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On Other Pages

COMMENT ..	2
<i>View From Delhi</i>	
BHUTTO'S OFFENSIVE	
FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT ..	3
DRAGNET OVER BANGLADESH ?	
R. P. MULLICK ..	5
<i>Orissa</i>	
A 'GARIBI HATAO' MINISTRY	
SUKODEV PADHI ..	6
<i>Tamil Nadu</i>	
THE FUTURE OF DMK	
FROM A CORRESPONDENT ..	7
<i>Punjab</i>	
AFTER MOGA	
FROM A CORRESPONDENT ..	8
THE JOINT SECTOR	
D. D. SINGH ..	11
KEEP SUEZ CLOSED	
TALIB YUNIS ..	13
IN DEFENCE OF BACCHUS	
MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY ..	16
<i>Clippings</i>	
FOREIGN INVESTMENT	
K. S. SANGHA ..	16
LETTERS ..	17

Editor : Samar Sen

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

JOURNEY TO THE BRINK

AFTER the Prime Minister's prediction that the next year will be extremely difficult in view of Pakistan's changed attitude towards Simla agreement, not much hope remains of a peaceful settlement soon of the disputes between the two countries. That the talk of war should resume over Thakur Chauk, an uninhabited puny plot of less than two square miles, is significant. Whatever the legal and moral validity of the contrary claims of India and Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir, the two countries agreed at Simla to respect, temporarily, though, each other's authority over much larger tracts without prejudice to the claims of either. The Simla agreement, insofar as it relates to Jammu and Kashmir, is not definitive; it will hold the field or hold back the armies, if you like, till a final settlement is not reached. When each country has agreed to the presence of the other in areas it regards as its own, what does it matter if Thakur Chauk falls on this or that side of the line of actual control? The cheese-paring would have had some justification if the line was meant to be permanent. But both sides have made it clear and the Simla agreement has made it explicit that the control line is no international boundary.

Thakur Chauk is a non-issue. President Bhutto's claim that a principle is involved is as misleading as the Prime Minister's statement that the dispute is of technical nature. The real issue is whether the two countries are still prepared to settle all their disputes through bilateral negotiations. By their postures both have replied in the negative, both have shown that they temporarily lapsed into sanity in Simla. Thakur Chauk merely provides the pretext for wrecking the agreement. To try to apportion blame for this setback will be a profitless exercise, for accommodation by either country would have resolved the deadlock. But it should not be overlooked that as the victor country India is better placed to be generous. No agreement would have been possible at Simla if the Prime Minister had not brought to bear a flexible approach to the questions on hand. Only a fraction of that flexibility will enable the two countries to get over the present hump. Whether Pakistan should get Thakur Chauk or some other area in exchange is a matter for the Prime Minister to decide. But the Simla agreement should not be allowed to founder on the rocks of the Chauk.

New Delhi should not overlook that President Bhutto has little

reputation of lose as a dove. His active opposition to the Tashkent agreement, his threat to launch a thousand-year war against India, and his role in the twilight hours of the Yahya regime have left a stamp of bellicosity on his image. Maybe a hangover of the past is impelling him to intransigence, though he realises that he must tread the path of peace. But New Delhi will be hard put to it to make the world accept that President Bhutto has frustrated India's earnest attempts to implement the Simla agreement even though it would have restored to Pakistan immediately some 5,000 square miles of lost territory. On the other hand, non-implementation will tend to lend substance to the criticism that India is

determined to use the leverage it has gained through the December war to bend Pakistan to its will. If Mr Bhutto's intention is to stall off an agreement on delineation till the U.N. debate on the admission of Bangladesh so that the continued occupation of Pakistan territory by India may be cited as proof of New Delhi's expansionist policy, the only way to foil the attempt is to get out of the territory before the debate. For this an immediate settlement of the Thakur Chauk dispute is necessary. The alternative to Simla agreement is grim. A decade ago India got involved in a war over a territory, much larger, though, where not a blade of grass grows; let not the same mistake be repeated over a territory where not a man lives.

be gloomier. Apart from this traditional production deficiency argument, the price spiral is also attributable to overmuch loaning and wanton minting of money by the Government in recent years. Leaky official control measures have abetted this. The chickens of last year's war are coming home to roost.

To soothe the enraged opposition the Finance Minister, Mr Chavan, said that the Government machinery was being geared up. It is said that a squeeze will be applied on credit, and deficit financing will be kept at a level where it matches up to the real growth to prevent inflation. But some import of wheat, rice and pulses may be imperative to make good the shortfall. Nothing is really wrong with such marginal, temporary imports. Food shortage has visited even the Asian mainland and China has entered the world wheat market as a bulk purchase. But the question is whether imports will lead to deflation of prices or even their stabilisation to the relief of the poor millions. Though the price rise has been alarming in the last two years, it had not stayed put in the preceding years, not even at the time when the so-called green revolution was said to be sweeping the Indian countryside. Actually the correspondence between the availability of goods and their prices is not as direct and clean as some theories argued it to be. Numerous obstacles remain on the way. So far New Delhi has blatantly failed to remove these man-made bottlenecks in spite of its assumption of control of all the vital sectors of the Indian economy. In view of the class composition of this rapacious government there is no guarantee whatsoever that it will try to remove the obstacles.

Prince Control ?

On the question of prices or rather price control, New Delhi has once again exhibited its ability to run hard to remain on the same spot. As in the previous sessions of Parliament, this winter too the Opposition moved a censure motion on prices, accusing the ruling party of utter ineptness; the latter opposed it and got away with a solemn pledge to curb the evil. But prices have not remained still. For those who have a penchant for figures, it may be noted that the official price indices touched the 210.4 mark this year—a clear ten-point increase over the preceding year's index which was already a record. But food prices rose by a faster rate of 16 per cent. For those millions of petty urban white-collared men, ill-paid workers and famished peasants this poses an unbearable burden; their emaciated

figures will have to exist on lesser calories and the rags remaining on their bodies will also go.

To go by the official explanation, the crisis has been caused by drought and floods. Owing to scanty rainfall the crops have yellowed even on the homeground of the Indian green revolution and excessive rains have washed them away in other parts of India, particularly in the eastern region. But, while explaining his government's failure, Mr Y. V. Chavan has admitted what some of his critics have been saying for quite some time that the much-touted green revolution is not that green. Though undoubtedly the 'miracle' seeds from Manila showed the proven multiplying capacity, it was nature's bounty in the last few years that mainly explains the increased food crops. This providential favour over, the country has reverted to the food shortages of the mid-sixties. Official sources reveal that this year's food production will be of the order of 100 million, much below the targeted 112 million tons; it could at best be 104 million if a good kharif and rabi can be harvested. But the reality may

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Intellectual Flurry

We have no urgent need for a Nobel Laureate economist to tell us that the Indian economic problem is a very difficult problem. The 1.7 million people who are right at this moment on dole and 3.54 million who are employed in relief works because it did not rain this year, know it too well. Not that these are the only people who are starving, there must be three times as many who have failed to reach the qualifications set by the Famine Code to get the dole or relief work. Even then Prof John Hicks is necessary; without the opinion of white people like him, our pundits would not know where they stand. When he said, talking about economic models, that it was up to the Indian economists to collect the relevant data and construct models, one wonders whether the banter was driven home. In this country, we know everything about everything but nothing about ourselves. We have no firm ground when we discuss the economic situation in the nineteenth or early twentieth century India. We have a vague notion that India was quite a prosperous country, as far as feudal prosperity goes, before the British came, and after the British left, our country was ravaged well and good leaving us no base to build industries; and yet we feel thankful to the British because they 'modernised' and 'industrialised' India. How far has India been industrialised since then? What is the nature of the industries developed? It makes little meaning to talk about industrial growth rate or increase in industrial turnover unless one knows what sort of industries are being referred to. Because of this utter ignorance Mr C. Subramaniam could get away with his idea that the economic outlook was more cheerful this year while industrialists like Mr J. R. D. Tata thought we were heading towards a disaster. It might suit our President, who has all the time to listen to Noam Chomski delivering the Nehru

Memorial Lecture; after all he is a guest and would not hurt the Indian leaders by spelling things right away. Such famous personalities are good to flaunt before the Indian public, just as a stature of Lenin has not hurt Calcutta in any way. These guests, even if they refrain from giving vent to their ideas frankly, lend an intellectual air to our rulers, by simply accepting invitations to come and talk. By association, our pundits acquire some weight. As a parallel instance, witness Mrs Indira Gandhi gathering tears in her eyes at the ceremony to felicitate Mother Teresa; isn't she as humane and motherly? Some, in West Bengal and Andhra,

View from Delhi

Bhutto's Offensive

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

RECOGNITION of North Vietnam, notice to quit SEATO, recognition of North Korea, and finally recognition of East Germany. Things converge into a pattern which defies New Delhi's understanding. Mr Bhutto has recognised all the divided communist countries in full. All that remains is recognition of Bangladesh. His diplomatic offensive is what a foreign journalist described as trilateral bilateralism, with the thrust towards China.

Pakistan's exit from SEATO was never in doubt for months now. Geopolitically Pakistan is no longer part of South-East Asia. But in the past, Pakistan was the only Asian country to link the CENTO and SEATO alliances. This link is broken. It might suit Indian commentators to underline Pakistan's continued participation in CENTO and a new degree of interest after a few years of indifference. CENTO might have disintegrated but for the Indo-Soviet

might doubt whether Mrs Gandhi, the Union Home Minister, was the ideal person to talk of mercy, but then it may be as well possible that she took the words of Mother Teresa wholly literally, "we have to love till it hurts".

People in West Bengal are having a dose of this intellectual flurry. Without a seminar on electronics, could we have had a decision to make West Bengal once more the leading State in the electronics industry? There is nothing funny in this decision-taking—no matter why the State's share in the country's production of electronics fell from 80 per cent in the mid-fifties to 6 per cent in 1971. Who would remember two weeks hence that such a seminar was held and such decisions taken?

treaty. As long as India is linked to a super-power through a treaty, Pakistan might find justification in continuing in CENTO, and directing its main policy thrust towards Peking, much to New Delhi's discomfiture.

India made much of its decision to upgrade relations with North Vietnam and East Germany, both on this side of the Indo-Soviet treaty. But it is common knowledge that for the past many years, Soviet diplomacy tried to persuade India to accord recognition to the German Democratic Republic but was significantly silent on North Vietnam. Pakistan did in a week more than what India did in years in this respect and demonstrated a certain independence in foreign policy. Now Pakistan might have more credibility with the smaller South and South-East Asian countries than India has. This will make for a new degree of isolation.

For the first time during the present domestic crisis, Mrs Indira Gan-

dhi admitted on the eve of the Lok Sabha session that a serious situation existed but she was sure of managing it and even turning the corner in a few months. All the fears about an impending food crisis have been confirmed. The heavy reliance on the kharif procurement might prove a disaster because the crop is poor and the response to the procurement drive is poorer. In a scarcity situation, and the psychology attending it, farmers with a surplus would be most reluctant to part with it. The minimum support prices might have some relevance in a surplus situation but not when the prices are keeping a relentless push upwards. When the issue came up in Parliament in the form of an adjournment motion (for once the CPI felt compelled to behave like an Opposition party), the Congress found it difficult to enrol participants in the debate. Congressmen were most unwilling and unenthusiastic about supporting the government's stand on the prices.

In the morning, the Congress President, Dr S. D. Sharma, was holding forth at a seminar on radicalism on the conspiracy of foreign vested interests which wanted India to import PL-480 wheat. He did not mention the CIA directly this time. (Dr Sharma is the biggest joke in the New Delhi Press corps these days and the Moscow lobbyists complain that the pro-CIA journalists are responsible for his ridiculous statements because they provoke him into a discussion on the CIA every time he meets the Press). A few hours later, Mr Y. B. Chavan was saying in Parliament that the Government would import foodgrains if necessary to meet the emergency situation. Someone is playing the CIA game somewhere.

Those who have watched the Prime Minister last week could not help the impression that she is tense and nervous. Her role in Parliament during the first week of the session has been less than marginal even where her own Home Ministry's matters were involved. The excesses of the Uttar Pradesh police units in Delhi and the trouble on the campus

are adequate to call the bluff of a strong Home Minister who can strong-arm the nation. Breakdown of law and order right in Delhi which is directly under the Home Minister is a damning indictment of her handling of things and the CPI bully boys who want Central intervention in Tamil Nadu on grounds of a law and order breakdown are a little subdued now. A stalemate solution in Assam gives Mrs Gandhi time but the Telingana Mulki Rules issue underlines her indecision. Now the Andhra region wants separation for Telingana while the Telegana leaders say they are tired of two campaigns for secession and they would rather wait for the other side to fight for a break-up of Andhra Pradesh into two. Though both the sides have left it to the Prime Minister to suggest a formula, neither would accept what she would have to say because it is going to favour one side or the other. The leader is no longer sacrosanct. If the tempo of the agitation in the Andhra region is kept up, all the ten Andhra ministers in Mr Narasimha Rao's Cabinet may have to resign and force a crisis situation.

Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu—these are the problem States, in that order. The Prime Minister will be left with little time for more serious issues. It is widely believed that the Congress will spend Rs 50 lakhs to win the Orissa by-election to save the Prime Minister's face. Which works out to over Rs 1,000 per effective vote in Cuttack, which is a small and compact constituency. The Prime Minister has been reluctant to visit Cuttack to campaign for the Chief Minister she has exported from New Delhi. In Tamil Nadu, the Congress is still a hapless spectator and has no role in the crisis. The Assembly Speaker's ruling smacks of Mr Bejoy Banerjee's in 1968. The inspiration for both these rulings, according to lobby reports, is the same ex-CPI barrister who has migrated to the Congress. In any case, the Speaker's ruling in Tamil Nadu did not enhance the prestige of Mrs Gandhi's party which has been charged with

engineering the DMK split. The Congress is anxious to disown any role because after the split it finds itself a non-entity in Tamil Nadu politics. The initial Congress game there is about to boomerang. Whatever happens, Mr Kamaraj will stand to gain. The possible pattern of alignments (if the behaviour pattern in the Lok Sabha on Mr K. Manoharan's privilege issue is any clue) will be: DMK and the CP(M) ADMK, CPI and Congress, and the Congress(O). In a triangular contest the ADMK sponsored front will be swamped by the other two and Mr Kamaraj might regain the State. This explains Mrs Gandhi's reluctance to dismiss the Karunanidhi ministry now though her intelligence agencies have obliged the CPI with information to draft the memorandum against the Ministry. The CPI seems to be managing the MGR show, providing it the political know-how.

So the country waits for Mrs Gandhi to turn the corner before she could help the country turn its corner.

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Dragnet Over Bangladesh ?

R. P. MULLICK

ON May 5 this year, the Defence Minister, Mr Jagjivan Ram, confirmed in the Lok Sabha that a detachment of the Indian Army was in operation in Bangladesh, "assisting" the Government there in curbing "insurgency". He held out the promise then that the detachment was to be withdrawn shortly. Since precise details about the type, strength, equipment and period of deployment of the army detachment have been withheld so far, it is being alleged in some quarters that the army presence has continued intermittently in Bangladesh.

Certain facts stand out. The strategic geopolitical situation of Bangladesh; the overall concept of India's "military security" in this region, as propounded with disarming frankness by many a hawk-strategist of the Establishment, which requires indirect politico-military control over the policies of the new State; the lure of sub-imperialistic sway over a significant peripheral region of the Indian Ocean, which would enable India to play a dominant role in the politics of this area. It need hardly be added that the general trend of opinion among the ruling class reflected in the big newspapers acting as its mouthpiece, favours maintaining India's "new and changed role in South Asia" after her victory over Pakistan. Voices have been raised in the ruling circles that India, after having "liberated" Bangladesh through military intervention, should not revert to a foolish moralistic stance on peace and/or Gandhian disarmament. Not only should India's arms production be proliferated, sophisticated and expanded, there should also be a simultaneous effort to raise her arms exports to the not-so-developed countries in South and South-East Asia. The ostensible aim—not so credible—is to earn foreign exchange. The ulterior aim is to secure political leverage over the

State policies of poor buyer countries, the method being that of classical imperialistic commerce in death. But does New Delhi expect to have a tangible influence through arms-oriented exports of a pitiful Rs. 2.7 crores worth of goods (as in the last financial year), over small countries with weak economies and a strident need for arms, to suppress internal discontent?

After according it recognition as a free, sovereign State, interested super-powers have been poaching into the public life of Bangladesh. The USA has vied with the USSR in increasing "aid" to this fledgling State, and with a long purse has begun purchasing, in decent cultural educational garb, elements from the youth and intellectuals of Bangladesh society. Who would believe in the USA's altruism in getting solicitous over Bangladesh's membership of the UN? The over-enthusiastic pleadings of the USSR in this respect are directed towards a similar objective—to obtain a commanding height in the political life of the State.

The furore that has been created in the UN over the membership of Bangladesh is the result of the super-power politics of acquiring areas of supremacy in the Third World through protege States (acting on behalf of a particular mentor-State). In this neo-Machiavellian game the USA has shown a remarkable degree of resilience and flexibility. Although it had not helped the Yahya Khan regime with logistic support, it became the target of a combined Indo-Soviet propaganda offensive (accusing it of having tilted its foreign policy towards this regime. The very fact that the USA sent its Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal area in December 1971 after a contrived delay, proves that it had not at any time the objective of salvaging the remnants of Pakistan's expeditionary force from its erstwhile eastern wing,

far less of militarily intervening in what was a localised conflict. Not only did the USA desire to avoid the possibility of this conflict expanding into war, it also wanted to keep the ruling bourgeoisie of India in good humour by allowing it to have their way with East Pakistan and create a base-area of their ascending political supremacy in South Asia. In the matter of grooming India as a future rival as well as potential antagonist of China, the old Dullesian concept has not ceased to be the basic framework of the USA's international strategy in Asia; only, the mode of application has changed. In this respect the USA's Democrats and Republicans are united—the apparent difference being only of accent on aid, on logistic support, on the maintenance of diplomatic understanding and political modus vivendi in all significant international questions. In view of the impending Presidential elections in the USA, the ruling party in India did not jeopardise the prospects of future aid. Hence, the beam of external propaganda by State agencies was being conducted in a way to shield the role of the USA in the Security Council apropos the question of Bangladesh's admission and make it appear as though the USA stood on a different platform vis-a-vis the States that have merely proposed a postponement of the question till the December 21, 1971 resolution of the Council is honoured.

The modern machinery of international publicity and propaganda by super-powers has reached a high degree of sophistication and would make it appear that they were the friends of Bangladesh while those States who would rather have a Bangladesh admitted to the UN with a clean record of respect for the Security Council's crucial resolutions are being dubbed its foes. But what are the facts?

The December 21, 1971 resolution was passed in the Security Council after repeated attempts by it to get the intruding army of occupation (of India) out of the area of former East Pakistan had been foiled by the Soviet veto. The real confrontation was between Indian land, air and naval forces and the Pakistan expeditionary force, the stragglers, going by the name of Bangladesh Mukti Bahini, being completely under the operational command and strategic sway of the Indian armed forces headquarters. The surrender of the Pakistan expeditionary force was made in response to a call by the Indian C-in-C, and therefore, the surrender was a State-to-State affair, Pakistan and India, who were then in a state of war. The Commander (G.O.C.) of the Mukti Bahini of the Bangladesh emigre government had not issued any call to the PF to surrender, nor had the latter stipulated any proviso in the terms of proposed surrender, making the trial of some of the POWs taken as a result, obligatory as a part of the deed of surrender. There is no international law extant today which permits trial of POWs on a selective basis by a governmental agency to which they had not surrendered, as an *ex post facto* measure.

The irony of the situation is that the Government of India, which throughout the critical months of March to December '71, had refused to accord recognition to the provisional Government of Bangladesh formed by only emigre personnel under the Presidentship of a leader who had chosen to surrender to the very repressive, exploitative State machinery he had supposedly been fighting against, is now posing as the greatest friend and champion of the Bangladesh cause. Since the creation of a protégé State on its eastern flank by eliminating nearly half of Pakistan's military potential, and more than half of its economic and population resources, suits eminently the politico-military ambitions of India's ruling class, it is easy to understand the motivation behind In-

dia's support for Bangladesh's application for membership of the UN.

The same ruling circles try to muzzle the demand of the Kashmiris for self-determination. But their right of self-determination is as much sacred as that of the Bangladesh peo-

ple. If Bangladesh or for the matter any other region has a right to secede from the parent State and form an independent, sovereign, viable State unit, then the corollary follows equally well in the case of others.

Orissa

A 'Garibi Hatao' Ministry

SUKODEV PADHI

IN the 1971 mid-term election the Utkal Congress, Swatantra, Jharkhand and some independent MLAs made a United Front (UF) Government with Mr Biswanath Das as Chief Minister. In June 1972 some members of the UC and Swatantra withdrew their support to the UF. The Congress invited them to join it and Mr Nilomoni Routray (UC) and Mr Ghansiram Majhi (Swat.) were made ministers in the seven-member Cabinet of Mrs Satpathy. Dr Harekrushna Mahtab, an intellectual gambler, who was arraigned by the Sarjoooprasad Commission on three charges out of four, narrowly escaped from the baneful findings. A few days before the splitting of the UF, Mr Sarjoooprasad gave the decision, and it was natural that the Home Minister would hand over the report. Mr Nilomoni Routray, the then Home Minister of the UF, resigned and joined the Congress. Mrs Satpathy took over the Home portfolio and the Commission's report is hidden under a red tape. Thank God, Utkal Kesari (the 'Lion of Orissa') survives.

The 'Garibi Hatao' ministry is ruling over Orissa. It has had a remarkable performance of keeping the prices very high. Before the prices tacked handed over Rs 1 lakh, at Barabati Stadium, to Mrs Nandini Satpathy. The sum was contributed by top class businessmen.

The whole of the northern region

of Orissa is in the grip of famine with starvation deaths occurring daily. All the dailies including *Prajatantra* (Congress party paper) are publishing photos of human skeletons crying for a handful of rice. When the Congress was in opposition, it blamed the UF for its inefficiency in tackling the problem of famine-stricken areas. Today every one knows that the Satpathy Government is totally unfit to tackle the problem. With so much of Central aid and relief measures by voluntary organisations rushing to Orissa, the present Government is unable to come to grips with the problem.

Cuttack city, a storehouse of dust, garbage and drains, has always elected Congress candidates. Mrs Satpathy is requesting the people of Cuttack to uphold that tradition. She granted Rs 2 crores for the improvement of Cuttack city and the Congress party itself utilised Rs. 80 lakhs. What about other candidates who were elected from Cuttack and have not shown any interest? What urges the Congress to make these sudden efforts? Because Mrs Satpathy is contesting from the Cuttack constituency.

The much-talked-about revolutionary land reform which Mrs Satpathy has taken up and promised to do something by December 1972, has been put into cold storage. The Kendu leaf trade controversy, the main source of unrest in the Orissa administration for the last fifteen

NOVEMBER 25, 1972

years, is yet to be solved. It was naturally expected that on coming to power the Congress would seize the first opportunity to take over the trade. The decision of the present Government to nationalise it from January 1973 has not come too soon. In December-January 1970-71 the Congress left the coalition of the then UF accusing the Swatantra of having taken a bribe from patawalas and for the same reason Mr Nilomoni Routray and some of his contemporaries of the Utkal Congress left the UF in June 1972. The public undertaking department of Orissa drew up a scheme, emphasising that the

present earning of the Orissa Government would rise from Rs. 2.9 crores to Rs. 4 crores if the Kendu trade is nationalised. Yet the Garibi Hatao ministry pretends to be deaf. Mr R. M. Singdeo (Swat.) challenged Mr B. Das, the present Finance Minister of Orissa, to disprove the allegation that he has taken Rs. 13 lakhs from patawalas.

During the last five months the Congress has failed to make use of its power, to build its popularity. Lay spectators wait to see what would happen after the Cuttack contest if Mrs Satpathy is elected.

nidhi instead of facing risks by joining hands with MGR. Therefore, the DMK establishment is now being called "Alibaba and the 176 thieves".

Mr Kamaraj now envies MGR because the alliance of the DMK with the Congress (R), CPI, PSP and Swatantra will become a challenge to the Congress (O) as an opposition party. Mr Kamaraj has commented that both MGR and Karunanidhi are equally corrupt. But Rajaji has praised MGR as an avatar of Dharma—as a modern Krishna to kill Duryodhana (Karunanidhi) and his men. Rajaji's backing of MGR is understandable. If the DMK ends because of MGR, the happiest man will be Rajaji because Karunanidhi and his aides are thriving in the State by using anti-Brahmin and anti-Malayalee (Keralite) sentiments. When the CPI joined with MGR, Mr Karunanidhi criticised the CPI as a party of high-caste Hindus. But this is also applicable to the CPM. This is a general weakness of the communist parties in Tamil Nadu, a weakness the DMK was able to exploit by posing that it serves the downtrodden. Most of the DMK ministers represent low-caste Hindus. This is of great advantage to the DMK. During the sixties, perverted intellectuals of the South encouraged the growth of the DMK in order to suppress the growth of communism in Tamil Nadu, while in practice, the DMK served only the high-caste Hindus. "Anti-Brahmin sentiments" were used by it to attract the mass sentiments against high-caste Hindus. When the DMK came to power, high judicial and executive posts, held by Brahmin intellectuals, were given to orthodox high-caste Hindus (Saiva-Mudaliars, Pillais etc.). The DMK was originally an atheist group. Later, atheism mixed with casteism. A Brahmin cannot rise to a high position in the DMK even if he is a brilliant intellectual with atheist ideas. For instance, Mr V. P. Raman, who was holding the No. 3 position in the party before the DMK came to power,

Tamil Nadu

The Future Of DMK

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

THE popularity of Mr Karunanidhi and his aides is fading. Contrary to his expectations, MGR waves are bigger and the noise is non-stopping. The police tend to outnumber the public at any meeting organised by DMK leaders in the city. But lakhs of people are attending MGR meetings, which shows the wave is favourable for the ADMK. Though MGR could not procure a sizable number of MLAs and MPs, he has drawn innumerable followers at the lower level. If the Centre does not intervene, MGR threatens that the people will decide and dethrone Mr Karunanidhi and his corrupt ministry. It is most unlikely that Mrs Indira Gandhi would immediately appoint an enquiry commission as wished by MGR to prove in the corruption charges against Mr Karunanidhi and other ministers, though when Mr Kamaraj, Mr Bhaktavatsalam, Mr P. Ramamurthy of the CPM and Mr Kalayanasundaram (CPI) talked about DMK corruptions, there was not so much public backing as MGR has now. It seems that MGR can grow indepen-

dently without the support of any other party. Now more MPs and MLAs have joined MGR at a higher level. About 35% of the branch units of the DMK in the upcountry centres have turned themselves into ADMK units. ADMK has grown to be a big opposition party, next to the Congress (O) in the State Assembly (the strength of DMK MLAs has been reduced from 184 to 176 out of 240 but the DMK still commands absolute majority). Perhaps MGR expected a larger number of DMK MLAs and MPs to come to his side. But Mr Karunanidhi is clever enough to keep the majority of the MLAs on his side by assuring them opportunities for further corruption. It is alleged by MGR that all MLAs put signatures on blank papers and gave these to Mr Karunanidhi during the 1971 elections. These blank papers may now be used to intimidate the signatories if they quit the DMK. The MLAs and taluk secretaries and other members of the General Council of the DMK would perhaps be wise enough to earn more money by remaining with Mr Karuna-

was forced to resign because juniors like Mr Karunanidhi opposed the rise of a Brahmin leadership within the DMK. Mr Karunanidhi actually hates a Brahmin but not a high-caste non-Brahmin, even if he is more orthodox than a Brahmin. Formerly, the Brahmins of Tamil Nadu maintained the intellectual traditions in art and literature, took a leading part in the freedom struggles and also held high posts in Madras High Court, the secretariat etc. The high caste non-Brahmins were jealous of such people. The British Government encouraged their rivalry and gave awards like Rao Bahadur, Diwan Bahadur etc. to many rich high caste non-Brahmin fools. A group of such men entered art and literature in the last half of the 19th century and gained reputation by using only anti-Brahmin sentiments. Later high caste non-Brahmins started loving and acclaiming the atheist E. V. R. Naicker. The EVR movement was encouraged by the British because EVR considered Brahmins his first enemies. It made the people at lower levels think that Brahmins should be killed first and not the exploiting Englishmen. EVR was finally satisfied by cutting the *kudumies* (long hair of Brahmin priests) and cross belts (Yakgnobhaveetham) of some poor Brahmins residing in the agrapharams. But no harm was done to the exploiting trustees who are high caste Hindus.

Mr Karunanidhi accepts EVR as his guru and accuses the CPI as the party of high caste Hindus but it is the support of the high caste Hindus that enables him to continue in power. It is of course true that he did favours to the elite of certain low castes such as Ahama-dians, Kallars, Thevars who were originally as rich as the high caste Hindus. But the position of the bulk of low caste Hindus like Vanniars, Nayagars, Yadavars, Am-balas (fishermen), Pallis etc. is as bad as ever. Now, all these low caste Hindus along with Brahmins are likely to go over to MGR. The ma-

ajority of ADMK organisers are low caste people.

Mr Karunanidhi says that he will prefer Mr Kamaraj, a pure Tamilian, to succeed him and he will never allow MGR, a Malayalee, to rule Tamils. But at the same time Mr Karunanidhi is not prepared to change the name of the party from Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam to Tamilar Munnetra Kazhagam. MGR proclaims that he has more followers than Mr Karunanidhi and the branch units of the ADMK will outnumber the DMK units in no time. This is possible because MGR is considered as God by many, whereas Karunanidhi is only a Chief Minister. If the trend goes like this, one evil is likely to be replaced by another evil.

The role of the CPM is pitiable. Mr P. Ramamurthy asked MGR to outline his principles. MGR replied that this country would not improve as long as the communists depended on labourers organised in trade unions to bring a change. He said that organised labourers were a minority who have all the benefits of provident fund, gratuity, bonus, fixed wages etc. as compared to millions of people who have no job security. MGR asked: What is the fate of the peasants who form nearly 70% of the total population? He stated that ADMK would work for the welfare of unorganised labourers and at the same time would not be hostile to trade union workers. (The followers of MGR took a major part in serving as agents of the Simpson management and attacking CPM and Kuchelar's followers).

There will be an opportunity to judge the strength of the ADMK, DMK and the Congress (O) in the forthcoming by-election for the Dindigul Lok Sabha seat. There will be a three-cornered fight between the ADMK and the alliance of the CPI, Congress (R), PSP and Swatantra, the DMK and the Congress (O). If the result favours the ADMK, the Congress (R) could isolate the DMK and the Congress (O) and Mrs Indira Gandhi would show some interest in

Tamil Nadu politics. Thereafter, the toppling work will be easier for her.

The clashes between the DMK and ADMK resulted in police firing in Bodi, Vriddhchalam and Ramnad where two or three people died and several were wounded. As a protest almost all the colleges in Madras, Trichy and Madurai were closed from the last week of October. Most of the student unions will continue the agitation till Mr Karunanidhi steps down. The ADMK procession headed by MGR and MKS (CPI) on a working day afternoon (10-11-72) made an impressive show. These agitations, hartals, violence and police firing will do the preliminary groundwork for Mrs Gandhi.

Punjab

After Moga

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

OCTOBER and the first fortnight of November were unprecedented in the politics of Punjab, in the sense that after 1947 the Moga massacre was the first on such a big scale and thereafter the students took the path of long struggle. Apart from the killings the walls were hit by bullets first, and then invaded by posters put up by the Punjab Students Union, the Students Federation (and of course by the State Government). Though these could not cover the holes caused by the bullets, they could be quite inspiring for the peasants, workers and of course the students in their long struggle. At the same time people considered the compromise reached between the Government and the Moga Students Action Committee (this committee consisted of some students belonging to the Congress and CPI organisations and the representatives of lawyers and so on) as an attempt to sabotage.

On the very day that preceded the Moga massacre, 13 detenus,

Naxalites and alleged Naxalites, were released from different jails in Punjab. The second batch of detenus released included besides others a young woman, the editor of a monthly and two trade union leaders. The announcement of the release of the first batch of 9 detenus of the same category coincided with the silver jubilee celebrations of the State, perhaps to boost the image of bourgeois democracy and its welfare State.

The release of the second batch was announced by the Chief Minister himself at his home town Faridkot and headquarters of the district to which Moga belongs. Perhaps he wanted to project himself as a revolutionary. Earlier he had told a New Delhi newspaper that he had jumped into politics when he heard of the execution of Bhagat Singh. He claimed that he joined the Gaddarites because he had no faith in Gandhian non-violence and that while secretly ferrying a comrade with some bullet injuries, one of the bullocks hauling the cart died he took the place of the bullock. He actually wept while narrating his "revolutionary" escapade and the death of his mother when he was about to complete his five-year term in jail. He also claimed that he was one of those who had occupied the secretariat of the Maharaja of Faridkot. People who know say that when some people had a plan to kill the Maharaja, it was Mr Zail Singh who severely criticized them and somehow saved the Maharaja.

While announcing the release he told the press that the detenus had given an undertaking in writing that they would have no link with the extremists. But some of these detenus had not given any written undertaking. After his release from Central Jail, Ferozepur, one of them in an open letter to the Chief Minister (published in a Punjabi weekly from Delhi) along with three others, pointed out some of the contradictions in his statement and asked the Chief Minister to admit that these detentions were undemocratic and dic-

tatorial in nature. The open letter also exposes the role of the Interviewers Committee which comprised 12 legislators and ex-legislators mainly belonging to the CPI and the Congress and was formed to bring the Naxalites to the right path and that of the police.

Mr Zail Singh started branding all the 22 released detenus as Naxalites, whereas previously he used the terms Naxalites and alleged Naxalites. People came to know that he was preparing the ground for the re-arrest of the detenus. The bogey of a CIA-Akali-Naxalite collusion had already been raised by the Chief Minister and his senior colleagues. The Akali Dal's demand for an enquiry into such a collusion was neither accepted nor rejected.

The Government could not tolerate a peaceful demonstration of about 15,000 at Ludhiana, led by the Punjab Students Union. It enraged the Government because only the Youth Congress and Students Federation of the CPI have been permitted to take out processions. The result was another massacre at Moga, killing more than 10. When the CPI campaign against the price rise fizzled out the Government arrested more than 3000 people, according to unofficial sources, and the number of non-students was by no means small.

The CPM, along with the Socialist party, was busy with the struggle of the hosiery workers and perhaps it wanted its leaders to be free for the Central Committee meeting at Chandigarh. As the CPM leaders claim their party to be the only true communist party in India, nobody should blame them for their attempt to sharpen the hosiery workers' struggle instead of wasting their energies by participating in a movement led by students, whom they consider petty bourgeois. As usual the CPI behaved more cleverly than the CPM by deputing the leader of its student wing to keep a fast in front of the State secretariat to counter the not-so communal soul's (Sant Fateh Singh) fast at Moga. Meanwhile the CPI leaders convinced the

Congress leaders that an agreement could be signed under the auspices of the Moga Students Action Committee, by which they could secure the release of the living martyrs of their movement against the price rise and at the same time claim credit for saving "national property".

The Government had already threatened to tax the people for the loss of national property worth Rs 4.5 crores. When the leader of the Students Federation started his fast he declared that he would carry it on until the suspension of the murderers of the people, release of all the arrested persons, withdrawal of the flag-marching army and CRP divisions and some BSF battalions, and lifting of Section 144. But when the rehearsal for compromise with the Moga Students Action Committee was over a peace agreement was signed and the student leader broke his fast before the agreement was implemented. All this agreement signing was with the consent of the Prime Minister as she had sent instructions to her state commanders not to be harsh towards the CPI as relations with it were already strained. Then came a series of appeals from CPI leaders to the students to remain calm as their demands had been conceded. There ended the whole affair, for the CPI.

But the Punjab Students Union, with 85,000 members, gave a call to continue the struggle as none of the demands had been accepted. The struggle once again gained momentum. The Punjab Agricultural University students engaged the police in a four-hour pitched battle on the university campus. Students of the Medical College, Patiala, got furious at the principal's harassment at the hands of the police. There was also a fight for three hours. Students of the Punjab University campus, which once saw large-scale Maoist wall-writing before the annihilation of a high-ranking police official's son, also participated. The Prime Minister, who was to perform the long awaited inauguration of the Student Centre on the campus and was to be conferred

an honorary degree, had to cancel her visit.

Teachers on Warpath

While all this was on, some 35,000 teachers of privately managed colleges went on the warpath with their 11-point programme. The main demands were security of service, parity with government teachers and nationalisation of education. The teachers of Haryana followed suit. The Punjab Government stopped all aid and asked the vice-chancellors of all the three universities in the State to instruct the principals of the colleges to recruit new staff. The Haryana Government maintained that it had got nothing to do with the strike by 2,000 teachers of that State. The hunger-strike camps of these peaceful agitators are also being watched by the police and some 50 teachers have been arrested in various districts of Punjab.

During this period the number of arrests rose to more than 2,000, according to unofficial sources. The police raided 5,000 houses of those who were on their lists as sympathisers of Naxals; some 115 of them are already in safe custody. Most of the detenus released in the last three months are again facing detention. Large numbers of people had to leave their houses.

Huge rallies of students and peasants are a routine matter in most of the villages. About 600 peasants and writers marched for the release of writers and other political prisoners at Nakodar in August. Recently Nihalsingh Wala witnessed a 10,000-strong rally. Villages Patto and Rode held 5,000 and 2,000 strong meetings. Colleges and schools at some places are being kept open with the help of the police. Some members of the committee which signed the compromise with the government were beaten by fellow students for their collaboration with the police and a very small number of students is turning up for classes. Homage is being paid to the martyrs in various schools and colleges. Diwali was not celebrated in a large number of villages as the

Students Union had asked the people not to celebrate it in protest against the massacre. In many of the villages the police dare not enter unless it is 400-500 strong. At one place some policemen were made to go round with their faces blackened.

An assistant professor of Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, who has been detained for two years, has told a New Delhi newspaper in an hour-long interview in the District Jail that he hoped to organise a new party with Marxist leanings where all the workers would be honest "unlike the CPI and CPM which are replete with the corrupt". People are wondering why, when already a few Marxist-Leninist groups are working in the State, the professor wants to organise a new one.

Though things do not exactly fit into the pattern of Mr Zail Singh's wishes yet his Cabinet does not regard them as very serious. The 10-member CPI group in the Vidhan Sabha has announced withdrawal of its support to the Congress Ministry and declared that it will work as a "democratic opposition" party. Mere words. They themselves know that 'after the Moga massacre some sort of a face-saving device has to be invented, which they have. Now their tabling a no-confidence motion against the government may not serve any purpose.

Further Details

Karam Singh writes from Chandigarh:

In his report about the Moga massacre your correspondent has missed some important and crucial aspects of the incident and of subsequent happenings in Punjab. The Regal Cinema in Moga was set on fire, not by the people, but by the police in order to burn the corpses of those killed in the earlier police firing, which they could not dispose of anywhere else due to the alertness and awareness of the public. But more serious are the issues arising after this blood-curdling episode. The firing, and the brutal repression of the students and the general public

at Moga was a challenge by the ruling class to the struggling people of Punjab in general and students in particular. They accepted the challenge and met reactionary violence with revolutionary violence. The people led by students attacked the various institutions of the ruling class at unexpected places and by hitherto unknown methods. Day by day the struggle became more widespread and more intense. It spread from cities to remote villages, engulfing all sections of the people—peasants, workers, employees, doctors, advocates, school teachers and college teachers. The ruling class became so scared and desperate that it cried for help from the 'people' because, as it wailed, every inch of the land cannot be policed.

Then at the zenith of the struggle the CPI stabbed in the back. The CPI-led Punjab Students' Federation, horrified at the movement going beyond its peaceful boundaries, reached a shameless agreement with the Government. But the students refused to bargain over the dead bodies of their brethren with the mere transfer of two police officers. They announced that the struggle would continue until all the arrested, not only students, were released and the butcher officers were arrested and tried for their crimes. At this crucial and most critical phase of the student struggle, the CPM leaders also refused to give their support, although their own student cadre were active in the struggle at some places.

The students of the professional colleges were in the forefront in this phase. A day after the CPI's appeal for a withdrawal of the movement, Punjab witnessed its most fierce student-police battles at Ludhiana, Patiala and Amritsar. The brave and valiant students of Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana, Guru Nanak Engineering College, Ludhiana, Guru Nanak University, Amritsar and Medical College, Patiala, fought pitched battles for hours with the police. To malign the Punjab Students' Union led by Mr

Prithipal Singh Randhawa the ruling class is spreading the lie that a huge mass of subversive literature and Chinese-made weapons has been 'found' in the hostels of the PAU, Ludhiana, where Mr Randhawa is a student.

Most of the student leaders having gone underground, with about 1,100 people in jails, including about 500 students and 150 Naxalites and their sympathisers, and the private colleges closed, an uneasy calm prevails all over Punjab, Systematic arrests are

going on in cities, villages and towns. The repression is so fierce because the ruling class is facing a very politically conscious student movement which has time and again moved further to the left organizationally, especially since 1967. These valiant students of Punjab are solving with their blood the most crucial and grave issue at stake—whether and how it is possible to build and sustain a revolutionary mass organization in the face of State onslaughts and revisionist treachery.

objection to a more suitable and thereby acceptable change in connotation.

The Prime Minister, embellished as she has been with dynamic postures and gestures in the last five years, proved equal to her task, pleased and reconciled both. According to her, Dhar's presentation of the economic policy resolution as placed in Gandhinagar, should stay; notwithstanding its link with Gandhi and Nehru, it should be changed in keeping with the formulations of Subramaniam if subsequent economic and political developments so warranted. It was a grand synthesis of the past and future and also that of the American and Soviet lobbies.

The question arises: were there some fundamental differences? If not why then drag in the names of Gandhi, Nehru and Kosygin, and why so much controversy and speculation? If yes, then why not as thorough and outright rejection of one and acceptance of the other proposal, and also what in essence are these differences in their concrete implications?

The correct answer is both 'yes' and 'no'. There was no difference on the crucial issue that the State, manned by the Indira Congress, should serve in the main the interests of the ruling classes. On this both trends are united. But there was a difference over the manner in which their interests could be best and most safely served. It is the correct understanding of these differences which should forewarn the Indian people in general, except a handful of private-sector magnates, and their alien masters, that their future is fraught with serious attacks on their economic status, political professions and democratic rights.

The answer to the first question was provided by Dr Sharma himself: if the private sector had already been so heavily financed by public money or sector, why so much fuss about a joint sector or parallel sectors? In other words when the private sector had made the State's economic resources so stealthily subservient to it,

The Joint Sector

D. D. SINGH

THE controversy about the joint sector serves to confuse the people and hide the fact that the proposal is inspired by the predominant motive of how best to serve the interests of the ruling classes.

According to Dr S. D. Sharma, Congress (R) President, any hair-splitting in this regard is unwarranted since the private sector is already overloaded with public money from the State exchequer; hence in physical structure, it is the public sector. Stretch it further—since public money has been drawn at the will and behest of the private sector—the former in essence is the private sector. So why worry about duality? This is Dr Sharma, fostered by the Syndicate, but fondled by the Indicate, overdancing to the tune of the latter. Hence his political crudeness, and to that extent unpalatable to the ruling classes. They require charm, polish and persuasiveness so that their economic policy is swallowed by political buffoons, particularly the communist imposters, and innocent and ignorant people without any feeling of bitterness, protest, resentment and revolt, and treat it as the renovated legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru. For this job the fittest candidate could be none but Mr D. P. Dhar, a favourite of Moscow, a hope of the so-called

communists, brought recently to New Delhi and limelight in the wake of the Indo-Soviet treaty.

Opposed to the new incumbent, according to the bourgeois press, is the resurrected Subramaniam. Rumour runs that he had earlier suffered victimisation at the hands of the American lobby during the course of rupee devaluation. Naturally therefore he had harboured the idea of decisive and weighty blessing from the Soviet Union for his novelty of the 'joint sector'. He rushed to Moscow, ignored the new Syndicate germinating in the Working Committee of the Indicate, and came back with the well-publicised news that the Soviet leaders had approved his new economic policy, which warranted a departure from the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956. He had become over-confident.

D. P. proved wiser. He imparted to the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 a hundred per cent national content by tagging it to Gandhi and Nehru. In their name it was to continue unaltered and unsullied. As against that the alien blessing secured by Subramaniam proved ineffective. This emerged as the apparent view. Nevertheless he stuck to his guns conceding only this much that if the phrase 'joint sector' caused revulsion in some quarters he had no

any fuss about this would attract nothing but exposure of this scandalous and anti-people reality, and cause great disservice to the private sector. His has been a mere sense perception and to that extent correct. He did not have the intelligence to view a thing in its process, in relation to other things, in its present and its future metamorphosis.

Regarding the differences, the thesis of Dhar, to which Subramaniam presented an anti-thesis, was imparted a synthesis by Mrs Gandhi. Hence a compromise at Gandhinagar, notwithstanding the differences. Dhar conceded a possible change in future and Subramaniam agreed to wait and see the change in favour of the joint sector.

The concept of the joint sector is the product of the prevailing objective reality and its future prospects. What are these? These are the growing economic crisis, which is the product of the policies of the private sector elites and their imperialist masters, notably the U.S. and Russian ones; the latter plundering the national resources between them, and the former squeezing out the last drop of blood of the Indian people for their consolidation and expansion, and the Indira Government setting in operation the entire State machinery, its resources and repressive apparatus, in defence of both, and even then posing as the creator of 'socialism', remover of poverty and friend of the people. While performing these diametrically opposite dual roles, the make-believe task is getting more and more difficult. The joint sector, according to them, if not today, promises a solution of this difficulty in the days ahead.

Specific Features

What are the specific features of the prevailing objective reality in consequence of the growing economic crisis and thorough exposure of yesterday's professions and today's performance of the Indira Congress Government?

Whatever the issues—essentially economic notwithstanding non-econo-

mic forms of some of them—the people are taking to arms, be it the crudest ones. They are no more prepared to court arrest, face lathi-charge, tear-gas and bullets lying down. Secondly most of the resistance movements are spontaneous. Thirdly the youth and students are, in the main, at the head of such movements. There is no organised all-India revolutionary party to provide them a right direction, right programme, broadbased co-ordination and sustaining perseverance.

What are the political parties doing? Take first the Indira Congress. After winning over the CPI, subjugating the CPI(M) and launching full-scale repressive measures against the CPI(ML) and out-Hitlering Hitler in that regard, the Indira-Sharma Congress could not afford to publicise today's reality that these movements were the clearest manifestations of the growing people's wrath and revolt against the Establishment. Then who to make the scapegoat? A ghost that none could see and few believe. The CIA was condemned as the agent-provocateur. The charge was echoed from Moscow. Vajpayee could not sit idle. He discovered another equally ferocious ghost, the KGB. One from the USA and the other from the Soviet Union. Wonderful make-believe by the parties of the ruling classes.

It is before these two imperialist powers that the Ministers have been pleading with begging bowls for aid to impart some lease of life to the otherwise dying and crisis-ridden comprador economy of the country. And these very powers are charged with sabotaging the otherwise sound economic progress! Then look at the ingenuity of a Sirdar Chief Minister, Zail Singh. To him, along with the CIA, the Naxalites, too, have risen from their graves or escaped from detention. Otherwise how could he and his Ashwani Kumar explain their earlier position that the Naxalites had either been killed in police encounters or sent behind bars?

The truth is that all these conco-

tions are bunk. The people have started facing the repression of armed counter-revolution in every corner of the country, but still in corners only. The ruling classes, not satisfied with the competence of Indira's Congress to checkmate the people rising with ghosts and bullets only, have spurred other watchdogs, many opportunistic parties, into action. Who are these and what are they doing?

Right from the CPI(M) to the Swatantra, they are staging Ram Lila and vying with one another in courting arrest for a day or so against the price-rise. Section 144 or ejections etc.; and generating more price-rise, clamping of Section 144 at more places and more and more ejection. That is the end-all and be-all of their revolutionary programme and struggle. Do they mean that by such actions they would dislodge the Ravan-Raj of the Indira-Congress? Even the most orthodox conservatives would not believe it.

The CIA may or may not be agents-provocateurs; but certainly the CPI(M), CPI, Socialists, Republicans etc. are agents-distractors of the revolutionary masses,—the working class, peasantry and student youths—many of whom still harbour revolutionary illusions about them, and but for these parties, could, by virtue of their being an advanced guard, their militancy and youthful revolutionism, provide correct direction, acquired through practice and investigation, to the revolutionary masses taking up arms.

But these opportunists and the ruling party cannot fool the overwhelming majority of the people for all time. This realisation has dawned on the class-conscious comprador bourgeoisie and their masters in Washington and Moscow.

What the Concept Means

Hence the concept of the joint sector. The joint sector is nothing but full-fledged reign of State monopoly capitalism and installation of naked fascist rule, the potentiality of which has not been discernible to

even the CPI(M). To it, notwithstanding (the savage onslaught let loose on it, the Indira Congress manifests only semi-fascist tendencies. To these blind revolutionaries the lives of their cadres are not as precious as the safety of the ballot box. The ruling class can, unlike the so-called revolutionary parties in opposition, foresee the dangers, the danger of armed resistance and revolt, and the danger of a correct and conscious revolutionary direction. Hence the conciliation between Dhar and Subramaniam wrought by Mrs Gandhi. In the absence of revolutionary direction there is no immediate danger: arrests, lathi-charges, a few killings and then magisterial or judicial enquiry after a few transfers and suspensions are sufficient; hence Dhar's presentation could stay.

Despite the fact and the Marxist truth that the State, in a class-society, is, in the final analysis, essentially a force in the hands and service of the ruling classes, the ruling classes pretend that these entities—the ruling class and the ruling apparatus—are two different things, and the State, being an independent force, is the mediator between the ruling and the ruled. This they continue to pretend and practise even after the practical merger of the two entities. Hence this joint sector concept, policy and anxiety for its implementation.

The joint sector will merge the economic resources of the State with those of the Birlas, Tatas etc. The economic merger will give rise to a new politics, the politics of defending the joint sector, imparting sanctity to it, transforming the Birlas etc., through the joint sector philosophy in which the people through their State are collaborators, into people's Birlas, publicising the unjustifiability and futility of struggle and if some people do not fall in line with the propaganda, killing them with repressive machinery of the State; and this would transform fascist repression into people's (State) repression in days ahead, for which the material and philosophical

background is the concept and practical implementation of the joint sector.

When angry masses, whatever the issues, burn buses, loot goods trains, banks, State godowns, stations and post offices, they are condemned by laymen too, as rowdies destroying their own, that is, public property. In the days of the joint sector the field, rather the target of people's anger, will become a thousand times vaster and the layman's innocent reaction will naturally become State religion. People's actions will not be allowed to be even dreamt of; freedom of thought, association and judiciary, whatever their little worth today will be done away with unless the revolutionary masses of the people agree to blunt the edge of class struggle and class consciousness and in submissive sublimation, wrought on them through fascist repression, are convinced that the State is of the whole, people, an old make-believe of the ruling classes in a new garb sought to be thrust on the Indian people with the added embellishment acquired from Moscow where it had been implemented by the Khrushchev clique for the revival of bourgeois rule. In India it is to be experimented with for the survival of the comprador rule, whose end otherwise, if correct revolutionary direction is forthcoming, is too close.

The Indian comprador bourgeoisie, ever since their birth, have been in

the habit of humble submission to foreign imperialists and consequently unbridled exploitation, be it British, American or Russian. They, therefore make good their exploitation by imperialists, by exploiting the helpless Indian people in an unbridled manner. It is in keeping with the popular saying that 'when you are helpless before the donkey-master (washerman) you feel satisfied by boxing the ears of the poor donkey'.

The only source of 'primitive capital' of the old and present-day capital requirements has been the Indian people, fleeced through usury, profiteering, hoarding, intensive and extensive exploitation, tax-evading etc. The Western or developed countries acquired such assets through piracy, plunder, slave trade, exploitation of foreign resources and present-day plunder of developing countries. The past cannot be revived, at present they cannot compete on the world market. Hence they have no *raison d'être*. The capitalist path is no more suitable for any underdeveloped country. Hence Indian capitalists can live and thrive only on the corpses of the Indian people through fascist rule, and the joint sector is the precursor of its full-fledged appearance with a glamour of respectability which the ruling classes expect from innocent people and derailed and disarrayed communists.

Keep Suez Closed

TALIB YOUNIS

THE so-called International oil Industry which is a term used to cover international oil activity outside North American and the socialist countries is effectively controlled by seven giant companies known, in oil terminology, as the 'international majors'. These companies are responsible for something like 80% of all oil production in the world outside the socialist countries

and North America. They also own, or control, over 70% of the total refining capacity, and in addition, they operate, through long-term charter, more than 50% of the internationally operating tankers tonnage. Five of these seven international majors have their headquarters as well as the overwhelming majority of their shareholders in the United States. These five oil companies effectively

control the production, distribution and marketing of oil from the producing countries to Western Europe and other oil-consuming areas. In this process the Middle East holds the greatest share of oil production and oil reserve. For, despite discoveries in other parts of the world, the Middle East, not counting Algeria and Libya, still holds by far the greatest reserves, namely 33.9 billion tons out of 56.8 billion tons, or 59.8 percent (1967) of world oil.

Investment by American oil firms in Arab Middle East oil has been conservatively estimated to be something like \$3 billion, with profit amounting to \$1 billion for the year 1967. The United States Government has always considered it its national responsibility to protect this vast investment and react to any threat against it by foreign Governments.

To what extent has the closure of the Suez Canal affected, favourably or adversely, American oil interests in the area? Rather than give an answer to the above question, it is perhaps more relevant to quote a report issued by *Petroleum Intelligence Weekly* (Oct. 30, 1967). The report stated that "Esso recorded almost 16 percent higher profits in the July-September period of that year (1967) than a year earlier. ESSO's third quarter profits were \$351 million some \$43 million above the same three-months period a year earlier. The boost in ESSO's profits was due not only to its higher U.S. production but also to a 250,000 b/d boost in its production in Venezuela". What the report tries to indicate is that the closure of the Suez Canal has led to a greater demand on 'native' American oil as well as oil produced in Venezuela. As production cost in both American and Venezuelan oil is much higher than that of oil produced in the Middle East (the difference in fact being \$-10 a ton extra, the higher price rise was borne by Western European consumers. After visiting Egypt in January (1969), Goronwy Roberts, Minister of State at the British Foreign Office, said that

the 18 months during which the Suez Canal had been closed had cost Western Europe £600 million and that Britain alone had lost £200 million. The United States 'native' companies had been able, meanwhile, to increase their net profit by 17% to 28%, which was two or three times the normal growth rate. A report by the Bureau of Mines of the Department of the Interior was noted by the bulletin of the U.S. oil industry, "Platt's Oilgram", in its January 2nd, 1968 issue which stated that the "U.S. crude production in 1967, stimulated by the Middle East crisis, gained 5.8 percent to 3.2 billion barrels, valued at \$9.36 billion for average of \$2.92 per barrel, compared with \$2.88 in 1966, according to year-end review by Bureau of Mines." But as the transportation of Middle East oil round the Cape was gradually beginning to get normalised, there was a drop in the demand for American 'native oil and the boom began to decline. But the expansion in demand for the U.S. 'majors' continued throughout 1968 and 1969. Thus while the profit of the U.S. 'native' oil producers went up by 3% for 1968, the profit of the U.S. 'majors' went up by 10% and that of Royal Dutch Shell by 15%. Furthermore, in the first 18 months since the June 1967 war, the profits of the Big Five shot up from \$4,600 million to \$5,500 million, that is, by almost \$1,000 million. All this seems to lead to the conclusion that the June war and the consequent closure of the Suez Canal have both led to the creation of a situation whereby it would seem to be economically advantageous for the United States to keep things as they are and to refrain from pushing too hard towards any settlement that is likely to change the status quo.

The second important consideration which is also connected with the closure of the Suez Canal is a political one which is directly related to U.S. regional and, ultimately its global, strategy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. In simple terms the whole thing basically centres round the

question whether a peaceful settlement leading to the re-opening of the Suez Canal serves to enhance United States strategic interests in the area. One way of arguing this is to examine the importance of the Suez Canal from Russia's point of view.

Russia's Viewpoint

The Russians' drive for warm-water ports and outlets to the oceans can be dated as far back as the mid-1950's, and the present naval build-up goes back to 1964 when it was decided that a Mediterranean unit was to be established as part of the Black Sea Fleet. Later developments indicate that the Soviet Union was evolving a naval strategy which was better suited for her image as a super-power. According to Admiral Kasatonov, First Deputy Commander-Chief of the Navy, such a "modern ocean-going nuclear rocket fleet should be capable of solving strategic tasks of an offensive character in modern warfare." This implies a desire by the U.S.S.R. naval strategists to confront U.S. naval hegemony in most maritime areas and in particular in the Mediterranean, and hence contribute to the emergence of a Russian naval presence aiming at establishing regional balances in strategically importance areas. In this way the Russians can hope to be placed in positions whereby they could challenge the U.S. from taking unopposed actions against States friendly to the U.S.S.R. Another important consideration behind the U.S.S.R.'s greater development of her naval power seems to be related to her desire to secure better protection of her expanding merchant fleet.

The volume and world-wide activities of the fleet is a clear indication of Russia's determination to challenge markets and areas of rich natural resources, hitherto dominated by Western monopolies. In fact between 1964-1967 the Soviet merchant fleet increased its tonnage from 6,958 to 10,617 thousand gross tons, and early in 1966 Russia was known to have one of the fastest growing

merchant fleets which, judged by the criterion of its present rate of growth, would probably pass the U.S. in tonnage in the middle seventies. In addition, Russia's 4,000 fishing vessels and 200 oceanographic ships, are the largest and most modern fleet for fishing and scientific research.

Other considerations, which might be relevant to the recent Soviet naval build-up, are:

i) Russia's attempt to establish a defensive zone against Western strategic attack,

ii) An attempt to establish a reciprocal offensive-defensive nuclear threat to the West, and

iii) A positive support to Russia's world-wide diplomacy.

Soviet naval deployment in the Mediterranean seemed to have coincided with the Arab-Israeli war in June 1967. In the critical period which immediately preceded the outbreak of hostilities, Russia demanded and obtained the permission for ten of her ships to pass through the Turkish straits into the Mediterranean. Since then, the number seems to have been around 40 ships including the occasional appearance of the helicopter carrier Moskva.

The strategic significance of this presence can be appreciated by relating its impact on NATO and the newly emerging balance in the area. Judged by a purely military criterion the Soviet fleet is clearly inferior to NATO's most powerful arm, the American Sixth Fleet. The fleet has a normal force of 50 ships (which include attack carrier striking force (FT 60), Amphibious force (TF 61), a Marine force (TF 62), a Service force (TF 63) as well as attack submarines and ballistic missile submarines, and something like 25,000 men and 260 aircraft. Militarily speaking, therefore, in the event of a direct conflict between NATO and WARSAW pact nations which falls short of a nuclear war, change the over-all strategic picture. In the event of such conventional warfare, the Soviet fleet might attack NATO carriers with a limited chance

of success. The most decisive feature in such an eventuality, however, would be a campaign with the socialist forces having the upper-hand on land against the southern flank, and naval forces of both sides having no more than a marginal role to play.

It is important to point out, in addition, that any comparison between the Russian Mediterranean fleet and the American Sixth Fleet would clearly favour the latter with its two powerful aircraft carriers, each supplied with 100 strike aircraft. The American Sixth Fleet has an additional advantage in the form of its Polaris submarines, an advantage further enhanced by the Soviet fleet's lack of sufficient air cover. Equally important is the fact that the Soviet Union has no direct control over her three points of access—the Straits of Gibraltar, the Dardanelles and the Suez Canal. What seems to be of direct relevance to the present study is the role which the Suez Canal plays in Russian strategic thinking not only in the Middle East but also in the Mediterranean area in general.

The Soviet Union's global strategy includes seeking the friendship of South Asian countries, particularly India. Such a role cannot possibly be fulfilled while the Suez Canal remains closed. The closure of the Canal has also created new problems for the Soviet Union. Russia's arms deliveries to North Vietnam have now to go round the Cape of Good Hope, or across the Trans-Siberian Railway. Russia's apatite ore (for fertilisers) which she imports from North Vietnam, as well as her exports to the Far East from the Black Sea have to go through the same route which is as long as it could possibly be. For example the supply route from Odessa to North Vietnam has been doubled in length. More significant, perhaps are Russia's difficulties concerning her attempts to bolster her presence in the Indian Ocean by supplying warships and vessels. As things are, such reinforcements will have to use the Cape

route. A re-opened Canal will greatly stimulate Russia's East-of-Suez policy and add to its mobility. It will greatly facilitate Russia's interest to play a part in Indo-Pakistani politics as well as in the affairs of the Persian Gulf. A wider objective would be an attempt to encourage an Asian collective security system (to keep China's influence out), and perhaps to try to keep level with Western influence in the area. But such ambitious plans cannot be considered in isolation. They have to be considered, inevitably, within the context of super-power rivalry in the area. This implies simply the proposition that any strategic gain for one super-power represents, in the final analysis, a net loss to the other. In other words a strategic gain for the Soviet Union (facilitated by re-opening the Suez Canal) would, by definition, lead to a local strategic loss for the United States. This would seem to lead logically to the conclusion that considering the Russian pressure in the Mediterranean, United States' strategic interests would be better served by keeping the Suez Canal closed.

The over-all conclusion, regarding the interplay of super-power politics in the Middle East region, in the post-1967-war era, would seem to indicate that United States' commercial as well as strategic interests are definitely furthered by keeping the Suez Canal closed in a 'no-war-no-peace' state of affairs, which if pursued to its logical conclusion would suggest that the U.S., motivated by the above, would be perfectly happy to be the new status quo (arising from the outcome of the June war of 1967), maintained with a new de facto political reality emerging as a result.

For Frontier contact
People's Book House
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Fort, Bombay

In Defence Of Bacchus *Clippings*

MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY

STANLEY Kramer's recent film *The Secret of Santa Vittoria*, a light-hearted comedy, is a surprise departure from the serious tone of his earlier films like *Judgement at Nuremberg*, a double-edged indictment of Nazi brutalities and the smug display of superiority by the victors, and *The Defiant Ones*, a perceptive study of human relationships between two fugitives from justice, one coloured and another white. The theme here is war, but minus the concomitant blood and gore. The locale is a small town in northern Italy and the heroes are the people who are up to anything to save their cellars and the grape orchards from the ravages of the war. The leader of this crusade in defence of Bacchus is the booze-happy mayor of the town (a superb larger-than-life portrayal by Anthony Quinn), often harassed by a Xanthippe-type Anna Magnani. Kramer's imaginative power is evident in his faithful and sympathetic depiction of the languid, sleepy nature of the Latin people with their characteristic fascination for wine and women. Slightly reminiscent of Compton Mackenzie's *Whisky Galore*, the film beautifully captures the comic frenzy of a small town out to save its national honour from the invading army and its manoeuvres, muddle and madness follow each other in an incessant out-pour of clean fun.

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Foreign Investment

K. S. SANGHA

Over the past two decades there has been a precipitous increase in the U.S. direct investments abroad. In 1950 total direct investments in other countries amounted to \$11.5 billion, rising to \$34.7 billion in 1961, and to \$71 billion in 1969. During 1970, according to the Department of Commerce's *Survey of Current Business*, total U.S. direct investments in foreign countries rose by a record \$7.1 billion to \$78.1 billion. It is estimated that at the present time the U.S., Japanese, and the Western European international corporations own or directly control roughly 25 per cent of the financial resources of the underdeveloped countries (including Canada).

One of the major reasons for the rapid growth of the U.S. investments abroad is the relatively higher rate of return on overseas capital investment. Statistics reveal that the rate of return on foreign investments in the extra-active industries (mainly petroleum) is substantially higher than in manufacturing. It is estimated that in 1970 petroleum accounted for 40 per cent of the total U.S. direct investments abroad as against only 24 per cent in manufacturing. Since the bulk of the U.S. investments in petroleum is in the countries of underdeveloped regions, the rate of investment profit from the less developed countries is bound to be far in excess of the rate of return in manufacturing which are largely concentrated in the countries of Western Europe and in Canada. For instance, in 1970 the average rate of return on U.S. investments in the less developed countries was 21 per cent, which is roughly twice the yield rate on U.S. investments in the developed countries. Or, take another example with respect to the relatively higher rate of profit from investments in the less developed countries. In

1958, the Union Carbide (60 per cent American-owned) made a net profit after taxes of 26.4 per cent in India, while at home its rate of profit was only 11.2 per cent. Likewise, the Indian Aluminium (65 per cent Canada-owned) made 23.3 per cent profit in 1950 whereas its rate of profit from home investment was merely 4.8 per cent. Take another example. In 1964 the following were the rates of return on book value of the U.S. direct investments overseas: Canada 8.5 per cent; Europe 10.8 per cent; Latin America 12.7 per cent; Africa 26.1 per cent; and Asia 38.2 per cent. These figures lend support to the argument why the multinational corporations of the industrial capitalist nations have sought to spread their capital far and wide. To be sure, the prospects of lucrative foreign business explains to a large extent the present policies of the investing nations to support counter-insurgency in various parts of the world in the name of "safeguarding national security".

The United States in the past has adopted various measures designed to protect private investment capital abroad against expropriation, nationalisation, and confiscation. The U.S. Agency for International Development, keeping in mind the interests of the international business community, has a guaranty programme to encourage the movement of U.S. capital abroad. The guaranty covers losses to the U.S. multinational corporations from straightforward nationalisation and in some cases includes breach of contract by the foreign governments. In case a U.S. firm is not paid a satisfactory compensation for a "lawful" expropriation, the Agency provides for equalising differences. The foreign investors are also given risk guaranties against currency inconvertibility, thus assuring the investors 95 per cent of the U.S. dollar that they would have obtained in exchange for local currency at the exchange rate pertaining at the time the transaction was concluded. The purpose of this subsidy is to encourage the U.S. cor-

porate capital in other parts of the world. In effect, the scope of the guaranty goes beyond this, and covers wars, insurrection, and revolutions by the "hostile" national or international organised forces.

... One of the alleged benefits of foreign investments, constantly put forth by the protagonists of foreign capital, is that they contribute to net capital formation in the host countries. In reality, however, the reverse is true, in that the ultimate outcome of investments of the industrial capitalist nations is a negative capital formation. This is because the Western industrial countries take more out of the host countries in the form of repatriated investment profits than they put into the economies of the receiving countries in the form of direct investments. Take for example the U.S. direct investments in Latin America. In the past decade the Latin American countries received from the United States an average of \$235 million annually in new direct investments (excluding reinvested earnings) as against \$1,000 million per year in profit repatriation from Latin America to the United States. This is tantamount to surreptitious plunder of the resources of the Latin American continent by a handful of multi-national corporations of the United States. How does this affect the national economies of Latin America? For one thing, at the present time it is estimated that the United States business corporations own approximately \$12 billion in direct investments in Latin America; the U.S.-owned companies account for one-third of Latin America's exports, one-fifth of its tax revenues, and at least one-tenth of its gross national product. As a general rule, for every \$1 received in investment, a Latin American nation may lose \$2 to \$3 in profit outflow to the investing country. For example, in Chile, between 1943 and 1958 private foreign investments from the industrial countries amounted to about \$250 million as against the repatriated profit of \$600 million to

the investing nations in the same period.

Colonialism as we have known it over the past centuries had ended at the termination of World War II; however economic colonialism in a new guise still seems to be growing. ... In Africa, for example, the "foreign enclave"—meaning the extent to which foreigners own Africa's wealth—has been firmly entrenched in the past two decades. In 1950 the share of "foreign enclave" in the gross national product of the Sub-Sahara economy of Africa was estimated at 20 per cent, but by 1967 it had gone up to 41 per cent.

... Small wonder that the financial flow of capital in the name of "developmental assistance" from the capitalist nations has not benefited the less developed nations; on the other hand, it may have been detrimental to the cause of development. ... The most serious ill-effect of the private foreign investments is in the decapitalisation of the host economies by the profit-hungry investors.

What can the receiving nations do to stem the fearless invasion and possible take-over of their resources by the investing nations? This question is of paramount importance to the less developed countries where positive capital formation is a sine qua non of industrial progress. At least two major steps can be taken by the less developed countries to ameliorate the existing conditions: One, these countries should gain strong and decisive control over the allocation of foreign investment funds. The present tendency on the part of foreign investors is to put in their funds in the extractive industries (where the profit rate is high) rather than in manufacturing (where the profit rate is low). Past experience, however, shows that a nation can achieve the goal of rapid industrialisation only through enhancing its stock of capital in the heavy manufacturing industries rather than in the primary producing industries. Two, the less developed countries must impose statutory limits on the repatriation of investment

profits by the industrial nations.

... In conclusion, it may be said that private foreign investments can never be a substitute for domestically-created investment in human and capital resources. In order to enhance its stock of capital, to augment productive capacity, and to create basis for self-perpetual growth, it is imperative that a nation seeks self-sufficiency at home by restructuring its political, economic, and social institutions. If the need is not met by available domestic resources, then foreign capital can make a positive contribution to economic growth provided the foreign investors do not consider the host countries as a hunting ground for profits.

(From *Industrial Times*)

Letter

The Language Problem In Assam

Your editorial of the November 4, "Language and Politics", echoes the words of an editorial of a well-known capitalist paper, *The Statesman* ("Recklessness in Assam, 8.10.72). Although you do not claim to be a Marxist, is an objective analysis of a situation also taboo to you?

The present language issue in Assam certainly has many complex forces involved in it and many reactionary elements are undoubtedly taking the upper hand and strengthening their ranks. There is also no denying the fact that communalism stems from the tide of a people's revolution. But, all these facts accepted, one cannot deny that the Assamese people have some very strong legitimate grievances against those forces that have been trying to deny them their identity in their own State. You in your editorial are so concerned about the rights of the Bengali-speaking minority. But should that prevent you from taking into account the rights and aspirations of the majority?

Assam is unlucky in having as neighbours two Bengali-speaking areas West Bengal and East Pakistan (now

Bangladesh) which are eternally trouble-ridden for various reasons. As a result, Assam which has predominantly been the home of non-Aryan races, has been engulfed by millions of Bengali immigrants pouring in from both West and East Bengal in search of fertile land and lucrative jobs. Not only as a result of British policy to encourage Bengali intellectuals to dominate Assam, but also after 1947 waves of Bengali immigrants poured into the State from the then East Pakistan. The Indian Government had raised enough hue and cry over the thousands of "Pak infiltrators" into Assam in the last decade. But, now after the creation of Bangladesh, that cry has suddenly stopped.

So, now, Assam has become "a land of immigrants" for no fault of her own, and her original population is now faced with the fact of becoming a minority in their own State. (The same process has been continuing in Tripura where the tribals are now said to have been badly outnumbered by immigrant Bengalis). Naturally, the people of Assam are at present terribly panicky of losing their own identity permanently if at least their language is not established as the sole medium of instruction. This, you and others like you may dismiss as mere chauvinism. But those who have identified themselves with the aspirations of the oppressed tribes and peoples of this State, will see in the language problem the genuine discontent against a government which has virtually made a colony of this beautiful, rich land which produces almost all the oil and tea of India and yet pays the highest prices for these commodities. Assam has not only become a fertile colonial hinterland for the rest of India economically, but even culturally it has been dominated by the "outsiders" ever since the late Aryanization of this State. The Bengalis, as is well known, came to Assam with the British, mainly to facilitate the running of the British administrative machinery by filling in the white-collared jobs. Later, they were encouraged by the British to capture the

whole intellectual sphere of the State and the Assamese caste Hindus felt flattered to adopt Bengali culture, as a means of pleasing the British masters. Thus, under the British, Assam became a virtual colony of Bengal and the interests of the original people of the State were totally submerged to that of enriching the pockets of the colonisers and their lackeys.

The struggle of the people of Assam has been a long-standing one of establishing their national identity in the face of Bengali colonisation in the social, economic and cultural sphere. In this respect one may dig up innumerable examples of Bengali resistance to any attempts on the part of the Assamese people to establish a separate identity. Ever since the time when Bengali was imposed on Assam as the official language by the British, till the forties when the Bengalis of Assam led by those of Sylhet (which was then a part of Assam) put up stiff resistance to the establishment of Gauhati University, one notices now the white-collared middle-class Bengalis here have doggedly set themselves against all local interests of the State.

Even the so-called Bengali Leftists in Assam are not free from this age-old high-handed attitude of cultural, colonisation and of delivering a revolution born in Bengal to the "backward" tribes of this State! As late as last year, Bengal's great 'Left' leader, Jyoti Basu, opposed the opening of a tea-auction centre in Assam because Bengali employees in Calcutta would face employment problems! No wonder the Assamese people mistrust all Marxists as "Bengali or Bengali-inspired opportunists" and one might safely guess that this might be one reason why the communist movement has not been able to make much headway in this State.

It is significant that the Marxist parties in Assam have seldom supported popular issues like the oil-refinery movement which was a mass movement to some extent. Even in the present language issue the left parties have sadly lost the faith of the people by failing to analyse the causes

of the movement and echoing blindly the words of the Calcutta 'high command'. Some Left intellectuals of Assam have even gone to the extent of saying that all left and progressive ideas come to Assam through Bengal! We, however, prefer to say that it is the east of Assam that is red and the revolutionary sun is in the east.

I am a regular reader of *Frontier* but your editorial and articles published on the language issue in Assam have sadly disillusioned me and my friends. It appears that even you cannot escape certain emotionalism characteristic of your class. Like others you have focussed on the "arson, molestation, looting and murder committed on the linguistic minorities. One cannot deny that many unpleasant incidents have taken place. But you seem to imply that the Bengalis are the innocent victims of Assamese violence whereas, in almost all the cases of violence, the provocations have come from the Bengalis. It was only after a teenage boy, Muzzamil Haque, had been beaten to death by some Bengali shopkeepers of Kharupetia and the General Secretary of Nowgong College Students Union, Sri Anil Bora, was brutally tortured, and killed and his dead boy beheaded and hidden by some Bengali miscreants of Hojai in collaboration with some Bengali police officers, that the basically anti-government movement turned into a communal riot. But even then, any objective reviewer of the situation would agree that what happened in Assam is in no way comparable to the innumerable communal riots taking place all over India every year.

Communal disturbances strengthen the hands of the reactionary forces and create confusion among the masses. Therefore all such movements are basically anti-people. But that does not mean that the revolutionary forces should either sit tight or side with one section and condemn another. One should be brave enough to analyse the root causes clearly and be objective.

TARULATA DOLEY
Sibsagar, Assam
NOVEMBER 25, 1972

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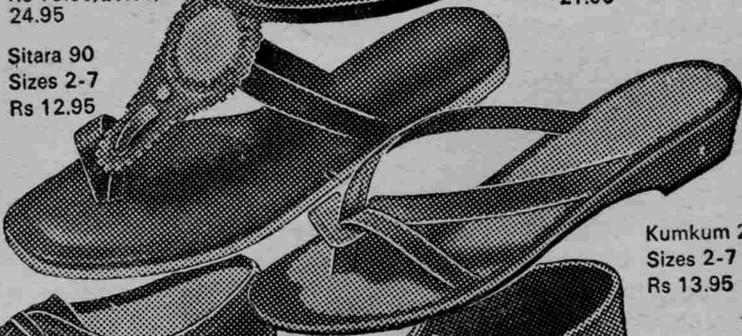
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