

LEFTISM
AND
LEFTIST UNITY.

SAUMYENDRANATH TAGORE.

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LEFTISM AND LEFTIST UNITY.

Once more murmurs about the 'Leftist Unity' are being heard in the whispering galleries of political India. But these talks, as in the past, are purely emotional in character. Nowhere any attempt to enunciate the ideological premises of the Leftist Unity is noticeable. Leftism still remains an un-defined, all-inclusive, mystic substance. In India, class-collaboration (the United Front policy). Imping behind the Congress—the party of the Indian bourgeoisie, the ecstatic eulogy of the anti-revolutionary Congress leadership, the complete submerision within the Congress, the strenuous attempt to hamper the class-organisations of the workers and peasants and the frantic efforts to conceal the bourgeois class-character of the Congress from the masses,—all these have been labelled and exhibited as 'Leftism in the political market place. The result has been disastrous on more than one occasion and in more ways than one.

In 1942, there was a spontaneous uprising of the masses. It was spontaneous in the sense that besides being emotionally stirred by a couple of slogans, the masses received no programme and no direction from the national leadership. Those who were responsible for inflaming the masses with such slogans as "Quit India" and "Do or Die", thought it wise to keep the masses without any directives. This was not accidental

by any chance, it was purposeful. The national leadership wanted to keep the movement, planless and decentralised and therefore ineffective. "As a matter of that; it did not want the masses to achieve their emancipation from foreign and indigenous bondage. In this the leadership was more than successful. Sublime heroism and suffering of the masses were deliberately made to flow into the marsh of sporadic, disconnected and localised incidents.

Yet, this conscious sabotage of the revolution has been beautifully covered up by the 'Leftists'. Jaiprakash Narain, the Congress-Socialist leader sang ecstatic hymns of eulogy of the "Incomparable leadership" of the August Movement; though he had one or two mild criticisms to offer here and there.

This unfortunately is the physiognomy of most that passes as 'Leftism' in India. Leftism in India is in the clutches of bourgeois leadership of the Congress. Now and then it criticises some particular action of the Congress leadership, only to apologise to it at the earliest opportunity. This variety of 'Leftism' believes that by perpetual surrender to the bourgeois leaders of the Congress, it will succeed to capture the Congress diplomatically. This intellectual superstition is a proof of its intellectual bankruptcy. It asserts with a very wise twinkle in its eyes that once the Congress starts a movement, it will utilise this opportunity to turn it into a revolution. As if revolution is like a dinner prepared by a chief (the Congress) and served by the waiters (the congress-'leftists').

Such faith in miracle and such utter lack of faith in its own ideology and its own leadership have never passed as 'Leftism' in any other country of the world. This 'Leftism' is mortally frightened of the word 'sectarian' and tries to prove to the Indian bourgeoisie that it is liberal and respectable and that its ideology is an expansive and all-accommodating one. It has not the courage to assert boldly that at every critical and revolutionary period in history the ideology of the revolutionary class is always considered 'sectarian' by the classes whose death-warrant has been signed by history.

Let us now look at the historical comedy of the first order that is being enacted for some time. The Rightist leaders of the Congress who had so long made the "Leftists" within the Congress dance to their political tune and had condescendingly allowed the "Leftists" to use the stage of their political party—the Congress, have now no further use of the "Leftist" rope-dancers on their stage. Acharya Kripalani, the oracle of the Rightists has recently released his verbal atom-bomb on the 'Leftists' with a superb exhibition of dramatic skill. With a cynical chuckle he has declared the most obvious fact, a fact which we have been asserting since last 12 years, that the Congress is a Party and that it has always been one.

Oh, what a furore it has caused in the 'Leftist' dovecote! For years these 'Leftists' have faithfully

towed the Rightist line and have continuously concealed the Party (class) character of the Congress, and now to be thrown to the wolves by the very persons they have served so loyally! They look at Acharya Kripalani with pathetic anger: as much as to say— "Tu es Brutus"!

Plaintive cries and tearful protests are being raised by the 'Leftists' from all sides. One can very well understand their discomfiture but then truth is generally known to be uncomfortable and specially so to the opportunists.

With such 'Leftism' can the masses of India ever succeed in winning their all-round emancipation? Is it possible that the masses will seize power and smash the Birla-Tata regime under the leadership of those who are sparing no pains to drive them into the bourgeois fold? Is it conceivable that those 'Leftists' who are to-day manning the 'Hindusthan Majdoor Sevak Sangh,' a typical example of 'Yellow' trade unionism sponsored to destroy the class-organisations of the Indian working class and to lead the workers astray on to the treacherous path of class-collaboration, shall lead them on to victory?

One of the fundamental errors committed by this brand of 'Leftism' has its origin in its confusing the national revolution with the bourgeois Congress. Being by origin nothing but a left wing of the Congress, it very naturally, though quite erroneously, considers the

Congress to be the synonym for and identical with National Revolution; where as in reality the National Revolution can be achieved only by the mass-forces organised outside the Congress and under the political leadership of the revolutionary Left.

This error has made the 'leftists' simply the left wing of the Congress, just as there are left-wingers within the Muslim League, the Hindu Sabha etc, but not the Left wing of the National Revolution. For example the C. S. P. and the Forward Bloc, both these organisations undoubtedly function as the left wing of the bourgeois Congress, but they are the Right wing of the National Revolution, at least so long as these organisations persist in their present attitude to the Congress.

In this connection we should also take note of the loose and superficial talk indulged by these 'Leftists' about the alternate leadership. Here again the problem of the alternate leadership of the National Revolution has appeared to these 'Leftists' to be identical with the problem of the alternate leadership of the Congress. The inter-connection between the class, the party and the leadership seemed to have eluded these 'Leftists' altogether and more over are completely blinded by the constitutional and pacifist illusion of changing the leadership of a party by the manipulation of votes! What we need to-day is an alternate leadership of the National Revolution, the replacement of the anti-revolutionary Congress leadership by the leadership of the revolutionary Left.

This alternate leadership has nothing in common with the replacement of one reactionary leadership with another reactionary leadership within the Congress.

But these 'Leftists' still hug the constitutional illusion deliberately created by M. N. Roy years ago in order to emasculate the entire Left in India.

The third fundamental error of these 'Leftists' lies in their constant effort to separate Independence from Socialism with an utterly un-realistic and unhistorical sophistry. Independence first, then Socialism—this is a pure and simple bourgeois trickery hatched by the Congress Rightists to confuse the proverbially muddle-headed middle class. One would have expected that the Leftists at least would not fall a prey to this clap-trap of the reactionaries.

But only the other day Jaiprakash Narayan has with all solemnity repeated the Rightist balderdash—Independence first, then socialism.

As if the fight for National Independence and the fight for Socialism are two separate struggles, as if National Independence is ever realisable in this epoch of Imperialism by any other method but the socialist method of organising the masses on an anti-feudal and anti-capitalist basis, as if the struggle for national independence in the colonial countries is not the part and parcel of the Socialist revolution?

To fall into his reactionary quagmire—Independence first, then Socialism, is this Leftism?

By far the greater part of 'Leftism' in India, is tied to the apron-strings of the Indian bourgeoisie; most of it is still the hand-maid of the Indian vested interests.

Yet, Leftism is definitely gaining ground inspite of the present-day recrudescence of religio-political Gandhism. The general orientation of the masses is towards socialism. If we have to hasten the process of radicalisation of the masses, if we want to put an end to every variety and shade of oppression and exploitation in India and if we really mean to make the masses the rulers of this land and to achieve ultimately the class-less society, we must then realise that it can only be done if Leftism in India stands on its own legs.—bold, dynamic, proud of its ideology and confident of itself.

The present is the most opportune time for that. But in order to put Leftism on its legs and to achieve the unity of all the Leftists forces in this land, two premises have to be fulfilled—:

FIRSTLY, the recognition of the imperative necessity of the class-organisations of the masses by the Leftists and SECONDLY, the recognition of the fact that the political leadership of the masses must be

in the hands of the 'United Left' and not in the hands of the Congress.

These two premises form the absolutely irreducible minimum on the basis of which the various Leftist Parties can unite and create the Leftist leadership of the masses.

Let us work for the creation of an 'United Left' on this basis.

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