

Ideological Struggle

N. K. SINGH

AN ideological struggle is on in Bihar. Mr S. N. Singh, the State Secretary of the CPI(ML), has declared a virtual war against party theoretician, Mr Charu Mazumdar. The State Secretary has "expelled" many of the followers of Mr Mazumdar, while he himself has been disowned by the Mazumdar camp. The war is on. But it is being fought on purely ideological level.

Ideological differences are not new for the Marxist-Leninist—to be more precise, Maoist—ranks in Bihar. From the very beginning, say from the days of the "Naxalbari Sahayata Samiti" and the 'Co-ordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries' there have been many groups, popularly known as 'Naxalites', claiming faith in the Maoist dictum of armed revolution.

The dominant group is the CPI(ML). In the beginning, Mr T. C. Josh and Mr S. N. Singh were the pillars of this group. The irony is that both of them are no longer attached to the party. The former was expelled by the latter while the latter himself has been disowned by the Mazumdar camp. From the very beginning of the armed struggle in Bihar, the CPI(ML) has been the most active and influential among the Naxalite groups. Another was the group of Mr B. K. Azad. Though very active in nature, the working field of this group was limited in the sense that it had influence only in the home area (north Monghyr) of Mr Azad. The third category of communist revolutionaries were active under the leadership of one Mr Rahi. This group was very small and it too had a very limited working field, viz some parts of Gaya district. Yet another group led by Mr Prithviraj Singh was active in the same region. This group is said to have had close

connection with the Co-ordination Committee of Mr T. Nagi Reddi.

Besides this, numerous scattered groups or combinations of groups—some having only a handful of persons in their fold—led by individual revolutionaries—were also active all over Bihar. At least two or three of such groups were in existence in Patna alone. Most of these small groups died out in the absence of a powerful ideological background and their members, including leaders, joined other stronger groups, mainly the CPI(ML). In certain cases the groups themselves merged into the CPI(ML). Most of these groups had no strong ideological differences with the ML.

While engaged in ideological dispute the Indian communists are often in the habit of hurling their pet accusations of 'CIA agent', 'counter-revolutionary', 'revisionist' and 'adventurist'—without caring whether the struggle is antagonistic or non-antagonistic. The struggle in Bihar is being conducted in the same traditional manner. To go by one group, it alone is the torch-bearer of revolution and the rest are nothing but CIA agents.

Mr Rahi's "CIA" group is very small and insignificant—and inactive too, to some extent—and it is futile to discuss its ideological background. However, it may be mentioned that he was once expelled from the Bihar State Co-ordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries on a charge of "counter-revolutionary activities".

The group led by Mr Prithviraj Singh too comes in the same category. Before making any comment on the ideology of Mr Singh it is necessary to reveal that once he had to undergo medical treatment in a mental hospital. Though having affilia-

tions with the T. Nagi Reddi group, he is very happy to declare that he is trying to propound some new Marxist theories of his own for the advancement of the Indian Revolution. "He is", reported Mr Singh's son, "engaged in studying mathematics now-a-days."

Both these groups have no 'action' to their credit while the group of Mr B. K. Azad was quite active in its limited working zone. But it has undergone a qualitative change. Mr Azad no more believes in traditional Marxism, not to speak of Maoism. Many of the Marxist formulations are basically wrong, according to Mr Azad.

Though a prominent member of the Bihar State Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries, Mr Azad opposed it from the very beginning. When he dissociated himself from the CCCR, his sharp criticism against the formation of the CPI(ML) seemed quite natural.

Mr Azad does not accept that the contradiction between feudalism and the poor peasants is the major one. He considers that the question of national liberation movement is the main thing. After the revolution is accomplished, he argues, a matriarchical system should be set up because democratic centralism means relationship between mother and child and that is impossible without a matriarchical system. There are many professional criminals in his 'Naxalite' group because "these so-called criminals have become the most hated people in this bourgeois society and as such they are our most allied forces." Last but not least Mr Azad uses things like *bhanga* because these help him to concentrate.

In the last mid-term parliamentary poll Mr Azad stood as an Independent candidate from the Khagaria constituency in north Bihar. He was defeated. In the wake of the election, Mr Azad found, all of a sudden, that the Chinese Communist Party is no longer revolutionary and that there are some basic errors in dialectical materialism.

CPI(ML) Rift

Since it is the biggest and the most influential group, the rift in the CPI(ML) is disturbing. The two groups treat this rift from different viewpoints. While Mr S. N. Singh treats it as inner-party struggle, the Mazumdar group in Bihar accuses him of being a "traitor." Both the groups are engaged in mutual mud-slinging. While the Mazumdar group tries to trace out the traits of *centralism* in its former State Secretary from the earlier days, the State Secretary accuses Mr Mazumdar of "left adventurism."

The rift between SN and CM came into the open late last year with the adoption of a resolution by the Bihar State Committee of the CPI(ML) accusing CM with "authoritarianism" and of pursuing "extremist" policies. The suit was followed by the U.P. State Committee, which too adopted a resolution supporting the stand taken by the Bihar Committee. However, it went one step forward by attacking the 'enemy annihilation programme.' Bihar had kept mum over the question.

Besides accusing CM of "authoritarianism", the Bihar Committee had attacked his line of not making a united front with the peasants *at this stage*. It wanted the rich peasants to be spared from 'annihilation.' Another attack on the leadership was mounted on the question of actions in urban areas. The Committee wanted the present sort of struggle in towns to stop and only actions of "defensive" nature to be conducted there. It also questioned the party's call that "this is an era of self-sacrifice." It wanted the policy of self-defence to be followed.

The positive aspect of the whole thing is that the rank and file, who seemed to be bewildered at the time of the split, recovered very soon. They have joined this or that camp and are continuing their struggle against the Establishment. This bewilderment was natural—the same person who was described by the CPI(ML) organ as "the beloved leader of

Mushahari peasants" hardly a year ago was described as "having no influence among the masses of the area."

However, it is the CM group which was in majority. All the 'actions', carried out were credited to them. At present the SN group is practically inactive, perhaps because it has lost its influence in the three Naxalite strongholds in Bihar, viz Mushahari, Surajgarha and Chotanagpur.

A clear line of demarcation emerges from the organs brought out by the two groups—both, if translated

into English, mean *People's War*. While *Lok Yudha*, the organ of the CM group in Bihar, confines itself to preaching its ideology and seems least disturbed by the split, almost the whole space of *Jana Judha*, the organ of the SM group, is devoted to articles dealing with the present ideological war. SN describes his one-time "respected" leader, Charu Mazumdar, as "an unintellectual man." Should an intellectual like Mr Nirad C. Chaudhuri be imported into the Communist Party to lead the People's Democratic Revolution?

Tripura**The New VIPs**

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

THE other day a VIP from Bangladesh told a friend at Agartala that he felt very disappointed when he noticed a trend in West Bengal to treat the Bangladesh issue strictly on a dialectical plane rather than as one in which at least the Bengalis should be involved. But he was happy to note that people in Tripura have at least found in Bangladesh a cause worth espousing 'after years of dissipation of their energies in wasteful pursuits.'

This VIP was of course not the only one of the tribe in holding such views. But the way they often behave gives rise to doubt as to how sincere and dedicated their own involvement is in the Bangladesh struggle. As some members of the Liberation forces say, they appear to be "a carefree lot undergoing the strain of a lengthy excursion." In spite of the fact that more than a million evacuees have already crossed over to Tripura, it is these VIPs whose presence we are made to feel all the time. Everywhere you hear their pep talk about themselves and they do not even seem to be aware of the presence of millions of evacuees who are living like animals.

They would make it a point to harp on the 'popularity' they enjoy

in Bangladesh. It is this 'popularity' which, they firmly believe, should be given priority over all that matters in connection with the happenings in Bangladesh. The other day one of them flared up at the mention of certain left radicals who, in the wake of the army crackdown, stayed on in Bangladesh to organise resistance while others fled the country. While others present grinned in embarrassment at his attitude he sought to explain his stand thus: "However firebrand the revolutionaries may be, we do not attach any importance to what they say or do because their number is very small". Sometimes some of these people are profuse in expressions of humility, but the more they talk the clearer it becomes that nothing would stop them from using the most ruthless and devious expedients to crush the left radicals whom they consider to be a potential danger. If you ask them what they are doing to help the liberation struggle, a wave of exasperation passes over their faces, as if it is mean to indulge in such curiosities. However, they have one advice to offer to all of us: "Read newspapers and you will know everything about Bangladesh". Someone would go