

Why the Indian People Go Hungry?

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INDIA has been famine-stricken for years, and this year is especially serious. Millions of peasants have to subsist on bark and herb-roots. Many have starved to death, and those who survive can only tighten their

belts. Clearly, this is the result of India's dreadful and rotten social system, but the Indian Government blames natural conditions, claiming that it is due to "drought."

India is richly endowed by nature. There is a vast plain of fertile alluvial soil in the Ganges valley in northeast India. Its lower reaches in West Bengal used to be called "Rich Bengal" by Western academic "authorities." The state of Assam has one of the highest rates of rainfall, 12,000 mm. per annum, in the world. Strange enough, the worst hit by famine are these fertile regions — West Bengal and Assam State. Indian Minister of State for Food and Agriculture Annasahib Shinde admitted that this year's climatic conditions had been good. Unwittingly, he gave the reactionary Indian authorities a slap in the face.

Speaking of natural conditions, we in Lankao County were much worse off than the Indians. Lankao is located on the eastern Honan Province plain at the very centre of the former bed of the Yellow River. Land here used to be crisscrossed by broken-down check-dams and dried-up river-beds. Floods were followed by sandstorms, while salinization left little alluvial soil. In the past, such natural conditions meant three calamities — sandstorms, soil salinity and water-logging — for the people of Lankao. After liberation, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao, we set up forest belts, drained the water-logged land by digging canals, and treated the saline soil. Physically, Lankao underwent rapid changes. Today, the county's population has increased from 290,000 before liberation to 380,000, and the acreage of cultivated land from some 900,000 *mu* to 1,160,000 *mu*. There has been a big rise in farm products and the total output of food-grains has increased from 90 million *jin* at the time of liberation to the present 170 million *jin*. Formerly seriously short of food, the county is now more than self-sufficient in grain.

The land of Lankao as well as the sky above it and the people on it are the same as before. Thanks to the brilliant leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao, there has been a radical change in the outlook of Lankao's people since liberation. Armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought, they have given full play to their revolutionary enthusiasm. Their struggle against nature has completely transformed Lankao. Under the dark rule of the Kuomintang reactionaries in pre-liberation days, the whole county was infested with bandits. The plundering and press-ganging by the reactionary authorities forced the people to leave their homes to seek a living and leave their fields untilled. In an average year, not a single ear of grain could be gathered on 200,000 to 400,000 *mu* of land. Two-thirds of the population, some 200,000 people, always went hungry. The officials of Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary regime were busy battenning on the people's blood and sweat and plotting against each other for higher posts. How could they give any thought to solving the problems of sandstorms, soil salinity and water-logging? The current ruling party in India, the Congress Party, and the Kuomintang in old China are birds of a feather.

The ruthless exploitation and oppression of the Indian people by imperialism and the Indian reactionaries have brought grave calamities to India as a nation. Taking advantage of their influence, the handful of Indian reactionaries hold the bulk of India's cultivated land, and have despoiled vast tracts of land. They engage in usury, lending out money amounting to 30,000 million rupees a year, and do everything they can to fleece the people through other forms of exploitation. They have hired themselves out to U.S. imperialism and, letting the wolf into the house, allowed the U.S. imperialists to plunder at will the country's resources. The fundamental reason for India's food shortage is definitely not any "drought." It lies in the criminal rule of imperialism and the Indian reactionaries. Bringing India serious food shortages is not enough for these blood-suckers; they are only too glad to have it that way. The U.S. imperialists hope famine keeps up in India, so that the country will continue to depend on U.S. grain, thereby facilitating their control and enslavement of India.

The only way for the Indian people to solve the food problem once and for all is to rise in revolution under the leadership of a genuine Communist Party and throw off the three mountains weighing down on them — imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism.

The Indian people are wise and industrious. They have their hands. But under the rule of U.S. imperialism and Indian reaction, their hands are temporarily tied. Once they have risen to overthrow the present cannibalistic social system and to fight for complete liberation, they will not only be able to solve the food problem but are sure to build India into a new state of the people, prosperous and strong.

Referring to the reactionaries in all countries, our great leader Chairman Mao has said that "in the final analysis, their persecution of the revolutionary people only serves to accelerate the people's revolutions on a broader and more intense scale." The revolutionary flames of the peasant struggle kindled in Naxalbari in January last year are now spreading over the vast land of India. This struggle has shown the rest of the Indian people the road of advance. We, the people of Lankao, deeply sympathize with the Indian people and firmly support their struggle. The day will come when the broad masses of the Indian working people will smash their chains and put an end for good to the criminal rule of the U.S.-Indian reactionaries. We are convinced a bright future lies before them.



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