

TENTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

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THE tenth congress of the Communist Party of India (CPI) held at Bezwada, one of the biggest towns in the otherwise predominantly rural state of Andhra Pradesh in southern India, from January 27 to February 2, will prove to be a landmark in the history of our Party for more than one reason. That the decisions and deliberations at the congress exert an influence far outside the periphery of the communist movement is proved by the fact that almost every paper and journal in the country, in the English and Indian languages, gave coverage to our tenth congress.

The most striking feature of the congress was the very large measure of unity achieved, be it over the general political line of the Party, the policy of forging a broad national democratic front against the offensive of imperialism and right-wing reaction within the country, be it over the organisational questions and the unanimous election of the National Council and the Central Control Commission of the Party. And the National Council unanimously re-elected Comrades Rajeswar Rao and S. A. Dange respectively as General Secretary and Chairman of the Party. This tenth congress is a landmark also for the reason that India is clearly at the crossroads:

The crisis of the capitalist path of development pursued by the Congress leadership has now reached an explosive point due to national factors as well as new factors arising out of the world capitalist system as a whole.

(Political resolution passed at the congress)

India is facing a two-pronged offensive, the external attack being from US imperialism as it establishes a base in Diego Garcia, a small island in the Indian Ocean but thereby directly threatening India's security and sovereignty. And now, with the US arms supply to Pakistan directly, and indirectly through countries like Iran, the external threat is looming even larger. Internally, Jaya Prakash Narayan (popularly called JP; at one time the General Secretary of the now dissolved Congress Socialist Party in the days of British rule in India and considered then as one of our front-ranking leaders of the left; later in post-independent India posing as a non-party man and therefore supposed to be above mundane day-to-day political affairs) is leading the whole pack of rightist reactionary and

even Hindu communal forces* against the Congress government led by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

The tenth congress of the CPI therefore issued the call to forge a left and democratic unity. This means 'building up the widest unity between the left and democratic forces inside the Congress and those outside, between the masses following the Congress and the masses following the left parties, in the struggle against the forces of imperialism, monopoly capital and feudalism and for revolutionary democracy and basic structural changes, including changes in the state apparatus' (ibid).

But right reaction cannot be fought unless the masses are mobilised for certain positive demands of a radical nature. The rightist threat in our country is not a temporary or passing phenomenon, it is a continuing threat for the whole period of the world capitalist crisis and will remain in our national life so long as the socio-economic base of right reaction exists and is not demolished by popular anti-monopoly and anti-landlord measures.

Therefore 'the Party has correctly to grasp the dialectical inter-connection between the fight against the right and the fight for radical social change and for left and democratic advance for bringing about a shift to the left in the country's life' (ibid). This is what distinguishes the CPI's class line from that of the bourgeoisie in the fight against right reaction. Among the other lefts, the sectarians underestimate the threat of right reaction, while the right reformists would act as the defenders of the *status quo*.

The Party stands four square for the defence of parliamentary democracy which is under attack from right reaction. The Party exerts every ounce of its strength to build up a movement for national integration and to fight against every separatist move.† The Party also advances a general economic programme for improving the lot of the common man and for more equitable social justice. This latter

* These are represented by the Jan Sangha which would try to establish a Hindu Raj in India and oppress the Muslim minority population, as Hitler did in Germany.

† National integration in our country means better consciousness as an Indian national while maintaining one's own particular nationality, Bengali, Punjabi, Marathi, Hindi, etc, India being a multinational state. While every nationality undoubtedly enjoys a measure of autonomy, with its own distinct language and culture, there has recently been a move to further vivisect the nationalities within the boundaries of the states of India. For example, there was a strong movement to separate the Telengana region from Andhra State on the ground that Telengana was a comparatively neglected area. This is usually called a separatist movement. The Party in Andhra threw its entire strength against this separatist movement, and the CPI stands for stronger all-India integration.

requires general restructuring of the whole five-year plan with greater emphasis and priorities for developing the core industrial sector and agriculture, and for reorientation of the credit policy in favour of the public sector, agriculture and small and medium industries.

The great help received from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation signed in 1971 for twenty years, is a most significant milestone in India's fight to safeguard and strengthen national sovereignty and build up a self-sufficient national economy. At the time of writing, talks are going on between the members of the Indian Planning Commission and Gosplan, whereby India's particular requirements will be taken into account in Soviet planning.

The Party congress noted with great satisfaction that 'the India government has on the whole been pursuing a policy of peace, non-alignment and anti-colonialism,' and that this foreign policy is pursued in the context of an international situation where it is the world of socialism that determines the future course of world history.

The concluding day's open air rally and mass meeting drew a crowd of 500,000. Ten thousand uniformed volunteers with red shirts and caps controlled the whole milling crowd overflowing the field and the erected dais where the Party leaders and fraternal delegates sat and addressed the meeting until late into the night. This was also the place where, on other evenings of the congress, cultural troupes with songs and dances from every state of India performed for the delegates and the public at large.

It was really a small India, with all its diverse cultural patterns, that could be seen. And this whole place was named 'Rajani Palme Dutt Nagar*' to commemorate our dear lamented Comrade RPD, so near to the hearts of all Indian communists.

The tenth congress of the CPI right at the start adopted a condolence resolution (with everyone standing and observing silence), and there was a special separate condolence resolution for 'our RPD' (as he is affectionately called here). Both resolutions were moved by Comrade Dange, who also sought special permission of the presidium to say a few words about RPD. The resolution recalled, with deep gratitude, reverence and love, Comrade Rajani Palme Dutt's help and guidance in shaping the revolutionary consciousness and perspective of the communists in India and their Party, and also personally of many who now occupy leading responsible positions in the Party at different levels.

* Nagar means a city or town or sometimes the site of some large-scale event.

Later congress unanimously adopted a declaration amidst much enthusiasm that a yearly lecture be held by the all-India Party Centre, at New Delhi, named after Rajani Palme Dutt; and further that the Party's building, housing its central press and publishing house, be named 'R. Palme Dutt Bhawan' (*bhawan* meaning a building or a building area).

Fifty years ago, in December 1925, in a small secret meeting, the Communist Party of India was born in the working class area of Kanpur (then spelt 'Cawnpore'). Over the half-century the Party has grown steadily in spite of heavy imperialist repression and the initial mistakes of a right and more often of a left sectarian character, natural in the growth of a communist party in the conditions of India then, under the British Raj, and now.

We look forward with confidence to the future. The presence of 103 fraternal delegates from 27 countries of Asia and Europe, from Arab and Latin American countries, and a delegate representing the national liberation movement of one country in Africa, and the messages received during and after the congress from practically every communist and workers' party in the world, give us added confidence in the correctness of our line, and demonstrate the solidarity of the international working class and communist movement in our fight for national democracy and socialism.
