CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
The Founding of the Communist Party of India

The Communist Party of India was founded in the 1920s to create an alternative mass movement to the existing Congress anti-imperialist movement. The communist movement grew out of economic causes and was rooted against the propertied classes whether British or Indian. The "revolt" was not against the colonial government and the ruling Congress Party as much as it was against the capitalist system. As far as communist parties world-wide were concerned the Communist Party of India, the CPI, was too conservative and ineffective.

Split of the CPI and Formation of the CPI (M)

Due to its rather passive manner, in 1964 the CPI split, thereby forming a second faction known as the CPI (M)-the Communist Party of India (Marxists). The CPI (M) called for a large scale revolt of workers. These people, mostly members of the lower castes and agricultural workers, were negatively affected by the elites trying to gain national power through capitalism by increasing India's industrial strength. The other group hurt by capitalism was the landlords and peasants with the breakdown of feudal society.

Problems of Nationalism

After gaining independence from Britain in 1947, the concept of the nation was hotly debated. In general, there were two camps of thought. One group wanted progress and democracy while the other group held cultural and religious issues most important. The main problem India had to overcome in their quest to define Indian nationalist thought focused on the need to analyze
and come to terms with the presence and domination of a foreign power in addition to the need to formulate a positive view of India while remembering its roots. This proved to be very difficult and was ultimately one of the factors leading to the failure of the communist movement.

Problems and Failure of the Communist Movement

The main problem for the communist movement was that no one encouraged the joining of the peasant castes, the landowners, and the middle class proletariat into one large revolutionary group. No real national spirit existed amongst them. The main concern of the communist movement was of a socio-economic nature for each individual group of people—not for the good of the working man in general. Many supporters of the movement knew nothing about Marx and Engel; they were simply using the communist movement to show their economic frustration. This failure to unite and create a new national identity is what led to the failure of the communist movement. The Sixth Congress of the Communist International said in its thesis on the Revolutionary Movement in Colonies or Semi-Colonies that "[t]he single biggest weakness...is the deplorable state of the political level of the proletariat, its class consciousness, its organization, and its unity with the other toiling masses and particularly the peasantry."
How Violence Attributed to Failure of Movement

It is important to analyze the violent struggle of the communist movement from its very beginnings in addition to the caste aspects discussed above which took place during the 1960s. The colonial state was prepared to crush any violent opposition to its power. Most importantly, the perspective of a violent overthrow of colonial rule presupposed a society confronted with undisguised brutality and oppression. Ever since limited constitutionalism was introduced within the colonial framework, social tensions were closely watched and kept under control to some extent—whether by aggravating the opposition by patronizing one section, as was the case concerning Muslim communalists, or by manipulating legislation as in the case of class conflict amongst workers and capitalists, or tenants and landowners (Joshi and Josh, 20). Hence, there were plenty of causes for mass movement against the government. The main priority of the communist mass movements should have been unity and getting the issues into the mainstream instead of simply resorting to violence. Gandhi's method, for example, was to slowly pick apart at the government's "liberality" and tackle the issues one at a time. This proved to be effective because the colonial state found it more frustrating to battle a forceful yet peaceful movement. Hence, this movement managed to damage the government more effectively than the violent and disorganized methods of the CPI.

David Brossard describes in great detail what makes Kerala so amazing from her history, to politics, to societal living. Much of the following information was obtained from his site referenced in bibliography section. He calls Kerala, a thriving capitalist trade center as well as one of the poorest
areas of India, a "bold social experiment" because it is the first ever democratically elected Marxist government. Kerala occupies only 1.2% of India's land area, yet it has 3.4% of India's population. Like any socialist system, Kerala spends what little resources it has on services such as health care, food, and basic education—equal for both men and women. Kerala is one of only a few anti-caste systems in India. Perhaps it is because there is a mixture of the Islamic and Christian religions. Both religions would tempt a lower caste Hindu to convert in order to avoid the stigma associated with the lower castes. This lack of strict caste structure could also result from the influence of the Communist Party of India which sought to abolish the caste system. The CPI was unsuccessful in uniting the castes in most of India; hence the failure of the movement, but it is a possibility in this situation. As mentioned above, Kerala is involved in active trade in a capitalist system. This is precisely what the communist movement was against when it can into being in India. However, Kerala is also the home of the first democratically elected Marxist government modeled on Chinese and Soviet influences rather than the "social justice" ideas of Gandhi. This system is what allows for the health care system, reliable food supply, and educational system mentioned above thereby maintaining a comfortable standard of living in Kerala amidst much squalor and turmoil which exists throughout India.