CHAPTER VI

SRIKAKULAM - II: SELF ACCELERATING EXTREMISM
This Chapter examines how once the decision to take up armed offensive was made, the maoists were led into a series of tactical changes which can be characterised as self-accelerating extremism, in the sense that each step taken by them forced them to take a more extremist stance if they were to retain the original assessment of a nation-wide upsurge and the original version to go into armed offensive. Concretely, it is examined, how the movement starting with a mass phase in which thousands of people participated in the actions of the maoists against the police and landlords, later on turned first into limited guerilla actions, and later still to individual annihilation combined withmere squadism. (We conceptually separate guerilla actions — which were based upon some amount of participation by the general peasant masses — from squad actions which were limited to the hard core members of the maoist organisation.) In the next section of the Chapter we examine how this self-accelerating extremism on the one hand caused and on the other hand was a result of the more and more extremist stances in their theoretical and ideological formulations.
SECTION I

On November 20, 1968, the District Committee of Srikakulam maoists met and after an acrimonious debate decided to start the armed struggle immediately. The proposal was initially opposed by important leaders like Ramalingachari, Vavillapalli and Appalasuri. However the same meeting rejected the proposal of Vempatapu and Adhibhatla Kailasam to completely sever their relations from the APCCCR. In spite of this resolution the relations with the APCCCR were soon totally cut off. The pro-T.N. leaders like Ramalingachari and D. Krishnamurthy separated themselves from the activities of the Srikakulam Committee which now elected a three man Secretariat to conduct the armed struggle. This Secretariat consisted of Panchadiri Krishnamurthi an honours graduate in political science, Choudary Tejeswara Rao, son of local Swatantra M.L.A. who was also a very big landlord of the area and Appalasuri. Vempatapu was made the secretary of the agency committee and it was in this area that the armed struggle really picked up. The Secretariat was to be in charge of ideological guidance, contacts with outside coordination of the movement, provision of recruits supplying arms ammunition and other necessities and conducting propaganda work. The post of the agency area secretary was like that of a field commander whereas the Secretariat would be like the general staff.
The mass phase

Once the decision to start armed action was taken the Srikakulam District Committee worked out a plan to attack landlords at different places simultaneously. These attacks were to be led by the District Committee members and efforts were to be made to get the maximum possible number of people to participate in it. Acting on this programme Vempatapu Satyam along with 400 tribals armed with guns, bows and arrows, attacked the landlord Theegala Narsimulu of Pedagothili village on the night of 24th November 1968. This group followed this up on the next day with an attack on Ramurti a money-lender of Doddakallu village. Property worth Rs.27,000 was taken from these places. Both these raids were personally organised by Vempatapu, who was acquainted with the victims for more than a decade. He used to visit them frequently, administering native medicines to their ailing relations and dining with them.

These two raids were followed by attacks on Bandusura and many other villages.

In the plains the programme was taken up in the Boddapadu area which was a stronghold of the communist revolutionaries. Tamada Ganapati, a self-educated poor peasant with lot of diplomatic and oratorial skills had been organising peasants in the
villages around Boddapadu in Sompeta Taluq. Due to his efforts several villages like Makannapalli, Harripadu, Neelavati, Rajam, Mamidipalli etc. became red fortresses. He was helped by the fact that the only high school of the area, was situated in Boddapadu and its Headmaster Janaki Rao had radical leanings. This school became a breeding ground for communist revolutionaries and many future communist revolutionaries like Uram Malleswara Rao, Putsa Appalaswamy, Pyla Vasudeva Rao, Juttu Umapati, Dumm Appalaswamy were products of this school. Boddapadu soon became the centre for communist activities not only in the Sompeta taluq but also in Srikakulam district. Panchadi Krishnamurthy, the theoretical guide to the communists in the district and also the Secretary of the then CPI(M) District Committee came and settled down in this village along with his wife Nirmala who was an active cadre of the party. Another notable person to settle down in this village was the famous poet revolutionary, Subba Rao Panigrahi. He came from a family of priests and was well known throughout the State for his excellence in Jamukula Katha (a form of folk art). These three went together, organised in the Boddapadu area a youth association, a peasant association, an agricultural labour association, sports organisation, an adult school, a hospital of native medicine and a library. All these were used to propagate revolutionary politics, develop contacts among the people and to
organise them under the communist party. After the decision was taken to take up arms they organised many meetings in their locality to explain the new tactics. These meetings were followed up by gathering a group of 500 people to raid on the landlords at the neighbouring Garudabhadra village which was at that time a Congress stronghold and the hometown of Maddi Kamesam, the richest money-lender, landlord and contractor of this area with whom they were having trouble for over a decade. The Maoist group was led by Pyla Vasudeva Rao, a young wiry muscular and extremely tough leader of second rank at that time, first cut off the crops in the fields of Kamesam and then proceeded to the village. Here they met with organised resistance from supporters of the landlord. Pyla Vasudeva Rao was caught by the landlord's men and locked up in a house but he managed to escape by removing the tiles from the roof and climbing out.

Another plains area where the movement was spread was in the Bobbili Taluq. This was the area in which Adhibhatla Kailasam the closest comrade of Vempatapu was working. He was fighting for the cause of the peasants from 1954 onwards when he led the peasants in their agitation for ownership of land against Kailasam's father and uncles who were the agraharamdars. For his pains Kailasam was dismissed from the post of school
teacher by his father who was managing the school. He then became a full time worker organising the peasants in the plains area of Parvatipuram district and the Narayanapuram area of Bobbili taluq. Here besides struggles for banjar lands, he also organised people to demand their right to catch fish in the village ponds. This pure vegetarian was also the President of the agency area committee and looked after financial and organisational matters including courts and cases while Vempatapu, the Secretary of the Committee concentrated his efforts in mobilising the tribals. Kailasam organised "Ryotu Sanghams" (peasant associations) in about fifty villages in his area. He also arranged the so called Tegimpu Sanghams (the dare-devil associations).

After the November 25 decision, Kailasam organised many squads with local militants and formed Committees to propagate revolutionary politics. In these activities he was joined by M.V. Ramanamurthy (MVR) the President of Bobbili Teachers Union. M.V.R. was a teacher, in the Badovalasa school and was active in the Communist party from 1961. He now became a whole timer and took over the leadership of armed squads. The maoists took up to seizing the crops of landlords and occupying lands of temples, and organising village governing institutions to take over the powers and functions of the panchayat. This was followed by seizing
harvests in Reddivalasa and Ramayannapeta villages and in two other villages, Lakshmipuram and Kammandavalasa people seized hoarded grains from the houses of local "Sahukars". In these actions there was high rate of participation from the general peasants led by the maoists. The police retaliated by arresting the people from the communist strongholds. The local landlords also announced a reward of Rs.2,000/- for capturing Kailasam and Rs.1,000/- for capturing M.V.R. Warrants were issued in the names of many party members and their sympathisers including that of M.V.R.'s wife and her brother. It became impossible for these people to stay in their villages. Nearly sixty party members left their homes and hid in the Parvathipuram forest area. The police opened a camp at Narayanapuram, making it impossible for the maoists to continue functioning. In this situation Appalasuri met the Bobbili Taluq maoists as the representative of the State Committee. Kailasam, M.V.R. and others expressed to him the opinion that they could no longer function in their old strongholds unless they killed the local landlords and thus removing the source of information and identification of maoists. Appalasuri did not agree to this opinion and conveyed to them the District Committees circular Spread the struggles to non-struggle areas. The message of this circular was "Hold the gun and ask for wages; remove the police gun and capture the land; hold the gun and abolish all the
The activities in the Bobbili area came to a standstill and all the cadre of this area was hiding in the agency forests.

Thus the police initially found little difficulty in suppressing the mass phase of the movement (in which actions conducted by the Maoists had the participation of hundreds of local peasants). So they turned their attention now to the agency area which was the base of Maoist activities. The objective of police was to comb these areas and capture all the Maoist leaders from their hideouts.

There were nine Platoons of S.A.P. operating on the whole in Srikakulam district with the cooperation of the Orissa Government. They had conducted continuous raids on the tribal villages and hamlets in search of offenders. These raids faced resistance from the tribals, sometimes spontaneous and sometimes organised. The incidents narrated below will illustrate the nature and extent of the resistance to police.

In Althi hills of Pathapatnam taluk the tribals attacked prohibition officers and beat them on December 10, 1968. On 12th a police party led by a D.S.P. and two Circle Inspectors arrived in Althi hills to arrest the miscreants. They were attacked by five hundred tribal men, women and children armed with bows, spears and arrows. The police were heavily stoned by tribals.
who shouted slogans about Mao and armed struggle. As a result, a D.S.P. and nine police officers were injured. Police opened fired killing two tribals. With this the resistance was broken and forty-six tribals were arrested.

In contrast to Althi hills which was a spontaneous affairs we find organised and stiffer resistance to police in the incident at Pulipatti hills. In this incident a strong party of Special Armed Police consisting of platoons, 25 trackers and many supply carriers were prevented from reaching their destination for four days by armed tribals. This police party left their Mondemkhal base on December 19, when they received information that Vempatupa Satyam and other top leaders were hiding in Eguva Ballerugudem village of Pulipatti village. When they reached into the egu valley they found themselves surrounded by the tribals. The tribals were stationed on mountain tops and had obviously chosen the spot to ambush the police party. They pushed boulders from mountain tops and attacked the police arrows and guns from their entrenched position. The fight lasted for two hours between 2 and 4 P.M. However the police managed to withdraw into the safety of Ramagundem hills without any fatal losses. On December 21, the police had reinforcements and this time instead of entering the valley they proceeded to their destination on top of mountain ranges. After a five-hour confrontation of firing and stone throwing the tribals were
forced to retreat towards Sivada and Valagamanaguda villages. However the police could not proceed further because the tribals had set fire to forest bushes and besides the police were doubtful of their ability to face in the night a tribal crowd estimated at more than a thousand. It was only on 23rd of December that the police could finally reach Eguvaballerugudem. Even on this day they had to disperse a 800 strong tribal group before being able to set up their camp. An interesting feature of this event was that though on the first day the tribals were led by Vempatapu on the other days they were led by purely local leaders like Biddika Venkanna and Biddika Jamma and Nimmala Krishnamurthy, Sarpanch of Valasaballeru. The police later on laid a jeepable road in this area to make their patrolling effective. Ironically this road became popular as the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Another instance of mass resistance to police in this period took place near Domada village on Santoshapuram hills along the river Vottigodda. Here a party of three Andhra Pradesh Special Police platoons combing the villages for Sangham leaders were attacked by hundred tribals. However their resistance was broken and many tribals including their leader Gajapati Yendudora, President of Mondemkhal Panchayat was arrested. In yet another incident a three hundred strong tribal group attacked a police party near Gangannadoravalasa of Kuttan hills
on 13.2.69. In the ensuing firing they were dispersed and their leader Savara Renjhim killed.

During all this period (November '68 to February 1969) the lootings of landlords and money lenders continued in the areas of Parvatipuram and Pathapatnam.

The Sanghams efforts towards total elimination of all forms of "exploitation" led them into conflict not only with the landlords, money-lenders, government and forest contractors but also with some sections of tribals like rellies and small merchants like shondies. Both these sections have trading as their main occupation. They were acting as middlemen between tribals and the big merchants of plains. On Sangham's call the tribals refused to repay the small loans they had taken from shondies and prohibited the rellies from collecting tamarind and other forest produce. This led in some cases to physical confrontation. For instance when the rellies of Chinnamerangi were prevented from collecting tamarind by the Sangham workers led by Adhibhatla Kailasam, the former collected two hundred of their fellow-tribals and looted two villages which were sympathetic to the Sangham. The Agency Committee decided that retaliatory action was to be taken but the rellies were not to be treated as enemies but only as straying friends. Inspite of this guerilla squads attacked 'rellies'. After these incidents the rellies became allies of the police and worked as their trackers.
The Guerilla Struggle

During this peak period of mass tribal activity Charu Majumdar visited Srikakulam. On January 21, 1969 he met Vempatapu and Choudary Tejeswara Rao at Gangannadora Valasa. He was informed of the massive response and support the movement got in the area and a very rosy picture of prospects given to him. He went back firmly convinced that a radical revolutionary line was necessary and saw the moderate leadership of T.N. as a hindrance to the progress of revolutionary movement in Andhra Pradesh. The A.I.C.C.C.R. in a meeting held on February 6, 1969 disaffiliated the A.P.R.C.C. led by T.N. from the A.I.C.C.C.R.

After this Charu Majumdar visited Andhra in the second week of February. A secret meeting of all the notable communist revolutionaries of Andhra who supported the extremist line of A.I.C.C.C.R. was held at Guttikondabilam of Narsaraopet taluk in Guntur district. Here it was decided to intensify and extend the armed struggle from the agency areas of Srikakulam district to plains area and other districts of Andhra Pradesh. Here they also pledged allegiance to the Chinese Communist Party as the centre of the world revolutionary movement. They also elected a State Coordination Committee with Choudary Tejeswara Rao as Convenor. It had ten other members. Panchadi Krishnamurti and Mamidi Appalasuri (both from Srikakulam), Nagabushan Patnaik and M. Venkataratnam (both to be incharge of Visakhapatnam),
Mancha Venkatanarasiah (for Guntur), G. Koteswara Rao (for Koraput and Ganjam area), Dama Chenchiah (for Nellore), K.S. Mahadevan (for Chittoor), K.G. Satyamurthy and Kondapalli Seetharamiah for Telengana area. These members were given the task of organising at district and taluk levels.

The meeting also laid down certain guidelines for organisational methods for continuance of the revolutionary movement. Guerilla squads were organised each with 7 or 8 members. The members were to be given training in use of sticks and firearms. The squads were to be in the forefront of resistance and also be active in mass mobilisation programmes. Ryotanga Sangrama Samities were to be organised at villages and were to form the mass base for the revolutionary movement.

The Srikakulam District Committee meeting was convened near Sobha of Parvathipuram taluk from 11-13th of February 1969 to discuss the ways in which Guttikondabilam decisions were to be implemented. The main decisions of this meeting were (a) to extend the movement to plain areas, (b) to send cadre from agency areas to organise party calls and activities in the plains, (c) to snatch arms and ammunition from the police.

The meeting divided Srikakulam district into four areas for operation of guerilla squads: 1) Bobbili area covering Bobbili and Salur taluqs, 2) Parvatipuram area comprising the forest
tracts of Parvatipuram, Palakonda and Pathapatnam taluqs, Chandanagiri area, comprising of forest tracts from Pathapatnam to Brahmanatharla area, Sompeta area consisting of the entire Uddanam region from Palaso to Icchapuram. These areas were to be looked after by area Committees which supervised the operations of the squads while there were separate taluq Committees to look after political and organisational work. Efforts were made to organise Ryotanga Sangrama Samiti in all villages. Leaders like Panchadi Krishnamurti would go around the villages meeting local sympathisers and militants discussing the immediate problems of the village to form Ryotanga Sangrama Samiti which were to make a class analysis of the village, identify the class enemies and decide on suitable action. These Samities were to coordinate their activities under the guidance of District Coordination Committee. Mahila Sangham for women and Bala Sangham for children were also organised as auxilliary corps.

The call to extend the movement to the plains area was taken up and the activity started with an attack on Tangadu Dharmaraju on 15.2.69 by the Boddapadu squad led by Hemachandra Panigrahi. Dharmaraju was a merchant who had informed police the whereabouts of Tamada Ganapati and other Maoist leaders. This was followed by more attacks on merchants and other police informers to terrorise them and make them non-
cooperative towards the police. In Padmapuram of Sompeta taluq the guerilla squad led by Panchadi Krishnamurti, Tamada Ganapati and forty others seized Rs. 40,000/- from the house of Varanasi Nityanandam, a rich landlord. This incident became very significant in the later annals of Maoist history under the name of the "Bathapuram incident". Charu Majumdar compared it with Father Gapon's peasant march on the Tsar's palace which started the 1905 rebellion of Russia and the peasant rebellion of Homan which was the starting point of Chinese Revolution. He held that the initiative and enthusiasm shown by the local people in their efforts to pursue, capture and kill the much hated money lender as the justification for his theory of annihilation which was to be the main form of Maoist activities in the later years.) An incident which inflated their morale at this time took place near Pathakota village. A police party led by Patro, the local Circle Inspector with whom the Boddapadu Maoists had old enmity was combing the Koppaslaroj hills and was ambushed. He was left for dead, but seems to have survived with a hand lost. The squad led by Panchadi Krishnamurti consisted of hardcore party members from the villages surrounding Boddapadu. On 19.4.69 they attacked and killed Rathina Bhima Rao of Boddapadu for being a police informer. A perusal of the F.I.R. and other relevant documents leads us to the inference that the killing was not a theoretically and ideologically premeditated act but an incident occurring
due to the feelings of the squad members. They followed this by an attack on the house of Marripatruni Suryanarayana Patnaik, a rich landlord of Padmapuram village. In this incidence many local tribals also participated along with many squad members. The landlord was notorious for his cruel dealings with the local peasants who also carried a grudge against him since he was not allowing them to use the village water channel. All his belongings were seized and distributed to the local villagers on the spot. The promissory notes he was holding were burnt. However, this landlord was not killed inspite of more favourable conditions. This lends support to the argument that the killing in Boddapadu was an accidental event. Some more incidents of this kind followed.

The call to extend the movement to the plains area was also taken up in their other plains stronghold i.e. the Bobbili area. The party cadre which had gone into hiding in the agency area after the December events now came down again into the Bobbili plains this time, reinforced by personal presence of Vempatapu Satyanarayana. On March 7, 1969 they started with symbolic forcible fishing in the Govripuram village ponds. In this action nearly four hundred people participated. With their presence now publicly announced the maoists now expected the police to come after them. So Kailasam and M.V.R. proposed that they should quickly conduct a couple of more actions in the neigh-
bouring villages and go back to take refuge in the mountains.
The District Committee flushed with the theory of a nation-wide
eruption, and thinking in terms of offensive struggles all over
the country did not agree to this proposal. And instead proposed
that they now divide themselves into two sections one of which was
to proceed to conduct actions in the Badevalasa area and the other
lay an ambush for the police who would come pursuing them. In
Govripuram they attempted to murder a landlord but failed because
their local contact betrayed them. In Badevalasa they attacked
and looted the houses of three local landlords. They also burnt
promissory notes worth nearly Rs.70,000/- But the second part
of the programme was a total flop. When the police came and
beat up the local peasants of the area, the peasants instead of
rising up and helping the maoists to ambush the police as expected
(and as happened in the agency areas) instead refused to help the
maoists in any way and gave the police information concerning
the whereabouts of Maoists. The maoist action squads became
disorganised and dispersed rather than disbanded as their
documents claim. Of the left over cadres some under M.V.R.
retreated into the mountains. Kailasam whose leg had swollen
was hiding in their hospital which was being run by Dr. Siva Ram
Reddi and Dr. Mallikarjunudu at Kalamrajpet. The police, informed
of this, RAIDed the place and in the resultant encounter the maoist
sentry. Reddy Appalaswamy a veteran party militant was killed and
all others arrested. Following these arrests there were armed processions by maoist sympathisers in about twenty villages of the area. But police patrolling, easily brought the situation under control. So once again (after December 1968) the maoist incursions into the plains areas were foiled by police. So the maoists had to think of readopting their tactics to the conditions.

During this time the maoist activities in Agency continued along with their newly extended activities in plains area. Firstly many raids were carried against shopkeepers and money-lenders. In these raids gold, silver, jewellery, rice, wheat, oil etc. were seized from the shops and distributed among the local population. They also attacked the houses of some landlords and made them distribute the lands under their occupation for e.g. Thimmakka Nisarayya, Sarpanch of Bottivada village gave away all his lands when attacked by a two hundred strong tribal group led by local maoist workers like Battika Sanghamesu, Kurukati Samayya etc. In none of these cases was the concerned landlord or money-lender annihilated. But when they attacked a police informant they invariably killed him. This was seen as an essential step for security of their life and movement. For e.g. Voona Vittal Prasad a money lender and a police informant was killed on February 6, 1969. This was
followed by the killing of Simhadri Naidu who had petitioned for the opening of a police camp in his village. Next day murdered Biddika Gopiah at Bathpolam village because he was arranging trackers for the police. Further they also killed Pattika Jamayya for the crime of having posted police in his village.

This Jamayya Naidu was a landlord and a non-tribal was notorious for his style of living and treatment of the tribals. He had seven 'wives' picked up from indebted tribal families. This period also saw some attacks by the maoists on the police for e.g. the A.P.S.P. platoon from Polla camp was ambushed by the tribals led by Kurangi Vasunarayana, Kurangi Kokhalingam etc.

The police camp at Vobbangi was attacked by the Maoist tribals twice - once on April 18, 1969 and again on May 3, 1969.

The police camp at Bollivada was also attacked on April 29, 1969. All the three attacks were carried out in the night and failed to cause any damage to the police camps since the tribals did not come near enough to the camps to make their weapons effective. The police parties were also attacked whenever they went on combing operations or raids to tribal villages to catch maoists.

**Annihilation: The Highest Stage of Class Struggle**

The party now had to face the question of operating under conditions of severe police repression. They felt that repression
was an unavoidable part of the sequence of the revolutionary events, an inevitable hurdle which was to be crossed if their programme was to be implemented and felt that people would take repression in their stride since it would become a matter of habit for them.

At about this time the A.I.C.C.R. met in a plenary session from 19th to 22nd April and decided to form a new party the CPI(ML). This meeting was attended by Choudary Tejeswara Rao and Panchadi Krishnamurti from Andhra. On their return from Calcutta they toured the whole of Andhra State to make a general review of the situation and to convey to the local leaders the decisions of Calcutta plenum. A meeting of the State leaders was held at Visakhapatnam from 14.5.69 to 16.5.69. In this meeting the old State Coordination Committee was converted into the Organising Committee for the newly formed CPI(ML).

In this meeting a four-point immediate programme was worked out for implementation in the whole of Srikakulam district. 1) Seizure of landlords property - lands, crops etc.; 2) organising Ryotanga Sangrama Samithis and other governing bodies in the villages; 3) organising guerilla squads; and 4) annihilation of landlords, police personnel and informers.
While the previous meeting called for extension of the movement this meeting called for its intensification by taking to new forms of struggle. This meeting can be regarded as a turning point in the history of the Srikakulam movement. Organisationally it involved a shift from the emphasis on mass activity to the emphasis on guerilla squads. Programmatically annihilation overshadowed all other activities.

In the plains the first act heralding the new programme took place on 19.5.1969 in Borivanka in the Sompeta area. Balada Krishnamurthy and his brother were annihilated in broad daylight by the squad led by Panchadi Krishnamurti, Subba Rao Panigrahi and Tamada Ganapati. In this incident hundreds of local villagers also participated. Property worth Rs. one lakh was taken and promissory notes worth 47 Rs. three lakhs were burnt.

However within five days of this incidence a morale shattering blow struck the maoists with the death of Panchadi Krishnamurti who was then the Secretary of the moist party in Srikakulam along with other militant cadres all of whom were in their early teens. This included Tamada Chinna Babu a 16 year old boy who used to play female roles with much aplomb in Subba Rao Panigrahi's cultural troupe, and some school students Dunna Gopa Rao, Bayinapalli Papa Rao and the 13 year old Nirajam
Rao. All these were students of Boddapadu High School which under the influence of their headmaster had become centres for radical politics.

This incident necessitated a reorganisation of Sompeta squads. The area organisers of Sompeta met at Mettur 11th and 12th of June 1969. In this meeting the squads were reorganised and new areas were demarcated for the operations of squads. The squads in the area were to function under the leadership of Tamada Ganapati, Chaganti Bhaskara Rao and Pyla Vasudeva Rao.

On June 24, 1969 a meeting of Sompeta area Committee was held to review the situation after Panchadi's death. Here Tamada Ganapati was elected as the new Secretary and wide ranging discussions were held on ways and means of securing and safeguarding the lives of guerillas, arrangements were made for an efficient courier system to coordinate the activities of various squads and the members were warned to be on the look out for police agents and informers. In a solemn ceremony Panchadi Nirmala's thumb was cut and with the blood the members were given tilak and pledged to kill top police officials in the district including the Superintendent of Police. Here they also formed two kamikaze squads to kill top police officers in relation for Panchadi Krishnamurti's death.

The squads in the Sompeta area had about 5 members each.
Their modus operandi was to fix a target for an annihilation, then get together 4 or 5 other squads and to carry out the task and use the event for an on the spot propaganda. In some cases they would be openly joined by the local villagers in carrying out the annihilation and in other villages they would have stray sympathisers who would supply necessary information and afford material assistance. In the latter type of villages the annihilation would be conducted solely by the squad and afterwards speeches followed to explain their act and thus use the people into revolting. An incident of the first type took place in Akkupalli village wherein, about four hundred villagers participated in the annihilation of Konchada Bhuchandra Rao. At the same time in the same village the house and general stores shop of Konchada Hararatha Ramudu was ransacked but the person himself was left alive. It is doubtful as to how far the annihilation of Bhuchandra Rao was an outcome of the cadres implementing 'annihilation' as a matter of policy. If the annihilation was theoretically motivated the killing of one person and the leaving of another becomes inexplicable. The element of revenge seems to have played a major role. We have already noted the pledge taken by members in the name of avenging Panchadi Krishnamurti's death. Even in the actual incident of murder, Panchadi Nirmala who was an active participant dipped her hand in the blood of the victim snatched away the Mangalasutram of the...
dead man's wife and stated "just as the police had made me a widow so shall the landlords wife be made now a widow."

The Akkupalli incident was followed up by several annihilations like that of Patro in Govinda Puram village and Krupa Sindhm of Konaka village. In Bobbili area also M.V.R. conducted an annihilation in one of his sporadic raids on the plains while hiding in the mountains.

The maoists felt that annihilations were helping their cause. They felt that an annihilation helped them to work freely in the area by terrorising the local landlords and police agents and giving confidence to the people in the determination and capability of the CPI(ML) in bringing about the revolution. So they felt that it was justifiable to carry out an annihilation without local peoples participation in it. They felt that they need not limit their annihilation activities to areas where they had some support and had previously conducted propaganda campaigns. They felt that annihilation itself was a way of propagating the ideals and spreading the movement to new areas. So they felt that it was appropriate to carry out guerilla actions of annihilating wherever it was technically feasible, irrespective of any political considerations.

Following this analysis of the situation they started extending their guerilla squad activities in Tekkali and Pathapatnam where they had previously no hold. A typical action here
is the annihilation of Pratapchandra Padi, President of Devabandupuram Panchayat and a big landlord. This action was carried out by a guerilla squad of ten members who were joined by another ten local people who had some personal grudges against the particular landlord. The annihilation was carried out in a theatrical manner. The head of the dead landlord was severed from the body, and paraded through the villages.

However in areas where the CPI (ML) gained hold by this kind of activity their sympathisers and supporters deserted them at the very first sign of strong police action.

However in areas like Boddapadu where there was a tradition of mass activity the CPI(ML) managed to retain their hold in spite of police action and forced many landlords to leave the place.

The Srikakulam District Committee Meeting's decision of May 14-16, 1969, were simultaneously being implemented even in the agency area. However given the initial mass support of the CPI(ML) here, none of their activities degenerated purely into squad actions without mass participation. In these circumstances annihilation was seen as a way of driving away the landlords from the agency area and of terrorising the police informers, rather than as an act of propaganda and as a way of mobilisation which seems to have been the case in the plains area.
They opened the implementation of the May 14, 1969 decisions with an attack on the landlords of Thumbali village. One of the landlords Gudla Siddhanti was annihilated while three more landlords D. Appalaswami Naidu, M.V. Narasimhamurthi and Seshirekhamma were let off after their houses were ransacked and promissory notes burnt. In this event it was not only the party members who had participated, but also tribals from the neighbouring villages numbering about a thousand. This was followed by the attack on village of Loharjola on 26th May 1969. Here one of the landlords Anguru Induvada Naidu was annihilated while six others were let off with ransacking. In this incident about two thousand tribals led by Vempatapu, Choudary Tejeswara Rao and others participated.

In another major incident about seven hundred tribals led by Vempatapu and others attacked a Savara landlord and usurer of Palukonda village Samburu Naidu. About Rs.10,000 was looted and distributed among the participants. This person owned about 10 acres of land which was declared to be seized by CPI (ML).

After the above incident the CPI (ML) celebrated Vietnamese solidarity day by ceremonially annihilating Nethala Balaji Naidu and Koti Chiranjeevi Naidu of village Malliveedu. This was followed by an attack on tobacco and tamarind trader, Ramamurthi of Doddakallu.
village by the Kendriyadalam (central squad) in the agency area led by Vempatapu on August 8, 1969. Ramamurthy's house was ransacked and he was beaten up and they left taking him for dead.

In the Boddapaddu area they followed this with their revenge on Maddi Kamesam the Garudabhada landlord who had foiled their previous attack. On August 5, 1969, one day before the Home Minister was due to visit the place they conducted a raid on the village, this time only with a handful of people (compared to the five hundred men in the previous attack). Pyla Vasudeva Rao who was nearly handed over to the police by Maddi Kamesam on the previous attempt, now had the last word when he hacked away Maddi Kamesam to pieces. This time there was no interference from the local villagers. The reputation of the maoists' ruthlessness and the fact of their being only against the rich was by now quite widely known and the local villagers preferred to view the fight as a personal one between Maddi Kamesam and the maoists rather than one involving the village.

To counter the Maoist activities the Government declared the agency area in Srikakulam district as disturbed in June 1969. Implications of this order was that the police were allowed to shoot at sight and to prevent more than five people from gathering together. This order was extended in August to cover the whole area comprised in the Pathapatnam, Sompeta, Tekkali, Ichapuram, Palakonda and Parvatipuram Taluqs. More C.R.P. reinforcements
were brought out and intensive combing operations were carried out for the Maoists, and orders were given to shoot at sight.

In these circumstances it had become impossible for the Maoists to function in the old fashion i.e. conducting activities openly and with the participation of innumerable local sympathetic tribals. In fact it was becoming impossible for them to function without solving the problem posed by Central Reserve Police. To this end they started falling back more and more upon squad organisation and squad actions as the way to defend themselves and destroy the class enemies - i.e. the police, landlords and money-lenders. These tactics were not a sudden innovation of May and post-May '69 days but were gradually evolving from November 1968 onwards.

The Squadist strategy

With the intensification of the struggle by the Maoists after the November 1968 call, they were faced with the problem of defence from Police raids. Initially they adopted a form of mass resistance in which hundreds and even thousands of tribals were gathered to prevent the police from advancing. Many times they also took recourse to setting up forest fires and mass vacation of villages. However in the long run these forms of struggles were not efficacious. They were disruptive to the normal productive life of the tribal economy and as such could not be carried out for a long period. Even otherwise
poorly trained and poorly disciplined mobs of tribals were no match to equipped and battle-trained police parties. It was in these circumstances that the guerilla strategy slowly evolved both theoretically and practically. Guerilla activities are evident as early as December 23, 1968 when a police party was ambushed by a small group of Maoists. This was followed by a guerilla attack upon a police camp in a school of the village Dakshini. They burnt the Dakshini police camp forcing the police to abandon the post. The success of these two activities was seen by the maoist leaders as offering them a way out of the difficulties arising from police raids. They felt that "The people gained confidence from the activities of guerilla squads. The mood of meek submission to repression, and the attitude that all their troubles vanished with their handing over of the leaders to the police is no longer present. Pessimism is gone, and people are now evading arrests by climbing up the hills during police raids and even remain there for a long time when situation demanded."

Governed by this kind of analysis they decided to reorganise themselves on a squad basis. The pivot of the new organisational system was to be the village defense squad. Their various responsibilities included: a) making analysis of the land distribution in their area; b) making a class analysis and pinpointing the enemies and friends; c) acting as the sentry to the village - watching the police movement; d) defending the village against police raids by organising ambushes; e) propagating the party
programme; f) reading, implementing and discussing the party centre's directive; g) being incharge of the village kitchen and also supplying the party centre with necessary food and other resources; h) holding peoples courts; i) collecting arms from the people. They were mainly armed with bows and arrows and bamboo sticks shaped as spears. The squads maintained contacts with others through an elaborate courier system.

The squad members at the village level were not full time members. They had to take on to these responsibilities in addition to their normal occupation to maintain sustenance. The squad as a whole was responsible for the over all well-being of the party members and sympathisers. It had to provide for the families of members who had to leave the village by getting them financial and medical aid besides aiding in their agricultural activities.

These village defence squads were supervised by zonal organisers who co-ordinated the activities of the squads and were also instrumental in recruiting and forming the guerilla squads from the village defence squads. This organiser was also the commander of the zonal squads which consisted of all the guerillas. He had the last word concerning when and on whom the raids have to be carried out. They were also incharge of political and theoretical education of the cadre. In fact "they
were the pillars on which the movement had to be carried forward"

The agency area was divided into fifteen zones each under the charge of an organiser.

The guerilla strategy for facing the police which was definitely decided upon and received a further boost with the visit of Kanu Sanyal and Souren Bose, the two Central Committee members to the agency area from July 30, 1969 to August 4, 1969.

A conference was held in their presence at Etumanuguda in which one hundred maoist squads and all their top leaders participated.

Souren Bose conveyed to the Srikakulam people the following views of the Central Committee "We are of the opinion that a peoples army can be raised in Srikakulam since the red government has already been established there. This army should have at least a thousand full time guerilla soldiers who will be used to carry out a mobile and offensive warfare against the landlord government of India." Kanu Sanyal giving a summary of his visit to China in December 1967 and commenting on the Naxalbari experience and the nature of the general tactical and strategic line for revolution, said that the "Unity of peasants with working class is possible only in a common struggle for the political power. There can be no unity based on economism.... The struggle for political power can be carried on only through guerilla warfare." Souren Bose commenting on the lessons of Srikakulam struggle said "The Sompeta struggle showed us that we could mobilise
a great number of people against the enemy and only through the 84
guerilla warfare." Bose and Sanyal also gave the details of
their experiences in China where they had military training for
3 months in Wanking Military Academy.

After these advices the following immediate programme
was worked out. (1) Armed struggle was to be intensified by
attacks on police and by snatching away arms and ammunition.
(2) A peoples liberation army was to be formed trained and
equipped to conduct mobile and offensive warfare. (3) The
struggle was to be extended to all possible areas (4) Political
propaganda to be conducted among masses and make them aware of
the necessity and the need to support guerilla warfare (5) to
kidnap landlords and hold them as hostages in return for ransom.

The relation between the guerilla and the people was seen
as being similar to the relation between the landlord and
the army i.e. the fighting arm of the general body. And in the
present stage (stage of intense police activities) the people
could fight back the landlords only through the guerilla.

"Without the guerilla the people can do nothing at this stage."
They saw the present condition of intensified police activities
as a positive help to the formation and development of the guerilla
units. They felt "The more there is repression on the people,
the greater is their strength. Without repression, there is no
peoples army and thus no village revolutionary base. The present
Governmental repression makes it easier for us to go forward and
intensify the movement. Repression is as natural as waves in
the sea, and those comrades who do not see it as such have not
yet had a scientific understanding and proper political conscious-
ess."

The main tactic of the mobile warfare in the immediate
future was not to be the defeating of enemy forces (police or
army, as it might be) but of inflicting the severest possible
losses on them. They said "Our problem is not to defeat the
enemy but as to how many class enemies we can kill. This is a
war of annihilation of class enemies. When the situation is
convenient we attack them and when inconvenient we withdraw
and attack at some other place where it is convenient. This is
the substance of mobile warfare."

The organisation for this mobile warfare was to be based
on guerilla squads, each having 5-7 members. These roving bands
were to be fed and supplied information by the people and would
be constantly on the move, ambushing the police and annihilating
class enemies (landlords, money-lenders, police informers etc.)
They felt that they had the upper hand over the regular police
because "their is a mercenary army needing elaborate arrangements
for food, housing etc. They do not have peoples support and as such
it was difficult for them to communicate with other police units and even to get information about the guerilla squads. For them it was only possible to conduct a stable warfare since they have to return to the camps as the night falls. In these circumstances the guerilla having peoples support and sympathy and capable of conducting mobile warfare had an upper hand.

Kanu Sanyal followed up his advices on guerilla struggle with a dramatic and courageous act proving its effectiveness. He led an ambush on a police group consisting nearly thirty six men and after causing wounds to some of them seized guns. The day after Kanu Sanyal left, the squads heralded their decisions on mobile warfare and annihilation of class enemy by killing Maddi Kamesam of Garuda Bhadra, quite a notorious and unpopular landlord of the area. Inspite of the possibility for making a lot of people participate in the act, it was carried on by a handful of guerillas in keeping with their new understanding of the situation.

Armed with the guerilla strategy and the decision to face CRP frontally and forced by the necessities imposed on them by CRP's patrolling, combing and pacifying measures, the maoists came into repeated clashes with the police. They gave calls for setting up traps with ropes, covered ditches etc. and for arranging ambushes at all possible places. This kind of
activity was extensive particularly in the Podi and Aviri hills area. The guerilla activity was successful enough to prevent the police from setting up any camps in Dakshini hills, Tulasi hills and Gangannadora hills. The police rather preferred to set up their camps in areas outlying these hill regions and go on raids to these hill regions in the day time.

The maoists asked the guerilla squads to prepare for war with the police since it signified a direct confrontation with the state for the sake of political power. A call was given to attack the CRP wherever they were to be found. A debate arose on the question of whether the attacks were to be only in self-defence or offensive also. The District Committee decided that it was proper to conduct raids on police not only for self-defence but even for retaliation and for seizure of arms and even for the simple reason of destroying the class enemy. The people were asked to vacate villages and hide in the mountains and leave it to the guerillas to deal with the CRP when they raided the village. And at a meeting of squad leaders it was decided that the priority must be shifted from attacks on landlords to attacks on police. They said "now we must concentrate on the police rather than the landlords. Every day we must carry out attacks on the camps. The village defence squads must be used to carry out these attacks."
The first problem the squads faced after they resolved to attack the CRP was that of **arms and ammunition.** In the beginning they tried to acquire modern weapons, either by seizing from police and landlords or by buying in the black market. These efforts were not successful. They felt that they were "spending too much effort on acquisition of modern weaponry, time is being wasted. These efforts are not intensifying class struggle nor are they helping organise a peoples army". In this situation they felt that there are any number of weapons which can be effectively used to weaken and destroy the enemy knives, axes, sickles, spades, big sticks and stones with fatal results. "By cutting electric wires, demolishing bridges, spreading rumours and creating a poisonous atmosphere against the enemy, by obstructing his communication lines he can be inconvenienced and his war power weakened. Thus if we want to finish the enemy we have weapons everywhere and our task is to put the peoples army into action not to indulge in defeatist doubts about our armoury."

With these thoughts the squads were organised to conduct attacks on police. Each had five members armed with the available guns (mostly S.B.M.L. type), besides sticks and arrows. Some arrows were poison tipped and others had gasoline dipped cotton tips with a wick of sulphur powder to explode on contact. The squads laid traps for police by digging holes and placing sharp
edged bamboo sticks in it. They also used bees to attack the police camps. However the main reliance for attacks on police was placed on crude bombs. Five experts were imported from distant places to help make the bombs.

At this time (June 1969) there were three hundred guerillas in the Central Squads, sixty in the woman squad and about 1200 in the village defence squads and a membership of 45,000 was claimed for ryotanga sanghrama samiti. The guerilla squads had some initial successes in their attacks on the police. During late May 1969 the guerillas engaged the police continuously for three days near Jeraduguda in Aviri area and finally forced them to make a temporary retreat. In the same area in June they forced a police search party which had come for the dead body of a landlord, to retreat without gaining their objective. In Podi area they raided the APSF camp twice and created some confusion and anxiety. They also conducted raids and ambushes on police parties with a view to demoralising them. For e.g. the 4th Battalion of A.P.S.P. which had its camp at Sirikonda was attacked thrice when it went towards Nilakantapuram in search of the maoists. They also killed eight police men in the Arivi hills in ambushes. The months of May, June and early July saw many clashes between the maoists and the police. On May 26, 1969, the police party clashed with maoists at Digivavili and in the
resultant firing Pyla Bheemudu was killed. On the next day
the police clashed with 150 tribal maoists and 3 tribals were
killed.

**The Bullet Beats the Bow**

However, very soon the tide turned against the maoists.
The police was strengthened by the addition of 2 battalions of
Central Reserve Police in mid-July 1969. (which were now freed
from their engagements with the separate Telangana agitation).
They also improved their equipment and transport and communication
arrangements. They effectively stopped, any supplies from outside
sympathisers and party members, reaching the guerillas in the agency
area. This combined with the disturbed agricultural position
within the agency made the food situation very difficult for the
guerillas. In this condition the CRP hunted and shot down many
guerillas. The task was made easier by the guerilla’s policy of
attacking police rather than defending themselves by retreating
and hiding. In the Parvatipuram agency area the police had
their first major success when they shot down six guerillas.

In an encounter near Elwinpet the guerillas lost their leader
Biddikai Addai. This was followed by the further loss of guerilla
leaders Kurangi Sundari and Addakula Chiranjeevulu in an encounter
near Palakonda. A major loss was suffered by the guerillas in
an encounter in a mango grove near Elwinpet. Ten tribal members
of Nimmala Krishnamurthy's squad were shot dead. In another incident the five Maoist cadres were shot dead. The CBP continued its operations of clearing the guerillas from the area with ruthless thoroughness. Innumerable arrests were made and they did not flinch even from burning small hamlets with the purpose of terrorising guerilla sympathisers and forcing them to move into Government camps where they would not be in a position to help the guerilla squads in anyway.

These harsh measures were complemented by various ameliorative and pacificatory steps. The then Home Minister J. Vengala Rao toured the area making the promises of justice and help to each and all. Food and cattle was distributed among the tribals. Land was surveyed in sixty villages and about two hundred acres of land which was under occupation of plainsmen, moneylenders etc. was returned to the tribals and a promise was made that in the other villages also similar steps would be taken as soon as law and order was restored. A tribal cooperative bus service and a cooperative Khandasari sugar unit were opened. The Girijan Corporation started free distribution of rice gruel and subsidised selling of rice. Fresh employment opportunities were provided for tribals boys as salesman, inspectors and jeep drivers in the corporation. Many tribal women were shown gainful employment in leaf-stitching and deseeding of tamarind. Attractive prices
were offered to minor forest produce collected by the tribals as well as to the fire-wood felled by them. Interest free short-term were disbursed among the tribals. The corporation was streamlined, corrupt officials were removed and a promise was made to the tribals that any kind of harassment by forest guards and police men would be prevented.

In these circumstances the help received by the guerillas from the people in the form of food, shelter and information was largely reduced. Even the guerillas realised that "the people are taking whatever the Government is giving and thus taking temporary protection under the Government. Though the masses do not see eye to eye with the Government under the pressure of circumstances they are being neutralised".

The party acknowledged that there was "stagnation" in the movement, and that the cadre was losing enthusiasm. There were no fresh recruitments and the village defence squads were organisationally liquidated. In fact except the Central squad consisting of the hard core party leaders hardly any other squad was in a position to be active. Even the Central squad had hardly taken any note-worthy activity after July 1969. The only action they indulged in was the controversial killing of Sreeramulu an erstwhile comrade of Vempatapu Satyan. His (Sreeramulu's) participation in Panchayat elections was the reason for his annihilation. Later on the party self-criticised themselves for
having killed him.

Questions began to arise among the cadre whether the steps taken by them were correct or not. Some felt that they had unnecessarily invited repression and threw the people into a sorrowful state of affairs. However the party opined differently: "Repression after struggle is as natural as the sound following the explosion of a bomb. It is necessary to help the movement to go forward... Just like the pain during child birth it is necessary to bring about a new system." They also felt that repression would "isolate the Government from the people and also enable us first to identify our real friends since at this moment one is forced to choose his sides". It was also stated by Vempatapu that at present stage they did not have the capacity to destroy the police camps but this should not stop them from continuing their activities of harassing the police by attacking them.

Reviewing their defeats they noted two factors as mainly responsible for their setbacks. One was their inability to use the conventional methods of warfare (setting of traps ambushes, rolling of big stones from mountain tops etc.) effectively. Secondly, they blamed their haphazard organisational methods. "At present there are practically no village defence squads functioning. Many mistakes took place in the building up of these squads. We acted under the assumption that recruiting
members to the village defence squads can be done in the same manner as canvassing for supporters in the election. Therefore no attention was paid to the individuals' initiative involvement and creativity."

This kind of self-criticism did not question the general strategic and tactical line which was seen as being correct in general, and as such to be continued with minor changes. The cadre was asked to make the best possible use of the difficult situation. For e.g. they were to take advantage of the growing rift between the landlords and the CRP. "The C.R.P. is snatching fowls from the landlords' homes and even misbehaving with their womenfolk. Some landlords are even thinking that the naxalites are preferable to the CRP. We must take advantage of the contradictions arising between the CRP and the landlords."

Contrary to the resolutions to continue as before the guerillas were forced by the circumstances to make one major change in the mode of their activities. Effective police patrolling forced them to leave the more populous and open areas and shift to places which provided them with more natural cover. In their search for safe hideouts which can be used as bases for activity they moved towards and even across the Orissa border and to remote hilly regions within the agency area. This was justified in party circles in terms of spreading the movement to new areas rather than in the terms of retreating for the sake of survival and defence. Thus their understanding and explanation of
the events was still in terms of offensive activity.

A meeting of the Central Organising Committee of CPI(ML) was held at Calcutta between September 5-9, 1969. This meeting was attended by Mamidi Appalasuri and Choudary Tejeswara Rao from the Srikakulam Committee. It discussed reports from the various states and the programme of the party in the circumstances. It saw world war looming large over the international horizon and feared that reactionary forces of the world were getting ready to destroy the revolutionary forces of the world in general and their world revolutionary centre in China in particular. To prevent such an eventuality becoming a reality, the revolutionaries all over the world were to intensify their struggles and prevent World War by making revolution a successful reality. This meant that the Indian revolutionaries were to "seize the day, seize the night and create as many pockets of struggle as possible." To this international imperative the national situation was also seen as providing a favourable opportunity. The country was clearly polarised into two sides - the broad masses of people on one side and on the other side the feudal forces consisting of landlords and the entire bourgeoisie of India which was totally comprador in nature. This situation called for starting of innumerable small bases of armed struggle, whose only form can be that of guerilla struggle and the guerilla struggle can take a political form only when the class enemy is annihi-
lated. This meant to the Srikakulam Committee that they were to continue as before, intensifying their activities and starting new areas of activity wherever possible.

In October 1969 a conference of squad commanders and party organisers was held in Megada hills of Parvatipuram taluq. A discussion was held about the Calcutta decisions which were conveyed to them by Mamidi Appalasuri and it was decided to intensify the struggle. The Agency Committee was reconstituted with Vempatamu as General Secretary and T. Pandu Ranga Rao, Namballa Appalachari, Kurangi Chakrapani and Kurangi Mokhalingam as members.

It is claimed that 150 C.R.P. men were successfully held at bay for three days when they had tried to surround the meeting and capture the leaders.

At about the same time the meeting was being held, eleven top naxalite leaders escaped from the Visakhapatnam jail (9th October 1969). They included Adibhatla Kailasam, Nagabhushan Patnaik and Dr. Mallikarjunudu among others. This spectacular jail break came as a shot in the arm for their sagging morale and also organisationally strengthened them when the escaped leaders reestablished their contacts with the movement.

After the Megada hills meeting and the Visakhapatnam jail break there was a revival of Maoist guerilla activities to some extent. In a major incident of its kind, taking place after
almost a gap of three months, the maoists led four hundred tribals in an attack on landlords of Peddabhadra village. Property worth Rs.40,000 was looted, a cloth shop ransacked and Putnuru Satyanarayana the local Sarpanch, abducted and released, only after collecting a ransom of Rs.3,000/-. Among others Vempatapu Satyam and Adhibhatla Kailasam had personally participated in this raid. This was followed by by notorious annihilation at the village of Banjara-juvarajapuram. This village is in the plains area bordering Mahendragiri hills. The maoists had a grudge against Sari Appanna a rich landlord of this village. He had previously tried to get Pyla Vasudeva Rao a top maoist arrested by the police. Now a squad led by Tamada Ganapati, Pyla Vasudeva Rao, attacked and killed him. His head was severed and hung up to a beam in front of his house and slogans were written on the walls with the blood of the deceased. Property worth Rs.60,000 was looted and many promissory notes burnt. At the same time in the agency area the maoists Kurangi Vasunarayana, Kurangi Mokhalingam etc. led two hundred tribals in an attack on Himmaralta Mohan Rao and killed him. Mohan Rao was ex-President of Sitampet Panchayat Samiti having been elected with Communist support he later on crossed over to Congress and was suspected to be helping the police.

The maoists claim that following the Megada hills decision to attack the CRP they annihilated fourteen policemen.
in all eight in an ambush at Nidagallu hill, three in an
encounter at Bartangi, two in another encounter at Bandlaguda
and one in Orissa.

The successes of maoists were shortlived. They soon
suffered a major loss in an encounter at Kerasingi Hills in
Tekkali Taluq. One of their major squads were wiped out and
the losses included Tamada Ganapati, the Secretary of the Srika-
kulam District Committee and Dr. Chaganti Bhaskar Rao, a Chief
Organiser of the plains area. The Srikakulam Zilla Committee
alleges contrary to the Government report that Dr. Bhaskar Rao
and Ganapati were arrested at Mathalapete—when they were
travelling towards the agency area—and later shot dead.

On 15.12.69 a meeting of the squad leaders of Sompeta
was held to discuss reorganisation plans consequent to their
recent losses. A major decision at this meeting was to use
propaganda about the martyrs, to further the movement in the
area. It was decided to lay emphasis on appeal to peoples'
emotions. Some even went to the extent of saying "Propagate
the revolutionary songs about martyrs, even more than our
politics." It was decided to continue the annihilation pro-
grame, and writing of slogans with the blood of victims was
not only approved but also commended. They decided to stream-
line the courier system to maintain constant communications
between the party centres and squads. Some suggestions were also
made regarding improvement in the relations between tribal and non-tribal elements within the movement. To this purpose the members who had come from outside were asked to shun elitist attitudes which they sometime adopted towards the local tribals. The squads were also asked to learn Hindi and Oriya in view of the movement's spreading into Orissa & other regions bordering the Srikakulam area. Finally many suggestions were made regarding the safety of party leaders. They felt that most of their losses were occurring during their travel from one place to another. So the members were asked to avoid travelling by trains, buses and other public transport systems and when forced to travel to carry bombs and other possible arms. The squads were asked to thoroughly acquaint themselves with the topography of their areas and to take adequate precautions while going to new places.

Soon after the Sompeta squad meet the Maoists received an almost a crushing blow when six of their leaders were apprehended and shot dead by the police on 22nd December, 1969. On 19th December four squads consisting of sixteen members left the Kerandi den where the Sompeta squad leaders meeting had taken place. They were moving towards the interior mountain ranges, when an accidental bomb explosion caused injuries to two of their members and forced them to halt and camp for the night. They were taken unawares by the police because their centry - a tired young boy of fourteen was asleep. The poet Subba Rao Panigrahi who
was the Secretary of the Uddanam Committee had previously, that day dismissed any need for elaborate precautions saying that "there is no need for sentry in distance. The people will inform us of any dangers. Six members including the revolutionary poet Subba Rao Panigrahi, a Oriya lawyer Ramesh Chandra Sahu, and Panchadi Nirmala were arrested along with three others and later shot dead.

This event caused the moment in plains area to come to almost a standstill. A squad leader wrote "The cadre are getting frustrated and are scared. Even I am scared. To give others courage I do not show my fear - and try my best to keep up the spirits. But it is not possible to give a concrete programme with the tragedy staring in front of our eyes." With these events some maoist guerillas left for their homes giving various pretexts. The plains area committee in its review noted that "there is no enthusiasm; there are no new recruits. There are no village defence squads. Except for the Central squad, there are no squads capable of attacking the enemy."

Inspite of this major set-back the maoists in Uddanam continued their activities under the youthful enthusiasm of Dr. Mallikarjundu's leadership. He had left pursuit of higher studies at the prestigious Jawaharlal Institute of Medical Sciences at Pondicherry to join the maoist movement as a Physi-
cian but soon he took up active political duties and after Panigrahi's death became responsible for the movement in plains area. His squad managed to capture Latchanna who in return for Rs.200/- a blanket and a lungi had given police the information leading to the death of Subba Rao Panigrahi and the death of other five maoists. A peoples court was held where eighty people from ten villages attended. In this meeting the preachers of annihilation left off the captured police agent who had caused inestimable loss to them because "the people said 'leave him'. We will ourselves kill him if he repeats his activity". After this the squad planned to kill policemen to avenge death of their comrades. They got an opportunity when five Oriya police came to Bansagaon village. But the squad members who were at this time staying in the nearby Impirisingi village were dissuaded from making an ambush by the local people who pleaded that they had a festival on the next day and as such not to spoil the atmosphere. In view of this kind of attitude on the part of the people this squad was now limited to activities of propaganda and meetings. They went round villages forming Committees and setting up contacts. So atleast for the time being under the relentless pressure of events and local responses of the people they seemed to have strayed from Charu Majumdar's advice of annihilations. Even when they caught two policemen near Sirakandi village they
were let off after elaborate lectures about the maoist philosophy. The relieved policemen gladly contributed Rs. six towards the party fund out of which they again received Rs. four for expenses in their return journey. Two days after this on 3.3.1970 the squad tried on attack on Kerandi police camp which seems to have fetched no results other than a few aimless shots exchanged on both sides.

It would be interesting to note that in this situation Charu wrote a letter to the Srikakulam maoists in which he said "Organise the children, teach them politics... a new man unafraid of death and losses is being created in your area. Enemy's last hours are coming near. So he is becoming terrible... In two or three months Bengal is going to turn into a volcano."

Shift to the mountains

At this stage the effective theoretical leadership of the movement fell into the hands of Vempatapu Satyan, who was already its most successful organisational leader. He came out with two documents reviewing the causes of the failure of the movement and the future course of action. This document put the blame for failures squarely on the omissions and commissions of the district level leadership - viz. Nagabhushanam Patnaik, Mamidi Appalasuri and Tejeswara Rao. The main points of criticism
against the district leadership are as follows: (1) "The Zilla leadership did not implement Mao's thought in practice." Mao stresses the necessity to establish bases in the mountain region and afterwards spreading to the plains. The district leadership had ignored this and prematurely extended the activities to the plains. (2) Some members of zilla leadership repeatedly gave revisionist and defeatist advises. Appalasuri differentiated between good and bad landlords, between tribal and non-tribal exploiters and suggested alliance with the former type. "They gave slogans like "Respect those who respect us, Reject those who disrespect us. This is Gandhism rather than Maoism." (3) The zilla leadership "behaved like officers, who visit occasionally and point out the mistakes. But they never directed as to how to rectify our mistakes nor even give a correct line." (4) The zilla leadership is responsible for disarming of the masses - which had taken up arms on November 25, 1968 to confront directly the Special Armed Police - and restricting struggle to the guerilla squads only. As a result instead of staying in an area, and consolidating the power and gains in that area, the cadre was kept roving without any purpose. (5) The zilla leadership demoralised the movement by condemning heroic deeds of the people for e.g. the seizure of landlords property at Mondemkhal and the burning of police camps were characterised as hasty by Appalasuri and others. (6) All initia-
tive of the local units was suppressed and destroyed. They were not allowed to even issue pamphlets, thus preventing any kind of propaganda. 7) The District leadership failed to inform the local units of the actual conditions of movement thus causing confusion and failing to co-ordinate the various activities. 8) The District leadership failed to help the struggle area units with finances, or medical facilities or supply of arms and ammunition or help in recruiting and training cadre.

In the light of these criticisms the agency committee decided upon the following steps. 1) To fight revisionism and opportunism in the party. 2) to set up a centre in the 'red area', which will co-ordinate various activities and provide proper guidance and help. 3) to stabilise the red area as a base, using the mountain region as shelter and then slowly spreading to the plains area. 4) carry on the annihilation programme.

Based on a faulty reading of this document several people have tried to present it as an evidence for Vempatapu having said that non-tribal interference must stop in tribal affairs. In fact Vempatapu was criticising only outside interference - in other words interference of district leadership.

Thus the Maoists had slowly backed out from the original theoretical position of revolutionary opportunities everywhere
being the same and calling for immediate action. Now they favored the theory of spreading slowly from entrenched positions. This position was probably the consequence of the given conditions. In the plains regions they had suffered severe losses and their organisation was totally destroyed and all the top leaders were arrested. On the other hand in spite of losses they were still holding considerable area. V.M. Nair wrote "It is nevertheless true that about 100 sq. miles of mountainous terrain, deep in the interior of parvathipuram agency, is under the virtual control of the naxalities. The Andhra Pradesh Government has failed to extend its sway over this area.

After the severe losses in plains area actions and following the Agency committee document, the maoist hard core cadre in plains districts shifted to mountainous regions by January 1970. The leadership at this time in the plains regions was taken up by Dr. Mallikarjunudu. He along with three other top leaders - Dummu Appalaswamy, U. Malleshwar Rao and Pyla Vasudeva Rao, moved into the Uddanam area. This area is in Tekkali and Sompet Taluks. It consists mainly of cashew topes and is bordered on one side by the Bay of Bengal and on the other side by the Mahendragiri range of hills. It has a lot of places which are not easily accessible and as such provide protection for guerilla activities. It was in this area (which
comes under Kasibugga police station) that the Maoists decided to carry on their activities.

This new centre of their activities is best described in Dr. Mallikarjunudu's own words "There are no landlords here but people are being ruthlessly repressed by money-lenders and traders. The agricultural labourer unable to find work is migrating to industrial area, or becoming slaves of money-lenders whose loans they are unable to repay. All the women here are working and as a result quite independent. They show a lot of response to our propaganda. The fishermen are very poor and do not own the implements of their profession - boats, nets etc. These are controlled by the sowcars, who extract a heavy return for their use. Previously there was no activity of the communists here. All the people here were under the influence of Svanantra Party we have developed relations with all the villages between Dokalapadu and Baruvavara on the trunk road 149 to the sea."

The modus operandi of the Maoists at this time seems to have been to station themselves in safe regions of mountains, establish contacts with villagers enquire of their problems and preach that solution exists in annihilation of the landlord or money-lender. If they felt that they had good response from a particular area, they would conduct a foray into the village and annihilate the local landlord—cum—moneylender and follow it
by some speeches for propaganda. Then they would again withdraw into the mountain region to surface at another village at a later time. One typical action of this type took place on January 18, 1970 in the village Bavanapuram. Voona Savaraiah the local money-lender was killed, his head severed and hung to the beam in front of the house. Rs.30,000 was seized and promissory notes worth Rs. one lakh burnt. The maoists credit this action with having relieved hundreds of indebted peasants in about fifteen villages of the surrounding area. However, the participation in the actual act was limited to the maoist guerilla cadre. Another such action took place on February 2, 1970 at Ambati-Kambaram where a money-lender Narayana Gowda was killed in a similar fasion and Rs.10,000 seized. In this action it is claimed by the Maoists that many local people also participated.

The activities of Maoists became sparse and were limited to efforts for survival and security as the C.R.P. intensified its combing operations in the Mahendragiri forest region. Many encounters took place in this region. In one C.R.P. raid on the local centre of Maoists the leadership just managed to escape leaving behind all their equipment and supplies including their diaries and note-books containing minutes of Party meetings.

In May 1970 the Central Organisation Committee of C.P.I. (M.L.) met at Calcutta. Vempatapu, Nagabhushan Patnaik, Adibhatla
Kailasam, and Appalasuri represented Andhra Pradesh. Inspite of three of these being closely connected with the Srikakulam movement, there was hardly any concrete discussion about the specific situation in Srikakulam except for paying homage to the martyrs and commending the glorious people of Srikakulam. No note was taken of the defeats and no discussion was made on whether any modification in strategy and tactics was necessary.

**Disaster and Downfall**

June and July 1970 were disastrous for the maoists in Srikakulam. The May draft programme of C.P.I. (ML) as noted had called for offensive action, painting a rosy picture of the present and future. Inspite of nagging doubts many local leaders also were optimistic. On 13th of June Dr. Mallikarjunudu wrote in his diary, "we can seize arms on a large scale and soon form the peoples' army. So in a short time we will be in a position to march to Bengal". Consequent to such programme and such attitudes they refrained from ceasing their activities and hiding for some time. This proved fatal for them in the face of intense combing operations of C.R.P.

The first major casualty for the maoists came early in June, in the Polla Area of Agency region. Their top leader and organiser of this area Medavarapu Ramana Murthy was shot dead in an encounter with police. Ramanamurthy a school teacher of
Badevalasa was the main maoist organiser in Bobbili Taluka.

Consequent to the severe losses in plains area, he was shifted to the mountain regions of Polla, in consonance with the agency committee document which advised withdrawal from plains and building of base areas. Functioning just like the Uddanam squads did he annihilated five landlords and was killed when he returned from this campaign.

On 9.6.1970, Simhachalam a member of the Uddanam Maoist squads was arrested and he turned a police informer. This caused many losses to the maoists. "He showed them all the places which are used by us, he got arrested the people who were making guns and ammunition for us. He exposed all our sympathisers, many of whom including all the villagers of Tangaruputta were arrested. He showed the police the hideout of Pyla Vasudeva Rao, who escaped just in the nick of the time. Here a whole lot of equipment - SEML gun, country bombs, explosive substances, electric detonators, gelatine, cartridges etc. fell into police hands. He also exposed our Kondalogam centre, but since we were careful nobody was arrested. Now the police have all the information and our whole organisation in Uddanam area is exposed. Five days after the Simhachalam affair, Jutti Umapati who was incharge of couriering in the Uddanam area was killed by police. They had losses in other areas also for e.g. on June 25, 1970 in an encounter near Jonaga hills in the agency area Mandal Sangamesu was killed.
Even amidst these reverses the Maoists of Uddanam carried on a raid on the landlord of Attukota village on 10th June. Promissory notes worth Rupees 90,000 were seized and burnt in front of the villagers. No annihilation was carried out as the landlord managed to escape from backdoor. Reviewing the success of this raid they felt that they succeeded because, unlike in previous attempts, this time they had established contacts with local people and took the help of those who were directly benefitted by the action - the indebted peasants. This was followed by two annihilations by Maoists in the agency area - one at village Tulasivalasa, another at Naidu- valasa on 11th June.

However in July 1970, the C.R.P. inflicted two fatal blows to the Naxalite movement one of which destroyed almost the entire Maoist leadership of the agency area and the other did the same to the Maoist leadership in the Uddanam area. On 10.7.1970 the police were informed by a broker of Gottivada Sarpanch (who was supporting Tadangi Naidu for the post of Panchayat Samiti President) that Vempatapu Satyanarayana and Adbihatla Kailasam were camping in Bori Hills, reportedly to canvass support for Thati Raju, a follower of Maoists who was contesting for the Panchayat Samiti Presidency. Acting on this information Police led by P.V.V. Satyanarayana, D.S.P. of Parvatipuram surrounded Vempatapu and Adbihatla and a group
of sixteen other maoists and in the resultant encounter both were dead.

In the Uddanam region the maoists led by Pyla Vasudeva Rao killed at village Bonamali a landlord and his son. With this act they paid homage to Wempatapu and proclaimed their determination to continue to function with the old tactics of annihilation and guerrilla struggle. On 30.7.1970 the police wiped out the entire maoist leadership of Uddanam area in a single blow. Dr. Mallikarjunudu, Dumma Appalaswamy and Urlam Malleswara Rao were surrounded when they were camping on the Ramrai hills. The police report says that all of them died in the resulting encounter.

Around this time (July 22, 1970) Nagabhushanam Patnaik and Appalasuri, both of whom were members of CPI(ML) Politbureau and over all in charges of Srikakulam movement, after their escape from the prison in October 1969, had gone to Calcutta and met Charu Majumdar, reportedly to plead the view that isolated killings of 'jotedars' were alienating the maoists from the rural masses. Their pleadings had no effect and they were arrested from a Calcutta clinic by the police, acting reportedly on information supplied by Charu Majumdar.

Thus the Srikakulam movement was hardly left with any of the old leaders who had started the movement. Only Pyla
Vasudeva Rao was surviving among the old cadre. Due to pressure of police he seemed to have gone into Calcutta for a couple of months during this period. In these circumstances a teenaged, engineering student from Nellore Rajaram Reddy was elected as the Secretary of the Agency Area Committee and given the responsibility of continuing the movement. By this time the guerillas who had nearly 8000 men with them at the height of their operations, were now reduced to hardly 20 or 30 people. Around 110 maoists were killed in encounters, and nearly three thousand people were in jails. Most of the people who had come from the plains had left the area. And the police were present in full strength. There were twenty-two D.S.P.'s (as against only one before) with two Central Reserve Police battalions, eight companies of Andhra Pradesh State Police and six platoons of District Armed Reserved Police were stationed in Srikakulam to suppress the maoist movement. The police had established three new police stations in areas where the maoists were strong—Sitampet, Nilakantapuram and Donubai. These were supplemented by many police outposts in forest areas and police pickets in villages which were maoist strongholds. They had also established many protection centres on the lines of Vietnam's strategic hamlets, into which the tribals were moved from their hill-top hamlets thus cutting off the guerilla's contact with the tribal masses. In these circumstances, the
Maoist activity came to a total standstill for the time being in their old strongholds inspite of the energetic campaigns of Rajaram who used to tour the area extensively trying to arouse the people into guerilla actions again. With his command of the tribal languages and his ability to totally submerge himself in the local population by using their language, clothes and customs etc. he was able to avoid the police until January 1973 when, according to the police version he died in an encounter near Donubai hills and according to Maoist allegations shot by police after being arrested at Koturu on 30th January.

This left only Pyla Vasudeva Rao among the old cadre. He seemed to have an inordinate knack for survival. Thrice he escaped by hair breadth. First in the Gamudabhada incident and again in the encounter at Mattlaipet where Tamada Ganapati and Bhaskara Rao were captured and finally in the police raid on his hide out following Simhachalam's revelations. He was now joined by Appalasuri who escaped from police custody for the second time by jumping from a running train. Pyla Vasudeva Rao is now reported to be functioning with his base in Ganjam and Koraput districts of Orissa and Appalasuri is reportedly in the higher committees of CPI(ML) responsible for organising movements on a state-wide basis.

The Maoist perspective on strategy and tactics started in the traditional way of stressing on the mass participation,
importance of economic struggles, mass organisation etc. Later we find the assessment of national situation as upsurge everywhere leading to the line of 'unleashing Naxalbari type of struggles' everywhere. Under the impact and necessities imposed by this line we found that a particular kind of interpretation was given to mass movements and organisations, etc. This line was implemented in several areas and the results were initial successes, soon to be followed by inactivity due to effective police intervention. In Srikakulam this line could be seen as being implemented from about November 1968 (when they called for armed struggle) to April 1969 (by which time police actions seem to have been effective in crushing mass resistance to them). In this situation the maoists could attribute their defeats either to the wrong estimation of the situation or to ineffectiveness of their organisational and tactical methods. They opted for the latter and came out with certain new ideas which they felt could help them succeed. The substance of these new ideas was to totally abandon mass movements, urban activity etc. in favour of dependence on guerilla actions, and individual annihilations to take them ahead. The period of 1969-70 saw the emergence of this line.

In this period their estimation of the situation as highly favourable to immediate revolution, continued and even strengthened with new arguments. They saw the international
situation as not only favouring but immediately demanding revolution in India. They viewed the intensification of Vietnam war and the developing of international monetary crisis in 1969-70 as further signs of the weakening of the enemies of revolution. They also took up Chairman Mao's call at this time to "develop revolutionary war to eliminate wars of aggression".

Charu Majumdar writing in Liberation of October 1969 expressed the view that Imperialism hedged in on all sides by surging struggles of people, was frantically plotting to launch a war of aggression on China, which after the cultural revolution had emerged as a bastion against world reaction. In this situation, war could be prevented from becoming an inevitability, only by consolidating the forces of revolution and spreading the sparks of armed struggle throughout India. So he advised his cadre to "seize the day, seize the hour, exert yourself to the utmost, do not lose a single moment" in starting the armed struggles in India. S.N. expressing similar opinions felt that India with its vast manpower and immense resources occupies a very important position in the Imperialists' global strategy to destroy China. This meant "for us in India that we must mobilise all our efforts to unleash the revolutionary peoples wars throughout India and we must create hundreds of Naxalbaries... This would help us not only in besieging the enemy at home but would also frustrate the imperialist plot to use India as a base.
for aggressive war" so he advised the Maoists to unleash guerilla struggles, carry on annihilation, develop guerilla zones, build revolutionary bases, conduct tireless political campaigns against national chauvinism etc. So they felt that their duties to international proletarianism demanded immediate unleashing of armed struggles all over India. It was in this context that the slogan of "China's Chairman is our Chairman, Chinese path is our path" was given. The Political and Organisational Report went so far in support of the above assessment of the international situation as to say that with the U.S. invasion of Cambodia the third world has actually begun "as much as the march of Hitler's hordes on Sudetenland was the beginning of the second World War".

The national situation was perceived as being extremely favourable to starting armed struggles everywhere. They analysed the continuing anti-congress wave and political instability as shown in the 1969, mid-term elections and the split in the congress party as meaning that "political stability has now become a thing of past. All the ruling parties present a picture of disintegration. Faced with the ever deepening economic crisis they can hardly deceive the people any longer". They characterise the new CPI(M) led United Front Governments in Bengal and Kerala as having completely gone over to the side of industrialists.
No significance was attached to the new socialist slogans of Indira Gandhi. In their opinion these slogans only enable to see "more clearly the crafty reactionary features of Mrs. Gandhi and her party". In general they felt that the "puppet character of the present regime and hollowness of the Parliamentary system are becoming clear to the entire people... The necessity of the battle of annihilation against these butchers is felt by vast masses of the people and the struggle is spreading to rural areas with tremendous vigour." The report also noted that "the peasant armed struggles have engulfed more than twelve States in India and have already become a motive force of the history. The onward march of the armed struggle of the peasantry will continue unabated. Thus they saw success and progress all around for their armed struggles.

In a highly optimistic note they maintained that the new year holds promises of still bigger victories" and called upon their followers to "Make The 1970's the decade of Liberation". It was in this context that Charu Majumdar made his prophecy of liberation of India by 1975 after formation of a Red army and a long March over India during early 70's. There was no perspective of a long drawn out struggle.

No significance was attached to the losses suffered by the peasant movements particularly in Srikakulam during late
1968 and early 1969. In fact Charu Majumdar even dissuaded the Andhra representatives to CPI(ML) Central Committee in December 1969 from revealing the real extent of losses suffered in Srikakulam, on the plea that given the national mass upsurge, such revelation would preach caution and moderation when the need was to go ahead with unleashing of struggles everywhere. The losses were explained away as an inevitable price to be paid and indeed regarded as beneficial in the long run by arousing class hatred. The C.O.C. of C.P.I.(M.L.) passed a resolution saying "our grief is immense, our grief is great. But comrades we must turn this great grief into deep hatred towards the class enemy... We call upon the entire party to annihilate as many of the class enemies in the countryside as possible and thus avenge the despicable murders of the valiant comrades of Srikakulam... Given their assessment etc. they fell upon guerilla actions as the method to making revolution. After quoting with approval Lin Piao's saying that "guerilla warfare is the only way to mobilize and apply the entire strength of the people against the enemy", they added that "guerilla warfare alone can unleash the initiative and rouse the creative genius of the Indian people... guerilla warfare alone can expand the small bases of armed struggle to large extensive areas."
Not only was guerilla struggle regarded as the only way of making revolution but a peculiar interpretation was also given about its content. Annihilation - killing of individuals by guerilla squads was seen as the way to start armed struggle. We have seen how in the course of armed struggle in Srikakulam area personal emotions led to some killings of landlords after March 1969, and how later the guerillas forced into mountain hideouts in Uddanam and other areas used killing of landlords and moneylenders despised by local population, to rouse enthusiasm, generate support and penalise informers and helpers of Police. These incidents had some amount of success in that they were welcomed by local peasants in so far as the killings freed them from the debts they owed to the deceased and also appealed to their feelings of the antagonism to the landlords with whom they had may past and present quarrels. These killings, which were a consequence of the inability of maoists to continue their mass attacks against the police and state organs to seize "political power", were converted by the CPI(ML) leadership into a theoretical formula to start guerilla struggle and lead it victoriously by presenting the annihilation as a panacea to all their problems of the CPI(ML). Political and Organisational report of 1970 asked the maoists to "realise and apply methodically the correct thesis that the annihilation of
class enemy is the higher form of class struggle and the beginning of the guerilla war and people's war... realise that the class struggle i.e. battle of annihilation can solve all problems facing us and lead to a higher plane, raise the political consciousness of the people to a higher stage create conditions for the emergence of a new type of man... who fears neither hardship, nor death, develops the people's army and thus can ensure formation of a permanent base area. Thus battle of annihilation liberates the people not only from the oppression of landlords class and its state apparatus but also liberates them from the shackles of backward ideas and removes from their minds the poisonous weeds of self-interest, clan interest, localism, religious casteism and superstition". The two most important aspects of their theory of annihilation are equation of class struggle with annihilations of individuals and seeing such annihilations as a necessary pre-requisite for starting of guerilla struggles.

A necessary concomitant of their theory of annihilation was their concept of class hatred as a motivating force of revolutionaries. In their view - "success in a guerilla action depends on the class hatred and class consciousness of the guerillas. This is what boosts up their morale and releases their boundless creative power." The importance of this concept of class hatred is that it replaces the idea of class conscious-
ness as an object of the movement. Since they have already assumed that peoples consciousness is already revolutionary and as such deny any of the need of any efforts to rouse peoples consciousness, and since guerilla struggle which is the only form of struggle can be started only by individual annihilations what is needed is class hatred? In sum their theoretical rationalisation meant that the lull in the movement caused by police activities could be broken by fanning hatred against the results of police activities. Detailed instructions as to how the annihilations were to be carried out an guerilla struggle was to be started are given in Charu Majumdar's A Few words about Guerilla Actions. This article instructs cadre on the activities necessary before, during and after a guerilla action in other words before and after an annihilation. In the first stage the member of the party, most probably a "petty bourgeois intellectual comrade" must go to the village, approach a few poor peasants, who in his opinion have the most revolutionary potentiality and whisper in his ear. "Don't you think it is a good thing to finish off such and such a Jotedar". This recruitment of guerillas is to be done in "complete secrecy" and in a "wholly conspiratorial" manner. Nobody outside the guerilla unit - not even other members of the party are to know the names of the guerillas, identify of the class enemy to be annihilated and time and place of action. It would be alright to conduct
some political propaganda before the guerilla action but it is neither absolutely necessary nor very advisable from the point of view of security. After forming the unit some investigations are to be conducted among people in choosing the target of guerilla action. The most hated landlord is to be chosen. After choosing the target careful planning is to be done about the time and place of killing him, and of paths of retreat and places of hiding for the participants. In the act of killing only local weapons are to be used to signify and heighten peoples hatred. However, "petty bourgeois intellectual cadres and those who have to travel far and wide may carry small pistols for personal defence". All available guns etc. are to be stored for use in future when pitched battles with police etc. would become part of the programme. Right now the idea is to kill and run. The object was killing only, not even seizing and distributing property of the victim or even following the act of killing with meetings on the sport to explain and propagate their action. These were to be taken up only at later stage and not in the beginning. Once the act is completed the atmosphere will be charged with expectancy of some impending event.... people will be elated but still hesitant. At this time the party cadre are to start their propaganda in secret whispering campaign. People are to be told how by killing of all landlords and other police agents, they can own all the land
in the village. Since the police and Government would no longer know who owns which land, "the repressive state machinery is deprived of its eyes and ears and it becomes impossible for police to know who is a guerilla and who is not, and who is tilling his own land and who tills that of Jotedars". So the peasants can seize power in their own areas.

This document was based on the understanding that since a revolutionary situation already exists in the country "the fight for the seizure of political power initiated by a few advanced sections is nourished by the tremendous initiative of the masses and mass actions, and the flames of people's war engulf the whole actions, and the flames of people's war engulf the whole countryside". In their view after the initial secret annihilation the masses would rally around the guerillas and carry out many such acts ultimately clearing their area of all class enemies and establishing liberated zones of their political power.

Given the theory of nation wide upsurge the CPI(ML) rejected the idea that guerilla struggles should be developed only in mountainous areas and forest regions which would afford natural protection and police attacks. In their view "guerilla war is the people's war of the peasants... It can be started wherever there are peasants". As already noted they
had a view that revolution would quickly succeed and would not involve any long term struggle. So they thought by staying in mountains etc. they would be unable to take advantage of the "nationwide upsurge" of the people. Their theory was that, due to this upsurge not only could struggles be started anywhere but also "even a spark can start a prairie fire".

In the above scheme of revolution there was hardly any place for united front or mass organisations or any struggles based on economic struggles. The programme of CPI(ML) adopted in May 1970, makes many formulation which destroy the content of a united front tactics. Firstly inspite of many objections within the party they held in the very first point of the programme that "ours is a country of peasant masses", so it naturally followed that they held the principal contradiction to be the one between "Peasants and Landlords, i.e. the contradiction between Feudalism and broad masses of the Indian people". The implication of not mentioning worker, urban middle classes etc. in the formulation "ours is a country of peasant masses", and equating of the contradiction between peasants and landlords with that between Feudalism and broad masses, were both indications of the party's resolve to ignore urban activities and take up only rural actions. This implication was obvious to the members of CPI(ML) and there was a bitter argument about it in their Central Committee. Another significant formulation in the
programme about united front was that it "can only be built up when worker-peasant unity is achieved in the course of armed struggle and after red political power is established at least in some parts of the country." (emphasis added). In fact it denied any necessity for united front at the present stage. Another significant aspect of the programme is that nowhere do we come across the concept National Bourgeoisie. The implication of this was that they denied the existence of any section of Indian Industrial, merchant or capitalist landlords class, with which an alliance is possible. Thus in effect their united front idea is restricted to landless and poor peasants, (they are said to constitute eighty per cent of India's population) with workers and petty Bourgeoisie allowed in, only if they integrate themselves with the landless in other words only if they join the CPI(ML). For e.g. they say that they have "only one appeal to make to students and youth, integrate yourself with the workers and poor peasants and the landless. Integrate! Integrate!" With the workers also the sole criteria to judge their revolutionaryness is their willingness to join the peasants or otherwise. Even the petty bourgeoisie "comrade" who is to initiate the guerilla struggles with his whispers is not really relied upon. He is only a catalyst, a medium for revolutionary message. The actual act of annihilation as well as the guerilla struggle is to be led by and conducted by the poor and landless peasants. One argument advanced here is that only the poor and landless labourers are
capable of the class hatred which is so essential in waging
guerilla struggle. So only they can be relied upon. The fol-
lowing example from their practice makes clear their ideas about
united front. In Debra the party decision on seizing of crops
was to confiscate the entire crop of despotic jotedars,
and police agents; confiscate part of the crop of agents
who are not diehards and all jotedars; not to touch the
crops of the rich peasants, middle peasants and small jotedars
who have sympathy for us. This implies that they were propo-
sing to seize crops even of middle peasants. (Defined in Mao's
way, it meant those with neither surplus nor deficit).

These sociological views on united front (in the sense
of class analysis) had also their implications on the political
plane (in the sense of alliance with other parties and groups). All
existing parties and groups, including other maoist groups
were summarily rejected by the CPI(ML) as unfit for any kind of
unity. Revisionism (meaning CPI and CPI(M)) was declared as the
main enemy of Revolution. Its weapon is bourgeoise democracy.

"So we will have to move against bourgeois democracy i.e.
elections and parliament". Centrism (meaning other maoist groups)
was denounced as the "vilest form of revisionism". So any "idea
of unity with these groups means the liquidation of the main
plank of our struggle and submerging the entire party in the
morals of revisionism".
These ideas on united front along with their previously noted ideas on the principal contradiction in India, and the formulation of guerilla struggle being the only form struggle naturally led to the idea that mass organisations and mass movements were neither necessary nor useful. They felt that these increase the tendency to open movements based on economism and expose party cadre to the enemy. So they felt that mass movements and organisations should not be taken recourse to and whatever propaganda of revolutionary politics had to be conducted, could be carried out through secret party organisation. Mass organisations and movements are usually viewed as instruments for raising peoples consciousness, and if the consciousness is already assumed to be revolutionary, they do not have any raison d'être. So they were against forming or even joining any trade unions or student unions. For e.g. "it is not our task either to organise trade unions or to bring them under our control or to bother ourselves about the trade union elections. Our task is to build a secret party organisation among workers". Another example of the CPI(ML) - Tripura Committee can be cited which proudly states in its review of activities."We do not set up open mass organisation unless it is in a liberated area. Military activity is the chief method for bringing about a revolutionary upheaval". In their view "our
party is a party of class struggle and our only task is to
develop class struggles, and as such mass movements which
unite several classes and several class ideas are unnecessary
and harmful.

However the class struggles were by no means to be
understood as economic demands. "To think that workers and
poor and landless peasants will be aroused only if they are led
into open struggles on economic demands is a wrong idea. It
weakens our work which is propagation of revolutionary politics
and of seizure of power, and building revolutionary base areas."

Their line of total dependence on annihilations was
implemented in several areas. It was easy to implement, in the
sense that even two people can carry out the programme. Where-
erver these activities were taken up the results were the same
as in Srikakulam. The guerrillas would hardly last for two or
three months before police nabbed them. There was hardly any
response to these activities, from the general public except
in two areas - Debrah. Copiballabhur in 1969 and Birbhum in
1971.

By mid 1970, the implementation of this line had led to
two developments which were important in determining the future
course of action for the maoists. First of all the maoist
cadre was flushed out of its regular rural areas of action by police activities, and secondly to quite a few of the maoist leaders the failure of annihilation programme was obvious. This brought forward the question what to do next. Several answers were given to this question and several different paths were taken up different groups of Maoists. These would be examined in Chapter IX.
NOTES

4. Based on interview.
7. Agraharamdar is a kind of land tenure system in which the management and suzerain ownership belonged to the local priest.
15. Cr.No.4/69 of P.S. Elvinpet.
18. Charge Sheet of N.C.C., p. 15. The news of Charu's visit reached the police after some days and they raided Gangannadornadomalasa. In the resultant clash with the local tribals, the Maoists suffered their first casualty - Renji a Savara peasant, the leader of the local squad died.


28. Cr.No.19/69 of P.S. Mandasa, F.I.R. of 19.4.69. This was the first incidence of a killing by the maoist squads.


30. See Cr.Nos. 34/69 and 36/69 of P.S. Sompeta.


33. *Document, u-9 of N.C.C.*

34. Cr.No.11/69 of P.S. Amdity, F.I.R. of 17.3.69.

35. For e.g. Cr.No.3/69, 18/69 and 19/69 of P.S. Nilakantapuram, Cr.No.22/69 of P.S. Elvinpet etc.


42. See Cr.No.9/69 and 11/69 of P.S. Nilakantapuram.
43. Cr.No.29/69 of P.S. Kurupam.
44. For e.g. see Cr.No.36/69 of P.S. Kurupam, Cr.No.25/69 of P.S. Kothuru, Cr.No.12/69 of P.S. Nilakantapuram and Cr.No.17/69 of P.S. Elvinpet.
47. F.I.R. of Cr.Nos. 31 and 32/69 of P.S. Ichapuram.
48. F.I.R. of Cr.No.37/69, P.S. Sompeta states that they were killed in an encounter. This is strongly contested by the party circles among others. A pamphlet (Document, E-6 of N.C.C.) says that they were arrested while travelling in a train, and taken to the hills and shot dead. In Vempatapu's book (op.cit., p. 46) it is maintained that they were arrested on May 27, 1969 at Kanchali railway station near Sompeta, taken to village Jasantarkot where they were shot dead.
49. Document, E-9 of N.C.C., Minutes of Sompeta Area Committee Meeting of 24.6.'69.
50. Information based on interview.
51. Ibid.
53. Mangala Sutram is a sacred thread worn by the wives during the lifetime of her husband and on attaining widowhood is removed.
54. Ibid.
55. Document, D-1 of N.C.C.
58. Document, H-1 of N.C.C., Summary of Sompeta Taluq Cadres meeting discussions.

60. Cr.No.71/68 of P.S. Pathapatnam, F.I.R. of 18.7.69.


62. Volume VII of N.C.C., p. 76.

63. Cr.Nos. 31/69, 32/69, 33/69 and 34/69 of P.S. Kurupam and the relevant F.I.R’s of 17.5.69.


65. Cr.No.9/69 of P.S. Sitampet.


68. Information from interview.


70. G.O.Ms.No.626, August 20, 1969 of G.A.D., Department Section General-A, Govt. of A.P.


72. Cr.No.83/68 of P.S. Kurupam and Document u-31 of N.C.C.


74. Documents K-4 and C-2 of N.C.C.

75. Document, C-9 of N.C.C.

76. Document, C-1 of N.C.C.


83. In Ibid., Tejswara Rao's Provincial Committee Report.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.

86. Document, E-3 of N.C.C., "On Guerrilla Warfare".

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid.

89. Ibid.


92. The police camps meant for raids on Tulasi hills was set up at Gottivadatolu-manda, the police camp for the Gangannadore-valasa hills at Tumpala padu, and for Dakshini hills at Podi. See Amara...etc., p. 158.

93. Document, E-2 of N.C.C.


96. Document, C-4 of N.C.C.
97. Ibid., the meeting was held on 30.6.69.
98. Document S-6 of N.C.C.
100. Document K-4, Op.cit. This is a description of 'Ekluye dalem', which has a typical squad structure.
101. Document 0-2 of N.C.C.
102. Document u-58 of N.C.C., However two of them were caught by police almost immediately and two more left unable to face the rigours of guerilla life.
104. Ibid.
105. Cr.No.s.14/69, 15/69 and 16/69 of P.S. Nilakantapuram.
106. Cr.No.12/69 of P.S. Nilakantapuram and Document N-4 of N.C.C.
107. See Cr.No.17/69 of P.S. Nilakantapuram and also Cr.No.s. 34/69 to 36/69 of P.S. Elipinpet.
108. Cr.No.16/69, 17/69 and 18/69 of P.S. Elipinpet.
112. Cr.No. 79/69 of P.S. Elipinpet. See also Cr.No.s.49/69, 54/69, 75/69, 73/69 of P.S. Kurupam; Cr.No.s.14/69, 15/69, 20/69, 21/69, 25/69, 26/69, 27/69, 31/69, 1/70 and 2/70 of P.S. Nilakantapuram; Cr.No.s.37/69, 43/69, 47/69, 51/69, 8/70, 14/70 and 17/70 of P.S. Elipinpet for description of clashes between the C.R.P. and the maoists. Except in two of these cases the casualty suffered was in variably by the maoists.

116. Document E-1 of N.C.C.

117. Ibid.

118. Cr.No.38/69 of P.S. Elvinpet.


120. Document E-3 of N.C.C.

121. So even while facing losses, they decided to continue attacking the police.

122. Document Z-2 of N.C.C.

123. Document Y-8 of N.C.C.

124. Volume XII of N.C.C., p. 120.


127. It is alleged by Satyanarain Singh, a member of the Central Organising Committee (COC) of the CPI(ML) that these decisions were taken and the advices given to Srikakulam Committee by the C.O.C. because they were not fully aware of the situation in Srikakulam. He maintains that Appalaauri and Tejeshwara Rao informed Charu Majumdar, the Chairman of CPI(ML), about the state of disorganisation, intense police activities and innumerable arrests in the Srikakulam area. But Charu Majumdar suppressed the information from reaching the other members of the C.O.C. See Self-Critical Report, Op.cit.


129. Indian Express, October 10, 1969.

130. Cr.No. 60/69 of P.S. Parvatipuram.

131. Cr.No. 66/69 of P.S. Mendasa.

133. Cr.No.107/69 of P.S. Pathapatnam.


135. Document N-2 of N.C.C.

136. Ibid.

137. Cr.No.83/69 of P.S. Mandasa.


139. Document M-4 of N.C.C.

140. Ibid., 25.12.69.

141. Document S-7 of N.C.C.

142. Document R-1 of N.C.C.


148. Though no clear evidence is available of his being officially elected as Secretary, it is quite evident from committee meeting minutes and diaries of that time that he was in charge of organisational matters.


150. See Document N-1 of N.C.C., Pyla Vasudeva Rao's notes describing their activities at this time.

151. Document N-15 of N.C.C. and also Cr.No.4/70 of P.S. Kasibugga.

152. Cr.No.9/70 of P.S. Mandasa, F.I.R. of 13.2.70.


154. See Cr.No.17/70 of P.S. Mandasa.

155. Document S-36 of N.C.C.
156. Document C-1 of N.O.C. Dr. Mallikarjunudlu's diary.


159. The police say that he was killed in an encounter following bomb throwing by the maoists Cr.No.53/70 of P.S. Kasibugga. The maoists maintain that he was arrested following Simbachalam's revelation and then killed. See Ibid.

160. Cr.No.5/70 of P.S. Sitampet.


162. Ibid.

163. Cr.No.55/70 of P.S. Kurupam, F.I.R. of 10.7.70. Some reports ascribe dejection and frustration to Vempatapu at the time of his death. He is quoted by C. Subba Rao in "The Bullet beats the bow", Times of India (weekly) March 21, 1971 as saying "We have killed many people, we have looted a lot of gold and money. But will all these benefit the poor girijan. I am caught in a vicious circle. I cannot call off the movement and cannot see much purpose in continuing the movement". Such reports are unauthenciated and are not borne out by a study of the diary and other writings of Vempatapu. He as well as rest of the leadership seem to have been of the opinion that guerilla struggle must continue, albeit with certain tactical changes.

164. Cr.No.63/70 of P.S. Sompeta.

165. Cr.No.54/70 of P.S. Mandasa, F.I.R. of 30.7.70.

166. Based on interviews. This was the period when in Bengal followers of Charu Majumdar had declared that anybody who differed with Charu was not a maoist and as such can even be annihilated.


168. Based on interviews.
170. Based on interview.
173. Vide, p. 300.
175. Vide, 167.
176. See Kanu Sanyal Terai Report, as well as Asit Sen's "Revolutionary Situation", Op. cit.
179. See, Charu Majumdar, "Develop Revolutionary War to eliminate war of aggression against China", Collected Writings of Charu Majumdar, Vol. 2 (WB, CPI(ML) 1972).
180. Ibid.
184. Ibid.
186. Ibid.

Liberation, December 1969.

"Peasant Guerilla...etc., Op. cit.


Besides the Political and Organisational Report, Op. cit., several articles in Liberation also elucidate the theory of annihilation. For e.g. See "Flames of guerilla... etc.," Op. cit. and "March Forward by summing up the experiences of Revolutionary Peasant Struggle", Liberation, December 1969.


Liberation, February 1970. This article called by some as the Murder Manual is compared to Carlos Marghella's Mini Manual for urban guerillas. This was circulated like a pamphlet among maoists and became the basis of all their actions during 1969-70, particularly in West Bengal.

A few words about Guerilla Actions", passim.

Ibid., p. 23.


See Ibid.


Emphasis added.


209. Ibid.


