

MLOC IN STRUGGLE!

Call for an international conference of Marxist-Leninists

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Transcription, Editing and Markup: Paul Saba and Sam Richards

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Call for an international conference of Marxist-Leninists

The following document, signed by communist organizations from Belgium, Canada, France, and Tunisia, is currently being circulated internationally in Spanish, Portuguese, and Arabic, as well as in English and French.

This document represents the concretization of the collective efforts of certain forces to develop a broad debate leading to the eventual unification of the ICM. The organizations signing this appeal call for an open debate on a wide number of political problems related both to the historical experience and the current practice of the world communist movement, and they explicitly reject a demarcation which is based mainly or exclusively on the evaluation of the Chinese revolution and of Mao.

At the current time, the world is in considerable disorder. The capitalist countries, including the revisionist countries, are going through a period of profound crisis. The peoples of different regions are openly struggling against oppression and exploitation. The proletariat is resisting the measures taken by the bourgeoisie to deal with the crisis.

In this situation, which is accompanied by major political upheavals and which opens up the possibilities for revolutionary struggles as well as a real danger of war, we are forced to remark that communist forces are not playing their role of giving political leadership to the proletariat and the peoples. On the contrary, they are weak, divided, isolated and sometimes inexistant or absent from important struggles on the national and international levels. The

Marxist-Leninist movement is experiencing a deep crisis. Several trends and tendencies exist within its ranks. But the lines of demarcation which divide them are often only formal.

The criteria for distinguishing Marxist-Leninists from revisionists remain the basic principles of class struggle, proletarian revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and proletarian internationalism.

Therefore, the under-signed organizations refuse the new line of demarcation between Marxist-Leninists and revisionists which certain would like to impose on the international communist movement which is based solely on the condemnation or not of the Chinese revolution and more specifically the teachings of Mao Tse Tung.

Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations will become the force needed for successful socialist revolution only if they are able to qualitatively and quantitatively raise their activities in the class struggle in their countries and to unite among themselves. The political and ideological bases for this unity should constitute a genuine victory over the different forms of revisionism, including the one based on the "three worlds theory", and this within their own ranks as well.

The under-signed organizations and parties met to exchange their present points of view on these questions. They came to the conclusion that a deeper and broader debate is needed on the level of the entire Marxist-Leninist movement.

That is why they have become involved in the organization of a first international conference where these problems will be examined on the basis of individual and collective contribu-

tions formulated and widely circulated beforehand by the participating organizations.

The organizations which have signed this call and which respect the principles of the equality and independence of the different Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations consider that these contributions can deal with any question which an organization participating in the conference feels should be dealt with.

However, they hope that the following points will be discussed:

- class analysis of the different countries, including the U.S.S.R.;

- summation of the building of socialism and its failures;

- the weight of past errors in the international communist movement, particularly the application of principles such as the equality of parties, democratic centralism and collective leadership in Marxist-Leninist organizations;

- the process of moving from the democratic popular stage to the socialist stage;

- the question of alliances, of work in united fronts and trade unions, and more generally the relation between the party and the masses;

- the national question in the dominated countries and in the multinational imperialist countries.

The under-signed organizations call on the Marxist-Leninist forces in the different countries to fully participate and collaborate in this project.

The under-signed organizations invite the entire international communist movement to study, consider, and draw up documents, and to organize bilateral and multilateral meetings with the goal of deepening the ideological and political debate around all the currently important questions.

- The Revolutionary Communist Party Marxist-Leninist

- (L'Exploité), Belgium

- The Marxist-Leninist Organization of Canada IN STRUGGLE!

- The Communist Organization (Marxist-Leninist)

- EN AVANT PROLÉTAIRES of France

- ECH-CHOOLA of Tunisia

September 13, 1980

PCR
L'EXPLOITÉ

EN LUTTE!



combateiros de todos os países, povos e nações oprimidos, unidos vos
COMBATTRE
Il existe des organisations communistes et socialistes
EN AVANT PROLÉTAIRES



In Struggle!

Responses to the conference proposal

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Transcription, Editing and Markup: Malcolm and Paul Saba

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To begin with, why an international conference? The proposal responded to the need to develop a collective political debate in the international communist movement. The Appeal issued by our third congress declared that such a debate would be necessary to intensify the struggle for international unity. Unity around a communist programme will move ahead the quickest if collective frameworks are set up that permit communists to learn about and criticize the views of others and thereby draw out the political bases for uniting communists. One or several international conferences could, in our opinion, be a very good way to move in that direction, although it is not the only framework within which debate can take place.

When we first put out the proposal in August 1979, we sent it to some 60 parties and organizations, most of which belonged to the trend which had demarcated itself from Soviet, Chinese and Eurocommunist variants of revisionism. Since that time, we have come to know many other organizations that have fought against revisionism in their own country. The positions held by these other groups are not always 100% in agreement with the lines that have been traditionally dominant in the international communist movement. Their experiences and their approach to the present crisis in the international crisis in a number of cases to be quite worthwhile indeed. Thus, the responses to our proposal which we detail below are mainly the responses of the first group of clearly demarcated anti-revisionists.

A dozen organizations expressed support for the proposal. They are: "Gegen die Stromung" and "Westberliner Kommunist" in Germany; the Marxist-Leninist Party of Austria, MLPO; the PCR (L'Exploite) in Belgium; Movimiento d'Accion Popular Unida/Partido de Trabajadores (MAPU-PT) and the Revolutionary Communist Party of Chile in Chile, the Communist Party of Cyprus (M-L), the OCML En Avant Proletaires in France, the Peykar Organization in Iran, the Movimiento d'Accion Popular (MAP) in Nicaragua, the ECH-CHOOOLA group in Tunisia and the Communist Party of Turkey (M-L).

In addition other organizations said they agreed with our analysis of the crisis situation in the international communist movement and support our efforts to organize a collective debate. These include Unidade Comunista in Portugal, the Communist Party of Greece (M-L) and the Bandera Roja Party in Venezuela. However, they judge that our specific proposal might lead to the creation of another pole in the international communist movement and perhaps to more confusion in a situation which is already fairly critical. That is why they would prefer to see multilateral meetings held at first. Finally there were a few organizations which said they found the proposal to be a worthwhile one but who also insisted that participants in any such event would have to meet all sorts of preconditions to be admitted.

It should also be said that some of the 60 organizations we appealed to simply refused to answer. Most notable among this group were the Party of Labour of Albania and a good number of those organizations whose political positions are very close to the PLA's views.

As for the organizations which are presently trying to establish themselves in opposition to the grouping led by the PLA, their response was to label the proposal as centrist (i.e. as an attempt to unite two opposing trends). At the same time, they tried to find common ground between it and their own effort at uniting those

who want to see a resolute defence of Mao Tsetung Thought. In January 1980, in response to a request by the RCP of Chile and the RCP of the U.S.A. we took part in a three-party meeting aimed at combining the two proposals for an international conference (one by IS! and the other by the RCP-USA). We oppose the RCP-USA proposal because we disagree very strongly with the approach the two RCP's have to the struggle to unite communists.

In the spring of 1980, we suggested a meeting of the 5 organizations (including ourselves) supporting the proposal to work out a way to conduct a more collective defence of the idea in the movement. The meeting resulted in the "Appeal for an international conference of Marxist-Leninists" signed by 4 of the 5 in September, 1980.

The new call supported the idea of a thorough and widespread debate in the international communist movement without the setting of a series of preconditions to participating in the debate such as the condemning or praising of the Chinese revolution and the teachings of Mao Tsetung. This attitude is a good one and we continue to support it.

However, the organizations which signed the appeal did not share the same understandings on how to struggle for the unity of the movement. And many had difficulties in terms of lack of resources holding them back at times too. These limitations eventually prevented the carrying out of a more collective defence of the proposal.

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