India

NEW LEFT MAJORITY IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The left wing led by B.T. Ranadive has succeeded in establishing a majority in the central policy making body, the Secretariat, of the Communist Party of India and the "official" right wing has been reduced to a minority, at the recent meeting of the party's 110-member National Council held at Delhi in April 1962. In the new nine-member Secretariat the leftists have a majority of five with the "left centrist" general secretary, E.M.S. Namboodiripad of Kerala supporting them. Namboodiripad fills the post which was held by the "right centrist", Ajoy Ghosh till his untimely death early this year. The left wing consists of P. Sundarayya of Andhra, Harishkisan Singh Surjeet of Punjab, Jyoti Basu and Bhupesh Gupta of West Bengal.

The right wing of course has had the satisfaction of securing an important amendment in the party constitution and getting their nominee, S.A. Dange, elected as the first chairman of the CPI ostensibly as a check on the militant activities of the left wing.

But it is doubtful if the rightists can contain the leftists within a framework of a moderate line of supporting the bourgeois Nehru Government. Already a serious fractional struggle for the control of the provincial party units has been initiated by the two wings. In fact there is every indication of the rift developing to a breaking point. The right wing in the CPI has also begun a slanderous campaign against the Chinese CP in its attempt to discredit the left wing.

The right wing in the Secretariat consists of M.N. Govindan Nair, Namboodiripad's rival in Kerala, Z.A. Ahmed of Uttar Pradesh and Yogendra Sharma of Bihar in addition to Dange. The strength of the Central Executive has been raised from 25 to 30 to make room for the new members of the Secretariat and a few others — Gangadhar Adhikari of Bombay, Y.K. Vyas of Rajasthan and Ajtar Singh Malhotra of Punjab. In the Central Executive the rightists claim a small majority.

An earlier attempt to elect Dange as the party's general secretary was resisted by the left wing which, however agreed to an amendment of the party constitution as a matter of compromise. B.T. Ranadive, the theoretician of the left wing and P.C. Joshi, the theoretician of the right wing have however, been dropped from the party's two policy-making bodies as a temporary truce.

How serious is the internal rift in the CPI? Bourgeois journalists have tried to minimise its significance by suggesting that it is just a make-believe to mislead non-communist public opinion. Obviously the internal conflicts in the CPI are not a make-believe. The differences dividing the two wings are so deeply rooted that they could not be resolved at the meeting of the National Council which lasted for 10 days.

The National Council in fact adopted several inconsequential resolutions on Algeria, rising prices etc. It also issued a call for the creation of a "democratic front" of all progressive forces including "democratic Congressmen" to fight the forces of "communal and rightist reaction" in the spirit of the Vijayawada thesis of the CPI.

But it avoided a decision on the crucial issues which are the main causes of the present rift. No post-mortem report on the third general elections, explaining the electoral debacle of the CPI in some states was adopted. It has also scrupulously avoided evaluation of the controversial decisions of the 22nd Congress of the Soviet Communist Party regarding "decentralisation".

The new Secretariat has been authorised to draft suitable resolutions on these subjects for discussion at the next meeting of the National Council scheduled to meet in August. This meant virtually shelving the issues.

A debate on these questions would have brought to the open the differences on the strategy and tactics to be pursued by the Party in the coming period. The left wing has demanded a redefinition of the Party's attitude to the Congress Government headed by Nehru. There is also a controversy in the Party about the characterisation of the Indian revolution (whether it is still bourgeois democratic or socialist).

The right wing still affirms its faith in the parliamentary road to socialism (as embodied in the Amritsar thesis of the CPI) while the left wing stresses the need for irreconcilable class struggle against the bourgeois state.

The Sino-Soviet ideological polemics have no doubt had an impact on the ranks and the leadership of the CPI. Since the CPI was built up during the Stalin era, its leadership is sharply divided on the process of decentralisation set in motion in the Soviet Union. The CPI press has published in the recent months various reports on the 22nd Congress — including the reports made by Togliatti, Gomulka and Thorez. The party weekly "New Age" also recently published the full speech of the Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, attacking the old Cuban Stalinists such as Escalante.

There is a great deal of confusion among the party as even among the leaders on this question. While the right wing unceremoniously supports the Khrushchev line the left wing is critical about the methods adopted by Khrushchev in his struggle against his political opponents in the CPSU. The CPI is also divided on the India-China border dispute. But the attitude on the border dispute is in fact related to the differences the two wings maintain on the characterisation of the Nehru regime. The right led by Dange betrays a chauvinist degeneration in their support of New Delhi, and in its condemnation of the Chinese action as "aggression". The right argues that the CPI should support Nehru because of his policy of neutralism which fits into the Kremlin cold war strategy against the Western imperialists. The left wing maintains that the Nehru Government is exploiting the border dispute for the political objective of fighting Communism internally.

The CPI dominated by the right wing today characterises the Nehru Government as a "regime of the progressive bourgeoisie" fighting against "feudalism and remnants of imperialism". In pursuance of its "lesser of the two evils" theory it is also pledged to support the "progressive Congressmen" as represented by Meenon, Malaviya, Nanda etc. as against "reactionary Congressmen" like Morarji Desai, S.K. Patil etc. and the "progressive" Congress as against the reactionary Swatantra Party, Jan Sangh etc.

The right wing still upholds the slogan of parliamentary
roads to socialism in India, and perpetuates the illusion that so long there is "parliamentary democracy" in India, there is the possibility of the working class seizing power by constitutional means. Hence its emphasis on electoral alliances with various parties in the provinces.

As against this, the leftist view is that the Nehru Government is "bourgeois" and therefore basically allied to world imperialism. Although the left-wing suffer from certain sectarian limitations it adopts a basically healthy class struggle approach. It rejects the parliamentary road to socialism and concentrates its fire on the right wing for creating "illusions" around the personality of Nehru as the only "saviour of democracy" in India.

During the post-mortem discussions on the third general elections these differences inside the CPI have been sharply posed in various states. The left wing has accused the right of being the "liquidationists" of the party because of its opportunistic electoral alliance with various opposition groups (like the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti in Maharashtra etc.).

Great Britain

THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS AND THE COMMON MARKET

Herewith the text of a resolution passed at the Young Socialist annual conference.

This Conference views with dismay the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party’s lack of a policy independent of the capitalist class in relation to European unity. Conference declares that the present attempts to unify Europe, i.e., economic unification accomplished from above through agreements by capitalist governments cannot succeed and are designed for the benefit of the monopolists and the financiers of Europe and will create a reactionary political block.

Conference recognising the historic and organic necessity of European unity declares that it can only be achieved on the basis of a Socialist economy. It therefore calls upon the Labour Party of Britain and Europe to take the lead in organising the working class in the struggle for a Socialist united Europe. As a first step to this, convening a general Congress of European Labour into which should be invited all the sections of the Labour Movement.

It believes that only such a policy can bring about a real unity, permit the planning of resources and industries, and the aid of underdeveloped countries, and lay the foundations of peace and lasting prosperity. Conference restates the fundamental Socialist belief that economic crises and war are an inherent part of the capitalist mode of production.

Conference is against the policies of declining world capitalism and the Common Market is one of these and Conference is for an independent working class programme of International Socialism.

Australia

THE CONFERENCE OF THE AUSTRALIAN SECTION

The Australian Section of the Fourth International held a National Conference on the 22nd and 23rd of April, 1962. Reports were delivered on the political situation, the Australian economy, the crisis of Stalinism, the colonial revolution and the organisational tasks of the section. We publish some extracts from the colonial resolution.

We must fight vigorously all aspects of Australia’s involvement in the imperialist military alliance, we must fight every attempt to send Australian troops out of Australia to be involved in any of imperialism’s counter-revolutionary wars in Asia. In this, we should struggle to have the principle of the historic A.L.P Conference’s victory on "No Troops For Malaya" (Hobart) extended to cover Vietnam, Laos and all Asia.

We must expose all aspects of Australian capitalism’s role as a colonial power, particularly in New Guinea, and to a lesser extent, Fiji. Throughout the South Pacific, the colonial revolution is on the march. Radically inclined independence movements are taking shape quite spectacularly in Fiji, and in the French Dependencies of Tahiti and New Caledonia (we have examined these from time to time in "International"). Due to the involvement of Australian capital in those colonies, and their geographical location relative to Australia, Australia will inevitably become more and more involved in their capitalist “defence”. We must resolutely espouse the principle of self-determination for those territories, and fight for the Australian labor movement to give the maximum solidarity and assistance to the emerging independence and labor movements in these areas.

In New Guinea, Australia’s “Congo”, the signs of the headlong development of the nascent native independence movement have been multiplying for years. The first stages of this process of developing native political awareness are, of course, the movements maligned by the imperialists as “cargo cults”, which have been universal throughout the South Pacific area for many years and which, in many cases, develop into embryonic nationalist political formations. (This process has been studied by the British anthropologist, Peter Worsley, in his fine analysis of the cargo cults, “The Trumpet Shall Sound”).

The next stage, already developing in many areas, is in the quite politically advanced nature of such ventures as the independent-minded natives co-operatives which Brian Cooper was framed for assisting, and the recent spectacular Buka tax resistance movement whose leader was so sophisticated that the panic-stricken Australian bourgeoisie press dubbed him a “native Castro”.

The Australian Government has shown an awareness of these developments, and is trying to head them off with a two-pronged campaign, one prong being brutal repression against all authentically nationalist leaders, such as the Buka Islanders and their sympathisers, such as Brian Cooper; the other prong being the attempt to create an “Uncle Tom” class, an “elite” among the natives, tied to imperialism.

We must devote great attention to the developing struggle in New Guinea, the colonial freedom struggle in which the Australian labor movement is most intimately involved. We must demand the right of Australian unions to assist in the formation of genuine unions in New Guinea, in opposition to the Government’s tame-cat unions plan. We must campaign against every incident of Government repression of authentic native leaders and movements. We must raise the slogan and campaign for genuine self-determination for Australian New Guinea now.