bourgeois democratic revolution before even conceiving of an armed uprising’ are based on outmoded concepts which become counter-revolutionary in consequence if not in intent.

Vanguard?

Is it undue pessimism or is it clear-sighted realism to say that, at the present time, the bulk of the organized working class in advanced capitalist countries is more than minimally integrated into bourgeois national culture, and as such, has become a class of little or no revolutionary potential? The progressive forces in the United States, those most actively rejecting American imperialism and accepting revolutionary solutions to the world’s problems, include some students, some intellectuals, and a quite significant body of Negroes. The blacks are the major insurrectionary force in American society and yet their objective class status is much closer to being unorganized, disemployed lumpen proletariat than organized, trade-union workers. This is not to write off the working class as a force which will most easily accept the new demands of a socialist society, but it does question whether it is now, or in the near future will be, the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle.

If this picture of the working class in developed countries is a true one, then much that has been standard to revolutionary theory must be seen as instrumental in bringing about this state of affairs. Although the forces which facilitated the greater exploitation of the under-developed world and the feeding of the crumbs of capitalist profit-making to the working class are also extremely significant in explaining this, the failure of revolutionary tactics must be seen to play its part. It is curious that we did not learn our basic lessons from the total collapse of the most organized, politically conscious working class movement in modern history—the debacle of the German working class in the 1930’s (the recent Indonesian experience is another dramatic example). Long-range education of an abstract nature, painststaking organizing for bread and butter unionism, and engagement in parliamentary politics can no longer be seen as productive tactics except in very special and very clearly defined circumstances. Exactly what should be done in the working class of developed countries at the present time is not easy to answer, but what should not be done appears clearly borne out of the major events of our century.

The present formulation assumes that the locus of revolutionary action has shifted to the “Third World”. Although the general theoretical explanation of this shift is only now beginning to be made, we already have a great deal of successful revolutionary experience to justify this thesis. Both the quality of mass misery and the repression that sustains it in the underdeveloped world have brought about conditions wherein armed struggle has been not only possible, but eminently successful. The struggle between bourgeois and proletariat has intensified just as predicted by the original Marxist exposition, but this struggle must now be seen in global rather than national terms. National liberation wars have become more successful, have become more hopeful for the future, the more they have defined themselves in these terms. In any ultimate sense, a revolutionary should fearlessly accept power whenever the opportunity presents itself even if that opportunity is not in accord with the theory of the moment. It appears, however, that these opportunities are increasingly being presented in a new context demanding tactics different from the earlier revolutionary tradition.

The Andhra “Extremists”

H. Rao

EXPERTS in Communist affairs and the top brass of the Communist movement in Andhra of right, left and extremist views might turn round and say “didn’t I tell you so?”, on the latest split in the Communist ranks, but to the thousands of Communists and their sympathisers and the lakhs of common people who voted for them in the last four general elections, the news brings disappointment and despair.

It is this feeling that is overlooked by those who indulge in the fierce debate raging in this State in recent weeks. The people’s mood of despair often turns into anger and many oldtimers and strong supporters are heard to remark that the Communist movement is now buried fathoms deep and there is no hope of its revival for decades. Should the leaders carry on this dog-fight when discontent is overwhelming the people and they are desperately looking for a way out? they ask.

It is against this background that the recent split in the Communist movement has to be judged. The CPM leadership started with its game of expulsions in West Bengal. Whenever the Government laid its hands on certain CPM cadres and leaders in that State, the top leadership rushed to the Press disowning the arrested. Very soon, “Operation Expulsion” became their biggest weapon: Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Kashmir, and now comes the turn of Andhra. Expulsions in Andhra proved the last straw and there is talk of a third Communist party in the air. Mr Nagi Reddy is the ‘man in the news’.

An amazing similarity between the situation in 1964 when the first split took place and now is the use of the phrase “Chinese agents”, then by the ‘revisionists’ and Government together against the Marxists, and now by both of them plus the Marxists against the extremists. At that time, some Peking Radio broadcasts were men-
tioned by Dange and his friends to prove that the split was brought about at the instance of Peking. The story repeats itself today with exact similarity, the only difference being that the chorus is joined in by Sundarayya.

Following the characterisation of Mr Nagi Reddy's followers as "extremists" or "revolutionaries" by the jute Press, the Marxists too label them as adventurists itching for revolution overnight. Their basic support to Naxalbari is adduced as evidence. But, if his Press statements are any indication, Mr Nagi Reddy does not seem to be dreaming of instant revolution; nor can he be quoted as saying that he would resign his seat in the Andhra Assembly, ask like-minded people to do so and breathe and spit revolution day and night. On the contrary, he went on record saying that it would take at least a year to give an organisational shape to the movement and gather forces around the slogan of winning demands through struggles alone. His complaint is: The CPM is much too preoccupied with defending Kerala and winning the election battle in West Bengal to even think of putting the party on the rails of struggle. When he canvassed support and wanted the party to rally round the struggle of the tribal people in Srikakulam district and think in terms of such struggles wherever people are already prepared to protect their interests from the government-landlord onslaught, his proposal was cold-shouldered on the plea that it would lead to adventurism. The attack against people in Nalgonda and some other pockets, which started at the time of the elections, was intensified, involving literally thousands of people and party workers in hundreds of cases; they were beaten up, local party leaders were even murdered and local party units were posed with the question of defending themselves and protecting the party. Let alone Marxism-Leninism, sheer necessity demanded that the victims of such attacks defend their life and property. They looked up to the Party for guidance, which was not forthcoming. This brought disillusionment with the present leadership.

The problem was taken to the organisational level through an alternate document presented at the special plenum called before the Burdwan meeting. It was natural for Mr Nagi Reddy and his followers to have felt justified in their line of thinking when the overwhelming majority of Andhra comrades voted for it. However, he was in a hopeless minority when he placed it at the all-India level.

Believers of the alternate line have certain differences with him. They agree with him on practically all aspects but doubt whether his line should be pushed through right down to the cadres, cutting across the party's disciplinary barriers, inviting justifiable anger of the State CPM leadership, followed by warnings and, ultimately, expulsions. His friends ask: If he exhibits so much impatience, what is the guarantee that his followers would not turn equally impatient? Would not Mr Nagi Reddy himself take at least a year to gather forces and give his line an organisational shape? By his actions he has only justified the action of the CPM leaders in being equally impatient and rushing to the extreme by expelling a stalwart like Nagi Reddy.

Though there were ideological and political questions on which both Mr Reddy and the leadership differed widely, the parting of ways came at the organisational level, giving rise to a feeling that perhaps this could have been avoided had some restraint been exhibited.

Mr Nagi Reddy's proposals deserve some attention in this context. Ideological and political problems at a policy level can be finally decided only at a Party Congress. Therefore, allow a full-throated discussion on both the lines before a decision is taken at the Party Congress. In the meantime, withdraw the open party letter sent to cadres against himself and his followers, as also the disciplinary action.

But the CPM leadership which met in Chandrapura as too trivial to bother over on a Sunday afternoon. They ignored the clue and missed the hectic activity in the capital of the two days that preceded the President's departure for Moscow. The disclosure was followed by the familiar exercise among reporters of dog-biting-dog; some said it was premature to ring the alarm bell, some claimed the story had no foundation, while some others reported that the Soviet Union had agreed to supply only defensive weapons to Pakistan. But the ripples the disclosure raised immediately in the placid politics of New Delhi in the silly season, should have set at rest all doubts about its authenticity. After some initial hesitation the Prime Minister has confirmed the news, but...