

CLASS STRUGGLE

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Mr Arun Goswami has introduced some interesting points in his 'The Main Danger' (*Frontier* August 11). In defence of the "guerilla actions" of the CPI (ML) as an individual form of class struggle, he says, "workers unnecessarily move to and fro to reduce working time ; land labourers slow down work in absence of landowners ; debtors play many tricks with usurers. There are many such examples. All these are done individually. Yet these are nothing but class struggle". Although the CPI(ML) and its leader Charu Majumdar declared *khatam* as the highest form of class struggle, Mr Goswami, while remaining completely mum over this, says, "Although the collective activities of a class are of greater importance, the individual activities also constitute a part of the entire class struggle." As theft, according to Marx, was the first form of protest against property, it certainly "constituted a part of the class struggle" ! One could have also cited the collective activities of the Luddites as a justification of his "collective activities of a class are of greater importance" than individual activities.

Indeed the theory and practice of class struggle can be extended to an absurd extent and debased. Such attempts are signs and symptoms of unconscious, primitive, elementary and crude forms and modes of protest, which Marxist-Leninists do not glorify.

Every year many a landlord or jotedar are killed by many a peasant. This has been happening since the advent of the landlord-peasant system and will continue to happen. The blind hatred and rage of the peasant has an element, a potent factor of class hatred, but in itself it is not class struggle. Class struggle must represent the needs and requirements of the interests of the class as a whole and the needs of the particular given historical stage of the class struggle. This also must be conducted as an act of *class for itself* and not as an act of *class in itself*. So long as the organised agrarian revolutionary movement on the basis of an over-all agrarian revolutionary programme with a concrete line of implementation led by a truly working class party fails to capture the imagination of the overwhelming peasantry, the blind, elemental but impotent rage of individual peasants will explode. Undoubtedly, this is justified and at times laudable. But when half-baked Marxist-Leninists come forward to organise and initiate such blind, elementary, individual outbursts of peasants and theorise them as the highest form of class struggle, Marxist pundits cannot but say that these have really nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism or with class struggle. The Marxist-Leninists being the most consciously organised body representing the class interests of the revolutionary classes as a whole organise the class struggle to the needs and requirements of given historical stage and combat these elementary, crude, primitive, unconscious and impotent outbursts and "first forms of protest". Instead of glorifying these forms as the highest form of class struggle, they help the people to fight back with such forms and methods that may lead them to the fulfilment of the needs and requirements of the given historical stage of class struggle. It is not enough to recognise all forms of class struggle, firstly because a lower form of class struggle, at a certain time of development, may become the weapon of the reformists and revisionists; secondly, because all forms of class struggle may not reach their logical conclusion in accordance with the interests of the proletariat. Recognition,

organisation and glorification of those forms of class struggle which do not culminate in the establishment of the joint dictatorship of the revolutionary people under proletarian hegemony—in spite of being “class struggle”—do not promote the needs and requirements of the class struggle of a given historical stage.

Of course, this does not mean that the Marxist-Leninists repudiate *khatam* altogether, or repudiate it on moral considerations. Marxist-Leninists judge it from the point of political necessity of the class struggle. They do not resort to *khatam* as a movement, as an episode, but as an auxiliary to mass movements, as an incident. Lenin said, “as revolutionary tactics, individual attempts (of assassination) are both impractical and harmful. It is only a mass movement that can be considered a real political struggle. Individual terroristic acts can be, and must be, helpful, only when they are directly linked with the mass movement”.

Class struggle existed in society before Marxism came into being. Class struggle is not the invention or discovery of Marx and Engels. Class struggle of the working class and revolutionary people are organised and conducted not only by Marxist-Leninists but also by the right revisionists and ‘left’ adventurists and by the bourgeoisie and landlords. From this, it is clear that the Marxist-Leninists can neither support nor glorify all forms of “class struggle”.

Let us go deeper into Mr Goswami’s theory of class struggle. He cannot possibly deny the element of class struggle in the 1932 Harijan movement for temple-entry, led by Gandhi. The Harijan landless peasantry joined this movement almost en masse and rightly demonstrated their class hatred. Why did the Communists criticise it? Because the landless peasants were then organising themselves together with the poor peasantry in order to rise in revolt against the landlords. Already in U. P. a big revolt had broken out. Gandhi deflected the spontaneous and anti-landlord movement of the landless and poor peasantry by resorting to hunger-strike and

launching the temple-entry movement. In spite of having elements of class struggle, in spite of its collective character, one would not be in a position to support or glorify such a class struggle as it served the interests of the exploiting classes.

Another example. Can one justify and glorify the silent procession of 1966? It had a strong element of class struggle and protest, but stronger was the conspiracy of the “communist” misleaders to throw cold water on the rising tide of the revolt of the people.

Some people see ‘class struggle’ in the trickery of reducing the working time of a worker and slowing down of work by a day labourer, but fail to see the other side, that is, the symptoms of parasitism in it. In fact, in the exploitative society of ‘give and take’, there are some bad habits, the vices of decay, of parasitism, among even a section of workers and toilers, not to speak of non-manual workers. The habits of shirking burdens, getting something out of nothing by trick, the habit of reducing working time by subterfuge and trickery are signs of growing parasitism as well. These habits and practices should and must be fought by class-conscious workers and by a working class party and not glorified as a form of class struggle. The revisionist and reformist trade union leaders indulge this parasitism of the workers and office employees and this base opportunism is now an accepted normal feature of the trade union movement. This is one of the ideological bases of revisionism.

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