

frontier

Vol. 7: No. 34

DECEMBER 14, 1974

PRICE: 50 PAISE

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PRINTED AT MODERN INDIA PRESS,
7, RAJA SUBODH MULLICK SQUARE,
CALCUTTA-13 AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY
FOR GERMINAL PUBLICATIONS (P) LTD.
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VICIOUS DUPLICITY

THE significance of Parliament's preoccupation for more than three weeks with smugglers and the protagonists of the import licence scandal cannot be missed. Haji Mastans and Tul Mohan Rams are able representatives of the new class that the Congress Government has spawned in twenty-seven years of uninterrupted misrule at the Centre. The guilts of the prototypes have not been established yet in any court of law; we have only the Government's word for it that Haji is an arch-smuggler and Mr Ram is a multi-dimensional criminal who wheedled the Government into issuing import licences in favour of certain firms which did not qualify for them and under provisions that were abolished twelve years ago. It does not really matter, though, for these names connote not so much individuals as the widening circle of racketeers manipulators and fixers who dominate our socialistic pattern of society. Their associates and protectors are in the Government itself; that is why smugglers cannot be tried in courts of law and the report of the Central Bureau of Investigation on the import licence scandal cannot be placed before Parliament.

The Government's duplicity will be revealed in all its viciousness if its attitudes over these two different types of economic offences are compared. It amended by an ordinance the Maintenance of Internal Security Act to detain suspected smugglers without trial. And when courts released some of the detenus, because the grounds of detention were vague or carelessly drawn, it promulgated a Presidential order to take all such cases out of the purview of courts. Both are aimed at putting the judiciary in its place and this will have been sanctified by parliamentary endorsement when the ordinance becomes an Act of Parliament. If in the case of smugglers Parliament is being invoked to lend respectability to the executive decision to erode the authority of courts, over the import licence scandal the Government is invoking courts to curb the rights of Parliament. Its contention that presentation of the CBI report to Parliament will prejudice courts is a mock obeisance to the judiciary; its concern is an inimitable piece of hypocrisy. The Government is using Parliament to cut down the judiciary to size, it is invoking the independence of the judiciary to curtail the rights of Parliament. It would not have done so if it had any respect for either.

In the din of the battle of rights in Parliament the Opposition seems to have forgotten that the CBI is a wing of the Union Home Ministry and therefore a tool of the executive Government. Is not subservience to persons in authority inbuilt in the organisation? Can it dare to report against

powerful Ministers and their accomplices? The strict impartiality of the CBI may be a myth carefully fostered by the Government of which the Opposition has been an easy dupe. Maybe the Government's reluctance to place the CBI report on the Tul Mohan Ram case in Parliament was wholly simulated; its only purpose was to help the impression gain ground that to get at the truth behind the import licence scandal that CBI had spared none and its report contained the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It seems the Government has succeeded in its scheme, and the Opposition will be a prisoner of its professions if the CBI

report is found to have fixed the guilt on small fry and cleared the big fish of direct or conscious complicity. It is one thing to insist on Parliament's right of access to the CBI report, and it is quite another to concede that the report is free and untutored and undoctored. The second cannot be a corollary of the first. And, then, are we to believe that all this tremendous fuss in Parliament is all that matters at this moment in this wretched country? Have both the Government and the Opposition decided to divert attention from the painful realities that haunt the millions?

Manipur : The Looming Crisis

A correspondent writes:

Now that the Congress sniping has succeeded in setting up a new Ministry in Manipur, it is pertinent to look back to New Delhi's record in the sensitive region of the North Eastern Frontier which Nari K. Rustomji aptly called the Enchanted Frontiers (OUP publication, 1971). Referring to Sir Akbar Hydari's death he wrote that it was not until ten years later that the Naga hills were granted Central Administration, after the embitterment of prolonged military operations. By then, he said, the gift had lost its grace, and the feeling among the Nagas was that they had won their new status through their own doggedness in the field rather than from any sympathetic or enlightened approach on the part of the Government and people of India. Sir Akbar was succeeded by Sri Prakasa, and, within little over a year, he was succeeded by Jairamdas Daulatram. It was unfortunate that, during the crucial period when far-reaching decisions were to be taken regarding the future of the hill areas, there were as many as five changes in the office of the Governor and almost as many in the office of the Secretary. There could be thus little continuity, Mr Rustomji went on, or consistency of policy, and there was a tendency to allow things to drift in the fond hope that they would solve themselves. "The Nagas had been demanding... that all the Naga tribes,

whether in Assam, NEFA, Manipur, or Burma, should be constituted as a separate single unit, and this demand of theirs still stands".

The drift of the fifties has not been replaced by anything sane or stable. Take Manipur. It has been alternating between President's Rule and short-lived ministries. New Delhi is hell bent on forcing its own will on the people there. If balked, it will let the devil take over, rather than gracefully withdraw in favour of the locally emergent aspirations and realities asserting themselves. This is what has happened in Imphal at last. The Congress High Command had no reputation for respecting the niceties of the parliamentary game. It has refused to concede a non-Congress Chief Minister's prerogative to choose his team. That it joined hands with a discredited politician and his none-too-reputable group in the Assembly to pull off the legislative coup in Imphal bespeaks its cynical craze for power at any cost.

Nobody in the Congress gave a second thought to the short or long term implications of the goings on in Manipur. With Mizoram at the threshold of a renewed ferment, with the Vizol Government in Nagaland suspected of being velvet-loved to the underground by New Delhi, with the Bodos getting martyred for demanding Roman as their script in Assam, and all this in the wake of Sik-

most propitious time when New Delhi could risk adding to the ranks of its opponents and dissidents. Nationally and internationally, it is taking on a little too much for its ingenuity if not resources. If it counts on its military muscles for a levelling off of discontent this is plainly a desperate resort to State gangsterism, which it has practised elsewhere. If it intends carrying on by ordinances and President's Rule, then of course parliamentarism in India must be seen to have pandered to the Congress passion for authoritarianism through the camouflaged claws of a certain brand of democracy.

In February, the Christian Nagas, a huge number, are meeting in a conclave in Ukhrul (Manipur). Naga participants will come from NEFA, Arunachal, Meghalaya, Nagaland, besides those from abroad. The engineered fall of the Naga-headed Ministry in Manipur could not have occurred at a more inopportune time. After a long and patient wait, the frustrated Nagas must now feel, unreasonably, impelled to ready a response to New Delhi's mayhem. It will be New Delhi to blame if the Nagas renew the call and intensify the campaign for integration, for that alone would now seem to assure them of their identity and self-respect. They have had a far too blatantly raw deal for far too long both from New Delhi and Imphal. The Meiteis have thrown away the last chance given them. The Nagas hereafter cannot be accused, in Manipur, of not having done their very best to bend their will to national interests. The same cannot be said of the Meiteis or New Delhi. The mandarins of the two capitals are going to have an uneasy time ahead what with their intrigues and infractions. Besides instability, Manipur is in for worse things in the future. Now that modesty has failed, mutations are inescapable.

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For Bigger Pastures

Taking advantage of the corrupt administration, the monopolists in this country are vigorously attacking, from a position of strength, the regulating powers of the Government. The performance of the public sector has been miserably poor thanks to official inefficiency and corruption. Now that the infrastructure facilities for development of other industries are in acute short supply, the monopolists are demanding a wider scope for expansion, higher prices and lesser controls.

The controls are being eroded for quite a while and farther liberation is on the way. The Finance Minister told the Lok Sabha during the last session that the Government was reconsidering prices and control measures. Of course, all for the sake of production and to check inflation. In a group discussion on the concentration of economic power and role of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act on November 5, where the Finance Minister was himself present, Mr Bharat Ram mounted a direct attack, saying that the time had come for relaxation of various restrictions on big industrial houses under the Act. The Chairman of the Monopolies Commission was frank. He emphasised that the Constitution would have to be amended to prevent concentration of economic power. The amendment of the MRTP Act would serve no purpose. He added that the Commission's work did not, and would not, come in the way of expansion of larger houses if it was considered that expansion was "in the public interest".

Everything seems to be in the public interest in the eyes of the Congress Government: the textile company of a monopoly house is allowed to expand in metal products, the Tatas would be allowed to gatecrash into leather manufacturing, a foreign monopoly tobacco company to expand in fishery and the hotel business and so on. The monopoly houses over the past two decades expanded remarkably not by asserting their rights under the Constitution only, but also through the active financial and economic support of the Government

and the party in power. These houses have been expanding their assets at the rate of 10 per cent annually over the years. In the four years from 1970 to 1973, the top 20 houses were granted 273 licences and 159 letters of intent. Thus it is not that they were not getting anything under the Government's regulatory system which in any

case was not sincerely implemented. Nevertheless, they are attacking their own Government first, to absolve themselves of the responsibility for the present economic mess, and secondly, to try to make ineffective any control and regulation which may come in their way.

Between CPM And CITU

A correspondent writes:

Readers of **Sramik Andolan** have been surprised at the appearance of a box of quotations from the work of communist theoreticians in the latest issue. The magazine is the mouthpiece of the CPI(M)-affiliated Centre of Indian Trade Unions. It contains news of CPI(M)-inspired movements in the industrial sector all over India and some information on labour trends abroad. In the past, no issue contained such a set of quotations.

The publishers have offered no explanation for the change, which however, is indicative of a shift of political emphasis within the CPI(M). A confidential document criticising the party's work in the trade unions has been circulated by Mr P. Sundaryya, with tacit support from Mr Promode Das Gupta, the ever-irritable State Secretary of the party. The charge against the CITU leaders is that they had neglected the political education of their supporters and followers. As a result, the latter are only insufficiently politicised.

What this really means is that the party leadership has begun an offensive against the trade union leadership, because of its criticism of the party's gradual pro-Soviet shift, its failure to give protection to field workers and to handle and accommodate inner-party critics, its attempts to control the work of all mass front organisations at every opportunity—the catalogue of party crimes, indeed, is a long one. The CPI(M)'s image is now social democratic rather than revolutionary. Till recently the leadership was chary of firing a broadside against the trade union leaders, not certain of the possible repercussions it

might have. Now the uncertainties are over; the expelled or suspended dissidents have not proved to be the force the party apprehended they might become: so the offensive

To their credit, the trade union leaders have refused to surrender. They have, to a man, challenged the Sundaryya document. The inner-party debate became so bitter that eventually Mr Jyoti Basu, that master of compromise, was called in to give a hearing to the trade union leaders. He remained characteristically noncommittal. On the one hand, he expressed mild criticism of the party's trade union work; on the other, he asked the trade union leaders to give the new proposals at least a trial for some period.

Clearly, this would have never happened if the leadership of any other party-affiliated mass organisation were concerned. Trade union leaders are in a favoured category, as the unions are the main arm of any working class party. They are also important for the party's finances. The leaders of the student and youth organisations have degenerated into a rather faded carbon copy of the party leadership already, with individual student leaders even trying to copy the

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mannerisms and direction of the party leaders.

If the intention of the party leadership was to scare the trade union leaders into tame submission, the move has failed. Politically, too, it has proved injudicious, as it has only increased the dissatisfaction within the trade union leadership and caused further dissension within the ranks.

Meanwhile, the dissidents are gathering strength in many areas. Many local committees are finding it difficult to work because of their resistance. A few days back, even Mr Jyoti Basu, probably the most heavily guarded Marxist leader east of Suez, was surrounded by a group of dissidents while on his way to a meeting in south 24-Parganas. The dissidents raised slogans against the CPI(M) leaders. They apprehend, however, that their parent organisation might hit back at them in the same way it dealt with the Naxalites—by liquidating them.

Lately, party leaders have developed the habit of not keeping their appointment with their cadres, apprehending inconvenient questions—this is not entirely unexpected in the present situation. The latest joke within the CPI(M) is: "If you want to know what is going on among ourselves, read the bourgeois newspapers; if you want to know what Promode Das Gupta did last Sunday, read the *Ganashakti*."

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Western 'Aid' To Bangladesh

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ON October 24 and 25 representatives of 26 countries and international institutions convened in Paris as the Aid Consortium for Bangladesh. The Paris conference signalled a new chapter in the young history of this nation. Until recently Bangladesh has opposed the formation of such a consortium, since several government quarters feared that such a consortium would be a source of economic pressure on the policy of the Awami League Government.

The meeting of 'benevolent' governments in Paris also added a new superlative to the series of special characteristics of Bangladesh. Aside from being the most corrupt, the poorest, and most densely populated country of the world, Bangladesh now has become the country with the biggest Aid Consortium ever convened by the World Bank.

In view of the fact that Western (and now almost some oil-producing countries) are preparing to provide Bangladesh again with large-scale 'aid' and 'assistance', it is necessary to retrospect on the two years of Western aid policy towards Bangladesh. For it seems strange that Bangladesh, in spite of the billions of dollars of foreign aid which it received, is at this moment, caught in a very serious, almost 'permanent' crisis. The whole country shows a picture of hunger and misery, and it is expected that several hundreds of thousands of people will perish before the harvesting of the winter crops.

There can be no doubt that the primary responsibility for this crisis should be borne by the new class of merchants and traders who since the end of 1971 have dominated the life of Bangladesh. Nevertheless one wonders whether the causes of this crisis are purely an internal, domestic matter. Is it possible that the 'wave' of foreign aid has anything to do with the present disaster?

The truth is that 'relief' and development assistance have been accomplices

of the generators of the crisis, since these in general have contributed to the rise of the merchant class, and stimulated the growing gap between the rich and poor. To make this clear we need to take a look at the ways in which 'aid' has been given to Bangladesh by Western governments during the last two and a half years.

The Stage of Relief

In the first two years of its existence Bangladesh received around two billion dollars of foreign 'aid'. Most observers (including many high officials of foreign charity organisations) agree that the overwhelming majority of that aid has not reached the common man but has served as an 'economic cushion' for the government of Mujibur Rahman, his party, the Awami League.¹ The reasons for this state of affairs are noted not only in the character of this Government and of the upper class of society, but as much in the manner in which Western countries have extended their 'charitable' arms to Bangladesh.

Within the shortest possible time Bangladesh was flooded with 'relief' and foreign 'relief organisations' (American, British, Canadian, etc.). In 1973 there were more than 50 of these organisations—all bringing their own goods and materials. In the first stage, 'aid' was predominantly 'relief'—that is to say, the foreign charity organisations considered the need and distress to be of such proportions that they were not concerned with programmes for long-term social and economic development.

Looking back at that initial period, the first thing to be marked is that the distress and misery of that time was vastly exaggerated. In 1972 there certainly was no famine, and in such a situation the free distribution of food and other goods had all kinds of 'side-effects'. The aid thus has had completely different consequences from the easing of distress.

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In the first place, many organisations together with their 'relief' brought a lot of corruption into the country. Charity and bribes, luxury and corruption, very often go hand in hand. Together with charity—Western cars, refrigerators, bottles of coca-cola, powdered-coffee, etc. arrived. The luxurious way of living of many foreigners in Bangladesh did not quite temper the greed of the Bengali middle class and the rising bourgeoisie.

Another aspect of the charity is the creation of needs and wants among the rich, upper classes of the population. This is done in a very clever way, through the 'import' of all kinds of novelties and the free distribution of articles like baby food, plastic packing, cleaning material, the import of thousands of Japanese Toyotas 'to transport relief-goods', etc.

Furthermore, many goods were simply surpluses which Western countries could not use any more. Of course, it is quite possible that many of the useless materials which entered (and still enter) the country have been sent with good intention. It is nevertheless a fact that even now there are piles of seeds, odd kinds of medicines, food products of various types—all surpluses which do not respond in any sense to the requirements, the needs, of the masses of the people. Many officials of relief organisations admit openly that they are simply forced to spread junk and waste, because of the policy of their 'mother organisations' abroad.

When one counts all the effects of the tempestuous 'flooding' of Bangladesh with foreign relief organisations it may not be so strange that as a result one gets the most corrupt government of the world.

In contrast with this influence of 'aid' on the Bengali middle class (getting accustomed to luxury and corruption) stands a very different influence which the aid has had on the masses of poor peasants. In general the activities of the foreign relief organisations have induced an increasing spirit of dependence among the landless peasants. It is true that only a small part of the 'aid' has reached them; nevertheless a certain attitude of expectation and a mentality of beggary has been nurtured which only hampers

the liberation and emancipation of the peasants. It is thus not to be wondered at that many Bengalis detest 'relief' and 'aid', since it cripples the peasants and makes them helpless.

2. The Second 'Phase'

In 1973 a number of foreign relief organisations came to the conclusion that it was time to start a second phase in which the emphasis would be on 'development assistance'. Although in fact some organisations never left the stage of 'relief', emergency aid, more and more organisations did start developing their own perspectives regarding the path of economic 'progress' for Bangladesh.

To get an idea of how a foreign relief organisation thinks about this country's 'development' we could take CORR as an example. This "Christian Organisation for Relief and Rehabilitation" is a 'charitable institution' which is supported by a number of church and other charity foundations abroad.

In the first place it should be realised that CORR still considers itself an instrument of the Catholic Church. As the annual report of this organisation states explicitly: "CORR is proud of its instrumental role in the church's interest for the reconstruction and the development of this Golden Land"².

In practice this leads to the granting of privileges to Christian people, as has happened repeatedly during the last two years. The disturbing consequence of this policy is that new, privileged groups are created, and new contradictions among population groups, which could avenge themselves later. A whole class of servants of foreign 'masters' has been nurtured, which considers this subservience a proof of their superiority vis-a-vis the Bengali Muslims.

Here we are, however, more concerned with CORR as a direct promoter of imperialist (economic) interests. For this is the essence of the 'development policy' of this organisation. CORR proposes to 'help' Bangladesh through the import of the Green Revolution, and it tries to do this through organising the rich and well-to-do peasants in 'cooperatives' and through providing these co-ops with foreign machinery, seeds, pes-

ticides, etc. In other words, there is an import-chain of Japanese agricultural machinery, German pumps, and promotion of Swiss pesticides (CIBA Geigy), etc. This way CORR—whether it wants it or not—is playing into the hands of imperialist interests and promotes the dependence of Bangladesh on foreign powers.

Implicitly CORR turns against the broad masses of the people, the landless peasants, the many day labourers and unemployed. As one employed of the organisation in Dacca commented recently: "Actually we don't have any programme for the 40% landless peasants in Bangladesh".

The same theme we find back in the annual report of the organisation in which CORR expresses itself in favour of the Green Revolution and against revolutionary violence. That means, no sympathy is to be expected from CORR for the Bengali poor peasants, if they tried to liberate themselves from the present oppression through armed struggle.

The class prejudice is demonstrated most clearly by the fact that CORR employs permanently a number of lawyers who are supposed to regulate disputes—but only with small peasants. As one member of the organisation remarked: "these people you can catch at least; we cannot afford to burn our fingers with the big ones".

The philosophy of CORR is not only against the revolutionary violence, but against all fundamental social changes. The problems of Bangladesh are not seen as social and political in character, but as simple quantities. "In Bangladesh, in a country with the greatest population density in the world and some of the greatest poverty it is obvious that the greatest immediate need is to produce more food"³.

CORR is the prototype of a Western 'relief organisation' in a Third World country. Such an organisation does not presume that there are fundamental differences of interest between landlords, rich peasants and landless peasants—but bases itself on the assumptions of a 'harmony model' in which the population constitutes a single whole and consequently has to be helped 'as a whole'. In that way they bet on the strongest

(of the moment)—excluding the broad masses of the population. That way they also choose against organising the poor peasants, and they opt against land reforms—the only way to achieve progress and emancipation, as the examples of China and North Vietnam have amply demonstrated. In the end they also choose against the independence of Third World countries, and against self-reliance. Instead of advocating indigenous solutions of agricultural problems, the use of modern methods adapted to the interests of multi-national corporations is stimulated. That way the organisation chooses against the country itself!

Again we have to conclude that instead of promoting social equality and independence, such an organisation increases the gap between rich and poor (within Bangladesh as well as at the international level).

3. The Spiral of Foreign Influence

Aside from charitable institutions like CORR,—Western governments and representatives of private companies and business circles have not kept aloof from Bangladesh. For example, the United States 'sacrificed' hundreds of millions of dollars for the new-born country.

The total sum of the influences of foreign powers (governments), of foreign business interests, and of charitable institutions has led to an alarming erosion of the sovereignty of Bangladesh; a far-reaching infiltration, 'infusion' of foreign power within Bangladesh.

How much foreign Powers are meddling in the affairs of Bangladesh can be demonstrated by the fact that foreign 'relief organisations' participate in meetings in the highest circles of the government of the country—which implies, of course, that they can have an influence on the decision-making. Relief orga-

nisations have special prerogatives like tax-free import of goods—prerogatives which easily can be misused.

In the last two years a special trade developed in cement, pumps, etc.—a 'development' which went beyond the control of the Government.

The relief organisations and other Western institutions in Bangladesh also have power through their foreign contacts. They have power through their control over knowledge and information.

The alarming aspect of the infiltration of foreign Powers, the undermining of Bangladesh independence, is the possibility which is provided to foreign intelligence agencies to 'explore' Bangladesh. This is in particular so much alarming when it concerns a powerful organisation like the CIA. Bangladesh has become a 'paradise for espionage'. And the charitable institutions provide ideal 'pillars' for the activities of American intelligence.

The CIA is not merely a ghost in Bangladesh. A 'charitable institution' like the Asia Foundation is notorious because of its financing by the CIA. The Ford Foundation (like the Asia Foundation settled in Bangladesh) directs its activities officially at social research. That is not necessarily a neutral function. Spokesmen of the American intelligence service have more than once (among others before the American Congress) explained that they consider academic institutions effective sources of information for the CIA.

The USAID (Agency for International Development) is the biggest 'money-pusher' in Bangladesh. Several of its functionaries who in Bangladesh reside as technical advisers (e.g. for agriculture) had specialised in the destruction of the revolutionary infrastructure in Indochina—as agents⁵.

The biggest American labour organisation, the AFL-CIO, not long ago sent representatives to Bangladesh to fraternal organisations (in particular to the 'Jatyos Shromik Federation'). It is a well-known fact that the AFL-CIO very often works hand in hand with the CIA in Third World countries, e.g. in Latin America.

In what other ways the CIA is try-

ing to influence the political climate in Bangladesh is difficult to say with certainty. But it can be safely guessed that its interests would be in dividing various radical left-wing opposition movements, and in promoting hybrid one-man parties and phoney 'left' united fronts, aside from pepping up the establishment.

Finally it should be kept in mind that there are a variety of ways in which the CIA can make use of people who unconsciously serve as informants.

With extensive financial means at its disposal,⁶ the CIA by now must have had plenty of opportunity to completely infiltrate Bangladesh. And one only has to point at the recent example of Chile to make clear that such an infiltration goes against the interests of the broad masses of the population and of progressive social changes.

What is the consequence of all this 'accumulation' of Western, imperialist power in Bangladesh? We can discern two 'spirals': one is a kind of deflation; the other a silent 'explosion'.

On the one hand, the influence of India and the Soviet Union—the Powers which were instrumental in bringing the Awami League to power—seems to be on the decline. On the other hand, there is an 'explosion' of imperialist power in the form of deals with multi-nationals. American imperialism which for long had exerted its influence 'behind the scenes' now comes fully into the open and lets its power shine.

4. The Age of the Multi-nationals and Aid Consortium

These developments started to crystallise when the new crisis in Bangladesh took its shape.

In the beginning of the summer, in July, while the floods started rising the reserves of the Government in foreign exchange were drying up. At first the Government apparently was not very successful in arousing Western countries' "benevolence" to help it out. Apparently the world was becoming critical towards the Government of the Awami League and its policy of corruption and robbery. How much of this appearance was real disgust is difficult to determine. Anyway, for the govern-

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ment of Mujibur Rahman the ensuing 'disaster' of the floods provided sufficient material for publicity with which to turn again towards foreign countries for relief.

In the name of the floods, in the name of the starving humanity, a new campaign was started. In September and October it became clear that the purpose of the campaign was not to save the poor peasantry of Bangladesh, but to serve the survival of the merchant-family of Awami Leaguers and Mujib's bourgeois government. In a situation in which daily hundreds of people starve, the Government fails to take any effective measures, except the vigorous campaigning for foreign 'relief'. In its view it is not the task of the rich Bengalis, the new-born masters of profit, to sacrifice and provide emergency aid, but the obligation of the 'charitable' Western world. That is not surprising, since the misappropriation of relief has been the most easy source of self-enrichment for the ruling class of Bangladesh during the last two and a half years.

To reach the aim of a new cycle of foreign relief, Mujib's Government is well prepared to sell the fate of 'his people'. Before surrendering to the Paris Aid Consortium, an understanding first was reached with a number of multinational corporations. In September, agreements were concluded with 6 multinationals for the exploitation of oil in the Bay of Bengal. Three American giants are in the leading position. One and a half billion U.S. dollars will be invested in explorations of oil in the continental shelf—an enormous jump in the level of foreign investments in Bangladesh.

It is not difficult to see neo-colonial monstrosities in the oil-deals. The hypocrisy with which Mujib tries to console landless peasants who will die tomorrow from starvation with uncertain oil-prospects in ten years—that itself is a 'sign on the wall'. Given the fact that barely any details have been published about the agreements one may well wonder what benefits the country will derive from these investments. Even more, one should question whether the poor peasants will ever derive anything from these deals. In general it

can be stated that the multi-nationals which exploit the natural resources of Third World countries far from promote the highly necessary social changes in those countries.

The deals with the giants paved the way for a new understanding with Western governments. After the charitable organisations, the foreign intelligence agencies, and the multi-national corporations, it was the collective, 'benevolent' Western governments' turn: thus the Aid Consortium which on October 24 and 25 met in Paris.

For a long time Mujib's Government and the Planning Commission had resisted the formation of such an 'Aid Consortium'. The authorities of Bangladesh favoured bilateral 'aid', since too much economic pressure could follow from a 'collective' approach. But there seems no other way out. Given the crying needs and the miserable condition of the poor peasants, their anger could quickly turn into revolutionary violence against the wealth of Mujib's merchant class. For the ruling class of Bangladesh foreign 'aid' has changed from a source of easy enrichment into a matter of necessity, of survival.

Bangladesh thus followed the examples of India and Sri Lanka. Those countries a few years ago received financial 'emergency aid' from the World Bank and from the U.S. when they were faced with exchange and food crises. The costly 'reforms' which those countries then were forced to undertake (like liberalisation of import policy, and new rules for private and foreign investments) could well serve as (negative) examples for Bangladesh.

What Paris has decided regarding the 'aid' which will be given to Bangladesh remains unrevealed. Generally the impression is that 500 to 600 million dollars of financial aid was proposed as the target by the World Bank. The communique which was published at the end of the meeting of donors reveals that the donor countries are following the same arguments, the same analysis, to explain the present crisis, as the Government of Bangladesh. As the most important causes are given: the oil crisis last year, the inflation on the world

market, and the floods during the summer.

Like the Government of Bangladesh, the Aid Consortium prefers to put things upside down. It is true that Bangladesh at present has tremendous needs in terms of foreign exchange, to meet its import requirements.⁷ But the root cause of this hardly lies in the inflation on the world market, however much detrimental this inflation for Bangladesh may have been. The essential reason for the shortage of funds with this Government lies in its own failure, the gap between its own interests and those of the population. For example, the most important item on the list of import requirements is food-grains. According to officials of the FAO in Dacca import of foodgrains hardly would have been necessary at all, if smuggling and hoarding had not caused such tremendous shortages.⁸

There is little doubt that Western countries again are coming forward on the side of the Government of Bangladesh and are setting off a new wave of 'relief' and 'aid'. How is it possible that a Government which has failed so manifestly in all aspects of its policy, which has shown so little interest in promoting the welfare of its people—how is it possible that such a Government still manages to receive financial aid from abroad?

The answer cannot be very difficult, if one realises that foreign 'relief' and corruption, charity and the enrichment of the Bengali elite, for two years have gone hand in hand. While the Bengali peasants became poorer and poorer, the merchants and hoarders grew more and more fat, and the influence of foreign (in particular American) countries within Bangladesh increased constantly. Can one conclude anything else, but that the various forms of 'aid' together boil

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Assam.

down to an instrument to keep a power elite on top, to keep Bangladesh dependent on the industrialised West, and to prevent the liberation of the poor peasants through an 'explosion, a revolution'?

- (1) e.g. Tony Hagen admitted that "only a small percentage of the donated babyfood and blankets reached its destination" (Hagen was in charge of UN aid to Bangladesh) (see *Holiday*, October 16, p. 2).
- (2) See CORR, Annual Report 1973 p. 2.
- (3) Ibid, 'The role of CORR in Development' (by Father Timm), p. 14.
- (4) It was for this reason that the Asia Foundation was thrown out of India in 1967.
- (5) USAID, by the way, also paid for part of the CIA's secret, counter-revolutionary war in Laos.
- (6) See the revealing book by Viktor Marchetti and John D. Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* (Jonathan Cape, Great Britain, 1974).
- (7) The Planning Commission has estimated that Bangladesh needs one billion 108 million dollars to meet its shortage in foreign reserves. That is, 70% of all import costs.
- (8) See Lawrence Lifschultz, 'Bangladesh: A State of Siege', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 30, 1974 (p. 49).

Report From Nagaland-II

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

THE Underground Nagas' latest attempted trip to China dominated current political discussion in Nagaland. It is not as if the Underground has travelled to China for the first time; but undoubtedly, there is a qualitative difference between the latest journey and the earlier journeys. Unlike on earlier occasions, the present group consists mostly of young people, men and women, most of whom are highly educated; the ideological motivation is very much present, and for the Government of India and the orthodox Naga leadership, the long-term consequences of the present journey are undoubtedly disturbing to contemplate. This is no mere 'opportunist' hunting for arms and supplies, but a genuine desire to imbibe the ideology of the revolutionary Chinese people. The leadership of the present group seems to have devolved upon the first of the committed Marxist-Leninists in Nagaland, and the prospects of continued insurgency, now toughened by a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the Naga situation, are bright.

Let us leave the Underground alone. Much of the writing on what they might do, how they might fight has to be necessarily speculative. The fighting elements have anyway no time, much less the opportunity, to give interviews expatiating upon their strategy and tactics. Of only one thing can one be certain: the insurgency is far from over in Nagaland, despite the routine, periodic optimistic assessments by the Indian military brass, the latest of which was touted when the present writer was in Kohima. (Back of Naga Underground Broken: General Bewoor. *The Assam Tribune*, October 31, 1974). Some back; some breaking!

Undoubtedly the GOI is trying to break the back of Naga insurgency, but only the military actions by the GOI are highlighted in newspaper reports. Though these optimistic military reports sound more and more like the briefings made by the U.S. army authorities in Vietnam,

the whole exercise is not exactly ridiculous. At least for the Naga people, the Indian Army's actions have been no fun. But except for the routine optimistic briefings, the actual actions of the Indian Army are seldom reported; for every single case of rape reported, scores of similar and worse atrocities are silently glossed over. The presence of a vigilant and conscientious press corps made it impossible for the Americans to hide the ghastly things they did in Vietnam. In the whole of Nagaland, there is only one single representative of a national news agency (UNI); the national newspapers do not have any resident representatives; much of the news flashed from Kohima has to be invariably a rehash of government and military handouts. Which perhaps is not a terribly bad thing, since even otherwise, the news-reporting would not reveal anything sensational. The permitted journalists know the limits of their freedom, and have to exercise their conscientiousness judiciously, patriotically.

But it is not only through military means that the GOI is fighting the insurgency in Nagaland. The paths chosen are many, though in true Hindu fashion, they are all directed to the same goal. Here again one finds a parallel between the methods used by the Americans in Vietnam and the GOI in Nagaland. The more blatantly barbarous methods of regrouping of villages and creating strategic hamlets have all been tried; there is even a programme of Winning The Hearts and Minds of The People, programmes designed to canalise the energy of the Naga Youth along 'Constructive' Channels.

Social Order

The chief reason behind the persistence of insurgency in Nagaland, apart from the bravery and determination of the Underground, has been the comparatively unscathed social structure of the Naga people. In fact, the strength itself is derived from the stable social order. The

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Naga people, especially in the Angami area, were suddenly and most brutally exposed to the realities of the twentieth century during the Japanese occupation of Kohima. Since then, there has been no letup in the assaults on Naga society: their homes have been overrun by strangers, for strangers now rule over their land. The people, however, never acquiesced, and not all the military efforts of the GOI have been able to defeat, or even contain the insurgency. The 'non-military' means employed by the GOI have been interesting, too. At a very crude and obvious level, the GOI has tried to buy up a section of the Naga elite. The varying successes the GOI has had with the NNO and the UDF are the 'returns' obtained on this score. A second method has been the employment of the tactics of 'talk-talk, fight-fight'; the institution of parliamentary democracy has been especially suitable for providing a forum for talking, while the field is clear for intensive search-and-destroy operations. Yet another tactic employed has been the one of creating splits and confusion in the ranks of the 'enemy'. This tactic could not have been successful in the initial period, when the Naga society, despite the contradictory pulls of clannish and tribal loyalties, still possessed a strong feeling of 'Naga oneness' (which after all has been the most creative contribution of Phizo's life-work, and which will certainly endure and further enrich the Naga personality, whatever success or failure might be met by the GOI and the Naga Underground). In fact, the granting of statehood and the consequent fruits enjoyed by a broad cross-section of the Naga elite were designed to create the proper conditions for such splits and confusion. The Government of India carried this tactic into the heart of the 'enemy' camp, as it were, when it succeeded in winning over, or at least neutralising, a section of the Semas. The full story and the 'raw' work behind the events of 1968-69, including the assassination of Kaito and the 'capture' of Mowu, will perhaps never be told.

By far the most ambitious 'non-military' tactic adopted by the GOI to defeat the Naga insurgency has been what

might be described as the tactic of cultural penetration. The basic assumption behind this tactic—as well as others mentioned—is that the Naga people can never be defeated as long as the Naga social structure is not destroyed. The fact that the society has continued to be generally stable despite the sudden and violent 'modernisation' thrust upon it should have seemed one of the most baffling problems for the GOI. Along with killing the Naga people and trying to buy the Naga people, the GOI has also been trying to change the Naga people. As usual with the GOI, the most obnoxious things are done under the garb of the most progressive slogans, once again taking a leaf from the American book. (Remember 'pacification', which actually meant killing of people?) Now, the cry is all for the quick and dramatic 'modernisation' of Naga society, resulting, presumably, in the Naga people's entry into and full participation in the so-called Indian mainstream. While there is not perhaps much to admire in the exclusiveness and particularism of the Naga people, the kind of 'modernisation' that is being thrust upon them seems 'nothing short of hideous'. The quality of the 'modernisation' that is going on is also of a peculiar kind. The elements of this 'modernisation' consist of propagation of Hindi, the ideals of Sarvodaya and Gandhi and Vivekananda, of Durga Puja and Ramakrishna Mission, of concepts and personalities which represent the most pharisaical elements of Indian character and culture. While the Naga people are viewed with such tender concern that 'alien' ideas like Marxism and class-oriented politics are strictly verboten, whole supplements are brought out in local newspapers to commemorate the 2,500th Nirvan Mahotsav of Lord Mahavira, to celebrate which occasion, the present Nagaland Government is to spend some 1,45,000 rupees.

'Cultural Missionary'

Would it be accurate to say that there is already in existence a significant non-Naga sub-culture in Kohima? To a greater or lesser extent, it is true that the capital of a State or a country sel-

dom possesses any distinctive national character; the people whose aspirations the capital is supposed to symbolise are mostly a minority, and often a deprived and despised minority at that. Kohima town, on the face of it, seems very much a Naga town, even an Angami town. But look at Khonoma, in the heart of the Angami country. The camp of the Assam Rifles is stationed in the very heart of Khonoma, in fact at the summit of the village which was so ferociously defended by the warriors of Khonoma in the last century. It would be interesting to study the linguistic composition of Kohima as revealed in the 1971 census figures. A different kind of occupation force, not in uniform, and not having any explicit military or political duties, is very much present in Kohima, and probably in other areas of Nagaland as well; these too are fighting, however unobtrusively, the GOI's war. The tactics are in fact complementary; the Cultural Missionary is armed with weapons which are no less insidious than those employed by the soldier. Working in close, implicit co-operation, together they hope to contain and finally defeat the Naga insurgency in about a generation's time.

The best laid plans might go astray. The most elaborately contrived strategy might backfire. The success of the GOI's strategy depends on one most important requirement—the total breakdown of the Naga social order and the destruction of the Naga feeling of 'oneness'. It is this that is being sought to be achieved through a process of alleged modernisation; and as yet, the GOI has not met with any notable success. There is yet another possibility, though. The 'simple, innocent tribal people' have perhaps existed only in books and in the imagination of jaded townsmen. As

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an anthropologist friend tells me, the 'innocent, simple tribal' might easily sell me half-a-dozen times over to different persons. The Naga elite has shown how quickly it can master the art of Indian parliamentary democracy, including defection and counter-defection and such other graces. At least a section of the present 'respectable' leadership would not be exactly unhappy if the insurgency continues, but within limits, for a while longer, just causing trouble enough to keep the GOI on the run—leading to more funds for the

contractors and politicians and the quickie fortune-makers—but without running out of hand, making it imperative for every self-respecting Naga to clearly choose sides. It is this section of the Naga elite that is even more perturbed than the GOI about the long-term consequences of the Underground's latest excursion to China. Even a section of the Underground is reported to be disturbed about the impact the returnees are going to have, though this rumour could quite conceivably be the creation of one or other of the many intelligence

outfits of the GOI operating in Nagaland. Social change, resisted so long and so fiercely by the Naga people, might indeed be coming about in Nagaland, but not in the way envisaged by the GOI. The awakening, when it will come, is surely going to be of a more radical, more genuinely revolutionary kind, devoid of any exclusivism or tribal chauvinism. One can only hope that we in the neighbouring States too might have a share of the fallout.

Releasing: **FRIDAY 13th DECEMBER '74**

MRINAL SEN'S

chorus



at
GLOBE :: SREE :: INDIRA :: PADMASREE and others

Famine In Tamil Nadu

S. N.

EXPERTS of the 'Green Revolution, Tamil Nadu Branch' proclaimed that this State had even reached 'a greener revolution', with a 'production of 55 lakh tonnes of rice and with a per capita rice consumption of 400 grams a day by 1972-73. Crores of rupees were spent on IADP which actually enriched the Indian comprador bourgeoisie. Now, two successive failures of the monsoon in 1973/74 and 1974/75 have exposed the 'Greener Revolution' and its manipulated statistics.

The price of rice in Madras and elsewhere in Tamil Nadu rules at Rs. 8.00 per Madras measure (1600 grams).

Last year, the Chief Minister, Mr Karunanidhi, posed himself as a 'Kaliyuga Karna' with his rice gifts to Kerala and West Bengal. Now, the prices in his home State itself have risen higher than those prevailing in the States which received 'the gifts'.

The following table shows the 'official' wholesale prices of rice and jawar prevailing in a few centres in Tamil Nadu.

Name of the town	Commodity	Variety	Year	((Rs. per quintal)					
				Feb.	April	June	Aug.	Oct.	Nov.
Madras City	Rice	Kichidi (Fine)	1973/74	166	214	234	321	398	449
Trichy	Rice	Kudiraval (Fine)	1973/74	147	151	153	161	171	160
				146	192	216	346	400	462
				123	112	120	133	120	126
				86	102	162	200	220	230
Salem	Jawar	White	1973	80	80	75	74	80	82

The table shows nearly an 180% increase in the price of rice in Madras City and 190% in Trichy as compared to the prices prevailing last November. In the case of coarse grains, the increase amounts to nearly 185%, as on the Salem market. The spiralling prices have reduced the gap between the middle and labouring classes. Even a salaried man who gets Rs. 500 p.m. is forced to take only one meal a day.

Usually, the ruling class has given reasons for the present famine: the failure of the monsoon and the growing inflation. The monsoon usually fails once in five years in Tamil Nadu. But

the 'greener revolutionaries' have no definite plan to save the crops from withering. But they used to proclaim that underwater resources in Tamil Nadu were relatively richer. But out of several lakhs of pump sets in the State, only 10% are in good working condition.

As for inflation, we don't need even Marx or Lenin or Mao to point out that it is nothing but an instrument to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, under any capitalist economy.

In Tamil Nadu, rice is everywhere but there is no rice to eat. The ruling class knows well who are the hoarders; the Government is silent. We know well why: the masters are the landlords and the traders. The Ministers and MLAs are appointed by them only to serve their own interests.

The Government of Tamil Nadu lacks sufficient stocks to start complete rationing. By relying on manipulated statistics, Mr Karunanidhi who had promised to give about 2 lakh tonnes of rice to the Central pool, has now cut a sorry figure. Even if he starts begging, the GOI will not help this State for political reasons. The GOI may not insist on Tamil Nadu giving its contribu-

Two Sculptors

SANDIP SARKAR

AN exhibition of sculptures by Jiten Roy and Saral Ghosh was on view at the Academy of Fine Arts, 3rd-9th December. Both are very young and have freshness and charm. Jiten Roy likes to add high finish to his work, while Saral Ghosh prefers rough texture. Roy has abandoned somewhat the development of sculptural play on volume and is more concerned with line. He uses open forms through which the background can infiltrate. In 'Musician' he brings this side out very clearly. 'Bull' has volume but lacks roughness. His Roman Catholic 'Priest,' a towering and frightening form, is done in curved lines. However a Brahmin or a Maulavi would have been more relevant. In 'Rest' the figure, done in sensitive lines, is not relaxed but tense. His man playing 'danda geli' and 'Portrait' are too highly polished and pretty.

Ghosh is more concerned with the tension of volume and mass. His torso is voluptuous and strong and his figures emanate warmth and a strong feeling

for life. He is sometimes a bit of an impressionist and there is a tendency to wallow in the dissolution of form—'Hungry' is a coarse example of this. He has a romantic sense of monumental grandeur as in 'Sarnath' and can even be playful and use a broken umbrella handle to depict a man doing a peacock arch very imaginatively. His 'Bird' has a rough texture but the back is incomplete and the legs are weak.

Both sculptors show promise and will certainly grow into mature artists.

Neo-Realism And After

MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY

THE recent Italian film festival in Calcutta served as a refresher course in the history of Italian cinema for those who had their taste of neo-realism, Antonioni and Pontecarvo; and for those who were exposed to these trends for the first time, it came as a exciting revelation of the power and poignance of the Italian cinema during the three decades following the war. Three films by neo-realist masters De Sica and Rossellini, two films by Antonioni, one by Pontecarvo and one rather indifferent film by Carlo Lizzani—altogether a representative fare, although one really missed Fellini and Visconti. The films ran to packed theatres in spite of all of them being without English subtitles, which again proved Calcutta's appetite for really good films.

Neo-realism came as a protest against the glamour-ridden "white telephone" cinema in Italy during the thirties and forties. Here the camera reached into the squalor, dirt and poverty of everyday life and portrayed the simple human emotions, genuine and palpable as opposed to the over-dramatised realities of the conventional cinema. Rossellini's *Paisa* and *Europa 51* shown in the festival bear testimony to the strength of this genre. *Paisa*, a compendium of six episodes relating the after-war disintegration of Italy and the generation of new hopes among the partisans, is a compelling portrait of social realities during this fluid period of world history. *Europa 51* deals with the problems of adjustment between the socio-political values of a bourgeois-minded husband and his radical-type wife. Ingrid Berg-

man as the heroine turns in a mature performance and the film, though a little wordy, beautifully analyses the confusions and contradictions of the upper middle class of Western Europe, faced with a dilemma of choice during the early fifties. De Sica's *Miracle In Milan* seen after a gap of years, still retains its old charm and has not dated a bit. Rightly called "a poet of poverty" De Sica makes Toto his chief protagonist in this film, and he emerges as an archetypal image of goodness in common man, his only weapon against the cupidity of the rich. The fantasy-style adds a fresh dimension to the film's impact and if there is any doubt that De Sica has indulged in an escapist solution when he shows his characters flying to heaven on broomsticks, one could counter that by saying that in the framework of fable or fantasy, that is the most fitting finale and perhaps the director would have loved to do a sequel to the film where by a master stroke of Toto's magic, the broomsticks would turn into rifles poised against the oppressors.

Antonioni picked up the threads where the neo-realists had left off. Whereas neo-realism has tried to project the collective mind, Antonioni's preoccupation is with the individual Bruno's loss of his bicycle and Aldo, Giovanni and Lidia's loss of their emotional moorings are two facets of the same problem, the same human tragedy told in different terms. Both *Il Grippo* and *La Notte* are elegies on lost communication, a stark, almost horrifying portrayal of loneliness. The first film has a background of working-class life and the second one develops amid the posh, high-society world of Milan and in both the films the characters are wonderfully integrated with the background. An impeccable visual sense and the subtlety of understatement are Antonioni's chief assets which often succeed in breaking the language barrier.

Among other two films in the festival, Lizzani's *Gold of Rome*, a hackneyed and mediocre indictment of anti-semitic brutalities perpetrated by the Nazis, is a thorough misfit in this programme. Pontecarvo's *Battle of Algiers* (already shown in Calcutta and reviewed in this journal) is a model of political cinema.

Towards Maturity

BY A MUSIC CRITIC

MR Ashish Khan, the eldest son of Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, proved by his recent sarod performance (Rabindra Sadan, November 16) that he has come of age. His alap in *Iman-Kalyan* gave evidence of his mature intellection and deft handling of the raga phrasing. The neat *jod* combinations helped build up the correct raga image. The *chhut* tans were balanced. The *gat* in *jhinjhoti* in the *mat'a tal* of three-two-four beats was both interesting and captivating.

The recital warmed up after the intermission when Ashish Khan infused much more personality in his alap in raga *Kausi Kanada* of the *malkaush ang*. His deeply modulated *gamak* tans brought out the robust character of the *Kanada ang* of the raga. So far as quick tans are concerned he surpasses even his illustrious father and does not seem to have any parallel now.

The *gat* in *trital* in *Majh-Khamaj* was very efficiently done. Barring a few noisy passages in the *jhala* portions (there is a class of listeners who like and enjoy this sort of rhythm) the recitals were aesthetically satisfactory and highly enjoyed by the common listener.

Letters

Misuse And Malindigestion

I have read the letters of Sankar Deb and Tarun Sen Gupta (November 23). Mr Deb claims that the Bombay plan of 1944 "suggested the gradual abolition of landlordism with compensation". This he writes to challenge my contention that the Bombay plan did not utter a single word against Indian feudalism. But Mr Deb does not say on what basis he challenges my statement. There is no talk of abolition of landlords in that plan. He invokes Nehru's certificate of the Bombay plan. Even what Nehru said has been dishonestly ignored by Mr Deb. For example, according to Nehru, "That plan is still not complete and there are many lacunae in it. In-

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it is conditionally by the way of thinking of big industry and tries to avoid revolutionary changes as far as possible." (*Discovery of India*, p. 609). Mr Deb omits the second sentence because it perhaps does not suit his questionable contention. Another exercise in dishonesty is his use of Nehru's opinion to be that of the Bombay planners, when he asserts: he (Nehru) agreed with the planners that "Also agrarian reform is a fundamental prerequisite". Nehru himself considered agrarian reform as the fundamental prerequisite. The Bombay plan never said so. Therefore the question of Nehru's agreeing with the Bombay planners on the question of agrarian reform does not arise.

The blind lover of the Bombay plan discovers that both the American Path and the Prussian Path were "advocated by the Bombay plan". It is a fantastic observation. This American path and the Prussian path are different historical forms of transition taking place independently of any expert suggestions and they are post-facto forms of capitalist transition in agriculture. What data Mr Deb gets in the history of the Indian economy which inspired him to think that the representatives of Indian big business had been advocating the bourgeois norms of agrarian revolution? I fear, Mr Deb says something wild without grasping the implications.

In fact the Bombay plan sought to maintain feudal ownership of the means of production in agriculture. Nevertheless the plan sought to step up agricultural production through cooperative farming. The need for cooperative farming arose in the opinion of the Bombay plan from the growing subdivision and fragmentation of land holdings. The plan said: "it (cooperative farming—A.M.) increases the size of the holding for purposes of cultivation without depriving the cultivators (i.e. landlords, moneylenders, jotedars etc. in whom more than 80 per cent of ownership remained concentrated in 1944—A.M.) of their right to the ownership of their existing holdings". (P. 31). This was a appeal to the pro-feudal enclosure movement to be launched by the feudal-bourgeois state power with "some measure of compulsion". Compulsion in

order to strengthen the landlord class, not to abolish it as claimed by Mr Deb. I have explained in my original article why the type of capitalism developing in a colonial economy like India gets succour from commercialisation of feudal agriculture and also why in spite of commercialisation of Indian agriculture, the landlord does not go the Prussian way to be a capitalist. India was a colony, Prussia was not.

Mr Deb is unnecessarily excited and seems not conversant with a proper use of the particular dictum of Mao.

To Mr Tarun Sengupta; I have nowhere said that 'tragedy and farce' are from Hegel. I have made a comment on the observation of the eminent economist on Marx's remark on Hegel's particular saying. I request him to read the relevant sentence once more.

Arun Majumdar
Santiniketan

Trouble In Gangtok

For the past six months, the peaceful people of Sikkim have been shocked and distressed by the Government of India's hasty steps in forcing a Constitutional Bill and giving an "Associate State status" to this Himalayan kingdom. The Chief Minister and his colleagues have no mandate of the people to request India for participation and representation in her political institutions and parliamentary system. Sending two representatives to the Indian Parliament means imposing Indian nationality and the dilution of our international status and separate identity. Protesting against the 35th Constitutional Amendment Bill, the students of Sikkim organised a peaceful demonstration on 10th October, 1974. Both boys and girls were mercilessly lathi-charged and teargassed by the CRP. Not satisfied with this, even small children and old and young were dragged out of their houses by breaking doors and windows and treated in the same manner. About fifty students were hospitalised for several weeks because of their serious injuries and wounds. Mr Hem Lall Bhandari and five other friends were expelled from the Tash-i Namgyal Higher Secondary School, by the Chief

Minister, Kazi Lhendup Dorji (Khang-sarpa). The student supporters of the Congress party are staying with the Ministers as their bodyguard.

H. L. Bhandari,
President, Sikkim Students
Association, Gangtok

Dalit Panthers

"Dalit Panthers" (Andhra Pradesh) emerged on October 20. The central office is located in Wahab Road, Tenali. The main object of the organisation is to educate and mobilise the Dalit people, who are 80% of the total population and politically depressed and exploited. Active preparations are on for the Andhra Pradesh convention of the "Dalit Panthers" in January 1975 in Tenali.

P. R. Rao,
Secretary

Malraux

It was a shameful act on the part of the one-time anti-fascist freedom fighter, Andre Malraux, to call Indira Gandhi a "sentinel of civilisation", when thousands of revolutionary youths are tortured and liquidated in and outside of jails here.

M. N. D. Nair
Trivandrum

APDR, Delhi

During recent years Indian governmental authorities have increasingly resorted to semi-fascistic methods resulting in the suppression of civil liberties and basic human rights, the thwarting of democratic movement and the obstruction of working class struggles. For instance, the state of emergency, originally declared in December 1971, has been unjustifiably and indefinitely continued by the Government of India as a cloak for various 'black laws' like DIR and MISA. Hundreds of political activists and trade union workers have been killed, some of them inside prisons or in jail custody. Inhuman torture of men as well

as women prisoners has been practised on an unprecedented scale.

This widespread prevalence of semi-fascistic practices is being kept away from the public view by the Government by indulging in yet another kind of anti-democratic activity, namely, the throttling and distortion of the mass media.

To fight these trends in the country, associations for the protection of democratic rights (APDR), have been set up in different parts of the country. Such a body for the Delhi area has been set up with the following aims and objectives:

Aims and Objectives:

1. To mobilise public opinion and agitate for the revocation of the emergency restoration of the due processes of law, unimpaired habeas corpus and of the other civil liberties that have been suppressed by the enactment and enforcement of various black laws, and against the practice of torture and killing of detenus and prisoners and the systematic harassment of citizens on political

grounds by the police and other armed forces or by anti-social elements with the connivance of the police.

2. To provide legal as well as financial assistance to the victims of political repression before, during and after trial.

The association will have four kinds of activities: (a) collection of information on a countrywide basis about cases of repression; (b) propaganda and agitation and the building-up of public opinion; (c) legal aid and provision of financial assistance to needy political prisoners; and (d) fund raising for carrying out the above activities.

The general body of the APDR Delhi Committee on November 22, passed a resolution condemning the Presidential promulgation under Article 359 of the Constitution as the most unwarranted abuse of constitutional provisions, all the more so as it has failed to achieve its purpose. Alleged smugglers have been able to secure their release despite the ordinance. On the contrary, this promulgation can

be used to suppress personal liberties of detenus held under MISA numbering 17,000 of which only 500 are alleged smugglers.

The Association also condemned the recent ordinance amending the Representation of People's Act. The effective withdrawal of the ceiling on election expenditure accords legal sanction to the nefarious attempts of big money to control political activities in the country through unaccounted donations.

The APDR Delhi Committee invites all democratically minded people, irrespective of party affiliation, to join the Association and participate in its activities and help it by sending donations. Information relating to repression should be sent to the address given below as well as financial assistance.

Ramadhar, Ashok Rudra, D. D. Singh, Mukundan G. Menon, Vijay Singh, Parthasarathi Mazumdar, Aurobindo Ghose.

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