

NEW CONTROVERSIES IN THE NAME OF 'MORE ABOUT NAXALBARI'

[The following is a translated version of an article by Kolla Venkaiah from December 1974 issue of "MUNDUBATA", a Telugu Monthly. In a Foreword (Dated Visakhapatnam March 1, 1975) to this article, NAGABHUSHAN PATNAIK, D. BHUVAN MOHAN PATNAIK AND P. HASSAINAR write :

"Rightly and timely, the six comrades issued the OPEN LETTER.....The six that signed the OPEN LETTER were certainly not a group, but had a common understanding on bringing about unity. Each is obliged, in all reasonableness, to conform to this common understanding in his sayings, doings or writings, which by all means he is free to resort to. When 'More About Naxalbari' was authored, it was demanded of him (Comrade Sanyal) whether the article did not blunt the OPEN LETTER. Comrade Sanyal did not care to

attend to this minimum obligation. He must have got his own reasons for it, known to him alone.

"But there appears in the article, *prima facie*, an undue rush at far-reaching generalisations from particular parts of events and, more particularly, from some omissions. One, without having to wait for any purpose, can safely meet these generalisations even now. In fact we cannot lose time on making our point in so far as these generalisations are concerned.....

"In fine, we once again express our general concurrence with Comrade K. V's comments in this booklet..., and we fully appreciate his earnestness in pointing out forcibly and frankly the erroneous formulations with the sole purpose of stalling the damage. Com. Sanyal's article is very likely to cause damage to the unity efforts that are afoot among the people and the revolutionary ranks in the country."—*Ed.*]

Some journals have recently published an article entitled "More About Naxalbari" by Comrade Kanu Sanyal. This article, instead of serving the cause of unity of the communist movement, in the guise of further elucidation about Naxalbari struggle has given rise to some more new controversies and issues making things more confounded. Once Comrade Sanyal and I happened to stay together for some time. We had, at that time, identity of views on some important matters concerning the unity among the revolutionary ranks of CPI (M-L). My direct experience with him on party organisational matters was very limited. Nevertheless, I have great respect for him as peasant organiser and as one of the founders of CPI (M-L). I am one of those who do not subscribe to the views expressed in that article and who differ from the formulae, policies and methods enunciated therein. However, as a colleague of his, I made adequate efforts to see that this article and the issues raised therein were discussed with him and other comrades, with the fond desire that the reorganisation of the working class party did not receive a setback. Though my efforts did not bear fruit, I never expected that

this article would be made the basis for open debate. Needless to say, the article was openly published in some journals. Under these circumstances, it has become inevitable to publish the comment to expound the other view on the various issues raised in that article. I hope that not only the author of the article but also the revolutionary cadres and people will take note of these facts and think in the direction of and give their mind to helping the unity among the revolutionary ranks and reorganisation of the working class party. With this view in mind, I place before you my comments on the important issues.

Differences between Black and White

This article published in the name of Comrade Kanu Sanyal and the letter placed before the Party members by Com. Kanu Sanyal together with five other comrades are not identical in content. Yet some journals have stepped up propaganda that both of these are similar and helpful to forge unity in the revolutionary ranks. This is nothing but refusing to see the difference between black and white. While publishing the article by Com. Sanyal in its columns, *Janasakti*, the Telugu Weekly, expressed similar views in its preface. Different comments appeared in journals on the letter of the six members of the Party. Many might not have gone through that letter. Whatever may be the comments, the salient features of the letter to some extent were published in the 'Indian Express' dated 7. 8. 72. The readers who have gone through the "letter" and the article will certainly discern the difference between the two and understand that the divergence is more striking than similarity, and the attempt to emphasize that both of these are identical is nothing but absolute distortion of truth.

The letter submitted to the Party members by the six comrades hoped for principled unity among the revolutionary ranks and in the CPI(ML) for the purpose of which it indicated a method. The revolutionary movement received a setback as a result of certain wrong policies carried out by

the Party leadership on some important political issues. The difference arising out of political policies had not been properly resolved, with the result that there occurred splits in the Party and engendered antagonisms with the other groups. It is the Party ranks and revolutionary ranks, that have to discuss and decide the party policies concerning the affairs of the country. Without placing the differences concerning the policies before them and discussing with them, old policies, methods and splits had been continued in various forms. Under these circumstances, the letter of the six comrades made suggestions for a principled unity. Experience in the revolutionary movement had proved the failure of the important political policy. Under these trying conditions, Com. Charu Majumdar, the Secretary of the Party who was expected to forge unity in the revolutionary ranks by placing all the differences before the members and initiating discussions on them did not attempt to undertake the task. That is why the six comrades were compelled to approach the Party ranks. The intention of this letter was not to create another group. Therefore the 'letter' made it clear that the differences between them and the revolutionary groups inside and outside the party are not antagonistic. It has only indicated that the differences and contradictions between the groups and among individuals wedded to Marxism-Leninism and the great thought of Mao Tsetung are contradictions among the people to be resolved with a unity-approach.

Further, it was not the intention of that 'letter' to earn encomiums for them by throwing all the blame on Com. Charu Majumdar for the opportunistic political line of the Party and the failure thereof. That is why this 'letter' made it clear that all the members of the Central Committee including those who drafted the 'letter' should themselves be responsible for what had happened, despite the fact that Com. Charu Majumdar was mainly responsible. The criticism contained in the 'letter' being self-critical was only directed against the 'left' opportunistic political policy and the factors responsible. Therefore,

also, it was not the intention to hold the others responsible for the failure and to escape themselves from being blamed. The criticism contained in the 'letter' was not designed to advance criticism for the sake of criticism alone.

It had not only invited criticism from among the revolutionary ranks, but also held out prospect of self-critical analysis by admitting their mistakes. Therefore, the unity appealed for in the letter is the unity among the revolutionary ranks based on the principles of criticism and self-criticism. This letter suggested a basis acceptable to all who subscribe to Marxism-Leninism and Mao's thought for forging this unity. The basis suggested was the article—'Spring Thunder over India', which summed up correctly the experiences of Naxalbari liberation struggle, the revolutionary experiences and the Terai Report, excluding the shortcomings therein. That is why the letter called upon the party members to forge new unity by summing up the experience of the movement in various parts of the country and by realising the mistakes on the basis of the article, 'Spring Thunder over India', and their suggestions. From the view-point of Marxism-Leninism and Mao's thoughts, this letter suggested correct principles, basis and method for achieving this unity among the party members and revolutionary ranks. Whatever be the shortcomings in the submission of this letter, it is quite proper and correct.

But the article published in the name of Com. Kanu Sanyal differs wholly with the letter on all important issues. The difference between the two is that between heaven and earth.

While the letter by the six comrades was mainly aimed at encouraging unity in CPI(ML), the article by Com. Sanyal tends to incite disunity among the Party ranks. While the letter placed before the comrades focussed the method of developing peasant struggles like Naxalbari and Srikakulam to the stage of guerilla struggles in the light of 'Spring Thunder over India' and the revolutionary experiences as the basis for unity, Com. Sanyal's article makes proposals

based on a flexible method of ‘negotiated settlement’ capable of helping the retreat of the movement. While the letter, basing on concrete facts, advanced criticism on Com. Charu Majumdar and the Central Committee and gave a call to press into service criticism and self-criticism in order to correct the entire Party, and overhaul the entire Party, the article by Com. Sanyal, on the other hand throws the entire blame on Com. Charu Majumdar and holds him wholly and solely responsible for the Party’s opportunistic policy and its failure. With absolutely no self-criticism, the article goes on hurling baseless criticism against Com. Charu Majumdar, against comrades having divergent views, treating them as enemies, instead of advancing corrective approach. While the letter of the six comrades encouraged the Party ranks to take responsibility for the activities of the Party to learn from mistakes and build new unity through discussions based on facts, this article indulged in irresponsible criticism, accelerating antagonisms and disunity in the party ranks. Judged by the points outlined above, these two are quite opposite and contradictory. Any attempt to advocate that both of these are identical and aim at bringing about unity is not only a great blunder but is also tantamount to obliterating the demarcation between good and bad.

Because Com. Sanyal is a signatory to the ‘letter’ of the six comrades, and the article is also purported to have been contributed by him, one may be led to think that both the letter and the article are identical. If anyone thinks so, he is doing a great injustice to the facts. The ‘letter’ was placed before the Party ranks in July 1972. The article took shape in April 1973, and was published openly in press in July 1974. It would not be understandable unless Com. Sanyal who signed the letter along with five other comrades in July 1972, would himself explain and elucidate why he changed his views by April ’73 on important matters concerning the revolutionary movement or why he signed the letter if he was holding the same view in July 1972 as expounded in his article in April,

1973, and why he sent his article to the press without discussing with comrades who signed the letter along with him. Whatever it may be, there is no identity or similarity between the letter he signed and the article published in his name.

Counter-revolutionary Negotiations

If negotiations with the Government are unprincipled, then they are quite contrary to the uprisings of the people. Com. Sanyal has made this type of negotiations as the material basis of his article. By the first week of May 1967, the Naxalbari peasant struggle was assuming the highest form. Com. Sanyal recalled in his article that in a public meeting organised on 7. 5. '67, a "proposal was put forth calling for negotiation with the United Front Government to which Com. Charu Majumdar was opposed." "This", Com. Sanyal says, "was mental unpreparedness" and "subjective tactical mistake." Though firm on principles, he concluded, "Absence of flexible approach in the policy led to doom the cause of Naxalbari struggle." Indeed, the very refusal by Com. Charu Majumdar and other Naxalbari cadres in that public meeting of the proposal for holding negotiation was only responsible for giving life to the Naxalbari struggle and the peasant liberation struggle which stood up valiantly earning encomiums from the national and international revolutionary forces.

This proposal for negotiations had not descended from heavens. The neo-revisionist leadership that held the sway over the United Front Government published this proposal in order to nip the peasant liberation struggle in the bud. The then neo-revisionist leadership had also reported to the Provincial Committee that they made the proposal whereby the struggle be confined to the land problem and negotiations initiated with the Government. Some Naxalbari comrades who fell victim to that propaganda might have made such proposal.

People's uprising is a revolt against the reactionary social order and against the Government preserving such

social order. The relationship existing between that social order and the Government may not be comprehensible to the people who took part in the revolt or those who led it. The reactionary Government while brutally suppressing its revolt on the one hand, invites the leaders on the other, for negotiations with a view to split the movement, thereby trying to keep the revolt under control and subject it to the existing social order. United Front Government of West Bengal made such attempts to nip the peasant uprising in the bud even in the case of Naxalbari struggle. Communist revolutionaries in the party assumed leadership of the Naxalbari struggle. They took up Marxism-Leninism and Mao's thought as their ideology, and applied that revolutionary ideology to concrete conditions and set out to translate it into practice. It need not be felt that the revolutionaries would never attempt for negotiations. But, they would never agree for negotiations when they are intent upon carrying forward the revolt. To agree for negotiations is to surrender the revolt. It amounts to throwing the peasantry who revolted against the semi-feudal and semi-colonial set up, back in and to their old life and accepting its authority in some form or the other. However, it would be a different issue if the revolutionaries go in for negotiations as desired by the people, especially in some instances, where there exists no people's revolt at all. But when once the people's revolt is set into motion, the act of starting negotiations in the very initial stage would doom the revolt. During the course of negotiations, some paltry concessions in matters relating to land etc. may be extracted, not more than that. That is why, those who are intent on carrying on the liberation struggle will never agree for negotiations. No revolutionaries could advise the rebellious peasantry to go in for negotiations. However, there is no guarantee that every uprising and every struggle would advance from strength to strength only by drawing lessons out of failures and learning from them. If the peasantry, by any reason, insists on initiating negotiations, the revo-

lutionaries would never oppose such a proposal imprudently. They would explain the dangers inherent in negotiations. They explain in clear terms to the peasantry that the feudal set-up would never come to an end by negotiations with Government, or their life could not be bettered by extracting some of the paltry concessions, and that negotiations would thus only pave the way for splits and rifts among them. If the peasantry still sticks on to their decision of going for negotiations, the revolutionaries would then remain with them, prove what they had stated is correct, isolate the opportunists from the movement and take up the reins of leadership into their hands or make efforts to mount another revolt. Under no circumstances, the revolutionaries by themselves, on the eve of people's revolt, agree for negotiations which serve as a prop to the reactionary social order. This is the principle governing any revolt and revolutionary tactics. This is exactly what Marxism-Leninism advocates.

In fact, the Naxalbari peasantry never desired to hold negotiations with the reactionary government. Though some cadres put forth the proposal, the majority refuted such a move. It was because they were inspired by the policies of revolution that stood for an armed struggle to capture political power. It was because they organised themselves, took up arms, appropriated lands and crops of big landlords, distributed those among themselves under the auspices of their peasant committees and established the Red area of struggle. They did not entertain any illusions that their Red area of struggle, the power of their land distribution would remain in tact by resorting to negotiations. Under such conditions, it could never have been considered a revolutionary tactic if Com. Charu Majumdar and the majority of rank and file had succumbed themselves to the proposal of negotiations put forth by only a handful of cadres. Revolutionary tactics are such that they alone remove from people's mind all sorts of illusions and lead them in the direction of revolution and national liberation and seldom create any illusions. Such

illusions are created by Right opportunism only.

The readiness to accept the proposal put forth by a few cadres cannot be treated as a flexible stand on policy methods. Indeed, it amounts to abandonment of the path of armed agrarian revolution in the name of "flexibility". When once the path of peasant revolt and agrarian revolution is given up, the theory of "firmness in principles" only leads to go against the principles of revolt and revolutionary line. No revolutionary who bases himself on revolutionary ideology is prepared to yield to or defend such proposals. That is why Comrade Charu Majumdar and the other comrades, though they failed in their efforts in developing the Naxalbari struggle to the level of a guerilla warfare, had taken in refusing and refuting outright the proposals for negotiations with the reactionary government, a correct step taken with correct, revolutionary outlook. Had they opted for negotiations with the then West Bengal Government in May 1967 and placed the proposal before the peasantry of Naxalbari, there would have been neither historic Naxalbari struggle nor any support from national and international revolutionary forces in defence of the struggle. There would also have been no anti-revisionist ideological struggle initiated by it and the peasant struggles of Srikakulam etc. led by the revolutionaries. Proposal for negotiations do constitute a way of thinking different from them, the existing situation and opinions held by the peasant masses.

The Real Causes

To attribute the failure of the Naxalbari struggle and the subsequent revolutionary movement to the non-acceptance of proposals for negotiations with the Government and non-flexibility on policy matters is not only contrary to truth but also holding back the real factors that led to the failure. No mention of negotiations with the Government was ever made either in the Chinese article 'Spring Thunder Breaks over India' or in the 'Terai Report', which summed up the

experiences of Naxalbari struggle. Both of them were written after the first week of May 1967. Those two formulated that the armed struggle in India should advance by fighting against the armed counter-revolution. It was made clear in the 'Terai Report' that...unity among peasantry would survive and develop only through our uncompromising struggle against the feudal order. The report had also expressed that the Naxalbari struggle received a set-back due to the failure to grasp the significance of armed peasant squads and to promote the revolutionary consciousness and self-confidence among the peasantry. Reducing the struggle, that was to be waged by the armed squads against the brutal armed forces of the Government, to the level of annihilation of landlords resulted in undermining the potentialities of the squads on the one hand and the initiative of the peasantry in punishing the brutal landlords on the other. And instead of properly co-ordinating the liberation struggle with the struggle for land as well as other important struggles, the method of thinking in terms of counterpoising each or all of these factors led to the set-back of Naxalbari and other armed struggles. This was clarified by the letter of six comrades and the subsequent discussions among the revolutionary ranks.

Against all these factors to hide the real causes for the set-back of the revolutionary movement and to invent other causes would only be dragging the movement to the path of retreat. Contrary to all the past reviews to unearth the proposal for negotiations with the United Front Government, the history of six years of Naxalbari amounts to drawing out a mouse after labouring hard to remove a mountain.

New Foundations for Old Path

On all important issues, Com. Sanyal's article has sown the powerful seeds for the old thinking and the old path.

Firstly, even this article can not state whether the conference of the peasants and the majority revolutionary cadres held on 7. 5. 1967 had accepted the proposals for negotiations.

regarding Naxalbari struggle with West Bengal Government. The argument advanced in this article is that though the cadres and the peasantry desired to continue the struggle; the conditions there for it were not existing. In support of this, it fails to advance a single factor concerning the Naxalbari area. The reasons pointed out are that the situation in West Bengal in 1967 was complicated, the people were not ready for a state-wide revolt and the then party members were not prepared for a revolt against the revisionist leadership. In fact, Naxalbari revolutionary cadres could assume leadership of the struggle only by rejecting such a way of thinking. The revisionist leadership of the party, while refusing to apply the revolutionary ideology to the concrete conditions in India and propagating a plan that they would capture power at the centre through countrywide revolt, watered down the struggles and revolts wherever the peasants resorted to them, by starting negotiations and making compromises with the Government. The Naxalbari comrades rejecting such a plan and applying the revolutionary ideology to the concrete conditions in India thought that the path of agrarian revolution, the path of people's war, the path of seizing political power in different areas through area-wise peasant revolts is the correct path for the liberation of the country, and plunged into action. They selected Naxalbari area and they integrated themselves with the peasantry, roused them with the politics of armed agrarian revolution, organised and armed them and led the struggle. This gave rise to the struggle. This led to the creation of big struggles by Naxalbari peasants and to the unity of the communist revolutionaries throughout the country and developing Naxalbari type of struggles. But the article by Com. Sanyal keeps these issues in the dark and refutes the very basis of Naxalbari struggle. The Naxalbari comrades did not plunge themselves into action entertaining hopes that state-wide people's uprising would take place by May 1967 itself and that all the members of the party would rally around them. They launched the struggle with a convic-

tion that the peasants' revolts and the struggles for seizure of political power taking place in those areas would ultimately pave the way for the liberation of the country. The escalation of Naxalbari type of struggles proved this to be correct. In place of this, to propagate the idea of state-wide and country-wide revolts is certainly the old thinking. In West Bengal as a whole, conditions for state-wide revolt were not existing. Therefore, the argument that negotiations should be initiated with the Government when there existed conditions for an upheaval in Naxalbari indicates drift towards the revisionist way of thinking on the question of tactics. It is only an attempt to infuse life into the dead theory of state-wide and country-wide revolts.

Secondly, this article propagates certain illusions that the revolt could have been preserved and all the conditions required for the establishment of a red base could have been created by resorting to negotiations with the reactionary Government. This is all pure imagination, far removed from facts. This sort of fantasy led to watering down the class struggle. It is easy to advise the rebellious peasantry to hold negotiation with the Government. But when once the ground is prepared for talks, the revolt will end only and it will not be preserved. After resorting to negotiations if it ends in a flop, it only leads to disruption. If the negotiations are initiated and the red area of struggle is abandoned it will not lead to the creation of conditions for base area ; instead, the authority of the landlords and their Government will be re-established over the peasantry. This is the lesson taught by the negotiations resorted to in connection with the Telengana peasant struggle.

It is obvious from all this, that to propagate that until all the conditions for the base area are created, the revolts are to be preserved by resorting to negotiations, that revolts are to be organised in such a way that they can be preserved, and to preach that these tasks are of primary importance is only to drift to the old path. It is day-dreaming to think that

conditions for base area would be created by entering into negotiations in connection with the revolt. To say that uprisings are to be organised in such a "planned way" as to preserve them through negotiation is nothing but sabotaging the uprisings that inevitably take place "in India". To say that uprisings are to be organised so as to "preserve them" is nothing but asking to seek concessions in the name of revolts. To propagate policies based on illusions contrary to facts leads only to the old path.

Thirdly, this article agrees to regard the Naxalbari peasants' revolt as correct in so far as it formed part of the country-wide upsurge and as there was the need for a struggle against revisionist outlook. But for that, this article refuses to regard the Naxalbari struggle as the struggle for liberation. It further refuses to take note of the characteristic nature of the liberation struggle as part of the national liberation struggle. The essence of this article is that the article treats the Naxalbari struggle as a historic struggle because it had contributed to the anti-revisionist struggle and not because it had created again liberation struggle in the country. And hence the lessons, drawn from the Naxalbari struggle, are also distinct. This article recognises only that the struggle drove home the importance of the point that "Revolts and revolution are inevitable". This article makes negotiations as the basis for the policy of dealing with revolts which may arise as a part of the general upsurge. It has proposed the policy leading to methods of controlling the revolts at the time of their occurrence itself. That is why this article has led to the old line on all important issues and laid, in a way, new foundations to the old line.

It becomes clear now that this article, from the review it embodied on the movement, is contrary to the line of class struggle and it blocks the role of leadership of the working class.

Anti-Class Struggle Attitude

This article, published in the name of Com. Kanu Sanyal

analyses the ante- and post-Naxalbari situation from an anti-class struggle viewpoint. The same attitude is reflected in the article in the proposal for negotiations, contrary to the situation of the Naxalbari struggle in May 1967, in its assessment of the prevailing conditions and in its attitude towards the struggle. Without stopping at that, with the same viewpoint, it makes a large-scale attack on the revolutionary values created by the struggle by slighting, twisting the ideological struggle that led to the Naxalbari struggle, the role of revolutionary cadres and the struggle itself. In the same process, it has slighted the role of the proletariat and has carried on propaganda of old doctrines and policies that come in the way of working class playing its role. Instead of levelling criticism against the opportunistic errors of the Central Committee and the erroneous policies carried out by the cadres and the Central Committee under the leadership of Com. Charu Majumdar, taking advantage of the mistakes, this article makes a big attack on the revolutionay role played by Com. Charu Majumdar and the Naxalbari cadres in the course of the struggle.

Firstly, this attack commenced with the refutal of the *Eight Documents* drafted and propagated by Com. Majumdar between January 1965 and April 1967. These documents not only embodied in them the poisonous seeds of opportunistic policies formulated under his leadership but also contained points dealing with the armed agrarian revolutionary line that led to the Naxalbari struggle and a new revolutionary movement. Taking advantage of the lacunae in those documents, this article summed up that the Naxalbari struggle proved all the revolutionary ideas and theories which emerged against revisionism to be wrong. It stated :

"Practically Naxalbari uprising is a living protest to the Eight Documents".

These eight documents which greatly influenced the Naxalbari cadres might not have reached the cadres in other states. They were received in Andhra only in the middle of 1974..

To which part of the documents is the Naxalbari struggle a "living protest"?

These documents had exposed the revisionist leadership in the country which by portraying every favourable result achieved on various issues as political victory and by adopting the path that the entire political power could be seized through capturing the centre, transformed the party into a right opportunist party. These documents had propagated that the seizure of political power through area-wise peasant revolts and armed struggle was the only correct path for the liberation of the country. The first document urged to spread among masses the agrarian revolutionary programme and to give their mind to class analysis. The second document put emphasis on the theory of seizure of political power through area-wise peasant revolts and armed struggle as against the doctrine of seizure of power through country-wide revolt. And also the ideological and organisational matters connected with that had been discussed. In those documents the mass line—from the people to the people—and the experiences of the Chinese revolution were elaborated. It is indisputable that these documents have had a great impact on the cadres of Naxalbari and of West Bengal. An attempt was made in these documents to apply the revolutionary ideology to the concrete conditions in India and to lay the revolutionary path. Under the influence of these, the Naxalbari peasantry led by the communist revolutionaries created a great struggle. Though the ideological struggle that was waged on the eve was not known to the cadres in other states, the Naxalbari struggle influenced the revolutionary ranks throughout the length and breadth of the country. The slogan that the peasant revolts and the armed struggle would lead to the liberation of the country had become a variant of the Naxalbari type of struggles. It should be admitted by all means that this had inspired the revolutionaries and the revolutionary people, who were swayed away by such right opportunist plans as seizure of power at the centre through country-wide revolts. But the

article by Com. Sanyal, refusing to take note of this fact, goes to the extent of describing Naxalbari as the living protest to all this.

The fact that this article has gone to the extent of describing whatever Comrade Charu Majumdar had said in this connection also as anarchy, shows that he is under the influence of revisionist thinking—which cannot distinguish between anarchy and revolution. The author of the article does not deserve to be defended, since he was well-versed with the contents of those documents and yet had concealed the revolutionary points contained therein, kept the readers in the dark and mounted an attack on them. This is quite contrary to the method of revolutionary criticism. In fact, Naxalbari is the living illustration of the revolutionary contents embodied in those documents.

Because the ideas of Comrade Majumdar were in tune with the prevailing conditions, they contributed to the revolutionary movement by gripping the imagination of the cadres and the masses. While the failure of the Naxalbari struggle is a living illustration of the anti-revolutionary points in the documents, the Naxalbari struggle is a living example of the revolutionary points in those.

The attack unleashed against the revolutionary contents in the documents is an attack made on the revolutionary outlook and the Naxalbari struggle for liberation. Com. Majumdar had only applied Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions in the country and propagated the revolutionary path, namely “area-wise seizure of state power”—under the impact of which the role of the proletariat was amply played in the Naxalbari struggle. Had the comrades of Darjeeling and the cadres of Naxalbari not played that role, the class struggle and revolutionary movement in Naxalbari region would not have reached the highest stage. Instead of properly reviewing the inner struggle that had taken place among the revolutionary ranks the article seriously attacks the proletarian role played by the cadres in this connection. This is only

to impede the correction of opportunistic policies and methods adopted under the leadership of Comrade Charu Majumdar and the reorganisation of the party on the basis of correct policies and methods.

Secondly, in support of the proposals which were not in tune with the situation of the struggle in May 1967, this article has started a war of quotations against Comrade Charu Majumdar who rejected the proposals for negotiations. That the writings of our great teachers of Marxism illumine our path of practice was forgotten and quotations were extensively hurled quite out of context. This article quotes what Comrade Stalin said regarding the attitude of seeking truth from facts, and from Comrade Lenin that "our analysis must start with concrete conditions" but it does not think whether they are applicable to itself.

At a time when modern revisionism is mounting its attack against the theory of political power, against the theory of revolution by armed struggle and through force, this article quotes elaborately in support of such an attitude against Com. Charu Majumdar from *Anti-Duhring* written by Engels. It is not understandable as to what purpose does the author intend to make use of these quotations. Engels in his great work *Anti-Duhring* refuted only the theory of Duhring—which advocated "political power alone determines economic relations". But Engels never stated that violent revolution and use of force were wrong and armed struggle for seizure of political power incorrect. To point at Engels as if he was against the theory of violent revolution and of force is nothing but atrocious trash. What Duhring advocated was completely different.

To reorganise the class relations, the capture of instruments of production like the factories and land is of prime importance. But contrary to this, Duhring raised an argument that after capture of power the class relations can be changed with the use of force, without the capture of productive instruments. Comrade Engels in his work completely refuted this theory. But without any context, only in support of the anti-revolution-

ary stand, quotations from Marxist classics have been taken. It is nothing but an inheritance from the revisionist leadership.

Thirdly, the article refutes the revolutionary role played by the cadres who roused the peasantry in Naxalbari with politics of armed struggle and also the role of politics in class struggle. It has theorised that “the programme of seizure of land taught the peasantry” about the establishment of political power, and the land seizure movement by itself takes the shape of the struggle for the seizure of political power. But the revolutionary movements clarify that no land seizure movement by itself would teach the peasantry about the need to capture power and that by themselves they could not transform it into a struggle for seizure of political power. And the revolutionary movements always refuted such theories of spontaneity. The revolutionary movement teaches us that unless and until the revolutionary cadres based on the experience of the peasantry rouse them with political consciousness and lead them properly, liberation struggles can not march forward. The Naxalbari experiences are not contrary to this. History has clarified that undermining the importance of revolutionary politics and minimising the role to be played by the proletariat in this connection lead to right opportunism. This article digs the history of Naxalbari from the year 1946 itself and proposes two more wrong formulae in order that the revolutionary ranks do not foresee this danger of opportunism. One is the unrealistic theory that Naxalbari became a reality as a result of the “glowing history of the past glorious class struggles”. It is the people that create history and the struggle. The Naxalbari struggle emerged as a result of the revolutionary political consciousness of the Naxalbari peasantry. The movement advanced as a result of carrying on a struggle against revisionist theories which misdirected the class struggle, and rousing the consciousness for liberation, based on the history of class struggles and the experiences and also discharging the role of the proletariat through such tasks by revolutionary ranks. In the name of opposing the wrong idea that Comrade

Majumdar was the creator of Naxalbari; it is incorrect for the article to go to the level of opportunist theory which undermines the role of revolutionary politics and the role of the working class. Similarly the article degrades itself to the level of equating the peasant liberation struggle with the struggle in 1958-59 waged on economic issues by contending that "the class consciousness of the peasants of Naxalbari" demonstrated in the struggle waged during 1958-59 was "not less than that of 1967." It is utter fallacy if anybody at this present stage, when the ideological knowledge of the revolutionary ranks has improved, attempts to erase the line between liberation struggle and other forms of struggles and thereby divert the liberation struggle. He should be considered as a person living in a dreamland. The revolutionary ranks realised that the land problem is a key problem for the democratic revolution and by neglecting the land problem and other problems, the movement has met with losses. They also realised that counterpoising the struggle for liberation against the struggle for land and other problems and neglecting, under such influence, the struggle for land and other problems are erroneous. Under such circumstances, to belittle the importance of liberation struggle by treating both of these struggles as identical and equal, thereby adding to confusion, is not only a crime but also a drift from left opportunism to right opportunism. The criticism in the article is bound to lead to that.

Criticism without Self-critical outlook

The article not only attacks the revolutionary ideas by resorting to opportunist theories and practices and taking the movement backward but has also gone to the extent of levelling criticism without any self-critical outlook whatsoever. In the communist movement, Marxism-Leninism never approves criticism without any self-critical outlook. Unity in the communist movement and in the proletarian party can only be achieved on the basis of criticism and self-

criticism. Criticism without self-critical outlook is contrary to the development of the movement. The question here is not whether the author has explained his self-criticism in this article or not. While criticising the revolutionary cadres whether he has taken a principled stand or not—that is the question. This article has levelled a big charge against Comrade Charu Majumdar as an anarchist and that he “wanted to establish anarchism in a new form”. Instead of criticising the errors in his documents, it rejects the revolutionary ideas in them. But it can not cite one single instance to show that he had wanted only to spread anarchism. In such a situation, is it correct to level such a charge against Comrade Majumdar, though he started thinking about the opportunist policies adopted under his leadership and tried to introduce certain amendments before his death, even if he failed to rectify such policies in full and unify the party ranks on the basis of correct policies? Though the comrades that split away by that time, amended the old policies to a certain extent, they not only failed to rectify them but also attacked Comrade Majumdar as a Trotskyite and removed him from the party. In such a situation, six comrades including the author of the article sent a letter to the party members in July 1972. That letter appealed to the party ranks to reject the opportunist policies that were being pursued and to demand self-criticism from Comrade Majumdar and other Central Committee members who rejected to place the opportunist policies for discussion, and to unify the party ranks on correct lines. It also explained that the contradiction among the party ranks and among the revolutionary ranks was not an antagonistic one. Majumdar had died by the time the letter reached the party ranks. Nobody can say what would have been the influence of the letter on him. The working class party at sometime or other has to discharge the responsibility of assessing the role played by Comrade Majumdar and his achievements and errors as a party secretary and his role in the revolutionary movement. It is only the

fruit of subjectivism on the part of the author of the article, who stated in his letter to the ranks that contradiction among the party ranks were not of an antagonistic nature and who appealed to demand self-criticism from Comrade Majumdar, to treat Charu Majumdar as an enemy, to call him an anarchist after his death. With the death of Comrade Majumdar, the party reorganisation faced some more difficulties. Some of his supporters became the supporters of Lin Piao, who had come out as a conspirator and betrayer. Some others have been continuing the old opportunistic policies pursued before his rethinking, some others are thinking in the direction of annihilation of class enemies as one of the forms. Inspite of all this, the urge for party unity and for the reorganisation of the party has increased. At such a time, how far is it correct to make such a criticism ? The author had been propping up the influence of Charu Majumdar and the opportunistic policies upto the time of his signing the letter of the six comrades. It will not indicate a self-critical outlook on his part to call Com. Majumdar an anarchist just at the time of initiating an inner struggle for the change, simply because he understood the mistake just earlier. When he had been supporting the same policies, was he to be called an anarchist ? This is not correct method. The party ranks have worked actively because of the inspiration drawn from the views of Comrade Majumdar and the Central Committee. Proper work was not carried out in the Central Committee for correct policies while examining the erroneous ideas of Com. Charu Majumdar with a correct outlook. Due to the lack of inner struggle, erroneous ideas developed into opportunist policies and caused harm to the movement. In such circumstances, to refute the revolutionary ideas advocated by Comrade Charu Majumdar and to refuse the responsibility of carrying on the proper struggle against his erroneous ideas and of correcting them on the part of the author who was a partner in all the affairs, would neither indicate his self-critical outlook nor help the unification of the party ranks.

This article has mentioned the mistakes committed by Com. Majumdar in the Naxalbari struggle since 1946. Such mistakes in one form or another, on one plea or another were committed by the leadership at the state and the central level and as a result of which the opportunist path and the revisionist path were continued for a pretty long time upto the Naxalbari struggle. It is nothing but boasting on the part of any responsible comrade to state that he never committed such mistakes. It only helps to hide his own mistakes. It is as much necessary on the part of everyone of us to learn from the past by helping each other through criticism as it is necessary to examine all his errors at the time of assessing Comrade Charu Majumdar. His achievements and mistakes during the course of Naxalbari and after and within and outside the party are to be assessed. It is a crime against the self-critical outlook on the part of the author to choose certain mistakes of Com. Charu Majumdar and to level antagonistic criticisms against him as if he [K.S] committed no mistakes during that period. Why the author who states in the article that heavy losses were incurred in the Islampur area due to the policies of Com. Charu Majumdar did not raise the question for discussion in the Committee of which he had been a member ? If he knew by that time that they were opportunist policies why did he continue to support them up to the recent time ? It is an irresponsible criticism on the part of the author who was responsible for those policies together with Comrade Charu Majumdar to use Islampur incidents, for an attack against him, at a time when the movement is receiving a set-back, instead of helping the party in its assessment. To state that all he had done was anarchy and to call him a Trotskyite would only help the disunity and confusion among the party ranks but would neither help self-critical outlook nor educate them. Only the criticism made with self-critical outlook is a principled one and helps the unity among the party ranks and revolutionary ranks. To develop arguments regarding the difference of grade and of

time between him and them in committing mistakes, to develop controversies among party ranks, to reject unity on this plea and also to reject his correct ideas and certain correct policies developed under his leadership, would not be revolutionary outlook but groupism. There are many of this kind in this article. The party ranks and the revolutionary ranks have to reorganise the proletarian party capable of heading the class struggle, unifying on a suitable basis for carrying on inner struggle for correct policies ; only criticism made with self-critical outlook can help this process.

Mutually Contradictory Attitudes

It is in no way correct to give the title "More about Naxalbari" to the article. The first article that summed up the experiences of Naxalbari struggle is the article 'Spring Thunder over India'. 'Terai report' made another attempt to sum up the Naxalbari experiences. There is no identity at all between these two articles on the one hand and the present article by Com. Sanyal on the other. They are the results of two mutually contradictory attitudes. On important points this article fully differs with the other two.

While the two articles summed up the experiences mainly from the point of view of class struggle and revolutionary outlook, this article reviews those from a 'right' opportunist point of view. While the 'Terai report' proposed that only through an uncompromising struggle peasant unity is possible against landlordism, this article, contrary to that, proposes a policy of negotiation with the reactionary government which safeguards the feudal system. While those two stated that armed revolution would develop by fighting against armed counter-revolution, this article proposes negotiations and revolts with a method of preserving them. While those two articles proposed to adopt the strategy and tactics of people's war and to implement them in a flexible way, this article proposes flexibility in the matter of negotiations with the Government. It is very clear that the attitudes, policies, and methods on which those

two and this article depend are mutually contradictory. Not only that, while those two were leading to the unity of revolutionary ranks and the development of the movement against the ruling classes, this article on the contrary is heading to raise new controversies among the party ranks and further to split the party and the revolutionary ranks. This is becoming an impediment to the unification of the party, to the unity of the revolutionary ranks and the re-organisation of the party, and is also weakening the class struggle.

That is why the author of the article, the party ranks and the revolutionary ranks have to examine this. It is in no way a mistake to wish that the author, as one of the founders of the party and having experience of the peasant movement, re-examine his article, discharge his responsibility towards the revolutionary movement and help the unity of the party and the revolutionary ranks. With this attitude in view, a serious comment has been made against the article. Though he was not prepared to discuss his article, along with the comment on it, with the other five comrades who are responsible for the 'letter', let us hope that he rethinks about his article in view of the comment.

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