

ON THE PROBLEMS OF UNIFICATION

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We, the organising comrades of two different CPI(ML) factions working in different districts of West Bengal, held a meeting on 17.6.74, and discussed the problems of unification of the Party and of other revolutionary forces in the present situation. We have come to this unanimous decision:

I. Just after the Party Congress in 1970 the struggle between the two lines gradually gained momentum and by 1972-73 took a wide shape. But now at all levels of the party, i.e., within the total leadership and within the broadest majority of the cadres, a unity of thinking has been achieved.

(a) That just as the CPI(ML) has made positive contributions in the context of the Indian revolution, it is also responsible for the nationwide setback, mainly because of its left-sectarian deviations. (We are not repeating the discussions going on as to the causes of these deviations. What we need to say is that, in our opinion, no particular leader or individual is solely responsible for these deviations. On the contrary, the total leadership is more or less responsible, and the cadres also cannot deny their responsibility).

(b) Almost all of us are convinced that the CPI(ML) must take the responsibility to lead the Indian revolution by correcting its deviations. It must be made the unity centre of all revolutionary forces.

(c) There is no basic difference of opinion on the question of what were the errors and what should be the right programme after correcting the errors. That is, on this question unity has been achieved in the main in regard to the future programme and line of action.

(d) A thorough probe into the different documents of different groups of the CPI(ML) reveals that the leaders and cadres are not yet united in a single organisation. Different elected Central Committee members of the CPI(ML) – 1970 Congress – established different centres, each declaring that it is the sole successor and tried in vain to lead the organisation and unify the Party. The demand for 'Party reorganisation' by Comrade S.N.S. and others in 1971, and by Comrade Soumya and others in 1973, could not solve this problem.

(2) The tendency to present hundreds of documents separately and the mentality to keep each of their own 'secret mountain strongholds' should come to an end. (From some quarters an apparently logical argument is heard that the political differences should be clinched and then and then only will there be unity! So far so good. But after having discussions and criticism during the last 4/5 years, where have we reached? Is there any political difference on account of which unity cannot be achieved? Is there any difference which cannot be kept within the level of inner-party struggle?) Every one of us believes that without a revolutionary centre – without a unity centre for all the cadres, the revolution cannot be led forward.

Naturally the question comes – what is to be done? What is the step that can make the CPI(ML) again a united centre? (Like the elected committee in the 1970 Congress).

'ONLY ONES'

We put forward very clearly a request and a demand to our leaders – give up your claim of 'We are the only ones'. Because this claim divides the Party, and reveals lack of correct self-criticism and repentance for previous serious mistakes. Thirdly, no matter how emphatically you say that you are the only ones, the majority of the cadres, supporters and revolutionary masses do not believe your claim. If you give up this claim, you will be able to unify the party and set an example for unity. At the same time it will be a concrete step to rectify your own mistakes. If on the basis of political unity at the organisational level the CPI(ML) is unified, we believe that it will greatly enthuse and encourage the ranks, workers, supporters and revolutionary people. Incidentally, it is necessary to mention the recent statement published in 'Frontier' by Comrade Ashim Chatterjee, a Party leader in detention. We agree to accept that part of his statement which deals with tile evaluation of Comrade Charu Mazumdar. We also appreciate his call for keeping the Party united. But he appears rather hazy about uniting "all former and present Central Committee members" of the Party. If different leaders of different centres whimsically co-opt comrades and announce themselves as the 'present' Central Committee members, it will lead to unnecessary confusion in the way to unity, it is only the Central Committee which holds the power to co-opt, and not isolated group. But since there has been no Central Committee meeting after the Party Congress, only those members elected in the Party Congress of 1970 are Central Committee members. Hence the words 'former' and 'present' create confusion. We accept the Congress of 1970 as the only one, because the split that came later goes on.

The Central Committee members who are still working and want to lead forward the CPI(ML) should, as a united body, reorganise and consolidate the Central Committee. This united Central Committee should (a) publish a clear, self-critical document and report the evaluation of the past activities; (b) publish a draft programme and constitution for the preparation of the 9th Congress. In the meantime in order to carry forward the work towards the 9th Congress, amend the documents of the 8th Congress and place a minimum programme of work; (c) establish a party committee system and democratic centralism within the Central Committee and at all levels and obey it; (d) recognise the Party committees in the province and at other levels at par with the Central Committee reorganisation; (e) take theoretical work with seriousness and start ideological struggle methodically; (f) initiate the work of unifying and mobilising the Party forces for starting important strategic zones, with a view to building base areas and an army; (g) initiate the process of unification with groups outside the Party.

We believe that this will be the best process to unite the party and destroy anarchic trends, systems and processes. Discussions with comrades of various organisations of West Bengal and some other States have convinced us that the broad majority of

comrades support this process and only this process. The CPI(ML) leaders must bear in mind the teachings of Comrade Mao: "Since our decisions incorporate the correct views of the cadres at the lower levels, the latter will naturally support them". The CPI(ML) leaders must understand that as they cannot end splitism, which is part of left-sectarian politics within them, they are trying to pass off a group as the Party.

How Long?

At the same time it should be clearly stated that if the CPI(ML) leaders do not do anything about this, the cadres are not bound to wait any longer. They cannot leave their future and the future of revolution in the hands of a few leaders for an indefinite period. But if the situation so forces, the CPI(ML) cadres will have to take the entire responsibility of revising the Party. So we request all our comrades to pay close attention to this side and to make preparations, because at this moment, it is the foremost task of the revolutionaries to unite the party.

(3) We hope the leaders elected in the 1970 Congress will come forward to unite the Party. Otherwise an alternative measure will have to be taken. No matter how unity is achieved, the CPI(ML) should not forget that from the very beginning one of its defects was that it could not unite the different revolutionary groups, although this could have been done after the formation of the Party. The CPI(ML) leaders themselves sealed all the ways for unification when they, from a very sectarian standpoint, labelled all these groups as "revisionists" at the Party Congress. This error must be corrected. On the basis of a draft programme, constitution and tactical line put forward for the 9th Congress, we shall have to patiently continue discussions with these groups and must make an all-out attempt to clinch the differences. If there is no difference on basic questions, we shall request them to join the 9th Congress. This attempt on our part is our duty and at the same time a practical step to rectify a past mistake. Even after this, all those who refuse to unite and maintain groups existence giving useless arguments or showing smaller differences, will have to accept the responsibility of disunity. What we want to say is that we should make all efforts to establish the 9th Congress of the CPI(ML) as the 'unity Congress' in its true sense. We even invite those comrades who think that the line of Comrade Charu Mazumdar was fully correct. Revolutionary forces cannot be strengthened if everyone forms separate groups according to one's own whims.

We notice a certain trend among some people. There are those who exaggerate the errors and divisions of the CPI(ML) and pretend to have been correct all along. On this matter, our opinion is that, evaluation of the CPI(ML) is going on and we are doing it ourselves. But that doesn't mean that others were correct and need no reevaluation. Is there any group in which there has not been a split? Above all, is it not necessary to evaluate what they themselves had done and why they had failed?

With regard to the article 'More about Naxalbari' by the leader in detention, Comrade Kanu Sanyal, published in 'Purbataranga', with due respect to him, we are not at one with many of his opinions. We mention here only one point. It seems

that he thinks that the formation of the Party in 1969 was wrong. He opposes the question of consolidating and re-unifying the party today, and proposes building up co-ordination afresh. We notice that some comrades who were once members of the CPI(ML) are also making similar statements. Some of them are of the opinion that there is the necessity of a 'Unity Congress' at present, but whether it will be the Congress of the CPI(ML) will be decided by "history".

While evaluating the negative side of the CPI(ML), to deny its positive side is incorrect, and we are against it. We want to say firmly that the formation of the CPI(ML) in 1969 meant the reorganisation of the Communist Party of India; and its first Congress in 1970 which is the 8th Congress of the Communist Party of India, as the most important, glorious and revolutionary incident in the communist movement in India since 1921. In spite of many defects the formation of the CPI(ML) has meant a qualitative leap in the Indian Revolution. It has firmly held high with boldness the flag of revolution and the irresistible hunger for revolution of the Indian people. And also for the first time the revolutionaries captured the Party centre, ousting the revisionists. To deny this is to deny all revolutionary heritage. 'The CPI(ML) has been divided into some parts; so divide it more and then start co-ordination from zero and, passing through protracted ideological struggle, form a correct party'. This idea leads to liquidation. Our efforts should be to quickly heal the split and ideological struggle can be handled maintaining the united framework. "There are divisions, so make these permanent – is the tendency to float with the tide. We shall have to resist splitism, make unity, but not give up the ideological struggle. In our opinion, we shall have to move towards the 9th Congress admitting our revolutionary heritage. When we admit it, the next Congress must be the 9th Congress and the Congress of the CPI(ML). We cannot leave the future in the hands of spontaneity in the name of 'history'.

(5) Lastly, we appeal to and request the CPI(ML) leaders: take correct, positive steps to unify the Party soon. We request all cadres and sympathisers and comrades to start discussion in this regard within their organisation and convince the leaders. They should be ready to shoulder all responsibility to unite the Party. Reorganise the Party forces and strengthen practice within the masses with a correct programme, and with an aim to build base areas and an army.