

Answer to a Criticism of the Communist Party of Peru

By a commentator for Tjen Folket Media.

This is an excerpt from a forthcoming article on the people's war in Peru.

The Communist Party of Peru (CPP) has been criticized by enemies, opponents, and by people who have not understood their line and the people's war in Peru. The originally Hoxhaist periodical *Revolusjon!* has also published such a critique in Norwegian.

The Periodical *Revolusjon!* and Eraker's Critique

In January 2017, the periodical *Revolusjon!* published [an article written by Steinar Eraker](#), where the CPP has been accused of waging "terror against the people" and for being a "counterrevolutionary force" and a "tool for imperialism". The article says the following [our translation]:

The conditions in Peru were miserable and one would believe that everything was in place for a successful uprising. But Sendero Luminoso [sic] did not have any analysis of the conditions in the country and had fatal errors in their decisions regarding armed struggle, which made it so that the Senderistas became more and more pressured. It was not long before they stood forth as a purely terrorist group that carried out murders against union members, peasant leaders, and activists who were against their struggle.

He writes that the activities of the CPP fell apart throughout the 1990s, and insists that the party itself claims that the oppression by the state apparatus was the cause – all without citing any sources. He claims that people in Peru have had

strained relations toward everything that can be called socialist politics and popular organizing, all because of the CPP. He writes that the CPP destroyed the "left-wing" and the proletariat's class organizations, that they carried out sabotages "without any goals or meaning from a military standpoint," that they destroyed peasant society, and carried out massacres. He writes that a revolution can never succeed by forcing peasants and workers to participate. He cites the Lucanamarca massacre to claim that the CPP carried out terror against the people.

The attempted "analysis" is that the CPP did not work closely with the people, and that they instead "destroyed everything and everyone that stood in their way" and that this was why they lost support. He accuses them of Focoism, a direction that the CPP has always warned against. The analysis in this article is not interesting because it is factual or difficult to answer, but because it contains a typical criticism against the CPP.

We must assume that the author has an honest starting point, but one that is incredibly banal. It is suggested that it would have been easy to succeed with a revolution in Peru. The conditions, in other words, were to have been very overripe for the people's war, but the CPP was to have failed because "they did not have any analysis of the conditions in the country" and that they were to have been "more and more pressured" in the people's war. This is simply put based on a practically nonexistent insight into Peru or the CPP.

Eraker does not explain why the people's war in Peru is the revolutionary struggle that for the last fifty years has come furthest in threatening the bourgeois state either! Peru is by no means alone in being ripe for revolution. The entire third world is characterized by the same miserable conditions for the broadest and deepest masses. If it is so "easy" to succeed in a revolution, why doesn't it happen all the time? And if the CPP was so miserable and out of touch with the masses and

reality, then why did they manage to come so much further than all others? There are great logical discontinuities in the critique against the CPP, with Eraker, as well as other critics. If the people's war in Peru was such a great defeat, what, then, does this make the absence of revolution under communist leadership in most of the world?

One can always claim that the CPP had an incorrect analysis, and then one can present their own, better analysis. But to claim that the CPP and Gonzalo did not have an analysis of the condition of Peru at all is easy to reveal as nothing more than empty rhetoric. Norwegian Maoists have now translated the political general line of the CPP, passed in 1988. Thereby, it is now possible to read some of their analysis and synthesis in Norwegian. A great deal of articles are available in both Spanish and English, just a Google search away. It is no problem to find articles, statements, and documents from the party with analyses of Peru. And this is just the tip of the iceberg. What cannot be found is volumes of internal documents of the party and movement, or volumes of semi-illegal publications that have never been digitized. To claim that they did not have an analysis is so foolish that there are no words to describe it. It was not only a fighting organization, but a thinking and writing organization, which based the entirety of its activities on an advanced political line and centrally approved plans.

Furthermore, if it is really as the author claims that there is a simple and mechanical relationship between a correct analysis and advances, then the author meets two explanatory problems. First: why hasn't the KPML [*transl. note: "Communist Platform, Marxist-Leninist"*] had any great advances? Second: how can he explain that the Communist Party of Peru did not truly initiate people's war and became "more and more pressured", but meanwhile all official statisticians, reviewers, analysts, intelligence services, historians, and the party itself confirmed a marked and rapid advance for the

people's war? How then does a people's war "without analysis" and with "fatal errors in decisions regarding the military question" begin at a very low level in a contained area and quickly grow in quality and quantity? Or that it could expand from a small region in the Andes mountains to the entire country, all national regions, and become an uncontested threat and challenge to the old state?

How could it then be that the people's war continued in full until the leadership that was then still not captured capitulated and did all that it could to liquidate the party, but yet even today there are actions of both a political and military nature being carried out in Peru? This is the second explanatory problem: if advances come from a good analysis, how could the CPP have no analysis (and an incorrect theory, and no support from the masses!) and still pose a threat to the old bourgeois state?

It is un-Marxist to claim that one must win because conditions are good and one has a correct line. A correct line is decisive, an understanding of the conditions is decisive, but Mao Zedong has shown that it is nonetheless possible to lose, at least temporarily.

It is not dangerous to have lacking insight or overview. Nobody can know everything about everything. And everyone begins with knowing nothing. But one should not parade their ignorance, and it will become a potentially dangerous error if one allows arrogance to stand in the way of their attempt to learn.