

LETTER

'WHITHER REVOLUTION'

It would have been easier to make a revolution soon after independence in 1947 if the strategy had been correct. The army then was just one hundred thousand with obsolete weaponry. The small police force in the provinces had got depleted by migration to Pakistan of Muslim staff. Now the army is more than a million strong, armed to the teeth with every type of armament. There are over half a million paramilitary forces of several varieties and many cloak-and-dagger outfits. In the states, the augmented police force is supported by armed constabulary, and village and home guards, which together exceed five million. More than that, a middle class committed to the status quo, non-existent at that time is now tens of millions strong. An attitude of unconcern towards meaningful social and moral issues is being deliberately cultivated. In order to make the idea of change and hope irrelevant, people are fed through the press, TV and the cinema with drivel and flimflam.

Hindutva fascist militia RSS, decimated after Gandhi's assassination, is now hundreds of thousands strong, with tens of thousands of whole-timers financed by Hindu NRI and US foundations under the influence of the CIA.

If under the exiting matrix of Indian social polity, the democratic modus operandi has to be necessarily utilised for the emancipation of the Indian people, how can the stifling shortcomings of highly fractured and defective democratic system be lessened. This so-called representative democracy Indians 'enjoy' negates democracy and makes any free and fair elections very difficult. Now it is being realised that most of the general elections in Punjab and Kashmir since independence have not been fair.

When B N Rao, constitutional adviser, placed the draft Constitution before the constituent assembly (CA), speaker after speaker denounced it as a mere rehash of the Government of India Act of 1935, with some anti-democratic colonial provisions made more stringent. Rajendra Prasad, the president of CA, described it as a grafted monstrosity. The constituent assembly appointed a seven-member committee to scrutinise the draft and suggest changes.

India does not need a new constituent assembly, as do the people of Nepal. Indian constitution is flexible enough to permit the needed reform. While taking the best advantage of the existing parliamentary system, the left should strive to build consensus on parliamentary reform, particularly on some form of proportional representation, for which the Congress Party might not now be unwilling in view of its dwindling position in many states. The communist and left parties should show some creativity and help in evolving an exceptional new system of parliamentary democracy that conforms to the Indian reality.

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