

**The Communist Party of India
(Maoist)
and Islamic fundamentalists**

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If we overlook the Trotskyist, quasi-Trotskyist and deviant left party views on fundamentalism, in themselves of no great significance, we will have to dwell on the viewpoint of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) in this regard, since they are waging an inspirational mass struggle in India to which we attach great value and respect.

In an interview in April 2007, Comrade Ganapathi, leader of the CPI (Maoist), stated,

“Basically, we regard the Islamic upsurge as a progressive anti-imperialist force in the contemporary world. It would be wrong to describe the struggle that is going on in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya, and several other countries as a struggle by Islamic fundamentalists or as a resurrection of something long ago theorized by Samuel

Huntington as a 'clash of civilizations'. In essence, notwithstanding the role of Islamic fundamentalists in these struggles, these are all wars of national liberation. Ideologically and politically, we oppose religious fundamentalism of any kind as it obfuscates class distinctions and class struggle and keeps the masses under the yoke of class oppression. However, 'Islamic fundamentalism', in my opinion, is an ally of the people in their fight against the fundamentalism of the free market promoted by the US, the EU and other imperialists. The Islamic upsurge is bound to raise anti-imperialist democratic consciousness among the Muslim masses and bring them closer with other secular, progressive and revolutionary forces. Despite the domination of fundamentalist ideology and outlook in the Islamic movement at present, I see the Islamic upsurge as the beginning of the democratic awakening of the Muslim masses."

In addition to what has been mentioned, and without repeating the warnings given –from Marx to Mao– against supporting reaction, it seems that our Indian comrades have also overlooked a number of other principles too:

1. Is it not that in the light of their 'Westoxification' philosophy¹, the

¹ Jalal Al-e-Ahmad, was one of the most famous and most influential of Iran's so-called religious intellectuals who, in his '*Gharbzadegi*' (Westoxification) and other works, instead of reviling imperialism, assailed democracy, secularism and western civilization

fundamentalists are not at all anti-imperialists, but rather anti-whatever-is-American, livid against the ‘infidelity’ of the people of the United States and the West? Hasn’t the hand that fed Islamic fundamentalism been that of the imperialists since the contemporary advent of fundamentalism up to the present?

2. Are the fundamentalists not rabidly opposed to the demise of capitalism and private ownership? Don’t capitalists, big landlords and millionaires constitute the godfathers of the fundamentalists and thus, aren’t the fundamentalists the godchildren of the imperialists? The majority of Taliban leaders are either landlords themselves or are friends and allies of landlords. These Taliban and non-Taliban feudal lords perceive their interests and very existence as being vested in conjugation with imperialism. Imperialism, in turn, regards these feudal lords as their most dependable bases of support, even if they were to metamorphose

as a whole. On the contrary, he sanctified the misogynist, reactionary and anti-technology culture of the Arabs, and eulogized Islamic government and the most reactionary and most odious of Islamic personalities. In like manner, Dr. Ali Shariati, another influential religious intellectual, invited the intelligentsia to return to ‘pure Mohammedan Islam’. With strident slogans against western civilization, science, culture and enlightenment –first and foremost against Marxism– and by using attractive ‘modern’, even Marxist, phraseology, he summoned intellectuals to revive Islam which –in his own words– was in its death throes. He claimed Islam and Shiite theology to be the pinnacle of human philosophical and political thought, and proudly called himself the spiritual son and disciple of Khomeini and other founders and custodians, dead and alive, of the incumbent criminal regime of Iran. Al-e-Ahmad and Shariati are no longer alive to wallow in the realization of their horrific wishes for the establishment of an Islamic republic of suffering, lashes and gallows in Iran.

into broker capitalists tomorrow. A socio-political force arising out of the dustbin of history cannot engage imperialism in a progressivist struggle. Those who depict the Taliban and their fundamentalist brethren as ‘progressives’ are in direct contradiction with Lenin, who wrote:

“Imperialism is as much our ‘mortal’ enemy as is capitalism. That is so. No Marxist will forget, however, that capitalism is progressive compared with feudalism, and that imperialism is progressive compared with pre-monopoly capitalism. Hence, it is not every struggle against imperialism that we should support. We will not support a struggle of the reactionary classes against imperialism; we will not support an uprising of the reactionary classes against imperialism and capitalism.”²

3. How is the Iranian regime or the Taliban opposed to ‘free market fundamentalism’? Are not current Iranian economic policies based on the tenets of neoliberalism and the instructions of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (privatization, price liberalization, runaway inflation, excessive imports at the price of the decimation of local production)? Have not these policies resulted in disastrous unemployment and poverty levels which have pauperised the people of Iran and devastated the economy? Has not the regime jailed and tortured dissident

² Lenin, *A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism*.

workers and economists, including Dr. Fariborz Raisdana, who are opposed to their anti-popular policies? Even though –as Ayatollah Khomeini astutely observed– the Taliban’s understanding of the economy goes no further than market prices of cattle and donkeys, one thing they never objected to was the ‘free market’ system which rolled out a red carpet of *laissez-faire* to mafiosi of all hues and colours. And it would be helpful to know that the finance minister of the Kabul puppet regime is a filthy Gulbuddini terrorist.

4. Has not the Iranian regime, despite all its hypocritical anti-US vituperation, been secretly dealing with the ‘Great Satan’ and its appendage, Israel³? Has it not, through its fascistic suppression of popular movements for freedom and its incessant massacre of communists, rendered and continues to render the greatest service imaginable to imperialism?⁴

³ Let us recall the “Irangate” scandal (Iran-Contra affair), when during the war between Iran and Iraq, the US and Israel sold weapons to Iran, and in return, Iran ordered its agents in Lebanon to free seven American hostages. With the revenue from the sale of weapons to Iran, the US supported the counter revolutionaries of Nicaragua. Washington asked Tehran not to free the US embassy hostages before the elections so Reagan could defeat Carter.

⁴ To lure and deceive the people of Iran, the regime bellows anti-US slogans so hypocritically that it will come as no surprise if a segment of the people of Iran, sick and tired of their rulers, reach the conclusion that US imperialism might be a good thing after all, since the blood drenched regime, steeped in treachery and corruption, keeps screaming at the top of its lungs against it. It is for this reason that sold-out groups such as the royalists, turncoats such as the People's Mujahedin of Iran, and treacherous intellectuals such as Kazim Alamdari, Abbas Milani, Mohsin Sazgara,

5. Didn't Khomeini come to power on the basis of an agreement reached in Guadeloupe between the US, Britain, France and Germany, and with the support of the Shah's army and secret police (SAVAK) –both of which remained untouched– and the powerful Iranian bourgeoisie?
6. Even right now, there is no Islamic fundamentalist group in the world that does not enjoy Iran's support. How is it possible that a criminal machine, dripping with the blood of the best sons of the Iranian motherland, can support an entity which is 'basically a progressive anti-imperialist force in the contemporary world'?
7. If the Taliban –created by Pakistan and the CIA⁵ and used by

Alireza Noorizadeh and others seize the opportunity to shamelessly call on the US and Israel to militarily attack Iran in order to rid it of the Islamic Republic. These odious US collaborators want to replace the Islamic criminals with US criminals in order to be able to rule over the corpses of millions of Iranians and a devastated land. The overthrow of the criminal Iranian regime is absolutely up to the people of Iran, otherwise any intervention by the US or its proxy Israel will result in the utter obliteration of Iran's independence and national wellbeing in a manner worse than the fate of Libya, Syria or Yemen.

⁵ In an interview with the BBC (10 April 1996) Benazir Bhutto admitted that "The madrasas had been set up by Reagan, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan during the jihad against Soviet occupation."

The 'Evening Standard', published in England, wrote (20 February 2001) that the US and its allies "encouraged the growth of Islamic fundamentalism to frighten Moscow, and to get Soviet soldiers hooked on drugs."

Professor William Beeman points out, “It is no secret, especially in the region, that the United States, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have been supporting the fundamentalist Taliban in their war for control of Afghanistan for some time.” (Jinn Magazine (online), August 1, 1997)

Rohrabacher , Reagan’s special assistant who was with the jihadi parties in the Battle of Jalalabad, revealed the hidden connections and the inclination of the US for the Taliban to remain in power. “Having been closely involved in US policy toward Afghanistan for some twenty years, I have called into question whether or not this administration has a covert policy that has empowered the Taliban and enabled this brutal movement to hold on to power... Let me repeat: The Clinton administration, along with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, created the Taliban...” (April 14, 1997)

Other than the \$43 million granted by former Secretary of State Colin Powell for ‘anti-drug efforts’ to the Taliban, in 1997, the then US secretary Robert Oakley granted the Taliban \$30 million for the capture of Kabul. (*Daily Times*, April 24, 2011)

Ahmad Rashid, in his book *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, writes, “Between 1994 and 1996, the USA supported the Taliban politically through its allies Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, essentially because Washington viewed the Taliban as anti-Iranian, anti-Shia, and pro-Western... Between 1995 and 1997, US support was even more driven because of its backing for the Unocal [pipeline] project.”

Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Advisor to Carter, in response to a question asking whether he regretted having supported the Islamic fundamentalists and having given arms and advice to the future terrorists, said “What is most important to the history of the world? The Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire? Some stirred-up Moslems or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the cold war?” (Interview with *Le Nouvel Observateur*, January 15, 1998)

The AI report, *Afghanistan: Grave Abuses in the Name of Religion*, refers to a comment by the Guardian: “Senior Taliban leaders attended a conference in Washington in mid-1996 and US diplomats regularly travelled to Taliban headquarters.” (November 18, 1996)

them as their coolies in the trafficking of heroin and in promoting blind terrorism and the most putrid of ideologies– can be regarded as being ‘anti-imperialist’, then surely the Pakistani government and its intelligence apparatus should, logically, be commended as a most active ‘anti-imperialist’ entity?

8. Has there ever been a venal and reactionary religious force in all of history which, after coming to power, has proven that it was not being hypocritical in raising “anti-imperialist” slogans and has really taken the path of independence and implementation of economic and social programs for the prosperity of the masses? Do the comrades regard beheadings, throat slittings, and rape of dissidents by fundamentalists as a measure of their anti-imperialist fervour?
9. Hezbollah should not be regarded as a progressive force merely because it successfully battled against Israel and aligned itself with other resistance forces. This party is a client of Iran and like the Taliban, the Ikhwan-al Muslimeen (Muslim Brotherhood) and its Palestinian branch (Hamas) and all other fundamentalists, it

And two French intelligence analysts, Jean-Charles Brisard and Guillaume Dasquie, affirm the same in their book *Bin Laden: The Forbidden Truth*: “Until August 2001, the U.S. government saw the Taliban regime as a source of stability in Central Asia that would enable the construction of an oil pipeline across Central Asia.”

Are our Indian comrades unfamiliar with the above facts, innumerable similar examples of which are accessible with a little Googling?

has its beliefs enshrined in its party programme. These include the establishment of an Islamic Emirate, a *Velayat-e-Faqih* (Guardianship Council of Islamic Jurists), promulgation of Mohammedan Sharia (Islamic Law), Islamic theocracy, sanctioning of private property and capitalism, hostility towards the rights of ethnic⁶, religious and sectarian minorities, absolute rejection of secularism, social segregation of men and women, violation of the human dignity of women through compulsory veiling (hijab) and a thousand other restrictions and discriminations, and world conquest with the Sword of Islam. The Hamas slogan, 'Communism is a cancerous growth on the body of the nation and we will excise it', or the slogan raised by Missouri, one of the leaders of the Islamic fundamentalists of the Philippines, 'If we take power, we will slaughter the communists like dogs', are eloquent expressions of the innate nature of these CIA-begotten religion-pushers. An 'anti-imperialist' posing or a 'nationalistic' gesture every now and then should not be a fig leaf concealing their inhumane aspirations and programmes. When the fundamentalists deem it necessary and expedient, they will have no compunction in bringing out their women or donning Che Guevara T-shirts. Despite the fact that their Taliban brethren-in-faith proscribed cinemas as *haram* (unlawful) and

⁶ In the early days of the Iranian revolution, Khomeini refrained from decreeing a *jihād* (holy war) against the interests of imperialism and its capitalist hangers-on. But when the people of Turkmen Sahra and Kurdistan –who had struggled heroically for their rights against the regime of the Shah– voiced their demands, Khomeini called for *jihād* against them and brutally suppressed them.

blew up the historic Buddha statues of Bamiyan, Islamic fundamentalists are too shameless to flinch from smooth-talking about a 'dialogue between civilisations' (Mohammad Khatami), 'national and cultural relics of honour and pride' (Ahmadinejad), or enthuse about poets and poetry or even elaborate on the 'amity between Islam and Marxism'⁷. Essentially, reactionary forces in dependent and semi-feudal countries strive to take power or to stabilize and reinforce themselves through reliance on pandering and turncoat intellectuals and by hoisting 'anti-imperialism', 'anti-feudalism' and even 'anti-capitalism' banners.

10. Before usurping the leadership of revolutionary Iran, Khomeini's favourite refrain was 'all of us together'. He took care not to show his Dracula fangs. Once he and his coterie were firmly established, he brutally slaughtered tens of thousands of leftists and freedom-seekers. If and when Hezbollah comes to power, we will see how it will emulate Khomeini's thoughts and actions and outdo its vampire demigod in massacring its opponents, first and foremost Lebanese communists and revolutionaries.

⁷ Dr. Abdul Karim Sorosh, one of the intellectual mainstays of the Iranian regime, recently stated, "Islam and Islamic spirituality is in reality much closer to Marxism than to liberalism." Perhaps it is because of such affinity that he rules Marxists to be mahdoor-ud-dam (sans retribution if killed)! This is an expression from Islamic jurisprudence which expresses the ruling that certain individuals or categories of people can be lawfully killed without any sin or blame being attached to the murderer.

11. Struggle against imperialism without struggle against fundamentalism or even against secular reaction is meaningless. If reactionary forces are not dealt a mortal blow in the course of anti-imperialist struggle, they will usurp the fruits of the struggle and replace imperialist oppression with their own merciless tyranny.

12. We earnestly request our Indian comrades to studiously examine Iran and the invaluable lessons that can be drawn from its recent history. The Islamic Republic murdered thousands upon thousands of noble communists and other freedom-seekers⁸, and today leads the pack of religio-fascistic regimes around the world in butchering leftists and revolutionaries. Freedom seekers are subjected to some of the most ghastly tortures in the horrendous prisons of Iran. Now, suppose the US or Israel attacks Iran. It goes without saying that with the toppling of the regime, the aggressors will not be able to occupy Iran and the Iranian people will shape their destiny with their own hands. Under the hypothetical circumstances of an attack on Iran, the Iranian revolutionaries will perforce have no option but to fight against both the aggressor and the regime. What will you comrades say in such a situation? Proceeding from your current premise, it is

⁸ Are the comrades aware of the massacre of thousands of revolutionary Iranian prisoners in September of 1988, which, second only to the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of communists in Indonesia by the Suharto regime (1965), is the most horrific crime of the century after the Second World War?

conceivable that you would say to the revolutionaries, "It is not important that the regime keeps you from participating in the struggle against Israeli or US aggressors, or, as happened during the Iraq war, sends you to the battlefronts in droves only to shoot you to death from behind. You should not raise your heads from under the guillotine of the regime because the Iranian regime is a 'progressive anti-imperialist force in the contemporary world' that supports many other 'progressive and anti-imperialist forces' like Hezbollah, Hamas, the Taliban and others; and you will not be democratic if you refuse to unite with them!"

13. Our comrades will certainly agree that today's capitalism is very different from that of the time of Lenin and Stalin. They looked on the bourgeois nationalism of an oppressed nation as having a 'general democratic content' and deemed the ruling national bourgeoisie in backward countries as being based in the masses and genuinely opposed to imperialism; therefore worthy of support and endorsement. But, on the basis of studies carried out and agreed upon by most Iranian Marxists, Iran has for the past century been a dependent capitalist country and its ruling bourgeoisie can never have an anti-imperialist and a 'general democratic content'. The Iranian clerical-capitalist regime is even more loathed and despised by Iranians than the erstwhile Shah's SAVAK-dominated regime. The regime's 'anti-US' posturing at the beginning of the revolution was only a stratagem without

which Khomeini could not have usurped the leadership of the democratic and anti-imperialist revolution against the Shah. Later, with continued posturing and by beating the drums of the 'danger of a US-Israeli invasion', the regime sought to detract the Iranian people from toppling it. The regime does not want the cat-and-mouse-game atmosphere of its relations with the US to dissipate because it is an all-too-comfortable cloak under which it can hide its criminal actions and gives it an excuse to savagely oppress the people and prolong its life. Confrontation with the imperialists or being attacked by them does not automatically transform this or that reactionary government or party to an 'oppressed' or 'progressive' one. Nazi Germany or fascist Italy's attacks on US forces did not change the nature of Hitler's or Mussolini's party and government and make them 'progressive'. Likewise, the Iranian regime's quarrel with the US does not mean that Khamenei and his regime are 'oppressed' or 'progressive' and therefore worthy of endorsement. Regimes such as the theocracy in Iran are not national entities and cannot embellish themselves by claiming to be victims of foreign aggression. There is nothing in common between such regimes and their peoples; they are separated by an ocean of blood.

14. To Marx and Engels, the socialists who wrote against the development of the bourgeoisie and modern bourgeois society and industry, in reality against the evolutionary course of history, were 'reactionary socialists'. Today, the clerical-capitalist rulers of Iran claim to hold the keys to paradise, to see

Khomeini's image when gazing at the moon, to anticipate the imminent advent of the Imam of the Age⁹ (whose emergence is being obstructed by the US!) –and there are leftists who kowtow to such rulers. Wouldn't we be justified in calling such leftists who even praise the Taliban, the epitome of ignorance and reaction in all of history, as being even more despicable than the reactionary socialists of two centuries ago?

15. In its statements in support of Iran's position vis-à-vis the US on the nuclear issue, the Communist Party of India (Maoist) has not made any mention of the crimes of the Iranian regime, or of the real reason behind the game being played between these two countries. It has not come out in support of the struggle of the people of Iran for freedom; not once has it written to condemn the regime and announce its solidarity with the martyrs and political prisoners of Iran. In denouncing the Israeli attacks on Gaza, the CPI(M) only supports Hamas without making any reference to its reactionary nature. The CPI(M) issues a statement on the killing of the people of Farah by US invaders without any mention of the nature of the Taliban and their blind suicide operations against our people. And it heartily defends the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) of which Maududi is the ideological guru, and which has relations with Al-Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jamaat-e-Islami and other terrorists. With such

⁹ The promised Mahdi, a messianic figure in Shi'a theology who will return at the end of times and lead the Muslims and all of humanity to salvation and utopia.

positions, it is natural that the leader of India's communist party would so enthusiastically want to unite with the fundamentalists:

“Our Party supports the Islamic upsurge and seeks unity with all anti-imperialist forces... The Left cannot even claim itself to be democratic if it does not initiate steps to unite with the forces in the Islamic movement... The strong religious language used by the leadership of these movements does not alter their national democratic essence and their anti-imperialist character.”

It is as if the comrades have forgotten that fundamentalists contemptuously refer to communists as ‘untouchables’ and, together with imperialists and reactionaries, have consistently defied communists and revolutionaries, not vice versa¹⁰. The fundamentalists do not countenance discourse with democratic and national or even liberal elements, let alone communists.¹¹ In his article ‘Islamic Fundamentalism in the Service of the World

¹⁰ Iranian fundamentalists rape girl political prisoners before executing them, least they leave the world as virgins. In Algeria, they beheaded newborn children. The Taliban savages conducted ethnic purges and genocide, gibbeted radio and television sets, and referred to schools as ‘gateways to hell’. Gulbuddin’s Islamic party threw acid on the faces of girls and during the war against the Russians announced that Sholays (leftist revolutionaries) were their archenemies. It is a long story, and there are innumerable examples. Is it because they are unaware of such facts that our comrades deem the fundamentalists to be ‘democratic in essence’?

¹¹ According to an Associated Press report (August 10, 2012), Pakistani Taliban spokesperson Ahsanullah Ahsan stated that the Taliban consider Imran Khan (leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) an infidel because he claims to be a liberal.

Capitalist System’, Iranian dissident thinker Dr. Younes Parsa Benab writes, “Fundamentalists generally view differences over legal, social and scientific issues as polytheism or evidence of treason. On the basis of this belief, when fundamentalists seize political power in a society, to promote ‘unity of the word’, they regard the words of any opponent which is different from theirs as *fitna* (evil) and in most cases annihilate them physically.” And in N. Nazimi’s article ‘The Link Between the World Capitalist System and Fundamentalism’, we read, “Although fundamentalists belong to different sects and creeds within different religions, in essence they are all against modernism, secularism, humanism, Marxism, socialism and all other schools of thought that seek equality, and refrain from any dialogue with ‘outsiders’.”¹²

Samir Amin believes, “Political Islam is not the spontaneous result of the assertion of authentic religious convictions by the peoples concerned. Political Islam was constructed by the systematic action of imperialism, supported, of course, by obscurantist reactionary forces and subservient comprador classes. That this state of affairs is also the responsibility of left forces that neither saw nor knew how to deal with the challenge remains indisputable.”¹³ Hisham Bustani, a Jordanian writer,

¹² http://www.ranjbaran.org/01_ranjbaronline

¹³ Samir Amin, *Political Islam in the Service of Imperialism*, Monthly Review, November 2007 (<http://monthlyreview.org/2007/12/01/political-islam-in-the-service-of-imperialism>) In this article there are references to the Khalqi and Parchami puppets,

Arab world expert, political activist and author of several books, calls fundamentalists the natural ally of the US and despotic regimes.¹⁴

16. Our intention is by no means to disparage Islam and religion in general. There have been junctures in the histories of countries like Iran and Afghanistan in which the clergy has played a valuable role. The debate is on our comrades' talk of unconditional alliance with drug kingpins procreated by the imperialists who regard communists as *mahdoor-ud-dam*. Coincidentally, Chris Harman, one of the Trotskyist leaders of the Socialist Workers Party, in the conclusion to his article 'The Prophet and the Proletariat', affectionately dubs the fundamentalists 'petty bourgeois utopians' who wish to reconstitute 7th century Mohammedan Arabic society, and writes "Many of the individuals attracted to radical versions of Islamism can be influenced by socialists." This delusion results from a lack of understanding of the barbaric, medieval and deeply anti-democratic nature of the fundamentalists and overlooks the

such as "Afghanistan experienced the best period in its modern history during the so-called communist republic. This was a regime of modernist enlightened despotism that opened up the educational system to children of both sexes. It was an enemy of obscurantism and, for this reason, had decisive support within the society." Such pronouncements are very much debatable and show the erudite writer's most lamentably botched and deficient information in regard to that infernal period in the history of Afghanistan.

¹⁴ *Al-Khabar*, April 19, 2012

shocking experiences of Iran, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

17. In another interview (June 2011), Comrade Ganapathi states, “Islamic jihadist movements have two aspects: one is their anti-imperialist aspect, and the other their reactionary aspect in social and cultural matters. Our party supports the struggle of Muslim countries and peoples against imperialism, while criticizing and struggling against the reactionary ideology and social outlook of Muslim fundamentalism... we always strive to reduce the influence of the obscurantist reactionary ideology and outlook of the mullahs and maulvis on the Muslim masses, while uniting with all those fighting against the common enemy of the world people—that is, imperialism, particularly American imperialism.”

If the comrades were to diligently focus only, say, on the example of Iran in their study of the genesis of Islamic fundamentalism, they would discover that fundamentalism has but one aspect, and that it is this one aspect, namely, dependence on imperialism, ignorance and brutality that characterises its rule in different Islamic countries.

It is possible for people’s minds to change¹⁵ and for elements of

¹⁵ It is possible that in certain situations revolutionaries will turn into capitulationists or reactionaries will side with the people’s struggle, but this is not a general phenomenon. One should not be deceived by this but should deal with it in a diligent and precise manner.

fundamentalist parties to join a revolutionary party, but it is ridiculous to envisage a change of mentality on the part of a fundamentalist government or school of thought. If communists cannot envisage imperialists except in terms of struggle against them, how can they expect an ideological transformation on the part of fundamentalist organisations?

18. Fundamentalists are certain that if they end the fascistic suppression of communists (for example in Iran) their days will be numbered. Fascistic tyranny and rabid anti-communism comprise their innate characteristics. We do not know how and on the basis of what factual analysis and direct or indirect experience, the Indian comrades deem fundamentalists to be 'democrats' and enthusiastically call upon leftists to unite with them? Can they provide an example of how fundamentalists are 'democrats'?

19. If the Indian comrades are truly committed to 'criticising and struggling against the ideology and social views of fundamentalism', we need to ask why there is no mention of this 'criticism and struggle' in any of the party's documents, but conversely, all their documents propagate the 'anti-imperialist characteristic' of fundamentalism and insist on joining forces with them? Where is a party document stating their 'criticism and struggle' against the crimes of fundamentalists and their links with imperialism? The Indian comrades condemned the killing of Osama Bin Laden in a statement imbued with a tone of

commiseration, but why do they stay silent in regard to martyred and imprisoned Iranian revolutionaries and the actions of the Iranian government? Doesn't this render baseless your claim of 'criticizing and struggling' against fundamentalists?

20. Is all this ogling of fundamentalists for the sake of uniting with them? Firstly, 'unity' with fundamentalists who thirst for the blood of revolutionaries is impossible, and, secondly, is it proper for communists, in their struggle against imperialism, to commit themselves to alliance with procreations of the very same imperialism they are fighting against? Is it justified, for example, for Syrian revolutionaries to associate with Bashar Assad¹⁶ to fight the procreations of the CIA, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, or should they separate their path despite whatever hardships they may have to face? Looking back in history, when the allies attacked Germany, should German Marxists have allowed themselves to disassociate their anti-imperialist struggle from their anti-capitalist struggle and consider, even for a moment, joining forces with Hitler? The union of revolutionaries with fundamentalists would be suicide and digging their own graves;

¹⁶ Bashar treads in the footsteps of his father, Hafez Asad, who during the Lebanese civil war in the 1970s ordered Syrian soldiers to kill leftists and support the Phalangists –agents of the CIA and Israel– against the Palestinians. In September 1970 he helped King Hussain and General Zia-ul-Haq in the killing and expulsion of Palestinians from Jordan.

instead of evoking sympathy and solidarity with the victims, it would be infuriating.

21. Islamic fundamentalism is neither rooted in the history nor in the theories or writing of Islam (whether ancient or contemporary), nor in the religious beliefs and schools of thought adhered to by the Muslim masses. Rather, the majority of Marxist thinkers and researchers concur that after the Second World War and the emergence of a powerful Soviet Union with its enormous gravitational pull and the global prestige it commanded, and after the historic Chinese revolution and the establishment of national and democratic governments in a series of Muslim countries in Asia and Africa, Islamic fundamentalism was hatched by the CIA. The heads of reactionary religious organizations were recruited by the CIA to maintain the imperialists' interests, namely to prevent the spread of Marxist ideas and to topple and suppress leftist, national and secular governments and movements.¹⁷

Had it not been for the incompetence and defeat of national governments in Muslim countries and the historic shortcomings and mistakes of leftists, political Islam would never have been so powerful, despite the efforts and conspiracies of the imperialists.

¹⁷ In particular, look up the account of the meeting between Eisenhower and 27-year-old Said Ramadan –son-in-law of Hassan al-Banna and leader of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt– in the White House; also, see the essence of Said Jamaluddin Afghani and the connection between the heads of the Islamic regime of Iran and the US, in *The Devil's Game* by Robert Dreyfuss.

At the time of the 1959 coup led by Abdul Kareem Qasim, the Communist Party of Iraq had the strength to mobilise over a million people, if obedience to Moscow had not overshadowed their decisions. If they had not neglected to be militarily prepared they could have come to power instead of supporting Abdul Kareem Qasim, or at least they could have prevented the murder of thousands of communists after his downfall.

Similarly, if the Communist Party of Indonesia, which with more than one million members and supporters was the biggest communist party in the world that was not in power, had not made the mistake of believing the Indonesian army to have two aspects (the 'pro-people aspect' and the 'anti-people aspect'), and had it not forgotten to arm itself, it could have aborted the devastating coup orchestrated by Suharto on orders from the CIA.

If the Tudeh Party of Iran had not been passive and had not made an incorrect analysis of the nature of Dr. Mosaddegh's government, they, as the largest left party in the Middle East and with extensive influence in the army, could have easily terminated the CIA coup against Mosaddegh and stopped the Shah from returning to power.

The Communist Party of Sudan which backed the 1969 coup by General Gaafar Nimeiry, had several hundred thousand members in a country with a population of 14 million. Since it did not have the necessary military preparation and followed the dictates of

Moscow, General Nimeiry massacred its leadership together with thousands of its members.

In Afghanistan, the New Democratic political current attracted large numbers of students and intellectuals, workers and petty bourgeois elements from urban centres, and its supporters outnumbered members of revisionist and fundamentalist groupings at gatherings and demonstrations. But unfortunately, the leadership of this credible political current failed to marshal the energy and enthusiasm of the large following it attracted and elevate their struggle to a higher level. Moreover, when one of its well-known and popular activists, Saidal Sokhandan, was killed by a bullet from the gun of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the leadership of the political current allowed the murder to go unanswered, thus further emboldening the fundamentalists.

But, we believe, the most painful mistake committed was during the Iranian revolution, where on the basis of a so-called 'class analysis', the majority of leftist parties and organizations –save a few exceptions– saw Khomeini and his gang as having a 'petty bourgeois' nature and, therefore, being 'anti-imperialist'; consequently, they saw it their duty to support him. And we are witness to the unprecedented catastrophic consequences this has had for the left movement of Iran.¹⁸

¹⁸ All this while, the Tudeh Party and the Organization of the Iranian People's Fedaiian (Majority) have taken their tail-wagging and treachery so far as to spy on leftist forces for the regime. At present, their heart lies with the idea of reform under the leadership of 'reformist' criminals of the regime.

The experience of the bloodbath of Iranian revolutionaries should not for a moment be forgotten by you or any other revolutionary party. You and others who share your beliefs in this regard should not dignify the murderers of those shining stars by calling them 'anti-imperialist', 'progressive' or 'democratic'. Granting such dignification to murderers would be sprinkling salt on the raw wounds of the revolutionary movement of Iran, and against internationalist solidarity. Marxists even object to the rule that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend' because they do not take a banal view of issues; Marxist views on issues and phenomena are based on concrete analysis of concrete situations and class analysis, and they stand firm on the long-term interests of the proletariat.

22. The Israeli Trotskyist, Yossi Schwartz, ignores the nature of the Iranian regime and believes that if the US attacks Iran, the Iranian comrades should join the Iranian (i.e. Khamenei's) army!¹⁹ And supporters of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers League raised the slogan 'We are with Hezbollah' in their demonstrations. If you comrades continue on your present course, will you have any advice other than that of these Trotskyists to give to the revolutionaries, workers and masses of Iran?

¹⁹ marxistclaudeaxis.net

23. Fundamentalists, in a manner no different from imperialists, have turned some countries into burning infernos for the masses and freedom fighters. If they find that they have the blessings of a glorious party such as yours, they will become even more brazen and taunt the revolutionaries with their jibes. The masses, out of sheer anguish, might accept it as their inescapable fate that where yesterday only imperialism defended the religious hangmen, today parties whose banners are those of the suffering people, who champion secularism and struggle against imperialism and every brand of reaction, also support the same torturers of the people.

We are at a loss to know how, with what chicanery, and in which Islamic country, communists have been able to convince their fundamentalist-blighted people of the righteousness of supporting fundamentalism. A deferential attitude towards fundamentalism will not merely result in distorting the image of this or that communist party; more importantly, such an attitude will discredit Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought in the eyes of the masses and dissident intellectuals. Admiring the 'anti-imperialist' aspect of fundamentalism is akin to having a militant with a noose around his neck, about to be hanged by fundamentalists, and someone being fascinated by the thickness of the rope and admiring its superb quality!

It is worth mentioning that in an interview two years later, we do see a difference in the tone of Comrade Ganapathi (June 2011):

“In fact, Muslim religious fundamentalism is encouraged and

fostered by imperialists as long as it serves their interests—such as in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries, and Kuwait, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan.”

If only our Indian comrades would remember the end result of this simple truth that they mention: a group ‘fostered and encouraged’ by imperialism can never have a ‘national democratic essence and anti-imperialist character’. Iran, a hotbed of fundamentalism, should not be forgotten. Fundamentalists are all cut from the same cloth, and from the moment of their procreation by the CIA they stand guard over imperialist interest. It is abhorrent for communists to develop a soft spot for them. The imperialists admit their atrocious betrayal of Afghan leftist and national forces through the mouth of Dr. Cheryl Benard, one of their policy pundits and spouse of Dr. Zalmi Khalilzad: “At first everyone thought, there’s no way to beat the Soviets. So what we have to do is throw the worst crazies at them that we can find, and there was a lot of collateral damage. We knew exactly who these people were, and what their organizations were like, and we didn’t care. Then, we allowed them to get rid of, just kill all the moderate leaders. The reason we don’t have moderate leaders in Afghanistan today is because we let the nuts kill them all. They killed the leftists, the moderates, the middle-of-the-roaders. They were just eliminated, during the 1980s and afterward.” Dr. Benard’s admission is an exposé of how the CIA used the Afghan fundamentalists as its bloodhounds. Alas, would that our Indian comrades never forgot

this admission!

24. Parties such as the Socialist Workers Party of Britain or the Workers World Party of the US, or intellectuals such as Tariq Ali²⁰ cannot be expected not to support the Iranian regime or the Taliban because of their perceived 'anti-imperialist aspect'. These groups and individuals are only spectators to dangers and suffering, and interpret and rationalise the world according to

²⁰ Mr. Tariq Ali did not define the Taliban as a terrorist group but rather as 'a legitimate resistance movement against US occupation and an expression of Pashtun nationalist sentiments'. Is Pashtun nationalism synonymous with ignorance, lunacy and butchery for the CIA-begotten Taliban to be its expression? Have the Pashtuns been less oppressed by the Taliban than other ethnic groups? Have other ethnic groups in Afghanistan not suffered under occupation and are they not against it? This travesty of 'Pashtun nationalism', concocted by Tariq Ali, is an insult to our people and worthy only of the Taliban and other Pashtun fundamentalist gangs. True Pashtun nationalism has been ever intertwined with the nationalism of other ethnic groups of Afghanistan, historically witnessed by the three Anglo-Afghan wars and the war of resistance against the Russians. The Pashtun people also reject and loath the reactionary 'nationalism' of the Pakistani Taliban: they do not vote for them; they evacuate areas under their control and they flee them as they flee foreign aggressors and occupiers. It would be edifying for Tariq Ali to know that Pashtun nationalism on the other side of the border has always been fused with secularism. It is only in the imagination of the likes of Tariq Ali that the Pashtuns regard school-burning and clinic-burning terrorists who are insanely opposed to women, education, the arts, doctors, engineers, teachers, etc. as paladins of their national aspirations. Roger Garaudy first became a strident revisionist, then turned away from Marxism and re-converted to Christianity. He finally became a Muslim, made trips to Iran, denied the Holocaust, and nestled in the heart of the Iranian regime, thereby hammering the last nail into his coffin. Is it unlikely that the likes of Tariq Ali, because of their amicable portrayals and interpretations of the Taliban, will one day be disgraced with the good graces of the Iranian regime?

their rosy-coloured intellectual perceptions and pre-formed judgments based on denial of mundane realities. For us this is of no importance. Neither the statements nor the actions of Castro, Hugo Chavez and Morales, nor the trip made by scions of Che Guevara to Iran²¹ are worth a fillip to us. They make no claim to being proletarian revolutionaries. But the position taken by your party, by the Communist Party of the Philippines, or by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), does matter to us (*see supplement on page 31*). Like all other revolutionaries around the world, we are proud of you; your failure is our failure, and your victory is our victory and joy. Your stance vis-à-vis fundamentalism or any other reactionary force is of regional and

²¹ The fortitude of the governments of Cuba, Venezuela and Uruguay in the face of the US imperialism, and the social and financial measures they have adopted for the welfare of their peoples are admirable. But awarding an honorary doctoral degree to Ahmadinejad, playing football with him, celebrating birthdays in Tehran, etc., and, of course, staying dead silent on the issue of the massacre of freedom-fighters in Iran should be roundly condemned. The economic and political ties of the three countries with Iran is a normal matter. But in our opinion, no political or so-called diplomatic excuse or pretext can or should induce them to make gestures that are excruciating and abhorrent for each and every Iranian and non-Iranian freedom-fighter who cherishes the hope that anti-imperialist governments will, instead of indulging in such ridiculous antics, honour the blood of tens of thousands of freedom-seekers and the current struggle of the people of Iran, expose the Iranian regime and not have a shred of disillusionment about its nature. Instead of visiting Iran under the watchful eye of the regime, the scions of Che Guevara should raise their voices in solidarity with Iranian political prisoners and in condemnation of the Islamic republic, for the people of the world to see, in their personalities, the grandeur of the sacrifice and memory of Che Guevara.

global import. It is for this reason that your standpoints about Iran, the Taliban and others should be carefully studied, and possibly criticized. We have no doubt that we will learn more from your response and explanation.

In conclusion, allow us to once again quote Lenin's following warning:

“If we do not want to betray socialism we *must* support every revolt against our chief enemy, the bourgeoisie of the big states, provided it is not the revolt of a reactionary class.”²²

²² V.I. Lenin, *The Discussion On Self-Determination Summed Up*, Collected Works, Vol. 22

Supplement

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), after successfully leading a protracted people's war from 1996 to 2006, liberating vast swathes of the country and toppling the corrupt and despotic monarchical regime, suddenly gave in to signing a peace treaty with the government in November 2006. According to the treaty, the revolutionary army came under the supervision of the United Nations and the party forfeited its greatest lever. By entering an interim comprador-feudal, opportunist and reformist government, the CPN(M) deviated from the revolutionary path on the very verge of attaining power and taking the revolution forward towards socialism. The CPN(M), by discharging a 20,000-strong army and integrating it with the armed forces of the reactionary government, rendered the people and the revolutionaries of Nepal defenseless against possible assaults by the enemy. It is strange but true that they even returned the lands confiscated in the interest of poor farmers to their feudal owners.

The party so lost itself in its interplay with the government that it reduced the masses who had brought the revolution to victory to inert spectators. The parliamentarism of Prachanda and Baburam (leaders of the right-deviationist branch of the party who, until yesterday, correctly called the parliamentarian parties of Nepal lackeys of the ruling classes and imperialism) and their advocacy of multi-party democracy blocked the party's path towards implementing its independent and revolutionary innovations. Prachanda and Baburam asked the government parties to go to the liberated areas and comfortably carry out their activities there. Prachanda trampled on the Nepalese people's interests when he signed a

water resource usage agreement with India. He is deluded by the belief that he can rein in the counter-revolution through political competition with other parties.

If this is valid, what was the purpose of the ten-years' people's war and all the sacrifices it entailed? In order for a revolution to consolidate its gains and attain ultimate success, it must dissolve all political, economic and cultural institutions and tools of the reactionary forces. The Bolsheviks dissolved the Constituent Assembly since it represented bourgeois democracy, whereas the workers' soviets (councils) were true representations of Soviet democracy. The proletariat was not supposed to preserve any reactionary legacy that would hinder the revolutionary undertakings of the soviets. The constituent assembly that Prachanda had his eyes on was composed of representatives of the feudal and comprador classes, and it is impossible to take Nepal forward towards progress with them. In Nepal, the form of government has changed from a monarchy to a republic, but its essence remains untouched.

As Comrade Indra Mohan Sigdel (Basanta), one of the leaders of the anti-Prachanda-Baburam wing of the CPN(M) has said, the monarchy has been toppled but the country remains semi-colonial and semi-feudal, and foreign intervention has not ended. The Prachanda-Baburam wing counters that Nepal does not need a New Democratic revolution, since the gap between a New Democratic revolution and socialism has shrunk. If, instead of bringing down compradors and feudals and other agents of imperialism and India –who are all enemies of the revolution– they are aided, will this render the path to socialism shorter or will it actually block it and render it impossible? In like manner, by disdaining to resolutely continue class and anti-imperialist struggle, Prachanda and Baburam claim that the real duty of the party is to develop the productive forces through facilitating favourable conditions for assisting countries. They thus have not even sided with the national bourgeoisie and the national economy. By signalling inclination to deal with the World Bank and the International

Monetary Fund, openness to establishing Special Economic Zones (which in reality is welcoming imperialist investment through providing facilities and privileges in return for free-handed and vicious exploitation of Nepali workers), etc., these leaders have assured all exploiters that there will be no threat from the party to imperialist plans and demands, and that in fact they want to associate with the imperialist system. Prachanda stated his interest in studying China after Mao, which has no other meaning except shelving Mao Zedong Thought. In 2006, Prachanda announced that Nepal will become a heaven on earth in the next five years. This exaggerated prediction could have been taken seriously if power had remained in the hands of the revolutionary communist party, but its realization in association with the compradors dependent on India and the US is simply ridiculous.

It is worthy of mention that after the CPN(M) forces entered Kathmandu, Prachanda, in a flash of egotism and craving for his personality cult, and in stark aberration from the basic principles of Marxism, labeled his new thoughts 'the Prachanda Path'. Fortunately, the CPN(M) has experienced and conscious proletarian cadres, who under the leadership of Comrades Kiran, Basanta and others, have risen up in resolute ideological struggle against Prachanda's capitulationist and revisionist stand. This gives hope for the finalisation and salvation of the revolution in the complex and difficult situation of Nepal, and progress of the CPN(M) towards creating a New Democratic and socialist society.