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WHERE ARE THEY GONE ?

THE living spectres of famine that used to haunt Indian newspaper pages till the other day have almost disappeared, as if under the spell of a magic wand. Is the wand wielded in Delhi? Has the Lady made it understood that she does not like famine and starvation stories to tar the image of a strong India? The sudden lack of concern on the part of newspapers of the great tragedy that is engulfing large parts of this subcontinent is strange.

Not much is known about the food situation in Pakistan. It seems to be better than in India and Bangladesh. In the latter thousands of people are dying each day in the towns and the countryside. Peasants are selling their land with cattle, as a Dacca contemporary reports, and other household goods in order to buy food. Thousands are leaving their villages for towns in search of work and food. Even proud peasants have been forced to beg. The situation is terrible but all agitation for all-party relief organisations has been in vain—Mr Tajuddin had to resign—because there is no dearth of people to trade in human misery and these people belong to the party of Sheikh Mujib. A foreign journalist on tour in Rangpur asked numerous peasants about what they thought lay behind the crisis. Five out of ten said "Allah" and the other five said "Mujib". They cannot do anything about the former; what will happen to the latter remains to be seen, though many of these men will not remain to see what happens.

In this country, the famine or near-famine conditions have not led to anything big so far. The new harvest may somewhat ease the situation though the prices will remain too high for landless peasants and others. In the meantime, rallies and demonstrations will go on in the name of political movement. Mr Jagjivan Ram will continue to appeal to the rich West to eat less in penance for what it did in the East in the past and dole out aid to India, which can explode some more nuclear devices for peaceful purposes and do nothing by way of real land reform. One is sometimes reminded of beggars who curse non-givers.

There should be enough food in the world. For instance, millions of acres have been uncultivated in America alone to avoid a glut. China has shown how to bring about an agricultural miracle by labour-intensive means without begging for external aid. The food problem is also a political matter—a matter of class relations. That is why food conferences in Delhi or Rome will achieve very little. It is up to the people to solve their own problem.

It is dishonest and silly to ask the rich West to practise restraint without touching the rural rich, the kulaks, in this country.

Phoney Concern

New Delhi is said to be worried over the frequent release ordered by courts of alleged smugglers detained under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. The Union Finance Minister has told a consultative committee of Parliament that the State governments were being asked "to review and streamline" the procedures for arresting smugglers under the MISA. This is plain euphemism for a directive to fabricate courtproof grounds of detention. From the Prime Minister to the upturned Mr Ganesh everyone in the ruling party and the Government has made so much self-congratulatory noise over the arrest of the alleged smugglers that it may be safely presumed that the executive agents of the Government were extra-careful in framing the charges and the chargesheets were the most credible that could be produced from that notorious alloy of fact and fiction which pass as police reports. From the dossiers of the alleged smugglers, prepared by the police and made available to the Government, more tenable cases for their detention could not be drawn up.

The High Courts of Gujarat, Karnatak, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Bombay have, in the first ten days, of this month, ordered the release of several alleged smugglers held under the MISA. The Supreme Court also has asked the West Bengal Government to set free two MISA detenues; though they were not being held for smuggling, their case deserves notice for they also were released on the ground of inadequacy of the charges against them. The court verdicts were almost an unrelieved indictment of the detaining authorities for the casual manner in which they deprived citizens of their liberty. The Gujarat High Court found the district magistrate of Surat guilty of carelessness as he had not cared to examine the material supplied by customs officials;

the Karnatak High Court ordered the release of six detenues, because the detaining authorities had not "applied their mind" and issued the detention orders "in a mechanical manner", reproducing the language of Section 3 of the MISA. The Supreme Court has ordered the release of two West Bengal detenues because one of them was being detained on a "wholly irrelevant" ground and the other for an offence from which he has been acquitted by a court.

It may have been forgotten by many that our socialist Government, which had allowed the Preventive Detention Act to lapse before the 1971 parliamentary elections, enacted the MISA on the strength of its post-election absolute majority on the plea that powers of preventive detention were needed by the Government to curb economic offences. Contrary to the "solemn" assurance that the powers would not be used against political opponents of the Government, the MISA has been invoked all these years mostly against political activists. The simplistic solution suggested by some members of the consultative committee that the MISA provisions be strengthened is completely off the mark. The provisions of the Act have not been found adequate; it is the manner of their application to which courts have taken exception. Why persons whom Ministers and sundry Congressmen in Parliament and elsewhere are, with impunity, branding as smugglers cannot be prosecuted in a court of law is a baffling question. Even self-confessed smugglers are being detained under the MISA, but not to speak of others whose guilt may not be equally easy to prove. Now the courts have found out that even the detention orders are riddled with lacunae. There are not many instances of political detenues being freed by courts on the ground of inadequacy of detention orders. Maybe the detention orders against alleged smugglers are being issued strictly according to the Government's policy. The Government does not intend to detain them for long, and it is trying to place the onus of setting them free on courts. New Delhi's concern over their release and consequent directives to State governments are just eyewash.

Crash Propaganda

Unemployed youth will note with anger the casual admission of the Government in the Lok Sabha that the "crash employment schemes have failed". It was these schemes which had formed one of the main planks of the Congress electoral propaganda—all the talk of the half-a-million-job scheme, the one-lakh scheme for educated unemployed, the special employment programme, etc.

To begin with, when the estimate of total unemployment in the country is put at around 50 million; these so-called employment programmes did not touch even the periphery of the problem, unless of course one viewed them as the Congress did for their propaganda worth. Now the Minister of State for Planning, Mr Mohan Dharia, has admitted in the Lok Sabha that not a single one of even meagre targets has been reached. What happened to the Rs. 170 crores or so spent for this scheme?

According to the Press, "no tangible assets have been created". For instance, the road works were merely earth-work formations with no provision for metalling, cross drainage etc., and were soon washed away. In the majority of the irrigation works undertaken, the turving and stone-pitching necessary to make them durable were not done, and in several other cases, the projects were abandoned midway.

But it is not only a question of sheer wastage of funds. **The Hindutan Times** (October 19) reported that in a large number of cases muster rolls were manipulated and no check was made as to who was being paid. Specific examples were given of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala. In other words, the crash schemes to provide employment became crash

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schemes to enrich corrupt contractors, government officials and their Congress patrons. In Parliament, even the Congress member, Mr K. D. Malaviya, complained that a large amount went to "middlemen".

In the name of a crash rabi programme, Rs. 200 crores were handed over to Congress State governments who shared the loot with big landlords and the Govern-

ment later admitted the failure of the programme and that production after it had been launched, was even less than in the year before. The crash employment schemes have met the same fate. And while money is gifted away like this, the Government moans of a resources crisis and impose heavier tax burdens on the people.

not bother about the social causes of the neglect of science and true learning in this country, but he cannot have been ignorant of the phenomenon. As a scientist with work and recognition abroad, he may have taken all his early frustrations in one long, triumphant stride. And as an Indian by birth he may be prepared to regard them all as being in a day's work. His immense patience and forbearance may have come also from his work itself—the search for the mystery of life and heredity. But the youngsters who dare not had Khorana's chances but seem to justify Haldane's hopes must do something to debunk the empty and wasteful rituals that go by the name of learning in this country.

Khorana's Ordeal

A correspondent writes:

It is possible that Hargovind Khorana, the Indian-born American scientist, will one day shed his natural reserve and record his impressions during his recent visit to India. Being a man of few words and a scientist, he may not go in for the usual clichés about the area of darkness with which Indian writers brought up abroad have made us familiar. But the basic response is not likely to have been much different.

Treated as a kind of precious exhibit, Dr Khorana was subjected to a rather vulgar furore over his achievement in modern science. This achievement is little understood in this country, but that possibly is no reason why his former countrymen should not be encouraged to go mad over his success. True, he has renounced the land of his birth, but let us eliminate that little irritant to the radiant mood in which the fact of his birth as Indian envelopes us. And so he was whisked through the country on a sort of whistle-stop programme of speeches and investitures, everywhere with a mafficking crowd in tow and an apparently stolid body of dignitaries for his audience. We have no report of his discussions, if any, with fellow scientists and scientific workers in this country, nor any intelligent, popular exposition of his distinctive achievement in any of our newspapers or periodicals. Dr Khorana is not the kind of man to vent his exasperation at this state of affairs or his disappointment over the progress of science in India. He may have felt it to be enough that he has settled abroad, never wishing to rub it in further.

It is only for us to reflect that even after more than two decades of independence, no other Indian scientist has achieved anything spectacular enough to rouse such feelings of patriotic pride. Dr Khorana has lived in this country too long not to have sensed the cause of the fuss made over him. From an obscure scientific worker, who was unable to find any proper employment for his brains in his native land and had to go abroad for research opportunities, he has become, on a sudden, a kind of national hero by virtue of his recognition by the Swedish Academy. Dr Khorana's own recounting of his experience with Indian universities, research centres and similar august organisations, prior to his settlement abroad, leaves us in no doubt about the kind of factors that baffled him in his search for 'work'. These are still endemic to our national life and continue to frustrate the pursuit of intellectual inquiry. We have on record the embittered and frustrated feelings of a scientist like J. B. S. Haldane about wilting atmosphere in our academic world. Haldane also spoke of the promise he had spotted in many young scientists in India. Quite a few of these promising youngsters have by now been assimilated into the same establishment against which they once chafed until they were turned into bureaucratic mediocrities. They are part of the ludicrous fixtures which make up our academic landscape.

It is a big irony that the same worthless janpan drums who once did everything to thwart Dr Khorana are now taking him up to showed praises and honours. For aught we know Dr Khorana may

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Armed Struggle In India : The Ghadar Party—II

GAIL OMVEDT

ONE further element of background is necessary to understand Ghadar communism: And that is the development in the 1920s of the theory and practice of communist-led national liberation movements.

The 1920s were a crucial decade for Asian revolution. It should be remembered that this was not only the period of birth of the communist parties, but also the time when the purely nationalist organisations took on a mass character for the first time, even though some of them (the Indian National Congress, the Kuomintang, the Sarekat Islam) had existed before 1917. It was the period when peasant revolt, whether in China, Vietnam, India or elsewhere, first took on an integral connection with this nationalism; it was the period of mass working-class strikes and the birth of true trade unions. It was also a period of international alliances and organising. This occurred in terms of communist organising, with M. N. Roy and Ho Chi Minh (Nguyen Ai Quoc) as notable international figures, with the Korean revolutionaries getting their first support from the Soviets in Siberia and Manchuria and in China; and it occurred, in purely nationalist terms: The first major anti-imperialist world conference was the League Against Imperialism formed at a conference in Brussels in 1927. This was, again, organised under communist initiative, but it brought together non-communist nationalists from all over Southeast Asia, West Asia, Africa, Latin America and the West Indies, and included such eminent leaders as Jawaharlal Nehru of India; J. T. Gumede who was president of the African National Congress; Messali Hadj, the leading nationalist figure of North Africa; and Mohammad Hatta of Indonesia.

In this tumultuous decade, when mass anti-colonial nationalism could not help but impress as a rising force, the leaders

of the Communist International attempted to formulate policy and guide the revolutionary efforts of the new-born Asian communist parties. The major lines were laid down at the Second Congress in 1920 in the "Theses on the National and Colonial Questions" and elaborated in 1928 in the "Theses on the Revolutionary Movements in the Colonies and Semi-colonies." These laid forth several basic principles: Because capitalism depended upon imperialism, anti-colonial revolutions were a crucial blow to the world system even if they were not socialist in content; thus all European communists had an obligation to support the independence of their colonies, and Asian communists were to take leadership of revolutionary nationalist movements. Because the effects of imperialism were to maintain a semi-feudal backwardness in agriculture and to prevent industrialisation of the colonies (a notion only clearly stated in the 1920s), even a "bourgeois-democratic" movement in the colonies had to be revolutionary, had to be identified with the world socialist forces. Thus, Asian communists were directed to take part in a united front of some sort with non-working class nationalists and give leadership to a revolution that in its first stage would be purely democratic (i.e., anti-colonial and anti-feudal, with agrarian revolution as its main thrust) but would move quickly to a second stage of building socialism.

The basic principles still left open the question of exactly how to organise. For the Chinese, where the KMT was at the time a revolutionary national party holding power in parts of the country, with a leadership willing to accept Soviet help and give stress to alliance with communists and support of peasants and workers, the path was fairly clear: A united front within the KMT gave the CCP its first great period of growth and allowed it to establish working class and peasant roots and found the beginning of its army. In a somewhat different way for the Vietnamese and the Koreans, nationalism was so crushed by the French and Japanese that it had to be revolutionary to find support. For the case of India, things were more complicated: Here the Bri-

tish allowed a good deal of freedom for manoeuvre to moderate nationalists, and thus the main nationalist organisations were decidedly non-violent and fairly accommodating; in addition, the absoluteness of British imperial control within India made any revolutionary working class organising extremely difficult. For M. N. Roy, who was first given the primary task of organising Indian communism by the Comintern, and later for the Communist Party of Great Britain, the major problems at first were simply the technical ones of making contact with potential communists within India.

In spite of the special problems of a country like India, apparently "locked into" imperial political-military control, it is worth stressing the degree to which all the new Asian communist leaders found it natural to see national liberation in terms of an armed and violent revolution. Though the term "people's war" was not used at this time, it appeared in fact an almost natural strategy. This was true of M. N. Roy as much as the Chinese or Koreans. Thus Roy's first thoughts in connection with India included (1) the formation of a liberation army, partly from mutiny out of the regular army, partly from general recruits; (2) internal mass organising which would link national liberation with the class demands of the masses; and (3) an external base, geographically

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contiguous to the colony, where the army could be formed and initially trained and a steady arms supply could be maintained.

As Roy put it:

Using the frontier territories as the base of operation and with the mercenary support of the tribesmen, the liberation army would march into India and occupy some territory where a civil government would be established as soon as possible. The first proclamation of the revolutionary government would outline a programme of social reform to follow national independence. It would call upon the people to rise in the rear of the enemy, so that the Liberation Army could advance further and further into the country. The entire adult population of the liberated territory would be armed... The programme of social reform... would be enforced in the liberated territories; consequently, the masses would enthusiastically support the new regime.*

And thus Roy began his efforts at recruitment by settling in Tashkent and working with Muslims who had left India originally to fight in defence of the Khalifate in Turkey; his hope was to make an entry through Afghanistan and the northwest border region.

No Armed Struggle

Such Indian revolutionary attempts at organising armed struggle from abroad have been given little attention because they had decisively failed by the end of the 1920s. Indian nationalism never took form as an armed movement, though mutinies were crucial at its beginning and end, and though it had its periods of violent struggle. Roy's own attempts at organising an army in Afghanistan were given up within a year, and he turned to efforts to found a communist network within India, a network which was in no position to be violent. Thus, the Communist Party of India which took shape by the 1930s grew with leadership whose origin was in petty-bourgeois nationalism and whose sole practical concern and involvement was with mass struggles of workers and peasants. For instance, while there

*M. N. Roy, *Memoirs*.

might be talk of forming a "red army" of workers in the 1928 Bombay mill strike, this was obviously impossible, and the peasant movements of the 1930s, while impressive in their numbers and militancy, had no way to be armed. The main trend and the dominant leadership in the CPI, then, from beginning to end made no serious effort at organising armed struggle.

Was this because an armed strategy was completely out of the question for India? This is a difficult question to answer, but it has been asked more insistently lately as more militant China-oriented communists have criticised the "revisionism" of the original and still continuing leadership. In fact, it is possible to argue that an armed strategy was possible, particularly at crucial turning points.

A main point is the necessity for a base area in a "people's war" strategy. For armed revolution in a directly-ruled colonial territory, an external and contiguous base of support is essential. Those who doubt this might consider the role of south China for Vietnam (when communist leadership took refuge there after the crushing of the Nghe-Tinh soviets of 1930); of Manchuria for Kim Il-sung's Korean guerillas; of north Vietnam for south Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia; and of the progressive African States of Tanzania, Guinea, the Congo, etc., for the liberation movements in the Portuguese territories. The question was, what was the entry for India?

There were two directions, northwest and northeast. Afghanistan seemed the most appropriate spot, in the traditional area of invasion into the subcontinent, and it was thus in Tashkent and Kabul that Roy began his organising and work. However, while it was geographically the most favourable, Afghanistan offered no social support: It had no indigenous communist party, and its king was a barely anti-imperialist feudal ruler who was easily bribed by the British to crack down on subversives within his territories. In contrast, China in the 1920s was alive with the most rapidly growing communist party in the world and, particularly after 1924, a vibrant, if uncontrolled national mo-

vement allied with the Soviet Union.

Further, the British in the 1920s (and perhaps after) apparently feared China as much as Afghanistan. All along there was the concern about the security of border areas, a fear that, as David Petrie put it, "troubles outside our borders might synchronize with any serious outbreak within them."* Petrie's own final assessment of Indian communism in 1927 begins with this concern about international connections and British frontiers, and he cites Zinoviev's speech to the Colonial Commission of the Comintern in 1925 to zero in on China as central to a revolutionary strategy:

It was China that had become their central starting point for action in India; China was important to them not only as an incendiary center for revolutionary and moral action, but also as the strategic base for real and technical contact with India.

Now it is striking that Roy himself, in spite of his activities there, never thought of China as a logical place from which to begin Indian revolution; certainly the CPGB when it took over directing Indian communism, had little idea of this. But the Ghadar communists—who had a natural base among the Sikh Punjabi troops who made up a majority of British imperialist forces in China as elsewhere, who had all along maintained their separate connection with the Comintern—did. And in the middle of the 1920s, Ghadar efforts began to focus in China.

In 1917 a conspiracy trial in San Francisco convicted 29 of the then leading Ghadar activists for violating the neutrality of the U.S. in the war by conspiring with Germany. They received sentences of one to eighteen months; the most well-known were to have been deported after their release but were allowed to remain in the States after a number of trade unions throughout the country appealed to have them granted political asylum. One of these was Santokh Singh, an immigrant who had become a small farm owner in California, had been general secretary of the Ghadar Party after Har Dayal, and was a member of its secret commission con-

*Petrie, *Communism in India*.

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cerned particularly with working out military strategy. While in San Quentin he was converted to communism, and after his release met with Rattan Singh, another who had reached California via the Fiji Islands and Vancouver, who had had little known connection with Ghadar before that but had already become a communist. Together with Bhagwan Singh, another early leader, they decided to revive the party. This was in 1919.

The first two or three years were spent in touring, collecting funds, establishing a short-lived newspaper and combating dissident factions among the Sikhs and other nationalist emigres. Then in 1925 Rattan Singh and Santokh Singh left for Moscow to attend the Fourth Congress of the Communist International; from this point the serious organising began.

The main areas of effort were California (a source of funds and recruits), Afghanistan, the Punjab, and (after 1925) China. Work in the Punjab meant organising a mass base and particularly a peasant movement. The earlier failures at insurrection had been partly due to this lack, and Marxist theory stressed the importance of linking armed struggle with social revolution. Thus, Santokh Singh returned to India to establish contact with disaffected Sikhs and to start in 1926 a new revolutionary newspaper, the *Kirti* (Worker), described today as one of the first journals of the Communist Party in India. Rattan Singh followed a more devious course, going through Afghanistan and

Constantinople back to the U.S., where he was arrested for illegally entering the country through Mexico; then he broke bail and escaped to Russia, travelling again through Europe and Afghanistan back to India. (Petrie, who describes this argues that the Ghadar party was anxious not to associate with M. N. Roy, was negotiating independently with the Comintern, and says that Rattan Singh had as one of his goal an effort to get a "mandate" from the Akali Dal for purposes of establishing credentials with the Comintern. This period of organising in the Punjab was what in fact gave birth to communism there and to the peasant movement.

Afghanistan primarily served as a base for communications. Here the Ghadar organisers, Indian revolutionaries in general, and the Comintern had contact with a general community of disaffected Indian emigres, and more specifically with a rather strange collection of men known as the "Provisional Government of India". This had been set up by the Germans in 1915, and since they wanted a member of the Indian princely order as its head, a man known as Raja Mahendra Pratap was its president. Its two main "Ministers" were both Muslims, Barkatullah and Obeidullah. The first had already had contact with the Ghadar activists when he joined with Bhagwan Singh in addressing meetings in California; the second was also said to identify with the Ghadar party. After 1920 Soviet money was also channeled through these leaders; though by no means communists they continued to be active in support of revolutionary causes after they were expelled from Afghanistan in 1922. For some time, then, money, men and communications could be channeled through Afghanistan.

China: Main Focus

But it was China that was to become the main focus. When Rattan Singh sent five Ghadar members from the Punjab to Moscow for military training in June of 1926, most of them went from there to China. And in 1925 Raja Mahendra Pratap, after peaking and touring in the U.S., left with seven Sikhs for China and Tibet, his aim being

"to penetrate into India through Tibet for Nepal for raising an insurrection."* Mahendra Pratap, who was dismissed by the British as a "hair-brained visionary" (see Petrie) went his own way after the tour, ending in Japan and taking to mysticism. But four of the three men with him remained in China to organise; and several other Ghadar Sikhs went about this time from Moscow or San Francisco to China. As a letter from Munsha Singh, at that time secretary of the Ghadar Party in California, intercepted in 1927, stated:

There is a great need of work in China. Help is required here. Our whole energy is being applied. There is a great need of a center in China, hence, heavy expenses have been incurred this year. (See Petrie).

(To be concluded)

*L. P. Mathur, *Indian Revolutionary Movements in the United States of America* (Delhi, S. Chand & Co.).

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The Population Problem In West Bengal—II

ASOK MITRA

THOUGH a great deal of hope has in recent years rested on the CADP (Comprehensive Area Development Programme) and the CMDA, the CMDA seems to have missed the bus, for a lot of employment on the level of Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 for young men and women could have been generated on community basis for maintaining the improvements and for servicing very small community social and educational institutions, nutrition, child-care and family planning centres. It is still not too late, for it is important to create and improve effective demand among young men and women, albeit at the primitive level.

The CADP can still do it if instead of preaching 'ramrajya' it undertakes patient and thorough exercises on the basis of at least one CADP area in each district representing its own unique socio-economic environmental features. For a lot of very intricate interdisciplinary work will have to be undertaken for even 10,000 acres balancing the creation of effective demand on the one side with the supply mechanism on the other, weaving in the strands of education, employment and family planning at a very primitive level.

Another possibility has arisen in the recent past. The Sunderbans Development Board in West Bengal recently undertook a number of food-for-work projects mainly devoted to recommissioning of moribund canals in the Sunderbans area, strengthening of retired embankments, construction of new embankments and construction of roads. One outstanding example is the Bonai Nadi Canal which was 5 miles long, 10 feet deep with earthen embankments, another 5 to 8 feet high and 15 feet wide at the base. The trench itself was 20 feet wide at the bottom and 40 at the top. In addition some 3 miles of smaller feeder canals were constructed. When completed the canal will be 7 miles long. The entire work was completed at the

expense of 250 M/T of bulgar wheat paid in lieu of cash wages. It is estimated that Re. 1 per kg. of 5,000 M/T of wheat will cost Rs. 50 lakhs. The value of work that will be possible through the payment of this wheat as wages in lieu of cash will be of the order of Rs. 2.5 crores. This is perhaps an extreme case of favourable capital output ratio of 1 to 5, giving a favourable illustration of conversion of human labour into capital. For most programmes of minimum employment this ratio will be lower than 1 to 5 but seldom lower than 1 to 2.

The secret lies in creating conditions by which the local community can work closely with the government staff, yet retaining the lead in planning and implementation of projects and in employing local labour in slack season. This means that any considerable project will have to be phased in segments over several seasons.

Many of the minimum needs programmes can be embarked upon through employment of local labour by payment of wages in kind, i.e. in grain as for example, school houses employing local materials and local architectural skill, surface wells for rural water supply, preparation of home sites for landless labourers (as in Kerala), rural roads and several items of rural electrification. The entire range of minimum employment programmes can certainly be conducted through this process.

It is possible that for the implementation of the minimum needs and employment programmes, the total stock of grain that will be needed will not exceed 3 to 4 million tons provided a mixture of payment of wages in grain and cash is devised only for participating workers. This method is bound to have a very salutary effect in controlling inflation particularly in grain prices in the rural areas and in stabilising the already restive relationship between landlords and landless agricultural labourers mentioned above.

The planning and implementation of works programmes in the village can be supplemented by at least three activities catering to minimum needs. This supplementation will be possible if the rural community and the bureaucracy

can enthuse the population in the age group 14 to 22 who can be pressed into service to do much of the marshalling and administration. These three sectors are: (1) Nutrition deliveries of expectant and nursing mothers, infants and toddlers 2) programmes of immunisation against cholera, smallpox, typhoid and BCG; (3) protection of water supply and environmental sanitation. Family planning services can be taken care of by mobilising the population in the age group 25 to 35. The first several years would be spent on building assets of lower order. The community can go on building assets of higher order for example, warehousing, small-scale industries, processing industries, etc. in the subsequent years. These processes are bound to give the impetus to increasing cooperative activities involving more and more women of childbearing age.

Though Bengalis are great travellers when the Reserve Bank permits, I have often found it very difficult to persuade many of my academic friends and colleagues to travel even twenty miles out of Calcutta to see things for themselves. The only person who occasionally succeeded in tempting people out on short visits to the villages of West Bengal was the late Daniel Thorner. But then, he was a legendary American and it became a matter of fashion and prestige to be seen with him in a village. Except for a band of dedicated and ideologically motivated young men and women in the recent past, but then they are a group whose enterprise and heroism I can only honour and salute from a distance—Rural West Bengal hardly exists in the metropolitan academic world except in the pages of books and numbers waiting to be reassessed. For far too long Calcutta has been like Boston as it was ridiculed in 1919.

And this is good old Boston,
The home of the bean and the cod,
Where the Lowells talk to the Cabots,
And the Cabots talk only to God.

Stung by the ridicule, Boston began to talk to the rest of the world, and now MIT talks to everybody. I hope we will be talking to the world of rural West Bengal.

(Concluded)

CPC Owes An Explanation

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE downfall of Lin Piao is not an entirely internal matter of the CPC. It has already created an unhealthy division among the Indian revolutionaries, with the very real possibility of this division proving self-destructive. Therefore regardless of what the CPC says, we have to take an attitude on the question, an attitude which is in conformity with the best interests of the Indian revolution.

When Comrade Charu Mazumdar singled out guerilla warfare as the only form of struggle and the annihilation programme as the only correct method of developing it under Indian conditions, he was of course basing himself on the well-known thesis propounded by Lin Piao in his "People's War". Because a succinct formulation of the role of guerilla warfare in mobilising the masses against the enemy is not there in any of the Chairman's works, CM naturally had to defend himself and his thesis on the authority of Lin Piao. In 1969-70, no one dared question this authority. Their only alternative was to bypass his authority and to attempt to confuse the cadre with quotations from the Chairman's texts torn out of context. This is not the place to go into the validity of their arguments but it should be pointed out that the years of armed struggle have fully vindicated CM's basic line on armed struggle and helped to establish a clear line of demarcation between Marxist-Leninists and revisionists of various hues.

All was well so long as Lin Piao was firmly in the saddle and authority flowed down from the Chairman through the Vice-Chairman to CM. Then came the most severe jolt, when history snatched the most important link that connected CM with the Chairman. It was not just an individual committing a crime and getting punished. So far as the Indian revolution was concerned it had serious political implications. It placed the whole guiding line of CM's thinking open to and helpless in face of attacks from revisionists. The ex-

tent to which CM relied on the authority of the then Vice-Chairman can be appreciated from the fact that he had called upon the cadres to establish the authority of Comrade Lin Piao as the only means of establishing the Chairman's thinking on Indian soil.

The national authority of CM was understood to be the manifestation, under Indian conditions, of the international authority of Mao Tse-tung Thought. Comrade Lin Piao remained a crucial link in this chain by virtue of his brilliant thesis on people's war, the even more brilliant report to the 9th Congress and above all, by virtue of his having risen to the status of being the closest comrade-in-arms of and successor to the Chairman himself. And here, for the first time, the role of authority in the revolution was explicitly spelled out when party cadres accepted CM as the only sure guarantee of ultimate victory. This is completely in line with the history of Marxism-Leninism, beginning right from Marx-Engels through Lenin to Mao Tse-tung. And let there be no ambiguities here—Authority is science, authority is the correct revolutionary politics and hence makes no mistakes. Theoretically, one may point out that even Marx committed mistakes. True, but they were mistakes in relation to and as proved by objective history but not in relation to the subjective level of understanding displayed by most other contemporary intellectuals. Since the Communist Party's understanding of the objective situation is in the last analysis subjective, the only way to ensure that the maximum correspondence exists between the subjective and the objective is to acknowledge the theoretical authority as infallible.

Question of Authority

Such is the Marxist-Leninist understanding of the question of authority, an understanding that has been borne out by the experience of all genuine communist parties. The history of the

party of Lenin and that of the Chairman teaches us that the revolutionary party grows only around a single individual and that the correct politics has always been associated with the thinking of an individual. In inner-party struggles cadres had invariably to adhere strictly to the thinking of an individual in their fight against all erroneous lines. When the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party threatened to reject Lenin's proposal for seizure of power by a numerical majority, Lenin reacted by appealing directly to the rank and file. The Cultural Revolution was victorious precisely because the correct politics was always associated with the thinking of the Chairman. The struggle between the lines within the party is not for identifying the right line from the wrong line, but a struggle to identify the wrong line and destroy it with the help of the right line. From the point of view of revolutionary practice, the immediate question that faces any party worker, namely that of the guiding line, remains impossible to solve so long as he remains a victim of doubts and vacillations as regards his faith in the revolutionary authority. Thus the problem of the correct line is immediately the problem of identifying the revolutionary authority.

The two most significant outcomes of the Cultural Revolution in China were undoubtedly (1) the emergence of Lin Piao as the most trusted lieutenant of the Chairman; (2) the emergence of the leftists as a powerful group within the Communist Party under the leadership of Comrade Lin. Unfortunately these two outcomes were too short-lived. Before even two years had ended after the 9th Congress Comrade Lin Piao was to be denounced as a revisionist and declared to have died in a plane crash. Two years dated the 10th Congress sanctioned his removal from the party and the government and that was the end of it—or so they thought.

Actually Chou En-lai, in confining his 10th Congress report to a much simplified account of the 'crimes' of Lin Piao, very conveniently forgot one most important aspect of the Vice-Chairman—that of his having acquired the stature of an international proletarian revolu-

tionary leader, a status to which the CPC itself had elevated him in the previous Congress, with the Chairman's blessings. Then of course, just as the CPC in the fifties did not grant the CPSU its right to vilify its leader Stalin as it pleased, because Stalin during his years stood at the head of the international communist movement and as such criticism of Stalin could not have been accepted as a strictly inner-party affair, so also in the case of Lin Piao, the world people in general, and the fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties particular have the right to demand to know more about the alleged 'crimes' of Lin Piao than what has been dished out. And if the charges are true, the CPC that can be expected from the CPC is self-criticism for its having recklessly elevated a potential assassin to the status of "the closest comrade-in-arms of and successor" to the Chairman and thus imposing his authority on the international communist movement with its disastrous consequences.

Going through Chou's report to the 10th Congress, one is struck by the fact that although 90% of the report confines itself to a denunciation of Lin Piao, none of the charges can be substantiated from Lin Piao's known writings. That Lin Piao planned to assassinate the Chairman rings hollow, in the absence of any political confrontation between the two.

Which leads one to suspect that the issues over which differences arose were even more decisive than what appears on the surface. And unfortunately events just before and after the downfall of Lin Piao go to confirm precisely this suspicion of ours.

For an Indian revolutionary, the disappearance of Lin Piao and the sudden and simultaneous stoppage of all references to Charu Mazumdar and the CPI(ML) over Peking Radio could not strike as entirely coincidental. Charu Mazumdar of course identified himself totally with Lin Piao. Could it have been the reason behind Peking Radio's suddenly enforced silence on the Indian Revolution? Not only that, six months later when CM was arrested and murdered by the Indian reactionaries at the behest of their Soviet revisionist mas-

ters, Peking Radio did not consider it even worthy of mention, although, when President Allende of Chile, admittedly a heroic anti-imperialist soldier, laid down his life in an uncompromising struggle, Chou En-lai lost no time in praising his martyrdom. We are not questioning whether what Chou did was right or wrong, but surely CM deserved a better deal. Since 1971 September, still this day, the CPC has not had a single word to say about Naxalbari or about the CPI(ML) or about the martyrdom of our beloved leader. What then is the sense of proletarian internationalism?

Ceylon 1971 was one more case in point where the Indian reactionaries, the Soviet revisionists and the CPC, for once at least, united in extending their support and help to bolster up a tottering reactionary regime.

Proletarian Internationalism

The policy of peaceful co-existence and non-interference may be cited as the reasons, although it does not explain why Chou went out of his way to support the government against an uprising which, even if petty bourgeois, was definitely anti-imperialist. As a matter of fact, however, the policy of non-interference has to be understood in the light of the general line of foreign policy of a ruling Communist Party which cannot be anything but proletarian internationalism, the essence of which consists in extending wholehearted support, both moral and material, to the national liberation movements in other countries. Non-interference and moral cum-material support for armed struggles are incompatible only when the one is metaphysically counterposed to the other, as is regularly done by the reactionaries. For a communist, however non-interference reserves and leaves untouched his right to support the armed struggle. In fact the whole policy of peaceful co-existence is subordinate to the general policy of proletarian internationalism and hence under no circumstances can the dictates of the latter be sacrificed or ignored even temporarily in order to preserve the former. The CPC's criticism of Khrushchevite foreign policy began precisely on this question of prin-

ciple. Nearly 15 years have passed and the CPC seems to have arrived exactly at the point where Khrushchev began. In fact the parallels are even more striking—and disturbing. Stalin and the CPSU, badly battered by a devastating war, sacrificed proletarian internationalism to peaceful co-existence in the hope that it would help protect socialism in their country. In the process, they strengthened only the hands of revisionists within the party and their very purpose was defeated. The universal truth of a political principle was subordinated to the temporary needs of a tactical gain and it cost everyone dearly. Faced with a similar situation and with the very real possibility of the Soviet revisionist fools embarking on a reckless adventure against China, the CPC is very busy mending its fences with everyone else. In this process however, proletarian internationalism seems to have become an unfortunate casualty. How else can one explain the fact that the CPC is less concerned about the fate of world revolution today than at any time before? Granted that the Soviet threat is very real and that China has to equip itself to face it, is it not a deviation to cite it as an excuse for China soft-peddalling the nature of the contradiction in the semi-colonial countries between the masses of the people and U.S. imperialism? Is it not a wilful attempt on the part of a group within the CPC to change the colour of China's foreign policy and under-estimate the strength of the world people in general and the Chinese people in particular? In an era when revolution is the main trend, what can be a surer guarantee for victory of socialism not only in China but in the whole world than revolution itself? Was Lin Piao not saying the truth when he proclaimed that even if China were attacked from all sides, by the combined armies of the U.S. and Japanese imperialism, Soviet revisionism and the Indian and Taiwanese reactionaries, the Chinese people could take on them all at once, would submerge them in the ocean of their population and drown them in their people's war? Wasn't he, by implication, correctly estimating the strength of the two warring social systems? Is it not true that his confidence sprang from a correct grasp of the

Chairman's statement that "there is the possibility of a Third World War; but still revolution is the main trend" and that "either the revolution will prevent a world war or world war will give rise to revolutions"? The "Left adventurism of Lin Piao, which is dreaded in the West but which in fact is the quintessence of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought, stands out in sharp contrast to the guarded diplomacy of Chou En-lai, praised by the Western press for wise pragmatism.

Foreign Policy

It is curious and interesting to note that revisionism, in ruling communist parties, has as its point of origin the party's foreign policy. And it is here that other fraternal parties smell it most readily for the simple reason that they are the ones who are immediately affected by it. But revisionism does not confine itself to foreign policy alone. Its manifestations are bound to be found in the internal policies also. But here we are in no position to judge things, because whatever information comes out is too meagre and unreliable to merit any analysis. But certain things can definitely not be ignored. For instance, the triumphal return of sworn revisionists and their instantaneous elevation to positions of the highest authority. Here we have on the one hand sworn and feared leftists like Lin Piao and Chen Po-ta being denounced as traitors and on the other hand proven revisionists like Teng Hsiao-ping quietly making it to the top! Perhaps we have no right, no sound basis for questioning their return to power but...well, one does feel uneasy.

The only political criticism that Chou levels against Lin Piao, that he gave primacy to production over politics

sounds incredible. The truth behind this charge can never be verified. Those who still have absolute faith in the CPC can perhaps swallow it. As a party worker, of course, one must have absolute faith in the party and its theoretical authority. But when faith in one authority is sought to be destroyed by the very party which gave him that status and which gives such explanations as that he wrote himself into the constitution as the Chairman's successor behind the Chairman's back, faith in the party itself is bound to be shaken. As such one is left with no alternative but to view things through the prism of his own experience, with the help of the politics of his own national authority who in this case is Charu Mazumdar.

The Indian revolution is already at the crossroads. Here we are, working in a party that has two major and sincere groups, accepting the same national authority but differing on the Lin Piao affair. Theoretically both factions have their weak points, as regards their attitude towards Lin Piao. As far as armed struggle itself is concerned, however, both the factions, accepting as they do CM's authority on the Indian Revolution, are the ultimate guarantors of victory, provided they do not turn the above contradiction on the Lin Piao affair into an antagonistic one.

And to the CPC a few words. Perhaps the above analysis of ours is wrong. Perhaps our understanding of the role of theoretical authority is wrong. Yes, we have deliberately ignored the role of the Chairman in this whole affair. But in any case, the CPC owes a detailed explanation to all the other fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties of the world.

— x —

(This is what the pro-Lin Piao group of Naxalites—which is reported to be responsible for the armed actions taking place here and there—thinks of the Lin Piao affair.)

The Prophets Of Doom

RAMADHAR

DESPATCHES emanating from Hong Kong, Taipeh, Moscow and a number of other places, published in the Indian press, have long been describing all mass movements in China as "power struggles" of various dimensions in "China's power hierarchy" which, depending on the intensity of the particular movement, would predictably lead to collapse and disintegration of the new Chinese society. If these predictions had had a grain of truth in them, China's new social structure would have collapsed, not only once but many times over, by now.

China has never concealed anything about the continuous struggle that has been going on there ever since the establishment of the People's Republic, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. They have always owned it and described it as a struggle between two lines—socialism and capitalism, or between communism and revisionism. This struggle is obviously an integral part of the process of restructuring their society.

The Cultural Revolution and other mass movements have only been accentuated and intensified forms of this ceaseless struggle between the two lines. Mao has repeatedly emphasised that this struggle, embodying cultural revolutions and other forms, will continue indefinitely, possibly for generations, till the accumulated thought-patterns and habits governed by bourgeois cum feudal cultural values (stored up in the psyche of the nation for almost 4000 years) have been totally eliminated and replaced by proletarian cultural values. True, this struggle has sometimes assumed seemingly unmanageable proportions which kindled hopes of disintegration of China in the hearts of many anti-China diehards, but their prophesies have repeatedly proved false and the Chinese new social order has not only survived their worst predictions but grown from strength to strength.

In this context, why does it not occur to them to examine whether these strug-

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gles are a vital part of an essential churning process that has been going on in China in the pursuit of evolving and building a new order of society, based on proletarian values or are they, as these prophets of doom would have us believe, a form of personal power struggle within "the Chinese power hierarchy", of the kind with which we are so familiar in other parts of the world? Why don't they examine this question deeply and scientifically rather than continue their futile exercise of guessing and predicting a collapse of the new political system there?

Or when they smell a "power struggle" in any and every kind of mass upsurge in China, are they not projecting their own conditioned reflexes into the Chinese situation which happens to be entirely different from what they are capable of visualising, or what they are used to? If they want to understand this process correctly should they not judge it in terms of China's new value system and thus on its own merits?

Moreover, they conveniently forget that a large body of evidence, emanating from a host of unbiased and independent sources, sometimes published even in the Indian press, has conclusively proved that the Communist regime in China is extremely popular with the Chinese masses. In such a situation, how can any broad-based and organised attempt be made to overthrow a popular leadership of this kind? Obviously it is wishful thinking on the part of those who have some kind of a vested interest in the disintegration of the Chinese Communist system.

Lin Piao Affair

It seems that the Lin Piao affair has come very handy to these prophets of doom. Even though he failed to usurp power, his position of eminence, particularly, as the proclaimed successor to Mao, and therefore with the extensive network of influence that he wielded, held out a promise that, at last, their expectations, their hearts' desires, would be fulfilled in the wake of the turmoil that followed his fall. But, alas! that too proved no better and brought no results. However, it may be worthwhile for us, in the context of current predic-

tions by these prophets of doom of "power struggles in China", to examine the Lin Piao episode in some depth.

Possibly Lin Piao, having been elevated to the position next to Mao and proclaimed his successor, felt suddenly tempted to get rid of him by conspiratorial device. The very fact that when discovered, he made an air dash to the Soviet Union and died on the way in an air crash, lends credence to the report that he had some prior links and understanding with the Soviet Union which, as the whole world knows, has been fondly waiting for a capitalist restoration in China and for this purpose has been plotting internal subversion and a pre-emptive nuclear thrust on that country. However, considering Lin's total record before his seemingly sudden confrontation with Mao it is likely that his links with the Soviet leadership, which is violently anti-Mao, though deep, must not have been very old.

Lin Piao's is a peculiarly sad case of a precipitous fall from dazzling heights and has all the suspense and drama of Rudolph Hess's flight from Germany to Britain, of course, in a very different context, during the Second World War. Under some demoniacal impulse or spell of a binding irresistible temptation that gripped him, something must have suddenly gone gravely wrong in the subterranean recesses of his being which snapped the ethical and spiritual process working behind his revolutionary zeal, that had sustained him all the way to becoming Mao's closest comrade-in-arms and his successor. Thereafter it must have all been a touch-and-go affair, a blind process within the darkness which enveloped him and, as indicated earlier, a precipitous fall downhill. The Soviet leadership's agents, always waiting in the wings, must have at once acted to take maximum advantage of this sudden turn of good fortune for them, when Mao's own successor needed the support of the Soviet leadership for his own dark designs, and thus the deal must have been struck. This is what makes Lin Piao's crime unpardonable. If Lin Piao had only differed with Mao's mass line, he could, at worst, have met the same fate at the hands of the people as Liu Shao-chi did. But his cons-

piracy to assassinate Mao and, when discovered, his flight towards Moscow place him in a very different category. He should naturally be looked upon as the Judas of modern China, though he could not succeed in his design of getting Mao out of his way.

Confucius is bracketed with Lin Piao in the present vigorous campaign because Lin needed the authority of a powerful father-figure to support his claim and condone his action if he succeeded in eliminating Mao from his way. Some kind of a resurrection of Confucius would have pelted to tide over the situation following the removal of Mao from the Chinese scene. This must have made the Chinese leadership conscious of the dangers of the traditional authority of Confucius which still lingered in the subconscious of the Chinese people. So they decided to fight it.

While Mao is still alive it is easy to fight the traditional authority of Confucius. Many of his rules of conduct, which may have been valid 2600 years ago, are certainly not relevant to present-day China. The doctrines of Confucius, visualising a class pattern of society, by such declarations as: "Those who work with their minds govern, those who work with their hands are governed", "He who excels in learning can be officials", and similar exploitative and derogatory teachings about women,* symbolise decadent values of a bygone age which have no place in the fabric of the socialist society Mao has built up in China. It is high time that the moral authority of Confucius, the prophet of pre-feudal China, be debunked.

Even otherwise it is wrong to describe the Lin Piao episode as a mere power struggle in the "communist power hierarchy". As already indicated, it is in fact a case of sudden moral failure on the part of a high-placed individual causing mental imbalance within him.

* "Only women and low-class men are hard to keep. If allowed to approach you, they show no respect; if kept at a distance they complain".

Lu Hsun, the great Chinese writer, derisively asked: "there is no knowing whether this included his (Confucius's) mother or not."

and making him power-crazy and as such determined to turn back the wheels of history—and, of course, futilely so. Let us understand that a conspiracy is never a power struggle; for the latter follows some rules of the game. (It has, at least, to seek support within the hierarchy itself, if not among the people.) Conspiracy has none.

Ford Goes To Japan

OSAMU NAKAZAWA

TOKYO: Though the details of his schedule have not been settled, sometime between November 18 and 22 Gerald Ford will be the first U.S. President to visit Japan. The last U.S. President who tried, Dwight Eisenhower, was forced into a humiliating cancellation by the great 1960 people's uprising against the renewal of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. But if Ford's visit will be a first, it will hardly be a triumph; on the contrary he can be expected to be greeted here with deep widespread hostility.

Opponents of Ford's visit note that he is also going to stop in South Korea, obviously an effort to help the Pak dictatorship to survive. It is widely believed that the true purpose of his visit to Asia to establish a U.S.-Japan-South Korea military alliance to fill the gap which will be left when the U.N. cover for U.S. troops in South Korea is withdrawn.

A further source of conflict is the recent congressional testimony of retired U.S. Admiral Larocque, in which he revealed that the U.S. has for years been bringing nuclear weapons into Japan despite the professed "Three Anti-nuclear Principles" of the Japanese Government. This announcement, which has been followed by a flood of supporting evidence from a variety of sources, has triggered a sudden upsurge of public anger against both the U.S. and the Japanese governments.

Moreover, even the Japanese Government has reasons to be nervous about Ford's visit. There are fears that he may demand a 15 per cent reduction

in oil consumption or announce new restrictions on U.S. food exports to Japan.

Both the communist and the socialist parties have announced their opposition to the visit. Moreover, it happens that the annual autumn labour struggles will come to a peak on November 18 and 19 with a national 24-hour strike, and one can be sure that the unions will take full advantage of Ford's presence.

There are other possibilities. In the last two months the Tokyo headquarters of both the Mitsubishi and Mitsui corporations—two of Japan's greatest empire-builders—have been bombed, with an anti-imperialist group claiming credit. While this kind of terrorism has been strongly repudiated both by the public and most opposition parties and trade unions, it is certainly possible that something similar might be attempted during Ford's visit. The Government is mobilising at least 20,000 police.

It is quite possible that when the U.S. President departs from Japan, he will leave behind a country more uneasy than the one he entered.

(New Asia News)

A Thin Story

BY A DRAMA CRITIC

SAMARESH Bose who once wrote novels like *Ganga*, *Srimati Cafe* and *B.T. Roader Dhare* has degenerated into a hack writer turning out novels which are infantile and meaningless. Recently at the Academy of Fine Arts, an amateur theatre group 'Shabdarp' staged Samaresh Bose's *Ram Naam Kebalam*. The story was pretty thin and bordered on the unreal. Three old cronies, seemingly fed up with their routine-bound lives, decide to leave their bolt-holes and go on a motor trip to Bihar. What happens after that is what the play is about. The situations that crop up in the course of their meanderings are farcical and fail to leave any impression. What little interest the play manages to arouse is sustained almost wholly by the efforts of Shanti Sinha, one of the most amusing old cronies. The high-pitched voice and the prudish

attitude towards alcohol and women leads to some merriment but the rest act rather woodenly and blunder along self-consciously. Mita Mazumdar, the sole female character, comes in breezily and relieves the tedium with a dose of effortless acting. Towards the latter half of the play all the men revolve round her. All the minor parts were rather hamfistedly performed by the actors who did not seem fully at ease.

A very long time was spent in changing from one scene to another. The effect of driving through the countryside at night was reasonably well brought out by the shadow of leaves flying past overhead.

Letters

Problems Of Unification

In the debate on the problems of unification of the revolutionary forces of India going on in *Frontier*, the article "On the Problems of Unification" (13 July, 1974) is the most practical, non-sectarian and politically the most developed one and 'A step in the right direction' (September 7, 1974) is also very good. I have one point to make in regard to the main article. The CPI(ML) comrades who are themselves making a revaluation should not be reluctant to learn from the masses—including the masses of other revolutionary groups. They should pay heed to the fact that what had been pointed out by others in 1969 and 1970 is being said now by the CPI(ML) comrades. To ignore it will lead to close-doorism. One serious cadre of the CPI(ML) says (August 24, 1974) that "the essentiality of mass organisation and mass

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struggle... has not been linked up with the basic question of building up of the base areas, formation of PLA and also that of the United Front". First of all, we must have a clear conception of the purpose of mass organisation and mass struggle. Chairman Mao says, "In China war is the main form of struggle and the army is the main form of organisation and mass struggles are also extremely important and indeed indispensable and in no circumstances to be overlooked, but their purpose is to serve the war".

As the purpose of mass organisation and mass struggle in India for the last fifty years was to realise some charter of demands, and not to serve war, the mass organisations and mass struggle have remained in the quagmire of economism. Secret and underground mass organisation must be formed within open and legal mass organisations and mass struggle led by revisionist and bourgeois parties. (But when the revolutionary mass organisation itself is capable of organising open mass struggle, it must initiate various forms of mass struggle of its own accord and its own method and tactics.)

During the last railway strike, some revolutionary leaders and cadres, constantly remaining with the struggling railway workers, made a very bold attempt to convince them that even victory in the strike cannot give them real relief. Only the people's democratic revolution can give them real benefit. They should think and act in terms of building up base areas, forming PLA etc. and their struggle should be led accordingly. Thus the struggle in some important railway places took different forms (resistance struggle with any instruments available) at the sight of which the revisionists began to tremble and Dange babbled. The strike may have been defeated, but revolutionary mass organisations, however small they may be, have been organised. And these are preparing and expanding themselves. They have begun to supply cadres, money, clothes, medicine etc. to selected places in the countryside for building up base areas and PLA. The railway strike itself was a legal struggle and when the railway workers in parti-

cular places started resistance struggle against brutal suppression by the ruling classes, illegal struggle was combined with the legal one.

The same comrade has raised the question of how the peasants' economic struggle should be connected with their armed struggle. The answer is not easy. However, one can relate some experiences. In some zone in U.P., one revolutionary leader began to work among the peasantry. After recruiting a few peasant cadres and after a thorough investigation it was decided that an economic movement like the construction of a dam, to save the villages, might be started. The movement met with a great response from all sections of the peasantry, barring landlords and some rich peasants, and the dam was actually constructed by the people themselves. But as the interests of landlords and rich peasants were hampered, they instituted several court cases against the militant peasants, including one or two peasant cadres. At once, a meeting was called. Some peasants wanted to beat up the culprits but it was decided that whoever gives witness against the arrested peasants would be beaten to death; that at the same time preparations for armed clash with landlords should be made. The news of the decision spread like fire and nobody dared to give evidence in the court. As a result, all the arrested were released. This event enthused the masses and they were ready to make greater sacrifices. Thus one guerilla squad was formed. But with the advent of the rains, the landlords decided to cut down the dam. The peasants decided to resist with whatever arms they possessed. The landlords were compelled to retreat, but in a clash one landlord was killed and several peasants were injured, and one of them later succumbed to the injuries. But the dam was saved and the peasants are preparing for the next phase of struggle with greater mobilisation.

Again, at Kanksha (near Durgapur, West Bengal), at the initial stage, the movement was launched for the enhancement of the wage rate to peasant labourers and various legal movements, including gheraoing of BDO, went on. But the starving peasants became impa-

tient and asked what would be the use of the arms they possessed, if they die of starvation. It was decided that grains going out from the villages would be seized and distributed among the distressed peasants. Thus armed struggle began. In a later phase, a huge amount of paddy was cut down by the peasants who were protected by armed guerilla squads. It is needless to say that everywhere, with the launching of economic movements, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought was propagated among the peasant masses and it was explained to them that their economic gains would never be final without armed struggle. Whether in U.P. or in Kanksha or in Hazaribagh, movements which were initially economic struggles were later on combined with armed struggle and at a certain stage armed struggle will be the main form of struggle. The agrarian programme which is an economic issue can only be materialised through armed struggle, i.e. people's war. Hence, throughout the revolution there always remains the question of linking up economic struggle with armed struggle.

Thirdly, the comrade has raised the question, "what are basic differences in organisation, method and slogan and in the line of action between two types of mass organisation, one led by the CPI (ML)?" and the other led by revisionists like the CPI(M)? So far as organisation is concerned, our mass organisation must be an underground organisation till we can mobilise a vast majority of the people to our side, whereas revisionist mass organisations are always open, as the purpose of their mass organisation is not to serve war but the ruling classes. But this tactic cannot be a rigid one throughout the revolution. With change in the situation, keeping the underground organisation for open and legal mass struggle may be developed. For instance, an underground organisation at some railway places greatly helped the striking railway employees to lead the struggle to a higher form whereas the revisionist leaders of the CPI(M), (not to speak of the CPI) always tried to turn back the wheel of the movement. Hence our organisation, method and slogan and the line of action are fundamentally different from those of the CPI(M). Our mass orga-

nisation is generally an underground one, our method is democratic centralism and mass-line and not bureaucratic and commandist method, our slogan (principal) is to serve the war and our line of action is that of resistance struggle and launching of mass movements like strikes etc. when the masses themselves realise the necessity to launch such movements while the revisionists always practise bureaucratic and commandist methods. For example, often decisions to strike and to withdraw the strike are made by revisionist leaders and not by the workers themselves. The workers are only to carry out the decision, not to participate in making decision—this is sheer bureaucratism and commandism so long practised by revisionists of all hues.

Fourthly, the comrade says. "Time and again we come across the mass line; but what is actually meant in the concrete conditions of India is never clearly stated and analysed". At the outset it must be emphasised that the mass-line cannot be practised by any leader or cadre who has not fully integrated with the masses i.e. the workers and peasants. One recent example. As a result of power rationing the management of a factory decided to stop work on Saturdays and Sundays. The CPI(M)-led union began to agitate that Tuesday, which was a closed day before the rationing of electricity, should continue to be so instead of Saturday, while the Congress-led union agreed to the decision of the management. Curiously enough, none of the two protested against the wage-cut for one more day in a week. The revolutionary cadres raised this vital question among the workers and most of them realised the hollowness of the leadership of both unions. The workers approached our cadres to lead the movement against the wage-cut. Again, our cadres said that the line of action against the wage-cut must be decided by all the workers and they were always at their service to guide them from the taking of decisions to and during the launching of struggle. This is an example of mass-line, since the slogan of the revolutionary cadres became the slogan of the masses of the factory. In the previous examples of U.P. and Kanksha also the mass-line was, and, is still

practised. In U.P., our cadres gave the slogan for the construction of the dam, but they themselves did not take the decision to start the construction work and impose it on the people of the concerned villages. Until the people realised the necessity of the dam and they themselves took the initiative to start work, no final decision was made. When the people accepted the slogan as their own after innumerable meetings—open and secret—the final decision to construct the dam and the consequent line of action, i.e., resistance struggle were adopted by the people themselves. In Kanksha also, whether the grains would be seized or not, or the paddy would be cut down or not, was decided by the people themselves. In short, when the slogan of the real communists becomes the slogan of the people through democratic and persuasive methods, it can be said that the mass-line has been practised.

A Cadre of MCC
Calcutta

Apropos the talk of unity of the CPI(ML), party organisations exist with a Central Organising Committee and three to four Central Committees with an equal number of general secretaries. Most of the cadres including the COC admit the wrong ideological and tactical path followed by the party under the leadership of Charu Mazumdar. The CC members are behaving like fools when they admit that in giving sanction to the wrong policies of C.M. they were swayed by the personality of one man (S.N.S., S. K. Misra, Mahender Singh are exceptions to this). Such a CC has no right to claim to be a CC and to decide about unity. The question of unity is not only of the CPI(ML) but all the communist revolutionaries. Wasn't the ousting of the Andhra communist revolutionaries also a conspiracy of the leadership? It conspired from the very beginning of party formation. For this the whole CC is responsible. But the greatest responsibility was that of Charu Mazumdar, who conspired to finish the revolutionary upsurge in India. He followed an anti-Marxist-Leninist path in the name of Marxism-Leninism. Like the Soviet revisionist clique, which ex-

ploits the toiling people of the world in the name of Lenin, C.M. betrayed the Indian masses in the name of Marx, Lenin and Mao. He never acted on the principle of democratic centralism, and even ignored the correct advice of friendly parties. He can well be compared to Li-Li-san, Wang Ming and Lin Piao of China. As the CPC has denounced them all, we in India should denounce C.M. and this is the time to do it. Denouncing him may cause some further setback among communist revolutionaries, but ultimately it will lead towards a stronger unity, a unity with a purpose. Without such a bold stand, unity will be only on the surface.

Cadres of CPI(ML)
Punjab State

Not By Satyagraha

Offering full support to the movement conducted by J. P. Narayan, one might be reasonably afraid that 'the entirely new weapon as devised by Gandhi' is too inadequate to be used for a 'total revolution'. Gandhi's political creed based on love, non-violence and assumption of human goodness in any individual failed to notice the operation of certain laws of social development. He could not understand the social forces working for communal disruption. The Hindu-Muslim conflicts were the result not of anything inherently wrong in the mass of Hindus and Muslims, but because certain social forces were working to incite them against each other. With this dwarfed frame of mind, Gandhi was probably more afraid of unity in the struggle against reactionary elements than even of communal riots. His dread of the militant unity of Hindus and Muslims manifested itself during the RIN revolt: "A combination between the Hindus and the Muslims and others for the purpose of violent action is unholy and it will lead to and probably is a preparation for mutual violence".

No serious student of history will agree that India could have been free by use of the Gandhian variety of satyagraha alone without the sequence of national effort for at least fifty years and the great postwar upsurge which swept

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over the country in 1945-46. The people's deviations from the rails of satyagraha, rather than satyagraha itself, put fear in the alien administration. The achievement of freedom 'with such little bloodshed and violence'—a credit claimed for Gandhi by his ardent disciples—is also unhistorical. Apart from the martyrs unwedded to non-violence, the process of transfer of power meant inhuman suffering for millions of people, hardly less than the suffering involved in perhaps any of history's great revolutions.

Today, the situation has turned from bad to worse. The political life of the Indian people is curbed. Democracy is at stake because of the dictatorial policy of the ruling party. Hoarding, smuggling and blackmarketing dominate the entire production and distribution of commodities. Rampant corruption, ruthless repression, total reliance on ordinances and repressive measures, galloping inflation, wage-freeze and spiralling of prices, the eviction of agricultural labourers and poor peasants, unemployment and frustration among students due to the prevalent educational system, etc.—to all these ghastly problems, the ready Gandhian explanation would be 'degeneration in the character of man'! For 'the greatest pathfinder of the present century' as imagined by J.P., frowned on the theory

of class rule, class struggle, derided the concepts of feudal domination and capitalist exploitation and overlooked social development.

Pramatha Sengupta
Howrah

Shri I. K. Shukla has contributed an excellent article, entitled "The Academic South Block" (September 28). But while discussing the reasons for the transfer of power in 1947, he swings to the other extreme of attributing it to everything else except the movements launched by the Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji. Let it not be forgotten that the socialist leaders mentioned by him (Lohia, J.P., Aruna Asaf Ali, Achyut Patwardhan) were within the Congress fold then. They participated in the struggle as Congressmen and never claimed that they had organised any separate movement outside the fold of the "Quit India" movement. Gandhiji too never said that they were wrong in what they did. He refused to condemn the element of violence that had crept into the movement. Moreover, these leaders and most of the factors mentioned by Shri Shukla, were themselves the product of a long-drawn-out freedom struggle under Gandhiji's leadership for a quarter century. The discontent and disaffection in the army and navy also should be largely attributed to this pro-

tracted struggle. Who else was responsible for it? Was there any other process at work for almost 30 years preceding India's independence?

This does not mean that I want to suggest that independence was won exclusively by the Congress and Gandhiji. There were other factors also though even they themselves were, directly or indirectly, influenced by the most dominant factor of Satyagraha-struggle launched by the Congress from time to time. And it was in no way "falsifying" history if the most predominant factor get the credit for the achievement of freedom.

In the global context, the Second World War was, perhaps, the largest indirect factor in hastening the process of freedom of India as also that of many other countries. Another notable contributory factor, in the case of India, was the emergence of the Labour Party in power in Britain immediately after the war. Shri Shukla has said nothing about it.

The Congress, under the leaderships of Nehru and Patel, and now under Nehru's daughter, has betrayed the people and the country. But it does not alter the facts of history relating to India's freedom and the role of the Congress then.

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