

# frontier

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## MACHINES AND MORALE

FOR days and nights the skies over Vietnam have been thundering with swarms of U.S. super-heavy and fighter bombers, punctuated by the less awesome noise of anti-aircraft missiles. In 24 hours alone, 700 tons of bombs were unleashed in the Haiphong area by B52s, whose use this time has been massive in both North and South. Air defences are so sharp in the north that fighter-bombers would have been vulnerable like anything, entailing heavy losses of crew and planes. As things are, the North Vietnamese brought down 15 U.S. planes, including a B52, as they returned to the attack on the Hanoi area and on Haiphong after a lapse of about four years. So, the giant B52s are being employed on a massive scale.

This is another terror campaign. The Pentagon knows that the Vietnamese liberation forces, of a different mettle altogether, will not give up in terror as the bombs crash. The American objective is to inflict as many casualties as possible on the civilian population and create chaos. Hundreds have died in the Haiphong area, and elsewhere. As for casualties, both Vietcong and civilian, no one knows how many have died, are dying, as the U.S. Air Force goes berserk over populated areas to stop the offensive by the liberation forces.

The Americans will be troubled by no humanistic scruples. It has been shown that the most formidable military and industrial power the world has ever known has failed to force a decision on the ground in Vietnam—wartorn for years even before the U.S. intervention—despite a formidable array of men and material and exploitation of the most sophisticated and mechanised tactics of destruction and torture. The Americans have to stop the liberation forces at any cost and deaths of troops and civilians are not to them a factor. A retreat now would be a final admission that Vietnamisation has gone with the wind, that there is very little to stop Thieu from falling head forward, that, in fact, the insane American scheme in Asia is a fast losing game which might cost Nixon his presidency. It is, therefore, quite likely that after stepping up the air offensive even further, Nixon may agree to resume the Paris talks. The other side is willing to talk again if the air offensive is given up. That way Nixon may save his malodorous face—for a time.

The Vietnamese fighting U.S. imperialism are an incredible people.

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But it seems the world has got used to their fantastic heroism and sacrifice. Perhaps we will soon be offered an explanation that underfed Asians can afford to die for a cause, but the Westerners value their life. That is why they crounge and scatter when there is no air support. Their puppets, the South Vietnamese army, have as much grown used to the air umbrella as the American troops to drugs. In the long run, there cannot be any doubt that men will triumph over machines. But the cost paid is already fantastic. Many people feel that it is time the human cost was shared by other friendly and fraternal powers who have had enough respite after World War II. But this, perhaps, is being sentimental. In a ruthless world of triangular power diplomacy anything goes.

## There's The Rub

The Union Agriculture Minister has now set up a cell in his Ministry to collect relevant data to correctly assess wheat prices. This means that the Central Government has so far been paying the wheat farmers a subsidy of Rs 50 crores every year without knowing if the farmers deserve the subsidy. After the phenomenal increase in wheat production, specially in Punjab which produces half of the total wheat in the country, supply has far exceeded demand but that has not eased the price situation either for the consumers or for the Government. Because of the increased wheat production, the Government subsidy has also increased three times. This is indeed a funny situation but the Chief Ministers did not see the fun. The Agricultural Prices Commission, assuming it had no data for assessment of the price, recommended, for decency's sake, a reduction in the wheat procurement price. The Chief Ministers headed by Punjab's Chief Minister rejected the recommendation. Farmers will continue to get the high procurement price or the subsidy or

the high market price, whichever is higher for their benefit.

Wheat is another story to indicate who runs the Government. Sugar told the same story. The hesitancy to tax rich farmers tells the same story. The Chief Ministers' inability to fix land ceilings does the same.

It seems that the Chief Ministers were all eager to redeem the pledge of Mrs Gandhi and the Congress before the elections to rationalise and socialise the land distribution system. The only rub is, the guidelines formulated by the Agriculture Ministry or for that matter the Central Land Reforms Committee were too vague to be implemented. That the Government could not formulate a clear guideline in spite of 25 years' effort should be sufficient for any layman to imagine that it was not very honest about the whole affair. Even in the States, where land ceilings have been fixed, for example in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Kerala, there have been so many loopholes in the legislation that land distribution has been much in the same pattern as in yester-years. The other States, again led by Punjab where the per capita income is the highest and that almost entirely by virtue of agri-

cultural product, are against the very idea of land legislation.

It bears repetition, in this context, that half of the country's national income comes from agriculture. And who gets the lion's share? Even Mr Robert McNamara is shocked to learn that 40 per cent of Indians live beneath the poverty line and 10 per cent of the below-the-poverty-line have become poorer. Unless the land distribution system is totally changed in favour of the landless, the situation is bound to deteriorate. Taxing the corporate industrial sector has reached a point where, it is said, further taxation will strangle the goose. Knowing this fully, the Government is yet afraid to touch the rich farmers. For those who half believed that the new Congress was serious about taxing the farmers, that a revolutionary agricultural tax was in the offing, the wheat story must be coming as a rude shock. Rich wheat producers will continue to get the price which was set in 1968-69 when wheat was scarce and therefore prices were at a very high point, at a time when the godowns are overbrimming with the stock that will rot because the poor people who are getting poorer cannot pay for it.

## Cracks In The Monolith

Will the storm gathering over the much-advertised stable Ministry in West Bengal burst sooner than most people imagine? The curious behaviour of the Chief Minister, Mr Siddhartha Sankar Ray, has set off speculations, not all of them wild. He is known to be a great one for meetings and conferences. All that he did as Union Minister for West Bengal Affairs was to convene a series of conferences with himself as chairman to devise measures to restore law and order in the State. The discussions would have continued interminably had he not been pushed out of the limelight by Governor Dias. Yet he did not attend the re-

cent Chief Ministers' conference in New Delhi, the first such conference to be held after the State Assembly elections. The items of discussion were quite important for "garibi hatao", and the conference would surely have profited from his presence as he could tell the fellow-Chief Ministers, from the experience of his drive against the hawkers in Calcutta, how easily the election slogan of "garibi hatao" could be implemented by a plan for "garib hatao".

But he had to stay put in Calcutta for weightier reasons. The induction of neo-socialists in key positions in the Ministry has not been liked by the veterans in the



party who claim that they also are socialists of long standing as they have faithfully implemented Jawaharlal Nehru's programme for "eradication of poverty" and no blame should attach to them if the father had not, like the daughter, coined the slogan in Hindi. They think all this talk of loyalty to the Prime Minister's programme is a mere pretext to usher in a rule of "barristocracy", to find berths for chums of the bar. Even those who have been included in the Ministry are grumbling, for their opinions do not prevail. They are disgusted with having to remain Ministers on sufferance. Those who are threatening to quit in protest have resorted to a euphemism—they want to take to organizational work. Mr Ray has talked to them but to no purpose. He cannot suddenly allow them to return to important positions in the organization either, for that will weaken his hold on the party apparatus. Unable to resolve the dilemma, he has sought the Prime Minister's advice.

Even the post of Congress president in the State is going a-begging. Not that there is no taker. But those who are willing are not eligible, while those who are eligible are not willing. Despite the staggering majority of the party in the Assembly, nobody who has a job of a sort to hold on to in New Delhi is prepared to exchange it for a position in West Bengal, however eminent politically. Everyone seems to be keen to keep West Bengal at arm's length, because one does not know for certain what shape the party will take under the contrary pressures of the young and not-so-young socialists and the old faithfuls of the party. Mr Ray is the solitary exception, for he had made his choice quite early. Even he has not burnt his boat, though. He still remains a member of the Lok Sabha, and if the need for socialist consolidation arises at the Centre when the Prime Minister reshuffles her Cabinet he may suddenly realise that his duty lies in New Delhi and not in the city of gardens. In any event, the Ministry

seems to be careering towards a period of anxiety, with the storm-troopers falling out among themselves fatally, in Krishnagar, in Calcutta, in Cooch Behar and elsewhere. The intra-party killings are being mostly passed over in silence by the nationalist press. It is said that 15 people were killed in Youth Congress clashes in North Calcutta in as many days.

## Fresh Pastures

*A correspondent writes :*

Senior bureaucrats at Writers Buildings are having a field day again. After three spells of President's rule in four years, of which two were under civilian Governors, their appetite for power has grown and when politicians talk about "commitment" to gain their petty ends with the help of a section of the bureaucracy, the latter can have little compunction to feel "committed". No wonder the seasoned civilian takes little time to gain the upper hand over his political boss because he is fully posted with his foibles and soon enough the politician ends up by having the civilian as his mentor. The tail starts wagging the dog to the mutual benefit of both and let the devil take the hindmost.

In fact the upper echelon of the bureaucracy likes to think that the politicians who have won in the elections to the State Assembly should have a sense of permanent gratitude for what they have done for their sake. Policy declarations have become a handy annual and when the first married Chief Minister and his assortment of ministers declared on assuming office that bureaucrats would be cut down to size and be accountable for their omissions and commissions, few eyebrows were raised.

But the chance for the senior civilians to readjust themselves to the new situation and entrench themselves even deeper came earlier than expected. The new Chief Minister's brief apprenticeship in the Central Secretariat has come as a boon to

his minions in the bureaucracy. The first opportunity was provided by his itch to remodel his own Secretariat on the Prime Minister's model. In a trice, three IAS officers got their chance to serve their new boss from Raj Bhavan as three jobs were created. Some other senior officers have grabbed their chance to spread their net. The splitting of the Commerce and Industries Department was primarily intended to clip the wings of a newspaper proprietor but the incidental fall-out has come as an unscheduled bonus for a handful because what was the charge of a single Secretary will now be looked after by three—one with the coveted rank of Commissioner. By a single ingenuous stroke the new boss has offered special dispensation to some aspirants. The supersession of Calcutta Corporation has opened yet other pastures for others jockeying for position.

New postings and transfers have created a chain reaction and prospective recipients have started counting their chickens. Patronage is being bestowed on others, including senior IAS officers against whom proceedings were started to retire them prematurely. Parkinsonian proliferation is the favourite game not only of the bureaucracy. Politicians have aided and abetted the practice to make their own position more secure not only in office but also at the hustings. A discordant note has, however, been sounded by some CPI MLAs who have the satisfaction of being both the wily ally of the Government and the opposition. But so long as some crumbs are thrown to them they will entertain people with their antics and their outbursts will be for the consumption of the gullible.

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## French Referendum

The Socialist leader, M. Mitterrand's immediate reaction to President Pompidou's coup de theatre is of some significance even though his warning has not helped to bring the leftists under a common platform. As the President announced his decision to hold a referendum on Britain's entry into the European Economic Community—which is employing a Gaullist device to live down the Gaullist past—M. Mitterrand said it for the benefit of the leftists that one must be very clumsy to fall into a trap when warned well in advance. But the Communists have knowingly decided to walk into it. The fate of the barely conceived Popular Front thus remains uncertain. A joint abstention was the only way out for the leftists; it could have also saved a lot of embarrassment. One just cannot expect the Socialists to say now when they are so well known for

their commitment to West European integration. Similarly a oui from the Communists was not on the cards because of their consistent criticism of the ECM. But like the Socialists the Communists could have decided to abstain especially after Brezhnev had openly accepted the existence of the ECM. The Communist decision would have made some sense if there was also a search for more radical partners and a switch-over to a revolutionary line. As a commentator has noted, it is difficult to explain "the striking contradiction between the choice of the electoral road to socialism and predilection for opposition."

To split the left and expand his majority is not, however, all that the President is aiming at. There are certain domestic compulsions and personal ambitions also. The uncanny politician that he is, M. Pompidou cannot but feel the necessity of giving a new look to the Government after the misadventures of the Prime Minister, M. Chaban Delmas in-

vited so much criticism. Perhaps M. Delmas alone will not be left out of the new Cabinet; there are some others who are not feeling comfortable over M. Pompidou's new found confidence and his determination to become President in his own right. One cannot miss the point that M. Pompidou has been seizing every opportunity to stress the Prime Minister's obligation to bow out of office the moment the President so wishes. This not only emphasizes the Prime Minister's rather pathetic dependence on the Elysee but also unity of command. But who will be the new Prime Minister? The most talked about man in this connection is M. Olivier Guichard, now in charge of the Education portfolio. If the referendum is going to be a personal vote of confidence in M. Pompidou's policy—a big oui will amount to that—there is no reason why the President will not go for an election in June rather than wait for the spring of 1973 when the term of the present Assembly expires. But in case the number of nons and abstentions were to make the people's approval of France's European policy rather doubtful, the President is likely to reshuffle his Cabinet only. But it will be a big surprise if M. Pompidou fails to secure a resounding majority considering the way he is going about the referendum. He has asked for the people's approval of a "confederation which will preserve the personality of the countries composing it, and therefore of France." The part France will play in the enlarged Europe is "predetermined by her geographical position, her past, the labour of her people, the prestige of her culture." M. Pompidou has learnt in 1965, when General de Gaulle nearly tasted electoral defeat, that a French President giving Europe a try stands to benefit at the hustings. The position M. Pompidou took on the location of the political and foreign policy secretariat for the ECM members has already served notice that the President is going to see his European policy implemented. When Chancellor Brandt and Prime Minister

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Heath are facing domestic political crises, M. Pompidou is expected to emerge from the referendum with his prestige considerably enhanced. The ambition of the first man of France is to become the first man of Europe.

## View from Delhi

### Mrs Gandhi's Insight

FROM A POLITICAL  
CORRESPONDENT

**T**HE Prime Minister's Secretariat which began becoming a power-factor in the late Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri's days is something of a super-cabinet plus a think-tank now. However, its operations extend to such trivial things as getting unfriendly journalists eased out of their jobs and fixing jobs for the friendlier ones. The resident editorship of a New Delhi newspaper is vacant and 22 names are being mentioned but the one who lands it must be acceptable to the Prime Minister's Secretariat in the first place and the proprietor in the second place.

But the Secretariat, where power lies slovenly like some undefined life-factor in the pages of files and notebooks, has made news of sorts. Following the Prime Minister's new-fangled speech at Commerce and Industry jamboree last month, her urban guerillas in the Press Corps began writing their heads off about an allegedly new-look economic policy. But it has now turned out that the policy speech in question was a rehash of an article by a Pakistan economist, Mahboob ul Haq, in a Hong Kong journal *Insight*. The journal is meant for a decision-makers, the publishers claim. Indeed, it does more than decision making. It does the thinking for Asian leaders like Mrs Gandhi. Here are a few quotes from the article and the "insight" Mrs Gandhi got from them.

*Insight*: In my country, Pakistan, the very institutions we created for

providing faster growth and capital accumulation frustrated later on all attempts for better distribution and greater social justice.

Mrs Gandhi: The very institutions we have created for promoting faster growth and capital accumulation now seem to frustrate our attempts for better distribution and greater social justice.

*Insight*: Once you have increased your GNP by producing luxury houses and cars it is not very easy to convert them into low cost housing or bus transport.

Mrs Gandhi: Once resources are committed to luxury goods it is not possible to convert them into commodities of mass consumption like bus transport or houses for the poor.

*Insight*: Development goals must be defined in terms of progressive reduction and the eventual elimination of malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, squalor, unemployment and inequalities.

Mrs Gandhi: Development goals should not aim at the proliferation of consumer goods or services which benefit only a certain section, but must be defined in terms of progressive reduction and eventual elimination of squalor and inequality, of malnutrition, disease, illiteracy and unemployment.

#### 'Kulak Week'

It was the week of the kulaks and thereby hangs a tale. Two rice-growing States supported the move for reduction in wheat procurement prices (West Bengal and Mysore). But no State had the courage to point out that the rice-eater of the coastal States has been subsidising the wheat-growing kulaks who have fattened on the Green Revolution. Jammu and Kashmir is the only State where rice is subsidised thanks to the Centre's bounty and for political reasons. A higher procurement price for wheat means a heavier subsidy burden which has to be met by the rice-eater to keep the consumer price of wheat low.

It is hardly surprising that the two communist parties in the system have failed to take an anti-kulak position on the wheat price issue. The Chief Ministers of wheat-growing States found themselves getting the support of Gujarat where the cotton and oil seed kulaks look to the government for support prices. Maharashtra by implication was with the wheat-growing States, like the CPI Chief Minister of Kerala. The kulak is everybody's ally. The Centre has given in and there could now be no mistaking where the Congress derives its real strength from. The CPI's solicitude for the kulak is rationalised through an elaborate theory: that he is both a friend and an enemy—but for the kulak India could not have stood up to U.S. blackmail.

#### "Collective Security"

The conference of Asian envoys dispersed after an important decision. Those involved should sell the Brezhnev plan for collective security in Asia with an Indian label. It is now claimed that Mrs Gandhi had preceded Brezhnev in 1968 in the course of her South-East Asian tour. The merit claimed for Mrs Gandhi's plan is that many countries have welcomed it (the identity of these countries is a secret still) and no big power has opposed it! The circumstances under which Mr Brezhnev chose to revive the plan after about three years and in the wake of Mr Nixon's Peking visit are being dismissed as inconsequential. But what beats one is the self-righteousness with which the New Delhi plan for collective security is to be canvassed in the region where the Soviet Union had failed to get response. Mr Swaran Singh has in the recent past spoken welcoming the Brezhnev plan but at no time did he mention Mrs Gandhi's 1968 plan or claim that India had a plan long before the Soviet Union thought of one. The Soviet plan to involve India and Japan into the proposed security plan is unfolding itself. It is somebody's plan by proxy.

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# Talking About China : Interview With Han Suyin

*In an exclusive interview Han Suyin, the well-known writer on China, replied to questions put by C. Prasad for "Frontier". The following is the transcript of the interview given in Paris on March 27, 1972.*

**QUESTION:** Do you not think that by receiving President Nixon the Chinese leaders have deviated from the line they had so long upheld?

Han Suyin : I do not think so and for these reasons. Chinese foreign policy whether towards the United States or towards any other country has been very clear since 1945. In 1944 and 1945 Chairman Mao enunciated the principle of peaceful co-existence between states with different systems. In 1948-49 this was reiterated. The same basic Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence were enunciated in 1954 at the Geneva Conference by Prime Minister Chou En-lai and again in 1955 at the Bandung Conference. It was American interference, aggression and military intervention in China's civil war 1946-49 which China denounced. If America withdrew there could be relations strictly between states, between states with different systems. But this has nothing to do with the position of China as a revolutionary country supporting revolution and opposing imperialism. Now America instead of having towards China the same policy that she adopted towards other socialist states had the policy of non-recognition and aggression—the policy of cold war. The Truman Doctrine elaborated it and America was to be the "champion" of the so-called anti-communism everywhere. In Korea, at the beginning of the Korean civil war, a war strictly internal, on June 25, 1950 the Americans went one step further. They deliberately included Taiwan, which was an integral part of Chinese territory, within their so-called "perimeter of defence". This was actually against their own words. Because in January, 1950

both Truman and Acheson had said that Taiwan was outside the perimeter of American defence, yet as soon as the Korean war, which was an internal affair of Korea, broke out Truman sent the Seventh Fleet to Taiwan on June 26. This was a flagrant violation of China's rights on Taiwan. Once again, propaganda-wise Vietnam was considered a part of "containment of China". The Vietnam war is a flagrant aggression on a country outside China—interference in the affairs of another country. True, it borders China, as Korea did. But the Chinese had not invaded Vietnam nor had they anything to do with the Vietnam situation. The Chinese have made it clear that the only direct question between themselves and the United States was the question of Taiwan. But of course they support the heroic Vietnamese defence of their territory invaded by the U.S. In receiving Nixon, they have in the joint communiqué, if you will care to read it, reaffirmed that they stand firmly against imperialism. They have refused to make a deal either on the question of Vietnam or any other question. And they have, on the contrary, made even clearer their position that they would never make a deal and that they remain staunchly against imperialism. America has now tried to resolve the question of Taiwan, and if you read the communiqué in this respect it has recognized that people on both sides of Taiwan Straits are Chinese, that there is no such thing as an independent Taiwan and that there is no such race as "Taiwan" different from the Chinese, that Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China belong to one territory, Chinese territory. From this point of view, therefore the communiqué has been a hopeful thing. But it does not mean that China has changed her policy. It only means that the visit of Nixon to Peking was an attempt to settle the outstanding direct problems between China and

the United States. It is the United States which has been forced to change its policy in Asia, towards China. The "Nixon doctrine" of "Asians fighting Asians" does not mean, however, an end to imperialism it means only a different tactic. Whether U.S. imperialism will change its policy of military aggression which it has pursued ever since 1945 remains to be seen; one must have no illusion on this point. Remember that the first aggression the United States perpetrated on the Asian mainland was directly upon China herself, by helping Chiang Kai-shek in an internal civil war against Mao Tse-tung. The second one was Korea, the third was Vietnam. Now America has come to an impasse in her military aggression in Asia. Nixon is trying to disentangle himself by his 'Nixon Doctrine' which may be more pernicious than direct aggression. But it still heralds the end of one phase in U.S. external policy. Therefore, I do not see in it any change in Chinese policy when they receive Nixon to talk on all this without any compromise. There have been contacts between the Americans and the Chinese ever since 1955. At ambassadorial level there have been over 130 meetings. From the Chinese point of view Nixon's coming to Peking is continuation, on a higher level, one might say at summit level, of these talks. I believe it has been a positive gesture in that it has clarified the stands. If you read the communiqué this is the first communiqué in the world where the two parties have *not* issued a joint communiqué but have issued two communiques stating how very different their views were. This is therefore a model communiqué because it is the first communiqué that tells the whole truth.

## 'Soviet Menace'

**Q.** How do you see the immediate and long-term significance of the developing rapport between Peking and Washington? [Especially

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do you think it would be possible for China to enlist tactical U.S. support against the 'Soviet menace' and 'Japanese militarism'?

H.S.: I do not think at all that comes into view. I do not think that Nixon's visit to China was being dictated on the American side by any anxiety concerning any possible attack by the Soviet Union on China. On the contrary there are many reactionaries in America who would be quite happy if the USSR started an aggression on China. The Chinese have no illusions about this. They do not think that the Americans have rushed in to support them and they will not ask for U.S. aid should this occur. The game is much deeper, much more pernicious. We are dealing with two imperialisms—the imperialism of the United States which is an "open" imperialism, and social-imperialism, which is another form of imperialism disguised under socialist slogans but just as vicious and exploitative in its aims, which are world domination, an entente with the United States at the expense of everybody else and a sole monopoly of nuclear terror. The difference between the Chinese foreign policy and that of the other two is that the other two say "let us fix for you war or peace" and the Chinese say it is impossible to fix anything except everybody getting together in equality and that all nations, big or small, *must* decide and each nation must achieve its independence. There is an enormous difference between these two policies. China refuses to make a bargain behind the back of anyone else at the expense of anyone else. And that is the point, for the other two are always making "deals" and that is why they deal in "war by proxy"—in Vietnam, the Middle East. And therefore from that point of view, the Chinese do not expect anything from the United States or any support from it against the Soviet Union. It is already being said very openly by certain French military experts that the very fact that China has been able in such a short time to produce its own nuclear

weaponry has been enough to break the balance of terror between the big two. This is already broken. Nuclear war has become almost impossible now because even though China has a minor equipment she has enough to be able to hold back a nuclear attack upon herself, and so people all through the world are encouraged and less frightened. And even without the Nixon visit, without the United States adopting a different policy it would be very difficult for the Soviet Union to contemplate all-out nuclear war on China. If it had been so easy they would have started it in 1969 but they did not. Even in 1969 when there was no such thing as a visit from Nixon or any help from America, if at that time when it looked as if the two so-called "super-powers", the U.S. and USSR, were ruling the world, the USSR wanted to attack China but could not because any such attack might not have been successful. Of course they cannot attack her now, when China is even stronger, but they will keep on trying. And we must not think that Nixon's visit or any thaw in the relation between China and the United States will change U.S. imperialism either. This is the wrong kind of thinking. America is thinking for herself and for her own self-interest. She has come to an impasse in her strategy in Asia and this is the reason for the Nixon visit. But she will continue to try to make a deal with the other imperialism, and the USSR will continue to try to make deals with the U.S. Of course the propaganda of the Soviet Union was to denounce the Nixon visit as 'against the Soviet Union.' The communiqué, on the contrary, makes it very clear that it is not against the Soviet Union or anyone else. But if of course the Soviet Union wishes to translate it in that way they are quite free to publish any kind of fantasy, any kind of interpretation they want. But it is not the truth. They know it very well, since Nixon is going to Moscow in May precisely to make a deal. Now what is most interesting is to

watch what will happen in May in Moscow and to see the kind of deal that is going to be made there. On the other hand, the very fact that China has become strong makes it less possible for the other two to make deals. The presence of China in the United Nations is also a rallying point for the other smaller nations, who now have strong support and by uniting together and presenting a common front they can get results which they could never get before.

Q. What do you think of the rumour that the Hanoi leadership is suspicious about a deal behind its back between Peking and Washington?

H.S.: There have been such rumours. I cannot find any confirmation in China that there is any such suspicion. But I think it is possible that in Hanoi there are a few people who have raised misgivings of a certain nature. These were not really official. One cannot, even with the best or the worst will in the world, say that they emanated from the officialdom since at the same time Premier Pham Van Dong went to Peking and reaffirmed friendship and solidarity with China. And this, I think counts much more than, maybe, the misinterpretation in the Western press of articles supposed to be translated from Vietnamese papers. I would not go so far that there are such misgivings. But even supposing that there had been, I think that by now, after the communique and Premier Chou's visit in recent weeks, we have seen that there was complete satisfaction on the part of the DRV and the Front with the attitude that the Chinese have taken. Even apprehensions which may have been stirred up by other countries not in Hanoi itself have now disappeared. And I think that the future will show that China has not made and will not make deals and bargains at the expense of other countries.

Q. What do you think of the charge that in post-Cultural Revolution foreign policy the Chinese have cared more about State to State re-



lations than supporting rebellion in the Third World?

H.S.: I think that this is a short-term process, it's a historical process in which there are phases. If you read Chinese history there appeared periods of "united front"; in one of them in 1935-37 it looked as if Mao Tse-tung was making an alliance with Chiang Kai-shek against the bigger enemy, which was Japan. Things must come one after the other. At the moment there is a shift in the balance of power in the world which obscures the ever present movement of history towards revolution. But the Chinese keep their minds firmly on revolution. In their editorial of the New Year they quoted Chairman Mao that the present tendency was not so much world war but revolution, that nations want national liberation, countries want independence and people want revolution. All their moves or policies are dictated by this revolutionary prospect, not by the prospect of compromise or of self-defence. Chinese foreign policy has not changed and is not concerned only with state to state relationship. In every State the Chinese have relations with the forces now manifesting themselves for national independence. And as Mao Tse-tung said very clearly in 1936, the first step in a revolution is national liberation. Now national liberation may even come from people who are capitalist or bourgeois. This means a united front for national liberation. And this is where the Chinese make a clear distinction between the stages of each revolution. You cannot have a proletarian revolution, say in Brazil, to take an example, or in a country like India immediately because they are at another stage. They will have to go through stages or processes in revolution. But there will be a desire for independence, away from "super-power" hegemony. This is why the Chinese, for instance, respected de Gaulle. They did not respect de Gaulle as a bourgeois, nor as a capitalist, nor as a reactionary which he was, but because he had a strong idea of na-

tional independence, of national liberation. This is the first step and this is what the Chinese understood very well. The way to revolution goes through national liberation.

#### Foreign Aid

Q. Would you please explain as to how the Chinese policy of foreign aid is designed to serve the people rather than the regime in power?

H.S.: The Chinese policy on aid was defined by Mr Chou En-lai himself during his visit to several nations of Africa and Asia, I believe it was 1963-64, when he laid down eight points for aid. I don't have them right at the moment but they were that aid must be absolutely free of interest. Loans must be long term for useful projects, not for prestige projects, not in order to enhance the debt of the receiver but in order to really help the economy. For instance in Mali the Chinese showed the Mali people how to grow tea. Now this was cutting their own market in tea and the Malians said to them, "why are you showing us how to grow tea? Then we'll not buy your tea any more". And they said "well, it is better for you not to buy our tea and to grow your own tea". In Tanzania the Chinese are building the Tanzam railway; they are giving extremely favourable terms. They are doing a railway which was refused by the Soviet Union, by America and by Europeans as being "too expensive", and also being "too dangerous". Dangerous to whom? Dangerous to them because this railway would liberate Tanzania from dependence and Zambia from dependence upon the South African network of communications and upon Portuguese Angola—colonial communications. The USSR refused help. This railway will truly free Tanzania and Zambia and that is why the Chinese have gone into building it. This is absolutely of no use to them, but it is helping the others. And they are giving extremely favourable terms which are not in any way crippling the national economy. Another point is that the technicians and engineers and others

that the Chinese send must live at the level of the real ordinary people of the country. There is no such thing as you find in other aid projects where 40%, even 50% of the loans given is spent on housing, cars, salaries for the foreign technical personnel. Here the Chinese go there, live on an absolutely basic standard, at the lowest level and they work side by side with Africans themselves. Fifthly, they train the people to run their own projects and maintain them. There is no such thing as remaining here as technical experts and burdening them and maintaining and keeping a so-called aid programme going which is a debt programme. Once a project is ended the Chinese liquidate themselves out of that country and go away. Of course the Chinese say "we cannot do very much, we are a poor country". And yet, even though they are always saying "we cannot do very much" they have already surpassed the Soviet Union in aid and the USSR is infinitely more rich than China. It was the same with Cuba. There was a misunderstanding with Cuba which has been misinterpreted by many young people. What the Chinese did in Cuba was to tell the Cuban government that they should grow rice instead of relying only on a monoculture of sugar. Unfortunately the Cuban government did not take this advice. As a result Cuba has now got economic difficulties. I am not going to accuse or criticise Cuba but if they had followed the Chinese advice at least they would have rice to eat whereas now they have to buy everything and rely entirely on one crop which is sugar. The Chinese tried to liberate them from it and the Cubans replied, "we have always grown sugar and we don't know how to grow rice." Now the Chinese had absolutely no self-interest in that plan, since they were selling rice to Cuba. So they were actually harming themselves by telling Cuba how to grow rice. Chinese aid is governed by the principle of true help to the other country and not for themselves. And the Chinese them-



selves, should they accept technical advice of anything from any other nation, would also see to it that this is not made an excuse for entering the country for dominating the economy or practising neo-colonialism.

Q. Coming to internal questions would you please give us an idea about the major issues now debated inside the Party as well as between the Party and the Army in China?

R.S.: This is a question I am unable to answer for the reason that I am not a party person, I am not a communist. And nothing has been published by the Party. But I feel that I can, from reading the newspapers, answer it this way—that there has been debate, as there always is in the Party, on certain policies. Debate is a sign of health, not of disease, it is a sign of democracy, not of authoritarianism. At certain moments, every three, four, five years there is an assessment or reassessment of aims, goals, of line. At the moment one reassessment is on mechanisation of agriculture. Mechanisation of agriculture is truly the key, as Chairman Mao Tse-tung sees it, to the industrialization of China. But this road has not been followed by the USSR. The USSR has industrialized but not agriculture first. It has been heavy industry first. What the Chinese are doing is a completely different kind of industrialization which means that the industrialized sector must begin with the agricultural sector. This road may appear to certain people not the correct road. And yet in China they feel that this is correct because this will release the manpower, this will first provide the basic technical knowhow to an enormous number of peasants, 80% of the population, instead of concentrating on heavy industry, which means a few large industries with a few workers. In such industries workers are a minority population even if they are 20% of the population. This concentration leaves the other 80% in ignorance, in a medieval, non-mechanized ignorance. What is being done in China is to put as

much mechanization as possible, even if only basic, in the countryside. That means that 80% of your population get some idea about the machinery and from there you are therefore educating not 20%, but 80% of your population in science, in techniques and from there they can themselves do their own industries. And your industrialization programme is geared to producing for the agricultural 80%. Once you have mechanized agriculture you also have agricultural industries. And from agricultural industries and electricity in the countryside—you build a truly modern socialist state. Lenin said: what is socialism? That is electrification in the countryside. The Chinese leadership have seen the problem much more clearly than any other country. In this way you have your whole population leap from the medieval non-mechanized stage into a modern, technical, industrial stage. And even if this mechanization is only primitive, still it makes every man, woman and child aware of machines and from that point you liberate their inventive spirits and you can have a tremendous industrialization. In other words you have bridged the gap between the peasant and the worker and you have turned your peasants into proletariat and therefore you have achieved socialism on the basis of the commune instead of waiting till you have industries in the cities and having a so-called proletariat who are also bourgeois because they are in the cities and they have a different life from the life of the 80% of the population in the countryside. You understand? There has been a great debate on this question and as I can see it, there have been people who are against it because the funds in China are limited. Let us face it, China is a poor country and it has to get its own funds itself, from its own economy by diverting a large proportion of funds therefore to the mechanization of agriculture. There were some sectors that may have felt deprived. Perhaps this is

one of the questions that has been debated. But as I say I do not know. I am only guessing.

#### Succession

Q. Do you think that the succession problem has been reopened with the disappearance of Lin Piao from the scene?

H.S.: No, I do not think so. I always looked with astonishment at the fact that in 1969 there was a proclamation of a single individual as the sole successor to a line, an idea contrary to Mao Tse-tung thought. One expected a collective leadership. We shall not know the whole story perhaps for some years. But it seems to me that again this has been a question which has been debated at the end of the Cultural Revolution and it has been pointed that it is much too restrictive to have one successor, that it is not in the spirit of socialism. I cannot tell you more about it at the moment. Many people look upon the fact that Lin Piao has been demoted—which I think is well known for what is called political error—as a tremendous danger to China. But is it a danger really? Or is it, if it is well understood, an added source of awareness? After all what has happened everywhere else have been military coups. Remember that half the world has got military dictatorships at the moment. Perhaps what has happened in China will be in the long run best for China. It does show that the government is really strong enough to put down any military, even if very prominent during the Cultural Revolution back into second rank that the Army is, without any blood-spilling or without any internal confusion or chaos. The Party must command the gun and never the gun the Party.

Q. What effect, you think the Cultural Revolution has on China's economic performance?

H.S.: I think that the Cultural Revolution has had two effects. One, the effect that many people have written about, was to stop growth for a while. This is quite true. For instance in 1967-68 some steel mills,



certain industries did stop so that production fell. The fact that everything recovered so quickly and even rebounded is the product of the Cultural Revolution. When you change, when in a factory you have got a director or manager who by force of bureaucracy has come to really dominate and the workers have again fallen into a secondary position you do get results, you do get production. But is it true that the production is really an ideal one, is it true that your factory is running well? It may appear so because it seems that you cannot do better. But the Cultural Revolution has proved that many of these ideas that production is at its peak etc. are wrong, that you can get two, three times as much once you have mobilised and emancipated the workers themselves who themselves begin to innovate and expand production. The same thing can be seen in Europe where we are always talking about the efficiency of workshops and of factories. It is true they are efficient. Go and count the hours of sickness, go and count the strike hours lost, go into it and find the inefficiency and waste of the capitalist economy—and its sum of human suffering. We are getting a kind of attrition of production in both the United States and Europe due to the fact that the workers are not treated as owners but slaves of the machine and there is the human factor which is always there. It is the human factor which the Cultural Revolution has released and on an incredibly large scale. Not by getting rid of the directors or managers but by incorporating them, by making them realise that their place is not to give orders, but to be with the workers and with the proletariat as leader in order to be able together to work better for socialism. And therefore, at this moment we are seeing extraordinary results of the Cultural Revolution.

I have had a very wonderful experience when I was in China last year (1971), I went to a certain area which is quite primitive and

in which I found 25 new bridges all built during the Cultural Revolution bridging quite large rivers—(two or three times the breadth of the Seine) built by the peasants. Now, they had been waiting for some bridges for some years and it was not done by the bureaucrats and the city engineers. And so they went and built them themselves during the Cultural Revolution. How can you beat that? How can you beat this kind of enormous energy, initiative which is shown everywhere? And this is what I mean by leap forward—this is really what is happening. How these people are all ready for machines. The whole of the provinces of China are seething with desire for mechaniza-

tion. They know about electricity, they know about machines, they want them. Whereas 20 years ago if you had proposed machines they could not understand even the first word about it, now everybody knows, everyone wants electricity, trucks, machines. Eighty per cent of the bicycles in the countryside in China are new—bought between 1970-71. So you see the enormous expansion all of a sudden in the last three years of the Cultural Revolution. In 1967-1971 there have been more savings in the banks of the countryside in China than in the previous 17 years. This is where strength is and this is what the Cultural Revolution has done.

## On Fascism—II

S. Roy

### III

#### Philosophy Of Fascism

**T**HE doctrine of fascism is a patchwork of rags, picked from every political gutter. But fascism has a philosophy alright: the class selfishness of property owners extended to cannibalistic dimensions.

This selfishness is a far cry from the laissez faire, "every man for himself" selfishness preached by capitalism in the era of its revolutionary dynamism. Fascism denies competition; in all fields. Even the competition between loyal and legal political parties to serve the bourgeois is denied. Instead, fascism attempts by attacks on the Right as well as the left, to wipe out all opposition. That is why the coming to power of fascism is preceded, not only by assaults on organisations of the toiling masses but also mutual, severe and often bloody struggles within the fascist camp [in India: witness the struggles of the Congress(R) versus the Congress(O) the Jana Sangh, Swatantra etc. which the revisionist CPI and CPM obligingly called "progressive"]. While the group that can most use

bureaucratic power usually emerges triumphant, usually it is the centrists who can do so. They are the best bet, since they appear to be less reactionary than the others and their anti-capitalist slogans carry a truer ring.

Thus fascism differs from the class dictatorship of the bourgeois as expressed in the parliamentary system in so far that fascism allows no legal and loyal opposition to function. The ruling classes evaluate their crisis to be so acute that even a legal and loyal opposition, they fear, might form the launching pad for the anger of the exploited. (So wipe out the CPM whose leadership is considered very reliable but whose cadres and supporters are "dangerous").

The difference between ordinary bourgeois dictatorship and fascism is that while ordinary dictatorship generates terror through the machinery of the State—police and the military—the fascists must employ a section of the people—armed, violent—upon the rest of the population. The police and the military are reduced to the secondary function of protecting the fascist hordes.

As the broad revolutionary dyna-



mism of capitalism narrowed and petrified into monopoly and imperialism, as it inevitably fought itself to exhaustion in repeated bids to divide and redivide the world, as larger and larger parts of the world slipped out of its grasp up the path of revolution and progress, capitalism had to jettison the democratic process involved at the time of its birth, and establish fascism in order to delay decay and ultimate death.

Ever since the 1917 October Revolution, the bourgeoisie in every country have realised that they can no longer use the toiling masses for their own purpose as they had done in Paris 1848 or 1872 or Vienna and Berlin and England in the 19th century. As a class, the proletariat had stood up. The frightened bourgeoisie, therefore, took different paths for the same purpose to safeguard their rule.

Where capitalism had time and space to develop (UK, USA, France), the traditional ruling class was able, more or less easily, to control both democratic and socialistic tendencies and thus have rejected, up to now, fascism as a form of government. In such places, they use fascist forms to meet particular exigencies (Northern Ireland, the Afro-American freedom struggle, the Student Revolt in France, May 1968). Where capitalism was weak and the need was 'urgent, the "forced march" of fascism was adopted (Italy, Japan, Germany, Spain). A particular set of fascists—who dared to encroach too rapaciously on the empires of the old imperialism—were fought and ousted (World War II) but the system stayed on with certain eyewash changes. Since 1945, all imperialist States have consistently tried to malign, isolate and destroy Stalin's Russia and later Mao Tse-tung's China; to combat and destroy or subvert every revolutionary and liberation movement; to aid, abet and prop up every reactionary, renegade, minority government in the world; to subvert the working class revolutionary movements of the world from within, by buying over a section of the vanguard

with economic bribes and political concessions. Thus revisionists of the 'left' and right were jerked out of dungheaps, kept alive, subsidised and on occasion glorified: Trotsky, Tito, Khrushchev.

The more imperialism failed in its efforts the greater its desperate use of the final weapon of fascism. Faced by the technological progress which urgently demands a radical change in the systems of ownership and distribution through violent seizure of political power by the most advanced class, imperialism opted to turn this very technological progress away from production, into destruction. War became its daily business, weapons its chief item of trade, terror the basis of its rule.

## IV

## Revisionism

Revisionism arrived at the same sordid point but travelled a different route. The USSR was founded by revolution led by the Bolshevik Party with Lenin at the helm. It was built by the unleashed energy and initiative of millions of Russian toilers under the leadership of Stalin. As such, the USSR was perhaps the most difficult place in the world where capitalism and the philosophy of selfishness could be restored. But seven positive powers and two negative factors permitted Khrushchev and company to do so. The negative factors are:

1. Russia had not had a proletarian cultural revolution (The Stakhanovite movement was limited in both scope and aim). Thus the experiences of the great struggles from 1917 to 1953 were never summed up and taken back to the people. The experience was allowed to dissipate. Instead, petit bourgeois philosophy with its opportunism and selfishness survived amongst millions of school masters, technicians, officers, professionals, peasants etc.—both inside and outside the Party.
2. Stalin had made mistakes in resolving the contradictions amongst the people. He used methods to

be used against the enemy, in resolving contradictions between the people. This, compounded with the harsh, power-hungry bureaucracy run by Khrushchev and company, in Stalin's name, had so terrorised and alienated the Russian people that they were temporarily incapable of any effective, united action against the renegades when they seized power on Stalin's death.

The renegades' seizure of power involved some large-scale killings and imprisonment. Their consolidation of power was equally bloody and ruthless, aided by the seven positive powers:

1. The great Red Army
2. The all-encompassing State bureaucracy
3. The powerful, privileged bureaucracy of the CPSU
4. The totally centralised economy with a bunch of manager-bureaucrats who wished to perpetuate their power
5. The total control over all communication media of the USSR
6. The massive encouragement—moral and material—offered by the old imperialists.
7. The heritage of Lenin, Stalin, the Bolshevik Party, the Red Flag which were now assiduously used to sabotage revolution and advance counter-revolution.

Khrushchev, Brezhnev and company have made good use of all this. The Red Flag today covers the poison weeds of revisionism. A few hundred yards from Lenin's embalmed body machinations go on to divide and loot the world. Russian money and arms, flying the flag of "anti-U.S. imperialist aid", now penetrate country after country leaving a wake of corpse (Sudan) betrayal (Egypt), exploitation (India) and dismemberment (Pakistan). Russian policy with tenacious consistency opposed and betrayed revolution and liberation whenever it had the chance. Russian power props up dozens of counter-revolutionary governments in Asia and has begun to build a chain of treaties in order to encircle and



suppress socialist China. No trick in the imperialist bag is too dirty for the revisionists. Aggression, racialism, robbery, murder—everything goes.

Ownership of the major means of production and distribution in Russia is not private but social—State-owned. To appropriate the surplus of this production for a few of the privileged, to apply it for destruction and imperialist designs, the Russian rulers had to instal a fascist dictatorship. The Russian people have been freed from slavery of private capital, they have experienced the October Revolution, borne arms and shed blood against imperialist intervention, monarchist disrupters and fascist invaders. They could not be led down the primrose path of alliance with capitalism into the docile captivity of wage slavery. Social-fascism ('Social' because of state bureaucratic ownership of capital was the only answer the revisionist social-imperialists could discover).

The weak, stunted, crippled bourgeoisie of the colonial and semi-colonial countries had even less choice. They could, of course, unite with the people in the struggle for freedom, which would ultimately snatch away from them what they had snatched away from the people over the years. Their philosophy, class outlook and very existence rejected this alternative. Instead, wherever the weakness of the national and people's democratic revolution allowed them to do so, they delivered themselves into the hands of the imperialists: to live on the capital, technology, markets and armed might of imperialism. To suppress the desire of their countries for freedom, of the nationalities for liberation and of their people for revolution, fascism, to the big compradors and landlords of colonial and semi-colonial countries, is an even more urgent necessity. To meet the rapacious greed of the imperialist masters, fascism is even more essential to the comprador.

There is a difference between the fascism of imperialist countries and that of the colonial, semi or neo colonial countries. The difference is in the comparative freedom of the ruling

class to pursue fascist policies independently. That is, whereas social-fascism in Russia was evolved and applied by the revisionist renegades led by the (Khrushchev-Brezhnev clique, fascism in Indonesia or India must await imperialist approval and aid. Only where the super-powers are agreed upon the need for fascism or where one super-power has established undoubted hegemony, can fascism manifest itself significantly. The second limitation on the establishment of fascism in colonial, semi-colonial and neo-colonial countries is the existence of a large feudal economy which cannot easily be brought under a monolithic central control. The ruling classes counter this difficulty by (a) rapid build-up of communications (b) coralling the feudals in the fascist fold by instilling in them the advantages of controlled markets and technological appliance. This naturally leads to fascism in such places having greater overtures of feudalism than elsewhere. The greatest barrier is of course revolution, which, acting as an anti-thesis, both sharpens the claws of fascism and limits its spread. The stronger the revolutionary armed struggle of the toiling masses, the greater the militant bond of the worker-peasant alliance, the sharper the conflicts and vacillations in the ruling classes, the more limited the aura of power of the fascist rulers. The process goes on until in the end a brutal Diem, Thieu or Lon Nol is encircled in his capital gnashing his teeth in impotent rage, with the flames of revolution ticking at his toes.

## V

### Economic Base

Imperialism, revisionism or comprador—all opt for fascism when faced with the fundamental problem of a moribund system: the techniques of production, evolved by years of struggle of production and scientific experiment, demand that ownership of the means of production be socialised and before that, feudalism must go and that each country, each nation, each producing man must be allowed to bring total intelligence, initiative and

energy to bear upon the problem of production—the struggle against nature.

But this would mean the end of exploitation of man and before that, of nations by imperialism. That is, the death of imperialism, revisionism and their compradors. That is why they fight with such desperate brutality to choke off the demands of countries for freedom, of nations for liberty and of people for revolution and try so hard to squeeze technology into their existing framework of power and property.

(In India, the desperation is reflected neatly in Priya Das Munshi's little pamphlet *Gramey cholo*. I quote: "When this is the situation (bankruptcy of the left), we have come to meet the last challenge, to play our last fight. This is much like a drawn game in football when extra time is played. If we score, the people will get the trophy, if we don't the maddened spectators may burn down the tent".

There is land, water and the labouring millions in India. There are also those fruits of technology: The IR-8 seed, pumps, tractors, fertilisers, insecticides, deep tubewells and electricity. But the two cannot be brought together without violent seizure of political power by the worker-peasant alliance. Technology cannot have any wide application without radical and extensive change in the ownership of land, in the pattern of scattered holdings, individual cropping, hoarder distribution and blackmarketing. So what have the rulers done? They have.

- (1) Relied on imperialism to build and sustain the infrastructure of agriculture — canals, fertiliser plants, power—instead of relying on the initiative of crores of poor and middle peasants and landless labourers. Thus the infrastructure is lopsided, under-utilised, expropriated by the rich. Instead of helping agriculture it festers as a sore.
- (2) They have fanned up the profit motive of the existing feudals and feudal merchants who have



become more rapacious than ever before. The rulers have also invited a whole gang of quick-buck makers, led by a bevy of brigadiers, to invade the countryside. The results are notorious.

(c.f. The Laments of Ladejinsky.)

- (3) They have maintained at the point of the gun, feudal and semi-feudal exploitation, as also a vast starving army of under and unemployed peasantry.

As a result grain production has shot up. So has pauperisation, concentration of land holdings, food prices and hunger. So there was and is unrest. The "Tents may burn"! The ruling classes opted for factism.

The Indian revisionists by their consistent championing of rich peasant causes, their middle peasant based and rich peasant led organisation, their fear of the landless peasantry's move to seize power, their inter-party fratricidal killings, their counterrevolutionary attacks on the CPI(ML) cadres and supporters in the rural areas and above all their deliberate, debasement of communism by advancing only economic demands, disappointed, disgusted and alienated the peasantry. Their sycophancy of the rich peasant/jotadar and fake roaring on behalf of the landless and rural proletariat frightened the lower and middle peasantry into the waiting arms of the Congress.

The CPI(ML) on the other hand depended too much on conspiracy and individual terror. They lacked both agrarian programme and organised military force. They failed to build up both a base area and united front. Thus, they failed to attract the middle and poor peasantry or even the mass of the landless. At one point in this exercise—we speak specially of Birbhum—the ruling classes demonstrated the superiority of their armed might through the army. Thereafter, they organised the rural population—first the rich, then the middle and finally even the poor and the landless into "Resistance groups". These groups proved far more violent than even the army in the destruction of

the cadres and supporters of the CPI (ML). Legal force gave way to, and served merely as the protector of, the extra-legal force. Elsewhere there were but variations upon the same theme.

In industry, the problem is equally acute. As foreseen by Hobson and quoted by Lenin, imperialism today no longer thirsts after raw materials so much as it seeks *cheap labour* to do the heavy work which in its soft rottenness it cannot extract from its own economy. Hence the Indian paradox: in a country starved of industrial goods 50% of machine capacity is unutilised. In a country which boasts of rising industrial exports, plants are closing down, retrenchment goes on in thousands and there is a build up of at least 35 million unemployed. In a country which is desperately illiterate, educated unemployed are numbered in millions. In a country which is poor and allegedly "peaceful", the expense on arms has gone up 1400% in 22 years. In a "free", and some would say increasingly "socialist", country, the doors of investment and control of industry are being increasingly opened to foreign private capital.

What sort of 'a fight' does Indira Gandhi put up with American imperialism which has Rs. 7-8000 crores worth of leverage in the Indian economy? What sort of free-enterprise capitalists are the U.S. imperialists who not only allow Mrs Gandhi to "nationalise" one after another of India's industries (barring the foreign owned banks etc. of course) but also pour a large part of their money directly into the hands of the GOI? In fact what sort of "nationalisation" is this? Is the Indian State as governed by Mrs Gandhi's government—the Indian nation? If not, then obviously take-over by the Government is not "nationalisation" but bureaucratisation.

#### Bureaucratisation

By equating bureaucratisation with nationalisation, the revisionists actually help in equating the government with the state and the nation. Given

the CPSU's utopian and hypocritical formulation of "a State of all the people", this is not surprising. But it certainly is a fraud. It also assists fascism, since the political hypothesis of fascism advances down the ladder of simple equations: Nation-State-Government-Party-Leader.

Bureaucratisation of the Indian economy is necessary to control, restrain and discipline the limited competition amongst compradors (LIC, bank, insurance). In the present era imperialism cannot even stand the risk of that little disturbance. Bureaucratisation is necessary to give greater profits to imperialism by selling of raw materials and labour cheap and buying shoddy goods at extra expense. (Mining corporations, iron ore export, State trading, the aided projects, the Government owned or taken over control (Food Corporation). It is necessary to keep the feudals and rich peasants fat but under centralised control (Rood Corporation). It is necessary to further oppress and exploit Indian labour and destroy his organisation. (CISF, DIR, Essential Services Act and the Ordinances and the ousting of non-Congress unions). Bureaucratisation also ensures the return of principal and interest on the capital invested by imperialism and provides for a hierarchy of managers who risk little, attempt less and exist entirely by constantly proving their treacherous loyalty to the imperialist cause.

Bureaucratisation of the economy is naturally reflected in politics by the disappearance of the various lobbies or opposition groups maintained by competing capitalists or compradors. Birla no longer needs to appoint a cabinet minister or finance a political party. It would not do him any good even if he did. If he is in the bureaucratic structure he will manage not only big industries but also those of others which have been bureaucratised. If he is out, others will manage his industries.

Thus bureaucratisation of the economy must, at one stage, find expression in oppositionless, terror-based, fake anti-capitalist, fascism.



The whole process quickens when the ruling classes see the storm clouds of insurrection on the horizon, as they certainly did in Calcutta, Durgapur, Midnapur and elsewhere in 1969-1971. They panicked and scampered under the shelter of bureaucratisation. A flurry of take-overs followed—cotton mills, banks—Saxby and Farmer, insurance, export and import trade, Sen Raleigh, Copper Corporation, Braithwaite etc. The revisionists found "progressiveness" in each of these measures, they were relieved at so many workers not losing their jobs. Their relief was short-lived since Indira Gandhi used precisely this weapon to slash down the CPM, chain the CPI to her chariot wheels, and remove all effective opposition to her party.

Such are the economic bases and imperialist compulsions behind Indian fascism.

### Special Case

Even in this process, West Bengal is a special case. West Bengal has a comparatively large but old industrial sector, a society which reached the highest pinnacles of comprador culture and its anti-thesis—individual terrorism, a society which "reformed" itself repeatedly at the top in order to fit the current rulers, while the bottom fell out under repeated shocks of famine, partition and economic collapse. West Bengal also has 38,000 villages and about 2 million people living in them. The 'sickness' of industries in West Bengal is matched only by the illness of her agriculture. A more feudal MP or Rajasthan *without* a large, restless and pauperised working class or a Maharashtra-Gujarat with a comparatively modern industry and with continuous capital inputs resulting in fruitful economism and labour docility—have not the problem of West Bengal.

Crises, unemployment and bankruptcy are the greatest here. A vast sea of declassed people is swelled constantly by the stream of refugees that began 26 years ago. Added to them annually, are the educated unemployed—turbulent, unstable, turn-

ed out by the education industry and rejected by the other industries. The movement from house to flat to tenement to bustee is palpable here, as is the degradation of youth from classroom via lumpency to jail. The villages are even more tragic. There the big jotedars have adroitly managed to balance themselves so that, Congress or CPM, no government can hurt them. There the crumbling of society and collapse of productive life is even more dramatic.

That is why protest found the most strident insurrectionary voice in West Bengal. And also why the 'resistance squads' in the rural areas, the all-party manhunts for the Naxalites, the wrecking of union offices, the widespread, extra-legal terror of the ruling party assumed their present dimensions here. Bureaucratisation—because of the 'sickness' of industry—is more intensive in West Bengal. It is West Bengal which had to pass through the greatest trials of chauvinism in the aggressive war against China and Pakistan.

These in short, are the chief reasons why Bengal feels today what India will feel tomorrow—the lash of fascist terror.

### Tools Of fascism

#### VI

Besides specific ideological, political, economic, social and cultural conditions, fascism needs certain technological tools without which it cannot achieve its full malignancy. These are:

(a) A system of terroristic police control using modern science and modern psychology.

(In India this machine is being methodically built up. U.S., Russian, British and German experts are being used. A whole armoury of laws—PVA, MISA, Emergency, PD, old British anti-terrorist acts—have been promulgated. What has not yet been written into "law" has become "fact" by a plethora of bloody precedence: that is, the right of the police to kill suspects singly or en masse.

Secret police organisations have multiplied as also the number of plainclothes policemen. Their initials vary—IB, SIB, DIB, CID, RI, R. & A Dept., CBI, M.S., SB, DDSI—but they all have one thing in common—the licence to kill.

From wire tapping and electronic gadgets to automatic weapons and forensic science—all modern facilities are used and used ruthlessly. Science is used with far greater expense and abandon to increase terror in our country than in reducing hunger or unemployment.

It is true that our policemen had rather crude habits and disdained psychology. But even this is changing. They displayed remarkable cunning in the later stages of the battle against the CPI(ML). They also showed greater ability in spreading their lies through newspapers and radio.

(b) A near-complete monopoly in the hands of the Government, over effective mass communications such as radio, newspapers, cinema, TV etc. (In India; the Government runs the radio and TV. As for newspapers, by its control over newsprint allocation, because of the fact that it is the biggest single advertiser, by its recent "socialistic" measure to regulate and take over ownership of newspapers and magazines the Government has the newspapers in a vicious stranglehold. The results are obvious and blatant. Indian newspapers are insipid, puerile, sycophantic, and false. By its control over film finance—the Government has an even tighter control over films).

(c) A large, all pervading bureaucracy by self-interest and tradition, would embrace, advance and install fascism in power. (In India: the British colonial tradition of the ICS has been multiplied thousandfold and the process of bureaucratisation has spilled over from politics and administration into both economic and culture. Schools, colleges, arts, all have come under the



purview and patronage of the Government, all are stuffed by people who, in addition to their qualification for the job must prove their loyalty to the Government and to the party of the Government. The revisionists intensified this trend, the Congress has enthroned it as a principle).

- (d) Monopoly, in the hands of the Government, over armed forces. (In India: the Government has an instrument fashioned by 200 years of colonialism. The Indian Army has been trained (i) to kill their countrymen (ii) to serve imperial interests. The expenses to maintain this tradition have been high. A million strong, it is buffered by other armed bodies such as the CRP, CISF, BSF, EFR, TA etc, all armed, all under the command of the Government. Now this vast body of armed men has notched up a "victory". Its swagger is exceeded only by the hatred for communism and for socialist China that has been assiduously drilled into them).
- (e) A highly centralised, state controlled economy. (In India: 67% of total non-agricultural employment rests with the Government, 80% of all business and commercial finance comes from or through the Government. The Government owns more than 50% of equity capital, or its equivalent, in most Indian companies. 95% of the infrastructure of industry is owned and controlled by the Government).
- (f) A large, bureaucratic party organisation which has repeatedly proved itself loyal to the interests of the foreign and native ruling classes. (In India: after a great deal of competition, the Congress).

These tools are not fashioned overnight. Nor are they always consciously created. But the fact remains, that:

- (a) Objective, circumstances constantly force the ruling classes to

fashion these tools, (India, 1962 onwards) and that

- (b) in spite of much bickerings as to methods and tactics, the ruling classes attempt to fashion these tools, (the ouster of Desai and company as well as the Jana Sangh and Swatantra, the subsequent rule of Indira Gandhi), and that
- (c) in doing so they receive aid and encouragement from both imperialism and the revisionists (U.S. "aid", Russian arms "aid" and advice and the loud glorification of Indira Gandhi and her major policies by the CPI and CPM leadership) and, finally, that,
- (d) the mistakes, weaknesses and pusillanimity of revolutionaries help the creation of these technical tools of fascism (example: the thoughtless city 'actions' launched by CPI(ML) and their inability to sustain them as well as their abdication from the leadership of mass movements).

The fact also remains that each one of these tools will, in the short run, aid counter-revolution, but each will, in the long run, help revolution. First, because of their very monolithic structure under the present class conditions, they will crack up. Second, under the new class conditions created by the revolution, the experience of centralised economy and State structure would help in establishing the dictatorship of the worker-peasant alliance.

(Concluded)

## Dateline Bangladesh

BY A FILM CRITIC

**H**APPENINGS in Bangladesh over the past one year have occasioned a good number of movie records, mostly by ubiquitous foreign TV crews whose competitive compulsions enabled their clientele to view the events instantly. The Indian Government's Films Division also de-

ployed a number of cameramen. But thanks to its bureaucratic way of doing things, and a certain lack of professionalism it did not quite score over its rivals from the Western countries. To make matters worse its record of General Niazi's surrender is reported to have been mislaid and it never reached its Bombay office. Knowledgeable people tend to suspect that it found its way to some other agency which somehow had missed the show. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has apparently not found time to come out with anything to allay public misgivings in this respect.

*Dateline Bangladesh*, a compilation film of one hour composed of material obtained from various agencies like the BBC, ITV, NBC etc. and shot by 100 cameramen, has now been released by the Films Division probably to compensate for its plain inability to project a comprehensive account of the events in Bangladesh despite its effort to get it done by its costly outfit. It has now to resort to outright purchase of material like the *Dateline* at a fabulous price for

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the consumption of the Indian audience, an unwilling admission of its failure to cope with fleeting contemporary events of such magnitude.

*Dateline Bangladesh* is an impressive compilation by Geeta Mehta of the happenings as recorded by the TV cameramen right from Mujib's first interview before the army crackdown on March 25 last year. The enormity of the atrocities, the perpetrators Tikka Khan and Yahya himself, the endless stream of refugees into India, the doings of the Mukti Bahini, all feature in quick succession. Shot mostly in colour the quality is sometimes uneven which is unavoidable in the circumstances but the stark tragedy and the assertion for independence come through eloquently, giving a new dimension to human dignity. The editing is sharp and drives home the basic points. Yahya's press conference is repeated a few times to bring forth his deadpan declaration that his objective was indeed laudable—preservation of the integrity of his country. Particularly poignant are the refugee camps of India where children suffer from malnutrition and worse. The commentary is incisive and in low key but is eloquent in exposing the hypocritical stance of some countries proclaiming concern for the suffering humanity.

## Letters

### Murder Will Not Out

In his column "View from Delhi" (April 8) your correspondent has spoken of Mr Siddhartha Ray's "brush with the Press corps" in New Delhi. He has not mentioned me by name but, since he has said that the "brush" was with the author of the "book on the State's agony", your readers would probably guess that it was I who was involved. I am therefore prompted to tell you the full story.

The conference (on March 28) began and ended well. I do not see how your correspondent divined that there was a "brush". The Chief Min-

ister gave some details of what his Government would do to revive the benighted State's industrial and agrarian economy. He put great emphasis on rural electrification and land reforms. He said his Government was determined to implement in full the promises made by the Congress relating to land relations. The difficulty, he said, was that "there are no land records. Everything is in a mess. We have to begin at the beginning. We have to prepare records as the first step towards implementation of land reforms."

On this issue I asked a few questions seeking information and the Chief Minister readily replied. These were the questions and answers:

RR—You say that everything in relation to land reforms is in a mess and that there are no records for the Government to go by. Does it mean that after passing the Presidential Land Reforms Act the Government under President's rule did not do anything on this front for a whole year?

CM—The Government had difficulties. Yet it did something.

RR—You say that even records were not prepared. How did the Government proceed to implement the reforms in the absence of these records?

CM—No, some data had been collected and some progress made.

I did not, nor did anybody else in the large gathering of reporters, feel the need to pursue the issue further.

In the course of his ex-tempore statement the Chief Minister said that law and order would be fully restored. He hastened to add that the problem would not be treated in isolation. "The twin problems of revival of the economy and restoration of law and order will be tackled simultaneously", he said.

Thereupon the following questions were put by me and answered by the Chief Minister:

RR—Do you propose to order an investigation into the murders committed in the State during the last few years—for example, the Barasat-Basirhat murders, the murders in prisons, and the murders of many other

people—including some prominent political leaders—and find out who the culprits are?

CM—No. There is no need for any fresh investigation. We know who the murderers are.

RR—Do you propose to publish the findings of the investigations so that the people may know who the culprits are? Are you going to punish the guilty?

CM—No. What has happened has happened. We want no recrimination. We are determined to see that the West Bengal we build is a glorious one.

RR—People would like to know who the real culprits are and what punishment is meted out to them?

CM—No, the people of West Bengal do not want that. They have not asked for it. Only the CPI(M) has asked for it.

RR—Should murderers not be brought to book?

CM—They are your friends.

RR—I have friends in the Congress and in every party. What may it be that stands in the way of your punishing the guilty if you know who they are?

CM—You are not from West Bengal. You have no right to suggest an inquiry or ask such questions.

There were no further questions on the subject. Were any more necessary? I had been formally invited to attend the Press conference. The invitation letter had not made it clear that since I had not come all the way from West Bengal to report Mr Ray's conference I was not entitled to put questions seeking information. This point was made clear by Mr Ray himself after I had put my last question. As far as I could see, no one in the large crowd of reporters had come from West Bengal to report the conference.

As you will see, there was no "brush" at all. I did not even murmur a protest against Mr Ray's remark. My experienced friends in the profession in New Delhi have drawn their own conclusions.

About your correspondent's reference to "an intrepid Bengali corres-



pondent", I do not see where the question of intrepidity comes at all. I should confide to you that in the presence of great men, such as Mr Siddhartha Ray, I become nervous. Occasionally I summon courage to try to elicit information which is why Press conferences are arranged. I thought I had elicited more than enough for a day.

While replying to my last question the Chief Minister informed me that I was "going to get a reply to my charges soon". I was surprised. I did not recall what charges I had made and against whom. It struck me that the Chief Minister might be referring to the points I had made in *The Agony of West Bengal*. For a year after the articles, included in the book, had been published in *Hindusthan Standard* (February 1971) I have met many Ministers and officials in New Delhi asking to know if the Government had facts to disprove my points. I have not so far had any from any of them. I do not propose to tell you what some of them tried to do, failing to rebut any of my points.

In her letter to Mrs Basanti Devi on February 2, the Prime Minister referred to my book to say that it "is a partial presentation of the facts. Ours is such a complex country that evidence can be found for any statement." I presume this is an admission that my facts and conclusions cannot be disputed. (I am waiting for a reply from Mr Ray if it is in fact the book he had in mind. As a matter of fact, any letter from him is welcome to me, including a reply to the congratulatory letter I sent him on March 19 on the victory of the Congress in the election and his impending appointment as Chief Minister.

RANAJIT ROY  
New Delhi

## Elections And CPM

Confusing and ridiculous statements have been coming out from Left Front quarters. It is high time the CPM workers started to critical-

ly understand their policy-formulating leaders in the light of some important and eloquent facts.

The support of all 'left' MPS, who actually conceal their 'Rightness under left phrases', for the moves of Mrs Gandhi's Congress in respect of (a) taking over of coal mines, (b) changes in the Constitution, (c) India's recognition of Bangladesh, (d) India's military action led to no avenue but a blind lane.

At the December 12, 1971 rally Mr Promode Dasgupta referred to the 'image' of Mrs Gandhi, brightened by her action in East Bengal and Mr Jyoti Basu spoke of the solid national unity on the Bangladesh issue, while expressing support for the so-called East Bengal upsurge. No genuine anti-imperialist worker could support the secessionist movement of the Awami League which was backed by the imperialist powers. It did not contain the slightest element of anti-imperialist struggle. More, having praised Russia for her pro-Indian stand on the Bangladesh issue, without any reference to the relevant UN resolution and severely criticising China, Mr Basu stated that the CPM was not with either of the 'two' communist blocs. When Trotsky said that they were neutral and were neither with the Mensheviks nor the Bolsheviks, Lenin called it sheer opportunism, ultimately helping the Mensheviks, betraying the revolution. This is what is done by the CPM leaders.

Having manufactured a lot of cock and bull fiction, CPM leaders provoked a section of their workers to hound and kill Naxalites and attack thinking workers of their own party. They wanted thus to resolve the inner-party political crisis and collaborated in various forms with the establishment and its institutions to restore the so-called law and order. The leaders knew very well that once they succeeded in setting their workers against Naxalites and the CPC line of thought, making them think that the present establishment is neutral and is capable of crushing the revolutionary forces, the party could be

dragged on to whichever track they liked. Similar to the line of other parties, CPM leaders also have been laying all-out emphasis on violence, rowdies, anti-socials etc and at the same time demanding 'peaceful' atmosphere in the State (in whose interest?). Thus, under a leftist veil they strengthened the hands of the reactionary ruling class in establishing 'law and order'. Thus the IF leaders paved the way for the victory of Congress politics.

As the CPM had no serious agitational and militant mass movement, in the local areas CPM leaders picked up 'apolitical' and some 'friendly contradictions' among the people itself of the same stratum and utilised and fomented them. The Congress was there to seize this opportunity. A fight was hatched and prolonged in order to show that their line of action was different from that of the CPI. A lot of such incidents occurred in the Jadavpur-Tollygunge area. As a result, when the CPM led front enters 'ministerial' chambers, the rank and file Congressites leave their residential area and vice versa. This

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thing has been going on since 1969. This time also, before and after the election, a big number of young men and families, irrespective of their political colour, have quit the area of Jadavpur-Tollygunge.

CPM cadres should understand that people's aspiration and struggle would be belied if the present leadership succeeds in (keeping their grip under the 'method', as Stalin described it—"For the sake of appearances, Marx's theory was mentioned, of course, but only to rob it of its living, revolutionary spirit". For the sake of appearance, of course, 'revolutionary' resolutions and slogans were adopted but only to be pigeon-holed.

KAMALA AICHI  
Bijayfarh

I have noticed a tendency among a section of supporters of the CPI(ML) and like-thinking organisations to blatantly dismiss the charges of large-scale rigging of the last elections in West Bengal. This is a harmfully sectarian trend of thinking born of sheer political blindness. There is a lot of evidence to prove conclusively large-scale, pre-planned rigging.

This should be treated as a political attack on the people; while its immediate target is the CPI(M) and its allies, the ultimate target is the people—post-election developments prove this in ample measure.

But why should the authorities attack the CPI(M) and its allies in order to attack the people later? Because, firstly, the people are in a state of high exasperation; they are itching for struggle to bring about some changes; and secondly, as their class consciousness is very insufficiently developed (as, instead of clarifying the minds of the people, the left leadership is "befogging" them, instead of dispersing petty-bourgeois illusions, they are *instilling* them; instead of freeing the people from bourgeois influence, they are *strengthening* that influence) [Lenin, Dual Power] the majority of the organised people in the state have unreasoning trust in the

Left Front parties and willingly accept their leadership, naively believing that they can lead them to victory.

DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE  
Howrah

I would request Mr Bikash Mukherjee (April 8) to seriously ponder whether he should not shed his sectarian attitude to the CPI(M) activists.

Anyone genuinely interested in building up a proletarian-revolutionary organisation needs to recognise that history never provides us with perfectly finished, readymade human material with which to create a leading core of a proletarian-revolutionary movement, that we have to forge vanguard groups from whatever human material is handed down to us by a class society. Secondly, it should be realised that the majority of the young CPI(M) activists sincerely want to make revolution—their specific socio-economic conditions compel them to adopt a revolutionary position. Thirdly, it should be honestly admitted that the CPI(ML) leadership was not able to expose the class-collaborationist nature of the CPI(M) leadership in a convincing manner, from a truly Marxist-Leninist standpoint; they failed to formulate and put into practice a tactical line best suited to the growth and development of the revolutionary forces, which is one of the primary reasons why the CPI(M) activists could not put up a strong opposition to the ministerialist deviation of their party leadership, they could not convince the CPI(M) activists by theory as well as by practice that theirs was the correct line. In fact, while the leadership of the CPI(M) turned right, that of the CPI(ML) veered to the extreme 'left'.

This is the time, I believe, to initiate thorough political discussions with these elements and forge united action with them against the common enemy—the ruling Congress.

SANAT ACHARYA  
Hooghly

The indignities suffered by the CPM in the last election have highlighted some points which need to be probed into by the party leadership which became so puffed up with a self-created illusion about its bigness that it began to treat the whole of West Bengal as its exclusive and impregnable preserve. The party's promises of everything to everybody, when judged in the light of its earlier performances in office, did not cut much ice with the people.

The second thing of which the people are rightly apprehensive is the CPM-style of class struggle, in the name of which people of the same class killed each other, leaving the real enemies in good spirits. The Home (Police) portfolio being then in its hands its cry of Congress fascism had very little effect.

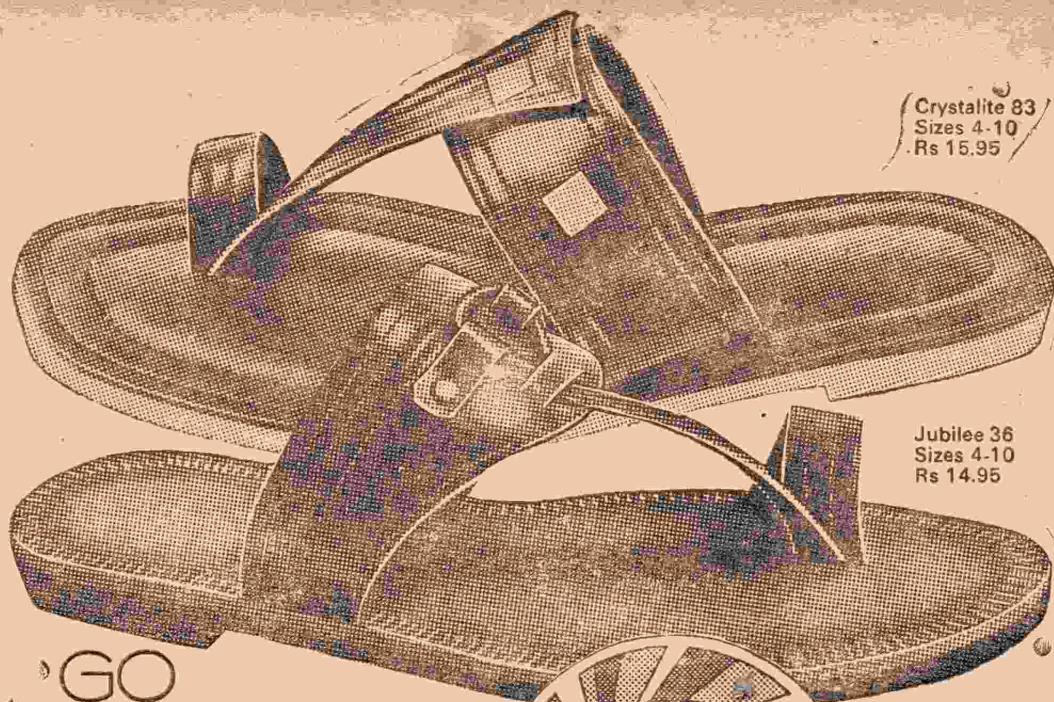
The third point that Mr Bikash Mukherjee so aptly points out in his letter (8-4-72) is its calculated postures of 'injured innocence' at the seemingly shocking behaviour of the Congress in manipulating election results in its favour by all possible means. Experience of the last two or three elections bears eloquent testimony to the fact that the party has also acquired specialised skills in doing the same thing. A Marxist party that is supposed to set an example of political integrity and honesty to the people has, to be frank enough, not behaved any better than its bourgeois counterparts and so has forfeited its right to elicit any sympathy from the people on this point.

As for rigging one should know that in a country where nearly 80% of the electorate are illiterate, the elections during all these years have been more or less rigged. The party in power at the time of election enjoys an edge over its adversaries. Had the CPM been in power the picture would not have been at all different. What has made the sky heavy with cries of rigging and conspiracy was its inability to contribute its mite to the last game.

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