CHAPTER III

ON THE QUESTION OF SIEZING POWER

The Telengana Armed Struggle of 1948-51 was the first experiment of the Indian communists with Maoism. After the crushing of the Telengana Armed Struggle, the Maoist theory of revolution fell into disfavour for a period of sixteen years. It was only in 1967 that, organisations which planned to implement Maoist prescriptions, re-emerged.

This chapter consists of two sections. The first examines various conditions and circumstances which preceded and made possible the re-emergence of Maoist theory and practice on the Indian political scene in general and in the State of Andhra Pradesh in particular. The second section describes the breaking away of some groups of people from the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI (M)) and their formulation of the Maoism to be applied to India.

I

The conditions which proved important for the re-emergence and initial development of Maoism in India can be viewed as a series of concentric circles, at whose centre was the Communist Movement in India. Various international events, the national
situation, the local circumstances and some, developments within the Communist movement, together caused the split within CPI(M) and led to the emergence of the Maoist organisations.

THE INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Sino-Soviet Split:

In the 20th Congress of Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1957 Nikita Khrushchev made a statement condemning many of the mistakes committed by Stalin's regime. This statement had many far reaching implications, and was a starting point of an acrimonious debate between the CPSU and Communist Party of China (CPC) on various issues ranging from the nature of international balance of forces to the problems of constructing socialism.

Eighty-one Communist parties of the world met in Moscow to thrash out the issues and arrive at a common understanding of the situation and tasks facing them. The result was the Moscow Statement of 1960. However the statement was given widely divergent interpretations by CPC and CPSU. Consequently severe debates arose within various Communist parties, as to which of the conflicting interpretations was the correct one. The Communists in India were no exception to this and a polarisation took place in them according to their divergent views on the general line of international communist movement and its' implied concrete course of action for particular countries.
The Chinese Foreign Policy

It also had some impact on communist politics in India. Until 1959 the Chinese took a friendly attitude towards the Indian Government. The trouble over Tibet and border issues however soured the Bandung spirit. From that time onwards Peking Press unleashed an attack on Indian Government. The People's Daily wrote several editorials viz. "The truth about anti-Chinese campaign launched by Nehru" "Revolution in Tibet and Nehru's Philosophy", "More on Nehru", which alleged that Indian Government had become a part of International Imperialist plots against China as well as national progress. These articles characterised the Indian State as feudal and comprador. The Chinese also asked the Indian Communists not to become chauvinists but to behave in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. They appealed to the Indian Communists who supported them to dispense with the "Dango clique which has embarked on national chauvinism and class capitulationism." During 1965, (by which time the cultural revolution was gaining hold in China) the Chinese adopted what later came to be known as the Lin thesis. This was a strategy to counter the United States' (U.S.A.) policy of encircling China. It aimed at linking all the 'people's wars' in the third world into a global front against the U.S.A. The Lin thesis advocated implementation of Maoist model of agrarian guerilla revolution in all the countries of the third world. It expressed the opinion that mass theory of
people's war has become "common asset of the revolutionary people of the whole world." These views could not but have had much impact on many of the Indian Communist leaders who held China in high regard. This is more particularly true of the Andhra Communists with their Maoist past of 1948-51.

Other International Events

To some extent various other international events had also a contributory value for the re-emergence of Indian Maoism. These are the Cuban Revolution, Cho Guevara's writings, the French student revolt of May 1968, and the Tet offensive of the Vietnamese. As early as 1963-64 Castro's speeches and Guevara's writings were circulated in India, and many Andhra Maoists particularly in the student front had been initially inspired by Guevara's life and writings. The Cuban Magazine Tricontinental had a fairly good circulation among Maoist circles of Hyderabad in 1967-68, and Cho Guevara's Guerilla Warfare, along with Regis Debray's and Cohn Bendit's book were discussed in their study circles. The Tet offensive and French student revolt also had much impact on many young men. In fact these events were decisive for the rejection of C.P.I. and CPI (M) by many revolutionary minded young men. Their choice against the established communist parties and in favour of the Maoist path was a result of several factors among which the most important were books like Cohn Bendit's The Left Wing Communism Regis Debray's Revolution within Revolution and events like
On an individual level despair of bettering one's material position and social status within the existing framework of social-structure, political institutions and economic organisation, makes one favourable to think of revolutionary solutions. The same is true at a social level where the despair is about finding solutions to the national problems. An attitude of iconoclasm and in favour of radical solution arises when such despair is combined with visions of a better society and hopes of being able to realise such a society.

India in 1967 was caught in an 'economic crisis' which might reasonably be expected to have led to despair at least amongst some people. At the same time India was in the throes of a 'political crisis' which might have given some people hopes of being able to destroy existing structure of political system and replace it with an entirely new one. The social turmoil which also existed around this time can be held as an indication of the tendency in which the Maoist movement arose.

Economic Crisis

After the initial success of the First Five Year Plan, the Indian economy seemed unable to fulfil its' promise and in 1967
it was in a condition which was characterised as a crisis by one and all. This period saw "the deceleration of growth rate which had set in towards the end of 1965 and persisted during 1967. There was near stagnation in the industrial output in 1967.... Industrial activity was adversely affected by shortages of raw material, power, components and spares, uncertain aid outlook and drought conditions.... accumulation of large stocks ...(and) cut back in production". Statistically the industrial production which had shown a 6.7 per cent increase in 1965 January-March period over the production of 1964 January-March period, steadily decelerated until it showed only a 1 per cent increase in 1967 October-December period as compared to 1966 October-December period. The index of Indian industrial production showed an increase of only eight points between the years 1965 and 1967. The fall in agricultural production was even more drastic. The average annual growth rate of agricultural production which was 3.1 per cent between 1953-54 to 1963-64 crashed down to minus 8.7 per cent during 1965-67. The actual production figures are 89 million tonnes during 1964-65, 72 million tonnes in 1965-66 and 74 million tonnes in 1966-67. The food situation forced the country to import a record 10.4 million tonnes food grains during 1966-67 and another 8.7 million tonnes during 1967-68. The reduction in food supplies had the chain effects of reducing the availability of raw materials for agricultural based industries; causing rise in food prices; reducing the real income of a large sector of rural house-holds; diverting the urban purchasing power from manufactured goods to food grains due to the sharp rise in the
prices of the latter; causing a fall in internal demand of industrial goods; and contributing to the setting in of a recessionary tendency in industries.

The years 1965-67 was a period of inflationary rise in the prices. The wholesale price index which showed an average annual growth of 4 per cent rise in the prices of "all commodities", a 2.3 per cent rise in the price of "all cereals" and a 2.4 per cent rise in the prices of "manufactured goods" in decade 1953-54 to 1963-64, showed during 1965-66 and 1966-67 a 12.7 per cent rise in the prices of "all commodities", 14.6 per cent rise in the prices of "all cereals" and an 8.1 per cent rise in the prices of "manufactured goods". The rise in prices were accompanied by fall in the incomes. The per capita income which showed a 2 per cent average annual growth rate during the decade 1953-54 to 1963-64, showed a minus 4.1 per cent average annual fall during 1965-66 and 1966-67. The real national income which showed an average 4.1 per cent growth between 1953-54 to 1963-64 decade, showed a minus 2 per cent decrease during 1965-66 and 1966-67. This resulted in a fall of savings and consequently of investments. The total domestic savings which showed an annual growth rate of 15.8 per cent during 1953-54 to 1963-64 fell down to 3.8 per cent during 1965-66 to 1966-67. In fact the savings of the Government sector were minus 12.2 per cent during 1965-66 to 1966-67, and the household sector which had previously shown an average of nearly 3 per cent rise in its savings showed only a 9 per cent increase during 1965-66 and 1966-67.
The whole situation worsened by the difficulties in getting foreign aid. Following the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war the United States had suspended its aid commitment to India. India also had the burden of immense foreign debt repayment which was compounded by the urgent necessity of importing food grains and badly needed spare parts for industrial purposes. These difficulties led to the devaluation of the Indian rupee and also to the abandonment of the fourth five year plan which was replaced with an annual plan.

These economic conditions compounded the already serious unemployment problem. The following table shows this clearly.

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<tr>
<th>Unemployment in India (in millions)</th>
<th>51-56</th>
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<td>I Plan</td>
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<td>III Plan</td>
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<td>3 Annual Plans</td>
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1. No. of unemployed persons at the beginning of

2. Addition to the labour force during

3. Total No. of jobs required during

4. Additional jobs created during

5. No. of persons unemployed at the end of

There hardly seemed to be better employment prospects in the future. In fact the industrial sector showed a deccrease in its employment capacity during the year 1966 and 1967.
Thus the Indian economy was a crisis in two senses. First it was unable to maintain the rates of production and maintain a healthy monetary system. Second, it fell far short of the demands placed upon it in an era of "revolution of rising expectations".

Political Crisis

India in 1967 seem to be poised on the eve of political crisis which had two aspects - a) Instability and b) Illegitimacy.

a) Instability: The general elections in 1967 ended the one party dominance in India. In eight States parties other than Congress came to the ruling position. Even in the Central Parliament inspite of a forty-nine vote majority there were doubts about stability of the Government in view of the factionalism in the Congress. Frequent defections, and inter-party quarrels within the coalition Governments added to the instability of the situation. The 1967 elections also saw the strengthening of various regional and communal parties like the DMK in Madras, the Akalis in Punjab, the Muslim League and the Jana Sangh. This election also saw the victory of many independents who had no party loyalties. All these added to the instability of the situation.

b) Illegitimacy: This period was aptly characterised as "democratic anarchy" implying the Governments inability to tackle effectively the deteriorating economic and political conditions. There was widespread impression that the Government was a prisoner
of indcision, and was incapable of showing a way out of the economic crisis. The Government's image was shattered not only in respect of its effectiveness but also in regard to its integrity. "Almost every morning newspaper reports come out with yet another report of a head hunt, euphemistically put forward as exposure of scandals, and scandals and corruption are never-ending." The report on Kairon's corruption, the episode of Biju Patnaik, Lohia's allegations about the Prime Minister receiving personal gifts and the farce of Awaras and Gavaram had destroyed the image of the Indian Government and reduced its aura of authority and legitimacy to many people.

Describing the changes in the Indian political system Rajni Kothari notes "The tremendous shift the country has been going through for some time now ... disintegration of old symbols of cohesion and identity, the erosion of the institutional consensus, represented by the Congress system of dominance, the obsolescence of traditional media of communication and patronage, the loosening of bonds that held discreet strata of population and traditional affiliations, the accumulating discontent against those in authority and the revolution in rising expectations". Those changes in the nature of the political system were accompanied by "emergence of pockets of discontent and anomie, in politically crucial areas such as the urban intelligentsia, the youth and the students, sections of the minority communities and the administrative services and various professional middle class groups."
Social Turmoil

The acute discontent with the economic conditions and the disillusionment with the political system led to a situation in which "Bandhs and hartals, marches and meetings have almost become a way of life". Shanti Swarup describes India of that time as "seething with discontent and protest, which have been growing very rapidly for almost a decade. They exist today at all levels of society. Strikes, processions, 'gheraoos' and a series of new forms of protest have been gaining in respectability".

The year 1966-67 was particularly marked by student unrest throughout the country. The country also witnessed during this period a movement for ban of cowslaughter which culminated in a mammoth march on the Parliament; the border dispute between Mysore and Maharashtra which led to ugly incidents; the Akali agitation, and the language riots in Madras. This was also a period of increasing industrial strife. The number of man days lost due to strikes in 1966 was more than double that of 1965 10.3 million in 1966 as compared to 4.6 million days in 1965. This period also shows a rise in the crime rate. While in 1965 there was a 0.97 per cent decrease in crime rate as compared to the previous year, there was a 6 per cent increase in crime-rate in 1966 as compared to 1965 and a 11 per cent increase in 1967 as compared to 1966.
THE LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Andhra Pradesh presents not only the general features of economic, political, and social crisis in the country but it also, certain specific conditions which account for the relative success of Maoists in forming a comparatively large organisation.

Economic Situation:

The general features of national economic crisis were also to be found in Andhra. Andhra Pradesh is predominantly an agricultural State. The contribution of agriculture and animal husbandry to the income of this State was 56.5 per cent whereas for the country as a whole it was 47.9 per cent. In the rest of the income only 11 per cent came from industries and 33 per cent from other sources. The other sources consisted mostly of trading etc. which were dependent on general prosperity of the people, which in turn depended on the state of agricultural production. Between 1965-1969 the weather was unfavourable to agriculture. This period saw droughts in 1966 and 1968, and a severe cyclone in 1969 which destroyed all standing crops. The index numbers of agricultural production in Andhra Pradesh (Base: 1956-57 = 100) clearly show this. They (for all production commodities, including both foodgrains and non-food crops) stood at record height of 127.9 in 1965-66, which crashed to 100.2 in 1965-66, showed slight improvement in 1966-67 (113.9) and 1967-68 (121.9) to crash once again to 104.3 in 1968-69. The index numbers of industrial production in Andhra Pradesh (Base 1960 = 100) also showed a slight fall, from 179 in 1965 to 170 in 1966 and 167 in 1967.
Fall in agricultural production had effect on the incomes and prices in the State. The per capita income index (with 1960-61 as base, at constant prices) which was at 112.4 in 1964-65 fell to 100.2 in 1965-66, slightly improved to 102.0 in 1966-67 and 103.0 in 1967-68, and fell to 97.4 in 1968-69. At the same time prices were rising sharply i.e. Index numbers of wholesale prices in Hyderabad city for food articles (Base August 1939 = 100) was 755 in 1965, rose to 866 in 1966 and jumped to 1001 in 1967. The general index also showed similar changes. It was at 761 in 1965, rose to 992 in 1966 and 1020 in 1967. This being the case with wholesale prices, one can easily imagine the state of retail prices which could be much more due to hoarding and blackmarketiing.

Social Unrest

After a long period of calm (which lasted from for 10 years from 1955) Andhra Pradesh was again a scene of severe social unrest in the post 1965 period. An agitation for location of steel plant in Visakhapatnam was the cause of huge rallies, rioting and police firings which culminated in the Andhra Bandh of November 1966. In this agitation 35 people died and 5000 were injured, another 5000 were arrested on various charges. The 1965-68 period also witnessed a kind of student strikes which were previously unknown. The University autonomy agitation of 1966-67, and the lower fee agitation of 1967-68 in Osmania University, heralded an era of student politics in Andhra Pradesh which was marked by huge processions,
riotings, and strikes, lasting for months together. The industrial front also showed a marked increase in the incidence of strikes in the three years of 1964-65 and 1966. The number of industrial disputes which never crossed 85 before, rose to 111 in 1964, 113 in 1965 and 114 in 1966. The number of man days lost in these three years were 5.29 lakhs, 4.91 lakhs and 5.12 lakhs, as compared to the previous highest of 1.9 lakhs in 1960. The number of workers involved was 85, 31 and 58 thousand as compared to the previous highest of 29 thousand in 1960. Another probable indicator of the social situation in Andhra Pradesh is the increasing incidence of dacoity. While the country as a whole showed 2.7 per cent decrease in the incidence of dacoity in 1966, Andhra Pradesh showed a 25.8 per cent increase over the previous year, in the incidence of dacoity. The next year showed another 30.8 per cent increase.

The point to be clarified here is that dacoity in Andhra Pradesh does not mean the same thing as it does in Rajasthan or Madhya Pradesh. Many of these were cases of looting of food by hungry villagers from hoarded stocks of traders, landlords and transport lorries etc.

Political Environment

Politically there was stability in the sense of a overwhelming Congress majority in Assembly. But factionalism was rampant, and its area of operation was not limited to manipulations at the levels of legislature and party organisation. Manifestation
of Congress factional politics are to be found even in the mass social unrest. According to one commentator, Brahmananda Reddy the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh at that time was 'hand in glove with the (steel) agitation' and 'deliberately organised violence' at many places, to lower the image of his factional rival N. Sanjeeva Reddy, who was at that time Minister of Steel in Central Cabinet.

Besides the general economic, social and political environment, it is the peculiar characteristics of Andhra Pradesh Communist movement, which go a long way to help explain the emergence of Maoism in Andhra Pradesh. We can note five of these here. a) The present low status of Andhra Communists in terms of their mass following, electoral strength and general political respect, contrasted strongly with its past days, when it had led the Telengana Peasant Movement, the Visalandhra Movement, the Navya Bhasha movement etc. and was regarded as a strong claimant to political power, with lot of electoral and mass support. This contrast might obviously have led to much discontent and search for ways to regain and recoup previous popularity. b) The contrast between past popularity and present weakness also led to an inconsistency between organisational and political development of the party. While it had a well developed tightly knit party organisation whose cells existed in most villages of the State, its working was at a low key given the lack of mass support. This led to increasing search of alternate lines by the party under the organisational pressure. c) The search for alternate
lines might have been influenced by the fact that Andhra Communist movement had a Maoist past (1948-51) - in fact they were the pioneers of Maoist movement in India - and most members remember the popularity and leadership position which they enjoyed among people in those days. d) After their initial electoral victories (they were the single largest party in Telengana as well as among Andhra legislators in Madras Assembly in the 1952 elections, and in 1955 they were expecting to emerge as the ruling party of newly formed Andhra State) the Communists in Andhra suffered severe reverses on the electoral front. In the 1962 Assembly they had only 23 members in the Legislature. In the 1967 elections also in spite of the national wide anti-Congress wave they failed to make much headway and had only 19 seats (C.P.I. 10, CPI (M) 9). More important, many party members had a feeling that the electoral defeats were a result of physical repression by landlords, their goondas and police. The party review of the 1967 elections says "the police the Congress landlords and their goondas had conducted mass raids on more than hundred villages (where CPI(M) was strong). In Thungathurti Constituency alone twenty villages were raided... eight CPI (M) workers were murdered during and after elections and hundreds of them wounded."

There were many other allegations about party workers being beaten and sympathisers being harassed during elections. In these circumstances some workers might have felt that armed activity was necessary to gain power. e) By far the most important reason was the feeling among a strong section of the party that the peasant movement
around which their party was based could not be successfully carried out without armed resistance. In this period there were two areas in Andhra Pradesh where CPI (M) was carrying out a militant peasant movement. These two are in (a) Srikakulam and (b) in Khammam, Warangal and Nalgonda districts of Telengana area. In both these areas CPI (M) workers were facing a bad time. Seventy of their workers were killed between 1952 and 1968 of these 20 died between 1966 and 1968. Many atrocities were committed on the workers like the burning alive of a seven-year-old son of a CPI(M) worker. Their sympathizers were driven away from the villages, beaten harassed and looted. Their livestocks were killed, grain and crops destroyed, and property damaged; their leaders were beaten up and their organisations prevented from functioning. The cadre was involved in many cases in these areas. In Khammam Taluq alone there were one thousand and three hundred cases in which CPI(M) peasant workers were involved. These cases were very costly, troublesome, time-consuming and disrupting the normal life patterns of the people. For e.g. one case had thirty adjournments in one year. This meant that the workers had to leave their villages and go to the district headquarters where the court was situated for thirty times in that year. In these circumstances the leadership of the peasant movements in these areas staunchly supported the Maoist faction, which argued that the peasant movement can be taken forward only by armed resistance. The advice to boycott courts and resist attacks on them appealed to the leaders of both Srikakulam and Telengana regions where at this time (1967) the movement
was facing a severe crisis. In both these regions the leaders were practically functioning illegally (since on each of them many cases were pending) and the peasant movement was facing the necessity to choose between going ahead by forcible occupation of landlord's land (which would definitely involve armed struggle) or compromising and consolidating existing gains on various issues like rise in wages, reduction of rents etc.

The question of why the Andhra maoists were able to attract nearly 10,000 party cadres has been answered both by the CPI(M) and the maoists. The CPI(M)'s view was that in Andhra party's links with poor peasants and agricultural labour had got weaker and the party leadership for fear of alienating allies in the electoral front had taken up only issues around which all people can rally for e.g. Visalandhra, Steel agitation etc. Class issues were neglected. Activity among working class was confined to economism. The leadership in the party was predominantly petty-bourgeois. Theoritically the party was very poorly equipped. In those circumstances the maoist leaders relying on the "moods and sentiments of frustrated party members (a frustration caused by stagnation in mass and class movements, and shallow marxist-leninist understanding - both of which the result of a long reformist past.) and impatient petty-bourgeois youth in Andhra" managed to attract a large following.

The Andhra Maoist leadership explained their success in the
following terms. "We were able to gain victory in our State because (a) from 1962 onwards we translated international Communist docu-
ments and circulated them among party members thus raising their political level. (b) We relentlessly carried on ideological expo-
sure of the CPI(M) leadership from 1964 onwards even when we were in jail. (c) Our party based on peasantry and agricultural labour with its memories of Telengann armed struggle, easily accepted people's warpath. (d) The issue of resistance was already before us in Srikakulam and Warangal, Khammam and Karimnagar areas. So Naxalbari could easily convince us."

DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

The Nature of CPI - CPI(M) Split

After initially following a radical and militant line between 1948 and 1951 the Communist Party of India (CPI) slowly shifted its stand "to support constitutionalism and parliamentary action coupled with support given to specific policies of Indian National Congress.... The Amritsar Thesis signifies acceptance of parliamentary democracy as principal avenue through which party could secure power in India." Briefly the CPI's understanding of the Indian situation and the method in which power was to be captured is as follows. The State in India is the organ of the class rule of the national bourgeoisie which upholds and develops capitalism in the national economy of
India. In the changed international conditions of weakened imperialism in comparison to the socialist camp it is possible for the Indian capitalists to independently industrialise the country. But they are obstructed by various reactionary forces like the monopoly groups, landlords, uxoros, wholesale dealers etc. On its own the national bourgeoisie cannot overcome these obstructions and build an independent and strong India. So the role of communists in this context is to ally with the progressive sections of the bourgeoisie and build an alliance of all patriotic classes to defeat the reactionaries. The leadership of this alliance will be shared between national bourgeoisie and working class. In other words between the political manifestations of these classes - the Congress and the CPI. In this process the constitution of India with its universal franchise and fundamental rights provide a good platform and instrument for the struggle of people to defeat the reactionaries. However there was always a section in the CPI which had reservations about the increasing support to Congress and the matters came to a head on the issue of Sino-Indian clashes and the CPI's attitude towards it. While the rightist faction gave unstinted support to the Government stand, including a decision to suspend all working class militant struggles, the leftist faction called this chauvinism. This along with the issue of Dange's role in the Meerut conspiracy case was the immediate cause of a rapture between the two factions in the CPI. Consequently the CPI(M) was formed in July 1964 at Tenali.
Those who came out from the CPI while agreed on their
disagreement of CPI's policy of constitutional struggles and sup-
port to Government did not have any clear-cut alternate programme
on which all of them were united. In the words of CPI(H) Central
Committee (CC) “majority of the party membership responded to the
call of thirty-two national council members in 1964 not so much
because of the complete theoretical and ideological clarity they
had over the issue under dispute but because of their own practi-
cal experience of the increasing mass discontent and disillusion-
ment with Congress policies on the one hand and the revulsion with
the patently revisionist and class collaborationist practice of
Dange's party and the revisionist policies of CPSU, leadership....
A good chunk of it (the CPI) rallied behind our party due to its
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militant sentiments”. While the party as a whole did not have a
clear cut programme the same cannot be said for all the individual
members within the CPI(H). While some of them had specifically
48 repudiated armed insurrection as well as peaceful transition
others were openly and firmly preaching that Maoism was the only
correct line for the party.

The Maoist Propoganda upto 1967

The all-India parallel centre within the CPI circulated
various pamphlets of the CPC outlining its views on international
and Indian issues, between December 1962 and April 1963. These
included, "Wheence the Differences - Reply to Thores", "More on
Differences Between Togliatti and us", "More on Nehru's Philosophy", etc. In 1963 many weeklies were started in various regional languages by the pro-Chinese Communists. These gave publicity to Peking's views on all important ideological and practical questions for e.g. there were articles in "Janasakti" and "Sengodi" calling for armed guerilla struggle and follow the teachings of Mao Tse Tung. Many individual members also exhorted party workers to prepare for guerilla struggle - for e.g. Mangal Singh urged party members to prepare for a Telengana type of revolution while P.K. Chakravartty reminded them of Telengana and Kakadweep struggles.

During 1964 several groups for e.g. "The Revolutionary Council" led by Parimal Das Gupta, the "Chintam group" led by Amulya Sen etc. and "The Marx - Engels Institute" formed by Sushital Roy Choudary etc. were conducting maoist propaganda.

The major propagandist for Maoist cause in this period was Charu Majumdar. Between 1965 and 1967 he wrote eight letters to the party members analysing the Indian situation, and laid down the strategy for carrying out revolution in the country. The main formulations of these eight documents were that (1) the Indian revolution must take the path of armed struggle, (2) it should be on the pattern not of the Soviet revolution but of the Chineso revolution, and (3) the armed struggle in India should take the form of peoples' war as advocated by Mao Tse Tung and not the guerilla war of Che Guvara. He even laid down that he would
co-operate with only those individuals and groups who regarded Mao Tse Tung as the leader of world revolution, his thoughts as the highest form of Marxism-Leninism in the present era, who believe that a revolutionary situation exists everywhere in India, that Indian revolution can advance only through area-wise seizure of power and finally who believe that only through guerrilla war revolution can begin and advance. Charu Majumdar also formed the "Siliguri group" consisting of Kanu Sanyal, Jangal Santhal and other major Maoists of Bengal. This group published six cyclotyped leaflets during 1965-66 calling for instant armed peasant revolution. In April 9, 1965, they had published a document, *What is the meaning of the spontaneous Revolutionary Outburst in India* which stated "It is necessary now to come forward powerfully and tell the people forcefully that capturing of power area-wise is our way" and another pamphlet on August 30, 1966 called *Main Task at Present Is To Build Real Revolutionary Party Through Uncompromising Struggle Against Revisionism*

The differences within the CPI(M) became public as early as 1965 when the staunchly pro-Chinese sections of the party came out with the document called *The Differences among the jail leaders* which severely criticised the attitudes towards CPC and CPSU as explained in Sundarayya's letter from Moscow. In that according to the Maoist section Sundarayya had "condemned the attitude of CPC towards CPSU leadership and on the question of unity of action
in Vietnam. He certified that CPSU leadership despite certain mistakes was greatly helping the national liberation struggles. He condemned the attitude of CPC towards Kashmir border issue and Afro-Asian Conference. He declared that CPSU leadership must be treated as a friend and not as a foe, and that points of common agreement between CPC and CPSU were greater than points of disagreement.

CPI(M) and the Fourth General Election

The CPI(M) found itself in a position to form Government in two States - Kerala and West Bengal. However in its third stronghold Andhra Pradesh, it found itself in a very poor position having won only 10 seats. To the Lok Sabha they had won 19 seats. Following this major electoral gains CPI(M) came out with a document called *The New Situation and Our Tasks*. Here they saw a deepening economic crisis as engulfing the country and leading it to a political crisis. However the political crisis was seen as being in its initial stage and still leaving a lot of room for the bourgeoisie to manoeuvre. To take advantage of this situation they outlined three tasks (a) "Since the fortunes of the entire party, at the present stage of development are closely linked with the successful running of these Ministries ......, our party should mobilise ever wider popular support for the programmes of these Governments and expose all attempts to torpedo them." (b)
"The single biggest lesson (of the fourth general elections) is that by determined struggle to win allies and concentrating main fire and driving main edge against Congress Party and its Government which is the chief instrument of class rule and exploitation... by leaving no room for revisionists scare of non-Congress right reaction at present state, ..... we can win many victories". They felt that by uniting all parties and groups in opposition Congress it is possible in future to establish a "non-Congress alternate Government at the Centre". (c) "Mobilising the masses of the people around specific issues as they arise, and carrying forward unity of the allies in the fronts and Governments". In sum they thought that by uniting all the anti-Congress Parties including MMK, Akali Dal, Muslim League etc. and by successfully running the United Front Government in Kerala and West Bengal and by building mass movements they can capture Governmental power even at the Centre. The Maoist sections of CPI(M) were by no means amenable to this kind of a programme. Their answer to the New Situation and New Tasks was Naxalbari.

**Naxalbari Peasant Movement**

Naxalbari is a police station covering about 200 sq. km. in area in the Siliguri sub-division of Darjeeling district. The Bengal Maoists had a stronghold in this area. This area had a tradition of militant peasant struggle. CPI(M) was planning to
stage a militant agitation in this area but changed its plans after the unexpected victory at the polls. But the stage leadership of CPI(M) could not enforce their views on the local leadership which was in the hands of two devoted Maoists - Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal. As early as May 1966 they had formed a parallel party centre in Darjeeling and were propagating Maoism. They wanted "Naxalbari to be the first testing ground of the theory of area-wise seizure of power". As a result they launched the movement which was described as "a struggle not for land or crops but for political power". Naxalbari's importance in the history of the Indian Maoist movement is based not on the intensity of the movement or its success (both of these were quite limited) but on its symbolic significance and theoretical value. To the Indian Communist movement it posed the question of seizing political power and of directing all struggles towards that direction. It was the first modern instance of the implementation of an agrarian, peasant based guerilla struggle in rural areas with a view to destroying existing power structure. In other words it was the first recent example of the practice of Maoist path in India. It forced decisiveness on many of the vacillating cadre of CPI(M). According to the Andhra Pradesh Revolutionary Communist Committee (APRCC) "Naxalbari peasant armed struggle brought forward the issue of people's warpath; led to ideological discussions in the party; played a historical role by exposing neo-revisionist ideas; it brought out the
internal struggle in the party; it encouraged revolutionary struggle in other States to intensify ideological struggles. Naxalbari also had a great symbolic value in the sense that it came to represent in a way idealism and revolutionary ardour for many young people who came to join the Maoist movement as a result of the impact of the Naxalbari peasant struggle. It raised Maoism in India from the level of idea to the level of implementation. It raised the hopes of many and goaded them into action.

Chinese support to the Indian Maoists

The Chinese were not satisfied with the CPI(M)'s somewhat reserved step to their stand on various issues. Nor were they entirely happy with CPI(M)'s strategy for Indian revolution as it was reflected in the views of E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Jyoti Basu, Sundarayya and other "moderates". In this context they did not welcome the formation of United Front Governments in Kerala and West Bengal and saw them as no different from other State Governments which were characterised as "local feudal and comprador forces". They also accused parts of CPI(M) leadership of being inclined to revisionism. After the Naxalbari peasant struggle the Chinese clearly ranged themselves against the CPI(M) leadership and on the side of emerging Maoist groups. Radio Peking
described Naxalbari as "the front paw of revolutionary armed struggle launched by the Indians". The broadcast further held that Naxalbari showed the future path of revolution in India which was to closely follow that of the path of revolution in China, since both countries have similar socio-economic structures. This broadcast was followed by a series of reports in Chinese newspapers which supported the Naxalbari kind of struggle and advocated the Maoist strategy of "armed agrarian revolution as the road to emancipation of India," This attitude of China had an immense impact on many of the CPI(M) cadre. Given the internationalist orientation and perspectives of the communist movement, the Chinese support to Naxalbari greatly helped legitimisation of agrarian-based guerilla struggle as a proper path for Indian revolution. It gave moral support and strength to those of the Maoists who were still hesitating to have an organisational break with the CPI(M) for e.g. the Andhra group led by T. Nagi Reddy, C. Pulla Reddy and others. It helped them make up their minds and hurry up with the organisational split from the CPI(M). However, it is patently false to maintain as Bibhab Das Gupta does, that it was only after the Chinese criticism that the Andhra Naxalites became critical of CPI(M) programmes. We have already pointed out that the Andhra leaders were critical of various CPI(M) attitudes even while they were in jail during 1965-66 and were propagating through 'Janasakti' as well as translations of Chinese documents and Mao's
writings the path of agrarian revolution. Even the Madurai document of CPI(M) accepts that the differences were as old as 71 from 1964.

II

The first section has outlined the environment in which contributed to the re-emergence of Maoism. The second section describes the process of this emergence, and its ideological and organisational manifestations. We have seen that elections, formation of United Front Governments in Kerala and West Bengal, Naxalbari Peasant uprising and Chinese support to it had polarised people opposing and supporting the agrarian, guerilla, path of revolution. By June 68 this polarisation led to a clear cut organisational break and to the emergence of two distinct ideological and political lines.

The development of the two distinct lines is studied under the following heads. 1) The stand of CPI(M) on the Naxalbari events and the maoist criticisms of it, 2) the CPI(M) defense of its positions in its various theoretical formulations and assessment of the situation, 3) the maoist alternative to the CPI(M) position which leads to the 4) final irreconciliability between the two lines and the split.
Naxalbari and the Maoist Criticism

The CPI(M) reacted to Naxalbari initially with caution and moderation. The issue was treated simply as a peasant agitation for land and its political implications ignored. Police were asked to keep away from the area and CPI(M)'s kisan leader Haro Krishna Konar who was revenue Minister at that time visited Naxalbari with proposals of land distribution to stop the agitation. But as it became clear to the CPI(M) leadership that the maoists of Siliguri backed by Chinese moral support were determined on making Naxalbari an example of their political line they hardened in their attitude. The police were asked to treat Naxalbari as a law and order situation. The CPI(M) also made a statement disavowing themselves from the Chinese assessment of Naxalbari.

These steps of CPI(M) leadership invited much criticism from Andhra maoists. They had majority in the CPI(M)'s State committee, which passed a resolution criticising central leaderships attitude towards Naxalbari, and demanding that if necessary CPI (M) should withdraw from Bengal Ministry. This was followed by much propaganda on the part of Andhra Maoists on the Naxalbari issue. Kolla Venkaiah a member of CPI(M) Central Committee gave an open press statement condemning repression on Naxalbari.

C. Pulla Reddy a member of the State Secretariat of CPI(M) wrote an article called Mass movement and Communist attitude, in the
party organ 

In this article he maintained that 

*real communists* have no right to condemn a movement in which 

the people participates. In another essay in the same paper he 

showed Lenin's efforts to correct mistakes in communist parties 

of other countries, thus implying that Chinese were correct in 

commenting on Indian Communist affairs. He rejected the Central 

Committee of CPI(M)’s charges about CPC interference in Indian 

Party's affairs.

Following the Naxalbari events the Andhra maoists inten-

sified their propogation of *People's War Path*. They translated 

and circulated the Chinese documents. In the Andhra Pradesh 

Political School held in June 1967 by the CPI(M) they conducted 

propoganda about their views. They also used the issue of Govern-

ment suppression and landlord attacks on the CPI(M) led peasant 

movements in Srikakulam and Telengana areas to advocate guerilla 

struggle. They argued that only by armed resistance can the 

movement be taken to a 'higher stage' and succeed over the attacks 

of Police, landlords and their goondas.

The Central leadership of CPI(M) decided to ignore the 

Andhra maoists activities for the time being, since the latter 

were too strong in the State unit, and concentrated their fire 

on Bengal maoists. In Bengal Charu Majumdar and Sushital Roy 

Choudhury had established a parallel party centre in 1966 which
was propagating 'Peoples War Path' and criticising CPI(M) leadership policies. This centre was called Committee to Fight Inner Party Revisionism. It brought out two letters entitled letters to the Politbureau Numbers 1 and 2. These letters accused the Politbureau of CPI(M) for forgetting the basic Marxist teaching that force is the mid-wife of every old society and said that the Politbureau of CPI(M) was following a line which was "neo-revisionist by their participation in elections, practice of forming electoral blocs and alliance with bourgeois social reformists, with the serious intentions forming coalition Governments." Further, these letters stated, that the Indian people had no illusions about bourgeois democracy and it was necessary to boycott elections for raising people's consciousness. They opposed participation of communists in Governments and felt that political power comes only through the path of armed struggle.

The Bengal Maoists also started many journals for e.g. 'Dakshindosh, Commune, Bidroha etc. which criticised the CPI(M) line and propagated guerilla struggle.

CPI(M) Replies

At this stage it became imperative for the CPI(M) to strike back at the Maoist ranks for two reasons. Firstly unless they cleared their organisation of the maoist elements and dis-associated themselves from their activities it would have become
impossible for them to continue in the United Front Governments. (Ajay Mukherjee of West Bengal was already threatening to resign because of CPI(H)'s anti-national activities). Secondly unless they clarified their stand on ideological as well as programmatic issues it would have become impossible to maintain their identity within the party and they would have given an opportunity to the maoists to spread their ideas among party members who did not have any alternative ideas in front of them. Towards these ends the CPI(H) took two steps.

The first was to expel the maoist members from the party. They dissolved the party's Darjeeling District Committee and Siliguri sub-divisional committee and replaced them with adhoc Committees. Prominent members of these Committees like Charu Majumdar and Souren Bose were expelled from the party. This was followed by State-wide expulsions of prominent maoist leaders for e.g. Sushital Roy Choudhary, Ashim Chatterjee, Parimal Das Gupta, Asit Sen, Suniti Ghosh, Saroj Dutt, Mahadeb Mukherjee etc. According to Sankar Ghosh "the purge continued for quite some time and at the end about thousand extremists had been expelled from the party". CPI(H) followed up the expulsion by physically capturing the party Deshabitaishi office which was at that time being edited by a maoist, Sushital Roy Choudhary. CPI(H) also gave a press statement branding the Maoists as "CIA agents", "agent provocateurs" and "left opportunists."
The second step was to clarify CPI(M) position on various ideological and programmatic issues by a series of articles and documents. The first set of articles came from M. Basavapunniah a Politbureau member of CPI(M). He accused the maoists as being agents of vested interests and ruling classes and felt that the political objectives and policies set by maoists "have absolutely no relationship to the reality of class alignments obtaining either on the State of West Bengal or in the country as a whole, and the slogan of boycott of the Parliamentary institutions they (the Naxalites) are raising is nothing but left sectarian and adventurist". Basavapunniah's writings were followed by B.T. Bandives articles and then the various documents of Central Committee of CPI(M) submitted at the Madurai Meeting. These clarified the issues which had been avoided since 1964 for pragmatic reasons (like avoiding further splits in the organisation).

CPI(M) was formed in April 1964 but they did not come out with a definite stand on international ideological issues. This has been due to two reasons. Firstly they were in jail during 1964-65 and were busy with elections in 1966. Secondly in view of the severe inner party controversy on the issues it might have been felt that to take a definite position might be organisationally disruptive. However by 1967, the events had made it necessary to clarify the issues if CPI(M) was to maintain its ideological and programmatic identity apart from the maoists.
This was attempted to be done in two levels. In the first place B.T. Ranadive wrote a series of articles in *Peoples Democracy* which defined their position vis-a-vis the Naxalites on some questions of programme. And in August 1967 the Central Committee of CPI(M) met at Madurai and put out a draft clarifying their stand on various ideological issues.

*Ranadive's articles* clearly differentiated the CPI(M)’s position from those of the Maoists on various questions of strategy, tactics and the assessment of situation in India. CPI(M)’s position was that while India is in the midst of an economic crisis, the political crisis has still not fully matured. And in this situation they should work carefully using all forms and instruments of struggle. From this perspective Ranadive criticised the Maoist position on elections, armed struggle, etc. Ranadive’s argument is briefly as follows. Material conditions and economic crisis alone cannot determine the kind of struggle to be taken up for carrying out revolution. The level of mass consciousness and state of party organisation are very important considerations in the choice of the revolutionary path. The feudal, imperialist and bourgeois ideas have still a very stronghold on people’s minds. The level of party’s organisation is weak. Given these two circumstances it is necessary to use any instrument and opportunity available for strengthening party organisation and increasing people’s level of consciousness. In the existing situation elections provide very
useful instrument for strengthening organisation, raising consciousness and organising struggles. In this perspective the Maoist calls for immediate armed struggle, and abandonment of elections was rejected as leading to disorganisation of the party and as removed from existing level of people’s consciousness.

The Madurai Draft explained the CPI(M)’s position on various international issues like the character of the new epoch, the question of main contradiction, the possibility of avoidability of war and the chances of peaceful transition to socialism. Though in general they followed the Chinese views on these matters there were significant differences. This document characterises the new epoch as that in which imperialism has been weakened on a world scale and the forces of revolution have strengthened. As such it is an era in which Socialism and communism will triumph on a world scale. Imperialism though weakened was seen as still strong enough and to defeat it a unity of all revolutionary forces was necessary. The armed might and the diplomacy of the socialist camp, the forces of national liberation movements in colonial and neo-colonial countries, the proletarian revolutionary movement in the advanced capitalist countries and the peace movements will be able to defeat imperialism provided they unite and exploit the contradictions within imperialist countries.

On the question of contradiction they held that the contradiction between the world socialist camp and the imperialist camp
as the central one. But in the present stage of development the antagonism between imperialists and oppressed nations becomes "the focus of all other contradictions in our time." As such the revolutionary struggles in Asia, Africa and Latin America have importance for the success of socialism not only in these countries but on a worldwide scale. On the questions of war and peace they generally followed the Chinese view that wars can be eliminated only after the destruction of Imperialism and for the time being they can be avoided by unity, determination and increased armed strength of the socialist camp. In this context disarmament, peace movements etc. are tactical slogans because, strategically only the victory of revolutionary forces can stop war. On the question of peaceful co-existence they held that it is a concept of respite necessary for the consolidation of the socialist State, economically, politically and militarily. But they added that it is a fighting and revolutionary concept which permits no breeding of pacifist and utopian illusions about imperialism and on this ground they denied the possibility of peaceful transition to socialism in advanced countries as also the possibility of non-capitalist path of Afro-Asian and Latin American countries before the defeat of imperialism.

The Madurai draft also criticised Soviet Union for several concrete steps like transforming the dictatorship of the proletariat to the dictatorship of the peoples; offering material incentive to workers; differentiating between physical and mental labour etc.
However, they felt that unity of socialist countries was essential for success of revolution in any place and advised China to "Unite in action" with the Soviet Union in giving aid to Vietnam.

The Madurai ideological draft was supplemented with the document Divergent views between our Party and the C.P.C. on certain fundamental issues of Programme and Policy. The differences enumerated in this document fall roughly into three categories. In the first category are the questions about class character of Indian State. In the second are the questions about tactics and forms of struggle to be adopted in India. In the third are questions concerning the relationship between Communist parties of different countries.

The document denied validity to the Chinese view that Indian big bourgeoisie is a parasito class fostered by imperialism and as such the stage and nature of Indian revolution is principally anti-imperialist. Although the struggle against feudal-landlordism and bureaucratic capital is also important. The CPI(M) view point was that the Indian big bourgeoisie is fundamentally different from the comprador type which existed in China before revolution. It was essentially industrial bourgeoisie and not a commercial one with servile links to foreign capital. The CPI(M) felt that while Indian big bourgeoisie had a tendency of compromising with foreign capital it was also interested in expansion of national economy and the industries. They did not think that servility was the main characteristic of the Indian bourgeoisie.
The CPI(M) also disassociated itself from the Chinese view that the sharpening social contradictions in India have forced Indian Government to become "puppet", "stooge" and "lackey" of imperialism. In their view the Chinese were exaggerating the degree, depth and maturity of the contradictions in India because though the crisis in Indian economy is deepening, there exists "an excessively marked lack of correspondence between the objective revolutionary situation and the weakness of subjective factors." In other words they held that the Congress Party still has considerable political influence among the people, inspite of the worsening economic situation. While on the other hand the revolutionary party was far from properly organised and as such to talk about immediate revolution is not to take into consideration, the realities of the situation.

Another resolution passed at Madurai was called On Left Deviation and Left opportunism. It endorsed the line elaborated in the party's different documents and tactics about elections and participation in the United Front Ministry and rejected the formulations of the Left Opportunists.

The Maoist Alternative

The Madurai document faced severe criticism from the Andhra unit of the CPI(M). The maoists criticised it "for supporting Soviet neo-revisionist policies and opposing the revolutionary line brought forward by the CPC." They also introduced four
resolutions in the State Committee of CPI(M). One proposed discussion of the Madurai draft at all levels of the party, another sought permission for presentation of an alternate draft, the third condemned the release of the document before it reached party members and the fourth suggested that in view of the importance of the document it should be finalised in a party Congress and not by the Central Plenum of the party. All except the last of these resolutions received majority support.

After the State Committee meeting the Andhra maoists sent a draft containing alternate proposals on ideological issues written by Dovulapalli Venkateswara Rao (hereafter DV) a member of the State Secretariat to the Central Committee and requested that it be circulated among party members throughout the country as an alternative to the Madurai proposals. The request was turned down. The Andhra maoists followed this up by a propaganda campaign of touring various districts, distributing the Chinese documents and holding discussions with the party cadre.

The reaction of Bengal Maoists to the Madurai documents and resolutions, was to give a call to overthrow the leadership of CPI(M). These views were presented in an article written by Charu Majumdar called *It is time to build up a revolutionary party*. He held that the CC of CPI(M) has become class collaborationist and revisionist in ideology because it has opposed the Chinese party by regarding Soviet Union as still a member of the socialist
camp; it has favoured peaceful transition and progress through Parliamentary democracy; it has refused to lead the countrywide mass upsurge and the mass movements by its policy of continuing in the United front; it has beautified the reactionary Indian Government by pointing out that the Congress Party still holds considerable political influence among the people and it has rejected the entire doctrine of Marxism-Leninism. Because of these reasons they held that "the duty of every Marxist-Leninist is to oust the CC from the revolutionary front."

The document held that economic crisis in India was ripening into a political crisis through mass upheavals and that "agrarian revolution was the only path for liberating the country." But they saw that it was necessary to have a strong revolutionary party to realise the potentialities of the situation. They felt that their defeat in Naxalbari was due to lack of such a party. But as yet they did not advocate formation of a separate party but felt that by remaining within the CPI(M) and conducting sustained ideological campaigns in favour of maoist lines without paying any heed to party discipline or Central Committee's commands they could build up a revolutionary party. According to Sankar Ghosh "At this stage Mazumdar was thinking more of transforming the CPI(M) into a revolutionary party than of forming a new party .... For him the party was still the CPI(M) he repudiated only the leadership."
Within a month after the above article of Charu Majumdar the maoists formed a provisional committee of revolutionaries inside CPI(M) (in November 1967). The main idea expressed in this meeting was that though a revolutionary party is necessary for the success of the revolution it can neither be willed from above by a few people nor brought about by ideological struggle however intense that might be. Therefore revolutionary struggles must be unleashed wherever possible and out of these struggles will emerge a revolutionary party. "The birth and growth of the genuine revolutionary party is possible only through the storm and stress of sharp revolutionary class struggle".

The Andhra Pradesh State Committee of CPI(M) held its' Plenum meeting at Palakollu from 9th to 13th January 1968. This meeting provided the Andhra Maoists with an opportunity to bring out their ideological and programmatic stand in front of the entire State party cadre as well as to manoeuvre for capturing the State organisation of CPI(M). Two hundred and thirty one delegates from various districts and taluq levels participated in this meeting. It was also attended by P. Sundarayya and M. Basavapunniah, (both members of CPI(M) Politbureau) who tried to persuade the maoists to reconcile themselves to the Centre's views but they did not meet with much success.

The plenum elected to the Presidium two Maoists Tarimela Nagi Reddy (hereafter T.N.) and D.V. and one follower of Central
leadership Gunturu Bapanayya. The meeting was dominated by the maoist faction and it passed by an overwhelming majority a resolution demanding the CC of CPI(M) to prepare a new draft on the basis of the general line proposed by CPG. This resolution received 158 positive votes while 52 opposed and 8 remained neutral. The meeting also approved two resolutions each of which submitted a set of formulations on the basis of which the CC was requested to reconsider its' ideological draft. One of this resolutions was written by T.N. and C. Pulla Roddy (hereafter C.P.) and the other by Kolla Venkayya.

The resolutions criticise the Madurai draft for presenting a wrong understanding of the international situation. Specifically they alleged that the Madurai draft does not expose Soviet leadership's anti-revolutionary activities; it does not point out the class roots of Soviet revisionism; it does not realise that Soviet Union is trying to destroy the socialist system and restore capitalism; it does not realise that Soviet Union is implementing a class collaborationist line with U.S. imperialism; it does not see the decisive role of national liberation movement; it does not realise that China is functioning as the world centre for revolutionary movements.

The resolutions held that the new epoch "is characterised by the final collapse of imperialism and the final victory of world wide socialism." It was an era in which "the national liberation
struggles are becoming the decisive force for the final destruction of imperialism." They were undermining the imperialist system by weakening the foundations of the system in the metropolitan country itself. They were also contributing to the cause of peace and strengthening the socialist countries by thwarting the plans of U.S. imperialism for world domination. Because of this "the U.S. imperialism with its 3000 military bases throughout the world is concentrating its main military strength in the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America to drown the national liberation movement in blood." For this reason the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America have become the main arena in which the struggle between world revolutionary forces and imperialism is taking place. As such it was the task of the international working class movement and the socialist countries of the world to extend all possible support to the national liberation movement.

They further held that the CPSU leadership was collaborating with U.S. imperialism in their plans to gain world hegemony. For this purpose they have come to an agreement to maintain the monopoly of nuclear weapons so as to blackmail weaker nations." They were also trying to isolate China which is the centre of world revolution. In different ways both U.S. and USSR are obstructing world revolution. While U.S. is trying to physically suppress the revolutionary movements, Soviet Union is "sapping the fighting will of the proletariat" and "demoralising, disrupting and sabotaging the national liberation
movement" by its concepts of peaceful transition to socialism, peaceful co-existence, "local wars lead to world conflagration" etc.

They described the CPSU leadership as representing the bourgeois elements "who have usurped the leadership of the party and the State". These privileged strata in Soviet Union have transformed the dictatorship of the proletariat into a capitalist State and were trying to cover up the fact with talk about the Soviet Union being the "State of the whole people". They had also subverted the Communist Party and turned it into an instrument of bourgeois rule - they had restored capitalism in Soviet Union by 1) introducing material incentives (2) allowing competitive economy and free market (3) investing all authority in the hands of the bureaucrats managing industries (4) by collaboration agreements with international imperialists for e.g. with the Japanese capitalists for joint exploitation of Siberian mineral wealth. In this situation it was not possible for the world revolutionary forces to join hands with the Soviet Union for forming an United Front against U.S. imperialism. The Soviet Union "sees possibilities of peaceful coexistence and visualises broad areas of co-operation with the United States" and is in fact "planning collaboration with U.S. imperialism for world domination." Therefore the Soviet Union's call for Unity of Action in Vietnam "is a clever camouflage for greater disunity and greater disruption
within the socialist camp and within the working class movement". The resolutions agree with the CPC's position on its relations with the Soviet Union which is that "there can be no unity of action regarding Vietnam since" while the Vietnam war aims at a decisive defeat of U.S. imperialism the sole aim of CPSU leadership is to bring the Vietnam issue into the U.S. - Soviet collaboration."

The alternative draft viewed China "as the base of world revolution". They opined that China was in the forefront of the struggle against the global strategy of U.S. imperialism for world domination.

Maoism was described as the Marxism-Leninism of the modern times and was regarded as being applicable to the problems of an era in which imperialism was fast disintegrating and national peace in the world scene. Maoism was defined as "Peoples Democracy, Peoples War, completion of the socialist revolution through the cultural revolution, an irreconcilable ideological battle against Modern Revisionism." The resolutions followed up their formulations on international issues with their analysis on Indian situation. They thought the big bourgeoisie in India was becoming more and more comprador in its nature. The dependence of Indian industries for imported machinery, technical knowhow and foreign capital were making the Indian bourgeoisie agents of foreign imperialism. The
Growing number of foreign collaboration agreements was seen as a clear evidence of this. Devaluation, liberalisation of import and export policy etc. were the concessions Indian bourgeoisie was offering the foreign imperialists. India was regarded as completely dependent upon U.S. imperialism not only for military hardware and food supplies but also for funds to implement the five year plans. They did not think that the Soviet aid make any difference to the situation but was only serving the monopoly interests and helping the foreign Imperialist penetration.

This document expressed certain significant views on strategy and tactics of the Indian revolution which set the Andhra maoists apart from both the CPI(M) and the Bengal Maoists. According to this document "Prolonged agrarian armed revolution is the only path left open to all backward countries for social emancipation." The Andhra Maoists did not object to the CPI(M)'s formulation that legal and illegal work must be combined and so must be parliamentary work with mass struggles. But they maintained that unless a perspective of armed resistance was added to these, the revolution would not become a reality and the revolutionaries "endlessly remain waiting for an insurrection to take place." This line varies from the Bengal maoists' complete rejection of legal and mass work and insistence
on immediate armed struggle. Thus they rejected the view that
armed struggle was the beginning of the revolution, as well as
the view that the armed struggle came only at the end of the
revolution. In their perspective armed struggle was a product
of a certain stage of revolutionary development and was necessary
for taking the revolutionary process to higher stages.

This document did not take a clear cut stand either for or
against the participation in the elections and Ministries. They
criticised the understanding and the aims with which CPI(M)
entered the elections and Parliament. In their opinion represen-
tative institutions were just a facade, since they are "part and
parcel of the bourgeois landlord constitution which is pledged to
the preservation of bourgeois–landlord system of exploitation".
So the CPI(M)'s tactical slogan of participating in the provin-
cial Ministries "to bring into existence Governments' pledge
to carry out a modest programme of giving immediate relief to the
people" was wrong. The CPI(M) leaderships' understanding of the
role of Ministries, they felt was leading to "the subordination
of mass agitations to the need of existence and continuation of
the Ministries. Citing an example they said that on the question of
food shortages the attitude of the U.F. Governments was to explain
to the people that they were not responsible for the situation
while the revolutionary attitude to take was to mobilise the
masses against the Central Government on this issue and unleash militant mass movements. But this was not being done since it might come in the way of continued existence of the Ministries. Thus the Andhra Maoists while criticising CPI(M) participation in elections and the Ministries limited their criticisms to the tactical plain and it did not make it an issue of strategy or abstract theory. There was no total rejection of the Parliamentary institutions but only in the particular way of participating in them. In March '68 the Maoists leaders in Andhra formed the Andhra Pradesh Revolutionary Communist Committee (APRCC). This was to run ideological propaganda and co-ordinate the activities of Maoists within the CPI(M). This gave organisational shape to the Andhra Maoists. It implied that they would not as yet leave the CPI(M) but try to convert the whole of CPI(M) to its point of view.

In May 1968 the All India Coordination Committee of the Communist revolutionaries (AICCRR) was formed with Sushital Roy Choudary as its Convenor. It called upon all the revolutionaries who believed in maoist path to join it with the ultimate view of forming a party to implement the maoists line. At that time it did not specify any detailed programme on which AICCRR has to be based. This is because though all the maoists of India at that time were agreed on certain general issues like the Soviet
Union having become revisionists and the necessity of armed struggle in India, many divergencies of opinion existed among them viz. on the attitude to be taken towards mass movements, elections, partial struggles etc. In such a situation the founders of AICCRR did not think it wise to risk splits in the movement by imposing uniform views on ideological issues.

The Andhra Maoists did not join AICCRR immediately because, in spite of its all India pretensions AICCRR was essentially an organisation of the Bengal maoists. The Bengal maoists were also maintaining direct contacts with certain sections of the Andhra Maoists and this was not linked by the dominant T.N. C.P. faction of the Andhra Maoists. The pro-Bengal faction of Andhra maoists was at this time centred around the Naxalbari Solidarity Committee whose activists consisted mainly of students and erstwhile S.F.I. cadre. The leading lights of this organisation were Murlapudi Venkataratnam a student of Guntur Medical College, and Chauganti Bhaskara Rao an eminent Surgeon with a thriving practice at Ongole. They acted as a catalyst for the split within the Andhra maoists in which the Srikakulam maoist leaders and many other senior members of Telengana area broke away with the T.N., D.V. leadership. Several other maoist groups also for e.g. Kerala and Maharashtra kept away from the AICCRR at this time.
The Andhra Maoists spent the months following the Palakollu Conference in mobilising support for their stand and preparing for the Burdwan Plenum. To this end they were utilising all kinds of party meetings. In this situation the CPI(M) leadership decided to discontinue its practice of holding summer schools for political classes. The decision was disregarded by the Andhra branch of the Student Federation of India (This students wing of the CPI(M) was completely in the control of the Maoists), which held political school in various districts during May 1968. In the school held in Guntur district the differences between T.N. - D.V. faction and the pro-Bengal faction came to the surface. There was much confusion in the school with mutual recriminations taking up most of the time.

The Burdwan Plenum of CPI(M)'s Central Committee met in June 1968. Here the Maoists from Andhra Pradesh carried out a relentless struggle over ideological issues. Though the alternative drafts presented by T.N., C.P. and Kolla Venkiah were defeated by big margins (22 for and 158 against), they were successful to the extent of forcing the leadership to accept nine amendments to the official draft. These amendments made the draft more critical towards Russia and changed some original formulations like the one calling for unity in action between CPSU
and CPI(M). However the acceptance of these amendments did not conciliate Andhra maoists who did not see any fundamental change in the leadership's views on strategy and tactics of Indian Revolution. (Only D.V. seems to have been temporarily placated by the sharp criticism of OPSU, which was incorporated in the ideological resolution. He voted for it, but soon under pressure from fellow Maoists he wrote a letter to the party leadership withdrawing his support).

The split

Burdwan made it clear to the Andhra Maoists that there was going to be no change in leaderships' attitude and that their days in CPI(M) were numbered. They decided to make most of the situation and convert as many as possible to their line of thinking so that when the split came they could take the maximum number of party cadre with them.

The CPI(M) leadership took various steps to meet the situation. The party Politbureau nominated two members to the provincial Committee Secretariat and four members to the provincial Executive Committee, thus creating majority for the anti-maoist faction. The Politbureau also prohibited T.N., D.V., C.P. and Kolla Venkaih from addressing any meetings and from touring the State to explain to the District Committees the decisions
of Burdwan Plenum. It also directed the CPI(H)'s local committee in which the pro-leadership faction was in majority to take any steps required to discipline the members. Though T.N., C.P. etc. were spared, notices of expulsion were served on many lower level Maoists, particularly in Khammam district. The cultural troupe of Subbarao Panigrahi which was propagating peoples war path was also disciplined.

The Central Committee of CPI(H) followed up the various organisational steps with a Letter to Andhra Comrades in which they held that the Andhra Maoists positions were in "fundamental opposition" to the CPI(H)'s stand on various issues concerning Indian Revolutionary movement and International Communist movement. They criticised the Andhra Maoists for holding that the Soviet Union had joined U.S.A. in order to destroy China which was the only base of world revolution and liberation. They also disagreed with the view that the national liberation movements play the decisive role in the destruction of Imperialism.

This was followed by a detailed criticism of Andhra Maoist's stand on various aspects of Indian reality. They disagreed with the Maoist view that India was no more than a neo-colony of U.S., and her independence was "formal". They held that the present day circumstances present Indian bourgeois ruling class with an
opportunity to take advantage of the antagonism between Imperialist and Socialist camps, as well as the antagonism between the various Imperialist countries. So they can maintain their independence to some extent by using these antagonisms as well by using the State power which they are controlling since 1950.

The CPI(M) letter then goes on to point out to a inconsistency in the Maoist stand on the stage of revolution. They felt that since maoists hold the stage of revolution to be peoples democratic (that is one involving agrarian revolution) they become inconsistent when they say that the main contradiction is between nation as a whole and U.S. Imperialism and its lackeys on the other hand. Because in a agrarian revolution the principal contradiction is between people and feudal elements, on the other hand if principal contradiction is with Imperialism, then the stage of revolution should be national democratic.

The CPI(M) leadership did not agree with the assessment of maoists on the character of Indian big bourgeoisie. The stand of maoists was that the Indian big bourgeoisie was totally dependent on foreign Imperialism and as such unable to assert its independence in any way, and consequently there was increasing dominance of foreign monopoly capital and the consolidation of feudal and semi-feudal land relations. In this situation the economic 'aid'
of Soviet Union was functioning as lever through which U.S. capital was penetrating our national economy. Soviet aid which helps the public sector in India was seen as creating the profitable climate for U.S. investment. CPI(M) stand on the other hand was that Indian bourgeoisie inspite of its compromises with Imperialism, was to some extent developing capitalist relations in India by taking advantage of Soviet aid etc.

The Letter to Andhra Comrade also severely criticised the maoist estimates of the situation prevailing in India at that time. The maoists were holding that in India a "revolutionary situation" existed and demanded armed forms of struggle and guerilla methods of organisation. In their view the people were fully conscious of the need for revolution. They also held that representative institutions in India were a sham. They felt that revolution was being prevented only by the armed might of counter-revolutionaries forces. As such they felt forms of struggle such as "strikes, demonstrations, petitions and elections... building class and mass organisations.... these tasks are impossible to be fulfilled, unless they are integrated with and carried side by side with the peasant partisan war". This estimate was discounted by the CPI(M) leadership which held that the people were still under the ideological domination of bourgeoisie and the level of party organisation in trade union, peasant and other fronts was not strong enough to make revolution.
The stand of maoists as described in the Letter to Andhra Comrades was accurate only in so far as the Naralbari maoist faction was concerned. T.N., D.V., C.P. and their followers in andhra had many differences with this stand. (we had already noted that they were not totally opposed to participation in elections, United Front Governments etc.). They clarified their position as well as mounted a severe criticism of the CPI(M) leadership in The open letter to party members which was circulated as their reply to Letter to Andhra Comrades.

The overall attitude of The open letter to party members was a hardening of attitudes both organisationally and theoretically towards the CPI(M). While the previous discussions and criticism of CPI(M) leadership were conducted at inter-committee level now the criticism of party leadership was made publicly and aimed directly for the party members. It signified that the Andhra Maoists could no longer see the party leadership voluntarily reforming and as such decided to abandon them and take as many of the party members on the "correct line" as possible. The open letter symbolises a clear polarisation on ideological issues and an organisational separation.

The CPI(M) leadership and its political line was clearly characterised as "nothing but a neo-revisionist line covered with deceptive revolutionary phraseology." The CPI(M) arguments were seen as aimed at weakening revolutionary struggles and it was
accused of supporting repressive measures against Naxalbari peasant movement, and of attempting to disrupt the movements in Srikakulam and Telengana areas. The letter rejected CPA(H)'s "middle path" (one which is different from both Chinese and Soviet positions) as a "myth" and said that they were destroying revolutionary content of concepts like peoples democracy and agrarian revolution and replacing them in practice with reformist ideas like non-Congress democracy.

The Open-Letter expressed the view that the Socialist Camp came into existence only after the Chinese Revolution. China was seen as a centre of world revolution which was struggling to complete socialist revolution, internally through the cultural revolution and externally through help to national liberation movements. On the other hand the CPSU leadership was acting as an agent and friend of imperialism. Its policy was preservation of capitalism in capitalist countries and restoration of capitalism in socialist countries. It had joined hand with the imperialists and reactionaries to suppress revolutionary movements and conspired to encircle and isolate China, economically, politically and militarily.

Inspite of the counter revolutionary collusion an "excellent revolutionary situation existed in the world". Imperialism was fighting its last-ditch battles and its complete destruction was on the agenda. This task was to be fulfilled by the national
liberation movements, on whose victory the fate of world humanity depends." It was the duty of all socialist countries to help these movements. But it was wrong to hold like the CPI(M) does that their victory depends on the "revolutionary combination of socialist diplomacy and the armed help of the socialist countries". On the other hand the national liberation movements can stand upon their own legs and can play a decisive role in destroying imperialism in colonial and semi-colonial countries as well as at a world level.

The Open-Letter resolutely declared that "Peoples' War" was the "universal method for national liberation movements". They felt that "in all backward countries the mass movements after reaching a particular stage have to face severe repression of the Government. After this stage has been reached the peoples movements could make further advance only by beating back the repressive measures, only by combining the mass movements with armed struggle." But the letter took caution that it by no means was calling for an immediate armed revolt. They said "Ours is a vast country with uneven development. Peoples movements are also developing unevenly. In these conditions, in today's economic and political crisis, militant struggles are bound to break in various parts of the country. The Communist Party must boldly lead these struggles ... resist the repressive measures .... develop the anti-landlord struggles.... coordinate all these
struggles and according to a plan develop these struggles towards a peoples war".

The Open-Letter took a tougher stand on United Front with non-Congress parties and formation of Ministries. They felt, such alliances and Ministries were only leading to increasing illusions among the masses. They dubbed such alliances as "nothing but renunciation of the theory of class struggle and adoption of a class collaborationist policy. An interesting aspect of the Open Letter was that it contained no specific and clear cut condemnation of participation in elections.

Significantly the Open Letter characterised India as a neo-colony of American Imperialism. Thus they moved to the left of their previous stand in which they seemed to have allowed some independence for Indian bourgeoisie. This shift must have been due to the realisation that acceptance of even a little independence for the Indian bourgeoisie would imply acceptance of a contradiction between Indian bourgeoisie and imperialism and thus, some possibility for progressive role of the Indian bourgeoisie, thus some necessity for the communist movement to help the bourgeoisie and thus some possibilities of acting within the existing framework. Thus to totally differentiate themselves from the CPI(M) standpoint they denied any possibilities of industrial development under the Indian bourgeoisie and also denied any progressive content for India's foreign policy.
The Open-Letter ended by giving a call to "build a strong and disciplined communist party through struggles based on Marxism-Leninism."

In June 1968 the expelled State Committee members held a meeting in Vijayawada, which was attended by representatives from various districts. Here it was decided to completely break with the CPI(M) and the Andhra Pradesh Coordination Committee for Communist revolutionaries (APCCC) was formed.

Various accounts exist of the strength of the maoists when they broke away from CPI(M). Sundarayya stated to the press in June 1968, that of the 16,000 party members in Andhra a quarter would go to the maoist, another quarter go to the CPI(M) while fifty per cent of them would remain inactive. The CPI(M) Political and Organisational Report submitted to the Cochin Congress (1968) noted a fall from 16,456 to 9,428 in the membership figures of Andhra Pradesh. This figure seems to be unrealistic, and a loss of about more than 10,000 in the membership of the CPI(M) seems to be a more accurate number. The CPI(M) figures submitted for their Ninth Congress at Madurai show the membership of CPI(M) at Andhra, only at 5,870. The Maoists themselves claimed about 10,000 defections from CPI(M). However the defections from CPI(M) need not be taken as an accurate indicator of the actual strength of maoists at that time. For this we must deduct those of whom who became inactive to various degrees and add all those new members who started their
political career not in CPI(M) but directly in APCCCR.

Not many details are available as to the exact break-up of the defections from the CPI(M) either area-wise or in respect of kinds of organisation. However an attempt at analysis can be made. At the top leadership level the break-split seems to have been even. People more closely connected with the Central leadership like Sundarayya, Basavapunniah, Moturi Hanumantha Rao and Nanduri Prasada Rao, who are either members of the Politbureau or organisationally linked to running party organs at Central level remained with the CPI(M). While those leaders whose political fortunes and interests were more deeply rooted with the state of movement in Andhra Pradesh went over to the Maoists. At the district and taluq level of the leadership also, the split seems to have been even. It does not seem to have been determined by any factors other than ideological proclivities or personal loyalties. Among the rank and file though the split seems to have been even more of the older cadre which was in the Telengana peasant movement seems to have opted for the Maoists. In the trade union front most of the units seemed to have stayed with the CPI(M) while a few units like the railway workers in Warangal area, the jute unions in West Godavari and some units in Singareni Collieries seemed to have gone over with the APCCCR. The Kisan Sabha in Andhra Pradesh was almost defunct, but whatever little organisation was there, was under the influence of Nanduri Prasada Rao and Uddamaraju Ramam and seemed to have stayed with the CPI(M).
Probably the reason was that after years of a united front line in village areas the Kisan Sabha was firmly in the hands of the rich peasantry who were sceptical about the radical intentions of the Maoists. The students federation of India, Andhra unit seemed to have totally gone into the Maoists hands. A majority of CPI(M) sympathisers in the teachers organisations were sympathetic to the Maoist cause. All the top Maoist leaders in Telengana and Srikakulam areas like K.G. Satyamurthi, Kondapalli Seetharamiah, Vempatapu Satyanarayana etc. were teachers. The majority of CPI(M) cultural organisations after some initial vacillation went over to the Maoist side led by their President Sri Sri. The party leadership as well and workers in areas where there was a militant peasant movement going on, went over to the side of Maoists. This was the case both in Srikakulam and in Mulug, Yellandu, Bayyaram etc. taluqs in Telengana. There was no rural-urban dichotomy significance in the split. The Maoists had as much following in the urban party committees as in the rural. The Maoist following was spread more or less evenly over all the districts. They had the maximum following in districts where CPI(M) was stronger.
NOTES


8. Ibid.


12. Ibid.

13. See Ibid.


15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.


22. Ibid., p. 132.


25. Report on the Survey as to how workers support themselves during retrenchments etc., Labour Bureau, (Government of India), Table 1.8, p. 1.


27. Fourth Five Year Plan in Andhra Pradesh (Government of Andhra Pradesh), Table III, p. 154.

28. Ibid., Table X, p. 162.

29. Ibid., Table I, p. 152.

30. Ibid., Table XVIII, p. 170.


37. See Raise your voice against landlord Terrorism in Andhra Pradesh, (CPI(M), 1968).

38. Ibid., p. 34.

39. Ibid. All these facts cannot be dismissed as being exaggerated or false because these allegations were made in a letter addressed to the Prime Minister.


41. For details see Chapter V and Chapter VII.

42. Why the Ultra-Left deviation, (CPI(M), 1968), Pp. 35-41.


46. See Denge's statement reproduced in Peoples Democracy, January 1, 1967.


48. For e.g. see E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Letter to Party Comrades (1964).


51. Ibid., p. 40.


54. Ibid.


59. Ibid., pp. 36-37.

60. Ibid., p. 78.

61. Ibid., p. 62.


70. Ibid., p. 186.


72. But not programmatic clarity. The people who broke away from CPI(H) in favour of "People's War Path" were agreed on general framework within which they will work, but they were neither clear nor sure about the exact details of the programs and policies which they would follow. The tactical and strategic details were not worked out. These emerged later and only after many more splits.
73. See the "Statement of the West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M) in People's Democracy, June 4, 1967.


76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.


79. Ibid. See Pp.76-77.


85. Ibid., p. 11.

86. See Ibid., Pp. 15-16.

87. Ibid., p. 21.

88. Ibid., p. 23.

89. Ibid., See Pp.28-32.


91. Ibid., p. 51.


93. Ibid., p. 57.

94. Ibid.


96a. Ibid.


98. Ibid., p. 5.

99. Ibid.

100. See Ibid., p. 6.


104. Ibid. See the introduction.

105. Ibid., p. 8.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid., p. 20.

108. Ibid., p. 19.

109. Ibid.

110. Ibid., p. 23.

111. See Ibid., p. 23.

112. Ibid., p. 35.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid., p. 38.

115. Ibid., p. 45.

116. Ibid.

118. Ibid., p. 57.
119. Ibid., p. 60.
120. Ibid., p. 52.
121. Ibid., p. 57.
122. Ibid.

123. The details of the differences and the organisational results of these differences between T.N. - D.V. group and Charu Majumdar group is traced in the next Chapter.

126. Ibid., p. 2.


128. Ibid., Pp.8-10.
129. Ibid., p. 11.
131. Ibid., p. 23.

133. Ibid., p. 7.
134. Ibid., p. 5.
135. Ibid., p. 19.
137. Ibid., p. 5.
138. Ibid., p. 8.
139. Ibid., Pp. 8-10.
140. Ibid., p. 14.
Emphasis added. Ibid., p. 13. In the *Bajaklyan Nirmana Saraskho* (Doc., C-28) published in 1969, the APRCC maintained that their denial in the *Open Letter* of giving a call for immediate armed struggle, was only meant to escape immediate arrest of their cadre. This self-criticism does not seem to be sincere. The *Open Letter* had clearly taken into account (a) the necessity of struggles to develop to a certain extent before they can take an armed form and (b) uneven development of struggles in the various areas of India. It looks much more probable that APRCC's self-criticism of 1969 was a result of their efforts to appease the radicals and to assure their revolutionary bona fides to the cadre who were questioning their intentions because of the influence of Srikakulam struggle which was being conducted under the guidance of Charu Majumdar faction. Thus this self-criticism was more a part of the 1969 "Left-line" taken by APRCC rather than intrinsic part of their theoretical formulations.

Ibid., p. 15.

Ibid., p. 23.

For e.g. see p. 24 Ibid. for the ridicule they pour on CPI(M) for saying that the "Congress Government may be able to achieve to some extent industrial development (emphasis added)."

Ibid., p. 32.
