

and other parties. Rabid communal fire was emitted from the platform and the Communist Party representative vied with others in this rabid communalism. Was it any wonder that the Party lost many seats and became the laughing-stock of the people of Tamilnad ?

## **VII. Organisational Line of the Right-Dominated National Council**

We have mentioned in the earlier Chapter how in order to pursue its line of class collaboration, the Dange group was resorting to factional mobilisation of the ranks against those who were opposed to their line. The April (1962) spirit was completely reversed. This forced three of our comrades—P. Sundarayya, Jyoti Basu and Harkishan Singh Surjeet—to resign their membership of the Central Secretariat.

The final blow to Party unity was dealt by the Dange group in the crucial days following October-November 1962. Comrade E.M.S.'s appeal to them to retrace their steps even at that late stage fell on deaf ears. Their revisionist political line and disruptive organisational methods forced Comrade E. M. Namboodiripad to resign from the three posts of General Secretaryship of the Party, membership of the Central Secretariat and editorship of NEW AGE weekly.

All this did not have any effect on Dange and company. They continued their mad drive to disrupt the unity of the Party.

In West Bengal, after the arrest of the leaders, the elected State Council of the Party was dissolved in disregard of organisational principles of the Party. Even more strange was the unheard of decision that the State Council would not automatically begin functioning when the leaders came out of jail but could be resorted to only by the National Council. A few members of the State Council who had been left out by the Government constituted a new Secretariat and issued a statement and submitted a memorandum to the Home Minister providing the alibi for the Government to continue the detention of the leaders by saying that they "had not reacted in time to the Chinese aggression" and had been reluctant to implement

the National Council's resolution on Chinese aggression, etc.—though the State Council held in the end of November, had adopted a decision for the implementation of the National Council resolution. A statement was also issued slandering leaders of the State Council with having misappropriated Party property, etc.

Later, the National Council (i.e. the Dangeites, our 40 members having been jailed in November 1962) dissolved the elected West Bengal State Council, the bulk of whose members was in jail and constituted a POC composed of 7 of their henchmen. One of these seven members resigned on the spot. Two of them remained permanently in Delhi. Another went to the U.S.S.R. One other remained in the district. Virtually the POC was a one-man body, which was invested with all the functions and authority of the State Council.

The plea under which the State Council was dissolved was that it had not endorsed the National Council Resolution of November. Actually, immediately after the National Council passed that resolution, the West Bengal State Council had met and adopted a Resolution that it would implement the NC Resolution and the leader of the Assembly party Jyoti Basu had stated in the Assembly that now that the National Council had passed a Resolution he would implement it. Thus, the National Council decision was in utter violation of the Organisational principles. Thus, the decision of the National Council struck a blow at inner-Party democracy and stifled expression of views even before a question was decided upon.

This imposed POC's only function was taking a series of disciplinary actions summarily suspending and expelling Party members and dissolving committees. When the Party was facing severe repression with most of the leading cadres in jail, they demanded the list of Party members from the districts within a short time, and if they could not be procured within the stipulated time, the districts were deprived of membership. The aim of all these measures was to convert the Dange group's minority in the State into a 'majority'.

In Punjab, even before the Secretary of the PC was arrested, a meeting of the State Council was called without any reference

to him. And the minority which took over the leadership exploiting the situation created by the arrest and detention of a large number of leading comrades of the majority, convened an illegal and unrepresentative special conference whose only purpose was to slander the leaders in jail and perpetuate the minority in the leadership. It was not accidental that within a few days of this conference, four leading comrades—two of whom had been released from detention only a few days earlier—who opposed the disruptive move in holding the conference were again arrested and detained.

The delegates to this conference were not elected by the membership. All District Council members that remained outside were delegates. In place of those arrested handpicked people were nominated. And some District Councils were even enlarged by nomination against the provisions of the Party Constitution. This 'Conference' which had no constitutional authority decided to replace the State Council that had been elected by the State Conference on the basis of elected delegates by a new Council elected by the delegates of this handpicked conference.

In Andhra, they reconstituted the Secretariat on the ground that those who have opposed the National Council resolution before it was adopted have no place in the Secretariat, even though they may agree to implement the resolution. In Bombay, the Committee was reconstituted by removing seven members who were arrested in November 1962 within three days of their arrest.

In other States, too, disciplinary actions began to be taken against comrades for political-ideological differences. The main target of attack of Dange and his followers in this period became Comrade A. K. Gopalan, leader of the Communist group in Parliament, who had come to be looked upon by the Party ranks as the champion of the people, who had been consistently voicing the demands of people against the imposition of heavy taxation, high prices, etc., and agitating for the release of the detained comrades. His speeches were in sharp contrast with the pro-Government activity of the Dangeites and naturally lower units and Party members, dissatisfied with the supine indifference of

the Dangeites to the people's problems, were everywhere requesting him to address meetings. Frightened with the prospect of being disowned by the rank and file Party members, the Dangeites began taking measures to prevent A. K. Gopalan addressing meetings. The Tamilnad Council Secretary wrote to him asking him not to address any public meeting in Tamilnad. The Maharashtra Secretary also wrote a similar letter, and asked the Party Centre to prevent A. K. Gopalan from addressing any meeting in Bombay.

In West Bengal, the mass of Party members getting extremely dissatisfied with the total inactivity of the POC over the question of the release of our comrades and the rise in prices organised a mass rally in Calcutta on these issues and invited A. K. Gopalan. The mass rally was the biggest in the recent period, even according to the bourgeois papers, over one lakh attending it in pouring rains.

And for attending this mass rally, which for the first time demanded the release of Communists after November 1962 in Calcutta, A. K. Gopalan was publicly censured by the National Council.

Intensification of the debate in the international Communist movement and certain articles in the Press of the Chinese Communist Party just about this time were sought to be exploited by the Dange group to denounce all opposition to its revisionist political line and disruptive organisational methods as "Chinese-inspired". They raised the bogey of anti-Party group in the July 1963 meeting of the National Council and the Control Commission was asked to enquire into its activities. At this meeting, Dr. Ahmed, M. N. Govindan Nair and Yogindra Sharma submitted a resolution which could only be written by police agents. Wild allegations that the Left were circulating Chinese documents, doing propaganda inside the Party for China, etc., were made in the resolution and stern disciplinary action was demanded.\*

\*Curiously, this resolution, which is supposed to be not for publication, has been quoted by the Home Minister of India in his statement to Parliament in support of his slanderous charges in justification of his action detaining 1000 Communist leaders in India.

### *Fight Against Revisionism Political-Organisational . . .*

The Party press, not only in the Centre but in the states to ceased to represent the Party and was reduced into organs of the faction which had control of the Party machine. The Party pre abandoned Marxism-Leninism, consistently violated the accepted policy of the Party, writings and reports in it were one sided and factional and in the ideological debate only one view-point was publicised while suppressing and slandering the other thus making any sober and serious discussions of the issues impossible.

What was equally grave was that quite a large section of the Party membership on the rolls at the time of the Vijayawada Congress was being denied the opportunity to renew the membership on various grounds while at the same time there were reports that in some places the membership was being inflated. Obviously, this could only be to pack a Party Congress with a majority of their own supporters and thus perpetuate themselves in the leadership.