

frontier

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PHOENIX THAT IS NOT

MANY of the Congressmen who were looking forward to an effortless victory in the assembly elections in March and a cosy niche in the hall of power for the next five years must have been thoroughly disillusioned by now. Not that the euphoria over the Bangladesh affair has worn off. It will not be allowed to until after the elections; and it may be taken for granted that till then there will be no response from India to any overtures for normalisation of relations with West Pakistan. The posture of confrontation will sustain the myth of a possible Pakistani attack, and Congressmen believe that haunted by the spectre, people will flock to the polling books to vote for the Prime Minister's party. For, has it not been proved already that the emergency may be national, the suffering common, but victory is won by the Prime Minister and her party alone? So will it be in future. No, the frustrated and the dejected in the party have no reasons for despairing of Congress victory. What they had not bargained for is that the leader will so mercilessly discriminate between one follower and another, that she will jettison one group in favour of another while distributing party nominations, though all these months both have cried themselves equally hoarse in praise of her bold leadership and holder socialism.

It is not the party satraps in the States alone who are engaged in this all-in wrestling. To a large measure the developments in the States are a reflection of the programme of annihilation initiated at the Centre. A major reshuffle of the Union Cabinet has already been billed. Over-enthusiasts have reported—somewhat prematurely it seems—that Chhatrapati Chavan is about to be thrown out; they are not reckoning with the finesse of the Prime Minister. No doubt, Mr Chavan has been marked out for ejection for his unforgivable and unforgettable offence of sitting on the fence for a time before casting his lot with the Prime Minister when the old Congress was split. But the purge must have a progressive look so that the left within the party and outside may hail it as another step forward to socialism and "garibi hatao". The row over nominations in Maharashtra has been got up to decimate Mr Chavan's leadership in the State; his supporters are being weeded out from the list of party candidates for the Assembly elections so that his projected elimination from the Union Cabinet after the elections may not be resented by the Govern-

ment of the most advanced State in the country. If the list approved by Mr Chavan seems to bear the influence of sugar barons and cooperative kings and estate owners, there will be no lack of people who will be able to smell a different kind of rat in the final list.

The Chhatrapati is not the only Union Minister in the news. Mr Jagjivan Ram may find that the sabre he is rattling off and on against Pakistan is made of tinsel and unable to cut through the trap that is being laid for him in Bihar. He may stay on, but not in his own right.

Heads of several State Chief Ministers may also roll in similar fashion. Mr Naik of Maharashtra is one; Mr Shukla of Madhya Pradesh is another; Mr Chowdhury of Assam still another. Even if the Prime Minister's party succeeds in capturing power in all States, very few of the present Chief Ministers may find themselves in office. The ground for their painless elimination is being prepared on the pretext of giving representation to the new entrants to the party who are claimed to have entered politics not for office but for their attachment for the Prime Minister's socialism. Perhaps they are being offered office so early in their career because the leaders do not want them to lose the pristine purity of their motive and develop a lust for office. Naturally, the clash between the entrenched and the aspirants is at its severest in the States where the party is in power. In other States the battle is being fought off-stage, not necessarily between the genuine and the pseudo supporters of the Prime Minister and her policies. A leading light of the Prime Minister's camp in West Bengal has taken a pique at Mr Siddhartha Shankar Ray for behaving like a cock in the walk and complained to the Prime Minister against his dictatorial attitude. Mr Ray is safely ensconced in the Prime Minister's confidence, and his detractor may come to grief. But it is of little moment who comes on top of whom in the infighting in the party all over the country. Of

far greater significance is the fact that the elections have shattered the myth that out of the ashes of the old party the Prime Minister has raised a new Congress. The new is shot through with all the deficiencies and drawbacks of the old.

Time For Poetry

With the release of the Congress (R), CPI and CPM election manifestos, the atmosphere is charged with various kinds of poetry. The Congress (R) with its background of bank, insurance and coal refinery nationalisation, privy purse abolition, Bangladesh liberation and all the rest of it, has emitted a sublime classical tone, happy with its state of affairs, assured of its prosperous existence in the foreseeable future, and so suffering from some manageable pangs of conscience. The two parliamentary communist parties are far away from the seats of power and therefore they indulge in romanticism holding out expectations, with no obligations. Their manifestos contain a long list of demands, sounding like lofty idealism in the void. What is surprising however is that the CPI which has almost merged in the Congress (R) and is vicariously suffering from a sense of participation has come out with a mile-long charter of demands; while the CPM, with no stake at all except assuaging the revolutionary ego of its cadres, has satisfied itself with a manifesto with only 11 points, just one point taller than that of the Congress.

All the manifestos however have one thing in common, the nation must have a self-reliant economy. None of the parties concerned would admit of the compradorial nature of the economy; why then this sudden cry for Swadeshi? There are no Naxalites around to chuckle over the mystery, though.

The cry for Swadeshi of course differs from party to party. The CPM is for pure Swadeshi, no aid from any quarters. The CPI is for no

aid except from the Soviet Union and her chalked circle; the Soviet aid being, as the CPI thinks, pure aid and therefore no trade, not at all expropriative trade and certainly not imperialist trade. The Congress wants aid but with no strings. Mrs Gandhi however, does not believe in the word aid; she blew off the semantic confusion in a recent Press meet and said all aid was loan. Loan if unpaid, every borrower knows, can liquidate all assets and the communist parties do not harbour any illusion in the matter. They believe that India, head over heels in debt, cannot stand on her own feet, such is the volume of aid taken already, and so wish a debt moratorium. Armchair politicians as they are, they have the privilege of voicing such demands. The Congress (R), which is more alive to the stern realities of life and anyway has to run the show, knows that a moratorium is the last thing to be executed; such romantic outbursts would bring in the aiding Power in their naked form and deflate the thin balloon of self-reliance. Latin America is no dead history.

The Congress (R) is at the Centre and all will be right in the States. It will most probably earn the satisfaction of having a strong Centre—its principal point in the manifesto. All the other points—land reforms, urban property limits, partially free school education, increased job opportunities—are there as the necessary padding images of the election sonnet. If voters find its mute grandeur preferable to the shrill romantic cry of the communists—blame is to be laid on the times and Bangladesh. An English daily however has no doubt whatsoever. It has produced a 72-page industrial supplement, stating in the first article, as its motif, that Bangladesh will solve all problems in India.

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Tibet

A correspondent writes:

The Dalai Lama, in Calcutta on his way to Bangkok, revived the flagging interest in Tibet. The Chinese, whose southern flank is said to have been turned by the emergence of Bangladesh, will have perhaps noted the public reappearance of the Dalai Lama and his plea for the right of self-determination. Some 80,000 Tibetan refugees are in India—and it will be no problem for the most enterprising of them to get arms if they decide on a struggle. There are pockets of discontent in Tibet and links with them, organised once by the CIA and activated through India have not been unknown. But the time for action is, perhaps, not ripe yet.

When Peking announced in July that Nixon had got himself invited to China, it did not know the shock waves it was releasing. The Russians, who were getting on fine with the Americans in this wide world, were most disturbed by the infamy of the proposed visit. In August, the Indo-Soviet Treaty was concluded. Article 9 of the treaty, laying stress on joint consultations over any threat to peace, and adoption of measures to end it, did not bring peace or stability to the Indian subcontinent. Generous arms supplies and diplomatic solidarity helped India a lot from October onwards. It is curious, but this treaty for peace, friendship and co-operation may continue to create fresh hotbeds of tension and armed conflict. Will Tibet be one of them? In any case a loud hint that it might

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be, is expected to pay some dividends.

Some people think that the war in South Vietnam is drawing to a close, though it would be foolish to think that there will be no American presence there. Nixon is too tricky to permit this belief. But perhaps it has dawned on the rapacious, aggressive American administration that the Vietnam war has been counter-productive. It has helped the Chinese to go ahead with their cultural revolution and emerge stronger, contrary to much wishful thinking. It has given the Russians time to increase their military might, including the creation of a formidable navy, and acquire a massive presence in West Asia. North Korea has grown stronger. It has helped little Cuba to stand on her feet and defy the arrogant giant. There are winds of change elsewhere in Latin America. And with the U.S. engaged in Vietnam, the winds of detente prevailing in Europe have led to a relaxation of tension everywhere there, enabling the Russians to concentrate on their frontier with China.

This concentration of a formidable combat force—the most formidable single combat force in a state of alert—has created a situation which many people choose to ignore in their assessment of Chinese ideology and practice and of power equations. The confrontation gives the Americans an edge over both the powers and Nixon has chosen to exploit the Sino-Soviet estrangement. China wants the encirclement ended and would talk to the devil if necessary. Before the Americans disengage themselves from the front line in Vietnam, it would be in the interest of the Kremlin to make the situation uncomfortable for both the USA and China, not by direct confrontation, but operating through others. Read in this context, the friendship treaty may have implications that go beyond the break-up of Pakistan. A resurgent nation, with a Defence Minister who thinks he can sink the nuclear-powered U.S. carrier Enterprise in a trice, will look forward to new horizons.

Rhodesia

Those who had any doubt about the redundancy of a commission to test the acceptability of the settlement worked out last November by the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, and Mr Ian Smith must by now have got the message that the five million Africans are not to be hoodwinked by the diplomacy of her Majesty's Government. At this writing reports have not yet reached us about the humiliating collapse of Britain's effort to lend legitimacy to the illegal regime in Salisbury. But this is now expected at any moment. The Africans lost what little regard they had for British "impartiality" when it was decided to appoint a commission instead of holding a referendum or an acceptable form of voting to ascertain the majority opinion. Even then the Pearce Commission was not told by the Heath Government how to go about its job; its ad hoc approach in the first few days bears that out. The day after his arrival Lord Pearce admitted to the Press that he did not yet know how to assess the opinion of the Rhodesian people "as a whole". It has not, however, taken Lord Pearce long to discover that the Commission he is heading does not have the magic wand to suddenly change the character of the Smith regime and inspire the Africans to freely express their opinion about the November settlement. Sir Alec's White Paper says that before and during the test of acceptability normal political activities will be permitted provided they are conducted in a peaceful and democratic manner. But the African National Council which is opposing the settlement is being denied even the normal facilities to carry on its political campaign. The emergency provisions do not allow it to hold meetings in the open, but indoor meetings are not possible to organize because of the refusal of insurance companies to underwrite halls. Its 200 applications to hold meetings in the Trust

Lands have also been refused. Still the Africans have made it abundantly clear that they reject the proposals for a settlement between Britain and Rhodesia. If this message has been communicated in an atmosphere of violence, Mr Smith is to blame for this. The moment he realised that the reaction of the tribesmen would be no different from that of the Africans living in urban areas he said menacingly that "the Government is keeping a keen watch for any resurgence of the well-known tactics of thuggery and intimidation practised by extremists... Already we have evidence of support which is coming in for these people from the well-known strongholds of international communism. Who else would try to convince our African population that the settlement terms are against their best interests?" Mr Smith was desperately looking for a pretext to silence the African opinion. The strong-arm tactics of the Salisbury regime have even forced the Centre Party which once advocated the acceptance of the settlement terms as the lesser of two evils to rethink its position. It is hoped that from the present crisis a strong united front of the Africans will emerge.

View from Delhi

Boss Of Bosses

FROM A POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

THE ministries to be formed in the States after the March elections are supposed to reflect the radical virtues the government at the Centre is claimed to have discovered for itself since the upsurge in early 1971 under the semi-fascist slogan "one country, one people and one leader." However, judging from the dilution of the Congress programme evident in the latest manifesto and the unseemly stampede for tickets New Delhi is witnessing, there is little reason to believe that the Gov-

ernments in the States would be any more radical than they were during the last five years. After March 1971, Mrs Indira Gandhi went about promoting most inconsequential factions in the Pradeshes to challenge the entrenched bosses. In the process, marked by an amateurish "ad hocist" phase, the reconstituted committees were evenly balanced so that no factional leader could prevail over another and the boss of bosses in New Delhi could be the sole arbiter on party affairs. This seemed to work well for the moment but on the eve of the elections, tensions are surfacing. In March 1971, the ruling party, in a minority at the Centre and dependent on other groups and parties, faced a serious challenge. The bogey of "right reaction and left adventurism" was raised to advantage and the results are supposed to indicate the decisive rout of both the threats to the hegemony of the amorphous left-of-centre politics. Going by the Congress claims there is nothing now to menace Mrs Gandhi's unique path to socialism through her own brand of bossism. Logically, therefore, there is no reason for the factions in the Pradeshes not to slug it out. The contentious lists now before the Central Election Committee are proof of the average Congressman's faith in his party's manifest destiny. Even Chief Ministers are deprived of tickets as part of the levelling operation but Mrs Gandhi should be ready for a few shocks because bosses are still bosses in the Pradeshes and the ruling party still depends on a multi-class vertical mobilisation to win the elections. There is no change in the party's style of work or the support structure though its base might have broadened as a result of its new approach to the small industrialist and the emerging class of kulaks.

The wrangle over the manifesto underlines the new realities in the party. Mr Mohan Kumaramangalam is credited with the draft, and Mrs Gandhi with all those inelegant and platitudinous paragraphs on land reforms. With the zeal of a new

convert, the Steel Minister drafted the manifesto in the belief the Congress was synonymous with the nation. When it came to land reforms, particularly making the family the unit for ceilings, the drafting committee made a belly landing. The day after, the release of the manifesto was put off and when it was released at last with due ostentatiousness it turned out that the ruling party was backtracking fast on land reforms because it cannot afford to alienate the strategic kulak class. And there was little talk about the crash programme for rural jobs, launched with fanfare in April 1971 without any progress to report. The gimmick would not click any more and so the reluctance to remind the voters that the Government had launched the programme. There is nothing to declare any way.

* *

Another issue on which the Centre is backtracking is the diffusion of newspaper ownership. The controversy whether the paper released a few months ago is a discussion paper or a draft bill has not been resolved yet because the Government has been speaking in many voices. As a short term palliative the 10-page limit on the size of the newspapers was introduced. The two paise excise levy on the papers is supposed to check the bogus circulation figures claimed by some of the more respectable dailies while the 10-page rule is expected to curtail the ratio of advertisements to reading matter. No newspaper has switched to indigenous newsprint for any significant part of its needs. They continue to publish editions of ten plus. Which means the circulation figures had been rigged in the past and the newsprint allotted is adequate to go round for more than ten pages for the actual number printed. The bigger papers have hiked the ad rates by as much as 35 per cent so that there is no loss in revenue from ads but at the same time they are trying to promote a conflict between news-

paper employees and working journalists and the Government. Lino operators and type-setters, proof readers and sub-editors are to be retrenched so that the unions find themselves confronting the government on the issue. Meantime, a study team is to go into the whole issue!

The proprietors have taken advantage of the situation to promote a rival all-India centre for working journalists. The Shiva Sena-CPI controlled IFWJ has become an appendage of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry presided over by the Prime Minister and its Secretary-General has been away in Moscow four months, which is a substantial part of one's tenure unless his re-election for several terms to come has been underwritten already. The CPI's game in the working journalists' movement would lead to a split and a polarisation, the right-wing elements forming a rival union and the CPI controlling the IFWJ, with other journalists forced to form a third one. The IFWJ leadership was rattled by the move for a proprietor-sponsored union. A good proportion of working journalists kept out of the IFWJ because it had been converted into the agit-prop wing of the CPI by the affluent leadership pampered by their "leftist" proprietors. Though it represented less than half the working journalists, the IFWJ became the spokesman for all in the absence of a rival union. The leadership's nervousness at the move for a rival union is a measure of its inability to convince its own membership that the IFWJ really represents the profession.

"Anti-communists welcome Bangla Desh", proclaim the posters on New Delhi's walls, issued by the India Chapter of the World Anti-communist League which has in the past espoused such causes as that of South Vietnam and South Korea. One hopes this does not have any connection with the Indo-South Korean Journalists Friendship Association recently floated here, claiming a few East Europe-trotting leftist journa-

lists among its distinguished members. The two official communist parties should be embarrassed by the posters because the Delhi public would now be in a position to judge who really welcomed Bangladesh. The nation knows precious little about the geneology of the Mujib Bahini, organised and trained by an outside power and inducted into Bangladesh

in good time to prevent a possible claim to political role by the Mukti Bahini. The Mujib Bahini will be kept intact to take on the leftist forces in Bangladesh and no wonder if the World Anti-communist League knows about it because it welcomes Bangladesh and wants to preserve it as—you know what.

January 23, 1971

Armed Struggle In The Gulf

A. K. ESSACK

DAR-ES-SALAAM: The struggle of the three million Arab people together with the former slaves from Africa for the liberation of the Arab Gulf from the vice like grip of the oil monopolies and their puppets, the Sultans, feudalists and the comprador bourgeoisie, will soon be entering its seventh year. Led by the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Arab Gulf, the people have cleared over 90% of the mountainous area of Dhofar of class enemies and are beginning to build a new society free from colour, class and sex discrimination.

The Arab Gulf is a vast area sparsely populated. It is mostly desert, but partly forest and mountainous. It includes the Sultanate of Oman, the Emirates of Oman and the States of Qatar, Bahrein and Kuwait. The emirates are, similar to Bantustan, for some of these do not have a population of more than 20,000 inhabitants. The Gulf has common borders with Saudi Arabia, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and adjoining Iran. If imperialism is holding on tenaciously in this area, if it is waging a most savage and merciless war, while at the same time imposing a news blackout, it is because the stakes are indeed very high. Imperialism is prepared to defend South Africa because of its gold. Here too it is fighting with doggedness because of black gold—oil. So necessary and vital has oil become to the economy of the industrialised States that imperialism is prepared

to go to any lengths to preserve its oil hegemony. Here is a picture of what is involved.

Oil Production as at 1970.
(In million metric tons)

North America	..	625.00
Caribbean	..	211.00
South America	..	34.00
West Africa	..	62.30
Middle East	..	771.90
North Africa	..	209.50
U.S.S.R.	..	353.00
Others	..	39.60

Source: *Petroleum Times*

It is clear that the Middle East supplies the bulk of the oil for use by the rest of the world. But in the Middle East itself the regions around the Gulf are the ones which produce most of the oil, as the following figures will show:

Production (in million metric tons)
as at 1970

Countries	
Iran	.. 190.00
Kuwait	.. 138.00
Neutral Zone	.. 27.00
Qatar	.. 17.00
Saudi Arabia	.. 175.00
Abu Dhubai	.. 32.00
Others	.. 56.00

It is small wonder that the major oil companies have staked their claims in this area. Sometimes they operate alone but in most cases in a consortium. Most of the major Western governments are directly involved in

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exploiting the oil resources. The following is a list of a few major ones from a list of 14:

1. The Kuwait Oil Company, 50% British interests (BP) and 50% American interests. 2. Henssiayuwill Company from Spain. 3. Bahrein Oil Company—100 American. 4. Qatar Oil Company: 23% (BP), 23% French Oil Company; 23 Shell; 23 New Jersey 5% Gilbenkian. 5. Japanese Abu Dhalli Oil Company. 6. Dubahai Oil Company: 55% American Continental; 22½ American Sun; 22½% West German; 5% Gilbenkian.

To maintain their oil interests the monopolies through their governments, particularly Britain and America, have left the Arab masses of the Gulf with little peace. Thus the military communiques of the Front 259/71 and 269/71 say, for instance. "On 20th September 1971, the British RAF launched a savage raid on Dhakout town... raiding planes used incendiary rockets; on September 21st at 1-30 p.m. the British RAF shelled indiscriminately villages of peaceful citizens... on the same day barbaric raids at Sha' About..."

However, it was not all plain sailing for the aggressors and marauders. The planes were intercepted by the popular militia; in many

cases the artillery fire was so severe that the planes turned back without achieving their targets.

Britain boasts that it was the first country to stop the slave trade and it justified its naked invasion of territories under the guise of stopping the slave trade and abolishing slavery. But here in the Arab Gulf, over 150 years after the abolition of slavery, the Sultans in the palaces, the puppets and stooges of the British oil companies, have as much as 500 slaves as domestic servants. Many more have to labour in the farms of the monarchs and the wealthy sheikhs. Most of the slaves have come from Africa. Like the rest of the downtrodden masses of the Gulf, the slaves have been exploited and oppressed. No wonder that they fled and joined the revolution which has offered them scope to develop their talent and release that enormous creative energy pent up for centuries to build a new society. They have already shown great courage and risen high in the Front's leadership.

The revolution with its strategy of guerilla warfare broke out in June 1965 in the mountainous region of Dhofar, adjoining the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. The

early years were marked by incredible hardships and sacrifice, and the guerillas learnt to persevere and the necessity of self-reliance. This was rewarded when Yemen became independent in 1967, assuring them of continuous arms supply as well as vital medicines. When China came to their assistance the struggle was given added fillip. The Soviet Union after a wait-and-see attitude also joined when it became convinced that the Front had in fact established liberated areas.

The position of the Front is the same as that of the DRV, PRG, Frelimo. They welcome, accept and are grateful for the assistance given by the two socialist giants. They do not, however, take sides in the Sino-Soviet dispute, they follow their own independent class line based on the realities of the concrete conditions of the country.

It has been the tactic of imperialism to divide the Africans from the Arab peoples. Thus the Arabs do not know the strength and achievements of the African revolution, while Africa has been kept in the dark about the achievements of the revolutionary conquests of the people of the Arab Gulf and Palestine.

From Dhofar in the west of the Gulf armed struggle has broken out in the east in the area of Inner Oman. This must threaten British and American military bases as well as the states of Bahrein, Kuwait and Qatar.

In the liberated area of Dhofar slaves have been emancipated. Women receive education in addition to training in the use of arms. They also work in agriculture.

The fundamental problem was to transform a society of shepherds into a stable agricultural life. The Liberation Army, along with the militia, have been building roads, dams, and reclaiming agricultural lands. The achievements in this sector are being considered significant, for it is easier to persuade the pastoralist to ride and fight, than to settle down and cultivate.

In an effort to halt the revolutionary tide, Britain has given flag inde-

রক্তন প্রকাশনীর নিবেদন

মুক্তির সংগ্রামে

পূর্ব বাংলা

লেখক—শফিকুল হাসান

The book consisting of 141 pages written during the thick of the East Bengali people's struggle against the Pakistani reactionary regime, is distinguished by *Marxist analysis* of the struggle initiated by Mujib's Awami League. Rich in objective content the book is imbued by, not Bengali chauvinism but by *proletarian internationalism*. The author, a medical student from Dacca, also exposes the attitudes of different left parties there which is worthy of special note. In this connection he has amply dealt with the situation on this side of the river—West Bengal.

Price Rs. 2.50

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Available with Golam Rasul

61 Mott Lane

CALCUTTA-13

pendence to some of the emirates. But both Britain and America retain naval and air bases and military camps. Sometimes these bases are operated jointly by America and Britain. Even after the so-called withdrawal of British forces, military camps are dotted all along the peninsula.

The strategy worked out is nothing

less than "Vietnamisation". The plans are for Arabs to fight Arabs. Encirclement of Dhofar and its base area of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen has begun. In this respect Saudi Arabia is playing the same role as some of the "dialogue" States in Africa. It is here that mercenaries are trained, armed and let loose against the revolution as well as against Yemen.

insurrection. For that long preparation was needed and in Uruguay the revolutionary consciousness was just beginning. As for guerrilla warfare, a la Che Guevara, that seemed impossible in Uruguay which is mostly flat and open without either mountains or jungles. Even Debray in his *Revolution in a Revolution?* said that Uruguay was an exception. A section of the left led by the veteran MRO leader, Ariel Callazo, argued that no revolution was possible in Uruguay because Argentina and Brazil will intervene to suppress any revolutionary movement that might erupt there. Therefore, it was best for the Uruguayan revolutionaries to join the movements of other lands.

In a pamphlet issued in May 1967 entitled *We are no exception* Callazo wrote:

Uruguay does not have the terrain to support a guerrilla foco. It has neither mountains nor jungles. An armed insurrection in Montevideo, were conditions to exist for one, would quickly be squashed by Argentine or Brazilian and eventually Yankee paratroopers. What then are we to do? We must join the revolutionary columns of the continent, we must help our brother peoples of Argentina and Brazil, without whose victories the liberation of Uruguay is impossible".

The organized trade union movement under the influence of the orthodox communists and anarchists was immobilized by 'economism' and revolutionary romanticism, while the white-collar workers desired nothing except "peace and high wages".

But while a section of the left was busy holding discussions, sometimes overheated ones, through press and platform, there were others who were quietly working out a strategy for revolutionary action at home. Until 1968, they made no declaration, issued no manifesto, formulated no sweeping or grandiose theories in the true Latin-American style. These were the Tupamaros. They quietly prepared and when they were ready, struck their first blow, and the whole country listened. Soon the world knew

The Tupamaros Of Uruguay

LAJPAT RAI

URUGUAY has been described as the Switzerland of the Americas. The reference was not so much to its climate or natural scenery, but to its so-called 'peaceful' and 'democratic' style of conducting its daily business of life. Created by British imperialism as a buffer between the continent's two giants, Argentina and Brazil, it has almost no natural resources, except some sugar in the north and its vast and fertile pampas on which cattle and sheep are raised, under the prevalent latifundia system of land ownership. Its economy, is therefore, limited to meat and wool on which it depends, almost totally, for its foreign currency. As long as it could continue to sell these two products at high prices the country seemed economically sound. Montevideo became a large well-ordered metropolis surrounded by a chain of "Casas mesereas" or slums, with 46% of the country's two and a half million population being within its radius. Acute poverty existed in the countryside exploited by absentee latifundistas and the shanty towns seethed with discontent. Yet Uruguay gave the foreigners the impression of being a happy middle-class nation. It had more doctors and hospitals per inhabitant than even the United States, a high degree of literacy, a solidly organised militant trade union movement, a weak army, no censorship and an efficient though corrupt civil servant class comprising almost one-third of the

total labour force. The winds of turbulence and revolt which were sweeping the continent had passed by this tiny republic.

But the whole structure was illogical. The change came when the prices of meat and wool began to collapse after the Korean war. The realities of a semi-colonial economy began to assert themselves; hard times fell upon the Uruguayans and gradually their previous liberties began to be eroded one by one. U.S. companies were called which invested their capital, recruited their labour from the shanty towns and started the process of "industrialization" which soon permitted them to take out more from the country than were put in. Discontent spread and so did the repression of the students, workers and peasants' unions. In 1967, opposition newspapers were suppressed and emergency measures made it a felony to belong to socialist, Fidelista (not the respectable Communist Party) and anarchist parties and groups. The Switzerland of the Americas became another neo-colonized dictatorship with merely outworn trappings to hide its real character, and the left began to talk of revolution seriously for the first time. But how to bring it about in a country like Uruguay? The Communists (Moscow-lining) led by J. M. Fortuny had only their "peaceful transition" (through elections and mass struggles) formula to offer. Some talked about revolution through

about their existence and their names were splashed across the front pages of the international press.

Beginning

Named after Tupac Amaru, the Inca revolutionary leader who fought against the Spaniards to the bitterest end, the Tupamaros began as "a militant group in the militant sugar workers' union" organized by Raul Sendic, a socialist party official. After many unfruitful legal protest marches and demonstrations for better working conditions, a group headed by Raul Sendic went underground and disappeared for a long time. Shortly thereafter, armed men began to hold up banks, raid the offices of U.S. enterprises and kidnapped unpopular government or public officials. They also raided the Rifle Club of Montevideo in July 1963 which ended in their taking away large quantities of rifles and guns. Between 1963 and 1967 they participated in 73 armed actions and by 1965 they had become household names loved and admired by the poor and feared and hated by the rich and the corrupt government officials. Then in 1968, they changed their name to National Liberation Movement and for the first time explained their strategy.

By the end of 1969, their acts—sabotage of U.S. firms, kidnappings (the most spectacular being of the British Ambassador), bank hold-ups (most wellknown being the robbing of Punta del Este Casino of \$250,000 despite formidable security precautions)—had elicited the greatest military-CIA-FBI ('advisors') manhunt in Uruguayan history. This fabulous manhunt ended in nothing except in the arrest and torture of some students and workers. The Tupamaros have proudly declared that they had not harmed a single citizen not directly involved in repression, killed no political opponent and never touched the innocent members of families of even the most notorious agents and accomplices of government repression. During this time, their own casualties were low—three killed in combat, a dozen wounded and captured.

In 1969 they issued their first strategic document, "Unos Problemas de Estrategia Revolucionaria" (Some Problems of Revolutionary Strategy) and explained what they were up to and why. According to this document, it is out of 'expediency', a 'revolutionary expediency' that terrorism is being employed "as the main tool of revolutionary action". The objectives of this action were explained as: (1) To threaten the Establishment, to cause it to panic and make serious tactical mistakes, such as resorting to mass repression which radicalises the population against it (2) To establish an underground revolutionary apparatus, including both active participants and trusted passive collaborators, (who will later carry out liaison, communications, logistics and the propaganda needs of the revolutionary armed groups). (3) To test new recruits in relative security, (4) To demoralise the rank and file and even the officers of the repressive forces, as they see themselves constantly but unexpectedly under attack. (5) To panic local capitalists into withdrawing their funds from specific areas, thus hurting the local 'warlords' and the politicians. (6) To frighten away the foreign investors, which will affect the whole bureaucratic oligarchy and finally, to force the USA constantly to extend its intervention, which taxes its resources, hence increases discontent at home, and "thin out its imperialist arms, rendering it more vulnerable abroad".

Politically speaking, the Tupamaros do not accept Debray's "exception theory", but they also reject Callazo's 'continentalism' as a tactic for Uruguayan revolutionary parties. Yet they see an element of truth in Callazo's warning of Brazilian-U.S.-Argentine intervention to suppress the revolutionary movement in Uruguay. According to many correspondents including those of the capitalist press, Tupamaros are efficient enough to seize power. Yet they do not do so. They are waiting for the revolutionaries in neighbouring countries—Argentina and Brazil—to develop forces strong enough to stop their reactionary military regimes from invading

Uruguay. In other words Tupamaros are continental revolutionaries who, like Debray believe that the unity of the left can be forged only in combat, but unlike Debray consider the 'city' as the main battlefield and the organized proletariat as the revolutionary force. In sum, they see themselves as the "little motor that starts the big motor of the revolution".

Real Enemy

The Tupamaros regard the United States to be their real enemy. They know that U.S. imperialism will use its allies and tremendous resources to stop revolution anywhere in the world. Its resources are formidable. In the first place the U.S. controls the finances of every unliberated country in the Third World. In Latin America its control is overwhelming. The United States also runs their armies. It gives them weapons, often free, it invites their most senior military officers (in Latin America, every officer from major up) to attend U.S. Command and officers' schools on U.S. scholarships. The USA also runs the unliberated Third World countries' intelligence agencies and 'advises' all branches of the military and the police. But in addition to all this, the U.S. operates first-rate counter-insurgency schools throughout the Third World (there are 7 such schools in Latin America). Their graduate elite corpsmen are given special consideration by their own brass and government and are equipped, with the most modern anti-guerilla weapons available. The role of American counter-insurgency experts in the Bolivian guerilla campaign led by Che Guevara is well known. Finally, the U.S. 'advisers' are usually on the spot to lead counter-insurgency campaigns as "civic action" whose expenses are met from the U.S.'s altruistic 'social progress' grants. And if anything goes wrong, the USA is always prepared to send thousands of Marines to intervene directly—as it did in Santo Domingo in 1965 and was set to do in Trinidad in 1970.

Thus, overwhelmingly, the centre of reaction everywhere is the USA.

In Asia, Africa, Latin America, through direct military intervention, indirect military blackmail, or neo-colonial domination, it is the USA which is the "master". And it is "against the USA that the slaves are rebelling". The 'USA' is the USA of their ruling class, those who profit most from their exploitative monopoly-capitalist system. It is that "same system which fosters racialism and exploits the black, brown, yellow and red minorities in the USA", and it is the same system which has "totally alienated a large sector of their young". The battle of liberation of Latin America therefore has to be fought, first and foremost, with American imperialism and its collaborators—the military and the oligarchy.

Apart from the above mentioned document, "Some Problems of Revolutionary Strategy", there is yet another source of information about the political understanding, strategy and tactics of the Tupamaros. In August 1969, the leadership of the movement gave a clandestine interview to a group of progressive journalists in which they answered some of the questions relating to the movement. The interview was published first in Chile and then in Uruguay. Later some portions of it were carried by the Cuban paper *Granma*.

The Tupamaros do not believe like other organisations in placing trust in manifestos and theoretical statements about revolution. How much time and energy has been consumed by this activity which leads nowhere? Enough of debating and paper-work has been done and to what account? Referring to the Moscow-lining Communist Party, they remark: "If writing political statements, making speeches and attending conferences had led to revolution, these gentlemen (of the Uruguan CP) would have made it long ago". Neither do they believe in 'legal manifestations' such as protest marches and peaceful strikes, which are generally broken up by non-peaceful methods, by the police and military.

They believe that fundamentally it is revolutionary action which leads

to revolutionary situations. In Cuba revolutionary action by a few young men led to these conditions. It also led to the unity of the left forces. The Communist Party of Cuba (PSP) which began by opposing the revolutionaries had to join with the 26th July movement.

They also hold that armed struggle hastens and precipitates the mass movement. And Cuba is not the only example. In China too the mass party was created in the course of armed struggle. According to Tupamaros, the rigid formula "first create the Party and then begin the revolution" "historically admits of more exceptions than application". It is necessary to fight the current "paltry idea of a party, identified by headquarters, meetings, a newspaper and positions on everything that surrounds it". It is also necessary to fight against the 'conformism' of hoping that the other parties of the left will dissolve before your verbal broadsides and that their members will come over to you. "We must realize", says the interview, "that there are true revolutionaries in all the parties of the left and many more who are not organized. To unite these elements and groups is a task for the left in general. But while it is not happening the revolution cannot wait". Besides, the road to left unity does not lie in interminable political discussions with the leaders, but in revolutionary action which alone will bring all the "genuine elements and groups" into the mainstream of struggle and "slowly lead towards political and ideological unification of the revolutionaries". This, according to Tupamaros, has been the experience of Uruguay, besides that of Cuba. They also are not oblivious of what they call the "spurious left" going under the name of a 'communist' or 'revolutionary' party. They are the "shock-breakers" of the bourgeoisie who will not only fight themselves, but will "sow confusion in the ranks of the fighters." They have to be exposed and eliminated. The Tupamaros realize the importance of militant trade unions as the recruiting ground for cadres ready for revolu-

tionary action. They form cells or groups in trade unions where support can be organized for the actions of armed bands and people prepared to enter them. Theoretical and practical training and recruitment are the principal concrete tasks within these cells and groups, as well as propaganda for armed struggle. And where possible the "cell leads the union to more radical struggles and to more definite stages of class struggle". They, however, expose and combat "economism" in unions led by reformist, liberal and 'revisionist' leaders.

According to them modern capitalism is dynamic enough to concede some demands of the workers when labour agitation spreads threateningly, catching back its profit margins through its control of prices, finances, export-import and inflation. Because of this, the 'revisionist' communist parties are caught in a capitalist well. The CP must certainly agitate for trade union demands, and since it keeps winning some of them, must try to keep up to itself, lest it loses its hold on the workers accustomed to fight for bread-and-butter issues only. As the CP develops into a Fabian society so does the labour and vice versa. Hence the need for combating 'economism' and 'Fabianism' inside the labour movement.

The Tupamaros consider armed struggle also to be a technical act that needs technical knowledge, training, practice and fighting spirit. Improvisation in this area is not permitted as it is likely to be paid for heavily in lives and failure. Therefore, it is important to have an armed group as well-trained and equipped as possible, proved in action.

It is important, therefore, to have an "efficient organization to absorb militants with the possibility of theoretical and technical training" and to have groups inside the mass movement who will "act as liaison with the armed bands". According to Tupamaros, "all armed bands should form part of a political apparatus at a certain point in the revolutionary process and in the context of such an apparatus not existing, should contribute to

its creation." But this does not mean that in the present context of the left, it should be obliged to subscribe to one of the existing political groups or should start a new one. "This only means perpetuating or joining the mosaic".

No Overall Strategies

As to specific and definite strategy for taking power in Uruguay, the Tupamaros do not give a definite overall strategy. According to them, there are some general strategic lines of the movement, and even these are subject to modifications as circumstances change. That is to say general strategic lines valid for a day, month and a year are possible, but no more. It is because "strategy is founded on real, basic facts and reality changes independently of our wills. It should be understood that a strategy based on the fact of a strong and organized trade union movement is not the same as one based on the fact of that movement having been smashed".

However, the facts on which the Tupamaros have their general strategic line are (1) The deepening economic crisis in Uruguay. The high level of unionization—even if all the unions do not have a high level of militancy. It is partly because of the membership and largely because of the reformist-liberal-revisionist leadership. But the basic all-important fact is that practically all the essential services of the State—banking, industry and commerce—are organized, as now-

where else in Latin America. The possibility of paralysing the services of the State has created and can create great opportunities from the point of view of insurrection. (3) Another fact is that of geography. In compensation for lack of difficult terrain in the countryside to locate the foco, Uruguay has a great city (Montevideo) with more than 300 square kilometres of buildings, where access is difficult. They do not want to copy the strategy of those countries that, by means of geographic conditions, can install a guerilla foco in the mountains, hills or jungles. (4) Another fact is that the Uruguayan armed forces of only 12,000 men, precariously armed and trained, constitute one of the weakest repressive apparatuses in Latin America. (5) Besides these factors, another one is that of powerful neighbours like Argentina and Brazil, both led by reactionary pro-imperialist juntas acting as the servants of North American monopoly-capitalist circles.

It is on the above facts that the broad lines of Tupamaros strategy of action is based—a strategy contained within the continental strategy of "creating many Vietnams" and "hacking each separate limb of the colossus' body till it falls to the ground in mortal agony and dies".

The Tupamaros maintain close contacts with the sister urban guerilla organisation of Brazil called Action For National Liberation (AIN) as well as with the rural-based guerilla

contingents of other Latin American countries. They are apprehensive of the present stance of the Cuban leadership vis-a-vis the guerilla movements of Latin America and their increasingly closer ties with the Russian and East European communist parties whom they had criticized and exposed in the past as standing in the way of the continental revolution in Latin America. They are firmly committed to the spirit as well as the letter of the decisions arrived at the Tricontinental and Latin American Solidarity Organization and believe that the "spirit these conferences set in motion can die at the top, not at the base of the world revolutionary movement."

The urban guerilla movement of Latin America, despite its obvious achievements, is, however, under attack from various left quarters. The Russophile communists condemn it as sheer adventurism, the Maoists look askance at it for it does not seek to "surround the city" from the countryside. The Che Guevarists criticize it for operating from the city, the "cemetery of the revolutionaries".

It is a form of revolutionary struggle that does not fall into the orbit of old schemes and categories. Yet Lenin wrote in his "Guerilla Warfare":

"New forms of struggle, unknown to the participants of the period, inevitably arise as the given social situation changes. . . . The crisis will introduce new forms of struggle that we are unable to foresee".

The Role Of 'Modern' Bengali Intellectuals: 1800-1900

BENOY GHOSE

WE shall discuss briefly in this paper the historical and sociological background of the emergence and growth of the modern intellectuals of Bengal (predominantly Hindu) and also the socio-economic and political role played by them as a 'social group' (we need not call it a 'class') during the nineteenth century. Our approach will be mainly

sociological, because the history of intellectuals as a 'social group' or 'social stratum' can best be studied within the framework of historical sequence of social change. The process of social change, generated during the period of transition from medieval feudalism to modern capitalism, led to the emergence of what we call 'modern' intellectuals. Along

with the static order of Estates, the static and hereditary intellectual order of medieval society also crumbled down. A new dynamic non-hereditary intellectual stratum began to emerge with the rise of modern capitalism. According to a noted sociologist the new bourgeoisie emerged on 'the twin props of money and intellect as a bourgeoisie of liberal

character'.¹ It means that not only 'money', but 'intellect' also had a functional role in the social dynamics of modern age. With money, it was a new determinant of social rank and power. Another noted sociologist has explained it in different words. He says: 'The modern bourgeoisie had from the beginning a twofold social root—on the one hand the owners of capital, on the other those individuals whose only capital consisted in their education'. But he adds that the educated class was 'by no means ideologically in agreement with the property-owning element'.² From the sociological point of view, this is perhaps the most conspicuous trait of the historically 'modern' intellectuals as a social group that, in spite of its close correlation with the capitalist bourgeoisie, it enjoys a certain amount of freedom of ideological commitment, within the limitations of the level and quality of bourgeois democracy. It is a well-known fact of history that a good number of progressive, and even 'revolutionary', intellectuals all over the world who opposed the bourgeoisie had been recruited from the bourgeois class. This fact alone shows the wide range of choice that the modern intellectuals have in the ideological spectrum of the bourgeois age.

Regarding the recruitment of the intellectual elite, it has been found in history that of the three principles—*blood, property and achievement*—on the basis of which it has been made, the 'blood' principle was active in feudal and pre-feudal aristocratic and tribal society, and there was a combination of all the three principles in earlier periods of capitalism, with a shifting emphasis on the third principle of 'achievement' with the progress and invigoration of democracy. 'Seen as a whole, modern democracy is a selective machinery combining all the three principles'.³

What is to be noted here, in the context of the emergence of the modern intellectuals in our country during the nineteenth century, is that the democratic forces must be kept vigorous in a progressively dynamic social

situation for making the principle of recruitment of the intellectuals more effectively achievement-oriented than blood-property-oriented. Unfortunately, this could not be done in Bengal, or in any other part of India, in the tragic socio-economic conditions of colonial rule. The transition from feudalism to capitalism, which alone could create the necessary historical conditions for the rise and growth of the modern bourgeoisie and of modern bourgeois democracy, did not take place in our country, as it was against the economic and political interest of the British imperialist rulers to effect any such transition. It is in Bengal that we witness for the first time the historical scene of the emergence of the modern English-educated intellectuals in India as a distinct social stratum, and it is in Bengal that we witness the development of these socio-economic conditions which curbed the democratic growth of this stratum, restricted its essential characteristic of multiformity and severely restrained its historically anticipated role in the changing social situation. The historical review, which follows, will bear this out.

In his Minute on English education (February 2, 1835) Macaulay observed: 'In India, English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seats of Government. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East.' Hence, as the language of the ruling class and of commerce throughout the East, 'the English tongue' was considered to be 'most useful' to the 'native subjects' of India. Concurring fully with 'the sentiments expressed in this Minute', Bentinck declared on March 7, 1835, that 'all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone'. But before this was done, Macaulay admitted in his Minute that 'the higher class of natives' were already speaking the ruler's language at 'the seats of Government', of which Calcutta then was undoubtedly the principal

seat. The rising compradors were already feeling the need to learn the ruler's language as a language of commerce, by the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when Calcutta was also made the political capital-city by Warren Hastings, and the Supreme Court was established in 1774. It has been noticed that 'from this period a knowledge of the English language appeared to be desirable and necessary'.⁴ A few semi-literate Eurasians, and enterprising Bengali and non-Bengali brokers of British Attorneys and Advocates of the Supreme Court, were the first 'celebrated complete English scholars' and 'teachers' of our country. Their fee was then as high as Rs 16 per month. A few dozens of English words, collected in pocket notebooks, constituted their only capital of English education, and their students—the upstart native aristocrats—learnt these words by rote. 'What they could not express by words was indicated by signs; and thus many a native contrived by supplementing the inadequacy of his expression with the gesticulations of his body, to make himself intelligible to his European masters'.⁵ But with this feeble 'mastery, of English, the native compradors could amass considerable fortune and raise themselves socially to the new rank of the urban aristocracy. This is how English education began in India, the education which became the most essential constituent of a modern intellectual in a colonial country like ours. It was motivated chiefly by the desire to serve the economic and political interests of the British merchants and rulers, and for monetary gains. This motive persisted, rather it was strengthened, with the quantitative and qualitative spread of English education in the nineteenth century. The spread began in Bengal with the foundation of the Hindu College in 1817, and it was accelerated with the establishment of the University of Calcutta in 1857.

Meanwhile efforts were made in Bihar and Orissa to make a beginning of English education on a very

humble scale. The Government started a college at Patna in 1844, but it was abolished in 1847. Another attempt to start a college in 1856 proved a failure, due to 'the apathy of the people'.⁶ A high English school was started at Cuttack in 1841, which was converted into a secondary college in 1868. The case of Assam was completely different, only Bengali was taught in Assamese schools, up to 1873. Assamese and Bengalis were almost inseparable during this early period of English education, and even for a long period of university education.

1200 in 40 Years

Between 1817 and 1857, in forty years, roughly about 1200 students (or an annual average estimate of 30 students) completed the full course of English education offered at that time by the Hindu College, Duff School and other institutions in Calcutta, of whom about 95% were Bengalis. Taking ten to thirteen years for each generation of educated intellectuals, these three or four generations of Bengali intellectuals of pre-university days, and a few traditionally educated scholars with liberal westernized outlook, like Vidyasagar, created a stir in the social life of Bengal, with repercussions all over India. Inspired by Western liberalism, imbibed through English education, these intellectuals set forth their liberal ideas of social and religious reforms with a dynamic zeal, which was rarely evinced by the generations of university-bred intellectuals in the second half of the nineteenth century. More about this later.

With the growing commercial value of English education and its usefulness, the decline of traditional learning went on steadily from the last quarter of the eighteenth century. This is evident from the following reports of scholars on the steady decline of Nabadwip, a great centre of Sanskrit learning in Bengal:

1818: William Ward: 31 *tols*: 747 Scholars.
 1830: H. H. Wilson: 25 *tols*: 550 Scholars.
 1835: William Adam: Confirms Wilson's estimate.
 1864: E. B. Cowell: 12 *tols*: 150 Scholars.

This decline in the number of *tols* and scholars of Nabadwip was due to a decreasing disposition towards Sanskrit learning among the Brahmins, from whom the scholars were almost exclusively recruited, as well as to the lack of patronage from the new zamindars, who were no longer interested in giving it any moral and material support in view of the rising market-value and social prestige of education in the foreign ruler's language. The centre of learning was definitely shifting from Nabadwip to Calcutta, and even the orthodox Brahmins were more eager to send their sons to the English seminaries of new Calcutta than to the *tols* and *chatuspatis* of old Nabadwip. This eagerness was evoked, not so much by any desire for acquiring new knowledge as for gaining the required qualification for some sort of service under the British rulers. It was for this reason, for gaining eligibility for service, that English teaching was also introduced in the new Sanskrit College of Calcutta, and Vidyasagar himself fought for it.

Services of all kinds under the British rulers were in fact largely

monopolised by the educated Bengalis in this period. Even the most noisy 'radicals' among the intellectuals of the 1830s, and 1840s, known as 'Young Bengal', including the leading fire-brands, were all collaborators of the British rulers in trade, commerce and administration. The trend of the monopolisation of government services by the educated Bengalis till 1856-57, can be guessed from the facts below.⁷ It should be noted that the Indian and Provincial Government offices were then located in Calcutta.*

These figures of some important Government services indicate the trend of educated employment prevalent in the middle of the nineteenth century. The well-paid upper-rank services were all reserved for the Englishmen, and the middle and lower ranks were mostly filled by the educated Bengalis among other Indians. This economic incentive to English education was lacking in Bihar, Assam and Orissa, and it was one of the reasons for the low progress of modern education in these eastern neighbouring States.

The last 43 years, 1857 to 1900, covers the period of university education. Calcutta University started as an examining body with the modest number of 244 candidates for the Entrance examination. The number rose to about 3000 in 1889, showing an increase of 25 times. At the first B.A. examination held in 1858, there were only 13 candidates, and the corresponding number in 1889

* Government Services: Indian and Provincial: 1856-57

Departments	Total	Bengalis	Europeans	Indians (excluding Bengalis)
Finance, Home, Military, P.W.D., Public Instruction ..	239	117	100	12
Bengal Govt. Secretary's Office ..	127	65	59	3
Sudder Dewany & Nizammat Adalat ..	48	34	11	3
Sudder Revenue Board ..	95	58	26	11
Accountant General's Office ..	205	111	90	4
Nine Depts. ..	714	385	286	33

was 1165, an increase of more than 80 times. Between 1858 and 1881, in 23 years, the number of graduates swelled to 1712, of whom 1494 were Bengalis, and the remaining 218 were other Indians, including Biharis, Oriyas and Assamese. Between 1861, when the First Arts examination commenced, and 1881, in 20 years, the number of F.As. reached 4724, of whom about 3800 were Bengalis. The M.A. examination was first held in 1861, but only six candidates were successful in 1863; by 1881 the number of M.A.s rose to 423, of whom 344 were Bengalis.⁸ Leaving aside the Matriculates and F.As. and also the 'non-finishers', if we look upon the employment condition of 1712 graduates only till 1881, we face the following situation:⁹

Government service	:	528
Private service	:	187
Unemployed	:	635
Unknown	:	320
Dead	:	42
		————
		1712
		————

About one-third of the university graduates were unemployed in 1881. By the end of the century the total number of graduates must have been round 5000 at this rate of growth, and the unemployment curve also must have been steeper.

Fall in Market-price

With the fall in the market-price of the educated and the shrinkage of employment opportunities, many were taking to the independent professions of law and medicine, or to teaching. Lawyers and teachers were proliferating on such a scale that these professions also became overcrowded and uneconomic by 1875-76. The Press was commenting at this time that lawyers and other educated persons who had alternative sources of income, from rural and urban property or trade, and therefore enough leisure to spend, were drifting to politics and trying to become politicians.¹⁰ In fact, the political scene

in this region of India, before and after the foundation of the Indian National Congress, was dominated by lawyers. For instance, in 1893-95, the Bengal Legislative Council had six elected members, of whom three were lawyers (Bengalis), two Zamindars, including the Maharaja of Darbhanga from Patna Division, and the eminent nationalist Surendranath Banerjea. In 1895-97 and 1897-99, except Surendranath, all were lawyers. Among them Madhusudan Das, known as the maker of modern Orissa, was elected from Orissa, and Saligram Singh from Bihar, and both were lawyers.¹¹

There was no employment crisis of the educated in Bihar, Orissa and Assam as it was in Bengal, during the period under review. The history of Patna College and of Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, both founded in the 1860s, is the history of higher English education in Bihar and Orissa. Even after the foundation of Patna College in 1863, it was found that till 1875, 'the natives of Bihar were more averse to higher collegiate education than school education'. On the rolls of all colleges in Bihar the number of students was 205 in 1900, whereas in the Presidency College of Calcutta alone it was 561 in 1898.¹² The number of students on the roll of Ravenshaw College in 1901 was 97, successful F.A. candidates were 32 and B.A. candidates only 2 in 1905.¹³ As regards Assam, after it was conquered by the British in 1826, it formed a part of Bengal, and Assamese was looked upon as a dialect of Bengali. Only Bengali was taught in Assamese schools till 1873, when Assamese as the language of the people was restored to its rightful place. The first generation of modern Assamese intellectuals was mainly educated in Calcutta and was in close contact with the educated Bengalis. Even in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the progress of higher education was very slow in Assam. There was only one arts college in 1899-1900, with thirty students on its roll. The senior Assamese scholars were all students of Bengal

colleges, mostly of Calcutta Presidency College and Coochbehar Victoria College.¹⁴

There was another facet of this crisis of modern intellectuals that should be noted. There was a very high proportion of 'wastage' in higher education. For instance, there were 18,000 students on the rolls of all colleges in India during 1902-7 for supplying an annual output of only 1935 successful graduates. This means about 88% fell out by the way without completing successfully the university course. Moreover, the policy of education itself was unproductive in the sense that it was heavily arts-oriented. The proportion of students graduating in the four main faculties of all Indian universities in 1902-7 was as follows: Arts 85%, Science 2%, Medicine 9%, Engineering 4%. The proportion of graduates in Arts who took one or more science subjects at the B.A. examination during the period was: Calcutta University 36%, Madras University 46%, Bombay University 34%, Allahabad University 25%.¹⁵ Scientific education was totally neglected because the policy of economic development pursued by the imperialist rulers did not create any need for it.

This arts-oriented education helped, to a great extent, in the shaping of modern intellectuals of India as the 'interpreters' between the rulers and the ruled, and as the promoter of Western bourgeois liberal thought in our country. This was exactly Macaulay's intention when he wanted to introduce English education in 1835, and when he made the historic utterance that the aim of this education was to create 'a class of persons Indian in colour and blood, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect'. 'The most eloquent expression' of English liberalism was Macaulay and substantially the British educational policy represented 'this liberal attitude to India which survived intact to the end of British rule'.¹⁶ Macaulay's near relative Charles Trevelyan was more explicit about the objective of English edu-

cation in India. He said that in the near future the Indian people would demand freedom from British rule, and there were two means by which they would seek to gain it, either by 'revolution' or by 'reform'. The means of reform was certainly more desirable for the British rulers. This would be made possible by giving English education to the Indians. Because, according to Trevelyan, 'the educated classes, knowing that the elevation of their country on these principles can only be worked out under our protection, will naturally cling to us', and will realise the need of 'acquiring and diffusing European knowledge' for 'naturalising European institutions' on Indian soil, in the interest of their own stability.¹⁷ This expectation of the British rulers was largely fulfilled by the Indian intellectuals.

Rigidly Selective

To make this policy most effective, education, specially higher education, had to be rigidly 'selective'. It was closely tied to the upper and middle classes, and also to the upper castes in the case of the Hindu community. In Bengal, higher education was almost a monopoly of well-to-do upper-caste Hindus like the Brahmins, Kayasthas and Vaidyas. The little interest that English education aroused in the early days among the traditional merchant-castes, artisan-castes and peasants, belonging to the lower order of the caste-hierarchy, quickly melted away as the reality dawned on the educated that caste-chasms could not be bridged either by education or by wealth. It was reported in 1869-70 that the classes which had an independent source of living such as the artisans, the merchants and the peasants, were becoming indifferent to English education. "Refer to the University calendars for the last ten years or to any previous reports of the Bengal Colleges, you will not find the children of many in independent circumstances of life in the list of passed candidates for degrees and honours or any similar marks of college distinction".¹⁸

The position remained unchanged till the end of the century.

Neither the imperialist rulers, nor the intellectuals created by them, were interested in the education of the people. Even a robust liberal educationist and social reformer like Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was in favour of giving education to the higher classes. Vidyasagar wrote to the Government of Bengal in 1859: 'As the best, if not the only practicable means of promoting education in Bengal, the Government should, in my humble opinion, confine itself to the education of the higher classes on a comprehensive scale' (Letter dated 29th September 1859). In matters of educational policy, it should be noted, there was then no other person among the 'educated' in Bengal whose opinion the Government considered more valuable than that of Vidyasagar. Macaulay's much talked of 'filtration theory', therefore, was nothing but a bluff. There was no filtration of English education downward. The horizontal spread of it on the countryside was limited, and its vertical spread was seriously inhibited by a 'selective' policy.

This was how the modern intellectuals of our country were born, nurtured and moulded. In the role they preferred to act, we find that Trevelyan's dream came true, but not Macaulay's prophecy. Indian intellectuals accepted the principle of 'reform' and not of 'revolution', as the best method for achieving the social-cultural elevation, and even the political salvation of their country and, as was predicted by Trevelyan, they committed themselves to work it out under the protection of British rulers. The history of social, religious and educational reform movements, and also of the nationalist movement, in the nineteenth century, will amply bear it out. Without going into details, we would select a few salient characteristics of these movements to substantiate our point.

Reform

Some of these reform movements originated in Bengal, spread over

other regions of India, and the Bengali intellectuals, for their early appearance on the scene, took a leading part in them. What was the social content and character of these movements? The movements against *Satidaha* (burning of widows on the pyres of their deceased husbands) and for monotheistic Brahmoism against Hindu idolatry and polytheism, led by Rammohan Roy, the anti-Hinduism and pro-Christianity movement of the young Derozians, the widow-remarriage movement of Vidyasagar, all emanated from social problems of upper-class and upper-caste Hindus. The degenerated social practices of a corrupt Brahminism created these problems, which hardly touched the fringe of other castes. The spread effects of these reform movements were therefore very weak vertically. The movement of monotheistic Brahmoism was lost mainly in arid intellectualism, and failing to reform Hinduism, it was absorbed into its fold and allocated the status of a sect, like many other religious sects. Hence the net social gain of these upper-caste-and-class-bound reform movements had been very small, although our liberal intellectuals fought for these reforms valiantly, under the umbrella provided by the 'liberal' bourgeois British rulers. The tumult raised by these reform movements was largely submerged under the roaring waves of an aggressive neo-Hinduism in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Like the social reform movements, one of the centres of origin and spread of early nationalist movement in India was Bengal. The Bengali intellectuals were ruling 'public opinion from Peshawar to Chittagong', and the educated class was 'the voice and brain of the country' in the 1880s.¹⁹ The voice was echoed in this manner in the Presidential speech, in the second session of the Indian National Congress in 1886:²⁰ "It is under the civilizing rule of the Queen and people of England that we meet here together, hindered by none, and are freely allowed to speak our minds. Such a thing is possible under British

rule and British rule only (*loud cheers*).... Is this Congress a nursery for sedition and rebellion against the British Government (*cries of no, no*), or is it another stone in the foundation of the stability of that Government? (*cries of 'yes, yes'*). This is how Charles Trevelyan's prediction that the English-educated intellectuals of India would cling to British rulers and seek the social and political salvation of their country under British protection came true. Till the end of the last century, and even the first quarter of the present century, there was no qualitative change in the nationalist outlook of Indian intellectuals.

Macaulay's prophecy did not come true. Modern Indian intellectuals were 'interpreters' between the rulers and the ruled all right, but they were not really 'English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect'. They grew into a 'hybrid' class, a peculiar blend of medievalism and modernism. As they were brought up in the dominant socio-economic environment of a deliberately bolstered-up feudalism, and its institutional power-structures, they could not shake off their medieval outlook and mentality. Macaulay wrote to his father in 1836 that "there would not be a single idolater among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence".²¹ Unfortunately, even after one hundred and thirty years of Macaulay's forecast, the number of idolaters among the respectable and intellectual classes in Bengal is formidably large. Every kind of medieval institutional power-structure like casteism, communalism, religious sectarianism, idolatry, polytheism and obscurantism, raised its head high, as days passed by, in the nineteenth century which we call the 'Age of Renaissance'—and the modern intellectuals succumbed to one or the other or all of them; even by being perfectly 'modern' with a fair volume of English education. The colonial intellectuals could not resolve this contradiction for long, and possibly they are still carrying this burden of contradiction, at least a large section of

them, in the changing social situation of independent India.

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Book Review

The Struggle For Laos

SURROUNDED by hilly southern China in the north, Cambodia in the south, thickly wooded Vietnamese highland in the east and Thailand in the west, there is Laos. This geographical situation has made the country's socio-politics extremely sensitive to the happenings across the borders. This is particularly valid for Laos' struggle for the growth of national consciousness in recent times. The Laotian struggle for nationhood, as the book under review* has shown, has been influenced, initially, by the Thais and, then and more profoundly at that, by the Vietnamese communists. Paul F. Langer and Joseph J. Zasloff, his co-author, have attempted an enquiry into Vietnam's role in Laos as a case study of a broader investigation of the problem of a senior partner assisting a junior partner in the making of a revolution so that one can understand the interrelation of Asian revolutionary movements. Non-availability of data—and the conflicting nature of even those available—is the main handicap in any such study. The authors admit of such difficulties. But, given that limitation, they have largely succeeded in giving a detailed account of the nature of involvement of Ho's Vietnam in Laos.

An anti-French coup in 1940 by some fifty youths was the first recorded attempt by the Laotians for independence from French colonialism. After this there was a comparative lull until the end of the Second World War. During the War Laos presented a confused political situation and a number of splinter groups, often vying with each other for peoples' allegiance, were operating in different parts of the country. They can politically be divided into two generic

**North Vietnam and the Pathet Lao Partners in the Struggle for Laos* By Langer and Zasloff. Princeton \$5.95.

factions (the authors identify at least three). The first group is typified by Prince Phetsarath—a pro-Western leader who sought limited independence within the French Union. The other, and the more progressive, called for complete freedom and looked to the Vietnamese, and, through them, to the Chinese for guidance and help.

After the allied reverses these groups buried their hatchets for a while and Prince Phetsarath, in September 1949, declared independence on behalf of the others. However, the re-entry of the French drove the Las Issara Government—as it was named—to Bangkok where it stayed in exile till 1949 when a compromise with the French colonists made possible its return. All through this period Prince Souphannavoung—the half-brother of Prince Phetsarath and a member of his government-in-exile—instead of living in comfort in Bangkok stayed back in the hilly tracts of eastern Laos and worked among the people to carve out an

area of his influence, which later helped him immensely.

This period saw the rise of two distinct trends in Lao's nationalist movement, generally on the lines of the two factions mentioned earlier. Conservatives as also the moderate middle class leaders of the Lao Issara, scared by communism, tended to compromise with the bourgeoisie in the mother country, while others like Prince Souphannavoung, Kaysone and Nouhak turned to the school of the people for survival. They chose to trek the violent road and fought bitterly to bring Laos into the broader framework of the anti-colonial struggle of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Indeed, this trend is typical not only of Laos or Indochina—but of all other nations of the Third World trying to throw off their colonial bondage.

Prince Souphannavoung is the key figure of the period. A scanning of the correspondence with his adversaries provides an interesting hindsight into the political situation in

Laos at the time. To his compatriots he wrote tersely about their dependence on the "colonist hangmen" and said that the Vietnamese are a more dependable ally. He said, "weapons... must protect our propaganda, ensure the security of our political leaders and buttress our diplomatic actions". Wherefrom were these weapons to come? From the Vietnamese, but he emphatically added that it was the Laotians, not the Vietnamese, who were to work hard for their freedom and establish their "people's power bases" for that.

But his base in 1949 was small. For reasons of survival, therefore, he had to shift to eastern Laos and asked Hanoi for help. It was a movement that sought to control the Laos-Vietnamese border region which was vital to its war effort in Vietnam.

In 1949, Souphannavoung visited Hanoi to meet Ho. On his return he convened the First Resistance Congress in 1950 which ended with the formation of Neo Lao Issara (Free Laos Front) and, in addition, a new resistance government whose roster included all the known names of the present-day Pathet Lao. The Pathet Lao came closer to Vietnam when Viet Minh, after the formation of the Lao Dong (workers) Party, called a meeting of Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian leaders and formed a Vietnamese-Khmer-Laos alliance to fight the American interventions.

All through the period the Vietnamese were helping the Pathet Lao to develop their political and military organisations. And it is with their help that the Pathet Lao launched the military offensive during 1953/54 in Phong Sally and Sam Neua which considerably strengthened their hands in the 1954 Geneva Conference. It is their backing, along with that of other communist countries, that enabled the Pathet Lao to earn a much needed base in the two provinces.

In 1956 the Neo Lao Hak Sat replaced the Neo Lao Issara. During this period again Phak Pasason Laos (PPL hereafter), the Peoples' Party of

MAO PAPERS

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This volume brings together a number of unpublished or little known writings of Mao Tse-tung. Included are Mao's instructions issued before and throughout the Cultural Revolution. These are of great importance to the understanding of the traumatic events in China at that time. The whole work throws new light on Mao as a writer, and as a leader.

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ON LENIN

Notes towards a Biography

LEON TROTSKY

Translated by Tamara Deutscher

Leon Trotsky, apostle of the doctrine of permanent revolution, gathered together some notes for future biographers and for what he hoped would be his own tribute to Lenin. The projected Lenin biography was never completed, so that this work, following so closely on the events which it describes, becomes crucial to an understanding of both Lenin and Trotsky. The text includes items never before available in English.

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Laos, the real instrument of control of the Laos independence movement, was formed. It was a semi-secret organisation and operated within the broader mass front of the NLHS. By 1957 Prince Souvanna Phouma and Prince Souphannavong agreed to a formula for coalition government which provided for the holding of elections and the merger of the Pathet Lao army with the Royal Laos Government forces. But by 1959 coalition prospects dimmed and a communist offensive began in the summer of 1959 increasing the momentum of the Laos freedom struggle.

The Vietnamese were active as usual. Thanks to their advice and material help, the Pathet Lao forces could beat the Royal Laos Government forces and gain new areas of influence. The Pathet Lao military influence was well reflected in their enhanced status in the 1962 Geneva Conference where unlike the observer status in the 1954 Conference, its emissary was one of the participants.

The Geneva accord was short-lived. In fact immediately afterwards trouble broke out between the Pathet Lao and Khong La, the neutralist leader, leading to his eviction from Khong Khay, and finally the Plain of Jars, the place where they chose to co-exist. Though in April 1964, Prince Souvanna Phouma could survive a coup, the political situation was heading towards polarisation. And by the spring of 1964 a serious confrontation developed between the communists and the rest. This time, however, Pathet Lao forces were much superior and by 1970 they wrested two-thirds of Laos from the enemy. And in April 1970, they even ventured out of their hilly hideouts and took Atto-phen and Saravane.

Like North Vietnam the political organisation of the Pathet Lao operates on two fronts: there is the mass organisation of the NLHS and within

it, the PPL, a semi-secret communist organisation, which is the real wielders of power and has its operatives planted in crucial sectors in Lao. However it is difficult to determine the exact inter-action of the VWP (Dong Lao Dong Vietnam) and the PPL. That there is a relation, however, is evident from the internal political structure (noted above) and the external policy of the Lao Communists. For example, on issues affecting the Sino-Soviet dispute, the Lao communists follow the Hanoi line. In a broadcast concerning the Paris peace talks the PL complemented the DRVN for its decision to go to Paris.

Sceptics have found in the Vietnamese help an expression of their age-old craving for westward expansion. To be sure, Hanoi is keen to have a friendly regime. This will make its western part immune to hostile action and ensure its vital supply line—the famed Ho Chi Minh trail—that runs through the region. Hanoi, however, has always appreciated and taken particular care not to harm Laotian sensitivities.

To Hanoi Indochina is one region and has a common enemy—U.S. imperialism and its lackeys in the native middle-class-dominated leadership. A successful national liberation movement needs an efficient leadership and a political organisation that can identify themselves with the people and take cognizance of regional problems without losing their international perspective. Uptill now the Vietnamese, in their dealings with their Laotian neighbour—and also Cambodian—have fully appreciated this aspect of the problem. "Even Laos defectors who denounced the political role of Vietnam in Laos admitted that the Vietnamese advisers get on well with their Laos counterpart. Most informants agreed that the Vietnamese were diplomatic in their dealings, making suggestions rather than demands, keeping their role and presence discreet, and paying attention to the particular sensitivities of the local authorities they advised."

HIRANMOY DHAR

Clippings

Searching Our Souls

Pakistan has suffered a major setback. It is stock taking time.

Chroniclers will record December 17, 1971 as the day of dismemberment. Historians will say that the destruction of the country, as conceived and constituted by its founding fathers, began on the night of March 25 when the Generals launched their murderous mission of suppressing the electoral verdict of the majority in order to save the "integrity" of the nation. From that moment the movement toward disaster was inexorable, for the men who held our destiny were oblivious to reason of politics, diplomacy, morality, and military strategy. Eight months later, that is, some 250,000 dead persons, millions of displaced citizens, thousands of raped women and orphaned children later, the disintegration of Pakistan climaxed in the surrender of 100,000 soldiers and civilians and the betrayal of millions who had, out of choice or necessity, remained loyal to the state. Few nations can claim a chapter so dark in history. To honour our past and for the sake of our future, we must ask why it happened.

We welcome the appointment of a Commission to enquire into the causes of our present predicament. Yet we fear the prevailing tendency to put blames on blundering individuals who, in fact, were mere agents of the forces that caused the crisis. The Commission would fail its historic obligation if it does not examine the roots of the problem and satisfies instead the passions of the moment by finding scapegoats. In every setback there are seeds of success provided a people learn lessons and recognize realities, however harsh and unpleasant they be.

We must recognize that the disaster occurred because we permitted it to develop. The excesses of the Awami League notwithstanding, the issues were relatively clear-cut, the inhumanity of the military intervention

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unquestionable and, from the start, its consequences obvious to anyone who dared to think. Yet few educated citizens at home or abroad had the clairvoyance or the courage to disrupt their lives, jeopardise their ambitions, and take risks to challenge the junta—they are so vociferously condemning today. Almost to the last day of ignominious surrender no leader of importance seriously questioned the basic premises of the junta's policies. In that sense many who are now calling for the trial of Yahya and his cronies are not free of complicity in the crimes against the country and its people. Finding scapegoats, surrogates of our crippled sensibilities and bruised consciences, will serve no good purpose. To the contrary, it may prevent the needed concentration on fundamentals.

The fundamental cause of the crisis lies in the betrayal of our people's ideal of Pakistan. The common Muslims' struggle for a state was based on their longing for a society free of oppression, injustice and inequality. Hence Muslim nationalism had earlier and stronger popular roots in those regions—like Bengal—where the oppressor class was largely Hindu. For the Muslim elite, however, Pakistan meant the end of Hindu competition and the establishment of its own monopoly of power and privileges. The tragedy of Pakistan lies in the fact that for 23 years this elite, consisting of landlords and capitalists, bureaucrats and military men, held on to its privileges at the expense of the people, and clung to power at the cost of participation. The lesson we must draw is that only the total transformation of Pakistan's economic and social structure will provide the basis for constructing a progressive, just and durable new order.

The sub-continent's worst colonial heritage was consecrated in Pakistan. We were ruled in the vice-regal tradition of executive centralism. When permitted to exist, the legislature was required to be a rubber stamp. Independent judiciary was judged a liability, and emasculated. Power was

concentrated in the bureaucracy and the army, both trained and tested by colonial Britain, aided and armed by imperial America. The poor were disfranchised; government unaccountable to the public. The callousness of our rulers was indiscriminating. Yet the more disadvantaged people of East Pakistan could only comprehend their condition as caused by regional discrimination. Their efforts to exercise their rights as a majority people were subverted in 1954, 1956, 1958 and 1969. In 1971 they were utterly brutalized.

In order for Pakistan to prosper in freedom and dignity we must withdraw the power presently vested in the army and bureaucracy, and restructure both institutions. Our armed forces are better trained to occupy the country than to defend it. The bureaucracy is raised to rule the people not to serve them. Their colonial ethos, authoritarian structure, mediocre standards, and managerial outlook were suited to the service of their foreign mentors, and are unfit for a modern, independent nation. They must be transformed into popular, participatory institutions emanating from and accountable to the people, capable of defending the country, and serving the public. We hope that our defeat at the hands of an equally obsolete, if more numerous and gadget-heavy, Indian army would compel us to creativity and innovation rather than to put on more military fat and to harden the authoritarian arteries of the bureaucracy.

Similarly, we wish that renewed quest for national unity will not lead us again toward mindless centralization. We are still a diverse country united by culture, religion, nationality and a yearning for justice, equality and freedom. Diverse lands like ours do not respond to European models of "integration". Nor can genuine regional grievances be suppressed by the repressive arms of government. Respect for regional cultures and traditions, and maximum local autonomy within the framework of popular, national planning are the requisites of unity and strength.

(Eqbal Ahmad in *Pakistan Forum*, Canada).

Letters

Bhutto's Role

In your editorial (15-1-72) you have said that Mr Bhutto deserves kudos for the magnanimity he has shown by releasing Mujibur Rahman unconditionally. Even though I do not have any prejudice against Mr Bhutto, I cannot but disagree with you in the matter. If he is really credited with having the quality you have so gracefully attributed to him, the fate of Pakistan would not have been what it is today.

It is because of the overbearing political compulsions, and not because Mr Bhutto is magnanimous, that Sheikh Mujibur has been released unconditionally. Bhutto's supposed magnanimity is the result of his self-acquaintance with the grim realities that the 14-day war has given birth to. The first is the fate of nearly a lakh of POWs; the second is to prepare the ground cautiously and gradually so as to bring the people of Pakistan in close contact with the real implications of the tragedy that has overtaken the entire country. Besides, the necessity of an image—the image of a man devoted to democracy and socialism—is no less compelling for his survival as the arbiter of Pakistan's destiny.

PHANI BHUSHAN GHOSH
Ashokenagar

'Frontier' once insulted a popular Bengali writer by calling him an agent of Sri Satyajit Ray.

It is not good for anyone to be an agent of anyone. But it is thousand times worse to become an agent of a man like Bhutto, the megalomaniac who was mainly responsible for the massacre in East Bengal.

Being a great lover of drinks myself, I sadly realise that alcoholism and Marxism cannot co-exist with each other.

TUSHARKANTI SINHA
Calcutta

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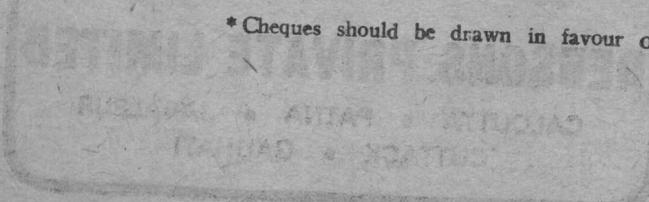
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