

# frontier

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## THE REAL THING

THE Aid-India Consortium meeting in Paris ended indecisively. Reason : America's obduracy. The U.S. delegate announced that his Government insisted that the debt relief to be granted by the Consortium to India must not exceed \$100 million. The other members wanted to be more generous but not the U.S. Conclusion : India has become anti-imperialist and so the imperialist U.S. has been partially antagonised (one could have said 'totally antagonised', if the U.S. had withdrawn aid to India totally—but it has not done so yet).

Corroborative evidence of India's anti-imperialism : Mr Swaran Singh's denunciation of the U.S. bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong as 'imperialist'. What more proof is required of India's zealous crusade against imperialism ? Mrs Gandhi is also being vocal.

If one wants further evidence one could go back to the history of Bangladesh, when the U.S. bared its naked fangs in the UN, by refusing to help Bangladesh and by criticising India's expansionism.

But the U.S. has been posing several problems which are hardly compatible with the idea that India has become anti-imperialist, an idea which could have helped the Congress in India temporarily and the CPI, the Congress ally, a bit more permanently. The first is the U.S. aid to Bangladesh, which the latter has accepted. It can be said that Bangladesh has not compromised its stand because the acceptance occurred after the U.S. recognition of Bangladesh. But the problem persists. How is it that the U.S. was imperialist when it refused to bail out Bangladesh and then suddenly came forward to help Bangladesh ? Has it suddenly become non-imperialist ? If such a sudden change is not possible, maybe, refusal or agreeability to help Bangladesh does not at all reveal the character of the U.S., just as a sudden fall of water does not mean that the ocean has ceased to be an ocean. The hold of the U.S. over the Third World is so very complete that Mr Nixon could afford to be erratic without losing the grip. Public memory is short but not so short that it is possible to forget the days when it was considered, during the Indian Army's invasion of East Pakistan, that the Indo-American break was complete. So heady the wine was that Mrs Gandhi began declaring that India would go ahead without American aid. Were she so resolved and her financial assistants equally so, how was it that her people are shocked by the U.S.

obduracy at the Paris meeting? The fun of the whole thing deepens if one remembers that the U.S. share of the debt relief to be granted was merely \$8.7 million out of \$100 million. How could the U.S., with such a small contribution, veto the total proposal? How is it again that the U.S. Government and the World Bank went about, each against the other, even though the whole world knows

that one is the shadow of the other? The non-U.S. donors were at the beck and call of the U.S. and that should be a clear enough indication of who, as far as India is concerned, runs the bill. Mr Swaran Singh's denunciation of U.S. imperialism may be just another instance of barking at the caravan, with the qualification that the barking is well rehearsed.

## Fantasy And Fact

When parts of U.P. are in communal turmoil over Aligarh Muslim University affairs, responsible papers in West Bengal led with stories of a Rs 1400-crore plan to provide employment to one million people over a period of five years, at an investment of Rs 15,000 per head. Fantasy, blown skyhigh, stalks Writers' Buildings and newspaper offices, though both know what is what. But, for once, a despatch from U.P. in a Calcutta daily admitted that the Muslim resentment over the character of Aligarh University has a deeper base, covering the sense of 'frustration and humiliation' at the creation of Bangladesh and the defeat of Pakistan. U.P. provided the theory for Pakistan while Bengal gave the blood, blood that stank from the middle of August 1946 onwards. So there should be no reason to be surprised by the latest developments in U.P.

What should cause surprise, even now, is the way we try to fool ourselves and others by singing, dancing and shouting that, because of the creation of Bangladesh—and the "defeat" of the two-nation theory—communalism has been wiped out from both erstwhile East Pakistan and India. Even as the Indian army was 'liberating' East Pakistan, there was communal trouble in Kerala in which most parties took part. Now comes Aligarh. Whoever gave the provocation it is clear beyond doubt that Muslims and Hindus have yet

to work together for a common ideal, for the glory of Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. But Bangladesh is rather lucky because the Indian press is a model of caution when reporting it. Though Mrs Gandhi went to war for the refugees, no one now bothers about them. Their treatment may not be sweet music to many ears. Whatever is un-

pleasant is kept out.

It is true that sections of the Bangladesh middle class do not view the universe through Islamic glasses. But this secularism—or whatever one calls it—is not common. Interested elements there will always be to turn economic frustrations into communal channels. Rehabilitation of the returned refugees cannot be a smooth affair marked by brotherliness. The landless Bangladesh peasant may be generous to those who have returned, but not so the jotedars, the men of property, who have been among the principal bases of the Awami League. The anti-India feeling, about which there are diverse reports, may also sustain a distrust of the Hindus for the simple reason that India is considered a Hindu State. The trouble in Aligarh, the curfew and the killings, are likely to fan this distrust further, provided they are reported. For what is not reported is not supposed to exist.

## Jobs In Villages

*A correspondent writes :*

There is much talk about removing joblessness from West Bengal after the Congress overwhelmed this part of the country in the March elections. A number of crash programmes have been mooted and bagsfuls of money allotted by the Centre for the purpose. The leaders' main concern seems to be the villages and the State capital is humming with pledges that every sinew will be stretched to redeem the lot of the countryside. Immediately after the elections a plan was launched to provide jobs to young men in the villages who had seen to it that the Congress won the elections. Some more packages have been announced about the small and marginal farmers and a "master plan" drawn up to solve the rural unemployment problem.

This anxiety for the peasantry now pervades the highest political echelons of the country. Spearhead-

ing the new 'radicalism', the Prime Minister has severely castigated the planners for their failure to eradicate unemployment and has asked for a thorough enquiry into the affair. The Bhagabati Commission has already gone into it and suggested a number of measures to deal with the evil, particularly in the rural areas. But most of the measures are short-term palliatives and meant to take the steam out of the rural discontent rather than change the existing physical and social conditions of village life.

Rural problems are closely linked to the country's general economic condition and its degeneration. For decades the State's economy has stagnated. When job prospects improved in other States after a dip in the recession of the mid-sixties, West Bengal has seen a shrinkage in the number of employed hands. No effort has been made to modernise agriculture. Farmers have continued

with their traditional single-crop farming with primitive tools, and investment in essential items like pesticides and fertilisers has been lacking. Rural electrification has gone at snail's pace—the rate is about the lowest in the country. Land reforms and ceiling have remained the glib talk of politicians and academicians. The peasant has continued with his uneconomic holding and poor yields. Now the planners want to repeat the experiences of some north-western States in India and inject money and create jobs for

certain rural social classes. Shortage of markets unnerves even the greediest capitalist. Dumping of this huge amount of money and persistent spoonfeeding may give a facelift to the agrarian scene for the time being, as in some north-western States. The current planning may pacify the more vocal section of the village community and defuse the present unrest. But it can bring no lasting improvement. For it needs weeding out of those interests who rule the country. New agricultural plans cannot curb them.

DRV immediately made the New York stock market feverish. The Dow Jones industrial average fell by 16%. A flight from the U.S. dollar in Europe began.

A few glaring facts about money going down the military drain and up into the flying crematoria—the B52s etc : the aircraft manufacturing firm Gruman has bagged an order from the Pentagon amounting to \$5000 million (the total military budget is \$80,000 million). With such monstrous growth of the arms budget there can never be any evening up of balance of payments. That is why the burden is being shifted to others. Moreover the official figure—7.89%—of devaluation tries to cover up its real purchasing power, which is much lower.

Of the total sum of \$65,000 m in the European countries, the central banks account for \$50 million and the U.S. gold reserve amounts to less than \$10,000 m. The U.S. decision to terminate the exchange of dollars for gold intensified its already sharp contradictions with its partners, leading to 'revolt' by some. For instance, France has renounced the dollar as a unit for defining her gold and foreign exchange reserves, the Organisation of Economic Development and Co-operation has done the same for accounting balance of payments and Holland has lowered the rate of discount.

Last year the U.S. payments balance had a deficit of \$30,000 million, almost 3 times that in 1970. It is envisaged on the basis of the trend during the last six months that this deficit in the current fiscal year will amount to \$38,000 million.

The Vietnam war was to ensure the U.S. maximum profit. It led to the dollar crisis. From the dollar crisis to escalation in Vietnam—and the crisis is more intense. Such is now the vicious circle.

The Montreal international monetary conference under the aegis of ten governments and also participated in by the banks of 20 countries to solve the growing crisis of currencies of the capitalist orbit led by the dollar proved still-born. The Canadian Finance Minister, Mr Turner, made no bones about what he described as "a desire to raise barriers on the way of international trade" on the part of "some States." It was clear that he was hinting at the discriminatory measures resorted to by the U.S. in its commercial policy. Even if the proposed parallel group of 20 nations comes into being side by side with the Committee of Ten, will that solve the problem? The trend of events since then suggests a negative answer. The *Daily Telegraph* already demands that the West European countries must come out against the dollar and calls this "the cry of the continent." These countries are bitterly disappointed. Devaluation of the dollar has hit precisely these erstwhile junior partners of the U.S.

which is shifting their shoulders the burden of depreciation of its currency by the standard of the gold content registering a gap of 42% between official and actual market prices of gold. This cannot but create a strong mistrust of the dollar, as a gold price rise means general drop in the exchange rate. The Paris Stock Exchange has reached an absolute record for France—\$ 50 per ounce—in London 52 and in Zurich 51.

Inflation continues to bulge, the economy is in crisis, the prestige of the great society is at stake. The White House programme to fight inflation on a war footing suffered, during the previous part of 1972, a fiasco because of another whirlwind, the criminal war in Indochina. The *New York Times* reports an annual 20% increase in the price of groceries—the highest for the past 14 years. Wholesale prices have gone up by more than 10%. The 'price freeze' was terminated last November, but the wage freeze continues.

Why this crisis of the dollar? The quest for an answer would take one some 10,000 miles away from the U.S. Pacific shores, to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (and West Asia too). The crisis of the dollar has been brewing since 1965, the year the war was escalated. It has now swelled to bursting point. The new spate of "electronic war" against the

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# The Environment

RANJAN K. BÁNERJEE

THE big cleanup is the latest American craze. Or to be precise, Canadian. For Maurice Strong, the Canadian millionaire, is the man behind Stockholm. He was the chief organizer and the Secretary-General of the 114-member United Nations Conference on the Human Environment at Stockholm.

The ecological movement started about a couple of years back with a number of ignoramuses screening their heads off for a clean environment. In course of two years their place was taken by a bunch of motivated professionals out to nail the polluters of the world. Hence ecology can no longer be slighted as dandy. From the weekend frolic it had been it has come to have a definite purpose in view and a marked neo-colonist ring.

There is little doubt that the world's environment is hard pressed. Especial-

ly in industrialized countries like the USA, the USSR, and Japan unchecked pollution of the environment has snowballed into a major crisis. But Stockholm is a ridiculous dramatization of the problem that hardly lends credence to the rich nations' ecological concerns. Fancy a UNESCO commission recommending recently with all seriousness the sealing of the entire Acropolis under glass?

The purpose of the Stockholm conference is to point out how man is going to manage the world's first technological civilization. The human environment is increasingly contaminated by the wastes produced by modern technology. The Japanese, for example, who have now 19 million automobiles, have also more than 6000 officially designated victims of air pollution. Especially the radioactive waste and thermal contamination threaten to tilt the meteorological balance of the world. If man continues to burn thermal fuel at the present rate, by the beginning of the next century, the atmospheric con-

tent of carbon dioxide will increase by 25 per cent, disrupting the global thermal equilibrium.

However, the real purpose of the environment movement is not so much to meet ecological challenges as to impede the development of poor countries counting on industrialization to raise their bleak standards of living. And it is time the myths that have sprung up around the movement thanks to expensive American pandering to the environmental crisis were exposed.

The Americans themselves who at the moment seem most concerned about the environmental crisis will be hard put to defeat charges of ecocide against them. The herbicide spraying that started in 1961 to deprive the Vietcong of food and cover has caused the most widespread and irreparable damage to the world's environment. It has destroyed one-half of South Vietnam's forests and stripped a total of 5 million acres. Eight hundred thousand more acres were denuded with huge 'Rome Plow' bulldozers. And in 1965-71 about 26 million craters were created by bombing. There is nothing in the history of warfare to compare with it. Never before has a land been so massively mutilated.

Naturally the American pandering to environmental crisis at Stockholm is regarded with misgiving, especially by developing countries. Indeed the Stockholm conference under the plea of providing a soapbox for demonstrators against the US role in Vietnam actually provides a fig-leaf for Yankee imperialism and the wealthy nations' conspiracy to keep ahead of the rest of the world. The real purpose of the conference is to keep the poor countries from breaking out of poverty by forcing them to delay their industrial development in the name of meeting ecological challenges and slowly to wean the world from the truth that the world's problem today is not pollution due to industrial development but poverty, plain and simple backwardness.

The career of Mao Tse-tung spans more than half a century of efforts to free China from the legacy of her past and to set her on the road to social and economic development.

In this volume the author describes Mao's struggle after the Liberation of 1949 to embody his political thought in the institutions of the People's Republic. He begins by exploring China's traditional political culture, and then discusses the development of Mao Tse-tung's conceptions of political leadership.

Professor Solomon suggests that Mao's particular innovation has been his concept of a political process that will motivate peasants to strive for a proletarian revolution.

## Mao's Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture

RICHARD H. SOLOMON

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# The Triple Rapport

R. P. MULLICK

THE oscillating pendulum of New Delhi's international attitude has found its node of a resting place in the convergence of interests of the USA and the USSR. This is the reason why India's ruling party has, in its latest articulation on foreign policy, concealed its satisfaction at the Soviet-American entente cordiale in studiously vague terms of general verities. In fact, it is the beginning of the fruition of a long-cherished dream—a "people's capitalism" cohering with socialism reformed.

In the face of new challenges from the world's teeming millions, spurred inexorably by the immense burden of hunger and privations of all sorts, capitalism has forced to develop subtleties of technique, both in the formulation of policy at home and apropos inter-State relations in the international arena. It has found its matching counterpoise in the convergence, towards its new concept of a mutated social order of private-cum-bureaucratic enterprise, from the other end, of a socialist order that is now under a process of transformation inspired by the USSR's ruling managerial elite. With the emergence of these trends, new tensions of a tri-polar power-balance have manifested themselves. They are the anti-nodes of international turmoil of the post-World War II era. The two superpowers who played the biggest roles among the dramatis personae on the international stage for more than two decades, with a convenient theme of cold war to frighten smaller powers with have begun to realize not merely the unproductive boredom of the play, but have also come to a conclusion—on the basis of a modus vivendi that is now taking shape—that it is far too risky to leave the initiative for effecting a new and revolutionary turn in international affairs to member-States of the developing Third World, and to China.

India, apparently, has found a new

role in this set-up, that of a jester, humorist and nexus-builder combined, between two archetypal imperialistic systems, different in form only, but in content approaching fast a set of correlated equations. The rising oligopoly of power in India has found in this role a recast of the 19th century (and early 20th century) prototype of imperialism's ally, with the difference that it is no longer necessary now to go in for collective security alliances, which expose, in any case, the ulterior intentions of imperialist States and their allies. The goody-goody image of a professedly liberal bourgeoisie rearing a democratic-socialist State, might thereby be shattered. Further, the rising *elan* of exploited people at home, torn by contradictions (between production relations and productive forces, between traditional-emotional valuations and social realities), and egged on by the "crisis of expectation" (which is the other face of the crisis of capitalism in a developing economy), can be subdued or held in leash only by the alternating methodology of coercion and conciliation, of fear-psychosis and vicarious power-satisfaction, of deceitful propaganda and the trappings of socialist moves. Here is the *raison d'être* of India's cleverly veiled alliance with classical imperialism, matched with equally camouflaged alignment with the "socialist" variant of this system. Here lies, also, the germane contradictions between the power-image abroad and the socialist image at home. India's ruling financial-industrial-bureaucratic complex (with the ex-feudals in transformed roles trailing behind and neo-kulaks getting ensconced in positions of power and productional superiority in the countryside) realizes the need to present at least a make-believe resolution of such contradictions before the ruled. The latest international developments afford an opening in this direction.

India's alignment with imperialism had its compulsions in the pattern of economic relationship with the developed capitalist countries of the West at the time of the transfer of power in 1947 and for years thereafter. In the early years of independence and during Nehru's first visit to the USA, this reality became the undeclared framework of India's foreign policy fundamentals. From 1949 onwards the quantum of India's foreign trade with the USA began assuming a significant proportion of the total. With the sterling countries it was even more pronounced. [In 1947-48, nearly 49.5% of India's total exports went there]. Of course India's sterling assets, which after the end of World War II stood at the staggering figure of £1200 million (in 1946, according to R. G. Casey), and had dwindled down to £500 million within a brief span, (according to Andrew Roth in *Eastern World: 1952*), were determining the pattern of India's economic relationship with the West, and hence political relationship as well. Nehru, the chief architect of India's foreign policy, was aware of such economic compulsions. In December 1947, he had outlined the genesis of his foreign policy in these words: "Ultimately foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy and until India has properly evolved her economic policy, her foreign policy will be rather vague, rather inchoate and will be groping." But this first framer of India's foreign policy was firm enough in his pragmatic moulding of the line. Barely one and half year later, he was enunciating a clear committal: "When I say we should not align ourselves with any Power blocs, obviously it does not mean we should not be closer in our relations with some countries than with others. That depends on entirely different factors. At the present moment, you will see that, as a matter of fact, we have far closer relations with some countries in the Western world than with others... These closer relations will no doubt develop, and we will encourage them to develop." (March 22, 1949).

It must be remembered that the first stepping stone to Indo-American rapport was laid, in the shape of the Indo-American Technical Co-operation agreement, in December, 1951. Closely following it, the USA granted "aid" to India to the tune of \$50 million in 1952 and \$110 million in 1953. During the first Five Year Plan period, out of the total of \$3000 million foreign aid received the contribution of the USA alone amounted \$2,380 million. To date a major share of India's foreign and utilisation comes from the USA's coffers. [The total foreign aid received by India during the period from April 1951 to October 1970, and utilised, are Rs 13,713 crores and Rs 11,995 crores respectively; and the USA's share in them are Rs 7,184 crores and Rs 6,784 crores respectively]. Only recently, India's Finance Minister conceded that out of the total unrequited foreign debt of Rs 8,200 crores more than half is outstanding towards the USA! And, all these cold economic compulsions are concealed under a barrage of pretentiously loud anti-American propaganda. About the alleged sang froid of the USA's foreign aid-givers towards India, recent facts coming to light in respect of American aid channels keeping up intended schedules through the devious route of the World Bank and the IDA, speak revealingly enough of what American "friends of India" have desired all the years since the inception of the Dullesian world strategy of politico-military blackmail and the unfolding of Marshall aid-concepts (for retrieving shattered areas of capitalist economy). These friends knew, and know still, the significance of an India firmly "stabilised" under bourgeois rule, a bulwark of democracy against the dreaded deluge of communism and exploited peoples' revolutionary liberation movements. On this focal point of agreement, bipartisan equation of ruling class interests in the USA is unique. What Mr Chester Bowles had said on January 19, 1952, in a policy delineating speech ("If the democratic government fails

in India, the entire free world will suffer a catastrophic setback all through Asia. The setback will be even greater, in my opinion than that which the free world suffered when China was conquered by the Communists"), is still the plank of the ruling class' credo in Washington. In recipient countries, the rulers cannot be unaware of the political leverage which a creditor-State can and does exercise over their political policies. Supply of military hardware, and/or strategic materials, and the furnishing of foreign exchange facilities in hard currencies, are the diverse means of employing this leverage. When it is claimed that India has avoided the exigency of being tied to the chain sequence of military aid, political ties and the conjoining of ruling class interests through a commonly shared concern for conserving the status quo in the regions concerned, it is forgotten that the Indian Army's logistic needs are best met by continental suppliers because of technical reasons. Hence the imperialistic assessment that meeting the strategic economic needs of India is a more effective way than overt military aid, in influencing the latter's international policy. Western political writers had anticipated with uncanny prescience this probability turning into a distinct possibility, as early as 1947: "Indian ministers will probably differ little in practice from the former British regime in what they regard as the essential interests of India in foreign policy. The interests are determined chiefly by geography and technical science and will be much the same in the next decade or two as in the past few years." [Guy Wint in *The British in Asia*].

#### Hopes Justified

Conduct of India's foreign policy in the years following has, by and large, proved that Western expectations were grounded on correct apprehension of the forces and interests guiding such policy. The Indian twist, to American-sponsored moves in the UN in late 1950 and 1951, for branding China as the aggressor

in Korea (although the US was committing the aggression), by giving an appearance of respectability to such moves with a so-called Afro-Asian peace resolution in the UN General Assembly—which, after all, was not intended to be carried through to the stage of effective implementation and hence dropped unceremoniously—was an indication of how close was India's international attitude to world imperialism. Mrs Vijay-lakshmi Pandit, whose pronounced pro-Western i.e., pro-imperialist, stance was appreciated by imperialism's leading lights and rewarded with the Presidentship of the UN, had then gone on recorded confirmation of India's alignment with the "free world", meaning the Western capitalist States, with the declaration that "We have voted with you 38 times, abstained 11 times, and only on two occasions there has been conflict of opinion." [51st General Assembly session of the UN]. The late Girja Shanker Bajpai, the then Secretary General of the department of Foreign Affairs, was even more specific: "India does not openly join any bloc because we must tend our problems.. But if tension does not ease and if threats of another war come about, we recognise that despite our hopes it will be difficult for us to keep out". Not surprisingly therefore, India was made to steer close to the imperialistic line and world strategy, while keeping up a liberal pseudo-socialistic facade of non-alignment. However it must be mentioned, that because of the acute mind of that rare Indian diplomat, Sardar K. M. Panikkar, two progressive moves were taken—recognition of People's China and the enunciation of Panch Sheel and Bandung principles. But the latter could not be translated into an enduring framework of foreign policy references, because of the inherent pusillanimity of Nehruan internationalism which could progress up to Tito's Yugoslavia and Nasser's Egypt, (and not beyond to the avowedly anti-imperialistic countries of Afro-Asia and Latin America) and certainly

could not dare envisage an effective Third World bloc of free, independent and uncommitted States. So while the essential need for laying the foundation stone of such a bloc was slurred over by Nehru himself, on high-sounding though airy prognostication that such a move would increase bloc-oriented tensions the ship of the Indian State was charted on to a pro-imperialist course in the late fifties and early sixties under the dithering captaincy of Nehru.

#### Smaller States

Apropos the semi-protectorate of Bhutan (in the mysterious murder of its Prime Minister Jigmy Dorji, in the flight of its Commander-in-Chief of the State Armed Forces, and even in the conspiracy to murder its king, the shadow of India's political representative is said to have loomed large); apropos Nepal, and apropos the Dalai Lama episode, India's stand virtually dittoed the Western. And why? It is because of the equation of ruling class interests, flamboyantly paraded as national interests. Lord Birdwood wrote in the *Eastern World* in 1952: "With Chinese forces now at the border of Nepal, that stronghold of operatic feudalism may one day find itself the Trojan horse of Communist intentions in regard to India. It is for this reason that India has attempted the role of a mediator in the internal affairs of Nepal." The imperialistic rationale running insidiously underneath it found an extraordinary parallelism with the mentor attitude of India's rulers towards Nepal, especially after King Mahendra had scrapped Nepali's party-parliamentarian constitution and changed over to partyless panchayati democracy. If it is not forgotten that India's tacit support to, and not-so-discreet encouragement of, the rebel Nepali Congress' extra-territorial activities (directed against the established regime in Nepal) from within India, and the traditional attitude of the Indian ruling class towards Nepal and the Nepalese institution of monarchy (symbolised by supercilious Nehruan

distrust towards it) amounted to interference, clothed as mediation, then it becomes comprehensible why such an attitude was a precursor to the 1959-62 Tibetan affair and Sino-Indian conflict. "Geographically Nepal is almost a part of India although she is an independent country" [Nehru, on March 17, 1950]; and "So far as Nepal is concerned it is a well-known fact—and it is contained in our treaties and other engagements—that we have a special position in Nepal." [Nov. 13, 1954]; and, the special pleading that Nehru made in the Indian Parliament (September '53) in favour of allowing facilities for Britain's continuing to recruit Gorkha soldiers for the latter's communist-baiting expeditionary force in Malay, as also for the like facility of transporting such unfortunate mercenaries of imperialism across the territory of India, on the peculiarly facetious ground that unless those facilities were granted Nepal's economy would have broken down—all these facts are landmarks in the development of the real character of India's non-aligned alignment.

Nehru, conferring with Lord Mountbatten in 1946 and agreeing in principle on measures that a future free India was to take for containing communism in conjunction with other partners of the Commonwealth, specially Malay, was the same West oriented politician who thirteen years later was welcoming an emigre Tibetan aspirant to power—the Dalai Lama in India and extending to him de-facto recognition as a State guest. And this virtual interference in Tibetan affairs, with subtle suggestions conveyed to China's Prime Minister, Mr Chou En Lai, for making up with the Lama by "respecting the autonomy of Tibet", was there despite the fact of India's having made an agreement in 1954 with China (on the basis of Panch Sheel principles) recognising the sovereign status of the People's Republic of China—contra suzerainty—in Tibet, and despite the other fact that Nehru himself had meant to stand by the agreement. [As testified to by Sardar Panikkar in his book, in *Two Chinas*, and as stated by Nehru on

8 May, 1959: "I have no doubt in my mind that the agreement we made with China with regard to Tibet was a right agreement...and we shall stand by it."]

However from late 1962 onwards the wheel of India's foreign policy had begun to turn on a different gear altogether, and, with an understanding with the U.S.A. for the latter's agreeing to equip fully four mountain division's of the Indian Army, a new dimension was set for the development of this policy towards open antagonism against China. In the 1965 Indo-Pakistan conflict, the USA's tacit underwriting of the Indian Armed Force's success against Pakistan through invaluable military intelligence in respect of the vulnerability of Pakistan's tanks and armour equipment—which it had itself supplied—more than highlighted a new twist in the USA's Pakistan policy. The formulators of its international strategy were having second thoughts about any further usefulness of Ayub Khan as imperialism's stooge, because of suspicions about his flirtations with communist countries—signalled by his closure of the American spy-air base at Badbera near Peshawar.

Tashkent further fortified the USA's suspicions about the ulterior motives behind the USSR's power moves in Asia. In due course, the enforced patchwork understanding, brought about between India and Pakistan under Russian auspices and mentorship, was to prove a turning point for the (i) development of a peculiarly complex relationship of competitive confrontation and collusion between the U.S.A. and USSR., (ii) the new role of guide and colossus combined of the USSR in relation to the developing States of Asia, especially in the southern region, (iii) the heightening of tension, and the beginning of a state of dynamic flux in tripolar power-equations between the USA USSR and China, and (iv) the planting of trojan horses, for future aggressive plans against China, in India, Thailand, the Indochina region and Japan.

Throughout the late sixties and up to early seventy-one, this US-USSR

competition-cum-collaboration continued, with both the super-powers dead set on gaining greater political leverage in New Delhi. It ended with the completion of one phase with the Indo-Soviet treaty of August 1971. Was the treaty symbolic of India's abandoning its policy of non-alignment? This question has been asked a fatuous number of times, rather naively. It would arise only if facts prove that India ever had a policy of non-alignment. But economic and political facts point otherwise. When in 1966 President Johnson, in a moment of tiff, had committed the indiscretion of hinting that food aid to India might be regulated, or even stopped in case India did not evince a friendly line apropos South Vietnam and the USA's policy in Indochina, interested elements intervened on both sides. However, the USA continued with the aid, and India her trading with South Vietnam, supplying strategic materials there, along with non-recognition of the PRG and even with a no-truck attitude towards Hanoi. The USA was demonstrably pleased, the quantum of aid to India was increased (the weightage in favour of the latter vis-a-vis Pakistan is eloquent through figures: during the 1965-71 period—to India, \$ 4,200 million, to Pakistan, \$ 1300 million), and the Indo-Soviet treaty, envisaged in 1969 as a successful sequel to the enunciation of the Brezhnev doctrine apropos collective security in Asia, did not come off. Military aid from America was not on the cards because of reasons already mentioned, that India's logistic needs could best be met by European producers. During the crucial 1965-71 period on an approximate estimate, India received \$730 million worth of military supplies from the USSR and East European countries, while Pakistan received \$233 million worth from China. Meanwhile the US ban (1965) on arms shipments to both India and Pakistan continued, only "limited amount of spare parts for the previously supplied equipment" made after 1967, and under one-time exception, "some military

aircraft and armoured personnel carriers were sold in 1970. [Foreign Policy Report: William Rogers, Secretary of State: March 8, 1972].

#### USA Goes East

Much loud speculation has been indulged in by the ultra-chauvinists of New Delhi in respect of supposed American committals to the Yahya Khan regime. Facts however point to certain cardinal elements of the developing situation, from about the middle of November 1971 till to date, which disprove their theories. After the visit of the Indian P.M. to the USA, the latter began efforts, now in real earnest, to work out a peaceful settlement in East Pakistan, as a part of the State but with a large measure of autonomy, to which Mrs Gandhi was not averse. Unfortunately, the thoroughly incompetent General Yahya, who was infinitely worse as Head of State, did not understand the subtle indications and brought about his own downfall, plus a major politico-military disaster for the State, with his purblind egoistic belief that the USA would underwrite this forthcoming military adventure. [His speech just before his utterly foolish step of playing into the hands of the hawks of New Delhi, by declaring war on India, amply proves it.]

The Indo-Pakistan conflict should be viewed in the context of Russo-American rivalry in South Asia. But in this rivalry, Soviet naval power was, and still is, on the ascendant. The USA, the erstwhile unchallengeable super-power, was fast becoming a tired giant. What with the mounting economic crisis at home, and the unending stick-in-the-mud involvement in the Vietnam war, the Pentagon was no longer prepared to risk a confrontation with the USSR's powerful nuclear-armed submarines in the Indian Ocean. The appearance of the Seventh Fleet during the Indo-Pak conflict—not any mystery move at all—was not that of a challenger. It was not even intended to salvage Pakistan's Expeditionary Force in East Bengal, since all possible escape-embarkation routes (Ch-

Ina, Chandpur, Chittagong) were closed. How could the international policy strategists of Washington afford to forego the leverage that had been slowly, and painstakingly built up over the weeks preceding this unexpected eruption, with a clumsy move to rescue the targeted enemies of the Indian Army? Washington naturally took the other way—jettisoning the Pakistan dictator, another Ngo Diem, who proved to be a painful impediment to its global interests and imperialist-strategic considerations. But, also, it would not, and could not afford to witness a virtual disintegration of residual Pakistan, with its armour and air force exposed to the full blast of India's armed might, after transport of the victorious eastern wing of the Indian army to the western front was completed. Nor could the USSR visualise such an extreme contingency, despite its bias towards India. Hence it was necessary for the USA to assume a deceptively "offensive" attitude with a view to (i) drawing out Indian naval and air forces to the east, and, (ii) make it obligatory for transforming its air-strength from a position of offensive to defensive alert. Simultaneously, diplomatic pressure was put on the USSR to prevail upon India to desist from pressing on its decisive victory in the East to the climax of Pakistan's destruction in the West, genuinely feared to be in the offing. Although India had no urge, nor power left to carry forward the hawks' 'Crush Pakistan' plan, the USA obviously was taking no chances. The USSR, although eminently pleased with the performance of India on the strength of Russian logistic supplies and massive air aid, could afford to watch in amusement the flabbergasted confusion of its rival, and yet allow Pakistan to survive.

#### Alignment Made Easier

After the failure of the Nixonian overture to China, to help the USA save itself from the bottomless pit of its Vietnam liability, and its face, New Delhi's policy experts were unhinged for the time being. They have now

been helped to find back their equanimity with the fruition of the US-USSR "peace-adventure". After all, this was precisely the type of understanding that Mrs Gandhi had craved for from the high priest of Western imperialism, as is now in evidence in the series of agreements gone through between the two nuclear giants. Let neutral Rumania make proposals for a conference of all nuclear nations for a really effective disarmament! India would not be the fool to wait for such a utopian eventuality. For the ruling circle of India, even a limited SALT arrangement between the two super-powers is an assuring prospect for domineering co-existence, a contract for conserving stability and the status quo (which they need most at present), and for establishing comprehensive areas of concord between them and itself. The ultimate aim is to isolate China, and foil and, if possible, frustrate its desire to acquire moral and ideological leadership in the struggle for liberation of peoples in the ever-pulsating revolution-charged Third World.

On February 29 this year, India's PM indicated an abiding alignment, spiritual as well as material, with the USA, by an equivocal expression meaning that India did not want to be with the USA *alone*. The implication is that, "to be successful", India should have close rapport with another super-power, the USSR. A triangular equilibrium of balanced status quo with both is now being

fondly bargained for. Not unexpectedly, ostentatious protestations of anti-US fervour are fading out. It is now the belief in New Delhi that the recalcitrants around General Giap in North Vietnam, and the PRG too will be forced or cajoled into accepting another round of Geneva-type negotiations and cease-fire. Then all will be well, and set for a spell of trying, tortuous, embattled "peace" till November when a worried Nixon will be granted his desired passport to re-election. For the USSR it will create unbounded possibilities—a prelude to elimination of China from South-East Asia and the ushering in of a Soviet-dominated Collective Security system that will turn all the straits and ports from Malacca to Suez, into the rendezvous of Soviet power. Little States of South-East Asia will have to conform to the new order evolving, or go the way of Bangladesh.

The 1971-72 foreign aid agreements reveal that out of the total of \$1,084 million India is due to receive, the largest share will be from the World Bank. Remembering that the latter is but a thumb-controlled institution, dependent on the USA's replenishing its coffers, the underlying truth that the USA still holds the economic strings of political friendship with India, comes to the surface. Japan, the USA's ally, is the second best aid-giver, and the USA too is not inconspicuous in the line—the sixth in order. No wonder, In-

dia's Ambassador to the USA will be faithfully carrying out his duties of cementing the "inevitable ties" of good and friendly India-USA relations. Hitches coming in the wake of a blessed little misunderstanding of late December 1971 will vanish with the dawning of realism in the USA's ruling circle, with the recognition of Bangladesh (already given), and with restoration of the economic aid-cut. Contrary to the fears of the U.K.'s PM Heath, or that of Australia's McMahon, the USA rests supremely assured in the belief that, there is no need to wean India away from the USSR because India's PM, "the lady" is "cold-blooded and tough, and will not turn into a Soviet satellite merely because of pique." [Kissenger, testifying before a "top-secret" meeting of the USA's decision-making supra-Cabinet, late in December 1971, as reported by Anderson, the columnist].

As a fitting act of gratitude—India is really not that "ungrateful", which aid-giving enthusiasts of both the Republican and Democratic parties of the USA fear sometimes. India has taken the step, dutifully enough, to exclude China from any reconstituted Geneva Conference on disarmament (March 23 1972). Other, more pronounced China-elimination tactics are likely, till the latter is made to see the new realities of South Asia, India's dominant position there, and returns to the goody goody days of Nehruan euphoria.

## North Vietnam And China : Reflections On A Visit—I\*

MARTIN BERNAL

**E**ARLY this year (1971) I went to Hanoi by way of China. After spending a week in Peking I went to North Vietnam for just over a month and then returned to China, where I stayed in Changsha and Canton for two weeks. Later I spent three and

a half weeks in South Vietnam. Thus during my visits to Vietnam and the second half of my journey in China, I was kept constantly aware of the similarities and contrasts between the two countries.

That there should be resemblances is hardly surprising. In prehistoric times there appear to have been no sharp cultural or physical divisions

between the rice growing peoples of the valleys and deltas in what are now south China and North Vietnam. For the thousand years between 111 B.C. and A.D. 940 Vietnam was a Chinese province. Even after Vietnam achieved political independence, China retained a dominance over its higher culture. The central administration was closely

\*This article appeared in *The New York Review of Books*.

modeled on that of China. Indeed, Chinese was the major written language, and Vietnamese literature and even folklore were deeply influenced by China.

In addition to these ancient connections, the histories of both countries show strikingly close parallels during the twentieth century. In both, peasant revolutionary movements led by Marxist-Leninist parties have gained power after long battles in the countryside in which patriotism as well as social revolution has been a major issue. Moreover, in both countries the protracted nature of the struggle has made active mass participation in the movement necessary to an extent that has never been approached in other revolutions.

Never having been to Vietnam before and not speaking Vietnamese, I expected that a strong Chinese influence would be evident. I even hoped that it would be, so that I could use my limited experience of China to help me to understand Vietnam. I was quickly disabused. Some of the distinctions I made on my first trip to Vietnam were the result of differences I saw between it and north and central China, with which I was familiar. Later, after spending some time in the southern province of Kwangtung, I had to modify some of these distinctions. But the essential differences between the two nations remained in my mind, and continue to amaze me.

To a traveler coming from Peking, the first impression of Hanoi was of a Mediterranean city. This view was partly superficial: the French colonial architecture, the typically Latin peeling walls and gentle decay. There was also the openness of life on the streets and the general air of relaxation. But, as in so many other quick social and political assessments, the weather played an important part in forming this impression. The Red River Delta in February is overcast, damp, and cool; there is nothing like the totally constricting dry, bright, and bitterly cold winter of north and central China.

This impression of softness or even

hedonism derives in large part from the appearance of Vietnamese women. In China with its unisex clothing, sexual passions run hidden and deep. Vietnamese women in both North and South are beautiful, and they know it. Unlike Chinese women, they wear bras even in the countryside. They seem self-conscious and aware of their sexual attractiveness. There are few traditional dresses or Ao Dais in Hanoi but the women walk with superb grace and, as in the South, they look sensational sitting sidesaddle on the backs of bicycles. Men too are acutely aware of their personal appearance. They wear their clothes with a sense of individual style and are even dandyish.\* Educated Vietnamese are conscious and proud of this difference. In the National Museum a senior archaeologist pointed out that the handles of a Bronze Age urn were in the form of copulating figures and said: "You can see how different we are from the Chinese."

In the towns of the South the pervading interest in sex in the midst of the greed, violence, and selfishness there creates an atmosphere of nihilism. In the North this interest serves as a counterpoint to the seriousness and dedication of the society. Brave women who have endured the terrible bombing to shoot down airplanes or who have worked for days without stopping to complete essential tasks are naturally far more moving for being attractive. The converse is also true. For instance, in a workshop in Thanh Hoa which had been evacuated to a cave to avoid US bombing, I saw girls standing behind lathes, covered in oil, whose beauty so moved me that at one point in an argument with one of my hosts I was surprised to find myself taking the

Stalinist line that feminine beauty was linked to production, while my host argued that it was much more complicated than that.

The openness of sex eases the relationships between foreign and Vietnamese men. It allows for the wide range of interests and humor which are denied in China. From the point of view of Women's Liberation much of this humor is at the expense of women, and it was certainly true that many of our jokes—though none of them was blue—depended on the view of women as objects.

#### Gallicized

There are, however, deeper reasons why foreign visitors have tended to find the Vietnamese elite so much more approachable and sympathetic than its Chinese counterpart, even before the Cultural Revolution, when the Chinese elite was in its heyday. Although a number of Chinese leaders have studied at Western or Soviet universities, their fundamental education was Chinese. In Vietnam on the other hand the secondary or even primary school education of almost all of the older generation of leaders was French. They have been profoundly Europeanized or, more specifically, Gallicized. Listening to Vietnamese scholars and politicians, I constantly had the impression of being with French Marxists.

These Vietnamese retain their faith in reason and science, which is profoundly moving in view of the monstrous assaults they are suffering from the most developed technology in the world. Linked to this is their belief and trust in formal and technical education. They are convinced that all people in responsible positions must be properly and thoroughly trained. Ta Quang Bun, the brilliant Minister of Higher Education who served as technical interpreter to Noam Chomsky when he was in Hanoi, gave a concrete reason for this need for concentrated academic studies:

"We are now able to produce graduates capable of neutralizing and disarming the most advanced and ingenious American devices and for

\*This deep awareness of physical beauty makes it peculiarly agonizing for Vietnamese disfigured by napalm, phosphorous, or torture. This is clear to anyone who talks to the beggars on the streets of Saigon, whom most Americans prefer to think of as victims of leprosy.

this a thorough scientific training is absolutely necessary."

The belief in professionalism goes far back in Vietnamese revolutionary history. In a small hamlet in the mountains at the extreme north of the country, I met a veteran of the Tai minority who had been sent to China by Ho Chi Minh for military training by Kuomintang and American officers. Expecting that his experience would be similar to the three or four month courses usually given to Chinese revolutionary fighters, I asked him how long he had stayed there. "Four years" was the reply.

In China there are frequent attempts to abbreviate and simplify education to make it cheaper and more accessible, and closer to the experience of the people. The Vietnamese will have none of this. When schools and colleges were evacuated from Hanoi and teachers and students had to move from place to place in the most primitive conditions, formal education was continued with the least possible interruption. History classes even took with them copies of Neolithic axes so that they could go on with their archaeology courses.

The Chinese put great emphasis on practical work in industry and agriculture as an essential part of education. The secondary schools I visited in Chinese cities all had "branch schools" in barren parts of the countryside. The buildings were usually built by the children themselves, who also cultivate the land around them. Local peasants arrived to give lessons on agriculture and to lecture on the hardships of life before 1949. With the "branch schools" in mind, I asked a group of Vietnamese students who had been evacuated from Hanoi whether there had been any advantages to living and studying in the countryside. Their immediate reply was :

"No. In Hanoi we can go to libraries, read newspapers, see plays and films, and go around with our friends".

"But surely," I persisted, "weren't there any advantages to living close to the peasants?"

"No." they repeated, "we were too

busy with our classes to do much practical work, and besides we all come from peasant families, so we know very well what peasant life is like."

This answer would not have been acceptable in China. At a school in Changsha someone quoted the widely known rhyme on the effects of education.

First year native

Second year other

Third year don't know father and mother

Peasant origins are not enough, one has to maintain contact with the rural masses. The Chinese often repeat Mao's story that when he was a young man he thought the peasants were dirty, and that as a student he should keep away from them. Later he came to see that in a real sense they were clean and that it was he who was dirty. Cadres and officials appear to accept that in many respects they are inferior to the peasants and that they should try to integrate themselves with them as far as possible. The desire is not to resemble completely the peasants as they are today, but to reach their unselfish, better, and "true" nature. This is an important qualification. Still the idea is very different from wanting to use outside agencies to transform the peasants. The aim of going down to the village people fits in well with a major Chinese tradition that the most decent man in society is the one who produces rice.

The Vietnamese share this tradition and for most Party veterans it was reinforced by their experience in the resistance, when they were surprised and moved by the patriotism, generosity, heroism, and intelligence of the rural population. But their respect and love for the peasants do not blind them to what they see as the peasants' limitations, and in particular their superstition and attachment to private property. These are seen as the inevitable results of the poverty, insecurity, and ignorance brought about by seventy years of colonial rule and millennia of feudal exploitation. The

Party's aim is to raise the people economically and culturally by bringing education to them. This education is designed to transform the peasants while trying to retain their original good qualities.

In this the Vietnamese are more like the Soviets than like the Chinese. Russian Marxism grew up in reaction to the populist idealization of the peasants and their Russian "essence". The Marxists saw themselves as bearers of world culture, science, and progress. Lenin borrowed greatly from populism, and his alliance of the urban Bolsheviks with the peasant Social Revolutionaries was crucial to the success of the Revolution. Nevertheless, the first large-scale direct contact of the Bolsheviks—intellectuals and workers—with the peasants came only after the Party had seized the apparatus of state. Thus it was inevitable that they should see their task as one of raising the peasants up rather than of going down to their level.

The Vietnamese revolutionary experience has been completely different. The early members of the Party tended to be the sons of landlords, rich peasants, and small officials—though all spent years in factories or jails proletarianizing themselves. It is true that, as in China, workers in the mines of remote regions played a key role in the very early stages of the Revolution. Nevertheless, because of its concentration in the cities where the power of the foreign occupier has been overwhelming the working class was forced to remain relatively inactive later during the armed struggle. Instead, the Vietnamese Revolution has been the most effective mobilization of peasants and tribal peoples in world history. To withstand protracted and savage repression, the movement has had to depend on the active participation of almost the entire rural population. There is now no doubt about the patriotism and revolutionary capacity of the population in the countryside. Even so, the elite are still confident that they have something to teach them.

**Mandarin and Vanguard**

Chinese and Vietnamese share the mandarin tradition and the modern concept of vanguard party. Some of the differences between the two countries can be explained simply by the fact that their revolutions are at different stages and that the mobilized masses in Vietnam accept the need for leaders in a way that the Chinese under less direct pressure were unable to do. Even so it can still be maintained that the Vietnamese cadres have more confidence in themselves than their Chinese counterparts, and that much of this confidence comes from their foreign or foreign-style training.

Vietnamese always make or imply a distinction between cultured and uncultured invaders. Parallels are constantly drawn between the Mongols and the Americans. Both have been masters of world empires but the essential similarity is that both are seen as barbarians whose power has been merely destructive. The Vietnamese attitude towards the Chinese and French is much more ambivalent. In many ways they are considered more dangerous because they are much more intelligent and seductive. They are seen as possessing sophisticated civilizations many elements of which can be made to apply to Vietnam. The fulfilment of Vietnamese culture requires that large parts of these civilizations be absorbed. However Vietnamese also argue that the process of absorption always transforms and Vietnamizes the cultural importation. In this respect as in many others Vietnam resembles Japan, another nation whose identity was formed by its relationship to the almost overwhelming civilization of China.

Today in order to create a new Vietnamese socialist civilization a great effort is being made to introduce socialist and even humanist culture. Concerts of Bach and Beethoven are given. In modern theatrical circles in Hanoi there are arguments between Brechtian and more orthodox directors. Soviet, Czech, East German, and sometimes even French films are shown. Many translations from

Chinese, Russian, and Western European classics are published. Only in translation does the South offer any serious competition to the North, though in Saigon the tendency has been to translate more modern and romantic works.

Thus the Vietnamese continue the tradition of introduction, adoption, and absorption of foreign cultures. The older privileged generation was given a thorough French education and many younger men and women have been trained abroad in Moscow, Warsaw, Berlin, and Havana. In Vietnam itself advanced education appears to be on a remarkably high level. With this equipment educated Vietnamese Marxists feel able to carry out their tasks in the same way as the Russian Bolsheviks intended to do, that is, to bring science and world culture to all the people.

China has always considered itself self-sufficient: like Western Europe it has seldom admitted that it has borrowed a great deal from other cultures. This belief persists in China today where people are usually interested either in technical matters or in the problems of China. Vietnamese officials and intellectuals are curious about everything in the outside world. I felt inadequate trying to answer their detailed questions on the Common Market, Brecht, Levi-Strauss, and the academic structure of Cambridge University. While they are intensely patriotic, Vietnamese intellectuals usually judge themselves in relation to intellectuals from other countries. On the other hand Chinese intellectuals, or at least those who have survived the Cultural Revolution, tend to see themselves as part of China and to measure themselves against the Chinese peasants.

This view of Chinese parochialism and Vietnamese innovation would seem to be contradicted by what is happening in both countries. China presents a scene of cultural austerity while North Vietnam is going through what can only be described as a cultural renaissance. Here again in cultural matters an obvious and major reason for the differences

between revolutionary China and Vietnam is simply that the two revolutions are at very different stages. The Vietnamese are still in the midst of a struggle for national independence. In this period they find it important to use the national culture to create a sense of national identity and to rally all classes of the population. In China this stage is over and the leaders see their task as one of making a class revolution and transforming human nature, and for this they believe the stranglehold of the old culture must be destroyed.

This advocacy of a new revolutionary culture for a new revolutionary people would seem to contradict the picture of Chinese self-absorption and faith in the peasants. The short story writer and radical critic Lu Hsun died in 1936, but thirty years later he was proclaimed as a pioneer of the Cultural Revolution. Throughout his life he proposed the introduction of new foreign artistic modes to replace what he saw as the hopelessly decadent tradition. He and his followers base themselves in the intellectual world of Shanghai, the economic and cultural center most open to the West, which, it is interesting to note, became the center of the Cultural Revolution in the Sixties.

Lu Hsun advocated the use of Soviet models for the new culture. Revolutionaries have no such clear-cut examples to follow. The reason for the cultural sterility in China today is that while it appears to be impossible to create a new culture out of abstract revolutionary spirit or thin air, there are powerful inhibitions against using any other source even in modified form. Cultural Revolutionaries desperately try to avoid traditional culture while they are unwilling

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ing to import new forms from the capitalist or "revisionist" West. Thus they are effectively restricted to the works of Mao, which are incidentally a brilliant and fruitful combination of both suspect elements.

Nevertheless there are strong populist tendencies in the Cultural Revolution. A major aim of the attack on tradition was to "weed out the old and let the new spring forth." Whatever the practice, the theory was to rely on the creativity of the masses. They were to be released from what the Cultural Revolutionaries saw as the stifling of artistic spontaneity by the Party's previous encouragement of traditional forms. Students and some urban workers may well have felt this. For instance, they were often bored and irritated by traditional operas even though their overt feudal content had been modified. But this does not seem to have been true for the peasants who were still steeped in traditional culture. In 1958 and 1959 during the Great Leap Forward rural counties and communes were encouraged to paint "mega pictures"—thousand pictures—and to write mega poems. The peasants sang praises of Mao, the Communist Party, and the new society in traditional meter with traditional images.

Why was the past bitter?

Why is today sweet?

It is because the Agricultural

Communes

Have been dragon kings

Golden Water, Silver Water is led  
up the mountains.

The Great Leap Forward was consistent in promoting the "earthy" or native—as opposed to the foreign and

technical—forms in culture as well as in agriculture and industry. During the Cultural Revolution there was a broad discrepancy between the treatment of politics and economics on the one hand and culture on the other. Politically and economically the masses have been taught to rely on themselves and to stand up to the authorities, both political or technical. Above all, peasants are encouraged to be self-sufficient and independent of the towns.

#### Centralized

In spite of or perhaps because of this diversity, culture has been kept tightly centralized. It all has to come from Peking or Shanghai. In Chinese bookshops today there is only one author, Mao; the only theatrical pieces played are five revolutionary operas and two revolutionary ballets. Some of these combinations of traditional and Western forms are moving and amusing. But because of the great reluctance to build anything from tainted elements there are desperately few pieces, and people would clearly like to see something else. They look forward impatiently to the new operas upon which amateur dramatic groups in factories have been working for the past five years; but these are still not considered fit for general release.

The Cultural Revolutionaries have reached this deadlock because of the apparent incompatibility of two of their beliefs, the limitless strength and creativity of the masses and the power and persistence of Chinese traditional culture. If the people are to be the cultural inspiration, how can they transform themselves or transcend their cultural limitations? Even by posing the problem the Revolutionaries are showing great confidence in Chinese culture. In their present search for a new culture, the Chinese are essentially looking for the answers in themselves. It is likely that only men who are confident of their country and their own cultural identity and survival can attack their own culture with such ferocity.

(To be concluded)

## Book Review

### CHINA'S CULTURAL REVOLUTION:

A VIEW FROM INDIA  
By G. P. Deshpande

Economic and Political Weekly.  
Rs 15

M R G. P. Deshpande, an Indian China-watcher, wrote about the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) during October 1966 and March 1970. His *China's Revolution : A View From India* contains the articles he published in various Indian journals.

The GPCR was preceded by an increasing deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations. In 1965 Moscow manipulated the issues raised by the war in Vietnam in an effort to encourage internal Chinese opposition to Mao's anti-Soviet foreign policy. U.S. bombing of North Vietnam, initiated in February 1965, produced sharp difference among the leaders in Peking. One side imagined a possible military confrontation with the U.S. and therefore supported Moscow's calls for unity of action in Vietnam. But the other side saw clearly that such unity would establish a permanent Soviet military presence in China. The first group accused the second, led by Mao, of underestimating the fascist menace and was lavish in praise of the Soviet army. The Soviet army in Mongolia had however started harassing the Chinese border in 1965; Soviet troops in Mongolia were increased in strength in January, 1966; the Soviets were reportedly making intelligence preparations for a troop-crossing; and on April 19, Peking accused Moscow of seeking to launch armed aggression from April 27 onwards. One dimension of the GPCR will not be understood if this Soviet thrust is not kept in mind. Peng Chen, party boss of Peking, drafted a joint Chinese Communist Party communique with the Japanese Communist Party and called for united action in Vietnam. Mao read it on March 28 and ordered the same day the purge of Peng Chen.

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Dist. Jalpaiguri,

JUNE 24, 1972.

It is not suggested here that the GPCR wholly owes its origin or tempo or development to the foreign policy debate in China. The GPCR was an extremely complex affair with many strands intertwined. The basic split within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was definitely not the result of Soviet intrigue. It had been gradually developing for years, mainly over internal issues. But Moscow tried to exploit the situation. That the GPCR began in 1966, not earlier or later, may have been as well due to Moscow. Mr Deshpande, however, brusquely brushed aside the idea that any Chinese leader, least of all Liu Shao-chi, supported the call for unity of action in Vietnam. He saw no relation between the GPCR and Moscow's manipulations on the border. He did not convey the impression of the outburst of the GPCR at various levels; his is the description of an event with one dimension, sometimes political, sometimes economical, sometimes ideological, sometimes

moral but never all-embracing. Mr M. Lisanu, in an article in *Problems of Communism*, November-December 1969, makes at least one hundred references which show that Liu, Teng Hsiao-P'eng, P'eng Chen all supported the Moscow line for Vietnam.

Mr Deshpande's one-dimensional approach to the problem of the PLA and the CCP is similar. By 1969 April the PLA was the dominant force in the politics of China. Lin Piao, the military leader, delivered the main address in the Ninth CCP Congress. At least 58 of the 170 full members of the new Central Committee were military men. The Politburo had ten military members in a total membership of 21. Nineteen of the 29 Revolutionary Committees, created in 1967, were headed by PLA commanders or PLA political commissars. That the army was on the ascendant during the GPCR was never disclaimed by even Chinese leaders. However it had to be done because one job of the GPCR was to purge the CCP itself, which was the main organisational force in China. The organisational work, in the absence of a coherent party, devolved upon the PLA, which moreover had to be strengthened because of the Soviet threat on the borders. Without underestimating the basic differences of the PLA from the armies of other countries, it was a fact that the problems of civilian-military relations remained unsolved during the GPCR.

The turn of events after 1970 onwards showed that the problem was very much there. Against this background, Mr Deshpande's rationalisation in favour of the PLA was evidently a wish fulfilment. He assumed that the cultural revolution within the PLA was complete and therefore it was no Marxist deviation that the military commanded the party during or after the GPCR. The assumption of power by the PLA was a necessary evil; there should have been no reason why admittance of the fact should be avoided.

The GPCR was launched for a variety of reasons, to achieve multiple goals. The minimal goals included

the purge of particular individuals, the shake-up of the bureaucracy, the temporary break-up of the party machine. The maximal goals were the training of a successor generation in revolution by revolution from below, the creation of a new morality and superstructure, the reinstatement of the ideals of mass participation and the transformation of the CCP. To ignore one or the other will be subjective deviation. Mr Deshpande tried to grasp the GPCR as a whole but often tended to become subjective. His bias towards the ideological against the practical, towards the maximal against the minimal, very often made him look an apologist for the GPCR.

China-watching from India is not an easy job. First, for the obvious reason, the lack of information. And second, for the rather unfortunate Indian habit of leaning towards interpretations instead of facts plus interpretations, towards the bright side of things instead of the bright plus the dark, towards subjectivism against objectivity. What the Indian public requires today with regard to China is not paeans for China but solid facts that establish the unambiguous stand of Marxism-Leninism in China.

N. G.

## This Picture And That

I. K. SHUKLA

**O**NE need not be a puritan to jibe at pornography. One's sense of aesthetics and standard of maturity and decency can well be outraged by what is so 'popularly' being purveyed by the Hindi cinema emanating from Bombay. The 'A' Certificate granted to *Zaroorat*, which was being shown at Society, reflects very poorly on the mental equipment, let alone moral, of the Board of Film Censors. All entertainment meant for the adults need not be mean and masochistic. Some of the recent Hindi films are brazen pornography and nothing less. That would explain the craze for them.

JUNE 24, 1972

The BOOK characterised as

- (1) "... a bomb ..." by "AB" in *Hindustan Standard*
- (2) "... useful and indeed indispensable ..." by G. S. Bhargava in *Hindustan Times*
- (3) "... a valuable help ..." by Pijush Banerji in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*

SOME DOCUMENTS RELATING TO EARLY INDIAN COMMUNISTS AND CONTROVERSIES AROUND THEM—collected and compiled by Dwijendra Nandi

### Contents :

A sharply analytical foreword; statements to police by Abani Mukherji, Nalini Gupta and Muzaffar Ahmed (excerpts) and some other related records; Dange's letter to the Viceroy; Papers relating to Charles Ashleigh's visit; etc.

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Briefly told it is the story of a jobless graduate who seeks to live by honest means. His wife ably stands by him. But he loses his legs in an accident. The poor girl has to sell herself to a moneyed lecher. When she returns with fruits, medicines, money, etc., she finds the husband has committed suicide. Her wayward brother arrives with money snatched from a postal peon. A friend has won a lottery of Rs. 3 lakhs and reaches there after it is all over ! This is not all. The young man and the girl married against the warnings of a horoscope-reader who had forecast accidents and all that. The young bride had rebuffed her boss once, only to surrender to him later—for money needed towards the treatment of her husband.

There are nude scenes of call girls embraced by their partners under the shower with and without clothes. No objection. The sexual act between the old boss and the steno girl has been perversely singled out for emphasis. The camera alternates between blurring and flashing the girl's face in a heaving movement which is more than merely suggestive of the intercourse. It was a torture witnessing this scene. I was in for another shock. I thought the seths in their sixties would feel offended and outraged. Lo and behold ! They were beaming with smutty smirk all over ! Because of voyeurism, vicarious thrill, or because money had so thoroughly defeated the defiant young ? The poison is being lapped up by millions of Hindi and non-Hindi knowing cine-goers with such relish and zest that it is time we woke up to this vicious drugging with a design.

Incidentally, there is a Bengali film *Anindita* currently on in Radha with nearly a similar theme. The heroine, to get rid of a nagging sister-in-law, marries a cripple, and worships at the shrine of a tantric sannyasini for the husband's recovery. The hero who had been approached once by a female relative with the photograph of this girl and requested to marry her, had rejected the proposal. He

is back on the scene and would have the girl begin life anew with him. The young wife decides not to desert the cripple of a husband but would allow the hero to expiate his hasty remissness of bygone days by spending on the medical treatment of her husband.

It is easy to damn it as sentimental stuff. What distinguishes it from *Zaroorat* is that it does not suggest prostitution as a way out of difficulties. It could, for better, have suggested the wife taking up some job or doing some chore, instead. But I will limit the criticism to what has been shown and not what else could have been shown.

The effect of *Zaroorat* is depression, disgust ; of *Anindita*, a cathartic elation. It would not do to say that the themes are different as shown by the titles of these films. The circumstances, skeletally, are the same. And, where the Hindi film could think of nothing else than prostitution as a way out, the Bengali film ended on an idealistic note. This by itself is not enough to establish *Anindita* as superior. Its claims for credit are irresistibly on other grounds.

The Hindi film shows man belittled, woman insulted, decadencies mocked at, superstition vindicated, righteousness punished, debauchery ruling, crime flourishing and respectable, sex and its 'adult' perversions magnified, resistance to evil mangled to mash. Artistically it is a horror, aesthetically a torture. It looks to be a calculated affront to individual assertion and manly initiative. *Anindita* may have many faults, but lacks all these. And that would set it above *Zaroorat*. But then, these days, for obvious reasons, Hindi films are popular and any number of variations of *Zaroorat* can be seen in the city any day. The obscenity and violence of Hindi films, perhaps, are nothing to cavil at. Who knows if they form part of a grand design to turn this into a nation of dwarfs and decrepits which then could be easier to rule—and ruin.

## Clippings

### New Light On The Guerillas

The shooting at Lydda airport has established two new factors about the guerillas fighting for the liberation of Palestine—they are firmly integrated into an international revolutionary movement and they have now decided on total war against anybody or anything connected with Israel.

Hitherto observers here had tended to be slightly patronising about the international links of the guerilla groups, both of Al Fatah and of the leftist Popular Front. The presence of students from Germany, America, France, Yugoslavia, India and elsewhere in their camps was thought to be a modish New Left fad and the eye did not linger on the colourful political posters from all over the world that adorned the Popular Front's offices : now one picks out that of "The Support Centre for Palestine People (Japan)." It is the exoticism of the Lydda gunmen—young men from beyond the eastern edge of Asia killing and dying on Asia's Western rim—that has brought home to people the fact that the Palestine struggle is now part of a single front that girdles the globe, and in which sectors are held by such varied groups as the Turkish Liberation Army, the IRA, the Weathermen in the United States, and the Tupamaros in Argentina (sic). The links between these various groups are firm but informal, and reports of an exchange of guerillas and of joint training are certainly exaggerated ; joint consultation and an exchange of experience is all that seems necessary. At the moment a Japanese woman doctor and a nurse are working in a Palestine refugee hospital in Lebanon, but foreign medical volunteers are by no means unusual and it is not certain that the two women, though they are Marxists, are members of the Japanese Red Army Group.

Guerilla spokesmen are unruffled

by criticism that Palentinians should have carried out the Lydda mission or should have participated alongside the Japanese. The Popular Front, in any case, claims that five of its guerillas from inside Israel did make a simultaneous attack on the airport building, though not many people here give this story credence. A spokesman said, "Sometimes our foreign comrades prefer to act on their own, sometimes we have mixed missions like that of Leila Khaled and Patrick Arguello, the United States citizen of Latin American descent who was killed in cold blood when he lay wounded on the floor of an El Al plane flying over London, and sometimes our guerillas act on their own. How can anyone say that Palestinians are not prepared to die when the Israelis themselves claim to have killed hundreds of our men in armed combat and when only a month ago four of our commandos, all Palestinians, took the greatest risk in hijacking the Sabena plane to Lydda airport? And two of them gave their lives when the Israelis tricked the Red Cross? A very particular point had to be made about the nature of our struggle and our Japanese friends made it for us. These are members of a new international brigade. When Andre Malraux and George Orwell fought against Franco were they meddling

murderers? No. But that you will say was part of an open civil war. Well, the Palestinian people are in open and permanent war with Israel and we have our friends from outside who will help us. We have shown the world that we are prepared to die for our cause; what we have yet to learn is how to kill efficiently."

... As to the involvement of foreign tourists in the shooting the Popular Front spokesman points out, "We have issued repeated warnings to them not to put themselves in our line of fire. The most recent warning was in December last year. If it was not reported in the West that was the fault of the Western news media. And these media that have so often ignored our sufferings now wax indignant because of the deaths at Lydda. How can we take such criticism seriously? We just intend carrying on."

... The two reactions to the shooting are so far apart that they might be about two completely different events. The West condemns the shooting while the overwhelming majority of people here refuse to condemn it, even when they are not young, red-hot revolutionaries, but solid, sober Arab citizens. Even President Frangie of Lebanon, trying very hard to take his country out of the cross-fire, did no more than "deplore" the Lydda incident and "reprove" an act of violence. But he put his finger on the root cause when he said that the violence was simply due to the fact that Israel would not allow the Palestinian people to go back home.

This incident has already inflicted a psychological defeat on the Israelis. The increased security precautions they have been compelled to take, and about the efficiency of which they are so proud, simply mean that Israel is that much more of a fortress-ghetto, which is a point that the Arabs have been trying to hammer into the Israeli consciousness. (G. H. Jansen in the *Hindustan Times*).

## The Hunt Continues

... Arrests of so-called extremists or Naxalites are, of course, not a new thing in West Bengal. But recently the police appear to have launched an offensive, the latest victim of which is a professor of the Indian Institute of Management.

Significantly, the recent arrests have not followed any widespread, or limited, recurrence of so-called extremist activity in West Bengal. Even the stock stories of "bomb attacks" on policemen, which earlier used to preface official reports of arrests of 'extremists', appear to have been dispensed with. No information is given about the grounds for the arrests, except for the general charge of involvement in 'extremist' activity; in deed, in many cases it is considered unnecessary to mention even the names of those arrested.

Some days ago a local police official told the Press in Calcutta that since August 1971 a total of 1,014 persons had been detained by the Calcutta Police alone under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. From the tone of the announcement, as reported in newspapers, it appeared that there was almost a sort of friendly competition among the different police stations in Calcutta as to the number of persons detained by each of them. Thus the official claimed that the Detective Department had arrested 95 persons. About 80 had been arrested from different areas under the Chitpur and Shyampukur police stations. The Beliaghata area also received honourable mention, though the police official added that the fact that he had mentioned these areas did not mean that no arrests had been made in the other areas. All the 84 police stations of the Calcutta Police, he claimed, had registered names of persons detained under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. This apparently was all that the public needed to know about these persons.

It is difficult to say what lies behind the police offensive against 'Naxalites' in West Bengal, but there is evidence to suggest that this time the

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police is going well beyond the alleged activists and turning its attention to those who, while they may be generally sympathetic to certain Naxalite positions, have not been themselves involved in political activity. The purpose may be to warn others of this category that they enjoy no immunity simply because they abstain from active involvement in politics.

If this is indeed the case, then it must be said that the worst apprehensions about misuse of the draconian Maintenance of Internal Security Act are being borne out. The Act, gives the Central and state governments the most sweeping powers of arrest and detention with virtually no built-in safeguard against their misuse. Only the utmost self-restraint on the part of government authorities at different levels can prevent the use of the Act for purposes which have nothing to do with national security. And the political climate in West Bengal right now is certainly not such as to encourage such self-restraint. Chief Minister Siddhartha Shanker Ray, who started his reign with a warning to newspapers in the state and by declaring that there could be no such thing as complete freedom of the Press, has most recently issued an 'ultimatum' to government employees which promises to be the prelude to a witch-hunt among them.

In the circumstances, only strong external political pressures can prevent the West Bengal government and the state Congress unit from adding the Maintenance of Internal Security Act to their armoury of weapons for achieving their own brand of "political stability" in the state. But there have been no protests in Calcutta—much less elsewhere—against the depredations of the police. This is not a surprise. In fact, the government appears to have counted upon it.

(A correspondent in *The Economic and Political Weekly*, Bombay.)

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## Chou Admits Mistake

The Chinese Prime Minister, Mr Chou En-lai, forcefully reiterated (in Peking on June 16) that the United States was involved in a war of aggression in Indochina and cited the conduct of the former President, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, in the Korean war as a good example for Washington to follow in ending the Viet Nam war.

Mr Chou spoke with great passion about the war, and about the role of Mr John Foster Dulles in undercutting the 1954 Geneva accord on Indochina and blamed himself for having been "taken in" by the American pledge to support the Geneva accords.

Mr Chou was addressing a group of American guests.

The Premier said that it was perfectly clear that the U.S. was engaging in an aggressive war in Indochina and equally clear that Indochina had never been conquered by foreign forces. He noted that feudal China had tried to conquer the Vietnamese peoples and failed and that France had failed to subdue them in 100 years of colonial rule. He said he did not think there was any precedent in world history to cover the action of the late John Foster Dulles whom he accused of preparing to violate the Geneva accords while the United States was giving its word to abide by them. "We were greatly taken in at the time," the Premier said.

"That was my first experience in international conferences. I have said this to Premier Pham Vang Dong of the D.R.V. I have told him we were both taken in. We committed a mistake in signing the Geneva accords and I was the representative who put his signature to that document and, if we could be forgiven, it is only because we lacked experience but now our other colleagues in the United Nations have more experience."

The Premier's clear implication was that China would never be a party to another accord which might divide Viet Nam or which might be subject to violation by the United States. His

words left no doubt that on this question at least he will be most adamant in the forthcoming discussions with Mr. Kissinger. (Harrison Salisbury in *The New York Times News Service*).

## Letters

### Short-Cut To Socialism

Two of the famous quotations of Chairwoman Gandhi, that revolution is a dinner party and that political power grows out of the moneybag of the capitalists have been very well proved from our recent experience in Orissa. Again it has been shown that the Congress is a unique machine, a strange transformer. The Swatantrites of Gujarat and Orissa as well as the millionaires of Maharashtra and U.P. were fed into it and overnight they were metamorphosed into socialist revolutionaries. Again this machine has much resemblance to a mouse trap. To enter it is quite easy but to get out is simply impossible. Because now one can be sure that there can be no act forbidding floor-crossing until all the 'Aya Rams' in all the States have entered the Congress. The moment the Congress secures absolute majority in all the States the floor-crossing will be immediately made illegal, thus foiling the potential of the (Tamil Nadu) 'Gaya Rams' for truancy. Now only one State making tall talk of autonomy, a single party of the prodigal sons and a handful of prospective socialists in other parties are left out. Hope, soon they will respond to the come-hither gesture of Mrs Indira Gandhi's socialism. And let us wish that thanks to this machine and thanks to these instant socialists we will soon find the Tatas and Birlas becoming shopkeepers in Bombay or owning pumpkin orchards in Rajasthan, for what else can they do with only five lakhs of rupees to invest or with say, ten to twenty acres of land to cultivate?

RABINDRANATH SAHOO  
Calcutta

## Another Arrest

The members of the Faculty of the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, are deeply concerned at the arrest of our highly esteemed colleague, Dr Paresh Chattopadhyay. We urge the authorities concerned to take immediate steps either to release him or bring him to an open trial, in which case he should be released on bail so that he can resume his academic duties.

FACULTY MEMBERS, I. I. M.,  
Baranagore

## Dacoits And Teachers

A fifteen-strong committee with Mr Ramnivas Mirdha as chairman will accord a grand civic reception on June 25, on the Red Fort maidan, Delhi, to two toughs who are said to have been swept by the 'change of heart' wave blown over the Chambal ravines by the political angel, Mr J. P. Narayan. Mr Mirdha is Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs. This is to prepare the people for later being told that these two things would be spared submission to the due processes of law!

The papers report, in another news item, that a trained woman teacher, among a dozen on hunger-strike in Bilaspur (Himachal Pradesh) demanding immediate employment, has died.

From these two examples it is easy to find which is the more profitable way to adopt in this hopeless land. Also, why anybody protesting against this criminal state of affairs, is damned as a Naxalite.

By the way, will the Government of India, for a change, officially condole the death of a job-hungry innocent woman on the Red Fort maidan?

I. SHUKLA  
Calcutta

## English ! English !!

Mr Indukantha Shukla's article "English ! English !!" (June 17),

though a bit provocative, is nevertheless readable. His debunking of posh English-medium schools can hardly be disputed. Nor can his suggestion to modernize the M.A. (English) syllabus be ignored. But his idiosyncrasies, so manifest in the laboured contrast between the first divisioners and Ph.D.s, can only abet an ignoble strife amongst the academicians. In view of the diverse standards of teaching and evaluation in different universities, how can we rely on the infallible proficiency of all first divisioners? The less said about the "ninth paper" (or lubrication paper?), the better. True, a Ph.D., like other degrees, may be had by hoax in these days of massive deception. But an enduring work of scholarship is the product of intensive study and painstaking research. It is an end in itself. So, instead of pooh-poohing all Ph.D.s, Mr Shukla should ponder whether all first divisioners of this generation are jewels of the first water either.

A RESEARCH STUDENT  
Calcutta University

## M. N. Roy

M. S. Prabhakar in his book review (April 29, 1972) correctly says, "It would be fairer to Roy to consider him as a representative of early Indian nationalists, who due to a strange combination of circumstances, came under the influence of international communism...there was a strong streak of opportunism in Roy". I fully agree with his views on the 'Royists' in India. But at least two observations of Roy are still to some extent relevant for the Indian Left. Firstly, "for years India has been seething with growing agrarian discontent. But no political expression has been given to this revolutionary factor. A party of agrarian revolution, in the democratic sense, must appear as the organ through which the peasant masses will be actively drawn into the fight for national freedom. Such a revolutionary nationalist party will fight under the programme of agra-

nian revolution. It will unite the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry in a democratic struggle under the leadership of the proletariat."

Secondly, Roy's assessment of the Indian bourgeoisie and bourgeois nationalism in India. According to him bourgeois nationalism has ended in a complete compromise with imperialism. Imperialism must have a social basis. Until the earlier years of the 20th century British imperialism relied on two factors: loyalty of the landed aristocracy and the passivity of the masses. Naturally the demand of the rising bourgeoisie was ignored: hence antagonism between the two led to industrial backwardness, forced the Indian bourgeoisie to depend on trade which was dependent on British imperialism both politically and economically. Hence the Indian bourgeoisie's ambivalent attitude. On the other hand antagonism grew between the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie who started the terrorist movement. Roy, in detail, shows in *The Future of Indian Politics* how the Indian bourgeoisie became the partner of British imperialism in exploiting Indian labour, and how towards the close of the First World War the passivity of the Indian masses disappeared and imperialism, in search of a new social basis, began to make agreements with the Indian big bourgeoisie. Since 1916 the British Government had introduced a series of economic measures that were greatly beneficial to the Indian bourgeoisie. Consequently the antagonism between imperialism and Indian capitalism had been at least for the time being almost eliminated. The political result of this changed economic relation has been reflected in a steady decline of the nationalist demand. This policy of collaboration on the part of the Indian bourgeoisie was shown by Mr Roy in a significant manner. In the present controversy on the character of the Indian bourgeoisie Roy's analysis is relevant, no doubt.

ARJUN BANDYOPADHYAY  
Naihati

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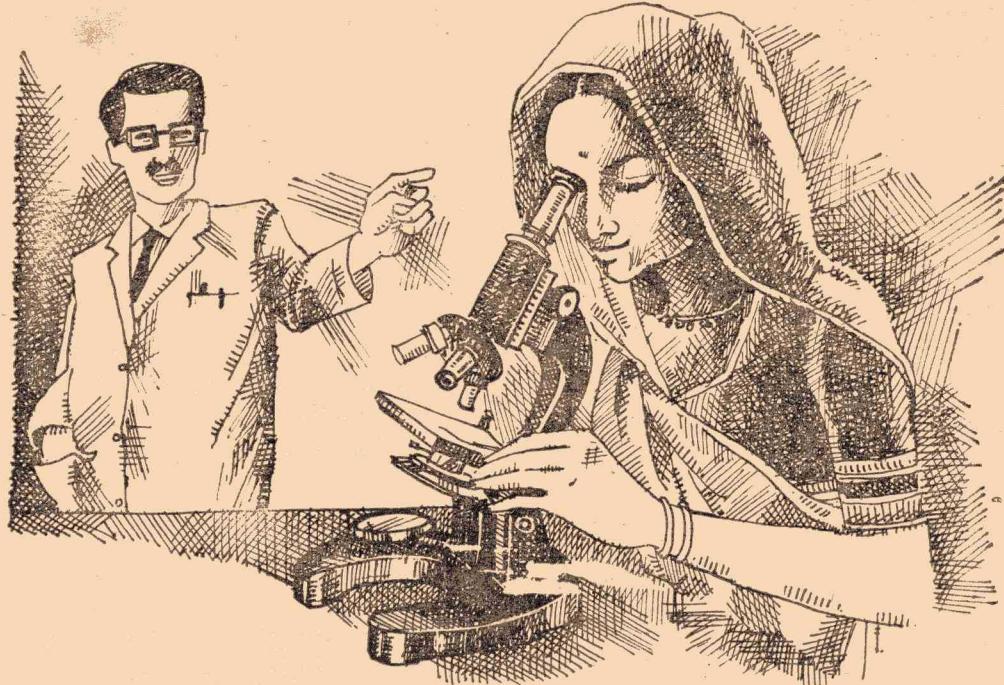
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