

Naxalbari and

by Ajoy Dutta*

Although the communist movement developed in different parts of the Indian Subcontinent in the second decade of the 20th century, it took shape primarily in the third decade, and its first congress was held in 1943. From the very beginning, the communist movement in this area was dominated by revisionist leaders, who had their souls with Congress leaders like Nehru and followed a reformist and collaborationist line. As a reaction to this, there arose an adventurist line, Trotskyite in nature, to make democratic revolution and socialist revolution at the same time and in one stroke, led by B.T. Ranadive and Bhowani Sen. This line arose after the partition of India, although the correct path of new democratic revolution was put forward by Mao for revolution in semifeudal, semicolonial or semifeudal colonial countries and was successfully being practised in China and other Asian countries.

In the midst of the dominance by revisionism from the right and from the "left," the real revolutionaries tried at different times to find a revolutionary path in different areas. The great Telengana revolutionary peasants' war was one example. But this was bogged down by the revisionist central leadership, according to which people's war with agrarian revolutionary war at the core to make new democratic revolution could not be an all-India phenomenon in the communist movement at that time.

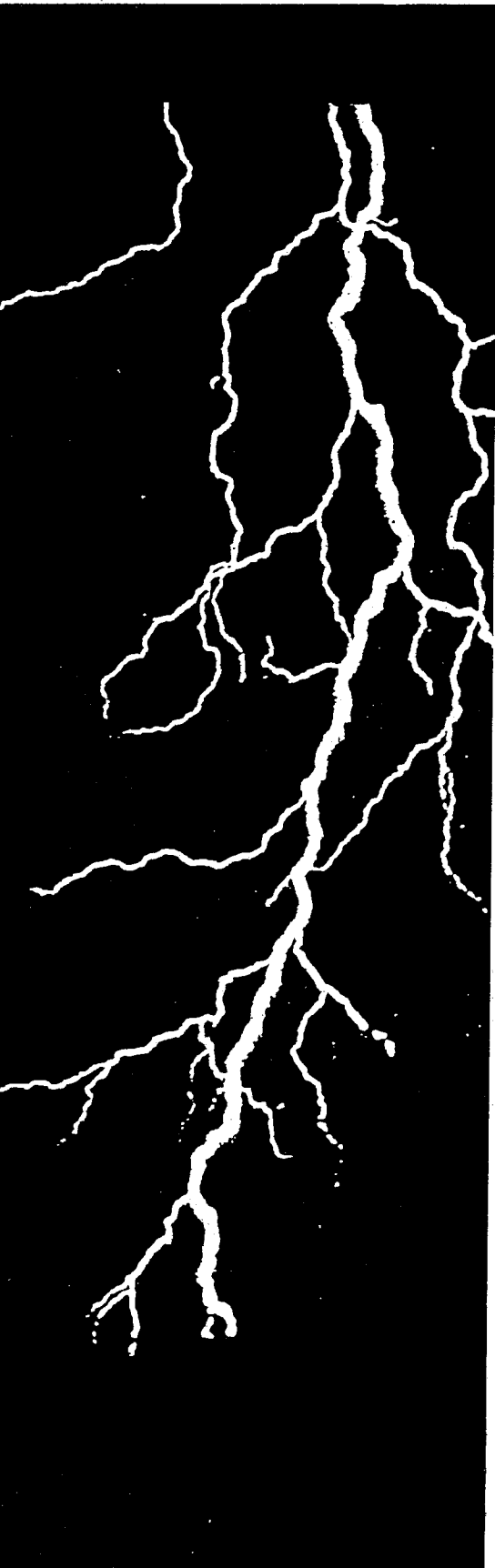
But the communist workers and people showed unprecedented heroism and sacrifice in the struggle against British imperialism and later on against the reactionary Congress government. The then

revisionist leadership in the communist movement of this region did not channel this heroism and sacrifice towards the revolutionary path of people's war, as shown by the revolutionary peasant masses of Telengana. Instead, they betrayed it.

Years of suppression of revolutionaries by revisionists in leadership sharpened the contradiction between the revisionists and the Marxist-Leninists. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China and the worldwide struggle against modern revisionism led by Comrade Mao and his associates gave the revolutionaries in India more strength and encouragement. They revolted *against the revisionist leadership through a concrete revolutionary action in Naxalbari by starting a peasants' revolutionary war*. Though the action was launched in a very small area like Naxalbari in the district of Darjeeling, it created a tremendous impact, unprecedented in the history of the communist movement not only in India, but in surrounding countries like Bangladesh. It became a historical phenomenon. It brought for the first time the path of agrarian revolutionary war as shown by Telengana revolutionaries to an all-India scale. To the revolutionaries and the people, it made crystal clear the fact that the path of the Indian revolution is new democratic revolution, the content of which is peasants' armed agrarian revolution, that the path of emancipation for the Indian people is not the parliamentary path advocated by the revisionists but people's war, which is to be waged in a protracted way principally mobilising the peasant masses with the landless poor peasants and agricultural labourers at the core.

No doubt, there were errors, even some serious ones, in the latter part of the movement, but the Naxalbari

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Its Impact on Bangladesh

peasants' struggle led by Comrade Charu Mazumdar and his associates, as well as the CPI(ML) which he led, took the Indian communist movement out of the clutches of the revisionist leadership and clearly showed the path of Indian revolution. For the first time in the communist movement of India, a decisive struggle against revisionism had been launched. For these reasons it was able to quickly attract the attention of the true revolutionaries in the ranks of the organisations led by revisionists; many new revolutionaries were born from among the young people, showing an undaunting spirit of sacrifice and courage and causing the reactionaries to tremble with fear. All this proved Comrade Mao's correct assertion that "It's right to rebel against reactionaries." Revolutionaries, led by Comrade Charu Mazumdar, rightly revolted against the revisionist leadership to bring the communist movement on to the right track. Mao had also remarked, "A single spark can start a prairie fire," the truth of which had been proved in the development of a revolutionary wave embracing all of India and the surrounding countries due to the launching of the revolutionary peasant struggle in Naxalbari.

In the latter part of the movement there were errors in regard to army building and military line. Annihilation of class enemies, for example, was taken as a general line and the principal stress was laid on the elimination of individuals and not on wiping out the political and ideological influences of the enemy. Annihilation of some enemies in certain cases should be a part of the general line of establishing people's war in these areas.

The question of mass organisations was totally negated and this was utterly wrong. Mass organisations are organisations of the

masses; the revolutionary party is the organisation of the revolutionary communists, the advanced detachment of the proletariat, tempered in struggle. A revolutionary war is a war of the masses, a people's war. How can people wage war without being organised? In addition, the level of consciousness differs from one section of the masses to another. However, mass organisations which serve revolution are needed by the revolutionaries. They must work in the mass organisations to channel the masses towards revolution. On these two questions the revolutionaries led by Charu Mazumdar practised mechanical materialism instead of dialectical materialism.

Before the start of the Naxalbari peasants' revolt, the first round of struggle between the Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries and the modern revisionists headed by Monisingh in the communist movement of what was then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) became sharp within the East Pakistan Communist Party (EPCP) and gained momentum through the impact of the worldwide struggle against modern revisionism and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The Marxist-Leninists in the EPCP reorganised themselves into the EPCP(ML). The Naxalbari peasant struggle had an influence in formulating the strategy and tactics of the revolution in what was then East Pakistan. The First Congress of the EPCP(ML), held in 1967, hailed the Naxalbari struggle as a revolutionary struggle.* Consequently there arose fraternal relations between the EPCP(ML) and the CPI(ML) led by Charu Mazumdar. The Naxalbari peasant struggle inspired thousands of youths from educational institutions in our country to go to the villages to work among the peasant masses and inspired a spirit of sacrifice for mak-

ing revolution. However, along with the glorious side of the Naxalbari movement, there were also the influences of the negative side in the communist movement in our country.

In the situation of 1971, through which Bangladesh came into being, two lines of evaluation in the CPI(ML) created two lines in the EPCP(ML) — a comparatively correct line, and a wrong line. However, the comparatively correct line dominated. The line followed by Charu Mazumdar was correct, in opposition to the incorrect line of Ashim Chatterjee. Comrade Charu Mazumdar supported the correct (and official) line of the EPCP(ML), as mentioned by the CRC, CPI(ML) in *Towards a New Phase of Spring Thunder*. "The CPI(ML) under the leadership of Charu Mazumdar took a correct stand of supporting the East Pakistan Communist Party (ML) which was leading a people's war against both the armies of Yahya Khan and India."

While in a short article it is not possible to go into detail on the causes of the advances and setbacks of the Marxist-Leninist movement in India, we say confidently that the glorious Naxalbari peasants' struggle has shown the basic path of revolution in South Asian countries. The general orientation of the Naxalbari struggle is correct. It is the responsibility of revolutionaries to reject the negative aspects of the Marxist-Leninist movement arising out of the Naxalbari struggle and to hold high the positive aspects and the correct general orientation. □

* Later, in 1971, when the question arose of evaluating the situation of Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan and the Indian invasion along with subsequent strategic questions, the C.C. of the EPCP(ML) was equally divided. One part became the BSD(ML).