

Who Benefits?

The confusion created by a statement issued in the name of the Central Spokesperson of the CPI (Maoist) has now been cleared up. A joint statement of the Spokespersons of the CPI (Maoist) and its Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee clarifies that it did not represent the party's views. It was solely the opinion of comrade Sonu.

The format, style and views expressed in the earlier statement had already raised questions about its authenticity. It carried a photo, perhaps to establish its credentials. That begged the question of why that was necessary. It looked as if its author was himself sceptical about its reception. On the one hand, it declared the intention to lay down arms. On the other hand, it requested the state to suspend its attacks for a month to carry out consultations about this. What would be the purpose of said consultations if the matter was already decided? Even more strangely, it stated, "After the party members inside clearly express their agreement or opposition, we will prepare a representative delegation from those who agree and participate in peace talks." What about those who didn't agree? Will they continue the armed struggle? What would be the relation between these two sections? Assuming the statement was not a fake, wasn't this person only representing a faction, though he claimed to be speaking as a spokesperson of that party?

A lengthy letter, addressed to the people, followed. It confirmed these doubts with a series of contradictory arguments, even going against the earlier statement's positions. Here are a few examples:

It is initially said, 'Adhering to the Party's "strategy-and-tactics" document, we have spread the revolutionary movement into several parts of the country. We have organised numerous oppressed sections of society. We united urban and rural populations, those of the plains and the forests. We organised the working class in the urban areas.' But then it goes on to argue, 'From the very beginning, we lagged behind in grasping the changing social conditions, both globally and at home. Time and again, we failed to assess correctly the enemy's strength and our own revolutionary forces, and to take the appropriate measures to advance the movement. We committed sectarian and ultra-left mistakes, applying the teachings of the Marxist masters uncritically, instead of adapting them to the concrete conditions of our country.' If all these errors in grasp and application happened 'from the very beginning', how could the movement spread to several parts of the country, while 'adhering to the Party's "Strategy and Tactics" document'?

If we were to ignore the apparent contradictions in these views, the only logical meaning one could derive from them would be this – we made significant advances but we also made grave mistakes, changes have taken place in conditions and the line needs to be developed accordingly. Yet, the conclusion arrived at by the author is something totally different. He demands that 'At the very least, it is now the Party's sole remaining duty to bid farewell to the dogged practice of clinging to the "protracted people's war path" and "armed struggle" in disregard of changing conditions and of time and place...' Considering the fact that the 'protracted people's war path' lies at the heart of the 'Strategy and Tactics' document, which the author accepts as having guided advance, doesn't this appeal for abandoning it amount to capitulation and liquidation? Moreover, as correctly pointed out in the joint statement, it even contradicts the author's own statement that had spoken about a temporary cessation of armed struggle. In fact, in this letter itself, just a few lines before this call for 'abandoning armed struggle', it talks about the need for a temporary cessation of armed struggle. Evidently, these are empty words, a disingenuous ploy aimed at the gullible.

The letter states, 'In Dandakaranya and in Bihar-Jharkhand, the revolutionary people's movement advanced towards the aim of liberating the area and reached new heights. That was made possible by a grasp of the region's specific economic, political, and social characteristics. The weaknesses of the enemy also served as a decisive support. However, though somewhat later than in other parts of the country, in these two regions as well, for the past decade and a half, there have been no conditions anywhere for the revolutionary movement to survive. The principal cause lay in our catastrophic failure to build a clandestine, impenetrable revolutionary party, and in our inability to comprehend changing conditions and correctly apply revolutionary theory in practice.' If conditions for a revolutionary movement to survive no longer exist 'anywhere' in these areas, shouldn't one write off the possibility of revolution as such? Wouldn't it be foolish to try apply revolutionary theory in practice in those conditions? What then would be the practice? Wallowing side by side with revisionists in the parliamentary pigsty?

Failure to comprehend changing conditions would indicate either revisionist or dogmatic errors. But what stands out in the whole letter is its total avoidance of mentioning revisionism. Not only that, the failure to build a 'clandestine, impenetrable' party is characterised as an 'ultra-left' error. Lets ignore the idealism seen in this notion of an 'impenetrable' organisation. Since when has this become an 'ultra-left' error? After all, failure in building and maintaining a secret party is a manifestation of liberalism. And we are taught by comrade Charu Mazumdar that liberalism is a concrete manifestation of revisionism. All of this is surely known to the author. Why does he then insist on labelling it ultra-left? Isn't this a conscious attempt to confuse, divert attention from real errors and cover up the revisionism that is actually being proposed?

Thus the logic of the statement and exposition seen in the letter lead us to this question—who benefits from this?