

retains concern for the welfare of the "smaller man".

War Economy

If a war economy is introduced ultimately, big business will stand to profit enormously. A war economy demands maximum production, particularly in the industrial sector. The main buyer of most industrial products will be the Government. This situation will ensure, on one hand, removal of all artificial and temporary constraints on production, such as licensing and trade union activities and,

on the other, an assured market. If Mrs Gandhi deviates from this course, big business will still stand to gain. Mr Chowdhuri's words should be taken with a liberal pinch of salt, and one may well keep one's ears tuned to what Mrs Gandhi chooses to say, for it is she who is going to take over the job of deciding economic matters once again. If she has been consistent with few policy matters so far, it is at least fairly certain that she is going to remain faithful to her new-found love for big business.

educating the masses regarding the necessity of changing the socio-economic structure, and thereby fulfilling the subjective condition necessitated for the seizure of political power when the political crisis ripens. To the Naxalites the situation is already ripe and an immediate call for seizure of power is to be given.

To you "quantity of time has changed the quality of the situation" and "non-committed mass is already committed in favour of revolution" and so "arms are to be snatched, guerrilla zones created and power captured". Without giving any room to ambiguity, you at another place write that the last midterm poll was being held in a "near revolutionary situation". So according to the Naxalites it is already revolutionary situation and according to you at least "near revolutionary situation".

With this understanding of the Indian situation you are able to see the vitality of Naxalite movement with your jaundiced eye. You write "the speed and vigour with which Naxalism has spread in India and the stir and impact it has produced speak unmistakably of its vitality and vitality is always associated with truth".

But you do not stop here, rather practise the game of confusing and distorting some concepts.

According to you, political parties can be divided only into two—(1) those who believe in vote and (2) those who believe in revolution, "this is the bomb the Naxalites have thrown in the politics of India" according to you.

Though according to you at least to the extent Lenin and Stalin permitted the revolutionaries of participating in elections as quoted by you itself (sic) is now out of date for that is quoting scriptures and does not help.

You have no argument to substantiate your new thesis obviously borrowed from Naxalites' arsenal and indulge in practising confusion. You write :—

"So it is easy to negate Naxalism with the help of classics but it is not so easy to answer the questions it

Documents

An Expulsion From The CPM

Bihar State Committee CPI(M) office
100 MLA Flat Patna-1
Dated 5th June 1971

Dear Com. Arun Kumar Roy,
Member Dhanbad Local
Committee CPI(M)

Our attention has been drawn to your article "Vote and Revolution" published in "Frontier" dated the 6th March 1971. We have carefully examined the article and are shocked to find that it not only goes against the programmatic understanding of our CPI(M), (it) repudiates our tactical line and election manifesto; confuse, some concept and leads to the vicinity of crude Naxalite rubbish.

After quoting classics and advancing all the arguments in favour of participation in elections for the growth of revolutionary battle in a particular stage of development of mass consciousness you nakedly advocated theories which find you in Naxalite company.

You wrote "fifty years back this would have been an infantile disorder in the words of Lenin or liquidators 'inside out' to quote Stalin, but with the man on the Moon and one third of world under the Red Flag the whole thing deserves serious rethin-

king. Quoting scriptures whether from Lenin or Stalin or Mao has little meaning where the quantity of time has changed the quality of the situation" etc. etc. You further wrote "the non-committed mass is already committed in favour of revolution as it has learnt from the historic events of last fifty years. So what is needed is not so much generation of circumstantial pressure to set it on but to provide the new light and conviction: terror is the only deterrent left with the establishment and power begets terror. So power is to be smashed and offence is the best defence and so vote may be boycotted, arms are to be snatched, guerrilla zones created and power captured. etc. etc." (page-7).

It is here that you differ and oppose the whole tactical line of the Party. According to us as mentioned in the tactical resolution of the CC in November 1966, we characterised the situation as the beginning of political crisis and further in the political resolution of the 8th party congress and subsequent C.C. documents as intensifying crisis. We therefore stress on quickly developing the economic consciousness to that of a political level by further intensifying the militant economic struggles and

has raised". And go on summing up, "the vote can change the ministry but not the others. Despite popular swing the class compositions remain the same, and so the class character of the machinery etc. etc."

Who has said that it will change the class character of machinery or class composition? In your enthusiasm to advocate the wrong Naxalite line you are confusing the issue and putting something in our mouth which we have not said and which is now the difference between us and the vote boycottist.

You will say that you are only polemically dealing with things and have not mentioned CPI(M). True, that is the art of deceit which you have unsuccessfully tried to practise.

Any way, the real issue is whether under the prevailing political situation, under the present stage of consciousness of the masses, the vote boycott slogans will lead a further step towards the radicalisation of the masses? According to us no. According to you—yes. According to Naxalites it is to be outright boycotted.

We discussed the issue in our party programme in the context of participating in certain State Ministries under the bourgeoisie constitution and limited power to the States and decided that we could certainly participate not because it is going to bring any "basic transformation" in "class composition or character of machinery" to use your words, but to educate the masses through their own experience regarding the necessity of the establishment of people's democracy, to further consolidate their organisation (para 112).

This job we have accomplished to a great extent in West Bengal and Kerala.

But to you participation in election by a revolutionary party is to be judged only by the fact whether the enemy wants it or not. You write:—

"The well known Maoist dictum is—war is to be fought when the enemy does not want it and is to be avoided when the enemy wants it. So is the vote, if considered a type of war, is to be boycotted when the ruling class

wants it and is to be fought when the ruling class wants to avoid it."

Ingenious argument no doubt. But it betrays the basic Marxist concept of judging the level of the consciousness of the masses and stage of its radicalization while considering the issue of participation in election or boycott.

The note, I am afraid, on your article is already long and there is no use quoting further passages which bear a running threat (sic) of Naxalite rubbish.

We do not agree with your sketchy dealing of the concept of the partisan warfare. You gloss over or conveniently forget that Lenin has also given the concept of partial partisan warfare at a certain stage of development of militant mass struggle and consciousness.

Thirdly, you repudiate our election manifesto and according to you in the near revolutionary situation "the only issue would have been" the slogans that can put this vote to the cause of revolution is the call to people to reject the constitution based on the right to property as Fundamental Right and to substitute it by one based on the right to work as Fundamental right.

So, Com Roy, you oppose CPI(M) tactical line, election manifesto and your whole understanding is contrary to our programmatic understanding and you praise the Naxalites to the sky.

While doing so you have violated the ordinary norms of the party. While discussing your article sent to the same Naxalite paper *Frontier* last year the State Secretariat had asked you not to rush to the press with any article dealing with party's policy and programme without proper consultation. So you violated this also. And truly speaking dozens of examples can be sighted (sic) that you have not cared for party's instructions just like a typical petty bourgeoisie (sic) individualist.

Lastly this is not in the realm of theory but your practice is in keeping with your own erroneous ideas and notions for which concrete ex-

amples can be sighted (sic).

The secretariat therefore calls upon you to submit your explanation as to why disciplinary action should not be taken against you latest by 22-5-71 and to remain present at Patna from 25-5-71 to 27-5-71 so that you may be in a position to explain in person before the State Committee which is meeting on these days at Patna.

With revolutionary greetings.

Yours Comradely,
Siabar Shrivastava,
Secretary, Bihar State Committee
CPI(M)

The Reply

100 MLA Flat, Patna, 25-6-71
To Com Siabar Saran Shrivastava, Secretary, Bihar State Committee, CPI(M)

Dear Comrade,

Sub:—Your letter on "Vote and Revolution" dated 5-6-71

1. Misreading of my article has landed you to the misleading conclusion that it "repudiates our tactical line and leads to the vicinity of crude Naxalite rubbish".

2. To prove this erroneous conclusion some lines from the article have been quoted but completely misinterpreting or misunderstanding the context. "Fifty years back... guerilla zones created and power captured" is not my argument, not even the officially acknowledged Naxalite stand, but the very logical implication of the Che-line which we must place honestly before we face it politically. Similarly, "the political parties are only reduced to two, those who believe in the vote and those who believe in the revolution" is only the "Bomb the Naxalite have thrown in the politics of India". We should be honest enough to admit this challenge from the left which I have attempted to refute with the help of Marxism-Leninism. The article should be divided into the following parts:—

1. Revolutionary should react to vote with open mind (I and II para).
2. Historical facts on vote and re-

- volution (III para up to "what they said").
3. Classical Marxism and Leninism on vote and revolution ("what they said").
 4. New Left challenge-Che-line, its direct and indirect implications and all possible arguments ("New Left Variety").
 5. Leninism on Parliamentary Democracy ("Armed Forces").
 6. My conclusion and observation (Today's compulsion).

I schematise my article not only to narrow down the realm of difference and hence the present controversy but to concretise the discussions, systematise the debate and to concentrate on the alleged differences in the approaches towards our party line and programme.

3. It appears, you do not have much against part (1). You agree with parts (2) and (3) but you are alarmed with part (4), which shows your crisis of confidence to face Che line and ideological weakness which is not logical for a Marxist. In the "Anti-Duhring" Engels has written pages after pages praising slave system and bourgeois renaissance and their historic impact on the progress of humanity. The same is with the 'Capital' of Marx. The correct appreciation of capitalism helped Marx in correct refutation of capitalism and in correct postulation of socialism.

4. You should not feel uneasy with the sentence: "quantity of time changed the quality of the situation". This is "Historical Materialism". Between the primitive communism of the past and scientific communism of the future what stands precisely is time which is not only a combination of second, minute and hour but stands as a symbol or yardstick for all conscious and unconscious human activity to change the face of earth. Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action and a road to truth. In the "Foundation of Leninism" Stalin correctly defined Leninism as the 'Marxism of the imperialist era and of proletarian revolution'. Lenin enriched Marxism which did not mean Marxism became old or poor. Simi-

larly the mere quoting from Marx or Lenin like a parrot without taking into consideration the changed context of the present and the changing countour of the future is not Marxism-Leninism and so cannot be revolutionary. This does not mean Che-line is correct. What is only proved that simply by quoting books we cannot disprove it. Did not the world of Marx undergo the qualitative change to the world of Mao and the latter to the present one? Is it not mainly for that the CPI(M) refused to accept the Chinese line of revolution in India and "Chairman Mao's thought" in toto even cherishing highest respect for that greatest living Marxist of the era? So when I emphasise the importance of changed context in applying Marxism-Leninism I simply uphold the CPI(M) line.

5. You seem to be unnerved even with the assessment of the present socio-political condition as "near revolutionary situation" and very much interested to prove that revolution is very far. This is a wrong understanding of the party programme and unexcusable for a man supposed to interpret it. The party programme clearly said years ago that our economic crisis was getting transformed into political crisis, and each year the crisis was deepening. Only in near revolutionary condition it gets matured or ripens. The said C.C. resolution of 1966 which you yourself quoted, "We, therefore, stress on... further intensifying the militant economic struggle... thereby fulfilling the *subjective condition* necessitated for the seizure of political power when the political crisis ripens". This shows, the C.C. admits the main stumbling block in the Indian revolution is not fulfilling the *objective situation* which is already near knocking at the door but that of *subjective condition* for the seizure of power i.e. in the words of Lenin, the revolutionary party is lagging behind.

6. While putting and explaining all direct and indirect logic of the Che-line under the caption "New Left Variety", I wrote, "the speed

and vigour... associated with truth" only to emphasise the reality and magnitude of this political challenge from the left which no genuine Marxist-Leninist should minimise. Moreover this is a hard fact. Naxalites in India, Palestine guerillas of the Arab world, New Left of Europe which created a near insurrectional condition in France in 1968, teachers of America and the revolutionaries of Latin America in general created a big impact on the world politics and scare on the Establishment, and lastly the Che-Guevarasts' insurrection in Ceylon where all varieties of communists were in power through a Front, should start a serious rethinking. Such enormous sacrifice throughout the world cannot come if the cause and the politics are not having a strong essence of truth. All these movements are carried under the banner and portrait of "Che". This does not mean that this line is having the whole truth and can give all the correct... answers of the day, but it is with the day. The recent support to the insurrectionists in Ceylon though keeping reservations about their line by the CPI(M) shows that the CPI(M) also acknowledge that. Moreover, the third communist camp namely Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, nearest to our party's line is being bracketted with Che-line (except Vietnam which has its own revolutionary line) as being obvious by the expulsions of North Koreans from Ceylon after the present insurrection. So the Che-line may not be the CPI(M) line but it is the nearest fraternal communist trend to us in the present world politics of today and this close relation was unthinkable if that line did not bear some strong essence of truth.

7. What completely surprised me, how part (5) of my article i.e. under the caption "Armed Forces" dealing plainly with basic Leninism could find you uneasy. As per our Party's political analysis revisionism is the main danger and not the Left deviation. So it is the duty of all genuine Marxist-Leninists to reassert again and again the fundamentals of Leni-

nism why parliamentary democracy cannot be an instrument to bring about the revolutionary change. What is the basis of your guessing that the argument "Vote can change the ministry but not the class character of the State" is in refutation of the opposite logic being put to the mouth of CPI(M)? How was the CPI(M) even indirectly aimed at? All these are aimed towards the revisionists who give that type of impression. Your susceptibility and in the way you thought yourself as the "target" and hastened to put reason in defence moving from Kerala to West Bengal, reflects a guilty mind which is always suspicious. Are we guilty of underground revisionism? I believe, we are not.

8. You are off the gear in dealing with the conclusive portion of my article [part (6)—Today's compulsion] where you should have concentrated at least to educate me as that portion contains my views. I am astonished to read in your letter that I wrote, that in the "present political situation the vote boycott" would lead to the "further radicalization of the people" while my article clearly concludes:

"Those who boycott elections and take up arms have their logic. Those who boycott arms and take up polls have their logic too. But for those who would take up polls to take up arms, use vote in the cause of revolution the task is like 'walking on razor's edge'. The famous epithet 'walking on razor's edge' has the well-known connotation of the scripture: 'The path of truth is very steep. It is like walking on razor's edge' which means that the first two alternatives are the easy path while the last one, i.e. use vote to the cause of revolution is the difficult path but the true path, as the "path of truth is very steep" and the easy cut is seldom the best cut. My article starts with the Naxalite challenge to 'Vote vs Revolution' but concludes with the Marxist challenge 'Vote for Revolution vs Vote for Reform'.

9. Your contention that "the slogans to reject the constitution based

on the right to property as the Fundamental Right" amounts to repudiation of our election Manifesto shows either you have not cared to read our Election Manifesto or you have forgotten its living tenets, and with all humility I draw your attention to the very beginning of the operative part of our Manifesto. "The Constitution and the People" page 12. of the Manifesto.

"All of them have been attacking our Party which declared that the present constitution must go lock, stock and barrel and should be replaced by a new one enshrining the real sovereignty of the people in place of the sovereignty of the vested interest."

What is the main lacuna of our constitution?

Our manifesto rightly points out (page 12-13):

"The fundamental rights are now reduced to sanctity of private property, the right of big property holders to hold private property while small holders like the peasants are evicted by thousands... every freedom is ensured to the capitalists—freedom of profit, freedom to hire and fire workers as they like, or running or closing the concerns".

It may be noted, various aspects of the constitution have been shown (to be) anti-people in later chapters, but the first and the most basic aspect to start with, the party manifesto correctly caught, is the problem of "right to property".

In the "Communist Manifesto" also Marx and Engels gave the guide lines to the communists of the world.

"IV. Positions of the communists in relation to the various existing opposition parties (last page)

"In short, the communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things. In all the movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time".

Com. P. Ramamurthi moved the only non-official resolution in the last Parliament on behalf of the CPI(M) Parliamentary group and that was

against making right to property the fundamental right in the constitution.

It may be noted that the article was written from jail and smuggled also from jail before election when our manifesto did not come out. So what should be the main point of attack in our election manifesto was a mere guess and it is refreshing that the guess did not fall short of reality by any tangible degree.

10. You contested my criterion for participating in the election using the well-known Maoist dictum that vote is to be fought if our class enemy wants to avoid it and is to be avoided if the class enemy wants. In this scale, participation in the election in Pakistan was revolutionary. Similarly in West Bengal, in All India, though it would not be anti-revolutionary yet, the effect would not be the same as in West Bengal. The result of the election has proved my contention. You have put forward your criterion for participating in election but could not prove how mine was "anti-marxist". The interest of the working class is always opposed to that of the Establishment and in a situation when political crisis starts and deepens the zone of "unity of the opposites" gets extremely narrowed and the "struggle of the opposites" only manifests itself, and so whatever political steps election or anything else the Establishment would like to take to minimise or get rid of the political crisis would be definitely against the interest of the working class, and should be opposed and confronted by the working class.

II. You are so much scared of Naxalites that you see Naxalism in even genuine interpretation of the Marxist programme and so you could say that my article "opposes the political and tactical line of the CPI(M) and praises the Naxalites to the sky" though it clearly says:

1. Naxalites say that the present condition in India is a revolutionary situation i.e. political crisis has ripened and is bursting forth, while my article says it is near revolutionary situation i.e. political

crisis has set in and is in the process of ripening.

2. Naxalites say, election whether in Pakistan, West Bengal and India is to be boycotted for the cause of revolution, my article says to participate (is) not to avoid but to further the same cause of revolution.

3. Naxalites say that they are the genuine communists following the path of Mao; my article says that they are Che-Guevaraist and only a brand of New Left Movement of the world with all its positive and negative sides.

The article endeavours to answer the most burning question the extreme left throws to our party. It says that participation in the election does not make a party anti-revolutionary provided the party fights the election in the revolutionary way as Lenin did in Russia, and it is the correct path, though the task is very hard like "walking on the razor's edge".

You attempted to interpret our party's line as only to talk of and participate in militant economic struggle. This is wrong. When political crisis has set in and is deepening day by day no revolutionary party not to speak of CPI(M) can or should restrict its activity within only "militant economic struggle". Partial political struggle should also be started. And in fact, the CPI(M) has started it since long back. Series of political strikes in West Bengal with no connection with economism and gallant fight of our comrades with the CRP at the cost of so much blood and sacrifice are the proof. At this late hour to talk of restricting struggles "within militant economism" is to disgrace our Party and to preach not even CPI politics but to help the "INTUC militants" out to disarm the workers politically by restricting them within economic struggle.

12. You question my right to write articles in non-party papers. This is most unfortunate. Nobody can restrict a communist from preaching and propagating Marxism-Leninism through whatever avenues available to him. Of course, he must not

attack the party and the leaders so long he is in the Party. In this article nowhere the Party and the leadership has been named or even indicated. If your secret information convinced you that "Frontier" is a Naxalite paper it is even more incredible that even the vehicle of Naxalism has been used to carry to the readers the views that participation in the election in the present context can also be revolutionary. Right to preach Marxism-Leninism is never questioned or denied to a Marxist-Leninist. I have personally read Com. P. Ramamurty and Basavapunniah's articles in the "Mainstream", the acknowledged weekly of the revisionists. So where the article is written is not the main point, the main point is what is written.

13. While concluding, you made an uncalled for attack on me regarding my political actions in Dhanbad which was not the subject for discussions, without giving any proof and any instance. This is shocking. This type of baseless, contextless, pointless sudden accusation only lightens your position and attributes a predetermined motive to your letter emitting more heat than light. After all we should not have any axe to grind against each other. If you are interested to review my political activity you come objectively and methodically, and I hope, I shall be able to convince you.

14. In conclusion you have asked me to remain present at Patna on 25.5.71; 26.5.71; 27.5.71 when the State Committee would meet while the letter I received on 9.6.71. I think, it should be 25.6.71, 26.6.71 and 27.6.71. But this mistake of month is not the typing mistake but that in your original script as I personally heard you dictating the typist. This shows that you are always behind time to put it politely.

15. I should not end my explanation without stating that I never boast of my infallibility and am ready to learn and correct myself if proved wrong. But whatever I do whether in principle or in practice, that is considering the best interest of the

party, to uphold its cause and enhance its prestige.

So there may be difference, controversy and if I am found unbearable I shall leave the Party with grace and even remaining outside the party I shall help the party to serve the cause of the proletariat.

With revolutionary greetings
(ARUN KUMAR ROY)
26.6.71.

Suspended

Com. A. K. Rai,

100 M.L.A. flat
Patna 1
5th August 1971

My Dear Com. Rai,

The Bihar State Committee of the Party after fully examining the reply submitted by you to the charges

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levelled against you and also hearing you in person has reached to the conclusion that your original article "Vote and Revolution" published in the "Frontier" dated 6th March 1971 and the reply of the charge sheet fully demonstrated that you have propagated anti-party line opposed to our tactical line, programmatic understanding, election manifesto and even to the extent of declaring that classical Marxism of little meaning in the present condition.

We are sorry to find that there is no realisation on your part regarding the grave harm done to the party, violation of its ordinary norm and form, open violation of State Secretariat instructions not to rush to the press any article dealing with the aspect of party policy and programme without prior approval of the same.

Therefore the State Committee has unanimously decided to suspend your party membership and further to refer your article, charge sheet and reply to the P.B. for they deal with party's basic policies and tactical line for further consideration and taking any further action if it thinks necessary.

With revolutionary greetings.

Comradely Your's

S. S. SHRIVASTAVA

Seal for

Bihar State Committee

Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Patna

(Mr A. K. Roy has since been expelled.

The March 6 number of Frontier is not in our stock.—Editor).