

frontier

Vol. 7: No. 15

AUGUST 3, 1974

PRICE: 50 PAISE

On Other Pages

COMMENT ..	2
CHINA AND THE CPM BY A CORRESPONDENT ..	3
CONSPIRACY INC. K. S. ..	7
<i>The Press</i> THE BIHAR SCENE PATRAKAR ..	9
AMERICAN RESEARCH ON BENGALI NATIONALISM BENOY GHOSE ..	10
A VETERAN ARTIST SANDIP SARKAR ..	12
CLIPPINGS ..	12
LETTERS ..	13

A DELIBERATE LEAKAGE

THE monsoon session of Parliament has begun. The parties are going through the familiar rituals about which the average citizen could not care less. The solitary exception is the new tax proposals—the much-trumpeted package of Finance Minister Chavan—of which some have been already enforced through ordinances. At the time of writing, the proposals are not known; they have not been presented to Parliament yet. But traders of Bombay, Mr Chavan's home town, seemed to have got a scent of what was up the Finance Minister's sleeve, created an artificial scarcity of certain commodities and managed to profiteer on a grand scale at the expense of not only the consumer, but also the Government. In this venture, they have virtually been launched by the Government, for full ten days before the proposals were to be announced it was officially disclosed that a second Finance Bill would be introduced in the Lok Sabha on July 31. This amounted to divulging that new taxes were in the offing, and from the Government's known proclivity it was not difficult to guess that the bulk of the proposals would be indirect levies. Lest this also should not register, a Finance Ministry high-up was alleged to have told a group of top businessmen that the proposals were for indirect taxes. The allegation has been referred by the Lok Sabha Speaker to the committee of privileges of Parliament.

A second Finance Bill is a rarity, and there is no convention that it has to be presented on a certain date. Speculations over the first Finance Bill, that is, the general budget proposals, are unavoidable. But speculations over the second are easily avoided if the Government does not divulge that additional taxes are proposed to be announced on a certain date. During T. T. Krishnamachari's stewardship of the Finance Ministry, a second Finance Bill had been introduced in the Lok Sabha. The Bill was sprung upon the members who had been merely told that the Finance Minister would make an important statement. But this time ten days' notice was given for businessmen to push up prices. Maybe, in grateful acknowledgement of this multi-crore assistance they will contribute liberally to the ruling party's elections funds for Gujarat. The Government has not been unmindful of individual business houses either. It has been alleged that the Government's decision to restrict dividends through an ordinance was leaked out to a certain business house which managed to earn Rs 7 crores out of this information. The Government has not been able to dismiss this allegation out of hand and a departmental probe has been ordered.

Editor : Samar Sen

PRINTED AT MODERN INDIA PRESS,
7, RAJA SUBODH MULLICK SQUARE,
CALCUTTA-13 AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY
FOR GERMINAL PUBLICATIONS (P) LTD.
BY SAMAR SEN FROM 61, MOTT LANE,
CALCUTTA-13
TELEPHONE: 243202

Leakage of tax proposals is not new. On one occasion when the budget used to be pointed in that haly of holies. Rashtrapati Bhavan, the tax proposals were available in Bombay for 16 old paise. The officials involved in the racket were small fry who fell victim to the temptations of a person who had right connections in the ruling party as was evident from the fact that he had selected Bombay's Raj Bhavan as his operational headquarters. Leakage of isolated tax proposals to the delight and benefit of the giver and the receiver of the information continues; allegations of leakage have become a hardy annual.

But these were all done clandestinely; only a few were guilty and the Government's sole default was that it failed to be sufficiently vigilant. This time the Government itself has become a party to the leakage; by its unnecessary, premature and seemingly motivated announcement in Parliament it has encouraged hoarding, profiteering and black-marketing on a wide scale. The Prime Minister has called for social boycott of the enemies of society, like smugglers, hoarders, and profiteers. Perhaps this is the type of boycott her party and Government have decided to practise.

Nixon Versus Congress

The House of Representatives will soon decide whether or not to impeach President Nixon. The Judiciary Committee mustered 27 votes out of 38 for impeachment; six of the 17 Republicans voted for charging the President with "obstruction of justice". Mr Nixon perhaps does not like the phrase, it is a pedantic paraphrase of his picturesque words: "I don't give a shit what happens. I want you all to stonewall it". This was on March 22, 1973 and is what obstruction of justice means. Other charges are being framed; so many things have come to light in the past year and a half that the public at times must have been fed up with it all.

The President is guilty of two great indiscretions. One was his fad about tapes. If he wanted to preserve the record of his administration for history, that was a curious way of doing it—so many expletives had to be deleted. The man who mentioned the tapes casually during interrogation is forgotten, but he did play a crucial role in the exposure. Mr Nixon's second folly was his transcript and mass publication of selected tapes. The language, the attitude to life, the cynical indifference to all values said to be enshrined in the U.S. constitution shocked even his admirers, and the shock was greater when it turned out that he had edited the tapes in his favour, not to speak of large and crucial portions having been wiped out

or just not being there.

Mr Nixon has proved himself a tough believer in the power of a lie. Nothing seems to be beyond him. He can be exasperating in his practices of evasion, and the practice can be so obvious as to baffle and wear out the public. But this time he may yet meeting his political end.

So long the myth has been nurtured that the head of the State—President or Prime Minister—in democracies is a Hegelian character, above secretarian or class interests and corruption. The myth has been exposed now and again. But it is the brazenness of the men who rule America and the loud and clear way their exposure has come about that has blown up the myth skyhigh. Thanks to the tapes, it is now beyond doubt that the highest representatives of the ruling classes can be creatures of corruption and other vices, that the evils are inherent in the system itself—even when it is adapted to different conditions in a holy country like India. One or two Watergates may ease the conscience of the defenders of the system, but the system, based on personal profit, will breed corruption. So why be so fussy about it?

President Nixon looks a small man. but the wonder has been his so-called big success in foreign policy. He has been to Peking and Moscow, Cairo and Tel-Aviv and talks a lot about his be-

ing a man of pece. At about the same time he has committed some of the worst crimes against humanity. The war in Indochina, conducted with singular brutality and duplicity, should have branded this man a long time ago. But when the boys came home, Americans tended to forget what he had done—and is still doing in Indochina—with the help of Dr Kissinger. Business is business and the red carpet is spread before the two—the Mr Hyde and Dr Jekyll of world politics—whenever they visit foreign capitals. And it is quite possible that Mr Nixon will do something again to avoid a two-thirds majority against him in the Senate and carry on. He is not the man to give a shit about the so-called dignity of the Presidency.

Self-Reliance ?

India's planning is supposed to be for self-reliance. But, for the Ministry of Industrial Development self-reliance means dependence on foreign collaboration. The 113 foreign collaboration proposals approved by the Government of India in the first quarter of 1974 once again bring home the fact that the Government has got scant respect for the development of indigenous technology and expertise. An analysis of these proposals reveals that the Industrial Development Ministry has totally ignored the Planning Commission's emphasis against priority being given to consumption goods for the elite in view of the difficult raw material situation in the country. For instance, collaboration has been granted for manufacturing filter paper, ready-made garments, acetate cigarette filter rods, air-conditioning and refrigeration controls, etc., which have nothing to do with the priority sector of the economy.

At a time when the country is faced with an acute foreign exchange crisis and the Ministers along with officials are visiting Western countries with the begging bowl, the sanctioning of these collaboration proposals is nothing but monstrous. There is every reason to ask what use the Foreign Investment Board and the Directorate General of Technical Development serve if they fail to keep

a vigilant eye on the nature of collaboration and its need at the present phase,

Out of the 112 collaborations, 19 envisage financial participation and this has all along been opposed by Indian experts. The report of the expert panel of the National Committee on Science and Technology has not found favour with the Industrial Development Ministry since the experts were very much against foreign collaboration, specially equity participation. The Foreign Investment Board which is supposed to assess critically the investment proposals concerning foreign participation has now turned out to be a strong votary of foreign collaboration and only a few weeks ago this board approved the Birlas' proposal envisaging 33.3 per cent equity participation by the U.S. multi-national giant General Motors in the share capital of Hindustan Motors. A known emissary of the Prime Minister acted as the spokesman of the Birlas and he managed to get the proposal approved putting pressure on the Ministry of Heavy Industry. What is more intriguing is the West Bengal Government's total support to the Birlas in pushing through the tie-up proposal. The Birla lobby knows well that the proposal consists of provisions which in effect mean total surrender of the management to the U.S. company. In sum, the Government's whole attitude towards the pattern of development shows that it has never been interested in self-reliance.

From The Wrong End

The Government has asked all classes of people to make sacrifices in order to help it shore over the crisis that has been allowed to grip the economy. Some measures have already been trumpeted and taken; salaried people have been compelled to forgo their wages increases and half of their dearness allowance rises; the higher paid sections have been forced to deposit part of their take-home salary in a special deposit redeemable after two years. All this has been done presumably on the basis of detailed homework, of which only a part unfortunately has been made public. The wage and dear-

ness allowance restrictions are expected to impound about five per cent of the money supply. The dividend ceiling will likewise freeze part of the money in circulation and so will the special deposit for the higher groups of salaried people. But there has been precious little information as to what extent effective monetary demand is accounted for by these classes and to what extent the spending of these sections is distributed between essentials and luxuries. The salaried class is a very big group, but it would be a fair enough assumption to make that for nearly 80 per cent of it nearly the whole income is spent on consumption goods like food, housing, cloth and essential transport. In other words, what the Government is asking these people to do is to eat less, be more scantily dressed and live as shabbily as possible. And this is so when the garibi hatao plan with all its fanfare on upliftment of the bottom 40 per cent of the people is supposed to be in full swing. Admittedly the salaried classes are in a much more privileged position than the millions of people who are without jobs and those who live in villages amidst unbelievable poverty. But does socialism merely mean levelling down all to the poverty line, swelling the number of people who do not have enough to eat and wear? It's kind of an Alicean wonderland!

Nor does socialism certainly mean that some people should go on getting all the best things of life because they have amassed a lot of money by adulterating food and drugs, by cheating society and the government and because they have friends and contacts at high places. Why must the economic spring-cleaning start with an attack on white money, on the salaried classes who by and large have far less resources and finesse to dodge taxes than the rentier class? Doesn't it smack something like beating your wife? And why must the long-promised measures against the black-money holders come at the end of the package—if they do come at all—rather than at the beginning? To say that the Government does not know who they are would be a flagrant insult to the efficiency and self-awareness of the administrative machinery.

China And The CPM

BY A CORRESPONDENT

CHINA is both promise and predicament—predicament for those who have more pretence than purpose. The more the pretensions are seen through the more the CPM leaders become desperate in their attacks on China. In doing so they seek not only to assure Indira Gandhi but also to disabuse the minds of the restive CPM followers who are trying to hold their leaders to their promise of action. And purposeful action means the "Chinese" general line. Action, however, is a most dangerous thing; therefore the CPM leaders are for something factitious while making jesuitical references to class struggle.

In recent years the CPM has attacked China from opposite sides; about the Soviet Union it has substituted Dange's straightforward opportunism by the diplomatic tactic of beating about the bush. The latest target of attack, by M. Basavapunniah, (People's Democracy May 12 and 19) was Teng Hsiao-ping's speech at the special session on raw materials convened on the proposal of President Boumediene. In his speech Mr Teng Hsiao-ping emphasised the vital role of the Third World in the struggle against imperialism and denounced the role of the two super-powers. He made a formal reference to the self-evident non-existence of a socialist camp. China has been telling it for a long time. Mr Basavapunniah too admits it. What however angers him is that China should be so categorical! The very first sentence following the preface he writes, reads—"The speech of the chief of the Chinese delegation instead of contributing anything worthy on the subject under discussion, is an analysis and assessment of the present international situation as viewed by the Communist Party and Government of China". Mr B. himself, however, has not spelt one word as to what should be worthy on the subject. More than half of the Chinese delegate's speech was devoted to the economics and politics of raw materials. The delegate did not set out to tell any individual country exactly what

to do but warmly endorsed rational proposals of reform with a true slogan of struggle — just as Lenin wanted a socialist diplomat to function at international conferences. One suspects, to Mr B. raw materials is raw materials. It is astonishing that there can be people who regard themselves Marxist ideologists yet do not see the inevitable inner connection between raw materials and imperialism and find the analysis of the international situation irrelevant when imperialism's economic relations constitute the core of the entire international situation as it now exists. Therefore it is not surprising that Mr B. would deny the role of the Third World countries and correspondingly fail to note the Soviet theory on it which said "the sovereignty over the natural resources is depending to a great extent upon the capability of utilising these resources by the industry of the developing countries". This is out and out imperialist theory, even more brazen than the so-called "inter-dependence" theory of the other super-power—entirely an extension and amplification of the theory of "limited sovereignty".

Not only in theory but also in practice the present-day Soviet Union manifests almost all the attributes of imperialism as defined by Lenin: (1) Scramble for raw materials. In 1970 the Soviet Union imported from the Third World countries a total of 2,360 million U.S. dollars' worth of goods, mostly raw materials and food-stuff, or more than seven times that of 1955. In 1972 the developing countries' share accounted for 94 p.c. to 100 p.c. in Soviet imports of cocoa bean, skins, jute, tea and cotton fibres. (2) Aid as imperialism—or skinning the ox twice, as Lenin said. In a Pravda article on March 29, 1973 the chairman of the Soviet Commission for Foreign Economic Relations, Skachkov, admitted: "...to pay for the Soviet economic and technical aids, the developing countries provide our country with important and essential goods such as fine non-ferrous metal ore, oil, natural gas, long-fibre cotton, natural rubber, skins, oil materials, cocoa bean, coffee, tea..." "this has made it possible that the needs of the Soviet social economy are met even more adequately". The other important

point to be noted is this—the International Currency Review (July-August 1973) stated that by 1980 debt service is likely to absorb one half of the USSR's export earnings. (3) Hegemonism—i.e. conquest of territory, not so much directly for themselves as to weaken the adversary and undermine his hegemony.

However, Mr B. dismisses all these, saying that even if all these are upheld as valid points, they do not conclusively prove that socialism in the Soviet Union has been transformed into monopoly capitalism and so-called 'social-imperialism'—as if they are of no consequence and he mechanically quotes Lenin's definitions. Lenin defined capitalist imperialism but he also noted the possibility of reversion to capitalism i.e. the emergence of social imperialism, as did Stalin subsequently, should the communists persist in right deviationist mistakes in a socialist country. How is it that revisionism, in other words, capitalism can appear in socialist countries? As the Moscow declaration of 1957 points out, the existence of bourgeois influence is an internal source of revisionism, while surrender to imperialist pressure is its external source. Mr B. is ready to concede certain revisionist mistakes on the part of the Soviet leadership—till the other day, there have been 'trends', 'revisionism', but today there is none. Today there are only 'certain mistakes' implying aberration and not trends. If 'certain mistakes' are persisted in, what do all these add up to Mr B. does not bother; nor does he bother about the serious and scientific question why socialist Czechoslovakia reacted as she did. Where did "counter-revolution" spring from? What gave it strength? How must it be combated? Lenin said—, "the mere conversion of the means of production into the common property of the whole of society (casually called 'socialism') does not remove the defects".—... And if these defects, inevitable at the start, are not step by step corrected, capitalism is restored. Materialist dialectics is the doctrine of development.

Essence of Imperialism

There are many forms of imperialism but the essence of all is the same—exploitation and aggression. Under capital-

ist imperialism the social means of production remain the private property of the few with the sanction of law. Under social-imperialism the operation is more subtle and deceitful, for there is no direct sanction of law. All the same the means of production virtually remain the private property of the Soviet upper stratum. The Soviet bourgeoisie, a term once coined by Stalin, does exploit the workers and peasants at home. The high standard of living of the elite were made possible by the low standards of the masses, as under capitalism. The economic interests of the two classes are in contradiction, Material incentives and competition disguised as economic reforms lead enterprises to compete with each other for profit and workers are alienated from each other. A sharp class struggle in the Soviet Union can be easily seen. While the right dissidents get wide publicity both inside and outside the Soviet Union the left dissenters, the growing phenomenon, as Deutscher noted, do not. The masses have been so deprived of political power that only a second revolution can return to them control over their own affairs. These phenomena reflect a fundamental shift in political power. Exploitation and revisionist economics at home is bound up with annexationist methods abroad in politics. The attack on Czechoslovakia is one instance, the Indo-Soviet treaty to organise aggression 'taking advantage of the small nation conflict' to bring 'East Bengal' under its hegemony in total disregard of the much vaunted theory of 'peaceful co-existence' is another. Silence on the part of the Soviet Union which even Fidel Castro publicly noted, about the role of American imperialism, to combat whose counter-revolutionary thrust the Russian army ostensibly marched into Prague—was eloquent enough.

About East Bengal, the concerted role of the London Times, New York Times, Hindustan Times and Moscow New Times was there for all to see. London and Washington wanted the Soviet Union and China to clash over East Bengal. China was in a dilemma, she was against foreign interference and aggression but neither was she ready to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for Yahya Khan. China preferred, just as the Marxists

should, the unity of peoples of Pakistan on the basis of justice and equality in the larger interests of Pakistan and revolution but was never opposed to the aspirations of the people of East Bengal. What China opposed was the 'import' or 'export' of "revolution". As the situation obtains now in Bangladesh Chou En-lai's remark to Neville Maxwell that from now on there would be no tranquillity on the sub-continent and that India would taste in the end the bitter fruit of its own making—is truly prophetic. In Hungary too, China opposed American and Western interference to combat which the Soviet army, not yet manifestly revisionist, was wanted.

Mr B. finds strange unity between Moscow and Peking when it comes to the question of analysing and assessing the conditions in the Third World. If so much of Mr B's dialectical skill depends on his being able to see through their 'similarity of approach' we may well wonder how it is that he fails to see through his own—the similarity of approach between him the 'Marxist' and Indira Gandhi the 'semi-fascist' on East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. If he is so alive to the absurdity of the Chinese position, how does he stomach the preposterous melodrama, for instance, of supporting the right of self-determination of the East Bengalis while denying the same to Kashmiris and the Nagas?

It is absurd to go on regarding Soviet revisionism as an inner-party phenomenon. Soviet revisionism has ripened into social-imperialism. And there is nothing common between Marxism and revisionism, there is no spiritual affinity between the two. The relations between Marxist China and revisionist Soviet Union are antagonistic. To preach for unity between them is to preach unity between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

"Socialist Camp"

When there was a socialist camp there was one tactic. With no socialist camp there is another. Lenin formulated the foreign policy of a socialist State thus: "When we stand alone and the capitalist world is strong, our foreign policy consists, on the one hand, in our having to

utilise disagreements (to vanquish all the imperialist powers, would of course, be a most pleasant thing, but for a fairly long time we shall not be in a position to do so)." (Speech at the All-Russia Congress of Soviets). Lenin elaborated this tactic in his well-known pamphlet 'Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder'. "To carry on a war for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie, a war which is a hundred times more difficult, protracted and complicated than the most stubborn of ordinary wars between States, and to refuse beforehand to manoeuvre, to utilise the conflict of interests (even though temporary) among one's enemies, to refuse to temporise and compromise with possible (even though temporary, unstable, vacillating and conditional) allies, is not this ridiculous in the extreme? Is it not as though when making a difficult ascent of an unexplored and hitherto inaccessible mountain, we were to refuse beforehand ever to move in zigzags, ever to retrace our steps, ever to abandon the course once selected and to try others?" To utilise the conflicts skilfully, one must understand that the discord is not a fortuitous and internal dissension between parties, but a most deep-seated and ineradicable conflict of economic interests among the imperialist countries which based as they are on profit and exploitation cannot but pursue a predatory policy. This stultified efforts to unite their forces against the Soviets in 1919 and will stultify such efforts against China in the 1970s. The imperialist interests of the Soviet Union and America are therefore irreconcilable and their efforts to unite their forces against China are bound to be combated. Elaborating foreign policy tactics Lenin said, "Our policy is grouping around the Soviet Republic those capitalist countries which are strangled by imperialism". "The main task we set ourselves is to defeat the exploiters and to win to our side waverers—this is a task of historic significance. Among the waverers are a whole number of bourgeois States which as bourgeois States detest us, but which on the other hand, as oppressed States prefer peace with us". In the Second Congress of Communist Organisations of the East

Lenin said that it was becoming quite clear that the socialist revolution which was impending for the whole world would not be merely the victory of the proletariat of each country over its own bourgeoisie. That would be possible if revolution came easily and swiftly. The imperialists would not allow this. All countries were armed against their domestic Bolshevism and their one thought was how to defeat Bolshevism at home. That was why in every country a civil war was brewing in which the old socialist compromisers were enlisted on the side of the bourgeoisie. Hence the socialist revolution would not be solely, or chiefly, a struggle of the revolutionary proletarians in each country against the bourgeoisie—"no, it will be a struggle of all the imperialist-oppressed colonies and countries, of all dependent countries, against international imperialism. Characterising the approach of the world social revolution in the party programme we adopted last March, we said that the civil war of the working people against the imperialists and exploiters in all the advanced countries is beginning to be combined with national war against international imperialism".

Compare with Lenin's view the Chinese foreign policy formulations and you will be confirmed that Mao is a great Marxist-Leninist and correspondingly there must indeed be something amiss in the Marxist" B.'s line of thinking "In the last analysis", Lenin said, "the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc. account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe". At the time (1923) Lenin propounded it.

Sushil Majumder's
Pre-Shakespearean Dramas
(for general readers, for students)
Price: Rs. 10.00

CHALAMAN PRAKASAN
C/o. Roy Press
144 K, Shyamaprasad Mukherjee Road,
Calcutta-26
Phone: 41-0756

China was a semi-feudal semi-colonial country, and India was a direct colony of the British Crown. Those who are trying to demolish the Chinese thesis that the Third World countries (which include China) constitute the propelling forces, ought to demolish Lenin's thesis first. Did not Lenin "clean forget the class character of those regimes"? The curious fact is not that China considers national liberation movements as the motive force—a glance at the map will confirm the truth of it but that people are counted Marxists who have no conception of class struggle, the relation between class struggle and stages of revolution. Lenin said, "We say account must be taken of the stage reached by the given nation on its way from medievalism to bourgeois democracy, and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy. That is absolutely correct". The Chinese formulation—countries want independence, nations want liberation and people want revolution—neatly sums up the tactical problems of class struggle of the proletariat. The problem of imperialism, Lenin said in his introduction to 'Imperialism and World Economy' by N. Bukharin, is not only a most essential one but was the most essential problem in that realm of economic science which examined the changing forms of capitalism in recent times. But Mr B. seems to be completely innocent of it. What is more, he with the profundity of Ivan the fool, asks, "What are these so-called three parts or three worlds according to the Communist Party of China"? Lenin said that what distinguished imperialism was the rule 'not' of industrial capital,

but of finance capital, the striving to annex not agrarian countries particularly but 'every kind' of country ("imperialism and the Split in Socialism"). The antagonism between America and Europe is a case in point. In his book "Imperialism—The Highest Stage of Capitalism" Lenin cited the example of Portugal, herself an imperialist country, yet very much dependent on Great Britain. If we accept Lenin's analysis of imperialism it is not at all difficult to appreciate China's broad division of the world into three categories.

Mr B. is particularly intrigued when China says that the international situation is excellent. How could it be so when the socialist States are in disarray? We should like to ask him—did the collapse of the powerful Second International prevent Lenin from dreaming of a successful world revolution—the Russian revolution in particular? The objective war-created situation inevitably engendered revolutionary sentiments despite the fact that nine-tenths of leaders of the proletarian masses had gone over to the bourgeoisie. The inexorable growth of economic crisis is the objective basis of the Chinese calculation. The objective situation inevitably engenders revolutionary sentiments despite Ranadives and Rajeswara Raos; it is tempering and enlightening all the finest sons of the people. One cannot tell whether a powerful revolutionary movement will develop immediately but at all events, it is only work in this direction that deserves the name of communist work. The Chinese slogan is one that summarises and directs this work and helps unite those who wish to promote revolutionary struggle taking advantage of the great disorder. On the other hand, using the pretext of an excellent situation (the decisive strength of the socialist camp) the revisionist Soviet leadership draws the conclusion that as a result of the changes in the world balance of forces the common road of the October Revolution has become outmoded and there can be a peaceful transition to socialism. One can see that the so-called 'similarity of approach' is superficial while the difference is fundamental.

Mr B. accuses both China and Russia

for having similar aims of putting their respective national interests over the international working class. If that is so, then both are social-imperialists. Why should Mr B. lament over their disunity?

In point of fact there is absolutely no similarity of approach between Moscow and Peking either in theory or in practice. China's influence in the Third World countries fosters militancy and anti-imperialism while Russia's does the opposite. Take, for example, India and Pakistan. In Karachi and Dacca we saw some of the most militant anti-American demonstrations on Vietnam but not in India. About the Soviet role in India this is what a Western commentator wrote "...the U.S. is still the target of frequent attacks by Indian leftists, in and out of Congress, any attempt to help India in military ways is immediately represented as a derogation of Indian freedom. Here again, however, the rapprochement between the U.S. and the USSR made the problem less acute". (J. D. B. Miller—"The Politics of the Third World", Oxford University Press, London).

The Soviet Union interferes in the internal affairs of the Third World countries, often to the advantage of the ruling party, but China does not. During the anti-Ayub democratic revolt embracing the whole of the then Pakistan Pravda (April 1, 1969, report by A. Filipov) in so many words supported the regime and opposed the revolt but China remained strictly neutral. Ayub at that time tried to utilise the name of China but it drew a sharp disclaimer from the Chinese Embassy to the great embarrassment of Ayub. Reference is made to Ceylon. But what are the facts? On March 6, 1971 a group of youths attacked the U.S. Embassy with petrol bombs and left some leaflets in the vicinity of the embassy. They claimed to be members of the Mao Youth Front. On March 13, 1971 claiming to have discovered a plot but providing no evidence to substantiate the charges, the Government declared a state of emergency. Ceylon has no Mao Youth Front and the Janata Vimukhti Peramuna—the Ceylon communists slandered them as CIA agents—had not planned to initiate a struggle at that point. It

Anti-feudal, anti-imperialist

English Monthly

THE UNITY

Price : 60 paise. Send your writings (typed) to the Editor, The Unity, C/o. Roy Press, 144 K, Shyamaprasad Mukherjee Road, Calcutta-26. The first issue is due on 1st September. Advertisements from progressive forces are solicited.

disclaimed responsibility and stated that this was an act of provocation. She said that agents-provocateurs were there and, following a request she provided an interest-free loan of \$30 million. That is all. The CPM's concern for CIA agents—the Ceylon 'Naxalites'—is very amusing. Revolution in Pakistan, in Ceylon is welcome. But when it comes to supporting and developing armed struggle in India now, the CPM says that would be premature, playing into the hands of the CIA.

Of course China's relation with bourgeois States is sometimes misconstrued by some local militants. But that is not China's fault. Mao said that such compromises did not require the people in the countries of the capitalist world to follow suit and make compromises at once. The people in those countries would continue to wage different struggle in accordance with their different conditions. In any case the success or failure of a revolutionary movement does not mainly depend on the external source. Lenin had no example to go by, no socialist State to help him but all the world to contend with. Yet he won. In fact, Indian revolution has not been hampered so much by either Chinese dogmatism or Russian revisionism as by CPM brand Marxism, a Marxism with its nose buried in friendly agreements with Indira Gandhi, a Marxism which is a throttle on the impatience of the people and an automatic broke on proletarian audacity. Witness the position of CPM strongholds, Kerala and West Bengal vis-a-vis; 'backward' Gujarat and Bihar.

Mr. B. again and again refers to international resolutions. But they explicitly singled out revisionism as the main

danger in the international communist movement. It is downright hypocrisy to omit the main point and the logic that flows from it. Nothing is static in the world. Kautsky and Plekhanov with whom Lenin jointly approved the manifesto of the Basle Congress of 1912, turned into social-imperialists. Lenin's sworn enemies in 1914—within a very short span of two years. Lenin did not lament over it nor did he seek unity with them. He proceeded to establish the inseparable connection between imperialism and revisionism.

Before concluding, it should be made clear that it is not my point that China makes no mistakes. I do not have the absolutist impulse of some critics to find reasons, once a party has been acclaimed for revolutionary consistency, for admiring every bit of it. But then neither should one want to harp on secondary things to show one's objectivity. Yes, China makes mistakes. People have not become saints because the revolution has won the first round. But for every hundred mistakes 10,000 great and heroic deeds, simple and inconspicuous are performed. Even if the contrary were true. Chinese efforts will be great in the eyes of world history because for the first time they are trying to change economic man into a self-less man, the most difficult problem of socialist organisation. Mr. B. has criticised China from a petty bourgeois opportunist standpoint. His error of judgment stems from his error of understanding of the nature of reality, of imperialism. His article makes loud assertions, sometime self-righteous, sometimes lachrymose—but a little probing shows that the article consists of relatively few theses, all of them familiar from previous appearance.

Conspiracy INC.

K. S.

IN the new alphabet that the children in India are learning A is for arrest, B is for bullets and bayonets, C would have been for corruption, but Mrs I.G. has ruled that out of order for being a world phenomenon. So, C is for conspiracy. The triumvirate intriguing against the people comprises the Congress, the CPI and the CPM, its Inspectress-General being an old hand at the game.

The collusion is so famously flourishing an affair that now the CPI is popularly known as the Communist Party of Indira. Vying for honours, the CPM would be glad to be known as the Communist Party of Madame. Now, he would be hailed a genius who can bring out the difference between the two. Efforts at this profound exercise notwithstanding, particularly in their respective party journals, many people believe the two parties to be complementary. And for very good reasons.

The CPI has discovered, among other significant things, that the country has no other problem except the rightist reaction which has made things difficult and messy and polluted our democracy. So, from its proven concern for democracy, it has pledged the Inspectress-General all help in curbing the demon of right (sic) reaction. She has deigned to agree.

The CPM, in its put on war of attrition against its shadow rival the CPI, went one ahead. To it, the main enemy blocking our way to emancipation is left adventurism or extremism. If this could be contained and wiped off, the country would start flowing with the milk and honey of democracy. So, it assured the Inspectress-General, its volunteers would liquidate this threat to our democratic polity. She reportedly nodded assent.

For a proper quid pro quo if the CPM secures her recommendation towards wangling the Kremlin accreditation, it would be just quite proper. As early as 1970, two Swedish writers had disclosed in their book "Face to Face: Fascism and Revolution in India" that

For "Frontier" contact:

WORKERS' BOOKSHOP

81, George Street

Glasgow G.1

England

"the CPM had begun to receive economic support from the Soviet Union". This must make it a "good boy" like the CPI. And, this explains their voluntary service in the cause of democracy placed at the IG's disposal in containing right reaction and left adventurism. All "service" having a price, parliament transformed itself into a pageant specialising in shadow boxing. It stands to reason that parliamentarianism should be "popular".

If, in the circumstances, the common citizen has come to regard the IG as vested with magical powers, it is understandable. It was her magic wand of 'constitutionalism' that made the Kerala ministry fifteen years ago disappear into nothingness. In Chile the same trick was performed with the same effect, but at what a bloody cost! So, does she not deserve gratitude of all genuine democrats for having performed the miracle in a non-violent manner? The Chilean junta, on this showing, is a pack of boors. The IG is more sensitive and more sophisticated. It is this gratitude of the communist gallants that has evolutionistically flowered into camaraderie.

If, in this context, one is tempted to hail the return of the red rose, it would be quite compatible with Marx, who, in a different matter, had exclaimed in Latin: *Hic rhodus, hic salta* (Here is the rose, dance here), there being no doubt as to who is the rose and who the dancers.

With this conspiracy against the people continuing, we make nothing of the umpteen Watergates gnawing at our nation's entrails. There too we are in good company. Senator L. P. Weicker Jr, a Republican member of the Senate Watergate Committee, charged the Nixon administration with 370 abuses of law. The U.S. being a super nation it must be having 370 instead of 365 days in its calendar. A scandal a day makes U.S. democracy click and stay. In our case we need many scandals a day to make our democracy work and pay. That is the golden way of all democracies.

Government Mafia

What is more relevant in Senator Weicker's indictment is, strangely or,

more aptly?) wholly applicable to our situation: "The net result of the White House's 'counterfeit' interpretation of the government, politics and constitution was that we almost lost America—not to subversives, terrorists or extremists of the streets but to subversives, terrorists and extremists of the White House". In all honesty, let us ask ourselves whether we have not lost India to the terrorists and subversives of the North and South Blocks headed by a ruthless IG. Our administration, polity, and constitution have been most 'concertedly' subverted by the ruling party, collaborators hissing approval from the wings.

Where do we go from here? "The more adept the African representatives became at parliamentering the more remote they became from their own people"; says Odinga, the former Vice-President of Kenya's ruling party, KANU, in his autobiography "Not Yet Uhuru". Further, "The civil service could frustrate the best plans of the best intentioned governments. The civil service resists change, even sabotages change". This behaviour of the politicians and the bureaucracy was not only Kenya's experience. It was common to all ex-colonies which were nettled with the same frustrations. In Kenya, Mr Bilad Kaggia was forced out of the Cabinet because he took the problem of the landless a little more seriously than was safe for the corrupt bureaucrats and politicians hoarding wealth and amassing property at the expense of the poor. Luckily, we have had no Kaggias in our State or Central governments. Odinga shared the same fate for having been critical of Kenyatta's acquisition of large farms. But Odinga had been consistently championing the cause of the poor come what may: Therefore, let us hear him on the Kenyan scene bearing on our problems: "The stage following on independence is the most dangerous... there has been a slide back into complacency after the first victory over external control and pressure, and national governments have left too much in their countries unchanged, have not built for effective independence by transferring power and control to the authentic forces and support of the national revolution and have forgotten that the internal ele-

ments of exploitation are closely related to reactionary external pressures". In the Indian context how internal exploitation is towed to external pressures needs no expiation here.

What had Odinga to say of one-party government in a democracy? "But a one-party government could be democratic only if the mass of the people were associated with policy-making at all levels, if the people were drawn into the running of the party, if national issues were discussed in the branches, at public meetings, at conferences, in our newspapers, among the women and the youth; if careful thought was given to the role of the party in relation to the administrator so that civil servants trained in pre-colonial attitudes could not, in the day-to-day running of the country, undo the best plans made by the political leadership".

The way wheat take-over was sabotaged by the bureaucracy in India last year, the regularity with which it has committed violations of the law, grabbed lands etc. and got away with it, the way our new aristocracy of ministers live in style, and the way the Congress has been reduced to an appendage of the government are too well known to bear repetition. How close to our own situation is Odinga's statement that a self-entrenched class of politician-businessmen is growing up in the cities, and in the countryside a large landowning class, and the government is isolated from the people, because government and wealth are in the hands of an elite that is taking power to itself and will plunge the country into pain and tragedy. The jobless, the frustrated, the peasants starving on the land, will endure much hardship, but how much more and for how long?

We need to ask the same questions, for the ruling party and its cohorts—the triad of conspirators—are plunging the country into pain and tragedy. Africa is nearest to us, and not only geographically. This would attest the pertinence of studying similar problems from some of the same angles.

Mr Odinga Odinga, who is not a communist, said after his visit to China in 1963 that it was impossible not to be impressed with life in China. "So many

of the problems of poverty and illiteracy were those of our people, and these problems were being overcome at an impressive rate". Overnight he was made into a communist by the kept press.

But then, has China non-violence and democracy as we have, or the daily Watergates as the other great democracy? Not for nothing in the neo-colonialist phase of exploitation by the comprador elite in Africa capitalism was given the name of "African socialism". The Indian variant of the fraud was designated "the socialistic pattern".

When the enemies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America remain united and their strategies of rapine and repression are constant it is imperative for the oppressed of the world to unite in their challenge to their oppressors and learn from each other in their wars of liberation, which will have to be waged simultaneously on all fronts—cultural, political and military. That the national conspirators are a part of, and under the active control and guidance of, the international conspirators known as imperialists and social imperialists must be clear to the peoples of the Third World from their own experience with no ideology supervening by way of enlightenment. Those who force them to fight for reordering their resources and lives cry wolf at the sight of experience having been transformed into an ideology giving content and direction to their aspirations and efforts. In determining the quality of their life and shaping their destiny they need not feel unduly hurt and embarrassed when dubbed as communists by their enemies. It is a time-worn ploy of the conspirators external and internal. The bluff can be called. This will weaken the enemy and guarantee victory for the forces of revolution and liberation all around.

For Frontier contact :

BANKURA NEWSPAPER

AGENCY,

Lokepur,

P.O. & Dist. Bankura.

AUGUST 3, 1974

The Press

The Bihar Scene

PATRAKAR

PREDICTABLY enough, the Bihar Government has not resumed advertising in "Searchlight" and "Pradeep" which were delisted some time ago without ascribing any reason. Instead it has tried to show off as if it did not care for the matter at all—despite the all-out opposition of the entire Fourth Estate. This is, of course, in keeping with the stiff attitude adopted by it against the movement for Assembly dissolution. "Searchlight" and "Pradeep" are now identified with the 'dissolution lobby'.

Recently the State Government, as if to make a mockery of the entire opposition, further pampered a former assistant editor of "Searchlight" whose nomination to the Food Advisory Committee had earlier led to a confrontation with the editor of the paper. (For further details see the issue dated June 8.) The assistant editor has been nominated to the Vidhan Parishad and given a top job as the head of the newly—and perhaps especially too—formed Department of Publicity. He has resigned from his "Searchlight" job and is posing as a martyr for the cause of Press freedom—from big business houses. After putting in decades of service in the Birla daily he has discovered now, all of a sudden, that the paper was nothing but a mouthpiece of the Birlas; its only job was to safeguard their interest. In his rather lengthy resignation letter, he has accused the editor for "dancing at the dictates of the owners of the papers". He says that the editor got the job only because of his anti-labour act of splitting the working journalists' movement; he had formed the National Union of Journalists.

Some portions of his letter to the editor are very revealing—and amusing too if we take into account that as a leader-writer the assistant editor was a party to all this: "At a time when Birlas believed that Chief Minister

Ghafoor was useful for them you used to praise him in the columns of "Searchlight". When Birlas failed to make it up with Ghafoor, you started a vindictive campaign against him and tried to defame him through cooked-up news... You've never written against the malpractices of the sugar-mills because of Birlas' interest in them".

The letter-writer could afford this melodrama because he belongs to the powerful L. N. Mishra lobby. (Therein lies the secret of his nomination to the Food Advisory Committee.)

Most of the Patna correspondents, with a few respectable exceptions, are on the payroll of Mr Mishra. One was astonished to see correspondents of well-known dailies extending silly arguments in favour of the Union Minister when news of his involvement in the Kosi scandal was hot in the air.

Mr Mishra is known to be an old-timer in the game of press patronisation. In New Delhi he maintains many admirers in the Fourth Estate. This set created a ludicrous situation once when about a dozen 'specials' arrived at a party at Mishra's dressed in the same attire—almost a uniform. It was revealed later that the Railway Minister had presented suit-lengths of the same material and design to all his 'favourite' correspondents. However, every one was under the impression that he was the sole recipient of the Minister's favours. And so they, like a concubine eager to please her master, arrived at the party in the uniform suit.

The most glaring instance of the Mishra lobby's influence came to light during the coverage of the shooting outrage on JP's procession on June 5. Besides PTI and Jana Sangh's "Motherland", none reported that the Indira Brigade men were 'responsible' for it. The entire press corps maintained unnecessary restraint. They could have, like PTI, easily reported the police version which clearly put the Indira Brigade in the dock. However, most of the correspondents just said that "the flat from which the shots were fired was allegedly under the occupation of the self-styled Indira Brigade". Not only this, many correspondents, especially those of UNI, "Hindustan Times" and "Hindu", tried

to minimise the incident in their stories. In such a situation, PTI—and its Patna bureau chief—certainly deserve kudos for the fearless coverage.

The reason for restraint that weighed with the others was that the brigade is patronised by L. N. Mishra's brother, Jagannath Mishra.

Among local papers, "Searchlight" came out boldly, for obvious reasons, while its rival "Indian Nation", though not a supporter of the dissolution movement, did not lag behind. Reason: it is opposed to the Mishras.

Curiously, the opposition is not on political grounds but on narrow caste considerations. The newspaper group, biggest in Bihar, belongs to Darbhanga Raj and its sole motto is to safeguard the interests of the Brahmins of Mithila. Everyone, down from a peon up to the chief editor in the concern, is a Maithil Brahmin. Now, Mr Mishra is not a Maithil—he is sort of an outsider—but he has, through money power, 'invaded' Mithila and confronted, defeated and humiliated the 'pure' local leaders like Hari Nath Mishra, Nagendra Jha and others. Therein lay the reason for the "Indian Nation's" opposition.

No wonder, in such a situation the State has seen a mushroom growth of newspapers catering exclusively to the current movement. Some half-a-dozen evening dailies have come into being at Patna alone. And almost every town in the State has seen the advent of some weekly or fortnightly. Many of the older journals are also supporting the movement despite the official threat of withholding government ads. This is a new trend in a State hereto monopolised by the 'feudal', 'sugar' and 'tender notices' press.

For Frontier contact

MANITHAN,

No. 2, Mangesh Street,

T. Nagar,

Madras - 17.

American Research On Bengali Nationalism

BENYO GHOSE

ALONG with science and technology, there has been a phenomenal growth of sociology and research in the Humanities in America after the Second World War, with emphasis on historical and socio-anthropological studies of underdeveloped and developing countries in South Asia. India was obviously the most important country in this region, and the eastern part of it, including Bengal, was selected as one of the most suitable fields for research projects. This particular research programme was sponsored at a time when, after the emergence of the People's Republic of China, the political and moral responsibility of containing social revolution in this region of Asia devolved on America, as the supreme leader of the imperialist nations. Some of our universities and research institutions, and a large number of scholars, participated in this Indo-American research boom, during the 1950s and 1960s. A part of America's massive economic aid flowed through diverse channels to the educational and cultural fields. There was uninterrupted inflow of American scholars in India, as there was a corresponding outflow of Indian scholars to America. One of the most favourite fields for furrowing by the former, during this period, was the social, political and cultural history of Bengal in the 18th and 19th centuries. The crop of research, though not rich in quality, is fairly large in quantity and variety. The question of quality does not arise, simply because it is not possible for any foreign scholar, without even a working knowledge of local languages, which most of the American scholars do not have, to do any kind of serious research, within a period of one or two years, with the help of local assistants and agents, interpreters, interviews, cocktail parties, and such technical gadgets as microfilms, photostats, tape-recording etc. But the reviewer knows from his personal contact with a fairly good number of American scholars that this has been the principal way of their doing research in

Bengal, on subjects ranging from Vaisnavism to Bepinchandra Pal, and from positivism to 19th century peasant risings. It is of course possible to collect a fairly large quantity of material quickly by this process, which the American scholars can often admirably do. But the finished product, in book form, of this style of research, generally becomes insipid, pompous and perfunctory. Leonard A. Gordon's "Bengal: The Nationalist Movement, 1876-1940"* has many faults of this style of research. There are occasional flashes of Gordon's perceptive mind in the analysis of political personalities and historical situations. But the chief disappointment of his work is that it tails off in a most unsatisfactory manner when it is about to become interesting. Gordon's language is also faulty, often involuted and schoolboyish. This may be due to his distorted sense of historiography, which is eclectic, with loosely scattered sociological cliches.

Declining Role

Gordon states in the Preface that "the declining role of Hindu Bengalis in Indian nationalist politics and their consequent revolts are major themes" of his book. He has developed these themes by tracing "the changing place of Bengal and the growth of nationalism over three generations from the 1870s to 1940", concentrating mainly on "types of leadership and political organisation and political strategy, case studies of leadership and Bengali self-imagery". In the Prologue he sets out to analyse "Trends in Bengal: 1876-1904". He says that "Calcutta was an Indian and Bengali as well as a European city, and concentrated the urban traditions of pre-British Bengal", and then "Calcutta was the arena in which those Bengalis who sought fame, fortune, and solid accomplishment, had to climb the ropes of opportunity". About Bengal he says

* Manohar Book Service, Delhi-6; Indian edition 1974; Rs. 60.

that the zemindars "whose landholding rights were to some extent a British creation, were heirs to the habit of authority descending from the Bengali rajahs of earlier days. The peasant population, scattered, divided, and exploited, was generally obedient to the Bengali zemindars and to the district officials of the Raj". With a bold step forward, the author then tries to indicate "the pattern of social, economic, and political organisation and change" in Bengal, by following the "lead of anthropologists and social historians", although he does not mention who these blessed creatures are. Following their 'lead' he makes these strange discoveries: "the operative social and political unit for rural Bengalis was one which has been called 'microregion' or 'samaj'"; "the village or 'gram' was generally not an effectively coherent unit in most spheres of life"; the concept of the 'bhadralok' "does not correlate closely enough with economic indicators"; "among the non-martial races the English gave the Bengalis a special place of scorn"; "the ICS, the bar, and the academic profession seem to have been popular and available to the most successful (graduates). These choices were related to the establishment of Calcutta University in the late 1850s" (no date could be given); "By the late nineteenth century, at least in the writings of Tagore and urban educated Bengalis, the term 'desh' was often used to refer either to Bengal or to India. . . One informant has said (who is a 'Dr' and a 'careful student of Bengali usage', according to the author) that after about 1905, the term 'desh' frequently meant Bengal".

For Frontier contact

BANI PRAKASH,

Panbazar,

Gauhati-1,

Assam.

AUGUST 3, 1974

"Case Studies"

With this secondhand knowledge of Bengal's social structure and history, Gordon proceeds to trace the growth of nationalist politics in Bengal over three generations. His "case studies of leadership" centre round Romesh Dutt and Ameer Ali in the first generation (1876-1904), Aurobindo Ghose in the second generation (1905-1917), and C. R. Das and Subhas Bose in the third generation (1917-1940). Leaving aside the disputable question of the representative character of 'ideologues', selected by the author for the three generations, it may be said that the studies based on the standard primary and secondary sources, contain very little that is new or fresh. The thread of analysis, if there is any, is often lost in the chaotic assemblage of facts, and the method of analysis, being largely simplistic, leads him to disastrous conclusions. Some of these conclusions, set forth in the last chapter, are: Although "non-violence became the official nationalist credo, revolutionaries and important leaders sympathetic to the use of violence, such as Subhas Bose, flourished in Bengal". This was the reason why the Bengalis were getting isolated from the mainstream of the Indian nationalist movement. "Most high-caste Hindus in Bengal are Shaktas or have been heavily influenced by Shaktism. . ." We do not know whether this piece of information was supplied to the author by his local D.Phil informants. "Some Bengali leaders, including Aurobindo Ghose, M. N. Roy, Subhas Bose, and less famous revolutionaries, would have agreed that the Bengalis were strong and then, somehow, became weak. In order to regain the lost strength. . . they argued. . . that all means were permissible. This would fit in with their Shakta tradition. . . and with Bengali traditions of violence". Then the inevitable conclusion emerges: "West Bengal has been torn by violence during the past few years as Marxist revolutionaries or Naxalites started a campaign of violence for which they themselves (as well as others) have had to pay dearly. . .". Possibly the clue to the rise of Naxalite violence is to be

sought, according to the author, in the Shakta background of revolutionaries like Aurobindo Ghose, M. N. Roy, Subhas Bose and others, and in the Bengali tradition of violence. There is a continuity of the cult of Shaktism in the politics of violence including Naxalism, in Bengal today, and that is why the role of Hindu Bengalis has declined in the nationalist politics in India, the ideal of which is non-violence. This is the result of Gordon's research in India on the nationalist movement in Bengal, 1876-1940, sponsored by the Foreign Area Fellowship Programme of America, and supported by the Southern Asian Institute, which "seeks a deeper knowledge of that vast and tumultuous area stretching from Pakistan in the west to Indonesia and the Philippines in the east".

For Frontier contact

M. VEERAMALLIAH,

Station Road,

Warangal-2,

Andhra Pradesh.

১লা অক্টোবর প্রকাশিত হচ্ছে

Stories of Long March-এর অল্পবাদ

লং মার্চের কাহিনী

অল্পবাদ করেছেন : বিজন বিহারী পুরকায়স্থ

মূল্য : ৭.৫০

প্রাপ্তিস্থান :

বুকমাক

C/o অগ্রণী বুক ক্লাব

এ-১, কলেজ ষ্ট্রীট মার্কেট

কলিকাতা-১২

A Veteran Artist

SANDIP SARKAR

AN exhibition of paintings of Gopal Ghose at the Birla Academy from July 9 to July 21 included some marvelous pastels that captured nature in its various moods. Particularly the fast changing sky, the gay exquisite flowers, sunlit wilderness, hills and valleys. It was evident that his powers had not left him and that he can still be thrilled by landscapes. He can still make us forget his skills.

In his water-colours too, mountains, the lonely moon, trees, birds, flowers and forlorn boats create an atmosphere that forces the viewer to forget time and place. Although he is not as good in using water-colours as pastels, he can still use his transparent and opaque colours superbly.

The exhibition had a retrospective character—a few old works were shown besides new ones. This was a help rather than a hindrance in understanding his personality as a painter. However, he has childishly tried his hand in oil and failed miserably.

Ancient Australians

Recently there was an exhibition of art and craft of the Most Ancient Australians at the Academy. I personally hate such original learned words as aboriginal. There were so many delightful things on view helping us to understand at some depth what the stone age was like and how the crisis of facing the modern world proves too much for people who are basically food-gatherers and hunters: the totem objects, bark painting, wood carving, spears, boomerangs, shields, simple musical instruments, bags, baskets, winnowing fan-cum-baby-carrier, fishing nets, storytellers' stones which have the main points of the story jotted down in symbols, decorated ancestral bone containers made of wood and objects like belts and boots made for the civilised white man who grabbed the land of the tribal.

There seems no demarcation line between art and craft and everything is functional and yet beautifully made.

The beautiful photographs and maps helped to recreate the atmosphere in which these tribes live and one came away with nothing but admiration.

Of particular interest were the bark paintings. The artist seems not to be restricted by the material which consists of bark, a few essential colours, simple

brushes. The simplification of form and intricate linear designs inside figures and the rude composition create an impact. The primitive stylisation is something very artistically valid. One can even understand the aesthetic principle without the aid of the myths the artist has in mind.

Clippings

Liberated Zone In Saigon Prison

Poulo Condor is a dreaded island-prison in South Vietnam where the Thieu regime incarcerates long-term political prisoners.

The conditions there and in the Saigon prisons generally are an outrage. In the midst of the bestial repression and deprivation at Poulo Condor, however, there exists a "liberated zone", where the prisoners' defiance has made the authorities tremble. The following is an extract from an article by Nguyen Khac Vien, director of the review, "Vietnamese Studies" in Hanoi.

"Imagine hundreds, sometimes as many as a thousand prisoners shouting from all the cells: 'Down with the torturers! Don't torture the wounded! We want rice that isn't rotten! We want medication!' And this for hours and hours. The guards went crazy, the overseers didn't know what to do, their beatings had no effect. Naturally we had our organization, our leaders, our liaison network for launching a campaign, formulating the slogans, perfecting our strategy. We had to know just how far to push an offensive and when to hold up the movement when some demands were satisfied.

"We never staged hunger strikes by ourselves, individually. But rather by the tens, by the hundreds, sometimes the whole prison. We did not even accept liquids. Sometimes they tried to unclench our teeth to introduce water or soup, to make us give up, to tempt us. We clenched our teeth tighter. This is what frightened them: this stubborn will power not of an individual but of a whole collectivity ready to die, if necessary, for a single one of our demands. From time to time they liqui-

dated one or another individual whom they judged dangerous, or they let a sick or wounded man die, or even killed him. But to let a whole prison die? That would arouse opinion; their superiors would call them on the carpet, because their responsibility is not to kill the prisoners, but to 'convert' them.

"Did you know that there is a liberated zone inside Poulo Condor? Of course, we were still behind the walls and the barbed wire but the torturers no longer dared to penetrate this sector. The rules of the camp, we hardly paid attention to them there: we held our meetings, we openly organized our courses of cultural and political education. Men and women reduced to skeletons, some crippled, some bleeding from the head, others from the back, the result of beatings by the guards. Each weighed hardly a hundred pounds. Not so much as a stick for weapons. Yet they defeated an army of brutes. Many died in the course of the battle but the others—how did they manage to survive? The mystery of how man resists and overcomes, everything when the fire of liberty burns within him.

"Liberty, culture. A prisoner from Pleiku told how we made pens out of scraps of barbed wire, blackboards and notebooks out of scraps of stone and wood and old newspapers. Thus the more educated gave geometry lessons to the others. The guards confiscated our materials, after beating us, naturally. We made new ones. This time we engaged them in direct battle, openly demanding the right to carry on education. Once again, all the cells displayed their readiness to risk their lives in order to

keep pens, blackboards, notebooks. The authorities gave in. At the end we had organized courses in math, literature and history; we even staged examinations, and a good many of our comrades, illiterate or nearly so when they arrived, little by little got an education.

"We collected scraps of handkerchief and of shirts; ill prisoners sneaked us their pills that made a yellow dye, we scraped the walls for red, rather ochre paint, and blue, and thus we made up flags of the National Liberation Front. And also banners, on which we wrote: 'Long live the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the NLF! Implement the Paris accords! We demand a policy of national concord! Down with the Thieu dictatorship!' They wanted to confiscate them. We told them right away: 'It will be a fight to the death'. They gave in. On the trucks that carried us out they wanted to hang the flags of the Thieu regime. We refused; again they gave in. They wanted to make the trucks pass under arches where the Thieu flags flew; we refused, they gave in. They passed out new clothes for our return but we threw them away and stayed in our rags. Then we crossed the Thach Han river and were free.

"We returned triumphant".

(From the Guardian, New York)

Letters

Hot Air Indeed

Film criticism is never beyond debate,—it cannot be. Individual reviewers judge films according to their own tastes and sensibilities. Disagreement between persons on matters of art is an accepted fact.

Our concern is not about the individual likes and dislikes of critics. But we must protest against the vicious attitude of the critics of Ananda Bazar Patrika, Hindusthan Standard and Desh towards Garm Hava. We are dismayed by the narrow communal viewpoint they have adopted in reviewing the film.

We believe that the makers of Garm Hava have tried, with great honesty and earnestness to depict the social picture of India's largest minority community

and have done this with an authenticity which is important to every right-thinking, socially conscious person. We believe that the film-makers wanted to jolt the people of our country out of their complacency and to imbue them with a sense of social responsibility.

But these reviewers have evaded this aspect of the film altogether and have viewed it through glasses tainted with communalism. They have tried to say, in many ways, that Garm Hava is a communal film. What they have not been able to hide in doing this is their own attempt to keep alive the fires of communalism.

We are convinced that the people will not be misled by this kind of calumny, that these so-called reviewers will be universally condemned for their views.

As we get ready to circulate this statement we see yet another comment made on Garm Hava appearing in Amrita Bazar Patrika. The comment, like the three others, expresses the same narrow communal viewpoint with equal vehemence. All this is incredible, disheartening, distasteful.

Sd/-

Mrinal Sen, Utpal Dutt, Soumitra Chatterjee, Sekhar Chatterjee, Anup Kumar, Subhendu Chatterjee, Dhritiman Chatterjee, Saroj Dey, Mriganka Sekhar Ray, Dipankar Dey, Manu Sen, J. D. Irani, Samit Bhanja, Sova Sen, Gita Sen, Jayasri Roy, Maitrayi Devi, Gouri Ayub Dutta, Ashok Mitra, Mohit Chattopadhyaya, Anal Gupta, Tapas Sen, Hrisikesh Mukherjee, Sadhana Roy Chaudhuri, Samar Sen, Robi Sen, Jochon Dastidar.

A Correction

As a member of the Central Organising Committee of the CPI(ML), I feel it necessary to correct some wrong statements made in the article "On the statement of the Central Organising Committee of the CPI(ML)" (Frontier, July 20, 1974). The article says: "The present document (the statement of the COC) limits itself to the aim of mobilising the party on the line accepted until the death of Comrade Charu Mazumdar". Nothing

can be farther from the truth. Far from upholding the tactical line the Party followed from about 1969 to the death of Comrade Mazumdar "the line accepted by the party Congress" the COC placed before the cadres and people an alternative line which is basically different. One should not mistake the strategy for tactics; the COC held that the strategy not the tactical line adopted at this phase, was broadly correct. The Political-Organisational Report accepted at the Party Congress stated as "the correct thesis" the theory that "the annihilation of the class enemy is the higher form of class struggle and the beginning of guerilla war" and declared that "The class struggle, i.e., this battle of annihilation, can solve all the problems facing us and lead the struggle to a higher plane, raise the political consciousness of the people to a higher stage, create conditions for the emergence of a new type of man, develop the people's army and can thus ensure the formation of a permanent base area". The COC held that the battle of annihilation of class enemies, carried out by secret squads of militants, cannot solve our problems nor can it serve as the beginning of guerilla war. That is why the COC considered it necessary "to participate in and lead mass struggles of the people on all fronts—economic, political and cultural—and establish the Party's political leadership over mass organisations with a view to organising armed struggles of the peasantry on the basis of an Agrarian Programme and for building up base areas in the countryside". This method of strengthening the Party, establishing the Party's leadership over the people, developing armed struggles of the peasantry, building up the people's armed forces and rural base areas is fundamentally different from the method propagated and practised at a certain phase that ended with the death of Comrade Mazumdar. While the method defined by the COC depends for its success on the masses of people led by the Party, the earlier method relied mainly on the vanguard.

The article wrongly observes: "Comrade Charu Mazumdar referred to this aspect (the need for participating in

economic struggle) in his last article. Therefore, the COC made a reference to this aspect and it was included in the third task". In the autumn of 1971, quite a long time before Comrade Mazumdar wrote his last article, the Bengal State Committee of the Party had issued the call for seizure of the landlords' crops. Comrade Mazumdar's article does not refer to the necessity for mass organizations without which no mass struggle can be conducted. So when the COC undertook the task of participating in and leading mass struggles on all fronts and of establishing the Party's leadership over mass organizations, no member of the COC even mentioned Comrade Mazumdar's writing as it had no relevance to the method that the COC was defining.

The COC's statement does not state, nor does it imply, nor did the COC intend it to imply, that, as a form of struggle, annihilation of class enemies should be combined with other forms of struggle. The interpretation that the COC's statement does imply this is wrong and unauthorised.

We expect comrades not to be misled by the "explanation" offered by "a member of the Central Committee" (our Party organisation has no Central Committee at present), whose identity is not known to us.

Suniti Kumar Ghosh
Member, COC (CPI-ML)

On Unification

The unanimous decision (Frontier, July 13, 1974) of two CPI (ML) factions in West Bengal for the unification of the party and revolutionary forces in the country is an important step in the right direction.

The West Bengal comrades have analysed the merits and demerits of the CPI (ML) and correctly stated that the formation of the party, and the capture of the revolutionary centre by Indian revolutionaries ousting the revisionists is a qualitative leap. While the bulk of the leadership of the party betrayed the cause of revolution, only cadres at the State and mainly the district level were faced with the task of heading the move-

ment. The 9th Party Congress was held in a critical situation and important decisions were taken that have to be analysed and reviewed in the light of our past experiences.

The West Bengal comrades have pinpointed left-sectarian deviation as the main cause of the setback. Sectarianism of either type haunted the communist movement for a pretty long time.

Ours is a vast country with a long heritage and unique features of its own, like the caste system, and equally powerful nationalities with their own languages and culture which are generally reflected in the political and ideological fields. The application of Marxism-Leninism to Indian conditions has proved to be a testing task. The Indian Marxist-Leninists have to continue their efforts to meet this challenge establishing the hegemony of the working class in rural areas in cooperation with the poor and the landless.

All those who believe in Marxism-Leninism Mao Tse-tung Thought, whatever may be their difference on certain questions of policy, accept, even today, Naxalbari as a turning point in the history of the revolutionary movement in the country. The Naxalbari peasant struggle not only helped to intensify the ideological struggle against modern revisionism and its Indian variant but also inspired and released a new wave of peasant armed struggles in the country such as Srikakulam, Lakhimpur Kheri, Mushari etc., during 1967-68 and 1968-69. Marxist-Leninists have to concretely analyse the causes of the setback of these peasant struggles which reached the stage of armed struggle, so as to assess the essence of the deviation which had taken a left-sectarian form. The West Bengal comrades have correctly upheld the need to continue the ideological struggle for a correct line in the united framework and the possibility of keeping all the differences at the level of inner-party struggle among Marxist-Leninists.

It is very correct to remind us that from the very beginning one of the defects of the CPI (ML) was that it could not unite different revolutionary groups though it was possible to do so. It is also correct to suggest the ways

and means of rectifying this defect.

I hope the Marxist-Leninists will ask the central leaders to work for uniting and rebuilding the party and for shunning sectarianism of all shades. It is for the central committee comrades to start discussions among themselves and initiate the process of unification and discharge their full responsibility to the party and the people. No doubt, a self-critical attitude towards mistakes on the part of leading comrades not only inspires confidence in themselves but also instils the same spirit among the party ranks.

Kolla Venkaiah
Visakhapatnam

Ordinances

When one is up against a brick wall, instead of demolishing it, one attempts to jump over it or skirt it by some other devious means. The Indian Government, faced with the wall of inflation in the path of feudo-capitalism has done just that. The root of inflation, the foundation of the wall, goes unscathed; the wall continues its dour existence while our regime attempts its skirting techniques. For what else is the ordinance of wage impounding if not a kind of escapism? And nobody knows this better than our present rulers. To forgive them for they know not what they do is not possible for they know and know full well. They know the futility of their ordinances to the wage earner and the serf. They know the futility of pitting their puny ordinances against the merry progress of prices. They know all. But they have got to do something. Anything to seek a justification for their existence and give a fresh lease to their waning lives. And so, amid the smug expressions of their benefactors, the cherubic smiles of their patrons to whom ordinances are just pebbles in their path, to be strictly ignored, they promulgate further perils to the commoner in the guise of a sheepish ordinance concealing a wolf which this same commoner can scarcely keep away from his door. In the guise of another milestone on the road to egalitarianism! (sic).

M. Fernandes
Bombay

FRONTIER

61, MOTT LANE, CALCUTTA-13

Subscription Rates

INLAND

One Year : Rs. 22.00 Six Months Rs. 11.00

Three Years: Rs. 60.00. Five Years: Rs. 100.00

By Surface Mail

* All countries : 6 dollars

Foreign AIR MAIL Rates (One Year)

America : 18.50 dollars

Europe : 15.00 dollars

The Netherlands : 18.50 dollars

Asia : 13.00 dollars

Please supply FRONTIER for

Six Months/One Year/Three Years/Five Years

I am sending Rs.....

by cheque/money order*

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Signature

* Cheques should be drawn in favour of *Frontier*

ack
niting
shun-
is
es to
and
and
the
self-
the
ins-
also
party
caiah
tnam
wall,
mpts
other
nent,
path
that.
n of
con-
egime
For
im-
ism?
our
for
pos-
well.
nan-
serf.
heir
pro-
But
hing
ence
ning
res-
abic
ordi-
to
fur-
guise
g a
can
In
the
des
bay
974

Regd. WB/CC-90

Frontier

August 3, 1974

Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers of India under R.N.16516/68