

# Panic In The 'Red' Camp

Maybe communism is too serious to be left to the communists! These days communists are not the vanguard leader. Nor are they engaged with basic issues affecting the broad masses in any proactive manner. For all practical purposes they are on the otherside of the river, they plead the cases of their 'enemies' well. Parliamentary trap has served as a nice graveyard for Euro-communism. And it is increasingly becoming so for different communist tendencies in Afro-Asian countries. Power corrupts and it has corrupted communist parties absolutely in the countries where they are in power, nationally or regionally.

In India it is difficult to recognise the erstwhile strongholds of communist culture. What is happening in West Bengal and Kerala today illustrates among things that the decline of official communist parties is irreversible. Like the Congress Party they too cannot survive without power even though it is partial at the state level. Strictly speaking state governments are greater municipalities in terms of Centre-State power equation. By controlling three municipalities for so long they cannot think anything other than hawking for the wrong deals with the wrong parties.

Communists, registered communists to be precise, like their Gandhian counterparts see danger in mass mobilising, rather mass awareness. If they resort to mobilising at all they do it for wrong reasons. They ask masses to fight for exploiters. The ruling marxists of Bengal despite huge money and muscle power at their disposal, look helpless, if not insecure, in the wake of minor reversals in the recently held panchayet elections. They are too demoralised to talk in unison. On most controversial issues, they talk in multiple voices, sometimes working at cross-purposes. Their much-publicised Tata car project is in jeopardy because the peasants of Singur, despite unprecedented 'communist' barbarism continue to agitate against forcible acquisition of fertile agricultural land. Panic in the marxist camp is so pervasive that even noble laureate Amartya Sen looks visibly worried about the fall-out of Tata's departure from the scene.

In truth the marxists are doubly troubled because their honeymoon with the Congress Party is over, at least for the time being. In reality running a state government otherwise bankrupt economically without the Centre's co-operation seems to be sending shivers down the spines of marxist bureaucrats. As they cannot protect interests of two antagonistic classes they are shamelessly exposing their true colour that is anything but red.

Way back in the 1960s, the CPM cleverly formulated a strategy of alternative government in the changed political context waving goodbye to their programmatic patent of People's Democratic Revolution. They are now advocating industrial revolution, not people's democratic revolution for the Tatas and their likes. The first communist government in Kerala in the 1950s actually tempted the ideologues of official communist establishment to formulate the permanent strategy of permanent settlement in parliament while assiduously advocating the idea of peaceful transition to socialism through Soviet help. Soviet Russia is history. So is Soviet brand of socialism. With no compulsion to defend

Soviet foreign policy anymore, gone is the era of locating principal enemy in American imperialism. Their anti-American stance in recent months borders on hypocrisy. They have replaced imperialism by communalism with the sole purpose of collaborating with the Congress Party to share power and parliamentary privileges as well. They cannot think beyond assembly and parliamentary polls. Their anti-communal tirade is skin-deep as it tactfully avoids to identify the very imperial capital that nurtures communal and reactionary forces. Communalism is not flourishing in a vacuum. Their strategy of talking endlessly without taking concrete steps to combat it in the field sometimes backfires only to embolden religious fanatics and communal politics. As they are solely pre-occupied with the idea of forming government at the state and central levels they continually project their opportunism under secular and progressive banner. They think formation of government in league with democrats, liberals, centrists and regional and casteist outfits is itself a higher form of class struggle. Class struggle it is. But it is the struggle to strengthen the social and political base of transnational corporations, mainly based in America. What a nice way to fight American imperialism and hegemonism. In such a tragic situation how long they could maintain their communist tag is anybody's guess. Already in many parts of the country they are better known as Red Congress.

Communists no longer make news in West Europe. In East Europe they continue to symbolise horror and gulag. In Russia they are re-writing their history by condemning the Bolsheviks of October fame to the history of dustbin. In India communists are too happy to disown their own past. They have already consumed their future. As for the present it is as dismal as anything else. The identity crisis that has been dogging them since the demise of Soviet Union in the late eighties seems to have worsened to the point of 'no return'. □