

New Tactics In Andhra

MALLIKARANJAN RAO

TWO important developments in Andhra Pradesh in recent weeks should give a new dimension to the serious debate on the tactical line reported to be going on inside the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist).

One is the new style of work decided upon by the Srikakulam Regional Committee of the CPI(ML), which has suspended the "annihilation" campaign. The Srikakulam committee has pledged to mobilise the peasants on patently economic and sectional interests like reoccupation of land from the landlords, and seizure of hoarded foodgrain stocks or forcing the hoarders to sell them at reasonable prices. The switch in the tactical line, evident from a Telugu pamphlet dated "11-1970" (that is November 1970) issued from the "Srikakulam Struggle Area", is away from the party centre's directive. The "annihilation" tactic of the central leadership is based on the rejection of mass organisations and mass participation in armed struggle as preconditions for starting guerilla warfare. Paradoxically and ironically, the tactic

was first tried in Srikakulam where there was already a mass movement and so the CPI(ML) could claim some initial successes for its tactic.

The second development is the notification by the Andhra Pradesh Government of three taluks in Warangal district (Mulug, Mahboobabad and Narasampet) as "disturbed" areas to contain the "Naxalite" trouble. These areas have been under the influence of the Andhra Pradesh Revolutionary Communist Committee (Nagi Reddy group, as it is known) which has been trying to develop a contiguous forest area covering thousands of square miles as a "guerilla zone."

If one remembers that about two years ago, areas of Srikakulam were notified as "disturbed" by the State Government, the seriousness of the situation for the Government in these three troubled taluks can be understood.

It would be well to sum up the APRCC's tactical line before recounting the results of its application in this "disturbed" area. The APRCC holds that people's war is the only path of liberation for India and armed

struggle the main form of struggle and the Red army the main form of organisation. At the same time, mass struggles on immediate issues should be co-ordinated with armed struggle, by co-relating mass organisations to the organisation of the red army to make the broad masses of people participate consciously in armed struggle.

Unlike the CPI(ML) which considers the "annihilation" line valid for any part of the country any time and with no relation to the mass movement, the APRCC has divided the State into three zones on the basis of the level of the mass movement: the forest areas where the mass movement has reached the stage of armed struggle; areas where there is a wide mass base and the class struggles are intensifying; and the areas where the mass movement is relatively weak. The APRCC decided to take the mass movement on to the path of armed struggle in forest and mountainous areas; to gradually develop mass struggles into armed struggles in the areas where there were powerful class struggles by expanding and intensifying them; and to strive to develop class struggles in other areas.

Guerilla Zone

Its attempt to develop a guerilla zone was in the forest belt through which the Godavari river runs. The forest comprises areas of three Telengana districts (Khammam, Warangal, Karimnagar and Adilabad) on one side of the river, and areas of

three coastal districts, East Godavari, West Godavari and Visakhapatnam across the river. This forest is linked with the Srikakulam forest by a small plain and the same forest extends into Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra States. Lakhs of Girijans live in this area under the same conditions of feudal exploitation and serfdom as obtain in Srikakulam district. The area is economically self-sufficient and poor in communications. It includes the area which guerillas of the 1946-51 Telengana peasant war used as the base for the struggle in the plains.

The APRCC started work in the Mulug taluk and along with the propagation of revolutionary politics, the people were mobilised against local exploitation—by landlords, forest contractors, moneylenders and petty village officials. The people were also mobilised for occupation of forest lands and land with the landlords. Resistance from the landlords was met with guerilla squad actions; as was to be expected, police reserves were thrown in by the Government against the movement. There has been a similar movement in areas of East Godavari district, across the river. Encounters between the squads and police patrols are common. Armed attacks on "people's enemies", seizure of their moveable property, burning of promissory notes, Government records with village officials, re-occupation of land seized by landlords, attacks on police stations, seizure of grain stocks from landlords for distribution among the peasantry all this had added up to a situation euphemistically described in Government's parlance as "disturbed."

In a recent document (*Some Problems Concerning the Path of People's War in India*), the APRCC has summed up its experience: "... when the people's movement is advancing, wherever we lagged behind in forming armed squads to fight back landlords and police repression, the movement has suffered a setback. And similarly wherever we

carried [out] armed attacks without taking into consideration the level of the people's consciousness, their political and organisational level, the movement has suffered a setback. Wherever the armed struggle was correctly co-ordinated with mass struggles on partial issues, the movement has advanced." (p. 37).

To the APRCC, the CPI(ML)'s idea of creating red bases by annihilating the class enemy is un-Maoist, and contrary to Mao's concept of liberated areas. The CPI(ML) thinks the state machinery is smashed at the village level the moment the landlords are forced to flee the village. An earlier APRCC document points out that Mao has laid down three conditions for developing an area into a liberated base area: building the armed forces, defeating the enemy, and mobilisation of the broad masses of the people. As the APRCC understands Mao, building of armed forces means building of the people's armed forces capable of defeating the enemy's armed forces, defeating the enemy does not mean annihilation of class enemies but defeating the class enemy along with its armed forces, and mobilisation of the masses means mobilisation and arming of the masses against the class enemy and its armed forces in complete co-ordination with the people's armed forces.

So "red" power cannot exist without a red army though the CPI(ML) claimed long ago that "red" power has emerged in Srikakulam and that it would soon be India's Yenan.

For FRONTIER readers in

West India can contact

S. D. CHANDAVARKAR

10, Kanara House

Mogal Lane, Mahim

Bombay-16

For Frontier contact

People's Book House

Meher House,

Cowasji Patel Street,

Fort, Bombay