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Unity of Communist Revolutionaries – Experience of CPI (ML)

We came to the conclusion that following the dialectical method is the correct way to overcome the political and ideological differences among the communist revolutionaries. The stand taken was identifying the points of agreement and differences, uniting on the basis of agreements and then striving for the resolution of the differences through internal discussions. A provision was made to allow the expression of the differences outside the organization without jeopardizing the unity of organization.

The Note of 17th January 2003 brought a turn to the bipartite and tripartite talks for unity. In this Note, we reached a clear agreement on the political, ideological and organizational stands, to translate them into practice, mobilise the people into agitations, struggles and movements, and to identify the wrong trends on the basis of Marxism–Leninism and Mao’s Thought as our world outlook and the tasks that emanate from it. Petty Bourgeois anarchism continue to manifest in many forms in the Indian revolutionary movement—one is the revisionism, reformism and right opportunism, second is the ultra anarchism, terrorism and left opportunism. Both these trends are harmful to the revolutionary movement. These twin trends cause an immense harm to the very cause of revolution. They create pessimism, despair and inaction. They sow doubts on Marxism–Leninism and thus ultimately leading to the liquidation of revolutionary movement and organization. Ideologically, these twin trends are based on metaphysics and departure from the dialectical method. Though they may rear their heads as separate entities and appear as different, they are mutually supportive of each other. Hence the Party will not remain healthy and loses its capacity to lead all the forces unless a determined and thorough going struggle is waged against them at ideological, political and organizational planes. The revolutionary movement will encounter serious impediments in the way. This understanding formed the basis of our unity.

In accordance with this basis of unity, we took up the task of building a genuine Communist Party in its true sense. We found that it will be impossible to build a genuine Communist Party without fighting and defeating right and left opportunisms, revisionism and sectarianism ideologically, politically and in practice which played havoc with the eight decade long Indian communist movement. It means concretely that we have to fight against the opportunism of revisionist parties and the left sectarianism and terrorist methods followed by the AICCCR and CPI(ML) of 1968–69. Our newly formed organization

had taken up this stupendous and heavy responsibility with the understanding that Naxalbari which rejected the above two trends is the continuation of the Telangana line and we are a continuation and a part of the Indian Communist Movement which started in 1920s.

Our party declared Marxism-Leninism-Mao's thought as our world outlook and decided to give the name of CPI(ML) to the united organization. Even though the name is that of 1969, we were clear in our understanding that it is a new organization which severed from left sectarianism and policies alien to Marxism-Leninism. Moreover, it also severed from the reformism and policies alien to Marxism-Leninism that plagued the Communist Party in India for the past eight decades. At the same time, it is part of the eight decades of Communist movement in India. We are partners of its effects, both good and bad. We are partners and inheritors of positive and negative aspects of the movements of toiling people.

While upholding the significance of these struggles, we were able to make note of deviations from Marxism-Leninism. We rejected the individual terrorism in all its forms.

At the same time, the opinion that 'left is better than the right' continues to haunt us. This softness and sympathy towards left sectarianism, at times, become a mental impediment in our efforts to implement the revolutionary mass line, develop the revolutionary ranks and rally the forces into our organization.

Left opportunism appears 'better' to the extent of opposing revisionism, but these two twins born out of the same womb. Both these trends, ultimately, go against Marxism-Leninism.

While opposing the state repression against the left sectarian forces, we have to carry on the struggle against 'left sectarianism at ideological, political and organizational planes.

We firmly believe that heroes are not makers of history and people alone are the real makers of history. The duty of the communist revolutionaries is to take the knowledge of Marxism-Leninism to the people. Then only the people can fight against the exploitative society as it make them capable of applying it to their own experience of life and of analyzing the experiences of the past struggle and thus enable to advance the movement.

Revolution is not a shadow boxing. It is not drum beating making hollow sounds. We firmly believe that revolution means bringing the people into action with concrete practice.

II

This orientation helped the unification of COI (ML) and CPI (ML). We applied the method of combining theory with practice to the process of unity. By Unity with differences we did not mean unity with anybody giving priority to numbers and relegating the politics to back seat. It means uniting with the forces that can be united and going into practice with the achieved unity. We formulated the policy of further strengthening unity with experiences gained in the practice. We adopted the Programme, Path and Constitution for the new organization. We kept the question of reversal in China open for discussion. Yet we had the confidence that it would not remain as a difference. So we left it to the discussions in the conference. By that time, Comrade Kanu Sanyal was paying critical attention to the policies and practices of the Chinese government and party.

However, the comrade was of the attitude that we can wait for some time without characterising now keeping in view that the CPC has a history of waging many a internal struggles against deviations and defeating the opportunist forces. "Here both the organizations adopted a flexible attitude. There was no occasion in the later period when we referred to it as a point of difference.

The Unity Declaration of 17-1-2003 gave guidance to the unity. It contained a principled stand on basic issues and flexible attitude on secondary issues. The unity declaration concluded with the following para:

"The COI (ML) has serious reservations and criticism on CPC. We can conclude the differences on CPC through discussions. There may be some divergencies on the practice of tactical line and also on some strategic issues. We agreed to resolve them through discussions. We agreed that these divergencies can be expressed within and outside the organization. But here primacy should be given to the unity of organization. We are firmly committed to the task of taking forward the unity of communist revolutionaries".

III

The Co-ordination Committee of COI (ML) and CPI (ML) functioned for three years. During the general elections it gave a call, "Defeat all the ruling class parties; Vote for democratic forces and revolutionaries". We attended the Asian Social Forum at Hyderabad with differences. Comrade Kanu Sanyal participated in the forum of left parties on behalf of the Co-ordination Committee. We held bipartite discussions with CPI (ML) RF (united organization of Red Flag and Red Star) as Co-ordination Committee. We came to the understanding in the second round of talks that there were differences. Number 1: On the character of Indian society, number 2 : Principal contradiction, number 3 : Path and the evaluation of Party History for 1967-72.

The CPI (ML) RF was internally divided into two sections due to differences. The important CC members who participated in two rounds of talks went away from KNR section. Our relations were continued with KNR's section. We entered into Co-ordination relation. We jointly organized an international seminar at Bombay. Some other programmes were also organised jointly. We tried to find ways to unite while keeping the differences on some questions. We got the approval of lower ranks for our basic documents as part of the preparations for all India plenum. According to the agreement reached with the Ramachandran group we left four issues to the future. Regarding the Path, we broadly upheld armed struggle line while opposing the parliamentary cretinism. In the Outline of the Programme, we formulated ad hoc stands. Out line of the programme and constitution were adopted for practice up to the arrival of final conclusion of divergent views and differences.

Those are:

Imperialism, during the colonial period brought changes in the feudal relations in India to suit its exploitation and protected it. Since then feudalism changed into semi-feudalism, and became the social basis of imperialism. After the transfer of power, the Indian big bourgeoisie in compromise with the landlord class maintained the status quo and strengthened it through rural credit, panchayat raj, fake land reforms, green revolution etc.

The big bourgeoisie is making hidden and open compromises with imperialism since 1947. Thus imperialism, feudalism and big bourgeoisie became impediments to the progress of Indian society.

In the course of time, especially after the imperialist globalisation, changes in the agrarian sector were further speeded up to serve the needs of imperialist capital and its market system. In the present world situation, the neo-colonial form of exploitation is intensifying with every passing year and various imperialist powers are contending for a dominant position in India.

So we could come to a clear understanding.

Stage of Revolution,

1. "In the present world situation, the neo-colonial form of exploitation is intensifying with every passing year and various imperialist powers are contending for a dominant position in India".
2. We also defined that, "the big bourgeoisie is making hidden and open compromises with imperialism since 1947. Thus imperialism, big bourgeoisie and feudalism became impediments to the progress of Indian society".
3. We also defined that: "In the present stage, the contradiction between imperialism and Indian people, and the contradiction between feudalism and broad masses of people are two basic contradictions. These contradictions are interpenetrating and interacting".

With these definitions, we recognized the main enemies. The Outline of the Programme gave scope to wage struggles against the main enemies. Similarly the basic documents gave a clear understanding on enemies, friends, motive forces, stage of revolution, united front and its leadership.

4. It also gave understanding that the path would be formulated based on the concrete conditions in our country and taking the experiences of all hitherto revolutions in the world and peoples' revolutionary movement in our country.
5. "Rejecting the parliamentary cretinism and the line of individual terrorism, and upholding the revolutionary mass line, we resolve to utilise all forms of struggles and organizations to seize the political power through armed means. Strategic united front of all revolutionary classes and forces with the working class as the leading force and the peasantry as the main force based on worker-peasant alliance as well as necessary tactical united fronts should be developed for furthering the people's revolutionary movement".

Though it is a repetition, it must be said the understanding contained in the Outline of the Programme gave ample scope for us to conduct the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks, to build agrarian revolutionary movement and to build revolutionary party. It gave ample scope to build mass organizations and joint action forums, to conduct the revolutionary activities in a concerted manner and to build militant struggles. It held high the revolutionary mass line while rejecting the parliamentary cretinism and individual terrorist line.

There is no need to harp on the inadequacies in the Programme. We acted with the confidence that the differences on the nature of the society, principal contradiction and path could be discussed after deeper study and could be resolved basing on the practical experiences. The basic documents of CPI (ML) that were formulated under the leadership of Comrade Kanu Sanyal on the basis of the Note of 17th January 2003 through three years long efforts of co-ordination committee, were kept aside for onerous the purpose of unity efforts and only with this understanding and confidence and the Outline of the Programme was adopted. It is not a small matter. Here we were guided by the overall interests of the unification of CRs and the revolutionary movement.

[From the POR of CPI(ML) Central Conference held in 2016]