CHAPTER II
THE MAOIST IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

The Maoist system of ideas is the one constant factor among the confusing diversity and flux of the various Maoist group's mode of action and analytical theoretical statements. The Maoist system offers to us a basic clue to the understanding of the forms of activity and thought of the Maoists for three reasons. Firstly their attitudes, aims, aspirations and expectations are based upon, if not actually derived from, the Maoist ideological formulations. Secondly, their perception of reality, their analysis of problems and the proposed solutions are made in terms of Maoist concepts and propositions. In fact their entire political vocabulary is made up of Maoist terms and concepts like, 'New Democracy', 'Protracted War', 'Liberated Areas', 'Encirclement of cities', 'Agrarian revolution', 'Rectification' and Maoist reinterpretation of Marxist concepts like 'Criticism and Self-criticism', 'Contradiction' etc. Finally the Maoist system offers to us a starting point and a frame of reference within which we can understand the programmes, policies and debates of the Maoists in India.

Two relevant points about methodology are to be noted here. Any interpretation of Maoist system of ideas in terms of their philosophic origin (for e.g. voluntarist or Confucian)
or in terms of their implications (for e.g. subversive or pettybourgeois nationalist or peasant radicalism etc.) has been avoided as irrelevant to our purpose which is presentation of maoism as a theory of revolutions, and for this reason the official version of Mao's writings has been used rather than the fuller and probably more correct translations of Stuart Schram. Because the latter are aimed at tracing of the development of Mao's thought in relation to Chinese history and Mao's biography rather than examining them for their present message. This has been done to study the concrete form of maoist influence on the Indian maoists and not enter into the questions of epistemology. Secondly, Maoism has been presented as a unified system of ideas and not mere juxtaposition of certain strategic and tactical principles of revolution. This has been done for two reasons. Firstly, we have felt that Maoism is a theory of revolution rather than merely a technical means of making revolution. Secondly we felt that this would at a later stage facilitate the study of trends and prospects of the Indian maoist movement.

With this perspective in view this chapter has been divided into three sections. The first section answers the question of what Maoism is, the second answers the question how it tries to achieve its goals, and the final section answers the question of the basis on which maoist precepts are claimed to be applicable to countries other than China.
Maoism is the product of the interaction of two basic components - Marxism-Leninism on one side and nationalism on the other side.

The two basic Components

a) Marxism-Leninism: Though they differ on the question of how important Marxism-Leninism is in the composition of Maoism, all the authorities are agreed that it is at least a point of reference. Mao himself swears his allegiance to the Marxism-Leninism system of ideas and widely uses the concepts and categories developed by Marx and Lenin. He regards "the theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is an universally applicable truth." According to Edgar Snow in 1920 Mao Tse Tung first embraced Marxism, on a visit to Peking during which he read the Communist Manifesto and he became converted.

Official Chinese sources discouraged the use of the term Maoism and preferred to use Mao Tse-Tung's Thought implying that his ideas are not self-sufficient but only an analytical interpretation of Marxism. According to Chen Po-Ta "Comrade Mao Tse Tung's greatest contribution to the Chinese Revolution is his correct and living synthesis of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the actual practice of Chinese
Revolution." In the opinion of Lin Piao, Mao Tse Tung's thought is the new stage in the development of Marxist theory.... the Marxism-Leninism in the epoch of the fall of imperialism and triumph of socialism". Even Cohen who greatly stresses the Chinese aspects of Maoism concedes that "Mao's thought draws its uniqueness from his revision, improvement or even complete abandonment of the various aspects of communist doctrine and Soviet practice." (Thus implying that Marxism is very much a part of Maoism). Harold Hinton explicitly accepting Liu Shao Chi's comment that Mao's "great accomplishment is that he created a Chinese or Asiatic form of Marxism" says that "the changes that the Marxism-Leninism had gone under sinicisation are numerous but are in the nature of atmospheric changes or the application of one rather than another theory or policy within the spectrum of Marxism-Leninism.

The relation between Marxism-Leninism and Maoism is presented best by Isaac Deutscher. He says that Marxism reached China only after the Russian Revolution in the form of Bolshevism. "Lacking any native Marxist ancestry the Chinese communism descends straight from Bolshevism. Mao stands on Lenin's shoulders... Bolshevism i.e. Leninism with its original and vigorous emphasis on anti-imperialism and the agrarian problem, rendered Marxism,
for the first time in history, directly and urgently relevant
to the needs and strivings of the colonial and semi-colonial
people in a sense, China had to jump over the pre-Bolshevik
phase of Marxism in order to be able to respond to Marxism at
all. Stuart Schram thinks that Mao is a kind of natural Lenin-
ist and lists the following specific borrowings of Mao from
Lenin". He owes to him the conception that political conscious-
ness does not manifest itself spontaneously among the proletariat
but must be instilled by an elite or vanguard. He is also indebted
to him for the theory and practice of organisation in accor-
dance with the principles of democratic centralism. He owes to
him the theory of Imperialism which explains how normally
hostile classes in dependent societies are united by a common
interest in opposing the foreign exploitation, he owes him also
the idea of an alliance between the proletariat and certain
other classes, particularly the peasantry as the form of State
power during the democratic phase of the revolution. And to Stalin
he owes the formula of the four-class bloc which lies at the heart
of his theory of peoples' democratic dictatorship." Deutscher
points out to some more borrowings of Maoism from Lenin. "It
taught them that China could achieve emancipation only through
revolution from below ...., that they ought to distrust any
reformism...., that they ought to join hands with the patriotic
elements of the Chinese bourgeoisie...., that the Chinese communism
must look for support to the destitute masses of the peasantry and that China's bourgeois democratic revolution was a part of an uninterrupted or permanent revolution". He concludes that "the lessons Maoism had learnt in the school of Leninism, although they were to be overlaid by other ideological elements, entered firmly into its political make-up."

b) **Nationalisms**: Each system of ideas is deeply affected by its time-spatial context. We use the concept Nationalism to characterise the context of Mao's ideas. The fact of his being Chinese deeply affects his system of thought. This effect can be seen to have three aspects. Firstly, it works as the aspiration and motive force underlying Maoist system of ideas thus defining its direction and purpose. Secondly, it is the cultural and intellectual tradition which gives shape and form to the Maoist ideas. Finally it consists the material conditions which determine the constraints within whose bounds the system of ideas is to be formed.

i) **Nationalism as the motive forces**: The dependent State of China and its lost glory deeply affected the feelings and thought of Mao. According to Schram "First on the list of the basic operative factors in Mao's thought must be placed his nationalism, not because it is necessarily the most important but because it is chronologically and psychologically primary
in Mao's thought. Mao was nationalist long before he was a communist or revolutionary of any kind. The nationalist orientation and fervour of Mao is quiet evident in his early writings. As Schram says "If one were to characterise Mao's mind and personality on the eve of May 4th period, the two most deeply etched traits appear to have been an emphasis on military strength and vigorous nationalism... These themes run through all of Mao's life and thought." His national pride was hurt by China's loss of glory. He was deeply depressed when he read about loss of China's territory and independence. These feelings shaped the context of many of his writings. For example "The Chinese revolution and the Chinese Communist Party displays the nostalgia for grandeur of the past that inspired Mao". His nationalism caused an anti-foreign feeling which is quiet evident in his writings. A.C. Cohen says that "operative traditional component in Mao's thought is chauvinism. There is considerable valid evidence suggesting that national resentment or national egotism is an active element in Mao".

Mao felt that China's deplorable condition was a result of its backwardness. His desire to build a modern and strong China can be considered the most pressing motive of his actions and thought. Schram calls him a "genuinely revolutionary nationalist." Revolutionary nationalism is defined as "the will to transform society and the promethean attitude to nature".
The influence of Chinese intellectual tradition is clearly visible in Mao's writings. Most of his military concepts owe heavily to the old Chinese tactician Sun Tzu. "The book Basic tactics ... illustrates how deeply Mao is rooted in Chinese culture and traditions ... Mao's very definition of guerilla tactics as avoiding strength striking at weakness, echoes the language of Sun Tzu, and in fact sums up the whole essence of that master strategist's teaching. In many other places Mao's Chinese text contains word for word citation from the Art of War and the associated commentaries." Not only his military writings but his basic attitude also shows the immense impact of Chinese tradition. Most of his thought contains "the type of moralising which owes more to the Confucian ideal of self-cultivation than to Lenin, for whom that which was moral was simply that which was useful for revolution". Mao himself comments on the necessity to use China's intellectual tradition, and says "we must not mutilate history from Confucius to Sun Yat Sen. We must sum it up critically, and we must constitute ourselves the heirs of all that is precious in this past. Conversely the assimilation of this heritage itself turns out to be a kind of methodology that is of great help in the direction of the revolutionary movement.

Mao's main aim is to find a solution to China's problems to this end he calls for a system of thought that would signify
Marxism. "If a Chinese communist bound to his people by his very flesh and blood, talks of Marxism apart from Chinese peculiarities this Marxism is a merely an empty abstraction. Consequently the sinification of Marxism - that is to say, making certain that in all its manifestations it is imbued with Chinese peculiarities and using it according to these peculiarities."

Thus Marxism Leninism and Nationalism clearly emerge as the two basic components of Maoism. But there is wide divergence of opinion on what is the exact nature of the combinations. One opinion holds that while Mao had indeed sinified the form of Marxism, his contribution to the substance of Leninist theory represents an adaptation of Marxism to Chinese conditions, rather than any wholesale transformation. The second opinion says that "Chinese form of Mao's thought is not merely a matter of folklore and local color, of Chinese decorations lasted on an intellectual edifice basically similar to that of any Russian or European Leninist ... but ... the substance of his thought itself is profoundly affected by his Chinese background" and again "If from the standpoint of national analysis classes have a certain priority in his thinking, on the level of sentiment and instinctive reactions, it is probably his attachment to the nation that predominated until recently. However, even those who take the latter
position do agree that "despite his nationalism and his feeling for China's past glory, he never expressed himself in quite un-Marxist terms. (Even) the articles of 1923, while furiously anti-foreign do not altogether neglect class analysis."

The combination of Marxism-Leninism and Nationalism give rise to three features which are the hall mark of Maoism and distinguish it from other systems of thought. These are a) a voluntarist, subjective, revolutionary philosophy, b) a populist political line and system of analysis, c) a militarist strategy and perception of the situation.

a) Mao's views on history can be characterised as voluntarist. The theories are based on the "premise that if masses properly organised and infused with ideological fervour can be activated to achieve most of the societies fundamental goals. Human will and labour rather than technical skills are seen as key ingredients of social progress." Thus Mao's socialist faith was based upon "Confidence in ability to bring forth powerful subjective forces latent in the present.... (rather than) confidence in working of the objective laws of social development." Mao's belief in "Infinite capacity of subjective forces to change objective reality" grows out of his "Promethean urge to fashion nature and cut of his passionate desire to transform man". This
voluntarism - in the sense of accent on subjective, conscious action is by no means absent in Marx and Lenin but Mao takes it much further. Many aspects of his political theory bear a clear imprint of the impact of his voluntarist philosophy i.e.

a) he regards subjective attitude as the decisive factor in determining the class nature of an individual or a political movement." (b) "In his theory of permanent revolution, voluntarism attains a kind of apotheosis. (c) He goes to the extent of saying that "provided men's consciousness is in conformity with the objective laws of the development of things, the subjective activity of the popular masses can manifest itself in full measure, overcome all difficulties, create the necessary conditions and carry forward the revolution. In this sense the subjective creates the objective." (d) "Mao's voluntarist impatience with economic forces of history lead to his impulse to carry out proletarian revolution even without proletariat if need be .... For him proletarian consciousness was more important than the proletariat itself." It is his voluntarism which leads to his substituting party for class.

His philosophy is revolutionary in the sense that he makes struggle an end in itself. As Cohen puts it Mao makes, "struggle not only a political good but a desirable state. Struggle is happiness".
b) Mao's political line can also be characterised as being **populist**. Populism is defined here following Meisner as a tendency which is marked by a conception of people as a single entity with collective social aspirations; as a belief that social reorganisation of society is a result of the release of inherent aspirations and energies of the pre-capitalist peasant masses; as a view of capitalism as being not inevitable but a spectre to be avoided; as a perspective which praises advantages of a country's **backwardness** which enable it to skip the capitalist-phase. Meisner says that "Much of what is distinctive in Maoist version of Marxism-Leninism can be attributed essentially to populist type beliefs and impulses, and this populist component of Maoism has had especially crucial implication for the character of chinese communist theory and practice."

Many of Mao's writings show the imprint of populism i.e. Benjamin Schwartz says that "Mao's Hunan Report of 1927 might just as well have been written by a Russian Narodnik as by a Marxist-Leninist". And Meisner thinks that while Mao's later writings do not lack standard Marxist-Leninist terminology an examination of them suggests that the populist impulse so apparent in 1927 was never to be completely submerged by Marxist-Leninist Orthodoxies".

Many of Mao ideas are populist. "His looking to peasantry
as the basis of revolution, his anti-urban, anti-bureaucratic views, his general distrust of large scale organisations, whether political or economic his extreme antipathy to occupational specialization, his deep and long standing hostility to intellectual, and the romantic mood of heroic revolutionary self-sacrifice which pervade his thought" are all populist. However it is in two basic ideas of Mao that we see him moving away from Marxism towards populism. The first is his tendency to use concepts of Nation and People. These do seem to be at variance with Marxist analysis which is essentially class analysis. According to Heisner "the populist strain in Maoism manifests itself in a strong tendency to conceive the people as an organic whole and to celebrate their spontaneous revolutionary actions and collective potentialities. Although Maoism demands class analysis and seemingly endless class struggle, it also conceives the Chinese people as potentially unified proletarian entity.... The enemies of people are either external or local representatives of alien influences." Schramm feels the same way and thinks that "Mao's populist tendency - the notion that overwhelming majority of Chinese are basically progressive and capable of participating in the revolution.... is probably the most important device by which he reconciles the nationalist and revolutionary halves of his thought". The other basic idea in which he comes nearer populism than Marxism is his attitude to the spontaneous strivings and consciousness of the
masses. The Leninist tradition saw these as "inadequate and potentially dangerous and emphasized the need of organisation, discipline and party intervention". On the other hand Mao had a "profound distrust for knowledge brought by intellectuals and had admiration for the innate wisdom of the peasantry.... He repeatedly urges those, who by Leninist criteria possess the consciousness necessary to organise and lead the masses to "merge with the masses" "learn from the masses" and indeed to become "students of the masses".

c) Given the specific conditions of China at his time - its warlords, colonial subjection, lack of central power etc. Mao came up with a strategy for revolution which can be called Militarist. Armed conflict was seen as a necessary feature of all phases and all levels of revolutionary process. It was a way of beginning revolutionary process as well as ending the revolution victoriously. In Schrann's words "The most important and most characteristic of Mao's leadership style is what I have called his military romanticism. By this term I mean to designate not only Mao's fondness for warfare as such, but his tendency to envisage political, economic and even philosophical problems as forms of combat.

The examination of above components and features enables us to give a tentative answer to the question, What Maoism is?
We might say that it is a revolutionary solution (a solution proposing total change in societies structure) given to the problems of a dependent country and oppressed people (China in this case), using the basic concepts and propositions of Marx and Lenin. This leads us to the second question - What are the details of this solution?

II

Mao's revolutionary solution can be studied as consisting of three parts. In the first we will explain the aims and perspective of Maoist revolution, in the second we will describe the social forces which can be mobilised to bring about the revolution and in the third we will outline the strategy and tactics to be adopted to bring about the revolution.

A) The aims and perspective of the revolution

Mao saw his country disunited and under the subjection of imperialist powers and he felt that the vast masses of his countrymen were being severely oppressed by the feudal forces. In these circumstances the immediate tasks he perceived were national unity, independence and redistribution of land on egalitarian lines.

Mao characterised Chinese society as "colonial, semi-colonial
and feudal". He says that "The imperialist powers have waged many wars of aggression against China... have forced China to sign numerous unequal treaties... carved up the whole country into imperialist spheres of influence... They have gained control of all important trading ports, China's customs, foreign trade and communications... turned China into a market for their industrial products, and at the same time subordinated her agricultural to their imperialist needs... (and) obstructed the development of China's productive forces". Mao thinks that the imperialists were maintaining their dominance in China by having created, allied with and helped by various reactionary elements. In his opinion "Imperialists have created a comprador and a merchant usures class in their service so as to facilitate the exploitation of the masses. They have made the feudal landlord class as well as the capitalist class the main props of their rule in China". Mao felt that not only were the imperialists directly exploiting the Chinese people but were also helping to maintain various other forms of exploitation perpetrated by their allies. He quotes with approval Stalin's views on this matter saying "The imperialism with financial and all its military might is the force in China that supports, inspires, fosters and preserves the feudal survivals together with their entire bureaucratic, military superstructure."

Mao saw six characteristics of Chinese society as resulting from its colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal nature. 1) Its
self sufficient economy being destroyed and the exploitation of peasantry intensified, 2) The growth of independent national capitalism being stultified. 3) Imperialism fully controlling the nation's financial and economic arteries. 4) The country being ruled by warlords and bureaucrats of the landlord class along with the imperialists and their puppets. 5) Because of disunity and immense territory, the political, economic and cultural development of China being uneven. 6) The Chinese people were becoming impoverished and pauperised without any political rights.

In this situation Mao saw revolution as inevitably developing out of the intensifying contradictions. In his words "The contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation, and the contradiction between Feudalism and the great masses of the people are the basic contradictions in modern Chinese society. Of course, there are others, such as the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and the contradictions within the reactionary ruling class itself. But the contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation is the principal one. These contradictions and their intensification must inevitably result in incessant growth of Revolutionary movements."

Mao sees a two fold task for the revolution. "Unquestionably, the main tasks are... to carry out a national revolution to overthrow foreign imperialist oppression and a democratic revolution to over-
throw feudal landlord oppression." The revolution is to put
an end to a China which is "politically oppressed, economically
exploited and culturally ignorant and back-ward" and build a
new China which is "politically free, economically prosperous
and culturally enlightened".

To carry out these tasks the revolution has to establish its own State. The nature of such a State is conceptualised by
Mao as New democratic. That is the ruling power in this State
will be a "joint dictatorship of several anti-imperialist classes.
It is an alliance, an united front of several revolutionary
classes". Mao thinks that the State and Governmental structure
in colonial and semi-colonial countries "has to be New democratic.
This revolution is different from a socialist revolution in the
sense that "its edge is directed against imperialism and Feudalism
and not against property in general". It is also different from
a democratic revolution since it has a long term perspective.
The new democracy is seen only as a "minimum programme" and as a
transitional society. The long-term perspective "is socialism and
communism". In this context it is necessary to take note of another
of Mao's concepts Permanent revolution. Narrowly understood it
means that as soon as the tasks of democratic revolution ... that
is national unity, independence, Political democracy, economic
reconstruction, agrarian reform and redistribution are completed,
the socialist tasks like egalitarian distribution, socialization
of production etc. are to be undertaken. More broadly interpreted it is a view of history as a continuous, unceasing struggle of contradictory forces and ideas, and the revolution which progresses continuously and uninterruptedly, without any rest or pause, going on destroying the wrong ideas and backward forces.

B) The Allies and the Enemies: Mao analyses the Chinese society in terms of classes to see which will oppose the Revolution and which will support it and what will be the exact nature of each classes' relation with the Revolutionary movement.

Following the Marxist tradition Mao affirms the leading role of the proletariat i.e. the industrial working class in the revolution. While noting the proletariat's weaknesses in China "its' small number, its state of disorganisation after 1926-27 defeats and low cultural level", he affirms his belief that proletarian leadership is "the sole key to the victory of revolution." According to him, "they possess all the outstanding qualities of all proletarians which fit them to become revolutionaries". These are, their concentration in a few urban centres, their capacity for organisation and discipline, their high cultural level and high social consciousness, their low economic status, their psychological state of despairing of ever becoming rich in existing system and their deprivation of the means of production. Besides these general advantages the Chinese proletariat has "many particular
outstanding qualities which permit it to become the leading force in the Chinese revolution". He mentions three such qualities viz. (a) "subjection to three fold oppression by imperialists, big bourgeoisie and feudals with a severity seldom found in other nations.... lack of an economic base in China which would permit social reformism" (i.e. giving concession to workers), (b) It is the "most politically conscious class in Chinese society.... under the leadership of its own revolutionary political party". (c) and it is "largely made up of bankrupt peasantry... (which) facilitates a close revolutionary alliance." Thus he concludes that "the Chinese revolution will certainly not succeed without the participation and leadership of the proletariat."

However, maoist call for proletarian leadership is to be understood with some reservations. Firstly as already pointed out subjective considerations are more important than objective ones for Mao in characterising a movement or a person. So one can be a proletarian even if born to a merchant provided his ideas show proletarian consciousness, and in the same way a rural movement can be characterised as Proletarian. Secondly as Deutscher points out Mao substitutes (in the pre 1949 period) the party for class, rationalising implicitly that the party manifests and epitomises proletarian consciousness.

While calling for proletarian leadership Mao saw peasantry as the force which would carry out revolution. "Several hundred
million peasants in China... will rise like a tornado or tempest - a force so extra-ordinarily swift and violent that no power, however great, will be able to suppress it. They will break through all the trammels that now bind them and push forward along the road of revolution. They will send all imperialists, warlords, corrupt officials, local bullies and evil gentry to their graves. All revolutionary parties and all revolutionary comrades will stand before them to be tested, to be accepted or rejected by them. To march at their rear and lead them? To follow in the rear gesticulating at them and criticizing them?"

Mao subdivides the peasantry into three sections - rich, middle and poor. Each of them had a different role to play in the revolution. Out of these he thinks that the poor peasants are the most revolutionary. "The poor peasants... are the broad peasant masses with no land or insufficient land, the semi-proletariat of the country side - the biggest motive force of the Chinese revolution, the natural and reliable ally of the proletariat and the main contingent of China's revolutionary forces." The poor peasants are further subdivided into three sections. Viz. a) Semi-landholder - they have enough land to produce only half the food they need every year. They must rent land from others or work as labourers or engaged in petty trade for their livelihood; b) sharecroppers - who do not own any land but own implements of production and circulating capital. For land and work they depend on others,
(c) poor peasants - who do not even have sufficient farm implements nor do they have any circulating capital. In these three sub-sections, Mao thought that the poor peasants are the most revolutionary followed by sharecroppers and then the semi-landholders.

The middle peasants are landholders who have (a) either just enough to meet their needs or (b) have a small annual deficit. The latter group "spiritually suffer more than others, because they see a contrast between past and present. They constitute the left wing of peasantry and ... can contribute great strength to the advancement of revolution". The former group usually remains neutral, but he will not absolutely oppose the revolution. He may join in when dawn of victory is in sight of the revolution. About the middle peasants as a whole Mao says "Not only can they join the anti-imperialist revolution and the agrarian revolution, but they can also accept socialism. Therefore the whole of middle peasantry can be a reliable ally of the proletariat and is an important motive force of the revolution.... The positive or negative attitude of the middle peasant is one of the factors determining victory or defeat in the revolution."

"The rich peasants are those who have some surplus food and money. That is to say, after they have satisfied their needs,
the product of their annual labour leaves them a surplus that can be employed for so-called primitive accumulation of capital." They are peasants in the sense that they contribute to production, and engage in labour. Mao regards them as semi-peasant in character, who practice usury and exploit others, but he thinks that "they might make some contribution to anti-imperialist struggle, and remain neutral in the agrarian revolutionary struggle against landlords".

Farm labourers who subsist only by their labour and possess no property of any kind are seen as another group which firmly supports the revolution. According to Mao "This group of people is the most distressed in the rural areas and should be given the greatest attention by those who are organising peasant movements."

A novel category which Mao introduces into his sociological analysis is elements declassed. He includes in this the rural and urban unemployed who take up to illegal ways of earning livelihood, i.e. robbers, gangsters, beggars, prostitutes etc. He says that there are twenty millions of such people in China and "if properly led can become a revolutionary force". "This social stratum is unstable while some are apt to be bought over by the reactionary forces, others may join revolution. They lack constructive qualities and are given to destruction... They become a source of
Mao thinks that the urban petty bourgeoisie (intellectuals, professionals, small tradesmen, handicraftsmen) in general is a "reliable ally of the proletariat". Of these various strata he thinks the intellectuals are the most useful and while cautioning about their "subjective, and individualistic attitudes and impractical thinking and irresoluteness in action", he lauds their role as "vanguard" or "link with masses". He thinks that small tradesmen and handicraftsmen will join the revolution since comprador and imperialist competition impoverishes them.

Another ally envisaged by Mao in the revolutionary struggle is the National Bourgeoisie. "This class represents the capitalist relations of production in China, in town and country". It is a class with dual character. "On the one hand it is oppressed by imperialism and fettered by feudalism and consequently in contradiction with both of them. In this respect it constitutes one of the revolutionary forces... on the other hand, it lacks the courage to oppose Imperialism and Feudalism thoroughly, because it is economically and politically flabby and still has economic ties with Imperialism and Feudalism. It is weak and has no independent role in the revolutionary process".

Mao sees two classes allied with Imperialism and ranged against revolution. The big landlords who is the "deadly enemy
of Chinese peasantry, the real rulers in the villages, the solid supporters of imperialists and militarists, the only bulwark of a clannish feudal society, the final cause of the emergence of all anti-revolutionary feudal forces". An exception is to be made here in that while landlords as a class is an irreconcilable enemy, enlightened individuals and a few small landlord can sometimes be used.

Another enemy of the revolution is the comprador bourgeoisie. It is defined as "an appendage of international bourgeoisie... dependent on imperialism for growth and survival... directly serves the capitalists of the imperialist countries and is nurtured by them; is linked closely with the feudal forces in the countryside." Even here Mao makes an exception. "However different sections of the comprador bourgeoisie owe allegiance to different imperialist powers so that when the contradictions among the latter become very acute and revolution is directed mainly against one particular imperialist power, it becomes possible for some comprador bourgeoisie groups to join anti-imperialist front.

\(\text{C) The strategy and tactics:} \) In this section there are four main ideas of Mao Tse Tung which are aimed at turning the necessity of revolution (examined in Section A) and the possibility of revolution (examined in Section B) into the actuality of revolution.
These four main ideas are the united front, the party, the
t mass line and armed struggle.

**United Front** - We have already seen how in his analysis,
Mao shows almost all classes as favourable to revolution. He
does not rule out the possibility of even some groups of com-
prador Bourgeoisie and some enlightened gentry (big landlords)
joining the revolution. His slogan for Chinese Revolution
was "three hundred and ninety five millions unite"! Parti-
cularly during the period of Japanese invasion he laid stress
on United Front. The basic tactical task of the party is none
other than" to form a broad national revolutionary united front9
again "the one and only policy for overcoming difficulties,
defeating the enemy and building a new China is to consolidate
and expand the anti-Japanese national united front." He is
even willing to convert a peasants' and workers' State into a
Peoples Republic and give many other concessions, like replacing
the slogan "land to the tiller" with "fair rents and fair wages".
However he insists that independence and initiative must be kept
by Party and the proletariat.

**Party** - In Mao's opinion "If there is to be a revolution,
there must be a revolutionary party. Without a revolutionary party,
without a party built on the revolutionary theory and style of
Marxism-Leninism, it is impossible to lead the working class and the broad masses of the people to defeat Imperialism. The Communist Party needs "not only democracy but needs centralization even more. They forget the system of democratic centralism in which the minority is subordinate to the majority, the lower level to the higher, the part to the whole and the entire membership to the central committee. But Mao's insistence on centralization is only a tactical one. Strategically he subordinates the party to the masses. This is necessitated by a form of struggle in which active and voluntary co-operation and participation of people is necessary. So the party leadership in principle is balanced with a policy of mass line.

Mass line - According to Doak Barnett it "involves setting up of a few clearly defined immediate aims, the concentration of efforts and attention on these aims above all others, the mobilisation and training of a large number of cadres drawn from many segments of the political system to carry out a campaign and finally mass mobilisation of the population as a whole to take action to achieve the defined goals". Mao explains the relation between Party and Mass line in following terms. "In all the practical work of our party, all correct leadership is necessarily from the masses to the masses. This means that take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them
into systematic and concentrated ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action.

**Armed Struggle** - Mao says that "the principal means or form of the Chinese Revolution must be armed struggle.... For our enemies have made peaceful activity impossible for the Chinese people and have deprived them of all political freedom and democratic rights". The same idea is put forward in his famous epigram "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun".

While laying stress on the armed struggle Mao Tse Tung repeatedly makes it clear that the primary factors in revolutionary struggle are human and political, not the military. Armed struggle is seen as a form of political struggle dependent upon the human factor of its success or failure. According to Mao, "Weapons are important but not decisive. It is man and not material that counts. The contest of forces is not only one of economic and military power but also one of the power and morale of men." For these reasons Mao exhorts his army to "explain, persuade, discuss and convince the people" and become like fish in water. Brigadier S.B. Griffith explaining Mao's views on armed struggle says "the guerilla war is not dependent for success on the efficient operation of complex mechanical devises, highly organised logistic system or accuracy..."
of electronic computers.... its basic element is Man.

Mao insists on the political control of the direction and purpose of armed struggle. He says "War is a special political technique for the realisation of certain political objectives.... Revolutionary war cannot succeed without a universal and thorough going political mobilisation. Commenting on the role of party in conducting armed struggle he says, "Party Commands the gun, the gun shall never be allowed to command the party". Further he makes clear its political perspective when he says "The Red army fights not merely for the sake of fighting but in order to conduct propaganda among masses, organise them, arm them and help them to establish revolutionary power".

Mao's guerilla strategy can be summarised as establishment of base areas (sanctuary for a guerilla nucleus of the revolutionary army), slow expansion in the rural regions, conducting a protracted struggle, encircling the cities and ultimately capturing them.

Mao thinks that certain conditions in China are conducive to the establishment of base areas. "A localised agricultural economy (not a unified capitalist economy) and the imperialist policy of marking of spheres of influence in order to divide and exploit.... prolonged splits and wars within the white regime.... provide conditions for emergence and persistence of one or more small red
areas under the leadership of communist party amidst the encirclement of white regime. This cannot occur in any imperialist country or in any colony under direct imperial rule, but can only occur in China which is economically backward, which is semi-colonial and under indirect imperialist rule. The bases once established, require five basic conditions for continued existence 1) strong mass support, 2) first rate party organisations, 3) a Red Army of adequate strength, 4) a terrain favourable to military operations and 5) economic strength sufficient for self-support.

Once having established the base areas, the Red Army slowly spreads in the entire rural region of the country, encircles the cities and finally capture them in Mao's words "in a semi-colonial country although cities have a leadership function, they cannot rule the countryside, for the cities are too small and the countryside too enormous, and the vast human and material resources are to be found in the countryside rather than in the cities.... If we rely fundamentally on organising a resolute, prolonged and widespread war of resistance against the enemy who has occupied our cities, if we wage war on many interlocking fronts, encircle the cities and isolate them, meanwhile gradually increasing the strength over a long period.... and if we coordinate these tactics with changes in the international situation we will be able to drive out the enemy." In this whole
process Mao repeatedly stresses the facts that the nature of war would be protracted "Our war cannot be won quickly, but can only be protracted".

This whole process of Maoist revolutionary war is described by Brigader General Griffith as consisting of three stages. Mao conceived this (revolutionary, agrarian based, protracted) types of war as passing through a series of merging phases. First - "Organisation, consolidation and preservation of Base areas situated in isolated and difficult terrain... recruiting cadre, training them, propaganda and agitation, persuading and convincing inhabitants, organising militias, home guards and sympathisers, to supply food, recruits and information... along with sporadic military operations... second stage consists of progressive expansion, sabotage and terrorism, liquidation of collaborationists and reactionary elements, ambushing police and weak military columns.... final stage consists of the destruction of enemy, may be interspersed with negotiations, truces etc."

Along with these strategic principles Mao conceives of many interesting tactical ideas which made him an authority on guerilla warfare. He stresses on the elements of surprise, initiative, mobility, manoeuvre (for e.g. "Make noise in West and attack in the East") superior intelligence, information and
flexibility of actions. Above all he lays emphasis on concentrating of one's own forces while dispersing the enemies. He thinks that the essence of guerilla tactics is concentration of a superior force to destroy the enemy. This is the principle of one against ten and ten against one. It is explained as follows. "We can change the converging attack directed by the enemy, against us on the plane of strategy into converging attacks directed by us against the enemy on the plane of campaigns and battles. We can change the enemy's strategic superiority over us into our superiority over him in campaigns and battles." These kind of tactics enable a small guerilla army to outnumber and defeat a much larger regular army.

To make possible such tactics Mao advocates many operational principles. For e.g. the mobile warfare which allows one to "fight when you can win, move away when we cannot". And again "The enemy advances, we retreat, the enemy camps we harass, the enemy fires, we attack; the enemy retreats we pursue".

The final point to be noted is the extreme flexibility of maoist strategy and tactics. He does not make any single form of struggle or tactic absolute and applicable to all times. They are viewed dynamically and within a time-spatial context for e.g. he is quite willing to give up protracted struggle and mobile warfare, which are the two basic elements of his system and to fight
wars of "quick decision" and "wars of annihilation" when necessary. His flexibility extends even to the guerilla struggle itself. He does not rule out forms of action other than of guerilla type. According to Brigadier Griffith "Mao has never claimed that the guerilla action alone as decisive in a struggle for the political control of the State, but only that it is possible, natural and necessary development in an agrarian based revolutionary war."

Having examined the strategy and tactics of Mao, which evolved in the process of Chinese revolution, we move on to the third section of this chapter which examines the basis on which Mao's strategy is claimed as applicable to countries other than China.

As early as in 1950 Mao Tse Tung wrote "Revolutions in different colonial and semi-colonial countries necessarily have certain different characteristics, but these constitute only the minor differences within general framework of uniformity." After the victorious completion of the Chinese revolution, the Chinese started putting forward emphatic claims about the applicability of the Chinese revolution to other countries. Liu Shao Chi in his famous speech to the Trade Union Conference of Asian countries in 1949 stated that "the way taken by the Chinese
people must be taken by the people of the various colonial and semi-colonial countries in their fight for national independence and peoples democracy." Similarly Chen Po Ta wrote in 1953 that "the conclusions reached by Mao Tse Tung some twenty years ago by applying Marxism-Leninism in his study of the problems of the Chinese Revolution are the new conclusions of Marxism for the colonial and semi-colonial countries". More concretely, Mao maintained in a telegram to Ranadive, the Secretary of Indian Communist Party in 1949 that "in many respects her (India) past fate and her path to the future resemble those of China".

However systematic claims for Maoism being the path of revolution for Asian, African and Latin American countries started only after the Sino-Soviet split. During the polemics of this split the Chinese emerged with a set of theoretical propositions whose effect was to universalise the Maoist strategy of Chinese revolution. (The stand of the Chinese is taken, as it emerged in the 1960-64 period. There have been a few changes in their position since then. For e.g. now the Russians are presented as a bigger danger to the revolution than the Americans. But we have persisted with the 1960-64 position since it was that which initially guided the Indian maoists' perception of the world situation and the tasks in front of them).
To avoid confusion we start with a brief summary of the Chinese position to be followed with an outline of the various propositions. They saw the world as consisting of two parts. One part consisted of the countries of the socialist camp and in the other part the imperialists (used in the Leninist sense) were oppressing and exploiting various nations and peoples. Unless imperialism was destroyed peace and progress cannot be achieved. The destruction of imperialism will come through revolts of the exploited countries helped by the socialist bloc. In this connection they held that imperialism had not basically changed its character since the days of Lenin, that wars cannot be abolished until imperialism was abolished; that nuclear weapons do not make for a fundamental change in the nature and outcome of wars; and that peaceful transition to socialism is not possible until imperialism is abolished.

The Chinese saw the world as being oppressed by Imperialism headed by the United States. "After the Second World War the United States imperialism has been trying to erect a huge world empire. Their strategic objectives are to dominate the intermediate zone lying between the United States and the Socialist camp to put down the revolutions of the oppressed nations and peoples, to proceed to destroy the socialist camp, to subject all the peoples and countries of the world including its allies to domination and enslavement of United States monopoly capital". In the Chinese
view imperialism had turned the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America into its semi-colonies. The Chinese felt that the so called independence of these countries was mere eyewash.

The world domination and exploitation of imperialism leads to the existence of four contradictions in the present time. These are listed as "between socialist camp and imperialist camp, between the proletariat and bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries, between the oppressed nations and imperialism and finally among imperialist countries and monopoly capitalist groups."

The Chinese felt that "these contradictions will give rise to popular revolutions which alone can resolve them." The chances of success of revolution are seen as increasing because of several factors like (a) the increasing, military, political and moral strength of the socialist bloc of countries, (b) the sharpening and deepening of the conflicts within the imperialist powers especially those between the United States and others (c) the increasing strength of the National liberation movement in the countries oppressed by imperialism and finally, (d) the increasing revolutionary zeal of the proletariat in capitalist countries. In sum "the international balance of forces have changed and become increasingly favourable to socialism and to all oppressed people and nations of the world."

In this situation the Chinese rest their hopes mainly on
"National liberation movements" for destroying the Imperialists. They see the semi-colonial countries as the basis upon which the imperialist system is built and as such destruction of this base would inevitably lead to the fall of imperialist system. Noting the overriding importance of the contradiction between Semi-colonies and the imperialism the Chinese says "these areas are the focus of world contradictions... these contradictions in Asia, Africa and Latin America are more pressing more direct and more immediate than the contradictions (of imperialism) with socialist countries." They see great chances of success for revolution in the semi-colonies since "these are the most vulnerable areas under imperialist rule and the storm centres of world revolution dealing direct blows at imperialism". Extreme importance is given to these national liberation struggles because "anti-imperialist struggle of Asia, Africa and Latin America is not merely a matter of regional significance but one of over-all importance for the whole cause of world proletarian revolution. This struggle defends world peace and undermines imperialist capitalist forces". And also "they prevent imperialist invasion of socialist countries and ultimately ensure the victory of socialism in even the first socialist country."

The question of war and peace is central to the Chinese argument. To the Chinese "Imperialism is the source of modern
wars. So long as imperialism exists, there will always be a
soil for aggressive wars." Imperialism has been the cause of
world wars in the period of Lenin and its character has not
changed since then. Though there have been no world wars there
have been more than six hundred local wars caused by imperialism
after the Second World War. "Imperialism has not changed... it is
the source of all modern wars... the chief force for aggression
and war is U.S. imperialism.... The imperialist block headed by
the United States is engaged in frenzied armed expansion and war
preparation."

The Chinese do not think that wars can be prevented by depen-
dence on "wisdom of greatmen, sensibleness, assurances, good
intentions, mutual concessions, mutual accommodations or compro-
mises." Even disarmament is of no use. Since wars are caused
by class rule, imperialism and exploitation, they can be abolished,
"only by abolishing all exploitation of man by man and of nation
by nation... only after the victory of socialism all over the
world". Concretely the Chinese see "the possibility of preven-
ting a new world war and preserving world peace (with) the
further development of the strength of the Socialist countries,
with the further development of the national liberation movements,
and of the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed peoples, and of
the Communist in defence of world peace, and of the full utilisation
of the contradictions in the imperialist camp).

The Chinese think that it is necessary and possible to avoid a world war, but not local wars. "In the present situation it is possible to prevent imperialism from launching a new world war. If all the peace-loving forces of the world unite into a broad international anti-imperialist united front and fight together. But it is one thing to prevent world war and another to eliminate all war. Imperialists and reactionaries are the source of war. In conditions where imperialism and reaction still exist wars of one kind or other may occur". Thus the Chinese while denying the use of negotiations etc. in preventing war have a long-term perspective in abolishing war. They see a series of small national liberation destroying the imperialists and as such removing the cause for war. These are the "wars to prevent wars". And for the short term they think that a determined and united stand by socialist countries can prevent the imperialists from launching a world war which would be suicidal to themselves. In this scheme the Chinese deny the possibility that national liberation wars might lead to world war.

The Chinese do not consider that nuclear weapons as having made any basic difference to the nature and outcome of war. They do not think that it obliterates the possibility of successful waging of national liberation wars. They put forward two arguments to support their stand. First is that the course of history in
decided by the great strength of the masses of people and not by
any weapons. "The revolutionary people have never been paralysed
with fear of nuclear weapons and so abandon their struggle against
imperialism... we have never believed that nuclear weapons can
determine man's fate... it is the masses of the people who are
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decisive force in history." Setting forth his ideas on nuclear
weapons in his famous interview to Anna Louise Strong, Mao Tse
Tung says that "The atom-bomb is a paper tiger which US reactionaries
use to scare people.... Imperialism even if armed with nuclear
weapons cannot frighten into submission a revolutionary people who
dare to fight.... (because) possession of nuclear weapons by
imperialism has not changed its nature, which is rotten to the core
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and declining, inwardly weak, though outwardly strong". The second
argument the Chinese put forward is that the socialist camp has a
superiority in the nuclear warfare. "If after we have done every-
thing to prevent nuclear war, imperialism should nevertheless
unleash nuclear war, it would only result in the extinction of
imperialism and definitely not extinction of mankind.... we oppose
pessimistic and despairing tunes like talk of total destruction and
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suicide of mankind."

The Chinese do not deny the need for peaceful coexistence
between countries with different social systems. They see it as
"necessary for creating an environment of socialist reconstruction
144
and for exposing imperialist policies of aggression and fear".
But they say "it should not be extended to relations between oppressed and oppressor nations.... It can not be road to socialism or main content of transition from capitalism to socialism, or general line of foreign policy of socialist countries" and again "It cannot be achieved without struggle, cannot eliminate class struggle in the world, and cannot abolish the antagonism between the two systems - socialism and capitalism, and the antagonism between oppressed nations and oppressor nations.

The Chinese are very sceptical about the possibility of peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism. Such a thing is "very seldom to be met in the history of revolution.... Ruling class never relinquishes power voluntarily". So they advocate "dual tactics, namely, while preparing for peaceful development of the revolution, be fully prepared to repel the assaults of counter revolution and to overthrow the bourgeoisie by armed force at the critical juncture of the revolution when the proletariat is seizing State power".

All the above propositions taken together give a general line to international communist movement which stresses the immediate need for carrying out armed national liberation movements in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.
NOTES


13. Ibid., p. 22.


15. Ibid., p. 372.


18. Ibid., p. 134.


22. Ibid., p. 172.


26. Ibid., p. 42.


31. Ibid., p. 73.

32. Ibid., p. 135.

33. Ibid., p. 136.


40. Ibid., p. 19.
41. Ibid., p. 19.
44. Ibid.
47. Ibid., p. 31.
48. Ibid., p. 32.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., Pp. 32-33.
51. Ibid., p. 33.
52. Ibid., p. 37.
54. Ibid., p. 68.
55. Ibid.
57. Mao, New Democracy in S.U., p. 78.
58. Ibid., p. 68.
68. Vide, p.
82. *Ibid.*, He also uses "vagrant" for the same category.


84. *Ibid*.


91. *Ibid*.


95. Mao Tse Tung, "An analysis...etc." in Stuart Schrag *Op. cit.*, p. 214. Chinese population at that time was less than 400 million.


112. Mao Tse Tung, "Why is it that Red Political Power can exist in China" in *Military Writings*, p.15.


120. See Ibid., Pp. 142-146.
127. Ibid., p.7
128. Ibid.
129. Ibid.
132. Ibid., p.13.
135. "On the difference between Comrade Togliatti and Us" in Ibid., p. 709.


145. Ibid., p. 28.

