

### Strikes

In several States Government employees are on the warpath, demanding dearness allowance at Central Government rates, while Central Government employees themselves are demanding a need-based wage. The strike of non-gazetted staff in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh has spread, and in Bihar teachers are restless. U.P. may follow suit. West Bengal State Electricity Board workers threaten action. The argument that there is little money in the kitty does not go home when there is conspicuous spending and when no attempt is made to equalise disparities. The recent ostentation at Chandrapura during a brief visit by the Prime Minister — the DVC, in bad straits most of the time, is reported to have spent at least Rs. 5 lakhs for the occasion — will not boost the morale of the Biharis.

Among the many hazards strikers have to face is propaganda. It is a pity that the plight of patients in Patna hospitals has helped to create the impression that the strikers are callous. But if the hospital story were not there, saboteurs out to disrupt essential supplies would have been invented overnight. Railway firemen have been accused of holding up rice supplies to poor Kerala. The Centre's solicitude for Kerala and some other UF Governments which were ditched is famous, but a Keralan on very short and expensive rations at the moment may have a short memory and blame the firemen for his hardship. All this points to the need for continuous political education.

It is too early to tell whether the Central Government employees will strike. Trade union leaders in Delhi have been known to funk at the last moment. But the Government may leave the employees with no other option. Taking advantage of the disillusionment consequent on the UF Governments' failure to deliver the goods in many States, it has itself helped to raise the prices of many essential commodities with impunity, and its spell of cocksureness is still not over, as politicking parties, too busy with the coming mid-term elections, have not tried to organise any

movement against specific rises.

Industrial labour is looking on, angry and timid. In the present situation some factory owners are waiting for a chance to declare a lock-out to cut their losses, and the workers, after their experience in the past few months, know that any precipitate action, without intense preparation, will be playing into their hands. Talking tough is not enough.

Government employees have a seeming advantage over industrial workers. The Government—what a pity!—cannot lock itself out. Action by large numbers of its employees has a direct impact on public attention and utilities, while a strike in a large textile factory, for example, can be insulated from the general public for quite a time. But the extent of economic deprivation is becoming so wide that a point is being approached where both industrial workers and white-collar employees may be forced to co-ordinate their action. Co-ordination with the peasant movements that are breaking out here and there still seems a tall order.

### Liberated Areas

As the Paris talks drag on, reports of massive "infiltration" by North Vietnamese regulars into the South multiply and this is made to justify heavy raids by B-52 bombers. The fact is that the Vietcong, after the Tet and subsequent offensives, have been able to liberate innumerable "strategic" hamlets and villages, ensuring themselves a steady supply of workers, fighters and produce. The people in many liberated areas have elected people's liberation committees at village and hamlet level. Such elections have been completed in the liberated areas in Chau Thauhn, Gia Rai, Cai Nuoc, Nam Can, Thai Binh, Song Doc and Dam Doi districts. Since the beginning of this year, thousands of young people in the provinces of the Mekong delta have joined the People's Liberation Armed Forces and gone to the front line. In three months, more than 4,500 young people joined the PLAF in Ben Tre province. Three hundred teachers and students in the cities of Ben Tre, My Tho and Cao Lanh went over to the liberated areas.

would have been both appropriate and seemly.

India, larger wheat procurement than in neither here nor there. 1 million tonnes of extra output, would have been altogether odd if Government had stayed put at last level. A still more relevant question is the price at which the Government has been undertaken. Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh are the three States where procurement prices have soared—procurement has been at prices way above the market prices. It is being freely admitted that big farmers and traders bought wheat at Rs. 50-55 per quintal from the small peasants, and surrounded the grain to the Food Corporation of India at prices ranging from Rs. 76 and Rs. 81. Under these circumstances, it would have been difficult not to sell to the Govern-

ment. The impact of these high prices is being directly felt now, as the rise in the issue prices of wheat. If the imported wheat were available, the issue prices would have been still higher. This is the most serious quality of the so-called wheat revolution. Following the "revolution", the domestic price of wheat has further risen upwards and it costs easily 50% more to produce wheat in India than to import it.

It has given our aesthetic standards, a sharp dignity in issuing a stamp to mark this *non sequitur* of a revolution has reached a new depth. Despite the revolution, even this year, at least 50% of the wheat that will be distributed through the public distribution agencies will consist of imports. After the revolution, the prices will rise. Despite the issue of the stamp, there will be famine and starvation over large parts of the country. When you are; a Government can do so little to show in the way of improvement will make a mountain out of a molehill. It can only be done by gimmickry. It is as if a team of public relations officers have taken over the task of administering the country. A revolution a day can keep coming, but for how long?

and joined the army there. There were many cases of father and son joining up at the same time. Those remaining in the villages or hamlets are now in the guerilla forces which have been grown considerably.

Broad sections of the young have joined young shock brigades. In February and March, more than 4,000 young people in Chau Thanh, Long My and Phong Hiep districts of Can Tho province took part in the work of supporting the front. More than 500 young men and women of Binh Phuoc district, Long An province, joined the civilian work corps for long-term service in support of the front. Their motto is, "everything for the front, everything for the defeat of the enemy".

Peasants in the liberated areas of My Tho province have started an emulation campaign in public grain delivery for 1968. Many peasant households have delivered their quota of public grain for even 1969. In their efforts to develop production the peasants in the liberated areas in Long An province have dug a total of about one hundred small dams against sea water this year and transformed 8,000 hectares of single-crop fields into double-crop fields.

It is in view of these impressive developments in South Vietnam that the Hanoi daily *Nhan Dan* said that the Saigon puppet administration is like an empty gunny bag which the U.S. has tried in vain to make stand on its own. The destruction of "strategic hamlets" and the crushing of the puppet machine of control at the grassroots level has broken the backbone of the puppet administration. Its political failure is also seen in its utter isolation, and the growing prestige of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation and the emergence of the Vietnam Alliance of National Democratic and Peace Forces, ten of whose leaders have been sentenced to death in absentia.

#### NOTICE

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## De Gaulle's Decision

Less than six weeks before M. Couve de Murville replaced M. Pompidou as Prime Minister of France, General de Gaulle had declared that he would not change the Prime Minister "whose value, solidity, capacity deserves the homage of everyone". What the General refused to do at the height of the French crisis was evidently found desirable after order had been restored. The change is particularly intriguing in the context of M. Pompidou's handling of the crisis and the impressive vote of confidence that he, no less than the General, received in the elections. The Prime Minister had faithfully carried out the President's policies and held the country together when much of it rebelled against these policies. Yet the General apparently believes that he now needs a different Prime Minister to give effect to new policies. The social and economic reforms that the General wishes to introduce are by no means unacceptable to M. Pompidou, but the latter perhaps would have preferred methods different from those the President intends to adopt.

It is difficult to see M. Couve de Murville as the man most perfectly attuned to the tasks prescribed by the General. The cool, reserved and polished diplomat, with his upper-class Protestant background, does not seem the kind of man who would respond with warmth and energy to the General's programme of reforms or slogan of "participation". But the General probably counts upon one negative virtue of the man; the former Foreign Minister and lately Finance Minister will not show his personal feelings even when he disagrees or strongly disapproves; he will be an instrument totally at the General's disposal. M. Pompidou has been and will surely remain perfectly loyal, but he is not quite so good at effacing his own personality; in fact, his loyalty, it appears, has not prevented him from expressing occasional doubt and disagreement.

This does not mean that General de Gaulle has lost faith in the man who has served him so well. M. Pompidou remains his chosen successor; indeed, there is no other possible successor.

Unless the General himself stay on, no other candidate is M. Pompidou in a Presidential But, before any such election, he probably hopes to convince doubting follower that the decision has been unwarranted; M. Pompidou then come to recognize that the General had been right all along and thus be better able to carry on grand tradition. Or perhaps the General is simply guarding against possible failure of his immediate programme; he cannot be unwavering but the more fanatical will support the "participation" plan entirely. If the scheme fails, it would be another crisis, perhaps more than the last. At that moment the General could turn to M. Pompidou who would be unscathed, as he has hope both for Gaullism and for the of the Gaullist vision.

## Sabah

The issue over which the Philippines broke off diplomatic relations with Malaysia in 1963 has revived. Obviously restoration of diplomatic relations in 1966 could remove the bone of contention Sabah.

In March this year a Manila Corregidor, a little island at the tip of the Manila Bay, got headlines in the world Press. For, a survey of the mutiny "revealed" that the Philippine authorities were using Sabah, now part of the Malaysian Federation. President Marcos explained that the commandos being trained not for invasion of Sabah but for counter-insurgency in case foreign Communists attacked Philippines. But the "revelation" was enough to spark off a hyper-nationalist campaign in the Malaysian Press. Kuala Lumpur these days echoes the solemn pledge of fighting to the last drop of blood against a foreign invader. And strangely enough the Sabah issue which denied that the mutiny in Corregidor had anything to do with "liberation" of Sabah, has since picked up the campaign for taking Sabah issue to the World Court at UN. One wonders if the lead-

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## FRONTIER

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back to early 18th century...  
the Sultan of Sulu claimed to...  
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which claims to inherit the...  
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to Malaysia, the successor of...  
North Borneo Company, with the Philippines.

points to the lack of...  
evidence to support...  
claim that the Sultan of Sulu...  
ceded the cession of Sabah from...  
of Brunei. Moreover the...  
colonial masters of the Philip-...  
annexed the territories of...  
of Sulu, surrendered their...  
North Borneo by the Madrid...  
signed with the British in...  
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team. In 1963, when the...  
of Malaysia was formed, a...  
referendum in Sabah resulted...  
in Malaysia's favour. So if...  
by 'international law' and...  
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Sabah is sounder than that of...  
Philippines. But colonial claims...  
apart, the people of...  
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of the present claimants. The...  
Sabah, with its rubber planta-...  
and coconut groves, has...  
potential, however, counts...  
than any yellow parchment...  
by some sultan to some...  
centuries ago,

Another potential of Sabah has lately been discovered. Dispute over Sabah might indeed offer rich political dividends. President Macapagal of the Philippines had revived the Filipino claim to Sabah as an election strategy. And the trick paid off. Now with the Filipino Presidential election a few months away the Sabah issue has again been dragged from the cold storage. At a time when Huk insurgents control central Luzon, when poverty, corruption and widespread crime are driving larger and larger numbers of people against the Government, jingoistic frenzy over Sabah may serve a useful purpose. Moreover, since Suharto's Indonesia has veered round to back the Malaysian claim, Filipino super-patriots can also raise the bogey of Muslim encirclement of the Philippines.

Malaysian rulers are no innocent kids either. Tunku Abdul Rahman is a past master in inventing foreign peril at the time of elections. And election time is again drawing near. When General Suharto moved into the Presidential chair, the bogey of Indonesian aggression had to be buried. Stories of Chinese subversion also are not likely to wash. In such a bleak situation "news" of Filipino subversion in Sabah comes in very handy. However strange it may seem, the Philippine-Malaysian dispute over Sabah serves no one's purpose better than those of Messers Tunku and Marcos.

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## Price Of Dual Satellitism

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW Delhi's reaction to the Soviet decision on arms for Pakistan was like that of a jilted spinster wallowing in sloppy sentimentalism and self-pity. The story was planted on three hand-picked correspondents to build up public opinion against the deal and it was meticulously timed for President Zakir Husain's take-off for Moscow. Thereafter, as usual, the official spokesman maintained that he knew nothing about the Soviet decision.

There was something unedifying and clumsy about New Delhi's attempt to build up opinion against the deal. As clumsy as its attempts to keep back from the country the fact that the Soviet Union has been helping it to build up a terrific arsenal—Sukhai-7 fighter-bombers, sophisticated tanks, missiles and guns, submarines, all in addition to what was already coming and the MIGs. Soviet requests for submarine bases in the Indian Ocean were being heard with great sympathy in New Delhi once.

At the time of writing this despatch, the only "official" reaction to the development was the Prime Minister's statement. Everything else has to await the President's return and the Parliament session on July 22.

Non-official reactions have been weird. The Moscow-lining Press seems to have gone beyond its brief. The decision is only in principle, the supplies would only be token and it would largely be defensive equipment like ground-to-air missiles! Its reason for anger: the "pro-U.S. lobby" is utilising the occasion to rally forces against Mrs Gandhi. The Right Communist reaction is little different from that of the Jana Sanghi jingoists. The CPI's exception to Soviet arms supply to Pakistan would have made sense if it had condemned outright the Soviet game of setting off India and Pakistan on an arms race. Soviet mediation at Tashkent was followed by stepped up military aid to India and if Mr Kosy-

gin meant peace on the sub-continent, it could only be construed that he also wants a permanent Asian confrontation between India and China.

When Moscow jettisoned class struggle to replace it by cold war, non-alignment ceased to be a charlatan doctrine and was respectable enough in the eyes of every Soviet Prime Minister after Stalin. India had a leverage over the two Super-Powers, almost to the point of blackmailing them to part with all the aid she needed. But with the Super-Power interests converging on India, non-alignment has degenerated into dual satellitism.

The tension in West Asia is easing and the Soviet Union would like the tension to ease in South Asia. Very soon there will be Soviet arms dumps in West Asia and South Asia and all of them interchangeable like the CENTO arms. A Pakistani military delegation is reported to be visiting Iran to study the Soviet equipment supplied to Iran, for a let-in the projected deliveries to Pakistan. U.S. arms came to Pakistan once via Iran. Now Soviet arms would come via Turkey or Iran even if the Soviets back out on a formal deal one of these days.

Soviet calculations in South Asia need not prove wholly correct but there appears to be a logic to the new policy. Stability on the Indian sub-continent demands an early settlement of the Kashmir dispute. If India has to be kept in a permanent state of confrontation with China, it should be relieved of the problems arising out of a permanent threat from Pakistan. But even if the two governments on the sub-continent want a solution of the Kashmir dispute public opinion in both these countries is belligerent. The Soviet Union might think that supplying arms to Pakistan might have the effect of pressuring India into a more reasonable attitude on Kashmir. But this is where the Soviet Union is likely to prove wrong.

### "Balance"

The compulsions of Soviet policy are clear. India has to be against China. But since an immediate Kashmir settlement is not likely, Pakistan would also have to be kept to keep the balance between the two countries. (The old American policy was all for India and against Pakistan, it would have to thank the USSR for the muddle it is in. The Soviet policy on the Kashmir issue, once an unqualified support to India, has gradually changed into one of strict "equidistance." There is a point in New Delhi getting sentimental about it. A clear indication of a shift in the Soviet stand was given when Mr Kosygin visited New Delhi last, in April, and told Mrs Gandhi so many words that President Zakir Khan was her best bet and she had missed the bus now, the Kashmir question can never be solved.

By dumping arms on both India and Pakistan, the Soviet Union has made its "Asian presence". If Asians, Asians, you can always stage a coup. If India and Pakistan cannot reach a settlement, India would be weakened and can confront China for a long time. But once India makes up with the Soviet leverage over India would be lost. Instead its own confrontation with China would be nearer.

Mr Kosygin's platitudinous lecture Mrs Gandhi skirts the basic issue raised by her. It might be interesting but then New Delhi cannot take a long-term view of things. A long-term preparation to meet the Chinese threat (an invasion is forecast every October but it never comes) is understandable. But to be prepared for ever, assuming a state of permanent conflict with China, is not. Delhi's rigidity on the border with China has not paid off, and again demands for a meaningful dialogue with Peking are heard among the sensible people.

How would New Delhi go on now? If Moscow thinks its policy will lead to softening on Kashmir, it may be mistaken. The Prime Minister

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# The Yahoos In Vietnam

CHARAN GUPTA

DR. BENJAMIN Spock and four others have each been sentenced by a Boston judge to a prison term of two years and a fine of \$5000 for inciting American young men to evade the draft. In the eye of U.S. law, draft-dodging is criminal offence; Dr Spock, with all his eminence as the foremost child specialist in the country, is therefore guilty of aiding and abetting a criminal offence. He is a criminal, and has to be locked up.

From all present indications, the citizens of the United States, in the elections next November, are likely to supplant Lyndon Johnson by Richard Nixon. Much worse things may happen then. True, there are any number of brave Americans, conscientious Americans, Americans like Dr Spock, who are trying desperately to prevent the calamity of Nixon as the next President, but, after all, they are in a minority. The judgment of the Boston court is not all that irrelevant: Despite the "Hell, No! We Won't Go" slogan reverberating among college boys and girls, the bulk of the American people would seem to frown upon those who would prefer to leave Vietnam to the Vietnamese—or Asia to the Asians. A considerable number among them may be weary of the war, but they would not still consider that the war is unjust, or that the Americans had no business to go out to Vietnam in the first place. If they thought so, it would then be Eugene McCarthy—and not Nixon or Hubert Humphrey—who would have been the leading Presidential candidate during this summer.

The dilemma faced by men like Dr Spock is not altogether unique. There have been similar instances in the past when individuals have arraigned themselves against the rulers of society and have suffered in the process. The history of human efforts would be altogether arid if individuals were lacking in the courage to protest against evils sanctified by social convention. The thing that has still to be stressed

here is that neither American society—nor the rest of the world—is perhaps quite aware how much of an evil the war in Vietnam is. Those amongst us who line up for a U.S. grant, or our Government when it puts in a plea for the flow of a couple of billion dollars annually from the U.S. administration, can be only vaguely cognizant of the enormity of the horror which Vietnam is. A compartmentalization of morality usually takes place: Vietnam, the argument runs, is not our concern, why should we therefore worry about it; if an official American grant advances my own educational or professional career, let me thank the U.S. officials and accept it; similarly, if funds funnelled from the U.S. Government budget would ease our own budgetary problems—for example, help finance the Fourth Plan—why, let us be properly grateful, and ask no questions about Vietnam. If our little favours are granted, we shall keep quiet over Vietnam, we shall not even bother to have the intellectual or emotional curiosity to enquire about the facts in Vietnam. It will not be convenient for us to learn that what the Americans are perpetrating in Vietnam exceeds the bestialities of Hitler, or that the strategy of "search and destroy" has amounted to an orgy of deliberate mass murder and to a systematic extermination of villages and people.

I have before me the issues dated March 9 and 16 of the *New Yorker* magazine. An American journalist named Jonathan Schell spent several weeks during the summer of last year with the U.S. forces in Vietnam, and has presented a clinical account of what he saw and heard. Let me quote him.

What I saw and heard had to do mostly with the destruction that was going on in South Vietnam, but at the same time I found that the peculiar character of the war tended to be defined for me by how the men in our armed forces reacted to the

July 14, 1968.

various special conditions of the war: the immense disparity in size and power between the two adversaries, the fact that Americans are fighting ten thousand miles from home, the fact that the Vietnamese are an Asian and non-industrialised people, the fact that we are bombing North Vietnam but the North Vietnamese are incapable of bombing the United States, the fact that our bombing in South Vietnam can be met by only small-arms fire, the fact that it is often impossible for our men to distinguish between the enemy and friends or neutral civilians, the anomalousness and the corruption of the Saigon Government, the secondary role played by the South Vietnamese Army we are supposedly assisting, the fact that the enemy is fighting a guerilla war while we are fighting a mechanised war and finally the overriding fantastic fact that we are destroying, seemingly by advertence, the very country we are supposedly protecting.

Schell describes, in great detail, the "search and destroy" missions in the provinces of Quang Ngai and Quang Tin; he saw the results of the American bombing, shelling and ground activities, in the course of which seventy per cent of all the villages were destroyed; he also could observe at first hand the process of destruction as it unfolded by flying in Forward Air Control (FAC) planes which are used to find targets for bombing and also to guide Air Force planes to targets. From what Schell writes with such painstaking detail, it becomes obvious that the American policy is one of wholesale genocide. For morale, American troops are taught to sing such soul-raising devotionals:

Strafe the town and kill the people,  
Drop napalm in the square,  
Get out early every Sunday,  
And catch them at their morning prayer.

Lest it is thought that this song is mere hyperbole, Schell mentions the point-count system the FAC pilots maintain for K.B.A.s ("Killed by Air"). The Americans are out there to kill, and individual pilots are credited with points in accordance with the killings they are able to achieve

through their bombing. The points are awarded as follows:

Men	Women
Old 3	Old 3
Crippled 3	Crippled 3
Children 3	Children 3
Military age 1	Military age 1
	pregnant 5

A neat note at the bottom adds: "Combination of two or more may also be counted".

The horrendous implication of this note sinks in only with a time-lag. It simply means that if a pilot can bomb and kill a pregnant woman, he is entitled to the highest point-count award—five plus one, six. The explanation could lie in psycho-somatic perversity, but maybe there is a more pragmatic reason for placing such a high premium on the murder of a pregnant woman, which an Air Force Lieutenant candidly provides: "When we kill a pregnant woman, we count it as two V.C.—one soldier and one cadet".

Such ratings can scarcely be considered as examples of bizarre humour, for, as Schell narrates, pregnant women are getting killed, every day and hour, by the indiscriminate bombing. Schell offers a minute description of a particular incident in the course of one bombing mission. Areas to be bombed are predetermined by "coordinates". Within the coordinates marked out for this bombing raid, two church steeples could be noticed. ("The churches were surrounded by twenty or thirty houses. About half of these had stone walls and thatched roofs. One thatch-roofed building was perhaps fifty feet long and thirty feet wide, and appeared to be some sort of gathering place. Flower gardens were in bloom in front of both churches. Behind both, plots of vegetable stretched back through glades of palm trees to rice fields.") The following piece of radio conversation ensued between the pilot in charge and the ground commander:

"Two of those structures seem to be structures of worship. Do you want them taken out?"

"Roger", the ground commander replied. "There seems to be a white flag out front there", Major Billings said.

"Yeah, Beats me what it is," the ground commander replied. What then follows can only be described as pure poetry, the poet's destruction. I hope the Editor will allow me to quote in full the description of how the great American won the battle of two little churches by bombing and strafing from the air.

"O.K., here goes", said the pilot. Then, addressing the F-4 pilot, he said, "Make your passes from east to north. I'll circle over here and west".

The Major brought the plane in for a dive, aiming its nose at the churches and fired a phosphorous bomb. Its white smoke rose from a cluster of trees fifty yards to the west of one church. "Do you see the smoke?" he asked the ground commander.

"Yeah, I got you", the ground commander said. "I'll make a pass, run and then come in with my seven-hundred-and-fifty-pound bomb".

A minute later, an F-4 appeared from the south, diving low over the churches in a practice run. It pulled out of its dive, circled backward and began to circle back for the next pass. A second F-4 followed its dive in the same way, and released its bombs. A tall column of brown smoke rolled up from the vegetable garden in back of the churches.

"That's about a hundred yards off," Major Billings said. "Can you move it forward?"

"O.K. Sorry," the flight commander said.

The third plane also released its bombs into the vegetable garden. The first plane, on its second pass, sent its bombs into rice fields sixty yards to one side of the churches. Three pillars of brown smoke now rose several hundred feet into the air, dwarfing the churches and houses. On the second plane's second pass, a bomb hit the front of one church directly—the church with the white flag on the front.

"Oh, that's nice, baby, real nice," Major Billings said. "You're getting those goodies right in there".

When the smoke cleared

...which was gone except for its  
...which stood by itself, with  
...on top. The white flag still  
...from its pole. The third plane  
...bombs into the rice fields  
...the side. The first plane fired  
...on its third pass, and they  
...in the vegetable garden be-  
...the destroyed church, leaving  
...smoke with dozens of small  
...puffs. Several of the rockets  
...the next volley hit the other  
...obliterating its back half  
...leaving two holes the size of  
...in the roofs of the front half.  
...or five of the houses around  
...the church burst into flame.

"That's real fine!" said Major  
Billings.

"When do you want the twenty  
mike-mike?" asked the flight com-  
mander. ("Twenty mike-mike" is  
military slang for 20-mm-cannon  
strafing fire, which fires a hundred  
shells per second.)

"Lay it right down that line  
you've been hitting", Major Billings  
said. "Put it right down across  
your bootches, and we'll see if you  
can start a few fires." (Strafing  
often set a house on fire,  
as bombs rarely do.)

As one of the F-4s made the first  
strafing run, the path of fire cut  
directly through the group of houses  
around the churches, sparking for  
a duration of a second with hundreds  
of brilliant flashes.

"Goody, goody! That's right  
down the line!" exclaimed Major  
Billings. "Why don't you just get  
those bootches by the other church,  
across the road, now?"

"Roger", answered the flight  
commander.

On the second strafing pass, the  
haling path of shells cut across  
the group of houses on the other  
side of the road.

"Real fine!" Major Billings said.  
"Now how about getting that  
hunch down the road a bit?" He  
was referring to a tile-roofed house  
that stood in a field about a hundred  
yards to the west of one church.  
The path of fire from the third  
strafing pass—the final pass of the  
strike—cut directly across the house,  
leaving several large holes in its  
roof.

"Right down the line!" Major  
Billings said. "Thanks, boys. You  
did a real fine job. I'm going to  
give you ninety-per-cent Target  
Courage."

The Major was as good as his word.  
His Bomb Damage Assessment Report  
read as follows: "Two Permanent  
Military Structures Destroyed, ten  
Military Structures Destroyed, and five  
Damaged". When Schell queried whether  
the houses and the churches could  
be considered as military structures,  
the Major simply shrugged, "Oh, that's  
just what we call them. Search and  
destroy".

Search and destroy, clear and hold.  
Burn and strafe. Kill and maim. Listen  
to this bit of conversation, depicting  
how the great U.S. army, the  
bearers of the burden of civilisation  
and democracy, heroically fighting it  
out with totalitarian Communism,  
spot and kill the Vietcong:

"We killed four V.C. this morning,  
sir. We turned around and saw  
that these guys were following us.  
They saw that we had spotted them,  
and we fired, and they took evasive  
action. We got all four of them,  
though. They didn't have weapons,  
but they were wearing the short  
V.C.-type black pajama uniforms,  
and they were definitely of military  
age. No question about that, sir."

No question about that, sir. All you  
have to do is be a Vietnamese of the  
right age and wear your national  
apparel, and you will be shot dead in  
your own country by the invading  
marauders. This is the only way the  
war can be won for democracy. Jonathan  
Schell describes, more in sorrow  
than in anger, the toll in terms of  
moral feeling this type of policy of  
insensate killing has taken: the American  
pilots are obsessed by the idea  
of unloading their bombs and opening  
up their guns. So much so that, on a  
particular mission, thirty or forty  
water buffaloes grazing in a rice field  
became the all-absorbing target, and  
salvo after salvo pound out explosive  
shells. No doubt, at the end of the  
day, when the points chalked up were  
being counted, thirty-odd buffaloes  
helped swell the credit of the com-  
manding pilot; each of them was a  
suspected V.C. And so much the  
better for the point-count system if

some of the she-buffaloes were preg-  
nant.

Dr. Spock has to be put away in  
prison. He is a criminal. He wanted  
to prevent young American men from  
going to Vietnam and be a part of  
such civilising, democracy-saving mis-  
sions as described above.

But look at the other side of all  
this. Dr Spock is an American citizen  
himself, and has the nobility to bestir  
himself against the indescribably  
shameful things American soldiers and  
airmen and marines are perpetrating  
in Vietnam. Jonathan Schell is an  
American journalist, yet he dares to  
defy the security embargo and write  
about the terror of the "search and  
destroy" missions. What about us? Our  
Government continues to be the  
Chairman of the Neutral Nations' Su-  
pervisory Team in Vietnam. Not a  
squeak of protest has been allowed to  
emit from our representative on this  
team: we see no evil, hear no evil,  
speak no evil. For dear life  
we stay neutral between humanity  
and bestiality. One day in the future,  
the Americans will perhaps travel  
through hell, but finally emerge, on  
paying the fullest price for all their  
sins, sombre in the after-glow of the  
catharsis; but there will be no expia-  
tion of the guilt of India, allegedly the  
land of the Buddha.



# Theory And Practice Of Revolution

H. GAMBERG

THE question of revolutionary tactics necessary for the seizure of power must be subject to continuous reevaluation in the face of changing historical and social conditions. Revolutionary theory and its theorists have not always been free from the tendency toward the ossification of ideas that have had relevance for some time and some place, but whose application to new situations may be disastrous. Our century has seen much revolutionary practice, yet the analysis to be learned from this practice has been spotty and far from systematic. It is time to make an attempt at discovering some general inferences from revolutionary experience, to get some sense of the way that revolutionary power is built and maintained.

The basic features of Marxist analysis remain relevant for the modern world, especially as witnessed by the startling successes of the older and newer socialist countries compared with the stagnation, waste and militarism of the "advanced" capitalist regimes. These basic features involve the conception of society in class terms, the inevitability of crisis in the capitalist world, and the essentially progressive nature of the oppressed people as the only instruments of their own liberation. These theoretical constructs are the stock-in-trade of the active Marxist but they do not map out the concrete tactics which he faces in highly diversified contexts, since for Marxism, what is true in theory must be true in practice, the working revolutionary is faced with very pressing political problems of doing the right thing at the right moment—to take power when it is possible and when it is most salutary for the broad masses of people.

In tactical terms, much of nineteenth century working-class political activity is controlled by the idea that the evolution of capitalism will slowly but inexorably lead to increasing proletarianization of society, increasing

struggle between the owning class and the oppressed class, and a growing consciousness in the working masses of their future role as masters of a new society. The culmination of this process would be the overthrow by the workers of the capitalist system. Marxism supported the growth and strengthening of bourgeois systems on the assumption that capitalism serves the "progressive" role of ushering in the class which bears the seeds of its own destruction. Working class strategy involved trade union organization, mass education in Marxist principles, and support for strikes as instruments of immediate economic demand and long-range political education of the masses. There is a strong tendency in nineteenth century Marxism of what Lenin was later to brand as "spontaneity" in his own times. The proletarian insurrection to take power was considered inevitable, not immediately planned for, and the result of a series of small steps leading to the promised land. Any demand for immediate steps to take power would be castigated at this time as anarchism or worse. The Paris Commune, the only proletarian accession to power in the century, although strongly supported by Marx, came as a surprise to almost everyone.

Compared to the present century, earlier Marxism in its tactical concepts appears calm, serene and millennial. There is even a highly benevolent attitude toward other working class parties which were considered to ultimately merge into the relentless tide of proletarian history. The major tactical goal of this era was to heighten the awareness of the working class helped along by the objective contradictions in the capitalist system. The bourgeoisie itself is seen in less malevolent terms as a class which would fall like an overripe and rotten fruit from the tree of history.

(Revolutionary theory is caught on the horns of a dilemma both sides of

which are both true and false depending upon particular circumstances. Practice demands highly general theory which can guide it through unexpected vagaries of experience. This is implicit in Lenin's claim that there is no revolution without revolutionary theory. On the other hand, events always outstrip theory and demands a strong predisposition toward flexibility in tactical detail. In all due respect to Lenin's dictum, his own experience is a clear example of stops and starts in the face of changing circumstances, of a brilliant strategy never to be too imprisoned by crustean principles. Lenin's success in taking power appears more as a result of a lucid demand for power when events "disobeyed" theory, than a strong dose of pragmatic march to concrete detail. Lenin himself was too much the orthodox Marxist to reticently recognize the way in which his own practice countermanded much of the revolutionary theory before him. For example, in *What Is To Be Done* he defended the organization of a highly disciplined and clandestine party of professional revolutionaries by reference to the special circumstances of Czarist Russia—its highly repressive character demanded an accent on illegal activity. He refused to make this into a principle of revolutionary theory and accepted the general contours of practice in the European labour movement on the grounds that revolution could be successful only in advanced countries. One can even say that the opposition to take power in 1917 was a surprise to the Bolsheviks and was taken as a matter of course only because of Lenin's ability to act in spite of theory. In the February Revolution, the Bolshevik Central Committee was quite engaged in a policy by which the party would become an opposition party within a "bourgeois democracy"

of his life Lenin waited for the European revolution to draw any general inferences from his own experience. In his left-wing infantile writing and Lenin still exhorting to legality and situational analysis, or not, to participate in parliaments, or not, to European comrades. Although quite aware of the dangers rampant in the labor movement and although imperialism broke the world of revolution being developed countries, he did not draw general inferences from these circumstances. Later events lead us to conclude that the European revolution do not lead to reformation of capitalist society, therefore either the proletariat in highly industrialized countries, or new, dramatic, methods must be used to the underdeveloped countries for liberation from imperialism. The result includes much that is usually considered peasant or proletarian and it is upon armed struggle as a revolutionary strategy. It is many well-established lessons in the world have still to be learned from these lessons. The relevance of military struggle is only and as intensively as the exploitative relations have been fully appreciated in the theory (at least up to the time of the struggle has two major consequences for the taking of power. It turns the overt oppressiveness of the powers into overt and covert. This polarizes the masses and shows the masses as he really is—deceitful, and racist. The consequence of armed struggle drives the people into a total commitment to the struggle up arms is to burn the old behind one. There is no liberty or death. No comparison compares to the

drama and significance with which armed struggle demands total commitment. There is some sense in asking a revolutionary to define himself by putting his life on the line. Debray's recent work appears to understand this when he rejects the bourgeoisification of the military inactive urban communist parties. But in overstressing the mobile guerilla band which keeps clear of the people because contact with the guerillas will bring repression upon the people (as well as the potential betrayal of the guerillas) Debray demonstrates that he has not fully understood the importance of commitment of the people to what is, after all, *their* revolution.

One other issue demonstrates the centrality of armed struggle. Since oppression rests on violence, it is only through violence that the people can be protected while the constructive aspects of socialism can bear immediate and fruitful results. The concrete benefits of agrarian expropriation, communal labour, in field hospitals, munitions factories, and textile production, and the attack on illiteracy in the rebel army can come about only because an armed force has arisen to defend the people as it reconstructs itself. Debray underplays these tremendous advantages by downgrading the importance of base areas as a revolutionary strategy. Military strategy bears fruit, if, and only if, it brings about the embryo of a new social existence. (In this sense, one should not overestimate the generalizability of the Cuban experience where the mobile band took power because imperialism was caught off guard and where socialist reconstruction had to take place after the taking of power. Indeed some of the problems intrinsic to the present Cuban situation may be rooted in the somewhat special way in which the revolutionary government came to power). The revolutionary experience gained by the masses in attacking the regime that exploits them and in transforming the world before their own eyes may be worth far more than painstaking education through abstract socialist treatises and through strikes that lead nowhere (except to the buying off of the people).

The conclusions of this reappraisal of revolutionary history are important

for successful revolutionary practice in our own times. The first conclusion is one not commonly stated, perhaps because it is so obvious. The long-range viability of revolutionary values, that is the success of the post-insurrectionary phase of the revolution, is dependent on the way the revolution came to power in the first place. The present revisionism of the Soviet Union, although probably not explicable in these terms alone, is rooted in the tactics and organization of the original Bolshevik party of 1917. The reliance upon a professional body of revolutionaries as the vanguard of proletarian power is the single great Leninist contribution to the contemporary storehouse of revolutionary principles. In other respects, too strict adherence to Leninist experience has major pitfalls for the post-insurrectionary stage of development. Moreover, the separation of the Bolshevik party from the masses, its growing commandism and privilege-seeking, is connected to the fact that power fell into the hands of a people not crystallized and galvanized by the chastening and self-sacrificing experience of long-term revolutionary war. Strangely enough, the long Civil War after the taking of power intensified this malintegration between the party and the people by strengthening rather than weakening the initial shortcomings of party organization. An adequate analysis of the reasons for the political weariness of the Soviet people after the Civil War has yet to be done, but the explanation in terms of the organization and tactics of the Bolshevik party would certainly be a relevant place to start.

Revolutionary agitation without direct military involvement of the people undercuts the tremendous educational benefits of armed struggle and subjects the masses to the deteriorating effects of practices which lead to parliamentarianism and bourgeoisification. The whole history of the European labour movement bears adequate testimony to this danger. Therefore all those tactical positions which demand the slow training of the masses for their future revolutionary tasks whether on the grounds that "this is what Marx or Lenin did" or that "the proletarian party must support the

false dependent circumstances, generally through the experience of his own claim that without revealing other hand theory which disposition and detail. With his dictum, as an example of the change of militant attitudes, and by Lenin's success, more a result of power, even theory, and the Marxist theory, the ways of the undermandate, primary traditions, example, defended the discipline, professional, and the character which illegal work, and still as of practice movement of on could be and countries, opportunity, is a surprise taken advantage of Lenin's theory. Below the Bolshevik, quite essence, the party, and theocracy.

bourgeois democratic revolution before even conceiving of an armed uprising" are based on outmoded concepts which become counter-revolutionary in consequence if not in intent.

#### Vanguard?

Is it undue pessimism or is it clear-sighted realism to say that, at the present time, the bulk of the organized working class in advanced capitalist countries is more than minimally integrated into bourgeois national culture, and as such, has become a class of little or no revolutionary potential? The progressive forces in the United States, those most actively rejecting American imperialism and accepting revolutionary solutions to the world's problems, include some students, some intellectuals, and a quite significant body of Negroes. The blacks are the major insurrectionary force in American society and yet their objective class status is much closer to being unorganized, disemployed lumpen proletariat than organized, trade-union workers. This is not to write off the working class as a force which will most easily accept the new demands of a socialist society, but it does question whether it is now, or in the near future will be, the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle.

If this picture of the working class in developed countries is a true one, then much that has been standard to revolutionary theory must be seen as instrumental in bringing about this state of affairs. Although the forces which facilitated the greater exploita-

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tion of the under-developed world and the feeding of the crumbs of capitalist profit-making to the working class are also extremely significant in explaining this, the failure of revolutionary tactics must be seen to play its part. It is curious that we did not learn our basic lessons from the total collapse of the most organized, politically conscious working class movement in modern history—the debacle of the German working class in the 1930's (the recent Indonesian experience is another dramatic example). Long-range education of an abstract nature, painstaking organizing for bread and butter unionism, and engagement in parliamentary politics can no longer be seen as productive tactics except in very special and very clearly defined circumstances. Exactly what should be done in the working class of developed countries at the present time is not easy to answer, but what should not be done appears clearly borne out of the major events of our century.

The present formulation assumes that the locus of revolutionary action has shifted to the "Third World". Although the general theoretical explanation of this shift is only now beginning to be made, we already have a great deal of successful revolutionary experience to justify this thesis. Both the quality of mass misery and the repression that sustains it in the under-developed world have brought about conditions wherein armed struggle has been not only possible, but eminently successful. The struggle between bourgeois and proletariat has intensified just as predicted by the original Marxist exposition, but this struggle must now be seen in global rather than national terms. National liberation wars have become more successful, have become more hopeful for the future, the more they have defined themselves in these terms. In any ultimate sense, a revolutionary should fearlessly accept power whenever the opportunity presents itself even if that opportunity is not in accord with the theory of the moment. It appears, however, that these opportunities are increasingly being presented in a new context demanding tactics different from the earlier revolutionary tradition.

## The Andhra "Extremists"

H. RAO

EXPERTS in Communist and the top brass of the Communist movement in Andhra left and extremist views round and say "didn't I say so on the latest split in the ranks, but to the thousands of communists and their sympathizers the lakhs of common people for them in the last few months, the news brings despair and despair.

It is this feeling that is shared by those who indulge in the debate raging in Andhra in recent weeks. The mood of despair and anger and many oldtime Communist supporters are heard in the Communist movement buried fathoms deep and the hope of its revival for the leaders carry on in the when discontent is felt by the people and they are looking for a way out?

It is against this background the recent split in the Communist movement has to be seen. CPM leadership started a series of expulsions in West Bengal ever the Government had on certain CPM cadres in that State, the top leadership to the Press disowned (ed.) Very soon, "expulsion" became the word: Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and now comes Andhra. Expulsions in Andhra the last straw and the third Communist party in Nagi Reddy is the 'man of the hour'.

An amazing similarity in situation in 1964 when it took place and now is the phrase "Chinese agents", "Revisionists" and Government against the Marxists, both of them plus the Marxists the extremists. At the Peking Radio broadcast

Andhra  
remists

H. RAO

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by Dange and his friends to  
the split was brought about  
stance of Peking. The story  
and today with exact simila-  
the only difference being that  
is joined in by Sundarayya.  
the characterisation of  
Reddy's followers as "extre-  
" or "revolutionaries" by the  
the Mirxists too label them  
Marxists itching for revolution  
Their basic support to Nax-  
is adduced as evidence. But,  
Press statements are any indi-  
Mr Nagi Reddy does not seem  
dreaming of instant revolution;  
can be quoted as saying that  
and resign his seat in the Andhra  
ably ask like-minded people to  
and breathe and spit revolution  
and night. On the contrary, he  
in record saying that it would  
at least a year to give an organi-  
shape to the movement and  
the forces around the slogan of  
demands through struggles  
His complaint is: The CPM is  
too preoccupied with defending  
and winning the election battle  
Bengal to even think of put-  
the party on the rails of struggle.  
be canvassed support and  
the party to rally round the  
of the tribal people in Srika-  
district and think in terms of  
angles wherever people are  
prepared to protect their  
from the government-land-  
straight, his proposal was cold-  
end on the plea that it would  
to adventurism. The attack  
people in Nalgonda and some  
pockets, which started at the  
of the elections, was intensified,  
ing literally thousands of people  
party workers in hundreds of  
they were beaten up, local party  
were even murdered and local  
minds were posed with the ques-  
of defending themselves and pro-  
the party. Let alone Marxism-  
ism, their necessity demanded  
the victims of such attacks  
their life and property. They  
up to the Party for guidance,  
was not forthcoming. This  
ough disillusionment with the pre-  
leadership.  
The problem was taken to the  
national level through an alter-

nate document presented at the special  
plenum called before the Burdwan  
meeting. It was natural for Mr Nagi  
Reddy and his followers to have felt  
justified in their line of thinking when  
the overwhelming majority of Andhra  
comrades voted for it. However, he  
was in a hopeless minority when he  
placed it at the all-India level.

Believers of the alternate line have  
certain differences with him. They agree  
with him on practically all aspects  
but doubt whether his line should be  
pushed through right down to the  
cadres, cutting across the party's dis-  
ciplinary barriers, inviting justifiable  
anger of the State CPM leadership,  
followed by warnings and, ultimately,  
expulsions. His friends ask: If he  
exhibits so much impatience, what is  
the guarantee that his followers would  
not turn equally impatient? Would not  
Mr Nagi Reddy himself take at least a  
year to gather forces and give his line  
an organisational shape? By his ac-  
tions he has only justified the action of  
the CPM leaders in being equally  
impatient and rushing to the extreme  
by expelling a stalwart like Nagi  
Reddy.

Though there were ideological and  
political questions on which both Mr  
Reddy and the leadership differed  
widely, the parting of ways came at  
the organisational level, giving rise to  
a feeling that perhaps this could have  
been avoided had some restraint been  
exhibited.)

Mr Nagi Reddy's proposals deserve  
some attention in this context. Ideolo-  
gical and political problems at a  
policy level can be finally decided  
only at a Party Congress. Therefore,  
allow a full-throated discussion on  
both the lines before a decision is  
taken at the Party Congress. In the  
meantime, withdraw the open party  
letter sent to cadres against himself  
and his followers, as also the disci-  
plinary action.

But the CPM leadership which met  
in Calcutta recently seems to be more  
interested in cleansing the party rather  
than revitalising it with a militant line  
of thinking and action—the same  
thing which promoted them to break  
with the CPI.

### The Press

## Ditched By Moscow?

COMMENTATOR

ALL scoops are not what Evelyn  
Waugh would have his readers  
believe; nor are they always, as has  
become the practice in India, delibe-  
rate leaks by Authority to a band of  
select correspondents when such dis-  
closures suit the Government. Even  
in this age when news is what official  
hand-outs say, an alert correspondent  
may occasionally carry off a scoop  
sufficiently important to turn his rivals  
green and flutter New Delhi's dove-  
cots. It is doubtful if the Government  
of India wanted the news of the Soviet  
Union's decision to supply arms to  
Pakistan to be broken on the eve of  
President Zakir Husain's trip to Mos-  
cow. Though not much of a believer  
in quiet diplomacy, the Government  
would have liked to await the result  
of the President's remonstrance with  
the Soviet leaders, suitably backed by  
sulky protest notes on diplomatic  
level. But the plan has been upset by  
the Delhi correspondent of *Hindusthan  
Standard*, who not only reported the  
Soviet-Pakistan arms deal but also the  
jittery reaction of the Government of  
India. Working on an obvious clue,  
he scored over the rest of New Delhi's  
reporting fraternity who must have  
dismissed the Prime Minister's sudden  
decision to curtail her programme at  
Chandrapura as too trivial to bother  
over on a Sunday afternoon. They  
ignored the clue and missed the hectic  
activity in the capital of the two days  
that preceded the President's depart-  
ure for Moscow. The disclosure was  
followed by the familiar exercise  
among reporters of dog-biting-dog;  
some said it was premature to ring  
the alarm bell, some claimed the story  
had no foundation, while some others  
reported that the Soviet Union had  
agreed to supply only defensive wea-  
pons to Pakistan. But the ripples the  
disclosure raised immediately in the  
placid politics of New Delhi in the  
silly season, should have set at rest  
all doubts about its authenticity. After  
some initial hesitation the Prime  
Minister has confirmed the news, but

the Government has not yet fully joined the petulant chorus, possibly because the President is still in the Soviet Union. It will surely not lag behind once the President is back, forgetting that its foreign policy has been so short of manoeuvrability in the last few years that it can no longer hope to enjoy a monopoly of Soviet bounties and must learn to co-exist with Pakistan in the Soviet heart.

The leader-writers have not, however, given their correspondents the benefit of the doubt and have proceeded to lay down what India should do in the face of Soviet "ditching". Of course, very few have suggested the obvious that India should so fashion its policy that its dependence on foreign arms for security decreases. *The Times of India* regards the reported deal as a sign of change in the Soviet policy the rationale of which the Russians have so far avoided spelling out. The paper says that in the past the Russians have fobbed off Indian inquiries with the vague assurance that they are not seeking Pakistan's friendship at the cost of their relations with this country. These generalities will no longer suffice. The Soviet leaders will have to be far more candid if they wish to restore the old confidence between Moscow and New Delhi. It is idle to pretend that this confidence is in no danger of being undermined. In the Indian view Pakistan has been China's accomplice in undermining the stability of the region. In agreeing to provide arms to Rawalpindi Moscow has apparently chosen to ignore this reality as well as the fact that Pakistan has no ground to fear India. This is a grave error of judgment. The worst of it is that so far as is known the Soviet leaders have done all this without even making sure that Pakistan is prepared to normalise its relations with India. They know that Pakistan has neither given up its aim of changing the status of Kashmir, by force if necessary, nor abandoned its policy of seeking the dismemberment of the tribal belt in north-eastern India in active collusion with China. In the absence of any firm commitment by the Ayub regime to respect the status quo, a policy of enforcing an arms balance in the sub-continent can only endanger its stability.

In the opinion of *The Hindustan Times*, India cannot but take a grave view of this development. Pakistan acknowledges no other enemy except India; any accretion to its military strength, therefore, is designed only for use against India. The Soviet move is also disappointing because it goes counter to the assumption that Moscow's arms supply policy to South Asia was based on the assessment that India's size and diverse security problems merited a limited increase in its military capability, but the same did not hold good for Pakistan. It contrasts with the receptivity several Western countries have shown to New Delhi's representations against arms supplies to Pakistan. For Moscow to supply both countries in the present circumstances is to encourage an arms race between them and lead to a further diversion of resources away from economic development. The lesson to be learnt from this development is to realise that relations with other countries are built on mutual interest; and not on recognition of the intrinsic merits of one country's policies by another. Unfortunately, official spokesmen have given the impression that there is something special about Indo-Soviet relations and have angrily rejected suggestions that Moscow's attitude to the sub-continent is liable to change. In the immediate future, India has no alternative but to counter and keep ahead of Pakistan's efforts to increase its military strength. But this situation cannot be accepted as permanent. Neither country can afford a continuing increase in military expenditure. And, as events have shown, neither can depend on powerful friends to sustain them unconditionally. The fact is that continuing hostility and suspicion have made them absurdly vulnerable to the geo-political designs of bigger powers and the independence of both will be endangered unless long-range policy is aimed at evolving some way of living together amicably.

#### "Let Down"

*The Statesman* thinks India has been "let down by Moscow". The direct Russian contribution to the Pakistan military machine, in addition to the arms Pakistan gets from the USA,

other Western sources and China, impinge on India's security. The political and psychological implications of the Soviet decision are more serious than its purely military consequences. The paper hopes that the most naive of policy-makers will not be taken in by the glitter of the inflow of Russian arms. India would have an impact on the continent as beneficial and as the earlier Soviet policies had with the initiative to come to Tashkent talks. Quite obviously, the Russians, motivated by self-interest, are acting in disregard of Indian interests and there is no reason why they should not tell them so. Against the immediate problem of the Soviet let-down of India, India has long-term lessons which New Delhi cannot afford to ignore. It has established once again that the relations between nations are not immune from the South Block's habit of taking decisions for granted can, therefore, be very dangerous. The vulnerability in international relations has also been demonstrated vividly. Pakistan today is able to get arms from the USA, China and the USSR. India is being done down even by those who were considered very close friends. Obviously, the rupture of India's relationship with China does it little good because it practically deprives it of all leverage with Moscow and Washington. This is something the country should ponder on though an improvement in relations with China does not seem likely in the foreseeable future.

All suggestions for a rapprochement with either Pakistan or China are to be repugnant to *The Hindustan Times* says that Russia's decision to supply arms to Pakistan has thrown into crucible all aspects of India's political, military and economic relations. Our general interests no doubt demand the friendliest relations with the East and the West, we should also lose sight of the fact that the common, in terms of political and economic philosophy, ways of life, between our country and the other democracies of the world. It should, therefore, not need any further argument to drive home the point that our special interests lie in

friendship of these countries, the same ardour, if not more, in doing in the case of the other countries. Contending for arms to Pakistan by such diverse Powers as the United States, Russia and China "has a sense of alignment and continuity of non-alignment" the paper says. The Soviet decision to give Pakistan has injected a new element into the sub-continent which may upset the prevailing military balance. The Government will now have to find ways to meet this threat, even the risk of getting dragged into a race we do not want. It is particularly important that the Government does not allow itself to be manoeuvred into a position where it has to depend on some single source for all our requirements. The US has been the main source of arms, not only because of the relatively favourable terms of sale but also because our field of exchange resources. We

would have freedom to acquire arms from whatever source we think is best only if we had currency enough to pay for them or had special arrangements with Western sources. This would call for gearing our foreign trade to earning the resources to meet all our defence needs or for forging new ties with the West.

Refusing to be disenchanted with the Soviet Union, *Patriot* seeks the reasons for the "hysterical pose" affected by a section of the Press in the determination of the reactionary trend in our politics to exploit any development, in internal affairs or in the field of foreign policy, so as to harm the cause of democracy and socialism. This reactionary trend is a secret united front made up of monopolists and feudal vested interests, the section of the Press that tirelessly totes their ambitions and woes as national issues, groups in the bureaucracy who are no more than bondsmen of foreign and Indian monopoly-capitalists and finally, individuals in the Congress party and the Govern-

ment. The present howls of those who did not even whisper when Washington replaced all Pakistani military hardware damaged during the clash with us, are more than proof that their attitude is nothing more than a mischievous effort to embarrass and, if possible, threaten the Prime Minister and other members of her Government who show signs of determination to pursue the radical path in economic affairs. The reactionaries whether in the Congress or outside know very well that with its well-known commitment to help in maintaining peace in Asia, Soviet arms of decisive significance will never be given to a still doubtful quantity like Pakistan. If, in spite of such knowledge, the American lobby and its adherents in the Congress and the "kept" Press dare initiate such propaganda, it is only because the socialists and radical democrats in the Congress do not assert themselves and take the offensive in the matter of explaining economic and foreign policies designed to achieve the objective of self-reliance.

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1917 to Vietnam

Edited by DAVID HOROWITZ

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This volume is the first in a new series called *Studies in Imperialism and the Cold War* edited by David Horowitz, who is the author of one of the earliest systematic statements of the New Left position (*Student*, 1962) and a formidable critique of recent American foreign policy (*From Yalta to Vietnam*, revised edition 1967).

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## Utpal Dutt's Latest

SUMANIA BANERJEE

The call for 'Black Power' by the American Negroes has provoked the Communists and Leftist intellectuals in India and elsewhere to regard the movement as "adventurist" and "harmful". In an atmosphere of unrelenting propaganda, Mr Utpal Dutt's latest production, *Manusher Matri*, is timely. The tragic paradox of the non-violent struggle of the American black people for their rights bound within the framework of a constitution deliberately designed to deprive them of those rights—exemplified recently by the assassination of Martin Luther King—should be borne in mind before one is tempted to condemn the Negroes for taking up arms.

*Manusher Matri*, now being staged at the Minerva Theatre, is a play of considerable interest to the worshippers of the cause of the tragedy of a racial and class struggle in a society where racism is sanctioned by law and perpetuated by mass prejudice. It is a departure from the usual formulae of translations and adaptations. It is an original piece, written by Mr Utpal Dutt and based on the court records of a case in Alabama which took place 15 years ago, when a Negro was convicted on a trumped up charge of the rape of a white girl and sent to the electric chair.

The main part of the play takes place in the court room and its dramatic possibilities are strong enough to make it one of the best specimens of courtroom plays. Mr Dutt himself plays the role of the main character, Tom Night, the lawyer defending the accused Negro, Haywood. It is an impressive watching him cross-examine the witnesses and tearing to shreds the prosecution case, passionately appealing in the process to the conscience of America, to free the black people. Mr Dutt's performance is memorable and reveals a wide gamut of historic and subtle emotional gestures, especially among the actors and actresses. Some are particularly those who play the roles of witnesses for

the prosecution. A remarkable panorama of characters unrolls itself before the audience. Mr Samresh Banerjee appears in the role of the judge, Callahan, who however could have been portrayed as a more dispassionate character. Satya Banerjee in the role of the lawyer for the prosecution, Tom Night, is superb. The set by Mr Nirmal Guha Ray conjures up the atmosphere of the period and the country and the team work is excellent. Particularly memorable is the use of Negro spirituals and folk songs during the intervals which help to sustain the mood throughout the play. Although there is little scope for creating magic by lighting on the stage (as in "Angar" or "Kallol") Tapas Sen makes his presence felt by the subtle touches, in keeping with the mood of the play. Barring the prelude and the finale, the play is refreshingly free from the crude propaganda one is apt to associate with Little Theatre Group productions. It is marked by a remarkable sense of restraint and highlighted by eloquent suggestions. One will always remember, for instance, that bitter and laconic comment of the accused youth Haywood (acted by Mrinal Ghosh) "But I shall never forgive," at the end of the second act, when the liberal Libovits advises his wife to forgive the fanatic white population of Alabama who have attacked her. Or the last words of Haywood when he is taken away by the guards: "They made a mistake. My accusers will die before I die. When my people will take up arms and put them to death, I shall come back to life."

The entire burden of the play indicates the futility of the liberals' struggle for justice in a race-ridden society. Trials in such a society are always reduced to a farce. At the end of the court-room scene the audience is left with the same sense of frustration and despair shared by the Negro youth. After this it is not too difficult for one to understand why the younger black people of modern America are seek-

ing more militant ways to win their rights.

It is precisely for this reason—the obvious message of the court-room scene—that the prelude and the finale strike a jarring note and seem redundant. The play opens with a scene in a part of modern Detroit where advocates of Black Power have created a "free territory" and are trying a white American soldier for his crimes in Vietnam. There is a long lecture on the need for armed retaliation against white supremacy. In justification, the advocate for violence tells his followers the story of the Alabama trial and with the flashback the actual play begins.

In the finale, we are brought back again to the scene of the prelude. There is again another lecture on the solidarity of the oppressed all over the world and the need for weapons—rifles, or even any missile—to fight back.

One wonders whether Mr Dutt had to add the prelude and the finale—they were not in the first version of the play when it was published in a Bengali theatre magazine some months ago—to play to the gallery. Both the scenes are so out of tune with the main play that it seems that Mr Dutt wanted to provide some sop to the revolutionary slogan-mongering sentiments of a section of the audience.

It is possible to understand to some extent his difficulties. Fanatics do not understand subtleties. The previous productions of the Little Theatre Group, for all their technical brilliance, failed artistically, primarily because of their direct appeal through slogans and crude contents to the fanaticism of the fashionable ultra-revolutionaries of Calcutta.

### Volte Face

Against the background of this ultra-revolutionary pose which Mr Dutt had to strike again and again to satisfy his admirers, his volte face—his deal with the 20th Century Fox and the abject surrender to the Government by signing a bond to get out of jail (damaged his image). In his present production he is possibly fighting between the desire to rehabilitate his revolutionary image and satisfy the artistic needs of dramaturgy,

## Film Fiasco

P. KUMAR

THE strike of the cinema-house workers petered out after a hundred glorious days of resolute fight. The much-hoped-for unity in the ranks of workers on the one hand and toilers in other wings of the trade on the other could never be effectively forged. Instead there was complete disarray. The strike ended without any central agreement. The houseowners in many cases forced employees to sign bonds, to their disadvantage.

True, the Government did not agree to the 10-paise increase per ticket as demanded by the exhibitors. But its role was one of callous passivity. Not only did it allow itself to be deprived of more than Rs. 1 crore in amusement tax revenue for the exhibitors' intransigence, its utter ignorance of what goes on in the industry and its complete collapse in the face of blackmail were staggering.

The progressive forces have not a better record either to their credit. The trade unions and the United Front entered the scene at the fag end somewhat halfheartedly and even that, after considerable prodding. Apparently, their revolutionary fervour found a more natural outlet in the scramble for Assembly seats and the striking workers could well be left in the lurch.

Now that the houses have started opening the scene is getting curiöser and curiöser. The much-vaunted Sangrakshan Samity, the self-appointed coterie, found itself forsaken by the exhibitors. The Samity's game is by now clear. When the strike was on, it refused to have any truck with the workers. It blacklisted some actors, maligned the technicians and directors known for their progressive views to please the powerful exhibitors. In fact the coterie's intention was to settle with the exhibitors. The strike did give them a lever. Already the three-in-one among them, the producers, distributors and exhibitors all at once, have deserted them now that no strike threat is lurking. The exhibitors refuse to recognise the Samity for simple reasons. The EIMPA is

still there, representing all the three wings. But the warring faction of producers and distributors does not leave the organisation. The exhibitors are taking advantage of the situation. Meanwhile, the Samity reels off statistics in newspaper columns to prove their claim. The newspapers lost advertisement revenue during the strike; the claims and counter-claims some how make up for a part of their lost money.

The Samitywallahs have now taken to the street—a farce in which some actors have been cast. The filmgoers, rather than going inside the halls at a price, have the pleasure of seeing the faded heroes in their novel roles. Some even pelted one or two questions, uncomfortable ones. The heroes had to beat a hasty retreat.

The exhibitors now propose to dole out charity. The same people who refused to grant a paisa more to their workers suddenly "feel called upon" to contribute "voluntarily" from next month 10% of I.N.R. collections to the State Government to enable the technicians and studio workers to make documentaries. They have become quality conscious too, for they blame the producers for the bad run of pictures which they have to show "perforce". The exhibitors further contemplate having their own cooperative to make films. The Samitywallahs are now getting it in the neck.

The picture is pretty confusing. Much valuable time has been wasted which could have been effectively utilised if the call of unity of the workers was listened to and acted upon. The Government's inaction has created more problems. The industry's ailments are not only institutional, the unlimited greed and sordid goings-on seem to defy any corrective measure. The self-seekers find a convenient berth in films because of their money. If the gamble fails to pay off, they jettison them to find other alternatives.

The strike and its aftermath point to one direction—the regulation of the industry. The Government's intentions are not clear. Some reports and recommendations, of course, are trotted out. It is time a new consolidation took place among the workers, actors, technicians and the elements with a healthy awareness.

Letter

## On Marx

*Frontier* should be congratulated for publishing the essay 'On Marx'. I rarely come across such a thought out and at the same time amply documented piece of writing dealing with contemporary trends in the socialist movement.

Basic policy statements by any Communist party always require an analysis of the international situation. Far all these analyses, in this case at least, have usually been dogmatic and derivative. In the name of guarding fraternal relations between Communist parties all over the world many essential and urgent issues have been either ignored or dismissed. Particularly after the Second World War the entire socialist movement undergone almost a qualitative change. Thus, true Marxists are facing the task of clearing the Augean stables. The present context demands a creative assimilation of Marxian dialectic. Glimpses of this assimilation abound in the essay 'On Marx'. But this dialectical approach would have been adequate if an analysis of the Indian situation was incorporated in it.

Jyoti  
Calcutta

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