

## CHAPTER II

### Contents

A historical study of events leading to the adoption of Programme by the Indian Communists:

Section 1 The adoption of and almost simultaneous controversy over the programme of the CPI in 1951 →

Sub-section (i) Adoption of 1951 's programme, and treatment of agrarian reform and rural democracy;

Sub-section (ii) Controversy over the programme of 1951;

Section 2 The split of the CPI into CPI and CPI(M); and

Section 3 The adoption of two new programmes by the CPI and the CPI(M) respectively.

Split in the Communist Party of India in 1964 was the culmination of prolonged inner-party differences on strategic and tactical matters cropped up on many occasions since the time of its foundation. If one analyses the documents of the CPI when the party was united (1920-1964) there could be seen differences of opinion on ideological and political grounds which ultimately led to the division of the party.

Starting from the foundation of the party the founder leadership of the CPI was never unanimous over ideological, political and factual issues. One such factual issue relates to the time and place of formation of the CPI. One group within the party which was later known as Leftist faction of the party agreed and acknowledged the fact that "... the Communist Party of India formed at Tashkent on 17 October, 1920, by M.N.Roy and others soon after the Second Congress of the [3rd] Communist International"<sup>1</sup> and accepted the guidelines of the 3rd International. Later it was affiliated by it in its Third Congress in 1921<sup>2</sup>. Another group, which was much later branded as Rightist faction of the party, hammered the point that the CPI was formed "... on 26 December 1925 at Kanpur, when the first central committee was formed and the first constitution framed"<sup>3</sup>. Again the latter has also doubt about the affiliation of the Communist Party of India by the Third Congress of the Communist International

in 1921. This group was much sceptical about the question - "Was the CPI formed at Tashkent affiliated to the Communist International?"<sup>4</sup> However, this group remained unconvinced over the affiliation issue of that time. In retort the other group harboured criticism that some among the leaders had little faith in the communist internationalism and favoured the name of the party as 'Indian Communist Party' and not the 'Communist Party of India', during the Kanpur Communist Conference<sup>5</sup>.

About the formation of the Communist Party of India abroad in 1921 although there was a debate among the communists in India still the fact was prominent that the Indian Communists were active both inside and outside the country about their political activities. After the end of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in 1922, M.N.Roy prepared a programme entitled 'A Programme for the Indian National Congress'. It was sent to communists working in India and was placed in the Gaya Congress of the Indian National Congress on behalf of the communists. However, this programme has another implication. It stated that "... the National Congress which is not a cohesive political party, but the traditional organ of our National Struggle"<sup>6</sup>. Indian communists since then had accepted it and used it as a political platform upto 1942. Another implication, this was the first programme prepared by the Communist Party of India formed abroad which was affiliated to the Communist International.

The under-current of differences of opinion within the CPI occasionally came over ground. The Central Committee of the CPI on 18 August, 1959 adopted "... the date of Kanpur Communist Conference as the date of the formation of the party"<sup>7</sup>. When the party was divided the CPI formed by the Rightist faction of the united party retained and accepted the 1959 resolution on it. But the CPI(M) formed by the Leftist faction of the united party stuck to the year 1920 as the actual time of formation of the party. It is evident from the above statements that the party was not capable of drawing unanimous view about a simple factual matter. Two main divergent currents of views had flown from the very beginning of the communist movement in India.

During this period the Indian communists contributed to the national freedom movement two new factors : firstly, a logically formulated political and economic programme of national independence and secondly, an independent class -oriented workers ' and peasants ' movement. Naturally, they had to face the three rounds of repression unleashed by the British rulers soon. These were : a) the Peshwar Conspiracy Case of 1922-23, b) the Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case of 1924, and c) the Meerut Communist Conspiracy Case of 1929-33.

In this phase Indian communists had no clear and agreed guideline for the party where strategic questions would have been discussed for determining tactical movements. But their

basic understanding was to organise peasants and workers along the Marxist class-line and to prepare them for fighting the enemies, principally, the British imperialists, feudal lords and the rising Capitalists. They carried out their activities in different groups scattered in different parts of India. Regular coordination among themselves was not possible due to successive bans on the party and conspiracy cases against them. Therefore, all of them in the beginning used the platform of the Indian National Congress to fight for national independence<sup>8</sup>. This was also in accordance with the guideline of the Second Communist International for the communists working in the colonial countries.

In this phase of inhuman repression over the communists and bans on the Communist Party of India, the communists of India had tried to popularise their revolutionary ideals through different means. Together with the congress socialists, the Communists formed parties of the workers and peasant in different names and in different regions of India. These were - the Labour Swaraj Party of the Indian National Congress (1925), Workers' & Peasants' Party of Bengal (1925), Girni Kamgar Union, Bombay, Kirti Kisan Party, Punjab (1928), etc. Ultimately all these parties gave birth to the 'Workers' & Peasants' party in 1928. Activities of these parties were centered round anti-British, anti-feudal and anti-capitalist rage.

In 1928, a conference was organised by the Workers' and Peasants' Party at Calcutta. Communists working in different provinces of India gathered together there and a central Executive Committee was formed of the CPI secretly. After the Meerut Conspiracy Case (1929-33) in December 1933, a Central Committee of the CPI was secretly formed, and Dr. Gangadhar Adhikari was elected as the General Secretary of the party. This Central Committee entrusted Ben Bradley to make contacts for affiliation from the Communist International which was withheld over the debate on the 'Draft Platform of Action'<sup>9</sup> (1928) of the CPI. However, the CPI was successful in achieving the affiliation in 1933.

It is a remarkable fact that in 1928, a draft programme entitled 'A Draft Platform of Action' was prepared by the CPI. This was the first draft programme in the history of the CPI. This draft programme bore a sign of serious thought of the then Indian communists in view of that time. It was first published in the 'International Press Correspondence' of the Comintern (i.e. Communist International) in December, 1930. However, this draft programme was rejected due to the basic disagreement with the policies of the Sixth Comintern Congress, (1928)<sup>10</sup>. A little was known about this draft programme of 1928 until 1951 (when the party was to prepare its programme in consultation with J.V. Stalin and the CPSU due to the inner-party disagreement within the CPI over programmatic matters). M. Basavapunnaiiah admitted that

"... it [the Draft Platform of Action] remained a Draft for the archives as it was neither discussed at any Party Conference or Congress nor was it adopted"<sup>11</sup>.

In 1930, the CPI tried for formal recognition of the Communist International. Disagreement over the Draft programme prevented that recognition temporarily but it died down ultimately in 1933 when the CPI was successful in getting affiliation from the Communist International. At that time the guidelines provided by the Sixth Congress of the Communist International (1928) was held as decisive by the communists working in the colonial countries. It states "The principal task in such countries [China, India, etc.] is, on the one hand, to fight against the feudal and pre-capitalist forms of exploitation, and to develop systematically the peasant agrarian revolution; on the other hand, to fight against foreign imperialism for national independence"<sup>12</sup>.

The strategy of the CPI upto its Second Congress in 1948 remained more or less in consonance with the dictum of the Communist International. But some tactical move of the CPI may be said not to be in line with the strategy it followed so far. Obviously this situation occurred due to the turn of the Second World War when Soviet Union was attacked by fascist Germany in June 1941. More importantly, the CPI opposed the historic Quit India Movement (1942)

launched by the Indian National Congress against the colonial rulers when the latter was highly vulnerable.

Although there was a guideline of the Communist International for the colonial emancipation still it was not sufficient to answer the peculiar national condition that prevailed in the respective colonial countries. Therefore, the very fundamental question i.e. the character of the national bourgeois movement of these countries remained unresolved. For India, it is rightly stated that "The characterization of the 'national bourgeoisie' remain central to debates among communists, the Roy-Lenin debate at the Second Comintern Congress (1920), right down to 1947 and beyond"<sup>13</sup>.

Strategic and tactical moves of the CPI in relation to the colonial masters and the National Congress Party led by the National bourgeoisie and feudal lords were of great historical interest.

### The First Attempt that Failed

In the beginning of the 1920s the communist circles of India were growing up both within India and outside. This was the direct influence of the October Socialist Revolution of the Soviet Russia in 1917 and the emergence of workers and peasants as class forces in India. However, communist

activists in the 1920s were facing successive bans on their party and conspiracy cases against them were pursued by the imperialist British rulers in India. Close and regular coordination among communist activists were naturally hampered due to the inhuman repression of the colonial rulers in India. Therefore, they had to work either secretly or in the name of different parties or groups other than the Communist Party of India. Such parties were Labour Swaraj Party of the Indian National Congress, workers' & Peasants' Party of Bengal, Girni Kamgar Union, Bombay, Kirti Kisan Party, Punjab and Workers' and Peasants' Party, etc.

In 1928, a conference was held by the Workers' and Peasants' Party at Calcutta. Communist activists working in different provinces participated in that open conference in disguise in the name of Workers' & Peasants' Party - activists. Then they secretly formed a Central Executive Committee of the CPI and prepared a draft programme. This draft programme for the CPI entitled - 'Draft Platform of Action' which might lead them as guideline - as a concrete strategy.

Historically this was the first party programme of the CPI. This draft programme was the result of serious thought of the then communist workers in India against imperialist rulers imperialist stooges among feudal lords and rising bourgeoisie and also against the big partner of the freedom

movement - the Indian National Congress. From the beginning communists were pressing the Indian National Congress to call for complete independence. However, the 'Draft Platform of Action' called for complete independence, abolition of feudalism and other mediaeval oppressions and for moving towards socialism.

This 'Draft Platform of Action' was sent for affiliation to the Communist International and was first published on 19 December, 1930 in the International Press Correspondence of the Comintern (i.e. Communist International). However, this Draft programme was rejected due to the basic disagreement with the policies of the Sixth Congress of the Third Communist International (1928). The Thesis of the Sixth Congress had laid down the strategy for the colonial countries. The 'Draft' programme did not consider that the Indian national bourgeoisie had any progressive role in the achievement of complete independence and democracy<sup>14</sup>.

This 'Draft' programme met with a premature end due to the rejection by the Sixth Congress of the Communist International and other internal preoccupations like the Meerut Communist Conspiracy Case of 1929-33 and participation in the national liberation struggle of 1929-33. Therefore, this 'Draft' programme went into complete oblivion of the Indian communists for a prolonged period. M. Basavapunnaiyah admitted that "... it [the Draft Platform of Action]

remained a Draft for the archives as it was neither discussed at any Party Conference or Congress nor was it adopted"<sup>15</sup>. A little was known about this Draft programme of 1928 until 1951.

In 1951 when the leadership of the Communist Party of India went to Soviet Russia for consultation with Stalin and the CPSU for a programme of its own in view of the differences of opinion within the leadership over the question of the role of the peasants in the democratic revolution, the question of 1928 Draft programme arose. Indian leaders - Rajeshwar Rao, Basavapunnaiiah, Ajoy Ghosh and S.A. Dange met Stalin and discussed with him about a new programme of the party which would be scientific and acceptable by all in the leadership.

M. Basavapunnaiiah recollected in the Stalin's Birth Centenary volume of the Ganasakti<sup>16</sup> in 1979 that Com. Stalin himself asked the Indian communists whether there was any previous programme of the CPI. If there was any than how it had treated the question now under debate ? Indian communist leaders then doubtfully answered that they had no agreed party programme so far. Basavapunnaiiah further stated there that Stalin made them remember about the Draft programme which was placed before the Communist International for affiliation. He then ordered some of his Russian Comrades to search for it in the archives of the Communist

International. Only after that it had come to light. Indian Communists then considered the contents of the 1928 Draft Programme, consulted Stalin and the CPSU ultimately arrived at their conclusions regarding the 1951 party programme and tactical lines.

Section 1      The Adoption of and almost simultaneous  
                  Controversy over the Programme of the CPI in 1951:

Sub-section i)    Adoption of 1951's programme and treatment  
    of agrarian reforms and rural democracy;

The Communist Party of India adopted a 'Programme' in its all-India Party Conference, Calcutta, 9-15 October, 1951. This was the first agreed party programme of the CPI. It was prepared on the basis of discussions of the CPI delegation with the delegation of the CPSU, headed by Stalin in the first quarter of 1951<sup>17</sup>. The conclusions of these discussions were incorporated in this programme and in another companion document entitled 'Tactical Line'. It dealt with the tactical questions like alignment of the classforces for partisan struggle, mobilisation of class forces, etc.

The 1951 programme was the result of inner-party struggle particularly noticeable from the first party Congress in 1943. The leadership of the party hinged many questions which

remained unresolved (for instance, the role of national bourgeoisie and the Congress Party in the freedom struggle, Mountbatten award, i.e., partition of the country, nature of independence, etc.). Collaboration with the Indian National Congress was rejected in the name of Right Revisionism, and maintaining an out and out distance from the Indian National Congress and the national bourgeoisie was evident. This was more pronounced in the Second Congress of the Party in 1948. The interests of the Indian national bourgeoisie and the imperialists were seen mostly alike. Therefore, it did not agree that India achieved independence on 15 August, 1947. The CPI then called it as 'formal independence'<sup>18</sup>. In order to achieve full independence, according to the CPI, the democratic forces should forge alliance against the imperialist - feudal-bourgeois combine. The national bourgeoisie which was represented through the Indian National Congress was seen as a 'junior partner'<sup>19</sup> in this combination. The above assessment over the prevailing situation had influenced the programme of the party adopted in 1951.

Now the following study will focus on the questions of 'agrarian reforms' and 'rural democracy' treated in this programme.

The programme states :

"The agriculture and the peasant problem are of primary importance to the life of our country"<sup>20</sup>.

"We can not develop agriculture ... and provide the country with food and raw materials because impoverished peasantry deprived of land is unable to purchase the most elementary agricultural implements and thus to improve its farming"<sup>21</sup>.

This programme also emphasised that industrialisation was not possible because the impoverished peasantry constituting 80 per cent of the population was unable to buy even a minimum quantity of manufactured goods<sup>22</sup>.

It observed with an anguish that peasantry was in a condition of semi-starvation and the government was a mere on-looker in times of natural calamities and wants.

This programme states that hundreds of thousands of hungry peasants forced by poverty left the countryside for towns, swarmed the labour market and consequently lowered the price of labour, thus increased the army of unemployment.

India's peasantry which constituted the overwhelming majority was culturally backward due to the poor living condition and because it was deprived of any material means to give education to its children.

Therefore, the programme emphasised the necessity to create human condition of existence for the peasants for which it was necessary to take land from the landlords and to hand it over to the peasants<sup>23</sup>.

To achieve these aims, the programme called for early completion of the following steps :

"To handover landlords' land without payment to the peasants including agricultural labourers and to legalise this reform in the form of a special land law and thus realise abolition of landlordism without compensation.

To ensure a long-term and cheap credit for the peasants to enable them to purchase agricultural implements and the necessary seeds. To ensure long-term and cheap credit to small artisans to enable them to purchase raw materials, etc. and carry on their manufacture and trade.

To ensure government assistance to the peasants in the improvement of old and the building of new irrigation systems.

To cancel debts of peasants and small artisans to moneylenders.

To ensure adequate wages and living conditions to agricultural labourers"<sup>24</sup>.

This programme considered that the 'agriculture and the peasant problem' were the most important and primary problems in the life of the majority of the Indian people. It analysed the causes as to why the food problem of India was one of continuing character of the national economy.

Growth of industry in India was directly proportional to the growth of its agriculture, because the market of industry was targetted to the peasantry. When the whole section of the peasantry was in abject poverty the possibility of rapid industrialisation was considered bleak.

Land to the peasants without compensation, cancellation of all debts to moneylenders, cheap credit policy of the national governments were some of the measures to set agriculture in motion. Unilinear growth of industry was not possible unless a stable agricultural economy supported it.

Age-long hereditary poverty led the entire peasant masses to cultural backwardness. Therefore, social and moral development could not be ensured unless the rural economy i.e. the agricultural economy was reorganised. The 1951 party programme analysed the root cause of the peasant problem from the Marxist points of view. Moreover it adopted some revolutionary demands for agrarian reforms.

Now this study will focus on the matter of democracy and more particularly on rural democracy conceived in this programme of 1951.

The programme of the CPI of 1951 was put before the people of India in order to make clear the objective for which they should fight. It states,

"... our party regards as quite mature the task of replacing the present antidemocratic, and anti-popular government by a new government of people's democracy created on the basis of a coalition of all democratic antifeudal and anti-imperialist forces in the country ..."<sup>25</sup> (Emphasis added).

In this people's democratic state, the sovereignty of the people will be vested in the hands of the people themselves through their representatives. The people's representatives will be elected by the people and subject to recall at any time upon a demand by the majority of the electors who will constitute a single popular assembly - a single legislative chamber. The people's democratic state will ensure universal, equal and direct suffrage for all male and female above the age of eighteen years in all elections to the legislative elections, and to the various local government bodies<sup>26</sup>.

The programme laid down provisions for local government through which 'rural democracy' will be established. The infrastructure of the local bodies will wipe out the feudal and landlord supremacy over the various local bodies. These feudal and landlord sections constitute the rural counterpart on agent of the imperialist and big power grippers.

The programme states —

"Local government [will act] on a wide scale and with wide powers through people's committees. The abolition of all local and provincial authorities appointed from the above

[will be ensured]"<sup>27</sup>.

The people's committees will be the sole determinants of the affairs of the local bodies. In the rural areas most of the people are either peasants and sharecroppers or artisans or small shopkeepers. They constitute 80 to 90 per cent of the rural population. Once, the people rise to power, rather one should say, seize the power of the villages, the pro-peasant measures will be defended and protected at all costs against the age-old feudal and landlord attacks.

Social and economic oppression of one caste by another or social and personal bans and prohibitions imposed by the so called upper castes on the lower castes, specially on the scheduled castes, in the name of custom, tradition or religion shall be abolished and made punishable by law. Religious minorities shall be given protection against discrimination<sup>28</sup>.

The programme has stated that people's democratic government will establish people's committees in all areas. The power of the people's committees will be more than that of bureaucratic and judicial bodies. The people's committees of respective areas will determine the distribution of land seized from the feudal and landlords and will decide over other social and economic matters. In the people's democratic state there will occur a shift of power from the

imperialist - feudal and landlords and the bourgeoisie to the toiling masses and their allies.

The programme of CPI criticised the constitution framed and adopted by the government of India in 1949. It stated "... while the stronghold of landlords, princes and imperialists on our economy, land and capital is guaranteed by this constitution [which was framed by the bourgeois -landlord govt. of India] not a single item of the life and liberty of our masses is guaranteed, beyond stating them as pious and illusory wishes. The constitution is not and can not be called a truly democratic constitution but a constitution of a landlord-capitalist state tied to foreign imperialist interest"<sup>29</sup>. Therefore, according to the CPI programme, the constitution of India is a partisan constitution for the vested interests and full of illusory and false promises for the toiling masses who constitute 90 per cent of the population.

#### Section 1

Sub-section ii) Controversy over the programme of 1951.

'The Programme of the CPI of 1951' was the product of much deliberation and practice. It was the product of a long-drawn-out inner-party struggle, specially in the years following 1947, and the valuable counsel of the delegation of the CPSU, headed by Stalin in the first quarter of 1951.

Another important companion document titled the 'Tactical Line' was also incorporated at that time. This programme was adopted by the all-India party conference, Calcutta, 9-15 October 1951. The Third party Congress, Madurai, 27 December 1953 to 4 January 1954, readopted this programme with a minor amendment<sup>30</sup>.

'The Programme of 1951' had repudiated the dogmatic and sectarian deviations of the years following 1947. Nevertheless, some serious mistakes remained with this programme which in course of time became evident. "National and international developments moved so fast that several of the basic propositions made in the 1951 Programme did not tally with a new emerging realities; and they could not meet the political requirements of the developing situation in the country and on an international scale"<sup>31</sup>.

Within a few years from the incorporation of this programme, it was evident that some basic provisions of the 1951 party programme were not tallying with the emerging realities. The leadership of the party started rethinking over the programme. The call for amendment of the programme was demanded more vigorously in the successive party conferences and congresses.

To focus on the controversies over the programme of 1951, it is required to look into the provisions of this programme figured in the serious debate within the CPI.

In 1947 the country was divided into India and Pakistan and got independence, but the programme did not admit it, rather the programme observed it as formal independence.

Para 1 of the programme states —

"The people of India were led to believe that foreign imperialist rule was at an end, that India had achieved independence and freedom ..."<sup>32</sup>.

Para 2 states —

"Four years of the Nehru government in power has belied the hopes of the masses in every respect"<sup>33</sup>.

Para 12 states —

"Knowing the desire of the people to make our country completely independent of British imperialism, the government has proclaimed India a republic. But unwilling really to break its ties with imperialism, it has shamelessly proclaimed the republic to be a part of the empire !

The membership of the British empire [British Commonwealth] is not only a formal matter, as is declared ... the government of India essentially carries out the foreign policy of British imperialism". It further states "If the independence of the armed forces of a country is a sign of its sovereignty and independence, then the key part of our

independence is still left in the hands of British imperialism"<sup>37</sup>.

The last paragraph of this programme stated the following among other things —

"India is the last biggest dependent semicolonial country in Asia still left for the enslavers to rob and exploit".

All these above statements in the programme of the CPI of 1951 rejected the reality of India's independence in 1947. Besides this issue of independence, the programme failed to recognise the fact that India appeared as a Republic in 1950. It analysed the character of the Indian state as power had been shared among the imperialists, landlords and the bourgeoisie. Para 7 mentions —

"This government [Government of India] which is tied to the chariot-wheels of British capital"<sup>35</sup>.

Para 10 states —

"The people of India are gradually realising the meaning of the state of affairs and are coming to realise the necessity to change this government of landlords and princes this government of financial sharks and speculators, this government hanging on to the will of the British Commonwealth, the British Imperialists"<sup>36</sup>.

Para 11 states further —

This is the "government of landlords and princes and the reactionary big bourgeoisie, collaborating with the British imperialism ..."<sup>37</sup>

When the party put itself to practice according to its programme, then immediately it was understood that the provisions made in the programme were completely different from the reality. The nature of India's independence and the character of the Indian state were different from the programmatic views. Therefore, serious rethinking started within the party which led to the demand of amendment and rejection of the wrong provisions in the programme. The alignment of party members under groupings started therefrom, and uncompromising debates took place in the successive conferences and congresses of the party.

The programmatic position suffered deeply due to its failure to acknowledge the reality in the prevailing national scenario. Besides it, the fast changing national and international perspective in the years following 1951 was basically different from its preceding decade. However, the programme of 1951 was prepared over the assessment of that decade.

The developments since 1951 that need special mention were the defeat of the U.S. armies in the Korean War, the rout of the French armies in Vietnam, the Tibetan Agreement

and the signing of Panch Sheel by India and People's Republic of China, the growing Indo-Soviet and Sino-Indian friendly relations, the holding of Bandung Conference under the leadership of China, India and Indonesia, the assertion of the Indian Government of its non-alignment policy in opposition to U.S imperialism and its military alliances such as SEATO, CENTO, etc., the growing tempo of the liberation struggle in Asia-Africa and Latin America, etc. More particularly the Indo-Soviet and Sino-Indian relationship and India's emergence as a non-aligned force at that time were compelling the Indian Communists to rethink for a new programme.

Other notable remarkable changes of the Indian political scene were the planned economy, public sector economy, more and more collaboration with the socialist world, legislation of Zamindari abolition and the declaration of the socialist pattern of the society by the Indian National Congress at its Avadi session in January 1955.

The real problem facing the party 1951 onwards, however, was how to assess and deal with the new positions adopted by the Indian National Congress and the Central Government ruled by it. It appeared that the Congress Party took serious note on the reverses suffered in the 1952 elections, particularly in states where the Communist Party had emerged as a force to reckon with. The Congress leadership's response was the

adoption of new manoeuvres intended to give it a 'left image'.

The most important of these manoeuvres was in the field of foreign policy. Forging relations of friendship with the Soviet Union and People's China, raising the voice of struggle against colonialism, joining the newly emerging nations in the Asian, African & Latin American Continents to develop anti-colonial struggles on a world scale, India was slowly making a mark in the international camp of anti-imperialist fighters.

The question, therefore, arose as to whether these developments in the policies of the ruling Congress Party should be seen in isolation or whether they should be understood as a change in the political complexion of the ruling classes. What happened at that time was a change in the CPI's approach to the ruling Congress.

Namboodiripad remarked that a section in the CPI gave an unhesitating 'yes' to the view that the ruling classes as a whole, and the ruling party - in particular, had started 'moving to the left'<sup>39</sup>.

Furthermore, the said section in the CPI argued that beginning with an anti-imperialist foreign policy (which was already visible), the 'shift to the left' was bound to extend itself to internal policy. The question in their view was simple - how could a progressive foreign policy fail to

exert its influence on internal policy ? The two after all, were understood to be the integral parts of the policies of the same class.

This point of view had also the vigorous support of the Soviet and Chinese Communist leaders and academicians. They were increasingly becoming friendly with the Indian state and its political leaders, praising them for their anti-imperialist policies and internal reforms. It was in this context that some academicians of Soviet Union started re-interpreting the role of Mahatma Gandhi in the freedom movement; he had earlier been denounced as a counter-revolutionary but now was praised as a 'great national leader'. Some members in the CPI took every pronouncement of such nature made by the Soviet leaders, every article appearing in the journals of those fraternal parties, as a 'guidance to Indian Comrades',<sup>40</sup>. This group within the party popularly was known later as collaborationists who favoured 'national democratic' front for national democratic revolution.

The communist leadership of the Soviet Union and its academic — were quite very appreciative of the role of the Congress Party and its leader Nehru for their role in the anti-imperialist struggle and siding with the socialist camp in the colonial liberation struggle of Asia and Africa in the post world war period. But in the national scene, the Congress was the main enemy of the CPI. Time to time good

certificates from the CPSU for the Nehru government led the CPI to a very embarrassing position. Although the CPI also appreciated the foreign policy of the Nehru government, still it had reservation to work with the Congress, because the Congress Party was considered as the party of the vested interests in the country.

In 1955 the day before the Republic day the Pravda - an organ of the CPSU, in its editorial acknowledged that India was an independent country and supported the internal and external policy of the Nehru government. Therefore, this editorial attacked the very foundation of the 1951 programme of the CPI.

The other group within the CPI, sharply disagreed with this view and held that however welcome the change in the foreign policy of the ruling party and its government be, it did not signify any change in the class character of the government, least of all in the field of internal policy. This group observed, while undoubtedly giving an anti-imperialist thrust to foreign policy, the ruling party was far from taking such position as the working class and its party were striving to make the country to be.

This other group suggested, while the CPI must extend support to those elements of foreign policy which help the world-wide struggle against imperialism, the CPI must

also independently popularise its programme based on the Marxist-Leninist understanding of the world situation. In no case, according to this group, must the illusion be created among the people that the anti-imperialist thrust in the field of foreign policy would automatically lead to progressive changes in internal policy<sup>41</sup>. Later, this group argued for the formation of national democratic front with all the left and democratic forces in the country including the ruling Congress Party.

These two lines confronted each other in the Third Congress of the CPI held at Madurai in the last week of December 1953. Among those who attended the session as guests was the British Communist Party General Secretary, Harry Pollitt, whose greetings to the delegates encouraged those pleading for a change in the party's approach to the Congress Party and its government. However, the majority within the CPI in that Congress stuck to its line of opposition to the Congress regime and its class policies while extending support to those elements of foreign policy which helped the world-wide struggle of socialist and other anti-imperialist forces against colonialism and war.

The programme of the CPI (1951), thus failed on the one hand to, highlight the existing reality of the country about the nature of India's independence, on the other hand, it failed to direct the party through the internal and external changes which occurred immediate after the adoption of this

programme in 1951 and its readoption in 1953 at Madurai Congress.

The ruling Congress party changed its course of activities in the face of left opposition. Historic visit of the CPSU leaders in December 1951 by the invitation of J. Nehru - Prime Minister of India helped much in building left-image to the Indian National Congress. In the general election of 1955, the Congress Party fully used the blessings of the Soviet leaders as the Congress itself is a leftist party. Actually from the end of the Stalins' era the Soviet Union always pursued a favourable friendly policy towards the Indian government installed after the end of the colonial rule. This was largely due to the role of anti-imperialistic attitude of Nehru and the Congress.

Indeed, this stand of the Soviet Union was shocking, but the more shocking effect the communist leaderships all over the world received when the CPSU in its 20th Party Congress declared the policy of 'peaceful co-existence' with the capitalist-block and peaceful transition to socialism' the Communist activities all over the world were divided into pro-Soviet and critical to Soviet stand. It was also found in the Indian scene.

The formation of the first Communist Government of Kerala, a few months after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU

in 1956 was claimed (by several people within and outside the communist movement) to be a confirmation of correctness of the line of 'peaceful' parliamentary path of transition to socialism. For the first time in world history, it was said, the communists had succeeded in winning a majority in a free election. It was a popular slogan to them : "Today Kerala, Tomorrow other states, in the end the Centre". However, all hopes were lost when the communist government of Kerala was dismissed in 1959. Internally chaos was created by the state congress from below and from the above - the Congress govt. of the centre dismissed the Kerala government. Thus India experienced the first test in the road towards the much advertised 'peaceful transition'<sup>42</sup>.

Another round of inner party struggle for a correct party programme and political line annulling the 1951 programme of the party had flared up following the Central Committee resolution in June 1955, titled 'Communist Party in Struggle for Peace, Democracy and National Advance'<sup>43</sup>.

The shift from the programmatic understanding of 1951 was evident in this resolution. It declares -

"The policies that the government of India pursues today in its relation with other countries are essentially independent and are not under the decisive influence of any foreign power". It further states - "The emergence of India as a sovereign and independent republic upholding the cause

of peace and freedom is a factor of profound significance in the present day world".

One more statement in this regard - "The existence of the powerful socialist and democratic camp and of the parallel socialist world market, the resurgence of the freedom movement in Asia, the growth of the democratic and peace movements inside the country, a relative improvement in certain aspects of Indian economy, the deepening contradictions in the imperialist camp resulting in its constant weakening and the growing conflict between the Indian bourgeoisie and imperialism - all these have made it possible for the government of India to assert increasingly India's sovereignty and independence"<sup>44</sup>.

The new stand pronounced in the pre-Fourth Congress resolution of the CPI actually attacked the very foundation of the 1951 party programme about its notion of independence, character of the state and the ruling party, economic situation in the hands of the ruling party and the external policies of the ruling Congress.

A series of 'Forums' expressing conflicting views by several leading members of the Central Committee of the CPI, and of different State Committees were published as pre-Fourth Party Congress discussion documents. The State Committee held prior to the Congress became political battle fields for different clashing political views<sup>45</sup>.

It appeared that there were three distinct political lines before the Fourth Party Congress in April 1956. One was the Central Committee's draft of the majority, the second was the alternative draft critical to the majority from the rightist angle - it was the extreme reformist line presented by P C Joshi, Rajeswar Rao and others who mustered one third strength in the Congress for their alternative political line; and the third one was by five Central Committee Members such as P. Sundarayya, M. Basavapunnaiiah, Harkishen Singh Surjeet, Hanumantha Rao and Prasad Rao, which was withdrawn in support of the official line (majority C.C. line) after it incorporated some amendments<sup>46</sup>.

All of these drafts were thrown open for discussion and comments from the party members and units all over the country and were published in a special publication called 'Forum'. The entire exercise took several months, with all the pre-Congress Conferences being turned into a debate on the issues posed in the draft.

One remarkable feature in these conflicting drafts was that each draft altogether denounced the 1951 programme as useless in the changed circumstances and they, therefore, proposed a new party programme in the Fourth Congress at Palghat in April, 1956.

In this Congress two main groups opposing each other could not arrive at an agreed decision about the question of

a new party programme in place of that of 1951<sup>47</sup>. This Congress resolved that India had achieved independence, not 'formal independence' as mentioned in the 1951 programme unanimously. The political resolution of the Fourth Congress echoed the resolution adopted by the Central Committee, June 1955, it reads - "The emergence of India as a sovereign and independent republic upholding the cause of peace and freedom is a factor of profound significance in the present day world"<sup>48</sup>.

Another most important issue figured in the debate of this Congress was whether or not to have 'a united front at all, from the Congress Party to the Communist Party, leading to the formation of a coalition government'. One-third of the delegates voted for the rightist proposal in favour of a united front with the Congress, (this was the group which placed the alternative c.c. draft before the Fourth Congress which was ultimately defeated and withdrawn). However, the majority went in favour of 'not to have united front with the Congress Party' and showed the danger of a 'shift to the right'. Namboodiripad remarked "It may be noted in anticipation of later developments that this very line of collaboration was what came to be adopted by the post-split CPI which went in a coalition with the Congress in Kerala, the only state where this was permitted by the Congress"<sup>49</sup>.

At the end of the Fourth Congress, however, the Central Committee was entrusted with the preparation of a new

programme for the party and virtually adjourned and rejected the 1951 party programme<sup>50</sup>. Thus the debate over the 1951 first party programme was over.

The next party Congress, i.e., the Fifth Congress was held in Amritsar, 1958 which could not make any progress towards the adoption of a new programme. It devoted its time on the party organisation and party constitution. At that time the party was deeply watching the international scenario, particularly the change of the Marxist line of thinking evident in the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956, which advocated peaceful coexistence of the two systems (Capitalist and socialist) in the world, and peaceful transformation of capitalism to socialism.

The Sixth Congress of the CPI which was held in Vijaywada in April 1961, was proposed to adopt a programme of the party. Two draft programmes were placed before the Congress from the rival groups but none of them was adopted. Actually, at that time the party was divided vertically. One group was led by S.A. Dange, Rajeshwar Rao, Bhupesh Gupta, and others, the other group was led by B.T. Ranadive, A.K. Gopalana, M. Basavapunnaiyah, P. Ramamurti, and others. A lot of debate took place over the rival programmes and other national issues. Important among other issues was whether a National Unity or a Democratic Unity should be built up. The hot debate ended in personal attacks among the leaders

leaders of the rival groups within the party. Ultimately, the guest delegate M. Suslov - a noted ideologist of the CPSU interfered and the party was saved from an immediate division<sup>51</sup>. The apparent inner-party unity that prevailed between 1955 and the Sixth Party Congress at Vijaywada in 1961, was so fragile that another round of furious inner-party struggle flared at the Sixth Party Congress. There was an entirely new political alignment of delegates at the Sixth Congress. The Congress delegates were more or less equally divided, several comrades going over to the opposition from their earlier support to the official line. The Sixth Congress of April 1961 ended in an organisational patch up and compromise. Only the speech of the General Secretary (Ajoy Ghosh) was adopted as the resolution of the Congress. Another development in this Congress was that the party chairmanship post was created avoiding the party constitution. Com. S.A. Dange was selected by an agreement as the party chairman. A sharp political division, however, persisted threatening a split<sup>52</sup> which ultimately came within a few years (1964) after the Sino-Indian border flare-up. Only after this split the two parties that emerged adopted their individual programmes.

## Section 2 The Split of the CPI into CPI and CPI(M).

The split of the Communist Party of India took place in the middle of the year 1964 when all efforts to hold a united Party Congress had ended in failure on 4 July, 1964 at its National Council's meeting held<sup>53</sup> in New Delhi. One break away group met at its Tenali (Andhra) Convention (7 July to 11 July 1964) and later formed the Communist Party of India -Marxist (CPI-M); and the other group formed the Communist Party of India (CPI) (this group retained the earlier name of the party). Both the groups claimed to be the original party following the correct political line. Arguments and counter-arguments continue among them in these regards even to this day.

The split of the CPI in 1964 was a severe jolt to the communist movement in India. There was a general belief that the ideological schism between the Chinese and Soviet Communist Parties in the late 1950's which had respective followers within the CPI had led ultimately to the division of the party. Of course, there was a definite repercussion<sup>54</sup> within the CPI of the ideological debate between the CPSU and CPC (i.e. Communist Party of Soviet Union and the Communist Party of China) regarding the grave issues like the thesis of the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 and the two documents of the international conferences of communist and socialist parties of different countries. These two documents

were - Declaration of the Communist & Worker Parties of Socialist Countries (Moscow 1957), and, statement of the Conference of the 81 Communist & Workers' Parties (Moscow 1960).

The thesis of the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 had evoked a great ideological debate in the international communist movement. The thesis declared the need and possibility of peaceful co-existence of the two (capitalist and socialist) systems in the world, and peaceful transformation of society from capitalism to socialism. It attacked the role played by Stalin in the name of 'personality cult' in the Russian national context which definitely lowered down the position of Stalin and his role in the struggle against imperialism. The world communist movement was stunned by the new line adopted by the CPSU. A mixed reaction within the communist parties of different countries was soon visible. One section in the world communist movement had started thinking that the Soviet Union had left the path of Marxism-Leninism and entered into the trap of 'revisionism'.<sup>55</sup>

The group within the CPI (often described as the Rightist ) who favoured the idea of peaceful transition to socialism advocated in the 20th Congress of the CPSU and had gathered arguments in favour of Kerala way as the path of advance for the party in the whole country. But soon their

hopes were dashed to the ground when the Kerala government was toppled at the end of 1959 by the Congress Party and its central government.

The Fifth Party Congress reiterated the aim of "the achievement of power by the working class, establishment of People's Democracy led by the working class"<sup>56</sup>. But the differences were so acute that the organisational report of the Party Congress had to say :

"Acute political differences had developed in our party before the Congress. These differences and the manner in which they had been fought had led to weakening of the unity of the party. Organised functioning had been paralysed in many areas. Our mass work, specially among the peasantry, had suffered seriously as a consequence"<sup>57</sup>.

It went on to say :

"Divergent and conflicting ideas have grown among different comrades about the decisions of the 20th Congress [of the CPSU], about the implications of the possibility of peaceful transition to socialism. After the general elections, the Kerala State Committee adopted a resolution trying to link our success in Kerala and the formation of the Communist Government there with the broader issue of peaceful transition. Some C.C. members thought the document to be wrong. Some argued with it. But the Central Committee did not even discuss it.

These, however, are not the only instances. An attitude of utter indifference towards basic ideological issues has grown inside the party. Some comrades even dispute such basic concepts of Marxism-Leninism as the dictatorship of the proletariat being essential for the building of socialism"<sup>58</sup>.

The followers of the peaceful transition to socialism saw its practice in Kerala state where the CPI formed the ministry.

But at the end when the Kerala government was toppled the Leftists within the CPI reinforced their arguments that Congress would never let the situation to develop in a way suitable for peaceful transition. Namboodiripad admitted "... the fate that overtook that government in 1959-60, followed by the subsequent struggle in Kerala itself and in other states like West Bengal, showed that formula 'Kerala today, other states tomorrow and finally the centre' [a popular slogan at that time] was completely unrealistic"<sup>59</sup>.

The fall of the government was followed not too lately by the development of the India-China conflict which further widened internal rift. This new rift on the India-China question reopened the controversy within the party and finally led to its split in 1964.

The resolution of the CPI Central Executive Committee (CEC) in its search for the middle ground - confidence in

China's non-aggressive character but commitment to India's territorial integrity - satisfied neither the pro-Chinese internationalist Left of the party nor the nationalist Right. Differences within the party were fully exposed as the consequences of a further incident on 20-21 October in which nine members of an Indian police petrol were killed and ten detained in a clash with Chinese forces forty miles inside the border of Ladakh as understood by India. The CPI's formal acceptance of the McMahon Line in mid - November amounted to a victory for the Right and further alienated the internationalist Left<sup>60</sup>.

The existing internal differences within the CPI was compounded by the events of Kerala, the Sino-Indian border dispute and the Sino-Soviet ideological quarrel. The historic 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 which adopted the policies of peaceful co-existence and peaceful transition to socialism had earned a mixed reaction among the communists in the world. The days of bonhomie between the two giant socialist states were coming to an end. The major differences came over-ground in April 1960 when the Peking journal Red Flag had published an article 'Long Live Leninism' which attacked the CPSU in ideological terms and the conflict developed at the World Confederation of Trade Unions' conference in Peking and the 3rd Congress of the Rumanian Workers' party both in June 1960. In this perspective the World Congress of Communist Parties was scheduled to be held

in Moscow in November 1960. There the CPI needed to clarify its position. The CEC's resolution, based on the draft of the national party secretary, Ajoy Ghosh, and supported by Namboodiripad, is reported to have explicitly condemned the Chinese Party and endorsed the Soviet line on peaceful transition and expressed concern at the way in which differences in the world communist movement were being handled by the two main socialist countries - the Soviet Union and the Peoples' Republic of China<sup>61</sup>. Ajoy Ghosh's speech to the World Congress was conciliatory in tone towards both the CPSU and the CPC but indicated support for the Soviet Party in the ideological quarrel and opposition to the Chinese Party on the Sino-Indian border dispute<sup>62</sup>.

Before the Sixth Party Congress of the CPI, serious differences had again developed inside the Communist Party of India on programmatic issues and on the current policies as well as the ideological issues of the World Communist movement. The two commissions which were appointed by the National Council to draft the Programme and Political Resolution to be placed at the Sixth Congress at Vijayawada, could not come to a common understanding. The serious differences that had cropped up at the Fourth Congress in 1956 (immediately after the Twentieth CPSU Congress) had made it clear that the party programme adopted in 1951 had become out-moded and now, therefore, to be redrafted. There was no common understanding on the lines along which the

redrafting was to be done. The National Council itself having no unanimous understanding for the preparation of a party programme which would be accepted by all in the party.

In this event, while the CPI National Council voted in February 1961 to recommend Ajoy Ghosh's draft political resolution to the Congress for approval, it agreed to circulate the Left alternative draft prepared and signed by twenty two National Council members including B.T.Randive and H.K. Surjeet. A third document, written by Namboodiripad which was critical of both left and right positions was also circulated<sup>63</sup>. The Sixth Congress, therefore, had three drafts before it, characterised respectively as 'Rightist' and 'Leftist' and 'Centrist'. The first having been prepared by S.A.Dange, P.C.Joshi and G.Adhikari as signatories was supported by C.Rajeswar Rao and others.

In essentials, the Rightists saw the principal threat as coming from monopoly and foreign capital which encouraged reaction - the monopolists and communal forces. The Congress party was represented as having progressive as well as reactionary elements. The CPI should therefore be prepared to work with and against Congress and be ready to extend a welcome to progressive Congressmen in a national democratic front led by the working class.

The left agreed that Congress's record was not entirely black, but accused the Right of Compromising with Congress

and underestimating its reactionary character. The CPI should vigorously oppose Congress party. The working class leadership of democratic forces was emphasized in the choice of the slogan 'People's Democracy'.

Namboodiripad's draft distinguished between two sections of the bourgeoisie - foreign and Indian monopoly capital on the one hand the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal elements on the other, and argued for efforts to win over the latter to the CPI side<sup>64</sup>. Thus the differences were, not confined to programmatic positions but included also questions of assessing the current situations and working out the tactical line. The Sixth Congress of the CPI proved inconclusive for two reasons : First, the Rightists had the barest majority; and second, the Soviet delegation, the first formal delegation in the CPI history, led by the prominent ideologist Mikhail Suslov while supporting the Right counselled against pressing matters to a split in the party.

In the Sixth Congress, the differences were not confined only to the programmatic positions. They concerned questions of assessing the current situation and working out of the tactical lines but there was no common understanding on the political resolution to be adopted by the Congress. While the discussion on the adoption of the new programme was deferred, the Congress was dispersed without having a unanimous or majority document spelling out the Party's current tactics.

A strange procedure was adopted by incorporating the speech of the General Secretary of the party, Ajoy Ghosh after replacing some passages from the speech. The inner party situation, therefore, was one of pandemonium marked by groupism.

The patch-up solution for the choice of top leaders of the party proved very soon to be only a temporary one. The patch-up arrangement was of balancing between the 'left' and the 'right' with an avowed Rightist as Chairman (S.A.Dange) and a 'pro-Left', as General Secretary (E.M.S.Namboodiripad). Namboodiripad personally maintained a stand what was known as Centrist, but he maintained a good relationship with the Left. He was also nominated as General Secretary by the Left. Naturally the tension between them was the inherent property of the patch-up work. In February 1963 Namboodiripad, the General Secretary, resigned in protest against the activities of the Right in dealing with the situation after Chinese aggression. The Right was majority in the National Council.

On 20 October 1962 the Sino-Indian border dispute took a more serious turn, creating an acute dilemma for the party. On 1 November, the National Council adopting an unequivocally nationalist stand, condemned China's aggression and called on the Indian people to unite in the defence of the country.

The anti-China hysteria which had been whipped up since 1959 was powerful enough to rouse general antipathy to the

pro-Chinese leftists in the communist party who demanded peaceful settlement of disputes between India and China from the beginning. The Rightists were reported to have used this chance to discredit and malign the 'Leftists' as 'Chinese agents'. Therefore, they posed the whole question of inner party struggle within the Communist Party as a conflict between the 'patriots' who stood up against China and the 'traitors' who were acting as the aggressors' tools<sup>65</sup>. Actually this dissension had helped the ruling party, the Indian National Congress to put down and discredit the very integrity of a section of the communists in the fashion of Quit India precedence.

Shortly, afterwards on 22nd November 1962 the Central Government commenced to detain nearly 1,000 CPI Leftists under the Defence of India Ordinance<sup>66</sup>. Some of the Rightist leaders were also in custody as for example, Achutha Menon. It was reported to be an assumption of the leftists that the Right had supplied lists of Leftists to the Home Ministry to facilitate the detentions.

But what appeared in this event, that the Dange-group was prompt to use this opportunity to reorganise the state units (as for example in the West Bengal and Punjab) and to pass Rightist and pro-Soviet resolutions in a depleted National Council meeting in Feb, 1963<sup>67</sup>.

Namboodiripad's own resolution entitled 'Revisionism and Dogmatism in the CPI'<sup>68</sup> was rejected in this National

Council meeting. At the end he resigned from the post of General Secretary in Feb, 1963 just after the end of National Council's meeting. Namboodiripad's document criticised the revisionist and dogmatic activities of the past and present leadership of the CPI. More particularly this document attacked the Right's current chauvinism and accused it of tailing along behind the ruling Congress government. In a further draft resolution he argued that the CPI should not take side in the Sino-Soviet dispute till it had put its own house in order.

The years 1963-64 were marked as the highest stage of internal squabbles among the warring groups of the CPI. Even it crossed the limit of decency and reached the personal digs on issues spanning over 1924 onwards.

M.S. Namboodiripad who was known as centrist resigned from the post of General Secretary in Feb. 1963 because the Right majority in the National Council led by Dange was not acceptable to him. Thereafter, C. Rajeshwar Rao a staunch Dangeite became the General Secretary of the party.

However, the next stage is the stage for unity between the Centrist Namboodiripad and his followers with the Leftists. The first point of their unity was that both of them considered the Right as their common enemy.

In October 1963 a meeting of the National Council was held. The 17 members released from jail also participated

in the meeting. They placed a document known as "The Threatening Disruption and Split of the Party - How to Avert the Disaster". This document was critical of the role played by the Right group led by Dange during the arrest of the Left leaders and followers and blamed the Right for disruption of the unity of the party.

In reply Dange rejected the arguments of the Left and counter charged "... do they really wish to bring about unity or only make manoeuvres under the guise of unity proposals ? We consider that the statement of the seventeen is actuated by a desire to prevent a split. But the measures proposed in their actual effect will lead to exactly the opposite effect"<sup>69</sup>.

Since October 1963 to April 1964 was the period actuated by tremendous bitterness between the rival groups. Accusation and counter accusation by either of the rival groups before the general press was a recurring affair. The two groups were obstinate in their individual way of thinking that created the final plea for division of the party marked by the point of no return.

Consequently on 15th April, 1964, the National Council where Dange group is majority suspended the dissidents enmasse. The expulsion was not only limited to the central organisations of the party, but also it extended to the provincial levels. In West Bengal, Andhra and Punjab the

Leftists were majority. Here the Right formed an alternative provincial committees with its followers<sup>70</sup>.

The last National Council's meeting was held in Delhi on 4th July, 1964. It was a last bid to retain unity of the party. However, the minutes of the discussion<sup>71</sup> were limited to the inner-party differences during China's aggression and the detention of the Left followers. The Left pressed for withdrawal of suspension and expulsion of the left leaders and followers. The Right majority did not accede to the proposal of the Left and asked them to prove their majority in the National Council. Then the 32 members of the Left in National Council walked out of the meeting. They brought out a memorandum condemning the anti-party factional activities being carried on by the Dange-group. This memorandum states "the exchange of views [in the N.C. meeting of 11 April 1964] revealed the fact that we [Leftists] are united not only against the factionalism and anti-party organisational methods resorted to by them, but also against their political line of tailing behind the bourgeoisie through general united front with the Congress"<sup>72</sup>. Ultimately the Left group broke away from the Right, severed all relationship with the Right. Eventually the situation led to the final split and the two warring factions individually as claimed only the successor and following the real Marxist-Leninist path for India's revolution. Both of them were trying utmost to gather as much as supporters as they could. The Leftists

then appealed to the fellow comrades to join with them against the Revisionist group of Dange.

Thus a situation was created in which there could not be found any way of resolving inner-party contradictions in ideological position on international communist cleavages and strategic and tactical questions regarding India's revolution. Later there developed inter-personal bitterness and distrust among the top leaders, and these problems also proved insoluble. The warring groups thought of resolving the contradiction by splitting the party and thereby dividing the movement so far they had built in India against the enemy of the toiling people. Thus the first split was over and it served as a womb for another split occurring within three years though the latter was for different reasons.

In the event of split within the CPI, there were felt this of the two giant communist parties, namely, the CPSU and the CPC which differentiated from each other on international ideological issues. At that time they were busy making allies in favour of their respective stand on ideological issues under debate.

In the split the CPSU openly backed Rightist effort. The CPSU was quick to supplement the effort of the CPI's to fit the revolt into the general pattern of the international split and trace it to the activities of "Peking Splitters". The CPI journal, reprinted from the Soviet journal Partinya

Zhizh, an article denouncing the "splitter groups" as composed of "diverse renegades, Trotskyites, and adventurists attempting to come to top on the dirty foam of Peking's factional struggle against the Marxist-Leninist parties. Among them are quite a number of morally corrupt people"<sup>73</sup>.

On the other hand, during the split the CPC was completely silent. But what was evident, the CPC had started criticising the Indian ruling circles from the late 1950's. The Indian government headed by J.Nehru was busy to dub and pose the National Congress Party as the champion of socialism and that too was certified by the CPSU after its 20th Congress in 1956 where peaceful transition to socialism was declared as one of the aims. The Rightist faction within the CPI in the pre-split period and after went for the support to the CPSU's stand on Nehrus. This was unacceptable to the CPC. Besides, the Tibet issue in 1959 and Sino-Indian border dispute in 1962 were the events where China's direct national interest was involved. On these issues the Rightist faction of the CPI endorsed the Nehru-government positions and proved its true nationalist identity and alienated the Left in the CPI as Chinese agents or traitors who were not critical of the Chinese stand in the international ideological debate. Therefore, the simple logic ran that China was behind the Leftist faction which engineered the split in the CPI in the fashion the International solidarity of the communist bloc broker by the CPC.

However, the ever undisclosed pro-Chinese position of the Leftist-faction, later known as CPI(M), was maligned thereby absolved of from the accusation very soon when CPC openly supported the break-away group later known as Naxalites from the CPI(M)<sup>74</sup>.

To sum up the whole gamut which culminated in and ended with the split of the CPI in 1964 can be redrawn.

The first major ideological confrontation between the two groups was visible during the Fourth Congress held in 1956 between the two strategical and political trends. The issue raised then was simple and straight; should the party play the role of opposition to the bourgeois-landlord rule symbolized by the Indian National Congress Party and its government at the Centre, or should it work for such an 'all-in unity' as would extend from communists to Congress, ultimately leading to 'the formation of the coalition government' ?

Among developments which followed the Fourth Congress were - the formation of the first ever communist government in Kerala, starting of ideological dissension within the socialist bloc over the thesis of the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956, shift of the Marxian understanding of revolution by the CPSU leadership, in India toppling of the Kerala government by the ruling Congress government in the centre, presence of China factor in the Indian border and

the policy pursued by the CPSU leadership towards the Indian ruling class and its party which was a discouraging factor to the Indian proletariat & its party. China's policy regarding the Indian ruling Congress party was same as that of the CPSU upto 1959. The Left faction within the CPI denounced the CPSU's stand. Meanwhile China also turned back from the Soviet on ideological grounds. Automatically the Left within the CPI who denounced vocally the CPSU were branded as 'pro-Chinese'. The pro-Chinese Left group within the CPI fell in trouble when China attacked India in the border in 1962. Then the Leftists were singled out and maligned by the Rightists of the CPI. The ruling Congress Party and its government did not miss the chance to brand them as traitors in the same fashion as Gandhiji did in 1942 during the 'Quit India Movement' where the Indian Communists did not participate in the anti-imperialist struggle for their different understanding of the then situation. The ruling Congress government kept the Leftists in detention enmasse. All these led to inner-party misgivings and unending group rivalry. These factors facilitated the drifting of the rival groups from one another in just opposite directions. The failure to evolve a correct political line and to maintain unity within the CPI in times of national crisis in the 1960s resulted in harms to the partisan struggle of the Indian proletariat. However, opinion differs. The Right CPI thought that the majority in the National Council was following a correct line but the group of the Left who broke away in 1964 were

responsible for disrupting the united struggle of the masses led by the CPI<sup>75</sup>. On the other hand, the Left CPI opined that by the split it was able to evolve a correct political line in lieu of tailism and revisionism of the united party. They claimed, consequently the revolutionary movement in India was helped by giving encouragement to those who suffered most, the urban and rural proletariat, to join and carry their movement to bigger and bigger success thereafter.

Section 3 The adoption of two new programmes by the CPI and the CPI(M) respectively.

The split of the Communist Party of India (C P I) was marked by the dissidents' meet at Tenali (Andhra) on 7 July 1964 and the adoption of two separate programmes by the two rival factions in their respective Seventh Congresses commencing shortly. In the beginning, these two factions were popularly known as the 'Left' and the 'Right'. The Left faction later named as Communist Party of India (Marxist), in short CPI(M), and Right faction retained and continued with the earlier name the Communist Party of India, in short CPI. Each of them claimed to be the successor of the united CPI, and by the by, they also claimed to be the successor of the earlier six Congresses of the undivided CPI. Therefore, after the split the Left faction organised its party Congress in Calcutta in

31 October - 7 November, 1964, and called it its Seventh Congress. In the same way the Seventh Congress of the Right faction was organised in Bombay in 13-23 December 1964.

The Seventh Congress of the Left which was held in Calcutta in October-November, 1964 had authorised its Central Committee elected by the Congress to change the name of the party if that was found necessary. In 1966<sup>76</sup>, just before the Parliamentary election the Central Committee changed the name of the party to Communist Party of India (Marxist). But the programme which was adopted by the Seventh Congress carried the earlier name the Communist Party of India as it was at the time of adoption of the programme in 1964<sup>77</sup>. In this Seventh Congress the party of the Left adopted a two-tier organisational set up at the highest level - Central Committee and the Politbureau in lieu of earlier three tier system of the united party.

On the contrary the Right faction which was majority in the National Council at the time of division met at Bombay in its Seventh Congress. This Congress prepared a Draft Programme for the party and retained the existing three-tier organisational structure at the top<sup>78</sup>. It blamed the expelled members who broke away and organised the Calcutta Congress as they were dissidents or splinters or renegade or pro-Chinese. It tried to establish its claim

to be original Communist Party of India.

After the split, the majority of the National Council members who had earlier been elected at the Vijayawada Congress (the 6th Congress) remained with the CPI. But the majority of the party members reported and claimed to have rallied behind the Left<sup>79</sup>.

There was a third faction known as 'Centrists' led by E.M.S Namboodiripad. Perhaps the term 'Centrist' was conferred on this group due to its middle position about the understanding of the Indian condition and the proposed courses of action of the party. However, this group appeared with distinction during the Sixth Congress of the Party held at Vijayawada in April 1961.

In the eve of the Sixth Congress, in the meeting of the National Council for a long term party programme Namboodiripad submitted a document, side by side with the respective documents of the Right prepared by Dange, and the Left prepared by Ranadive. The Right argued for working with the progressive Congressmen in a National Democratic front and the Left which argued vigorously for opposing the Congress for its anti-people and reactionary role, therefore, no berth would be allotted for the Congress in its avowed People's Democratic Front. Namboodiripad's document took a middle course. His draft distinguished between the two sections of bourgeoisie - foreign and Indian monopoly

capital on the one hand and anti-imperialist and anti-feudal elements on the other, and argued for effort to win over the latter. It is reported that in the National Council the Right had the majority - 56 were said to support the Right, 36 the Left, and 18 Namboodiripad. The Sixth Congress rejected the documents of the Left and the Centrists<sup>80</sup>.

Namboodiripad's middle course was also evident from his document 'Revisionism and Dogmatism in the CPI'<sup>81</sup> for which he had established himself as an able theoretician in the party. Here he criticised the past zigzags between the revisionism and dogmatism of the CPI leadership.

During the Sino-Indian border clash he accused the Right for its chauvinistic approach and attacked it of tailing along behind the Congress government. His explanatory letter to the world communist parties during the Chinese aggression and the fact that he was of the opinion that the CPI should not take side in the Sino-Indian dispute placed him in the middle position between the two extreme rival faction within the CPI. However the Centrist group was more vocal against the Right group than the Left. The Right was the common target of both the Left and the centurists. After the split, the Centrist merged with the Left but its identity was felt in the Tenali Convention and in the Seventh Congress of the Left and ultimately it could manage a respectable berth in the Left group.

The two Congresses of the two parties had adopted respective programme and tactical lines. The Draft programme of the Right was prepared by S.A. Dange - the top leader of the Rightist group, and it was adopted by the Bombay Congress without significant alterations. The Left draft was prepared by M. Basavapunniah which underwent some modifications before and during the Calcutta Congress largely in response to the Centrist reservation of Namboodiripad and his followers<sup>82</sup>.

In Tenali convention of the Left a preliminary discussion was started for adopting a party programme which would be different from that of the Right. In that convention of the Left, a draft programme was prepared and circulated among the delegates by the organizers. Side by side, there was circulated another 'programme-note' prepared by Namboodiripad which disagreed on some points of the main draft<sup>83</sup>. However, this matter did not end here. When the party of the Left was all set for the Seventh Congress, there it discussed all the drafts, recommendations and criticisms of the programme from different corners. E.M.S. Namboodiripad in his 'note' disagreed with the official draft programme.

The main point of difference was that Namboodiripad suggested for National Democracy as an immediate stage of revolution and a non-capitalist path. He did not agree

with the formulation of the official draft. The official draft proposed People's Democracy as an immediate stage towards the socialist stage. However, he argued that his proposed analysis of National Democracy and non-capitalist path would be different from that of the Dange group's, i.e. programme of the Right. Furthermore, regarding the class alliance of his proposed National Democracy, he made it categorically clear that he did not visualise any class alliance without the leadership of the working class of which workers and peasants alliance would be the basis. However, this recommendation was voted out by 202 to 126 votes and People's Democracy was accepted as the immediate goal in the programme<sup>84</sup>.

Another recommendation from E.M.S. Namboodiripad found place in the final programme of the Left. It was on the need of alliance with all progressive forces to wipe out pre-capitalist forms of exploitation as the precondition for democratic revolution<sup>85</sup>. It was incorporated in para 86 of the programme.

The two programmes which emerged from the rival CPI congresses (Seventh Congress of the Left and Seventh Congress of the Right) confirm the view that the split occurred over genuine and significant differences among the members, even leaders of the undivided Communist Party over both strategic and tactical questions. These questions

related to the class character of the Indian state, the immediate stage of revolution, the alliance of classforces, etc. At the time when the party was undivided, in its Sixth Congress, the main two drafts were placed for adoption but they remained undiscussed. What was evident was that these drafts reappeared in their respective Seventh Congresses with minor modifications when the party was divided.

An analysis of the two rival programmes brought out by the two main groups of Indian communists, viz., the CPIM) and the CPI can clearly indicate their respective positions and understandings of strategic and tactical matters. This study also can focus on the matter whether the ideological and tactical positions of the warring factions within the undivided CPI had been accommodated in their respective programmes when those factions built independent parties by splitting the CPI. Some of the basic features are highlighted here to touch upon the departure of one from another. Two types of Marxist understandings regarding the Indian condition were revealed by the rival programmes of the two Communist parties in India.

A study of the programmes which emerged from the rival congresses of the two groups of CPI later known as CPI(M) and CPI, confirms the view that the split was turned essentially on the domestic issues like the nature of the

ruling class and its party - the Indian National Congress. Another important factor, i.e. ideological understandings regarding the stages and types of domestic revolution and the primary task of this revolution and leadership question had a plethora of disagreements between the rival programmes.

Some of the basic differences are highlighted here side by side for close comparison :

1. For the Right (CPI) - India's independence 'was a historic event'<sup>86</sup> and India was now on the path of independent development<sup>87</sup>.

For the Left (later known as CPI-M)-the transfer of power was mere 'compromise'<sup>88</sup> between British imperialism and congress party. India achieved independence being partitioned into India and Pakistan. Thus India's political independence was secure on the event of August 15, 1947. "Thus ended the political rule of the British in India and the state headed by the big bourgeoisie was established"<sup>89</sup>. The subsequent economic development in India was, therefore, an attempt by the bourgeoisie to strengthen its position - a compromise with imperialism and feudalism at the expense of the people.

2. The Rightist view of the India's economic development was comparatively optimistic. Though the growth was inadequate there was some economic progress and to

that extent independence had been realized<sup>90</sup>.

The Left, on the other hand, argued that economic development was illusory and what passed for planning in India was subordinate to the profit motive of domestic and foreign capital<sup>91</sup>.

3. For the Right, the key group which dominates the machinery of the state is the national bourgeoisie in which big bourgeoisie holds powerful influence, and therefore, puts reactionary pulls on the state power<sup>92</sup>.

For the Left, the key groups dominating the machinery of the state are the bourgeoisie and landlords led by the big bourgeoisie<sup>93</sup>.

- 3.1 To the Right, 'the big bourgeoisie hold powerful influence' over 'the class rule of the national bourgeoisie as a whole'<sup>94</sup>. It visualises "within the national bourgeoisie itself as the top monopoly groups get more and more differentiated from the rest of the bourgeoisie ... The influence of foreign monopoly interests is also felt in this development in which they generally support those monopoly groups"<sup>95</sup>.

Therefore the Right arrives at the decision that "The monopoly groups and feudal circles represent the main anti-democratic forces of reaction in the country"<sup>96</sup>.

According to the Right, the monopoly and big bourgeoisie

are not leading the State of the national bourgeoisie, but they have powerful influence on it. They are considered as reactionary forces because they have a link with foreign imperialist capital. The task of the National Democratic Front, therefore, is to alienate the monopoly and big bourgeoisie from the rest of the bourgeoisie and to forge alliance with the latter for completion of the National Democratic revolution.

- 3.2 To the Left, the big bourgeoisie is leading the bourgeois-landlord government in India. "The big bourgeoisie which headed the national liberation movement and the new independent state after 1947 has been continuously in state power for nearly two decades and has been utilising that state power to immensely strengthen its class position at the expense of people on the one hand and compromising and bargaining with imperialism on the other. Thus they have embarked on the path of capitalist development"<sup>97</sup>.
- The Left observers, "During the last two decades there has been an enormous growth of Indian monopoly and strengthening of capitalism in India"<sup>98</sup>.
- Therefore, the Left calls for People's Democratic Revolution to replace the bourgeois-landlord rule led by the big bourgeoisie and to establish the workers-peasants rule led by the proletariat.

4. For the Right, the national bourgeoisie 'has strong links with the landlords', this factor also gives rise to 'reactionary pull on the state power'<sup>99</sup>.

For the Left, the landlord class shares the state power with the bourgeoisie<sup>100</sup>.

5. Both Right and Left agree that forces of imperialism are in league with the big bourgeoisie<sup>101</sup>. Both of them accept the need of use of the parliamentary means as one of the methods of struggle for this goal<sup>102</sup>.
6. The Right's central slogan was, therefore, the establishment of National Democracy through a front of all patriotic and progressive forces including the national bourgeoisie.

For the Left, the central slogan is the establishment of People's Democracy through a front of working class, peasants, intelligentsia and national bourgeoisie.

7. The Right considers that the worker-peasant alliance is the motive force of this front but the leadership of the front "belongs to anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-monopoly forces"<sup>103</sup>. It proposes combined leadership among the participating forces in the national democratic revolution of this stage.

For the Left, the worker-peasant alliance is the

basis of the front. The Peoples Democratic Revolution of this stage will be led by the working class through its party - the communist party<sup>104</sup>.

8. For the Right, after the National Democratic Revolution the National Democratic State will be run by all the participating democratic forces but it hopes that the balance will be shifted in favour of the proletariat which will carry it forward to the ultimate stage of socialist revolution<sup>105</sup>.

For the Left, after the People's Democratic Revolution the People's Democratic state will be run under the proletarian leadership and only then it will be possible to carry it forward to the next socialist stage<sup>106</sup>.

Therefore, for the Right, after the democratic revolution all the patriotic forces will get berth in the democratic set up to share power and enjoy results there from. But for the Left, after the democratic revolution the proletariat will lead the democratic state in alliance with and with the support of the peasantry and in no case the bourgeoisie will be allowed to share the state power, because the bourgeoisie would be the target of the socialist revolutionary struggle.

9. For the Right, the main task in the National Democratic stage is to direct the country's economy along the non-capitalist path of development against the imperialist penetration and internal big and monopoly reaction over the national economy<sup>107</sup>. Other important tasks, in this stage, are to carry out the remaining works on land reforms and to ensure democracy at all levels. .

On the contrary, for the Left, the main task in the People's Democratic stage is to carry out agrarian revolution and to make a sweeping democratic reform in the social system. The second urgent task is to eradicate and expell the foreign monopoly capital and national big and monopoly interests<sup>108</sup>.

10. Besides the establishment of democracy and democratisation of all set-ups after the respective democratic revolutions, the aim of agrarian reform is another most important activity in this stage. The Right assessed the consequences of the agrarian measures of the existing government that "Feudal land relations have been curbed ; Statutory semi-feudal landlordism has been abolished in the erstwhile zamindari areas. The major part of the area under cultivation is within the category of self-operated ownership holdings while the areas under lease, which

constituted the major area before land reform, is now confined to a small area"<sup>109</sup>. It sees that the ruling Congress Party's agrarian policy has largely curbed feudalism.

Furthermore, it sees the entrance of market economy in the rural sector. It states "The stronghold of commercial and financial interests over the rural market during the last several years has been tightened enormously. The price mechanism and market manipulations drive the peasants of whatever little benefits they secure on account of land reform and technological development"<sup>110</sup>. For the right, the peasantry is exposed to the capitalist oppression. The rural bourgeoisie has emerged in place of the feudal elements and landlords. Therefore, it vows for wiping out the remnants of feudalism and landlordism of whichever extent is remaining for the 're-organisation of the agrarian economy'<sup>111</sup> in the 'non-capitalist'<sup>112</sup> line. In this agrarian reform the participation of the whole of the peasantry including the rich peasants<sup>113</sup> is sought.

For the Left, the agrarian reform is one of the most important aims of the People's Democratic revolution. It sees that "Nearly two decades of Congress rule has proved beyond any shadow of doubt that the aim and direction of its agrarian policies is not to smash the feudal and semi-feudal fetters on our land relations and thus liberate the

peasantry from age-old bondage, but to transform the feudal landlords into capitalist landlords and develop a stratum of rich peasants ... to make these sections the main political base of the ruling class in the country side"<sup>114</sup>. The Left assesses that the ruling Congress policy for the agrarian reform is not to smash the feudal and semi-feudal fetters but to make them political base in the country side.

The Left analyses the existing Indian class rule as the 'organ of the bourgeois-landlord' government led by the big bourgeoisie<sup>115</sup>. Therefore, it recognises that the landlords enjoy state power in the existing Indian state, and the big bourgeois leadership is working in league with the landlords and feels no need of smashing the landlords, rather to help them persist.

Therefore, for the Left in order to complete the agrarian revolution the existing bourgeois-landlord rule should be changed. The Left does not rely upon the big bourgeois leadership for the agrarian reform. For it, the Left calls for workers-peasants alliance and proletarian leadership for the People's Democratic revolution and radical agrarian reforms. It recognises the agricultural labourers and poor peasants as the most revolutionary forces in the countryside. To complete the agrarian revolution these sections are the main forces "who constitute 70

per cent of the rural households and are subjected to ruthless exploitation by landlords by their class position in present day society, will be basic allies of the working class"<sup>116</sup>. The Left is conscious about the classification among the peasantry. The poor peasants and the agricultural labourers are the core ally of the working class. The working class leadership and the active participation of the rural proletariat are the only guarantee for sweeping democratic reform of the social system and the completion of the agrarian revolution in the People's Democratic stage<sup>117</sup>.

However, both the Right & the Left perceive the capitalist penetration, but the Right thinks that it is near completion by the Congress's land reform measures and the remaining part is to be completed "Basing itself on the agricultural labourer & poor peasantry and uniting all sections of the peasantry in their struggles".<sup>118</sup> On the contrary the Left thinks it is still existing dominant in the rural economy; therefore, it has rallied the forces for immediate completion of agrarian reform as the foremost goal of democratic revolution; and to do the same, rural proletariat (constituted by the agricultural labourers and poor peasants) is the main force, not the whole of the peasantry. It considers other sections of the peasantry, particularly the rich peasantry as the most vacillating section; hence any urge for radical agrarian reform is not reliable in the rich

peasantry. On the other hand, for such reform the urge in the agricultural labourers and poor peasants is genuine and strong. For the Left, historically the working class and the rural proletariat are the main forces to carry the People's Democratic revolution into a success.

The foregoing analysis has dealt with the facts as to how and when the two factions of the CPI prepared their respective party programmes according to their understanding of the condition of the Indian state and its ruling class. A comparative analysis of the two programmes has been placed side by side to demarcate their difference of understanding of the Indian condition. However the forthcoming chapter will deal purely with the issue to issue positions of the two parties particularly on matters of establishment of democracy at all levels, particularly in the rural areas and agrarian reforms as enunciated by the programmes of the CPI & CPI(M) respectively.

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