



Declaration
of the
Revolutionary
Internationalist
Movement

5-1-24

DECLARATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONALIST MOVEMENT

*Adopted by the delegates and observers at the
Second International Conference of
Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations
which formed the
Revolutionary Internationalist Movement.*

Central Reorganisation Committee
Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)
Ceylon Communist Party
Communist Collective of Agit/Prop (Italy)
Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist)
Mao Tsetung Regional Committee
Communist Party of Peru
Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist
Haitian International Revolutionary Group
Nepal Communist Party (Mashal)
New Zealand Red Flag Group
Nottingham and Stockport Communist Groups [Britain]
Proletarian Communist Organization, Marxist-Leninist (Italy)
Revolutionary Communist Group of Colombia
Revolutionary Communist Party, India
Revolutionary Communist Party, USA
Revolutionary Communist Union [Dominican Republic]
Union of Iranian Communists (Sarbedaran)

"Today the world is on the threshold of momentous events. The crisis of the imperialist system is rapidly bringing about the danger of the outbreak of a new, third, world war as well as the real perspective for revolution in countries throughout the world." The scientific accuracy of these words from the Joint Communiqué of our First International Conference in Autumn 1980 have not only been fully borne out by the recent developments in the world, but the world situation has been further accentuated and aggravated since that time.

Thus the Marxist-Leninist movement is confronted with the exceptionally serious responsibility to further unify and prepare its ranks for the tremendous challenges and momentous battles shaping up ahead. The historic mission of the proletariat calls ever more urgently for an all-out preparation for sudden changes and leaps in developments, particularly at this current conjuncture where national developments are more profoundly affected by developments on a world scale, and where unprecedented prospects for revolution are in the making. We must sharpen our revolutionary vigilance and increase our political, ideological, organisational and military readiness in order to wield these opportunities in the best possible manner for the interests of our class and to conquer the most advanced positions possible for the world proletarian revolution.

Armed with the scientific teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung we are fully conscious of the tasks expected of us in the present situation and are proud to accept and act in accordance with this historic responsibility.

The Marxist-Leninist movement continues to confront a deep

and serious crisis which came to a head following the reactionary coup d'état in China following the death of Mao Tsetung and the treacherous betrayal of Enver Hoxha. However despite these reversals there are genuine Marxist-Leninists on all continents who have refused to abandon the struggle for communism.

The international communist movement is developing through a process of further consolidated unity and advance along the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Since 1980 we have developed our strength and increased our ability to influence and lead developments. Our Second International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations which was successfully convened despite unfavourable and difficult conditions, represents a qualitative leap in the unity and maturing of our movement. The tasks that cry out to be done can and shall be accomplished by forging an invincible barricade against revisionist and all bourgeois ideology, by providing scientific leadership to and standing in the forefront of the surging revolutionary waves, by consciously applying the principles of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to guide our practice and sum up our experience in the crucible of revolutionary class struggle.

The following Declaration has been forged through painstaking, comprehensive discussions and principled struggle by the delegates and observers at the Second International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations which formed the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement.

The World Situation

All the major contradictions of the world imperialist system are rapidly accentuating: the contradiction between various imperialist powers, the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed peoples and nations, and the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the imperialist countries. All of these contradictions have a common origin in the capitalist mode of production and its fundamental contradiction. The rivalry between the two blocs of imperialist powers led by the US and the USSR respectively is bound to lead to war unless revolution prevents it and this rivalry is greatly affecting world events.

The post World War II world is rapidly coming apart at the seams. The international economic and political relations – the

“division of the world” – established through and in the aftermath of World War II no longer correspond to the needs of the various imperialist powers to “peacefully” extend and expand their profit empires. While the post World War II world has undergone important changes as a result of conflicts between the imperialists and, especially, as a result of revolutionary struggle, today it is this entire network of economic, political and military relations that is being called into question. The relative stability of the major imperialist powers and the relative prosperity of a handful of countries based on the blood and misery of the exploited majority of the world's people and nations is coming unraveled. The revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations and peoples is again on the rise and delivering new blows to the imperialist world order.

It is in this context that the statement by Mao Tsetung, “Either revolution will prevent war, or war will give rise to revolution” rings out all the more clearly and takes on urgent importance. The very logic of the imperialist system and the revolutionary struggles is preparing a new situation. The contradiction between the rival bands of imperialists, between the imperialists and the oppressed nations, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries, are all likely in the coming period to express themselves by the force of arms on an unprecedented scale. As Stalin said in regard to the First World War:

The significance of the imperialist war which broke out ten years ago lies, among other things, in the fact that it gathered all these contradictions into a single knot and threw them on to the scales, thereby accelerating and facilitating the revolutionary battles of the proletariat.

The heightening of contradictions is now drawing, and will do so even more dramatically in the future, all countries and regions of the world and sections of the masses previously lulled to sleep or oblivious to political life into the vortex of world history. And so the revolutionary communists must get prepared, and prepare the class conscious workers and revolutionary sections of the people and step up their revolutionary struggle.

Communists are resolute opponents of imperialist war and must mobilise and lead the masses in the fight against preparations for a third world war which would be the greatest crime committed in the history of mankind. But the Marxist-Leninists will never hide the truth from the masses: only revolution, revolutionary war that

the Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary forces are leading or preparing to lead, can prevent this crime. Marxist-Leninists must seize hold of the revolutionary possibilities that are developing rapidly and lead the masses in stepping up the revolutionary struggle on all fronts – beginning revolutionary warfare where that is possible, stepping up preparations where the conditions for such revolutionary warfare are not yet ripe. In this way the struggle for communism will advance and it is possible that the victory of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples in the course of decisive battles will shatter the imperialists' present preparations for world war, establish the rule of the working class in a number of countries and create an overall world situation more favourable to the advance of the revolutionary struggle. If, on the other hand, the revolutionary struggle is not capable of preventing a third world war, the communists and the revolutionary proletariat and masses must be prepared to mobilise the outrage that such a war and the inevitable suffering accompanying it will engender and direct it against the source of war – imperialism, take advantage of the weakened position of the enemy and in this way turn a reactionary imperialist war into a just war against imperialism and reaction.

Since imperialism has integrated the world into a single global system (and is increasingly doing so) the world situation increasingly influences the developments in each country; thus revolutionary forces all over the world must base themselves on a correct evaluation of the overall world situation. This does not negate the crucial task they face of evaluating the specific conditions in each country, formulating specific strategy and tactics and developing revolutionary practice. Unless this dialectical relationship between the overall situation at the global level and the concrete conditions in each country is grasped correctly by Marxist-Leninists they will not be able to utilise the extremely favourable situation at the global level in favour of revolution in each country.

Tendencies in the international movement to view the revolution in one country apart from the overall struggle for communism must be struggled against: Lenin pointed out, "There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is – working wholeheartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in *one's own* country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy and material aid) *this struggle*, this, *and only this*, line in *every* country without exception." Lenin stressed that proletarian revolutionaries must approach the question of their revolutionary work not from the point of view of "my"

country but "from the point of view of *my share* in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution."

On the Two Component Parts of the World Proletarian Revolution

Lenin analysed long ago the division of the world between a handful of advanced capitalist countries and the great number of oppressed nations comprising the largest part of the world's territory and population which the imperialists parasitically pillage and maintain in an enforced state of dependency and backwardness. From this reality flows the Leninist view, confirmed by history, that the world proletarian revolution is composed essentially of two streams – the proletarian-socialist revolution waged by the proletariat and its allies in the imperialist citadels and the national liberation, or new democratic revolution waged by the nations and peoples subjugated to imperialism. The alliance between these two revolutionary currents remains the cornerstone of revolutionary strategy in the era of imperialism.

In the period since the Second World War until now the struggle of the oppressed peoples and nations has been the storm centre of the world revolutionary struggle. Prosperity, stability and "democracy" in a number of imperialist states has been bought and paid for by the intensified exploitation and misery of the masses in the oppressed countries. Far from eliminating the national and colonial question, the development of neo-colonialism has further subjugated whole nations and peoples to the requirements of international capital and led to a whole series of revolutionary wars against imperialist domination.

The current intensification of world contradictions while bringing forth further possibilities for these movements also places new obstacles and new tasks before them. Despite efforts and even some successes of the imperialist powers in subverting or perverting the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed masses, especially in the hopes of turning them into weapons of inter-imperialist rivalry, these struggles continue to deal powerful blows to the imperialist system, and accelerate the development of revolutionary possibilities in the world as a whole.

In the imperialist countries of the Western bloc the post World

War II period has been essentially marked by a non-revolutionary situation reflecting the relative stability of imperialist rule in these countries inseparably linked to the intense exploitation of the oppressed peoples by these imperialist states. Nevertheless, the revolutionary prospects in these countries are more favourable than in any time in recent memory. History has shown that revolutionary situations in these types of countries are rare and are generally connected with the acute intensification of world contradictions, such as the conjuncture taking form in the world today.

The mass revolutionary struggles that developed in most of the Western imperialist countries especially during the 1960s demonstrate forcefully the possibility of proletarian revolution in these countries, despite the fact that the conditions were not favourable for a seizure of power at that time and these movements declined along with the overall ebb in the world movement. Today the sharpening world situation is increasingly reflected in these countries as seen, for example, by important rebellions of the lower strata of the proletariat in some imperialist countries as well as the growth of a powerful movement against imperialist war preparations in a number of countries, including within it a more revolutionary section.

In the capitalist and imperialist countries of the Eastern bloc important cracks and fissures in the relative stability of the rule by the state-capitalist bourgeoisie are more and more apparent. In Poland the proletariat and other sections of the masses have risen in struggle and delivered powerful blows to the established order. In these countries, also, possibilities for proletarian revolution are developing and will be heightened by the development and intensification of world contradictions.

It is important that the revolutionary elements in both kinds of countries be educated to understand the nature of the strategic alliance between the revolutionary proletarian movement in the advanced countries and the national-democratic revolutions in the oppressed nations. The social-chauvinist position that would deny the importance of the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples or their ability, under the leadership of the proletariat and a genuine Marxist-Leninist party, to lead to the establishment of socialism is still a dangerous deviation to be combatted. The modern revisionists, led by the USSR, who claim that a national liberation struggle can only be successful if bestowed by "aid" from its "natural (imperialist) ally" and the Trotskyites who negate in principle the possibility of the transformation of a national-demo-

cratic revolution into a socialist revolution are examples of this pernicious tendency. On the other hand, in the recent period a significant problem has been another deviation which ignores the possibility of revolutionary situations arising in the advanced countries or considers that such revolutionary situations could only arise as a direct result of the advances in the national liberation struggles. Both these deviations sap the strength of the revolutionary proletariat in that they fail to take account of the developing world conjuncture and the possibilities for revolutionary advances in different kinds of countries and on a world scale that flow from it.

Some Questions Regarding the History of the International Communist Movement

In the little over a century since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* and its call "Workers of all countries, unite!" an immense wealth of experience has been accumulated by the international proletariat. This experience comprehends the revolutionary movement in different types of countries in the great days of decisive victories and revolutionary élan and the periods of the darkest reaction and retreat. In the course of the twists and turns of the movement the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought has taken shape and developed through a constant struggle against those who cut out its revolutionary heart and/or render it a stale and lifeless dogma. Important turning points in the development of world history and the class struggle have invariably been accompanied by fierce battles on the ideological front between Marxism and revisionism and dogmatism. This was the case with Lenin's struggle against the Second International (which corresponded with the outbreak of the First World War and the development of a revolutionary situation in Russia and elsewhere) and in the struggle of Mao Tsetung against modern Soviet revisionism, a great struggle which reflected world historic developments (the reestablishment of capitalism in the USSR, the intensification of the class struggle in socialist China, the development of a worldwide upsurge of revolutionary struggle aimed particularly at US imperialism). Similarly, the profound crisis that the international communist movement is now experiencing is a reflection of the reversal of proletarian rule in China and the all-round attack

on the Cultural Revolution following the death of Mao Tsetung and the coup d'état of Teng Hsiao-ping and Hua Kuo-feng, as well as the overall heightening of world contradictions accentuating the danger of world war and the prospects for revolution. Today, as in the other great struggles, the forces fighting for a revolutionary line are a small minority encircled and attacked by revisionists and bourgeois apologists of all stripes. Nevertheless, these forces represent the future, and the further advances of the international communist movement depend on their ability to forge a political line which charts the path forward for the revolutionary proletariat in the current complex situation. This is because if one's line is correct, even if one has not a single soldier at first there will be soldiers and even if there is no political power, power will be gained. This is borne out by the historical experience of the international communist movement since the time of Marx.

An extremely important element for the elaboration of such a general line for the international communist movement is the correct evaluation of the historical experience of our movement. It would be extremely irresponsible, and contrary to the Marxist theory of knowledge, to fail to attach adequate importance to experience gained and lessons learned in the course of mass revolutionary struggles of millions of people and paid for by countless martyrs.

Today, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, together with other Maoist forces, are the inheritors of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao, and they must firmly base themselves on this heritage. But they must also, on the basis of this heritage, dare to criticise its shortcomings. There are experiences which people should praise and there are experiences which should make people grieve. Communists and revolutionaries in all countries should ponder and seriously study these experiences of success and failure so as to draw correct conclusions and useful lessons from them.

The summation of our heritage is a collective responsibility which must be carried out by the entire international communist movement. Such a summation must be done in a ruthlessly scientific manner, basing itself on Marxist-Leninist principles and fully taking into account the concrete historical conditions which existed then and the limits they placed on the proletarian vanguard and above all in the spirit of making the past serve the present, in order to avoid metaphysical errors of measuring the past with today's yardstick, disregarding historical conditions. Such a thorough summation will undoubtedly take a fairly long time but the pressure of

world events, the opening up of revolutionary possibilities, demands that certain key lessons be drawn today to better enable the vanguard forces of the proletariat to fulfill their responsibilities.

The summation of historical experience has, itself, always been a sharp arena of class struggle. Ever since the defeat of the Paris Commune, opportunists and revisionists have seized upon the defeats and shortcomings of the proletariat to reverse right and wrong, confound the secondary with the principal, and thus conclude that the proletariat "should not have taken to arms." The emergence of new conditions has often been used as an excuse to negate fundamental principles of Marxism under the signboard of its "creative development." At the same time, it is incorrect and just as damaging to abandon the Marxist critical spirit, to fail to sum up the shortcomings as well as the successes of the proletariat, and to rest content with upholding or reclaiming positions considered correct in the past. Such an approach would make Marxism-Leninism brittle and unable to withstand the attacks of the enemy and incapable of leading new advances in the class struggle – and suffocate its revolutionary essence.

In fact, history has shown that real creative developments of Marxism (and not phoney revisionist distortions) have always been inseparably linked with a fierce struggle to defend and uphold basic principles of Marxism-Leninism. Lenin's two-fold struggle against the open revisionists and against those, like Kautsky, who opposed revolution under the guise of "Marxist orthodoxy" and Mao Tsetung's great battle to oppose the modern revisionists and their negation of the experience of building socialism in the USSR under Lenin and Stalin while carrying out a thorough and scientific criticism of the roots of revisionism are evidence of this.

Today a similar approach is necessary to the thorny questions and problems of the history of the international communist movement. A serious danger comes from those who, in the face of setbacks in the international communist movement since the death of Mao Tsetung, declare that Marxism-Leninism has failed or is outmoded and the entire experience acquired by the proletariat must be put into question. This tendency would negate the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, eliminate Stalin from the ranks of proletarian leaders, and in fact, attack the basic Leninist thesis on the nature of the proletarian revolution, the need for a vanguard party and the dictatorship of the proletariat. As Mao powerfully expressed "I think there are two 'swords': one is Lenin and the other Stalin", once the sword of Stalin has been

discarded "once this gate is opened, by and large Leninism is thrown away." This statement made by Mao Tsetung in 1956 has been shown by the experience of the international communist movement up to today to retain its validity. Similarly today the advances in the science of revolution made by Mao Tsetung are also attacked or rendered unrecognisable. In fact all this is a "new" version of very old and stale revisionism and social democracy.

This more or less open revisionism, whether it comes from the traditional pro-Moscow parties or its "Eurocommunist" current, from the revisionist usurpers in China, or from the Trotskyites and the petit-bourgeois critics of Leninism, remains the main danger to the international communist movement. At the same time, revisionism in its dogmatic form continues to be a bitter enemy of revolutionary Marxism. This current, most sharply expressed in the political line of Enver Hoxha and the Party of Labour of Albania, attacks Mao Tsetung Thought, the path of the Chinese Revolution and especially the experience of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Masquerading as defenders of Stalin (when in fact many of their theses are Trotskyite), these revisionists soil the genuine revolutionary heritage of Stalin. These imposters use the shortcomings and errors of the international communist movement, and not its achievements in order to buttress up their revisionist-trotskyite line, and demand that the international communist movement follow suit on the basis of a return to some mystical "doctrinal purity". The many features this Hoxhaite line shares with classical revisionism, including the ability of Soviet revisionism (as well as reaction in general) to promote and/or profit from both openly anti-Leninist "Eurocommunism" and Hoxha's disguised anti-Leninism at the same time, are testimony to their common bourgeois ideological basis.

Upholding Mao Tsetung's qualitative development of the science of Marxism-Leninism represents a particularly important and pressing question in the international movement and among the class conscious workers and other revolutionary minded people in the world today. The principle involved is nothing less than whether or not to uphold and build upon the decisive contributions to the proletarian revolution and the science of Marxism-Leninism made by Mao Tsetung. It is therefore nothing less than a question of whether or not to uphold Marxism-Leninism itself.

Stalin said, "Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution." This is entirely correct. Since Lenin's death the world situation has undergone great changes. But the era

has not changed. The fundamental principles of Leninism are not outdated, they remain the theoretical basis guiding our thinking today. We affirm that Mao Tsetung Thought is a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism. Without upholding and building on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought it is not possible to defeat revisionism, imperialism and reaction in general.

The USSR and the Comintern

The October Revolution in Russia and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat opened a new stage in the history of the international working class movement. The October Revolution was the living confirmation of Lenin's vital development of the Marxist theory of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. For the first time in history the working class succeeded in smashing the old state apparatus, establishing its own rule, beating back the attempts of the exploiters to strangle the socialist regime in its infancy and creating the political conditions necessary for the establishment of a new, socialist, economic order. In this process the central role of a vanguard political party of a new type, the Leninist party, was demonstrated.

The international impact of the Russian Revolution, coming especially as it did in the course of the world conjuncture marked by the First World War and the upsurge of revolutionary activity that accompanied it, was immense. From the beginning the leaders and class conscious workers in the new socialist state viewed the success of the revolution there not as an end in itself but as the first major breakthrough in the worldwide struggle to defeat imperialism, uproot exploitation and establish communism throughout the world. In the wake of the Russian Revolution a new, Communist, International was formed on the basis of assimilating the vital lessons of the Bolshevik revolution and in rupturing with the reformism and social democracy that had poisoned and eventually characterised the great majority of socialist parties making up the Second International. The Russian Revolution and the Comintern in connection with the objective developments brought about by World War I transformed the struggle for socialism and communism from an essentially European phenomenon into a truly worldwide struggle for the first time in history.

Lenin and Stalin developed the proletarian line on the national

and colonial question, stressing the importance of the revolutions in oppressed countries in the overall process of the world proletarian revolution and arguing against those such as Trotsky who held that the revolution in these countries was dependent on the victory of the proletariat in the imperialist countries and denied the possibility of the proletariat carrying out a socialist revolution on the basis of having led the first, bourgeois democratic stage of the revolution in these types of countries.

The period that followed the Russian Revolution was marked by worldwide revolutionary ferment and attempts at establishing working class political power in a number of countries. Despite the unbending assistance the newly established USSR gave and the political attention by Lenin to the revolutionary movement worldwide, the temporary resolution of the crisis that World War I concentrated and the remaining strength of the imperialist powers as well as the weaknesses of the revolutionary working class movement led to the defeat of the revolution outside the borders of the USSR.

Lenin and his successor Stalin were faced with the necessity of safeguarding the gains of the revolution in the USSR and carrying through the establishment of a socialist economic system in the Soviet Union alone. Following Lenin's death an important ideological and political struggle was waged by Stalin against the Trotskyites and others who claimed that the low level of the productive forces in the USSR, the existence of an immense peasantry and the USSR's international isolation made it impossible to carry out the construction of socialism. This erroneous, capitulationist viewpoint was refuted both theoretically and, more importantly, in practice as tens of millions of workers and peasants went into battle to uproot the old capitalist system, to collectivise agriculture and create a new economic system no longer based on the exploitation of man by man.

These soul-stirring battles and the important victories won in them greatly spread the influence of Marxism-Leninism and increased the prestige of the USSR throughout the world. The class conscious workers and oppressed peoples correctly considered the socialist USSR as their own, rejoiced in the victories won by the Soviet working class and came to its defence against the menaces and attacks of the imperialists.

Nevertheless it can be seen in retrospect that the progress of the socialist revolution in the USSR, even in the period of the great socialist transformations in the late 1920s and '30s, was marked by

serious weaknesses and shortcomings. Some of these weaknesses are to be explained by the lack of previous historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat (outside of the short-lived Paris Commune) and by the severe imperialist blockade and aggression aimed at the USSR. These problems were increased and supplemented, however, by some important theoretical and political errors. Mao Tsetung, while upholding Stalin from the slanders of Khrushchev, made serious and correct criticisms of these errors: Mao explained the ideological basis for Stalin's errors: "Stalin had a fair amount of metaphysics in him and he taught many people to follow metaphysics", "Stalin failed to see the connection between the struggle of opposites and the unity of opposites. Some people in the Soviet Union are so metaphysical and rigid in their thinking that they think a thing has to be either one or the other, refusing to recognise the unity of opposites. Hence, political mistakes are made." Stalin's most fundamental error was to fail to thoroughly apply dialectics in all spheres and thus draw serious wrong conclusions concerning the nature of the class struggle under socialism and the means to prevent capitalist restoration. While waging a fierce struggle against the old exploiting classes, Stalin denied in theory the emergence of a new bourgeoisie from within the socialist society itself, reflected and concentrated by the revisionists within the ruling communist party, hence his erroneous claim that "antagonistic class contradictions" had been eliminated in the Soviet Union as a result of the basic establishment of socialist ownership in industry and agriculture. Similarly a failure to thoroughly apply dialectics to the analysis of socialist society led the Soviet leadership to conclude that there was no longer a contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production under socialism and to neglect to pay adequate attention to carrying out the revolution in the superstructure and continuing to revolutionise the relations of production even after the establishment, in the main, of the socialist ownership system.

This incorrect understanding of the nature of socialist society also contributed to Stalin's failure to adequately distinguish the contradictions between the people and the enemy and the contradictions among the people themselves. This in turn contributed to a marked tendency to resort to bureaucratic methods of handling these contradictions and gave more openings to the enemy.

In the period following the death of Lenin, Stalin led the Communist International which continued to play an important role in advancing the world revolution and developing and consolidating

the newly formed Communist Parties.

In 1935 an extremely important Congress of the Communist International was held in the midst of a severe world economic crisis, the growing threat of a new world war and imperialist attacks on the Soviet Union, the coming to power of fascism in Germany and the smashing of the German Communist Party, and the establishment of fascism or menace of the same in a number of other countries. It was necessary and correct for the Communist International to try to develop a tactical line concerning all of these questions.

Because the Seventh Congress of the Comintern has had such a deep influence on the history of the international movement it is necessary to make a sober and scientific evaluation of the Report of the Congress in the light of the existing historical conditions at the time. In particular the reasons for the defeat of the German Communist Party must be deeply studied. Nevertheless certain conclusions can be drawn now, and must be in light of the present tasks of today's Marxist-Leninists and three clear deviations must be identified.

First the distinction between fascism and bourgeois democracy in the imperialist countries, while certainly of real importance for the Communist Parties, was treated in a way that tended to make an absolute of the difference between these two forms of bourgeois dictatorship and also to make a strategic stage of the struggle against fascism. Secondly, a thesis was developed, which held that the growing immiseration of the proletariat would create in the advanced countries the material basis for healing the split in the working class and its consequent polarisation that Lenin had so powerfully analysed in his works on imperialism and the collapse of the Second International. While it is certainly true that the depth of the crisis undermined the social base of the labour aristocracy in the advanced capitalist countries and led to real possibilities that the Communist Parties needed to make use of to unite with large sections of the workers previously under the hegemony of the Social Democrats, it was not correct to believe that in any kind of a strategic sense the split in the working class could be healed. Thirdly, when fascism was defined as the regime of the most reactionary section of the monopoly bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries, this left the door open to the dangerous, reformist and pacifist tendency to see a section of the monopoly bourgeoisie as progressive.

While it is necessary to sum up these errors and to learn from them it is just as necessary to recognise the Communist International, including in this period, as part of the heritage of the revolutionary struggle for communism and to beat back liquidationist and

Trotskyite attempts to seize upon real errors to draw reactionary conclusions. Even during this period the Communist International mobilised millions of workers against class enemies and led heroic struggles against reaction such as the organising of the International Brigades to fight against fascism in Spain in which many of the best sons and daughters of the working class shed their blood in an inspiring example of internationalism.

The Communist International also gave, correctly, great emphasis to the defence of the Soviet Union, the land of socialism. But when the Soviet Union made certain compromises with different imperialist countries, the leaders of the Comintern more often than not failed to understand the critical point that Mao Tsetung was to sum up in 1946 (in relation to the compromises then being made between the USSR and the United States, Britain and France): "Such compromise does not require the people in the countries of the capitalist world to follow suit and make compromises at home." Furthermore, such compromises must take into account, first and foremost, the overall development of the world revolutionary movement in which, of course, the defence of socialist states plays an important role.

In circumstances of imperialist encirclement of (a) socialist state(s) defending these revolutionary conquests is a very important task for the international proletariat. It will also be necessary for socialist states to carry out a diplomatic struggle and at times to enter into different types of agreements with one or another imperialist power. But the defence of socialist states must always be subordinate to the overall progress of the world revolution and must never be seen as the *equivalent* (and certainly not the substitute) for the international struggle of the proletariat. In certain situations the defence of a socialist country can be principal, but this is so precisely because its defence is decisive for the advance of the world revolution.

It is necessary to sum up the experiences of the international communist movement during the period around the Second World War in the light of these lessons. World War II cannot be considered a mere repetition of World War I, for, even if the same murderous logic of the capitalist system was responsible for it, it was a complex combination of contradictions. At its beginning in 1939 it was, as Mao then pointed out "unjust, predatory and imperialist in character." But a major change with global implications took place when Hitler's Germany turned his troops on the Soviet Union. This just war on the part of the Soviet Union drew the support and sym-

pathy of the working class and oppressed peoples the world over who were greatly inspired by the heroic resistance of the Red Army and the Soviet working class and people. This was no mere sympathy for a victim of aggression but the profound conviction that the defence of the Soviet Union was also the defence of the socialist base area of the world revolution. Similarly the war waged by the Chinese people under the leadership of the Communist Party of China against Japanese aggression also developed and was most definitely a just war and a component part of the world proletarian revolution.

Particularly with the entry of the Soviet Union into the war it took on a more complex character. It became a combination of four component parts: the war between socialism and imperialism; the war between the imperialist blocs; the wars of the oppressed people against imperialism; and the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, which in some countries developed to the level of armed struggle.

These differing aspects led on the one hand to the growth of socialist forces, the defeat of the fascist imperialist powers, the weakening of imperialism and the quickening tempo of the national liberation struggles. On the other hand they led to a recasting of the imperialist division of the world with the US assuming the role of chief bandit among the imperialists.

There were great revolutionary achievements in the course of World War II; at the same time it is impossible not to see serious errors and begin the collective process of deeply summing them up so as to be better prepared for coming storms. In particular we can note the error of eclectically combining the above mentioned contradictions. In practical political terms, the diplomatic struggle and international agreements of the Soviet Union became increasingly confounded with the activities of the Communist Parties making up the Comintern. This problem also contributed to strong tendencies to portray the non-fascist powers as something other than what they truly were – imperialists who would have to be overthrown. In the European countries occupied by German fascist troops it was not incorrect for the Communist Parties to take tactical advantage of national sentiments from the standpoint of mobilising the masses, but errors were made due to raising such tactical measures to the level of strategy. Liberation struggles in colonies under the domination of the allied imperialist powers were also held back due to such erroneous views.

While cherishing and upholding the monumental revolutionary struggles and victories that took place in this important period and the years immediately following, today's Marxist-Leninists will have to deepen their understanding of these errors and their basis.

The socialist camp that emerged from the Second World War was never solid. Little revolutionary transformation was carried out in most of the Eastern European Peoples' Democracies. In the Soviet Union itself powerful revisionist forces unleashed going into, in the course of, and in the aftermath of the Second World War grew in strength and influence. In 1956, following the death of Stalin, these revisionist forces led by Khrushchev succeeded in capturing political power, attacked Marxism-Leninism on all fronts and restored capitalism in that country.

The coup d'état of Khrushchev and the revisionists in the Soviet Union was also, it is clear now, the coup de grace to the communist movement as it had previously existed. The widespread cancer of revisionism had already consumed many (including some of the most influential) parties that had made up the Comintern. In many others only the thinnest veneer covered parties that were fast degenerating to positions of modern revisionism while the revolutionary elements were being suffocated. In the Soviet Union itself after Stalin's death the genuine Marxist-Leninists and the Soviet proletariat, weakened by the war and disarmed by serious political and ideological errors, proved incapable of mounting any serious riposte to the revisionist betrayers.

Mao Tsetung, the Cultural Revolution and the Marxist-Leninist Movement

Beginning immediately after the coup d'état of Khrushchev, Mao Tsetung and the Marxist-Leninists in the Chinese Communist Party began to analyse the developments in the Soviet Union and in the international communist movement and to struggle against modern revisionism. In 1963 the publication of *A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement* (the 25-point letter) was an all-round and public condemnation of revisionism and a call to the genuine Marxist-Leninists of all countries. The contemporary Marxist-Leninist movement has as its origin this

historic appeal and the polemics that accompanied it.

In the *Proposal* and the polemics Mao and the Chinese Communist Party correctly

- upheld the Leninist position on the dictatorship of the proletariat and refuted the revisionist theory of “state of the whole people”;
- upheld the necessity of armed revolution and opposed the strategy of a “peaceful transition to socialism”;
- supported and encouraged the development of the national wars of liberation of the oppressed peoples; exposing the sham independence of “neo-colonialism” and refuting the revisionist position that the wars of liberation should be avoided because they endanger “world peace”;
- made an overall positive evaluation of Stalin and the experience of construction of socialism in the USSR and refuted the slanders directed against Stalin of being a “butcher” and a “tyrant”, while making some important criticisms of Stalin’s errors;
- opposed the efforts of Khrushchev to impose a revisionist line on other parties as well as criticising Thorez, Togliatti, Tito and other modern revisionists;
- put forward in an embryonic form the thesis Mao Tsetung was developing concerning the class nature of socialism and carrying through the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat;
- called for a thorough study of the historical experience of the international communist movement and the roots of revisionism.

These points, as well as others contained in the *Proposal* and the polemics were and remain vital elements to distinguish Marxism-Leninism from revisionism. Through these polemics Mao and the Chinese Communist Party encouraged the Marxist-Leninists to split from the revisionists and form new proletarian revolutionary parties. The polemics represented a radical rupture with modern revisionism and a sufficient basis for the Marxist-Leninists to go forward into battle. Yet, on a number of questions, the criticism of revisionism was not thorough enough and some erroneous views were incorporated even while criticising others. Exactly because of the important role these polemics and Mao and the Chinese Communist Party played in giving birth to a new Marxist-Leninist movement it is correct and necessary to consider the secondary, negative aspect in the polemics and in the struggle waged by the Communist

Party of China in the international communist movement.

In relation to the imperialist countries, the *Proposal* put forward the view that “In the capitalist countries which US imperialism controls or is trying to control, the working class and the people should direct their attacks mainly against US imperialism, but also against their own monopoly capitalists and other reactionary forces who are betraying the national interests.” This view, which seriously affected the development of the Marxist-Leninist movement in these types of countries, obscures the fact that in imperialist countries the “national interests” are imperialist interests and are not betrayed, but on the contrary defended, by the ruling monopoly capitalist class despite whatever alliances it may make with other imperialist powers and despite the inevitably unequal nature of such an alliance. The proletariat of these countries is thus encouraged to strive to outbid the imperialist bourgeoisie as the best defenders of its own interests. This view had a long history in the international communist movement and should be broken with.

While the CPC paid great attention to the development of Marxist-Leninist parties in opposition to the revisionists they did not find the necessary forms and ways to develop the international unity of the communists. Despite contributions to the ideological and political unity this was not reflected by efforts to build organisational unity on a world scale. The CPC had an exaggerated understanding of the negative aspects of the Comintern, mainly those caused by over-centralisation, which led to crushing the initiative and independence of constituent communist parties. While the CPC correctly criticised the concept of Father party, pointed out its harmful influence within the international communist movement, and stressed the principles of fraternal relations between parties, the lack of an organised forum for debating views and achieving a common viewpoint did not help resolve this problem but in fact exacerbated it.

If the theoretical struggle against modern revisionism played a vital role in the rebuilding of a Marxist-Leninist movement it was especially the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, an unprecedented new form of struggle, itself in large part a fruit of this combat against modern revisionism, that gave rise to a whole new generation of Marxist-Leninists. The tens of millions of workers, peasants and revolutionary youth who went into battle to overthrow the capitalist roaders entrenched in the party and state apparatus and to further revolutionise society struck a vibrant chord among

millions of people across the world who were rising up as part of the revolutionary upsurge that swept the world in the 1960s and early 1970s.

The Cultural Revolution represents the most advanced experience of the proletarian dictatorship and the revolutionising of society. For the first time the workers and other revolutionary elements were armed with a clear understanding of the nature of the class struggle under socialism; of the necessity to rise up and overthrow the capitalist roaders who would inevitably emerge from within the socialist society and which are especially concentrated in the leadership of the party itself and to struggle to further advance the socialist transformation and thus dig away at the soil which engenders these capitalist elements. Great victories were won in the course of the Cultural Revolution which prevented the revisionist restoration in China for a decade and led to great socialist transformations in education, literature and art, scientific research and other elements of the superstructure. Millions of workers and other revolutionaries greatly deepened their class consciousness and mastery of Marxism-Leninism in the course of fierce ideological and political struggle and their capacity to wield political power was further increased. The Cultural Revolution was waged as part of the international struggle of the proletariat and was a training ground in proletarian internationalism, manifested not only by the support given to revolutionary struggles throughout the world but also by the real sacrifices made by the Chinese people to render this support. Revolutionary leaders emerged such as Chiang Ching and Chang Chun-chiao, who stood alongside and led the masses into battle against the revisionists and who continued to defend Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought in the face of bitter defeat.

Lenin said, "Only he is a Marxist who *extends* the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*". In the light of the invaluable lessons and advances achieved through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led by Mao Tsetung, this criterion put forward by Lenin has been further sharpened. Now it can be stated that only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and to the recognition of the objective existence of classes, antagonistic class contradictions and of the continuation of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat throughout the whole period of socialism until communism. And as Mao so powerfully stated, "Lack of clarity on this question will lead to revisionism."

The Cultural Revolution was the living proof of the vitality of Marxism-Leninism. It showed that the proletarian revolution was unlike all previous revolutions which could only result in one exploiting system replacing another. It was a source of great inspiration to the revolutionaries in all countries. For all these reasons the Cultural Revolution and Mao Tsetung earned the lasting and vicious abuse of all reactionaries and revisionists and for these same reasons the Cultural Revolution remains an indispensable part of the revolutionary legacy of the international communist movement.

Despite the tremendous victories of the Cultural Revolution the revisionists in the Chinese party and state continued to maintain important positions and promoted lines and policies which did considerable harm to the still fragile efforts to rebuild a genuine international communist movement. The revisionists in China, who controlled to a large degree its diplomacy and the relations between the Chinese Communist Party and other Marxist-Leninist parties, turned their backs on the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples or tried to subordinate these struggles to the state interests of China. Reactionary despots were falsely labelled as "anti-imperialists" and increasingly under the banner of a worldwide struggle against "hegemonism" certain imperialist powers of the Western bloc were portrayed as intermediate or even positive forces in the world. Even during this period many of the pro-Chinese Marxist-Leninist parties supported by the revisionists in the CPC began to shamelessly tail the bourgeoisie and even support or acquiesce in imperialist adventures and war preparations aimed at the Soviet Union which was increasingly seen as the "main enemy" in the whole world. All these tendencies blossomed fully with the coup d'état in China and the revisionists' subsequent elaboration of the "Three Worlds Theory" which they attempted to shove down the throats of the international communist movement. The Marxist-Leninists have correctly refuted the revisionist slander that the "Three Worlds Theory" was put forward by Mao Tsetung. However this is not enough. The criticism of the "Three Worlds Theory" must be deepened by criticising the concepts underlying it, and the origins must be investigated. Here it is important to note that the revisionist usurpers had to publicly condemn Mao's closest comrades in arms for opposing this counter-revolutionary theory.

One of the essential contradictions or features of the epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution is the contradiction between socialist states and imperialist states. While at the present

time this contradiction has been temporarily eliminated as a result of the revisionist transformation of a number of formerly socialist states, it is no less true that summing up the experience of the communist movement in handling this contradiction remains an important theoretical task, for it is inevitable that the proletariat will again find itself in a position where one or a number of socialist states will be confronted with the existence of predatory imperialist enemies.

In 1976 shortly after the death of Mao Tsetung the capitalist roaders in China launched a vicious coup d'état which reversed the verdicts of the Cultural Revolution, overthrew the revolutionaries in the leadership of the CPC, instituted an all-round revisionist programme and capitulated to imperialism.

This coup d'état met with resistance from the revolutionaries in the Chinese Communist Party who have continued to struggle for a restoration of proletarian rule in that country. Internationally, revolutionary communists in many countries saw through the revisionist line of Hua Kuo-feng and Teng Hsiao-ping and criticised and exposed the capitalist roaders in China. This resistance, in China and internationally, to the coup d'état is a testimony to the far-sighted revolutionary leadership of Mao Tsetung who tirelessly worked to arm the proletariat and the Marxist-Leninists with an appraisal of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat and the possibility of a capitalist restoration. The theoretical work done by the proletarian headquarters, guided by Mao Tsetung, also played a major role in equipping Marxist-Leninists with a correct understanding of the nature of the contradictions in socialist society and remains an important elaboration of Mao Tsetung Thought. This left the Marxist-Leninist movement ideologically better prepared for the tragic events in 1976 than they were on the occasion of the revisionist coup in the Soviet Union twenty years earlier, despite being forced to face this situation where there was no socialist country.

Nevertheless it was inevitable that the restoration of capitalism in a country comprising one quarter of the world's population and the revisionist capture of the Marxist-Leninist party that had been in the vanguard of the international movement would profoundly affect the world revolutionary struggle and the Marxist-Leninist movement. Many parties previously part of the international communist movement embraced the revisionists in China and their "Three Worlds Theory", and totally abandoned revolutionary struggle. As a result of this these parties spread some demoralisation

and, on the other hand, lost the confidence of the revolutionary elements and have undergone a great crisis or collapsed entirely.

Even among some other Marxist-Leninist forces that refused to follow the leadership of the Chinese revisionists, the loss in China led to demoralisation and the putting into question of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. This tendency was further exacerbated when Enver Hoxha and the PLA launched an open all-out attack on Mao Tsetung Thought.

While a certain crisis was to be expected in the international communist movement following the coup d'état in China, the depth of this crisis and the difficulty in putting an end to it indicated that revisionism in different forms was already strong in the Marxist-Leninist movement by 1976. The Marxist-Leninists must continue to carry out investigation and study into the roots of revisionism, in both the more recent period and in previous periods in the international movement, and continue to wage struggle against the continuing revisionist influence while continuing to uphold and build upon the basic principles forged in the revolutionary advances made by the international proletariat and the communist movement throughout its history.

The Tasks of Revolutionary Communists

The task of revolutionary communists in all countries is to hasten the development of the world revolution – the overthrow of imperialism and reaction by the proletariat and the revolutionary masses; the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in accordance with the necessary stages and alliances in different countries; and the struggle to eliminate all the material and ideological vestiges of exploiting society and thus achieve classless society, communism, throughout the world. First and foremost communists must remember and act in accordance with their reason for being, otherwise they are of no use to the revolution, and worse, degenerate into obstacles in its path.

Experience has shown that proletarian revolution can only be achieved and carried forward by a genuine proletarian party based on the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, constructed on Leninist lines, capable of attracting and training the best revolutionary elements among the proletariat and other sections of the masses. Today there is no such party in most countries

in the world and even where such parties exist they are generally not ideologically or organisationally strong enough to meet the requirements and the opportunities of the coming period. For these reasons the establishment and strengthening of genuine Marxist-Leninist parties is a vital task for the entire international communist movement.

In countries where no Marxist-Leninist party exists the immediate task facing the revolutionary communists there is to form such a party with the aid of the international communist movement. The key to the establishment of the party is the development of a correct political line and programme, both as regards the particularities in a given country and the overall world situation. The Marxist-Leninist party must be built in close relationship with carrying out revolutionary work among the masses, implementing a revolutionary mass line, and, in particular, addressing and resolving the pressing political questions which must be resolved in order for the revolutionary movement to advance. If this is not done the task of party building can become sterile, divorced from revolutionary practice and lead nowhere. On the other hand it is just as wrong to make the formation of the party dependent upon the rallying of a certain number of members or to insist that a certain quantitative influence among the masses be achieved before the party's formation. In most cases when the party is first formed, it will be composed of a relatively small number of members; in any event, the task of rallying the revolutionary elements to the party's banner and deepening the influence of the party among the proletariat and masses is a constant task.

The Marxist-Leninist party must be built and strengthened in the course of waging an active ideological struggle against bourgeois and petit-bourgeois influences in its ranks. In building the vanguard party, Marxist-Leninists should learn from the experience of the Cultural Revolution through which Mao fought to insure the party's proletarian character and vanguard role. Mao's understanding of the two-line struggle in the party, his criticisms of erroneous ideas of "a monolithic party" and his emphasis on the need for the ideological remoulding of party members enriched the basic concept of the vanguard party developed by Lenin. It is important to create a political situation in which there are both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and personal ease of mind and liveliness.

Without being guided by revolutionary theory, practice gropes in the dark. The Marxist-Leninist parties, and the international

communist movement as a whole, must deepen their grasp of revolutionary theory in the course of making a concrete analysis of concrete conditions in society and the world. Marxist-Leninists must not abandon the field of analysis of new phenomena to others and must actively wage the theoretical struggle concerning all the vital problems and questions of debate in the revolutionary movement and society as a whole.

The Marxist-Leninist party must be built and organised with the fundamental objective of seizing power firmly in mind and undertake the task of preparing itself and the proletariat and revolutionary masses organisationally, politically and ideologically. As the Joint Communiqué of Autumn 1980 put it, "In short, communists are advocates of revolutionary warfare." This revolutionary war and other forms of revolutionary struggle must be carried out as a key arena for training the revolutionary masses to be capable of wielding political power and transforming society. Even when conditions do not yet exist for the armed struggle of the masses, communists must carry out the necessary work in preparation for the emergence of such conditions. This principle has a whole series of implications for the Marxist-Leninist parties, regardless of the differences in tasks and stages the revolution will go through in different countries, including that the party, the backbone of which must be organised on an illegal basis, should be prepared to withstand the repression of the reactionaries who will never peacefully tolerate for long a genuine revolutionary party.

While engaging in, or preparing for, the armed struggle for power the Marxist-Leninist party should utilise different forms of legal and/or open work. History has shown that such work while important and sometimes even critical in a given period, must be coupled with exposure of the class nature of bourgeois democracy and in no circumstances should the communists drop their guard and fail to take the necessary measures to insure the continued ability of the party to carry out revolutionary work when different legal possibilities disappear. Past experiences of handling the contradiction between utilising legal and open possibilities without falling into legalism and parliamentary cretinism should be summed up and the appropriate lessons drawn.

To carry out its revolutionary tasks, to prepare the masses for the seizure of power, the Marxist-Leninist party must be armed with a regularly appearing communist press, even though the press will have a different role in relation to the tasks posed by the path of revolution in the two types of countries. The communist press must

be neither petty and narrow nor dry and dogmatic. It must strive to arm the class conscious proletariat and others with an all-round view of society and the world, principally through analysis and political exposure following close on the heel of events.

The Marxist-Leninist party in every country must be built as a contingent of the international communist movement and must carry out its struggle as part of, and subordinate to, the worldwide struggle for communism. The party must educate its own ranks, the class conscious workers and the revolutionary masses in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, recognising that internationalism is not simply the support rendered of the proletariat in one country to another but, more importantly, a reflection of the fact that the proletariat is a single class worldwide with a single class interest, faces a world system of imperialism, and has the task of liberating all of humanity.

Such internationalist education and propaganda is an indispensable part of preparing the party and proletariat to continue to carry the revolution forward after political power has been achieved in a given country. The achievement of political power, and even the establishment of a socialist system not based on exploitation, must be seen not as the end in itself but as one part of a long transition period full of twists and turns and inevitable setbacks as well as advances until the goal of worldwide communism has been achieved.

Tasks in the Colonial, Semi (or Neo) Colonial Countries

The colonial (or neo-colonial) countries subjugated by imperialism have constituted the main arena of the worldwide struggle of the proletariat in the period since World War II and up until the present day. In this period a great deal of experience has been achieved in waging revolutionary struggle, including revolutionary warfare. Imperialism has been handed extremely serious defeats and the proletariat has won imposing victories including the establishment of socialist countries. At the same time the communist movement has obtained bitter experience where the revolutionary masses in these countries have waged heroic struggles, including wars of national liberation, which have not led to the establishment of political power by the proletariat and its allies but where the fruits of the victories of the people have been picked by new ex-

plotters usually in league with one or another imperialist power(s). All of this shows that the international communist movement has a very important task to critically sum up the several decades of experience in waging revolution in these kinds of countries.

The point of reference for elaborating revolutionary strategy and tactics in the colonial, semi (or neo) colonial countries remains the theory developed by Mao Tsetung in the long years of revolutionary warfare in China.

The target of the revolution in countries of this kind is foreign imperialism and the comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie and feudals, which are classes closely linked to and dependent on imperialism. In these countries the revolution will pass through two stages: a first, new democratic revolution which leads directly to the second, socialist revolution. The character, target and tasks of the first stage of the revolution enables and requires the proletariat to form a broad united front of all classes and strata that can be won to support the new democratic programme. It must do so, however, on the basis of developing and strengthening the independent forces of the proletariat, including in the appropriate conditions its own armed forces and establishing the hegemony of the proletariat among the other sections of the revolutionary masses, especially the poor peasants. The cornerstone of this alliance is the worker-peasant alliance and the carrying out of the agrarian revolution (i.e. the struggle against semi-feudal exploitation in the countryside and/or the fulfillment of the slogan "land to the tiller") occupies a central part of the new democratic programme.

In these countries the exploitation of the proletariat and the masses is severe, the outrages of imperialist domination constant, and the ruling classes usually exercise their dictatorship nakedly and brutally and even when they utilise the bourgeois-democratic or parliamentary form their dictatorship is only very thinly veiled. This situation leads to frequent revolutionary struggles on the part of the proletariat, the peasants and other sections of the masses which often take the form of armed struggle. For all these reasons, including the lopsided and distorted development in these countries which often makes it difficult for the reactionary classes to maintain stable rule and to consolidate their power throughout the state, it is often the case that the revolution takes the form of protracted revolutionary warfare in which the revolutionary forces are able to establish base areas of one type or another in the countryside and carry out the basic strategy of surrounding the city by the countryside.

The key to carrying out a new democratic revolution is the independent role of the proletariat and its ability, through its Marxist-Leninist party, to establish its hegemony in the revolutionary struggle. Experience has shown again and again that even when a section of the national bourgeoisie joins the revolutionary movement, it will not and cannot lead a new democratic revolution, to say nothing of carrying this revolution through to completion. Similarly, history demonstrates the bankruptcy of an "anti-imperialist front" (or similar "revolutionary front") which is not led by a Marxist-Leninist party, even when such a front or forces within it adopt a "Marxist" (actually pseudo-Marxist) colouration. While such revolutionary formations have led heroic struggles and even delivered powerful blows to the imperialists they have been proven to be ideologically and organisationally incapable of resisting imperialist and bourgeois influences. Even where such forces have seized power they have been incapable of carrying through a thoroughgoing revolutionary transformation of society and end up, sooner or later, being overthrown by the imperialists or themselves becoming a new reactionary ruling power in league with imperialists.

In conditions when the ruling classes exercise their brutal or fascist dictatorship, the communist party can utilise the contradictions this gives rise to in favour of the new democratic revolution and engage in temporary agreements or alliances with other class forces. However, this can only be carried out successfully if the party maintains its leadership, utilising such alliances within the overall and principal task of carrying the revolution to completion without making a strategic stage out of the struggle against dictatorship since the content of the anti-fascist struggle is nothing other than the content of the new democratic revolution.

The Marxist-Leninist party must arm the proletariat and the revolutionary masses not only with an understanding of the immediate task of carrying through the new democratic revolution and the role and conflicting interests of different class forces, friend and foe alike, but also of the need to prepare the transition to the socialist revolution and of the ultimate goal of worldwide communism.

For Marxist-Leninists it is a principle that the party must lead revolutionary warfare in such a way that it is a genuine war of the masses. The Marxist-Leninists must strive, even in the difficult circumstances of waging warfare, to carry out widespread political education and to raise the theoretical and ideological level of the masses. For this it is necessary to maintain and develop a regular

communist press as well as to carry the revolution into the cultural sphere.

The main deviation in the recent period in the colonial, semi (or neo) colonial countries has been and remains the tendency to deny or negate this basic orientation for the revolutionary movement in these types of countries: the negation of the leading role of the proletariat and the Marxist-Leninist party; the rejection or opportunist perversion of people's war; the abandonment of building a united front, based upon the worker-peasant alliance and under the leadership of the proletariat.

This revisionist deviation has taken on in the past both a "left" and an openly right-wing form. The modern revisionists preached, especially in the past, the "peaceful transition to socialism" and promoted the leadership of the bourgeoisie in the national liberation struggle. However this openly capitulationist, right-wing revisionism always corresponded with, and has become increasingly intermingled with, a kind of "left" armed revisionism, promoted at times by the Cuban leadership and others, which separated the armed struggle from the masses and preached a line of combining revolutionary stages into one single "socialist" revolution, which in fact meant appealing to the workers on the narrowest of bases and negating the necessity of the working class to lead the peasantry and others in thoroughly eliminating imperialism and the backward and distorted economic and social relations that foreign capital thrives on and reinforces. Today this form of revisionism is one of the major planks of the social-imperialist attempt to penetrate and control national liberation struggles.

In order for the revolutionary movement in the colonial, semi (or neo) colonial countries to develop in a correct direction it is necessary for the Marxist-Leninists to continue to step up the struggle against the revisionists in all their forms and to uphold the work of Mao Tsetung as an indispensable theoretical basis for further analysing the concrete conditions in different countries of this type and developing the appropriate political line.

At the same time it is necessary to take note of other, secondary, deviations that have appeared amongst the genuine revolutionary forces who have strived to carry out a revolutionary line in the colonial and dependent countries. First of all it must be noted that the countries comprising the oppressed nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America are not a monolithic bloc and have considerable differences in relation to their class composition, the form of imperial-

ist domination and their position vis à vis the world situation as a whole. Tendencies to fail to carry out a thorough and scientific study of these problems, to mechanically copy the previous experience of the international proletariat or to fail to take notice of changes in the international situation and in particular countries can only harm the cause of the revolution and weaken the Marxist-Leninist forces.

In the 1960s and early 1970s Marxist-Leninist forces in a great many countries, under the influence of the Cultural Revolution in China and as part of the general worldwide revolutionary upsurge, joined with sections of the masses in waging armed revolutionary warfare. In a number of countries the Marxist-Leninist forces were able to rally considerable sections of the population to the revolutionary banner and maintain the Marxist-Leninist party and armed forces of the masses despite the savage counter-revolutionary repression. It was inevitable that these early attempts at building new, Marxist-Leninist parties and the launching of armed struggle would be marked by a certain primitiveness and that ideological and political weaknesses would manifest themselves, and it is, of course, not surprising that the imperialists and revisionists would seize upon these errors and weaknesses to condemn the revolutionaries as "ultra-leftists" or worse. Nevertheless these experiences must, in general, be upheld as an important part of the legacy of the Marxist-Leninist movement which helped lay the basis for further advances.

In the oppressed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America a continuous revolutionary situation generally exists. But it is important to understand this correctly: the revolutionary situation does not follow a straight line; it has its ebbs and flows. The communist parties should keep this dynamic in mind. They should not fall into one-sidedness in the form of asserting that the commencement and the final victory of people's war depends totally on the subjective factor (the communists), a view often associated with "Lin Piaoism". Although at all times some form of armed struggle is generally both desirable and necessary to carry out the tasks of class struggle in these countries, during certain periods armed struggle may be the principal form of struggle and at other times it may not be.

When the revolutionary situation is ebbing, the communist parties should determine appropriate tactics and not fall into rash and impatient advances. In such situations, political and organisational preparations necessary to carry out protracted people's war should by no means be neglected and forms of struggle and organisation

suitable for the concrete conditions should be determined in order to hasten the development of the revolution while awaiting favourable conditions for further advance. It is necessary to combat any erroneous view which would postpone the commencement of armed struggle or the utilisation of any form of armed struggle until conditions become favourable for revolutionary warfare throughout the country. This view negates the uneven development of revolution and revolutionary situations in these countries, in opposition to Mao's statement, "A single spark can start a prairie fire." It is also important to note that the overall international situation has an influence on the revolution in a particular country; not taking this into account leaves the Marxist-Leninists unprepared to seize the opportunity when the revolutionary process is hastened by the developments on the world scale.

Today as the danger of a new imperialist war is rapidly developing, the Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations in the neo-colonial countries are also confronted with the urgent task of devoting attention to the struggle against imperialist war. Communists must take into account the possibility that many of these countries may be dragged into the imperialist war according to the position these countries have in relation to the different imperialist blocs. Communist parties must consider the various concrete situations that might arise in the midst of such an imperialist war and develop their thinking in relation to these situations. Given the objective conditions in these countries the masses are generally less aware of the danger and consequences of an imperialist war and the Marxist-Leninists must educate them. In the event of an imperialist war the most important task of the Marxist-Leninists is to utilise the favourable opportunities thrown up by such a war to intensify the revolutionary struggle and turn the imperialist war into a revolutionary war against imperialism and reaction.

The Joint Communiqué of Autumn 1980 pointed out:

There is an undeniable tendency for imperialism to introduce significant elements of capitalist relations in the countries it dominates. In certain dependent countries capitalist development has gone so far that it is not correct to characterise them as semi-feudal. It is better to call them predominantly capitalist even while important elements or remnants of feudal or semi-feudal production relations and their reflection in the superstructure may still exist.

In such countries a concrete analysis must be made of these conditions and appropriate conclusions concerning the path, tasks,

character and alignment of class forces must be drawn. In all events, foreign imperialism remains a target of the revolution.

The analysis of the implications of the increased introduction of capitalist relations in the countries dominated by imperialism, as well as the specific case of those oppressed countries which can correctly be termed "predominantly capitalist," remains an important task for the international movement. Nevertheless some important conclusions can be drawn today.

The view that the combination of formal political independence and the introduction of widespread capitalist relations has eliminated the need for a new democratic revolution in most or many of the former direct colonies is wrong and dangerous. This view, promoted by various Trotskyites, social-democrats and petit-bourgeois critics of revolutionary Marxism, holds that there is no qualitative distinction between imperialism and those nations oppressed by it, thus eliminating at a single stroke one of the most important features of the imperialist epoch.

In fact imperialism continues to be a fetter on the productive forces in the countries it exploits. The capitalist "development" which it undeniably introduces to greater or lesser degrees does not lead to an articulated, national market and a "classical" capitalist economic system but to an extremely lopsided development dependent on and in the interests of *foreign* capital.

Even in the predominantly capitalist oppressed countries foreign imperialism along with its domestic props remain the principal target of the revolution in its first stage. While the path of the revolution in these countries will often be considerably different than those in which semi-feudal relations prevail, it is still necessary, in general, for the revolution to pass through a democratic, anti-imperialist stage before the socialist revolution can be begun.

The relative weight of the cities in relation to the countryside, both politically and militarily, is an extremely important question that is posed by the increased capitalist development of some oppressed countries. In some of these countries it is correct to begin the armed struggle by launching insurrections in the city and not to follow the model of surrounding the cities by the countryside. Moreover, even in countries where the path of revolution is that of surrounding the city by the countryside, situations in which a mass upheaval leads to uprisings and insurrections in the cities can occur and the party should be prepared to utilise such situations within its overall strategy. However in both these situations, the party's abili-

ty to mobilise the peasants to take part in the revolution under proletarian leadership is critical to its success.

Due to the establishment of a central state structure prior to the process of capitalist development, semi (or neo) colonial countries, in the main, have multi-national social formations within them; in a large number of cases these states have been created by the imperialists themselves. Furthermore, the borders of these states have been determined as a consequence of imperialist occupations and machinations. Thus it is generally the case that within the state borders of countries oppressed by imperialism, oppressed nations, national inequality and ruthless national oppression exist. In our era, the national question has ceased to be an internal question of single countries and has become subordinate to the general question of the world proletarian revolution, hence its thoroughgoing resolution has become directly dependent on the struggle against imperialism. Within this context Marxist-Leninists should uphold the right of self-determination of oppressed nations in the multi-national semi-colonial states.

Thus it can be said that the Marxist-Leninists in the colonial and neo-colonial countries confront a double task on the ideological and political front. They must, on the one hand, continue to defend and uphold the basic teachings of Mao concerning the character and path of the revolution in those types of countries, as well as defending and building upon the revolutionary attempts that (to paraphrase Lenin) accompanied the "mad years" of the 1960s. At the same time, the revolutionary communists must apply the critical Marxist spirit to analysing both past experience as well as the current situation and developments that affect the course of the revolution in these countries.

The Imperialist Countries

As the Joint Communiqué pointed out, in the imperialist countries "the October Revolution remains the basic point of reference for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics." It is necessary to reaffirm and deepen this point because the basic Leninist principles regarding the preparation for and waging of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries have long been buried under an avalanche of revisionist distortion.

Lenin correctly stressed the need for communists to develop an all-round political movement of the workers capable, when condi-

tions ripen, of leading the revolutionary forces in society in an insurrection aimed against the reactionary state power. He correctly pointed out that such a revolutionary movement could not grow spontaneously out of the day-to-day economic struggles of the workers and that, further, these struggles were not the most important arena of revolutionary work. He argued that the revolutionaries must "divert" the spontaneous movement of the masses away from a narrow struggle over the conditions and sale of labour power. In order to do this it is necessary to bring political consciousness to the workers from "outside" their immediate experience, above all through *political exposure* and analysis of all the major events in society in every sphere: political, cultural, scientific, etc. Only in this way could a class conscious sector of the proletariat be formed – conscious of its revolutionary tasks and of the nature and role of all the other class forces in society.

Lenin emphasized too that as crucial as agitation and propaganda are, they are not enough. Only through class struggle, especially political and revolutionary struggle, could the masses fully develop their revolutionary consciousness and fighting capacity. In this way, and together with the all-round work of the communists, the masses learn through their own experience and are educated in the furnace of class struggle.

Far from preaching the "monolithic unity of the working class," Lenin demonstrated that imperialism inevitably leads to a "shift in class relations," to a *split* in the working class in the imperialist countries between the oppressed and exploited proletariat and an upper section of the workers benefitting from and in league with the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Lenin was also the vigorous opponent of all those who, in one form or another, sought to identify the interests of the proletariat with that of "its own" imperialist bourgeoisie. He vigorously fought for a line of revolutionary defeatism in relation to imperialist war and consistently upheld the banner of proletarian internationalism in opposition to the tattered "national flag" of the bourgeoisie.

Lenin also analysed that the possibility for making revolution in the capitalist countries was linked to the development of *revolutionary situations* which appear infrequently in these countries but which concentrate the fundamental contradictions of capitalism. He analysed the error of the Second International of banking everything on the gradual and peaceful accumulation of socialist influence among the masses and argued instead that the task of communists in relatively "peaceful" times was to *prepare* for the excep-

tional moments in history when revolutionary transformations in these types of countries are possible and when the activities of the revolutionaries mark the society and the world for "decades to come."

Despite the clarity of Lenin on these subjects, and their centrality to the overall body of scientific socialist theory, the Leninists have quite often chosen to ignore it.

Early in the history of the Third International, in certain Communist Parties, erroneous conceptions of "mass parties" in non-revolutionary situations and economist deviations appeared. These tendencies grew in strength and became articles of faith in the communist movement, along with other wrong and extremely dangerous tendencies to champion bourgeois national interests in the imperialist countries.

Unfortunately, the rupture with modern revisionism during the 1960s was notably incomplete especially regarding the strategy and tactics of communists in the imperialist countries. While the "peaceful road" was rejected and criticised and the need for an eventual armed uprising propagated, little effort was given to summing up the historical roots of revisionism in the communist movement in the capitalist countries and, in general, the Marxist-Leninist forces adopted a course of work based more upon the negative experiences of some of the Communist Parties during the 1930s than on the "October Road" forged under Lenin's leadership.

In most imperialist countries during this period, a significant section of new-born revolutionary forces took wrong turns into policies of adventurism or left sectarianism. But especially as time wore on, the new Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations generally adopted a line of making the centre of their work concentrating on the day-to-day struggles of the workers and battling with the revisionists and bourgeois trade union officials for the leadership of these struggles. This worship of the "average worker" and the preoccupation with the economic struggle led to little in terms of actually winning workers to a revolutionary position and to the Marxist-Leninist parties but did unfortunately have a corrosive effect on the Marxist-Leninist parties themselves and on their members. The economist line dominating the Marxist-Leninist movement in these countries stood in sharp contrast to the very revolutionary principles on which it was founded. The young militants who made up the bulk of these parties joined them because they wanted to contribute to the worldwide revolutionary process, because they wanted to struggle for communism. The desire to spread the

revolutionary movement of the 1960s to the proletariat and to merge with the workers, inspired to no small degree by the experience of the revolutionary youth in the Cultural Revolution, was a powerful and correct revolutionary sentiment which, however, became stifled and distorted under the influence of economism. As the worldwide revolutionary upsurge receded, the Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations tended to move further and further to the right in an effort to obtain a mass following on a non-revolutionary basis. The members of these organisations saw less and less connection with the preparation for revolution and the tasks they were actually pursuing. The results of this were distortion, demoralisation and the strengthening of opportunism.

All of this was further compounded by confusion among the Marxist-Leninists regarding the "national tasks" (or more precisely, the lack of them) in the imperialist countries. As was pointed out, the polemics of the Chinese Communist Party contained serious errors in this regard, errors which were incorporated by the Marxist-Leninist movement. The correct, internationalist desire to fight against US imperialism (correctly singled out as the main bastion of world reaction at that time) increasingly mingled with a promotion of the national interests of the imperialist states insofar as they came into contradiction with the US and (especially from the early 1970s on) with the Soviet Union. Increasingly wrong positions were taken by a great many Marxist-Leninist parties concerning world affairs, positions which went against internationalism and objectively aligned the positions of these parties on these issues with imperialist war preparations and counter-revolutionary suppression. As pointed out earlier, some Marxist-Leninist parties in the imperialist countries had already adopted a thoroughly social-chauvinist line even before the coup d'état in China in 1976.

These two serious and related errors, economism and social-chauvinism (including the embryonic revisionist "Three Worlds Theory"), were the main subjective factors that contributed to the virtual collapse in Europe of the Marxist-Leninist movement following the coup d'état in China. The communists in the advanced capitalist countries must give great emphasis to the struggle against the influence of these deviations in building and strengthening genuine Marxist-Leninist parties.

As the Marxist-Leninist movement floundered in most of the advanced capitalist countries some sections of the revolutionary youth attempted to find a "new ideology" and a different path. The attraction of anarchism and other forms of petit-bourgeois radicalism for signifi-

cant sections of the revolutionary youth reflected a desire to bring about revolutionary change. Nevertheless these forces are incapable of playing a fully revolutionary role insofar as they lack the only thoroughly revolutionary ideology, Marxism. In some countries small numbers of people have turned to terrorism, an ideology and political line which does not rely on the revolutionary masses and has no correct perspective of a revolutionary overthrow of imperialism. While these terrorist movements like to appear very "revolutionary," they have also incorporated, more often than not, a whole series of revisionist and reformist deviations such as "the liberation struggle" in imperialist countries, the defence of the imperialist Soviet Union, and so forth. These movements share with economism the fundamental failure to grasp the centrality of raising the political consciousness of the masses and leading them in political struggle, as preparation for revolution.

While the "excavating" of basic Leninist principles is the starting point for the elaboration of a revolutionary line in the imperialist countries, it is still only a beginning. The imperialist countries of today differ in important respects from turn-of-the-century Russia and other imperialist countries at that time and a great deal of experience (positive and negative) in trying to build a revolutionary movement in these countries has been accumulated since the October Revolution.

The process of imperialist development has led to a number of important changes in these countries – including the virtual elimination of a peasantry in some of them, the rapid growth of new sections of the petit bourgeoisie, and so forth. The most important development, however, is the greatly increased parasitism of the imperialist states based on the plunder of the oppressed nations, and a further polarisation of the working class that goes along with it.

There is in the imperialist countries a large, well entrenched and influential labour aristocracy which benefits from imperialism and willingly serves its interests. Imperialism sharpens the contradiction between these workers and a significant strata of the working class (including its industrial reserve army – the unemployed) who are impoverished and who desire and are inclined to fight for a radical change. In the principal Western imperialist states this lower section of the working class is composed in no small measure of immigrant workers from the dominated countries as well as, in some cases, national minorities and oppressed nations from within the imperialist states themselves. It is this lower section of the working class that is the most important element of the social

base of the party of the proletariat in the imperialist countries.

In between these two sections of the workers there is a large number, sometimes even a majority, of workers who, while not benefitting from imperialism in the manner of the labour aristocracy, have been greatly influenced by a long period of relative prosperity and who are not, in ordinary times, in a revolutionary mood. The fight for the allegiance of the broad masses of these workers as they are propelled into motion by deepening crisis and especially as a revolutionary situation develops, will be an important element in the struggle between the revolutionary, class conscious proletarians led by the Marxist-Leninist party and the reactionary labour aristocracy and its political expressions. While not neglecting to carry out work among the bourgeoisified sections of the working class the Marxist-Leninist party in the imperialist countries should principally base its work on the most potentially revolutionary sections of the workers.

It is not possible to build the revolutionary movement and lead it to victory without paying attention to the battles for daily existence of the working class and masses of other strata. While the party must not direct its own or the masses' attention mainly to such struggle nor foster the dissipation of its own and the masses' forces and energies on them, neither can the party fail to do work in relation to them. Leading economic struggles is not the same thing as economism. The proletarian party should take these struggles, especially those with the potential to go beyond conventional bounds, seriously into account. This means conducting work in relation to these struggles in such a way as to facilitate the moving of the masses to revolutionary positions, especially as the conditions for revolution ripen.

The Marxist-Leninist party must strive to carry out Lenin's call to turn the factories into fortresses of communism. This is not only an important political question for the preparation of the revolution but also has important implications for the armed insurrection of the proletariat.

Unless the Marxist-Leninist parties in the imperialist countries strike deep roots among the revolutionary masses through evolving and implementing a revolutionary mass line, then efforts to utilise revolutionary situations will be seriously weakened. In all this the tactics and style of work developed by the Bolshevik Party and summed up by Lenin still remain the basic guideline. However, in order to develop a revolutionary mass line and style of work, Marxist-Leninists in the imperialist countries must put aside

conventional wisdom about "proper" forms of struggle and organisation and all such dogmas, analyse the specific characteristics of contemporary imperialism and the nature of struggles being waged by the masses and seek out favourable new grounds for revolutionary practice and develop new forms of struggle and mass organisations.

As Lenin so vividly expressed it, the communist ideal "should not be a trade union secretary, but a *tribune of the people*."

The Marxist-Leninist party, while principally basing itself on the most potentially revolutionary sections of the proletariat, must strive to carry out revolutionary work among other sections of the population including elements of the petit bourgeoisie.

Another factor potentially very favourable to the proletarian revolution in more than a few of the imperialist countries is the existence of oppressed nations and national minorities within the bellies of these beasts. Often, as noted above, large numbers of proletarians from these nationalities form an important part of a single, multi-national proletariat there. But, in addition to this, there is also a broader national question involved, encompassing other classes and strata of these oppressed nationalities. Such situations have often given rise to sharp national struggles within these imperialist states, and if they are properly handled by the proletarian parties there, which should support such struggles and uphold the right of self-determination where applicable, these struggles can play a significant role in the struggle to overthrow imperialist states.

In the countries of Eastern Europe Marxist-Leninists face the task of formulating correct strategy and tactics for the socialist revolution, taking into account the domination of Soviet social-imperialism and the concrete tasks it poses without minimising or overlooking the central task of overthrowing the state power of their own bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

The current developments toward world war and both the dangers and revolutionary opportunities that presents require that the Marxist-Leninist parties in the imperialist countries place great importance on the question of world war and revolution. The Marxist-Leninist party must expose imperialist war preparations and especially the interests and manoeuvres of its "own" imperialist ruling class. It must demonstrate to the masses that such a war flows from the very nature of capitalist exploitation and is a continuation of imperialist economics and politics, and that only the advance of the world revolution can stop the war in preparation and attack its source. The communists must constantly struggle against every effort to identify the interests of the proletariat with

those of the imperialist bourgeoisie and must train the class conscious proletariat and others to see through the bloody imperialist nature of the national flag.

The communists must build support among the masses for the anti-imperialist struggle of the oppressed peoples and nations, even where such struggles are not led by Marxist-Leninists. The party must consistently and concretely train the proletariat in internationalism.

The increased danger of world war is now being felt sharply by the masses in the imperialist countries and communists must pay great attention to the mass movements against war preparations and to addressing the questions posed by these movements. The Marxist-Leninist party must support the revolutionary elements in these movements and strive to win them to its ranks. The party must unite with the anti-war sentiments of the masses while at the same time combatting illusions that a "peace movement" can stop the imperialist war and especially the national chauvinist views that seek to avoid the devastation of war for one imperialist nation or another at the expense of the rest of the world.

While uniting with the masses in struggle against imperialist war preparations the Marxist-Leninist party should not put forward or support demands for "nuclear free zones", illusory notions of abolishing imperialist blocs and so forth in the imperialist countries. Even in the lesser, non-nuclear states the communists must constantly stress to the masses that imperialism breeds world war, that all imperialist ruling classes are implicated in preparing this crime against humanity, and that the only real solution lies in revolution and not in illusory, and ultimately reactionary, efforts towards "neutrality."

The Marxist-Leninist party must prepare itself and the revolutionary proletariat so that if revolution is not able to prevent the world war it is in the best position to take advantage of the weakness of the imperialists, to build on the inevitable widespread hatred of war and direct it against the imperialists themselves and strive to turn the imperialist war into a civil war. The revolutionary defeatist position must be adopted by the Marxist-Leninists in all the imperialist countries.

In the imperialist countries the communist press plays a particularly important role in the preparation of the proletarian revolution. The press must be built as the collective propagandist, agitator and organiser of the party.

The Marxist-Leninists in the advanced capitalist countries face the task of continuing to combat the pernicious influence of revisionism and reformism in their ranks. The key to doing this remains the fight for principles developed by Lenin in the course of preparing and leading the October Revolution. At the same time the Marxist-Leninists must sum up past experience, fight against dogmatism, be firm in principle and flexible in tactics, and undertake a scientific study of the developments in the imperialist countries over the last several decades and the further development of revolutionary strategy that flow from them.

For the Ideological, Political and Organisational Unity of Marxist-Leninists

The communist movement is, and can only be, an international movement. Indeed the very launching of scientific socialism, the *Communist Manifesto*, declared "Workers of all countries, unite!" With the success of the October Revolution, the formation of the Communist International and the subsequent spreading of Marxism-Leninism to every corner of the globe, the international unity of the working class took on an even more profound meaning.

Today, in the midst of profound crisis in the ranks of Marxist-Leninists, the need for international unity and the need for a new international organisation are urgently felt.

In building up its own organisation on a global level, the international proletariat has accumulated both positive and negative experience. The concept of world party and the resultant overcentralisation of the Comintern should be evaluated so that appropriate lessons from that period can be drawn as well as from the positive achievements of the First, Second and Third Internationals. It also is necessary to evaluate the overreaction of the Communist Party of China to the negative aspects of the Comintern that led them to refuse to play the necessary leading role in building up the organisational unity of the Marxist-Leninist forces at the international level.

At the present juncture of world history, the international proletariat has to take up the challenge of forming its own organisation, an International of a new type based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao

Tsetung Thought, assimilating the valuable experience of the past. And this goal must be boldly proclaimed before the international proletariat and the oppressed of the world with the same revolutionary daring of our predecessors from the Communards of Paris to the proletarian rebels of Shanghai who dared to storm heaven and resolved to do the "impossible" – build a communist world.

The process of forming such an organisation will, in all likelihood, be a protracted one.

The most crucial task the Marxist-Leninists face, in this respect, is to evolve a general line and a correct and viable organisational form, conforming to the complex reality of the present-day world and the challenges it poses.

The function of such a new International will be to continue and deepen the summation of experiences, develop the general line on which it is founded, and serve as an overall guiding political centre. These tasks necessitate a form of democratic centralism based on the ideological and political unity of Marxist-Leninists. But it cannot be of the same nature as the functioning of a party in a single state, since the components of such an international organisation will be different parties having equality of right and responsibility of leading the revolution in each country in the sense of each party's share in the preparations and acceleration of the world revolution.

Considering the level of ideological and political unity and maturity achieved by the Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations at the Second Conference, they must take the following preliminary steps in the direction of fulfilling the higher tasks mentioned above:

1. An international journal must be developed as a vital tool in reconstructing the international communist movement. It must be at once both an organ of analysis and political commentary as well as a forum for debating the questions of the international movement. It must be translated into as many languages as possible, vigorously distributed in the ranks of the Marxist-Leninist parties and among other revolutionary forces. The Marxist-Leninist parties must correspond regularly with the journal and contribute articles and criticism.
2. Helping the formation of new Marxist-Leninist parties and the strengthening of existing ones is the common task of the international communist movement. The ways and means must be found for the international movement as a whole to assist

Marxist-Leninists in different countries in carrying out this crucial task.

3. Joint and coordinated campaigns should be conducted by the Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations. The First of May activities should be carried out under unified slogans.
4. The different Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations should carry out the political line and decisions adopted by the International Conferences and agreed to by these parties, even while continuing to carry out principled struggle over differences.
5. All Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations should, within the measure of their capacity, contribute financially and practically to the tasks involved in furthering the unity of the communists.
6. An interim committee – an embryonic political centre – must be set up to lead the overall process of furthering the ideological, political and organisational unity of communists, including the preparation of a draft proposal for a general line for the communist movement.

The constitution of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, based on the higher level of ideological and political unity of Marxist-Leninists achieved through principled struggle, represents an extremely important step for the international communist movement. But the need to race to catch up with the objective developments in the world is still apparent. The revolutionary struggle of the masses of the people in all countries is crying out for genuine revolutionary leadership. The genuine Marxist-Leninist forces, in individual countries and on a world scale, have the responsibility to provide such leadership even as they continue to struggle to solidify and raise the level of their unity. In this way the correct ideological and political line will bring forward new soldiers and will become an ever more powerful material force in the world. The words of the *Communist Manifesto* ring out all the more clearly today: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win."

March 1984



