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JAN SANGH AND COMMUNISTS

It is commonly thought that the Jan Sangh is opposed to communism and to the Communist movements in India. The examination of the record, however, suggests that this is far from the case. Both, the Jan Sangh and Communist are extremists and totalitarians, opportunistic and unscrupulous. In the face of power both will shed whatever differences they might have and join hands. This happened in 1967 and it will happen again at any time.

Proof on a single exchange of courtesies and complements that took place in 1967, is sufficient.

The Jan Sangh paper "Organiser" said in the issue of March 12, 1967 - "There is not much common between Bharatiya Jan Sangh and the Communist Party of India. But we are all children of Bharat Mata and we are all heirs to the spirit of the twentieth century. That sure is some base to try to build on."

That the Jan Sangh was willing to alter its outlook in its process of building the basis becomes evident from the following sentence :

" Perhaps the present encounter will not only make the Bharatiya Jan Sangh more radical and the C.P.I. more national, ~~in~~ and not unwelcome end-results."

This drew immediate response from the C.P.I. The review of four general elections adopted by the National Council of the C.P.I. in April 1967 noted increase in the votes won by the Jan Sangh and deplored that the Communists C.P.I. had adopted open ' rigid and inflexible ' attitude on electoral adjustments with it. Instead it suggested " we should have taken a flexible line and tried for adjustments..." The C.P.I. noted that the Jan Sangh was acquiring " Mass ~~xxxx~~ base which included vast sections of the ~~disillusioned~~ bourgeois , students, traders, shop-keepers and professional classes " It noted with glee ' Organiser's ' approval of the communists " After all sons of Bharat Mata " and went on actually to prefer Jan Sangh to the Swatantra Party. C.P.I. remarked " There are contradictions between the two

(Jan Sangh and Swatantra) which cannot be easily resolved and anti-communism is not proving efficacious under the impact of the popular and anti-congress upsurge and the election results "

Jan Sangh's anti-communism indeed did not prove efficacious, for within a few days it joined hands with the C.P.I. to form Government in Bihar and later in United Provides.

All this did not happen over-night. The preparations were being made well in advance and were being taken note of approvingly by the Communists. The Communist weekly ' Link ' reported on March 12, 1967 " The Jansangh Parliamentary Board decided that it would facilitate the formation of a non-congress Government in Bihar even if the Communists are included in it." A fortnight later the Link ' reported ~~ixan~~ interview by Dr. Baldeo Prakash , a Jan Sangh leader in which he said that " there were many issues on which there was no ideological disagreement between the Jan Sangh and the Communist" The same issue also noted " In all his talks and public speeches Nanaji Deshmukh (Jan Sangh leader) never uttered a word against the Communists and showed a willingness

to take a practical view of all economic problems "

Mr. M.R. Masani, M.P. and ~~now~~ Chairman of the Swatantra of the Swatantra Party in his speech at Sapru House in New Delhi on July 27, 1967 expressed his dismay at these writings which showed a Communist attempt to woo the Jan Sangh and the R.S.S. He said :-

"If you want any evidence for this disturbing thought which worries me, I refer you to a series of very interesting articles in ' Link Magazine,' you know what its colour is, of the 12nd March, the 26th March, the 30th April and the 23rd July. These are very appreciative articles about the R.S.S. and even the Jan-Sangh, except for Mr. Balraj Madhok who wants friendship with the Swatantra Party and therefore is a reactionary. But the R.S.S. leadership and the R.S. S. rank and file and particularly Mr. Nana Deshmukh, are praised for not being anti-communist. They are praised for becoming radical. In an article ' Link ' said : ' Experience is driving large sections of the Jan-Sangh rank and file and middle leadership to the conclusion that the political future of their party -

neither in trying it to the apron strings of Swatantra nor in seeking a common language with the Congress, but in turning more and more economic radicalism and in building friendly relations with the Left Parties'."

Masani went on -

" In the Punjab, says ' Link ' , the shift in the emphasis of the Jan Sangh is even more marked: ' With regard to Communists, their attitude of absolute hostility has changed to one of cooperation on agreed points'. So the ' link ' congratulates itself that its political party, the Communists, have had considerable success in this drive to eat up the Jan Sangh and R.S.S. I mention it because this is one more disturbing symptom of how these total forces, the disruptive forces, are gaining ground and functioning at various levels."

Masani's warning fell on deaf ears and the Jan Sangh and the Communists both continued in opportunistic honey-mooning. The Communist daily ' Patriot ' reported on

July 29, 1967-

" According to the new thinking as revealed at the Simla Meeting, the Party (Jan Sangh) will now not be averse to working with the C.P.I., particularly in the Trade Union field. "

Concessions mostly came from Jan Sangh in Punjab. The

' Link ' reported on August 6, 1967 -

" The Jan Sangh went ,part of the way with the Communist to endorse partial State Trading in foodgrains and gradual nationalisation of transport."

The ~~Parties~~ Party's present Mr. Atal Behari Bajpati , went on a step further. He said -

" If the Right Communists could change themselves, and they have really given the impression of being responsive to popular sentiments and of an urge to break away from the Marxist dogmas and extra-territorial attachment, the position might become the mainstay of the alternative Government."

(The Times of India, August 14, 1967)

This was an astounding statement for any Nationalist leader to make and its falsity was exposed in a year's time when the Right Communists supported the Russian invasion of Rumania , and Russia's decision to supply arms to Pakistan. So much for Mr. Bachpai's gratuitous Certificate to the Right Communists ' of an urge to break-away from the Marxist Dogmas and extra-territorial attachment."

Later on even the Left Communist were even welcome. Late Mr. Din Dayal Upadhyaya said -

" That the Jan Sangh would work with all parties including Left Communist... if the coalition was in the interest of the people. "

(The Indian Express , 24th January 1968)

The Coalition seems to have worked pretty well. Mr. Atal Bihari Bajpai told the Press Conference -

" The Akalis, the Jan Sangh and the Communist had been working , by and large, quite harmoniously."

(Amrut Bazar Patrika, Feb. 26, 1968)

Mr. Bachpai realised full well that such flotations with Communist did not quite square to the Jan Sangh's professions of Nationalism and Democracy. This uneasiness was revealed in the following _____ " This is pragmatism and not opportunism " (The Hindustan Standard, March 31, 1968).

Mr. Bachpai also said that his Party would not mind forming Ministries on the basis of common minimum programme with the Communist if the situation so demanded. The Jan-Sangh's paper " Organizer " kept pace with the Communist by denouncing Americans for their defence of South Vietnam against aggression by the Communist North Vietnam. On June 9, it referred to the vietnam...

War in these emotional terms :

" When Americans perpetrated bombard^{ing}~~ments~~ our
co-Asian North Vietnam and ravaged that fair
land..."

Significantly while expressing sympathy for Communist North
Vietnam the ' Organizer ' turned a blind eye to the plight
of the anti-communist co-Asians South Vietnam.

In the light of this, it is not surprising that the
Jan Sangh supported the Central Government employees' illegal
strike and did not the Motion of No-confidence arising out of
the dismissal by Governor Dharmavir of the Communist dominated
United Front Government in West Bengal in November 1968.

Last year the Jan Sangh went so far as to refuse to
participate in the Union Home-Minister Mr. Y.B. Chavan's
round-of-talks with various political parties to find ways and
means of combating Naxalite activity (The Jan Sangha's
Opportunism (The Hindustan Times - May 17, 1969). Undoubtedly,
to cover up its strip and also to fool its own rank and files,
Jan Sangh leaders would go about making occasional anti-communist
statements, but they cautiously avoid declaring themselves
against participation in a -- -- -- -- --

coalition with the Communist or clashing with them on major issues of policy. Two such issues arose last year.

The Nationalisation of Banks and the Presidential elections. On both, not surprisingly, the Jan Sangh prevaricated. On 25th July 1969, in the Lok Sabha Mr. A.B. Bachpai objected to the introduction of the bill to replace the Ordinance nationalising banks simply on the ground that it was against the rules of conduct of the business of the House and asked for its postponement till after the Supreme Court had disposed of the question. He did not oppose it straight-way as pernicious totalitarian measure. On July 30, when amendments were moved by the C.P.I. and the C.P.M and an Independent M.P. seeking nationalisation of Banks as well as Jan Sangh voted in support of the amendment along with the C.P.M. C.P.I., P.S.P, S.S.P. and the B.K.D. On the Presidential election, the Jan Sangh President Mr. A.B. Bachpai refused publicly to endorse the candidature of Mr. N. Sanjiva Reddi or to oppose Mr. V.V. Giri who was being supported by Mrs. Indira Gandhi's faction of the Congress and the Communist. . All this brought Jan Sangh's prestige to all time low.

In a pamphlet entitled " CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES AND
BHARATIYA JAN SANGH " { by Dipa Prakasan New Delhi I,
Price 10 paise) distributed at last Annual Sessions
of the Jan Sangh , Mr. Balraj Madhok , severely criticised
the party's opportunism. He wrote " In the General
Elections of 1967, masses gave very strong support to the
Jan Sangh and ~~thereby~~ put the Jan Sangh in a powerful
position. If this opportunity had been properly utilised
and no coalition Governments had been formed with the
Communist ~~and~~ by the Jan Sangh , then the prestige
and power of the Jan Sangh would automatically have
increased and all nationalist elements would have naturally
swerved towards it. But the Jan Sangh suffered a great
loss due to the small mistake and in the mid-term elections
in 1969 instead of marching forward , we went back-ward."
He went on to refer to the Presidential Elections -" If
Shri Sanjiva Reddi had won then part of the credit of its
success would have come to the Jan Sangh and the situation
would have arisen when the national politics could have been
turned conducive to the Jan Sangh. But due to our hesitant
policy and unnecessary delay in giving clear instructions

this result could not have been obtained. Instead of taking a decision in such matter firmly, remaining indecisive in the name of power-politics, does not benefit anybody.". These are the two mistakes committed by the Jan Sangh. Mr. Madhok quoted " Jan Sangh has now got third opportunity. If this opportunity is also missed, it will bring fall to both the party and the country. He advocated the Jan Sangh's alliances with the Opposition Congress, Swatantra party and other nationalist parties and said " If the Jan Sangh was very strong the basis of its progress ~~was~~ so vast that it alone could capably face the situation, even then it would be intelligence if it went along with elements having similar views as theirs. But is the Jan Sangh in this position today ?
because of the
Unfortunately/the absence of tolerance and political acumen shown by the Jan Sangh leaders in the last two years not only the people outside Jan Sangh but people like me who have tended the Jan Sangh/^{sapling}with their blood and sweat right from its birth, are disappointed. "

Mr. Madhok's remarks proved prophetic. Jan Sangh's leadership took him to task for the pamphlet which contains

severe strictures against Russia and the Communist.
Mr. Madhok was obliged to withdraw the pamphlet and
even to deny that it had been circulated. ~~This indeed~~
This indeed is the only effort in the Party to bring
it to its senses and to end its opportunistic career.
But the Jan Sangh seems determined to acquire a
socialistic garb of respectability and even to make
friends with the Communists in order to share ~~the~~ in
the loaves and fishes of the office.
