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THINGS being what they are in Bangladesh and Mujib being what he is, the people will not derive any benefit from the dictatorial change in the form of government. Overnight Mujib has discarded the parliamentary form of democracy—which by the way is not the sacred cow it is supposed to be by the English-educated elite—and, as President, assumed all executive authority. It is not exactly the Presidential form of government we know. The President of the USA does not have the Olympian powers Mujib has assumed: Mujib at his discretion may permit only one political party to function as the national party. Mujib will determine the programme, membership and organisational set-up of the party, members of which alone will adorn Parliament. The Supreme Court of Bangladesh has no longer the power to enforce the fundamental rights. These rights—if any—will be enforced by special court, tribunal or commission to be appointed by Parliament, i.e., Mujib's men. Mujib can remove judges on grounds of misbehaviour and incompetence. He, too, like Mrs G. would like to have 'committed' judges, but in his arrogance of power or lack of sophistication he prefers the ramrod.

That absolute and sweeping majorities do not help government to face economic and political crises is now clear. The trouble in Bangladesh, as elsewhere, is the creation of the ruling class, a product of class contradictions, but the rulers and administrators there are perhaps more inefficient and corrupt and at the same time more greedy for a quick buck than elsewhere. High hopes were held out by the crafty, and swallowed by the naive that a 'liberated' Bangladesh would go forward despite the suffering undergone. But the set that took over as a result of the Indian intervention proved to be interested in themselves to an extent never seen before in a country after a true national liberation movement. That the country would be on the road to ruin was inevitable: opportunistic help from friendly powers did not help. In the three years since Mujib returned from his comfortable captivity, things have gone from bad to worse. Thousands of people have died in floods and famine and a kind of perverse civil war while the same class which sold their trade and industrial licences during the Ayub regime to Punjabis and basked in non-hazardous profits are doing rather well. Inflation is beyond proportions.

What Mujib will do in his delusions of grandeur will not benefit anybody but himself and his class. Maybe, some innocent people in the countryside still

look up to him as the Father of the Nation, as a good man fallen among rackets— a sentiment on which he banks. But this father-fixation is unlikely to last.

What will happen to the Mujib and Moscow swearing parties if the President

decides on one party? A merger? If so, Moscow will supply the dialectic.

The latest outrage is called by Mujib the second revolution. Allah knows how much the people are paying for the first revolution, engineered and executed by outsiders. We do hope that the people of Bangladesh will survive the second.

By Force Alone

The Government of India spent over Rs. 40 crores last year against Rs. 3 crores in 1950-51 to maintain the Central Reserve Police. The expenditure is likely to cross Rs. 50 crores in the current financial year. Surely these tendencies need to be curbed if the much proclaimed democracy is to survive. In fact, an impression has been gaining ground that the present Government, which happens to be one of the most powerful regimes this side of Suez, is totally incapable of functioning without the backing of the army and other paramilitary forces which have been growing in size and power from year to year. The frequent involvement of armed forces in civilian affairs has been causing concern. Some senior army officers are known to have, on more than one occasion, expressed reservations about using the army to quell people's political movements.

The increasing dependence on the army and military organisations, coupled with promulgation of such anti-people laws as DIR and MISA, would not have been necessary had the ruling party not shown scant regard to popular institutions. But flouting democratic norms, bypassing Parliament and not responding to people's protest movements, the party has cleared the way for one-party dictatorship. The large-scale deployment of CRP and BSF which should normally be patrolling the frontiers to prevent smuggling and other illegal activities, and the frequent alerting of the army demonstrate how much love and regard the ruling party has for democracy. In Bihar alone 57 companies of CRP in addition to an undisclosed number of

BSF are presently stationed on what is euphemistically described as internal security duties.

History bears out that the use of armed forces for simple law and order problems can lead to large-scale demoralisation in their ranks and widen the gulf between them and the people. The way the ruling party is using the armed forces makes one think that the function of the Border Security Force is not only to face external threats but also safeguard and defend the rulers, however, corrupt and undemocratic they may be. They forget that such flagrant disregard of popular institutions and failure to democratise socio-economic structures can only prove suicidal in the long run.

Instead of taking bold economic decisions to mitigate people's sufferings and to arrest the rot in the body politic, the ruling Congress has relied heavily on use of force and official violence. Having failed to ensure the smooth functioning of popular institutions, or resolving internal bickerings in the party to get down to the business of ruling, the party in power is behaving most arbitrarily in the exercise of authority.

Another Gimmick ?

One of the favourite words of Indian politicians is "self-sufficiency". Come any occasion when there is even a remote chance of meeting the local demand from local production—perhaps at some distant point of time—and they would start hammering the headlines with this catchy word. We had self-sufficiency already in food (claimed soon after the

green revolution years of 1968-71 by none other than our venerable President Ahmed who was then the Minister of Food); in fertiliser (promised by Mr Sethi of Madhya Pradesh when he was the Petroleum and Chemicals Minister in New Delhi) and in so many other items from time to time. These promises have now gone down the drain. But the charm of the word remains. Like a mantra, our politicians keep on repeating it in season, out of season. And now we have got in Mr K. D. Malaviya, the Union Petroleum and Chemicals Minister, once more a formidable exponent of this verbal art. He has been proclaiming from practically all possible forums that nothing can prevent India from achieving self-sufficiency in oil by 1980 or 1981. To the credit of Mr Malaviya, it must however be said that he, more than most others, knows more about oil and such other things. But even then, he seems to have craned his neck a little too long.

Mr Malaviya's arithmetic looks something like this. Bombay High, where the third test well drilled earlier this month has also struck oil, is expected to yield about 14 million tonnes of crude by 1980 or 1981. Another about 16 to 17 million tonnes are expected to come from increased production from the onshore areas. Like all simple mathematical sums, all this looks very facile and easy. But the sum has some loose ends. Can we really set up the technical outfit for utilising the Bombay High crude, assuming that it turns out to be as big a bonanza as it is promised, within the deadline mentioned? The total cost would come to a very high figure: for 14 million tonnes, it would be around Rs 1,400 crores or so. Wherefrom the money would come? From the sale proceeds of oil or from budgetary resources? More than this, Mr Malaviya's projections for onshore supplies seem to be very much on the high side. The Fuel Policy Committee has put the proven reserves of oil in the country at only 127 million tonnes excluding the Bombay High. So how do all these figures work out? Or is it just another of those gimmicks?

The Naga Struggle: 1947-74—II

UDAYON MISRA

FILL 1949, the NNC was divided on the question of the nature of Naga independence. While one group of Nagas favoured immediate independence and severance of all ties with India, another group favoured the continuance of governmental relations with India till the Nagas could run their own State all by themselves. Yet another group, though very small, wanted Nagaland to be a Mandatory State under the British Government for a specified period of time. But with the election of A. Z. Phizo as President of the Naga National Council towards the end of 1949, the demand for full and immediate independence gathered momentum. (Before being elected President of the NNC, Phizo, dissatisfied with the NNC leadership and its constitutional methods, had withdrawn from the NNC and formed the People's Independence League. He mobilised the Naga youth into a Naga Youth Movement and Naga Women's Society and harnessed the tribal, range and village councils to further the demand for independence. It was under Phizo that NNC was transformed from a mere constitutional organisation into a militant body. In February 1950 the NNC declared that no Naga representative would be sent to the Indian Parliament and the Assam Assembly. The next year, on May 25, 1951, Phizo inaugurated at Kohima a plebiscite on the issue of Naga Independence. Volunteers of the Naga Youth Movement and the Naga Women's Society went round the villages collecting signatures and thumb- impressions of all adult Nagas and administering them oaths, in the tribal fashion, to fight for Naga independence. The Plebiscite, which took four months to complete (May-August 1951), was a great success with almost the entire Naga population voting for independence. But the Government of India decided to ignore the plebiscite as a "farce" and a "stage-managed show". The NNC was not deterred by this, and the same year saw the total boycott of elections

to the District Council. The following year (1952) the Naga National Council demonstrated its refusal to accept the Indian Constitution and its Sixth Schedule by organising a total boycott of the General Elections. The Government of India went through the entire process of election. Electoral rolls were prepared, nominations called for, polling booths erected—but not a single Naga cast his vote. There were no nominations, no candidates and no voters! The boycott of the General Elections of 1952 proved beyond doubt where the sympathies of the average Naga lay, and the NNC successfully demonstrated that the plebiscite of 1951 was no farce. Both the plebiscite and the boycott of the election further strengthened the position of the NNC and geared up its movement for independence. The next phase, was to be that of civil disobedience. People refused to pay taxes, the 'gaonburas' (village headmen) resigned, government teachers gave up their jobs, children left their schools, and all national and official functions of the Government of India were boycotted. In short, it was total non-co-operation with the Government of India.

From 1952 onwards relations between the Nagas and Delhi gradually worsened and several incidents added to the growing hiatus. On October 18, 1952, the people of Kohima demonstrated against the torture of a young Naga boy by the Assam Police at Dimapur. During the procession a Naga pedestrian was run over and killed by a police officer's motorcycle and this resulted in the people turning violent. A judge of the Angami Tribal Court tried to save the life of the police officer; but he was shot dead by a trigger-happy policeman. This resulted in a high degree of bitterness against all Indians. The enquiry committee set up to look into the matter exonerated the police action. This further outraged the Naga's sense of justice. Five months later, in March 1953, Nehru paid his first visit to Kohima, along with the Burmese Premier. Despite feelings

against the Indians running high in the Naga Hills at that time the Nagas gave Nehru a rousing welcome, treating him as a guest in true tribal fashion. Representatives of the tribal councils and leaders came to listen to Nehru at Kohima. But when the Naga leaders were denied any address, either in writing or in speech, at the public meeting, all the Nagas walked out, and Nehru ended up by addressing the non-Naga officials present. The Nagas made it clear that if the Prime Minister of India was not prepared to listen to them, they too would not listen to him. This was probably the only such incident in Nehru's lifetime and he was never to forget it; for, he never visited Kohima again. Immediately after Nehru's visit the police cracked down on the Naga National Council and most of its leaders went underground. The villages of Viswema, Jakhama, Kigwema and Phesama were searched in quick succession by men of the Assam Rifles, and in May 1953, Khonoma, the most important of all Naga villages, was searched and the villagers humiliated. Thousands of people went underground and with this began the period of armed struggle in Nagaland. The Indian Government had taken the first step in this direction. The struggle in Nagaland now began in right earnest—underground propaganda against the Government of India was stepped up, government employees were threatened, schools closed down, the 'gaonburas' asked not to collect taxes and return their red blankets (a sign of honour conferred on them by the Indian Government). Thousands of young men joined the Naga Home Guard or acted as porters for the underground. In order to prevent this, the Government of Assam promulgated an ordinance in September 1953, which empowered the district authorities to requisition the services of Naga young men to act as porters in any emergency. This was nothing short of forced labour. All this, along with the police and military actions, further embittered Naga-Indian relations and chances of a negotiated settlement became ever remote.

Undeclared War

The underground activities culmina-

ted in the formation of the Naga Federal Government in March 1956. The Federal Government adopted a Constitution which declared: "Nagaland is a people's sovereign republic. This has been so from time immemorial. There shall be a parliament with a strength of 100 tatars (Members of the Tatar Hoho or the House of Representatives), the President will be elected by the people and his Cabinet will consist of fifteen Kiloners (Ministers)". The new Constitution declared that Nagaland would maintain permanent military neutrality, that there would be no standing army for the maintenance of law and order and the Home Guards could function both as police and as patriot-soldier. The Federal Constitution also declared: "Land belongs to the people and it will remain so. There will be no land tax, and other forms of taxation will be formulated by different administrative units". Religious freedom and the equality of men and women (w.r.t. political rights, work and wages) were guaranteed. The Naga Federal Government set-up was a carefully planned one and soon a parallel government started functioning in the Naga Hills. Violence now broke out on a wide scale. Already by the end of 1955 the underground was reported to have mobilised a force of over 15,000 armed Nagas. The Government enforced the Special Powers Act and the Indian Army moved in to replace the Assam Police Battalions. The undeclared war in the Naga Hills had begun. Army outposts were attacked, convoys were ambushed, and bridge and culverts blown up by the underground Federal troops. In retaliation, the Indian Army started its reign of terror, reports of which are gradually coming to light today. Entire villages were burnt down, standing crops destroyed and the infamous village regrouping scheme put into effect.

Meanwhile, the underground Federal Government having stepped up the activities, a section of the Naga leaders under the banner of the Naga People's Convention led by Dr Imkongliba Ao tried to come to terms with the Government of India. Their efforts led to the formation of the "Naga Hills Tuensang Area" in December 1957, to be administered by the Governor of Assam as the

Agent of the President of India. This new administrative unit was carved out of the Naga Hills District of Assam and the Tuensang Division of NEFA, and was placed under the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India. Following this, the Naga People's Convention stepped up its demand for a separate State of Nagaland within the Indian Union. The Government of India which was desperately trying to woo the 'loyal' Nagas accepted the demand, and in 1960 the Delhi Agreement was reached. It accepted the 16-point memorandum of the People's Convention along with the demand for a separate State. An Interim Body with Dr Imkongliba Ao as Chairman started functioning from February 13 1961. Phizo and the Federal Government of Nagaland rejected outright this agreement with Delhi and the underground reorganised its forces and revised its plans of action for a stiffer struggle. Recruitment to the underground forces went up and the Federal Government started negotiations with foreign countries for arms supplies. Phizo declared from his exile in London: "No agreement can be recognised regarding the future of Nagaland except with the persons who are fully representative of the Naga people". Despite the Federal Government's rejection of the Delhi Agreement, the new State of Nagaland was inaugurated on December 1, 1963. The Naga Federal Government now had to wage its struggle not only against the Government of India but also against the new State Government of Nagaland. This was bound to have far-reaching consequences. The Indian Government's policy of pitting one group of Nagas against another was beginning to pay dividends. Yet, although the creation of a Naga State within the Indian Union was a setback for the Federal Government, it also further strengthened the underground's resolve to fight on for full independence. Armed struggle against the GOI was stepped up and in April 1963 Delhi announced air-support to ground operations in Nagaland in order "to curb increasing rebel activity there by Naga hostiles with assistance of modern weapons secured from foreign countries". The number of Indian troops increased severalfold and modern

heavy armour was brought in. Yet, the underground met with one striking success after another. The Indian Army found it tough going in an alien territory where almost every Naga villager was in sympathy with the underground. Referring to this in his book, *Nagaland Nightmare*, P. D. Stracey writes: "With sympathisers in every village and the tremendous walking powers of the ordinary Naga, to whom every short cut and subsidiary trail in this area is known, is there any wonder that the quarry is seldom at home?" Moreover, as the intensity of the Indian army operations increased, support to the underground from the villagers also increased.

Peace Mission

As the undeclared war in Nagaland took on new dimensions, and the life of the Naga people was getting unbearable in the face of Indian Army operations, the Church leaders took the initiative and formed the Peace Mission in February 1964. Binala Prasad Chaliha, Jaya Prakash Narayan and Michael Scott were named its members. As a result of the efforts of the Peace Mission, a ceasefire agreement was signed at Sakraba village in May 1964. This agreement is also known as the famous Sakraba Agreement. It was signed by the three Peace Mission members and six representatives of the Federal Government led by Mr Zashei Huire. The Ceasefire Agreement had several significant features. No mention was made of the Nagaland State Government of Shilu Ao; but the existence of the "Naga Army"—this military wing of the Federal Government—was acknowledged. In fact, the Sakraba Agreement recognised the "Federal Government of Nagaland" even if indirectly, and this was a great gain for the underground. Even the term "Ceasefire" had its implications... For, the term "ceasefire" is generally used only in the event of war between two sovereign nations. Another very important aspect of the Agreement was that there would be no patrolling within three miles of the international border with Burma. The ceasefire terms were as follows:

"The Security Forces will not under-

take (a) Jungle operations; (b) raiding of camps of the underground; (c) patrolling beyond one thousand yards of security posts; (d) searching of villages; (e) aerial action; (f) arrests; and (g) imposition of labour by way of punishment".

The Naga Federal Government on its part undertook to suspend (a) sniping and ambushing; (b) imposition of fines; (c) kidnapping and recruitment; (d) sabotage activities; (e) raiding and firing on security posts, towns and administrative centres and (f) moving with arms or in uniform in towns, villages and administrative centres wherever there are security posts. It became clear from the ceasefire terms that the Indian Army had been indulging in village-searches, aerial action plus forced labour in Nagaland.

The ceasefire was put into effect on September 6, 1964, and it was followed by the peace talks at the Chedama Camp, five miles from Kohima. After several rounds of talks, nothing tangible emerged. The Federal side stood firm on the question of sovereignty, while the Government of India wanted a solution within the Indian Constitution. The disarmament plan put forward by the Peace Mission also fell through because the Naga Federal Army and the Tatar Hoho were of the view that the giving up of arms would weaken their political case. This deadlock was followed by the "Peace Mission proposals" for a settlement of the problem.

The Peace Mission Proposals, after stating the Naga Federal Government's and the Government of India's stand on the Naga issue, admitted that the people of Nagaland were never part of the Indian mainstream and never displayed any urge to be part of the Indian Union when the British left in 1947. The Peace Mission appreciated "the desire of the Nagas for self-determination" and for the preservation of their integrity. It stated that "the Naga Federal Government could on their own volition decide to be a participant in the Union of India" and come to a mutual settlement with the Government of India. (Para 13 of the Proposals). Thus, the Peace Mission Proposals made it amply clear that the Nagas and the In-

dians were separate nations and if the Nagas wished to join the Indian Union it had to be voluntary. Military force could not bring about such union. The Peace Mission "appreciated the courage and tenacity displayed by the Naga people in their endeavour to achieve their goal", (Para 12 of the Proposals). The Peace Mission Proposals were discussed in detail by a special session of the Tatar Hoho held in March 1965, which was also attended by the members of the Peace Mission. The then Assam Chief Minister, Chaliha, made it clear that acceptance of the proposals would not commit the Federal side to join India, while J. P. Narayan declared that the Naga struggle "is most certainly a struggle for national freedom". The Tatar Hoho did not reject the Proposals outright but did not accept them either. It insisted on the right of self-determination which could be the only basis for a friendly relationship with India. The Federal side made absolutely so concessions on the question of Naga independence. Further peace talks followed, the ceasefire was extended and the GOI agreed to a Federal leader going to London to consult A. Z. Phizo. An earlier suggestion that a three-member Naga Federal delegation should visit London on Indian passports was rejected by the Federal side, as acceptance of Indian passports would mean acceptance of Indian nationality. Finally, Kjevi Yalley (Phizo's brother and a top leader of the underground) left for London for talks with Phizo. Before Yalley's departure for London, the Naga National Council, the political wing of the Federal Government, held an open session on May 21, 1965 at Viswema village, after a lapse of nine years. The session, which was presided over by the Vice-President of the Naga National Council, Mr Imkongmeran, reaffirmed the leadership of Phizo and reasserted the Naga right to self-determination. Yalley returned from London in September of the same year and told Chaliha that Phizo was willing to take part in discussions with Delhi but there was no indication of any change in the Federal stand. The negotiations, which had apparently reached a blind alley, were renewed. A delegation of the Naga Fede-

ral Government met Mrs Gandhi in February 1966. Mrs Gandhi herself had expressed willingness for the talks to be resumed. The talks with the Prime Minister did not produce any result, and in an interview with the Press, the Foreign Minister of the Naga Federal Government, Mr Issac Swu, said that "nothing short of independence" would satisfy the Nagas. When asked if an autonomous Nagaland with Defence, Foreign Affairs and Finance under the control of Delhi would be acceptable, Mr Swu answered: "This would not be independence. We don't want to be a part of India. Any status which does not confer sovereignty on us would not be acceptable". Swu concluded the Press meet by saying: "We may be forced to seek assistance of foreign countries to achieve our objectives". Till now the Nagas had received assistance from Pakistan, but the search for better and more dependable friends seemed to be yielding result.

It soon became evident that the gulf between the GOI and the Naga Federal side was widening, despite all the peace talks and negotiations. Both sides stiffened their attitudes. The Ceasefire Agreement was frequently violated and reports of village-regroupings, punitive raids and atrocities committed by the Security Forces became common. On February 25 1966, J. P. Narayan resigned from the Peace Mission: saying that he had forfeited the confidence of the Federal Government and that he had never subscribed to the idea of full Naga independence. This was followed by Chaliha's resignation and the sudden deportation of Scott from India. In the meantime the Federal side stepped up its activities and on March 22, 1966, they celebrated their Republic Day on the outskirts of Kohima. It was an im-

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The Mall,

Kanpur.

pressive display of Federal strength with fully armed units of the Naga Army taking part in the celebrations. The Federal flag was hoisted, full Republic Day celebrations were held and thousands of people participated. Some trekked for nights to join in the celebrations. The Federal Republic Day celebrations were held right under the nose of the State Government which had been earlier notified by the underground. In the "Republic Day" address, the President of the Federal Government declared: "It is my firm conviction that the only practical solution to the problem of India-Naga relations is self-determination". He asserted that the Nagas wished to have friendly ties with India but said, "If the worst is to be forced upon us, we have to be prepared as to be capable of changing the history of a great part of Asia". It was clear that the State Government and the Indian Army personnel could not have prevented the observance of Republic Day by the Federal Government even if they had wanted to. Later on, of course Delhi's stand was that the rebels had taken "prior permission" (1) to observe their Republic Day. Plenty of commotion took place in the Lok Sabha over this "open expression of distance" by the Naga underground. But it established once again that the Naga Federal Government was not just made up of a group of Western-educated Christians' out to break up the integrity of India. The Federal side had once again demonstrated their strength and the thousands of Nagas present in the celebrations bore evidence to it.

(To be concluded)

প্রস্তুতি গর্ব

ভানুসারী—এপ্রিল মুক সংখ্যা।

বিশেষ ক্রোড়পত্র সহ

প্রকাশিত হচ্ছে মাৰ্চে।

A New Centre for Communists?

MCM

A two-day convention of some communist "revolutionary" groups was held at the Town Hall, Ernakulam, on December 14 and 15, at the end of which a new communist party came into existence. The bourgeois papers characterised the "ceremony" in different tunes, viz. "formation of fourth Communist party in India", "Genuine Communist Party", etc. But it seems that the already existing splinter groups and individual revolutionaries took no notice and treated the whole affair as a casual incident.

The manner in which this revolutionary group was formed is thought provoking. The ball started rolling with the formation of a Reception Committee (sic!). They showed much keenness to get this news item published in the dailies. Its leaders met journalists, explaining to these the programmes and policies of their future "revolutionary actions". Thus everything had been set ready and with the participation of about 500 delegates from within Kerala the convention started. Reports and details of the discussions held inside reached the Press at lightning speed. For three days almost all national dailies published the news coming from the rostrum of this aspirant revolutionary convention. Later, a 19-member State Committee headed by A. V. Aryan was elected, and the group came into being under the name "Centre of Indian Communists".

An appeal, printed in English and addressed to "Comrades and Countrymen", had been issued on November 8, 1974. It claims that this convention is a prelude to the formation of "a genuine communist party in India". After analysing the treacherous and revisionist activities of both the CPI and CPM, the appeal touches the CPI(ML), characterising them as "Indian Narodniks" and its line as "more dangerous than the line of the Randive-Namboodiripad clique of 1948 known as the Calcutta Thesis". At the same time it least do-

ubted the "sincerity of some among them". What irked them was their entering into the "revolutionary arena in the name of Marxism-Leninism and Comrade Mao" while "at the same time practising the policy of terrorism and murdering of individuals, which were condemned by Marx, Lenin and Mao as the non-communist path". This appeal levelled another charge against the existing Naxalites—they were accused of having propagated Debre's "Revolution in Revolution" as Mao's Thought.

The appeal concludes after requesting the working class and "progressive sections" of the people to cooperate "in order to build up a genuine communist party and revolutionary movement and to develop mass movements and mass struggles free from the left and right opportunism or either deviation, through the path shown by Marx, Engels Lenin, Stalin and Mao".

Like the appeal, the political resolution (printed in Malayalam) does not indicate the policies or programmes of the Centre. Divided into two parts, it analyses the national and international situation without bringing any new points. It was just a repetition and an imitation of many we have seen before; there were several mere translations from the Peking Review in certain portions.

The resolution never tried to specify its own line, or course of action in a broad-based way, but dealt with imperialism, social-imperialism, the crisis of the dollar and the capitalist system on the world market, the exploitative tendencies of imperialism and super-powers, the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union for world hegemony, etc. etc. It goes on to say that as the super-powers are fighting each other for world domination, the contradiction between them remains. The pacts and friendships between them are partial and temporary.

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Actually their aim is to engage in a terrible and permanent struggle with each other. . . . As long as imperialism, social-imperialism, and their exploitation exists in the world there would not be any permanent peace. Either they will collide with each other; or the people will move forward through the revolutionary path."

This fails to corroborate other Marxist-Leninist analyses, which hold that the two super-powers will try maximally to avoid any possible war between themselves, but will continue tirelessly to involve others in wars, as the first one is disastrous for their own existence and the second will create additional markets for their weapons. This has been proved well in Cuba, Vietnam, the Middle East and recently at Cyprus.

After analysing the involvement and exploitation of super-powers and imperialist forces in the under-developed countries, the resolution points out that if unending struggles are conducted in the light of the peculiar circumstances prevailing in each country and they try to move forward along the path of independence and self-reliance, smaller countries will be able to modernise their trade and agriculture, and can make an overall development which was unattainable for their ancestors. This contention reminds one of the policies and programmes of the Bihar movement and that of JP.

While discussing the political parties, the resolution finds no difference between the ruling and opposition parties. Opposition parties are not trying to educate the people about the sloppiness of our existing economic system; instead they try to mislead the people by advocating that with the removal of the pre-

sent rulers everything will become all right. If today's opposition comes as tomorrow's rulers, they will also continue the job done by the present rulers. It exposes the character of both the CPI and CPM but unlike the Appeal left the CPI(ML) untouched.

It declares that the main task before the Centre is to coordinate the communist revolutionaries throughout India. It seems that this is the means as well as the end. Although reports were published in the newspapers that the Centre will not take part in the parliamentary system or elections of any kind, the political resolution never makes an emphatic declaration to this effect. Likewise the case of Naxalite prisoners inside the jails did not find a berth in the resolution.

Doubts have been raised from several quarters about the genuineness of the Centre regarding the commitment of leaders as well as the group as a whole. Till recently its leaders were heading their own separate groups and wings. Three of the foremost leaders were active in the CPM until 1971, and neither the Naxalbari-Srikakulam revolts nor the several armed revolts in Kerala, enabled them to make a correct assessment of "genuine Marxist-Leninist principles". They remained with the CPM until its leadership took some disciplinary action against them. For example, Mr A. V. Aryan. In the 1970 mid-term election, defying the CPM's directive to fight from the Ollur constituency, he fought at Manalur and lost to his Congress rival. His defeat was a great shock to the CPM, as he was regarded as "No. 3" in the party leadership. This led to a call for an explanation from him and subsequently the split widened. After that he formed his own group, known as the Communist Unity Centre, in 1972. The timing of the convention is also relevant—when all other political parties have started preparations to fight a snap election.

Like other States in India, Kerala is still far away from a revolution and has to go miles ahead to fulfil Victor M. Fic's prediction: "Kerala: The Yenana of India".

The Murder Of Mahalanobis

ANAMIK BASAB

PROFESSOR Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis was murdered, and his brainchild outraged, on the morning of December 16, 1974. A distinguished gathering of scientists, as well as workers of the Indian Statistical Institute, graced the occasion by their presence. The venue was the Amra Kunja, the Mango Grove inside the ISI campus, where the Professor gave many expositions of his scientific vision.

The murder was not called as such, though. For the murderers were **bhadralok**, genteel people, who would never use a rough word. They belong to a social category in which "malnutrition", is used to mean "starvation", "interrogation" of extremists to mean "physical torture", and poverty and inequality are discussed in terms of elegant mathematical models rather than hunger and destitution. The murder of Mahalanobis was appropriately dressed up and called "International Symposium, Recent Trends of Research in Statistics: in Memory of the Late Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis". To mark the solemnity of the occasion, social meets were organised in which foreign liquor flowed in abundance, while research in the ISI was grinding to a halt, and low-paid workers were waiting in vain for realisation of legitimate demands, under an all-pervasive economy drive. And, all this in memory of Mahalanobis.

But what a perverted mind is it that equates the noble efforts of upholding the Professor's memory with murder? Let us list the pervert's follies and pin him down.

What was Mahalanobis, essentially? Certainly, he was no angel. A close associate of his for over thirty years, thought he was "an impossible boss", "an autocrat, a strategist who did not place all his cards on the table, and did not take kindly to those who differed with him".¹ To many, however, who watched him from a distance, and with sufficient unbiased, the essential Mahalanobis was a superbly dynamic mind, involved in the world around him, work-

For Frontier contact

VISALANDHRA

BOOK DEPOT,

Srikakulam,

A. P.

FEBRUARY 1, 1975

ing on a canvas as large as life itself. The ingredients that mixed to shape this personality were "a high intellectual calibre, scientific spirit, dynamic leadership, devotion to work, love and sense of pride for one's own country, and a deep concern for the common man"².

The Professor's concept of statistics, the concept that led him to create his brainchild, the ISI, has been aptly summarised by another associate of his:³

"For the last two decades the late Sir Ronald A. Fisher who is considered the father of modern statistical methodology, and Professor Mahalanobis have been advocating that statistics be looked upon as a 'key technology' for application in all scientific activities which involve observation, experimentation and measurement". . . . "From the above conception of statistics as a key technology it is obvious that an institution meant primarily for the development of statistical methodology and for the non-routine application of statistics for the benefit of other sciences should be so constituted and organised that a strong group of creative workers in statistics can be in close working relationship with researches in different fields of the natural and social sciences".

This, then, was the Professor's concept of "statistics as a key technology" and the guiding force behind the creation of the ISI. That there was some realisation of this concept in the ISI, through effective utilisation or the close co-existence of researchers in statistics and other disciplines, could be illustrated by reference to the D^4 statistic, evolved in response to problems in anthropology, methods for large-scale sample survey, elaborated in response to the needs of national planning, and other statistical tools, developed for use in geology and genetics. It is in this many-faceted, collaborative, rationally-integrated character where the imprint of Mahalanobis' mind and the source of strength and uniqueness of the ISI lie. The best tribute to the memory of Mahalanobis would be to project this unique character of the ISI in all its academic activities. To destroy this character would be to assassinate the Professor and outrage his brainchild.

In this context the post-Mahalanobis

era in the ISI, especially the recent International Symposium, is reviewed here.

While the burners in the crematorium had not cooled down yet, the mention of "other subjects" was surreptitiously sought to be deleted from the statement of objectives in the ISI's constitution which read: "to promote the study and dissemination of knowledge of and research on statistics and other subjects relating to planning for national development and social welfare";³ etc. Various research projects, especially those involving equipment, chemicals, field surveys, were stifled under the pretext of fund shortage, and administrative incapability. Various forms of corruption and nepotism were introduced. Workers were pitted against workers, to fight battles that were not theirs. The leadership of the ISI Worker's Organisation was lulled into a deep slumber, as though by the deft sweep of a magic wand. While all these followed in quick succession, the scientist-administrator at the top, who had stepped into Mahalanobis' shoes, sat back and played his fiddle. Was there a method in his madness?

And then came the deluge, the grand finale, the International Symposium.

The scientific workers of the ISI who were not mathematicians, the non-Math-Stat people, were informed of the Symposium, incidentally, in an Office Order on "Economy Measure", and then invited, as a second thought, to participate, just a few weeks before it began. Very few of them were thus able to present their research results to the distinguished gathering. Not that all Math-Stat people were treated equally; some were discriminated against for obscure reasons. The outsiders, especially those from the affluent countries, however, were invited well in advance. A glance through the Detailed Programme of the Symposium showed that 27 out of the 43 sessions were devoted to Math-Stat. Fair enough. But how many of these 27 had much to do with live data, let alone with "national development and social welfare"? How many of all the contributions were based on interdisciplinary researches done in the ISI, which could not be carried out in interdisciplinary organisations? How many

of them represented researches in "other subjects" *per se*, the potential impetus for sharpening statistical tools? How many accommodated the works of young minds, the ISI students, who were exposed to a broad spectrum of knowledge besides statistics? Did this Symposium, then, project the ISI's unique character, based on Mahalanobis' concept of statistics as a key technology? Was there a lack of appreciation of the Professor's concept of statistics and his life-sized canvas in the minds of men who organised the Symposium and may shape the ISI of tomorrow?

These are stupid questions, indeed, products of a perverted mind, never to be asked, for heaven's sake, in polite company. Mahalanobis may cry in pain and shudder at the sigh of his brainchild being outraged, mutilated beyond recognition. But, to the *bhadralok*, the genteel people, of the ISI, the king is dead, long live the king.

Is there a voice of protest? A voice of protest, did you say? But, you should have known better: the ISI is a mini-continent in a continent of Circe, where the sorceress, by a magic flicker of her finger, has turned men into herds of sheep.

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Economic Theory and Planning:

Essays in Honour of A. K. Das Gupta
Edited by Ashok Mitra
Oxford University Press, 1974. Rs. 50

Economic Theory and Planning is a collection of essays presented to Prof A. K. Dasgupta on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. From the list of his works it is evident that Prof Dasgupta has long been taking a very active interest in both economic theory and planning. Essays presented to him cover precisely the same ground.

Some eight essays in the first section deal with the central issues in economic theory nowadays: the problems of value and movement of capital. Regarding their position on these issues, economists are now divided into two distinct camps—neo-classical and neo-Keynesian. The present volume opens with an essay from J. R. Hicks, the doyen of the neo-classicists on preference and welfare.

It acquaints us with the fact that the celebrated Hicks-Allen endeavour was prompted by Henry Schultze's effort to measure cross-elasticities straight from the Marshallian approach to consumer behaviour. The latter, Hicks realised, was ill suited for their venture for the simple reason that owing to his obsession with measurement of utility in terms of constant marginal utility of money, Marshall just could not take care of such phenomenon as income-effect which would figure as an important factor in the Schultze business. He and Allen adopted an ordinalised version of Paretian utility function, and thus their analysis, Hicks felt, could be the right kind of springboard for econometric jobs such as measurement of cross-elasticities and the like. But Samuelson offered the econometricians another springboard in the shape of the so-called Revealed Preference approach. Hicks then, in 1958, revised his earlier demand theory to state that the old springboard that he and Allen had engineered was still good enough for the venture the econo-

metricians are interested in. But since the dust stirred up over the so-called "integrability problem" has now settled so that Hicks can say that it was after all a mare's nest, the difference between the two competitive approaches of Hicks and Samuelson is that between tweedledum and tweedle-dee. The econometricians, Hicks' public, can sure exercise their right of choice to tell us which of the two they are going to fall for. Hicks sticks to his 1958 position and expects others to follow suit.

Hicks then proceeds to show how his preference hypotheses can be more meaningfully used in the problem of measurement of social product. The labour theory of value providing an alternative measure, he says, rests on such assumption that labour is the only factor of production and there are no economics of scale. To his dismay he discovers that the real world runs counter to these hypotheses. Hicks then triumphantly restates his measurement theory of 1958 vintage, which is again his over-compensation criterion restated. Naturally from this area, Hicks passes on to welfare, where we have less of analysis and more in the way of assertion of faith. Now so far as these measurement theories and 'New Welfare Economics' are concerned, one knows enough about them and will enjoy what Hicks has written. But then we are astounded that even Hicks should give those arguments against the labour theory of value. He happens to be confused between two absolutely different ideas—'labour as the only factor of production', the bourgeois vulgarisation of the labour theory, and 'labour as the only human agent in the production process', the way Marx looks at the problem. If one is over-interested in the problem of movement, the present reviewer can only refer to Passinetti's 1973 January-April Metro-economics article. Naqvi's essay in the present volume will help one to understand the problem.

In his article Preference Ordering and Economic Policy Meade tells us that the days of the liberal economic theorist are not really over. The economic theorist can contribute to the building up of a good society. The latter "can be built only on the basis of good citizens who in the political arena will consider what is distributionally fair as well as an efficient set of laws and institutions to make the market work fairly and efficiently". There just could not be a more apt putting of neo-classical faith.

Joan Robinson, in her abdication of neo-classical economics, starts out with Kaldor's criticism of equilibrium economics. She traces the development of economic thought from Ricardian political economy through Marxian critique down to the stage of pure theory. The latter, one knows, proceeds from a set of hypotheses through to deduction of some results without ever taking up the question of comparing the results with the reality. Marginalist Revolution—circa 1870—the real beginning of pure theory—dogged the issue of distribution that Ricardo and Marx were primarily interested in and solely concerned itself with determination of prices in terms of market-independent preferences and technology and theory of distribution of prices. Joan Robinson points out how this theory can be a powerful tool of mis-education. Marxists, she says, in their haste to refute this theory doggedly insisted on Vol. I. Capital's theme of overall exploitation resulting in an undialectical neglect of Volume III's analysis of prices, different from values in Volume I, distributing surplus value into non-wage income category. From Marx's theory of competitive capitalism one can proceed to the theory of monopoly capitalism considering a spectrum of profits commensurate with the monopoly power of firms.

Class-room Economics

Joan Robinson underlines the failure of class-room economics to provide a proper explanation for the existence of positive rates of profit. Whatever explanations are given founder on the fact that the rate of profit is rising as capital per man.

She finally shows why the various concepts of capital with the rate of profit gravitating around it have been tried out and sedulously taught both in the imperialist West and in neo-colonies (India in particular). If by capital is meant waiting, saving, finance or education and technology, and if these alone cater to increase output, countries waging war on poverty must necessarily require them and pay the 'appropriate' price. Naturally pillage of the Third World by the imperialist West is legitimised. However, some other countries outside the arena of interdependence between neo-colonies and neo-imperialists have made rapid strides economically, culturally and socially without recourse to foreign aid and thereby, have called the bluff.

Naqvi's article on value and prices is a lucid presentation of some important theorems on the labour theory of value and relations between wage, profit, price and organic composition of capital. As a method of analysis. Naqvi constructs simple numerical analogues to metrical formulations and then passes on to more rigorous proofs. The exposition, simple and elegant as it is, will surely answer the need of those who emerge from J. R.'s abdication of neo-classicism fully convinced and are desperately in search of a new parable.

Amartya Sen's article on some debates on Capital theory written in the form of an imaginary dialogue between the Buddha and Subhuti is a precise and comprehensive account of the so-called two-Cambridge debate. The same ground has been covered by Harcourt, Kregel, etc. One has to read the present article to see the difference. However, one may not agree with him regarding the consequence of polemic: And in fact when Subhuti asks what he has gained other than debunking the neo-classical use of capital as factor of production and the determination of the rate of profit by the so-called marginal product of capital, one is simply astounded. Is it not the same Subhuti who began the discussion saying "despite early doubts I have become lately 'interested' in using an 'aggregate production function'. And I would 'like' to have the rate of profit in the economy

determined by the marginal product of capital"? Again debunking the neo-classical use of capital is just a step towards understanding the essence of capital—that it is a social relation and basis of capitalist exploitation and it remains to be seen whether one is prepared to face this consequence of the polemic or still tries to dodge the issue, as has been done nicely in the present article.

Whatever damage has been done to neo-classical logic scarcely ever deters some of our serious students of economics pursuing the neo-classical train of thought. Ashoke Guha's article on overtaking criterion and P. Dasgupta's on optimum population policy are instances of this exemplary devotion. In fact, these two economists set up to Meade's dictum, trying their best to make their contribution to the building of a 'Good Society'. For those who have a taste for pure theory of economic policy, these two articles will do.

Amit Bhaduri's essay on forced commercialisation is an analysis of the nature of the precapitalistic commodity production system in India's vast rural areas. The kingpin of the entire analysis is the hypothesis that the poor peasants tied to landlord-cum-moneylender-cum-trader have perforce to sell a part of their produce or receipts in kind from sundry agricultural work in order to pay for a part of the past debt and essential non-crop expenditure. Under the circumstances they are finally left with an amount of crop that is less than what is necessary for bare subsistence and input requirement—the latter, in case of sharecroppers and owners of tiny plots. Hence the need for further loans from moneylenders for purchase of crop which implies greater and greater participation on the part of the peasantry on the market, to their economic ruination. Bhaduri insists that the terms of trade between industry and agriculture are not responsible for the phenomenon. It can be explained in terms of the role played by the merchant's capital.

The present article being the continuation of his previous discussion on the stability of semi-feudalism only acquaints one with the cash nexus of semi-feudalism, but fails to identify the reasons for the phenomenon and hence the perpetuation of semi-feudalism.

What about the relationship of the indigenous monopoly capital and its foster-father, foreign monopoly capital, to agriculture and consequential non-transformation of merchant's capital into producer's capital?

Ashoke Mitra's sceptical note on the concept of equivalence in exchange seeks to clarify the concept of equivalence and informs us that it may be difficult to find an empirical correlate of the concept for the insuperable problem of value-judgment associated with it. He begins with Marshall's position on equivalence, passes on to Luxembourg's idea of non-equivalent imperialist trade between industry and agriculture in socialist regimes and its operational significance in accelerating the price of socialist accumulation. As for the concept of equivalence in a socialist regime, Mitra rightly clarifies the point that from mere worsening of the terms of trade it is not correct to infer that exchange is non-equivalent—a point that not only Preobrazhensky but later writers such as Dobb, Leurin, Carr failed to appreciate. To see if the exchange between industry and agriculture is non-equivalent, one has to see if the rates of profit in industry and in agriculture are different. This is what these authors never tried to study. Incidentally Mitra suggests that equivalence in rate of profit on surplus value can in fact serve as the empirical correlate of the concept, although it has its own value-implications.

Mitra dwells on an important issue, raised by Preobrazhensky whether non-equivalent exchange between industry and agriculture is a method for socialist accumulation. He answers this question in the affirmative and his reasons for so doing lie in the differences in the savings ratios obtaining in industry and agriculture. This prescription is questionably, for this method may guarantee accelerated accumulation, but whether the accumulation is socialist is another matter. One has only to remember in this connection the lessons from the history of the Soviet Union.

One more point before we leave this essay. It is not evident if Mitra properly appreciates Marx's dialectical treatment of equivalence and non-equivalence in capitalism. Marx shows equivalence

in capitalist exchange in terms of a unique rate of profit in his price analysis (Mitra's criterion of equivalence). But this is appearance while the reality is non-equivalence, as shown in his value analysis where it is pointed out that the rate of surplus value is the rate of exploitation of labour, the only human agent in capitalist production.

The first section of the book ends with an interesting item. Some preliminary notes by Daniel Thorner on the principal modes of production analysed by Karl Marx. Thorner was collecting more information about insufficiently characterised Asiatic and ancient modes. He felt that specific forms of feudalism were so widely divergent that each one of them should be studied as a separate category. Then again development from feudalism to capitalism has wide variations, and there is no guarantee that the capitalist order of economy will emerge from the womb of feudalism. "Semi-feudalism" may also be a category which should be studied carefully. From "Capitalism to Socialism" the course of development need not necessarily be uniform. Now that one has a whole spectrum of 'socialist' economics, one has to know specific characteristics of this category also. As the title of these notes suggests, Thorner wanted to study the concept of reality or study of category but reading these notes one gathers that he was in fact interested in the treatment of economic reality by various authors. In Marx's Capital I, this distinction is only too evident. Marx's study of the bourgeois mode of production captures the essence of capitalism of Marx's time, and in the chapters on primitive accumulation in Capital, which only trace the path by which in Western Europe the capitalist order of economy emerged from the womb of feudalism we find a brief study of reality. Was Thorner sure what he was after?

Planning & Public Policy

Essays in Section Two analyse the problem of planning and public policy. The first three essays respectively by Lefebvre, Rudra and Islam discuss theory and practical difficulties of planning and plan implementation. Lefebvre discusses the failure of the old paradigm of deve-

lopment and focusses on the difficulties of replication of experience of capitalist countries in the underdeveloped third world. He says that the Chinese experience may give birth to an alternative paradigm. This study is deliberately superficial. Any in-depth serious study of the development programmes which are under way in the third world could not but show that these programmes are but elaborate covers for the 'ruling clique's participation in the economic life of the country in the interests of the comprador bourgeoisie and hence there is hardly any reason to think that successful completion of these programmes would bring more of the amenities of life to people. The search for a newer paradigm is again a search for a newer hoax. Lefebvre should understand that just as Western experience cannot be replicated if only for a reason different from the one he would go with, so is also the Chinese experience of planning because that presupposes the "establishment of peoples" power through armed revolution. Lefebvre's wrong framework is responsible for a gross misappraisal of the Great Leap Forward. The present reviewer can only refer to such studies as Wheelright and Macfarlane's *The Chinese Road to Socialism* Jan Myrdal's *Report from Chinese Village* and Gun Kessle and Jan Myrdal's *China: Revolution Continued* and finally John Gurley's celebrated study on Chinese development strategy.

Nurul Islam's *Planning and Plan Implementation* enlarges upon the problem of information and necessary statistical obstacles to implementation of plan. He amply illustrates the article with reference to the problem of planning in Bangladesh. While there is hardly anything particularly interesting in this article, assumptions that foreign resources are conducive to economic growth—although tacit in the present paper—can be made by an apologist of neo-colonialism. Ashoke Rudra's essay on "Usefulness of Plan Models" will be found particularly useful by the students of planning in our universities, who are taught to study methods of planning and gloss over the economy of planning.

Dr Raj's article on nationalisation of banks in India begins with discussion of

various facts of monetary policy and points out the imitations of banking legislation and control in matters of monetary policy. Hence the justification of complete nationalisation of commercial banks. Thereafter he tries to focus on the success of the measure in terms of indices such as rise of bank deposits and investment in priority areas like agriculture and small-scale operations. Rise in bank deposits is a phenomenon caused by the steady expansion of government expenditure. Since there has not been any significant change in the rate of the rise in bank deposits, this index does not give us enough information regarding the impact of bank nationalisation. So far as investment in agriculture is concerned one finds that while actual investment falls far short of target figures, most of this investment has inevitably gone to owners of large farms. Fortunately for Dr Raj the disturbing information has not yet reached him that bank nationalisation has not particularly been a boon to small industries or how the nationalised banks actually mop up rural surplus in order to invest in speculative business in the urban areas or that nationalised banks are really following in the steps of State-owned non-banking financial institutions in the matter of liberally investing in monopoly business. Perhaps he could not care less. After all, is not the Indira regime a replica of the progressive bourgeois whom Marx totally misunderstood?

Fiscal Policy Etc.

There are as many as four articles on fiscal policy, tax-policy and investment policy by Lakdawala, Gulati, Dantwala and Bisaria, and then Prasad. While Lakdawala's article not only does not contain anything substantial on the subject of fiscal policy in India, one finds that he has confused between the instrument and the target. That apart, the draft of the present article leaves much to be desired. Gulati's article considers the impact of various tax-holiday programmes on employment. One immediately discerns in his arguments a vestigial trace of the neo-classical production function approach. Dantwala and Bisaria in their critique of Government investment programme and its im-

fact on unemployment start from a statistical fallacy that, though according to census population has increased over a decennial period, the total work force has registered a slight decline. This they observe, is due to the re-definition of the total work-force in such a way that those who are secondarily occupied are not counted in. They insist that a sound investment programme should take into account not only the volume of unemployment but age and sex composition, regional characteristics, and educational qualifications as well. Dantwala comments that unless the macro-investment programme is thoroughly disaggregated and the factors mentioned above are considered, it will not make any dent in the unemployment problem. One envies Dantwala's complacency regarding the key to the solution of the unemployment problem.

Pradhan H. Prasad's discussion on limits to investment planning is in a sense a counterpoint to the Dantwala and Bisaria thesis and brings to the fore an important question "Development for Whom?" He shows that investment in agriculture has only strengthened semi-feudalism in rural areas. Again fundamental to his analysis of semi-feudalism is the role of consumption loans and the assumption that the earning of the jotedars from the semi-feudal mode would be greater than that from the capitalist mode. Hence the non-conversion of merchant's capital into producers' capital. His observations may be taken as an argument for perpetuation of semi-feudalism. But he has definitely clarified one very important point—that while the investment programme will hardly benefit the underemployed rural power, it would cater to the village moneybags.

The editor has surely done a fine job in pulling together some good papers on very relevant problems of our time, and Dasgupta festschrift will certainly be regarded as a valuable addition to economic literature. C.J.

For Frontier contact

POPULAR BOOK STALL,

Near Bank of India,

Clipping

A Big Pipeline

CHINA: China has just put into service its first great pipeline: 1152 kilometers long, it connects the oil-fields of Tashing in Manchuria with the port of Shinguangtao on the Bay of Po Hai. It crosses the northern provinces of Liaoning, Kirin and Hopei. The pipeline has been constructed in two stages, the first part being started during the winter of 1970, the second part has been completed this autumn. The pipeline, which is double throughout its northern section, is provided with 19 pumping stations.

This achievement, underlines the New China News Agency which gives the information, "reflects the excellent situation of the Chinese petroleum production". It is true that there has been excellent progress in the course of the last few years. Besides, the future prospects are even more promising—to such an extent that China, according to Japanese experts, can be one of the world's exporters of petrol.

Petrol is a relative novelty in China. Only ten years ago, production was less than 10 million tons. Progress was slow till 1970; since then it has increased by leaps and bounds. Thus, between 1972 and 1973, it has doubled, reaching 60 million tons. Some Western experts estimate that in 1974 it was 80 million tons, which will put China in the same rank with producers like Libya or Abu Dhabi.

The outlook appears to be even more bright, though the Chinese are maintaining a total silence over this point. The Japanese predict that the Chinese production will reach 400 million tons in 1980, that is to say, actually equal to that of Saudi Arabia. But these predictions are received with some scepti-

cism in the West where, taking account of the eventual exploitation of offshore deposits in the Bay of Po Hai, it is considered that the Chinese will run into the difficulty of finding equipment to develop its petroleum industry at this pace. But have not the Chinese often surprised the experts?

(Le Figaro, January 4, 1975)

Contemporary Artists of Calcutta

SANDIP SARKAR

A NNUAL shows organised by the Art academies in Calcutta can be compared to annual numbers or special issues brought out by leading dailies of the city. A lot of money and effort is spent but the net result is polished mediocrity. The Birla Academy's annual exhibition, January 9-25, was no exception.

One could see that the established young painters did not feel like participating. For instance Bijon Chaudhury, Bikash Bhattacharya and Sunil Das were conspicuous by their absence. Prakash Karmakar and Ganesh Pyne were there with two exquisite paintings but Rabin Mondal gave a sort of doodling to show that he is thoroughly disgusted with the judges who declared the prizes. From the paintings exhibited one could see the trends of the younger generation of painters. In the past two decades young artist would enthusiastically copy Picasso or Braque or one of the modern masters, now-a-days they unashamedly mimic Ganesh Pyne or Bikash Bhattacharya. Many a young painter is wedded to tempera because of Pyne's success. Some even show a modicum of competence. Among them Biswapati Maity showed a sense of composition and intensity of feeling while Asit Mondal was rather sugarcoated. The only other person who got away without being influenced by Pyne is Darmanarayan Dasgupta who has taken over the miniature artists's craftsmanship and mixed it with colourful fantasy. His woman in white against the background of brown twin mountains and a naked tree without leaves which had green and red snakes was compelling. Manu Parekh still

blares with mad trombones but is more convincing.

On the whole the sculpture section was far better. Bipin Goswami's reclining nude had a monumental quality and was one of the best exhibits we have seen for many years. Naturally the blind judges did not award him the prize. Ajit Chakravarti's 'Birds of the Green Retreat' was weak and insignificant by comparison. Debabrata Chakravarti's 'Flight' was a copy of a well-known sculpture done in Hungary. Manik Talukdar showed his unlimited possibility and Sudhir Dhar his fancy.

B. R. Panesar's collages 'Page from History' showed his imaginative flare for arranging space and his feel for structure. Ramananda Banerjee's graphic 'Alarm' was particularly good and the black and white drawing by Alope Bhattacharya had competence.

Letters

Gandhiana

The letter, "Gandhiana" (December 28) with a patchwork of quotations from a book, **The History Makers**, is another example of distortion of facts and values. These excerpts from the book, culled chaotically, are considered good enough reason for Shukla to ask if one can have any doubt as to whom Gandhi saved and served. He evidently suggests that Gandhi served "the established mechanism of law and order". But is this the last word on the subject? Is a single scholar's (though British!) assessment sufficient to come to sweeping conclusions about Gandhi's role? Moreover, it is doubtful if the excerpts bear the inference drawn by Mr Shukla.

Of course, no one can accuse him of "ability or ambition to add to Gandhiana", whatever the term, used by him, may mean. But he surely does not lack in scholarly ambition to destroy "Gandhiana", if there is any. Unfortunately for him the 1942 ring-leaders (J.P., Aruna, Lohia, Patwardhan)", whom he wants to project as great heroes have, time and again, declared themselves to be humble followers of the man whom Mr

Shukla is out to denounce, though in independent India their role has been far from inspiring. Only lately J.P. has started making amends for his heretofore reactionary role.

Mr Shukla has also said: "That Gandhi's influence was nil as far as our vast bureaucracy was or is concerned is a patent fact of our history. By and large that is true of the police too." But who were the people on whom Gandhi had influence? Is it not a fact that he had influence over the "dumb millions" of India and it is they whom he wanted to serve?

One might as well ask Mr Shukla as to whom he wanted to serve over a year ago when he advocated that the Centre, controlled by Mrs Gandhi and her henchmen, should take over the administration of Manipur which was then under a non-Congress Ministry?

Or has he chosen Gandhi at this odd hour to make an oblique attack on J.P. and his movement in Bihar so as to render much-needed succour to Mrs Gandhi in her hour of great difficulty?

One might also point out to Mr Shukla that arrogance is no substitute for clarity and objectivity.

Ramadhar
New Delhi

RWA Split

In the recent 5th conference at Anantapur the Andhra Pradesh Revolutionary Writers Association expelled sixteen members from the organisation for anti-Association activities and for indiscipline. They include former executive members Jwalamukhi, M. V. Ramana Reddy, C. Satyam and a former Secretary, Nikhileswar. The Association did not consider their resignation letters refuting the slanderous allegations of the aforesaid members and reaffirmed its faith in continued broadbased organisation of different revolutionary groups.

Secretary, Revolutionary Writers Association, A. P.

A statement issued by 13 of the expelled members, including Jwalamukhi and Nikhileswar, says in part:

The Revolutionary Writers Association (VIRASAM, Andhra Pradesh) has not succeeded in playing a responsible role as a broad-based mass organisation. The fifth conference of RWA was an all-out exhibitionism of the Charu Mazumdar faction. It was used as a platform to propagate the politics of Charu Mazumdar. The so called "Revolutionary Students" released a pamphlet demanding the expulsion of writers who opposed the faction. The action was thus predetermined. Accordingly, even though, Jwalamukhi, Nikhileswar and the Guntur unit announced their resignations openly before the delegates in the morning session of 14. 1. 1976, Virasam adopted a resolution expelling them.

The signatories appeal to the peoples' writers and friends of literature to evaluate and review this phase of the historical split and also assess the "anti-people role" of Virasam freely and objectively.

On Unity

I have gone through the article "On Unity—A Response" (4-1-75) written by Comrade Ashim Chatterjee. I broadly agree with his criticism regarding SNS and SG, and specially with the line of the 'Basis of Unity' given by him. In the programme placed by SNS and his group, we find so many 'revolutionary' words. But is he or his group practising the same? What he is saying or writing is not being practised and again, what he is practising is absent from what he is saying and writing. This is one of the main forms of opportunism and revisionism.

What is the COC saying and doing? Is it practising anything? How will it find out the truth without going to practice?

Baldeo Singh
Jharia

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Foreign AIR MAIL Rates (One Year)

America: 18.50 dollars

Europe: 15.00 dollars

The Netherlands: 18.50 dollars

Asia: 13.00 dollars

Please supply FRONTIER for

Six Months/One Year/Three Years/Five Years

I am sending Rs.....

by cheque/money order*

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

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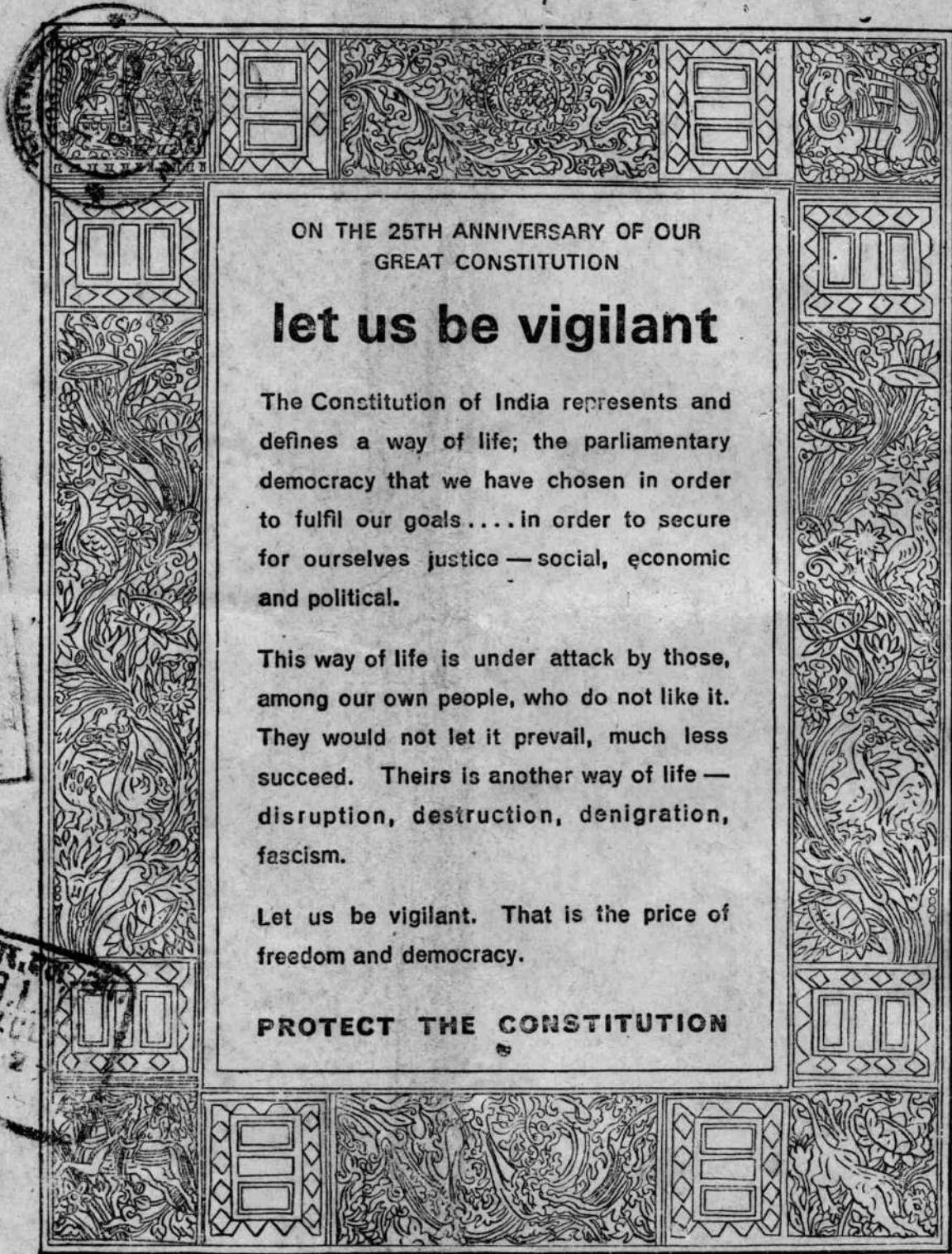
Signature

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

Let us be vigilant

The Committee of the American People
has issued a report which shows that
the Government is spending billions of
dollars to maintain a vast network of
spies and informants in every part of
the world. This is a shocking waste of
money and a threat to our freedom.
We must demand that the Government
stop this practice and protect our
rights. Let us be vigilant.

Calcutta



ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR
GREAT CONSTITUTION

let us be vigilant

The Constitution of India represents and defines a way of life; the parliamentary democracy that we have chosen in order to fulfil our goals . . . in order to secure for ourselves justice — social, economic and political.

This way of life is under attack by those, among our own people, who do not like it. They would not let it prevail, much less succeed. Theirs is another way of life — disruption, destruction, denigration, fascism.

Let us be vigilant. That is the price of freedom and democracy.

PROTECT THE CONSTITUTION

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R. J. CALCUTTA
15-2

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