

Delhi University Campus

UNEASY TRENDS - 3

'Politics of Naxalism'

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(HINTS' Varsity Reporter)

It is said that once in the late 1960s, a soviet delegation visited China to advise the Chinese Communists on how best to tackle the adverse situation. At a meeting with the leading communists, they found that Mao was absent. Mao was reminded of the meeting and asked to come. Mao questioned the propriety of such a meeting and replied that only chinese could know the chinese situation. When asked to spell out the Marxist Plan, Mao stated that he was still thinking and when he would find a solution, he would inform the Russians. Whether the story is factual or not, its moral is truthful.

Marx wrote in the European context at a time when the working classes were agitating for a better deal. Everywhere he talks of the 'proletarian revolution'. Yet we find that the Russian Revolution of 1917 took place in a country where the great majority of people were peasants and the administration was very efficient. Mao Tse-tung accomplished the same

2. Ability to sustain 'Protracted War'
3. National Appeal
4. Leadership
5. Organization
6. Breakdown of Administration.

In India there is definitely an element of peasant discontent, particularly in less fertile tribal belts in Bihar and Bengal where the land reforms have not been implemented. There is however, no peasant discontent in say Punjab, West Bengal, U.P. & Haryana & other such areas. If the land reforms are faithfully implemented, this factor can safely be ruled out. As yet the Bengal Naxalites have failed to make a dent in the rural areas. Recently a report indicated that the urban youth were not willing to go to the villages to live and work there. The rural conditions were inhospitable. The Naxalites

leadership had to evolve another strategy that of involving the young recruits in critical cases so that they go out to villages in order to save their skin if nothing else. Ability to sustain 'protracted' war seems irrelevant since the Naxalites are still in their infancy. Nor do the Naxalites have any national appeal. India is not subject to foreign invasions as Russia was in 1917 & China in 1920s. Internally they are not united on a national basis either. There are various factions working according to their own ideology & Programme of action. I understand that they had to proclaim Mao as their Chairman just in order to reconcile all factions. In the process they have earned the wrath of the nationalists and the ultra-nationalist to the extent that today no political party openly supports them. On the positive side, it can be said, that they have a fairly stable organizational base though it is yet to become as efficient as the RSS organization. They also seem to be lacking the discipline of a guerrilla army. Against them goes another factor—the governmental forces are becoming stronger day by day, the rightist forces are very powerfully united, and they have yet to be corrupted.

Naxalite movement is merely an element of the prevailing socio-economic situation in the country and that its growing popularity is due to the sense of frustration enveloping the youth. By its nature, therefore, the movement lacks genuine economic discontent. J. L. S. Gidling in his book 'People's War' says:

"It is the young men and the more active and enterprising of the villagers rather than the very poor and down-trodden who become revolutionaries."

This is very true. Most of the revolutionaries come from the top strata of our society. They usually live in decent bungalows, well-educated and richly stocked with American goods. They or their children study in the best available public schools. They have hobbies like chess, cricket and cards. They are very fond of having bed tea in their houses and condemning the existing constitution. Mostly they tend to be quite contemptuous of their filthy background and contemptuous of ordinary men though they must always talk of 'the people'. This is not unexpected because a man who

In the previous articles I have sought to explain that the

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