely free from all internal and external debts. On the eve of taking up the scheme of mul-

tipurpose usages of resources and turning "waste into something valuable", Mao Tse-tung, in a speech at the Tientsin Municipal Revolutionary Committee, said, "Step by step, big enterprises like Wuhan Iron and Steel Company can be built up as integrated complexes which turn out a variety of iron and steel products and, in addition, have machine building, chemical and construction departments."

"In given conditions", he said, "each of the two opposing aspects of a contradiction invariably transforms itself into its opposite as a result of the struggle between them. Here, the conditions are essential. Without the given conditions, neither of the two contradictory aspects can transform itself into its opposite." According to this theory, what is "waste" and what is "valuable" are the unity of opposites in a thing. In given conditions, "waste" can be transformed into what is "valuable" and the useless into the useful.

Staff members and workers on the industrial front in China were reported to have immediately reacted to this theory and started studying and mastering the dialectical relationship in the field of their work. An attempt to help them realise the importance of multipurpose use for carrying out the CPC's general line of "going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism" was actually made at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.

Multipurpose use has developed throughout the fierce struggle between the two lines in the party. Liu Shao-chi and his agents on the industrial front were reported to have for a long time resisted Mao Tse-tung's directive on going all out in multipurpose use and tampered with the implementation of this policy. In planning and industrial management, they were said to have drawn strict demarcation lines between different industries and restricted the production of an industrial enterprise to one sphere. Producers of chemicals, petroleum or coal must not go beyond their specific field. Even in the mining industry, an iron mine or a tungsten mine concentrated only on its prescribed products and disregarded everything else. Apart from wasting many valuable resources, this prevented many new techniques from being used and popularised. However, at the repeated call of the CPC for developing "integrated industrial complexes" during the Cultural Revolution, the workers and staff members on the industrial front realised the fact that a power plant cannot only supply power but it can also produce electrical machinery; a machine-building plant turns out both machinery and steel; and a chemical plant has both chemicals and rare metals on its production list.

No Absolute Waste

The process of production is one in which man knows, transforms and utilizes nature. But nature's material resources cannot be fully utilised by producing one product. In making one product, resources are partially transformed into this product and the rest becomes "waste." The question is how to look at this "waste"—from which point of view and with what kind of attitude? From the metaphysical point of view, waste cannot be used and should be got rid of. On the contrary, materialist dialectical view holds that what is waste and what is not waste are relative terms. There is nothing in the world that is absolute waste. "Waste" under one condition may be valuable under di-

fferent ones. "Waste material" left from one product can become good material for another product. After being transformed and utilised, "waste material" can become a product or useful material.

During the Cultural Revolution this theory was effectively practiced in the industrial sectors and workers and staff members were entrusted with the task of being engaged in multipurpose use, promoting the transformation of things by different methods and transforming "waste material" into wealth so as to serve production, construction, the building up of national defence and the people's livelihood. If one looks at things from an isolated and partial point of view, the material that can be utilised may indeed be in small quantities and the value insignificant. But if one takes an overall view and looks at things from their interconnections, then he gets a different picture. For instance, every photo studio discards some waste liquid every day after films have been washed. This liquid contains a tiny amount of silver. However, if all such liquids in a city are put together, the accumulated silver can come to a big quantity. Proceeding from this knowledge and carrying forward with a spirit of hard struggle, a smelting plant under Tientsin's department for recovering discarded materials smelted huge amounts of waste liquid, including mud, which it had collected from more than 100 photo studios, hospitals and film factories in 1969. The report of the Writing Group of the Tientsin Municipal Revolutionary Committee claimed that a considerable quantity of silver had thus been collected over the past years.

The report says practical experiences prove that multipurpose use can give rise to new productive forces. Existing factories have enormous potentialities, and as long as the CPC boldly mobilises the masses and carries forward the spirit of hard struggle and self-reliance, the workers and technicians, once they start doing the job, can quickly turn out

the equipment needed for multipurpose use. By devoting all out efforts to technical innovations, rational use of manpower, material, machinery and equipment, ensuring that one man is specialised in one skill and familiar with others, and making one machine do many jobs, it is not required to add a great deal of manpower, machines and equipment. Besides, costs can be tremendously reduced by multipurpose use of waste water, gas, slag, heat and materials in production. Therefore, by expanding production in the existing factories through multipurpose use, China can obtain quick results with smaller investments and at lower costs, the report says. Giving an example the report points out that the construction of a plant making polycrystal silicon used to call for a big investment and take a long time. But once the masses are boldly mobilised concerning multipurpose use and they start with indigenous methods and use waste hydrogen from other plants, they will be able to turn out the product in a short period. Compared with building a new plant, this will save much investment and give faster results, and costs are cut by a big margin. If China wants to build a new factory that can make 3,000 tons of resin annually, an investment of four million yuan is needed and it is two or three years before production starts. Through multipurpose use, the report said, one chemical plant was able to produce 5,000 tons of resin annually with an investment of only one million yuan and after one year of production.

There is nothing final about the boundaries between industries. With the development of production techniques and the State's growing demands, existing enterprises begin to continuously make new products and increase varieties, thereby transforming themselves from enterprises making one product into ones turning out a number of products. The viewpoint that one enterprise should only produce one kind of product does not

conform to the objective law of the development of production.

In addition to producing sugar in which sugar-cane was the chief raw material the Kiangmen Sugar-cane Chemical Plant in Kwangtung Province has made comprehensive use of waste sugar-cane residue and liquids to make more than ten kinds of light industrial and chemical products. These include pulp board, glazed and wrapping paper, furfural, cementing material, alcohol, yeast and "702" farm chemical made from waste sugar-cane residue and other wastes. Formerly this plant was in operation half a year and lay idle for the other half. This situation now has been completely reversed. Cutting across the limits set, it has changed into a multiple-producing factory making light industrial products such as sugar, paper and artificial fibre pulp as well as steel, iron, chemicals, medicines, building materials and polycrystal silicon.

Using Pigs

On the basis of constantly summing up practical experience, workers have made new advances in recent years in comprehensively using pigs. From bristles, they extracted protein fibre which is used as textile material and obtained glue and lard from pig bones which, when ground to powder, become potassium fertiliser used in helping crops grow. When made into powder, pig blood can be used as an industrial material. From the visceral organs of pigs and their glands and throat-bones, medicines such as bile acid and chondroitin are manufactured. Brain lipoid is also obtained from pig brains, each kilogramme worth several thousand yuan.

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Business Manager
Frontier

Tail gases belching from the chimney of a Shanghai oil refinery used to foul the air. These gases have been transferred to a nearby chemical plant via a 2-kilometre-long channel set up by the workers who analyse, separate and purify them, obtaining ethylene, propylene and butane from this noxious exhaust. After being synthesised, the gases are transformed into many kinds of chemical materials. They are then delivered to Shanghai's textile mills, plastic and pharmaceutical factories and machine-building plants, which process them into light, abrasion-resistant and anti-moisture artificial wool, dacron, capron and other synthetic fibre goods, as well as various plastic goods needed for industry in the production of insecticides, medicines and medical equipment.

According to the report, by making an all-round and dialectical analysis of the copper, nickel and acid found in various waste liquids, workers at a small plant at Shanghai realised that the harmful could be made beneficial. Through decomposition, they created wealth amounting to more than 1.7 million yuan for the State in 1969. The copper oxide obtained from such "industrial rubbish" as waste liquids meets the demand for pigment in the country's industry. The big amount of daily waste gases and liquids emitted from a factory had damaged 700 mu of farm land every year and caused a loss of 50,000 yuan in income from farming there. Collecting and utilising the waste gases and liquids, the workers obtained a lot of valuable resources, enabling the factory to acquire an additional income of 3 million yuan each year. Alongside the rapid growth of industry and agriculture, large quantities of new machines, equipment, tools and packing boxes are required.

All things gradually become old or damaged in the course of the use serving the natural law of the development of things. After an all-round analysis of damaged equipment, workers have become aware of the fact that something that is damaged

is bad in one respect but this does not mean everything about it is bad. In 1969, the report claimed, a Shanghai shop repairing old electric machinery and a bearing repair plant fixed more than 400 electric machines, 200 water pumps, 500-odd blowers and over 100,000 sets of bearings. Provided they were ground smooth and the saw-teeth were sharpened, processed or reproduced, damaged saws, files and other similar tools were serviceable again. This had saved the State a large quantity of material. Old or cast-off iron buckets, cardboard and wooden boxes and other packing boxes, are restored. A cardboard-box in recent years has repaired boxes weighing over 16,000 tons, thus saving more than five million.

Wine was all the Peking General Winery used to make. It is now reported to have been making a dozen or so important products by using waste materials, liquids and gases. It has thus become a comprehensive enterprise producing wine and many other items such as materials for the electronics industry, chemical products, drugs, insecticides and machines. By going in for multipurpose use, the Wuhan Iron and Steel Company is said to have added more than 100 items to its production list. After being used in a comprehensive way, one ton of steel slag, difficult to dispose of before, is now worth as much as one ton of steel ignot. Large quantities of waste gases, water, liquids and slag discharged daily in Kirin city, a centre of China's chemical industry, are used by the city's more than 100 small neighbourhood plants as raw materials turning out over 200 industrial products, many urgently needed by the State.

For FRONTIER contact

S. P. CHATTERJEE

Statesman Office

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Crisis : This Side

ANISH GHATAK

LOTS of tears have been shed over the Bangladesh issue. Lots of poems have been written. The human talking machines who pass for politicians here have been fighting windmills with unprecedented zeal. In the meantime the grinding reality moves on. Thousands of fear-stricken human animals cross the border every day. The Krishnagar station platform or the Lalgola refugee camp beats our conception of Inferno. This is human suffering at the rawest. A father or a mother fighting to snatch some food from the hungry children is not an uncommon sight. The fortunate ones have been registered as refugees. Quite a number of them are housed in tents donated by countries like Canada, West Germany or Japan. Beautiful blue tents with galvanised stands and other fancy trimmings, but more suitable for winter weekends than the hazards of a relentless tropical climate. After three months of the monsoon these tents are a sorry spectacle. At Bahadurpur and Dhulian in Nadia one can see rows of these faded, sagging, torn tents and futile human endeavour to make the best of them. Sanitation is next to nothing. Miles and miles around these places stink. There is an epidemic of virulent types of enteric diseases, the result of sub-human living conditions and malnutrition. Supply of medicine is utterly inadequate.

It is no use writing a tear-jerker about a suffering people, particularly in view of the fact that the best of our efforts are next to nothing compared to the magnitude of the problem. But as days and months pass certain other secondary problems grow like cancer and it will be suicidal to turn a blind eye to them. There are unmistakable signs of friction between the refugees and the local population. Prices show an all-time high. That of rice is also going up. More and more refugees are being

employed in paddy and jute fields because they will work for anything they get, whereas the local landless day labourers demand a minimum subsistence wage. This is a dangerous point of friction because the plight of our landless labourers anytime is hardly any better than that of the refugees. There are communal conspirators, local and imported, who find the uprooted people a very easy prey. A notion is gaining ground with alarming rapidity that the whole show was deliberately staged to rid East Bengal of a particular community and as such retaliatory measures should be taken. The refugees, to say the least, are psychologically maladjusted. In the beginning they did not mind roughing it out because they hoped that the massacre would end soon and they would be able to go back. But now after five months with no end in sight and fresh stories of horror filtering in all their hopes are gone. They have started resenting the living conditions imposed upon them by fate. A hard working people resent being reduced to the status of dole-seekers however benevolent the giver may be. Many think in terms of making this their permanent home whatever the consequence. There is no need to emphasise the significance of this in the poorest State in India which is bearing more than seventy per cent of the brunt and tottering under its own poverty and problems.

Another peculiar situation may develop in West Bengal when the flood waters recede. Already SOS messages have started going out from Malda, Nadia, Burdwan, Murshidabad and other affected districts where hundreds and thousands of people are marooned. Floods this time have taken the heaviest toll ever. Millions have become homeless, crops worth crores of rupees have been destroyed. It does not need a very fertile imagination to predict the outcome. There is bound to be steady processions of hungry homeless people towards nearby towns and cities. The nightmarish days of 1943 still linger in

our memory. But unlike 1943 these people will not go down without a fight for survival. What is likely to follow is an angry demand for diverting the existing resources to meet their immediate needs. Their feeling towards the refugees will be far from sympathetic.

The sooner we face these facts the better. Like other privileged countries we cannot afford to go on watching the gladiators fighting the lions from the gallery. It is our survival, economic and physical, which is at stake. The leaders should realise that hurricane visits to refugee camps and dramatic political overtures are not enough. These may not put off the trouble already brewing.

A Slice Of Life

BY A DRAMA CRITIC

MINERVA Theatre's Workers Association's production *Prabaha* emphasises the familiar slogan "Art is a weapon" and in fact uses the stage as a powerful platform for preaching the revolutionary political message. *Prabaha* is not for those who believe the theatre to be a place for soporific popular entertainment or those snooty aesthetes to whom the mere mention of the word "propaganda" has the shock of a four-lettered slang. *Prabaha* is for that firmly committed audience sharing their vision with an equally committed group of dramatists and producers. It is a brilliant example of art confronting reality, taking up the challenge with great courage.

The play starts in contemporary Calcutta where the CRP-mafia are out for the kill, crushing the youth power which is moving forward to revolutionary goals. We have all the precise details, the combing operations, the police firing, bomb attacks on the police and the political trials, and the total picture we get from the play is really a slice of life. The young prisoners recall the terrorist phase of our national movement

and the scenes shift to the thirties. Now and again there are a couple of swift switch-overs between the past and present and the young boys of today draw their inspiration from their old comrades. There is a narrator serving as a link between the episodes who interprets the play, relating it to the socio-political backdrop. The style is as straightforward and hard-headed as a political manifesto and the construction has the clarity and forthright manner of well-conceived reportage. It is a pity that the acting often has a tendency towards conventional hamming and there are occasional lapses into unhistoric bias in the analysis of contradictions in bourgeois politics, but in consideration of the profound total impact of the production, these minor shortcomings are nothing. The build-up of the dramatic tension and the overall mounting of the production display the director's technical skill and a high degree of artistic imagination. In addition to the factual delineation of the collective, external realities, there are also some delicate moments of tender, individual emotions as in the case of the terrorist leader torn between love and patriotic duty. The artistry of the gadgets creates new dimensions in production and the technical assets like lighting, sound effects and sets are beautifully assimilated into the production with dazzling feats of virtuosity. With its power and integrity *Prabaha* will remain as a significant milestone in the long march towards a strong and creative agit-prop theatre.

The Child Bride Again

MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY

DINEN Gupta's *Pratham Prati-Shruti* dwells on the adolescent emotions of a child-bride which has by now become a child-image in Bengali films. Here she emerges as a little feminist, filled with precocious platitudes, confronting the elders with uncomfortable questions. She reforms her bottle-happy father-in-law, tames

the shrew of a mother-in-law and makes her nincompoop husband a real man. The transition from adolescence to womanhood, the conflict between tender sentiments and boiling passion is never touched upon and the focus is always on superficial and pointless external details. As is customary with films of this genre, the director tries to cash in on the romantic nostalgia for the period and the film is crammed with tiresome titbits of village life at the turn of the century and some clumsy folk rituals having no relation with the basic plot-development and as a result, the film becomes stodgy, plodding with tedious, unconnected episodes and the emotional content fails to surface. The photography bears the impersonal and crudely academic style of the pavement calendar, especially in portraying the rural scenes, and other technical qualities are almost non-existent.

Documentary

Recently, Calcutta Film Society screened an excellent two-reeler documentary on the new theatre movement in Bengal during postwar years. Chidananda Dasgupta has directed this film with a rare passion for the subject resulting in a high degree of creative involvement. Aptly titled as *Theatre outside theatre* (echoes of off-Broadway?), the film attempts to analyse in detail the different facets of the new kind of theatre emerging out of the IPTA during the mid-forties. The film goes into the origins and the background of the growth of this cultural phenomenon with the help of newspaper clippings, paintings and stills, reconstructs the tumultuous period of the war and famine calling for the need of a mass-based, collective art-form which could serve as the mirror of the age. The development throughout these years is then studied and the divergent trends enriching the movement are discussed. The film is modelled on the form of a seminar in which various people creatively engaged in the new theatre movement voice their opinions and the director often cuts back and forth

from the symposium to the scenes of actual production and vice versa and these short shifts have made the film a lively debate. By documenting one of the productive aspects of our cultural history, the film has done really a pioneering job.

Clippings

Packing Up?

The foreign oil companies operating in India are freely repatriating their reserves along with profit remittances in anticipation of possible nationalisation, informed sources said. The sources reported that the firms had stopped all capital investments for modernisation of plants and machinery, curtailed other developmental activities and cut down to the barest minimum stocks and inventories of chemicals and other items. Most of the business, they added, was now done on borrowed capital with the overdraft facilities provided by foreign banks...they (the sources) said that not only the profits but a part of the capital was being remitted abroad under the guise of clearing outstanding bills and other payments. All the dues of foreign parties and of the foreign personnel employed by the firms were being paid in advance lest there might be difficulties or disputes over payments after nationalisation of the firms.

The sources pointed out that while in the past, the companies used to stock raw material and manufactured products for three or four months they now held stocks for a much shorter period.

One company, they said, had worked out a scheme under which a retiring employee could opt for pension instead of gratuity. When an officer opted for pension the company's liability would be spread over several years and it would not be required to draw a large sum from the working funds to pay gratuity.

The sources said that one company had disbursed Rs 7 lakhs among its

top officers with a view to depressing the anticipated high profits this year.

The sources felt that apart from the fear of nationalisation the foreign oil companies might be motivated by the fear of a conflict between India and Pakistan which might affect their operations. By way of abundant caution, the companies appeared to assume that in the event of a war there might be a clash of interests between India and their home governments.

A spokesman for one of the companies dismissed these statements as simply not true...The spokesman admitted that his firm was not making any sizable new investments... He confirmed that the bulk of the borrowed capital came from foreign banks.

...Mr Raja Kulkarni, general secretary of the National Federation of Petroleum Workers...said the employees of the three foreign oil companies numbering about 12,500 have lost 'all faith and confidence in the bona fides of the oil companies'.

In a statement...he said the the foreign oil companies have unila-

terally and in an indiscriminate manner reduced 50% of employment during the last eight years. (Agency News).

The Union Government is examining measures to put a check on the "huge" amount of profits being sent home by foreign companies operating in India, Mr P. C. Sethi, Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals said in a Press Conference...

The unusual amount of repatriation of profit by foreign oil companies in recent years had been more glaring in that they had given higher dividends than they had normally done in the past. The situation, as the Government saw it, he pointed out, was alarming, adding that the foreign oil companies had repatriated Rs 120 crores over the last few years, whereas their investments totalled Rs 108 crores. (*The Statesman*).

Closed Factories

A quick survey by *The Economic Times* revealed that at least a third of the closed factories suffered from depletion of finance and shortage of working capital, about 20 per cent, suffered from technological obsolescence and 10 per cent each from shortage of raw materials and managerial inefficiency. This means that labour trouble, as a direct cause of closure of factories in West Bengal could not be attributed to more than one-fourth of the closed factories. (*The Economic Times*).

Not A Paisa Spent

Not a paisa has been spent to this day from the budgetary provision of Rs 25 crores on relieving unemployment among the educated in any part of the country. With no decision yet on the programme to be financed by this special provision, nothing is likely to be spent for another two or three months also.

Official sources (in New Delhi) concede that nearly two-thirds of the provision may have to be surrendered as no worthwhile programmes have

been sponsored by any Central Ministry.

Discussions between the Central Ministers and the Planning Commission in this regard have been of a preliminary nature. Detailed schemes have not been worked out by any Ministry on the ground that surveys must precede the drawing up of specific programmes...(*The Times of India*)

VO City

Bombay is reported to have taken a place among the world's ten worst venereal disease infected cities. Surveys by the Government, municipal and social bodies have revealed the incidence of this disease even among those who are under 15.

At least half of those who have contracted VD in recent months belong to the 15-25 age group, while two-thirds of the victims are under 35. It is believed that the number of patients has risen from 10 per cent of the entire adult population of Greater Bombay to 20 per cent.

Visits to brothels by teenagers and the youth, and closer relations among students are believed to be at the root of the increased incidence of VD.

...The Central Bombay VD Clinic run by the municipal corporation attracts a daily average of more than 650 men but less than 75 women. (*Hindustan Times*).

Letters

Terror In Tollygunge

We, the saner section of south Tollygunge, are seeing with horror and panic the upperhand given to the police here. Brutal murders of innocent youths in the presence of lamenting, poor, helpless parents are not uncommon. An example of terror:

On September 2 at about 11 a.m., four police officers appeared in the locality on trucks loaded with arms followed by a CRP convoy. They

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asked the people at the point of the bayonet to shut their windows. Thereafter they dragged out two youths, who had been arrested on 31-8-71, from one of the trucks, kicked them brutally all over, causing multiple injuries and bone fractures. The youths bled profusely, their arms and limbs were cracked by bricks. While they cried people had to watch the scene with tears in their eyes. Some women in my house fainted. When one of the youths prayed for water, the police officer pissed. Then they played with the senseless bodies and soon after heaped them on the truck. Before leaving they shouted in chorus, "If any bastard dares to disclose what we have done we shall create another Baranagar here."

My appeal to fellow human beings is: Save the two youths if they are still alive. I pray to all: Save us from the impending massacre, check by all possible means the recurrence of another Baranagar.

A HOUSEWIFE
South Tollygunge, Calcutta

CRP in College

Naxal activities in Birbhum were magnified to help the establishment to induct the army and the CRP in monstrous strength. These are allowed to scour the length and breadth of Birbhum, inflicting torture on unarmed people. Terrorizing academic life into total deadlock appears to be the major concern of the CRP. A case in point is the method twice tried out in four months by the CRP in Rampurhat College. On February 10 some miscreants set fire to some college property. The college authorities panicked and sought help from the CRP battalion stationed at Rampurhat. They blustered in when the Principal's chamber and the college office were completely gutted and there was nothing to do. Since they had no useful service to render, they concentrated on the student's hostel adjacent to the college. Boarders were asked by the college authorities to go home. The belongings of some teachers houses in the superintendent's

quarters were removed and CRP officers took possession of the quarters without the knowledge of the teachers concerned. The college was closed from February 11. When late in April, work was resumed, the CRP was still in possession of the students' hostel. We were told that the Principal's request to the CRP authorities to vacate the hostel had been ignored.

On April 2 a cracker exploded somewhere on the college compound—all smoke and nothing more. Nobody was injured. But the CRP stormed into classrooms ignoring the presence of teachers and beat up the students with lathis and rifle-butts. Girl students hid themselves under desks, and it was sheer luck that the teachers were spared. After the beating the students were made to stand hands up for about an hour and a half out on the college compound with the sun overhead. They were searched and entertained with the filthiest words from the Hindi vocabulary. All this in the august presence of the head or the institution. This time again the college was declared closed for summer holidays. We all took it lying down—no enquiry, no protest, no stir in the life of the students and the public of Rampurhat.

When the college reopened the inevitable CRP were still sauntering about the college compound and were in solid possession of the hostel. The Principal pleaded his impotence. Students had already suffered academically owing to the long closures. Therefore, despite the provocative and bullying presence of the CRP they turned out in large number to attend classes. But the CRP were growing restive for action and things had to happen.

On September 1, at about 12 o'clock when classes were going on peacefully a cracker burst at a remote and solitary place on the college compound. The CRP again stormed into the class-rooms wielding lathis and rifles. Some students ran for shelter in the teachers' room. In minutes the CRP were everywhere. None was spared this time—students, teachers

and non-teaching staff. Blood-stains on the floor of the teachers' room were visible even as late as September 4. The CRP forced the bleeding students to walk, hands up, to the thana lock-up. Some students are still behind the bars for all we know. Many have sustained fractures, and the condition of one of them is precarious.

The Principal again declared the college closed till September 11. In Rampurhat we go round a queer cycle—a cracker bursts, the CRP goes berserk the Principal declared the college closed.

At the official level, up to September 4 not even an enquiry was ordered even though the local SDO graces the governing body of the college as its President *ex-officio*. On the popular side, students dare not wall up a single poster condemning the CRP brutalities for fear of being rounded up en masse and condemned to the thana lock-up; the townspeople dare not organise a bandh or hold a public meeting. The CRP commandant is reported to have blustered out to some citizens that his men have acted with restraint so far in face of the gravest provocations but next time they would not hesitate to shoot.

A READER
Birbhum

China And Pakistan

The Indo-Soviet treaty had raised many expectations. People thought jubilantly that India would now be able to take a courageous course. But what is apparent is that the Big Brother will advise and probably guide Indian foreign policies including the policy on Bangladesh.

It may be remembered that the USSR has not shown any support for freedom fighters. It cannot be expected that the USSR will take a posture quite antagonistic for the USA which is openly supporting Yahya Khan. Russian policy nowadays is double faced. It looks progressive in form but remains reactionary in content.

I am surprised by the views of 'Analyst' (14th August). Was he

not aware that the Awami League tried for autonomy at first? As a last resort, when all negotiations failed they were compelled to declare independence. Peasant struggles cannot set up autonomy within a neo-colonial State. This is absurd. History has negated the assertion of Analyst that development of East Bengal would have been facilitated had it remained united with a bigger unit (Pakistan). Big States that are economically weak are suitable exploitation grounds for imperialists. Independence from such a State is not undesirable.

Good reasons may be advanced for the contention that East Bengal and West Pakistan have remained two different identities even after twenty five years of common statehood. East Bengal's claim of separate nationhood is based on solid reasons fortified by recent history. The movement for independence is a progressive one although it is under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie. This class will not naturally voice the demands of the peasants or specifically organise them. It is a fact that the peasants of East Bengal have so far not actively participated in the movement in large numbers. It will be the task of the Communists to awaken the peasant masses for fulfilment of their demands through a revolutionary war. The present situation offers advantages which must be fully utilised. The peasant movement should have a revolutionary leadership and a separate revolutionary army, cooperating with the national bourgeoisie in a broadbased front for independence. Through such struggles they must aim at establishing their own rights (e.g. Chinese Communist Party offered to cooperate with Chiang Kai-shek during Japanese War).

The opportunity is good now because local landlords will not be in a

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strong position to suppress the peasants. It is the specific task of the Communists to change the character of the war instead of denouncing it as serving only bourgeoisie interests. Communist parties of different countries secured their mass base and political power by fighting alongside the bourgeoisie against the fascist powers during the last world war. The uphill task of transforming the conflict into a people's revolutionary war must be faced and undertaken. In that case the revolutionary army of Bangladesh is likely to get all support from fraternal parties of South-East Asia. U.S.S.R. and India are directing their policies to prevent such 'Vietnamisation' even if it means surrender of the Awami League to Yahya Khan.

If we surmise that China had anticipated this move, her concern about Indian interference becomes meaningful.

Some people have been confused by Chinese actions which, they think, tend to support Yahya Khan and go against the Bangladesh struggle. It looks to me that they are quite wrong. The Chinese note that the issue was 'an internal affair of Pakistan' was only non-committal. Can anybody deny that the correct international principle is to let the Pakistanis fight it out among themselves. In each country the proletariat must fight its own liberation war.

It is quite erroneous to maintain that Yahya Khan has come to play a progressive role by keeping Pakistan united and for this reason China has supported him (sic.).

The American correspondent writes in *Amrita Bazar Patrika* that China is having second thoughts about her aid projection for Pakistan. Another American correspondent writes from Dacca (*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 24th August) that Bangladesh people consider China as their only friend. These two news items point to a different Chinese policy, although they are unable to help these people straight away. Any government thinks twice before deciding to support a rebellion in another country; specially if in this case the leadership rests with a bour-

geois party which is landlord-ridden and which has come under the control of the Indian Government, thus being very susceptible to the influence of imperialist powers.

The initial prevarication of China is understandable.

It has been foolishly asserted by some people that the 'Mujib clique' is playing into the hands of imperialists or serving their purpose. Had Mujib done so the imperialists would have propped him up and matters would not have come to the stage of open conflict. The imperialist pressure is now being exercised through India to bring the Bangladesh movement down to a shameful compromise. It is the task of revolutionary elements in East Bengal to frustrate the imperialist game by organising people's revolutionary struggle bringing in its fold the broadest strata of the masses.

B. R.
Calcutta

The CPI(M) has been vociferously demanding that the Indira Government recognise the freedom fighters and arm Bangladesh. But this sounds ridiculous when contrasted with its oft-repeated assertion that the reactionary Indira Government is out to liquidate the Marxists physically. There is also little consistency in the latest resolution adopted by the CPI(M) urging improvement of relations with China vis-a-vis its criticism of China for not coming out against the Yahya Khan regime over the Bangladesh movement. Like any other bourgeois party, the CPI(M) is now bedevilled by political expediency.

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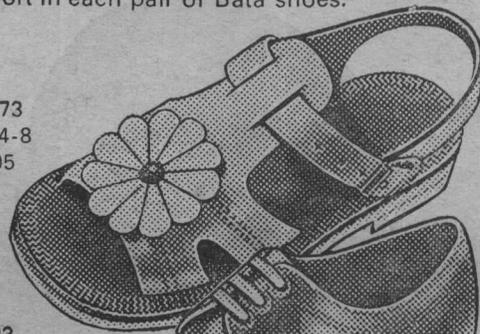
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