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Pakistan

Call for a greater Left unity

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There has been never any other better time in history of Pakistan for a greater Left unity than the present time. There is great urge among all the Left and progressive forces to unite on one platform.

[https://internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/pakistan_support.jpg]

Pakistan Peoples Party: illusions shattered

Pakistan Peoples Party was traditionally seen as a party that will fight against militarization and for democracy. Under Benazir Bhutto, the PPP has become a party of compromises and conciliation with the present military regime of General Musharaf. She has already finalized a deal of power sharing with present military regime that has become one of the most hated among ordinary people. The price hike, unemployment, class polarization, uncertainty of future and rising incidents of mass killings have become the hall mark of the Musharaf regime.

Benazir Bhutto has tried to win over her lost support in Pakistan during the process of dealing with Musharaf by a massive show of mass power in Karachi has been disrupted by the suicidal attacks of religious fundamentalist forces. According to one report, the Benazir reception at Karachi was one of the most expensive political events in the history of Pakistan costing over 3 billion Rupees.

The illusions among many that PPP will turn to left wing ideas have been shattered. On the contrary, PPP has never been more on the right than present time. This has given the Left forces a rear chance to win over the sympathies of many who are disillusioned and disappointed by PPP character. This is a chance for the Left to win them over by taking new organizational measures and flexible tactics by coming closer and unity.

The disunity among the fundamentalists

The Mutehida Majlis Amal, the religious fundamentalist unity alliance has never been as disunited as they are today. There is an open war going on among them. This will not be seen by the masses a healthy sign. Even if they are able to continue as MMA, they have lost a precious time in fighting among them over tactics to fight the best way against Musharaf regime. It was difficult for many of them to adjust to the present day realities that the state is not the same as was the case in the past. The Pakistani state wanted to disassociate itself under the imperialist pressure from the religious fundamentalist forces. The religious fundamentalist are on the offence on the basis of their ability to show to the masses that are the anti imperialist forces. But it is an anti imperialist of the fools. The Left has been fighting the influence of the imperialist for a long time but during the last few years it had lost the initiative to the religious fundamentalists who had more funds and resources at their disposal. This is the right time to unite the human and material resources for the unity of the Left to continue the anti imperialist struggle on more effective manner.

Fundamentalists' Suicidal Attacks: a challenge to Left

The suicidal attack on Benazir Bhutto rally in Karachi on 18th October was a warning note to all the democratic forces particularly the Left forces. It is an attack on civil liberties, right of association and assembly. This attack is to terrify people struggling to get rid of militarism and religious fundamentalism. Such attacks are the result of a calculated game of eliminating the opponents.

It is fascist tactics and we must condemn in strongest terms. We have no other way apart from uniting ourselves to fight for our right to assembly. We can not let the few individuals with a suicidal mission to dictate us their terms and conditions and to shut us up. We must have a right to organize and demonstration without fear of these suicidal attacks.

The state has failed to protect even those who compromised with the regime, how it can protect us who are totally against the military regime? The only defense of self defense and unity among our selves, the only way to fight is solidarity at national an international basis.

Many process of Left Unity

At present there are many process of Left unity going on in Pakistan. There is Awami Jamhoori Tehreek, an alliance of seven Left groups and parties. But it has not gone very far. The Awami Jamhoori Forum is taking initiatives to call more Left meeting for unity all over Punjab. One such meeting was in Rawalpindi on 20th October attracting over 75 Left and progressive activists and radical social activists. They have formed a district committee to discuss the process in detail later. Awami Jamhoori Tehreek (AJT) Rawalpindi called this meeting on the initiative of Awami Jamhoori Forum (AJF). AJF has produced a leaflet explaining the reasons for a greater left unity at present time.

On 24th October, AJT Punjab has called a left unity meeting in Lahore to discuss the process and plan for future actions. The meeting will take place at National Workers Party office at Mcload Road Lahore.

The Tabqati Group under the leadership of Lal Khan (Ted Grant group) in association with PILER Karachi has called another Left Unity meeting on 7th November in Karachi. Labour Party Pakistan is taking part in this meeting as well. Meraj Mohammed Khan in association of Inqilabi Jamhoori Committee (Taj Marri) is calling for a new Left party in Pakistan. He is campaigning in Sind for such an initiative. Meraj Mohammed Kahn and Inqilabi Committee is already part of the AJT.

Labour Party Pakistan is holding its fourth national conference in Toba Tek Singh on 9/10/11th November. LPP will hold a public rally on 10th November and most of the Left leaders will be invited to speak at the public rally and participate in the conference.

We call on all the radical social activists, trade unionists, political activists and advocates movement leaders to parties to take part in this process and urge for a greater Left unity.

The General Elections strategy

We must plan a strategy to take part as Left forces in the next general elections going to be held during early next year. LPP is advocating a policy of participation in the next general elections from as many seats as possible. What we need is put forward an alternative candidate in each constituency. We must not be forced to vote for a party that

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is in alliance with military regime or from religious fundamentalism. There is a great anti Musharaf consciousness at present in Pakistan. We must be able to be candidate to attract this consciousness. We must fight against the discriminatory rule of Election Commission that allows only graduates to contest in the elections. We must go to the courts against this rule and get rid of it allowing our working class comrades to stand in the elections.

What we need a percentage of vote and not just one or two leading contestants on behalf of the whole Left. We must strive for a reasonable percentage of national votes for the candidates of Left forces. That is only possible when we have a national strategy and maximum numbers of Left candidates across Pakistan.

We need a common political and economic agenda for such a Left unity. Hat we can discuss in our meeting and come forward with proposals that could be agreed by at least majority.

Please comment and circulate this message with your comments to as many as possible.

These are some of my initial thoughts for discussions and hopefully we can go forward on the road to unity.

Unity is strength and Workers of the World: Unite.