

Towards Socialism



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22nd JUNE CALLS FOR LEFT CONSOLIDATION AND ANTI-IMPERIALIST STRUGGLE.

DEBABRATA BISWAS, General Secretary, AIFB

22nd June is the Foundation Day of Forward Bloc. Its Founder - President Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose gave a clarion call for Left consolidation and anti-Imperialist struggle as early as in 1939. Seventy years have since rolled on, but still his calls are quite very relevant. Direct British imperialist domination over our country has ended. Even the dominating phase of British imperialism is over. American imperialist force is now at the driver's seat and is spreading its vicious tentacles in various parts of the world. India is a no exception, as the American influence over our country is gradually on increase. With the signing of Indo-US Nuclear deal, George W. Bush has succeeded not only in finding a very good friend in our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, but has also turned India as a strategic partner of the US. This partnership is even extended to the sensitive areas of military operations and foreign policy of our military operations and foreign policy of our country, as a result of which our sovereignty is threatened. Within hours of terrorist attacks Mumbai on 26/11, we find a lot US agents and officials taking key positions in the whole area. During our last Lok Sabha election campaigning, we find US envoy and other foreign affairs officials moving around in different parts of the country and negotiating with several political leaders, obviously intending to influence the political and election trend of the country. Now, with the Congress Party winning and capturing the major power at the centre, with Dr. Manmohan Singh as the second consecutive turn Prime Minister of India, it is apprehended that the US influence will penetrate more deeply in our socio-political and economic affairs. From our experience, it can be said that this growing overpowering influence of the US will be detrimental to our national interest. It is still now, therefore, relevant and urgently needed for us to fight against imperialist and capitalist forces to fight against imperialist and capitalist forces headed by the US.

With the recent victory of the Congress and their allies in 15th Lok Sabha, the capitalist and the right reactionary forces, the bourgeois classes of our country have come in the forefront and are all out to crush the progressive elements of the country. The dangerous trend can be reversed only by the Left forces of the country. And obviously the Left must be united and consolidated to wage an all out fight against the imperialist-capitalist combine. The 22nd June, the Foundation Day of Forward Bloc, reminds us of this urgent task. We urge upon the people to rally round the revolutionary call of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose to save India from the hands of Imperialism 'India saved means Humanity saved.'

FREE HAND FOR ECONOMIC REFORMS

All that the government of India was looking for since the days of early 1990s, led by the then Congress Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the then Congress Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, was a free hand for economic reforms. Since then the Congress led governments introduced reforms in phases, which were also aided by the BJP-led NDA Government during 1999-2004. But there were numerous hurdles to cross over, particularly the people's adverse reaction to those corporate-friendly reforms and the Left's presence in good number and strength, particularly during the Congress-led UPA regime from 2004. The results of 15th Lok Sabha Election, with increased number of Lok Sabha seats for the Congress and substantial fall in strength of

the Left forces in the 15th Lok Sabha, have opened a vast area of opportunity for the Congress and their corporate allies, too, to implement their long-desired economic reforms. The first reaction was observed in the over-jubilant stock market. With the king Congress back in power, unprecedentedly the Sensex rose by 2110.79 points within a couple of minutes on 18th May 2009. The investor's rush was so wild that for the first time in the history of Indian stock market, trading was suspended for hitting the upper circuit. It is anybody's guess how the share market will move in the coming days.

This sensex jump reflects the traders' and business houses' high hopes and expectations about the reforms that will follow with the Congress assuming power at the Centre. In fact the outgoing UPA government proposed a round of liberalisation initiatives including reforms in banking, pensions, the retail sector and easier labour laws among others. Most of those, however, had hit a roadblock after the Left parties voiced stringent opposition particularly in the Parliament. Now that the roadblock is substantially removed, the Congress would freely move in the 15th Lok Sabha for early implementation of their proposed reforms. Even the corporate houses feel that the stage is now set for a new wave of reforms. We wonder how far these reforms would benefit the aam admi, in view of oft-quoted assurance of inclusive growth by the UPA government.

The immediately expected reforms would cover Pensions, Insurance, Disinvestment, Labour, Banking, Retail, Fiscal measures, Goods and services tax among others. With no Left pressure from within, the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority Bill (PFRDA) may finally be passed, bringing in pension reforms.

Increased FDI in insurance is in the pipeline and is going to be cleared shortly. An increase in the ceiling on FDI in insurance to 49 percent from 26 percent will soon be implemented. A Bill to this effect was introduced towards the fag end of the outgoing UPA regime.

Disinvestment move will also gather further momentum. Resumption of disinvestment in PSUs, particularly the profit-making public sector units, is expected to get a push on the so-called plea of enabling them to raise funds. Navaratna industries will also not be exempted from the axe of disinvestment.

It is a matter of serious concern that Labour laws are going to be liberalised to benefit the corporate houses, with anti-labour apprehensions. Changes in labour laws, long seen as a hurdle to a more corporate-friendly regime, are expected to get a push soon. But provision of layoffs may lead to major labour unrest.

Private capital is going to have more controlling role in Banking sector in near future. The government is expected to push for the amendment to Banking Regulation Act to allow bigger role for private capital in India's banking sector.

Entry of big capital, foreign or domestic, in retail business appears to be a big threat for millions of retailers and their families. It is apprehended that easier foreign investment norms in multi-brand retail may go through.

Other fiscal measures taken to help the economy tide over the impact of international recession are primarily designed to help the big traders and corporate houses, and nothing to benefit the common consumers. This process is likely to continue. Cut in excise duties and others are some of the measures already taken by the Government.

A comprehensive goods and service tax (GST) may finally see the light of the day in the next couple of years as indirect tax reforms assume centre stage. But basically these would adversely affect the common consumers.

The Congress has assumed bigger power in the 15th Lok Sabha and the aforesaid economic reforms and others are going to follow. We wonder, what an alarming condition is awaiting the aam admi.

From Archives:

AN APPEAL TO SOCIALISTS

(An article written - By Niharendu Dutta Mazumdar in 'Forward Bloc', the Political weekly of Forward Bloc in 12th August 1939)

In these days of mutual suspicious and distrust it is difficult to say or write anything without being misunderstood and without injuring unwittingly the cause of unity. Yet I am deeply convinced that when I appeal to all socialists to join the Forward Bloc, I do so from a sense of duty to the very cause of unity.

Socialists have not joined the Forward Bloc, Certain socialists are even hostile to the idea of left consolidation. This seems particularly strange when we remember, as Randive has pointed out in the August issue of New Age, that the idea of a left Bloc is essentially of socialist origin.

The reason why socialist have not joined Forward Bloc are many. The foremost among them is, that the Forward Bloc has developed as a reaction against the splitting tactics of the Right Wing : it is good in so far as it opposes the splitting tactics, but dangerous in so far as it seeks to alienate the personnel of the Right Wing.

This argument by itself rather suggests the remedy that socialists join Forward Bloc and fight to preserve the heritage of struggle in Congress without narrowing its basis (a la Right) or splitting away from the Right (after the

fashion of the "inverted Right" Leftist).

But another reason stands in the way of socialists joining the Bloc. Before Triupuri Congress, the socialists were unquestionably at the head of the Left. But to-day the socialist are outnumbered by Left nationalists, and it is the latter who are at the head of the Left. If socialists join the Forward Bloc to-day they would be swamped by Left nationalists, who would carry the day and drag socialism along its trail.

This view point is too weak-kneed to be termed socialist, if by socialism we mean genuine, revolutionary socialism the socialism of the working class, the socialism of Marx, Engles, Lenin, Stalin and Dimitrov. These great masters teach us that revolutionary socialism is superior to all political doctrines, not because the greatest number of people follow it or are even aware of it, but because it is the only theory based on science, on a real view of the world. They teach us that it is the most powerful weapon in a struggle, because it is the political theory of the working class, the most revolutionary class of modern society even though that class is a minority of the people.

I do not prefer to be an authority on theoretical socialism. But with all due respect to my better equipped socialist comrades, and yet with supreme conviction, I claim that if socialists join the Forward Bloc, they would not only be swamped, but actually outstrip the "inverted rights" in every way, because even as national revolutionaries, socialists in every colonial country excel "pure" nationalists. Socialism is the theory of the working class, a class which has no interest it cannot sacrifice for the sake of national freedom, while nationalism properly belongs to the bourgeois who in the last analysis loves his property dearer than his freedom. Why is then this fear of being swamped, of being outdone?

There is another aspect of the question. Socialists advocated the Left Bloc, not because of some electoral defeat, or any particular conspiracy of the Right. Their idea of Left Bloc arises from their political analysis of the period of which the chief components are (i) the slowly gathering imperialist attack, (ii) the willingness of the masses to retaliate and (iii) the policy of capitulation of the leadership based on an illusion of lasting compromise with British Imperialism. Their analysis led them to advocate a Left Bloc, whose function would be to mass revolutionary force of the people against imperialism and isolate the capitulatory leadership.

But the rank-and-file left-winger has not been led to the idea of a Left Bloc so much from a deep analysis, as from an elemental reaction against the shameless attack of imperialism, of the vested interests. The left swing is elemental, and consequently on mass-scale.

Would it be correct for socialists to regard this elemental swing to the Left on a mass-scale as a dangerous tendency crowding out the socialists? Why, some have even begun to look upon the Forward Bloc as a kind of Frankenstein's demon, raised by socialists, and overpowering them. This is fantastic. The Left is discontented and is groping for correct lead. For the socialists to leave the Left to its own fate by refusing to join the Forward Bloc would be as incorrect as harmful to themselves.

Some would argue: the Left nationalists are growing no longer. They have found a way and found the wrong way. Let them lead themselves astray, why should socialists join?

This is a false estimate. The groping of the left for a lead would naturally put them sometimes on the right, and some times on the wrong track. To exaggerate every mistake, and belittle the success of the Left would be harmful to the cause of unity. In any case, if the socialists are confident of their own correct approach why not let the Left have the benefit of that?

A dissent would be voiced. The socialists are ready to lead, but the Left does not listen. Our lead is not followed.

My reply is : people learn more from action, from actual struggle than from pure discussion. People know their leaders through struggle. I believe the socialists, if they follow the socialism of Marx, Lenin, Stalin can achieve greater success in a struggle than any other political group. Socialists have an unbroken international revolutionary heritage. Socialists are the leaders of the most revolutionary class of society. If they are socialist in deed, as they are in words, if they fight every struggle in the socialist way, they would establish their unquestioned leadership over the Left.

Another point is stressed by Comrade Randive that relates to qualitative demarcation of the socialists from the Left nationalists. I support him with all emphasis in so far as the principle of the thing is concerned, but would like to draw somewhat different practical conclusions.

The Forward Bloc is still a Bloc, and not a Left Nationalist Party. The constitution of the Bloc does not require a Socialist Party to merge into the Bloc. The separate existence of the Socialist Party is not only a necessity, but a *sine qua non* to the socialists' joining the Bloc. It is this party which distinguishes the socialists from the Left nationalists. The stronger the party, the clearer is the line demarcating socialists from other progressive elements in society. The wider the organized influence of the party over the working class,

the deeper the organic contact, the clearer is the line demarcating the working class from non-proletarian revolutionaries. The more all-embracing the Socialist Party, the more decisive is the influence of socialism over the whole people. That brings us to the important task of building up a United Mass Proletarian Socialist Party.

It is absolutely correct to say that unless we put our energies in the direction of building up the United Mass Proletarian Party in all its aspect, we would not prove of decisive influence in the national movement. But to find in this an insuperable obstacle to our joining the Forward Bloc is, in my opinion, wrong.

The positive formulation should be : we join the Bloc, in order to unite the Left, for preserving the fighting heritage of the Congress ; and in order to succeed in this task, we strengthen ourselves, we strive as never before, to build up the United Mass Proletarian Socialist Party.

I appeal to all socialists to deliberate coolly over these issues and criticize my views to which I should only gladly submit. I Appeal to all socialists to join the Forward Bloc.

Resolution adopted in the Central Secretariat meeting, held at New Delhi on 18th May, 2009

AIFB REVIEWS 15th LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT

The Central Secretariat of All India Forward Bloc met on 18th May, 2009 and reviewed the results of 15th Lok Sabha Elections.

While accepting the mandate of the people, with all modesty, the party is of the opinion that, the confusion about the stability, credibility and programme of the combination of the non-Congress (I) and non-BJP parties helped the Congress (I) to retain the power. BJP's anti minority role and the directionless and negative campaign and emphasizing some non-issues antagonized the people and was rejected by them. This also favoured the Congress (I) to come back to power.

The move for making a third front with all non-Congress(I) and non-BJP parties was right. But the Left parties and other parties of the front have failed to give a proper structure for this combination. The front partners also failed to provide an alternative national programme of governance. The leaders of the front also didn't make any nation-wide joint campaign. All these lacunae created confusion among the people about the viability of the third front. The willful campaign of Congress (I) and the BJP with the support of a section of the media about the third front also damaged the move to make the non-BJP, non-Congress (I) front.

The Congress (I) succeeded in mobilizing the minority votes infavour of them by manipulating the related facts. Although the Congress (I) deprived the minority community in many ways during their decades long regime.

The differences between the Left Democratic Front parties are the main reason for the defeat of Left Front in Kerala. The Kerala government and the LDF failed to propagatate among the people about the achievements and the welfare schemes of LDF Government.

The confusion about industrialization, land acquisition and high handedness and the over dependence on bureaucracy of the Left Leaders are the reasons for the Left Front defeat in West Bengal. The unfortunate happenings in Nandigram also affected the image of the Left Front and its government. The coming together of TMC, Congress (I), Maoists, separatists and other anti-left forces in the state with the help of national and international anti-left forces have unleashed a strong vilification campaign against the Left Front Government and the Left Front in the state. This gave an edge to the anti-left forces against the Left Parties.

The LDF of Kerala and the Left Front of West Bengal should learn lesson from this setback. Sincere and open efforts must be taken for making proper course corrections. The party cadres and leaders should keep regular and intimate relation with the people. The lethargy due to power should be avoided. The partners of the fronts should maintain proper communications and respect each others' sentiments and opinions.

The All India Forward Bloc (AIFB) is of the opinion that this is a temporary setback, which gives an opportunity to all of us for self-introspection. The All India Forward Bloc will do more micro analysis after receiving the reports from different states about the election results.

The AIFB strongly believe that better coordinated Left Front throughout the country is the only alternative to the current Left coordination. The party will explore all the possibilities for developing a stable and politically oriented people's alternative against the Congress (I) and the BJP.

The AIFB expressed happiness at the spectacular success of the Left Front candidates in Tripura.

Political Commentary : By Dr. Barun Mukherji

US PRESSURE ON INDIA TO SIGN NPT

India has signed a civil nuclear deal with the US. Both India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and America's former President George W. Bush, the two main architect of the Deal, have felicitated each other as 'Best Friend'. Now with the change of regime in the US with her new President Barack Obama,

the situation starts changing and India's nuclear capability and weapons appear to the US as a destabilising factor in South Asia. India-Pakistan relationship and war situation in Afghanistan may not allow India to have a privileged position in the eyes of Obama administration. So, the US doesn't want India to enjoy exemption from signing the NPT. Recently the US Asst. Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller has raised the issue at a United Nations meet and has said that India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea must sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the global pact against atomic weapons. But India's unambiguous stand in this respect is known to all for a long time. India abides by non-proliferation in principle, but it can not sign the treat because it discriminates between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states. Genuine disarmament efforts are possible only when US and Russia start negotiations on a new treaty to reduce their nuclear stockpiles. Still as a responsible power, India has even made the 'no-first-use commitment'. But the discriminatory NPT treaty is not acceptable.

On the other hand, inspite of India's signing an international treaty with the US that would prohibit further production of nuclear bombs, the new Obama regime pressurises India to sign the NPT. It's now the turn of India under the leadership of second-time Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to withstand the pressure. The whole country awaits how the UPA government reacts to it.

PENDING MILITARY AGREEMENTS WITH US

The US military personnel are anxious for quick implementation of at least three pending important military agreements with India. A top US military commander -- the US Pacific Command chief Admiral Timothy Keating has recently visited India and met high Indian officials to explore the possibility of early implementation of the agreements which were kept pending since the days of Left support to the last UPA regime. The pending agreements are the Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA), the End-use Verification Agreement and the Logistics Support Agreement. These agreements dealing with information secrecy, end-use verification and turnaround facilities are given priority due to strategic reasons. The Cismoa binds the two sides to confidentiality of information on military equipment and processes, the end - user Verification agreement will authorise the US to inspect and check that India is using US - supplied military equipment for purpose that they are meant and the LSA will allow US ships and aircraft to refuel in India and Indian ships and aircraft to refuel in the US and its bases.

Admiral Keating said that the earlier joint India and US military drills such as the Malabar series of exercises were big learning experiences for the both sides. He is very hopeful that with the signing of the pending agreements, "we can do even more".

The Indian military establishment has already vetted the deals. The US military authorities are now awaiting the clearance signal by the second term UPA government. Along with the nuclear deal, this agreement would eventually strengthen the Indo-US strategic partnership.

THE LEFT WILL RESURRECT AS A PHOENIX

-G. DEVARAJAN-

The result of 15th Lok Sabha elections is really an eye opener to all the left parties and the regional parties. Definitely everybody will do postmortem according to the objective and subjective conditions of the states, which they represents. It would be a highly superficial statement if anybody says that victory and defeat are natural in elections after defeating in the elections. The responsible political parties that participated seriously in the elections cannot take such ostrich position after loosing the seat.

The left parties met immediately after the elections were announced and resolved to do inter and intra introspection and to make detailed study about what went wrong. Detailed analysis by the states at booth level will definitely enable the left parties to take necessary course corrections. The four main stream left parties have already done primary election analyses at a glance. While doing so we have to consider some general features of the election results.

It is a fact that there was no popular trend in favour of the Congress (I) throughout India in the elections. The Congress (I) has lost number of seats and percentage of votes in Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam, Gujarat, Chattisgarh and Karnataka. At the same time they have gained much in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Kerala and Uttarakhand. The Congress (I) has retained their supremacy in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi. Certain states including West Bengal they have maintained the status quo. It reveals that there was

no all-India trend. Some of the schemes, which were implemented by the UPA government due to the pressure of left parties like NREGA, RTI, Adivasi rights, agri-loan waiver etc. benefited largely to the congress though they were reluctant to implement the same by raising financial liabilities.

The available statistics shows that the Congress (I) got 28.52% of votes in this election, which is about 2% more than the 2004 votes i.e., 26.53. But the BJP, the principle opposition party has lost about 3.33% of votes from its kitty. The BJP got only 18.83% of votes this time though they had 22.16% votes in 2004. It indicates that the Congress (I) didn't have the entire votes lost by the BJP. It has another meaning that together the Congress (I) and the BJP got 47.35% of votes (28.52 + 18.83) only. In 2004 elections both the parties have gained 48.69% of votes (26.53 + 22.16). Which means, the non-Congress (I) and non- BJP parties and independents got 52.65% of votes in 2009 elections. The 'Third Front' parties altogether got more than 21% of votes in 2009.

Whatever may be the statistics about the percentage of votes, the Congress (I) has increased its number of seats from 145 in 2004 to 206 in 2009, an addition of 61 seats. Meanwhile the BJP has lost 22 seats this time. Its seats came down from 138 to 116. The election result clearly indicates that the BJP is a sinking ship and its number of seats is sharply declining. It had 182 seats in 1999 and it reduced to 138 in 2004 and 116 in 2009. The main reason for this decline is that the BJP has nothing to offer to the people except its communal hatred politics. In almost all economic issues related to globalisation, disinvestment of public assets, curtailing the labour rights, the BJP always stood along with the Congress (I). So far as the subservient attitude towards the US imperialism, the BJP always sailed along with the Congress (I). Thus it has proved that there is no difference between the Congress (I) and the BJP. During the entire election campaign the BJP raised and emphasized only non-issues like 'strong' and 'weak' Prime Minister, division in UPA, groupism in the Congress (I), construction of Ram Mandir etc. Along with that the highly communal and venomous speeches of Barun Gandhi, the representative of new brand BJP leadership and the projection of Narendra Modi as the Prime Ministerial candidate after L.K. Advani completed the epitaph of BJP.

The left parties have taken an initiative to make an alternative people's platform against the Congress (I) and the BJP. There are ten parties including the left came together and resolved to make a front after the election. This combination of ten parties has decided to ensure the defeat of Congress (I) and the BJP in the elections. But the people of India didn't take it as a serious, viable and credible alternative. Therefore, the people who were keen to ensure the defeat of BJP didn't support the non-Congress (I) non-BJP combination. It is also a fact that the 'Third Front' parties have failed to announce a vision document or a manifesto or a Common Minimum Programme before the election. While criticising the Congress (I) and the BJP, the 'Third Front' leaders have failed to offer an alternative programme. There was no joint election campaign throughout the country by the 'Front' leaders. The past history of some of the 'Front' partners - their inconsistency in politics and relation with BJP- is also seriously affected the winnability of the 'Third Front' candidates.

The left parties got a serious set back in the elections. In 2004 election it had 60 members in the Parliament. But in 2009 elections it got only 24 seats, a reduction of 36 seats. The left parties have lost 20 seats in West Bengal and 15 seats in Kerala. Along with the national issues, certain state factors also played very important role in this huge defeat.

In Kerala the avoidable inter and intra conflicts within the Left Democratic Front seriously damaged the image of the LDF. The differences of opinion between the LDF partners just before the election has proved that there is no difference between the LDF and UDF at least on seat sharing issue. Due to lack of coordination, the LDF has failed to propagate the achievements of the state government though the state government has initiated and sincerely implementing lot of welfare schemes for the poor and weaker sections of the society. The consolidation of different communities against the LDF is also one of the reasons for its defeat. Kerala is known for alternating between LDF and UDF from election to election but the scale of defeat this time shows a change of voter preference that went beyond customs. The LDF of Kerala should examine this fact seriously.

The election result of West Bengal shows that the popular mood was against the left front in the state. The mishandling of emotive issues like land acquisition for industrial purpose has created a big hue and cry in the socio-political atmosphere of the state. The unfortunate developments in Nandigram seriously affected the image of the left front government of West Bengal. A large section of people who always supported to the left front couldn't expect such serious police actions from a left front government. The opposition Trinamul Congress has dangerously utilized this confusion and crisis for their political benefits. Not only the Trinamul Congress but all other anti left forces including the Congress (I), the Maoists, the separatists, the communal outfits etc. also came together and started an all out campaign against the left front and its government with the help of bourgeois media and national and international anti-left forces.

Therefore, instead of doing a political campaign to propagate the necessity of left's victory to protect the country from imperialism, monopoly capitalism and communalism the left front of West Bengal was forced to make a defensive campaign during election. But the left parties who always take pride in keeping their ear to the ground have failed to detect the mind of the people. Earlier the reports from the polling booth were approximately correct but this time those reports were absolutely wrong. It reveals that a serious gap is developing in the relation between the leaders and cadres and cadres and people. This is a serious matter to be addressed immediately. Another issue is the arrogance and insensitivity of a major section of the leadership at different levels developed after 32 years of uninterrupted power. The Left Front of West Bengal should contemplate over these lacunae and immediate measures to be taken to bring back the legacy of the left front.

The defeat of the left parties is temporary. Those who are celebrating the defeat of the left parties will definitely repent soon. The corporate giants, monopoly capitalists, imperialist agents, bulls and bears of stock markets are only happy after seeing the defeat of the left. But they are unaware about the history of the left parties that it always grown by swimming against the current. The left parties always worked for the working class, downtrodden, depressed class and the toiling masses. It will continue to work for the interests of the poor and to protect the sovereignty and integrity of our motherland. Therefore the left will resurrect as a phoenix.

HOW TO TACKLE SLOWDOWN

- *Nirmal Sandhu*

In the name of fighting the slow-down vast sums of public money are to be handed over industries, which have landed themselves in trouble largely because of their own blunders.

Construction companies had undertaken huge housing and commercial projects at such costs that these have gone beyond the reach of customers. Investors and speculators no longer find them attractive.

The lure buyers, the RBI and banks are trying to lower interest rates. There is a fear that if not given a helping hand developers might fail to pay back loans and banks may get flooded with bad loans, which they call non-performing assets.

Similarly, private airlines recklessly purchased aircraft and started new routes without realizing there can be a slowdown or recession in the near future. Taking big risks is considered macho and some airline owners like to flaunt a larger than-life image.'

When troubles started, they begged for a government rescue. Employees were first sacked and then taken back under a threat. What kind of management run airlines?

Much of the private sector in India is not really private. Government financial institutions and banks own large stakes in many big companies. B. Ramalinga Raju was running Satyam Computers with only 8 percent ownership in the company, which further slipped to 3 percent shortly before the fraud surfaced.

For years Raju was manipulating accounts to show inflated profits and fictitious assets and none of the institutional nominees on the board or banks handling company accounts, it seems, cared to verify profit claims.

Before any government aid or loan is extended to a company, its accounts must be got independently audited to ensure that profits and assets are not exaggerated. Fraudulent firms must be swiftly banished from the corporate scene.

The rule of the capitalist game is : if you make a mistake, you must pay for it. But if corporates or institutions make blunders, they get state help as their collapse could shake the financial system and job losers bring a bad name to a government.

The US learnt it at a great cost after the federal government allowed Lehman Brothers to fall. The ramifications of failed institution are too complicated to handle. Besides, the public sentiment gets a hit.

There are exporters crying for a financial package. Should they not have saved something for the rainy season when the going was good? Profits go into private pockets and losses are passed on to the government.

When ordinary workers lose jobs, everyone's heart bleeds. Nobody, therefore, minds when the government hands over tax concessions and easy money to the same incompetent managements without ensuring they do not make the same mistakes in future.

This is being done in the name of boosting growth. If firms fail, banks suffer. People lose jobs and governments do not want to be accused of being silent spectators to traumatic developments.

Airlines and real estate companies that had adopted financially unviable business models will get government support to continue with them. The cost of their inefficiency will be borne by customers, who will be asked to pay more for their products or services.

What is the guarantee that profit-making companies will not pass on their surplus money to family-owned firms as the Satyam Computers management was caught doing?

The best way to rescue citizens losing jobs or facing financial hardships of not their own making is to put in place a comprehensive social safety network.

It has a social obligation towards the aged, the weak the infirm, the unskilled and the unemployed who cannot make a living in a competitive environment.

The government has adopted the ruthless system of market economy without taking social safety measures prevalent in capitalist countries.

Governments the world over are trying to help, each according to its capacity, workers getting pink slips and trouble companies and banks from the after-shocks of the US sub-prime crisis.

One difference between the US bailout and India's rescue plans is that the government there does not allow law-breakers to escape easily without punishment. They are denied golden parachutes or parting financial benefits. Here the same set of managements continues with the help of government financial institutions owning majority shareholdings in their companies.

The actual benefits to companies will be much less than what the government bailouts promise them and the economy will take its own time to recover.

A lot of money will go into public sector infrastructure projects. Given the level of corruption and incompetence in implementing such projects it will be quite a while when more jobs are actually created and demand for steel, cement and consumer products picks up.

The government has given industries tax incentives and cheaper credit amounting to Rs. 2,45,000 crore. It has widened the gap between the government revenue and expenditure by Rs. 2,66,000 crore (fiscal deficit), which amounts to 5 percent of the GDP.

This will require the government to borrow more from various lenders. This huge debt will be passed on to the future generations of Indians.

The government has unwittingly done something that will come quite handy in its battle against slow-down. The stiff hike in the salaries of the Central staff and some state government employees will help boost demand for industrial and consumer products. Many will be able to buy houses and cars which earlier they could ill afford.

Since the monsoon has been normal and rabi crops are promising, there will be no food shortages and no need for wheat imports. Bharat Nirman and the rural job guarantee scheme, despite some shortcomings and loopholes, have put more cash into rural hands. So rural India will not be, as usual, left behind in stimulating demand and growth.

Growth will not pick up without good governance. The regulatory mechanism needs to be stringent. The legal system must deliver justice without delay Administrative red tape and corruption hinder progress and raise project costs. Held-up economic reforms can further accelerate growth. The present crisis should propel steps to clean up its delivery system.

Courtesy : Amity

CAMPAIGN AT THE PEAK IN TRIPURA BYE ELECTION

The bye-elections to the Town Bardowali Assembly constituency of Tripura will take place on 28th May 2009. Com. Shyamal Roy, General Secretary of All India Forward Bloc, Tripura State Committee has been filed the nomination as AIFB candidate supported by the Left Front of Tripura.

The Left Front of the constituency committee is doing its all out efforts to win the constituency this time. State leaders of CPI(M), CPI, RSP and AIFB are participating the election meetings and conventions in different parts of the constituency. Town Bardowali is a urban constituency within the capital city, Agartala.

Com. Debabrata Biswas, General Secretary, Com. Naren Dey, Secretary of AIFB attended public meetings in Town Bardowali constituency.

Press Statement:

THE LEFT WILL WORK AS RESPONSIBLE OPPOSITION

The leaders of the Left Parties, the CPI(M), CPI, AIFB and RSP met in New Delhi on 17th May 2009, and have issued the following statement:

The Left parties will work as a responsible opposition in parliament.

The Left parties will continue our cooperation with the non-Congress, non-BJP allies.

In the light of the Lok Sabha election results, it was decided that each party individually would review the reverses suffered in the elections. Following this, the Left parties will come to a collective assessment on how to overcome the shortcomings and move ahead.

The meeting was attended by Prakash Karat, Sitaram Yechury, S. Ramachandran Pillai (CPIM), A.B. Bardhan, D. Raja (CPI), Debabrata Biswas, G. Devarajan (AIFB), T.J. Chandrachoodan (RSP)

DPRK FOREIGN MINISTRY VEHEMENTLY REFUTES UNSC'S "PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT"

The Foreign Ministry of the DPRK issued the following statement on 14th April 2009 denouncing the United States and its followers for finally perpetrating hostile acts of daring take issues with the DPRK's satellite launch for peaceful purposes by abusing the United Nations Security Council defying its repeated warnings:

The UNSC issued a brigandish "presidential statement" condemning the DPRK's satellite launch on April 14.

Looking back on its history, the UNSC has never taken issues with satellite launches.

The UNSC whose permanent members are those countries which launched more satellites than any other countries tabled and discussed the DPRK's launch of satellite for peaceful purposes although it was legitimately conducted after going through procedures under international law. This is an intolerable mockery of the Koran people and a thrice-cursed crime.

The hostile forces are claiming that the DPRK's satellite launch would result in improving its long-range missile capacity but this is not essence of the issue. The gravity of the issue lies in that the standard whether it is a satellite or a long-range missile. It is the logic of the U.S. that Japan may launch satellites because it is its stooge and the DPRK should not be allowed to do so as its system differs from theirs and does not obey them. It is the UNSC that accepted the U.S. brigandish logic as it is.

The UNSC's action was a wanton violation of international law as it ran counter even to the outer space treaty which stipulates that "Outer space shall be free for exploration and use by all States without discrimination of any kind, on a basis of equality and in accordance with international law."

The prevailing situation clearly proves that the principle of sovereign equality and impartiality stipulated in the UN Charter are a mere show and it is only the logic of strength which works in the international relations.

There arises a question as to whether the UN is necessary for the DPRK as it infringes upon the sovereignty of its member nation. The DPRK Foreign Ministry declares as follows for the present to cope with the prevailing situation: First, The DPRK vehemently refutes and condemns the unjust action taken by the UNSC wantonly infringing upon the sovereignty of the DPRK and seriously hurting the dignity of the Koran people.

The DPRK will continue to exercise its independent right to the use of outer space based on international community, not arbitrary practices of the UNSC which has been reduced to a tool for high-handed acts.

Second, there is no need any more to have the six-party talks which the DPRK has attended. The spirit of respect for sovereignty and sovereign equality clarified in the September 19 joint statement for denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula is the basis and the life and soul of the six-party talks.

The six-party talks have lost the meaning of their existence never to recover not that the parties to the talks themselves totally denied this spirit in the name of the UNSC and now that Japan, which has desperately obstructed the talks from their outset, openly and unilaterally applied sanctions against the DPRK over its satellite launch.

The DPRK will never participate in such six-party talks nor will it be bound any longer to any agreement of the talks as they have been reduced to a platform for encroaching upon its sovereignty and forcing it to disarm itself and bringing down its system.

It will positively examine the construction of its light water reactor power plant in order to round off the structure of the Juche-based nuclear power industry.

Third, the DPRK will boost its nuclear deterrent for self-defence in every way.

The hostile forces's escalated military threat that they will intercept even a satellite for peaceful purposes compels the DPRK to further increase its nuclear deterrent.

The DPRK will take a measure to restore to their original state the nuclear facilities which had been disabled according to the agreement of the six-party talks and bring their operation back on a normal track and fully reprocess the spent fuel rods churned out from the pilot atomic power plant as its part. The hostile forces are seriously mistaken if they thought they could bring the DPRK to its knees by force.

It is the basic purport of independence, Songun of the DPRK that it can never repeat the disgraceful history a century ago when the whole of Korea was conquered by the Japanese imperialists in the long run, after being violated and cajoled by big powers around it as it was weak in its national power.

The DPRK will defend the peace and security on the Korean Peninsula with the might of Songun in a responsible manner though the six-party talks cease exist and the process of denuclearization collapse due to the hostile forces.

FORWARD BLOC - ITS JUSTIFICATION

[This thesis was written by Netaji in Kabul in February -March 1941 during his secret Sojourn there en route to Europe.---Ed]

The evolution of a Movement is analogue to that of a tree. It grows from within and at every stage it throws out new

branches, so that there may be ever increase progress. When no fresh branches sprout forth, the movement may be presumed to be in a process of decay or death.

While every Movement draws its sustenance from the soil from which its springs, its also assimilates nourishment coming from outside -from the atmosphere, environment, etc. Internal sustenance and external nourishment are both necessary for a living Movement.

When the main stream of a Movement begins to stagnate, but there is still vitality in the movement as a whole - a left Wing invariably appears. The main function of the left Wing is to stimulate progress when there is danger of it being arrested. The appearance of a left Wing is followed by a conflict between it and the stream, which now becomes the right Wing. This conflict is a temporary phase and through it a higher stage is reached, when the conflict is resolved. The solution takes place through some sort of agreement or adjustment, whereby the left Wing begins to dominate the Movement as a whole. Thus the left Wing becomes, it time, the main stream of the movement.

One may describe this process of evolution in philosophical language by saying that the "Thesis" throws up its "antithesis". This Synthesis", in its turn, becomes the "thesis" of the next stage of evolution.

This process of evolution -called the "dialectical process " -if properly comprehended, can give a new meaning and significance to the developments that have taken place within the Indian National Congress during the last few decades. We shall herein study the Gandhi Movement from the dialectical point of view.

We may observe at this stage would be an error to suppose that conflicts inside a movement are unhealthy or undesirable under all circumstances. It would indeed be more correct to say that conflict which arise from the logic of history are essential to progress, whether in the sphere of thought or in the sphere of the action.

There is no fixed rule as to when a Movement or a particular phase of it should lose its dynamism and begin to stagnate. So long as it can assimilate from outside and go on creating something new, decay cannot set in.

To come now to a study of Gandhi Movement. By 1919, after the close of the world war, a new situation arose in India and with it, new problems. The official Indian National Congress could not face this situation as it had lost its dynamism altogether, and a left Wing was clearly necessary if the entire Congress was not to stagnate and die. At this juncture a left Wing appeared in the form of the Gandhi Movement. Conflict ensued for a time and the old leaders were driven out of the Congress or voluntarily withdrew, Ultimately the synthesis took place. The Congress accepted the tenets of Mahatma Gandhi and the left Wing then became the official Congress.

In 1920, Gandhism took possession of the Indian National Congress and for two decades it has maintained its hold. This has been possible, not merely because of Mahatma Gandhi's personality but also because of his capacity to assimilate other ideas and policies. But for the later factor, Gandhism would have ceased to dominate the Congress long ago. During its twenty year's domination of the Congress, whenever revolts appeared, the Gandhi Movement took the wind out of their sails by accepting many of their ideas and policies-and only recently has it has shown sign of falling to adapt itself to the changing environment. For instance when the Swarjya party arose in 1923, the conflict that followed continued only for a time. At the Cawnpore Congress in 1925, the Swarjist policy of carrying non-co-operation inside the Legislatures was accepted by the Gandhiites and was there upon adopted by the Congress as a whole.

Again in December,1928 at the Calcutta Congress there was a revolt against Gandhism sponsored by the Independence League on the issue of Independence. Mahatma Gandhi then advocate Dominion status and he fought and defeated our resolution on Independence. But a year later, at the Lahore Congress, he himself moved the resolution declaring that henceforth Independence was to be the goal of the Indian National Congress.

By this process of Assimilation, the Gandhi Movement was able to maintain its progressive character and prevent the emergence of any big left Wing development. There was a temporary setback after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in 1931, but Gandhiji recovered lost ground when he launched Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience in January 1932.

The Failure of this civil Disobedience Movement and its abandonment in May, 1931, created a new situation which gave birth to a fresh revolt -this time from the Right. Disappointed at the failure of the Movement a large section of the Gandhiites urged the revival of the parliamentary programme which had been scrapped by them at Lahore Congress in December, 1929, before the launching of Satyagraha by Mahatma Gandhi in 1930.Gandhiji surrendered to this demand in 1934,ostensibly because he had no alternative plan for the Congress. This incident was an indication that stagnation in the Gandhi Movement had set in and this was confirmed when a big left Wing revolt arose through medium of the Congress Socialist party which was inaugurated in 1934, almost contemporaneously with the swing towards parliamentarianism.

The Gandhi Movement did not lose its elasticity and adaptability in a day and the attitude of the Gandhiites towards the Congress Socialist and other Leftists remained benevolent on the whole in 1934 and after. As a matter of fact the Congress Socialists were offered seats on the Congress working committee in 1936,1937 and 1938. (They did not accept the offer in 1938) In January 1938 the Gandhiites, at the instance of Mahatma Gandhi himself, supported by candidature for the Congress presidentship. And at the Haripura Congress in February, 1938 when I was to nominate the working Committee for the year, Gandhiji was clearly of opinion that there could be no objection to having Socialists on the working committee.

A distinct -and what has still remained inexplicable -change in Mahatma Gandhi's attitude came in September,1938 after a meeting of all India Congress Committee at Delhi, at which there was a walk out of the left Wingers over a controversial issue . It was then one heard Gandhiji saying that there could be no compromise with the leftists in conducting the affairs of the Congress A few months later, in January, 1939 he gave proof of the same mentality by opposing my re-election as Congress President.

Since September, 1938, Gandhism has tended to become increasingly static and hide bound. At the Haripura

Congress in February of the same year, the two most important resolutions passed were on the question of federation and the coming War. Though the resolution on federation was one of uncompromising oppositions, throughout that year the air was thick with rumours that negotiations for a compromise between the Gandhites and the British Government were going on behind the scenes. My attitude of uncompromising hostility towards federation was the first item in the Gandhian charge sheet against my presidentship. The second item was what the Gandhites regarded me as unduly friendly attitude towards the leftists. The third item in the charge sheet was sponsoring and subsequent inauguration of the National Planning Committee which, in the Gandhian constructive programme. The next charge against me was that I advocated an early resumption of the national struggle for independence, to be preceded by an ultimatum to the British Government.

By September, 1938, any intelligent person could have foreseen that in future the relations between the Gandhites and the leftists would cease to be cordial. As already indicated above, Gandhiji himself gave a frank expression to the change in his mentality. Further-more, it became clear to esoteric circles in the Congress at the time of the Munich Pact that in the event of war crisis overtaking India in the Future- an open rupture between the Gandhites and the leftists would become unavoidable. It is true that from 1927 (Madras Congress) to 1938 -the war policy of the Congress was clearly enunciated in successive annual sessions of the congress and one would not under ordinary circumstances have expected any divergence of opinion, not to speak of a rupture, among Congressmen on the war issue. Nevertheless, discussion among important congress leaders during the international crisis preceding the Munich Pact left no room for doubt that the Gandhites cherished no enthusiasm for the war resolutions passed by preceding sessions of the Congress and they would not hesitate to circumvent them should they find necessary or convenient to do so. Now the two questions on which would not countenance any compromise were those of Federation and the coming war. Consequently any compromising attitude of the Gandhites on these two issues presaged a breach between them and the leftists in the days to come.

Though the Munich Pact staved off the war in Europe for the time being students of International Politics could not but feel that the war was nevertheless unavoidable and imminent. The conviction began thereafter to grow within me that in the view of the international situation, the British Government would give up the idea of Federation down the throats of Indian People. Federation being no longer a live issue for the Indian .It was necessary for them to decide about their future political plans. Since the much expected battle royal on the federation issue was off, how were they to continue the fight for the Independence.

In November, 1938 when I began my North India tour, I put forward a solution of this problem. I urged that it was no use waiting for the Government to take the initiative against the Indian people. Federation being dead, at least for the time being, and war being ahead of us in the non-distant future, it was time for Congress to take the initiative. The proper method for doing so would be send an ultimatum to the British Government demanding Independence within a certain period and start preparing the country for a national struggle. This idea was widely propagated by us from November onwards and it came before the Tripuri Congress in March, 1939 in the form of a resolution-but it was defeated at the instance of the Gandhites. The resolution stated inter alia that after the ultimatum was sent to the British Government, a period of six months would be given within which a definite reply was called for six months after the Tripuri Congress when war broke out in Europe, the political wisdom underlying our resolution was admitted even by the Gandhites who were so much against us at Tripuri.

Soon after war was declared in Europe Mahatma Gandhi who was then the unofficial Dictator of the Congress issued a public statement advocating unconditional co-operation with Great Britain in the prosecution of the war. The resolutions repeatedly passed by the congress during a period of eleven years were conveniently forgotten.(Federation was officially postponed by the Government after the War broke out)

Since 1938, the issue on which we leftists have found ourselves at loggerheads with the Gandhites and on which no compromise has been possible- are the resumption of the national struggle for Independence and the correct war-policy of the Indian People. It is to be noted that till November, 1940, Mahatma Gandhi consistently declared in private and in public, that any Satyagraha or civil disobedience was out of the question and that anybody who launched such a movement would be harm to his country. It is true that in November 1940, Individual Satyagraha was started under his auspices. But as Gandhiji himself has declared and as we all know very well, it is not a mass struggle for the attainment of Independence. As responsible British Officials in India and in England have already declared this movement has not embarrassed the British Government to any appreciable degree. In conformity with his desire that Great Britain should win the War, Mahatma Gandhi has refrained from creating an embarrassing situation for the Government which a mass struggle for winning independence would naturally have done.

In September 1939, Mahatma Gandhi advocated unconditional co-operation with Great Britain in the prosecution of the War, but in November, 1940 he demanded liberty to carry on anti-war propaganda. Since 1938, he consistently denounced all attempts to resume the national struggle for Independence, but in November, 1940 he modified that stand so far as to actually launch the individual civil Disobedience Movement. Would it not be a moot question to ask as to what could explain this change however small ? And would it be wrong to say that this has been due entirely to the pressure from the left.

The Gandhiji could, even at his present age, alter a position consistently and tenaciously advocated and upheld by him for a fairly long period- though this change may be due to pressure and be only partial-evidence of his adaptability and mobility. Nevertheless it is not adequate for the needs of the times. We are now living in the "Blitzkrieg" period of history and if we do not move with the times, we shall have to go under. So far, Gandhiji has been unable to prove by his action that he can keep abreast of the times and lead his nation-and this accords with our relief which we have already

stated that the Gandhiji Movement is becoming static and hide about.

The uncompromising attitude towards heterodox thought which the Gandhites have been evincing since September, 1938, and their increasing desire and endeavor to expel dynamic and radical elements from the Congress - not only prove that they are losing their adaptability and mobility but will, like a vicious circle, make more and more static. The various non-political organizations which Gandhiji has started for the Gandhites (e.g. the All-India Spinners Association, the Gandhi Seva Sangh, the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the Association, the Hindi Prachar Samity, etc.) will also undermine the political dynamism of the Gandhiji Movement in future by creating non-political vested interests, as it has already been doing. And more than anything else, peaceful parliamentary life and ministerial office has been, and will be the political grave of Gandhism.

Whatever revolutionary fervor the Gandhiji Movement had was sapped more by the acceptance of ministerial office than by any other factor. It would be no exaggeration to say that under the influence of this factor, a large number of Congressmen have definitely turned the thorny path of Revolution to the rosy path of the constitutionalism. Congress ministries in the provinces were formed in 1937 and neo-constitutionalism reared its head in a menacing form within the Congress in 1938. Ever since then, the main task of leftism has been to fight this "Frankenstein" created by the Congress itself. How to stem this drift towards constitutionalism, how to create a fresh revolutionary mentality among the people in place of the neo-constitutionalism mentality, how to face the war-crisis in a bold and adequate manner, how to bring the Congress back to the path of uncompromising National Struggle and how ultimately to establish leftists ascendancy in the Congress - these have been the main problems for the Leftists since 1938.

The Gandhi Movement today has become a victim of not only constitutionalism but also of Authoritarianism. A certain amount of Authoritarianism is permissible and natural in a militant organization. But the excessive Authoritarianism that one finds today is traceable to the same causes as constitutionalism. Since the acceptance of Ministerial office, the Gandhites had a taste of power and they are anxious to monopolize it for themselves in future, what has been going on within the Congress of Late is "Power Politics" though of a same kind. The fountain head of this "Power Politics" is Wardha. It is the aim of this "Power Politics" to beat down all opposition within the Congress so that the Gandhites may comfortably rule the roost for all the time. But this game will not succeed. Real power has yet to come and it will never come if we travel along the safe path of Constitutionalism. It is certainly possible for the Gandhites to expel all discordant elements from the Congress and make it a close preserve. But that does not mean that they will be able to win liberty for India. And without real power, there cannot be real "Power Politics". What we see therefore today is sham is "Power Politics".

Personally I would have no objection to Gandhites trying to monopolize power for themselves or acting in an authoritarian manner, if they had been or revolutionary force. But unfortunately, Gandhism has ceased to be revolutionary. There is no hope that it will succeed in carrying the nation towards its goal of national Independence. Consequently the more our Gandhites friends try to consolidate their power, position and influences, the more stagnation they will bring into the Congress. Liberal does of disciplinary action against non-conformists may make the Congress a more homogenous body that at present, but that process will only were create more enemies outside and in the end will strike at the "mass basis" of the Congress and undermine the hold which the Congress has over the country at large.

The Efforts of the Gandhites to consolidate themselves is nothing else than "Right-consolidation" within the Congress. This had gone on slowly for a long time and un noticed, till it was accentuated with the acceptance of Ministerial Office. When the danger was detected and leftists began to organize in self defense, a furore arose in Gandhian Circles. For the Latter, self consolidation, i.e. Right-consolidation, was right and natural: but left consolidation was crime.

Ever the Gandhian has began to stagnate and a big left wing has emerged in opposition to it, the Gandhites have become Rightists and Gandhian Consolidation has come to mean Right-Consolidation.

Philosophically speaking, Right-Consolidation is the "thesis" which demands its "Anti-thesis" and the conflict following in its wake, no further progress is possible. All those who believe in progress and desire it, should therefore actively assist in this lack of left-Consolidation the Forward Bloc was born in May, 1939 soon after a momentous Session of the All-India Congress Committee in Calcutta, at which I tendered me resignation of the Office of President.

Left-Consolidation could have been achieved in either of the following ways:-

(i) By forming one party and rallying all the Leftists element therein. This, however was not possible because of several parties. Claiming to be Leftists, already existed and they were not prepared to existed and they were not prepared to liquidate themselves in favour of one party.

(ii) By organizing a new Bloc which all Leftists and existing leftists parties would join, while retaining the separate identity of their respective parties, if they so desired.

This was the first aim and endeavour of the Forward Bloc when it was launched. It did not want to start rivalry with the existing leftists parties, nor did it want to undermine any of them. If the Bloc proposal had been accepted and all leftists parties had joined the Forward Bloc, while retaining their separate identity--left-Consolidation would have been easily and promptly achieved and the Rightists would have been faced with a formidable force. But unfortunately for the leftists cause, this also was not possible because some of the existing leftists parties prohibited their members from joining the newly formed Forward Bloc. What accounted for this inexplicable attitude on the part of these parties, need not be discussed here.

(iii) In the above circumstances a fresh attempt at left consolidation was made in the following manner. The existing Leftists parties and the Forward Bloc agreed among themselves to form a new Committee to be called the Left-Consolidation Committee. This Committee was to function as the organ of the entire Left-but it would act only when there was unanimity among the component elements of the Left-Consolidation Committee.

The Left-Consolidation Committee was formed in Bombay in June 1939, and the effect was immediate and striking. For the first time, the entire Left presented a united and organized front at the meeting of the All India Congress Committee which was being held at that time. Though numerically in a minority, the leftists were thereby able to prevent several changes being enacted in the Congress constitution, on which Rightists were known to be very keen. That meeting of the All-India Congress Committee was a moral victory for the leftists and on the surface, it seems to augur well for the Left Cause.

But on the 9th July 1939 the first blow at the Left-Consolidation Committee was struck and by Mr. M.N. Roy. The Committee had decided to observe the 9th July as an All India day for protesting against two resolutions of an anti-left character which had been passed by the All-India Congress Committee at its Bombay meeting in June in the teeth of leftists opposition. The Congress president, Babu Rajendra Prasad issued a statement in July calling upon leftists to abandon the All India Day on pain of disciplinary action. As a result of this threat, M.N. Roy made an announcement at the eleventh hour to the effect that his party, the Radical League would not participate, in the observance of All India Day. He also telegraphed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru requesting him to use his influence with the Congress Socialist party and dissuade them from participating in the All India Day. Since Mr. M.N. Roy was then looked upon as a leftists leader and his radical league was one of the component units of the Left-Consolidation Committee his action amounted to a betrayal of the leftists cause and was warmly acclaimed by the Rightists.

Though handicapped by the defection of the Radical League, the other members of the Committee carried on as usual, and their determination to hold together increased when the war situation overtook the country in September, 1939. But in October, a new crisis appeared when the leaders of the Congress Socialist party announced in Lucknow that in future their party would act on its own and would not follow the direction of the Left-Consolidation Committee. Nevertheless, consultations between them and other members of the Committee continued for a time.

The next blow struck at the Left-consolidation Committee was in December, 1939, when a breach between the Forward Bloc and the National Front took place. The relations between the two had hitherto remained close and cordial. For instance, when the Anti-imperialist Conference was held at Nagpur in October on the eve of the meeting of the Congress working Committee at Wardha. The National Front enthusiastically participated in it, along with the Forward Bloc, Kishan Sabha and others though the Congress Socialist from other provinces outside C.P. and Berar did not. And after the Congress Socialist withdrew from the L.C.C. later in October at Lucknow the Forward Bloc and National front continued to collaborate. It was however brought to the notice of the Forward Bloc that the national front continued to collaborate. It was, however brought to the notice of the Forward Bloc and National Front had been carrying in propaganda against the former, while outwardly collaborating on the Left-consolidation Committee. What is more, it appeared that in an official journal of the National Front, an official article had appeared painting the Forward Bloc as a counter revolutionary organization and adversely criticizing it in many ways. This matter was brought up at a meeting of the leaders of the Bloc and of the National front held in Calcutta in December, 1939. The latter refused to disown the above article or to withdraw it. Thereupon they were told by the Forward Bloc leaders that a "counter-revolutionary" organization could not collaborate with the National Front on the Left-consolidation Committee.

The attitude of the National leaders showed that they wanted to use the platform of the L.C.C. for populating their organization, while carrying on reprehensible propaganda, both secret and open, against the component unit of the Committee.

When the breach took place at Calcutta in December, 1939, the National Front openly informed the Forward Bloc that if a national struggle was launched by the latter independently of the Congress, the former would openly denounce it and resist it.

This breach was further accentuated by a conflict between the Bengal Branch of the Forward Bloc and of the National front over some other issues.

Even before the Left-consolidation Committee was started there was in operation something like a L.C.C. in Bengal. As a result, the leftists were in an overwhelming majority in the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, the dominant partner in the Leftists Combination being those who later on joined the Forward Bloc when it was formed. The Leftists combination naturally became stronger when the Left-consolidation Committee was started on All India basis.