

PU-PW Merger

A Positive Development but for the Perspective

Recently, CPI(ML) People's War and CPI(ML) Party Unity have merged into a single organisation which retains the name of CPI(ML) People's War. This is a significant development as it involves unification of two of the prominent communist revolutionary organisations in India and thus coming together of a considerable section of the party forces in a single political-organisational frame. So, this development is worthy of notice and comment by other communist revolutionary organisations.

We find some difficulty in commenting on this unification in a definite manner, because we do not have before us the common documents which constitute the formal ideological-political basis of the new CPI(ML) People's War. Nor do we have before us any unity-resolution by the constituent organisations so as to know about the kind of differences they have resolved to arrive at a common basis for their unification. We have only got their joint press statement on their merger. The contents of that statement do not help in drawing any inference about the nature of this unification, that is, about its being a principled unification or an opportunist one. However, the contents of that statement provide enough clues to understand how the newly-unified organisation views and approaches the major task of unification of the communist revolutionary forces in India and reorganisation of the single Party.

So far as the nature of this unification is concerned, it seems to be, more or less, a principled unification. Circumstantial evidence lends some credibility to the claim of the PW and the PU that they have assured themselves of the common line-basis of their unification, in the course of conducting unity-discussions since the year 1993. Even prior to this unification, it was stated in the 1995-review document of the PW that both

the organisations had thrice discussed their respective basic documents and overcome whatever political variations were noticed in the discussions during 1993-95. Going by the PW's version of the 19-year history of the issue of its unity with the PU, no serious ideological-political difference between them ever came up as a hurdle to their unification, except for the period of 1984-89 when the two organisations held different positions on the characterisation of the contemporary CPC and the Chinese State. We have not come across any contradiction by the PU of the PW's version. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that they have arrived at this unification mainly by overcoming the practical-organisational hitches or apprehensions which kept them apart for so many years, especially since the year 1989. No wonder those practical-organisational hitches or apprehensions have now crumbled under the weight of the new practical-organisational pressures on both the PW and the PU to seek a merger of forces and resources. The role of the situational pressure in expediting this unification is more apparent in the case of the PU. The problematic situation of the PU in the central districts of Bihar (where it is caught up in a cut-throat tussle with stronger rivals for territorial claims) has played a crucial role in persuading the PU leadership to shed its lingering hesitancy and decide for merger with the better-armed PW.

Anyhow, it is a positive development that these two communist revolutionary organisations, whose separate existence was not warranted by any significant ideological-political demarcation between them, have now become a single organisation. Such a reduction in the number of parallel organisational platforms (as vehicles of variant expressions of a certain ideological-political line/trend) is objectively favourable for the development of the two-line struggle and establishment of the proletarian revolutionary line. That is so because then the consolidated organisational platform would provide a more consistent and representative expression of the concerned ideological-political line/trend. The fewer the platforms and the sharper the profiles of the major ideological-political lines/trends, that much less complicated and more productive would be the process of their mutual struggle. From that angle of view, the merger of the PW and the PU should be welcomed.

As regards the new PW leadership's view of the major task of the communist revolutionary unification and the reorganisation of the Party in India, its thinking is not merely erroneous but also potentially damag-

ing to the advancement of this cause. It is taking a narrow view of this task from both the ends of the problem. At the one end, it is grossly underestimating the extent of the communist revolutionary forces who are required to be unified. It is thus writing off a good chunk of them as participants in the reorganisation of the Party, before even the churning process of ideological-political struggle accompanying that reorganisation has run its course. (We will analyse, at some other time, the "left" sectarian approach working behind this gross underestimation and the left opportunist line-roots of that approach.) At the other end, it is grossly underestimating the extent of the ideological-political effort which is required to refute effectively the right opportunist and the "left" opportunist lines, to establish the supremacy of the proletarian revolutionary line within the communist revolutionary camp of India and to accomplish the reorganisation of the Party. Underestimation by it at the latter end is partly due to the underestimation at the former end (ie, concerning the extent of the forces to be united). Still more, that is due to its unwillingness or inability to draw proper lessons from the historical experience of the course of Party-reorganisation in India since the late sixties.