

frontier

Vol. 4: No. 9

JUNE 12, 1971

PRICE: 35 PAISE

On Other Pages

COMMENTS	..	2
<i>Kerala</i>		
NEWSPAPER REVOLUTION		
RAMJI	..	4
<i>Andhra Pradesh</i>		
WHAT TO DO ?		
C. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO	..	5
<i>Assam</i>		
SEEING RED		
FROM A CORRESPONDENT	..	7
ON THE PARIS		
COMMUNE—II		
PARESH CHATTOPADHYAY	..	9
GROWTH OF THE		
PEOPLE'S ARMY		
VO NGUYEN GIAP	..	12
<i>Book Review</i>		
A DIPLOMATIC HISTORY		
OF INDIA	..	15
TWO ARRIVALS		
BY A DRAMA CRITIC	..	16
LETTERS	..	17

Editor : Samar Sen

PRINTED AT MODERN INDIA PRESS,
7, RAJA SUBODH MULICK SQUARE,
CALCUTTA-13 AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY
FOR GERMINAL PUBLICATIONS (P) LTD,
BY SAMAR SEN FROM 61, MOTT LANE,
CALCUTTA-13
TELEPHONE: 243202

LOST WEEKEND ?

BEFORE the Prime Minister visited Calcutta on Saturday rumours were circulating that a state of emergency was going to be declared or something similar and drastic about to be undertaken. The problem of the refugees has assumed colossal proportions and the administration, even in spheres other than refugee relief, has proved to be worthless, tarnishing the 'fair' image of the Congress (R). In any case it is a government living from day to day through sordid intrigues and arrests of political opponents; the famous Bangla Congress was about to be split; results of the three by-elections were uncertain.

There was no sensational development, however. Mrs Gandhi said some of the refugees would be sent to other parts of India. No one knows how many and when and how—the railway system is already unable to face up to the many tasks in eastern India. How the transfer of a few thousand, even a few lakh refugees, would help to tackle this human wave, carrying despair, disease and death, is not known. On this issue, there is perhaps not much point in attacking the government—the problem is colossal and unmanageable, the more so when it seems to be the deliberate policy of Islamabad to get rid of as many people as possible.

General Yahya Khan must be chuckling now and then, though his kitty is pretty thin. His tasks are financial and military; he knows he will get the money he needs and be able to feed the army. As for the East Bengal population, well, aren't those sub-human beings used to floods and famines? On the other hand, the problems facing India are manifold—political, economic, military, social, medical... Serve her right for poking her sharp nose into Pakistani affairs.

There are reports of pressure on Yahya Khan. Maybe he is being advised to make a political gesture now that he has proved his military might. But aren't some pressures working on Mrs Gandhi too, besides the physical presence of millions of refugees? Her statement that India is not interested in the disintegration of Pakistan was not a stray remark. Are some people telling her to play it cool on the borders? The build-up however goes on.

However, about one thing we could be certain in these uncertain days. Both the Central and the State Government are capable of taking

and executing a quick decision so far as despatch of more police and troops is concerned. West Bengal will have quite a few additional police battalions to guard the refugee camps. Some refugees have already encroached on private property in Calcutta and elsewhere. The time is not far off when not many tears will be shed on the plight of this uprooted humanity. They are not voters either.

At the moment many nations are expressing great concern—the chorus

is surprising—and some governments are rushing aid. In the hour of need and confusion one cannot look a gift horse in the mouth. But beware. Where will the giant C-130 transport planes of the U.S. Air Force, now said to be on their way, land in the border areas to pick up refugees? There are not many airfields to tackle such aircraft. As a U.S. Congress report pointed out, American aid to the Laotian refugees was essentially a “cover” for the CIA’s semi-military activities.

The Centre Can't Be Cornered

The atavistic fear that India will disintegrate if the Central power is weakened made the Constitution-makers invest the post of Prime Minister with powers that have no parallel in any other constitutional post of the world. Countrymen by and large perhaps subconsciously share the same fear and that is why the recommendations of the Rajamannar Committee, appointed by Mr Karunanidhi, failed to spark off a prairie fire. True, the Committee had no locus standi and Mrs Gandhi is under no obligation to read let alone act on it. But just imagine what would have happened, were the recommendations made and published even one year ago. The Chief Ministers of the States—non-Congress, other-Congress, and even the in-Congress without any idea of the things that had come, would have had hung the recommendations as their sacred cross and joined a crusade for more power to the States. Mrs Gandhi, who was made Prime Minister by the Chief Ministers and who fortified herself by the well-learned British technique of dividing and ruling the Congress CMs as well as using the non-Congress CMs as a sharp foil to the recalcitrant CMs, would not have dared to treat the Committee as disdainfully as she does now. Autonomy is a good thing, so long it pertains to distant people, say of Bangladesh. Mrs

Gandhi, though she may be a great champion of Bangladesh, has no use for such a word when it may shear her own plumage. Suppose the recommendations of the Rajamannar Committee were put to a referendum? Not at a distant remove from the Awami League's Six Points, the recommendations might have produced something as surprising as the results of the last Lok Sabha elections. The CPM in West Bengal took the cue alright and judging by the results of the West Bengal elections, hit it quite smartly. But Mrs Gandhi, with practically all the States under her thumb, is now in a position to ignore the Rajamannar Committee and instead stand by the Setalvad Committee and the Administrative Reforms Commission which found the Constitution absolutely all right so far as the division of power between the centre and states is concerned. Not that she has taken any rigid stance. She will allow flexibility in the matter. In fact, over the years the States have acquired more functions, executive and financial. But Mrs Gandhi will allow the flexibility, keeping the Constitution intact so that if the worse comes to the worst she may take on the ultimate power, constitutionally. After all, now with the massive mandate from the people, she can act according to her wisdom.

Under these circumstances, it will

be useless to discuss the pros and cons of the Rajamannar recommendations. Some are trying to do it, weakly, in case the state elections next year may spring one more surprise, not exactly to the satisfaction of Mrs Gandhi. But the question whether the proposed Inter-State Council will be redundant and usurp the functions of the Cabinet or Parliament or some such thing, or whether the grants to the States should be called doles, or whether the States should be given more financial power when they refuse to tax the rich farmers or host of such other things are merely academic. The crux of the issue is, however, not the division of power; it is the capture of power. Since no non-Congress party has even any pretension of working to that end, the Rajamannar recommendations today are as useful to us as the Swedish laws on eros.

Railway Travails

The discussion in Parliament on the Railways' plans has gone its expected way. At least apparently the Railway Minister was grieved by the cut of Rs 250 crores by the planners and proposed to take it up with the people concerned. However, he remarked that the political agitations “specially in the north-eastern” sector might be behind this uncalled-for pruning of the plans. He said “but for this...the economy was positively picking up and appropriate investment could be made in the railways.”

As an integral part of the infrastructure, the railways can make significant contributions to any plan for development as a carrier of goods and men and as promoters of new jobs. This is particularly true of the industrial regions in north-east India—West Bengal to be precise—where the industries greatly depend on railways not only for movement of goods but for the orders as well. But here the performance of the Indian Railways has been near chaos.

In the early days of planning

when there was some activity in the economy, the railways lagged behind and wagon shortage caused a lot of jamming in vital sectors. When, however, the economy slumped in the mid-sixties and an uneasy lull set in in business, the railways cut down their plans and this severely jolted the big industrial units tied to it and its impact on the smaller units around the bigger ones was ruinous. The engineering industries complex in Howrah and Greater Calcutta was the worst sufferer. Important units like Braithwaite and Martin Burn slowed down their production and in chain reaction a few thousand smaller producers had to shut down their shops. When, however, the economic situation began to look up towards the end of the sixties, the Government would not, or rather could not, re-adjust the railway plans and took to overseas markets for new orders for wagons and the like and, in fact, did secure a few big orders for bigger units. (For instance, the Martin Burn group got an order of about Rs 5 crores). But despite these orders the smaller units which had so far depended on factors other than quality for supplying the railways could not fit into the new situation. As a result the so-called boom had little or no impact on the numerous sweat shops of the region. This led to an economic chaos where disaffection spread and social tension struck root. Obviously when Mr Hanumanthaiya was picking up "strikes and tensions" as a cause for the cut in the railway plans he was confusing cause with effect. Throughout the debate his effort was to explain away the railways' operational inefficiency on the plea of law and order. But the coal industry spokesmen of Bengal and Bihar have something else to say. They told pressmen in Calcutta that train hold-ups by the public were more frequent in other parts of India than in West Bengal and this was partly attributable to the "the railway staff themselves". Evidently, the coal tycoons who belong to the Hanumanthaiya tribe can hardly have any reason to

bully the Railway Minister unnecessarily. Meanwhile, the Railway Minister has announced the installation of 14 computers at a cost of about

Rs 16.5 crores as part of a nationwide drive for economy on the railways.

The Singapore Press

Summer is the unkindest of seasons in South-East Asia but nowhere has it been more unkind than in Singapore. In course of just one month two newspapers have been guillotined, three newsmen expelled from the country and four detained without trial. Freedom of the press, if there were ever such a thing in Singapore, has been given a quiet burial.

This is how sentimental fools and fellow-travellers have portrayed the fight between the forces of darkness and light, between democracy and communism. Without reflecting on the courage of the Singapore Premier in standing up to the communist mischief some woolly-headed liberals have started denouncing the arrest of some agents and the closure of organs of subversion. The arrested people of the influential Chinese language daily *Nanyang Siang Pau* were engaged in "glamourising the communist way of life". Premier Lee detected it before it could cause much damage to the image of Singapore as a safe haven for foreign investors free of the communist virus. The closed-down paper *Eastern Sun* of course had not yet shown its communist fangs and the editor of the paper said he had instructions to follow an anti-communist editorial policy but Lee dug out the dubious source of its finance and cracked down. There is no end to communists' dialectical devilishness and one does not know how they would use an anti-communist paper for furthering their own cause. Lee cannot take any chances.

The case of *Singapore Herald* was more delicate and by the same token more dangerous. This paper did not openly attempt to "glamourise the communist way of life" but dared to "take on the Government", thus undermining popular confi-

dence in Lee's administration and negatively helping the communists. The paper in short was trying to subvert the system Lee Kuan Yew has reared and perfected where critics, ipso facto communist, do not and cannot exist. As it has been said, in Singapore those communist agents who hope to criticise or oppose Lee will have either to boycott elections or accept Government hospitality behind bars. Parliament was thus disinfected but not the press and that is why Lee had to expel three foreign journalists working for the paper and finally force its closure.

All the cry about Lee Kuan Yew destroying press freedom is just propaganda. He has always maintained that he believes in freedom of the press—freedom to criticise the communists and his political opponents. Look at the flourishing *Straits Times* which enjoys complete freedom to publish Government hand-outs, glamourise the American way of life and print all conceivable kinds of saucy sex stories.

That the Premier does not want to gag newspapers but only to keep them on the correct track was proved early this week. The Government agreed to give licence to a new co-operative formed to run *Singapore Herald*. The new management understandably would be given freedom to follow the holy trail of *Straits Times*.

Contrary to what propagandists say, last month's events in Singapore only prove that there is a match for Spiro Agnew east of Suez. Here at last is an Asian statesman who cares a damn for international opinion and can "take on" an irreverent and insubordinate press. The only pity is that Singapore is too small a place for Lee Kuan Yew's talents.

Destination Unknown

A correspondent writes:

Railway trains are no longer fascinating to passengers though they may still startle and enthral a village boy. Nor are trains that important in diplomacy or revolution. In the jet age no Lenins care to alight at Finland Station to guide a revolution. But some young men who dare to think that the spirit of Lenin is alive in them still travel by train and sometimes, on arrival, depart for unknown destinations. Sometimes non-political boys coming from strongholds of one party or the other also die a gruesome death, as the nine at Konnagar.

Over the question of killers there is always an unclean shroud of mystery spread by the mocking police.

Innumerable people have been killed, not in blind, collective clashes but in calculated attacks, here, there, everywhere: people dragged out of buses, out of their homes or people getting down at stations, people meeting in cells. Young men, skinny or strong, short or lanky, with faces not yet furrowed by the worries of living, with a world to look forward to, lying here, there, everywhere in pools of warm blood, bodies sometimes dismembered. Courage as never before, daring as never before, dedication—or fanaticism—as never before—all gone to waste long before the ultimate end.

The question arises again: who are the killers—when the law-and-order forces are not involved? Men belonging to the same class, sharing perhaps the same values till the advent of the united front government but now differing with horrifying

violence. And all the while the classes that rule are doing quite well, eating quite well, copulating quite well, sleeping quite well and dying a decent death in their homes. The bourgeoisie, call them nationalist or comprador, the jotedars, call them feudal or semi-feudal, are having a nice time. Not for them, with rare exceptions, the nightmare of the long knife. As for the administration, it is true that the police force is demoralised to the extent of being unable to gather or impart information about the activists, but this demoralisation has not lessened their capacity to kill. From August last year the police and the CRP have been on a killing spree.

The roots of inter-party violence were sown in 1967. But in the killings over land or trade union power, in the group clashes between landless peasants or between workers, there was sudden passion, no premeditation, according to sympathetic leftists. With time came the calculated political murders, whetted by ideology; a process in which no mercy is asked for or given, a process which enables the 'urban poor' to spread their dreaded specialisation. There is something fascinating and frightening about the boys of today who take violent death as a matter of course.

Gone are the days when 'enemies' were taught a lesson or two and let off. Now the death penalty is the rule. Perhaps this is because if one is let off with lighter punishment one can organise and turn on the punisher. Since there are no liberated areas where the notorious tyrant or informer can be made to ride a donkey so that he can reform, the only way is to bump him off. Persuasion has no place in political practice these days. The practitioners are in a hurry and the objects of their class hatred have to be those who are near by, within reach. All the while the shadow of the kapalik who believes in human sacrifice is darkening the lives of the sanniyasi-rebels of today.

Kerala

Newspaper Revolution

RAMJI

THE CPI face saver, allegedly incorruptible Mr C. Achutha Menon and his mini-front government have been putting across a revolution on paper that has been picked up and echoed in no less a country than the USSR not to speak of the nationwide publicity it has had from the Establishment press in this country: the *patla dan* festivals, conducted at great expense to the public exchequer, by which it was made out that the Government had granted title deeds to no less than nearly 200,000 landless people.

Recently special supplements were taken out in the Malayalam Press by the Government to highlight the "nationalisation" of private forests in the Malabar area, a step which the reactionary Marxist Government, under E.M.S., had refused to take. But two days before the supplements came out, the High Court, reopening after the summer holidays, had already issued its now familiar stay orders on writ petitions submitted by the owners of private forests. Even a layman knows that with the provisions of the fundamental rights in the Constitution safeguarding private property, such a measure would not stand before any judiciary. This was so well known that the Marxist Ministry refused to indulge in this futile exercise. But the Achutha Menon Ministry went ahead, against the advice of the Law Department of the Government.

On a par with this is the spectacular ordinance taking over the vast acres of M/s Kannan Devan Plantations owned by British interests. The land involved was substantial: over 150,000 acres. This move has also been stayed by the High Court on a writ filed by the plantation owners. Everyone knew that it would be stayed. But the Government achieved its propaganda target.

Meanwhile, police atrocities keep

For Frontier contact

People's Book House

Meher House,

Cowasji Patel Street,

Fort, Bombay

mounting, the peasants in the Kuttanad area being the main victims now. Raids, looting and rape by the CRP and the local police go on merrily. While any concerted action by agricultural workers to resist black legs or wage cuts is ruthlessly put down, the Government has kept mum over an open threat by the big landowners of the Kuttanad rice bowl that they would keep their vast areas fallow. Not a word of warning has been uttered by the Government to deter the well-organised band of landowners who owe allegiance to the Kerala Congress, a partner of the ruling Front. These landlords have been highly pampered under all regimes. Crores of rupees have been given to them by way of "loans" for helping agricultural operations. It is interesting to note that not a single pie of such 'loans' has ever been repaid.

Though the Naxalite menace cannot be trotted out in Kerala on a par with West Bengal, the police, under the League chief Md. Koya, are doing their best to keep up the tradition of the khaki uniform. Innocent persons are nabbed, taken to police lock-up and beaten to death. Just for a lark. Here, the stock excuse is not 'encounter' or attempt to break loose from jail or belligerence towards authority. It has a clinical explanation: coronary thrombosis! Some doctors are always ready to oblige the police with such fantastic postmortem reports. Recently two such cases were very much in the air in which innocent, young, able-bodied men were taken by policemen on their rounds, tortured and killed for a night's diversion and their bodies released with the certificate of doctors to the effect that they died a natural death.

The Indira Congress which is the mainstay of the ruling front is now in the throes of a violent dispute: to join the Ministry or not. The Young Turks are against while the Old Turks, led by the leader of the parliamentary party, are for. The issue was laid at the feet of Madame Gandhi in Delhi. She has allowed them to fight it out at the State level. The

fight is on. With the ruling front very much in favour of shoring up its respectability with the addition of Congress (R) in the Cabinet, and the Old Turks slaving for the spoils of office, the Indira Congress is likely to join the ruling front.

Andhra Pradesh

What To Do ?

C. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO

THOUGH no significant Naxalite activity has been reported recently in another of their strongholds, Khammam and Warangal Districts, there is no indication that the movement has died down there. There has been a tradition of communist insurgency in this area. Since the forties Naxalite activity in Srikulam has been more dramatic but in Khammam it has been persistent and deep rooted". (*Indian Express*, Vijayawada edition, 7-2-1970).

Just after a year this was written, the civil authorities have been forced to move in army units to control the situation. This was done on the night of March 1st strategic points all over the forest areas of the two districts. Mulug Taluk in Warangal District alone has over 1,000 men of the Kumaon Regiment. It is estimated that anything between 4,000 and 5,000 troops took up positions in Warangal, Khammam and Karimnagar Districts. This is in addition to the 4,000 and 5,000 CRP, SAP and other para-military units already in the area.

Probably this is the first time in the past two decades that army units had to be moved in to control revolutionary activities. Even in West Bengal it was to "ensure peaceful polling" that the army moved in.

What happened during the last year to warrant this move ?

In April 1969 the Revolutionary Communist Committee of Andhra Pradesh led by Mr T. Nagi Reddy

adopted the now famous document "The Immediate Programme".

One of the main points mentioned in the document was that in the forest areas of Warangal and Khammam Districts, the people's movement has transgressed the general legal limits. The cardinal point in agrarian revolution would be abolition of the landlord system and distribution of land to the tiller. It also means the liberation of rural masses from all forms of feudal exploitation.

Fertile land and fruit gardens that had been grabbed from Girijan peasants are still in the hands of landlords. People have been anxious to take them back. "We must prepare them to occupy these lands". Attacks from Government armed police would start. With this our resistance would have to be unleashed too. . . . also we have to take the agrarian revolution forward basing it on the path of 'People's War. Then alone we could march forward."

The first step was taken in April 1969 when the landlords as a precautionary measure were neutralised and made ineffective.

The Government's reaction was to move in District Reserve Police and Special Armed Police.

Once the landlords and other exploiting classes had been neutralised, the land programme was taken up in right earnest. Thousands of acres of Government waste land and forest land and landlords' land were occupied. Along with this all forms of Girijan exploitation were stopped. It took almost a year to implement the first stage.

Hundreds of Girijans occupying the lands were imprisoned. Along with indiscriminate arrests, the repressive police machinery went into action and the inhabitants of whole villages were tortured to reveal the whereabouts of the revolutionary leaders. Repression led to a hardening of feelings amongst the Girijans against the police and the Government.

The masses in neighbouring taluks began to appreciate the work done in Mulug taluk, Warangal District So

much so the movement spread to Narsampet and Parkal taluks in Warangal District, Yellandu, Burugamphad Nugur taluks in Khammam District and Mantheni taluk in Karimnagar District. A total area covering 5,000 to 6,000 sq. miles and inhabited by about 350,000 to 400,000 population came under the control of the revolutionaries.

Towards the end of 1969 CRP units were also moved in and repression increased. The movement gained momentum in direct proportion to police repression.

The State Government, rather the Stolypin of Andhra Pradesh, Mr Vengal Rao, the Home Minister, realised that it was not just a law and order problem. *The Times of India*, Bombay, on January 3, 1970 wrote an editorial saying that "meaningful steps in various social and economic fields" were necessary if the Naxalite challenge was to be met effectively. The State Government had announced a series of measures intended to improve the lot of the Girijans, including restrictions on the activities of moneylenders and tradesmen, grant of land-possession certificates, improvement of irrigation facilities and monetary grants for buying bullocks and agricultural implements.

To hoodwink the masses the Government issued notices of eviction on landlords occupying tribal lands. The same Vengal Rao addressing a meeting of landlords at Cherla, Nugur Taluq, in February 1970 advised them to move the courts for stay orders. What hypocrisy!

Eviction notices apart, the Government tried to bribe the tribals by distributing clothes, tobacco etc. and in some cases money gifts. The revolutionaries could warn the tribals about the trap laid for them. Educated by them, the tribals started asking Ministers and officials what they were doing about the land the Girijans had lost to the landlords.

The answer was torture.

What is the game that the Government is trying to play on the Girijans in the matter of land? Issuing eviction notices without actual evic-

tion, bribing the Girijans with offers of alternative land, etc. They do not wish the tribals to get back their land as all the landlords are supporters of the reactionary ruling party.

According to the Government, special laws to protect the Girijans were enacted in 1917 in the old Madras State to which Nugur taluk was then attached. The same laws became applicable to the rest of the Girijan areas in Warangal, Khammam and Karimnagar districts in 1963 only. The Government pleads that as the law was enacted recently, it is helpless in the Telangana area to which the three districts belong.

The question is why can't the Government implement the law at least in Nugur, Bhadrachalam and other taluqs where the Act had been in force since 1917? Even in the Telangana area most of the grabbing of Girijan land was from about 1960-61 and reached the peak in 1964-66.

Land Sales

In 1965 the Government, to regularise sales of lands in Telangana, passed an order now known as "50-B". Registration of land sales was unknown in Telangana for a long time and with the passing of land reform bills in 1951, the process became all the more difficult, so much so that even without registrations land sales were common. This led to difficulties in maintaining land records. The taluq land registers would show one name, while the actual occupant was different. In some cases land has changed hands half a dozen times, yet the name of the original owner remains in the records.

To regularise records, rule "50-B" was introduced. Under it the taluq office itself could, after due enquiry, register the land in the names of the present occupants if they could show documentary proof that they had bought it before 1960.

Rule "50-B" became a rule for corruption and wholesale forgeries. The then tahsildar of Mulug, employing some top Congressmen as his agents, undertook mass registrations of land. Girijan land taken on lease

was registered in the names of new owners, using forged documents, etc. Thousands of acres of such rich land passed to landlords. The tahsildar became rich overnight. Even the otherwise blind Government had to institute an enquiry. Of course nothing came out of this as top Congressmen were involved in the whole racket.

Though stay orders were obtained a year ago the Government is not making any effort to have the orders vacated. It is not in the least interested in de-grabbing Girijan land from the landlords. Even if the Government is to implement the 1917 Act in Nugur and the 1963 Act in the Telangana area, a lot of Girijan land would revert to the Girijans. But it is easier and cheaper to torture and shoot them than let them have their land back.

Ignoring that by the term 'Girijan', the revolutionaries mean 'anybody in that area who is a son of the soil and is downtrodden and exploited, the Government tried to implement a policy of divide and rule by differentiating between tribals and non-tribals. As the revolutionary movement did not allow such differences, the Girijans were not deceived by the Government.

Torture, bribery, promises, everything that is in the capitalist armoury was tried. Liquidation of a few well-known traitors and informers by the revolutionaries solved the problem.

Freed from fear of informers, traitors and police agents and with the revolutionaries implementing their programme with zeal, the Girijans, from passive spectators became active participants in the struggle.

Village committees came into existence to safeguard the interests of the revolutionary movement. With these taking over local control and defence, the revolutionaries were free to advance and spread the programme to new areas. Since mid-1970 the movement has expanded to embrace villagers in the plains and in spite of the repressive machinery, today it covers an area of about 7,000 to

8,000 square miles with a population of nearly 500,000/600,000.

The Government is spending crores of rupees on laying new roads, constructing bridges etc for quicker movement. Wireless transmitters have become as common as transistors. But even the most reactionary of the landlords and other exploiting classes in the area have been neutralised and are offering the repressive machinery no co-operation. For all practical purposes civil rule is absent.

Realising their helplessness, the civil authorities on March 1 handed over the area to the army to implement "Phase Three" of the repressive programme.

According to reliable information, "Phase Three" is the same as the American "strategic villages" plan in Vietnam i.e., herding together many scattered villages into concentration camps, so that food supplies do not reach the revolutionaries.

On the night of March 15, after giving a warning to the repressive machinery almost a month ahead, the revolutionaries struck at Pagederu, Khammam district, and removed from the scene two well-known police agents, though Pagederu and surrounding villages had a heavy concentration of the law and order forces.

This unnerved the forces and a repressive campaign was launched

Our agent at Alipurduar

Mr SUBHAS BOSE,

Newtown Library,

Alipurduar P.O|,

Dist. Jalpaiguri,

West Bengal.

JUNE 12, 1971

against villagers within a radius of ten miles of Pagederu. Indiscriminate beating and torture of men, women and children was the order of the day. The Indian Army probably was trying to cover itself with glory by taking a major role in the brutal repression.

Camps

As usual, a top-level conference of repression officials took place at Warangal in the last week of March and it was decided to bring in additional men. Camps have been set up in villages all over the area—the maximum distance between villages not being more than 2 to 3 miles. No movement by civilians is allowed after dusk between villages and after dark in the villages. Normal life has come to a standstill and the village economy is in the doldrums.

By April 23 this year *The Times of India* carried two news-items, contradicting each other. One was about an interview given by Mr Vengal Rao to newsmen at Madras in which he claimed "that there no longer was a 'Naxalite problem, in a big way. Even the trouble spots were identified and dealt with firmly". Rao went further and "paid a tribute to the Andhra police for the "challenging task" they had accomplished during the last two years to root out the menace".

The other, a *Times of India* News Service item datelined Hyderabad, 22nd April, had this to say "... In the Warangal and Khammam Districts in Telengana the extremists led by the Nagi Reddy Group, have become active again...they are carrying on intimidation and assault on public servants, a senior official who has visited the district said."

The two news items give a clear picture of the confusion into which the Government has been thrown.

The other side of the picture is that the revolutionaries lack fire-power. Mao has rightly said that it is men that count, not weapons. But still what will you do ?

Assam

Seeing Red

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

THE Government of Assam has finally declared war on the Naxalites. The Chief Minister never lets an opportunity slip, when making public addresses, to speak of the Naxalite menace and how this has been imported from the neighbouring State of West Bengal to disturb the calm and contentment in Assam. Youths are urged to join hands with the patriots in exorcising this spectre. Some months back a high-powered cell under a senior police officer was set up to tackle the growth of Naxalism in Assam and it is reported that after adequate training the Assam Police are now confident. This confidence has been displayed of late in the random arrests and summary detention of countless young men all over the State. The CPI leader, Mr Phani Bora, said in the Assembly the other day that the Congress Government was committing a serious mistake in arresting members of his party as Naxalites and that "in such cases people might get restive. Administration should be decentralised and brought nearer the people". And of course, that is being done. The police at least are much nearer the people today and have been given the licence to pick up anyone they choose. Most Left parties in the State believe that the Naxalite problem should be tackled without further delay and they are prepared to render any assistance to the Government. In this they are being joined by "Left intellectuals" and "progressive" writers. The people's movement, they fear, is about to be disrupted by a handful of youths who in collusion with the CIA are trying to question the socialism of these established socialists.

The Assam Police have seldom displayed efficiency except in creating crises for its government. It has

still to learn much from its counterpart in West Bengal. And this certainly will take some time. But before that something must be done to justify its existence. Till recently most of those arrested as Naxalites were described as agents from West Bengal, having nothing to do with the local people. Government publicity media, the bourgeois press, Congress and CPI leaders, and Left intellectuals are all joining hands to isolate the movement from the common people and the most vulgar of communal slogans are being raised. Anything that helps curb the menace is welcome. Whether one calls it Left adventurism, a CIA conspiracy or a Pakistani plot, is of no matter. The odds can be straightened out later. Yet with such solid backing why is the government so panicky? And why are the police picking up anyone who dares to speak up against the government as well as against the established political parties? The formula that the Assam Police have discovered in fighting Naxalism is simple. Anyone refusing to accept the logic of the Congress or the CPI, PSP and the SSP (these are the main opposition parties in the State) must be a Naxalite. I have left out the CPM from this because the police in Assam are still to do a bit of reading to find out the differences between that party and the CPI(ML). As such quite a few CPM workers have also been rounded up. When one comes across the people arrested as Naxalites one is just taken aback. Most of them heard the word 'Naxalite' for the first time during police interrogation. To others it just meant anti-social elements. The other day the police searched the houses of a Dibrugh University student and a fourth grade employee of the University library and rounded them up, to be released after "due verification". The fourth grade employee was at a total loss for he had never heard of the species called Naxalites and told me that the police charged him with postering the town with Naxalite slogans. Can you believe what the police seized

from the house of the postgraduate student after an elaborate search lasting several hours assisted by armed personnel? Just a sheet of art-paper! The explanation given was that he might write something on it. People in panic can say or do anything.

Yes, young men in Assam have started thinking on different lines and the movement is fast striking roots in this apparently quiet and complacent State. Things take some time to start here but once they catch on, they spread fast. That is perhaps why even the most complacent of Congress bosses in the State are displaying signs of anxiety and fear. Why should the State machinery have to be geared up to fight a few young men with erroneous ideas imported from neighbouring West Bengal? There is much more to this than that, and at least some at the top know it only too well. Although a great fuss was made over the discovery of a so-called arms factory in Maligaon near Gauhati, and over the arrests of some "well-known Naxalites from Bengal", the government knows that its claims of success are rather vapid. Although it is somewhat too early to ascertain whether the revolutionary work being done in the Assam villages is directed by a centralised command, the existence of the CPI(ML) is being strongly felt in several parts of lower Assam, particularly in Kamrup and Goalpara. And throughout the State small dedicated groups are functioning and it is only a question of time when full co-ordination will be reached under the leadership of the CPI(ML). The coming together of these groups has not been prevented because of ideological differences, but because of the underground nature of the movement which makes frequent contact rather difficult. This has to be achieved immediately if the so-called Left is to be prevented from taking advantage of the situation. The betrayal of the revolutionary movement in the State in the early fifties by the CPI has not been forgotten and the Assamese peasant, once roused, can display a

tenacity of purpose which can work wonders. It is true that in the recent elections the Congress swept the polls but to those who have rejected the path of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, such elections mean very little, however much the election results are used as cudgels to beat the revolutionaries with. Elections or no elections, the work is continuing and in the next few years Assam will record the change. But lack of contact and exchange of views between the different groups is posing a problem. The immediate need of the hour is a strong revolutionary leadership to give these determined and courageous young men a sound ideological base so that they can further the cause of the peasant revolution in the State. For this the CPI(ML) is best suited to draw up a co-ordinated plan of action. When doing this it should be kept in mind that initial differences in tactics and methods to be adopted may arise but attempts to reach a common programme are bound to succeed. All such difficulties are bound to vanish as long as there is faith in the revolutionary ardour of the peasant masses.

Each State has its own problems and it is a matter of great satisfaction that those working for radical changes in Assam have realised that although the condition of the Assamese peasant is in no way better than that of his comrades in other parts of India, the Assamese village has some characteristics which are not too easily found in the neighbouring States. Powerful landowners are no doubt there, but the feudal exploitation is not as acute as in West Bengal; stark poverty can be seen in many an Assamese village but the percentage of landless labour is perhaps lower than in many other States; the average Assamese peasant does own a little plot of land (even if this is just two or three Assamese bighas) although he cannot even subsist for just two to three months on the produce of his land. Moreover, within a radius of just a few miles one comes across villages which have little in common, except of course their

poverty. But the one common feature is that most of them are poor peasants for whom life is getting more difficult every day. And it is among these people that the real work has started and it is certain that in the next few years the hospitable, quiet and friendly Assamese peasant will see through the deception being practised on him since independence.

That is exactly what the Government and the 'Left' parties are scared of. The Assamese peasant is realising that election promises carry no value,

and that after all these years his material condition has sadly worsened. All that his village has got perhaps is a tubewell (dug during an election campaign) and the panchayat which has skilfully created a small group of privileged men within the village. It is to this peasant that young men are carrying a new message. The Chief Minister, his colleagues and the 'progressive Left' that is backing him are naturally panicky at the growth of Naxalism in the State. The "land to the landless" slogan has ended in nothing; the promise of

more jobs remains a promise. Efforts to divert the attention of the common man by raising the bogey of Pakistan subversion have failed. It is interesting to note that during the disturbances sparked off by an incident in Lumding Railway Station (where some Assam Sahitya Sabha delegates were manhandled by some Bengali rowdies) the centres of trouble were the towns, particularly Gauhati and Tezpur, whereas nothing happened in the villages. The struggle to live is their immediate concern.

On The Paris Commune—II

PARESH CHATTOPADHYAY

ON March 26 elections took place all over Paris—organized by the Central Committee—and two days later the Commune was proclaimed. (A Commune, meaning a group of persons acting together for the purpose of self-government has been the lowest administrative district in France. The commune, however, became famous in history as the name of the Government of Paris when after the fall of Bastille in July 1789, the electors who had chosen the Parisian deputies to the Estates General, formed themselves into a revolutionary municipal government at the Hotel de Ville, the City Hall of Paris. This commune existed through all the political changes till 1795. As in many other things the revolutionaries of 1871 followed the revolutionaries of the 1790s in calling their government—arising out of the elections of March 26—by the same

name). The Central Committee of the National Guard handed over all its powers to the Commune which governed Paris till May 28, 1871 when it was crushed by the superior forces of the hangman Thiers.

The Commune of 1871 though having some superficial resemblance with the mediaeval communes or the commune of the 1790s was in reality totally different from both. The mediaeval commune though at first an instrument of the nascent bourgeoisie in its fight against feudalism, itself became the basis of bourgeois state power which precisely it was the purpose of the new Commune to destroy. The Commune of the 1790s, at least with the Girondins, was an attempt to break up the centralized state into a federation of states, again without questioning the basis of the state power itself, quite contrary to what the new commune did. From its very inception the Commune of 1871 was conscious of the fact that it could not accept as its own the old state machinery—meaning, basically, its standing army, police, law courts and bureaucracy—which was the instrument in the hands of the propertied classes, the minority, to repress the toiling masses—the immense majority. As the representative of this

majority the Commune had to destroy the state machinery and simultaneously to see that it did not itself give occasion to create, out of the representatives of the toiling masses themselves, a privileged caste to undo this great revolutionary work. Some of the first decrees of the Commune ensured this dual task. It suppressed the standing army and substituted for it the armed people. The police was stripped of its political attributes and turned into responsible and at all times revocable agents of the commune. The Commune filled all posts—administrative, judicial and educational—by election on the basis of universal suffrage of all concerned, subject to the right of recall at any time by the same electors. To crown it all, every official—from the members of the commune downward—was paid the average wage received by an ordinary worker. Let us also note that a remarkable political measure the Commune adopted was the abolition of political distinction between the French and the aliens, and conferment of equal political rights on the aliens. In fact a Hungarian, Leo Frankel, was a member of the Commune and its Minister for Labour while two of the most brilliant commanders in the ranks of the com-

Frontier is sold by

PROLETARIAT BOOK

AGENCIES

22/6, S. B. Raha Lane,

Asansol

JUNE 12, 1971

muné were Polish, Dombrowski and Wroblewski². Thus the first proletarian revolution almost from the moment of its birth showed its international character.

The Paris Commune aimed to serve as a model to the rest of France where the old centralized government would give way to the self-government of the producers. It envisaged that the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest country hamlet and that in the rural districts, the standing army was to be replaced by a national militia.

Side by side with these revolutionary political measures, the commune adopted a series of extremely significant social and economic measures. The church was separated from the state, the church property confiscated, and the priests were sent back to the recesses of private life. The educational institutions, cleared of all interference by the church and state, were opened to the people free. Night work of the bakers was banned. Employers were prohibited from reducing wages through the imposition of fine on the workers. All closed workshops and factories were handed over to the associations of workers.

"Thus", wrote Engels, "the class character of the Paris movement emerged sharply and clearly. As almost only workers, or recognised representatives of workers, sat in the commune, its decisions bore a decidedly proletarian character. Either these decisions decreed reforms which the republican bourgeoisie had failed to pass solely out of cowardice, but which provided a necessary basis for the free activities of the working class... or the Commune promulgated decrees which were in the direct interest of the working class and in part cut deeply into the old order of society."³

The Parisian working class started to act on these decisions right in the

midst of the civil war imposed upon it by its internal class enemies after having experienced, hardly two months earlier a complete siege of more than four months by the foreign invaders. But right under the attacks from Versailles, with the Prussian army standing at the gates, the commune had already changed the face of Paris—and given a foretaste of what the proletariat would do to its society. "No longer," wrote Marx, "any trace of the meretricious Paris of the Second Empire. No longer was Paris the rendez-vous of British landlords, Irish absentees, American ex-slave-holders and shoddy men, Russian ex-serf-owners... No more corpses at the morgue, no nocturnal burglaries, scarcely any robberies; in fact for the first time since the days of February 1848, the streets of Paris were safe and that without any police of any kind... the *cocottes* had reformed the scents of their protectors—the absconding men of family, religion and, above all, of property. In their stead, the real women of Paris showed again at the surface—heroic, noble, and devoted like the women of antiquity. Workers, thinking, fighting, bleeding Paris—almost forgetful, in its incubation of the new society, of the cannibals at its gates—radiant in the enthusiasm of its historic initiative!"⁴

In spite of the tremendous suffering that the people of Paris went through under the long siege of the foreign army, the factors were not too unfavourable for the commune at the outset. Genuine patriots from different classes joined it hoping that the Commune would resume the war against Germany and regain national independence. The petty bourgeoisie, specially small shopkeepers threatened with ruination as a result of debt and other economic ills joined the Commune which granted them the postponement of debt. Even the republican bourgeoisie joined it out of fear that the Versailles Assembly where the rural interests predominat-

ed, might restore monarchy. It was, of course, the workers who played the main role in the entire movement. Militarily also the situation was not too bad at the beginning. Thus Lis-sagaray, a soldier of the Commune, wrote, "What rebellion had thus been armed? It was no longer a handful of desperate men fighting behind a few pavements, reduced to changing their muskets with slugs or stones. The Commune of 1871, much better than that of 1793, possessed at least 60,000 men, 200,000 muskets, 1,200 cannons, five forts; an enceinte covered by Montmartre Belleville, the Pantheon overtopping the whole city, munitions enough to last for years."⁵

However very soon serious cracks appeared in the united front. The bourgeois republicans deserted the movement when they were frightened by its proletarian-socialist character and the petty bourgeoisie broke away when the movement seemed to be heading towards inevitable defeat. Only the proletariat stayed on till the bitter end.⁶ The only way to save the movement was for the proletariat to unite with the peasantry. In fact the commune had already declared to the peasants that its victory "was their only hope" and while the Versailles ruling bourgeoisie had imposed on the peasants the main burden of indemnity to be paid to the Prussians, the commune declared that the true originators of the war would be made to pay the cost. The Versailles Government knew that a continuous contact between the commune and the provinces over a period of time would win over the bulk of the peasantry to the side of the revolution. Hence they prevented it by establishing a police blockade around Paris. (With the Prussians of course occupying 1/3rd of France).

⁵History of the Commune of 1871 (1876), translated by Eleanor Marx Aveling, revised and corrected by Karl Marx (1886), p. 183 of the M.R. Press reprint, 1967.

⁶See Lenin, *In Memory of the Commune* (1911).

⁴The Civil War in France, Section III.

²See G. Bourgin, *La Commune* (1960) pp 64, 74-75.

³Introduction to the third edition (1891) of Marx: *The Civil War in France*.

Thus the proletariat was isolated from its natural ally, the peasantry who, ignorant of what was really happening in Paris, could even be roused by the Versailles Government *against* the proletariat of Paris. In some prominent towns like Lyons, St. Etienne, Marsailles, Narbonne, Toulouse etc. the working class tried to seize power, establish communes and come to the help of Paris. But they were, more or less, abortive.⁷ Thus the working class of Paris was almost completely isolated from the broad masses of the French people.

A serious drawback of the movement was that the workers had not yet a political party of their own with a clear cut programme of action. Ideologically, they were overwhelmingly under the influence of non-Marxist ideologies like Blanquism and Proudhonism. The members of

⁷See Lissagaray, *Op.cit.*, Ch. IX and X cf. Marx's letter to Beesly, 19-10-1870.

the Commune were divided into a majority, the Blanquists, who had also been predominant in the Central Committee of the National Guard; and a minority of adherents of the Proudhon School of Socialism.

Finally the working class leadership committed several grave errors from which the Versailles Government greatly profited. Its greatest mistake was the *generosity it showed to the class enemy* in the initial stage. Thus immediately after the victory of March 18, the Central Committee of the National Guard instead of disarming the city's policemen and locking them up, allowed them to retreat to Versailles, and when the enemy at Versailles was completely helpless, the Central Committee in its reluctance to continue the civil war *begun* by Thiers, instead of at once marching upon Versailles and smashing the enemy easily, allowed the latter to participate in the elections on the

⁸Engels, *op.cit.*

26th March, and time to regroup its forces. Secondly, the commune did not take over the Bank of France. In this case the commune without risking a single man had only to stretch out its hands and bid Versailles negotiate or commit suicide.⁹ Perhaps with time the commune would have drawn lessons from its mistakes and rectified them. But it was precisely time, more than anything else, that the commune lacked. From the beginning of May all the energies of the Commune were taken up by the fight against the advancing armies of Versailles. Thiers was now helped by Bismark who released the French soldiers, taken prisoner earlier, and sent them to fight against the Commune. On May 28, the last defenders of the Commune fell and the movement, after a glorious two-month existence, was drowned in a sea of blood.

(To be concluded)

⁹Lissagaray, p. 187.



FAMILY PLANNING CUTS COST OF LIVING

FOR FREE SERVICE AND ASSISTANCE CONSULT THE NEAREST FAMILY PLANNING OR MATERNITY AND CHILD HEALTH CENTRE

4mp 70/320

Growth Of The People's Army

VO NGUYEN GIAP

TO carry out a people's war, it is necessary to have a correct position on building forces, mobilizing and arming the entire people, incorporating them into the rebellion and the war in every way, building broad mass political forces and, at the same time, people's armed forces within the three categories of troops that serve as the combat nucleus.

This line represents the creative application of Marxist-Leninist thought on how to mobilize and arm the entire people and construct a new kind of revolutionary army, to the concrete conditions of Vietnam. It is the concrete manifestation of the criterion that revolutionary violence is the violence of the masses in the construction of the forces of revolutionary war. It is the continuation and development on a new level of the tradition represented in the slogans "The entire country is at war," "We are all soldiers," "When the enemy comes, the women too fight," which have been a part of the history of national liberation wars and of the national defence of our people for some time.

To wage a people's war, it is essential to mobilize all the people. The mobilization and organization is a criterion of fundamental importance of the entire people for the rebellion and the war is a growing process of broad and continuous education and organization of the masses by the Party, with a correct revolutionary line. It was because of having mobilized and organized the broadest people's masses and having led them in struggle during the revolutionary peak of the years 1930-31, the period of democratic mobilization of 1936 to 1939, and the period of mobilization for national liberation during 1940-45, that the powerful force was present in the people's uprising of the August revolution during the anti-French resistance, and is present in today's anti-Yankee war of resistance.

In order to achieve partial insurrections, our Party, supported by the political bases and clandestine armed forces previously created, mobilized the people's masses in each region into courageous uprising against enemy power with the aim of installing revolutionary power and spreading the local guerrilla war, stimulating the political and armed struggle, rapidly unfolding the mass political forces and the revolutionary armed forces, providing a quick stimulus toward a national revolutionary culmination in general insurrection aimed at the seizure of power.

During the general insurrection, the Party mobilized the entire people from North to South, grouped them in a broad National United Front for a unified uprising in the cities as well as in the countryside, to break out of the imperialist and feudal yoke and take power. When the revolutionary war came, our people already had a relatively complete rearguard and a people's power through which the mobilization and organization of the fighting was broader, multi-faceted and better organized.

Under the slogans "Resistance by the entire people and on all fronts" and "All for victory," the nation's forces placed themselves on maximum alert to fulfill the task of destroying the enemy aggressor. During the war, the Party gave great importance to the work of propaganda, mobilization, organization and strengthening the people's forces, at the same time that the ranks of the People's Armed Forces were constantly developing, for a fuller incorporation of the entire people into the war.

The political forces are those of all the people that take part in the insurrection and in the war in an organized way, under the direction of the vanguard Party. Participants include revolutionary classes, patriotic people's sectors, men and women of the various nationalities that make up

Vietnam, grouped around the United National Front whose base is the worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the working class, with its solid base for constructing and developing forces on all fronts of the revolutionary war, material as well as moral, political as well as military, economic and cultural, on the front line as well as in the rearguard.

From the first worker-peasant self-defence detachments of the Soviet movement of Nghean and Hatinh in 1930 and 1931 to the detachments of the National Army of Salvation, the Armed Propaganda of the Liberation Army of Vietnam, and the Ba To guerrillas—including the thousands of fighting self-defence detachments throughout the length and breadth of the country during the period preceding the August revolution and the People's Armed Forces—the People's Armed Forces have developed from nothing into everything, from weak into powerful—some through the system of volunteers, others through the compulsory military service plan—based always on the power of the political forces of our conscious and organized revolutionary people. It is because they have been based on these broad and growing political forces, that our armed forces, under the direction of the Party, have acquired an excellent revolutionary nature and that, in the great moments of the revolution, they have been able to forge ahead confident of the strength of the People's Armed Forces.

The actuality of the revolutionary struggle in our country has taught us clearly that the mass political forces also constitute an offensive force against the enemy using violence in insurrection as well as in revolutionary war especially in a very useful and flexible combination with the People's Armed Forces.

The appearance in the war of the army of political struggle has been a stroke of outstanding creativity in the present organization of the revolutionary war in the South. This army of political struggle, whose organization is based in the powerful mass

political forces and whose base is the workers and peasants, brings together the best and most courageous elements of the mass organizations, of all social sectors and all ages, and extends its organization to all areas, in the countryside and in the mountains as well as in the cities. This army, well-organized and trained, has the art of revolutionary and scientific struggle characterized by fruitful and flexible methods of struggle, and is the force which is the nucleus of the mass political struggle in the revolution as it is in the revolutionary war in South Vietnam.

Armed insurrection and the revolutionary war constitute the highest form of revolutionary struggle for the seizure and the defense of power.

It is not possible to speak of insurrection and war without armed forces. Consequently, to prepare and carry out armed struggle and revolutionary war at the same time with the mobilisation of political forces, our Party gives special importance to the structure of the People's Armed Forces which serve as the fighting nucleus of the whole people.

Over past decades, our People's Armed Forces developed out of guerrilla detachments and the self-defense militias of the masses and have reached the point of being concentrated in ever bigger and stronger units comprising regular troops, local troops and guerilla and self-defense detachments, and from underequipped infantry units have become armed forces formed in various corps and branches, with the increasingly modern equipment they have today. Through this process the line and criterion with respect to the structure of the People's Armed Forces have been perfected.

The question of the essence of the revolutionary class of the armed forces constitutes a key aspect of the Party's theory of organising these forces. Our Party affirms that our army is a people's army, first of all of the working people, in essence an army of workers and peasants led by the Party of the working class. To its ranks come the best elements

of the revolutionary classes first of all and principally of the block of the worker-peasant alliance and the nationalities that make up Vietnam. This is the instrument of the Party and the revolutionary state which carries the armed struggle to the end with the aim of achieving the Party's revolutionary goal. It is the armed force of the people's democratic state which earlier fulfilled the function of the worker-peasant dictatorship and today meets its historic mission of the proletarian dictatorship's defense of revolutionary gains and people's power against any enemy, from within or without. It is a fighting army and at the same time an army of work and production. Its nature is that of the working class, its position and ideology those of the working class and of Marxism-Leninism.

In whatever circumstance, as when much of our armed forces were still guerrilla detachments as when they became powerful armed forces with different corps and branches equipped with modern technique, the Party has always given great importance to the growth of the class nature of our army, considering that to be the surest guarantee and the most important factor of fighting power in the People's Armed Forces.

This principle has even greater importance in a country whose population is chiefly peasants and petit-bourgeoisie, while the leading class, the working class, is numerically small.

If during the initial period of the formation of the Red Army, of workers and peasants, Lenin considered the increase of worker elements to be one of the most important ways to increase the revolutionary nature of the Soviet armed forces, in our country, given the concrete conditions of the society and of the armed forces, our Party also considers its increased leadership in the armed forces, education in proletarian ideology, the higher education of the armed forces in the political area, and the increase of worker and peasant elements, especially in command positions, to be fundamental

measures for the growth of the revolutionary nature of the armed forces.

The principal political problems in the composition of the armed forces, which have been resolved in the process of development and growth, are:

To consolidate and constantly increase the complete, direct and multi-lateral leadership of the Party within the People's Armed Forces, considering this to be a principle of primary importance. To stimulate political work constantly, considering it to be a source of strength and structural principle of the People's Armed Forces.

To concede the utmost importance to political education and ideological leadership in the army; to make sure that all cadres and fighters understand thoroughly the line and the political goals, the line and the military goals, and the policy and directives of the Party and the laws of the state; to teach Marxism-Leninism; to raise class consciousness, closely tied to national consciousness patriotism, love of socialism and proletarian internationalism, in order to increase the armed forces' fighting spirit, will and determination to fight and win.

To apply democratic centralism and a conscious and rigorous discipline based on broad internal unity; to strengthen and achieve a monolithic internal unity with the people, as the fish is to water, and internationally with all enthusiasm and sacrifice for the common cause.

The experience of people's war that we have accumulated over 25 years have corroborated clearly the fact that the form of the three types of troops—regular or main troops, regional troops and guerilla militia and self-defense units—is the most suitable for mobilizing and organizing the battle of the entire people; the greatest importance must be given to the building of the main troops along with the local forces, closely combining the building of the main troops with those of local forces, and of stationary forces with mobile forces. This is also a new development

in the organization of forces, based on past tradition.

The guerrilla militias and self-defense groups are broad armed forces of the working people, they do not separate themselves from production and they serve at the base, as an instrument of violence, of people's power. They are organized in villages, communities, factories, neighbourhoods, according to the fighting tasks, the conditions and characteristics of each place; they form a powerful force in the country, prepared to fight the enemy with all kinds of arms they need, from the most rudimentary to the most modern, utilizing highly effective tactics, fulfilling their mission of shock contingents in production, and providing local and regular troops with fine cadres and fighters to fill their ranks.

The regional troops are forces that serve as a nucleus of the armed struggle in each locality. They are deployed according to the tasks and concrete conditions in each theatre of operations and each region, and are organized in strong units, of high quality, with various necessary corps, with an operational capacity concentrated in their locality and in close coordination with the militias, guerrillas and regular troops. They are capable of brilliant fulfilment of such tasks as annihilating the enemy, expanding the guerrilla war, protecting the people, defending power and maintaining the local people's right to be their own masters.

The regular troops are mobile armed forces that fight throughout the entire battlefield or in specific areas of strategic importance. They consist of the necessary branches and corps, especially strong infantry corps and a sufficient number of air and naval forces. The regular troops must have a fairly high level of fighting efficiency, and be truly iron fists capable of unleashing major annihilating battles and inflicting increasingly severe blows on the enemy, achieving victory in each battle, wiping out larger and larger enemy units and causing a change in our favour in the situation.

Because of the peculiarities of the revolutionary war in our country and the conditions of an increasingly merciless war, especially when the enemy applies a policy of neocolonialist aggression, much importance must be given to the formation of regional armed forces that are truly powerful, and to the construction of regular armed forces of high combat efficiency. Only in this way can the three types of troops develop their maximum fighting capacity, achieve a close coordination in carrying out enemy liquidation, effectively conserve the people's forces in all their aspects, unfolding the people's war with strength and on many levels, and winning more important victories all the time.

In close combination with the political forces and the people's armed security forces, the three types of troops are organized and established with a capacity that is appropriate and proportionate to their tasks and are distributed according to the necessities of each strategic point, each theatre of operations and each locality, with the aim of guaranteeing the presence of powerful stationary and mobile forces and of achieving a tight and centralized combination of mobile forces on every level and throughout the country. That is a typical characteristic of the problem of composing the people's war forces and at the same time shows its supreme importance. With powerful stationary forces we can fight the enemy in all parts of the country with units that know the land and the enemy situation well, are capable of delivering sure blows and, at the same time, of fighting anywhere, decimating and annihilating the enemy and attacking or dispersing his forces or holding them back, thus creating conditions for the mobile forces to inflict great annihilating blows in unsuspected places. In our narrow territory, with a broad development of the people's war and the enemy's great mobility, this form of organization and distribution of forces allows us to limit the enemy's advantages and develop our own, creating a solid

strategic front in the people's war which is capable of maintaining control of the initiative at any moment in attacks against the enemy. It permits us also to distribute sufficient forces to attack him everywhere and at the same time to concentrate powerful regular troops capable of winning against the enemy's mobile strategies, and achieve successive victories of increasing importance without having any need for a permanent army of numerical superiority or one equal to that of the enemy.

In conformity with the development of the revolution and the maturity of the armed forces, our army has advanced from a regime of voluntary recruitment to obligatory military service, reaching a new grade of mobilization and incorporation of all the people into the building of the People's Armed Forces and the strengthening of national defence.

At the beginning, our army was one of small guerrilla detachments born out of the revolutionary process of the people who rose up with empty hands to confront Yankee imperialism and its lackeys. At that time our support was in the consciousness of the masses in applying the voluntary recruitment system in order to build our army, and we used this during the entire resistance war against the French.

Our Party correctly established the principle that the source of equipment for our armed forces is the following:

To base ourselves on the masses, equip ourselves with what exists, make efforts to manufacture arms, seize them from the enemy in order to wipe him out and, when conditions permit, accept all possible aid from our brother countries in order to perfect constantly our armed forces' arms and equipment. During the initial period of the establishment of the armed forces, because of our economic backwardness, the fact that we had no armament-manufacturing industries, and under conditions in which our country was closed off by imperialism, we ran into innumerable difficulties with respect to armaments

and equipment, but based on the masses and guided by the highest fighting slogan it had, our Party mobilized the people to supply what was necessary and possible to the armed forces so that they could overcome their difficulties and organize the production of a part of the arms and munitions. Our Party was wise in pointing out that the armed forces must find their source of arms and equipment in their own confrontation, capturing them from the enemy to decapitate him. During our war of resistance against the French colonialists, our armed forces equipped themselves basically with modern arms captured from the enemy: only much later, from 1950, did we begin to receive aid from the brother socialist countries.

Following the reestablishment of peace, we based ourselves on our socialist economy and on the development and great aid from the socialist countries for the largescale improvement and modernization of equipment and armaments for our armed forces.

In the establishment of a contingent of cadres, our Party outlined a correct position and completely established class orientation, norms and policy of cadres in the army.

Our Party maintains a firm position concerning class orientation, and is based chiefly on worker and peasant sectors. It has given primary importance to the selection, preparation and promotion of the best cadres of worker and peasant origin without overlooking the selection, formation and promotion of cadres of intellectual origin closely tied to the worker and peasant masses and committed body and soul to the revolution. During the process of applying the policy of party cadres, we categorically censured any tendency to depart from the class line and to underestimate the formation of selected elements of worker-peasant origin, and evidence of narrowness in the tendency to look only at class origin.

The quality of the armed forces is the synthesis of factors of man and arms, of military, political and logisti-

cal aspects, of military philosophy, organization, armaments and fighting method.

Above all human and politico-moral factors play a determining role.

In the task of raising the qualitative level of the three types of troops, there are definite requirements: the self-defense militias must be organized everywhere and must be solid and strong; the regional and regular troops must be trained and adequate in quantity.

Since our population is not very great, the army is considerably inferior numerically to that of the invader. For this reason its high quality must be evident in strategic effectiveness and high fighting level.

On the strategic level, this means that a generally numerically inferior army must be able to win over a numerically superior and better-equipped enemy; on the operational and tactical level, that forces with less men and arms must be able to destroy large numbers of the enemy troops and win great victories.

If the units are of high quality and know how to fight with a high level of effectiveness, we can multiply the fighting capacity of a determined number of the armed forces and at the same time relieve ourselves of the problems of organization, direction, completion of the units, guaranteeing their materiel and economizing the time and achieve successively greater victories through their forces. This is a problem of strategic importance.

To guarantee that our armed forces become more powerful all the time and achieve successively greater victories through their battles in a long and harsh war, we have applied the axiom:

Fight and at the same time create and develop forces, fight to create and develop forces, and create and develop forces to fight with greater strength and achieve greater victories, gradually develop forces and, at the same time, encourage leaps in their development in order not to squander the propitious occasions for propelling the war toward victory.

(From *Tricontinental*. Abridged.)

Book Review

A DIPLOMATIC HISTORY OF INDIA

By C. Heimsath and S. Mansingh
Allied Publishers. Rs 30

IN reviewing this book, my impression is similar to that of a pathologist who, by the compulsion of his profession, has to examine pus, stool and urine.

The central objective is to analyse the theory and practice of non-alignment which, according to the authors, is the novel feature of Indian diplomacy. They at first describe the factors, old and new, operating behind the idea of non-alignment. Afterwards they explain the content of non-alignment. Finally, they proceed to show the working of the principle of non-alignment on two major planes—the global system dominated by the U.S. and the USSR and the regional Asian system.

The authors have pointed out two essential novelties of Indian foreign policy. Non-alignment, initiated and practised by India, has become the rallying point of a large majority of newly independent States and given rise to tri-polarity in the international scene. Again this doctrine has put emphasis on psychological and moral power rather than on physical might and has thus given a new dimension to international diplomacy.

These two premises may easily be put to question. The idea of non-alignment is nothing new, its doctrine of *Panchasila* has been accepted by many communist countries who belong to a definite bloc. It is a flexible doctrine; the imperialists have also invoked the doctrine of non-alignment and non-interference to cover up their sinister motives since the days of the first World War. Historically India can be called neither its initiator nor its chief practitioner. Again actual facts prove that the non-aligned countries spend more on military budgets than do many of the so-called war-mongering communist countries. The governments of "non-aligned" countries are easily prone to the use of vio-

lence for the sake of security. India's defence expenditure consists of one-fifth of her total budget whereas China spends only eight per cent of her national budget on security measures. Again India's actions regarding China, her policy of hunting down the Naxalites and her police duty in Ceylonese affairs have exposed her 'concern' with moral persuasion. Pious promises and tall talk about 'ahimsa' in diplomatic conferences notwithstanding, her actual practice has hardly strengthened the psychological and moral powers about which the authors are so eloquent (p. 65). The reason is simple in the Marxian sense—a single action is more important than a thousand of programmes and conferences.

Apart from these differences in opinion, there can be manifold objections against this book. First, the authors are descriptive, rather than reflective. As a result the book appears more as a chronology than a history. Secondly, the authors, according to their own admission, (Preface, VIII) have relied mainly on the published official papers of the Indian Government. All other sources are completely omitted. As a result the book has become essentially a brief for Indian foreign policy, not

a critical study. Thirdly, the authors have, for their conscience's sake, twisted and suppressed portions of their sources. Chapter XVIII (The Confrontation with China) is a typical example. They argue that "the Indian case overall was weightier and more convincing than the Chinese" (p. 465). The sole source of this statement is Alastair Lamb's book (mentioned in notes and references No. 5). But the authors are completely silent about Lamb's comment on India's undue stubbornness in dealings with China and on China's generous overtures for compromise with India. Nor do the authors succeed in supporting with evidence their views over China's so-called attack on India. From the very beginning they have taken China's aggressive motives for granted though Maxwell's well-documented book gives another impression. Finally, the authors have pathetically avoided certain embarrassing questions and instead have indulged in irrelevant and unnecessary eulogies on the realism of Indian foreign policy, in the context of her growing involvement with imperialist America and social-imperialist Russia. For example, the authors admit that "no one should have been surprised when Indians evidenced resentment about the huge share of the modern sector of their economy controlled by foreigners". In the next two sentences they give a few details about the enormity of the control. Then suddenly they refuse to answer the charge and cry out, without any logic, "foreign support... in the industrial field at least, was necessary to keep that sector vigorous and expanding" (pp 384).

The authors can rest assured about the financial success of their book because it is written in the fashion of a text-book oriented for examinations, college and competitive. The treatment and analysis are especially suited to the purposes of a colonial education system which primarily intends to produce hundreds of running dogs of imperialism and feudalism.

G. BHADRA

Two Arrivals

BY A DRAMA CRITIC

WITH their latest production *Rajrakta* (based on the play by Mohit Chattopadhyaya) Theatre Workshop seem to have definitely arrived. The aimless groping for a style, the tedium of insipid adaptations dithering towards abortive ideals, the worrying days of travail have given way to a resolute commitment, a confident grip over the medium. Here at last the group have found something worthwhile to say and they have said it boldly. The play is set in an archetype of the present world in which human beings are being constantly crushed under the scientific nightmare by the beneficiaries of the future horror, the faceless, soulless machine called Authority. Beginning as an impressive charade in which four characters, three men and a girl, start a game whereby two become the king and his henchman and the other two the innocent victims of the inhuman torture engineered by the Establishment donning different dresses, this apparently simple game soon takes on a symbolic significance. The room turns into a miniature of today's world throbbing with conflicts and clashes between the oppressor and the oppressed, which ultimately culminate in a revolutionary upsurge with the thundering shouts of *A Bas Le Rot*. A taut and expert direction (a magnificent job by Bivas Chakrabarty) steadily builds up to the hectic finale where the two forces stand sharply poised against each other and the message is clear and straightforward. True, at times, the message is hammered into us; there is often the flaw of serving the Brechtian content in an Ionesco container, the music remains an unimaginative mixture of pop-tunes, the decor smacks of obvious symbolism, but ultimately these little drawbacks do not matter.

Theatre Centre's current production

JUNE 12, 1971

= Just Published =

Purba Bangla issue

ANEK (Bengali) Price : Rupee One

AND

RED LANTERN

Bengali Translation of Revolutionary Peking Opera Price : Rs. 1.50

PEOPLE'S BOOK AGENCY

1, Kishore Ghosh Lane

P.O. Khagra

Berhampore, W. B.

Radical Book Club (Cal.-12), New Book Centre (Cal.-9) and Annapurna Book Stall (Cal.-9)

Parajit O Nayak is also a turning point for Tarun Roy. He has been able to cure himself of the habit of dishing out cheap popular entertainment and has come up with something significant. A play of two characters, it portrays the tragedy of a political leader who in his craving for success has lost touch with tender human emotions and has become a puppet of some unknown force. He loses in the election and in course of his convalescence in the care of a woman he faces this bitter truth as his past comes back in bits and flashes. The woman brings back the glow of human warmth and a rapport grows between the two. But after a recounting of votes, the leader regains his seat and leaves the woman for renewed bouts in politics. In this highly personalised document of our confused and chaotic period, the nasty game of politics has been analysed with an unrelenting candour but there is no sign of partisan hatred. The techniques of production, especially the film-projection devices acting as a backdrop to the mental crisis, are effective and the characters have been sharply etched. Tarun Roy's weakness in moments of emotional concentration is amply compensated by his brilliant comic image of the harassed male and Dwipannita Roy gives a tender cameo of innocence. Unfortunately the lighting and music are not quite up to expectations. It is time the director got over the inane idea of cobweb shadows symbolising the mental agony and cut out some banal dialogue, mainly the childish piece about Jai Bangla, obviously inserted as a box-office sop.

For FRONTIER contact

S. P. CHATTERJEE

Statesman Office

Steel Market

Durgapur-4

JUNE 12, 1971

Letters

In-Fighting

Today we face many problems concerning our revolution and are discussing some of these in different political journals. But so far we have not paid any serious attention to the dangerous trend of inter-party clashes and the politics behind it. Of these clashes the most alarming are the ones between the CPI(M) and CPI(ML) cadres. A Marxist knows that any attempt to put worker against worker, peasant against peasant or youth against youth, is counter-revolutionary. Mao Tse-tung teaches us that the success of a communist party in leading the people to overthrow the ruling class depends on its capacity to handle the contradictions correctly. He also teaches us that the class composition of the "people" corresponds to the stage of revolution but at every stage of revolution the contradiction between the ruling class and the people will be antagonistic while the contradictions between the people should remain non-antagonistic. So a communist must be careful in handling the contradictions among the people.

Those who try to turn any non-antagonistic contradiction among the people into an antagonistic one, are the enemy of revolution and so enemy of the people. In fact, ruling classes everywhere try to sharpen the contradictions among the people to weaken the revolutionary forces. If one assumes that the CPI(ML)'s complaints against the CPI(M) are all correct, some questions still remain unanswered. The CPI(M) is a revisionist party and its activities are helping the ruling classes. It is easy to understand from the above formulation that the leaders of the CPI(M) are inciting the workers, peasants and youths to attack the cadres of other parties, specially CPI(ML) cadres, with a view to sabotaging the Indian revolution. But what about the CPI(ML)? Are they not letting this fratricide to

continue? Are not they killing the cadres of the CPI(M)? The CPI(M)'s attitude is quite understandable—their activities correspond to their politics. But why are the CPI(ML) cadres getting involved in this sort of killing? If they thought that their activities would stop the CPI(M) they can now see that they were wrong. In fact interparty clashes constitute a process in which along with the CPI(M), the CPI(ML) has gradually become involved. So this process also, acting upon CPI(ML) cadres, is changing their attitude towards other non-parliamentary communist revolutionaries. Like the CPI(M), big (?) party chauvinism it too is suffering from. Just as the CPI(M) acts like a big boss with parliamentary parties, the CPI(ML) also does the same with non-CPI(ML) revolutionaries. Some incidents of beating non-CPI(ML) cadres are also being reported.

What a situation! These groups of non-CPI(ML) revolutionaries boycotted the election. This shows their clear differences with other parliamentary left parties. On some tactical questions their stand may be wrong, they may differ with the CPI(ML), they may have fewer followers compared with the CPI(ML) in West Bengal, but are these reasons enough to attack them?

TARUN SEN
Jalpaiguri

What Next?

You publish editorials, articles and letters in your weekly on incidents in jails and, murder of CPI(ML) cadres. It is not surprising that the government of a country wedded to capitalism will try its utmost, legally or illegally, to wipe out the seeds of revolution. So any cry from the revolutionaries for benign treatment seems childish. We hope the ML members knew what they were heading for before they started their activities. But what is frustrating is the apathy of the common man towards these gruesome incidents. Let us try to find the reason behind this.

The activities undertaken by a dubious group of cadres who claim that they are ML members drive a wedge between the common people and the "people's party". Incidents in schools, colleges and universities are pushing the student community towards thievery. The operation is turning the petit bourgeois into lumpen proletariat and nothing else.

Some ML sympathisers claim that these activities are the handiwork of stooges of capitalist forces. However, whatever is done in the name of the ML is theorised, more often after the incident has taken place, in the ML party organ. (The act of breaking of the statue of Vidyasagar was theorised after the incident had taken place.) It seems that ML sympathisers want to derive some credit from these. This they have already done but in the process have isolated themselves from the people. When a boy of Class VIII makes a bonfire of school furniture accompanied by obscene language his parents feel helpless. When in a college the revolutionary zeal of the students finds expression in cheating, in perverted gestures, some people feel helpless. And when they find that these acts are not disowned, but are praised by the Party, they become confused. They just don't know which side to move and opt for the status quo.

I was a clerk in a primary school now burnt down, I don't know by whom. I have my old mother and three sisters to look after, I am an ML-sympathiser. But what shall I do now?

BIPIN KUMAR DALAL
Calcutta

Ceylon And China

In some recent issues of *Frontier* you highlighted the Che Guevarist revolt in Ceylon. As an editor of a leftist journal and a champion of the cause of the working class you naturally felt outraged at the savage ruthlessness with which Mrs Bandaranaike's 'so called' progressive government suppressed the youthful rebels. One of your contributors stated that the Che Guevarists were, in fact, Maoists and therefore Ceylonese counterparts of the Naxalites of West Bengal. Another contributor, namely, Mr Ashok Rudra, accused India for helping the Ceylonese Government in suppressing the rebellion by sending troops and military hardware. He even called India an expansionist and imperialist power of the Western type. I am not holding any brief for the Indian ruling classes. But it certainly strikes me as strange when you keep silent over the Chinese attitude

to the Ceylonese rebels. China offered Ceylon a long-term interest-free loan of Rs 150 million to tide over the present difficulties. If you really believe the Ceylonese rebels to be genuine revolutionaries bent upon establishing a new order based on Marxism-Leninism, how would you explain the curious Chinese attitude? You have so long been consistently following the Chinese line and propagating the thesis that China is the centre of World Revolution. How is it that the Ceylonese Maoists have been let down by Mao's China? Is expediency greater than ideology? If the Indian ruling class is guilty of supporting a reactionary Government why should China not be accused for doing precisely the same thing? A Caesar, indeed, can do no wrong!

The events in China and Bangladesh have clearly shown that Chinese national interest has got precedence over ideological interest. If it suits the geo-political interest of China she does not hesitate to give moral and material support to a reactionary regime.

It is highly deplorable that a section of Indian leftists still confuse revolutionary spirit with Mao worship.

BAREN DAS GUPTA
Calcutta

ASSAM BENGAL RIVER SERVICE PVT. LTD.

POWER BOAT BUILDERS & ENGINEERS

26A, EZRA MANSIONS

10 GOVT. PLACE EAST,

CALCUTTA-1

FRONTIER

61, MOTT LANE, CALCUTTA-13

Subscription Rates

INLAND

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

By Surface Mail

All countries : Rs 40 or 5 dollars

Foreign AIR MAIL Rates (One Year)

America : Rs 168 or 21 dollars

Europe : Rs 120 or 15 dollars

Asia : Rs 88 or 11 dollars

Please supply FRONTIER for
Six Months/One year/Five Years/Seven Years

I am sending Rs.....
by cheque/money order*

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Signature

* Cheques should be drawn in favour of *Frontier*.

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

DEPEND
ON
US...
YOUR
SOUND
COMPANION

MURPHY

Radio and Transistor

AHUJA

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

PYE

Car Radio

ARCEY

MECOM

Car Aerial, Suppressor, Intercommunication
Condenser



DEBSONS PRIVATE LIMITED

CALCUTTA • PATNA • JABALPUR
CUTTACK • GAUHATI