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Editor : Samar Sen

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BY SAMAR SEN FROM 61, MOTT LANE,
CALCUTTA-13
TELEPHONE: 243202

RELAPSE OF MALADY

IN the decision of the Working Committee of the Congress(R) to dissolve its units in five States and set up ad hoc committees in their stead the CPI will certainly find a vindication of the latest decision of its National Council. The crusading zeal of the party is now directed entirely toward rescuing the socialist Prime Minister and her loyal supporters from the clutches of their colleagues who are masquerading as socialists but whose real intent is to subvert the socialism which the Prime Minister is so keen to introduce in the country. The supposed discomfiture that the appointment of ad hoc committees has caused to Mr Bejoy Singh Nahar or Mr Jagjivan Ram may appear to the party as a crushing defeat for the class enemy. A few more steps of this type and the revolutionary grain in the Congress(R) will be separated from the reactionary chaff. Of course, the revolutionary metier of the Congress(R) will be proved finally and indisputably when it invites the CPI to share power at the Centre.

THE CPM proposes to persist in its posture of opposition to the Congress(R). There is no indication yet that the party's acceptability with the Prime Minister has gone up, though her obiter dictum recently in Calcutta that the CPM is an important opposition party must have raised hopes in the sinking Marxist heart. In so far as Mr Nahar's discomfiture indicated Mr Siddhartha Shankar Ray's ascendance in the Congress(R) politics in West Bengal the CPM should be happy. The rapport between Mr Ray and Mr Jyoti Basu is well known, though their growing co-operation has received a setback because of what the CPM regards as Mr Ray's perfidy. But the imperatives for continuing the rapport are many, not all of them known. The CPM's policy of selective support to the progressive policies of the Congress(R) has, in West Bengal, taken the form of assisting the police in hunting down the "Naxalite anti-socials". The semi-fascist character of the Presidential regime over which the party is crying itself hoarse does not inhibit such cooperation. Maybe the party will step up this cooperation in response to the Prime Minister's certificate that it is functioning within the democratic framework. If the party can provide further proof of its democratic intentions, the Prime Minister may relent and order early elections in the State which is now the most militant demand of the party. Maybe

closer cooperation with the Government and the police in restoring peace and order will be one of the features of the mass agitation that the party has threatened to launch next month to compel the Government to hold early elections. The most vindictive action of the Governor in dismissing several Government employees has, however, created a dilemma sooner than anticipated. Will Mr Dias be allowed to get away with it?

The Prime Minister and her associates have reasons to be happy over the reaction of the Communists to their earlier, 'progressive' decision. Obviously, neither of the parties has learnt any lesson, and both are eager to discover alibis for cooperating with the Congress(R). The fact, however, is that the Congress(R) is now in a position to indulge in its old addiction to groupism inherited from the undivided party. The abstention of the last two years had been forced on it because the future

was uncertain. Now that it is secured, the pastime has been resumed. The appointment of an ad hoc committee in Bihar may be designed to cut down Mr Jagjiyan Ram to size; Mr Chavan's wings have already been clipped in Maharashtra, and maybe he will soon cease to count if Chief Minister Naik is replaced in Maharashtra for which the demand is growing. The ad hoc committee in West Bengal is designed to strengthen the position of Mr Ray, who, in spite of the Prime Minister's support, has not been able to break Mr Nahar's hold over the organisation. The declared intent is, of course, different; it is said if the supremacy of fiftyish Mr Ray is established over sixtyish Mr Nahar, it will be a victory for the youth in the party. The current exercise in the Congress(R) is merely a symptom of the power struggle between rival groups at different levels. Only naives and frauds will regard it as a conflict between progress and reaction.

Second Exercise : At Howrah

After Baranagar-Cossipore there were strong apprehensions that the next exercise in public resistance, mass upsurge—whatever you call it—would be staged in Howrah and that Howrah would be followed by Tollygunj or Behala. The exercise in Howrah is now over. An 'indignant mob' and the police closed in on two localities, Sibpore and Bantara, officially liquidated 12 Naxalites, and destroyed shops and houses belonging to Naxalite sympathisers and supporters. The provocation, of course, was reportedly given by the local Naxalites themselves. At bay everywhere, outnumbered, outgunned and outmanoeuvred, the local leaders—it beats one to think but that is how things have been made to appear—decided to annihilate two members of the 'resistance party'. Then began the search-and-destroy operation, for two days and after the manhunt, the immediate toll was 12. How many more murders occurred in the area

during the operation will be never known because in police democracy, the source of knowledge is the police and their obliging friends, the newspapers.

How big was the mob that took part in the Howrah resistance? One would never know. Some reporters put it at about one thousand, others at about five thousand. There are two reasons for inflating the number, though in reality the number of cut-throats may not have been more than twenty. The first is to establish the theory that people are coming forward in resisting the Naxalite marauders. The theory was sought to be substantiated at Baranagar-Cossipore. Mrs Gandhi, while in Calcutta, publicly okayed the theory. The more relevant reason to inflate the number is to try and prove the hollowness of the CPI(ML)'s annihilation philosophy. The only raison d'être of the annihilation was to mobilise the support of the people, who would vo-

lunteer around the revolutionaries wholeheartedly, realising that these self-less men were their real allies, that the CPI(ML) cadres were annihilating the scourges of society. The incidents at Baranagar-Cossipore and Howrah that sparked off the white backlash, however, are cited as showing that the Naxalites are running out of public sympathy. The more the number and strength of the resistance party, the more hollow would appear the annihilation theory.

But what really happened? In Howrah, unlike in Cossipore-Baranagar, the police actively joined the forces of Indira Gandhi, instead of standing by. One newspaper stated that, after the manhunt, the hunters came back and handed over at the thana the weapons used in the operation. What does it mean? Does it not mean that the police used cut-throats along with their own forces, to wipe off the Naxalites?

The scene is clear now. Against the Naxalites, the first line of defence is constituted by the military and the police. The second line is of course the ruling party and its members. The third line of defence comprises all the left parties which on occasions like Baranagar-Cossipore and Howrah make noises and at the same time organise public mobilisation to restore law and order and thus give the police a handle. The biggest of the left, the CPM did not find any reason to revise the theory that the police and the Naxalites were going hand-in-gloves, even after Howrah. Meanwhile, similar operations against Naxalites elsewhere are said to be going on, without newspaper publicity.

Setbacks

Except for Indochina progressive forces seem to be generally on the wane elsewhere in the world. The first to suffer a grievous setback were the fedayeen, that is Palestinian guerillas who since 1967 held high the martial image of the Arabs by vowing to carry on an unending

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struggle against Israel. But the guerillas soon fell out with Jordan's King Hussain who let loose his hordes and in the bloody battles that followed the fedayeen were almost routed. The crisis showed that the guerillas, though skilled and courageous gunmen, had feeble contact with local people, for which they have paid dearly. Though Arafat and other leaders of the Palestinian guerillas, who include quite a few Marxists, startled the world by their dare-devilry, they were found wanting in political skill and patience.

More disastrous has been, however, the plight of the Sudanese communists after their attempted coup which closely resembled the effort of the Indonesian communists in the last decade. The communists in Sudan, who were enmeshed in parliamentarism, had neither the arsenal nor the personnel to call upon when the army struck back. And Numeiry, who once rode on the left to power, had little difficulty in bringing the rebels to book. After a mock trial he executed the communists and some of their sympathisers including at least a dozen leaders of the Sudanese communist parties.

The fatal mistake of not having a political base and arms of their own also proved costly to Bolivia's united front. Torres was no communist. However, after sneaking to power this liberal general wanted to reform his country and did take some steps. But he failed to do many things and this led to his fall. He nationalised the tin mines and expelled the Americans, but failed to round up the enemies at home; he planned to raise a militia, but did not defuse the army and its generals who have overseas loyalties. When, therefore, frightened even by his pinkish red the reactionaries in the army struck, the guards and militia—a combination of miners and students—gave in after a short battle. Only the FLN, an elitist guerilla band—seemed to have kept up the fighting till now. Obviously the Americans have been heartened by the turn of events in Bolivia. Chile's 'left' President, however, has

something to worry about.

It is said that the FLN is regrouping to fight out the rightist regime of Hugo Banzer. But in Latin America's social conditions an urban guerilla needs, besides technical equipment, a firm base among the middle class and the ghetto dwellers. Though the FLN has claimed to have that support, it is yet to prove itself as a force to reckon with. Among Latin America's guerillas only the Tupamaros have shown that they not only have military prowess to challenge the

enemy but have enough water to swim in. Frequent ambushes, abductions and jail breaks by them have made the Pacheco government look pathetic. Acknowledged experts in public relations, they have also decided to fight in the elections to widen their mass contacts though elections are not in their ideology. True, their feats do not measure up to the achievement of the NLF in South Vietnam but they are emulating the Vietcong perseverance and trying to adopt the Maoist strategy of guerilla warfare to the realities of Latin America.

African Uncertainties

What is Africa heading for? The answer is pretty simple; if a greater number of black African leaders play into the hands of the Vorster-Smith-Caetano clique and depend on Heath and Pompidou for military aid, then they are only inviting another long period of colonial domination. The deposition of Apollo Milton Obote, the abortive coup bid in Nairobi, border skirmishes between Ugandan and Tanzanian forces, the confusion in the East African Community and Simon Kapwepwe's political campaign against President Kenneth Kaunda are all representative of the African syndrome. What made President Julius Nyerere not to extend support to the plotters in Nairobi and to pass on the details of the plot, code-named "Doomsday", to President Jomo Kenyatta and also not to recognize the Idi Amin regime is his fear of the "Latin Americanization" of African politics. Amin has threatened that the army will not hesitate to remove any civilian government in the future if it fails to satisfy the generals. To ensure permanent military intervention in Ugandan affairs, Amin has not only doubled the defence budget at the cost of social programmes but also compromised his country's independence by accepting the bait of a British military training unit to discipline the army which is divided on tribal affiliations. The general is also

trying to keep the army united by directing it to cross the Tanzanian borders and promising it British Saladin armoured cars, American helicopters and French Mirage jets. It is still remembered how elated Mr Edward Heath was at the ouster of Obote; the British Prime Minister's brazen-faced reaction was for no other reason than the severance of a vital link in East-Central African alliance. Heath was very much discomfited at the Singapore Commonwealth conference when this grouping said that the Commonwealth must intervene in any plan to sustain the white regime in South Africa. President Nyerere wanted to develop a strong African chain stretching from the Zambezi to Cairo and counted deeply on President Obote in the confrontation with the white supremacists. Any effective Pan-African movement has to be based on socialist policies pursued in individual States. This, as President Nyerere has spelled out, means mass welfare, elimination of elitism (a legacy of colonial rule) and formation of a truly representative Government right down to the village level.

President Nyerere has done well to throw cold water on the conspiracy to overthrow the Kenyatta Government but the background of the plotters shows that there is strong resentment among the Luo and Kamba tribes at the growing Kikuyuisation of Kenya's

army and administration. The Kikuyu get more economic and social benefits than any other tribe although they constitute no more than one-sixth of the population. After Obote inter-tribal rivalries have again surfaced in Uganda. Amin has been trying to distract attention from disunity within the country by opening a front against Tanzania. This may

enable him to ride the Ugandan tiger for the time being, but the first victim of it will be the EAC which is now in disarray. The EAC will never be a socialist federation so long as Amin remains in power. In his attempt to discredit President Kaunda, the leading Bemba, Kapwepwe, is playing the game of Vorster who wants Lusaka's effort to redistribute income

and use copper wealth to improve living standards in the rural areas to fail. The Bemba who constitute the majority of copper miners have not liked the call of President Kaunda to make sacrifices for narrowing the rural-urban gap. Kapwepwe has been carrying their brief. If he has any success, Pan-Africanism will have suffered yet another setback.

View from Delhi

Business As Usual

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

FLOODS, drought and the price spiral mean nothing to this, our imperial capital committed to growth with social justice. The capacity of the seminar industry is being fully utilised. Bangladesh is still the feedstock, with the Indo-Soviet treaty held in reserve. It is a relaxed mood, business as usual even if a few college boys burn or hijack DTU buses. There is no crisis atmosphere any longer and for Mrs Indira Gandhi it is time to return to politicking, dissolving a few Pradesh Committees and toppling a couple of Chief Ministers before embarking on a longish tour.

After the March elections to the Lok Sabha, the Prime Minister is known to have provided support and encouragement even to the most inconsequential of dissident group in the Pradeshes not fully under her control. The axis of three Chief Ministers which had turned out to be a mini-syndicate under Mr Chavan's leadership during the ticketeering phase had to be broken up. These were the Chief Ministers who refused to accommodate the CPI. The process began with Rajasthan where strongman Sukhadia was eased out. Then it was Mr Brahmananda Reddy. Mr V. P. Naik seems to be in office on borrowed time and partly because of Mr Chavan. Mrs Gandhi has been trying to get complete control of the PCCs before the February

1972 Assembly elections and shortly thereafter to ease Mr Chavan and Mr Jagjivan Ram out. All this in the name of giving a new look to the party.

The CPI drummer boys might see gushing radicalism in all this. Their Cochin congress early next month is expected to endorse the political resolution and the party would be all set to force what is called a left-ward shift in the Congress policies. The hope is that the "all-in" united front of the CPI and the pseudo-left in the Congress would together force a split in the Congress and restore Mrs Gandhi to a position of dependence on the CPI. That would be the classical national democratic front patented in Moscow. The CPI's vituperation against the Rumanian leadership for challenging the myth of a single centre of world communism and the East German party newspapers' vicious attack on the CPI(M) are an indication of the pattern to emerge. The CPI even hopes it can split the CPI(M) and win over those yearning most for parliamentary power, the Jyoti Basus and E.M.S. Namboodiripads, for the national democratic front to come. A Politbureau member of the CPI(M) who wanted to visit East Germany for eye-treatment did not get the expected invitation and in a few weeks came the attack on the CPI(M), branding

it pro-Peking and Trotskyite, presaging a change in Moscow's attitude to the party.

It is not difficult to guess who is behind the stories in the Bangladesh press about three socialist countries outside Chinese influence dying to recognise the Mujibnagar regime though the Soviet Union itself might not act immediately. The objective of the story is to save the CPI from its acute embarrassment over the Soviet indifference to Bangladesh. The Awami League leadership has been inspiring stories of imminent Indian recognition of Bangladesh because they think recognition means war and war means their return to Dacca to rule Bangladesh happily ever after. The Awami League leadership does not want to fight its own war: it wants somebody else to win it for them. One section is already talking of a solution on the basis of the six-point formula, ostensibly to save Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's life.

Well, the United States will not permit the liquidation of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and he might even be released conditionally in the next few weeks. Suppose after the Sheikh's release the military junta embarks on an adventure across the borders, world opinion would be in Pakistan's favour. If a flare-up is timed for the U.N. Security Council meeting late in October, Pakistan would have a

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diplomatic edge over India. Conditional release of the Sheikh and the handing over of administration in Dacca to a civilian will be held out as proof of General Yahya Khan's bona fides. Once U.N. observers come in, the Mukti Bahini operations will slow down. If the Awami League leadership splits and one section begins a dialogue with Islamabad, India will come a cropper, saddled with the refugees.

Shortly after Mrs Gandhi took over in 1966, she visited Washington. The immediate outcome was an assurance of resumption of U.S. aid on condition India should not criticise the U.S. policy on Vietnam. Mrs Gandhi has been too anxious to visit Washington and to prove to the United States that the Indo-Soviet treaty means nothing.

There is no progress with normalisation of relations with China. The Foreign Office is rather cold to the whole thing while the Prime Minister's Secretariat and India's Kissinger are going ga-ga over nothing. The story of Mrs Gandhi's letter to Mr Chou En-lai was planted by the Prime Minister's secretariat. Then came all the moonshine of Mr B. C. Mishra coming home armed with a reply. The Foreign Office now says there was nothing in Mr B. C. Mishra's report when he came here to suggest any change in the situation. But those outside the Foreign Office seem to be executing a parallel foreign policy, making all kinds of claims about China's desperate attempts to normalise relations with India. Assuming ambassador-level relations are restored and a trade pact signed, would it mean normalisation of relations? China has restored such relations with the Soviet Union but a million Soviet troops confront China all along the border. China is no longer guessing India's position or intentions. Once New Delhi rushed to sign the Indo-Soviet treaty in panic, Peking knew the configuration and should be in no hurry to make any gesture. At best, the police tents outside the Chinese Embassy in

Chenakypur to harass visitors might disappear. A couple of correspondents passing for sports writers might make a trip to Peking with the ping-pong team. A trade agreement might be signed but in the best of days

there was no trade with China on a significant scale. But as long as New Delhi's subservience to the super-powers continues, its attitude to China would be one of hostility.

September 12, 1971

The Story Of A Naxalite

R.N.S.

HIS appearance is not as impressive as that of Che's. A young man of about 20 or 22, he is unusually polite and docile for his age and except for two bright eyes set in a pale pockmarked face there is very little to note about him. But it is his words, his stories, his experience which impress.

This is the story he told me : Tripura is very poor. In comparison to Assam or West Bengal it is much smaller and has no important natural resources. The economy is based on agriculture. There are many vital problems. The first is scarcity of cultivable land. In 1952 the population was about 600,000. The pressure on land was the least at that time. But trouble started from the late fifties when thousands of refugees from East Pakistan began to cross over into the State. Most of them have settled down permanently. This influx resulted in two things: a rapid bulge in the population and heavy pressure on land. Recently more refugees have come following the army crack-down in East Pakistan. Approximately the local inhabitants (tribals and refugees who came after March 1971) number 15.56 lakhs, while refugees (who came after March 1971) number about 12 lakhs. As a result of the increasing pressure on land there is continuous fragmentation of farm holdings and increase in the number of landless peasants. At present about 50% of the agricultural population are landless and about 75% possess are less than 5 kanis of land on an average (2½ kanis are equivalent to one acre). The land itself is

also not very fertile. The maximum output per acre (in the best fields) is 15 maunds whereas in West Bengal the average per acre output from ordinary land is 25 maunds. But in contrast to the latter, the peasants in Tripura have to pay 1½ times more land revenue. Between 1960 and 1970 there was an unprecedented increase in land revenue—per kani it went up from 75 paise to Rs 3.50. This affected the poor peasantry very badly.

Tripura has not succeeded in coming out of its semi-feudal embryo. Owing to inadequate communications a large number of essential commodities have to be imported and their prices keep rising. Most of the villages remain isolated from one another, so there is no proper distribution of the local merchandise. To take one can of kerosene oil to Raima, a village 100 miles from Agartala, one has to pay Rs 18; per litre the price is Rs 2.00. Salt is one rupee a kilo there, whereas near Agartala kerosene per litre costs 50 paise and salt 45 paise. At Kanchanpur Dasda, 130 miles from Agartala, rice is 75 paise a kilo but in the capital and nearby areas it is Rs 2.00 and more.

It is the poor peasants who suffer most. There is no hope in Tripura of an industrial build-up—whatever it had in the name of industry besides tea,—footwear and match-factory—have been abandoned thanks to the inefficiency of the State's bureaucrats. This together with the pressure on land has made the problem

of unemployment acute.

The Government has totally failed to tackle the situation. It has practically done nothing to ease the lot of the people. The present Government, to speak frankly, is a zamindari of the Chief Minister, Mr Sachindralal Singh. He is endowed with all the qualities of a typical Indian parliamentarian. His efficiency has often been seen in groupism, in the traditional Indian politics of divide and rule; in that sphere he is unrivalled. It is his autocratic rule that split the Congress. In his personal life, well, he is sometimes called Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. There is however nothing hopeful about the rebel Congress either. Its leaders accuse Mr Singh of highhandedness but they themselves have so long connived at his misdeeds.

What about the other political parties? The CPI(M), although it has a very good organization and in power-politics its position is next to that of the ruling Congress, in practice thinks little of the common man.

In the circumstances, when the country's economy is in an extremely adverse situation and the parliamentary parties are making things worse, intervention from radical leftists is not only logical but also a necessity. We, the Naxalites, therefore came on the scene. The big factor which inspired us to take active part in politics was the peasant uprising in Naxalbari and the Naxalite activities in different parts of West Bengal since then. It is true that at the beginning we had not any direct link with anybody in Calcutta who could send us precise information about the Naxalites and it was only through the bourgeois press that we tried to piece together the happenings in West Bengal. Whenever we read the news of the murder of landlords and moneylenders in those papers we appreciated it, because we believed that the end is sacred, it does not matter what means are adopted. By that time we had already been convinced that no change would be possible without bloodshed. Revolution needs blood, not only of the enemy, but also of us,

Visit to Calcutta

It was just before Durga Puja in 1969 that I had a chance to go to Calcutta. I was then connected with a local newspaper which was ideologically more radical than others. We used to send the copies of this paper regularly to some students of a well-known college in Calcutta. I took some copies of our paper with me. I had another thing in my mind, to make friends with them.

The very moment I reached Calcutta I noticed Naxalite slogans on the walls and I was so impressed that I wrote them down in my notebook. Then one day I took copies of our paper and went to see students of the particular college at their hostel. As I stepped into their room I heard them talking about politics, Naxalbari and Charu Mazumdar. I produced my press credentials and handed over the newspapers. They were satisfied and began to talk to me. One of them proposed that the occasion should be celebrated, called a bearer and asked for tea and biscuits. Within a few minutes the atmosphere became so friendly that I forgot that I was a stranger.

My friends asked me about my political affiliations. I said I had none. They again asked me whether I had any interest in the stories of Naxalbari and Srikakulam. I said we were eager to know about all those. For about four and a half hours they talked about, among other things, the peasant struggles in Andhra, Kerkdip and Naxalbari, about the greatness of Chairman Mao and the beloved old man, Charu Mazumdar, the historic Long March by the Communist Party of China, the role of the Chinese mandarins and the similarity of the revolutionary situation in India and China. I once asked them to explain the inner meaning of one of their favourite slogans—China's Chairman is our Chairman, China's path is our path. One of them said that by China they never meant a mere country, but something more. They tried to put her before our eyes as the ultimate goal of an ideal communist. The entire Chinese nation was

to them the ideal communist community with Comrade Mao Tse-tung at the top. As the Indian communists (Naxalites) wanted to set up the same type of communist society in this country they should follow the Chinese line and in doing so they must accept Mao as their Chairman, because it was he who showed them the way of revolution. Moreover, Mao was the true representative of the downtrodden Asians wherever they may be while the leaders in this country were agents of vested interests and neo-colonial forces.

It was about 7-30 or 8 p.m. I left the hostel. My friends gave me some pamphlets to read, including the Communist Manifesto, some selected writings of Lenin and Mao, the stories of Mushahari, the Tarai Report of Kanu Sanyal and a handwritten biography of Babul Biswakarma (who was killed during the Naxalbari movement).

I stayed at Calcutta for about 45 days, and met my friends several times. Whenever we met, we discussed the general political situation in the country, the international situation, activities of the communists in the Third World, and other subjects. One evening I myself talked about the political situation in Tripura. My friends liked it and joined the discussion. Before I left Calcutta, I promised to organize the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) in Tripura.

II

AGARTALA is a small town. I was born and brought up here and am still studying in a local college. Naturally a large number of young boys of my age were known to me, some of them intimately I decided to talk to them about the problem. When I talked to them, to my great astonishment I discovered that they were also thinking in the same way, about the same thing. I was delighted. All of them were students and there was every reason for their being dissatisfied with the existing set-up. The students' out-

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burst is not an isolated event but an eloquent reflection of the national condition. One of my friends who joined the local CPI(ML) told me why. When he sees at home how hard up his parents are now—even a few years ago men lived more comfortably here—it is impossible for him not to take part in the politics of his country. My friend was right. We took part in politics not for any self-interest but for the poor people who were being bled white by their exploiters.

About a month after my return to Agartala I received a letter from my Naxalite friends saying that they were sending a representative to Tripura in order to organize the CPI(ML) and start class struggle against class enemies. Within a few days the man came. He was an economist and used to teach in a college somewhere in West Bengal. Soon after this two more young men came and joined us. Both of them were engineers, but unemployed.

We organized the TOC or the Town Organization Committee [of the CPI (ML)]. It always remained underground. The screening for enrolment in the TOC was very strict. Only 30 boys were selected as office-bearers but that too not at a time. At first only five boys were selected. After a few weeks more were taken in. During the third screening 10 more were admitted. In this way the figure finally reached 30. These 30 boys were the initiators of all operations. Within a short time after the arrival of the three leaders from Calcutta we had about 1,000 active sympathisers in and around Agartala.

The leaders first decided to teach the TOC members the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, growth of capitalism, feudalism, the utility of class struggle, its ways, definition of class enemies etc. The responsibility of arranging the theoretical classes was entrusted to me.

These classes used to be held somewhere in the town. The TOC members were very regular and sel-

dom failed to attend. Sometimes they seemed to be much more zealous than their teachers and organized group discussions on different subjects. The next thing the teachers asked us to do was to write slogans on the walls. They said that these slogans would make the people conscious of their suffering. They would also know that the CPI(ML) had emerged to protect their interests.

The notebook in which I had taken down the Naxalite slogans in Calcutta were now very useful. I carefully read the slogans and selected some of them. The slogans you have seen on the school, college and government buildings in Agartala are from my notebook. One thing, for slogans we also used the Red Book Chairman Mao.

After the wall-writings we turned our attention to the peasantry because the main aim of the CPI(ML) is to organize and mobilise the poor peasants against the landlords, money-lenders and other agents of feudal exploitation. In the course of their struggle the peasants will join the working class in the cities. Anyway, we began to think of our next mission—operations in rural Tripura. I have already told you that the economy of Tripura is based on agriculture. The local tribal people are the oldest inhabitants and also the oldest agriculturists, suffering from inhuman feudal exploitation. Many promises were made to them since independence by the local and Central governments but none of those was fulfilled. On the contrary a very severe restriction was put on them in 1960 when a Bill was passed by the Tripura Government to put an end to the tribals' age-old method of cultivation, "Zum-chash", on the plea that it would lead to deforestation. It is true that "Zum" type cultivation generally takes place on forested slopes of mountains. The tribals or "Zum" cultivators destroy these forests by setting them on fire and use the ashes of the burnt trees as fertilizers. Naturally this means deforestation ultimately leading to erosion of soil and affecting regular rain-

fall. But the government, thought it passed the anti-Zum Act did nothing concrete to compensate the tribals. On the contrary they had to face additional pressure when refugees began to cross over into the State from East Pakistan. Most of the fertile land, especially in the plains passed into the hands of these refugees. In some cases the newcomers who were much more affluent than the poor tribals bought land directly from the latter, and sometimes the great Sachindral Sinha illegally distributed thousands of kanis of fertile land among the refugees. This is one of his election strategies. Under these extremely adverse circumstances when their roads were blocked on both sides the tribals found no alternative but to step further down the economic ladder. They began to work as agricultural labourers in fields which were even a few years ago their own.

With all these things in our minds we prepared our next programme. There were among our sympathisers some tribal students. They were exceptionally rich among their people but they had also a genuine love for us. We asked them to take us to their villages. They agreed.

Generally, the average villager is very suspicious owing to his ignorance and isolation. He will not talk intimately to any townsman, he may even inform the local landlord or his agents about any newcomer. The villagers however do it out of fear. These complications can be avoided if the outsider gets shelter with a local man. Then the villagers may treat him as a less dangerous fellow, if not as a friend. All of the TOC boys followed this policy, they contacted their tribal friends and with them went to their villages. They then mixed with the tribal peasants and tried to win them over to their side.

The Will of God

The conversations between a TOC boy and tribal peasants used to be like this:

The TOC boy: Hello, brothers, how do you do?

The peasants : Well. Aren't you the guest of our Bachudhan Babu ?

TOC Boy : Oh yes. Aren't you Dabua whose father Maju Rieng was a big farmer of this village ? I know all of your friends.

Dabua : Yes, my father was a landlord but his son is now a labourer and in the same farm.

Other peasants : We too had our own land but God has deprived us of it.

TOC boy : God or the present landlord ? Bachudhan Tripuri says that you were evicted by somebody of this village. Isn't it a fact ?

The peasants : Yes, Bachudhan is right, but nothing can happen without the will of God.

So it was the ghost of God who often prevented us from proceeding further. The tribals believed that their poverty was due to the will of God, their sufferings too were due to the will of God. So to move against the landlord or moneylender is to rebel against God. For instance, one of the TOC boys working in a village at Khoai once asked the local peasants whether they had made up their minds to kill the landlord as they had said they would on the previous night. The peasants said they knew he was there to help them. But it was useless to kill that man. "You know that God has written on our foreheads that we will have to suffer and starve. So what's the use of this murder ?"

In some cases there was no God, nor his spectre, but mutual interest between the landlord and the peasants which defeated our programmes. For instance the TOC boy said if the peasants realized that they were being exploited by that man, why did they not kill him ?

The peasants said it was true that he exploited them but he also helped them in distress. In lean times they could borrow money and paddy from him. If they killed him who would help them ?

Yet, we succeeded at some other places. There we could have killed all the class enemies had not circumstances betrayed us at the ele-

venth hour. We however succeeded in beheading two villagers, one of them a landlord and the other an agent. The former was a nightmare to the people of Maharani, a village about 40 miles from Agartala. He had illegally in his possession more than 100 kanjs of land, besides being a moneylender who used to charge a very high rate of interest. Contrary to our bitter experiences at other places, we got a satisfactory response to our call from the local peasants of Maharani. Actually there the TOC boys worked only for about a month and succeeded in convincing the peasants of the necessity of class struggle and annihilation of the local moneylenders, landlords and their agents. It was most probably in March, 1970, that the peasant guerillas of Maharani killed that landlord. The TOC boys themselves conducted the operation but the actual killing was done by the local peasants. This is how it went :

The Operation

At about 2 a.m. the guerillas slipped into the house, found the man in his bedroom sleeping on his cot. One of the guerillas took out a knife and stabbed him on the head, chest and stomach. He died instantaneously. The guerillas then slipped out as silently as they had entered a few minutes ago.

But in the second case, we made a big mistake. Instead of killing the landlord we killed his servant. It happened this way. The man came to know of our plan much before our TOC boys could reach his village. So on the particular night he went to sleep in another room while the poor servant was ordered to sleep on his master's cot. Our guerillas were equally deceived. They could not recognise in the dark whom they were killing. The next morning when they saw the landlord proudly stepping out of his house a shiver went down their spines, many hurriedly left the village but on their way to Agartala some of them were arrested by the police.

Along with our activities in rural

areas we aimed at the destruction of all the machinery of imperialism in towns. First of all we decided to blow up the system of education which since the 19th century has been producing agents of imperialism. We used to attack schools during the day, often during the recess. We used to carry with us highly explosive bombs, pipe-guns, knives and petrol. Generally our targets of attack were the library, the office and the room of the headmaster. After receiving an "all clear sign" from our sympathisers we entered the school and divided into four different groups : one to attack the room of the headmaster, to cut the telephone wire in his room and destroy all his valuable office files ; another group to enter the library and set the books on fire, another to enter the office to destroy everything including the money, and the fourth group to guard the school entrance and watch the movements of the students and teachers. This group used to have many bombs and pipe-guns, while the others carried petrol and knives.

In this way we raided a large number of schools, including the Pragati School, the Prachya Bharati School, Avaynagar Higher Secondary School and the Vodhjang High School. As for the Avaynagar School not a single sheet of paper was left in the office room, every thing was burnt to ashes. Wherever we went, neither the students nor the teachers ever dared make any protest. We fell upon them like a tiger on a herd of sheep. Nowhere did we experience any resistance except some feeble protests from the old headmasters. Those bloody goody goody men used to say : *Babara kena esob korchha ? Agun lagie ki hobe* etc. (My boys! What are you doing? What will you gain by setting everything on fire ?)

Similar was the fate of the colleges in Agartala. For about six months everything was at our mercy. Classes were postponed, examinations held up and the stupid teachers were always seen inside their houses. But we did not kill any of them. Here

of course we definitely deviated from the line of our comrades in West Bengal.

Days were rolling on and we were becoming more and more powerful. On the last birthday of Comrade Mao Tse-tung we organised a procession. Carrying placards and pictures of Mao, Lenin and Charu Mazumder we walked along the different streets of the town. The pedestrians looked on but made no remark; even the police who were following us from a safe distance did not dare to come out of their four-wheeled cages. At about 9 p.m. we dispersed in the darkness near Gangerpar. About ten minutes later the police reached the spot, got down from their vans and raised a "halla" (noise).

Clashes with CPM

This single incident proves our strength and stamina. Really, unlike all other political parties the CPI (ML) grew with unprecedented rapidity. And this involved us in clashes with the CPI(M). It is true we had genuine hatred for Congress but our hatred of the CPI(M) was unlimited. It was because they speak of revolution but sit in parliament. There is a party of economism, agitating for some economic demands and concessions. They try to excite the middle-class Bengalis in the name of revolution and thus keep the starving people far away from actual class struggle. The leaders of the CPI(M) are from typical middle-class stock sharing all the vices and shortcomings of that class. They know it well that if there is a revolution they will be its first victims because their sole aim is self-enrichment at the cost of the toiling millions. That is why we made the CPI(M) our main political enemy. We first attacked the party's student front. In one operation, for instance, we severely beat up the leader of the students' union in our college. That fellow was an out and out CPI(M) supporter and he used to spread all sorts of rumours against us. One day we entered the college, dragged him out of the class room and gave him a good beating. As

one of the TOC boys took out a knife to stab him, he began to run. Somebody among us threw a small bomb and the boy was injured. He was bleeding profusely. But we failed to catch him, he ran away.

After this incident, everyone of the CPI(M) became very panicky. We erased their slogans from the walls and wrote our own; nobody came forward to challenge us. In fact, we did what we liked during those months. One thing, however, we did not do. We did not kill anyone of our political enemies. Not only that, we believed in the basic identities between the hard core cadres of the CPI(ML) and the CPI(M), but the situation was not very helpful. Unlike Calcutta, Agartala is a much smaller place and most of us, I mean the political workers and leaders, were known to each other intimately. Besides, there was less sophistication in our politics. So we could beat somebody up, but could not think of killing him. That does not mean that we ever compromised with our class enemies.

But our fall was as meteoric as our rise. The moment we reached the peak we came to learn that we had among us many spies. We tried to be more alert but it was too late. Towards the end of 1970 some of our TOC boys were arrested. We therefore left our homes, shifted our office and "school" to a safer place somewhere outside the town. Long before this, we had been sleeping elsewhere at night to avoid the police. After those unexpected setbacks we changed our shelters. But all these proved fruitless. Almost every alternate night some TOC boys and active sympathisers were caught and jailed. Then one day came my turn. Like other TOC boys I also did not sleep in my house. My widowed mother who did not like these things from the beginning became very unhappy. She often said that I could do whatever I liked but I should remember that I was her only son, and should not die. "My son do not sleep outside at night." On the occasion of a festival I agreed to spend

the night at home. At about 3 a.m. I woke up at a loud noise outside the gate. I left the bed, looked through the peephole of the door and found two truckloads of the CRP and Tripura Police. I still pity them! Though they encircled the house they did not dare come inside for they feared that I might throw bombs. So the OC began to shout: "Sudhir Babu, I ask you to surrender, do not try to run away or throw bombs, my men are ready with their guns." He repeated this warning but none of his men came in. Meanwhile my mother also woke up and began to weep. I therefore decided to surrender. I opened the door and said "Yes, now you can come in. Look! I am unarmed." The OC was to take me in his jeep but my mother rushed out and said that they must call somebody as witness, otherwise they might kill her only son and deny that they had arrested him. The OC agreed and my mother called in our next-door neighbour, a headmaster whose school we once raided. I was surprised when I heard the headmaster say that I was an extremely polite and innocent boy, that whatever I did, I did it for the people and with an open mind. Another surprise was that for one man there came at least 60 armed policemen! These demons are always afraid of death.

The lock-up was dark most of the time, the floor was wet with urine, the walls were plastered with excrement. I was given two bricks so that my feet did not get wet. For seven days I sat on the bricks. The food served in the evening was smelly and full of stone chips. The six or seven convicts with whom I shared the lock-out used to tell me that the food was so prepared that it would spoil my liver for ever. Whatever be the truth, my liver has been damaged.

Reasons for Failure

The failure of our movement was mainly due to two important factors—absence of mass support and internal conflict. I admit that wherever the people allowed us a free hand in our

operations, they did it out of fear and not out of love or sympathy. We wrote slogans on the walls but seldom tried to make the people understand our theory. Middle-class people are basically opportunist and timid. Though sometimes they cry for a change, basically they prefer the status quo. That is why they support the CPI(M). They know that the CPI(M) will not turn over the system, but help it to run, it will moreover secure for them some concessions. Naturally, when we raided the schools, burnt books or beat up CPI(M) students people began to doubt our sincerity. I often heard whisperings behind me among the students in my college that what Sudhir had been doing was not good. It has been said earlier that many TOC boys and sympathisers were arrested while asleep. Those who gave them shelter themselves betrayed those boys. They would not have done so had they any loyalty to the party. A large number of boys are still rotting in jails. Nobody cares for their release. From my experience I can say that revolution depends on the participation of the people. Basically the people do not take any initiative. This initiative should come from a revolutionary. He will create a situation favourable for people's participation. For this however he should have patience and farsightedness. All these we ignored from the start.

Another thing that weakened us was internal conflict and for this the ultimate responsibility lies with the "Big Three" of our party who came from Calcutta. Whatever they did, they did according to their whims and

For FRONTIER contact

S. P. CHATTERJEE

Statesman Office

Steel Market

Durgapur-4

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as per the written instructions from headquarters. It was we the local TOC boys who built up the party in Tripura but our service was not sufficiently taken into account. The leaders seldom asked us to take part in the screening committee for admission. As a result a large number of spies entered the party and sabotaged our operations. By the beginning of 1971 many efficient and trusted workers had been arrested and imprisoned. Inside the TOC we had a genuine feeling of brotherhood. We were ready to die for one another. But this relationship did not last long because of the tactics of the three leaders. Finally, they themselves were arrested. They were let down by the same people whom they had trusted more than they did us.

Since my release I have left the party and decided to complete my studies. Besides, I shall look after our small grocery—the only means of our livelihood. But don't think that I have betrayed the party. I have not and I must not. The only thing I want to say is that for the time being West Bengal and Tripura have no bright future. West Bengal in particular will see bigger tragedies. Only the CPI(ML) can save her from ruination but it should remember that it will have to take the people by its side. 'People' is not a myth, it is a reality. However, because of indiscriminate murder of individuals whoever they may be—a teacher, a middle peasant or a policeman—and because of the so-called cultural revolution, people had not come forward for their defence.

I ask my friends to watch the war of Bangladesh. It is not yet a class struggle but a mere clash of interests between two groups of colonial people. But there may emerge a third group—the real revolutionaries who will crush the first two. Look and learn. Here in India also there are two groups of hypocrites: the rightists and the so-called leftists. So think of your next step. You have already made your path slippery.

Cossipore-Baranagar

BY A CORRESPONDENT

WHAT appeared in the newspapers about the Baranagore-Cossipore killing of August 12-13 was but a small part of what actually happened. The press reports were police reports. But what happened would be beyond anyone's comprehension. Murder of sorts is a familiar thing now days. But the Baranagar-Cossipore carnage was neither familiar nor secret. It has broken new grounds and set a new pattern with the most ominous sign of the shape of things to come. So long the police would come to the house of a Naxalite suspect, ransack the house and, if he happened to be there, drag him out. The police would not make any charge, would produce no warrant and would not answer any question. The day following there would appear in the press a spoof about a bomb attack on the police or an attempt to escape and about the death of the boy. But this time it was entirely novel. More than 150 young boys were butchered within two days—the Friday-Saturday. Others who were not young had also to die. Lest there be any mistake, a list containing the names of the boys killed was hung up on an improvised scaffolding on Kutighat Road, the main road connecting the Baranagar police station with the other parts. There were hour-to-hour additions to the list, and the list covered only a part of the whole area of operations. The list ran to more than 60 names on Friday alone, and enlisting the dead was discontinued as the dead were lost count of.

The boys were murdered because they were nonconformists and Naxalites. Not all of them were activists; indeed very few of them were. Some were friends; many were neighbours; others happened to have talked to some of them once or twice.

The big business concerns (there are quite a few at Baranagar), the shopkeepers and the local political leaders

SEPTEMBER 18, 1971

were feeling uneasy. On the day preceding the mass murder, one Congress(R) worker who ran a club of local roughs was killed. The anti-socials became panicky; they got the green signal from the high-ups in the Government. The police were officially withdrawn and given the strictest instruction not to interfere. Practitioners in murder and mayhem were brought in; arms were supplied; the operation started. It started in broad daylight. Lest there be any doubt about police inaction and connivance, it may be pointed out that at least 3 murders were committed right in front of a three-storeyed building housing a large contingent of armed police at Kutighat Road, about half a furlong away from the Baranagar police station. Who were the killers? They are now euphemistically called "resistance groups". They are controlling the area at the moment. They get protection, money from the business houses; they extort money from the people on the plea of defending the locality; they are on the payroll of the police for supplying intelligence about the Naxalites. But actually who are they? They are gangsters and murderers. Only the other day it was their daily practice to snap and steal overhead copper wires plunging whole areas into darkness. One of the members of the "resistance groups" had his left hand chopped off at the wrist in the process. The killers are at large. They are reigning at Baranagar.

It was a bloody, sadistic settling of accounts. Dead bodies were everywhere—bodies with heads cut off, limbs lost, eyes gouged out, entrails ripped open. They were there in the streets in broad daylight. Later they were carried in rickshaws and handcarts and thrown into the Hooghly. The tidal bore came in handy; the bodies were washed away. Murders of the most grisly kind were perpetrated; the most ghastly tortures were inflicted. Only two of the countless are being cited. An old man above 60 was literally doused with petrol and burnt alive because he had failed

to give news about his alleged Naxalite nephew. A schoolgirl in her early teens had her arm chopped off because she did not know where her brother was. More apologetic crimes like the burning of houses, kicking and punching people to senselessness, etc., need not be mentioned.

Macabre Drama

The Baranagar-Cossipore killing was a practice in systematic brutality. A macabre drama was enacted in the wake of the killing. It took shape in the cool comfortable Rotunda of Writers' Buildings. There was a hurried conference of political parties presided over by the killer party. There were hot words, angry words, ambiguous words all around. Mr Jyoti Basu of the CPM threatened a *bandh* over the issue. But there was no *bandh*. There simply could not be any. The Baranagar people know that the CPM cadres who had in the past made a strategic retreat from the area of operation, presumably due to the Congress threat were allowed to come back and they helped the Congress(R) killers flush out the extremists. Thus when the left leaders made the angry protest the people of Baranagar were not amused; they felt sick. In fact the "wicked Naxalites" are the common enemy. Mr S. S. Ray, who has for some time been threatening to bring out a new Bengal, visited Baranagar on Sunday and was conducted to the places of incidents by the killers themselves. (There was not any visit from the Left). The meeting at Rotunda (the same day) was a few minute's late (shouldn't the visit precede the meeting?); a commission was announced; the Left leaders understood and the *bandh* call was not pressed; a resolution (yes, a resolution) was passed condemning the murders. *Requiescat et peace*. The ominous sign is the exhibition of total hypocrisy on the part of the political leaders. The killers, much like the fascist storm-troopers, themselves played the hoax and organised student strikes, etc., here and there in protest against the killing. The killing is con-

tinuing, albeit with a different intensity and on a different scale.

In fact, the Baranagar-Cossipore massacre was a public crime. We have supped well on horrors at Baranagar. Political murder is common enough. But in the Baranagar-Cossipore area political murders were carried out as part of a big conspiracy. Murderers are professionalised and given official patronage. This is the work of the pathological preachers of hate, fear, suspicion, of people who are apparently set on producing a climate of opinion in which it might well seem to an indoctrinated fanatic that it is his duty and the only way to national salvation, to remove physically the Naxalites. Fascism is not a figure of speech, it is a grim reality. Baranagar is not an isolated incident; it is openly said there that a repeat performance will be given sometime somewhere.

August 7, 1971

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Book Review

MAOISM IN INDIA

By Mohan Ram

Vikash Publication. Rs 22.50.

THE schism in the Indian communist movement predates the ideological rift in the international field though the Sino-Soviet dispute hastened it. As early as 1947, the peasants of Telengana were fighting against armed counter-revolution though the Cominform initially overlooked it and finally asked the fighting peasantry to call off the struggle. The Chinese Communist Party (CPC) too was somewhat passive at the time. It held out the experience of the Chinese as a model of national liberation in the Third World, but it did not press home its line at the time. Polycentrism was absent in the communist movement and Moscow was the accepted leader.

But after the rise of revisionism in the fifties the situation changed substantially. Though Moscow did not spell it out in its policy statement, it made India the showpiece of its

strategy of peaceful transition to socialism and showered economic aid on India to wean her away from the imperialist camp as a proof of its concept of the non-capitalist road of development. Naturally the CPC was also drawn into the conflict. It labelled the Indian ruling class stooges of imperialism and called India's 'double alignment' as dual alignment between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

During this period dissension grew among the Indian communists and the split was formalised with the setting up of the CPI(M). The CPI dittoed the Soviet thesis of peaceful transition and national democracy. The Marxists, on the other hand, rejected national democracy. But it equivocated on peaceful transition and put the onus of armed conflict on its class enemies.

Initially, the CPC was not hostile to the CPM, but it was not cordial either. Its news media quoted the Marxists only twice (when its functionaries were rounded up in December 1964 and when the party refused to attend the Writers' Conference in Moscow). The differences appeared after the 1967 elections. Rejecting the CPM thesis that the crisis of the Congress in the elections shows that the economic crisis is fast reaching the initial stages of a political crisis, the CPC said the revolutionary situation in India was excellent. But it avoided direct attacks on the CPM and mainly used its tirades against the CPI's revisionism to sunb the CPM in a roundabout way. By steadfastly rejecting the CPM's contention of the united front as an 'instrument of struggle', the CPC made its distaste clear.

But after the uprising in Naxalbari the CPC began to attack the CPM bitterly. Following the CPM's programme, the peasant leaders of Naxalbari had formed village committees of rural poor, seized the land, driven out the landlords and their armed men and proclaimed India's first red base. But the UF government—which the CPM dominated—sent the police and army at the behest of the Centre and nipped the rural communards in the

bud. After an unusual delay, the CPM disowned the rising as adventurism, while meekly urging the UF to halt the repression.

The CPC found in Naxalbari the full flowering of the struggle begun in Telengana decades back and severely criticised the neo-revisionists for betraying the struggle. Provoked by the CPC and the dissident cadres within itself, the hitherto hesitant CPM leadership was forced to take its stand on ideological issues and in the process exposed its true colours. In August 1967, in Madurai the CPM laid down its ideological line which was basically at variance with that of the CPC. To the CPM, briefly, the Indian state is a bourgeois-landlord state led by the big bourgeoisie following a capitalist path along with monopoly capital. Under their rule the country's economic crisis was transforming itself into a political crisis. The CPC rejected the thesis and found India a puppet government led by bureaucratic capitalism tied to the apron-strings of imperialism.

The difference was fundamental. And the CPC went on with its attacks on the CPM. With the Soviet Union staking its ideology of peaceful transition to socialism in this country, India assumed a cardinal position in the East-West confrontation in the communist movement.

In between the breakaways from the CPM formed the AICCR (All-India Co-ordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries). After the Burdwan plenum, almost the entire Andhra Pradesh state committee dissociated itself from the CPM and organised itself as the APCC beyond the pale of the AICCCR. Later on a serious acrimony was to crop up between the two on the question of leadership over the Srikakulam struggle

A New Party

Ultimately a new party—CPI (ML)—was formed in April, 1969 that excluded, among others, the Andhra Pradesh Co-ordination Committee or the Nagi Reddy group, to be more precise. To the new party

Just Out!

Proletarian Path

(July issue)

Contents:

- Editorial on East Pakistan.
- Long Live the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.
- Press Conference in Court by T. Nagi Reddi and D. V. Rao.
- A Programme for Anti-imperialist Struggle.
- Nixon's Proposed visit to China.

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25/1, JYOTISH ROY ROAD,
CALCUTTA-53.

the principal contradiction in India is that between feudalism and the peasantry. It is to be resolved by staging a people's democratic revolution with the poor peasants, the working class and the middle peasants. In July of the same year, the CPI(ML) got the blessings of the CPC which recognised it as India's only genuine communist party.

This is how Mohan Ram describes the development of Maoism in his book which is an attempt to update his better known book *Indian Communism, Split within a Split*. Of six chapters he devotes the first three to the situation that led to the Naxalbari uprising and the creation of the first Marxist-Leninist party in India. In the rest he deals with the strategies and tactics of the CPI(ML) and other shades of Maoists with their differences.

The discussion is based on two premises. First, the Naxalbari uprising does not mark the beginning of the Maoist movement in India. Second the first Maoist party—the CPI(ML) was imposed from the top.

The writer describes in detail the situation that led to the conversion of the AICCCR into the CPI(ML) and accused the former of violating the norms of democratic centralism. He says, the two decisions—to expel the Andhra unit and to form a party—were almost simultaneous... suggesting an anxiety to exclude it from the new party. Further, the AICCCR was alleged to have bypassed "the state committee" by "organising its faction in Andhra Pradesh by dealing with the Srikulam District Committee directly". No doubt the manner in which the CPI(ML) was formed does make it vulnerable to criticism of this kind. But it must be noted that though Mohan Ram's chronology of events leading to the party formation is faithful, he has not been able to substantiate his charges adequately. In the absence of an alternative programme, his accusation against the AICCCR—and its Bengali leaders—turns out to be an apologia for the Andhra group and its leader Nagi Reddy.

But the author exposes himself while trying to establish his second premise. Despite the myth of indolence of Indian peasants they have repeatedly risen in arms against the exploiters. Within a period of three decades there had been three major uprisings in this country wherein armed peasants fought armed counter-revolution. But they had done it within a general programme of the global communist movement and under Moscow's leadership. But there have been climactic changes in the international scenario with the rise of Soviet revisionism as a separate ideology. Against this perspective the Indian peasant struggle reached its nodal point in Naxalbari. The CPC's strategy for the Third World as an alternative line to revisionism and its support to the Naxalbari rising gave it a place of eminence in the Indian people's fight against their rulers. Though Mohan Ram mentions this aspect in passing, his tendency to underplay its role as the making of a handful of anarchist, petty-bourgeois Bengali leaders is ill-concealed.

ASHIS SEN

The Agamani Song

H. CHAKRABORTY

KANGSANARAYAN, the legendary king of the *Barendras* (North Bengal) was the precursor of the Brahmanical revival of the *Shakti* cult which differed originally from the Vajrayana mother cult in some respects but later assimilated many of the traits of Buddhist *Tantra*. The revivalist movement received great fillip during the heyday of Bengali feudalism in the late Afghan and the early Mogul period when the feudal class of Bengal reached an amicable settlement with the Muslim rulers of Gour. This bonhomie lasted till the arrival in the late 16th century of the Mogul general, Man Singh, who broke up the little entente of the twelve feudal principalities of Bengal and brought the recalcitrants under the tutelage of the absolutist Akbarid monarchy.

The mother cult, particularly that of *Durga Dashabhujā*, continued to gain ground despite periodical reverses in the fortunes of the landed aristocracy during the regime of the later Moguls. It was during this age that the cult found its expression in Bengali literature through the agency of Raja Krishnachandra Roy of Nadia whose court was graced by two devout votaries, Bharatchandra and Ramprasad. While the former was a follower of the traditional Brahmanical faith, Ramprasad led a sort of revolt against the ritualistic spiritualism and preached the supremacy of the heart rather than the head. He sought to establish a personal and family relationship with the godhead in the form of a daughter, especially in his lyrics. This gave rise to a genre of Bengali songs known as *Shyama-Sangit* of which *agamani* is a branch dealing with the glad tidings of the imminent advent of Uma, the daughter-conception of the godhead. Many socio-economic facets of the existing reality have cast their shadow on the *agamani* songs, such as child marriage, oldish husbands of young girls because of the curse of *Kulinism*, the happy news and attendant household scenes of a married daughter's home-coming from afar, preferably in the autumn—it is the season of the religious festival and boats can ply better then. Thus the socio-economic reality penetrated into the spiritual conception of the mother-as-the-daughter endowing the godhead with a rare human and personal touch which lent the songs a throbbing vitality.

Shyama-sangit, especially of the *agamani* variety, seems to be part of the psychological make-up of the Bengali people. Every Bengali—be he a *sahib* or a *babu*, a townsman or a villager, educated or unsophisticated—readily reacts to a song of this variety which presupposes an empathetic response in the Bengali mind. The reasons must be sought in the social conditions of the land.

Ramprasad Sen surpassed all composers of *agamani* songs by his depth of genuine feeling and originality of

poetic imagination. Next came Kamalakanta, who did not lag much behind the former in poetic faculty but was hardly his equal in the imaginative sweep that grasps and transforms reality.

The later composers could not retain the robust assertiveness of Ramprasad and their songs often verge on trite sentimentality. Sweeping away all aesthetic judgment and bringing the audience to tears is neither a very difficult task nor an infallible criterion of good art. Most of the compositions of the post-Ramprasad period fail to rise to the level of real art work because of the over-emphasis on sentimental banality.

A number of agamani songs were sung before a small gathering in the chamber of Dr Gopal Banerjee on the morning of September 5. The singer, Mr Kanai Banerjee, has a good voice commanding a pliable range. Through selection of a score of such songs by various composers he was able to weave a conceivable pattern of semi-dramatic sequences of a theme. The ragas selected by him included Jogya, Kafi, Mia-Ki-Todi, Parraj, Lalit, Gunkeli, Deshi Todi and of course, Bhairavi. Bhairavi of the Bengal variety has a distinctive feature which is in no way inferior to that of Agra or Kirana. This is the only raga to which the Bengali mind reacts sharply and instantly. The raga was shaped and reshaped many times in the hands of many geniuses ranging from Joyadeva to Nazrul. Next come the tunes created by Ramprasad known as the *Prasadi* tunes. Mr Banerjee's mode of singing was both efficient and expressive although the occasional Tappa embellishments were not well achieved. But he was able to establish immediate rapport with the audience. His Bengali intonations were without fault which can be hardly said about his Sanskrit hymns. As for example it is not *asatyo* but *asato ma Sadgamaya*. The songs tended to cause a lump in one's throat but, as I have said before, excess of the pathetic sentiment scarcely constitutes the criterion of real art.

Mr Banerjee was ably supported

by violin, flute, tambura, shahnai and percussions of which the tabla was out of tune all the time and the shahnai missed some of the upper notes on several occasions. When this instrumental team served the purpose of *doharki* (repetitive chorus), why can't Mr Banerjee do without the disturbing harmonium? But his singing was fairly effective and was able to arouse emotive response.

Two Documentaries

BY A FILM CRITIC

A good documentary film sponsored by the State Film Department is indeed a rarity and the few creative short films made under the United Front regime are not very often publicly released for reasons best known to people dominating the show. However from time to time in private previews, these films are shown to the privileged few. Last week at such a show two short films *Gangasagar Mela* and *A Happening In Calcutta* made by Graphic Documentaries were shown to an invited audience. These two films are directed by Bansi Chandragupta, the renowned art director working with Satyajit Ray since *Pather Panchali*. In both the films we can see the designer's eye for detail and visual patterns. *Gangasagar* depicts in evocative cinematic metaphors the spiritual journey of a seething mass of humanity, congregating in the annual fair held at the confluence of the Ganga and the sea in winter when the sun enters the Capricorn. It is a powerful, emotive document, a mosaic of faces, starting like a symphony and proceeds with different variations and movements ultimately culminating in a crescendo of complex emotions, the hectic finale of mass-worship. Satyajit Ray's excellent score helps considerably to sustain the mood.

A Happening In Calcutta is about the city during the festive mood of the pujas, when the city suddenly

undergoes a metamorphosis, a pleasant shift from the frayed tempers and violent tensions to a spirit of gay abandon. The puja rituals are beautifully illustrated and integrated into the overall scheme and the cultural events forming the festival of Calcutta sponsored in 1969 also feature in the film. K. K. Mahajan's mobile camera goes into streets and brings out the volatile nature of urban living. A word of caution for the director who often betrays overpowering obsession with design for its own sake, always a handicap to the social documentarist.

Letters

Where Do We Go Now ?

Three years have passed since the Naxalbari uprising of 1967. Ruthless terror and repression were unleashed to suppress the struggle and all other political parties claimed that the 'revolution' was finished. Subsequent developments showed that the claim was baseless. After Naxalbari there were Srikakulam, Debra-Gopiballavpur and innumerable incidents including Kheri, Mushahari, and so on. Then came Birbhum.

These struggles provide lessons—both positive and negative. The positive ones are : They have focussed the necessity of armed struggle as the only way of capturing state power. And in doing so they have forced all the political parties, rightist or leftist, to take a position and an attitude. The struggles have proved that there prevails a revolutionary situation, an excellent revolutionary situation, that the people want a radical and genuine change, and that the people have sympathy, if not support, though it is very passive and mild. They prove that bourgeois democracy is actually a dictatorship. In India it is a big bourgeois-big landlord dictatorship, and as people's resort to violence it unmasks itself and fascism is let loose. They prove that if you are a revolutionary only in words and not in deeds, the state machinery will

provide you with all protective arrangements to save your life. If you are a revolutionary in deeds too the price on your head may be fixed at several thousand rupees.

There are negative lessons too :

These struggles though revolutionary in nature are more the acts of some militant youths dedicated to the cause of revolution than acts done by broad masses of people, by workers and peasants. That is why there have been many sparks, but no prairie fire as yet. That is why the particular struggles could not go on for long and survive the attack and onslaught of the reactionary forces. Though a revolutionary situation is there the reactionary political forces, particularly the social democratic parties, have a strong mass base, more or less. The overwhelming majority of workers and peasants are still under their political influence. The contingent of workers is very small or practically nil in the revolutionary ranks engaged in actions.

There is strong criticism of the action carried on in the urban areas : raids on educational institutions desecration of statues and armed engagements with police in big cities. It is thought that it is a deviation from the accepted strategy of people's war, from the general tactical line of "encircling the urban areas through rural bases," and from the tactical line of "non-military political struggles for a fairly long time in urban areas". As a result of this wrong line, it is argued, revolutionary forces are being wasted and the cause of rural guerilla warfare has suffered.

But are these struggles a success or a failure? It may be said that they have been both. Have not they threatened the very existence of the state machinery and challenged the existing conditions? They have created fear and horror in the minds of domestic and foreign reactionaries. Yet these were a failure in the sense that they failed to establish any base area or liberated zone, or mobilise and organise the masses and lead them into action.

But what type of armed struggle

would have been a success? What could have been the specific nature, character, form and method of people's war in the Indian perspective? No effective reply has yet been given by any communist revolutionary group. Some paper-reply was given in the immediate programme of the Andhra Communist Revolutionaries (published in *The Proletarian Path*). But it is simply a proposition and there is no proof that it has been effectively put into practice. Some reports of armed action by Andhra men under the leadership of Nagi Reddy in Warrangal and Khammam appeared in the press. But the intensity and extensivity of these struggles or their present position are not known in West Bengal.

For a pretty long time non-CPI-(ML) revolutionary groups have been pointing out the defects and mistakes in the CPI(ML)'s political military and organisational line and putting forward alternative lines. It appears, they thought that simple political polemics was enough to defeat the ML line and win over the revolutionary ranks of the ML. What they have ignored is that in a peaceful and non-revolutionary situation ideological and paper-battle may pay but in an acute revolutionary situation, particularly when the ML has already started actions, simple paper-struggle would not produce the desired effect if not combined with practice. They miserably failed to create a model following their own alternative line.

So long such polemics and debate had been going on between the CPI (ML) and other communist revolutionaries. But if recent press reports are true it is no more a contradiction between ML and non-ML Naxalities. The CPI(ML) itself is divided on many important issues concerning strategy and tactics.

Some interested circles think that a serious split will soon result in the liquidation of Naxalities. The CPI-(M) in particular has begun to dream of a come-back of the militant ranks of the Naxalities to the old fold. This

is evident in the political line it is taking in its organs of late.

Will the Naxalities be liquidated from the Indian political scene, will there be again an era of peaceful and constitutional politics? Will the "chaos" come to an end and everything become normal? If anybody thinks so he is mistaken. The armed outbursts have not come from heaven. All these subjective activities are the logical effects of many objective causes. The order of the day now is disorder. Nobody can deny that there exists a serious economic crisis in India which in its turn gives birth to a political or revolutionary crisis. In fact the entire society—economy, politics and culture—is on the verge of total collapse.

The Naxalites cannot be liquidated or disbanded. If they are liquidated it will mean that the present Indian society will have a long lease. If revolutionary forces decay, it will prove that India is suffering from no permanent economic and political crisis. But if the present Indian crisis is permanent and has grown acute then the Naxalites will live long.

This, of course, does not mean that there will be no change in the composition or alignment among Naxalites. Some of the cadres may become frustrated and inactive while others may join other parties because of the terror unleashed against them. Possibly there will be realignments, reshuffling and reorganisation. Such a process is believed to have already started. Consequently there may be a pause, a lull.

It would not be impertinent to think that the second phase of India's civil war is going to be over—Telen-gana being the first phase—and the third phase is ensuing. What is required now is unity and unification of all the Naxalite forces. This is not an impossible task. There is full ideological unity between different groups. There is political unity too, so far as the stage of revolution and political strategy are concerned. All of them accept Mao Tse-tung thought as the continuation and further development of Marxism-Leninism and they take

the CPC as the leader of the international communist movement and world revolution. They agree that India being a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country the stage of revolution is people's democracy and agrarian revolution is its essence. If an all-out effort is made to unite and unify the forces, principled polemics is conducted and lessons are sincerely taken from the past and present, there will appear a more powerful revolutionary force.

SAMIRAN SEN
Calcutta

Profundities

The CPI(M)'s failure to distinguish between a genuine and a sham national movement is more fantastic than 'China's failure to support a national movement'.

The learned members of the Politbureau have, however, expressed the worthy observation that by amending the Constitution, Mrs Gandhi is purporting to do what they had been demanding for quite a long time. Many a worried brain will now calm down and hail the party as a model parliamentary opposition, true and loyal to the great and lofty ideals of parliamentary democracy.

These two apparently unconnected views of the CPI(M), when taken together seem to acquire a significance more than justifying your comment: "New alignments are coming into sharp relief. There is much better understanding between the left parties and the administration..." (August 21).

A READER
Calcutta

BirBhum

The political identity of A.B. was a bit obscure in his article of 10.7.71, but he himself disclosed it in his letter of 7.8.71. It is ridiculous when he claims that the CPI(M) is the only revolutionary party. The party's present political activities are confined to struggles for the economic

benefit of middle-class workers, industrial workers and peasants. If the CPI(M) claims that it is responsible for the increase in their earnings and for giving land to the landless, then in that case it has done, in the opinion of Marx and Lenin, a most anti-revolutionary work when India is fully in the grip of imperialist powers. Does A.B. think that the "proletariat babus" of Dalhousie Square, the industrial workers and the landless peasants who have benefited from the economic struggles under the leadership of the CPI(M) will hold the rifle any more at the moment of actual uprising?

That the CPI(M) is a politically bankrupt party was shown by the failure of the purely political struggle by the industrial workers of Durgapure and the recent peasant trouble at Allahpur. In both cases, there was betrayal by the election-loving CPI(M) leaders.

Further as an eye-witness to the recent happenings in the Baranagar-Cossipore area, I can speak of the active role played by the local CPI(M) cadres in collusion with the Congress goondas, local police and CRP. After the mass killing, the CPI(M)'s daily, *Ganashakti's* figure almost tallied with the total death figure given by the bourgeois press, where only one zero was missing from the actual figure.

S. MUKHERJEE
Calcutta

Not Enough

The observation, "It is also a fact that agents have infiltrated their (the Naxalites'), uncoordinated squads justifying some of the slander and also fatally exposing their underground structure" (August 21) is an admission of a truth on your part which you have so long repudiated. Yes, the fact is that agents-provocateurs have infiltrated both the apparently well-knit organisation of the CPI(ML) and the riddled organisation of the CPI(M) which has thrown open membership both at the party and union levels, to all and sundry, inclu-

ding those who were, before the coming to power of the U.F. for the second time, diehard members of the arch-reactionary party, Congress(R) and(O). Cases of subverting party moves both at the union and party levels have occurred in the eastern region's coal and steel belts and other industrial areas in and around Calcutta.

On the one hand you have sporadic strategic actions devoid of simultaneous tactical thinking and action without much response and sympathy from the public because of failure to propagate the ideas, aims, motives and means of the CPI(ML), on the other there are the repressive powers of the State practised with the crafty connivance of the social democrats. That in view of these 'action' would not and could not be eventually successful was never in doubt. Actions based on valour, zeal and youthful enthusiasm are not enough unless accompanied by proper guidance from the underground leadership and by co-ordinated action by the "legal" parties professing Marxism to buttress the strategic action against the reactionary powers.

A. K. PAREKH
Bombay

Why So Silent?

About one year ago, one of my friends, Prof Jagannath Ghosh, was arrested in Basirhat sub-division. So far as I know, he is still in jail. While I know nothing of the "offences" he had committed, I know this much that the West Bengal Government College Teachers' Association has not issued even a single statement expressing sympathy for the teacher. Allow me to remind you that about two years ago when another teacher, Prof Ranjit Gayen, was arrested in the same sub-division. I had written a long letter to you stating that the Association had chosen to keep quiet in similar cases. The Association then replied that it would be more active in similar cases in future. Prof Gayen ultimately lost his job. Needless to say,

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Prof Gayen was suspected to be a Naxalite. Prof. Ghosh may similarly be suspected. Will he lose his job too? I am sure that the leaders of the Association will let us know of the actual position of Prof Ghosh.

RATHINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAY
Calcutta

Middle-Of-The-Roaders

In an article dated 5th April, 1956, Comrade Mao Tse-tung wrote.

"... Stalin put forward a formula that in different revolutionary periods the main blow should be so directed as to isolate the middle-of-the-road social and political forces of the time." Criticising this, Comrade Mao wrote, "Our experience teaches us that the main blow of the revolution should be directed at the chief enemy and to isolate him, whereas with the middle forces, a policy of *both uniting with them and struggling against them* should be adopted... But there was a time... when some of our comrades crudely applied this formula of Stalin's...; the result was that, instead of isolating the real enemy, we isolated ourselves and suffered losses to the advantage of the real enemy." (P 433-4, *Political Thought Of Mao Tse-tung* by S. R. Schram).

Comrade Charu Majumdar should give a second thought to his directive—"Hate and smash the middle-roaders." The only people gaining from the daggers-drawn attitude of the CPI(ML) and CPI(M) towards each other are the ruling classes. And aren't the cadres of the CPI(ML) getting isolated to some extent?

CPI(ML)
A Sympathiser
Calcutta

Whose Body

Failure on the part of the police and the administration to confirm or deny the arrest of Mr Saroj Dutta is causing serious concern, especially to those associated with politics and literature. Mr Dutta was the editor

of the noted Bengali journal *Parichaya* during the late forties.

It is understood that the body of an old man, said to be of that of Saroj Dutta and reported "unclaimed", was found on the Maidan near the Mohun Bagan tent.

ANJAN SEN
Calcutta

Freedom Or Imperialism ?

On August 21 almost all the newspapers announced that at Hyderabad Bharat Dynamics has started producing anti-tank guided missiles in collaboration with a 'foreign firm'. In future it would also produce a sophisticated radar system for the army and a nuclear-attack warning system.

In striking contrast with past rituals nobody on this occasion talked about the collaborating country; none even named this 'foreign firm'. The foreign firm involved is the General Dynamics Corporation—a notorious arms-maker of the USA. In 1967, General Dynamics was the second largest Pentagon contractor and received 4.7% of the total U.S. defence contract amounting to \$1800 million. In 1968, it received Pentagon contracts of \$1450 million to manufacture about 200 supersonic, controversial swing-wing fighter bombers (F-111s) for the U.S. and NATO. This expensive aircraft was soon grounded and removed because of repeated operational failures and inherent defects. It was nicknamed by the U.S. fliers 'the death machine'. In 1970, the failure-ridden General Dynamics along with eight other top U.S. arms-makers suffered a significant drop in sales.

There is lack of business and so the U.S. arms-makers are spreading out to other parts of the world in keeping with the U.S. imperialist role. Chrysler, McDonnell-Douglas, Westinghouse etc. are nursing and raising Japanese militarism. Lockheed has just received 'approval' for collaboration in India (*The Statesman* 25.8.71). The notorious General Dynamics too is here—not to sell but

to make arms. In reality it is just about the same as Pakistan's possible receipt of U.S. arms via Vietnam. Yet our otherwise vociferous 'patriotic' agents are quiet.

Indira and her ilk are right in saying that the Indo-Russian Treaty does not make 'non-alignment' a relic of the past. Surely not, India's 'non-alignment' means serving under the double yoke of its twin masters—U.S. imperialism and Russian social-imperialism.

We are being increasingly sold out under the dizzy spell of jingoistic nationalism, based on opportunistic expediencies.

SWADHIN KAR
Calcutta

Striking Power

The point established by Alok Kar (September 4) with regard to the Indo-Pak war needs further elucidation. Failure of the Pakistani army cannot be regarded as an achievement on the part of the Indian army. The battle of Khem-Karan was won by fields of sugarcane (which hampered the mobility of the Pattons) and not by Indian Vijayantas and Shermans. Indian officers at Khem-Karan claimed to have destroyed 60 Pakistani tanks and captured 10 intact, later Indian estimates put the figure at 97 destroyed or captured. Independent sources put it at 40.

The Bhembas-chhamb area was the only front in Kashmir where Pakistan's heavy striking power could be efficiently used. The battle of Sialkot was one of the important tank battles since the Second World War. Military experts in Washington concluded that Pakistan lost 200 tanks, with about 150 temporarily put out of action. India lost between 175 and 190, with another 200 out of action. India was deprived of 27% of her tank forces while Pakistan lost about 32%. The rival claims were 471 Pakistani and 516 Indian tanks destroyed.

The Indian armed forces have indeed "endowed themselves with an aura" The claims made by India—as gathered from newspapers during

the conflict—were: August 31—IAF destroys 10 tanks. September 7—3 tanks captured. September 14—82 tanks destroyed. September 16—260 tanks destroyed. The total adds up to 352 tanks destroyed and 3 captured. Incidentally the Government of India announced the immobilisation of more Pattons than the Pakistani army possessed.

Pakistan claimed 115 Indian planes while New Delhi claimed 73 Pakistani aircraft. Independent figures put the Indian loss at 65 to 70 and the Pakistani loss at 20.

R. D. BOSE
Calcutta

States, Small Or Big

I almost fully agree with what 'Analyst' wrote (August 14). But when he says that in the present world situation tiny States cannot keep themselves really free of the influence of super-powers and that larger States are economically more expedient for class struggle, I think he is totally incorrect. Any State, whether tiny or big, can be really free from the influence of super-powers if the people carry on a revolutionary armed struggle and overthrow imperialism and local reactionaries. Albania has already achieved this. Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and many other 'tiny' States are going to prove it. The people, the people alone, are the motive force of history. Any deviation from this understanding and any over-stressing on other factors (topography, area, population) is a dangerous un-Marxian trend.

The statement that larger States are economically more expedient for class struggle has no foundation. It leads in the ultimate to the justification of national oppression in the name of unity. Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, etc. were economically expedient for class struggle than India.

Analyst says that armed struggle should have been launched in East Pakistan for autonomy not separation. This concept arises from the previous belief. He is worried about Pakistan (a big State) being split.

He wants unity at any cost. He does not understand that East Bengal is fighting for national self-determination which cannot be achieved within the framework of Pakistan in which East Bengal was converted into a colony. This can only be achieved by a total separation from that State.

The demand for independence of East Bengal is just as is that of the oppressed nations within India. Only after each nation has achieved real self-determination can there be a real union.

In East Bengal fierce class war will take the national war to the anti-imperialist path and make it a genuine national liberation war.

A CRITIC
Hyderabad

'Adventurism'

With reference to Mr Chakrabarty's letter, the Naxalite tactical line, I agree, required severer critical analysis. What perhaps prevented me from doing so was the consideration that the young Naxalites, while trying to find out a correct line for Indian revolutionary practice were dying, as never before, in the hands of the police for no personal gains. If you call it anarchism, well, then it must be pointed out that 'Naxalite anarchism' is the sin of CPM revisionism. The CPM promised people's democratic revolution but is now busy in organising 'gaddi' revolution. The party of the proletariat, which is dominated by the petty bourgeoisie, must perforce rot with every passing day. Between Naxalite 'adventurism' and CPM revisionism, the former is erring on the side of revolution, the latter on the side of counter-revolution. Both are harmful. "Of course," as Lenin said even while denouncing dogmatism, "the mistake of Left doctrinairism in communism is at present a thousand times less dangerous and less significant than the mistake of the Right doctrinairism." (*Left-wing "Communism: An Infantile Disorder"*).

ASHIM MITRA
Calcutta

Enemy No 1

People's Democracy in its issue of 1-8-1971 stated that *Frontier* is well known for its sympathies for Naxalites. Is it a crime? To be a sympathiser of Naxalites is as dangerous as it was to be a sympathiser of the CPI during 1947-50 (*Eh Azadi Zhoota Hai*) or the 1962-64 days of the CPI(M). Any sane man taking an account of affairs in the country will unmistakably conclude that the Government's No 1 enemy on the home front are the Naxalites. It is the Naxalites who are being ruthlessly killed without trial in jails and outside in West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra, Punjab, Kerala, Orissa etc. If the present Indian Government is a bourgeois one, I fail to understand how their No. 1 enemy, the Naxalites, who have waged an armed struggle against the Government, can be treated as enemies by the CPI(M). It is reported that the Government has been murdering those Naxalites whom they could not purchase. Their inspiration is Marx, Lenin or Mao. I do not know whether the time of revolt chosen by them is astrologically correct or not. It will be judicious to leave the matter to history. But out of the whole turmoil and sacrifices and deaths, one fact has come out very distinctly, that the character of our Government is fascist though its usual garb is democracy. It has been unmasked at a heavy cost paid by the Naxalites.

The leaders of the CPI(M) working in perfect safety in Parliament, assemblies, corporations, municipalities and as trade union bosses are incapable of making any sacrifice and have adopted a wonderful course to sure success. Condemn and slander and if possible kill or help kill the Naxalites and then tell the people that the Government has committed this and that crime and therefore they should vote the CPM into power.

A READER
Calcutta

SEPTEMBER 18, 1971

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