

Towards a New Phase of Spring Thunder



Document from CRC, CPI(ML)

The following text has been submitted by the Central Reorganisation Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist). The introduction is from the journal *Mass Line*, an Indian Marxist-Leninist newspaper, which also published the text. — AWTW

Twenty years have passed since the peasants of Naxalbari stood up and said NO to class oppression and revisionist betrayal. The peasantry took up arms in this struggle for New Democratic Revolution, thus giving a crushing blow to the well-entrenched revisionists in the Indian Communist Movement. Naxalbari caught the imagination of class conscious people of India and its message reverberated from divers corners of the country. We are giving here excerpts from the historic document, *Towards A New Phase Of Spring Thunder*, debated and accepted by the all-India conference of Central Reorganisation Committee, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) held in January 1982 with the aim of elucidating the great significance of this epoch-making upsurge — Editor, *Mass Line*.

Historical Significance of Naxalbari

Many opponents and distorters of the Naxalbari struggle have argued that the incident itself was very insignificant when compared to many other struggles that have taken place in India, and that it became so significant mainly due to

the open support and encouragement given by the Communist Party of China. It is true that the CPC's open support gave an impetus to the whole movement, and helped much in building up unity among the revolutionary cadres all over India. But that does not belittle the significance of the event itself, because the CPC decided to support and uphold it only after recognising the historic significance of the struggle as summed up in the above quoted words. So what we have to examine is whether the CPC's evaluation was correct or not.

If we consider the extent of the struggle, the nature of the clashes, the number killed or arrested, etc., the Naxalbari struggle is a small and insignificant one in comparison with many other struggles that have taken place in India. That is why the revisionists and opportunists of various hues cannot understand why Naxalbari gained so much historic importance. They cannot understand how even a small event becomes the symbol of a historic turning point. What really happened was that the entire contemporary history of India in that period got crystallised in the struggles that developed surrounding that unknown, remote village of Naxalbari. The year 1967 was a crucial one as far as Indian history is concerned. It was in 1967 that the economic crisis which was developing since 1947 had become most acute; and the consequent political instability had reached an unprecedented intensity. From every

quarter attempts were under way for tiding over this crisis. Moreover the penetration of Soviet social-imperialism and its attempt to gain an upper hand in India had intensified the contradiction within the ruling classes. The manifestations of this economic and political crisis could be witnessed in all parts of the country. Among the revolutionary-conscious people, the thinking that the communist leadership was betraying them was spreading on a vast scale. And as a result, they had started to dare to think about new ways and means. This was not a special feature confined to certain specific regions alone; rather it was truly a countrywide phenomenon. The Naxalbari struggle was the outcome, the creation of this historical circumstance which had grown up step by step. It was the appropriate answer to the burning question of the correct path for the liberation of the Indian people given by that very history of India, to the questions raised by it itself. It is this historical relevance that raised Naxalbari to the status of the most important historical event in the contemporary history of India. Thus the Naxalbari struggle originated and developed in close connection with the particular historical circumstance that had become matured in 1967 in India.

The developments in the international communist movement also contributed much to the added significance of the Naxalbari struggle. The struggle against revisionism in the international communist

movement had already become crucial at that time. In the struggle against international revisionism the growth of the liberation movements of the colonial and semi-colonial countries is a factor of decisive importance. By all counts, India holds a vital place among such countries. In India where revisionism had held sway for a very long period, that the genuine revolutionary forces surged forward discovering on their own the path of armed struggle by shattering the trammels of revisionism would in a big way assist the struggle against revisionism waged on a global level. That is precisely why the Chinese Communist Party, which had risen to the leadership position in the international communist movement (by leading this uncompromising fight against revisionism), upheld the Naxalbari struggle; that is also why Marxist-Leninists and other revolutionary forces all over the world drew inspiration from it.

In the light of the new developments in the international communist movement since the death of Mao Tsetung, an argument has been raised from some quarters that the unconditional support given to the Naxalbari struggle by the CPC was the result of the "left" deviationist trend that dominated the entire period of the GPCR in China. Of course, the proponents of this theory are the followers of the present revisionist leadership of China who have thoroughly reversed all the correct verdicts of the GPCR both on theoretical and practical levels. And this argument conforms to their present ideology of preventing the development of armed struggle. But the genuine Marxist-Leninists who uphold all the correct verdicts of the GPCR and take sides with the socialist roaders in China cannot accept such a baseless contention. The whole-hearted support given to the Naxalbari struggle by the CPC was based on a correct evaluation of the national and international situation using Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought as the guideline.

Ideological Basis

In India, the Naxalbari struggle and the subsequent development of

the revolutionary movement was possible because the communist revolutionaries actively participated in the ideological struggle at the international level. Their participation in this struggle initiated and led by Mao Tsetung against Khrushchovian revisionism was vigorous and they took sides on controversial issues. It was through this struggle that the communist revolutionaries in India became capable of combating revisionism that had already got itself well entrenched in the communist movement of India. The ideological struggle at the international level did not stop there. It assumed new dimensions in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of China. Thus the international communist movement arrived at new and correct formulations on the theory and practice of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat which is the most important component of Mao Tsetung Thought. Moreover, in China itself this struggle developed to new levels. The ideological struggle that had broken out at the international level against the neo-revisionists in China (who have seized the party and state leadership following the death of Mao Tsetung) has raised the ideological level of the international communist movement to new heights. Under the protection and guidance of the neo-revisionists of China, the neo-revisionists in India have also been quite active recently in undermining the revolutionary movement. So, the Indian revolution can march forward only by linking the struggle against the Chinese revisionists at the international level with the struggle against their agents in India.

The Cultural Revolution in China and the consequent developments have imparted a new understanding with regard to the process of establishing and consolidating real people's political power. The state of affairs in all former socialist countries has shown us that it is more difficult to consolidate political power than it is to seize political power by building up a parallel military might. Experience has demonstrated that in that process of consolidation of political power, capitalist restoration itself is

possible. In this process of consolidation of political power, the determining factor is the capability and the level of consciousness of the workers and other toiling masses to continue the class struggle against the capitalist elements and thereby keep the real power in their own hands at the local level, i.e., even at the level of factories, cooperative farms and communes. This experience is relevant in the prerevolutionary stage also. This understanding can — and must — give a new content to the struggle that is taking place here in India (in the pre-revolutionary stage) in order to establish people's political power at the local level. Furthermore, the political content of the slogans of the Cultural Revolution (and the dialectical approach reflected in them) such as "take class struggle as the key link," "put politics in command," "grasp revolution, promote production," etc., can play an important part in the struggle against revisionism in the pre-revolutionary stage also, especially at a time when the Indian agents of Deng are making all-out attempts to undermine the armed struggle using all sorts of economist slogans and a revisionist mass line. The banner raised by the Cultural Revolution was that of an uncompromising struggle against revisionism: and this struggle against revisionism taking place anywhere in the world today is based upon the correct verdicts of that great revolution. As comrade CM pointed out, the Indian revolution is taking place in a new stage of world revolution after the commencement of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of China. The Indian revolution cannot take a single step forward without assimilating and upholding its correct lessons.

The ideological struggle against the Albanian brand of revisionism is also an important factor in this respect. The Albanian leadership has taken an ideological stand very similar to that of Khrushchov revisionism by not recognising the existence of antagonistic class contradictions in a socialist society. That is why they are opposing the GPCR in the same vein as that of the Soviet revisionists.

In short, the guideline for our evaluation and summing up of the past must be the revolutionary essence of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought which has evolved out of the ideological struggle taking place at the international level against the Chinese revisionists and the Albanian revisionists.

Evaluation of Naxalbari

Comrade CM tried to sum up this lesson in his article "*One Year After Naxalbari*" where he stated, "If the Naxalbari peasant struggle has any lesson for us, it is this: militant struggles must be carried on not for land, crops, etc., but for seizure of state power." From analysing the nature of the Naxalbari struggle itself we had already come to the conclusion that all the activities during that struggle were centred round establishing the revolutionary committees of the peasants as the real centres of people's political power. But this political power was translated into concrete reality by implementing the decisions of the committees on many basic economic issues like the distribution of land and other properties. Without such concrete measures the political power has no meaning; it would merely be an empty, abstract phrase. So the struggle for political power and economic demands are two fundamental aspects of any revolutionary struggle. The relevant questions is: out of these two aspects, which is the principal one? And the genuine Marxist-Leninists would unequivocally assert that the struggle for political power is the principal aspect as long as the class struggle is continuing. In the history of the Indian communist movement confusion on this question has always been utilised by the revisionists to subvert revolutionary struggles, as has already been pointed out above with regard to the Telengana struggle. In this context it was absolutely essential to smash the revisionist view and firmly establish the primary importance of the struggle for political power. And the greatness of Naxalbari consists precisely in the unequivocal stand taken by the revolutionaries

under comrade CM's leadership on this question. But, even so, instead of presenting the relationship between the struggle for political power and for economic gains dialectically, comrade CM counterposed one to the other and gave one-sided emphasis to the struggle for political power. The mistake persisted and took on even greater proportions in later years and became a basis for the dogmatic understanding of the question of political power and for one-sided rejection of other forms of struggle and organisations. The

proper summing up should be that "militant struggles must be carried on not merely for land, crops, etc., but mainly for the seizure of political power," for only this gives us an accurate view of the actual struggle in Naxalbari.

Weaknesses

In spite of the correct political guideline, the Naxalbari struggle suffered a temporary setback in that area, though its politics triumphantly spread all over India. What were the reasons for this temporary set-

On the Twentieth Anniversary of Naxalbari Struggle

By the Central Reorganisation Committee, Communist Party of India

It is now twenty years after the historic Naxalbari struggle broke out, leading to the formation of the CPI(ML) on April 22nd, 1969 under the leadership of comrade Charu Mazumdar. When we look back into the rich experience of these past twenty years assimilated by the Marxist-Leninist movement in India we can see positive as well as negative experiences, a correct understanding of which will help us in advancing the cause of revolution in India.

The Naxalbari struggle and the consequent formation of the CPI(ML) dealt a heavy blow at the forces of revisionism and parliamentarism which had already been well entrenched in the Indian communist movement and thus gave an impetus to the development of revolutionary forces all over the country. The CPI(ML) under the leadership of comrade Charu Mazumdar established Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought as

the guiding ideology of the communists in India, determined the stage of Indian revolution as that of New Democratic Revolution and the path of revolution as Peoples' War, brought forth the role of peasantry as the motive force of revolution, and strove to integrate the lessons from Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution with the concrete tasks of Indian revolution.

The emphasis given to the anti-feudal tasks in the political line of the Party, as established by the Party Congress of 1970, gave birth to many militant peasant struggles in different parts of the country during the past two decades. Yet repeated experiences show that these struggles could not break out of the comparatively small pockets where feudal forces were dominating locally and the struggles could not develop to higher levels even in these areas. On the other hand, during the recent years, vast areas of Indian countryside witness-

back? The *Terai Report* itself had summed up the reasons thus: "lack of a strong party organisation; failure to rely wholeheartedly on the masses and to build a powerful mass base, ignorance of military affairs, thinking on old lines and a formal attitude towards the establishment of political power and the work of revolutionary land reform." In general this is a correct evaluation of the weakness of the movement at that stage which led to the temporary setback. Here it is to be pointed out that the lack of the

very concept of protracted war also contributed to such a setback. But now we can go deeper into the matter as we have accumulated more experience during the last few years. When we look back, we can see that communist revolutionaries who were leading the Naxalbari struggle could not chalk out a thorough, concrete programme for establishing parallel power centres and continuing it for a long time because they did not think seriously about the possibility of the existence of dual power centres in the coun-

tryside for a long time. Without a political line of setting up people's power centres in parallel to the enemy's existing power centres and gradually overcoming the latter through a long drawn-out struggle, the concept of establishing political power at the local level can never be realised and lead ultimately to the countryside seizure of power.

During a period of historic turning points in any country there emerge some historic personalities who play a leading role in the historic development of that period. It is true that masses create history. The same masses choose their leaders who can represent their will and wishes and lead them in carrying out their determinations. That means they create their leader also. Then that leader becomes the symbol of the social consciousness of the majority of people in that period who are actively involved in the revolutionary changes of that period. To the extent that this leader can represent and articulate the political will of the majority of the people, he will naturally be recognised as the authority of the movement which is leading the people at that critical juncture. The revolutionary authority of Lenin and Mao had emerged and got established in this way. Of course India has not yet passed through such a critical historical turning point in which a revolutionary change swept the whole country. Still, we have to recognise the fact that with the Naxalbari struggle, India was entering such a historical period. Though the further development of the movement faced many obstacles and was hampered to a great extent, we can't deny the fact that the Naxalbari struggle brought forth a qualitative change in the development of the whole history of India. That is why comrade CM who played the leading role in guiding that struggle was considered to be a historic personality and an authority as far as the Indian revolution is concerned. Up to this extent comrade CM's authority was not created artificially, but had evolved historically. □



and Party Day

(Marxist-Leninist)

ed the emergence and spreading of a different type of farmers' and peasants' struggle mainly directed against the Centre.

Struggles against national oppression spreading to different areas has become one of the most important political developments of the past few years in India. Even the Darjeeling area which gave birth to the Naxalbari struggle is now witnessing the struggle of Gurkha national people. Some of these struggles have thrown up open challenges to the all-India ruling classes and the very existence of the imposed central state has been seriously threatened leading to the increased fascistisation of the central state machinery.

All these developments compelled our organisation to reformulate our political strategy leading to the adoption of the new political orientation at the all-India Plenum held in May 1985. Characterisation of India as a neocolonial country and

the recognition of the significance of the national question with the conclusion that New Democratic Revolution in India can be completed only as an ensemble of New Democratic Revolutions of different national formations by the Plenum have been getting established day by day by the developments taking place all over India.

Under these circumstances, the task of carrying forward the cause of Indian revolution can be accomplished only by deepening our understanding of the Indian situation and establishing it at the political and ideological level and translating it into revolutionary practice. Rebuilding of the Party and unification of revolutionary forces can also be achieved only by advancing along this path. Let us resolve to go ahead steadfastly and take up the challenge with added determination.

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