

The Unity of Communist Forces on What Grounds?

Written by Comrade Poulad, February 1995

The reality of diversity and dispersion in the Iranian communist movement and the negative effects of the communist forces' disunity in the fight against the oppressive system of capitalism have, for years, put forth this problem and the ways of overcoming it as one of the crucial issues of the communist movement.

Based on such a reality, we have occasionally witnessed some political forces which have suggested drafts and projects to overcome this dispersion and unite the different political groups in the communist movement by accepting a common platform, thus ending the dispersion in the movement. Such attempts are, in fact, doomed to fail primarily because they are not realistic, not to mention the fact that often perjured motives behind these calls and meetings for unity reveals the falsity of such plans and attempts. It must be added that since these meetings and attempts at unity have never resolved any of the movement's problems, and therefore, even in the best light, they should not have been taken seriously. (1).

Lately, the question of "unity of the Left" has, once again, been considered among some ex-patriot groups. They have held seminars, published bulletins and, while putting emphasis on "the necessity for the unity of the Iranian Worker Left", have claimed by issuing a statement to "...Finding a way to overcome the dispersion and sectarianism among the forces of the workers' left" (2), "...Despite all the disagreements and based on minimal common grounds, unity is both possible and necessary." (3) Within "The League of Appeal For Unity of the Forces of the Worker Left" (4), there are some who even go beyond the claim of a simple unity and, in the land of imagination, consider the purpose of these meetings as "building the revolutionary unitary party of the working class". (5) But, generally speaking, "The League of Appeal..." while emphasising the necessity for building the working class party, at present sees "the Initiation of a unification at a level lower than party unity and higher than unity of action as a possibility".

The statement of this League makes it clear that the developing forces of the League have, as of yet, no joint platform and that the platform of unity will seemingly be provided only later "through discussions and the specification of real common grounds." (6). Furthermore, the what & wherefores of co-operation among the forces and the form of their unity will also be defined "in accordance with the contents of the resultant platform and in the course of the discussions among the participating forces."(7).

At the present, therefore, the materials available for us to comprehend "The League of Appeal for the Unity of the Forces of the Worker Left" are but the bulletins of discussion among the constituent members of this League and their joint statement. A statement which although by no means mentions the objective of the unity, necessary conditions for its providing and ways of reaching it, already announces decisively, as of now, the title of the unity which will take shape in the future: The Unity of The Forces of The Workers' Left! This name has not been chosen by mistake and brings to a focus the reason for selecting such a name. This gives a clue to better understand the aim of the constituent members of the League for Unity.

Certainly, when speaking of overcoming the dispersion of the communist movement, the term "Unity of the Left" is understood, for communists, as the unity of Marxist forces. But some of the constituent forces of the aforementioned League, while considering themselves Marxists (8), declare the said unity as the unity of at least some of the Iranian Marxists, if not all. Yet, in fact, even though using the term Left by them seems to give such an impression, by no means is it the unification of Marxist forces to which they refer. For the majority of them, the term Left is by no means a synonym for a Marxist force. Studying the views they have put forth in discussion bulletins illustrates that some views, under the mask of Marxism and the title of "the return to Marxism", have further expanded the opportunist concessions and sell out of principles. That is, although the question here is the unification of Marxist forces, after using the word Left and manoeuvring around its different meanings, while putting non-Marxist forces on the same front as Marxists, they consider the former a part of the forces of such a unity. For the members of the League of Appeal, therefore, the Left does not necessarily mean a Marxist force but rather, as easily, mean a non-Marxist one. Of course, the fact to as how the Marxist "Left" and non-Marxist "Left" of the League will, hand in hand, bring an end to the disunity and dispersion of the communist movement is a riddle, which we could resolve through assessing the views presented by the elements within this League and thus, by doing so, come to an understanding of their real goal of The Appeal for Unity of the Left.

When dealing with the term "socialism" too, the League... has demonstrated its opportunism. Unlike communists who use the term socialism referring to the first phase of communist society, "socialism" has no solid and defined meaning for the so-called Marxist forces within the League. Thus, with no hesitation, they also apply the term in dealing with different political forces that do not belong to the working class. Thus, the socialism of the working class, as they promote it, has lost its real meaning and become such a banal manifestation within which any class and stratum can fold and decorate itself.

Despite being aware of all the differences and disagreements in their own viewpoints and positions on various issues, the League emphasise that "unification should not be postponed until the resolution of the existing disagreements." (9) Apart from the fact that without resolving fundamental disagreements (10), unity cannot be accomplished and, that primarily "the harmony in main viewpoints and the oneness of practical tasks" (11) is for this matter necessary, the League, however, know full well that the presence of the very same "existing disagreements" has indeed caused the current demarcations and separations. This has also been used in the past as the cloakage for various splits and segmentations. Therefore, the lack of attention to past experiences and the failure to learn from past mistakes and losses turns any new attempt for unity into another negative factor preventing the true unification of communist forces.

In dealing with the unification of the leftist forces in the present situation, another issue to which we must pay attention, is that the known organisations of the Iranian communist movement, at present, exist out of the country, with no connections to the conditions of struggle in Iran. This reality has brought about, for these organisations, different entities without the understanding which, and also in the absence of a real comprehension of their situation, one cannot speak of their unification. Of course, it must be noted that these issues could be propounded, indeed, only for those who have seriously put forth the question of overcoming the communist movement's division, rather than those who speak of unity of the Left and the fight for socialism while presenting no clear understanding of either "the Left or of "socialism".

It will be attempted, in this article, to illustrate the real aim and motive of the designers of the "League" and, the true purpose of their appeal for the unity of worker left forces. It must already be mentioned that these appeals and the nature of the meetings they have held have never resulted in the unification of Marxists, nor can they be considered a step towards overcoming the existing dispersion within the ranks of communists. To prove this, the viewpoints and perspectives of the League in regards to the definition of the Left, the current status of Marxists and, the question of the working class party, will be investigated.

1) Definition of the Left:

Prior to anything else, when studying the existing documents on the above proposal, what attracts the eye is the name that the League has chosen to define themselves as well as defining the forces of their unity.

In spite of considering themselves as Marxists and communists and claiming to try to overcome the existing dispersion in the communist movement and to even move on in the direction of building the working class party, the above groups call their unity "the unity of the Iranian worker Left" and insist on introducing themselves as the Left or, at most, the worker Left rather than Marxists or communists. This insistence, in itself, could not be subject to any criticism if these forces had presented a unified and specific understanding of "the Left" or that of "the worker Left" as another term for referring to Marxist and communist forces. But a look at the documents of discussions of these organisations and groups clearly shows that not only is there no unified understanding in this regard among them, but rather each has presented a different meaning to the definition of the Left and, among them, diverse class forces are referred to by the unified name "the Left". To understand the usage of the word "Left" among these groups it is necessary to refer to their own writings on the subject.

In the article "the unity of which Left and in what way", published in the bulletin of the unity of the forces of worker left # 1, Sept. 1994, the author who is from the organisation "Rahe Kargar" recognises "three major groupings of the left in the political spectrum of Iran consisting of Liberal Democrats, Radical Left and, Radical-Democrat Left. While putting emphasis on the unity of "Radical Democrat Left", the author writes: "the element of ideology must be eliminated from this unity. In this case, being religious or secular, being Marxist, Leninist or Kautskist should then make no difference for such a unity." Or in another writing named "The report of the meeting of the forces of Worker Radical Left, a summary of the conclusion of the viewpoints presented at the meeting", while having stressed upon the activities of various social trends in the political spectrum of Iran, and that each fights against the Islamic Republic regime based on their own positions and interests, the author reveals his or her understanding of a "Leftist force" which is not necessarily Communist or Socialist yet seemingly an adherent of Socialism and of the working class. This is revealed by the expression: "here particularly the leftist force adherent of Socialism and the working class- and not necessarily Communist and Socialist- is in complete dispersion." (The author's stress)

The opposite side of these viewpoints seems to appear in the phrase, "revolutionary left or better yet, worker and communist movement", stated in another writing named as "the conclusion of discussions at the meeting". Or in the article "the question of unification of the left and proposal of pragmaticality", where the group "Minority's Cell" writes: "there is still a vast line of the radical left that, whether as political organisations or as socialist activists separated from these organisations, consider themselves a part of worker-communist movement, fight in this direction and, are engaged with the path-finding of a

communist critique on the existing situation. The question, however, is the what & wherefore of organising this left suitably according to the existing situation."(12)

The above excerpts clearly show that the League has divergent conceptions on the meaning of Left, and that based upon their definitions, a force could be considered as part of the Left by one while the very same force is recognised as a part of the Right by another. Among them, some equate Left as Socialism, some others as radical forces, and even sometimes, as religious factions.

As we see, the variety of views and the diversity of conceptions of the forces of the League on the meaning of Left is to such a degree that while one refers to religious factions in society as Left, the other speaks of revolutionary Left and calls it an analogue for the worker and communist movement. In spite of all these differences and disagreements on the principles and essential issues, all the constituents of "the League of Appeal..." are unanimous in regards to a single important and basic matter (!!) And that is, that all are in agreement not to use the title Marxism and Communism when introducing themselves and that all have reached unity in declaring themselves under the heading of "Worker Left"!! Presenting different understandings of the "Leftist" or "Worker Leftist" forces and at the same time issuing a statement titled as "meeting for the unification of Iranian worker left", in a situation where every organisation, group and sect, has its own particular understanding of the term Left. As a matter of fact, in order to clarify their understandings, each trend is forced to use expressions such as "Revolutionary Left", "Radical Left", "Worker Left" etc. to elucidate the difference between its own Left and those of others__ and also in a situation when the aforementioned forces avoid applying the titles Marxism and Communism to their league. This signifies the necessity of both a careful look at the motives behind such an approach and of understanding it, thus raising the following questions: Does "worker left" mean the same as "revolutionary left" and "worker and communist movement"? Or is it the same as "radical left" which "considers itself as a part of worker and communist movement"? Or perhaps it refers to "radical-democrat left" for which being religious or secular, Marxist, Leninist or Kautskist should makes "no difference"? Or maybe it refers to those "adherent forces of socialism and the working class" who hesitate to call themselves "socialist"?

By agreeing on the ambiguous title "The Unity of Worker Left", the issuers of the statement for the meeting have purposely left the above questions unanswered in order to make the framework of unity so wide open that they can bring into this unity any and every force merely for this; that their various positions are "Leftist" and or, in regards to so & so, they oppose the Right.

It is of no mystery to anyone that, from a theoretical point of view, the Left is a general concept that could be used in regards to any and every force with any and every class correspondence. For example; while no one has any doubt that "the Democratic Party of U.S." is certainly a right wing party, we could speak of its left faction, or speak of the left faction of the so-called "combatant clergies" within the Islamic Republic regime. We could speak just as much of the left faction in the Gaullists' Party of France as that of in the Bath parties in the Middle East, or in Social Christian Party of Germany, and finally, that of the traitorous and criminal line of Aksariat in Iran which has its own left faction after all! Thus, why is it that the issuers of the Appeal for constituting "the Unity of Worker Left" have, despite all this, attempted neither to use the title Communism as referring to themselves nor to clearly elucidate their conception of the phrase "Worker Left". If these groups had issued their appeal to form a front consisting of the progressive and radical forces within the Islamic regime's opposition then it would have been possible to set a discussion in relation to the objective and subjective conditions necessary for establishing a front, the characters of its constituent forces, and the role of communists in such a front. But the constituent forces of "the Iranian Worker Left's Unity" have entered the battlefield here, under

the label of exertion in fighting the existing separation and dispersion within the communist movement and under that of an appeal for unification. It must be brought to their attention; therefore, that any group which wants, through a rendition and an elucidation such as the one given by the issuers of the aforementioned pronouncement as to the meaning of Left, to reduce the unity of the communist movement to the level of a front unity. This League that intends to disguise the compromise and deviation from Marxist principles behind the excuse of overcoming the diversity and dispersion within the communists' lines.

What is clear here, is that the constituent forces of the "League of Appeal..." have no desire to clarify the actual motives, as a result of which they all agreed upon the usage of the title the Unity of Worker Left. And furthermore, that they are not willing to put it clearly as to why, instead of calling upon Marxist forces to unite in order to overcome the communist movement's disunity and, hence, to effect the unity of Marxists, they rather speak of the unity of Worker Left. However, despite the dubious phraseology of these groups, we can discern their real reasons from within their presented views on this matter, and number them as such:

1) The purpose is to widen, as much as possible, the framework of such a unity by applying the titles "Left" or "Worker Left" in referring to the forces of the said unity, so that different forces with different platforms and class backgrounds would find rooms in this unity. Therefore in this case, "Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran" and "radical religious forces" could too, as "leftist" forces, have a place in "the Unity of Worker Left". (13)

2) There is no agreement in accepting one another as Marxist and Communist forces among those forces, which are supposed to unite. The purpose here then, is to disguise this unprincipled compromise. And this being so, it must then be emphasised how these forces who do not consider each other as Marxists, will bring about, by working together, grounds for the unity of Marxists. (14)

3) As we know, the communist movement has faced, hitherto the collapse of the Soviets and the recent international events in this regard, great problems on a worldwide scale. This has especially become possible due to the fact that the vast ideological attack of imperialist bourgeoisie against the working class and communists has been waged through reference to the discredit and defeat of what used to be acknowledged as "the existing socialism". In such a situation, those forces accustomed to laying down their arms before the bourgeoisie, have indeed found their way out by as much as possible, the avoidance of the usage of Marxist dialectics and terms so that they may be able to penetrate into the hearts of those with no tolerance for such terms.

It is, therefore, clear that although within the ranks of communists the usage of the term "Left" is normal and natural for addressing the forces of the communist movement, but where the aim is to knowingly not use the terms "Marxism" and "Communism" to refer to the forces of this movement. The terms "Left" or "worker left" are not being used with an accurate and clear definition as another phrase to address the communist forces, then the motives behind such a ploy must be comprehended and the deep ignorance thus prevailing must be unmasked. (15)

It may be argued that the meaning of "unity of the worker left", as well as the aim of such a unity is the unification of those forces that "strive for socialism" and have "worker tendencies". But, even in this case, it is again necessary that the forces of the League... clearly declare their actual understanding of "socialism" and of "worker tendencies" beforehand. Only a look at the history of political parties in Europe illustrates that merely calling oneself a socialist is not enough to show one's adherence to the

working class. The history of Europe is full of bourgeois parties that have striven under the mask of socialism towards the maintenance and development of the bourgeoisie; parties that had "leftist" approaches in regards to some social issues and that sometimes even had considerable influence among the workers; parties that basically have considered or are considering activity within the lines of the working class as a part of their role in order to take advantage of the power of this class in the course of ongoing political struggle within society. Is it possible to deny the influence and penetration of socialist and social democratic parties in labour unions?

The fact is, that there have been parties in the history of the working-class movement which have, in different degrees, participated amongst the working class under the banner of socialism and utilized the power of this class in the direction of their own interest. Those parties have, by no means, had any affinity with those lines that indeed supported the immediate and long term interests of the working class. Throughout the history of the worker's movement from Marx's time up until this day, Communism has always been viewed as the ultimate goal of communists i.e., the most vanguard part of the working class, who have, for this reason, been the organizers of the most vibrant class struggles towards the fulfilment of this very goal. Of course, in their political-dialectical system, the communists, too, use the word socialism. Yet, since they recognize and introduce socialism as the first phase of communist society, then a clear line of distinction between their socialism and variously-coloured socialism of all kinds, is subsequently being drawn. Basically, by socialism, communists refer to a society within which, upon the overthrow of the capitalist system, political power has been seized by the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e. the most vanguard class in bourgeois society. At which point, this class begins waging its fight forward towards reaching communism i.e., classless society, through the implementation of social ownership over the means of production. Under socialism, the implementation of the dictatorship of the proletariat provides the means to eradicate any sort of exploitation of one by another and directs society to a stage where it has been stamped upon its banner: from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs.

Now, let us look at this issue from another angle. The League of appealers is well aware that we live in a situation where every day a new definition of the working class is being invented. Thus, while having all sorts of definitions of the working class, merely announcing the "worker tendency" of a current, does not solve any problems in this discussion. For instance, by relying upon this definition that "all those who receive wages and salaries" (16) are workers, "Rahe Kargar" recognizes anyone who receives a salary as part of the working class. On the basis of this definition then, aside from the bourgeois salary earners, at the lowest level, any teacher could be considered a worker. Thus, in this way, Rahe Kargar could reflect on the activity of a given petit-bourgeois current, of course with some "leftist" stance among the teachers of a given region as the "worker tendency" of that current and ask for their participation in "the worker left's unity". In fact, in such a condition what objection could other forces of the worker left's unity address to Rahe Kargar?

Therefore, it has to be stressed that although the expression "the Left" is a common form for defining communists, since any and everyone can, in a way, comment on and interpret it according to their interests and considerations, then in order to avoid any confusion one should refer to all phenomena by their own, real names. It is for this reason that when discussing the unity of the forces of the communist movement, such forces must be identified by known terms such as Communism and Marxists. And if the expressions "left" or "worker left" are being used, one must then clarify that the aim is to refer to communist forces, in order to prevent bourgeois and petit bourgeois "polity". Furthermore, by clarifying what the question is about, one should, hence, proceed by laying the problem out correctly and then

presenting the methods for carrying out such a task, if the objective here is in fact to overcome the disunity and dispersion of the communist movement.

2) In what conditions are the communist forces?

We have, so far, illustrated why the constituent forces of "the League" use the term (Second "worker left" when referring to themselves, and why they are hesitant to mention Marxism and Communism as well as applying the term socialism rather than communism when speaking of their struggle's goal. Now, it is necessary to deal with the conditions in which the communist movement finds itself:

One of the significant issues in the study of the documents of discussions of "the Iranian Worker Left Unity" is the lack of attention of the majority of the forces of this unity to the conditions within which this "Left" i.e., the forces that are supposed to unite, are situated. It is obvious that when the issue is to overcome the dispersion and separation within the communist movement of Iran, both the conditions of activity and struggle of the communist forces within the country and that of those abroad, must be taken into consideration. The fact is that those communists, who are inside the country and present at the primordial battlefield against the class enemy, have totally different conditions than those who are out of Iran with no decisive and effective connections to the revolutionary movement inside.

The difference between the conditions of work and struggle of these two parts of the communist movement naturally determines their different tasks. And, if one ignores these essential and significant differences, they undoubtedly won't even be able to lay out the actual problem correctly, not to mention taking a practical step towards resolving the dispersion within the communist movement.

In relation to the conditions of work and struggle of the communists in Iran, there is, of course, no need for further emphasis that due to the domination of dictatorship, not only is there no possibility of free and overt activity for communists but, even worse, they are under the most intense attacks of the enemy. Thus, it is for this reason that communist activity is carried out through complete underground conditions. The pressure and suppression ruling upon Iran has resulted in communists not yet being able to organise themselves as relatively massive and recognised groups and to guarantee the continuity of their activities, despite all their activities and devotion (their courageous resistance under the barbaric torture of the Islamic regime's executioners, and their constancy in defending the proletariat's goals when facing death squads are but manifestations of such devotion). The ruling vicious suppression and the domination of opportunism has ensued in the fact that the tremendous steps that the communist movement had taken forward towards building connections with the working class by the establishment and growth of the Organisation of Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrillas in the late 60s, and the grounds that had, thenceforth, been brought about for the union of communists with the masses as an important condition for unity among communist forces, were consequently lost. Having still no connections with the working class -which itself is unorganised and lacks professional and union organisations - nevertheless, communists continue their struggle as small groups and segmented elements, or as comrade Pouyaan put it, "not like fish in the sea of the people's support, but as dispersed and tiny fish under the siege of crocodiles and pelicans". Therefore, under military repression, the proletarian intellectuals carry out their activities as small groups, segmented elements and with no serious relations with one another and are exposed, at any time, to the deadly attacks of the enemy who, by immeasurable malevolence, prevents the formation of any revolutionary organization and is determined to destroy any organised action.

We know, on the other hand, that as a result of the systematic attacks of the ruling counter-revolution against the revolutionary movement of the Iranian people, and the barbaric suppression of the struggles of both the masses and political forces in this country, the political organisations have suffered great blows as result of which, some have been scattered and some others have gradually centred abroad. Upon such a reality, we are now witnessing abroad the presence and activities of a number of known "communist" organisations that lack any and every real and effective connection with the revolutionary movement within Iran. At the same time, we are faced with a broad spectrum of ex-activists (17) of political organisations, who, for different reasons and at different points of struggle, have left their organisations and now participate in struggles abroad either individually or by forming small groups.

The communists situated abroad, therefore, have not only suffered from the lack of connection with the working class, but to this, what also has been added is the dilemma of their distance from Iran's society and the absence of a dynamic relationship to the struggles and existing issues within this society.

These are the realities to which any communist force that lays out the question of unity among the Iranian communists must pay attention. According to the above reality, it is clear that one cannot consider the round-table talks held amongst a few organisations and groups abroad, and/or their presumptive cooperation and unity of action, either as the unity of the Iranian communists or as an ending point to the existing dispersion within the lines of the communist movement, even if these unifications are seen "at a level lower than party unity yet higher than occasional unity of action"(18). Furthermore, contrary to their claims, such attempts cannot be counted as an "all-embracing umbrella" that will "gather all leftist social forces under its banner" (19), or that it will probably turn the movement into a "muscled political force" (20). Certainly, co-operation and unity of action of the existing forces abroad is, in itself, a positive and correct attitude which must be organised even to a greater extent in fighting against the Islamic regime. But, these attempts could never mean either the unification or the unifying of the Iranian communists. Neither could they mean the amassment of the "leftist" "social forces", especially when, by making such claims, the line between the two parts of the communist movement i. e., those within the country and those others without, is intermixed. Basically, due to the lack of a decisive and competent connection between these two parts, and the difference of conditions within which these parts are situated, one cannot prescribe a similar remedy for their dissimilar predicaments. The path to the unity of the communists inside the country is determined fundamentally by those communists present at the core of the conditions of struggle and their pathbreaking in Iran. At the same time, it has to be emphatically pointed out that the fact that the existing forces abroad neither can nor have the right to decide the organisational forms of cooperation amongst the active communist elements and groups inside the country, since they don't have any serious and organisational relationships with such forces, does not mean that the forces abroad have no duty towards the communist elements and groups inside the country. On the contrary, the existing conditions leave great tasks in this regard to the communists abroad, with which we will deal later on. In conclusion of this discussion here, we have to emphasise, once again, that speaking generally of the unity of "left", and the lack of attention to the conditions of the activity and struggle of this "left" in Iran as well as abroad, mean but intermixing the dialectical relationship between the communist activity within and without the country. Such a view turns the determining role of the struggle inside the country and its effect on developing and advancing the struggle abroad upside down, and it, thus, deviates from the principals of Marxism.

3) The working-class Party

A look at the discussions organised on the question of "unity of the Iranian worker left", reveals that some of the participants in these discussions consider the aim of such a unity as building a unitary party of the working class.

Since the discussion on the working-class party and the requirements for building such a party has been one of the primordial and, at the same time, prominent polemics within the lines of the Iranian communist movement, it would perhaps be much more appropriate to deal with it separately. It is only necessary to point out here that although the undertaking to form the working-class party is an inseparable part of the tireless struggle of communists in the emancipation of the working class from the yoke of capital; and that even though without its combatant organisation, the working class would not be able to implement its hegemony through the course of revolution; nevertheless, it must be understood that the working-class party has (and is) built neither spontaneously nor by the command of volition of some groups or circles that have no connection with the working class. But rather, it is through the advancement of the worker movement and the association of communist groups and forces with the struggles of the working class that this party has (and is) formed. Therefore, one cannot regard the closeness and unification amongst the existing organisations, groups and circles abroad as the formation of the working-class party. Thus, placing the establishment of the working-class party as the aim of the unification of such forces only explains the improvidence and frivolousness of such moves. If one is supposed to learn from the past, then we have to draw the attention of these forces to the fate of those parties that have so far been formed under such a title, so that they realise the end result of such parties has clearly shown that without any connection to the working class, one cannot talk about building the working class party. The valuable experiences of the communist movement in this relation have revealed that any of the forces which has, up until now, tried to present itself or its unification with another group as the working-class party with no consideration to these existing realities, soon has made a mockery of itself within the movement, and the course of life has but explicitly unmasked the opportunistic methods of such forces. The ignominy and travesty has now reached the point where a political current that, in fact, already carries the title of the working-class party, is once again promoting the slogan of building the party, and is participating in the process of forming another one! (21)

There are those currents within our movement that on paper and by issuing variously-coloured statements have established the working-class party, and by the will of their so-called " theoreticians " pen -for which apparently there is no scarcity in our movement- make the entire working class into members of such a party! But, it must be realised that despite all of these magic tricks, none of these parties have been present in any of the hundreds of strikes organised by the working class itself, nor have they even been aware of the occurrence of such strikes. Yes indeed, our working class is still unorganised, it still lacks its own organisation and, the question of building the party is still facing the true communists as one of the questions of the communist movement. Therefore, by simply making this party - and, of course, on paper - one cannot disguise the inability in carrying out the excruciating and complex process of building the communist party under the dictatorship ruling Iran.

Undoubtedly, the problem of disunity and dispersion within the communist movement, is a serious and crucial issue to which no communist individual or force can be indifferent. It is for this, indeed, that any communist individual or force would aspire to an end of disunity and division, and fight for unity of all communist lines. Thus, in generally posing the question, any attempt towards unity, and any step in this direction - no matter how small the step - would be valuable and revolutionary. But, as far as the initiators of "the League of Appeal for Unity of Worker Left" are concerned, not only have these forces,

even generally speaking, not posed the question properly so that they could organise an action in this regard, but by deviating from the principles of Marxism, they are also adding more weight to the burden.

Communist approach in relation to the question of unity, is tied with a concrete analysis of a concrete situation. Only in this way can there be a possibility to pose the problem correctly and get close to its solution. Instead, what analysis does "the League" offer in relation to the overall present situation? This league does not even engage in posing the questions, which are but fundamental to answer when striving for unity. For instance, it is not clear to this league that, once accomplished, what this unity and unification of political forces must lead to. In other words, we unite to do what? In fact, the essential question is: a) what is that concrete problem of the movement for which the unity of forces is both necessary and required, and b) what are the combatant forms and paths in this respect?

Certainly, sharing a common goal, and having agreements on methods of struggle in order to accomplish this goal, is a necessity for unity. However, as it was previously pointed out, in the discussions for unity of these groups, on the one hand, the aim is distorted, and on the other, there is no discussion as to the methods of struggle by which such a distorted goal is to be accomplished. Consequently, the unity discussions are centred around broad issues that practically provide no solutions for real problems. Whereas, if we ascertain the goal of struggle and the ways of its achievement, then to whatever degree we step forward in this path, we will have, in as much, highlighted the necessity of closeness and unification, and will have, in as much, paved the road to unity.

If we accept that the communist movement is in crisis, then we must accept, as well, that without analysing this crisis, understanding its existential reasons, and subsequently finding resolutions to overcome this crisis, we cannot take any step toward the unity of communist movement. In fact, having not yet clarified as to why we have been facing such a crisis, what dimensions and outcomes this crisis has had, and what is the way out, how can one speak of overcoming dispersion amongst the communist lines!

Perhaps, those who simply portray the gathering of a few political forces and their joint statement of unification, as the way to overcome the existing dispersion within the ranks of communist movement, have mistaken the effect with the cause, and think that it is from the dispersion of forces that the movement is in crisis. Whereas, we know that, in reality, dispersion and disunity in themselves are the products and outcomes of crisis and not vice versa.

If the intention were real unity, rather than batching some groups together; if the purpose of unification were to struggle rather than to create entertainment and artificial amusement under the name of political-organisational work and activity, then it would be easily possible to see that considering the existence of crucial subjective differences, and the lack "equilibrium" on the essential viewpoints, one cannot speak of organisational unity, and even if such a unity takes place, this would mean nothing other than a preparation for the next separation and split.

The Iranian communist movement is a part of the world communist movement. Therefore, this movement, in the overall picture, is faced with unresolved issues that challenge all communists throughout the world today. Without comprehending this reality, and thus undertaking to understand the existing real problems, any debate on unity would be meaningless, superfluous and have no impact other than misleading the forces and diverting their views from the real issues - which only by resolving, could one take a step toward paving the road to a principled unity of communist forces. (22) This reality

itself, at the same time, proves that unfortunately, in the present situation, there is no ground for the unity of the existing forces abroad. Therefore, with a belief in making efforts to overcome the dispersion and disunity within the movement, we must employ our deeds to create the necessary grounds for unity. In our opinion, to take steps toward preparing the conditions for unity, as far as the circumstances abroad are concerned, we must, on the one hand, embark on organising the cooperation and unity of action amongst communist groups in the fight against the Islamic Republic, and construct, on the other, an active ideological struggle in respect to the pressing issues (23) and real questions of the communist movement. These are also, among the activities that at the present time communist forces could implement to carry out and advance their fighting tasks, to discern the what & wherefores of overcoming the existing crisis, and to serve the fight for communism. It is clear that undertaking such practical tasks could still not be counted as direct measures toward communist unity, however, these are the truly combatant measures and attempts which, with consideration to the existing conditions abroad, could be employed in relation with the unity of communists.

In conclusion, it is necessary to emphasise that the presence of Marxist organisations and groups abroad, and the existence of Marxists elements and circles around the world, has provided for the Iranian communists potentially significant possibilities which, if treated correctly, could have positive outcomes in favour of the working class and the communist revolution. If these forces and circles in each country would collect and exchange the combatant experiences of the working class, and would try to channel the available energies into examining past mistakes and answering the unanswered questions that, following the world's current events, have occupied the minds of the proletariat intellectuals, it would be a great aid to those communists who, at the core of the battlefield in Iran, are taking steps toward the organisation of the working class and the eradication of the capitalist system.

When this article was in the process of being printed, "the League" published a new resolution dated Feb. 1995. In this resolution, the constituent forces of "Worker Left Unity" have tried to clarify the distinctive viewpoints which separate their line from the alleged socialism of other currents. Nevertheless, both the basis of the issues signified in this resolution, and that of the views governing the actions of these forces in respect with the hows & wherefores of overcoming the present dispersion within the communist lines, have centred around the organisation of the working class and the establishment of the revolutionary party, precisely in the same manner already described and criticised in this article.

FOOTNOTES:

1) For a better understanding, we can refer to the following experiences:

a) "The Unity Conference" that was held in the chaotic situation after the Feb. uprising of 1979 with the claim of unifying the dispersed lines of the current known as "The 3rd Way", and the further dispersions that followed within the lines of its supporters in spite of all the claims and viewpoints regarding their unification.

b) The defeat of the attempts made by the forces of the Minority, in the direction of reunification, which ultimately came to an end officially without having any impact.

c) The end result of the attempts of the three organisations: Rahe Kargar (so-called "The Worker's Path"), Shoraye Allee ("The High Council") and "Sazema-neh Fadaee ("Fadaee Org.") in relation to unity, was summed up with Rahe Kargar's separation from this process and the merger of the other two.

2, 3 and 5.) The excerpts within quotation marks are all from "The Statement On The Joint Meeting for Unity of The Iranian Worker Left", dated as the thirteenth of May 1994.

4) This is the name they have given themselves. The Forces of Appeal for Unity of the Worker Left consists of the following organisations and groups:

- 1) The Union of Iranian Revolutionary Workers, "Raha Kargar"
- 2) Rangbaran's Party of Iran
- 3) Worker, Socialist Notes
- 4) The Organisation of Iranian Revolutionary Workers, "Rahe Kargar"
- 5) The Preparation Committee for the Unity Conference
- 6) The Minority's Cell
- 7) Collaborators of the Project for Establishing the Revolutionary Socialists' Discussion Bulletin
- 8) Some of The Minority's cadres

6 & 7) Both are excerpts taken from "The Statement on the Joint Meeting..."

8) We find it necessary to mention that although, up until a while ago, Marxism-Leninism was the ideological banner of the absolute majority of the communist forces in Iran, we are witnessing, nowadays, its gradual elimination from the literature of some of the forces. Instead of Marxism-Leninism, they used terms such as Left, or at most, Marxism. In order to prevent any diversion in the discourse here, in dealing with "The League of Appeal..." we have intentionally used the term Marxism rather than Marxism-Leninism, however, we will confront such misuse of terms in a separate article.

9) From "The Statement on the Joint Meeting..."

10) Certainly the presence of essential disagreements between two (or amongst a few) forces prevents their unification. In order to unite, therefore, those essential disagreements must be resolved.

11) Karl Marx

12) The Bulletin of The Union of The Worker Left Forces. #1

13) In the ranks of Rahe Kargar, as one of the forces of "The League..." we can clearly come to an understanding of the real meaning behind the usage of the word Left. In the article "Some Points on The Discussions of The Word Unity" published in The Bulletin Of Joint Discussions, #3, dated June 1983, they have stated: "The united front could place in itself other forces and currents as well, and thereby unite all leftist revolutionary forces... this front has to include a vast line of the revolutionary left in order to

increase the effect of the left on class struggle as a whole and make it into a strong, democratic and socialist revolutionary alternative. The Communist Party of Iran, The Democrat Party of Kurdistan of Iran, democratic forces and radical religious ones, and the three existing currents involved in the ... discussions, have to take serious steps in this direction."

Or in the article "the unity of which left, and in what way", published in the first issue of the Unity Bulletin of the Worker Left Forces, where the author, while emphasising that "being leftist has to do with one's "practice" and standpoint in confronting the existing economic and social systems", rather than "the ideological and religious mentality of this individual or that current", concludes that "the lack of invitation to leftist religious currents such as "Ershaad" (The Guidance), "Movahedeeh Enghelubee" (The Revolutionary Monotheists), and "Armaanah Mostaz-afaan" (The Goal of the Impoverished) is "indefensible".

14) The following two examples, alone, are enough to understand these forces' assessments of one another:

a) In the statement of "Collaborators of the Project for the Establishment of the Discussion Bulletin of Revolutionary Socialists", as one of the forces of "the League..." in reply to "the unity of the Iranian radical worker left", in the first issue of The Bulletin of Unity of the Worker-Left Forces, it has been stated: "We believe that the experience of the Iranian revolution showed that not only none of the existing organisations and currents are capable of reconstructing the Iranian revolutionary left, in fact, they themselves are part of the reason of this present crisis. In order to get out of this crisis, we must separate ourselves from these traditional currents and put our efforts into building new blocks of revolutionary socialists. We are, therefore, in agreement with the first article of the resolution, which pinpoints the necessity for such a unity. This, however, does not mean that we acknowledge the signatures of all those who have signed the resolution."

b) And or, on page 13 of #25, Jan. 1995 of the publication "Worker, Socialist Notes", as one of the forces of The Worker Left's Unity, it has been stated: "In our opinion, after the collapse of the Soviets, organisations such as Rahe Kargar... have encountered a political and organisational crisis... and in order to resolve this, these organisations must liquidate and re-establish themselves anew on the basis of correct Leninist views together with worker militancy. Rahe Kargar, however, has chosen the shortest path instead, in order to keep the perversity of the past covered. Rahe Kargar's new policy is to hide itself within a "large unity", so that perhaps in this way it may continue its own existence. In terms of organisation, Rahe Kargar is like an exploding hand grenade. If this upcoming explosion is kept in a small place, it will then appear in an outstanding and palpable way, whereas in a "vast" area, it will not be as noticeable."

15) From the 1st to the 4th of Feb. 1995, "The Association of Iranian Researchers" held series of conferences under the title of "Iran on the threshold of the year 2000", in one of the universities of London, England. Regardless of the discussions and viewpoints presented in this conference which should be evaluated elsewhere, what attracts the eye is the presence of those forces that are being introduced as the Leftist forces of Iranian society and are there to speak about the future of "The Iranian Leftist movement".

The criminals of the current known as the Majority, discredited individuals such as Negahdaar and Keshtegar whose betrayals to the Iranian people are well known, and Mohammad Omidvaar from the Tudeh Party whose one real party task up until yesterday--or perhaps even now-- was servitude to the

USSR and also Babak Amir-Khosravy from the so-called liquidations of dependent forces (one always has to keep in mind the probability of the master's order for such liquidations) expressed their views on the future of the Left as the thinkers(!) of the Iranian Left movement, reveals the nature of the hosting association of such a conference. But does this fact not show that these organisations claiming themselves as communists, perhaps should not lean towards "the Right" when using the term "Left"? Or maybe some of our clever "Leftists" are aiming here to launch some fatal attacks on "the Right" by placing all these forces under the "all-embracing umbrellas" of the Left, and to thereby isolate "the Right"!

16) In the article "What is the disagreement on", published in the first issue of "The Bulletin of the Joint Discussion", in May 1993, the view of Rahe Kargar on the working-class has been defined as follows: The meaning of worker is "...all those who live solely on the sale of their labour power, regardless of whether their work is intellectual or manual, and whether it involves this or that branch of economic activity..." and then it is emphasised that: "This unifying definition of the working class which, of course, is neither our invention nor a new one, has obvious differences with the dominant definition within the Left movement, the differences which have ongoing results in respect to the question of organisation and even to that of political strategy.

17) By "a broad spectrum of ex-activists of the political organisations", we mean those who have maintained their loyalty to the struggle and to communism and, as much as the conditions abroad and their own possibilities allow, fight towards advancing their combatant tasks and against the Islamic Republic. Of course, along side these, there are those others who, if at some point in the past and within the boundaries of one or another Marxist organisation were involved in the struggle, now have dropped out of the battlefield of political struggle, and do not engage in any political activity. At this point, it is necessary to mention that while still carrying the title of ex-member or ex-supporter of this or that political organisation, some of these individuals justify their own lack of revolutionary stamina by repudiating the organisations to which they used to belong. Drawing a demarcation line between these two groups of individuals is necessary for we sometimes witness that some go about praising the latter group, and claim that 'in the event of a truly revolutionary movement springing up in the future, these individuals will join the sea of revolution'. This claim, indeed, should not be taken so lightly. The experience has shown that always those opportunists who, at the fall of the movement, do nothing but direct their quarrel, reproach and dishonour towards the real combatants, would, at the rise of the movement, swim in the sea of revolution with so much passion and heat that everybody is left in awe! Whereas, true Marxists do not sit awaiting for the formation of this sea, but, since believing in the fact that the sea of revolution, too, is formed through the conjunction of the small brooks and streams of the present struggle, they rather go about organising these very same brooks and streams. They realise that it is the channelisation of these tiny currents that will prepare them to play a correct role when the sea of revolution begins to march. Therefore, to be a combatant Marxist it is also necessary to act upon it today. After all, one cannot call oneself a Marxist by referring to one's activities in the past.

18) The excerpt from, "Statement on the Meeting for Unity of the Worker Left", dated May 13th, 1994.

19) The excerpt from, "A Letter from Iran, A Word with All Left Activists", published in the first issue of "the Bulletin of Unity of Worker Left".

20) The excerpt from, "The Essential Necessity of Moving In the Grand Axis", published in the first issue of the above bulletin.

21) To discern such currents, there is no need to go afar; the list of names of the constituent forces of the League would be enough!

22) For instance, this question can be raised that as the outcome of the recent international events, what impacts has the world's current situation had on the working class strategy and tactic in revolution to overthrow the bourgeoisie?

23) It is clear that there is a distinct difference between the essential issues of the movement and issues that any cloistered intellectual can utter on paper in numerous relations. The essential issues of the movement are matters that have prominently come before the movement, and their resolutions are of necessities.