

COMMUNIQUE OF THE ASSAM-TRIPURA ZONAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPI-ML

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Inside or outside of the Party, everyone is agreed that the principal cause of the all-India setback suffered since the end of 1970 by the Indian revolution and its standard bearer, the CPI(M-L) lies within ourselves. The political and organizational crisis that began after the setback has, within the last three years, deepened. This event proves with certainty that the enemy's all-round attack was not the fundamental cause of the setback and the crisis, but that the responsibility lies with our subjective errors.

The great debate and discussion over the setback and errors, continued over the last one year, has helped to raise the ideological and theoretical standards of the whole party. But all the analyses and assessments suffer from the same weakness: all of them look at the errors superficially, without revealing their principal source by entering into their depths. Thus it has not been possible to eradicate the errors at their roots.

Our tasks are to search out the principal source of our errors and then to combine the negative and positive experiences of our party and lift it to the level of theory so that the theory may light the path of our struggle and advancement.

The experiences of the great Chinese Revolution and the ongoing Vietnamese revolution have established, and the successes and failures of the Indian revolution have confirmed the truth that violent revolution in a colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal society is the sum of two forms of struggle – military struggle and mass struggle. These two forms of struggle have separate characteristics and thus demand separate attention and solution. But these two forms must be applied together, i.e., the principle of their simultaneity must be rigorously enforced keeping the military struggle as the principal form with which one must coordinate all political economic and cultural mass struggles either directly or indirectly.

All our principal errors stem from the absence of a deep understanding of this truth. By 'violent revolution' confusedly understood "armed struggle" or, more specifically, "guerilla warfare", but we had no understanding of the fact that under the leadership of a truly revolutionary party, all mass struggles – violent uprisings, political movements and even struggles launched on immediate economic demands – are part and parcel of violent revolution. Due to our lack of understanding of the methodological principle of the simultaneity of the mass struggle and military struggle in a colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal country and of its indispensability in the process of safeguarding and developing the revolutionary armed struggle, we laid a one-sided stress on guerilla warfare and either neglected mass struggle or kept it in abeyance by consigning it to a later stage. Similarly, in the past, under the influence of revisionism, we had laid a one-sided stress on mass struggle and either neglected armed struggle or consigned it to a later stage. Thus, throughout the history of the Indian communist movement we have

committed either "Left" or "Right" errors. On the one hand, guerilla struggles of the armed units did not last long in the absence of the foundation and active help of mass struggles while, on the other hand, lacking the protection and help of the armed forces, the mass struggles could not develop or last. We never learned to combine the two forms of struggle.

In this rare moment in our history when this method of simultaneity was applied, especially in Telengana (1948-49) and Naxalbari (1967), there were great advances in the revolutionary struggle. But it was not difficult for revisionism and dogmatism to destroy the results of these struggles because the method was applied unconsciously, fortuitously, and therefore, only momentarily.

PRINCIPAL ERRORS

The struggle of the Naxalbari peasants under the banner of Mao Tse-tung Thought and the commencement, due to its enthusiastic impact of armed peasant struggles in many parts of India, especially in Srikakulam, and the formation (1969) of the CPI(ML) on the basis of an India-wide unity created large waves of revolutionary struggles in India by removing the hegemony of revisionism and centrism from among a large section of the masses and by the sharp penetration among them of the politics of the armed seizure of power. But because of our inability to understand the aforementioned fundamental rule of violent revolution, we confused and compounded the military struggle and the mass struggle, the two processes with specifically different characteristics. For example, the method of guerilla struggle, which is the main form of military struggle, was applied in the case of the anti-feudal mass struggle of the peasants. The killing of particular landlords under specific circumstances by building small secret groups, may be a particular form of the peasants' class struggle, although it is not the "higher" or only form of the anti-feudal struggle in general. But to call this the preface to guerilla warfare is wrong because guerilla warfare is a specific method of fighting adopted by our small and weak armed forces against the powerful armed forces of the enemy and thus it may be initiated only through combat against the armed forces of the enemy.

Due to our lack of understanding of the particular characteristics and immediate importance of the military struggle, we did not encourage the conscious political and organizational task of building the peasants' regular armed forces and totally neglected the task of military training. Instead, the formation of the army was covered under a plethora of rigmarole, and thus, this most important problem was not even properly posed. Our lack of understanding of the particular characteristics of mass struggle and the indispensability of the united front tactics in it led to the postponement or abandonment of extensive local or national alliances, however unstable or temporary, against the common enemy. The characterization of the whole bourgeoisie as comprador because it was "comprador at birth", the labelling of any error as revisionism and treating it as one with counter-revolutionary revisionism – these were simply attempts to make this deviation supportable.

Above all, the failure to understand the simultaneity of the military struggle and the mass struggle led to the abandonment of mass struggle as revisionism or even as

the weapon of the ruling classes. Later when the necessity of mass struggles was admitted in words, it was in effect abandoned through its characterization as the work of the "next stage" and by denying the necessity of mass organizations.

CONSEQUENCES

One disastrous consequence of this confusion of military struggle with the mass struggle was the creation of the line of "physical liquidation". It is true that in every revolution physical liquidation of class enemies takes place and that it never leads the struggle to a setback. But when a specific line and method grew on the foundation of the killing of landlords and when it became the fashion to advocate as many killings as possible instead of as few as possible, we slowly lost the sympathy of the masses and became isolated. The inevitable consequence of this deviation was that our rural struggles were never able to destroy the political power and social status of the landlord class. Rather, we deviated from this real target, became dependent on the natural class consciousness and spontaneous hatred of a few peasants and imposed revolution on the unprepared masses. Naturally, while facing the white terror, the masses became confused and terror-stricken; mass resistance became impossible and the whole mass basis faced great losses or even complete destruction. As a result, organized mass movements and mass uprising for the political seizure of power became unreal dreams. Starting out as admiring but inactive supporters, the masses slowly became neutral observers; armed struggle became the barren effort of a few advanced persons and aggressive closed-doorism, horrible sectarianism and adventurism swallowed up the whole party. The call to build up mass movements which came later could not, under these circumstances, create anything but hollow echoes.

The wrong notion about guerilla warfare and a fantastic primitiveness on the problem of building the armed forces resulted in the abandonment of army formation to spontaneity. Thus army formation became impossible even in those areas of West Bengal and Andhra where enough fighters were available for the construction of cores for the army. The work of building the United Front and mass struggles was also abandoned to spontaneity by rejecting the use of united front tactics and building new mass organization or using the existing ones. This abandonment to spontaneity of two out of three "magic weapons" required to make the revolution victorious in any area (i.e. to liberate the area) led inevitably to the failure of all efforts to create a base area; the existing armed units slowly became inactive or became transformed into roving rebel bands; the party became more and more isolated and lacking in initiative; desertion and surrender increased rapidly in the presence of a relentless white terror and the enemy managed to "put out the fire of armed struggle" everywhere.

The party became isolated from revolutionary practice of the masses due to its abandonment of mass struggle, so that it had no option other than a dependence upon the wisdom of one particular leader when it had to test the correctness of its line. As a result the principles of democratic centralism were increasingly trampled upon and replaced by the wrong notion of "individual authority". Instead of the proletarian revolutionary attitude of "searching for the truth from facts" came

slavishness and the deranged petty bourgeois vice of authority worship. Brilliant cadres became bureaucratic, while careerists and enemy agents managed to infiltrate into the party. The fight against centrism on the question of the formation of the party was dragged into the party and all differences of opinion were strangled with the cry of centrism. In certain areas, to all these was added the odious influence of the wrong line on physical liquidation and the pipe-gun or the dagger became the weapons for the resolution of internal contradictions. The enemy has utilised this situation fully. It is true that the despair, imprisonment and even the untimely death of many priceless leaders, cadres and innocent persons were directly caused by this deranged and often dishonest authority worship.

This wrong notion was even internationalized and the old Khrushchevite wine of "international authority" was imported in a new bottle by denying the equal and fraternal relationship between the communist parties of various lands through such wrong, harmful, and anti-proletarian-internationalist slogans such as "China's Chairman is Our Chairman". In fact, one important reason why so many wrong lines persisted for so long was our mechanical and dogmatist dependence on "international authority" and "recognition".

CHARU MAZUMDAR

Evaluation of the personal role of Comrade Charu Mazumdar, the principal architect of the Naxalbari peasant movement and the founder of the CPI(ML), is a very important political question. The personal contribution of Comrade Charu Mazumdar should not be denied, nor should it be exaggerated. To overstress his personal responsibility for the party's errors and thus to look upon him as an "unconscious traitor" is a horrible Right deviation. Similarly, unreal thinking, such as "his line is correct, but the cadres made the mistakes in practice", is simply the continuation of the "Left" deviation of the past. The grandest quality of Comrade Charu Mazumdar was that he displayed an extraordinary courage and bravery in the implementation of certain important Marxist-Leninist conclusions in the Indian revolution and the application of Mao Tse-tung Thought to the concrete conditions of India. He made great contributions: (1) in the work of rescuing the Indian revolution and the Indian party from revisionist quicksands; (2) in leading the Indian people with certainty into the revolutionary path by initiating the peasant armed struggle; and (3) in rebuilding of the party in a new style by severing all relations with counter-revolutionary revisionism. For these reasons, he was a great revolutionary and a Marxist-Leninist.

But he used to derive specific lines and methods not from the concrete conditions of the Indian revolution but from theoretically derived Marxist-Leninist conclusions and inevitably, made dogmatist errors. Under the influence of the spontaneous, all-India mass upsurge since 1966, he began to minimize the strength of the enemy and exaggerated the subjective forces of revolution and became, in many ways, a worshipper of spontaneity. Under the influence of dogmatism, he became disinclined towards self-analysis and did not undertake a relentless and thorough analysis even after the defeat of 1970-71. Above all, due to his lack of understanding of the combination, difference and simultaneity of the two forms of

struggle, he made serious errors on the questions of mass struggle, guerilla warfare, army-building and the United Front. It is true that these mistakes were *our* mistakes, but his responsibility was the greatest in the matter of their formulation.

In spite of this, his contribution and achievement far outweigh his mistakes. His life of struggle his death-defying courage, his bitter self-sacrifice, his embracement of death like a communist – all these are lessons for every communist. There is no doubt that the way ahead must be through the correct solution of unity and struggle between the two forms of struggle, through making the rural areas the principal theatre of struggle, through the taking up of the task of building the armed forces of the workers and the peasants as the principal task so that military and political bases may be established in suitable places. While paying main attention to this principal task, we must adhere to the party's class line and apply the united front tactics in building mass organizations to develop various political and economic struggles by different sections of the masses according to their consciousness and wishes and relentlessly go forward towards the organisation of armed uprising. Naturally our primary armed units will be extremely small and extraordinarily mobile, but they will slowly develop in number, in weaponry and tactically by activating the masses into various types of mass struggles and through sudden attacks and combat against the enemy's armed forces. These units will become regular and mobile military units when the party's conscious efforts are added. There is a determining importance to this effort because without imposing serious defeats, rather than isolated clashes, upon the enemy's armed forces, the mass struggle will not rise to even higher stages and base areas will not develop.

The mass struggles and partial insurrections of the toiling urban masses including students and youths must be actively fostered so that the rural struggle can be helped in every way and preparation made for the all-out armed uprising. In the urban areas, we should oppose the adventurism of the blind desire for action and should instruct selected cadres to work underground and wait for opportunities so that footholds may be created in the cities through firm, sure and measured steps taken with vigilance.

The dogmatism, sectarianism and adventurism of the past must be defeated for the healthy development of the party, and the minds of those who are still clinging to the 'left' errors of the past must be liberated step by step through patient teaching. Aggressiveness and violence are not permissible. Many comrades are increasingly realising the errors of the past but they are not looking at the errors in their own connection but separately and individually. Thus they are discovering the symptoms but not the disease. As a result they are inevitably laying a onesided stress on mass movements and repeating the 'right' errors of the past by relaxing the secrecy which is the very lifeblood of the party and taking the dangerous road of open and legalistic methods. They are denying the role of Comrade Charu Mazumdar and some are even denying the party by inclining towards a liquidationist line. This thinking and tactics obliterates the dividing line between Marxism and modern revisionism and may take on serious dimensions unless thwarted.

'RIGHT DEVIATION'

Looking at the problems as a whole, the danger of 'left' deviation is decreasing and the danger of 'right' deviation is increasing, although 'left' deviation remains the principal danger in those areas where comrades are still clinging to the old lines. Both these deviations deny the unity and struggle between the two forms of struggle and their simultaneity.

To go against the tide is a Marxist-Leninist principle. Today it is the duty of all comrades who have arrived at the correct line to firmly stand against the majoritarian tide constituted by these two deviations and conduct the struggle for bringing the majority of honest and diligent comrades to their side. Only in this way, will they be able to isolate the handful of careerists and enemy agents who are utilising the confusions within the party by throwing their lines into the troubled waters.

It is the party which will conduct the armed and mass struggles. Therefore the ability to build the army on base areas depends on whether we can skillfully unite, extend and consolidate the party. The process of consolidating the party on an all-India basis is getting blocked from two directions. On the one side are the liquidationists who are challenging the usefulness and legitimacy of the formation of the party in 1969 and are advocating a return to the level of "co-ordination". The liquidationists want to widen, deepen and make permanent the cracks, which due to various errors have appeared in the revolutionary units forged on an all-India basis around the CPI(ML) instead of moving step by step towards the cementing of these cracks. On the other side are the sectarians who have isolated themselves from the majority by trampling upon all democratic principles and even created a fake "Central Committee". The deviation has not only not helped the creation of all-India unity but has instead encouraged our internal disunity, misunderstandings and suspicions.

The Assam-Tripura provincial committees have created the Assam-Tripura Zonal Committee consisting of the leading cadres of the two areas, upon the basis of fundamental and minimum political unity and through the infliction of a defeat over liquidationism and sectarianism. They have thus taken a first step towards consolidation on a 'zonal' basis. This zonal committee requests and calls upon the cadres, members and sympathisers of the party in other areas: to immediately unite on a zonal scale on the basis of minimum political unity; to start from a desire for unity and to arrive at a new unity through the principled criticism and self-criticism of past and present errors; and in this way proceed on an all-India basis towards the party's ninth national congress (2nd after Naxalbari). Comrade Mao's latest call be our standard: "Bring Marxism, not revisionism; be united, do not split be open and above board, do not intrigue and conspire".