

Report on Armed Peasant Struggle by Debra Thana Organizing Committee of Communist Party of India (M-L)

THE Indian monthly *Liberation* carried in its December 1969 issue a report on the revolutionary armed peasant struggle in Debra, West Bengal, by the Debra Thana Organizing Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist). The report sums up the experience of the Communist Party of India (M-L) in leading the peasants' armed struggle in Debra.

The report begins with a quotation from Chairman Mao: "Make trouble, fail, make trouble again, fail again . . . till their doom; that is the logic of the imperialists and all reactionaries the world over in dealing with the people's cause, and they will never go against this logic. This is a Marxist law. When we say 'imperialism is ferocious', we mean that its nature will never change, that the imperialists will never lay down their butcher knives, that they will never become Buddhas, till their doom."

"Fight, fail, fight again, fail again, fight again . . . till their victory; that is the logic of the people, and they too will never go against this logic. This is another Marxist law. The Russian people's revolution followed this law, and so has the Chinese people's revolution."

The report says that the heroic peasants of Debra have realized the truth of Chairman Mao's teaching from their own experience in the struggle against local tyrants, evil gentry, *jotedars* (landlords) and usurers. They said: "How can a *jotedar* ever wish good to others? A butcher never lays down his knives, and will never become a Gautama Buddha."

The report reviews briefly the history of the peasant movement in Debra. In 1967, a surging wave of class struggle started in the area, the whole area under the Debra police station shook as poor peasants in their thousands demonstrated. The unbending and stiff attitude of the *jotedars* and the rich peasants only increased the class hatred of the landless peasants. They did not remain satisfied only with their demand for wage-increase but called for a fight to the finish against the entire *jotedar* class. Their struggle began to overstep the pale of economic demands. They openly raised the slogan: "We will return blow for blow" in a tit-for-tat struggle against the *jotedars* and usurers. Their own struggles helped them to realize better that

they must wage armed struggle against the armed counter-revolution.

The report severely denounces the "United Front" government of West Bengal which was controlled by the Indian revisionists for its sabotage and suppression of the armed peasant struggle in Debra. It says: When the peasants' armed struggle in Debra entered a new phase under the inspiration of the peasant struggle in Naxalbari, warrants were issued by the "United Front" government against the comrades who had taken part in the struggle. This government, on its last day in office, promulgated a reactionary decree banning meetings, demonstrations and carrying of weapons in this area. It openly collaborated with the *jotedars* and jointly launched their counter-offensive against the peasants. Under these circumstances, there was no way to carry forward the movement other than by means of guerrilla activity, by forming secret squads and annihilating the class enemies. Thus, the question of seizure of power appeared as a natural and inevitable question.

The report points out: The formation of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), its political resolution, and the teachings of Comrade Charu Mazumdar tremendously encouraged the organization at Debra to form guerrilla units by fighting against all kinds of opportunism and legalist illusions. Comrades in the organization at Debra placed the experience of the people's struggle before the people and the ranks in the light of Chairman Mao's teachings; they pointed out with modesty their own past weaknesses and they also pointed out the treachery of the Indian revisionist leadership. While doing this they put forward annihilation of class enemies by guerrilla method as the task. The effect was surprising. Work began to progress very rapidly, and the guerrilla unit was ready for action within one and a half months. The progress made in these one and a half months was like a big leap forward. The experience of these one and a half months helped us to realize how tremendous was the significance of Chairman Mao's teaching on mass line: "From the masses, to the masses."

The report says: On October 1, 1969, a demonstration of about 1,000 armed peasants attacked the house

of a notorious *jotedar*, Kanai Kuiti. The revolutionary peasants seized his gun and cartridges, confiscated his stock of hoarded rice, clothes and mortgaged articles, and burnt all his documents relating to land. Moreover, we managed to move our combat force to safety without a scratch on them. So we could use our entire strength in subsequent attacks. The seizure of the gun and the cartridges changed the mood of our cadres and struck fear in the hearts of our enemies. Since then, the guerrillas have taken more revolutionary actions. All these actions could not have been carried out so smoothly without the wholehearted support of the local people.

The report stresses the importance of keeping close ties with the masses and doing propaganda among them. It points out: "In the plains where the masses serve as our jungles and hills we must carry on political propaganda along with guerrilla actions." Relying on the masses is a thing that has to be learnt. We must defy all difficulties and fear and go among the masses — not once but repeatedly. The conspiracy of the ruling classes to cause dissensions among us can be smashed only by making our political propaganda regular and more concrete. We can wage people's war in Debra only by carrying on political propaganda and guerrilla struggle simultaneously.

Summing up the experience of the peasant armed struggle in Debra, the report points out: "Ours is a protracted people's war and the enemy is now much

stronger than we. Our weapon is Mao Tsetung Thought and our method guerrilla struggle." In order to annihilate large numbers of the enemy, there must be accurate investigation of his movements. We must "depend on the local squad or the people of the village where action is to take place, because it is they who have the most detailed information about the movements of the class enemy."

The report adds: Ours is a protracted people's war and our path has twists and turns. But our future is bright. If we do not prepare ourselves mentally in this way we are sure to fall prey to defeatism and frustration. We must repeatedly stress inside our Party what Comrade Charu Mazumdar has said: "Let us eliminate the defeatist mentality and be inspired with the inevitability of our victory."

The report says that it is necessary to turn the personal hatred of the peasants against the *jotedars* into class hatred. This must be taken as a matter of principle by the Party members and the guerrillas alike.

The report ends with: "Long live the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)!"

"The present armed struggle in Debra will continue!"

"Long live Chairman Mao! A long, long life to him!"