

# frontier

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## AREA OF DARKNESS

**T**HE puja and culture-loving babus, of Calcutta are perhaps waiting for a man like J. P. Narayan to lead them, in a silent procession, from Raja Subodh Mullick Square via Lenin Sarani to a few hundred yards away from Raj Bhavan, to end their troubles. The CP (M) top notch, making many resolutions in their politbureau and central committee, have lost their all-India stature and are falling back (on the affluent CPI and wistfully looking forward to recognition by Russia. Their Lenin Sarani marches up to Raj Bhavan have had little impact so far. What they and their allies plan to do on May 3 and May 7 will not scare much the Government, whatever the degree of response to their moves. As things are, there cannot be business as usual in Calcutta these days and trade and business will not mind closure for a day. People will take it as something is better than nothing.

What is happening in Calcutta? One can call it creeping paralysis or metastases—a malignant tumour spreading all over. The power cuts are merciless. And when power is on it is like oxygen being administered to a hopeless case. All industries, big or small, are finding it impossible to function and 50 per cent of the work force has already been laid off. During load-shedding, the telephones do not work for hours. Water supply is minimum. Hospitals are affected. With no lights in the evening, students are in a wilderness. The nights are spasmodic. It is like fate knocking at the crumbling door of a house mortgaged to pimps. The businessmen from Rajasthan and their Bengali agents must be cursing themselves for being unable to sell spurious electricity on the blackmarket.

Who is responsible for the power crisis? The ministers, politicians, administrators, engineers, and all. There has been no maintenance; no spare parts have been allowed to be imported. In the meantime the desire for quick money has overtaken all. Money moves everything—without money coal and oil and men will not move. There is a great deal of humbug about everything, including indigenous power stations like Santaldih. And now the tall Chief Minister of West Bengal is looking for an instant thermal power station to be imported from anywhere, leading to speculation in the press whether the plant, including the boiler, can be airlifted.

Meanwhile, the in-fighting in the West Bengal Congress goes on and on, to the delight of the left adversaries. The MLAs, busy making money, have no time to think of the people they 'represent'. How can products of rigged elections and black money think of the voters? West Bengal is no Gujarat yet. Whatever be the analysis of the Gujarat movement, now that the prices there are higher than ever, the stir did succeed in scoring the point that people returned in so-called democratic elections with the help of tainted money are corrupt and should be sacked. If such a movement succeeds in Bihar and elsewhere it will serve some purpose.

Meanwhile, unemployment is getting so widespread that young men swearing by Indira Gandhi gate-crash, sometimes with arms, into new offices, insisting that the jobs must go to the sons of the locality. Teachers, students, power and rail workers are restless. Prices are still rising sharply. Determined to hold the price line, the Government has, without batting an eyelid, raised the prices of Asian luxuries like rice, wheat, bread, cotton, textiles, medicines, kerosene, edible oils, oil, drugs and what not. It will now be the turn of salt. People seem to have little faith in elections and the elected. They have come to realise, with bewilderment, that our rulers are, in fact, followers of Confucius who said that great men should lie and not practise what they preach.

When Charu Mazumdar held out 1975 as the year of liberation, many people thought him mad. But the objective situation today—the great disorder the Chinese speak of—shows that the deepening crisis could bring about a climactic turn if there is a party with the right grip over the Indian reality. Our Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries, busy debating whether Lin Piao was right or a double-dealer, should wake up. It is later than they think.

## Preparation In Bihar

The ruling party and its unfailing ally, the CPI, are scared of the spectre of fascism haunting this country. Having killed the Congress Ministry and the Congress-dominated Assembly of Gujarat, the spectre is said to have taken a long, long stride to Bihar to repeat the performance. As democracy's keeper, the ruling party has vowed not to yield in Bihar; which may well mean that it will not relent before blood has been spilled in Bihar on the same scale as in Gujarat. The process has already started. Of the killed in police firing in Gaya, two were children, who must have been arch-fascists bent on capturing power by inciting the people to violence. The Union Home Minister has denied in Parliament that the law-enforcing authority in Gaya was ordered to shoot at sight anyone violating the curfew, what the benign Government had done instead was to warn the people that breakers of curfew might be shot. Granted—for no reason whatever—that the difference between the two is more than semantic, is there any law that authorises the Government to forfeit the life of a curfew-breaker? Not many weeks ago, the Gujarat High Court had ruled that the Police Commissioner of Ahmedabad had no authority to ask his men to shoot curfew-breakers. Maybe the judge was not committed to socialism and democracy and so the Government has no use for his verdict.

The current lull in Bihar does not mean that the agitation has tapered off. The demands for the dismissal of the Congress Ministry, dissolution of the State Assembly, and imposition of President's rule have not been given up. Whether President's rule, which is Congress rule by proxy, will be any better is a question. Yet the absence of an alternative to the Congress makes the demand for President's rule an imperative. The Congress is trying to utilise this interregnum to put its own house in order

and make a show of accommodation to the student agitators. But its efforts have created a bizarre situation in which one is not sure that a Ministry exists in Bihar. Chief Minister Ghafoor is shuttling between Patna and New Delhi in a back-breaking endeavour to propitiate the gods in the capital and their angels in the State. The move to include the Union Defence Minister's son in the Ministry to ensure the support of his group to the pruned Ministry has upset Mr Jagjivan Ram is angry, and his anger cannot be ignored, with the Presidential election barely three months away. Whether Mr Ghafoor had taken counsel with the Railway Minister or not, the relations between the two Bihar stalwarts in the Union Cabinet have been further strained which will make for anything but harmony in the ruling party in Bihar. The third group in the Bihar Congress which has been left out of the Cabinet, faction leaders who have lost the ministerial gaddi in the Cabinet reshuffle, and the former Chief Ministers whose number is considerable, all have their dirty fingers in the already-chaotic pie.

The disarray of the ruling party to bound to hasten a renewal of the agitation. To forestall this the CPI has descended on the arena, with the slogan that Mr Ghafoor must go but the Assembly should remain. Bihar must not be denied the privilege of having a Congress Minister. The CPI's save-the-Congress campaign is directed mainly to the students, for the battle will be half-won if a division can be brought about among them. For what price, this assistance is being offered is not immediately known. But about understanding there should be doubt. The statements of the leaders of the two parties on the developments in Bihar are intriguingly alike; they could as well make a joint statement. Both have raised the bogey of fascism to prepare the ground for wanton repression when the agitation re-activates itself. The agitators have been warned that if refuse to be satisfied with the



measures that the ruling party may choose to adopt and continue to persist in their demands, they should be prepared to face the full fury of an unwanted government determined to hang on to office.

## Coup In Portugal

The attempted coup by a regiment of the Portuguese army on March 9 failed, but the April adventure has succeeded. The military has overthrown the Government, and the President, the Prime Minister and the ruthless chief of staff are reported to have gone into exile. The Movement of the Armed Forces has promised 'free' elections to a new Constituent Assembly and said that the people would be able to choose any political or social system. Knowing as people do about the reluctance of the army to part with power, judgment should be suspended.

The officers, many of whom had served in Africa, were restless and angry over recent developments. The last Portuguese Governor and Military Commander of Guinea-Bissau (1968-1973), General Antonio de Spínola, in his book, *Portugal and the Future*, published in February, said that Portugal could not win Africa by military means alone. He proposed a political solution through the creation of a Portuguese Federation of four equal States — metropolitan Portugal, Mozambique, Angola and Guinea, each with a parliament and elected Governor, responsible to a federal parliament and a central Government based in Lisbon. The book, which was a best-

seller, outraged the Salazarist faction of the military led by Admiral Thomaz, who forced the dismissal of both Spínola and the chief of Staff. This led to the abortive coup by young officers who were fed up with the stalemated colonial war.

The liberation struggle in Portuguese Africa has gained so much momentum that the Spínola solution, if it is offered after the elections, may not be acceptable. In the end the Portuguese ruling class will perhaps be compelled to strike a Gaullist posture despite the creation of collaborationist groups.

## The Ugly American

Peking has once again stepped up its campaign against the United States after a period of apparent thaw in their relations. The warm reception given to Kheiu Samphan, commander-in-chief of Khmer Rouge, during his recent visit to China was in a sense symbolic; the visit provided an occasion to the Chinese leadership to make it clear that it did not any longer believe that the USA would facilitate a solution to the Indochinese problem by refraining from providing military aid and political support to the Thieu and Lon Nol regimes. There was a time when the Chinese seemed to believe in the efficacy of diplomatic moves to thoroughly discredit the tottering Lon Nol Government; but its ability to somehow hold on to Phnom Penh, thanks to the American largesse, has persuaded many countries not to sever relations with it. It is, therefore, likely that the Chinese have now come to the conclusion that the diplomatic route to victory in Cambodia has been sufficiently explored and that military means alone can now secure the collapse of the capital city. What mainly stands in the way of Khmer Rouge forces launching a major assault on Phnom Penh is the heavy fire at the disposal of Lon Nol's military. The stepped up

U.S. aid which now amounts to \$1.6 million a day ensures an abundant supply of armoured personnel carriers and heavy artillery weapons. The Americans are not only providing generous aid, they are also trying to introduce a certain amount of discipline in the army. All these have forced the Khmer Rouge forces to concentrate on provincial capitals like Oudong and Kampot. The provincial strategy has been paying handsome dividends: the taking over of one small town after another has willy nilly forced the Lon Nol Government to transfer troops from the capital.

An identical American policy in South Vietnam has encouraged President Thieu to refuse to work out any settlement with the communists. It is over a year now that the last American soldier left Vietnam and the U.S. presence is now less visible. But there are still about 5,000 Americans in the country who continue to play a major role in Thieu's war effort. The majority of these Americans provide logistic support to the South Vietnamese army. The CIA operates in the country through various organizations and the office of the Defence Attache is led by five army personnel. The U.S. Ambassador, Mr Graham Martin, has more "special assistants" at his disposal than diplomats. Mr Martin is the man who played a decisive role in involving Thailand in the Vietnam war. He is living up to his well-known notoriety in Vietnam also. During 1974-75 the United States will be providing the Thieu regime \$1.450 billion in military aid and \$400 million in economic aid. It is said the South Vietnamese army has since the cease-fire of January 28, 1973 never run short of anything. It is also true that the army without American support and encouragement would not be in a position to launch attacks against GRF positions. In spite of the USA underwriting the Thieu regime, the political, economic and social decay continues.

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## Hounded Out

The Constitution of India, it is said, ensures the equality of all—Indians as well as aliens—before the law. Article 51C, one of the fundamental articles, enjoins on the States to 'respect the International Law and Treaty Obligations in the dealings of organised nations with one another'. And yet what happened in Bombay to the demonstrating Iranian students was in direct contravention of all these written provisions of the Constitution.

On March 23, the Iranian students, some 40 in number, marched to the Iranian Consulate to protest against the Shah's repressive policies and clamp-down on artists and students and demanded the setting up of a democratic regime. The students also appealed to the Human Rights Commission to enquire into the Shah's autocracy. Initially nothing happened. After two days, however, the police arrested Nosrat Temoorzaddeh on the technical ground that the latter had left Bhopal, where he was studying, without information, and his passport was confiscated. Two of his friends, Asghar Nosrati and Latif Shoshtari, also landed in jail when they went to the police station, looking for their friend.

On April 9, i.e. after a fortnight the students were released and on April 10 all charges against them were withdrawn, obviously because none of these could be substantiated. The very next day, however, when the students called on the police at their insistence, they were served with orders, signed by an Under Secretary

of the Maharashtra Government, to leave this country within 72 hours. Furthermore, the students were surreptitiously booked for an Air India flight touching Teheran. This would have landed them straight into 10 to 12 years of captivity or in one of Shah's confession cells. But the students refused to go by that flight. An appeal to the Bombay High Court earned them 48 hours respite. On April 16 they had to leave for Frankfurt when the Court dismissed their appeal ultimately.

New Delhi's writ of justice did not stop there. Similar expulsion notices were served on four more Iranian students. This time the reason was more bizarre, as the students were in Poona when the demonstration took place. Appeal by two of them that such orders violate the principles of natural justice was of little avail.

Obviously the determination with which the Maharashtra Government hounded out these Iranian students shows that some people in New Delhi think that this act will help Mrs Gandhi during her visit to Iran. With the days of love lost between Teheran and New Delhi coming to an end in the wake of the oil crisis, New Delhi will not allow anything to happen in this country that might irritate the moody monarch in Teheran. The customary right of the aliens to peaceful protest and demonstration or the question of humanity and equality of justice notwithstanding, such actions can be taken again, as and when necessary. At the moment, oil is all important. So the police were asked to cleanse the country of these Iranian students, particularly those who might have had some connection with the Shah's political opposition. The complicity of the popular press has encouraged New Delhi in this open flouting of basic human norms. More than 20 Iranian students were fasting in New Delhi in protest against the inhuman expulsion orders. A few of them had to be removed to hospital. These things, however, are not played up in our press.

## Words, Words

"I come not as the widow of the murdered President, I come as a wife and mother of a destroyed Chilean home, one of so many. I come before you representing hundreds of widows, thousands of orphans, a people robbed of their fundamental rights, a nation suffering from a 'state of internal war', according to General Pinochet, imposed by his own troops, who obey the servants of fascism that represent foreign interests. I come before you to denounce the cruel daily violations of each and every norm of the declaration of the rights of man."

This is what Hortensia Allende, wife of the assassinated Chilean President, underlined while making the indictment of the fascist terror in Chile at a public meeting on the Calcutta Maidan recently. The meeting was jointly organised by the Congress and the CPI to accord a reception to Mrs Allende and her daughter, Miss Isabella Allende. Mr Sankar Prasad Mitra, Chief Justice, Calcutta High Court, presided over the meeting and the Chief Minister, Mr Siddhartha Sankar Ray, was the main speaker.

Apparently impressed and moved by Mrs Allende's speech the Chief Minister, at a stage, participated in joint slogans demanding release of communist prisoners in Chile. A brilliant actor, a perfect hypocrite, Mr Ray managed to forget how many communists are behind bars in West Bengal while he was expressing his wrath against the crimes of the junta in Chile. There was none from the CPI side to disclose that as many as 20,000 persons, mostly young men, belonging to different factions of the communist organisations in India, are detained without trial in West Bengal jails. And there was none to tell Mrs Allende that what Mr Ray had said about his country's support to the Chilean patriots in their fight against fascist junta was nothing but a big hoax. Bribed by political cheats, Mrs Allende was forced to consider

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# The Pay Scale Conspiracy

BALAI DUTTA

THE Great White Father has been very generous. The college and university teachers will no longer be the paupers they are. Their payscale can now be compared favourably with that of many highly paid men in various government and non-government offices. They will be in greater demand on the matrimonial market—this hopeful jest is being circulated in the staff rooms of most colleges amid loud guffaws, albeit somewhat forced at times.

Naturally, the teachers are elated. In these days of spine-breaking hardship the increased pay will mean a little more ease. And of course, the prospect of another step up the social ladder is not unpleasant. But sober thoughts will help to focus our eyes on the other side of the picture, a side which is unsavoury, to say the least.

Benevolence is hardly the second nature of the Indian Government and it is difficult to accept any of its actions as purely altruistic. So, should one not ask why the Government is so sympathetic towards the sufferings of the college and university teachers while carrying on ruthless plunder of the rest of the people in the country? Why do the rulers consider the teachers to be friends and are ready to share the loot with them? Should the teachers forget that it is the very same Government that threw their compatriots in Haryana into jail? Should it be forgotten that other sections of the teaching community are not even promised anything? Can anyone forget the thousands who were killed, imprisoned and tortured by these rulers? Should it not be remembered that countless millions in our country are starving and are being viciously pushed around like herds of cattle? And should not the teachers ask why they, a mere handful of men and

women, out of a vast multitude are being given the privilege of a better life? These questions must be sorted out before rejoicing. Teachers should coolly and logically examine the bribe that has been flung before them.

“Without the participation of the intellectuals victory in the revolution is impossible”. No one realizes this truth better than the rulers. So they try in every possible way to buy over intellectuals and corrupt their minds. The exploited working people cannot produce intellectuals of their own, for they are denied the facilities of education. This is particularly true in a semi-feudal semi-colonial country like India where literacy is non-existent and the system of education is a sham and a fraud. So, the duty of awakening political consciousness among the masses initially is that of the intellectuals. Integrating themselves with the broad masses of people they can spread and develop revolutionary theory and practice, thereby forging a weapon. Naturally this is anathema to the rulers. Therefore they try their best to isolate the intellectuals from the masses. They throw the intellectuals titbits from their table, heap false honours on them, foster addiction to privilege and encourage ambition that always flutters in the parochial hearts of the petty bourgeoisie; corruption sets in at a fast pace and the intellectual becomes a parasite. At the same time, using all the means at their disposal, the rulers create distrust and hatred about the intellectuals in the minds of the common people. So the already existing gap widens and a wall comes up with condescension on one side and hatred on the other. The revolutionaries must try to neutralize the efforts of the ruling classes. A ceaseless struggle must be carried

representatives of our ruling party as lovers of socialism and democracy.

The way political prisoners in West Bengal is being treated is brutal. Shooting prisoners dead in prison has been almost a regular feature of the administration in this country. The fortune of undertrial prisoners is a crude, arbitrary act and a violation of elementary legal norms, including the constitutional norms effective in India. Many prisoners are doomed to slow death because of the lack of medical assistance. Such treatment of political prisoners can be qualified as not only anti-human but also criminal. The condition in jails in India shows that the Government is shamelessly flouting the principles and norms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Government of Civil and Political Rights.

## অনুষ্ঠান

স্তালিন বিষয়ক রচনায় সম্মেলন

সাধারণ সংখ্যা : মে '৭৪

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- স্তালিন ও সংশোধনবাদ ডঃ হার্ট (চায়না পলিসি ষ্টাডি গ্রুপের অনুরোধক্রমে লিখিত)
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- আন্তর্জাতিক কমিউনিস্ট আন্দোলন বনাম ভারতের কমিউনিস্ট নেতৃত্বের ভূমিকা
- গল্প/কবিতা/মতামত ● সাম্প্রতিক সংস্কৃতি

সমস্যা

সম্মেলনকে সমালোচনা করুন, লেখা পাঠান,

গ্রাহক হোন।

কার্যালয়—পি ৫৫ বি সি আই টি রোড।

কোলকাতা-১০

প্রকাশিত হয়েছে। স্টলে খাঁজ করুন।

MAY 4, 1974

out to win over the intellectuals from the clutches of the exploiters.

### The Conspiracy

The college and university teachers are intellectuals in every sense of the term. With their educational laurels and academic pride they have never been remarkable for their nearness to the people. The aura of respect always kept them isolated. They kept themselves aloof from the non-teaching staff of the different institutions, from the school teachers and even from the students. But of late economic distress has been breaking down the ivory tower bit by bit. The professors were slowly and painfully learning that they also were in the same boat. Hardship was making them aware of the possibility of resistance, though of course they had a long way to go before they came to recognize the inevitability of revolution. The danger signal was clearly perceived by the ruling classes and adequate steps were immediately arranged to avert the disaster that loomed ahead.

The new pay scale is one of the steps. The use of sugar-coated poison is typical of the social-imperialists, and their lackeys in India are learning fast. They have come to know in the hard way that repression breeds resistance. So they are trying to kill with kindness. The whole thing was carefully planned. The Sen Commission went through the motions of recommending a new pay scale which was, in reality, pre-fabricated. The UGC promptly accepted the recommendation with very minor modifications. The All India Federation was formed with a noted revisionist in leadership. The story of its birth is shrouded in mystery. State level leaders were carefully briefed and a government-controlled movement was launched with great fanfare. The teachers were not aware of the plot and they fought with courage and vigour. Their fighting spirit was utilized by the leaders to further their own ends. Then came the de-

claration on March 29. The lackeys, the so-called "chamchas" of the leadership, went into raptures over the success of the movement.

This "successful" movement proved many things for the rulers. It established the efficacy of the revisionist leadership, it proved that peaceful movements can yield results, it proved the Government is, oh, so sympathetic. But what has actually happened? The teachers are becoming a section far removed from social reality. When the toiling millions are living far below the poverty line and are suffering from horrible repression it is criminal to try to achieve affluence. The rulers are making the teachers a party to their criminal activities by proposing to pay them a salary which is going to increase the economic disparity already present in Indian society.

The consciousness of the necessity of united action against the rulers was growing among the teachers. A united front of college and university teachers, primary and secondary school teachers, non-teaching staff of the educational institutions was on the verge of becoming a reality. Unity with the students too was envisaged by the teachers. The teachers were also becoming conscious of the necessity for integrating their struggle with that of the other sections of the toiling masses. Of course a lot of organizational and propaganda work would have been necessary before this initial consciousness could grow into full-fledged conviction, but the field was prepared. What will happen now, at least for the time being? The college and university teachers will be lulled by a false sense of security, while the other sections of the teaching community will be chary of uniting with a section which is definitely much better off. The toiling masses will equate the professors with the bureaucrats and the exploiters. This is going to make the task of achieving unity infinitely more difficult. This is precisely what the rulers want and it is chief-

ly this motive that prompted them to give the teachers more money.

Nevertheless, the individual college and university teacher who has been suffering from chronic economic distress is delighted with the proposal of increased pay. He can hardly be blamed. But he must realize one thing. This pay enhancement will not solve any of his problems. One does not have to be an economist to understand the difference between money income and real income. The spiralling prices will reduce the extra money when he gets it to almost nothing and it is silly to expect that in the near future prices will go down or become stabilized. Increase in the amount of money means nothing until and unless prices are checked. The increased pay scale will exert more pressure on the already overstrained State coffers and it will be met with deficit financing and new foreign debts which will lead to hyper inflation and a consequent sky-rocketing of prices.

### The Struggle

Our struggle is over, for our objective is achieved—this is a sentiment expressed by some teachers. Many people from the other sections of the middle class are also saying the same thing. But this is a grave error. The announcement of the new pay scale does not mean that other demands of the teachers which are no less important are also conceded. The demand for deficit grants, for regular monthly payment of the salary and such other economic demands are far from being granted. Better struggle must be carried out to safeguard and win back the democratic rights which are daily being trampled upon. Besides, it is the sacred duty of college teachers to stand by the other sections of the teaching community in their struggle which must of necessity become intensified day by day. So, the struggle must go on. As a matter of fact it must become more militant and more wide in scope because the enemy



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face is extremely cunning and vicious.  
"In any society, it is the middle class which is the backbone of stability and when it grows restless, there is serious cause for anxiety. Fortunately, it seems that this fact is being realized at the highest levels." The editor of *Commerce* (March 23, 1974) could not be more right when he wrote this. A contented and emasculated middle class is essential if exploitation is to be carried on in peace. Social-imperialism is preparing to buy off the whole middle class so that it can exploit India more brutally. It is trying to transform the middle class into a new class of servile petty-bureaucrats. The lackeys of social-imperialism in India are giving concessions to the middle class so that it can exploit India more brutally. It is trying to transform the middle class into a new class of servile, petty bureaucrats. The working class are kept as poor as always. Actually they will be rendered poorer by these concessions, because the expense will be wrung out of their pockets.

In a semi-feudal semi-colonial country any concession given to the people by the ruling classes cannot be fake. This is specially true in the era of total collapse of imperialism. So, the lure of extra money will not be able to hold back the intellectuals from taking the path of revolution. The setback will be only temporary. That the ruling classes have failed to win over the teachers completely is apparent from the fact that even after the announcement of the new pay scale the whole teaching community in Bihar is fighting side by side with the common people for their just demands. This is a very significant and happy occurrence indeed. Undoubtedly, teachers all over the country will follow their valiant example. But still, the threat must not be taken lightly and the efforts to win over the intellectual must be

ra Pradesh.

## Tripura

### The April 9 Strike

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

WHEN the State Government employees in Tripura announced their decision to go on a day's token strike on April 9 in response to a call given by the All-India Confederation, the ruling cliques in Tripura were going through intense factional feuds. After all the prodding and persuasion at the level of other Central leaders had failed to keep the Congress house in order, the Prime Minister herself airdashed to Agartala on March 31 to remind the feuding cliques of the need to maintain at least a facade of unity for the time being, whatever the differences. For the people suffering from starvation, unemployment and spiralling prices with hardly any roof over their heads, she could not bring any tantalising message. Never before had she sounded more hollow than this time when she sought to enthuse the people in Tripura by resurrecting her heroic exploits during the Bangladesh days. Never before had she been greeted with such cold neglect as she was when those present at the meeting did not even care to respond to the slogans shouted by her at the close of the meeting, in spite of her repeated requests. It was a bizarre occasion for the Prime Minister and her entourage.

True, people here have not yet started looting foodgrain shops, nor are they clamouring for dissolution of the Ministry headed by the septuagenarian Sukhamoy Sengupta, who excels in esoteric jargon fail. All the excitement generated by the professional gossip-mongers about the 'imminent' fall of the Sengupta Ministry could not rouse people's interest in the least. On the contrary, Sengupta & Co. must be nursing a sneaking sense of

gratitude to the opposition which gave him and his followers enough time to patch up their differences with the recalcitrant Congressmen, before the opposition came out in the Assembly with a no-confidence motion. Perhaps the opposition did not think it wise to run the risk involved in toppling the Ministry when people's mood was more defiant than ever before.

In the situation, a section of the Government employees raised doubts about the outcome of a strike based on certain economic demands concerning the employees alone. Movements conducted by the Government employees in the past for such economic gains could not enlist the sympathy or support of the broad masses of people and ended in the tradition of conventional economism. There was no conscious effort on the part of the employees to unite the working class people around demands that were in the common interest. Secondly, the employees' unions had never acted on any political programme in support of the basic demands of the people. These lapses had always helped the ruling classes to divert a sizeable section of the people into organised opposition to the employees' legitimate demands. This section of the employees also thought that it was time the Government employees shed their anxiety to preserve a non-partisan image and threw in their lot with the broad masses of people whose suffering have reached a crucial stage. The views expressed by this section at last prevailed and the charter of demands included issues such as holding the price-line, employment for the unemployed, land to the tiller, immediate withdrawal of all repressive measures and unconditional release of all political prisoners. For the first time they raised slogans pledging solidarity with the workers, peasants and student-youths and carried on a vigorous agitational campaign. The result was indeed striking: different worker, peasant and youth organisations held rallies throughout

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the State in support of the proposed strike. Later, they were also joined by units of other Central Government employees. In the course of agitation a time came when the assorted economic demands of the Government employees were pushed into the background and the issues involving the people as a whole became most pronounced.

The ruling classes were not sitting idle either. First, they employed all the conventional methods to intimidate the employees, including the propaganda that the proposed strike was anti-people. With the intensity of the agitational propaganda gaining momentum every day, they mobilised all the instruments of repression at their command, including deployment of the military at important public places. This was supplemented by gangs of hoodlums, employed by the Government, moving menacingly and threatening the employees with physical punishment in case they joined the strike. However, apprehending something, the Government made certain modifications in the whole arrangement at the last moment. The military was withdrawn on April 7 and members of the State Armed Constabulary were stripped of their rifles and posted along with the CRP with only lathis in hand. With this, the hoodlums and other union-busting splinter groups also retreated from the scene. No signs of opposition whatsoever were visible anywhere.

The April 9 strike was a success not only in terms of absence recorded in different offices (being more than 95% on an average) but also in terms of the spontaneous support it received from the people. If this indicates the hollowness of the social base the ruling classes often boast

of, it also enjoins on the Government employees greater responsibilities so far as their future movements are concerned.

In the meantime, having failed to coax the strikers into giving an undertaking that they could not attend office on April 9 for obstructions created by the picketers, the government is now being tough with them. Already some employers have been suspended and many more chargesheeted. The Government is moving with calculated steps. It perhaps thinks that, as in the past, it would be able to take full advantage of the situation when the employees have no follow-up programme. It may go in for large-scale victimisation. This will, it thinks, force the employees out on the streets demanding no-victimisation, and burying the demands which made them go on a day's token strike. This is exactly what had happened in the past.

It is quite evident that the ruling classes cannot ignore the popular weight the April 9 strike carried with it. They are concerned about the potential danger such movements may pose in future. Unlike previous occasions, instead of fabricating publicity material to make it appear that the April 9 strike was a failure and anti-people, the ruling classes are now trying to create an impression that they are opposed not to the demands, but to the means the employees had resorted to for focusing them. To prove their concern for people's sufferings the rulers are voicing the same demands and asking the people to strengthen Mrs Gandhi's hands so that the demands could be met. At the same time, for all the ills that plague the present price position they are very subtly trying to divert people's attention to the 'machinations' of the small business establishments rather than the monopoly houses.

Later events will prove how determined and strong the Government employees are to carry forward the 'harder struggles' proclaimed by them.

## The Golden Days Are Here

A.F.M.

EVERY jute mill is now earning an average daily profit of Rs. 2.50 lakhs. This, despite the power cuts, production loss, wage increases and so on. The estimate is also the most conservative one that knowledgeable circles are able to make.

Ever since Oct. 1973, when the first indications of a worldwide oil shortage were available, jute goods prices have kept appreciating. The world demand has also been steadily rising. It is estimated that in Australia the demand rose by as much as 66% in the October-December period. It has since risen at a faster pace. It is the same with Japan. Indeed, the weekend of April 20 witnessed a veritable flood of inquiries from all over the world.

On the other hand, raw jute prices have all but crashed. The current price range is Rs. 47-51 a maund. The way things are moving, a further fall would not be surprising. The farmers have started the inevitable panic sale, the raw jute market is a veritable buyer's paradise and the mills are maintaining their pressure by crying, "godowns are full". To top it all, the Jute Corporation of India, once heralded as the lone farmer's baffle wall against the big bad wolves, has retreated backstage and is reportedly nursing its badly-bruised thumb, anticipating another thunderbolt from the Commerce Minister, by now the industry's most sophisticated pet.

There are two things about the industry which need explanation. One is the boom the jute constructions are enjoying. This aspect of the situation is readily well-publicised. But neither the industry nor the Government is anxious to inform the public of the precise extent of profit the boom is realising for the mills. The current average price of scope because the enemy

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tonne. Taking the raw jute price at Rs. 51 a maund, the costing works out as follows: Rs. 51 × 28 (taking 28 maunds for one tonne) = Rs. 1,428. With this amount has to be added Rs. 1,600 as the manufacturing, delivery and other costs. Therefore, the total cost comes to Rs. 3,028. The current average hessian price being Rs. 6,810 a tonne, the profit comes to Rs. 2,782 a tonne. In other words, to Rs. 99.36 a maund.

As for sacking, taking Rs. 47 as the average raw jute price, the costing comes to: Rs. 47 × 28 = Rs. 1,316 + Rs. 1,300 as manufacturing, delivery and other costs = Rs. 2,616 per tonne. With Rs. 3,750 as the current average price for sacking, the profit per tonne comes to Rs. 1,134. This is where the mills would like to divert the attention, but the matter does not really end here. Sacking being a heavy material, its profitability has to be properly accounted for by multiplying the amount, Rs. 1,134 by 3. Thus, the actual profit comes to Rs. 3,402 per tonne. Or, to Rs. 1,210 per maund. This is why the current market is witnessing a perceptible shift in manufacturing from hessian to sacking.

The other aspect of the situation the people involved would like to gloss over relates to production. How is it that despite a 50% cut in production, as claimed by the Indian Jute Mills Association, the total volume of production is keeping pace with the volume recorded one year ago, when the power supply position was comparatively good? According to the IJMA, the total volume in March 1974 was 81,600

tonnes while one year ago, in March 1973, it was 94,600 tonnes. The most surprising aspect of the situation is the production figure for February 1974, when the mills worked for only half the month: 51,100 tonnes. Obviously, the quantum of power supply cuts and the production volume being officially recorded do not quite agree with each other. Either the figures are exaggerated, which would be illogical, or the actual extent of production fall due to power cuts is less than the claimed percentage. In any case, the industry is not being quite truthful.

But the mills are appropriating a huge sum of money in quite another way. The West Bengal Government recently raised the multi-point sales tax on jute goods from  $\frac{1}{2}\%$  to 1%. A multi-point sales tax has to be realised at every point of sale. In respect of jute goods, the mills happen to be the first point. As such, they are liable to pay it. According to government notification, it is to be levied on the total turnover of every seller at each sale point. The mills are not merely not paying the tax on their total turnover, but are extracting it from their purchasers as well. The latter, however, are paying it at every subsequent point. The mills are handing over the amount of money thus collected to the Government, thereby not paying anything at all on their own turnover. The sales tax people are reportedly fully aware of the goings-on but are keeping mum, as is the practice of a corrupt bureaucracy. The "savings" thus effected reportedly run into several crores of rupees. Meanwhile, a final legal point waits to be raised: Are the mills legally capable of acting as the sales tax department's agents in collecting the taxable amount of money from their purchasers? Is the multi-point sales tax also a purchase tax?

## Parliamentary Cannibalism

SHUKLA

MR Samar Guha (SP) charged the Centre with committing "political cannibalism" in Gujarat, so that the "mass upsurge" did not spread to other States (*Times of India*, New Delhi, March 12).

When Marx called bourgeois parliaments a "pigsty", he was not merely critically contemptuous of the "talking shop" set up "for the special purpose of fooling the 'common people'" (Lenin), he was also uncannily "too prophetic" in more than one sense. When the nation is aflame, not only the men in the "pigsty" debate whether the smoke is higher or the flames, they also treat the common man as a guinea-pig and revel in his roasting for the greater glory of parliamentarism.

Who otherwise could have believed, after two months of gory gaucherie in Gujarat, that the Indian Parliament would be debating with sedate equability such metaphysical conundrums as: "What is normalcy? Who sponsored or steered the movement? What will happen to the imminent Presidential election, or the biennial elections of the Rajya Sabha? How will it—conceding the demand for the Assembly's dissolution—endanger and enervate our roaring democracy? When could the next elections be held? What was the mystery behind demands coming in instalments?"

It is this frivolity (yes, it remains that, in spite of Mr Jyotirmoy Basu shouting: 'Butchers, you have shot down hundreds') that would mark out the Indian Parliament, for any serious student of political institutions. It is a classic example of a government breaking the law and flouting the constitutional rights of a people with impunity. The Prime Minister who is so concerned today about personal liberty and niceties

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MAR 4 1974

like that deserves applause for her stout defence of 'multi-party democracy' and the profound observations she made in this connection. But, if she has a memory and a democratic conscience, let her recall that as Congress President she forced in 1959 the Namboodiripal Government in Kerala to pack up and get out. Neither had Kerala witnessed a two-month-long fiery 'ordeal' as Gujarat has nor were over a hundred lives lost there in police firings. And yet she was undeterred in expelling a non-Congress government, with Mr Nehru as Prime Minister acquiescing obligingly.

Nor is the daughter behaving any different from the father—chip of the old block that she is. The eighth volume of Sardar Patel's correspondence describing Mr V. K. Krishna Menon's (then High Commissioner to the UK) trenchant criticism of New Delhi's repression against the communists in Hyderabad, West Bengal and elsewhere in the country, Mr Menon had called it "barbarous and inhuman", and told the director of the Intelligence Bureau: "It is you who are murdering communists". Mr Nehru's reaction? Let us hear him: "It amazes me how and why Menon should have talked in this way. I can only think that he was under some deep mental strain and consequently completely upset. He is often rather ill and sometimes his nerves give way when he is unwell. In any event, what he is reported to have said is totally inexcusable". So, neither is Mr J. Basu original in his inveighing, nor Mrs G in suspecting such persons to be mentally unsound after her illustrious father. But it requires nerves of steel and a good deal of cheek to be so arrogant and so self-righteous. Such crimes recur for want of punishment. And, Parliament stalls this punishment of a headstrong government by the people.

As to the class character and priorities of our Parliament. In December 1973 the Madhya Pradesh Government entered a 15-point Agreement with the Chambal Valley

dacoits. According to sources, these are:

1. No fresh charges will be brought against former dacoits who have been acquitted in cases already initiated against them. Pending cases, if any, will be withdrawn.
2. No revision appeals will be filed against those acquitted by the lower courts.
3. The Chief Minister will write to his counterparts in UP and Rajasthan to take similar action.
4. No guarantee will be sought from the Chambal Peace Mission while releasing any former dacoit on parole.
5. The practice of releasing former bandits on parole will be resumed. (It had been stopped after one of them absconded and formed a new gang while on parole).
6. The Narsingarh transit jail will be reopened and the inmates given the same liberal facilities as provided at the Mungaoli open jail.
7. A second open jail will be opened at Panna, in the Bundelkhand region, next year.
8. A deputy collector and a Deputy S.P. will visit the convicted dacoits in jail at least once a week.
9. As a matter of principle, the U.P. Government should meet the expenditure on rehabilitation benefits given to former dacoits who hail from the State but are now being looked after in M.P.
10. The I.G. of Police will place two jeeps at the disposal of Sarvodaya workers in Gwalior and Sagar divisions.
11. The fetters put on Raghunand Singh after his misbehaviour with a lady doctor in a Gwalior jail some time ago, will be removed.
12. The government will pay an annual grant of Rs. 1 lakh to the peace mission.
13. Allotment of land to convicts and provision of scholarships for their children will be expedited.
14. Convicted dacoits, who misuse parole facilities and abscond, will be treated as ordinary criminals.
15. A three-man high-level committee will obtain information on

sources of arms supply to the former bandits.

The agreement was reached between Mr J. P. Narayan and Mr P. C. Sethi in the wake of reports that bandit guns had once again begun to boom in the Bundelkhand region after a lull of about 20 months. (*Times of India*, December 2).

After this who will not prefer dacoity to any other honest profession in free India? One can understand the heart-burning of the political convicts and undertrials at finding desperadoes so pampered and themselves so dragooned. Parliament found nothing objectionable in it. Nor did it find anything wrong with the Meghalaya Residential Permit Bill, awaiting President's assent, which bars outsiders from the State and thus protects itself against intruders, asserting sovereignty by repudiation. This bares the ugly garçole Indian democracy is. And given its composition, cannibalism, its natural religion. By the way, who said Article 370 is meant only for Kashmir? Meghalaya and Maharashtra, among other States, have arrogated it to themselves. Kashmir may be now among the 'also ran'.

Mr Nehru loved poetry and had Robert Frost to remind him to go miles before he slept. He went long enough. Now his daughter is going the miles, and one wonders in apprehension how far she will go before she sleeps. Sometimes, we, the Nehru-fans, suspect that our first Premier is watching our democracy, which, in turn, is suspected by uncharitable wags of being haunted by some hoo-doo. But, just as Mr Nehru immortalized Frost (keeping his 'miles to go' stanza on his table), let Mrs G immortalize Bertolt Brecht by acting upon the solution suggested by this German poet:

After the uprising on June 17th  
The Secretary of the Authors'

Union  
"Had leaflets distributed in the  
Stalinallee  
Which said that the people



Had forfeited the Government's confidence;

And could win it back  
By redoubled labour, Wouldn't it  
Be simpler in that case if the  
Government

Dissolved the people and  
Elected another?  
This will serve the Gujaratis right  
for having shooed away the Congress.  
Besides, other States will have learnt  
the proper lessons. Amen.

## The Mid-East Game

The cease-fire which halted the guns of October gave a big push to diplomatic manoeuvres, through which "a lasting peace" would be achieved. Sadat and Kissinger, the puppet and the puppeteer, are laying the groundwork of "peace", i.e. the domination of the Middle East by U.S. imperialism.

Through the Geneva Conference, Kissinger and Sadat have already secured the disengagement of the Israeli and Egyptian forces from the Suez area, but that really is quite a minor step compared to their projected goals. Already talk of a Palestinian State is on the agenda and the security of Israel based on U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 is a fait accompli. The above indicates that for imperialism to achieve its goal it must maintain a special equilibrium in the region so as to ensure the operationalization of its "peace plans".

In the past few weeks, two events have taken place that at first sight would seem to be unrelated, yet when we probe deeply the underlying connections will crystallize.

First, unrest in the ranks of the Jordanian military was reported. Basically the reasons behind it were economic. The large gap between the officer elite and the mass of the rank and file reached high proportions, in a time when the cost of living was skyrocketing. Since one-fourth of the Jordanian population survives on soldier's salaries, the military in turn is really an economic institution that affects the lives of a sizeable portion of the Jordanian population. The ensuing unrest among the rank and file of the 40th brigade was similar to a labour

union strike, i.e. the unionization of the military.

Such developments acquire importance when we identify Kissinger's advice and influence on Hussein, and how the above developments played a role in convincing the latter to modify his position, as regards the Palestinians.

Let us backtrack a bit. During Kissinger's visit to Jordan, he responded to Hussein's request for economic aid by sardonically suggesting that he cut down the size of the army and security forces from 100 thousand to a more moderate size of 15-20 thousand. This assures Israel of secure borders on the Jordanian front, but Kissinger was quick to point out that the King's security would also be looked after. In addition, Kissinger advised him to take a more moderate position concerning Palestinian representation at the Geneva Conference. The King initially refused to succumb to Kissinger's proposals but after the mini uprising within the ranks of the military, it became evident that Hussein's power is shaky. The dissidents of the 40th Brigade were not only demanding the elimination of the socio-economic inequality in the military, but their slogans indicated that they favoured Prince Hassan who supports the idea of a Palestinian state as a more effective method of getting rid of the Palestinians, in contradistinction to Hussein's proposed federation.

Very soberly, Hussein recognized that he is expendable in the eyes of imperialism, if he were not to operationalize their plan for the area which, when simply put, is: create a Palestinian state through the pre-

sent negotiations by eliminating not only the resistance but the actual idea of resistance and struggle. This would require full Palestinian participation so as to discredit the so-called "extremists" i.e. those who have postulated people's war as the only means by which Palestine will be liberated.

Hussein, a well trained puppet, began to soften his position. First, he delivered a speech at the Cite Sportive in Amman in which he said, that he had no objection to Palestinian representation. A few days later as he addressed parliament he proposed direct negotiations with the leadership of the P.L.O. with the aim of agreeing to common strategy.

In short, Hussein's actions have been revised so as to remain in favour with Imperialism.

On another level, various figure-heads from the West Bank and Amman have been to Beirut propagating the idea of Federation and/or State. These representatives of the Palestinian bourgeoisies, Suleiman al-Nabulsi (a close friend of the PDF and one of four key advisers to the King), Hikmat al-Mosri, Abdel Raouf al-Fares and Rashad al-Shawwa (ex-mayor of Gaza) in the eyes of Imperialism are the projected national leaders of the future artificial settlements that they hope to impose on the Palestinian settlements that they hope to impose on the Palestinian people.

It must be noted that these people have been met by certain representatives of the PLO, whose organisations have succumbed to capitulation i.e. PDF and co.

For Frontier contact

BANI PRAKASH,

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Assam.

We have serious reservations as regards these closed meetings. Our reactionary "dignitaries" are carrying the message of capitulation, by euphemistically claiming opposition to Zionism through their proposed solution: Federation with Jordan.

It is high time we faced our people with the truth, and all the complexities and obstacles that the truth poses.

We conclude the following from previous discussion: (a) The imperialist plan for the region is to pacify the area by the total elimination of not only the Palestinian resistance movement but by the actual elimination of the idea of resistance. To assure such, the proposed Palestinian state is viewed as a terminal solution and not as some of our "friends" believe it to be—one of the stages through which the whole of Palestine will be liberated. (b) The development of a right wing alliance taking into account that some of the previously so-called petit bourgeois regimes (Egypt) have been pursuing a full course towards an organic alliance with the reactionary forces of the area i.e. Saudi Arabia. These developments have forced Egypt to become more and more one of the essential pillars of Arab reaction. (c) Given the present international balance of power, the proposed settlement would be essentially the translation of the imperialist plan for the region, and would require that we veer off the revolutionary path, a sacrifice we can neither ask of nor impose on our masses.

(From the Bulletin of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, March 1974).

For Frontier contact :

BANKURA NEWSPAPER

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## Two Exhibitions

SANDIP SARKAR

AT sundry times and sundry places, art and literature allure various people, who at the outset chose to work at something else. In Calcutta, we have people like B. R. Panesar, Vasant Pandit, Debashish Bhattacharya, a young doctor in charge of a health centre in a village of Bankura is an addition to the list. Debashish has shown certain distinctive traits in his exhibition of collage at the Academy of Fine Arts. He has used odd bits of paper, old pieces of cloth, medical adverts., and on rare occasions paint. He has not mastered the technique of collage as have Panesar, Robin Mondal or Bikash Bhattacharya, but from time to time there are brilliant flashes, intense and exhilarating. He has at least understood that collage like painting is a two-dimensional medium.

Strangely enough his fantasy world does not have anything to indicate that he works in a Bankura village. Back in the village, he seems to brood about the turmoil, agony and pleasure of living in Calcutta. Art here is a substitute for reality, a projection of his fantasy world. He thinks about restaurants, youth unrest, the serpentine peculiarities of the second by-lane and about a certain girl on her fifteenth birthday. The composition generally is competent with deft handling of colour and line. At times he fumbles and loses his head over trifling details, not knowing exactly what he should do. There is some confusion even about pictorial idiom and what one should say. However, there is enough to indicate that he will mature when the time comes. He has brought in a quality of day-dreaming into his work.

It is becoming quite customary these days for a group to have two exhibitions a year. The major show is that of painting and the minor exhibition has drawings and pho-

tics. The West Bengal Young Artists Federation is no exception to the rule. The group in their 4th show maintained a certain standard although there were serious lapses too. One could easily see that Ganesh Pyne, Bikash Bhattacharya, the Vienna School of Fantastic Realism, tantra and even Suvapasanna had, like some dim ghosts, haunted these artists. Yet one was attracted by their sincerity and skill.

Bipul Guha's drawing of parts of a nude woman had lucid lines. But what make him put circles and a hand at odd places is hard to understand. Paritosh Das has tried to be naive but failed because he has not been able to integrate space. Kajal Dasgupta's coloured drawings have a spark and his composition is evocative. Tapan Kumar Biswas boldly identifies with the down-and-out—it is obvious that poverty emotionally upsets him, and he has not yet found the art that transforms reality into illusion and hence his drawings verge on illusion. Barun Simlai has been influenced by Nikhil Biswas. Ujjal Das creates the illusion, but uses overworked imagery clichés. Anil Sen's two drawings remind one of Suvapasanna. His drawing of a seated woman has sculptural qualities and some promise.

There was enough to indicate that all these youngsters have potentialities.

## Letters

### The Police And Girijans

I have recently toured Rachanpet, Gangaram, Rachanagudem and some other adjoining villages in Kothagudem taluk (Khammam district, Andhra Pradesh). Mr Voggela Venkatasam, Kondru Sreeramulu and Kaka Bojji, leaders of the Girijan Sanghani, accompanied me.

To our shock and surprise we learnt that Rachanpet village, about 22 miles from Kothagudem on the Palawanah-Dammamet road, that



## From Prison

We, a unit of the CPI (ML), now interned in Hazaribagh Central Jail, Bihar, having taken an oath of allegiance to the path directed by Comrade Charu Mazumdar, have been fighting for long against repression in jail.

We are retained 24 hours with iron fetters binding our legs. We have been in fetters for three years.

Our police cases have been pending in various courts of different districts of Bihar without the least prospect of trial. Either our cases should be tried and finalised in no time or we should be freed. Almost all of us here have been without any trial for three years or even more.

We are not allowed to read political news in the daily newspapers, political journals and magazines. Political information contained in them is obliterated either by cutting out the piece concerned or by pouring thick black ink over it. This practice must be ended immediately, as should that relating to political books.

We are in separate cells day and night except for a slight recess of two hours in the morning and an hour and a half in the evening. As we are undertrial prisoners, we should be allowed longer hours of freedom. Sometimes the jail authorities forcibly take away individual comrades from amongst us. This is a method of utter repression.

Medical treatment and medical attitude are marked by lack of attention. Com. Mohan Rao had a serious bullet wound with fracture of bones just below his left knee. His wound has not yet healed up, but the jail surgeon has disallowed him medical diet for nutrition during his convalescence on the ground that he is quite fit and normal.

Physical torture and thrashing are reported often. About a year back, one of our comrades, Ajit Das, was forcibly taken away from Cell No. 2 and beaten for no cause.

We have been struggling against

the Central Reserve Police headed by Rajkumar, sub-inspector on special duty, shot dead one Soyam Surappa, a tribal on March 27 in broad daylight. He was killed not because of mistaken identity nor accidentally. It was cold-blooded and planned murder by the police.

The people have told as follows:

Soyam Surappa was passing along a forest route. He was under the influence of liquor. He noticed the movement of the police in the area and sat there. The police approached him and tied his hands with a rope. A woman, Smt. Basavamma, a tribal working in a nearby field, noticed this incident and rushed to the village to inform the relatives of Surappa. Soon after the arrival in the village two shots were heard. When the villagers reached the scene, the police had encircled the area and they did not allow anybody to see the body of Surappa. Soon the body was shifted to Gangaram village in a van. Though post-mortems are not usually conducted in police camps in this case it was done in the police camp at Gangaram. The tahsildar and medical officer were summoned to the police camp and the body disposed of. Another point to be noted here is that the police took care to avoid the Girijans either as panchas or witnesses in completing the formalities to dispose of the body.

After this incident, the police claimed that they had killed a "prominent Naxalite leader". It is still a mystery what name they have actually shown in the records.

Scared by this ghastly act of the police, the menfolk have fled to nearby villages. Only old men and women talked to us in the village. As the police demanded and took, all the sheep and chickens in the village free of cost, not a chicken could be found there. The villagers told us that the goondaism of the police surpassed the goondaism they had seen so far.

Even though one could write volumes about police atrocities, I ven-

ture to give one or two examples so as to give an idea of the magnitude of the crimes that are being perpetrated by the police on innocent Girijans.

During the course of our tour it was brought to our notice that at Durdapadu village, situated about 10 miles from Aswaraopet in the newly formed Sattupalli Taluk, the local sub-inspector on special duty and the Central Reserve Police, had been raping and molesting Girijan women. The menfolk have no alternative but to remain silent spectators. Otherwise, they are afraid they would be killed, and the police would get rewards for killing so-called Naxalites in so-called encounters.

Citing specific instances the villagers told us that one Kurusam Laxmi and Gogga Laxmi were taken to the police camp by the CRP men, and were being used by the officers and men of the CRP. The father of one such girl, Kurusam Mutyalu, gained enough courage to petition the District Superintendent of Police for necessary action. A copy of the petition was given to us.

The police, we learnt, are collecting some young Girijan women and providing them with police uniform and forcing them to accompany police parties in their so-called combing operations. These combing operations are nothing but night-outs to molest girls.

I request the Chief Minister to order a thorough high-level probe into police atrocities in Girijan areas so that the good name of the Government is not tarnished and Girijans to whom the Government was anxious to provide several amenities are protected from police goondaism. I am prepared to appear before the enquiring authorities as and when such an enquiry is held.\*

CHEKURI KASAIHA  
MLA (New Congress)  
Hyderabad

\* Mr Kasaiha has submitted a representation to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, giving the above facts.

all these and have decided to move on the basis of a united programme with all the democratic, progressive and revolutionary elements, whatever their political-organisational obligation may be. We aim at mobilising the people for establishing their real democratic rights in the course of armed agrarian revolution in India through tasks of a "United Programme".

JAIL UNIT OF CPI (ML)  
 Hazaribagh Central Jail, Bihar  
 seemingly insurmountable difficulties

### Enquiry

We are passing through a critical phase of our national history. Whatever illusion we had about our emancipation through the Congress has evaporated. We wish to tell our fellow countrymen about the inhuman condition of political prisoners now rotting in Presidency Jail. We had the fortune of undergoing imprisonment for protesting against the rotten food policy pursued by the Government. We were detained in Presidency Jail from November

15, 1973 to November 19. On the first night we were kept along with robbers, murderers and other notorious anti-social elements without blankets or anything, though it was very cold. Conditions in the cell were inhuman and there was no sanitary arrangement. The food was sub-standard.

A public inquiry committee should be instituted and its findings on conditions in jails implemented with the shortest possible time. Political prisoners should be treated as political prisoners and executive prerogatives should be made null and void and the conditions laid down by the Judiciary followed in letter and spirit.

S. SENGUPTA  
 Calcutta

### "Justice"

On November 11, 1970 at 10 o'clock in the night Ranjit and Samir two brothers, were alleged to have been murdered by a group of police officers headed by Bibhuti Chakravorty, Deputy Commissioner of

Police and P. De, Assistant Commissioner of Police.

The Metropolitan Magistrate of the 3rd Court has committed to sessions four police officers. A demand for sanction of prosecution against Bibhuti Chakravorty and P. De is pending adjudication of the High Court.

It is a matter of shame that the Government has been resisting the grant of such sanction though they were held prima facie guilty of murder by the Enquiring Magistrate and that the four police officers committed to sessions have not been suspended. Not only that, it is understood that, after they were committed to sessions, one of them, Shew Mongal Singh, has been promoted as Assistant Commissioner. This is not only mala fide but also contemptuous of court proceedings.

We demand immediate cancellation of the order of promotion.

Arun Prakash Chatterjee  
 Joint Secretary,  
 West Bengal Association  
 of Democratic  
 Lawyers

# Where does our interest lie?

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## Hazaribagh Incident

The incident in which, on March 1974, two employees of the State Bank of India, Hazaribagh Branch, Comrade Anjananarayan Prasad and S. D. Prasad, were killed and Comrade P. Prasad was injured by the firing of a police guard at the bank's gate is by now well known. We observe that the revisionist trade union leaders of the State Bank are renewing this incident as an isolated case and are shielding the repressive role of the armed forces of the State machinery from the wrath and hatred of the bank employees. The incident proves that these forces are being trained by the Government of India to meet the people with rifles only. Bank employees should shake off all indifference and frustration and protest through demonstrations, meetings, processions and leaflets against the unlawful detention without trial, murder and torture of political prisoners and all kinds of white terror and police atrocities on the toiling people of India.

A STATE BANK EMPLOYEE  
Calcutta

## E.V.R.

I congratulate Mr Ambuj for putting forth the relevant facts about E.V.P. But the report regarding the communist Brahmin Mayor (Mr S. Krishnamoorthy) is incorrect. He is merely a sympathiser of the CPM. He stood for election as an Independent candidate. It was C. N. Annadurai, who persuaded him to accept the then mayoral office. He is now closely connected with the Association of Democratic and Civil Rights in Madras.

USHA NARAIN

## Whither Sangharsh Samiti

The Maharashtra Government seems to know that it will not be pulled down. It is not because it does not deserve to be pulled down but that the programme is not on the agenda of the five left parties

who have formed the Sangharsh Samiti. All that the programme puts it, at best, is, that mass movements will bring the pressure of the workers on the Government to concede their demands and will bring socialism so that exploitation of man by man will be eliminated. In no resolution of the Parishad can one find the left parties wishing to oust the government even peacefully, leave alone by violent means. This is in spite of the fact that the majority of these five leftist parties profess Marxism-Leninism. These parties are the CPI, CPM, Lal Nishna and Peasants and Workers Party. The fact of the matter is that these parties have no cohesion in their perspective; they think somewhat alike. For example, the CPI has a definite policy of supporting the Indira Congress under the plea that all progressive elements within the Congress must be taken along to press proper socialist policies in India. Besides, Russia has clearly given a direction lately that all support must be given to Mrs Gandhi by the CPI. The CPM, though it makes noises off and on against the Congress regime to please the ranks and talks of ushering revolution soon, cannot forget that it supports Russia's policy towards India and thus it becomes an indirect partner in the Soviet's support to the bourgeois landlord monopolist Indian State apparatus. After all how can the CPM permit 'socialist aid' from Russia to India to go waste! And so it must support the Government but continue to please the rank and file by revolutionary slogans against Indira Government. The Peasants and Workers Party has roots in villages but it entirely agrees with Mrs Gandhi that changes for the better can be effected through the ballot box. It has also links with the rich peasantry and hence will hesitate to venture on any activity of the type experienced in Gujarat. Lal Nishna hailed Naxalbari with the reservation that if chances occur to capture power through the ballot box there is nothing wrong about it.

It does not believe that Soviet social-imperialism is also strangulating the Indian masses. Hence it is possible that if both the CPM and the CPI decide to give a lease of life to the Indira Government, Lal Nishna may join the camp of 'support' or 'coalition'. The remaining partner of the Sangharsh Samiti, the Socialist Party, is interested in joining the Jana Sangh and Shiv Sena and Congress (O) too, to capture State power. It is not necessary to expect much from it either. That is how the Naik Government is safe in the hands of this Sangharsh Samiti.

Lately the Youth Congress of the Congress has been airing slogans about removal of corrupt Ministers of the Maharashtra Government. This wave will gain some momentum but how futile it is, everybody knows.

The latest move of the Republican Party to join the anti-Congress fray of the Dalit Panthers may encourage revolutionary ranks. But even this has to be utilised with a class struggle perspective and not anti-Congress or anti-Naik or anti-Brahmin or anti-Maratha stance. It is high time the left parties utilised the various contradictions if they mean to swear by Marxism-Leninism. In fact the enthusiasm and heroism of the youths of Gujarat should give an impetus to the Maharashtra people but the way of struggle and the programme must be completely clear. Otherwise reaction might take advantage of the same, as is evident in Gujarat. In any event revolutionary struggle by the broad masses led by a strong coordination of all Marxist-Leninist parties should be on the agenda in Maharashtra rather than sporadic demands for removal of some corrupt ministers. The State structure must be destroyed.

P. R. GODBOLE  
Bombay

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## **AN APPEAL**

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