

CHAPTER - V :

THE COMMUNIST ALTERNATIVE

- 1) The main features of election manifesto of C.P.I. 1967, 1971 and 1977.
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CHAPTER - V :

THE COMMUNIST ALTERNATIVE

1) THE MAIN FEATURES OF ELECTION MANIFESTO
OF COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (~~MARXIST~~) -
1967, 1971 and 1977 :-

The Communist Party of India got divided in 1964 when Pro-China group led by A. K. Gopalan and P. Sundaraiya decided to establish a parallel Communist Party and the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The split horizontally divided the movement and considerably weakened its hold. As soon as the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was established, the Shastri Government put certain -

restrictions on it and a large number of party activists were arrested and detained upto 1966.

1967 elections was a first ~~test~~st of the real electoral strength of the rival parties because the Communist Party of India (Marxist) displayed its electoral clout in Kerala in 1965 and ~~WEST BENGAL~~ it was quite strong in Kerala and West Bengal. The Communist Party of India's influence was more wide spread but it was not substantial.

Having brought to the notice of electorate the failure of Congress, the Communist Party placed its manifesto in the fourth general elections. The programme and policies had the following features.

a) ECONOMY :

The manifesto declared that the party wanted to eliminate foreign monopolies from national life and foreign trade would be controlled by the state. Moreover, it promised that all banks would be nationalised. The fourth plan would be replaced by people's plan. It declared that the state sector must be expanded in various branches of economy. The manifesto made it clear that, "The Communist Party of India stands for taking over by the state all foreign trade which is mostly controlled by foreign - monopolies."¹ Moreover, it wanted to enforce the land reforms laws which would be helpful to landless labour and

actual cultivators. All surplus land would be distributed among agricultural labour and poor peasants.

b) CONSTITUTIONAL :

The Party declared that more power should be given to states in financial matters. It wanted to remove regional disparities.

c) EDUCATION :

The manifesto mentioned that the Party wanted to reorganise the entire educational system to suit the needs of modern industrial India and to reduce cost of education. It wanted to ensure autonomy of academic bodies.

d) SOCIAL :

The manifesto devoted some part for problems of tribals, muslims and other minorities, Scheduled Caste, women and maintained that adequate facilities for employment should be provided by the state to them. The Muslim community should be ensured their specific cultured, social and religious rights. It wanted to ~~xxxx~~ eradicate the very root of casteist thinking in society and especially in the working classes.

e) FOREIGN POLICY :

The manifesto of 1967 declared that the compromise

of the Congress Government with America weakened the policy of non-alignment. It stated ~~it should~~ India should also come out of Commonwealth. It declared that inspite of hostile attitude towards China, it is in the interest of country to explore all avenues for peaceful settlement with China either directly or through the good offices of friendly neutral powers and propose a No-War pact to China.

2) THE MAIN FEATURES OF ELECTION MANIFESTO
OF COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST) -
1967, 1971 and 1977 :-

The Communist Party of India emerged as a major Communist Party in 1967 and it continued its quarrels with the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which was ultimately resulted in the downfall of Namboodripad Government. The Communist Party of India decided to support Indira faction of the Congress in 1969 in the hope that the alliance with this section of the Congress would radicalise Indian policies. Due to this policy, the Communist Party of India entered into an alliance with the Congress (Indicate) and established coalition governments in West Bengal and Kerala displacing the Marxists.

At the time of 1971 elections the concept of the alliance of left and democratic forces i.e. the alliance of the Communist Party of India and the Congress (I) was forged

in some states and one can see the impact of this development of the Party's manifesto.

The manifesto at the very beginning put the question to the electorate whether they wanted the dark forces of reaction to continue exploitation or they want to check it. The Party wanted to root out the rightist forces and capture power.

The programme and policies of the Party placed before the electorate in the mid term poll of 1971 had the following features.

a) ECONOMY :

The Party wanted to restrict the right to property of monopolists, princes, landlords , so that they cannot misuse it. The manifesto stated that this right was abused to carry on plunder and to perpetuate vested interests. The Party, however, admitted that adequate compensation should be paid.

b) CONSTITUTIONAL :

The manifesto declared that it wanted to establish parliamentary supremacy by amending the constitution. In case of judiciary chief justices of Supreme Court and High Courts shall be appointed from the names of the panel appointed by parliament. Parliament should have the right

to remove the judges by simple majority in Lok Sabha. It wanted to replace present system of election by the system of proportional representation. The post of Governor should be abolished. Similarly, the Upper Houses in the states should be abolished. The provisions relating to emergency would be revised to curtail the emergency powers. Likewise, the provisions dealing with centre-state relationship would be amended to give more powers to states. The provisions meant for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes should be amended for their effective implementation. The voting age would be reduced from 21 to 18 to provide an opportunity to young people to participate in political life.

c) SOCIAL :

The manifesto dealt with protection of the democratic rights of the minorities and curbing of the forces of communalism. Legislative and administrative steps would be taken to safeguard the rights of minorities and backward sections of society. In case of women which constitute the half of our population the Party wanted to wipe out all sorts of disabilities to enable them to participate in the socio-economic life of the country.

d) EDUCATION :

The Party wanted to re-organise the educational

system that would strengthen secular base of the country.

e) FOREIGN POLICY :

The manifesto declared that Indian foreign policy based on anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism would be made more radical. It wanted to have friendship with U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries. Moreover, India should come out of Commonwealth. It wanted all possibilities to be explored for breaking the present deadlock between India and China. Similarly, it wanted to normalise Indo-Pak relations in the light of Tashkand Spirit. Moreover, it stated that the Party wanted to strengthen India's solidarity with Afro-Asian countries.

3) THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA MANIFESTO - 1977 :-

The friendly relations between the Communist Party of India and the Congress continued upto 1975-76 when the Communist Party of India supported emergency and opposed the movement launched by J. P. The Communist Party of India came under heavy pressure when N. Satpathi and H. N. Bahuguna were removed as chief ministers and Sanjay Gandhi launched an attack. The Communist Party of India leadership came out openly, criticising the extra-constitutional centre of power in the Congress. The elections were declared in 1977 and the Communist Party of India openly opposed the continuation of emergency but the alliance was not broken.

The Party had electoral understanding with the Congress in states like Bihar, West Bengal and Kerala. But the signs of shift in the Communist Party of India's position were visible.

The manifesto declared that sixth Lok Sabha was a crucial battle and the electorate had to make a momentous choice, and requested the Government to lift emergency. Having put forth these points the programme and policies were placed before the electorate.

a) TO SAFEGUARD AND EXTEND DEMOCRACY :

At the very beginning, of the manifesto stated that the party wanted to safeguard and extend democracy. Therefore, it wanted to lift emergency to remove press censorship and stop misuse of 'Samachar', Repeal MISA and Publication of Objectionable matters Act. It also wanted to repeal anti-people clauses of the constitution, especially 42nd amendment Act. Apart from it, the Party wanted to set up popular committees for implementation of land reforms and other democratic measures.

b) ECONOMY :

The manifesto stated that the Party wanted to revitalise economy for economic development. Therefore, it would adopt such measures that would check multi-national companies and strengthen public sector, it advocated -

creation of employment and democratic structural changes, to check the forces of imperialism. It wanted to nationalise textile and all foreign drug industries and all banking business. In addition to it, the Party wanted to cancel all concessions given to big business in the last two years. Similarly, it would change taxation policies to reduce burden on the people. The manifesto made it clear that the Party wanted, "orient planning to development of home market, rapid industrialisation, creation of employment and democratic structural changes."²

c) SOCIAL :

Manifesto makes special mention to working class, peasants and agricultural labour, tribal people, weavers and artisans, women, youth and students, teachers, muslims and other minorities and Harijans and promises that the peasants would be paid remunerative price for their produce. It wanted to abolish bonded labour. Likewise it wanted to distribute surplus and Government wasted land to landless under land reform policy. It would execute laws providing equal status to women. It stood for right to work and voting right at 18. The Party would adopt administrative and other steps to give effective protection to Muslims and backward sections of society. Action would be taken against those who commit atrocities and practise social boycott against Harijan.

d) EDUCATION :

The manifesto stated that the Party wanted to reorganise educational systems to provide secular base to the country. It would give democratic rights and security and services to all teachers.

e) FOREIGN POLICY :

The manifesto stated that the Party wanted to strengthen present foreign policy of India. Therefore, it wanted to take anti-imperialist stand, maintaining friendship and political and economic relations with Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

4) THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

(MARXIST) MANIFESTO - 1967 :

The fourth general elections were very important for the Communist Party of India (Marxist) as it had to show its political strength. The Party emerged as a stronger faction in Kerala and West Bengal. The Party was considered pro-Chinese in 1967 it advocated the concept of people's democracy and put forward its own ideological framework in its election manifesto of 1967.

The peculiarity of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) manifesto was that it had vividly brought to the notice of the electorate the failure in various sphere

of national life not only of the Congress Party but other parties including Communist Party of India. The main features of its manifesto are as follows.

a) SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PEOPLE :

The manifesto in the very first line of the programme, stated that supreme powers must be vested in people's representatives. Therefore, the method of proportional representation which expresses the genuine will of the people would be adopted. Repressive legislation must be withdrawn.

b) ECONOMY :

The manifesto stated that the Party stood for balanced economic growth. It wanted to nationalise banks and big industries. Similarly, it wanted to develop public sectors rapidly to achieve economic independence. The Party wanted to abolish taxation on all necessaries of life. It would level high taxes on the rich sections in urban and rural areas. Likewise, it wanted to stop American aid and nationalise foreign trade. Entire surplus ~~and~~ land of the rich peasants would be distributed among agricultural labourer and poor peasants. The manifesto made it clear that the Party wanted, "Nationalisation of banks, monopoly concerns and other big industry whenever immediately necessary. A people's economic plan of development and self-

reliance. Development of public sector and with the utmost rapidity to overcome economic dependence."⁴

c) SOCIAL :

The manifesto stated that the Party stood for equal rights to all citizens and equal pay for equal work. But the rights of Muslims minorities - cultural, religious, linguistic would be protected. It wanted to abolish all social disabilities. Special measures would be adopted to promote the care of Adivasis and backward communities. Similarly, the Party wanted to promote common class struggle of the workers against the rich land-lords.

Free and compulsory education would be provided upto secondary stage. The Party wanted to fix the living wages of workers, employees, teacher, government employees so that their living standard would be improved. It wanted to replace the present bourgeois-landlord state by democratic state led by working class. It also wanted to ensure - guarantee of the secular state.

d) CONSTITUTIONAL :

The manifesto declared that in order to have regional autonomy the states must have full autonomy. The post of Governor should be abolished. The local administration would be run by directly elected local bodies.

e) FOREIGN POLICY :

The Party wanted to replace the present bourgeois-land lord state led by the big bourgeoisie by a people's Democratic State led by the working class. The manifesto stated that it wanted to adopt, "an independent foreign policy based on opposition to imperialism, especially American imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism and support to all struggles, it is a policy based on opposition to nuclear war and imperialist wars and supporting peace and peaceful co-existence, a policy of firm friendship with all peaceful countries, of firm solidarity with Afro-Asian people." It advocated the quitting of British Commonwealth. Moreover, the disputes between China and India should be resolved peacefully. There should be friendship between free India and Socialist China in the interest of Asian freedom.

5) THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

(MARXIST) MANIFESTO - 1971 :

The Communist Party (Marxist) strength grew in West Bengal as the Party emerged as an important political force. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) was split in 1967 when a large number of militant leaders walked out of the Party and established many revolutionary groups called Naxalites. The radicals were strong in West Bengal and Andhra. The Party faced attack from these sections.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) placed its manifesto at the mid-term poll of 1971 which had the following features.

a) ECONOMY :

The manifesto stated that the Party wanted to nationalise all the heavy industries and other key sectors of the economy. It also wanted to eliminate all feudal and big land lord interests. The privileges and privy pursues of all princes would be abolished without compensation. The manifesto also stated that the Party would adopt measures to raise wages and improve living condition of agricultural labourers. It also published that the Party stood for nationalisation of industries and private monopolists. Similarly, it wanted to review all those provisions which are detrimental to the national interests. The Party promises to revise the policy of taxation that would reduce the burden on the poor and levy the high taxes to the rich.

b) CONSTITUTIONAL :

The manifesto declared that amendments relating to Fundamental Rights would be made to enable the parliament to frame the laws against private property of foreign and Indian monopolists and upper strata of our society. -
Ultimately it would lead to strengthening the fundamental rights of the common people. Considering the reactionary

judgements delivered by the Supreme Court, the Party wanted to deprive of all the powers of Courts that hinder the policy of removing social injustices, inequality and oppression. As the federal character of the constitution had been undermined there arose the conflict between the Centre and States. Tendency would be towards states as India is a multi-lingual country. The Party wanted to abolish governor's post and provision of Presidential rule in state. There should be complete control of state over all its officials including All India Services.

c) FOREIGN POLICY :

The manifesto stated that the Party would adopt the firm stand on the struggle against the imperialist policy in relation to problems of Indo-China states, to Korea, to Middle East, to Germany and to Cuba. It would support Africans fighting against white racialist. New initiatives would be taken by Government of India to organise common struggle of all anti-imperialist countries particularly those of Asia and Africa. The Party would adopt bold measures to improve India's relations with China. Moreover, attempts would be made to normalise relations between Pakistan and India.

5) THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

(MARXIST) MANIFESTO - 1977 :

After 1971-72, the Congress Government headed by

Mrs. Gandhi systematically followed the policy of repression against the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and it rigged the assembly elections to 1972. During that period the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was under pressure from Communist Party of India, the Communist Party of India (M.L.) and the Congress Government. During emergency the Communist Party of India (Marxist) bore the major brunt of the oppression as a large number of its workers were detained. The 1977 elections gave an opportunity to the Party to come out of its deliberate isolation.

After pointing out the evils of emergency declared by the Congress Government, and urging its withdrawal Communist Party of India (Marxist) placed its programme and policies in the sixth parliamentary election. The features of it can be summarised as under.

a) ECONOMY :

The manifesto declared that the Party wanted to take over foreign capital and impose ban on entry of multinationals. It also wanted to nationalise monopoly houses and to take over foreign trade. Similarly, it wanted to abolish land-lordism. The land taken over would be distributed among landless labour and poor peasants. It would lower down taxes and levies on the peasants, it promised that the state would control the wholesale trade in food and other essential articles.

b) CONSTITUTIONAL :

The manifesto pointed out that the Party will withdraw emergency and release all political prisoners. It wanted to repeal 42nd amendment to constitution and MISA and the act of prevention of publication of objectionable material. The Party also wanted to restore the democratic and trade union rights. Moreover, right to work will be made fundamental constitutional right.

c) SOCIAL :

Firm measures will be adopted against racial oppression of Harijan. Similarly, measures would be taken against their victimisation. Provisions would be made for unemployment relief. Compulsory and free education upto the age of 14 will be provided and would attempt to eradicate illiteracy.

d) FOREIGN POLICY :

The manifesto declared that the Party will adopt a foreign policy of consistent anti-imperialism and close co-operation with socialist countries.

3) COMPARATIVE STUDY :

The main reason of the split in the Indian communist parties was ideological in the sense that the Communist party of India followed pro-Soviet policies and advocated the cause of left and democratic front whereas the Communist Party of India (Maharashtra) advocated the cause of peoples democratic front.

a) POLITICAL :

In 1967, manifesto Communist Party of India wanted to amend the constitution to give more financial power to states and curtail the powers of the centre. In 1971 it stood for Parliamentary supremacy by amending the constitution and maintained that provisions must be amended regarding the centre-state relations by giving more powers to states without breaking basic unity of the country.

In 1977 the party wanted to safeguard and extend democracy and advocated repeal of anti-democratic legislations. Whereas CPI (M) manifesto of 1967 pointed out that the party wanted to grant full autonomy to states and in pursuance of that the post of Governor must be abolished. The party manifesto of 1971 advocated the principle of Parliamentary supremacy and argued that the Parliament should have the right to frame laws against private property. It also attacked the judiciary for its

reactionary judgements.

In 1977 party stood for repeal of 42nd constitutional amendment and MISA. It promised that wanted ~~xxxxx~~ restore the democratic and trade union right of the people. Also it advocated giving right to work to the people and be included in the list of fundamental rights.

b) ECONOMY :

In 1967 manifesto the CPI stood for nationalization in industries, foreign trade and fourth plan would be replaced by people's plan. It wanted to enforce land reform laws.

In 1971 party wanted to restrict the right of property as it obstructs social and economic progress.

In 1977 party wanted to revitalise economy. It wanted to bring structural changes to check ^{imposition} ~~imposition~~ forces, and ~~cancel~~ concession given to big business during emergency.

The CPI (M) 1967 wanted to stop American aid, - distribution of lands. it wanted to develop public sector rapidly.

In 1971 the party wanted to nationalise all the heavy industries and key sections of the economy. It wanted to eliminate all ~~feudal~~ and ^{big} ~~by~~ landlords interests in the economy. In 1977 the party wanted to take over foreign

capital and abolish landlordism and ban ~~mx~~ multinationals.

c) FOREIGN POLICY :

The CPI manifesto of 1967 clearly mentioned that the ^{comprehensive} ~~comprehensive~~ of the congress Government with America made the non-alignment weak. The manifesto of 1971 made it clear that the party wanted to Indian foreign policy based on anti-imperialism and friendship with USSR. In 1977 party clearly mentioned that it wanted to strengthen foreign policy of India by maintaining freindship with and political and economic relations with soviet-union. The C.P.I.(M) also stood for anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist and pro-socialist foreign policy. Establishment of friednly relations with soviet union is the running theme of the C.P.I. manifestos Pro-Chinese and anti-Soviet bias of the C.P.I.(M) was partially corrected in 1971 and both parties held almost identical views on foreign policy in 1977. Both parties advocated normalisation of relations with neighbouring countries.

d) SOCIAL ISSUES :

Both the parties stood for protection of minorities and for safeguarding their rights . They were committed to wage struggle against caste system and favoured the policy that would strengthen the cause of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

A comparative study of ideological positions of these parties reveals that though basically they have identical opinions on most of the points, as both of them advocate supremacy of Parliament, inclusion of right to work nationalisation of industries, land reforms, fight against imperialism and colonialism etc. they differed in details and especially in following the practice.

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- 1) Pattabhiram M, (Ed.) General Election in India 1967,
P. 205.
- 2) Shaktihar S.L., (Ed) The Sixth General Election to
Lok Sabha, P. 71.
- 4) Ibid P. 252.

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