CHAPTER IV

TWO SHADES IN DAOISM
This Chapter examines the emergence of two clearly distinct strategic and tactical lines within the broad ambit of maoism, and the process of debate between these two groups on various issues.

During the inner-party struggle of 1964-68 many maoist groups emerged within the CPI(M). When they split away from the CPI(M) their strength in various State units of CPI(M) was as following. In Andhra Pradesh 10,000 of the 16,000 CPI(M) members sympathised with them; in Jammu and Kashmir 800 out of 800, in Punjab 100 out of 600, in Delhi 150 out of 400, in Bihar 300 out of 2,600 in Orissa 150 out of 800, in Maharashtra 150 out of 2,300, in Tamil Nadu 1,300 out of 8,500 and 500 out of 16,300 in West Bengal.

Basic agreement existed among all these groups in two areas. Firstly they were agreed on various formulations about the international situation. They were of one opinion on Soviet Union being revisionist, China being the centre of world revolution, national liberation movements being the decisive force in the destruction of imperialism, peaceful transition to socialism being an impossibility etc. The second area in which agreement existed was the broad general characterisations about the Indian situation and the path of revolution there. They were all agreed, that Indian independence was only formal, that it was ruled by a comprador-bureaucratic bourgeoisie which was allied to feudalism, and was subservient to imperialism.
They also agreed that guerilla struggle based on peasants was
the path to India's liberation.

Beyond these basic agreements, lay a vast grey area on
which there was no clarity and implicit agreement among the
maoists. This area concerns questions about strategy and
tactics—like, what was the level of peoples consciousness in
India, what forms of struggle have to be adopted, what was to
be the nature of organisation to lead these struggles, on what
issues and demands were struggles to be carried out, whether
to take offensive actions or limit oneself only to defensive mea-
sures, when and where to start armed struggle etc.

Two groups in Maoists

Within the maoists two distinct groups emerged, which
offered different answers to the question of strategy and tactics.
The first of these groups, was led by the leaders of Naxalbari
Peasant struggle—Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal etc. This faction
was highly influential within the maoists for four reasons.
Firstly it had the advantage of being in the forefront of an
inner-party struggle for a maoist line. In fact Charu Majumdar
pioneered Maoism in the sense that he was the most vocal, and
enthusiastic supporter of Maoism as early as 1964. He was the
first to translate and circulate the Chinese documents. This
group was the first to form a parallel committee within CPI(M)
to propagate Maoism. It was the first to form an all India body within the CPI(M) (November 1967). It was the first group to sever its links with CPI(M) and form an independent organisation for Maoists (May 1968). Secondly it enjoyed the credit of having led the Naxalbari peasant struggle. Thirdly, it had the recognition and open support of the CPC and finally, though its following within West Bengal CPI(M) was negligible (estimates varying from 400 to 1000), it was the only Maoist group which had an active following outside the regular communist cadre. Many young men inspired by Naxalbari were flocking to it. In 1967-68 students union elections, the pro-maoist, Progressive Students Coordination Committee won impressive victories in Calcutta, overshadowing all other students' organisations. Many artists like Utpal Dutt and Aparna Sen, and many intellectuals like Amiya Chakravarthi (Principal of a local College), Promod Sen Gupta (veteran revolutionary and well known literary figure) and Sasar Sen (poet and journalist) had rallied around this group. As a result of the high prestige accruing to it because of these factors the Bengal maoist faction was able to carry behind it the Bihar, U.P., Jammu and Kashmir Maoist groups as well as a big chunk of maoist groups of Andhra Pradesh and Punjab.

The second maoist faction was centred around the Andhra group of maoists led by men of national stature within the Communist movement like T.N., D.V., C.P. etc. This group was organisationally strong and sound. It was supported by the Maharashtra maoists,
besides the K.P.R. Gopalan and Ramadas faction of maoists in Kerala, (the above two groups formed 80 per cent of the maoists) and the Parimal Das Gupta faction in West Bengal, and major sections of maoists in Punjab and Tamil Nadu.

The differences of opinion between the two maoist groups surfaced by early 1967 on the issue of the attitude to be adopted towards the parent party CPI(M). The Andhra faction held that there was no need to precipitate the impending split within the CPI(M) organisation. Their idea was to stay in the organisation as long possible, conduct ideological struggles and win over as many members as possible to their side. They felt that a split which was hurried through would isolate them and as a result the struggle would suffer. The Bengal faction on the other hand had different ideas. For all practical purposes, they were out of CPI(M) by July 1967. They were more sceptical about the revolutionary potential of the CPI(M) cadre. They felt that the old party organisers had fallen into economist ways of functioning as a result of the "rut of revisionism and bourgeois pattern of activity into which the CPI(M) had fallen." So, "if we rely on the revolutionary forces inside the party we shall never be able to build a revolutionary party. We must lay our stress on the hundreds of thousands of young people outside the party." Thus, "those who think our main task is to attract the great majority of the members of so-called marxist parties towards us and that a revolutionary party can be built up this way are consciously or unconsciously thinking
of forming only another party for fighting elections."

On the surface of it these differences may seem only to be of minor tactical importance, caused by differential organizational strength i.e. while the West Bengal maoist formed a hopeless minority within the CPI(M) of the State, the Andhra faction had clear majority in all the State Committees as well as the general membership of the CPI(M) in their State. The behaviour of the Jammu & Kashmir as well as U.P. of the maoists can be seen as further evidence to this analysis. Maoists in these States followed the Andhra attitude towards the parent party inspite of their being much closer to the W. Bengal faction on matters of strategy, tactics etc. This might be because in both these States the maoists had a clear majority in these organisations.

These differential attitudes towards formation of a revolutionary party were a result of divergent outlooks, assumptions, and assessment of the situation in the country and its revolutionary possibilities. These divergences were made explicit only later in the process of an unfolding debate between the Andhra and Bengal factions of maoists on the proper attitude to be taken to various issues and the correct responses to be adopted to various events.

The Bengal and Andhra groups were the products of two totally different manifestation of the nations socio-economic
and political crisis. The context of Bengal faction was provided by the terrorist tradition of Bengal, the miserable state of its industries, the enormous problems of the metropolitan city of Calcutta, the enthusiastic support to the maoists by students and unemployed youth of Calcutta, the hunger riots of 1966 and the experiences of Naxalbari. On the other hand the Andhra maoist faction was more of an outcome of an organisation crisis within the communist movement, and it was situated in the relative socio-political calm of Andhra Pradesh. The differential backgrounds, surroundings, and immediate experience reflected in the differential responses to events, divergent perceptions of revolutionary possibilities and conflicting generalisations from their experience. Concretely the Bengal faction saw mass upsurge and revolutionary situation all around. It was very optimistic about its' prospects and was in a great hurry to utilise what it saw as a favourable situation. The Andhra faction was much more cautious and felt the people were not yet fully conscious of the necessity of revolution. Thus they thought in terms of a long drawn out struggle in front of them and were unwilling to agree with the Bengal faction which felt that a "single spark" was enough to set off a prairie fire. Thus while Bengal faction saw the situation as ripe for revolution and needing only courageous and determined leadership, the Andhra maoists visualised the necessity of educating the people and carrying out revolution by a slow and arduous process.
Immodate Revolution

The perspective of Bengal Maoist faction was immediate seizure of power through armed struggle. All their ideas on strategy and tactics reflected this perspective. They regarded the lesson of Naxalbari as teaching them that "militant struggles must be carried on not for land, crops etc. but for seizure of State power". So for this purpose liberated zones were to be established through armed struggles. "Thus the party must immediately start building up areas of peasant armed struggle".

This strategy of immediate seizure of power through armed struggle, pervaded all their ideas. Thus they viewed the party which will be the chief instrument of the seizure of power as being "not only a revolutionary party but will also at the same time be the peoples armed forces and the peoples State power. They equated the party and the peoples army, thus implying that there was no distinction in the tasks to be performed by them. This party was to be built not by recruitment of members through propaganda etc. but by organising armed struggles in the countryside and converting the participants into a party. Thus armed struggle becomes a pre-condition for the existence of party which was to consist of only "revolutionaries in deeds", and those who had proved themselves in armed struggle. In Charu Majumdar's words "the primary condition for building up of a revolutionary party is to organise armed struggle in the countryside". They held
that the "sole criterion of whether a party is revolutionary or not is whether the party is directing armed struggle or not".

Their assessment of the situation in India was that a 'revolutionary mass upsurge' existed, people were fully conscious and prepared to take part in revolution. This assessment underlies their formulations regarding the forms of struggle to be adopted. The party can "never be an open party", and as such participation in elections etc. was ruled out. Propaganda was seen as necessary but they seem to have thought in terms of armed propaganda in favour of armed struggle. Education of workers and peasants was to be carried on not through papers and pamphlets but through revolutionary example and revolutionary struggles. People were to learn through participation and since willingness of the masses to participate in revolution is already assumed the question of convincing people to participate did not arise. Meetings and demonstrations were unnecessary but initially one or two of them may be organised if "the peasants acting under the influence of their old method of working ask (for them)". They did not belittle economic struggles for "guerilla warfare is basically a higher stage of class struggle, and class struggle is the summation of economic and political struggles." But these economic struggles were not viewed in the conventional way i.e. they were neither seen as aimed at gaining certain economic demands nor seen as a partial struggle which could destroy the illusions of the workers and peasants and
prepare them to participate in higher forms of struggle. Economic struggles as visualised by the Bengal maoists were nothing more than calls for armed struggle. They did not raise any demands like raising of wages or reducing of rents but only called for seizure of crops and lands, which in other words meant physical confrontation with the landlords. Such was their understanding and perspective of the economic struggles.

The Bengal Maoists orientation towards armed guerilla struggle also effected their views on the United Front. They felt that "the United Front can be built up only in the course of an armed struggle led by a revolutionary party" and "a United Front can be successfully built only by directing an armed struggle.... the party that is not engaged in directing an armed struggle has no business to talk about United Front." Thus they viewed the United Front as something which does not precede but follows the armed struggle. This United Front was to be based essentially on the peasants. "We must build our party basically among the peasant masses." In the traditional Marxist fashion they call for working class leadership of the peasants but "the peasants are the main force of revolution and the victory in revolution depends on arousing and arming the peasant masses." So the party work in the working class was to be "based on politics of agrarian revolution". This meant that after propaganda among the workers those who joined the
party "must be sent to the rural areas actively in organising
the agrarian revolution. In this way the leadership of the
proletariat over the agrarian revolution will be realised in an
effective form". Thus the work among proletariat was aimed at
and limited to recruiting people for armed struggle, in rural
areas. No attention was paid to the demands of working class
in themselves for e.g. for higher wages etc. To the students
and intellectuals also the Bengal maoists gave a similar advice,-
they were to go to the villages, integrate themselves with the
peasants and participate in the armed struggle. In their concep-
tion of the United Front, the rich Peasants (as defined by Mao)
were not included, since the "rich peasants in our country rely
mainly on feudal exploitation. So our relation with them will
be mainly one of struggle." They thought that it would be possible
to forge unity with the nationalities. For e.g. the Nagas, Mizos
etc. but "the precondition for forming such an United Front is
that the'nationalities' must be carrying on armed struggles...
the Communist should forge unity with the national struggles
but the duty of the communists is to develop class struggles
and not national struggle". The Bengal Maoists also ruled out
any possibility of any kind of unity with existing political
parties like the CPI, CPI(M), Socialist parties etc. For "today
all the political parties of India have turned into accomplices
of U.S. imperialism... and become enemies of the revolution."
So far we have been citing various writings of Charu Majumdar to support the point that the assessment of a nationwide upsurge and the resultant perspective of immediate seizure of power has led to a redefinition of the traditional Maoist tools like "United Front", "Mass organisations" and "Economic Struggles" etc. In fact we can find several writings by members of the Bengal faction and several resolutions of A.I.C.C.C.R which can be held as evidence to say that United Front, mass organisations etc. are abandoned only after 1969 and not before. In February 1968 the official organ of the Bengal Maoist Liberation carried a lead article which maintained that communists would continue to participate in elections if they are allowed to. "We are not aware of any Marxist in this country who claims that the role of bourgeois Parliamentarism as a political weapon has out-lived its usefulness." Kanu Sanyal's Terai assessment also commended the role played by mass organisations and the Naxalbari peasant struggles. In May 1968 the A.I.C.C.C.R accepted unanimously a draft proposed by Satyanarayan Singh (SN) and Parimal Das Gupta which proposed participation in Trade Unions - even in those which were led by the Congress Party. In S.N's words at that time they sought to link "present with future, immediate with ultimate, partial to whole, economic to political, legal with illegal, open with secret and party with the masses." However under the ruthless logic of the development of this movement
based on the assessment of a nation-wide upsurge and immediate seizure of power led either to the abandonment of these ideas by the profounders or the abandonment of the party by their foes. While Asit Sen left the party, S.N. changed his opinion.

Graduated Approach

The perspective of Andhra Maoist faction was governed not by 'immediate seizure of power' but by the necessity of a protracted struggle to build up a revolutionary movement. Though they were at one with the Bengal Maoists on the necessity of armed struggle they differed on the concrete manner in which the struggle was to be conducted. They made it clear in The Open Letter that they were not calling for immediate armed struggle. As already noted they were also not firm in their opposition to participation in elections and united fronts with non-Congress parties. C.P. in an article in Janasakti maintained that electoral participation and United Fronts were alright as long as they were used to destroy peoples illusions about them and conduct mass struggles. Similar views were expressed by T.N. in a press interview. In these circumstances they did not agree with the opinions of CPC as expressed in articles such as the Spring thunder breaks over India. C.P. wrote a letter to the Politbureau of CPI(M) where he maintained that the Chinese were mistaken in their assessment of Indian situation.
The Protracted War perspective of the Andhra maoists, determined their approach to the questions of party building, forming united front and conducting mass movements. Intense ideological struggles, as well as class struggles were to be conducted, and their viewpoint was to be widely propagated by circulating the party papers and documents. Out of these the revolutionary party was to slowly emerge. In this process ideological struggle had a very important position. It was the pre-condition of Revolutionary struggles. Though they agreed that party organisation was to be secret, they did not accept the view that party activities must be limited to armed struggle and illegal activities. They were of the view that the party must organise mass movements and democratic organisations like civil rights associations, Trade Unions etc.

Assuming that peoples consciousness was as yet not prepared for armed struggle, they saw the immediate task as one of organising class struggles based on mass support. Though these struggles were aimed ultimately at evolving into armed struggles, and though they were to be combined with propagation of armed struggle, their immediate form was to be defensive in aim and nature. Masses were to be mobilised to defend themselves from the attacks by the landlords. The issues on which the struggles would be conducted would depend on the level of peoples consciousness and the nature of the problems they face.
Initially the struggles can be started on issues like rise in wages, distribution of waste land, famine conditions and even taxation. The agitational forms were also to depend on concrete local condition. There was no objection to extensive use of pamphlets, rallies, meetings, demonstrations etc. if they were conducted with the aim of raising peoples consciousness to the level of armed struggle. It was with this understanding that the Andhra Maoists conducted a State-wide solidarity campaign week, during October 1st to 7th, in which they propagated about the peasant movements in Andhra its present and past, and explained the necessity to review the Telengana (1948-51) type of struggles. These campaigns were to be used to "expose" Governments repression on peasants and seek solidarity of the people for various struggles. Unlike the Bengal faction the Andhra Maoists were prepared to participate in and use Trade Unions, student unions etc. They did not agree that the only proper work among the working class and students was to recruit cadre for peasant armed struggles.

The Andhra Maoists recognised the unevenness of the development of movement in different areas of the country and prescribed different types of tactics for different types of areas. They categorised the areas into three types - a) areas where there is active struggle b) areas in which party organisation exists but there is a general lull in the peoples movement,
c) new areas. In the areas of struggle the party felt that the

task was to consolidate their gains (for e.g. of occupied lands,
increased wages etc.) and defend them from the attacks of police

and landlords. For this purpose, it was necessary to mobilise

masses, form volunteer squads and give a secret form to the party

organisation. Solidarity campaigns were to be conducted in

adjoining areas, so as to propagate revolutionary politics as

well as to lighten the burden of police concentration in the

struggle areas. In the second type of areas where there was party

organisation but no struggle the first step to take was to hold

meetings of party cadre and convince them of the necessity to

organise people for struggles on their (peoples) own issues. Once

the party cadre was prepared demands were to be formulated on

various issues (for e.g. wages, rents, etc.) and extensive propaganda

conducted about these among people. After this the people were to be

moved to struggle on pressing problems of their areas. Pamphlets

were to be distributed and meetings were to be held. If landlords

were prepared to concede to people's demands a temporary compromise

might then be arranged. But if the people were enthusiastic

and prepared to struggle for more important demands (distribution

of gains and lands) the movement could be taken to a higher pitch.

As soon as people start moving to struggle on their problems,

volunteer squads, peoples defence squads, village Sanghams, ryotu

Sanghams etc. were to be formed. These would be "embryonic forms"
of the future Governmental organisations. They would be responsible not only for conducting peoples struggles and defending them, against repression but also for looking after the general welfare of the people. The Andhra maoists had no objection even to attending courts in the initial stages of the movement. In the third kind of areas, work was to be started by sending cadre from the areas where the movement was strong. The Andhra maoists also advocated conducting of mass struggles conducting in town areas based on the problems and demands of workers, students and middle classes. But these struggles were to be combined with revolutionary propaganda.

**Pragmatic Unity**

It was inevitable that these differences should have organisational repercussions. The Andhra faction of maoists finally severed their links with the CPI(M) and formed the APOCCR in June 1968. (Eight months after the formation of AICCRR by the Bengal Maoists and one month after AICCRR had fully declared its separation from the CPI(M).) The Andhra Maoist leaders who were in agreement with the AICCRR's views on various issues did not attend the June 1968 Vijayawada meeting at which APOCCR was formed. They included Srikakulam leaders like Panchadi Krishnamurthy, Vempatapu Satyanarayana and some Telengana maoists like K.C. Satyamurthy and Kondapalli Seetharamiah. This implied boycott was
followed by an attack on APCCCR in the June 1968 issue of Liberation. This criticism charged the APCCCR for not having clear conceptions about the nature of Soviet Revisionism, and of vacillating about the path of armed revolution in India. It maintained that the Andhra Maoists were unnecessarily delaying their break with the CPI(M). It accused the Andhra Maoists of having illusions about the elections and the Parliamentary path. This was followed by a visit of two AICCCHR members to Andhra Pradesh. They met some Maoists in Guntur, who had formed a Naxalbari Solidarity Committee and explained to them the different viewpoints of AICCCHR and APCCCR. As noted earlier this Committee was already conducting propaganda against the APCCCR. Now they started propaganda about the differences between AICCCHR and APCCCR. When the APCCCR complained to the AICCCHR about the undesirability of bringing the debate into public they were told that the AICCCHR has recognised the Naxalbari Solidarity Committee as its organisation in Andhra Pradesh. This amounted to setting up a Maoist organisation as an alternative to, if not in opposition to, the APCCCR. The APCCCR was further harassed by the fact that in October 1968 the Srikakulam District Committee of Maoists joined the AICCCHR overriding the State organisation of APCCCR. The Srikakulam Committee also passed a resolution regretting that APCCCR has not yet joined the AICCCHR.

All this while, the APCCCR was holding that all the Maoists
in India must unite after extensive debates on various issues. They were also denying the AICCCR's claim to be the top moist organisation in India. The AICCCR was a self-proclaimed all-India body and was not the result of State Committees electing it.

The APCCCR pointed to the fact that many groups in Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu etc. have not yet joined the AICCCR. Inspite of these views the APCCCR joined the AICCCR in November 1968. This was obviously a result not of any change in views but because of the organisational pressure as noted above. For various reasons as noted earlier, the prestige of the Naxalbari leadership of the AICCCR was quite high. It was attracting new cadres. The APCCCR might have felt that it would lose its revolutionary credentials by staying outside. Thus the unity was organisational rather than programmatic.

The entrance of APCCCR did not make much difference to the AICCCR. It continued with its old formulations and activities. The APCCCR was not even treated as a State Committee which had joined the all-India body. It was treated merely as a small faction joining a national organisation. The AICCCR continued to maintain direct links with Srikakulam District Committee and Naxalbari Solidarity Committee neither of which submitted to the organisational superiority of the State Committee. The APCCCR leaders (who were enjoying a quite high prestige in the CPI(M), at least four of them being members of the CPI(M) Central Committee
were not given positions in the organisations actual decision making bodies. They were not taken into the editorial board of the party's magazines and the Andhra Committees official paper Janasakti was not even mentioned in their list of revolutionary newspapers in India.

**Programmatic Disunity**

The AICCRR continued with its programme of "unleashing Naxalbari type of struggles" (meaning struggles in which masses of the people led by the maoists to forcibly occupy land, seize crops and directly confront the police and armed forces) immediately and wherever possible. The maoist groups following them were advised to immediately start armed peasant struggles in their areas. This implied that in all areas irrespective of their different conditions and circumstances the same programme of armed struggle with police, forcible occupation of land etc. was to be implemented. The Naxalbari type of struggles were to be universally implemented, since the Naxalbari type of conditions (peoples preparedness to fight) were assumed to be existing throughout the country. The result of the implementation of this line had different results in different areas according to their divergent contexts. In Srikakulam which had strong maoist organisation and a tradition of mass peasant struggle there was a mass
movement for occupation of lands, resistance to police etc. for a period of five months— from October 1968 to March 1969. In Musahari where the maoists had been working for some years but not with as much mass base as in Srikakulam there was a "mass upsurge" in August 1968— which lasted for about a fortnight. There were armed processions, seizure of crops in some areas, attack on usurers and destruction of the promisory notes. But the entrance of a strong police force put an end to these activities. In the Lakhimpur-Kheri area of Uttar Pradesh where the maoists were working in an area of eleven villages and where there were already several quarrels about the ownership of some recently cleared forest land, they were able to cause some mass upheaval for a few days in May 1968. There were pitched battles between the peasants led by the maoists and the supporters of the landlords. In one such incident fifteen people were injured. As soon as the Provincial Armed Constabulary established three camps in this area and conducted raids on the villages the movement stopped and the maoist cadre went away to neighbouring forest areas. In Debra-Gopiballabhpur area which later became a storm-centre of maoist activities (when a different line was implemented) the people hardly responded to efforts by maoists to start a naxalbari type of mass movement.

The APCCCR though it had joined the AICCRR had not changed
its basic perspective of protracted struggle. As such AICC&CR was led into increasing differences of opinion particularly on the conduct of struggle in Srikakulam for which they were responsible. The District Committee was more in favour of the AICC&CR line. In these circumstances differences about tactics arose in three respects. The first issue of contention was on the characterisation on the struggle. The AICC&CR and the majority of the Srikakulam district committee regarded it as a liberation struggle. This had two implications. First that the immediate aim of the struggle was to seize political power by destruction of the existing State. The confrontation was physical and direct between the people and the ruling class. It was simply a matter of armed forces of the people destroying the armed forces of the ruling class. The second implication was that the liberation struggle had a priority and in fact was an essential prerequisite for the completion of the agrarian revolution and for the solution of the other problems of the people. The people's problems could not be really solved before they were liberated, for e.g., the land cannot be redistributed and the people's standards of living really raised by putting the nation's economy in a proper shape until and after the victorious completion of the liberation struggle. As long as the present State power existed any attempt for agrarian revolution would be meaningless and fruitless. So
the first task was to destroy this power and liberate the people. The whole idea of the liberation struggle was based on the assumption of peoples' preparedness for participation. The APCCCR which was sceptical about the level of peoples' preparedness, put forward the concept of an agrarian revolution which was intertwined with the struggle of liberation. In their view armed struggle for liberation could only be an end product of innumerable struggles by the peasantry against feudal oppression. In this process the peasant was to gain consciousness of the necessity to seize power through armed struggle. The peoples' movement can be taken to higher stages only by seizing landlords crops and lands and cancelling all debts. To the peasant liberation meant, freedom from feudal system and ownership of land. A liberation struggle which is not preceded by and combined with land occupation etc. becomes abstract and unintelligible to the peasantry. So the APCCCR advocated an immediate struggle which would have as its immediate next step, not total liberation but mobilisation of the people for completion of the agrarian revolution. This mobilisation and the resultant struggles would ultimately lead to a liberation struggle. The only concession which the APCCCR was willing to make to the AICCRR's faction was to hold out the optimistic prediction, that because of the overall revolutionary situation this process would not take a long
time and they can very soon be leading a liberation struggle.

This basic difference led naturally to difference of views, on under what conditions a guerilla struggle could be launched. In concrete terms this was a question about exactly when a guerilla struggle could be started in Srikakulam area. The APOCCR's viewpoint was that following the intensive police attacks in March 1968, the morale of the people of Srikakulam was destroyed and the movement was in a state of lull. The way to get out of this lull was to reestablish contacts with the people, conduct political propaganda and mobilise them to struggle for various demands. If there were attacks by the police during this period they were to be resisted by the people and militants with whatever weapons that were locally available. Thus the APOCCR was stressing on peoples mobilisation and defensive actions. On the other hand the AICCCR group did not accept demoralisation of the people as a fact but only disorganisation. They felt that inactiveness of the people was a result of a lack of proper leadership and organisation, which can give them confidence and show means of defeating the enemy's forces. For this purpose they advocated immediate starting of offensive struggles against landlords and police. The APOCCR was also critical of the Srikakulam District Committees attitude to the United Front. They felt that by totally neglecting the working class and the national bourgeoisie they could be considerably weakened and by
their attacks on small-traders, rich peasants etc. they could
be alienating sections of people who might otherwise stay
neutral.

The differences between APCCCR and AICCRR came to surface
on two more issues. During November 1968, about 300 people led
by Kunnikal Narayanan carried out attacks on the police stations
of Tellichery and Pulpally in the Wynad forest (in Kerala).
Several conflicting reports about these incidents came out in
the papers. In these circumstances T.N. made a statement to
the newspapers that it was an act of agent provocateurs' financed
by the CIA and Central Government of India. For, in his view
such acts might have looked premature and harmful to the maoists
who were planning to use to some extent legal avenues of work.
The first reaction from Charu Majumdar was a cryptic comment
that attacking police stations was not in his programme. However
when the Radio Peking broadcasted its support to the Kerala events
Charu Majumdar changed his original stand in December 1968 in
an article We salute the peasant revolutionaries of Kerala. In this
article he commended "the heroism and courage displayed by the
impoverished masses of Kerala" and maintained that "every revolt
against Government is just". The Andhra maoist organ Janasakti
of January 1969 printed Charu Majumdar's views and avoided any
mention either commendatory or critical of T.N.'s statement.
Participation in elections was another issue on which there were differences of opinion. In view of impending mid-term elections in Bengal in June 1968, the AICCRR passed a resolution which maintained that "Naxalbari has proved to be the burial ground of Parliamentary path in India. The people of India so far wallowing in the mud of parliamentary path have now seen the light. They are now realising that the Naxalbari path is the only path for liberation. So down with elections .... (and) total boycott of elections". This was followed by their attacks on candidates and polling booths. The AICCRR at that time was still maintaining that boycott or otherwise of elections was purely a tactical issue to be decided in each concrete instance, (they were to be boycotted in areas where parallel people's institutions had been set up) depending on how far it was useful for mass mobilisation and for increasing peoples consciousness. But the AICCRR resolution maintained that "the question of participation in elections was not a question of tactics but that of the strategy i.e."whether to take a Parliamentary path or a revolutionary path." Their argument was that circumstances in which Lenin advocated participation in elections were far different from those existing in India. In Lenin's time, a) world capitalism had not entered the stage of permanent crisis, b) the Parliaments were historically young and a result of peoples demands and struggles for democratic organisations. As such many
people had illusions about them, c) Russian Revolution at that
time was in a period of lull, d) Parliamentary participation
was useful when the path of revolution was a nation-wide insur-
rection. On the other hand the Indian revolution was taking
place when (a) world capitalism was in a stage of permanent
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crisis; (b) people had enough experience of parliament to have
no illusions left about them; (c) Indian revolution was in a
period of mass upsurge and not of lull; (d) the path of revolu-
tion in India was rural based peoples war, and not insurrection.
The AICC CR was hesitant about accepting this resolution and post-
poned the issue by saying that it will have to discuss the whole
issue before making a final decision. At this time T.N. was still
a member of the Andhra Legislative Assembly and he received a
direction from the AICC CR to resign following its resolution on
elections. T.N. accepted but with the reservation that it
would be a personal decision. He was willing to make compromise
but not a concession.

In these circumstances the AICC CR passed a resolution
expelling the AICC CR. The resolution gave three grounds for the
ejection. The first was the alleged disloyalty of T.N. group
to China, T.N.'s statement on Kerala and his not retracting it
even after Chinese broadcast was given as evidence. Secondly
the Andhra Committee was seen as hindering the Srikakulam struggle
because of basic differences in the political understanding.
Thirdly, the failure of T.N. to resign from the Andhra Legislature in the two month period given to him by the AICCRR, and the reservations on the election issue maintained by the Andhra Committee. However the resolution ended on a cordial note by maintaining that they would "treat the Andhra Committee as friends and comrades outside the coordination and try to maintain non-antagonistic relations with them". While the resolution lists the ostensible reasons for expulsion the real reason seems to have been the feeling of AICCRR's leadership that given the basic reasons for difference of opinion on tactical issues, continued unity would be of use only to the Andhra Committee - by giving the latter the high prestige and credibility which AICCRR was enjoying at that time among the young maoist cadre. By expelling them they would destroy their revolutionary credibility and pave way for the formation and strengthening of a maoist organisation in Andhra Pradesh which would sincerely implement the AICCRR's line. These expulsions were carried out without consulting even their followers in Srikakulam and other regions. When Kolla Venkiah (whose stand on ideological issues was between AICCRR's and APCCCR's), went to the AICCRR to mediate he was not even given a hearing.

From Coordination Committee to a Centralised Party

The expulsions paved the way for the crystallisations of the two maoist lines in different organisational frameworks.
The AICC(C) soon transformed itself into a party - the Communist Party of India - Marxist-Leninist (CPI(ML)) and determinedly went forward to implement its line based on the perspective of immediate revolution. The Andhra Committee also came out with an explicit programme of its own and went on to build a movement on that basis.

The day after the expulsion of the Andhra Committee (February 8, 1968) the AICC(C) passed a resolution which maintained "without a revolutionary party there can be no revolutionary discipline and without a revolutionary discipline the struggle cannot be raised to a higher level." Charu Majumdar changed his stand which had been "It is time to build up a revolutionary party", (November 1967) to "We must form the party now". (March 1969). Following this decision the AICC(C) met on April 22, 1969 (the 100th birthday of Lenin) formed a Central organising committee (COC which became the real power in the party, that was now formed) to organise the new party. This had eleven members. Several reasons have been given as to why they formed into a party. According to Bibhab Das Gupta "the kind of tactical line which was going to be followed from February 1969 onwards could not be implemented without a strong centralised leadership.... A more important reason was the fact that the Chinese wanted such a party." Sankar Ghosh is also of the opinion that the Chinese wishes had a play. Both of them
depend on the flimsy evidence of Charu Majumdar having written that the international leadership has been reminding them time and again of the importance of building the party. In the absence of any other evidence it would be wrong to take this statement literally. The "remindings", more probably referred to nothing more than general exhortations of CPC to form revolutionary parties all over the world. It is more probable that because of their increased, confidence due to the successes in Srikakulam at that time and the feelings of imminence of revolution, must have led to the abandonment of all efforts to reconcile the maoist groups in India and instead form a centralised party.

This secret party was publicly inaugurated on May 1, 1969 in the maiden at Calcutta. Delivering the keynote address Kanu Sanyal (who was released from the jail by CPI(ML)) said that for the first time in India a revolutionary party was being formed, and "I firmly believe that the great Indian people will warmly welcome this event, will realise that the formation of this party is an historic step forward for the Indian revolution, and will come forward to raise the struggle to a higher stage under the leadership of the party." He also quoted Mao to the effect that revolution would be victorious throughout the world at the latest by the year 2000 A.D.

This inaugural meeting of the CPI(ML) passed a Political Resolution which gave their assessment of the national and inter-
national situation. In this they held that (a) India was a semi-colonial country. The evidence offered for this was that India was totally dependent on the United States and Soviet Union, even for food requirements they had to depend on the PL 480; they were thousands of collaboration agreements; India was being plundered by unequal trade. (b) India's social relations were semifeudal in nature. The increasing concentration in land; expropriation of the total surplus produced by peasantry in the form of rent; complete landlessness of about forty percent of the rural population; usury, increasing evictions; backward techniques of production; social oppression of the harijans, etc. go to substantiate this. (c) The Indian State was an instrument of the big landlords and comprador bureaucratic capital. The unbridled freedom of the landlords to plunder the peasantry with the help of the State machinery, highest rate of profit in the world, and concentration of wealth in the hands of seventy five comprador bureaucrat families was the proof of this. (d) Government is a 'lackey' of Soviet and U.S. imperialisms. These countries had a total political, economic, military and cultural grip on India. So the Government was dovetailing their foreign policy interests and helping them encircle the centre of world revolution - Socialist China. (e) An excellent revolutionary situation exists in the world today. The United States and Soviet Imperialists were facing increasing difficulties in their efforts to redivido
and enslave the world. Armed struggle in the oppressed countries, revolt of Soviet colonies in East Europe against national subjugation and restoration of capitalism, and the increasing militancy in the working class and negroes in the western countries were indicating the growing favourable situation for revolution in any country. (f) In India also, there was an excellent revolutionary situation - peasants were being pauperised, unemployment was becoming endemic and a deep economic crisis was making the working class, peasantry and petty bourgeoisie its victim. Sharp contradictions between capital and labour, between feudals and peasants, imperialism and the people and among sections and parties of the ruling class were sharpening a political crisis in which revolution could be easily carried out. (g) People were rising in bitter struggles against oppression. Naxalbari, Srikakulam, Musahari, Mizor and Naga revolts were examples of this. (h) Ruling classes were resorting to brutal suppression of these struggles with the help of draconian legal powers like the DIR and preventive detention etc. They were also using all types of parochialism – caste, communal, provincial and chauvinism, to disrupt the peoples movement. In this context the CPI and the CPI(M) were acting as the agents of international and domestic reaction by creating illusions among the people with their talk of United Front Governments and thus providing relief to the people.

This resolution was later supplemented by the programme of the CPI(ML) (which was adopted at the Party Congress in May 1970).
It held that Indian independence was a sham one, what had happened was that the British unable to face the mass upsurge against them had withdrawn to the background leaving their "puppets" to rule. In fact the so called independence only increased the burden on Indian people. While previously they were being exploited only by the British imperialists and feudals now they had to carry the burden of "the four mountains" - United States and Soviet imperialism, feudalism and comprador bureaucratic bourgeoisie. In these circumstances the task of Indian revolution was to overthrow the rule of the above four oppressors. The principal contradiction in India was between feudalism and the masses of the people. By resolving this the other contradictions with imperialism etc. would also be resolved. In these circumstances the stage of revolution would be People's Democratic meaning that it will establish the rule of working class and peasantry along with petty and middle bourgeoisie. The essence of this stage of revolution was seen as contained in an agrarian revolution. (i.e. in a redistribution of land). The path of Indian revolution was to be the path of People's war. It was a war waged by mobilising masses and creating small bases of armed struggle all over the country. Guerilla warfare was the basic form of struggle throughout the struggle. The major task they set for the People's Democratic State when it would be established after the victorious completion of the revolution were (a) Confiscation of the properties of imperialists, comprador bureaucrats and landlords; (b) better
living conditions for people and removal of unemployment;
(c) development of a new democratic culture and the requisite educational system; (d) abolition of caste system and recognition of social equality; (e) equal status to all nationalities and their languages; (f) an international alliance with proletarians and the oppressed led by the CPC. This programme was to be temporary, one to be developed into a socialist at the earliest possible opportunity.

The news of the formation of the CPI(ML) was broadcasted from Peking Radio and other signs of approval and blessings came in the way of articles in the Chinese press. However this did not prevent many maoist groups from leaving and staying outside the newly formed CPI(ML). The Maharashtra unit of AICCCR refused to convert itself into the State unit of CPI-ML and protested over "the opportunist, bureaucratic phrase mongering" "adventurist" activities of the AICCCR. The resolution blamed AICCCR for treating other maoists groups in an "antagonistic" manner and even giving calls to "annihilate" them. In these circumstances "The Maharashtra State Committee of Communist Revolutionaries calls upon the Andhra Committee which possesses the necessary experience and resources to take upon the great responsibility for uniting all the revolutionary groups in the country into a revolutionary organisation". Except for Kunnikal Narayanan, all the other Kerala groups led by Kosala Ramadas, K.P.R. Gopalan etc. were more in favour of the Andhra Committee. Even Kunnikal
stayed out of CPI(ML). The cadre in Punjab and Tamil Nadu split evenly between the Andhra Committee and the CPI(ML). Parimal Das Gupta formed a rival coordination committee at Bengal level and criticised CPI(ML) for neglecting work in cities trade unions and other mass organisations. He accused Charu Majumdar of Che-ism and expressed his disagreement with Kanu Sanyal's assessment of the Naxalbari movement in the Terai Report. He also disassociated himself with Charu's views on Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia - which were that a peoples rebellion in Czechoslovakia which was a capitalist country was suppressed by Soviet Imperialism. Asit Sen another senior maoist leader who had presided over the May Day meeting of CPI(ML) where it was inaugurated also left within a couple of weeks to form the Maoist Communist Centre. In his view the CPI(ML) had failed to recognise the importance of struggles based on economic demands. He felt that Naxalbari was the struggle of the peasants for land and it would be an overestimation of peoples consciousness to regard it as a struggle for State power. He felt that the first task ahead of the maoists was to build a party, whose cadre would be predominantly drawn from the working class. Such a task could be carried out only in cities. Only after such a party was built should the guerilla struggles in the rural areas begin, otherwise the party would be dominated by the petti-bourgeois cadre and petti-bourgeois ideas and lead to all kinds of deviations. Promode Sen Gupta was another person to form a maoist group in West Bengal outside the CPI(ML).
These desertions and criticism did not have any effect on the line of CPI(ML) if anything it made them more determined to carry out their line of immediately unleashing Naxalbari type of struggle, everywhere. The June 1969 issue of Liberation branded the Andhra Committee as "enemies of liberation" and "last reserve of reaction". The relations were no longer to be non-antagonistic. This was followed by a couple of articles by S.N. which denied the charges of Che'ism (of trying to start armed struggle with a handful of people and without mass participation) and counter accused the "chicken-hearted intellectuals" (refering to Asit Sen and Parimal Das Gupta) of trying to "divert the present armed struggle along the old lines of mass economic struggle." S.N. also denied Asit Sen's contention that the revolutionary party must consist of a working class majority because the compulsions of a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society would necessarily lead to a poor and landless peasant majority in the revolutionary party. As against Asit Sen, S.N. maintained that the revolutionary party was to be built in rural areas and in the process of armed peasant struggles. To think of building a party of workers in urban areas through theoretical education was crass revisionism.

Charu Majumdar also replied to the charges levelled against him and these replies more or less solidified his stand which was slowly but definitely moving away from that of building mass organisations and leading struggles based on economic demands. He denied the charges of following Che Guevara and said that though there might be some superficial resemblances they have
really nothing in common. Che's guerilla theory was said to depend on petty-bourgeois intelligentsia and technically sophisticated weaponry whereas, Charu Majumdar said he depended on peasant masses and people rather than arms. In Charu's opinion the party becomes the only class organisation of the proletariat in a revolutionary situation. So "when we say a revolutionary situation now prevails in India it necessary follows that in India our task today is to build underground party organisations and not mass organisation." Charu felt that a mass organisation represents a United Front of different ideologies and as such whether it would work in a revolutionary way or not would be determined by the ability of the party to work independently. This implied that mass organisation may be built if at all only after the party had made some progress in carrying out the armed struggle. He specifically rejected any kind of participation and utilisation of trade unions. He felt that the use of trade unions as training school for the proletariat to increase their confidence and teach them the tactics of struggle is possible only when there is no revolutionary situation. The politics of agrarian revolution must be brought to the proletariat from without, from out side trade-union struggles."

A Hypothesis

The CPI(ML) attempted to implement its line of unleashing
Naxalbari type of struggles in various areas in 1969 with varying degrees of successes. The line as it was implemented in early 1968 had extremely limited success, that too only in the areas of Srikakulam, Musahari and Lakhimpur. Even in these areas the movement was suppressed easily by police forces. In those circumstances the choice in front of the CPI (ML) was either to abandon its basic assessment of the situation (as being favourable to immediate armed activities for capturing State power) or if they wanted to stick to the assessment they had to make certain tactical innovations which might enable them to continue armed struggle. It is a hypothesis of this dissertation that the CPI(ML) chose the latter alternative and as a result fell into a process which can be called self-accelerating extremism i.e. by persisting with their original assessment of the situation they had to shift from armed mass uprising of the Naxalbari and early Srikakulam type to limited guerila actions and then to individual annihilation and abandonment of peasant struggles and finally taking up to terrorist activities. The next two chapters would examine the working of this process in the State of Andhra Pradesh. The policy, tactics and programme and results of the Andhra Committees actions which were based on a different assessment of the situation (i.e. the situation is revolutionary but it requires a lot of preliminary work before the stage of armed struggle for liberation could be reached) would be examined in the Chapter VII.
NOTES


3. Charu Majumdar, "It is a time to build a Revolutionary Party" *Liberation*, March 1969, Pp. 6-7.


7. Charu Majumdar, "One Year of Naxalbari struggle", *Liberation*, June 1968, p. 27.


15. See *Ibid* and also "Develop Peasant Class... etc?*, *Op. cit.*


18. Charu Majumdar, "Undertake the work...etc.? *Op. cit.*


22. See Ibid and also Cham Majumdar, "To the Youth...etc., Op. cit.

23. Cham Majumdar, "Develop Peasant Class...etc., Op. cit.


26. S.N.'s Self Critical Report of CC of CPI(ML) (1973) seems to have maintained this stand.


29. See June 15th Resolution of APCOCR.


32. July 23rd Resolution of APCOCR.

33. See Ibid.


35. Ibid.


37. Vide, pp. 110


39. Sriakula Girijanodhayamiki Sambandinchina Konni Samasalu, APRCC (Type script).

40. Ibid.

41. Which was published in Liberation, December 1968.

42. The Resolution of Bihar State Coordination Committee of June 12, 1968 on the Adivasi movement in Bihar, the Resolution of Naxalbari Revolutionary Peasants" of Septem-
ber 1968, (published in Liberation, October 1968) and the October Resolution of Srikakulam District Committee calling for armed struggle etc. are some of the examples to the response to AICCGR's call.

43. For details see the next Chapter.

44. **Self-Critical Report...etc., Op.cit.**


46. See Kalyan Chaudari, "Focus on Middnapore", *Frontier*, December 6, 1969.


50. For e.g. Ramji in *Frontier*, November 24, 1968 speculated that these might be the plots of Congress, CPI(M) etc. to discredit the Maoists and disorganise them by finding a pretext to arrest them.

51. This comment might have been guided by the fact that Kunnikal Narayanan was refusing to align his group under AICCGR. See Document C-28, *Op.cit.*

52. "We Salute to the Revolutionaries of Kerala!", *Liberation*, December, 1968.


60. The 11 members were viz. Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal, Sushital Boy Choudari, Saroj Dutta and Souren Bose from West Bengal; Panchadri Krishnamurthy and Chaudary Tejumara Rao from Andhra Pradesh, R.P. Saraf from Kashmir; S.K. Misra from Uttar Pradesh; Satya Narain Singh from Bihar and Appu from Tamil Nadu.


65. *Programme of the CPI(ML)* at the Party Congress held in May 1970, Proposition No. 5.


67. *Ibid.*, Proposition No. 16. This meant that the destruction of the landlords would lead to a change in the whole situation.


69. *Ibid.*, This is a summarisation of proposition No. 38.

70. *Resolution On The Difference with the AICCOR*. Maharashtra State Coordination Committee, May 1, 1969.


74. All these groups were more in favour of the Andhra Committee and later in 1970 some organisational links were established and a newspaper called *The Proletarian Path*, was published jointly.


78. Charu Majumdar, "On some current political and organisational problems" (1973).

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, V.C. Shukla, in a statement to Rajya Sabha on November 26, 1969 showed the following areas as centres of Maoist activity viz. Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, Krishna, Guntur, Warangal and Nalgonda in Andhra Pradesh; Gopalpur, Kesarkup, Darang Nargun, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur and Cachar in Assam; Luzzafarpur, Dharbanga, Champaran, Monghyr, Bhagalpur, Purba, Saharia, Shahabad, Ranchi and Singhbhum in Bihar, Darjeeling, 24 Parganas, Jalpaiguri, Hooghly, Bardwan, Midnapore, Birbhum, Purulia, Nadia and Calcutta in West Bengal and Koraput and Ganjam in Orissa.