

The proletarians have
nothing to lose
but their chains.
They have . . .

A WORLD TO WIN

INTERNATIONAL
MARXIST-LENINIST JOURNAL

Editions in
English, French
and Spanish

No. 2, May 1982



Editorial

Coordinating Committee

On the Joint Communique
Peru, Turkey, Britain, Haiti

Imperialist Economism
RCP, USA

**Condemnation of
Coup in Poland**
PCR de Chile

Stakes of the Polish Crisis
France

Farce of Universal Franchise
Ceylon CP

**Press Communique
and Resolutions**
CRC, CPI(M-L)

**Comments
on Basic Principles**
New Zealand

“To carry out the struggle against revisionism and to aid the process of developing and struggling for a correct general line in the international communist movement, the undersigned Parties and organisations are launching an international journal. This journal can and will be a crucial weapon which can help unite, ideologically, politically and organisationally, the genuine Marxist-Leninists throughout the world.”

—From the Joint Communiqué “To the Marxist-Leninists, the Workers and the Oppressed of All Countries”

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Flat 2, 10, Villa Road
Nottingham NG3 4GG
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Editorial

—Coordinating Committee

A year has passed since the International Conference which issued a Joint Communiqué signed initially by thirteen Marxist-Leninist organisations. Since the appearance and distribution of the Communiqué, numerous parties and organisations have endorsed it.

In order to continue the process of unification initiated by this Conference and to reach a qualitatively higher level, the Coordinating Committee that emerged from the Conference considers it necessary to carry out another International Conference some time in 1982.

The First International Conference was possible due to the sharpening objective contradictions in the world today. Among them are the deep and sustained economic crisis; the increasingly grave threat of a new world war; the growing exploitation and oppression of the international proletariat and the peoples subjugated by imperialism, and as a counterpart, the important struggles of the masses and oppressed nations that this gives rise to. In light of this critical situation—compounded by the counterrevolutionary coup d'état in China—and in order to confront it, it was both essential and urgent to develop the revolutionary subjective factors. This meant trying to formulate a general line as well as strategy and tactics for the international proletariat, and to achieve this, drawing a clear line of demarcation between the genuine Marxist-Leninists and the various existing revisionist tendencies, thus beginning the process of rebuilding the International Communist Movement on the basis of principles and the experiences of the world revolutionary struggle.

A first step in this direction was taken with the International Conference and the Joint Communiqué it gave rise to. The great significance and value of this attempt to reunify the Marxist-Leninists—despite the limitations inevitable in a first joint meeting—consists, first of all, in that a commitment was made to take such an initial step. This initiative could not have been pulled together without overcoming various revisionist, dogmatist and sectarian tendencies; and also of course not without the existence of organisations that agreed on certain essential principles and on an appraisal of the historic moment we are living in; and most especially, it could not have taken place without the common recognition that it was both necessary and urgent to forge the unity of the Marxist-Leninists. The meeting itself, its spirit of unity and ideological struggle, and the Joint Communiqué which is an expression of common views, are all manifestations of the determination to continue advancing—both ideologically and practically—in the unifica-

tion process. Its future success depends on the decision to persist in the debate in order to deepen the unity already achieved and to resolve existing disagreements. If we continue along this path with perseverance and largeness of mind, many Marxist-Leninist streams will merge into this unitary current—as is already being borne out in practise—and together with ever more forces, it will be possible to make advances in the formulation of a general line for the International Communist Movement and the creation of the most effective organisational forms corresponding to the level of unity achieved. Even before reaching this goal, at every step in the development of the unification process it is possible to adopt practical resolutions contributing to its strengthening and permitting joint actions against the common enemy. The agreement to jointly publish a journal in three different languages is a concrete expression of this kind of unified action.

The debate at the International Conference and the Joint Communiqué it issued are outstanding affirmations of Marxism-Leninism, whose fundamental principles are shared by those who took part. The Joint Communiqué is a public endorsement of some of these principles. Certainly, this reaffirmation of Marxism-Leninism is extremely important at a time like the present when the bourgeoisie and opportunists of all sorts, with all the power of their mass media, are trying to show that Marxism-Leninism has failed, by pointing to a socialism that has degenerated into state capitalism in a number of countries as the embodiment of Marxism-Leninism in practise. The International Conference and its Joint Communiqué, even with the shortcomings inherent in a first joint initiative, make it clear that there are forces who do not regard the present state of those countries as the result of the application of Marxism-Leninism, but rather of the betrayal of its fundamental principles or of a failure to understand them. The Conference and the Joint Communiqué constitute a declaration that these forces thoroughly reject the idea that what exists in those countries can be called socialism. Of course, to determine the causes which led to the reestablishment of a new system of exploitation and oppression in a number of countries, as well as to the revisionist degeneration of the old International Communist Movement, is an arduous task requiring joint investigation and discussion so as to arrive at a common scientific assessment. Such a common evaluation must also include, as some organisations have correctly pointed out already, a criticism and self-criticism of the history of the organisations that broke with the old International Communist Movement after the 20th Congress of the CPSU.

As a lesson and inspiration for the future, it is extraordinarily positive that the first International Conference displayed such a scientific and critical attitude in taking up problems through an intense ideological struggle in defence of principles. Independent judgment, opposition to tailism and dogmatism, and fidelity to Marxism-Leninism, along with the sincere objective of learning from others and the ability to recognise mistakes and correct them, are qualities inseparable from the genuine proletarian internationalism that inspired the Conference. This attitude marks a decisive difference from other forces that call themselves Marxist-Leninists. Taking into account the dogmatic and tailist practises which characterised the old International Communist Movement and still prevail among many who claim to be Marxist-Leninists, it is obvious that simple participation in international meetings and the subsequent publication of "joint" resolutions is no proof that there has been struggle to seek truth through independent judgment, faithfulness to the facts and to principles and a genuine interest in learning from the experiences and thinking of others.

The First International Conference, along with reaching a certain level of agreement (as expressed in the Communiqué) on current political questions as well as questions about the history of the revolutionary movement, also revealed the existence of disagreements and a significant unevenness among different organisations regarding the investigation and the resolution of these questions.

Among the numerous historical problems left for discussion and resolution we could mention: a critical evaluation of the work of the Third Communist International; a deepening of the analysis of the objective and subjective conditions which led to the restoration of the system of exploitation in a number of socialist countries; a critical analysis of the policy of the Anti-Fascist United Front carried out before and during WWII; a critical evaluation of the old International Communist Movement and the Marxist-Leninist movement that emerged out of the Sino-Soviet polemics, etc. Clearly, not only can the international proletariat win great victories, but also—despite the errors and/or capitulation of those who have acted in its name—it has the necessary vitality and correctness to explain why some of its practical efforts failed, by uncovering errors and deviations, and betrayal of principles.

Furthermore, the International Conference, in discussing the document presented by the inviting organisations (the RCP of Chile and the RCP, USA), as well as in the course of formulating the Joint Communiqué, revealed the existence of disagreements or of unresolved points that need to be discussed and investigated on a number of questions regarding the political evaluation of current conditions. Among them are, for example: the relation between nationalism and internationalism; the organisational forms that the International Communist Movement should adopt; the character of the revolution in certain countries dependent on imperialism in which capitalism plays a dominant role; the characterisation of the superpowers and their policies with respect to other imperialist countries, as well as the proletarian line towards them; the characterisation of present-day revisionism (in relation to how Lenin defined it in his time); a more precise evaluation of the present crisis, of the tendencies towards war and revolution; the determination of what should be the center of gravity at this time for the Marxist-Leninist parties in relation to the masses; the determination of the principal contradiction today, etc. . . . The need to advance in the unification process demands that these and other important problems be given special attention so that in the future they can be resolved and a unified position taken on them.

The First International Conference was convened on the basis of previously set conditions, so that the participants had general agreement beforehand on certain formulations considered to be fundamental points of departure in order to advance towards a deeper

unity. Among these conditions, a positive evaluation of the theoretical and practical role of Mao Tsetung in the world revolution and of the outstanding significance of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution was given special importance, since it has become a pivotal question in the recent period. Because of this, only organisations which had already taken such a position with respect to both these points were invited. The centrists—who while not openly participating in the assaults on Mao's contributions have neither acknowledged their decisive importance nor broken with those who've launched surprise attacks in opposition to their previous positions on the revolutionary work of Mao—were not invited. Without abandoning the hope of winning over some of the centrist forces, the decision to exclude them from the Conference was based on the principled Marxist stand that you cannot struggle effectively against wavering forces and win over honest elements under their influence by watering down the revolutionary positions to their level of vagueness, but rather only by firmly and explicitly defending these positions.

The positive evaluation of Mao's contributions, a pre-condition complemented by other views which arose at the meeting itself—in particular, the assessment of Mao's development of the theory and practise of the class struggle under socialism—led to the statement in the Joint Communiqué that even though we are still living in the era defined by Lenin, Mao's thought represents a qualitative development of Marxism-Leninism. The clearly defined position on Mao Tsetung's contributions drew a line of demarcation between the participants and signers of the Communiqué—as far as an initial level of unity would permit—and the different types of pro-Soviet revisionism which became public and evident at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, as well as the reactionary theory of the Three Worlds and other views and actions of the present Chinese leadership opposed to Mao. This also made it possible to draw a line of demarcation with those who recently (since Mao's death) have disavowed his contributions and attacked him.

Now, as we have shown, a new step is needed to advance the process of unification initiated by the First International Conference, and we must prepare for a new Conference. Firstly, new changes have taken place in the international situation. Secondly, many organisations, due to practical reasons or lack of knowledge of the process in gestation, were not present at the First Conference. Their voices must be heard at the next meeting. The active participation of all is necessary for the success of the Second Conference. The necessity to restrict the number of delegates from each organisation must be compensated for by a thoroughgoing debate carried out beforehand: within each organisation, in bilateral meetings and, eventually, in preparatory regional meetings. The Coordinating Committee invites all interested organisations to send written results of their investigations and views on the pending questions as well as on others they consider important. These may be documents for the Committee to distribute or articles for the third issue of the journal, which we will make every effort to publish before the Second Conference. We emphasise once again, as does the Joint Communiqué, the importance of debating the document presented to the First Conference by the RCP, USA and the RCP of Chile.*

In order to assist in the preparatory debate, we include here again the list of questions left by the First International Conference for debate and future resolution.

* *Basic Principles for the Unity of Marxist-Leninists and for the Line of the International Communist Movement* is available in English, French and Spanish editions from: RCP Publications, P.O. Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654, USA.

1. The current objective situation: the historic conjuncture. What are the main contradictions in the world situation today? How are these different contradictions developing and how should they be considered in terms of the fundamental and principal contradictions?

1.1 Characterisation of the current crisis—how are the two tendencies toward world war and revolution developing? What is the relation between these two tendencies and which is dominant?

1.2 What analysis can be made of the development of the world revolution, taking into account the revolutionary struggles at the end of the 1960s and the ebb that followed in the middle of the 1970s?

1.3 How should the two superpowers be characterised?

1.4 What is the current validity of the thesis of an international united front against the two superpowers; what are the relations between such a strategy and proletarian internationalism and the revolution in each country?

1.5 How to link, on the one hand, the orientation of the revolutionary movement—in view of strategy based on a class analysis, on the most important contradictions and on the principal contradiction at each stage—with, on the other hand, the political conjunctures thrown forward by causes independent of our will: crisis, war, change in the strategy of reaction?

2. Path of the Revolution. The communiqué states that “As Lenin analysed, the world proletarian revolution, in the era of imperialism, consists of two great currents allied against the imperialist system . . . There are many features in common between the revolution in these two types of countries; above all that in both instances the revolution must be led by the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party, through whatever stages, and to the dictatorship of the proletariat, socialism. But there are also some important distinctions in the path of the revolution in the two types of countries.”

2.1 The Dominated Countries.

—What criteria are necessary for characterising the dominated countries? In particular, to what point have capitalist relations developed in the dominated countries and is this process growing today? What conclusions should be drawn from this? The role of the bourgeoisie? The question of the revolution in two stages, etc.?

—What forms of accumulation of forces should be put in practice in these countries, especially regarding the armed struggle?

—What summary can we make of the different experiences of national liberation struggles since the Second World War?

—What are the tasks of communists, in the course of a revolution which passes through two stages, in order to create the conditions for the socialist revolution upon completion of the first stage? What are the essential differences between a “new-democratic revolution” and a bourgeois revolution, and how do these differences manifest themselves on the organisational, military, and political-ideological planes?

2.2 The Imperialist Countries.

—What are the essential criteria for characterising the imperialist countries?

—We say in the communiqué that “the October Revolution remains the basic point of reference for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics” in the imperialist countries. How should the teachings of Lenin be applied concerning the path of the revolution in these countries, taking into account the experiences and lessons acquired since the death of Lenin? What is the role of different forms of struggle in the process of accumulating forces? What is the role of the press (agitation and propaganda), of work in the trade unions, of electoral and parliamentary struggle, etc.?

—What are the most dangerous deviations and how should they be characterised: economism, dogmatism, tailing spontaneity? How do we consider/apply the teachings of Lenin in *What Is To Be Done?* and *Left-Wing Communism*?

—What are the forms of struggle for achieving the seizure of power? What is the validity of the insurrection, the role of the organs of revolutionary power?

—Are there conditions in which communists should wage a struggle for national defence or national liberation in the imperialist countries?

3. Summation of the International Communist Movement.

3.1 What is the correct summation of the Third International, in particular concerning the line developed before the Second World War (7th Congress of the Comintern), during the war (Anti-Fascist United Front, dissolution of the Comintern) and the period after the war?

3.2 What are the objective and subjective conditions which led to the restoration of capitalism in the socialist countries?

3.3 What summation can be made of the international Marxist-Leninist movement following the Sino-Soviet split? The “25 Point Letter” should be critically examined.

3.4 The necessity for a general line of the International Communist Movement.

4. Revisionism.

—The revisionist parties which exist as forces of opposition, that is, in those countries where the bourgeoisie dominates in a traditional fashion. Are these parties a political force which has new and different characteristics in relation to the social-democratic revisionism denounced by Lenin?

—What is the nature of the relations of these parties with the bourgeoisie in their respective countries and with the Soviet Union? Their political role, their relations with the Soviet Union and their own bourgeoisie—do these vary according to the type of countries (imperialist countries, dominated countries, etc.)? Do these political forces have a specific plan of a bourgeois-bureaucratic nature based on the control of the means of production by the State?

5. The Party—Strategy and Tactics.

5.1 Party-building. Struggle between two lines within the party. Position with regard to tendencies and factions. The functioning of democratic centralism. Lessons of the Cultural Revolution regarding the question of the party.

5.2 Relation between the party and the masses. How to actually play a vanguard role without falling into a voluntarist position, not taking into account the real level of consciousness of the masses? How to unite with the masses and their struggles without falling into spontaneous and economist tendencies?

—How to link the mass line with the principle underlined by Lenin of the need to divert the spontaneous struggle of the masses?

5.3 How to use agitation and propaganda (in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist theory of knowledge), taking into account that agitation and propaganda alone are not sufficient for developing a revolutionary consciousness, which requires that the masses must have practical experience. In other words, without forgetting the strategic objectives and their broad propagation, what tactic must be established (in relation to agitation, propaganda and action) to develop the political consciousness of the masses?

May 1, 1982

Imperialist Economism, or the European Disease

—Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

In the past year or so a fresh breeze has swept over the old continent. In Britain, the broadest outbreak of mass revolutionary violence in contemporary history; in West Germany, massive demonstrations on an almost weekly basis and very often going over into pitched battles with the police; in the East, too, there is Poland. . . . All of this, it would seem, provides fertile ground for revolutionary work and certainly no reason to be discouraged. But where are the revolutionary communists?

The more or less complete collapse of the Marxist-Leninist movement in Europe is a complicated question, which deserves to be studied, debated and, most of all, rectified. In this article, however, we'll limit ourselves to examining a particular and stubborn malady which certainly has contributed to the current sorry state of affairs and which, unfortunately, continues to infect many of the revolutionaries who are struggling in the midst of a very difficult situation and upon whom a great responsibility rests. Our purpose here is not to propose a treatment but merely a diagnosis of this disease, for as Lenin pointed out, recognizing the problem is more than half of solving it.

We call this disease *imperialist economism*, by which we mean essentially the political trend of economism against which Lenin waged a fierce and protracted battle, especially as that trend manifests itself today under the conditions of imperialism and in the imperialist countries.

The arguments of the "economists" of today in general are, with some minor alterations, the same ones Lenin addresses in *What Is To Be Done?*, which may well be the most distorted, misused, and buried of all the great Marxist-Leninist works. One hears often (indeed, such a line existed powerfully in our own Party) that *What Is To Be Done?* can only be understood on the basis of the particularities of Russia to which, alone, it is applicable; that the work only applies to countries where, like Russia, a democratic revolution is on the agenda—while others claim it is only of use in imperialist countries and has little practical value for revolutionaries in the oppressed countries. Still others hide behind the numerous sins committed in the name of *What Is To Be Done?* to avoid any systematic study and application of it (a method of reasoning which would, by the way, lead one to abandon *all* Marxist works).

In fact, the allergic reaction to *What Is To Be Done?* and the intense emotions that it arouses are more explained by its *applicability* than the lack of the same, and that Lenin criticizes thoroughly and not very politely many points which continue to be accepted as articles of faith among many revolutionaries. For example, what revolutionary active in the 1970s (to say nothing of previous decades where the following was even more unchallenged) has not heard such statements

as "The economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of drawing the masses into active political struggle," "The Social-Democrats [communists] are now confronted with the task of lending the economic struggle itself, as far as possible, a political character," of the importance of carrying out "political agitation on an economic basis," or of the need for "close organic connection with the workers' struggle." Who has not heard the criticism levelled at those who refuse to accept this reasoning, such as "*Iskra* displays a tendency to minimise the significance of the forward march of the drab everyday struggle in comparison with the propaganda of brilliant and complete ideas" or, simply a denunciation of "dogmatism and doctrinarism." All of these quotes from Lenin's opponents refuted by him in *What Is To Be Done?* reveal starkly that many of the "burning questions of the movement" in turn-of-the-century Russia still smoulder today.

In answering his critics, Lenin showed, and correctly in our opinion, that socialist consciousness did not and could not develop spontaneously or "organically" out of the daily struggle waged by the working class against the capitalists. He pointed out that such a struggle inevitably developed on the basis of the contradiction between labour and capital, in particular the struggle over the conditions of the sale of labour power (wages, working conditions, etc.). Lenin agreed that such struggles would develop a *political* character but was quick to point out that such politics would in the final analysis remain bourgeois since it remained a struggle essentially over the price of a commodity (in this case labour power). He pointed out how even at that time the working class had a great deal of experience with such "politics," as in England, for example, where the struggle had long since taken the form of making demands on the State regarding working conditions, wages and so forth. In opposition to the worshippers of spontaneity, he stressed that the attention of the workers could not be focused on their conditions and their own struggle, but had to be *diverted* from its natural course through the work of conscious revolutionaries into an all-around political struggle aimed at seizing State power.

This broader consciousness can only develop on the basis of seeing the relationship of all classes in society to each other and to the State, the political tendencies of the different classes, their strengths and weaknesses. Only in this way could the working class become capable of understanding its own mission to lead in seizing state power and moving toward communism. The means of creating this class consciousness among the workers would not be principally through their experience in the economic struggle, but, on the contrary, through wide and extensive political exposure in the party press and by other means. This political exposure must be drawn out of *all* the important

political, social, cultural and scientific questions affecting *all* classes in society.

Coupled with bowing to the economic struggle has always gone "workerism," which can be translated as a philistine contempt for non-proletarian sections of the revolutionary masses (such as revolutionary students), appealing to the workers on the basis of a spirit of "revenge" against the capitalists, and a worship of what are actually backward and non-proletarian characteristics of sections of the workers.

Third International

Contemporary history has well demonstrated the bankruptcy of economism. One of the main lessons of the history of the degeneration of the great majority of Communist Parties that made up the Third International is what a pernicious influence economism has exerted in the history of the international movement. As far back as the 6th Congress of the Comintern in 1928, when, it should be pointed out, the Comintern was following an overall revolutionary line, serious economist deviations were already in evidence—in particular the call of the Comintern for the parties in Europe to become "mass parties" and to fight for the leadership of the day-to-day struggle of the workers. Although this line had many "left" aspects, in particular a tendency to see the coming crisis as the imminent collapse of capitalism, it remained economist in the sense that it held that the struggle around the immediate needs of the workers would, itself, lead to a revolutionary movement of the working class provided the Communists joined and led this movement. Missing entirely was the emphasis of Lenin on the need to *divert* this movement; instead the existing movement could lead to the proletarian revolution. These tendencies became accentuated when the worldwide economic crisis of 1929 led to a big upsurge in hard-fought economic struggle and in general to a more revolutionary mood among the workers and other sections of the masses.

The Social Democrats made considerable efforts to contain and suppress this movement, although they were also able to pose as champions of the workers' demands and their struggle in order to contain and suppress the masses of workers ideologically and politically. The Communists believed that mainly by encouraging and developing the spontaneous struggle and conducting propaganda and other political work on the *basis* of this movement, the grip of the Social Democrats on the workers could be broken and the revolution could be accomplished.

This view was furthered by the erroneous belief that the bourgeoisie, beset by crisis, would be unable to deliver on any economic concessions and thus the workers would be forced to seek a "revolutionary solution" to their most immediate needs. While it is of course true that the bourgeoisie was unable to resolve the crisis except through World War 2, it is also true that they were able to make concessions to sections of the proletariat in the advanced countries. In the U.S., Roosevelt conceded unemployment insurance and Social Security and some make-work projects were set up. In France, the Popular Front government of Léon Blum (supported by the Communists) instituted the now famous Congé Payé (paid vacation). In Hitler's Germany unemployment fell significantly. One should contrast the ease with which the bourgeoisie or its political representatives "conceded" to these demands (and in some cases became their champions) with their intransigence in the face of those political demands which actually called into question the bourgeois State power even if these demands were, from an economic point of view, easily grantable. In the U.S. the case of the Scottsboro Boys (nine Black youth condemned to death after being falsely accused of raping two white women, a case which became the focus of the Black people's struggle in the 1930s) and the fact that the U.S. bourgeoisie, while forced to call off the executions, never reversed the verdict on this outrage, illustrates Lenin's point that "'Economic' concessions (or pseudo-concessions) are, of course, the cheapest and most advantageous from the government's point of view, because by

these means it hopes to win the confidence of the working masses.'" While such political struggles were occasionally taken up by the CPUSA and other Comintern parties (although from an increasingly bourgeois-democratic viewpoint) there was never the understanding that *these* types of questions had to become the vital concern of the proletarian movement if that movement was to escape the narrow confines of the struggle over the terms of the sale of labour power. There was never the understanding that a *political strike* in the U.S. over the Scottsboro Boys or in France for the liberation of Algeria, even if limited in extent, would be worth a hundred hunger marches or fights for paid vacations because such struggle would train the masses of workers as the vanguard fighters of the oppressed in the broadest definition and to understand their historic role in seizing political power and systematically attacking all the inequalities and oppression of the old society. Without this understanding there can be no revolution, at least not a *proletarian* revolution.

With the coming to power of Hitler and the crushing of the Communist Party and the working class movement in Germany, the great shift rightward began in the international movement. The goal of proletarian revolution, if not dropped altogether for the instant, became nebulous and vague with little or no implication for the tactics and strategy of the Communists in that period. What joins in large measure the earlier "left" period with the openly right-wing line adopted in the 1930s and consolidated at the 7th Congress in 1935 (see G. Dimitrov, *United Front Against Fascism*) was the infatuation with the mass, militant, day-to-day struggle and the failure and/or refusal of the Communists to strive to turn the spontaneous movement into something else, into an all-around political struggle. In place of what Lenin called a "bitter struggle against spontaneity," one finds instead the Communists transforming themselves into the agents or expressions of this spontaneity.

More recent history, too, underscores the bankruptcy of economism. The great movements that shook the advanced countries in the 1960s did not have as their origin the economic struggles of the workers against the capitalists, nor has that struggle been the most favourable grounds for the agitation and propaganda of communists among the workers. In the United States, for example, it was above all the resistance of the Black masses to national oppression and the struggle against the Vietnam war that propelled millions of people into motion, including significant sections of the proletariat. When the proletariat in France in May 1968 demonstrated its potential as the most revolutionary force in society, it did not do so as an outgrowth of its *own* struggle against the bourgeoisie but, on the contrary, as the outgrowth of the struggle of *other* sections of the people struggling around *other* questions, in particular the revolutionary youth and students who were raising political demands against the political power and, in a confused, unsystematic and often idealist fashion, demanding a reversal, a revolution, in the existing social relations. The fact that when the bulk of the proletariat *joined* the oppositional revolutionary movement of '68 it raised its own economic demands (pushed in this direction by the French Communist Party, especially) is neither surprising nor in any way contradictory to the stubborn fact that that great movement grew out of the political movement of the revolutionary youth. In all truly profound revolutionary movements, the broad masses of the working class (as opposed to the advanced minority of the proletariat) generally join in on the basis of economic strikes which are closely linked to the prevailing political climate and which usually go over themselves into overtly political strikes. This is, for example, what took place in the Iranian revolution when the working class joined in the mass movement against the Shah, first raising economic demands and then, very quickly, going over to political demands for a Republic and in fact turning down economic concessions as a "dirty bribe" (and this lesson remains valid despite the fact that the Iranian revolution has yet to be successfully carried through to completion of even its initial

stage).

This process of mass economic strikes becoming mass political strikes is a common feature of the development of an insurrectionary situation and is one which Lenin paid great attention to in analyzing both 1905 and 1917. But this process, really, has little to do with the economist conception of "rendering the economic struggle itself a political character." The mass economic strike in these types of situations is a *means* (and not the only one) by which the *masses* of the proletariat enter an already developing revolutionary political struggle which as often as not is "provoked" or initiated by the activities by other sections of the people. The ability of the masses of workers to "go over" from economic to political strikes and, most of all, to a proletarian insurrection is also a kind of "diversion" of the mass movement which is itself dependent on a politically mature, class-conscious section of the proletariat able to lead the broad revolutionary masses, as well as broader sections of the working class itself, through the intense upheaval and swirl of a revolutionary situation marked by rapid twists and turns to launch a successful revolution. It was to the training of exactly this revolutionary section of the proletariat that Lenin attached uppermost emphasis.

That revolutionary situations will arise or that broad sections of the proletariat will rise up in the course of them has been amply demonstrated. But it has also been demonstrated that without this revolutionary section, led by a genuine revolutionary communist party, the masses will never succeed in waging a proletarian revolution. If the opportunities are not lost altogether, the best that comes about is the masses used as a battering ram by a bourgeois clique to batter down the existing power and establish its own.

Do Events in Poland Justify the Worship of Spontaneity?

Events in Poland since August 1980 have occupied the attention of Marxist-Leninists, and justly so. The ferocity and depth of the mass rebellion coming, as it seems so often, "out of nowhere," is indeed an important sign of the intensification of the contradictions in the East as well as the West and the certainty of mass, revolutionary battles in the period to come. But can it be said that this mighty spontaneous movement somehow negates Lenin's teaching on the need to combat "spontaneity" or, on the contrary, do events in Poland underscore Lenin's thesis and especially his stress on the "conscious element"?

Certainly, one of the most important lessons to be drawn from the Polish events is precisely the possibility, and increasing probability, of mass upsurges including in the advanced capitalist countries. That the masses will rise up and struggle, even search out an alternative to the existing State power and social relations, is not, however, the point of contention. What the events in Poland also show, and very vividly, is the critical role played (or in this case, not played) by a vanguard party and an advanced section of the class.

It is certainly not surprising, given the history of Poland, that the majority of workers in the movement believe they are rebelling *against* Marxism-Leninism. Nor does this fact in itself seal the fate of that movement; Lenin's remark on the Easter Rebellion in Ireland is to the point: whoever expects to find two ready-made armies lined up will never live to see the revolution. The problem in Poland is not nearly so much that the large mass of the proletariat is strongly influenced by nationalism, Catholicism, bourgeois-democratic illusions and strong pro-West sentiments, but that there is no viable force in Poland that is politically and ideologically challenging the "spontaneous" pull on the masses. The workers in Poland showed a tremendous infatuation with bourgeois democracy, as if the mere extension of democracy, including to the factory level, would solve all the problems of society. In fact, Poland before the military coup was probably much the same as Russia in the months before the October Revolution when Lenin called the then imperialist Russia "the most democratic country in the

world." What the movement showed objectively was the *limitations* of bourgeois democracy, that democracy is and must be the rule of one class over another. If the movement as a whole drew opposite conclusions from the same experience, it only underscores the importance of revolutionary theory.

In the swirl of events in Poland there is a great deal of raw material, of experience, from which the masses of workers could quickly learn vital lessons, but these lessons have not and will not be learned without the intervention of a political force drawing its revolutionary theory out of the accumulated worldwide experience of the class struggle and of social experience more generally, that is, Marxism-Leninism. To believe that the political line and the revolutionary ideology necessary to direct a victorious revolution in Poland will emerge spontaneously is wrong and dangerous. The movement has certainly posed the questions of state power, of a scientific understanding of socialism and so forth, but these questions will not and by their very nature cannot be resolved within the narrow confines of the immediate class struggle in any one country.

On the most empirical level one can easily see that the classic syndicalist line of accomplishing everything through the general strike took its toll in Poland. The leadership of that movement posed questions regarding the nature of state power but made no real and serious preparations for seizing it.

In fact, the Polish events demonstrate that the "spontaneous" ideas of the masses have very conscious and organized promoters and supporters. The Catholic Church, various pro-Western forces in and outside Solidarity, and other agents of bourgeois influence of various kinds have and continue to exercise an important sway over the Polish workers. To insist on worshipping spontaneity means abandoning the struggle against these very "non-spontaneous" enemies as well as against the force of habit and tradition on which they thrive and which they *re-inforce*.

Mao vs. Lenin!?!

One of the arguments of those who find Leninism or at least *What Is To Be Done?* outdated or worse is that Mao Tsetung, and especially his teachings on the mass line, have somehow "corrected" Lenin's teachings on spontaneity. In fact, Mao's teachings overall and especially his writings in relation to the class struggle under socialism (which represent his most important contributions to revolutionary theory) refute this view.

Mao, and the revolutionaries in China who followed his line, attached a tremendous importance to the conscious factor: that only by arming the proletariat and the masses with an understanding of the nature of socialist society and the class struggle, of the historic task of achieving communism worldwide, in short by arming them with Marxism-Leninism, would it be possible to maintain the dictatorship of the proletariat and advance on the socialist road. Indeed it was the revisionists in China who constantly tried to focus the attention of the workers on their "own" most immediate and narrow concerns.

If the spontaneous understanding of the masses was always basically correct, why did Mao find it necessary to stress that "going against the tide is a Marxist-Leninist principle"? In fact it is interesting to note that a slogan of the early years of the Cultural Revolution, "The mainstream of the mass movement is always correct," was dropped and not taken up again by the revolutionaries. It was also Mao Tsetung who stated succinctly, "In order to seize political power it is necessary to first create public opinion," which led him to give great attention to the struggle in the superstructure of the socialist society. From all this it is difficult to see how Mao's teachings supposedly contradict Leninism.

It is true that some of Mao's writing during the period of the armed struggle in China can be open to a misinterpretation with regards to the question, particularly Mao's insistence on "paying attention to the

needs of the masses” and of basing the work of the party on the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of the masses (90 percent).

In correctly situating these teachings of Mao it is necessary to consider two extremely important features of the Chinese Revolution: that it was a protracted period of armed struggle taking the form of a war between two different *regimes* and that the Chinese Revolution had to pass through a national, democratic stage. The fact that the revolution took the form of two regimes confronting one another meant that it was absolutely necessary for the Communist-led base area governments to meet the needs of the people who lived in those areas. It is in this context that Mao’s call to pay attention to “cooking oil and salt” must be seen; he never insisted that the struggle for cooking oil and salt was somehow a “preliminary stage” but simply that in waging the armed struggle—which is, after all, the highest form of revolutionary struggle—it was necessary to correctly handle these lesser, secondary contradictions. Furthermore the ability—and necessity—of the Chinese Communist Party to develop policies and a “mass line” that corresponded to the needs and sentiments of 90 percent of the population was contingent on the bourgeois-democratic character of the first stage of the Chinese Revolution, which meant that the great majority *could* be united and that even sections of the national bourgeoisie, and perhaps more importantly those sections of the upper petit bourgeoisie strongly influenced by it, could and did support the programme of the CPC for the first stage of the revolution.

In a fundamental sense, the question of *diverting* the spontaneous course of the revolution was posed by the task of transforming the democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, a task to which Mao devoted great attention, not only *after* seizing power but also during the long democratic period. The stubborn resistance that Mao met at every step of this struggle is again testimony to the fact that the socialist revolution and socialist consciousness do not and cannot develop spontaneously.

While revolutionary strategy and tactics can never be “carbon copies” of the experience in another country or the past, and especially revolutionaries must take into account the distinction between the imperialist countries and the oppressed nations, it is nonetheless true that the basic questions involved in Lenin’s criticism of economism are broadly applicable to *all*. One saw in the Cultural Revolution, for example, the tremendous attention Mao Tsetung and the “Gang of Four” which supported him paid to the *consciousness* of the masses, of their need to be concerned with “affairs of state,” of not being content with “simple class hatred”—all of which earned them the label of “idealist” and “ultra-left” from the revisionists currently in command in China. Even in those countries where the revolution will not necessarily mainly take the form of insurrection in the cities, the question of forging and training an advanced section of the proletariat (and revolutionaries from other strata won to the cause and outlook of the proletariat) is no less vital. In no country can the movement be left to its “spontaneous” course. In Iran the task of communists among the workers is not, as some would have it, to focus their attention on their *own* condition and their struggle with the employers, but to arm the advanced workers with a vivid and profound understanding of *all* the social forces at work (friend and foe alike) and the political tasks of the revolution—this alone will enable the revolutionary section of the proletariat to correctly determine its friends and enemies and lead the revolutionary masses in preparing to seize power and advance toward the elimination of classes and class society worldwide.

The economist political trend in Iran is often associated with a “left” deviation, particularly a tendency to deny the two-stage character of the revolution in that country. This view, common among Trotskyites in Latin America, also negates the political struggle to overthrow imperialism and carry out various other important democratic tasks (the national democratic, or new-democratic revolution) with sectarian and at root *economist* calls for an immediate

socialist revolution. Such a line has the effect of concentrating the attention of the workers on their immediate economic relation to their employers, ignoring the fundamental economic relation of dependency on imperialism, and abandoning the political leadership of the opposition to imperialism and the fight to fulfill democratic tasks to the national bourgeoisie, which is always more willing to be cursed than politically challenged!

We have attempted to summarise those points which illustrate the general applicability of Lenin’s thesis on economism as expressed in *What Is To Be Done?* and again in addressing the alleged “conflict” between Mao and Lenin we’ve attempted to show that the political *essence* of Lenin’s teachings is valid in all types of countries. Nevertheless, as the title of the article indicates, our target is *imperialist economism*, the economist tendency in the advanced countries in a time when imperialism has long been established. We have not used the term strictly the way Lenin did, but while there are some differences between the imperialist economists Lenin struggled against in World War I and their contemporary counterparts, both share some important features: a one-sided and mechanical attachment to the working class/bourgeoisie contradiction within a given country; a disdain for the political struggle and for non-proletarian sections of the masses; and, most importantly, a failure to proceed from one of the most fundamental characteristics of our epoch—that “a major division in the world is between a handful of advanced capitalist countries and a great number of oppressed nations comprising a large part of the world’s territory and population, which the imperialists parasitically pillage and maintain in an enforced state of backwardness, blocking the development of national capital, fostering capitalist relations only to the extent that these serve the interests of imperialism, and maintaining pre-capitalist relations, especially in the countryside.” (*Basic Principles for the Unity of Marxist-Leninists and for the Line of the International Communist Movement*, draft document prepared by leaders of the RCP of Chile and the RCP, USA).

In his struggle against the social-chauvinists of the Second International, who openly or guilefully supported the victory of the “fatherland” in the first world war, Lenin explained at length the *material base* of social-chauvinism and its connection with economism. He begins his famous article “Imperialism and the Split in Socialism” with the following:

“Is there any connection between imperialism and the monstrous and disgusting victory opportunism (in the form of social-chauvinism) has gained over the labour movement in Europe?

“This is the fundamental question of modern socialism.”

In this article and many others he shows that, yes indeed, there is a close connection between opportunism in the advanced countries and the fact that imperialism “increasingly transforms the ‘civilized’ world into a parasite on the body of hundreds of millions in the uncivilized nations” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 106) and that this economic fact results in a “shift in class relations” (*ibid.*, p. 116).

Of course all Marxists are familiar, to one degree or another, with Lenin’s teachings on the “labour aristocracy” and it is generally accepted that revisionist parties of Western Europe or the bourgeois labour movements in the U.S. or Britain find a social base in such a labour aristocracy. But at the same time there is a tendency to *narrow* the conception simply to a handful of union officials and parliamentarians and some traditionally highly paid and highly skilled workers. On the contrary, the important conception in Lenin’s treatment of the labour aristocracy is the division of the working class into *two camps*; one, a genuine proletariat with “nothing to lose but its chains,” and another section with a material stake in preserving and defending imperialism. *Each* of these two political poles finds a material base of support in the existing (imperialist) relations of production and *each* finds sections of the *masses* who will rally around its banner.

It is because of this fundamental division of the working class into

two hostile camps that the conception of the "monolithic unity" of the working class, of waiting for and expecting the working class to rise up in a single bloc, takes on particularly ominous implications in relation to today's imperialist countries. Of course even in the backward Russia of 1903 Lenin stressed the importance of winning the adherence of a minority of the workers to a revolutionary political line and correctly ridiculed the worship of the "average worker." But in the advanced imperialist countries of today the worship of the "average" worker, especially in "average" (or normal) times, is a recipe for falling into pro-imperialist politics.

Has the latest period (spiral) in the development of imperialism, the post-World War 2 period, led to a greater unity of the working class, or, on the contrary, has it accentuated its divisions? This is at the heart of the question of strategy and tactics in the imperialist countries.

It is undeniably true that in the latest period the "socialization" of society has increased—that is, the tendency to impose more and more modern methods to broader and broader spheres of production and to impose the "factory system" to virtually all of social life. Many of the traditional highly skilled and almost artisan occupations have been increasingly supplanted by the technique of the assembly line—a case in point being the building trades in the United States where some of the conditions of labour of carpenters, long a bedrock of the labour aristocracy, approach those of, say, auto workers.

Some conclude from this that the social base for revisionism or for imperialist influence in the working class more generally is being weakened by this phenomenon. In other words, the more "socialized" the productive method, the more "proletarian" the work force. From this mechanical method comes the view that workers in large factories are, almost by their essence, more class-conscious than workers in smaller plants and that there is a direct relationship between how many workers there are in a country and how thoroughgoing the character of the revolution will be. Transferred onto a world scale, such a view holds that the proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries should be more class-conscious and thoroughly revolutionary than in a country like, for example, Turkey.

In fact, a correct materialist analysis demonstrates that the main economic development since the second world war has been the intensification of the exploitation of the underdeveloped countries and, as a necessary corollary, the increased parasitism of the "advanced" countries. The period of relative social peace in a handful of countries in Europe, North America and Japan, bought and paid for in large part by the workers and oppressed in the underdeveloped world, has greatly *strengthened* the material supports of bourgeois labour politics and increased the ideological and political stranglehold of the bourgeoisie (generally through its agents) on the "average worker."

While it is certainly true that the working class will spontaneously struggle to improve the conditions of the sale of its labour power, it is not at all true that the workers will spontaneously come to recognize that their class interests are opposed to imperialism (and this, of course, leaving aside those workers who actually do *benefit* from imperialism and thus have an objective basis for defending the imperialist system and siding with their own imperialists in particular). The politics that spontaneously arise out of the workers around their *own* interests lead inexorably toward their identification with the imperialists themselves, and these will be the politics of the masses of workers if the struggle is allowed to remain on that terrain and not diverted.

Everybody is familiar with the crimes committed by the revisionists

in this respect—from the Communist Party of France's shameless support for *l'Algérie Française* to various Buy _____ campaigns (fill in the blank according to what imperialist country you live in). Unfortunately, the track record of the new Marxist-Leninist forces is not always that much better. The Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), led by a well known labour leader, Reg Birch, distinguished itself a few years back by publishing a pamphlet saying the flood of immigrants in Britain was lowering "the level of skill of the British proletariat" (!). More recently a group of professed Maoists in West Germany, the Communist Workers League of Germany (KABD), has made the fight for the 35-hour work week central to its political work, even going so far as saying on the occasion of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan that the way to oppose war developments was to intensify the struggle for the 35-hour work week (and if the war is accompanied by a big wage increase, as was World War 2 in the U.S. . . .). To give this bald-face economism a kind of "internationalist" twist they launched a campaign for a *European-wide* struggle for the 35-hour work week (are Yugoslavia and Portugal invited?) at a time when most workers outside Europe are much more likely to be working a 60-hour work week than a 40-hour one.

The above are, of course, extreme cases, but the fact that these monstrous examples could even exist in a movement claiming to have broken with revisionism should serve as an ample warning that there is still much destruction to do in order to construct a correct line for the international communist movement.

Yes, but isn't the deepening crisis of imperialism undermining the bribery and corruption of the workers in the imperialist countries and won't this lead them to struggle? Certainly the crisis is undermining the breadth of the bourgeoisification that the imperialist countries have experienced (though it is wrong to conclude from this that crisis will *ever* negate this entirely) and it is certainly true that this worsening of living standards will propel workers to struggle. But again, around what line, with what leadership, for what end? In fact, *spontaneously* the bulk of the workers (the "average") are more likely to follow the leadership of revisionists or even fascist elements with their program of restoring and/or improving the glorious days of class collaboration and imperialist crumbs for all, than the path of proletarian revolution. The revolutionary communists cannot "outbid" the revisionists and imperialists in their appeals to the workers on an economic basis. Lenin rightly ridiculed German Communists who insisted on promising the workers that their wages would not fall (or was it a promise for a 35-hour week?) if the proletariat came to power. Certainly to promise the workers of the imperialist countries today a quick improvement in their standard of living is to abandon a real conception of proletarian internationalism and goes completely against the spirit of Marx (and a point stressed in the Cultural Revolution in China) that "the proletariat can only liberate itself by liberating all mankind."

To put it bluntly, for the communists to act as the *expression* of the spontaneous sentiments of the "average" worker, to take the "drab, everyday struggle" as their starting point and most favorable arena of political work, in short, to tail the spontaneous movement of the workers, is to abandon the proletariat to the hegemony of the bourgeoisie. And, in the imperialist countries, this can only mean abandoning them to the imperialist politics of the ruling class. In these countries, social-chauvinism is the inevitable bed partner of the worship of spontaneity.

Condemnation of the Coup in Poland

—Partido Comunista Revolucionario de Chile [Revolutionary Communist Party of Chile]

December 13, 1981. On hearing the news from Poland—martial law, curfew, unions prohibited and their leaders jailed, armed forces in the streets—no Chilean can have failed to remember the coup unleashed in our country in September, 1973. By brutally repressing the Polish people, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in Poland and the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie have openly exposed themselves. The phoniness of the socialist camouflage worn by the state capitalist regime has been revealed once more. The repression is not directed against a handful of reactionary dissidents, who want Poland to return to Western-style capitalism, but rather against the Polish working class and broad sections of the masses. It's not a matter of smashing a momentary rebellion against the disastrous consequences of the economic crisis, but rather a conflict that has been gathering strength and expanding since 1956. In this struggle the workers are demanding control of the economy and, in fact, control of society, by demanding that the appeals of the Solidarity movement—democratically decided—overrule those of the ruling party and the internal and international reactionary forces that it represents. The Polish bureaucratic bourgeoisie as well as the Russian hegemonists have understood this and thus have responded with the only "argument" characteristic of ruling classes: the force of arms.

The struggle of the Polish people, in which the working class is participating massively alongside other sections of the population, represents the broadest mass rebellion against the new bourgeoisie encrusted in the state economy and in the State itself since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which was also suffocated by a coup.

Both cases have shown the absolute necessity of a leading party guided by Marxism-Leninism, if society is to advance towards an authentic dictatorship of the proletariat, in which the proletariat truly controls the State and represses both the traditional reactionary forces as well as the new bourgeoisie born out of socialism, at the same time guaranteeing a broad democracy for the people. A party which doesn't supplant the proletariat in the control of state power and is prepared to advance to communism, creating the conditions for the withering of the State and its own leading role. In Poland, the working class has not yet been provided with such a party; in China it was undermined by revisionist infiltration, which isolated the proletarian leaders like Mao Tsetung and his closest collaborators.

What has happened in Poland has had the virtue of unmasking even more sharply the hypocritical policy of the ruling circles of both superpowers—the U.S. and USSR—as well as their respective allies.

U.S. imperialism, which invaded Vietnam and sponsored the coup in Chile, now protests the invasion of Afghanistan and the coup in Poland; the USSR, which opposed the invasion of Vietnam and the coup in Chile, has invaded Afghanistan and supports the coup in Poland. Clearly both superpowers and the governments allied with them sponsor and unleash invasions and coups to further their aims of world domination and gain new strongholds for the decisive redivision of the globe which each hopes to impose in its own favour through a new world war. As usual, the victims of those clawings and pawings between the savage imperialists are the peoples of the world. Thus it is of decisive importance that the Polish proletariat (and the proletariat of any country) stamp the popular struggle with an independent leadership, combating all illusions of "altruistic" support from any imperialist power arising from its antagonism with others. Only reliance on their own forces and on the solidarity of other peoples can guarantee victory and its subsequent defence. The apparent support for the Polish people by the U.S. government and its allies—limited and vague—is only meant to destabilize the Soviet bloc to a certain degree, forcing it to use considerable forces to defend that "socialism" which the people of the East themselves repudiate. All this is with an eye towards unleashing (or being in the best possible situation to face) a new world war, through which they hope to replace the Soviet Union as exploiters and oppressors of the people whom the Soviets presently plunder and suppress. Their vagueness in "aiding" the Polish people is dictated by fear of interfering with the business they are carrying out with the Soviet bloc to alleviate the crisis; and especially by fear of the prospects of authentic socialism which the spreading of proletarian movements like the Polish one could mean—in that bloc or in the West. That's why fundamentally they are using the Catholic Church as well as social-democratic forces and governments to prevent the Polish workers from going too far in their resistance to the coup and to advise them to limit themselves to the role of martyrs of the peaceful opposition.

The attitude of the traditional "Communist" parties of the West and other parts of the world to the coup in Poland is particularly significant. To establish themselves as a new bureaucratic bourgeoisie (Polish-style) they need—to a greater or lesser degree—the support of one or the other superpower and their allies, as well as the continued existence of the institutions of bourgeois dictatorship, to repress the people. The differences between these parties over the situation in Poland reflect their different opinions as to which bloc can best serve their interests. The Communist Party of France tends towards loyalty to the Soviet bloc; the Chinese Communist Party has

already firmly allied itself with U.S. imperialism. Nevertheless, none of those parties favours the development of the Polish people's struggle towards the establishment there of a genuine dictatorship of the proletariat, guaranteeing the elimination of the new bourgeoisie, real control of state power by the proletariat, national independence, and the surmounting of bourgeois democracy which is no more than a camouflaged dictatorship of the bourgeoisie—all under the leadership of a true Marxist-Leninist party which ideologically ensures those objectives. The common position of such parties clearly demonstrates the correctness of what various Marxist-Leninist forces have put forward when they've pointed out that revisionism today doesn't play the role of simple defender of the traditional bourgeoisie, that it has its own political designs: the establishment of state capitalism as the oppressor and exploiter of the people. Thus what they favour for the Polish people is at most the operation of the institutions and rights of bourgeois society. Taking advantage of the repressive and dictatorial aspect inherent in bourgeois "democracy," they propose their own dictatorship and the establishment of state capitalism.

In the face of the events in Poland, the Revolutionary Communist Party resolves to make all efforts within its reach to:

1. Win broad support for the Polish people's resistance against the oppression and exploitation they are suffering at the hands of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie of that country and at the hands of the Soviet imperialist bourgeoisie;

2. Strive to strengthen the Marxist-Leninist current developing in different countries, since only a world proletarian movement pro-

pelled by genuine Marxism can render real support to the fundamental interests of any proletarian detachment in struggle;

3. Influence, join and support the various efforts to sum things up which have arisen around the events in Poland so as to clarify the factors that led to the perversion of socialism in a series of countries and to identify the conditions which characterise true socialism. Among them are: the kind of party that is required, the character of its influence over the masses, the role of the State, the role of revolutionary ideology and its social-democratic and other distortions;

4. Expose, through the coup in Poland, the hypocritical support of U.S. imperialism and its allies who only seek to capitalise on the Polish people's sufferings to benefit their own hegemonist and war-mongering interests—in opposition to those of the Soviet bloc—as well as to hold back all prospects of socialism in Poland;

5. Denounce the reactionary nature of the state capitalist regimes of the Soviet bloc and the imperialist nature of the USSR and the betrayal of Marxism-Leninism, which have become even more evident with the coup in Poland, as well as expose the intentions of the revisionist "Communist" parties that have not yet seized power to establish regimes similar to those of that bloc;

6. Bring out the commonality of interests between the Chilean people and other peoples in Latin America who are fighting to overthrow the military dictatorships imposed by the U.S. government, and the Polish people and other peoples of the Soviet bloc, who are in combat against the dictatorships imposed on them by the USSR.

Paris—January, 1982

General Jaruzelski's Coup de Force, or The Stakes of the Polish Crisis

—Members of the former group Pour l'Internationale Proletarienne
[For the Proletarian International], France

What are the conditions which brought about an actual military coup d'état?

What are the consequences of this confrontation, in Europe and internationally, for the stability of the imperialist system and for the proletariat?

What support should we give to the resistance movement taking shape, and with what objectives?

A. Origin of the Confrontation

1) The development of the Polish workers' movement:

The current crisis began in August, 1980 with the launching of the big strikes in the Baltic. But a long period of development paved the way for this movement. A decisive stage of this was Gdansk, 1970.

Indeed, in order to grasp the current movement, and especially its future, despite the clear setback it has just suffered, it is important to briefly recall the previous struggles in Poland and the other Eastern countries.

Whether a worker or from other social strata, no Pole can forget the 1944 Warsaw insurrection. For nearly two months, Warsaw and particularly its working class neighborhoods, resisted the German army under the intentionally passive eyes of the Soviet military forces.

In '56 the Polish workers also made their presence powerfully felt. They surged into the breach opened up by the hesitations of "destalinisation." But their actions and reasoning were still confined to the strict framework of "real socialism" ("socialism as it actually exists"), trying to rectify the Party and unions and contenting themselves with "workers' councils" conceded by the PUWP (Polish United Workers Party) and under its leadership.

The Baltic strikes of December 1970 and January 1971 brought about a qualitative change; compared to what had taken place previously in Eastern Europe, it was the naval shipyard workers this time who launched the strike. It was the working class alone waging and leading the struggle: mass demonstrations at first, then mass strikes and strike committees independent of the PUWP and the official unions. This movement rapidly produced sharp social tension and was met with unprecedented brutality; the street demonstrations of the strikers turned into slaughter, the militia fired without restraint. Unofficially, between 150 and 500 dead were counted. In response, the workers turned to rioting: their two targets were the militia (burning buildings and vehicles) and the Party, whose headquarters were also torched.

But this repression did not break the Polish workers' movement. It could even be said that the movement took a qualitative step forward. Social antagonism increased and expressed itself more sharply. Despite their clear-cut victory, the authorities were shaken: Gomulka left the political scene, replaced by Gierek who took full advantage of his working class origins to try to appeal to the working class. At the time of the January '71 strikes in Szczecin, the authorities negotiated. In this second outbreak, the workers, rather than confronting the militia with their bare hands in the streets, entrenched themselves in the factories they had occupied, and formed strike committees.

These events of '70-'71 profoundly affected the class consciousness of the Polish working class and in a very tangible way influenced the struggle of 1980, its objectives and its tactics.

A long period of maturation for the working class took place between the struggles of '70 and '80. A maturation which resulted first from the depth of the class contradictions that exploded in '70. Of all the countries of the East, Poland is the one the Soviets have least been able to shape in their image. The existence of a powerful Church and a strong private peasantry attest to the depth of the contradictions. Furthermore, in 1968 Poland experienced powerful student unrest; and this type of unrest is always a very revealing sign of the ripening of class contradictions.

The 1976 movement continued and deepened this process of maturation. Other workers' struggles, especially at Ursus, were brutally repressed and numerous workers imprisoned. The contradiction deepened even more at this time: a political movement—the KOR—arose around the defence of the imprisoned workers. At the head of this movement were the leaders of the '68 student movement. Thus, the two movements of '68 and '70 which had been oblivious to each other, joined together from then on, making it possible to change the balance of forces in relation to the authorities, as well as moving the struggle to a higher stage, including, among other things, the founding of a newspaper called *Robotnik*, which was very well received within the working class.

Thus in ten years the workers' movement went from riots, direct responses to the massacres, to much more highly developed tactics, leading in particular to a nationwide organisation. The fact that Gdansk was the epicentre of the 1980 movement is significant in terms of the nature of the confrontation; it was indeed a question of the struggle begun ten years earlier. The two protagonists were perfectly aware of this. The Gdansk workers responded to the authorities' "victory" won through the massacre, with the victory

of '80 which was sealed by forcing the rulers to build and inaugurate a monument to the memory of the victims of '70.

Clearly Jaruzelski was now trying to win the third round. Yet this time, the battle did not unfold solely in the area of the Baltic ports, but throughout the country as a whole, occurring in an already tense international conjuncture, with the USSR already entangled in Afghanistan, the Polish revolt threatening to seep through elsewhere (Rumania, for example), and with a social movement in the West no longer under the "spell" of Brezhnev-style "socialism."

2) The development of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie:

Along with the development of the workers' movement the policies of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie also developed. Gierek played his card of modernising Polish industry, for which he borrowed massively from West European governments and banks, especially West German. Modernisation was supposed to lead to a strong expansion, to a development of exports that would provide the currency needed to pay back credit.

This policy ran up against two realities:

—The first was the decay of the system of rule which hampered economic policies. Indeed, all the evils labeled "Western" flourished and developed in this new style state capitalism: corruption, local and rival feudal kingdoms, etc., with a very restricted *nomenklatura* (system of rank and privileges) cut off, of course, from the people.

The state apparatus was nothing but a huge body of impotent and incompetent bureaucrats, incapable of achieving the goals of the Plan, forced to allow the development of the black market, a parallel economy. . . . Some Solidarity leaders described how the different clans clashed within this apparatus, each one measuring its strength by the number of factories it operated, without worrying about general coordination or modernising the old ones.

—The second is the crisis of the world economy, which hit Poland with full force through the rise in energy costs, and stagnation, indeed decline in markets, made even worse by its exploitative trade relations with both the West and East.

In these conditions, the economy headed straight towards collapse, pure and simple. This economic situation along with its effects on the masses' standard of living thus increased the objective basis of the social tensions. This was felt all the more sharply because along with industrial modernisation, there was a great expansion of the black market and the privileged strata.

3) The characteristics of the workers' movement of summer '80.

The workers' movement of summer '80 had the following key traits:

—Its base was an organised mass strike around the factories, especially those with large concentrations of workers, with tactics consisting of avoiding armed confrontation with the authorities and their Soviet protector.

—The demands put forward (that is, more or less radical reforms), although negotiable, shook the whole ideological and political system ruling Poland, especially those for a free union, and for the abolition of privileges such as special stores, allocations to militia personnel, etc. . . .

—The workers' aspirations, particularly as they were expressed in the formulation of demands, implicated the political system as a whole. But the alliance between those with experience in struggle against the system and those thoroughly familiar with it from the inside (particularly members of KOR) made it possible to agree on a tactical line for the negotiations.

—Implicating the political system didn't translate into a desire to build a Western type of society, but rather to establish workers' control, particularly in the domain of economic management.

—The founding of Solidarity. Although it calls itself a union, Solidarity can't be compared to other trade union forms in the West

(or East). On the one hand, Solidarity was formed on the basis of strike committees, which came out of large-scale class struggle. On the other, Solidarity became the representative of a whole class, then of a whole people; in addition to being forced to take responsibility for a whole series of problems regarding social life, it very rapidly became a social and political force. All the forces in the country came to recognise this role, which was consecrated in the tripartite meeting aimed at establishing the basis for national accord.

Another basic trait of this movement was indeed its protracted character. As soon as the bureaucratic bourgeoisie consummated the August defeat, the proletariat continued its pressure while preserving a remarkable cohesiveness by uniting different strata of the population around it. Day by day the rulers grew a little more isolated, with gangrene setting in even in its strongholds: the Party experienced a great deal of turmoil, since part of its base belonged to Solidarity and was challenging the way things were going, elections, etc. . . . within the PUWP.

Solidarity also developed within the ministries, the judicial apparatus, and even the militia.

The class struggle thus continued to develop in several phases:

—Extension of the Gdansk agreements to Poland as a whole, the establishment of Solidarity in all of industry and the administration.

—Spreading the struggle to the peasantry, with the recognition of Rural Solidarity.

—The Bydgoszcz incident was undoubtedly the most important stage before the coup d'état of December 1981: by having the representatives of Solidarity beaten, the rulers launched a test operation to measure the proletariat's reaction.

The extraordinary mobilisation at the time of the four-hour warning strike on March 27, '81, showed that the rulers would have a difficult force to put down in case of a confrontation.

The greatest risk of confrontation up until December '81 was finally defused by a coalition between the moderates and the authorities. Contrary to what is happening today, the working class controlled the Polish situation, and those in power then were not ready to fight it out. However, a large section of the proletariat wanted to launch a general strike, and the agreement signed as a last resort by Walesa gave rise to widespread protest within Solidarity's ranks.

Nevertheless there can be no illusions about the ability to overthrow the political power through a general strike. Some very timely Warsaw Pact manoeuvres in Poland itself moved into place the necessary apparatus to smash any possible rebellion.

4) The different stages leading to the coup d'état. After this date, three phenomena appeared:

The *first* was an *effort to unite the moderates* in a centrist type of Party, pulling together the Church, the wing of the Party considered moderate, and the moderate wing of Solidarity. This effort, heavily influenced by nationalism, was supposed to lead to national accord; but due to the existing antagonism, carrying it out proved impossible. The contradiction between the strength of the industrial proletariat and the needs of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie supported by Soviet power, made any such centrist coalition illusory.

The *second* was *the struggle within the PUWP*. The conflict of August '80 thoroughly shook the Party: the rank-and-file challenge, radicalisation of the "hard-liners," horizontal structures sweeping away the hierarchy. This struggle reached its full intensity during the preparations for the Congress. The Congress did not achieve anything: the line was upheld; the CC reelected, the status quo preserved. In other words, the decomposition could continue. This reached its peak at the time of the plenary which shelved Kania; the very confused debates prevented any coherent position from surfacing; Kania was dismissed probably due to his lack of firmness, and his

assistant replaced him to carry out the policies we know today.

In fact it was at this plenary that the wheels for the military coup d'état were set in motion. The nomination of Jaruzelski, minister of defence and military careerman, coincided with the political decomposition of the PUWP and the dispatch of military units throughout the country for the official purpose of keeping the authorities afloat (supplies, maintaining the state's organisational structures, settling conflicts).

The *third phenomenon* was *Solidarity's Congress*. The Congress has been long awaited since it was the first general debate since August '80. On the other hand, it is interesting to consider the effect of the clash at Bydgoszcz. In fact this Congress showed the limits of the tactics of self-restraint practised by Solidarity since the beginning: it adopted a programme that generally indicted the system; it called on the workers of Eastern Europe to form free unions; it put the problem of the Soviet Union on the table.

All the points adopted bear testimony to this. It was also apparent during the election of Solidarity's president. Although Walesa was elected with more than half of the votes, three other candidates together brought in a significant number of votes. Thus, while no opponent was able to develop a coherent alternative policy, doubt began to set in about the policy of self-restraint.

Thus through these three phenomena the coming confrontation could be seen. The political power, whose main foundation was crumbling, had no other *way out except to rely on military force*. The proletariat did not know how to develop the tactics suited to this new situation and maintained its self-restraint. A few days before the coup d'état, awareness of this fact was expressed in the union at Radom. Jaruzelski had to force the proletariat to toe the line. His manoeuvring room was tight. What did he have in mind? Did he respond to a Soviet ultimatum? Did he instead try to beat the Soviets to the draw by staging a nationalist coup d'état?

What is certain is that the general staff of the Warsaw Pact had to have known what was coming down. The coup had been in preparation for quite awhile in conjunction with fraternal help from the Soviets. The form taken—*isolation by cutting communications, massive arrests*—showed both the General's resolve and his fears.

Strange as it might seem, Jaruzelski appears to have placed his bets on nationalism and an understanding with the moderates; he apparently never completely abandoned his vision of reaching some kind of national accord.

The PUWP, for its part, totally disappeared from the political scene and people only began to talk about it again five days after the coup d'état!

Jaruzelski was making a risky bet: any resistance by the proletariat that was just a little too strong would lead to open intervention by the Soviets. All the nationalist dreams of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie faded away in the face of the very actions of those considered the most nationalist: the military.

B. Lessons of the Movement

The unfolding of events in Poland over those 18 months provide many lessons, particularly on the character and nature of the Solidarity movement. Further, this movement certainly did not end on December 13, 1981.

The features that can be defined out of this experience are the following:

1) The basic trait is that it involved a *proletarian movement*. The large industrial centres were the heart, the mainspring of the mass movement, forming its organisational pivot. After the December 13 coup d'état, it was the industrial proletariat which continued to resist the army and militia most actively.

—The working class movement, on the other hand, in the form of mass political strikes, shook all of bourgeois society. Not only did it

stop it from functioning physically, but by pointing its finger at the social order, by emphasising the precarious, fragile aspect of social organisation, the movement starkly contrasted social reality with its deformed image: ideology. It brought out the truth. The official rhetoric, the pressures, the promises by the political and union apparatus which before helped stem the development of the aspirations, initiative and action of the masses, became ineffective. The force of truth which the working class movement unleashed attracted different social strata like a magnet. Through its broadness, it transformed the usual protagonists in Poland—the Party (PUWP), the Church and the dissidents. It divided each of them into two tendencies, one reformist, the other conservative. It reduced them to a state of political midgets.

By shaking up the whole social equilibrium and all the regulating mechanisms and the ideas that go with them, the mass movement clearly demonstrated that it was hitting at the fundamental contradiction in society between the bourgeoisie and proletariat.

In another vein, what was the influence of Catholicism and nationalism?

This must be judged on the basis of the facts more than on how the workers characterised themselves and society. Certainly the striking workers in the Gdansk shipyards "followed the crowd," but they didn't go along with the proposal to go back to work suggested by the primate of the Polish church. Certainly the workers sang "God Save Poland," but they appealed to the workers of the Eastern countries in September '81 and to the workers of the whole world after December 13. Nationalist ideas did not influence the 21 demands of August '80.

It's not a question of getting hung up on the most obvious appearances of the movement, but of trying to understand the profound nature of the proletarian movement.

2) The workers' movement was able to demonstrate a real *tactical genius*, making it possible, under a dictatorial regime, to push back the rulers on key questions, to rally the great majority of the people around it, and to bring about the decomposition of the system of rule, all while avoiding armed confrontation which is the rulers' favourite terrain.

In this respect, it must be noted that never has a workers' movement been able to achieve such a breaking down of the rule of the bourgeoisie through its own strength during a period of peace. Comparable examples can be found only in the countries emerging from war. This shows all the lessons to be drawn from this movement.

The method used can be summed up as follows: beat the authorities at their own game by turning their own arguments against them, make use of the rules of the official game to put the adversary in trouble, avoid the arena of confrontation which is the rulers' strong point, impose a constant tension based on the balance of forces, and on this basis, negotiate everything that the adversary finds unacceptable. All these things extend the limits of what is possible, cornering the authorities.

These tactics were able to be carried out for two reasons. First, because of the experience paid for in blood ten years earlier. Second, because of the cohesiveness which the very structure of the industrial fabric made possible, particularly the concentration in Gdansk.

The key to the success of these tactics was the cohesiveness of the proletariat which held up a seamless front in the face of the adversary. Beyond the prestige of the workers of Gdansk and other Baltic ports, and beyond the long development of the class struggle over the past ten years which strengthened this cohesiveness, there was the systematic practise of mass democracy and an organisation based on the reality of the social movement of the proletariat.

3) The practise of *self-restraint*:

The conditions of the struggle, especially the nature of the enemy, led the working class to practise what everyone has referred

to as self-restraint. This consisted of acting within a tolerable framework for the enemy: not denouncing the leading role of the Party nor the Polish state's alliances within the Warsaw Pact.

Some might criticise this self-restraint as a brake on the development of the workers' movement, and for resembling the ground rules of the social pacifists in Western Europe. Actually, the conditions for applying self-restraint suggest a different analysis:

On the one hand, self-restraint deprived the adversary of an excuse to attack the workers based on what they were putting forward, and at the same time permitted the enemy to not "lose face."

On the other hand, the principle of self-restraint remained an offensive position, insofar as through formal concessions (recognising the leading role of the PUWP) the workers' movement continued to grow stronger, while in reality, the Party's role as leader of the working class was reduced to nothing, and thus its foreign alliances became meaningless.

In this way the practise of self-restraint made it possible to mobilise and unite the whole working class, urban petty bourgeoisie and peasantry. It has therefore been a factor in the ripening of class contradictions in society as a whole, a ripening which took place evenly. Taking into account the conditions, this self-restraint in fact brought about the ripening of revolutionary conditions for the people as a whole.

4) But this self-restraint had its *drawbacks*.

As long as the bureaucratic bourgeoisie could pull back, self-restraint could be a formidable weapon, but as soon as it was backed into a corner, the only solution left was to fight no matter what the price. This tactic lost its effectiveness; on the contrary it even became an obstacle, preventing the real problems such as the military coup de force and foreign intervention from even being taken up. And this is where Solidarity's basic error lies: believing that the rules of the game based on a mutual acceptance of self-restraint and the existence of Solidarity were eternal, that peaceful general strikes could stop an armed, cornered enemy.

With regard to this error, several aspects must be seen. It's possible that religion and nationalism had an influence on the pacifism of the movement: Poles don't kill each other, they refuse to spill blood, even to defend themselves. But it is the experiences of the Gdansk massacres in particular that lie behind this behaviour.

Secondly, a dual power situation existed in Poland after August '80. Yet this kind of balance cannot last long: one of the two adversaries must force the other into line. But what alternative did the Polish proletariat have? Although in a national framework the balance of forces was favourable enough that seizing power was within its reach, the fact remains that the international encirclement (Warsaw Pact forces and Western silence) totally reversed this balance of forces.

5) Did Jaruzelski succeed with his coup after all?

While this situation prevented the development of the class relations in Poland, and thus the awakening of revolutionary consciousness as well, still Jaruzelski's coup was far from successful. For that to happen he would have to break the back of the industrial proletariat, the nucleus of the Polish social movement. It seems this was beyond his reach. Certainly a Polish or Soviet-Polish military regime had to take over in Warsaw, and the status quo reestablished in the end, representing a clear setback for the workers' movement.

Yet if the industrial proletariat is not broken, it will "digest" its experience, as it did in '70, and it will attack again with a heightened and deepened consciousness. The international contacts which exile will force it into making, as well as the development of the class struggle in Europe, can only be favourable for this movement. Finally this reality of the balance of forces demonstrates clearly the necessity for revolutionary struggle on an international scale.

The Polish proletariat has rocked Polish society to the point that it has fallen apart; this will not fail to be reflected on a subjective level, in the realm of consciousness, as the experience is assimilated; things will never be the same in Poland.

But this was also a blow against the whole socialist camp as well, including all the ideological tendencies claiming to be part of it. The results of this are incalculable.

Indeed, the entire ideological justification for this system is crumbling. This not only imperils the existence of the Eastern regimes and the CPs as a whole, but it especially frees the workers' movements from a tremendous mortgage: "real" socialism.

C. The International Context

1) Poland's place in the Warsaw Pact (its strategic location between East Germany and the USSR, the Baltic Coast, the importance of the Polish army, etc.) makes it a country which must remain "eternally" socialist, an inalienable stronghold of the USSR. Any attack against Poland will inevitably provoke war, sooner or later.

The USSR lives in fear of being encircled, a fear arising from the reality of its history, especially since the October Revolution. This is the basic premise of the Polish question. Any country which is part of the Soviet fortress is by definition subject to, on the one hand, the political conditions accompanying this geo-strategic premise, namely the fascist dictatorship of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie nicely labeled "socialism," and on the other hand, the economic conditions: membership in Comecon.

In the same way, any internal challenge results in the crushing of dissidence by force of arms, as was particularly the case in Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

2) The legacy of Yalta defines the general character of the situation in Poland and the countries of the East. This division of the world dates back to the Second World War. According to the logic of Yalta, each great power, in reality the two superpowers, takes care of things in its own zone as it sees fit. This is why the events in Czechoslovakia didn't upset East-West détente in the least; the Western leaders just considered it an unfortunate incident. The same logic applies to the West as well: Vietnam and Chile are two particularly blatant examples.

3) East-West economic relations. The economic relations which developed between East and West, particularly within Europe, were grafted onto this legacy of Yalta. This is how West Germany became the second largest seller to East Germany and its third largest buyer. Western credits began to assume great importance: Poland's foreign debts are basically owed to Western creditors, particularly West Germany.

Thus the recognition of the Yalta agreements on a political and military level made the development of economic relations possible. This explains the quandaries of the West and the fears of the Eastern European countries when confronted with destabilisation in Poland. In time, these two aspects may become contradictory insofar as the uneven development of the economies leads to a redivision of the world sooner or later.

The particularity of the Polish crisis meant that the governments of Western Europe were almost as worried as their counterparts in Eastern Europe, which explains the great efforts by Western Europe, especially financial efforts, to bring about a settlement of the conflict. During 1981 numerous "political" credits were extended because of pressure applied by Western governments, despite the grumbings of the bankers. Any deterioration of the political situation in Poland which might force Europe and the West to eventually cut back its trade with the East is deemed an economic catastrophe. Now the context of the economic crisis and of unemployment must

be taken into account. For example, a cut-off of trade with the East would place West Germany in a very difficult situation and would destabilise it seriously.

This, therefore, is what determined the West's attitude toward Poland up until December 13. Although this attitude stems from Yalta, and later détente, the international situation is characterised by the challenging of these two ground rules. The worldwide crisis which has been developing since the end of the 1960s has led to:

4) Calling into question the global balance of forces.

In 1975 a decisive stage was reached with the U.S. defeat in Indochina and the Soviet-Cuban penetration into Angola and Eritrea.

The political and economic situation in the big Western powers began to deteriorate with a severe crisis of confidence in the U.S. and the rise in unemployment in all countries except Japan; but the real turning point came in '79 with the invasion of Afghanistan, the Sino-Vietnamese war and the occupation of Cambodia, the Iranian revolution and the energy crisis it set off, and the destabilisation in Central America and in Poland.

This set of events destabilised international relations totally. Each of the two blocs has been rocked in strategic areas and each sees this as the result of underhanded activity by its adversary. Distrust is growing and confrontation is in the making.

This is how the situation of the two superpowers presents itself:

The U.S. wants to return to the good old days and is putting up a great military effort to maintain its empire: militarily in relation to the Soviets, economically, in relation to the Europeans and Japanese, and in relation to the liberation struggles of the oppressed peoples.

The USSR's situation is quite different. Its economic strength does not equal that of the U.S., Europe or Japan. Its one strength is military. Here, it is in some respects superior, in some equal, and in some inferior but not unacceptably so, which gives the USSR its militarist character.

This character stands out even more because of growing weaknesses in its economy, technology and agriculture. As of now, the situation in these sectors is not about to improve: Poland is in a state of bankruptcy, and in due time, the USSR will no longer have the means to assume responsibility. Soviet agriculture is going downhill. Its technological inferiority may well lead to its losing its military advantage if the arms race is stepped up. And finally, with the events in Poland, a political and ideological crisis is lurking.

The economic, financial and moral bankruptcy of the Soviet bloc is developing surely and rapidly. There is only one way to try to escape it: military ventures in Europe, an inelegant but effective means of settling debts, and of finding the technological, industrial and agricultural capabilities which the USSR lacks. It is also the only way to substantially weaken the U.S., which is a greater and greater threat to them.

The Polish situation poses a no-win situation for the West.

On the one hand it can carry out an economic boycott of the East. This would mean compromising its own economic stability, which would intensify its own social tensions, and would mean suffocating the Eastern bloc, which would corner it and push it towards war.

On the other hand, the West could turn its head, as it did with Czechoslovakia, but this too would have its consequences: spurring the USSR towards military ventures (like Munich in '38), and rousing the people of Europe against it at a time when the political and social situation in the West is already very sharp because of the crisis.

Thus the gearing up for war in Europe is already underway; the Polish crisis is the finishing touch in this process. All imaginable hypotheses lead to the same place. Possible scenarios for American intervention in other areas of the world—in Central America, the Caribbean, Angola (through South African intermediaries), in Iran (with Israeli help), in Libya (with Egyptian help)—only lead in the

same direction.

The European bourgeoisie is the most worried about this situation, which explains its "cowardly behaviour" (as the Polonophiles call it). Since it doesn't have the military means to respond to the USSR, it has been taken hostage. This is even more the case because it's at the centre of the conflict, and because its alliance with the U.S. is both dangerous and not that reliable. Dangerous, because the European bourgeoisies have everything to lose in war, since Europe may be completely destroyed, and yet an attitude of compromise (like that preceding the Second World War) would mean sharing the spoils with the Russian superpower. Not very reliable, because the Americans could be tempted by an isolationist policy of withdrawal, which has happened before (at the beginning of the last two world wars). This withdrawal would be relative, since the U.S. would use the opportunity to rebuild its empire around the Pacific while waiting for the USSR to wear itself out in a war in Europe. Moreover, this would bring into line one of the U.S.'s most dangerous rivals: Western Europe.

The approach of war is not solely a result of deliberate calculations by the superpowers. In fact the great powers have completely lost control of the situation. The allies they've financed and armed are playing nasty tricks on them at every opportunity (Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights, for example). The underlords they have installed in the dominated countries do as they please. Finally, the masses are paralysing the superpowers' actions more and more (Iran, the pacifist movement in Europe, Solidarity in Poland, for example).

This loss of political control is occurring as a result of the economic crisis. Thus parallel to the approach of war, the imperialist system is threatening to crumble under the weight of its own contradictions.

Conclusion

In this process, worldwide contradictions are converging in Europe. In addition to the inter-imperialist contradictions we have examined, Europe is pregnant with a broad social movement. The intensification of the crisis of imperialism and the approach of war have begun to spark the youth and even a significant section of the masses into action: the pacifist mobilisation which also hits the imperialist system; the ghetto movement in England; the socialist upsurge in France and in southern Europe; the struggle of the Polish people; the social decomposition in Italy; the more-than-difficult "democratisation" in Spain; etc. . . .

Along with the rise of these struggles comes a collapse of the bourgeoisie's most reliable bulwark, that is, the leftist forces whose role is to channel the struggles: the crisis of the PCF (France), the PCE (Spain), of trade unionism: the SPD in West Germany and the Labourites in Britain.

It is only through these struggles which must converge and rely on the strength and cohesiveness of the proletariat, and through becoming conscious of the stakes of the current situation in Europe, that the tide of history leading us toward war can be reversed.

The struggle of the Polish proletariat is, from this point of view, an example from which the proletarians of other countries must draw inspiration in order to develop. This is why it is so important to make clear what is at stake in the Polish crisis.

It is also necessary to support and strengthen the struggles in Poland in order to weaken the Soviet bear, encourage the struggle in Eastern Europe, aggravate the problems of the Western CPs, and finally, through support, make it possible to prevent the nucleus of the struggle in Poland from being crushed, in order to hold on to what was won in the struggles of '80-'81.

To strive to unite the social forces already in motion, to propagate as widely as possible the correct understanding necessary for the mobilisation of the social movement—this is the framework for the struggle to support the Polish people.

APPENDIX:

The ML group "Pour l'Internationale Prolétarienne" decided to dissolve in February 1982

—Two members of PIP

If it were merely a question of the importance of this group, this event by itself would not even deserve mention in the daily obituaries. But this dissolution could have implications for the signatories of the communiqué. And more, this demise is a reflection of the general crisis of revolutionary activism. It is from this angle that the problem is worth examining. The three following points take up the Joint Communiqué of Autumn 1980, the nature of the PIP's internal crisis, and the nature of the general crisis of organised Marxist-Leninists in Europe.

1. Is PIP's dissolution a reversal of verdicts on the communiqué, on its content and its role?

The authors of these lines remain convinced that the call represented a very positive step and marked a stage in the crisis of the ICM. At the time it was signed, the contradiction between revolutionary Marxism-Leninism and opportunism was a key manifestation of the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat on a world scale. Major worldwide confrontations and upheavals are manifested first in intense ideological, philosophical, and theoretical struggles, etc. . . . The Autumn '80 meeting came in just such a phase. The manoeuvres of the PLA, the CCP, the centrists, the revival of the ultra-left, the campaign launched by the bourgeois intelligentsia against Marxism and the Chinese revolution—all this is testimony to the intensity of the ideological struggle. By drawing a certain number of basic dividing lines, the call was a positive response. By dealing with a great many questions frankly and critically, the meeting did not evade the serious problems of the day, but rather took a step towards resolving them. By linking up to bring together representatives from four continents, the initiative of the RCP, USA and the RCP of Chile put back on the agenda a real internationalism which had not been seen for many years.

A new situation was thus created for the revolutionary M-L forces. This remains true regardless of later developments with the participants and signatories.

The real question is: Are we able to confront this new situation? Are we able to be bold enough to deepen the advance begun in Autumn '80?

The dissolution of PIP answers in the negative—which is not correct—but the question is still posed for other forces that signed the communiqué.

2. In our eyes, the internal crisis of PIP did not stem from any incorrectness of our basic views. We are not blaming either the overall advance, or the concrete internationalist initiatives. The basic cause of the group's demise lies in its inability to define *the exact relationship between general views and concrete possibilities for action*. We were not able to resolve the contradiction between general political and ideological line on the one hand, and on the other, the actual movement of the class struggle and the concrete and immediate questions that it poses. Perhaps it seems bold for a group which is dissolving to talk about a correct political and ideological line, but this line

which was developed by going against the tide of the mainstream of the revolutionary movement in France has remained too general.

PIP was not able to carry out activity around a general orientation alone. On the contrary, it dissipated itself in concrete tasks, not knowing how to transform the general orientation into well-articulated concrete activity corresponding to immediate reality.

3. The question which is at the heart of PIP's dead end is also at the centre of the overall crisis of the revolutionary forces in the world, particularly in Europe. The various failures certainly involve the influence of opportunist ideas, but two things must be emphasized. First, these opportunist ideas are rooted in the history of the ICM. Second, revolutionaries attempting to go against the tide by opposing right opportunism or its opposite, dogmatism, haven't been able to formulate a concrete and viable response to the present situation.

In fact, the problems facing us M-L revolutionaries are immense. We are inheriting a doubly difficult situation: a very deep crisis of capitalist society and a very deep crisis of Marxism.

Objective reality is of course always basically definable as the epoch of imperialism; but beyond this generality, the world has undergone great political, social, ideological, technological and economic change. Clearly the current crisis of the world imperialist system is of the same type as previous crises, in the sense that it has resulted from contradictions inherent in capitalism itself, but it also has a depth, a scale and impact which give it a new dimension. What weapons do the revolutionary Marxist-Leninists have at their disposal in the face of this new objective situation? Very few! Marxism is going through what is perhaps the most serious crisis since Marx. While world history has continued to move forward like a locomotive, some time ago Marxism became stiff and frozen: only the Chinese revolution brought forward new ideas, and they are far from sufficient to make up for the tremendous lag. On the contrary, the development of the ICM has given rise to a lot of illusions which themselves are obstacles to becoming aware of the extent of the problems.

The very deep crisis of the imperialist system throws the world into turmoil and moves history forward rapidly. It reveals the profound nature of things, clears away men's illusions, lays bare all the weaknesses, including perhaps especially those of the revolutionaries. Looking at the profound changes the international Marxist-Leninist movement has undergone since the death of Mao is convincing enough.

Social and historical upheavals bring forth revolutions. But before they become social revolutions, they are ideological, theoretical and philosophical revolutions which educate revolutionaries and make them fit to face up to the objective situation.

We must make such revolutions and rid ourselves of dead weight by resolutely entering the arena of the actual experience of the proletariat.

Making revolutions means revolutionising our views, our methods of thinking and work.

Ridding ourselves of dead weight means rejecting old ideas, striking down taboos and icons, whether myths of the ICM or workerist myths.

* * * *

These then are the conclusions we have reached during the time of PIP's existence. We think it is important to make them known even in this terse form, to those who still hold lines that are indeed revolutionary.

These ideological revolutions which must be made concern us all. This is the way social revolution must take place. To deny it by contenting oneself with performing exorcism through dogma can only make the situation worse.

Paris—February 15, 1982.

50 Years of the Farce of Universal Franchise in Sri Lanka

—Ceylon Communist Party

The UNP government and its stooges are this year celebrating the 50th anniversary of the grant of Universal Franchise by British imperialism to the people of this country. Learned pundits and constitutional lawyers have been hired to preach to us the alleged benefits which our British enslavers are supposed to have granted to us through this measure. The opportunity is being used by cunning and reactionary politicians to administer a heavy dose of bourgeois parliamentary democracy on our people, who have already had a surfeit of it.

That is why that, even if it means swimming against the current, we, as Marxists-Leninists, must scientifically approach this problem and tell the people the naked truth—however unpleasant it must be for our ruling classes. In the first place, we must examine the conditions under which Universal Franchise was granted to our people. It was the Donoughmore Commission that recommended this allegedly far-reaching measure, whose consequences nobody guessed at that time. But one fact is admitted by all, and that is, that, with the exception of Mr. A.E. Goonesinghe, no other politician or political party in this country asked for Universal Franchise. It was given unasked. It was granted to us in the year 1931, to both men and women over 21 years of age, when even the women of France, a developed country of Europe, did not have a right to vote. The French women only got that right in 1945, while their Swiss counterparts got it only in 1971. Apparently, we were judged to be more competent and more qualified than the French and the Swiss.

Let us ask ourselves a simple question. Why did the British imperialists, who had conquered our country, and were exploiting it in their interests, give us Universal Franchise? Was it out of love for us? To ask that question is to answer it. The obvious answer is that they had an ulterior motive. They believed that through the exercise of Adult Franchise, they could divide the people of this country according to race, religion, caste and all other trivial sectarian issues and thus prevent and sabotage the growing unity of the anti-imperialist forces, so that the imperialist masters could continue to ride on the backs of all classes of our people. And that was precisely what happened.

It is no accident that the emergence of communal politics dates back to the Donoughmore era. During the martial law days of 1915, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan had risked the dangers of torpedo-infested seas to go to London to plead the cause of his Sinhalese brethren who were imprisoned during the riots. Subsequently, in the elections to the educated Ceylonese seat in the Legislative Council, Ramanathan successfully defeated Sir Marcus Fernando and H.W.

Jayawardene.

But, as the British gave more reforms, the Sinhalese and Tamil bourgeois leaders quarrelled about how to share this power. Before the Donoughmore Council came into force, the Ponnambalam brothers had had differences of opinion with the Sinhalese leaders about a separate seat for the Tamils in the Western Province. As a result they both resigned from the Ceylon National Congress, which they had helped to form, and whose first President was Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam. It cannot also be denied that it is Adult Franchise, and the necessity to cater to it, that still compels politicians to stir up communal feeling among their following, with an eye to the next elections. It is this that is largely preventing a statesman-like solution to the communal problem in our country. Parliamentary politicians think only of the parochial interests of their seats. Statesmen think of the interests of the whole country. Universal Franchise was one of the most divisive measures introduced by our colonial masters with the purpose of disuniting us. Well can the British imperialists look back on a piece of good work well done.

It is of course true that reforms of the type of Universal Franchise, like any other form of social service, has its good points. It does bring some benefit to the people. Because of the necessity to win the votes of the people, the politicians are compelled to serve at least some of the interests of their voters. That is how we can account for measures such as free education, free health services, the rice ration system, and other forms of welfare state. But, like in other reforms, they are intended to prevent a drastic and revolutionary reconstruction of society. Just as the capitalist prefers to part with a small portion of his gains in order to protect the whole, so the ruling classes try to deceive the people with a few palliatives, but without curing the illness; this, in short, is the famous argument between reform and revolution. The ills of our society are too fundamental to be cured by reforms. They stem from a system of exploitation by imperialism, feudalism, capitalism, and act only by exploitation. By hoodwinking the people by means of reform like Adult Franchise, a parliament, etc., the ruling classes seek to distract the attention of the people from the real issues, and turn their attention to issues that cannot fundamentally affect the position of the ruling classes in society.

That is why we describe bourgeois parliamentary democracy, of which Universal Franchise forms an important part, as a political attempt to conceal the economic exploitation that goes underneath. Parliamentary democracy is an adornment, a veil to cover the naked dictatorship of capitalism. It was invented by the reactionaries as a weapon to deceive and divide the people, to dampen their class con-

sciousness and their fighting spirit, by creating the illusion that it is possible to attain socialism through parliament by peaceful transition. It is an attempt to distract the people's attention from the real seats of power which are the armed forces. It is an attempt to substitute the struggle by words for the struggle by arms.

Bourgeois democracy is basically an attempt to conceal from the masses that real power in society rests in the hands of the repressive state machinery, that acts as a watchdog of the exploiters of the masses. Every worker who has been on strike knows that his employer, be he white or black, has only to lift his telephone, and, within minutes, an armed police party would be at the gates. It has come to protect not the workers, but the private property and person of the employer. But, let any worker who has been assaulted by a foreman, or whose legal wages had not been paid by the employer, telephone for the police, there would be no response. Again, countless are the number of times that workers have been locked up for incidents arising out of strikes or demonstrations. But has anyone ever heard of any employer being locked up for violation of the labour laws of the country? What does this prove? It clearly proves our contention that the police force, like other armed forces, are nothing but the watchdogs of the exploiting classes. They certainly do other jobs like directing traffic, and occasionally apprehending a thief or a murderer. But their fundamental duty is to safeguard exploitation. That is why, wherever and whenever there is a strike, the first to arrive is the police jeep.

And when they come, they come armed. They will not come empty-handed. There would be guns in their hands. Why the guns? They are the ultimate source of their power. With the guns, they can shoot and kill. Without them, they cannot exact obedience of the workers or submit them to exploitation. That is why Comrade Mao Tse-Tung said: "Every Communist must know that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." That is the quintessence of the Marxian theory of the State. In whose hands are the guns in our country today? They are in the hands of the watchdogs of the exploiting classes. Therefore, political power is with them. Only when the guns change hands, only when the working class and its allies can snatch them from the hands of the watchdogs of exploitation, i.e., when they carry out revolution, only then will political power come to the working class, which Marx termed the dictatorship of the proletariat, only then can the working class achieve liberation and march to socialism.

It is to prevent the masses from realising this truth that all the snares of bourgeois democracy have been invented. But, even so, as Lenin pointed out: "There is not a single State, though democratic, which does not contain loopholes or limiting clauses in its constitution, guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law and so forth, in case of a disturbance of the peace, i.e., in case the exploited class disturbs its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner."

He further said: "Bourgeois parliament, however democratic, and in however democratic a republic, is nothing but a machine for the suppression of millions of working people by a handful of exploiters—for the property and power of the capitalist is preserved." That is why he said: "Bourgeois democracy, nevertheless remains, and under capitalism, cannot but remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich, and a snare and a deception for the exploited, for the poor."

Lenin pointed out that: "The form of bourgeois States are extremely varied, but their essence is the same; all these States, whatever their forms, in the final analysis, are inevitably the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie."

That is why he said: "Only scoundrels or simpletons can think that the proletariat must win the majority in elections carried out

under the yoke of the bourgeoisie, under the yoke of wage-slavery, and that only after this must it win power. This is the height of folly or hypocrisy, is substituting voting under the old system and with the old power, for class struggle and leadership." Instead, he advocated that, "In order to win the population to its side, the proletariat must in the first place, overthrow the bourgeoisie, and seize State power."

These quotations from the great Lenin must convince any genuine revolutionary of the Marxist-Leninist position concerning bourgeois parliamentary democracy. But it is a sad fact that, in Sri Lanka, the exploiting classes have had a measure of success in deceiving the people with the fraud of bourgeois parliamentary democracy. This is due to the fact that, as a result of certain historical accidents, there have been regular changes of government through the ballot, spreading the illusion that changes of power could be brought about by the ballot. It is also due to the relative economic stability that we have enjoyed till recently. Lastly, this illusion has been helped by the betrayal of the old Left parties, who have surrendered their revolutionary principles at the altar of bourgeois parliamentary opportunism.

Let us take one example and try to study it a little more intimately. We have voted 10 times after Universal Adult Franchise was granted to the people. The people voted in 1931 for the first State Council, in 1935 for the second State Council, in 1947 for the first Parliament, in 1952 for the second Parliament, and in 1956 for the third Parliament, which brought into power Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. In 1960, as if voting once was not enough, the people voted twice. They voted again in 1965, and yet again in 1970 and 1977.

But nevertheless, this right to vote was not exercised by the entire people of this country. From 1948 onwards, the people of Indian origin, who for the most part were workers in the tea and rubber plantations (which brought in a major part of our foreign exchange), were disenfranchised. By making it a law that only citizens could vote, and by depriving these people of their citizenship, their right to vote was annulled. This was a deliberate move on the part of D.S. Senanayake, Ceylon's first Prime Minister, and perhaps the shrewdest politician that the capitalist class has produced in Ceylon. He understood what even the Left movement failed to understand: that the majority of the people of Indian origin were workers, and would therefore ultimately join the Left movement of the country against the ruling classes—as, in fact, they did during the 1947 Parliamentary elections, returning 7 members of their own and helping to return Left candidates in nearly 14 other seats.

Therefore, despite the boast of Universal Adult Franchise, a fair section of the working class of this country has not enjoyed the right to vote from 1948. What is worse, their heads were counted for the purposes of delimiting the constituencies. The result was that for a member's return for constituencies with a large concentration of such workers of Indian origin, he had only to poll a relatively small number of votes as compared to the other constituencies. One such example was Talawakelle.

Despite the boast that Universal Franchise guaranteed the equality of citizens, i.e., one vote for one person, in actual fact, the seats were so delimited that the conservative rural areas were weighted against the more progressive urban and coastal areas. For instance, it required a less number of votes to return a member in the Central Province, which usually returned either the UNP or the SLFP, then it did to return a member in the urban and coastal areas, where the Left was strong. Nevertheless, by means of this process, the people sent to the legislature many eminent men, graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, learned barristers, fiery orators, able debaters, etc. Some of them have celebrated their 20th anniversary of their entry into Parliament. We are not disputing this fact or that they made clever and good speeches, but that is not the question at issue.

The question at issue is whether the ruthless exploitation of the

working people that existed in the country when the farce of Adult Franchise and parliamentarism began in 1931, has been reduced even a little as a result of the wonderful speeches and the efforts of these eminent gentlemen, who rode to Parliament on the backs of the common man.

The honest answer has to be a plain: "No." Why is this? It is because the misery of the toiling people is due to the exploitation they suffer at the hands of the neo-colonialists, feudalists, and the big bourgeoisie; because the workers and the peasants and the rest of the toiling people are compelled to sell their labour power at very low prices to the exploiting classes. While the exploiting classes grow more and more rich as the result of amassing huge profits through the creation of surplus value from the labour power of the working people, the toiling people themselves get more and more impoverished as the result of this ruthless exploitation, which has continued unabated whichever party was in power in Parliament.

Elections have never altered this question. This is for the simple reason that exploitation by capitalists and the landlords is not protected by Parliament, but protected and safeguarded by the machinery of the State which has been built up at the great expense by the exploiting classes in order that it can act as their watchdog. That is why Marx defined the State as the instrument of the oppression of one class by another. By the machinery of State, we mean principally the armed forces, as well as the legal system, the judiciary, the jails and the highly paid bureaucracy—all of which are not subject to any election, but carry on irrespective of whichever party is in power.

There are, of course, changes in the bureaucracy that governs a country. A bureaucrat is transferred from Colombo to Matara, or from Kandy to Nuwaraeliya. Or else one bureaucrat is replaced by another. But the State machine remains intact, and is basically not influenced by changes of government. We have had several changes of government, including some in which so-called "Leftists" have participated as cabinet ministers. But has anyone heard of a son of a worker being appointed the Commander of the Army or the Navy? NO! The top posts of the machinery are reserved for men who come from classes whose interest it is to safeguard exploitation. These are the men who constitute the machinery of State, which acts as the watch-dog of exploitation.

It is to hide this fact that the farce of bourgeois parliamentary democracy was invented. But, all the same, this game cannot be played without there being two opposing sides, just as in the game of football. That is why, after the 1977 elections, J.R. Jayawardene lamented the defeat of Leftists leaders like N.M. Perera and Colvin R. De Silva. Without them being in the opposition, it would be more difficult to fool the people. The essence of bourgeois parliamentary democracy is the existence of two opposing parties, or two groups of opposing parties. One governs, and the other opposes. So important is this act of opposition that the government pays a higher salary to the leader of the opposition, so that he or she may oppose the very government that pays him or her to do so. This is also why the bourgeoisie has invented all the mumbo-jumbo associated with Parliament, which are collectively called Parliamentary Conventions, and which are held to be more sacrosanct than the law itself. The greatest upholders of these conventions and the most devout worshippers at the shrine of constitutionalism and parliamentarism are the erstwhile Left leadership.

Some of these conventions are worth investigation, and exposure. On Budget Day, during tea-time, it is customary for all party leaders to sit for tea at the Finance Minister's table; so, on this day, every year, you will see men who abuse each other outside, and in Parliament sit at the same table and drink tea. The idea that is sought to be put across is that, despite the hurling of abuses during Parliamentary debates and on public platforms, members from both sides of the House were agreed on preserving the status-quo, the

bourgeois parliamentary democratic system, which is only a synonym for capitalist exploitation. It is for the same reason that cricket matches are organised with the Prime Minister captaining one side, and the leader of the opposition, the other. After all, the Parliamentary game is very similar to cricket—a friendly game among friends, members of the same or similar class, and played according to well-accepted rules to which both sides subscribe. Here we have the quintessence of bourgeois parliamentary democracy—a sham battle between men whose fundamental interests are the same, but a squabble over trifles.

This kind of class collaboration and sham fighting has become possible because leaders of the two coalitions on either side of the House, despite verbal protestations, are defending more or less the same kind of vested interests. That is why, no single political party, whether in the government or in the opposition, showed any keenness to compel members of Parliament to declare their personal assets. It is also for the same reason that we found unity of views on both sides of the house, irrespective of their party distinctions, when it came to the question of increasing the salaries of ministers of Parliament, or of giving them pensions. Parliamentarism breeds opportunism of the worst sort. When one candidate is not offered by his party the seat he wishes to contest, he changes sides, like changing shirts, and proceeds to contest the same seat, as a representative of the party to which he was all these years opposed. Other disgusting forms of crass opportunism are the examples of men who claim to be believers in dialectical materialism, beginning their political campaigns by going on pilgrimages to Kataragama temple or by offering flowers at the foot of the statue of Lord Buddha. They want even the gods to take sides in elections. It is an attempt to cheat both man and god.

It is not necessary for us point out that elections in Sri Lanka are synonymous with large-scale corruption, mass impersonation, bribery, free flow of liquor, thuggery, appeals to communal and caste sentiment, etc., etc. Where democracy comes in, we don't know. Or again, after all these years' "training" in democracy, there are still seats which can be contested only by candidates of a particular caste or community. All these instances of crass opportunism and the exposure of the fraud of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, must at least open the minds of all honest-minded people. They must realise that all these much-publicised parliamentary struggles between parliamentary parties are all a sham, and are only intended to deceive the people and to prevent them from embarking on the revolutionary path. Many people fail to realise that the grant of bourgeois democratic rights and liberties is nothing but a trap to ensnare the revolutionaries. It is an attempt to encourage revolutionaries to carry out all their activities in the open, so that they could easily be under the surveillance of the secret police.

If we are granted the "right" to publish a newspaper, the C.I.D. is the first to read our ideas and plans. If we are given a permit to use a loudspeaker for a public meeting, the police can tape-record our speeches. If we are allowed to stage a demonstration, the police can, and in many countries do, photograph every face in the demonstration, and so on.

When the working class gets too strong, all this information is used to decapitate the revolutionary movement at one stroke, as it happened in Indonesia in 1965. In Chile, the modern revisionists and the socialists thought that they had come to power peacefully and even allowed leaders of the bourgeois armed forces into the cabinet. The latter bided their time, and, at one fell blow, destroyed the entire government and unleashed a fascist dictatorship.

Whether it is the example of Indonesia or Chile or that of Sri Lanka, the plain lesson to be drawn is that there is no peaceful, parliamentary path to socialism.

A reaction can never be defeated by victory at the elections alone. The UNP has been defeated three times in parliamentary elec-

tions, but has been able to re-emerge and be as strong as ever. When the UNP strength in parliament was reduced to 8 seats in 1956 by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, there were pundits from the LSSP who said that the last nail had been driven into the coffin of the UNP. Yet, somehow or the other, the corpse escaped from the coffin, and has ruled the country twice, since then. Again, when the United Front parties emerged victorious in the 1970 elections, with a two-thirds majority inside parliament, the same pundits again declared that the UNP could never re-emerge as a political force. But in 1977, the UNP swept to victory, with a 5/6ths majority in parliament, eliminating the Leftists completely from parliament. The alternative to the possibility of a return to power of the UNP is not in the retention of the SLFP in power or voting into power another fraudulent coalition, like the United Left Front, but the instalment of a government under the leadership of the working class through popular, mass revolutionary struggle. The alternative is people's power, with the working class at its head. But this implies rejection of the peaceful parliamentary path and an acceptance of the revolutionary way.

People remember the joy and expectation that followed the victory of the United Front parties in 1970. They obtained a 2/3rds majority inside parliament. There was nothing they could not have done. Yet they failed. Having promised a democratic government, they ruled for six out of the seven years under a state of emergency and with harsh repressive laws. Faced with an economic crisis that had engulfed the whole capitalist world, their only solution was to transfer the burdens of the crisis on to the shoulders of the masses.

There is no doubt that they carried out certain allegedly progressive measures, like income ceiling (now abrogated), capital levy, land reform, etc. But these were not socialist measures. They were intended to strengthen capitalism. Far-seeing capitalists realised that too great a concentration of land or income in too few hands is the surest spur to revolution. They, therefore, tend to broadbase ownership of land and capital so as to diffuse the revolutionary movement. This is what the Coalition government did. Several forms of state capitalism have come into being. Considerable sections of the economy, which is now estimated at 60%, have been brought under different forms of state capitalism. Foreign-owned plantations and plantations of over 50 acres owned by local landlords have been nationalised. Business firms have been acquisitioned. There has been a proliferation of state corporations—breeding with it a new bureaucratic capitalist class.

But State power still remains firmly in the hands of the exploiting classes. So long as this remains so and the class positions remain as a whole, exploitation in new or old forms will continue. Distribution of land does not connote socialism. Napoleon divided the land after the French Revolution. MacArthur did the same in Japan after the Second World War. But it did not constitute socialism. It was confined to the framework of capitalism. The important point is: In whose hands is State power? Different sections of the ruling classes may replace each other. But exploitation and the consequent misery of the people continues. This cannot be changed by changing parties at elections.

In 1970, the United Front parties promised us socialism. But, in 1977, they not only suffered a crushing parliamentary defeat with two of the three parties suffering total extinction in parliament—neo-colonialism and capitalism are very much with us; and their very trusted servants, the UNP is back in power and is steering the country towards the worst economic mess in our history and a new enslavement to new neo-colonial masters. This smooth changeover from the United Front government to the UNP government was possible only because it was the same State power that served both governments. Without the destruction by force of this State power and the establishment of an alternate State power which Marx called the dictatorship of the proletariat, no progress is possible.

That is why we must not dissipate our energies in these futile attempts to defeat reaction through elections and, instead, unite together all revolutionary forces and establish a United Front of workers, peasants, the revolutionary intellectuals and all patriotic people to overthrow by force foreign and local reaction once and for all. We must go down to the grass roots of the people and propagate the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought. We must be with the people, like fish in water, understand their problems, help them to organise in trade-unions, peasant unions, youth leagues, etc., to solve their day-to-day problems; lead them from small struggles to big struggles, heighten their class consciousness, and learn, in the course of these struggles, to politicalise them and to integrate open work with secret work and legal work with illegal work—but always ensuring that secret and illegal work is the fundamental aspect of our work. The important thing is that we must not deceive the people with opportunist and false solutions as those presented by the worshippers of bourgeois parliamentary democracy.

Of course, when we call for the rejection of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, we will be met with abuse and recrimination and even accused of supporting reaction. These abuses are nothing new to us. But our anti-UNP bona fides can never be called into question. We opposed the UNP even when Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike was inside it. Our opposition to the UNP is total and final. But, we aver that it cannot be defeated finally only through elections. We are not willing to be a party to the deception that the power of reaction can be overthrown by defeating it at the polls. We tell the people categorically that, without breaking up the neo-colonialist/feudal/big bourgeois economic framework, and without smashing by force the State machinery that protects the economic framework and makes possible its exploitation of the people, no matter whichever be the party, or the group of parties that comes into power by the fraud of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, the fundamental problems of the people cannot be solved. Revolutionaries, therefore, must understand that the smashing by force of the existing bourgeois State machinery and its replacement by the State machinery of the working class, which Marx defined as the dictatorship of the proletariat, is an essential precondition for the abolition of exploitation.

But, there are others who hide their parliamentary opportunism by pretending that they do not believe in parliamentary democracy but that they were contesting elections to make use of parliament as a platform for propagandising their views. It would be relevant to note here that, when the LSSP contested the elections to the Second State Council in 1935 and Philip Gunawardene and N.M. Perera managed to squeeze in, this was the aim that these Samasamajist twins proclaimed in loud tones. But everyone knows how they both ended up as ministers in bourgeois coalition governments.

The advocates of this argument quote copiously from Lenin, particularly from his book, *Left-Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder*, in support of their contention. This argument deserves a little attention because it has caused confusion among genuine revolutionaries. In dealing with this book by Lenin, one must not look at it without reference to time and space. If we did so we would be metaphysicists and not dialecticians. Let us remember that Lenin wrote this book in April, 1920 in order to be read by delegates who had assembled in Moscow for the First Congress of the Third Communist International. He wrote this at a time when only one country in the world had succeeded in establishing socialism and when parliamentary illusions were rife among most European countries. That was 60 years ago. To use a yardstick of 60 years ago and to apply it to the situation of today would be a gross caricature of Marxism. In any case, Lenin was dealing with a question of tactics—how to make the maximum use of legal methods to do propaganda for Communism in countries where the working class had not yet come to the position of accepting Soviet power as the only way out. Under any

circumstances, Lenin never advocated the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism through parliament. He only advocated that, where possible, parliaments be used as a platform by the Communists. But let us remember that, during the 60 years since he wrote this book, not one Communist MP has fulfilled the role expected of him by Lenin. Almost every one of them fell a prey to parliamentary opportunism and constitutionalism.

In Sri Lanka, no one is today seriously plugging the revisionist theory that the working class could pass on to socialism by peaceful means through parliament. The failure of the 1970 experiment and the debacle of 1977 has put a stop to that. Similarly, the miserable performance of the odd Left groups that contested the 1977 parliamentary elections—including the highly financed (from whatever sources) JVP—has equally exploded the theory of trying to use parliament as a platform. In any case, the hooliganism that goes on in parliament today and the absolute lack of any principled debate, along with the concentration of all power in the hands of the President, who does not sit in Parliament, has ceased to make parliament even a platform. Further, the new constitution which eliminates all small parties that poll less than 12-1/2% of the votes and the system of proportional representation rings the death knell of this theory. Today, the people of Sri Lanka are sick to death of this parliamentary game where alternative parties have ruled the country without basically changing the economic structure. This was demonstrated by the mass approval of the decision of the genuine anti-UNP parties in the South not to contest the Development Council elections. Today, when the class consciousness and the willingness to revolt is increasing among the people, to mis-direct them on to the path of bourgeois parliamentary democracy would be a crime.

Since Lenin wrote this famous book, a lot of water has flown under the bridge. Revolutions have taken place in over a third of the world even though, in all of them, capitalism has been restored. In the rest of the world, revolutionary situations are maturing. World imperialism is sinking into its final crisis. In our part of the world bourgeois democracy does not exist in more than two or three countries, even in name. Even the President has accepted this. Nobody can gainsay the correctness of Mao's analysis that in the world today revolution is the main trend.

Even though, in his time, Lenin advocated, for strictly limited purposes, the use of parliament as a platform, he was quick to point out its limitations. He said, "The socialists, as fighters for the liberation of the working people from exploitation, had to use bourgeois parliament as a platform, as one of their bases of propaganda, agitation and organisation, as long as our struggle is confined within the framework of the bourgeois system. But now that world history has placed on the order of the day the complete destruction of the system, the overthrow and suppression of the exploiters and the transition from capitalism to socialism, to confine oneself to bourgeois parliamentarism and to bourgeois democracy, to paint it as democracy in general, to gloss over its bourgeois character, and to forget that Universal Suffrage, as long as the capitalists retain their property, is only one of the weapons of the bourgeois State, is shamefully to betray the proletariat, desert to the side of its class enemy, the bourgeoisie, become a traitor and a renegade." Today, in Asia, there is hardly a country where bourgeois democracy thrives. In most of the countries revolutionary situations have matured. In some of the countries the working class and its allies have taken the road of armed revolution for the seizure of State power. In such a situation, are we justified in asking our people to participate in the farce of bourgeois parliamentary democracy and in extolling Universal Franchise?

A thousand times "NO."

That is why the test of a true revolutionary today is his attitude to the fraud of parliamentary democracy. Without making a clean break with parliamentarism, without rejecting it in total, it is impossible to embark upon the revolutionary path of uniting all the revolutionary forces for the overthrow of foreign and local reaction, the destruction by force of their State machinery and its replacement with the state machinery of the working class and its allies and the establishment of a government under the leadership of the working class based on the worker-peasant alliance and unity with the revolutionary intelligentsia and all patriotic people.

[Reproduced from 'Kamkaruwa' (Worker), central organ of the Ceylon Communist Party]

Press Communiqué

—Central Reorganisation Committee, CPI(M-L)

First All India Conference of the Reorganisation Committee, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) was held in the last week of January 1982. The Conference lasted eight days and was held at a time when RC had already made significant advances in the reorganisation and rebuilding of the CPI(ML), facing grave challenges thrown up by the developments at the national and international level. It was held in underground conditions in rural Maharashtra with the full cooperation and support from the people of the surrounding villages.

Forty-five delegates and four observers, representing different States, participated in the Conference. They had been elected by the respective State conferences. Fraternal delegates representing Revolutionary Communist Party, USA, Nepal Communist Party and Ceylon Communist Party attended and addressed the delegates conveying fraternal greetings from the respective parties. One representative of a friendly organisation in India also participated as an observer.

The Conference commenced in a revolutionary atmosphere after hoisting the red flag and commemorating the martyr comrades. The rostrum of the conference pandal was decorated with a huge red banner on which the portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung and founder leader of CPI(ML) martyr comrade Charu Mazumdar were prominently placed. After the opening speech, the Secretary presented the document on approach to the developments at the international level. In the discussion that followed, delegates, observers and fraternal delegates actively participated reflecting the high level of consciousness achieved by the comrades in the intense ideological struggle for upholding Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought including the lessons of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and in the fight against the new variants of revisionism represented by the present leaderships of China and Albania, and the counter revolutionary theory of three worlds.

In this atmosphere marked by a high level of political awareness which pervaded all through the Conference, the following documents were presented and lively discussions took place. The Political and Organisational Report presented a summing up of the experience after the formation of the RC in November 1979. RC was formed with the merger of Kerala State Committee and Andhra Pradesh State Reorganising Committee with the task of reorganising and rebuilding the party at the all India level on a correct ideological, political and organisational basis. During the last two years State level committees could be organised in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Assam. Numerous struggles in all these areas were taken up and in Kerala and AP armed struggle could be developed linking up with the establishment of parallel political power at the local level. Thus the work during the last two years succeeded in laying a firm foundation for reorganising the party at the all India level. During the discussion on this document State units presented their detailed reports approved in their respective State conferences.

The document summing up the 14 years of experience after the Naxalbari struggle evoked a keen and vigorous two line struggle and

the discussion on it continued for two days. Vast majority of the delegates, while upholding the great contributions of comrade Charu Mazumdar and the essence of his revolutionary line, stressed the need for rectifying the mistakes committed by him and the Party under his leadership and firmly put forward the need for developing all other forms of struggle and thus developing a revolutionary mass line complementary to armed struggle. The Conference accepted the ideological and political evaluation put forward in the Summing up document with amendments strengthening the positions taken in it.

After detailed discussion the Conference accepted the amendments to the Party Programme and Constitution adopted in the 1970 Congress, the Political and Organisational Report and the document on international developments. The Conference empowered the new committee to redraft the document on tactical line based on the approach in the Summing up document.

The working papers on work among peasantry, workers, students, women and on cultural front were discussed and it was decided to redraft the papers incorporating the suggestions put forward by the delegates and to circulate them for further discussions at various levels before finalisation.

It was resolved by the Conference that reflecting the organisational development achieved, the name of the committee be changed to Central Reorganisation Committee. The Conference elected the new committee which in turn elected comrade Venu as its secretary.

After the resolution commemorating the martyr comrades was adopted, another resolution calling on the Marxist-Leninists all over the world to wage a determined struggle against the new variants of revisionism on a wider scale and to take effective steps to build up a revolutionary platform of the international communist movement was adopted. The Conference hailed the working class who participated in the 19 January All India strike and called up on it to come forward and take up its historic role in the New Democratic Revolution. It declared solidarity with the struggles waged by the minority nationalities. The Conference also greeted the Polish workers who have dealt a severe blow to international revisionism and called upon all freedom loving people to actively support their heroic struggle in the face of the military crackdown by the social fascists and cautioned the Polish people to be vigilant against the machinations of U.S. imperialism and its agents too.

The Conference concluded with the entire participants and volunteers joining in singing the *Internationale* and they departed to different parts of the country with the firm determination of carrying forward the reorganisation of the party and developing revolutionary struggles on the basis of the new understanding achieved.

After the successful conclusion of the Conference, a public meeting was held in which the people from the nearby villages enthusiastically participated.

10.2.1982

Resolutions of the All India Conference

—Reorganisation Committee, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)

1. In Memory of Martyr Comrades

During the decades long liberation struggle of the Indian people, and during the course of the armed agrarian revolution led by our party, CPI (ML), hundreds and thousands of our dear comrades including our respected and beloved leader comrade Charu Mazumdar laid down their lives most heroically in service of the people. With the blood of these comrades the red flag has become still more red.

This Conference, while commemorating the martyrdom of these comrades, takes the vow that we shall spare no effort and shall march forward with death defying spirit of self-sacrifice keeping aloft the red banner, handed over to us by these martyr comrades.

2. Call to the Marxist-Leninists all over the World

After the death of Mao Tsetung and the subsequent developments in China, the International Communist Movement faced a very serious crisis. The new variants of revisionism propagated by the leaderships of the CPC and PLA, created confusion among the Marxist-Leninists all over the world and sowed the seeds of disruption in many Marxist-Leninist organisations. But, in spite of such serious setbacks, many Marxist-Leninist organisations, and the rank and file in some other organisations have stood up and fought against these new variants of revisionism emerged in the ICM and have held aloft the red banner of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. And the ideological struggle that is going on in the ICM has really enriched and enhanced the level of ideological understanding of the ICM and so the movement is actually on the threshold of a new qualitative leap forward. In this circumstance, it is high time that all the Marxist-Leninist forces at the global level should come together and exchange their ideas and experiences so that an effective struggle against the new variants of revisionism can be waged at all levels and the struggle for socialism and communism can be carried forward further on a wider scale. This Conference calls upon all the Marxist-Leninist forces all over the world to take up this urgent task and strive hard for building up a revolutionary platform of the ICM in the immediate future.

3. Storm Centres of World Revolution

Rising waves of fierce national liberation wars against imperialism, social imperialism and their flunkies mark the contemporary world. The U.S. and the Soviet Union, the two modern day monsters in their desperate bid to save themselves from extinction, are creating more and more gory spots on the world map. The oppressed peoples of Africa, Latin America, Central America and Asia are resisting these barbaric onslaughts heroically. While social imperialism finds the going tough in a host of countries, particularly in

Afghanistan and Kampuchea, their rivals-in-crime headed by U.S. imperialism are receiving resounding blows in El Salvador among many other countries.

This Conference greets the fighting people in all the continents and calls upon the world's people to resolutely march forward along the path of liberation and give the death blow to the global imperialist system.

4. Condemn the Social Fascist Repression in Poland

In spite of the massive military crackdown the Polish working class is in no mood to yield to the social fascists. The developments in Poland have exposed the gaping structural contradictions in which the social imperialist camp is engulfed, and it is a big blow to international revisionism. It is once again shown to the world that the working class cannot and will not be fooled by empty slogans. But at the same time the Polish people should be vigilant against U.S. imperialism and its agents who are trying to divert the movement to their advantage. This Conference calls upon all freedom loving people to actively support the heroic struggles of the Polish workers.

5. In Support of the Struggle of the National Minorities

In spite of the fascist terror and military suppression resorted to by the Indian state the armed struggle waged by the peoples of Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram is surging ahead. And these struggles are inspiring the other national minorities like Tripuris, Sikkimese and Kashmiris also to wage struggle by taking up arms for their right of national self-determination.

This Conference hails the heroic armed struggle of the Manipuris, Nagas and Mizo people and declares solidarity with these struggles.

6. Condemn the Atrocities on Dalits

In recent months, the landlords and their goondas, aided by the state, have unleashed a wave of atrocities on Dalits in Sadhupur, Deoli and other places all over India. This tyranny is part of the repression that the feudalists have let loose against the rising tide of people's resistance. This Conference calls upon the people to resist this butchery of their class brothers in the name of caste.

7. To the Workers Struggling Against Fascism

This Conference hails the workers who participated in the 19 January All India strike against fascist black laws of the ruling classes.

We call upon the Indian proletariat to take up its historic role in the New Democratic Revolution, upholding class politics and marching in the van of the people.

Comments on Basic Principles

—A comrade from the Red Flag Group, New Zealand

I have studied the above document to the end of “The Basic Tasks of the Marxist-Leninists—Imperialist Countries,” i.e. to the end of par. 204 and send you my comments without delay. I have confined them to the tasks in general and to those in imperialist countries—pars. 158 to 204. There is of course much I would like to discuss in the previous parts of the document and less important issues in the part I have covered. My comments are made in the light of my experience in New Zealand and shortcomings:—

1. The point that *the concept of socialism must be brought to the workers from outside of the class struggle* is not made clearly enough.

References are made in the document to the mass line. If one does no more than look up Mao on this (Vol. 3, page 119) “from the masses to the masses” is discussed. It is stated that the ideas of the masses must be made concentrated and systematic. As Mao states that one must study Marx, Lenin and Stalin, the phrase quoted incorporates the idea that socialism is not necessarily to be found in the ideas of the masses and is necessary to be brought to them. However I think the document should make this more clear. Lenin considered this very important and refers to it many times in *What Is To Be Done?* (pages 52, 66 and 67 in my copy).

Apropos of this the document contains no clear refutation of the idea that the Party should not initiate struggles but should do no more than take part in those that are going on—an idea prevalent in the CPNZ. Pages 81-82 of *What Is To Be Done?*—“‘That struggle is desirable which is possible, and the struggle which is possible is the one that is going on at the given moment.’ This is the trend of unbounded opportunism, which passively adapts itself to spontaneity.”

2. Although par. 179 alludes to the matter I don’t think the document emphasises sufficiently that it is a basic task to bring *class political con-*

sciousness to the masses, nor does it give a line on how this is to be done. In this connection I prefer to the quote in par. 179 of *Basic Principles* the following one on page 133 of *What Is To Be Done?* (my copy):— “Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships of *all* classes and strata to the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelations between *all* classes.”

3. Alliances are mentioned in par. 192 but Lenin’s essential conditions for them are not: “But an essential condition for such an alliance must be the full opportunity for the Socialists to reveal to the working class that its interests are diametrically opposed to the interests of the bourgeoisie.” (Page 30 my copy.)

4. *Exposures* are mentioned in par. 189 but I don’t think it is made sufficiently clear that they must be made in such a way as to show that the evils exposed spring from capitalism and will continue so long as there is capitalism. After all, the exposures in the *New Zealand Truth* which are not made in this way and often expose corruption in high places must in general be acceptable to the ruling class or they would not continue.

5. *Illegal Work*. There is no discussion of the necessity for this. (I can’t lay my hands on the appropriate Lenin at the moment.) Perhaps it was taken for granted by the people drafting the document considering their conditions.

Notwithstanding the above comments I think the document excellent.

Joint Communiqué of the Autumn 1980 International Conference—“To the Marxist-Leninists, the Workers and the Oppressed of All Countries”

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. During the last few years revolutionary struggles have erupted, including in certain areas of strategic importance. All the imperialist powers are preparing to lead the workers and the oppressed people to an unprecedented mutual slaughter to protect and expand their empires of profit and exploitation throughout the world. The imperialist powers and reactionary ruling classes are joined in two rival bands of cutthroats and slavemasters, two blocs which are led one by the U.S. imperialists, the other by the equally imperialist USSR. This war is looming on the horizon and will break out unless the revolutionary struggle of the masses, the seizure of power by the working class and oppressed peoples, is able to prevent it. Still if this does break out, it will represent an extreme concentration of the crisis of the imperialist system and will heighten the objective basis for revolutionary struggle that must be seized by the Marxist-Leninists.

But at the very time when such great dangers, challenges and opportunities are placed before the workers and oppressed of all countries, a great crisis exists within the ranks of the Marxist-Leninists who have the responsibility of leading the working class and peoples in making revolution. After revisionism had clearly come to power in the USSR with Khrushchev, the international proletariat suffered a further grievous loss after the death of Comrade Mao Tsetung in 1976 with the seizure of power in socialist China by a new, counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie dragging one fourth of humanity back down the capitalist road. This great loss was further compounded by the attacks on the great contributions Mao Tsetung made to the revolutionary science of the working class, Marxism-Leninism. These attacks were not only launched by the new reactionary rulers of China, but have been joined by deserters from the revolutionary ranks, and clearly the Soviet revisionists themselves are mixed up in these attacks.

In the face of this sharpening situation, and recognising the critical need to rise to the great challenge that this situation represents, delegates from a number of Marxist-Leninist Parties and organisations have held a meeting to discuss how to emerge and advance from this crisis on the basis of forging and uniting around a correct ideological and political line for the international communist movement. Through the course of the meeting unity was achieved on the following points, which the undersigned Parties and organisations consider important elements for the development of this line:

I. THE CURRENT SITUATION

—Imperialism means war. This basic truth analysed by Lenin holds particular meaning for today as another world war shapes up on the horizon. This is not a result of the desire of any particular bourgeois leader but stems from the very laws of the imperialist system.

—In the current historical conjuncture it is only the two most powerful imperialist powers, the U.S. and the USSR, who are capable of heading up imperialist blocs to go to world war. These two imperialist powers are also the most powerful bastions of reaction in the world today.

—All the other imperialist powers are also driven by their nature toward war—they are also big exploiters, thoroughly reactionary, aggressive and enemies of the proletariat and the peoples of the world.

—In the face of the growing danger of world war the proletariat and the oppressed people must develop their revolutionary struggle against imperialism and all reaction. If such a war breaks out they must strive to turn inter-imperialist war into a revolutionary war aimed at the overthrow of the reactionary ruling classes.

—In the last few years powerful revolutionary movements have developed in a number of countries, which have greatly battered or even toppled the reactionary regimes and shaken the imperialist system. While none of these revolutionary movements has yet led to the dictatorship of the proletariat, they are another clear indication of the possibility of doing so. The objective conditions for revolution are ripening throughout the world and in some countries these conditions are already mature. But the subjective conditions, especially the development of the Marxist-Leninist movement, are lagging seriously behind the objective conditions.

II. TASKS OF MARXIST-LENINISTS

It is necessary to rescue and build upon basic principles of Marxism-Leninism which revisionists and opportunists have done their best to obscure and bury.

—The dictatorship of the proletariat has been and remains a cardinal point of Marxism-Leninism. This principle too has been trampled on by revisionism. From the time of Karl Marx down to the present, fighting to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and to defend and strengthen it where it is established, have remained touchstone questions for Marxist-Leninists.

However, it is not correct and is especially harmful today, to fail to

take into account the important experience, positive and negative, the proletariat has acquired in this respect since the time of the October Revolution. In particular the great teachings of Mao Tsetung on continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and the experience of the Cultural Revolution he led are of vital importance. Comrade Mao Tsetung correctly pointed out that during the entire period of socialism, that is in the period of the transition to communism, classes and class struggle still exist. He pointed out the continued existence and constant regeneration of the bourgeoisie under socialism, its material and ideological base, and the means for combatting it. Mao clearly indicated, for the first time in the history of the science of Marxism-Leninism, that the ringleaders and most important section of the bourgeoisie during the socialist period (after the socialist transformation of ownership has in the main been completed) are those leading people in the Party and the state apparatus taking the capitalist road. Mao made clear that it would be necessary to wage repeated mass revolutionary struggles, such as the Cultural Revolution, against the new bourgeoisie during the entire socialist transition.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was an unprecedented mass revolutionary movement which succeeded for ten years in blocking capitalist restoration, training revolutionary successors who are fighting today against the new capitalist rulers in China, and helped to spread Marxism-Leninism throughout the world. The fact that the Cultural Revolution did not succeed in the final analysis in preventing the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat in no way lessens its historic importance nor its important lessons for the world proletariat.

—“The seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution.” This is universally true for all countries. The “peaceful road to socialism” is littered with the corpses of countless masses who were pointed down this road by revisionist betrayers.

The principle of armed struggle of the masses has also been abandoned by revisionists who replace it with putschist theses and practises or empty phrases which renounce all types of political and organisational preparations. No matter what stages the revolution may go through, the need to seize political power by the force of arms must be propagated broadly among the masses of people, the Marxist-Leninists must carry out the necessary ideological, political and organisational preparations with this goal in mind and must strive to launch the armed struggle for power as soon as the conditions are ripe. In short, communists are advocates of revolutionary warfare.

The armed struggle must be carried out as a war of the masses and through it the masses must be prepared ideologically, politically and organisationally to exercise political power.

Whatever the necessary forms and stages of the revolutionary process the principal reliance must be based on building up the armed forces of the masses led by the party, while it is also necessary to carry out political work among the armed forces of the enemy to help disintegrate these armed forces and win over as many of their soldiers as possible in the course of the revolutionary struggle.

—The existence and the leading role of the party of the proletariat is another cardinal principle. This is expressed in an organisation of the vanguard of the proletariat which must be based on a Marxist-Leninist ideological, political and organisational line on the principal problems of the revolution; which at every moment, inside and outside its ranks, combats all bourgeois and revisionist influences; which permanently practises criticism and self-criticism and centralism based on democracy; which has a conscious iron discipline, all in order to link closely with the masses, to raise, generalise and coordinate their struggles, particularly political struggles, leading them to seize power from the ruling classes. With this aim, the party must attach great importance to formulating and spreading, according to principles, a concrete strategy, line and policy in accordance with the concrete conditions of the country and the interests of the masses and their wish to liberate themselves.

The party must give great attention to the illegal forms of struggle and organisation, in order to preserve its independence and to educate the masses in the struggle against their enemies. From a strategic point of view, illegal forms of work are fundamental. At the same time the party must make use of legal opportunities in order to broaden its influence without falling into or promoting bourgeois-democratic illusions and while preparing for the inevitable repression by the reactionaries.

The party must gain the leadership of the struggle of the masses and the revolution in practice, by correctly applying the mass line. The party must continually strengthen its leading role by ensuring that the masses and the working class continually raise their ideological, political and organisational level and that they take over an increasingly important part of the tasks of the revolution. In this way, the party will create the conditions for an authentic dictatorship of the proletariat and likewise the final withering away of the party with the withering away of social classes, communism.

Capitalism has long ago reached its final stage of imperialism, one of the most important features of which is the pillaging of the dominated countries and the exploitation of the oppressed peoples. In doing so, imperialism also greatly expands and strengthens the gravediggers destined to overthrow it.

As Lenin analysed, the world proletarian revolution, in the era of imperialism, consists of two great currents allied against the imperialist system—the proletarian socialist revolution in the capitalist countries and the new-democratic revolution in the semi-feudal, colonial, semi-(or neo-) colonial countries subjected to imperialist enslavement. There are many features in common between the revolution in these two types of countries: above all that in both instances the revolution must be led by the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party, through whatever stages, and to the dictatorship of the proletariat, socialism. But there are also some important distinctions in the path of the revolution in the two types of countries.

COLONIAL AND DEPENDENT COUNTRIES

In the semi-feudal, colonial, semi-(or neo-) colonial countries the revolution must in general pass through two stages—first that of the new-democratic revolution led by the proletariat which leads to the socialist stage. Those who insist on making a principle of skipping this stage or eclectically combining the democratic and the socialist revolution do great harm to the revolution.

While the exact course of the revolution in any given country is dependent on the concrete conditions found there, the teachings of Mao Tsetung concerning protracted people’s war are of great relevance in these types of countries. Those revisionists who attack Mao’s theory of surrounding the city by the countryside as having failed to insure the hegemony of the proletariat or dogmatically insist that insurrection in the city is the sole form of seizing power in these types of countries are in fact attacking the revolutionary struggle there.

Experience has shown that without the leadership of the proletariat and a genuine Marxist-Leninist line it is impossible to free these types of countries from imperialist enslavement, still less to advance on the socialist road. While in general it is possible and necessary to build a very broad united front in such countries, even at times involving sections of the exploiting classes, experience has underscored the importance of the Marxist-Leninists maintaining leadership and political and organisational independence, of conducting widespread education on the need to advance to socialism and ultimately communism, to combat narrow nationalist tendencies even while waging a struggle for national liberation, and exposing and combatting in the appropriate ways the bourgeoisie, even the sections with which it may be allied in this struggle against foreign imperialism and the reactionary ruling classes in power.

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.

IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES

In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels pointed out that the "workers have no fatherland." Lenin stressed that this is particularly applicable in the imperialist countries. This, too, is not only a cardinal principle of Marxism-Leninism that must be rescued from decades of revisionist distortion but takes on special importance in the current conjuncture with the approach of a third world war. Communists combat every form of national chauvinism within the working class and other sections of the oppressed people. This means fighting against every tendency which identifies the interests of the proletariat with the interests of its "own" imperialist ruling class either in plundering people of the colonial and dependent countries or, especially in today's situation, in going to war to protect the interests of the bourgeoisie. If a third world war breaks out the proletariat must work actively for the defeat of its own bourgeoisie in the war, attempting to transform the war into revolutionary civil war and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

While the road of the October Revolution is universally applicable in the sense of the need for the armed revolution, the leadership of a proletarian vanguard party, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the establishment of socialism, etc., in all countries; in addition in the capitalist and imperialist countries the October Revolution remains the basic point of reference for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics. The Marxist-Leninists recognise that in each country the revolution will take specific forms and must analyse the concrete conditions and sum up the experience of the masses in struggle while upholding the basic Leninist line concerning the political and organisational measures necessary for the preparation for and the seizure of power by the proletariat. Again, the distortion and negation by the revisionists of basic Leninist principles in this regard is not only an historical fact but continues to be a current problem. While paying attention to concrete analysis of concrete conditions in each country, it is necessary to study and apply correctly Lenin's theses on the importance of raising the political consciousness of the working class to its historic mission and developing its political and revolutionary struggle, on the importance of the communist press, and of combatting the influence of economism while paying attention to the needs and conditions of the life of the masses. It's also necessary to study and apply Mao's teachings of the need to base oneself on the profound sentiments of the masses to liberate themselves.

III. ON THE UNITY OF THE MARXIST-LENINISTS

The proletariat is a single class worldwide with a single historic class interest in liberating humanity from all exploitation and oppression and in ushering in the era of communism throughout the globe. For this reason proletarian internationalism is something inseparable from Marxism-Leninism and a constant need of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist vanguard in all countries. In addition to this obvious, but often forgotten, truth, the current conjuncture also demands vigorous efforts to establish the unity of Marxist-Leninists and the revolutionaries in all countries if we are to meet the tests and opportunities facing us. In fact, the need for the unity of the Marxist-Leninists is not only objectively necessary but is increasingly demanded by revolutionaries and the masses throughout the world. In this pro-

cess, as in all things, ideological and political line is decisive.

As Lenin emphasised, "Unity is a great thing and a great slogan. But what the workers' cause needs is the *unity of Marxists*, not unity between Marxists and opponents and distorters of Marxism."

In our view unity can only be achieved on the basis of drawing firm and clear lines of demarcation with revisionism and opportunism of all forms. These lines of demarcation are not something which have dropped from the sky or been concocted by sectarians nor can they be treated as mere topics for sterile, academic debates—they reflect the main and decisive forms in which revisionism confronts the revolutionary proletariat and the Marxist-Leninist movement in the world today.

Upholding the contribution of Mao Tsetung to the science of Marxism-Leninism represents a particularly important and pressing question in the international communist movement and among the class conscious workers today. The principle involved is nothing less than whether or not to uphold and build on decisive contributions to the proletarian revolution and the science of Marxism-Leninism made by Mao. Mao Tsetung made important developments of Marxism-Leninism in the area of the anti-imperialist democratic revolution leading to socialism, people's war and military strategy generally, philosophy (where he made important contributions on the analysis of contradictions, which is the essence of dialectics, and on the theory of knowledge and its links with practise and the mass line), revolutionising the superstructure and continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, as well as in the struggle against revisionism on the practical and theoretical fronts. It is therefore nothing less than the question of whether to uphold Marxism-Leninism itself. Mao's theoretical and practical leadership represent a quantitative and qualitative development of Marxism-Leninism on many fronts and the theoretical concentration of the historical experience of the proletarian revolution over the last several decades.

We are still living in the era of Leninism, of imperialism and the proletarian revolution; at the same time we affirm that Mao Tsetung Thought is a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism. Without upholding and building on Mao's contributions it is not possible to defeat revisionism, imperialism and reaction in general.

Closely linked to the above is the need to vigorously oppose the new revisionist rulers in China who have overthrown the dictatorship of the proletariat and are restoring capitalism. They have utterly capitulated to imperialism, and have demanded that others follow suit, at the present time under the signboard of their reactionary "strategic theory of the three worlds" which they have fraudulently tried to pass off to the ignorant as the work of Mao himself.

The Soviet revisionists and those revisionist parties historically linked to them remain bitter enemies of the international proletariat. In recent years the Soviet revisionists have adopted a more militant posture vis-à-vis the Western imperialist powers. This is consistent with their own requirements as a great imperialist power heading up a rival imperialist bloc. They have on several occasions intervened directly by military means or made use of the Vietnamese and Cuban revisionists who are part of their bloc, to seek to expand their imperialist domination. This is often masked as "internationalism." In some cases revisionist parties historically tied to the USSR have promoted such counterrevolutionary lines as "peaceful roads" and "historic compromise" with the bourgeoisie; in other cases these revisionist parties prepare military coups and armed actions divorced from the masses. The role and nature of the revisionist parties today must be further analysed and studied, both in particular cases and in general, but in any event it is completely clear that they stand as bitter enemies of the proletarian revolution and must be unmasked and defeated as a crucial part of developing the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and mobilising the masses in revolutionary struggle.

The Albanian Party of Labour and its leadership have fallen completely into the revisionist swamp. Shortly after the counter-

revolutionary coup in China the PLA attracted a number of genuine revolutionaries because they opposed some of the more hideous features of the Hua-Teng clique in China, especially regarding international line. Very quickly, however, they outdid even Hua and Teng in the virulence of their attack on Mao and Mao Tsetung Thought. The PLA leaders have adopted classic Trotskyite positions on a number of questions, including the nature of the revolution in semi-feudal, semi-colonial countries, e.g. excluding people's war as a form of revolutionary struggle. More significantly their position grows daily closer to the made-in-Moscow revisionist line on a number of cardinal questions and world events, as already shown by their stand on Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, the workers' upheaval in Poland, and their attacks on Mao, which are similar to the Soviets' attacks.

The influence of Trotskyism has been strengthened by revisionism in general and has been especially strengthened recently by the coming to power of the revisionists in China and by the revisionist stands of the PLA. The organisations and Parties which endorse this communiqué are calling for the struggle against revisionism to be linked to the struggle against the positions of the Trotskyites, which are left in form but deeply rightist in essence, and are especially calling for opposition to the following points: their "purist," "workerist" line of negating the alliance with the peasantry or other non-proletarian forces, negating in particular the policy of a united front against the reactionary classes in power; the negation of the possibility of seizing power and embarking on the socialist transition period in a single country; and their economist conception of the mass struggles and with regard to the way in which they see the transition to communism as consisting basically of a development of the productive forces.

The signatory organisations and Parties underline the increased danger posed by social democracy which holds power in a number of countries and which continues to serve as a Trojan horse for the interests of the Western imperialists. In addition to its usual conciliatory tactics, in some countries social democracy is attempting to form or influence armed groups in order to play a role in a situation of changing conditions. Marxist-Leninists must steadfastly combat their influence among the masses and must denounce all their tactics.

While it is not only possible but vitally necessary to take important steps now to unify genuine Marxist-Leninists on the basis of clear lines of demarcation that have emerged and in the face of the urgent tasks of the international movement, it is also necessary to carry out collective study, discussion and struggle over many important questions. This is particularly evident in relation to the necessity of developing a much fuller and deeper understanding of the history of the international communist movement. As the Chinese Communist Party pointed out in 1963 when it was a genuine communist party, in its polemics with the Soviet revisionists, with regard to the history of the international communist (and national liberation) movement there are "many experiences and many lessons. There are experiences which people should praise and there are experiences which 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." Today, in light of further momentous experiences, positive and negative, since that time, and with the present situation and the looming possibilities in mind, this orientation assumes all the more profound significance. The need to dare to ponder and analyse more deeply and penetratingly in order to act more boldly is all the more decisive.

Before modern revisionism revealed itself openly in the USSR and various other countries, there already existed within the international communist movement different erroneous conceptions which facilitated its development.

While recognising the undeniable contributions made by the Third International to the unity of the international proletariat, to the founding of communist parties and to their struggles; and while

recognising the tremendous role played by the October Revolution, which initiated the epoch of proletarian revolutions and opened the way for the construction of socialism in the USSR, communists must endeavour to critically sum up these experiences, making it possible to explain in the light of Marxism-Leninism the seizure of power by the bourgeoisie in that country and in other socialist nations, and also making it possible to learn from the errors and deviations which were committed and to evaluate to what extent they had bearing on the degeneration into opportunism of the majority of the international communist movement. In the face of the demoralisation caused by these facts among broad sectors of the masses, and given that the bourgeois sectors are taking advantage of these facts, claiming that they prove the "failure" of Marxism, it falls on us communists to show that it is not scientific socialism which has failed, and that, on the contrary, scientific socialism makes it possible for us to grasp what objective and subjective factors gave rise to these events. Among other things, we must investigate and struggle over the experiences of the Third International and the reasons which led to its self-dissolution; the way in which the relationship between the revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie and imperialism and the policy of forming an anti-fascist united front was handled during the last world war, and also the very reasoning behind this policy; the origin of the revisionist tendencies, such as Browderism, which spread faith in the idea that it would be possible to establish a lasting peace and improve the living conditions of the masses on the basis of agreements between the USSR and the imperialist powers who were fighting against the fascist states, and of the tendencies to conciliation which these gave rise to; the deep roots that led to the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and other socialist countries, paying particular attention to the way in which the development of the class struggle was handled and the question of how the need to consistently apply the dictatorship of the proletariat was treated in those countries, to the handling of the relationship between politics and ideology, between politics and economic and technical questions, the question of the mass line, the question of the correct handling of contradictions among the people and with the enemy on the basis of mobilising the masses, the relationship of centralism and democracy within the party and the relationship of the party to the masses. By throwing light on these questions, while staying clear of the slander of the Trotskyites and other enemies of the revolution, we will be able to draw important lessons for the development of the revolution.

In sum, in order to achieve the unity of the Marxist-Leninists, it is essential to deepen the study so as to make an evaluation of the theoretical and practical activity of the communists during the period of the Third International, the Second World War and especially the causes of the coming to power of the revisionists in the countries in which the proletariat held power, particularly in the USSR and in China.

The undersigned Parties and organisations received and discussed a major draft text prepared jointly by the Revolutionary Communist Party of Chile and the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA. They hold that, on the whole, the text is a positive contribution toward the elaboration of a correct general line for the international communist movement. With this perspective, the text should be circulated and discussed not only in the ranks of those organisations who have signed this communiqué, but throughout the ranks of the international communist movement.

To carry out the struggle against revisionism and to aid the process of developing and struggling for a correct general line in the international communist movement, the undersigned Parties and organisations are launching an international journal. This journal can and will be a crucial weapon which can help unite, ideologically, politically and organisationally, the genuine Marxist-Leninists throughout the world.

These Parties and organisations signing this communiqué stress

the need not only to maintain contact and carry out discussion and struggle with each other but actively to seek out and develop relations with other genuine Marxist-Leninists around the globe and carry out an ideological struggle and political work to win still broader forces of the international movement and the masses to consolidate the revolutionary position and reinforce the revolutionary struggles.

The current conjuncture in the world and in the international movement presents the revolutionary proletariat, the oppressed peoples and the Marxist-Leninists with great tasks, trials and, above all,

great opportunities. Marxism-Leninism, the science of the revolutionary proletariat, has always been forged and tempered in the furnace of class struggle. Today we must rise to meet the challenges before us, race to catch up with the rapid developments of the objective conditions, reconstruct the unity of Marxist-Leninists on the basis of a correct line and summing up the experience of the past, fight for proletarian internationalism—and in so doing push ahead the advance toward communism throughout the world.

This Joint Communiqué, issued by parties and organisations which took part in the Autumn 1980 International Conference, was originally signed by the Ceylon Communist Party; the Groupe Marxiste-Léniniste du Sénégal; the Grupo para la Defensa del Marxismo-Leninismo (Spain); the Mao Tsetung-Kredsen (Denmark); the Marxist-Leninist Collective (Britain); the New Zealand Red Flag Group; the Nottingham Communist Group (Britain); the Organizzazione Comunista Proletaria Marxista-Leninista (Italy); the Partido Comunista Revolucionario de Chile; Pour l'Internationale Proletarienne (France); the Reorganisation Committee, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist); the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA; the Unión Comunista Revolucionaria (Dominican Republic). Since then a number of groups have indicated their support, including most recently from Australia, Japan, Nepal and Spain, in addition to the forces whose endorsements follow.

Long Live the Struggle for the Unity of the International Communist Movement!

—Political Bureau, Regional Committee Tupac Amaru of the Partido Comunista del Perú [Communist Party of Peru]*

Important Declaration

The document entitled “To the Marxist-Leninists, the Workers and the Oppressed of All Countries,” issued by 13 communist organisations from the five continents, is one of the world proletariat’s most important advances on the road of international revolutionary organisation which was begun by Marx and Engels, continued by Lenin and Mao, and on which we must now persevere.

At a time of ferocious worldwide reactionary offensive, while arrogant reformist and revisionist bureaucracies and opportunists of all kinds spew foul-mouthed assaults on the Marxist doctrine and the revolutionary movement, as weak and two-faced elements abandon our ranks and go over to the enemy; in sum, at a difficult time, it is a great encouragement to us to see that real communists throughout the world are persisting bravely in the fight against imperialism and world reaction, in the hard fight to smash the bourgeoisie’s agents and lead the revolutionary struggle.

We are particularly happy to know that the battle we have carried out for years against the three-worldists and Chinese revisionism is not an isolated struggle, although there have been times when it seemed that way. We’re happy to learn of the existence of other organisations which have not capitulated, organisations with which one can and must join forces in the common task.

Correct Orientation

The document outlines in a general and schematic way the basic positions that in the present situation serve as the basis to advance towards the unity of the communists of all countries. It is correct to take as the starting point the present crisis of the international communist movement, because only in this way can a correct way out of this crisis be charted.

It is correct to emphasise, although only in broad strokes for now, the three great historic tasks: the dictatorship of the proletariat, the violent seizure of power and the construction of the communist party. It is quite accurate to indicate the important role played by Mao in developing the theory and practise of the proletarian dictatorship, of revolution in the underdeveloped countries, of people’s war and military strategy, of Marxist philosophy and of other aspects.

Nevertheless, the document has a shortcoming regarding the current counterrevolution in China, in that it indicates that it began

in 1976. This shouldn’t be considered an obstacle to unity, but it is important to understand that revisionism took power in China in 1970 (it is after this point that the rehabilitation of revisionist elements takes place and three-worldism is spread on a world level) and it became consolidated in 1973 with the 10th Congress manipulated by Chou En-lai.

We consider it a step forward against dogmatism to grasp that there are countries in the colonial world which, because of the workings of imperialism and other factors, have ceased to be semi-feudal (p. 7, English edition) even though their peoples still form part of the great torrent of national democratic revolutions.

On the other hand we believe that semi-colonialism shouldn’t be confused or identified with neo-colonialism (p. 6), since among the neo-colonial countries there are both semi-colonies (partial domination) as well as colonies (complete domination). These two latter categories refer to the *degree* of domination, which shouldn’t be confused with the *form* of domination: old-style colonialism (direct domination) and neo-colonialism (indirect domination).

It is correct to once again give the proper significance to the great thesis put forward by Lenin and Mao that the two great currents which make up the world proletarian revolution are socialist revolution and new-democratic revolution. This point marks a demarcation with the three-worldists who have “forgotten” the task of revolution, replacing it with support for puppet governments in the colonies and the imperialist governments of Europe and the U.S. Nevertheless, we think this analysis of the class struggle on a world level should take into account that the colonial world (Asia, Africa and Latin America) and in particular, at this moment, Central America, is the focal point where the contradictions in today’s world converge and where the imperialists are weakest, and where the most important revolutionary battles are developing at the present. This understanding will allow moving forward in the formulation of a unified tactical line for the international proletariat.

The Tasks of the ICM

Since the unity of the communists of the whole world is one of the most important tasks, it is vital that all the signatory organisations firmly endorse the characterisation of Mao Tsetung Thought as “a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism” (p. 10), because it is only on the solid basis of the doctrine of Marx, Lenin and Mao that the communist parties can be reconstructed. We must push this decision as well as the clear demarcation with the main forms of

*The national leadership of the Party was liquidated and some of us from the lower ranks are now engaged in its reconstruction.

revisionism: Russian, Chinese, Albanian and Trotskyite, together with the unequivocal categorisation of social democracy as an imperialist trend.

Furthermore, we think that in putting forward the great task of world communist unity it is fine to point out the necessity to sum up the experiences of the ICM and of the dictatorship of the proletariat, so as to be able to draw the lessons from history. We also agree with the succinct list of themes which should be struggled over in this summation (pp. 13-14), but there is an important omission: struggle over the experience of the communist parties and organisations after the great international polemics of 1961-64. During this period, many organisations throughout the world broke with revisionism and took up the historic task of leading the revolution, without, in general, much success. Certainly international conditions and the betrayal of Chinese and Albanian revisionism explain part of this, but the crisis should be analysed mainly on the basis of the class struggle in each country and of the hits and misses, the setbacks and successes, of the line followed by those parties in their work. Without this, the summation would be incomplete and there would be the risk

of not actually arriving at a solution for the present crisis of the ICM.

We are fully convinced that all this work of demarcation, unification, polemics, investigation and theoretical development must be carried out to arrive at a very concrete goal, in addition to the general objectives indicated in the document: the formulation of the proletariat's international programme and tactical line which would serve as the basis for the reconstruction of the glorious Third International with its respective national sections, as the unified party of world revolution.

Finally, we express our firm determination to actively participate in the struggle to provide the international proletariat with its political vanguard. The road to this goal certainly will not be easy neither in the short nor the long run. An arduous and complex struggle awaits us, which will certainly include disagreements, splits, reunifications, etc. But with the experience obtained, with the forces which the working class will offer us to the degree that we are able to be its vanguard, with the all-powerful guide of the doctrine of Marx, Lenin and Mao, we will certainly achieve victory in this great historic task.

Peru—February, 1981

On the Joint Communiqué

Open Letter to the Coordinating Committee of the International Journal A World to Win

—Türkiye Komünist Partisi-Marksist-Leninist
[Communist Party of Turkey Marxist-Leninist]

Dear Comrades:

The vanguard organisation of the proletariat in Turkey, the Communist Party of Turkey Marxist-Leninist, was founded in 1972 by the great communist leader Ibrahim Kaypakkaya. The Party was founded in the struggle against modern revisionism in general and in the struggle against the revisionist-Trotskyite "Safak" line in particular. Our Party has witnessed fierce two-line struggles since its founding. The last of these line struggles was the struggle against the "YD-line." This line was developed particularly around the negation of the contributions of Comrade Mao Tsetung to Marxism-Leninism and around the negation of the Marxist-Leninist legacy of the struggle against modern revisionism. This line thus found itself in contradiction with all principal questions of the Marxist-Leninist theses of the minimal and maximum programme of our Party. The Second Conference of our Party exposed this line as revisionist-Trotskyite. Furthermore, the Second Conference has come to the conclusion that the new front of attack against Marxism-Leninism, under the worldwide leadership of the Party of Labour of Albania, played an important part in the development of this line.

Because of the fact that the "YD-line" was dominant in the section of the Party responsible for international relations and had strong influence within the Central Committee of our Party, there were significant shortcomings in the defence of Marxism-Leninism in the person of Mao Tsetung conducted by our Party in the international communist movement. Our Party put forth a unified call in the fall of 1978 around the slogan, "Without the defence of Mao Tsetung, Marxism-Leninism cannot be defended!" Despite this call, because of the gathering dark clouds of the modern revisionist-Trotskyite storm of renunciation that was growing on the horizon at the time, the Party showed inconsistency in fulfilling this task in the two years that followed.

The behaviour of the participants of our Party at the conference where the "Joint Communiqué" of the 13 signed organisations was made should be seen in this historical framework. For this reason we have re-analysed and re-assessed the "Joint Communiqué" and we are sending you the results of this re-assessment in the form of an open letter so that it can be evaluated by all Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary organisations.

A General Assessment of the Joint Communiqué

Today the class-conscious proletariat stands before a crucial question. The main contradictions in the world are intensifying in such a

way that they are becoming more and more concentrated. While this development is leading to the fact that on the one hand the objective conditions in the phase of the proletarian world revolution are increasing on a day-to-day basis, on the other hand the subjective factor is greatly lagging behind this development. The international Marxist-Leninist movement has been weakened by the modern-revisionist and Trotskyite treachery. As a result of this a significant amount of confusion has arisen in the ideological arena. In this situation the striving for ideological unity in the international Marxist-Leninist movement must prevail and this is one of the immediate tasks that lie before communists. In order to attain ideological unity, one must bring together these forces, against those who are leading the three fronts that are hostile toward Marxism-Leninism. These three fronts which are today stepping up their attacks on Marxism-Leninism, are:

- The modern revisionist front of the Khrushchev-Brezhnev style
- The modern revisionist front of the "Three Worlds Theory"
- The new opportunist front, which has gathered around the modern revisionist-Trotskyite line of the PLA.

A strong ideological struggle of the highest level amongst the revolutionary forces with the purpose of attaining unity is one important practical task. It is our opinion that the international conference that was convened in Autumn 1980 was an important and positive step in this direction.

The results of this conference are summarized in the "Joint Communiqué" of the 13 signed organisations. Our Party has assessed this "Joint Communiqué" as a document that defends Marxism-Leninism and its main characteristics in relation to the present task. The essential aspect of this "Joint Communiqué" is that it upholds the fact that our epoch is still the epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution, that Leninism is the Marxism of our epoch, that Lenin's principles are not outdated, but rather still hold their validity, that in particular the three main fronts that are presently attacking Marxism-Leninism have been exposed, and that along with this it exemplifies the importance of the defence of the contributions of Mao Tsetung to Marxism-Leninism.

But we would also like to point out that the "Joint Communiqué" is lacking on some points, and contains some views on other points that we do not agree with. Our views and criticisms of these points are commented on below. We regard these criticisms as necessary for the progress of unity.

Our Party intends to sign the "Joint Communiqué" with the reservation of our points of criticism listed below. At the same time, we hail the initiative to publish an international journal with the purpose

of advancing the ideological struggle in the international arena. We will try to use all possible forces to contribute to this discussion. As a first step in this direction we ask you to publish this open letter from us.

Our Points of Criticism on the "Joint Communiqué"

On Section I: "The Current Situation"

We want to address two points here: First, clarity must be established on the statement that "all the other imperialist powers are also driven by their nature toward war." (Page 2, English edition.) The correct formulation is in our opinion, "Other big imperialists by nature (West Germany, France, England and Japan) participate in the drive towards war." If all big and small imperialists are in their essence the same and if they are all equally the enemy of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples, it is still, as Lenin said, the "big imperialist powers" which propagate the imperialist war to redivide the world and which could wage such a war. Belgium is, for example, an imperialist country which exploits the proletariat and attacks the struggles of the oppressed peoples—in this respect there is no qualitative difference between it and other imperialists, but it is not in a position to propagate a new imperialist war of redivision. Today U.S. imperialism and Russian social-imperialism have leadership in the propagation of imperialist war as well as leadership of the two imperialist military blocs. Besides them, though, other imperialist big powers are preparing for imperialist war. This should be clearly stated.

Secondly, it is stated "The objective conditions for revolution are ripening throughout the world and in some countries these conditions are already mature." (Page 3) In general, this statement is correct. But it must be additionally determined where the weakest links in the chain of imperialism are. In our opinion the focal points of revolution are still in the areas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

On Section II: "Tasks of Marxist-Leninists"

In this part the following statement is made, "The armed struggle must be carried out as a war of the masses and through it the masses must be prepared ideologically, politically and organisationally to exercise political power." (Pages 4-5) In our opinion this statement is not entirely clear. A vital part of preparing the masses for the seizure of power are armed and unarmed forms of political struggles. The relationship between these two forms of struggle varies according to the social-economic structure of the respective country and depends on which stage the revolution has reached. A few well-known examples: in China, which had a colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal social-economic structure, armed struggle played the decisive role throughout the entire period of the national democratic revolution. Armed struggle was essential to the ideological, political and organisational preparation of the masses for the exercise of political power. But at the same time the non-bloody forms of the political struggle of the masses were very important. We also see that in the case of the preparation of the masses for the revolution in Tsarist Russia, non-bloody struggles were emphasised for long periods of time. What was valid for Tsarist Russia is all the more valid for imperialist countries. But the formulation above can be dangerously misinterpreted in such a way that for such countries the means of preparing the masses for revolution is, generally speaking, armed struggle.

Secondly: The countries are divided into two groups, according to the "important distinctions in the path of the revolution." In our opinion the classification is insufficient although the acknowledgement of these distinctions is very important. In accordance with the circumstances of the time, the Comintern programme prepared under the guidance of Stalin (1928) divides the countries roughly into two groups, namely imperialist countries and countries under the yoke of imperialism. The latter category is then divided into three groups depending upon the path and road of the revolution in the respective countries. In

our view this classification was correct given the circumstances of that time. And that is how Marxist-Leninists should approach this issue even today, that is, those countries that are, in one way or another, under the yoke of imperialism should be divided into various categories on the basis of a careful analysis of the actual situation in each respective country. We think it is possible to divide the dependent countries into at least two different types. Furthermore, one should analyse the common elements of the revolutions in these countries.

Our conclusion to this, based on our analysis which is still not completed, is the following. The oppressed countries should be divided into at least two types. One type includes countries in which capitalism is inextricably bound up with imperialism, which is to a greater or lesser degree dominant in the economic base. At the same time there are remnants of feudalism in the economic base and the superstructure, even if feudalism itself is not the main aspect. As far as we know, for instance, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Portugal and Greece belong to this type of country. Though in countries of this type the proletariat has not yet completed the task of democratic revolution, the crucial task of the new-democratic revolution is to attain national independence and political democracy. In this context the strategic slogan in countries of this type should be the "revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants." And as far as the question of the path of the revolution in these countries, the relationship between protracted people's war and popular insurrection must in turn be examined in concrete terms.

The countries of the second type are the semi-colonial, semi-feudal countries. Even if comprador capitalism has developed in these countries to a greater or lesser extent, their production relations are still predominantly feudal and semi-feudal. The two main tasks of the new-democratic revolution in these countries are the attainment of national independence and the abolition of feudalism by means of the agrarian revolution, and the principal strategic slogan for these countries must generally be "people's democratic dictatorship." In this context, the path of revolution in these countries will generally be protracted people's war.

Third: It is possible to establish certain distinctions among the imperialist countries themselves, and these should not be regarded merely as different stages of the revolution. The "Joint Communiqué" does not deal with the situation in imperialist countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic and other countries under the influence of Russian social-imperialism. In our view the strategy and tactics of the path of the October Revolution is also valid for these countries. But above and beyond that, the political, financial and military influence of the Russian social-imperialists has a particular significance. In revisionist-capitalist countries of this type, the proletarian revolution, in attacking the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, must at the same time set its sights on Russian social-imperialism because the two are bound together by a thousand threads. And this aspect will influence the tactics to be followed on a number of questions of the class struggle, such as alliances, military strategy, etc., etc. In our opinion it is necessary—especially in view of the growing revolutionary situation in Poland—for the world's Marxist-Leninists to take up this issue and subject it to close scrutiny.

Fourth: After a series of arguments in defence of a thorough understanding of Lenin's line on the masses, the following statement is made in connection with revolutionary work in the imperialist countries: "It's also necessary to study and apply Mao's teachings on the need to base oneself on the profound sentiments of the masses to liberate themselves." (Page 8) In effect, we consider this corollary superfluous because Mao Tsetung's interpretation of the mass line is no different and contains no other doctrine than Lenin's, whereas such a passage might create the impression that the two great teachers of the mass line, Lenin and Mao, are in conflict with each other. And that would be extremely detrimental.

On Section III: "On the Unity of the Marxist-Leninists"

The first point we want to take up in this part in the Communiqué concerns the formulation "Mao Tsetung Thought." It is said that "We are still living in the era of Leninism, of imperialism and the proletarian revolution; at the same time we affirm that Mao Tsetung Thought is a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism." (Page 10) At its First Conference in February 1978 our Party took a position against this formulation which, as we affirmed, is used by many enemies of Marxism-Leninism to distort the contributions made by Comrade Mao as being the "Marxism-Leninism of a new epoch." Thus, this formulation is cunningly used to spread the belief that the epoch has changed; it has become a tool in the hands of those who would separate Mao Tsetung's teachings from Marxism-Leninism as Khrushchev and Hoxha tried to do with the invention of the spectre of Maoism, of revisionists and Trotskyites waving the red book in their hands. That is why we have taken a position against this formulation. We propose instead that Mao Tsetung be defended in concrete terms as one of the five great teachers of Marxism-Leninism. The formulation in the "Joint Communiqué" does not satisfy us. It gives the impression that such detrimental tendencies might be present and that such a formulation might have been agreed on merely as a compromise.

Second: When the talk turns to the ideological roots of the leadership of the PLA, Trotskyism is mentioned. In our opinion another peculiarity of this anti-Marxist line is modern-day revisionism, just as important as Trotskyism. Their attacks are on the contributions of Mao Tsetung in relation to the analysis of the contradictions within socialist society and of the continuation of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Their views on the communist party, their thesis of "decolonization" and their interpretation of the thesis the "two superpowers are the enemies of the peoples of the world" are the cornerstones of the modern-day revisionism of their line. The

"Joint Communiqué" should be clearer on this point.

Third: In order to further the struggle against modern revisionism, which constantly appears in new forms, the necessity to study the world communist movement and the experiences of various proletarian dictatorships, both their negative and positive aspects, is emphasised. This is correct. We should truly assess our past, analyse it and learn from it.

The point that we want to criticise here is the one-sided approach to this question in the "Joint Communiqué". It is demanded that the self-dissolution of the Comintern, the conciliatory tendencies during and after World War 2, the capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and in a list of other socialist countries, and the degeneration of the majority of parties of the Third International must be analysed. But why after the final break from the modern revisionism of Khrushchev was no new International founded? Also questions like the rise of the "Three Worlds Theory", statements which refer to Mao Tsetung's last battles which aren't documented, etc., etc.—the necessity to analyse these questions is not mentioned in the "Joint Communiqué."

We are of the opinion that with a dialectical method and a historical-materialist approach to these Marxist-Leninist legacies, one can also take up and learn from a broad analysis and research of these questions, without giving Trotskyism and modern revisionism the slightest possibility to influence the analysis.

The last point which we want to mention is regarding the draft text for discussion prepared jointly by the RCP, USA and the RCP, Chile. Unfortunately we have not yet been able to translate and study this text. We therefore cannot comment on this at the moment.

With Communist Greetings,
The Central Committee of the TKPM-L
May 20, 1981

Resolution on the Joint Communiqué

—Stockport Communist Group, Britain

The "Joint Communiqué" of thirteen Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations of Autumn 1980 correctly states the present tasks of the international proletariat, and of the oppressed peoples and nations, outlines the basic principles for the international unity of the Marxist-Leninists, and draws firm and objective lines of demarcation with the various contemporary strands of opportunism and revisionism: it is a sharp weapon for forging that international

unity of the communists which it is vital to achieve if the opportunities for revolutionary advance on a world scale which are presently beginning to unfold are to be seized. We enthusiastically endorse the "Joint Communiqué" and pledge ourselves to work hard to strengthen our unity with the signatories of the Communiqué and with all other genuine communist forces.

August, 1981

On the Joint Communiqué

—Marxist-Leninists from Haiti

We are writing this letter to make known our points of agreement and disagreement with the Joint Communiqué. The goal of this text is thus to help launch a thorough discussion, around the Communiqué, on the essential theses which divide true Marxist-Leninists from modern revisionists.

Although we have some points of disagreement with the Communiqué, overall we agree with its orientation. Why?

Because first of all, we think that in the face of the crisis situation existing today on a world scale, in particular in the face of the threat of a third world war, Marxist-Leninists throughout the world must unite and unite the masses of people around them in order to either prevent imperialist war, or if it should break out, to transform it into revolutionary war.

Secondly, the orientation of this Communiqué: it enables Marxist-Leninists themselves to unite around scientific theses of Marxism-Leninism, providing a dividing line between genuine Marxist-Leninists and the revisionists who claim they are also Marxist-Leninists though their real goal is to attack and falsify genuine Marxism-Leninism. This is in order to impose their own dictatorship over the peoples of the world.

We are going to list here our points of agreement and of disagreement with the text, as well as the points which we think need clarification. We will also refer to an open letter of the Communist Party of Turkey Marxist-Leninist (TKPM-L), published in the September 4, 1981 issue of the *Revolutionary Worker*. We think that certain parts of the text are too general, such that even enemies of Marxism-Leninism can make use of them.

(p. 1) "This war is looming on the horizon and will break out unless the revolutionary struggle of the masses, the seizure of power by the working class and oppressed people, is able to prevent it. Still if this does break out, it will represent an extreme concentration of the crisis of the imperialist system and will heighten the objective basis for revolutionary struggle that must be seized by the Marxist-Leninists." (Joint Communiqué)

Overall, we think that war can be prevented by "the revolutionary struggle of the masses." We even think that this prevention is basic. Indeed, the confrontation between the two imperialist blocs could very well lead to the use of nuclear arms, which would endanger the very survival of mankind. This position should not lead to defeatism. On the contrary, it should drive us to advance the struggle against imperialist war. We think that this position is diametrically opposed to that of the Chinese revisionists, according to whom "World war, though inevitable, can be postponed." ("Chairman Mao's Theory of

the Differentiation of the Three Worlds is a Major Contribution to Marxism-Leninism," FLP 1977, p. 69.)

At the very moment when the world is going through this extremely serious crisis, the masses are not prepared for revolutionary struggle. This is due to 1.) the division and lack of preparation among the Marxist-Leninists themselves, who must lead the revolutionary struggle of the masses against imperialist war, 2.) the antagonistic contradictions between the Marxist-Leninists and the modern revisionists within the revolutionary movement.

It is important that Marxist-Leninists continue to discuss their points of disagreement among themselves, in order to come to a real unity based on Marxist-Leninist principles. This is necessary to carry out their mission of leading the masses in the struggle against modern revisionism within the revolutionary movement, and in the struggle against imperialism and social-imperialism, for peace and socialism.

(p.2) "All the other imperialist powers are also driven by their nature toward war—they are also big exploiters, thoroughly reactionary, aggressive and enemies of the proletariat and the peoples of the world." (Joint Communiqué)

Contrary to the TKPM-L, we think that this paragraph constitutes a demarcation from the Three Worlds Theory, which calls on the peoples dominated by the imperialists of the "second world" to unite with them to fight the imperialists of the "first world." As a matter of fact, this paragraph specifies that the imperialists of the "second world" are "just as exploitative, reactionary and aggressive" enemies "of the proletariat and the peoples of the world." They must develop their autonomous struggles against these imperialisms, which, flowing from their very nature as imperialists, want war just as much as the two superpowers.

(p.4) "The armed struggle must be carried out as a war of the masses and through it the masses must be prepared ideologically, politically and organisationally to exercise political power.

"Whatever the necessary forms and stages of the revolutionary process the principal reliance must be based on building up the armed forces of the masses led by the party, while it is also necessary to carry out political work among the armed forces of the enemy to help disintegrate these armed forces and win over as many of their soldiers as possible in the course of the revolutionary struggle." (Joint Communiqué)

According to the TKPM-L, "In our opinion this statement is not entirely clear. A vital part of preparing the masses for the seizure of power are armed and unarmed forms of political struggles. The relationship between these two forms of struggle varies according to the social-economic structure of the respective country and depends on

which stage the revolution has reached.”

Overall we agree on this point with the TKPM-L. But we go further: indeed, it’s our opinion certain other points need clarification. We think that, at certain stages of the revolutionary struggle, the Marxist-Leninist party could very well not have armed forces under its command (generally, at the beginning of the revolutionary process). At these times, the party must necessarily wage a non-armed political struggle. However, and here we unite with the Communiqué, this political struggle must be waged in such a way as to build the revolutionary armed forces, in order to move on to the higher stage of the armed struggle.

Secondly, we think that, if political work within the armed forces of the enemy is key at the stage of armed struggle, then political work cannot be neglected within all the other forces of the enemy at this stage. This is even more obvious at other stages where the non-armed political struggle prevails. Thus the question of *stages*, and even the stage of armed struggle, must be clarified, understanding fully that intensive political work must be carried out *among all the forces of the enemy*.

(p.5) “The existence and the leading role of the party of the proletariat is another cardinal principle. This is expressed in an organisation of the vanguard of the proletariat which must be based on a Marxist-Leninist ideological, political and organisational line on the principal problems of the revolution.” (Joint Communiqué)

We agree with this point. However, we think that it is necessary to specify which are the “principal problems of the revolution” at each stage: before the seizure of power by the proletariat, and after this seizure of power.

(p.5) “The party must give great attention to the illegal forms of struggle and organisation, in order to preserve its independence and to educate the masses in the struggle against their enemies. From a strategic point of view, illegal forms of work are fundamental. At the same time the party must make use of legal opportunities in order to broaden its influence without falling into or promoting bourgeois-democratic illusions and while preparing for the inevitable repression by the reactionaries.” (Joint Communiqué)

We are in profound agreement with this point of view. But we must note that certain Marxist-Leninist organisations or parties, while overall holding a revolutionary line, often fall into the trap of bourgeois democracy, which makes repression by the reactionary forces easier when they unleash it. We think that such parties or organisations must correct bourgeois-democratic tendencies, because they are very harmful to the revolutionary struggle.

(p.7) “Experience has shown that without the leadership of the proletariat and a genuine Marxist-Leninist line it is impossible to free these types of countries from imperialist enslavement, still less to advance on the socialist road.” (Joint Communiqué)

We think that this is correct. In order to carry through the new-democratic revolution successfully, it is necessary to form a united front of all classes opposed to imperialist domination and its local lackeys. But within this united front, the Marxist-Leninist party must maintain its independence and its leading role, because the revolution will be compromised if bourgeois tendencies take over leadership of the struggle. Thus the leadership of the proletariat and its party is indispensable.

(p.7) “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, charac-

ter and alignment of class forces must be drawn. In all events, foreign imperialism remains a target of the revolution.” (Joint Communiqué)

We’d like to point out two things here:

—The formulation “semi-feudal relations of production” poses a problem. Feudal relations of production exist in the majority of social structures dominated by imperialism. Therefore these have long been considered semi-feudal, semi-colonial social structures. Today, with the introduction of capitalist relations of production into these social structures, they are correctly called predominantly capitalist countries, but where elements or remnants of *feudal production relations* and not “semi-feudal” ones can be found. A production relation is a relation involving a ruling class and a dominated class—here, the class of landowners and the peasant class which it exploits. The class of landowners cannot be called a “semi-feudal” class: it is entirely *feudal*. Therefore there are “elements or remnants” of *feudal* relations of production, in a structure dominated by capitalist relations of production.

We think that foreign imperialism is not only “one” target of the revolution, but indeed, one of its main targets. Thus this formulation must be re-examined.

According to the TKPM-L, there are certain countries “of the second type” which are semi-colonial, semi-feudal countries.” In their view:

“Even if comprador capitalism has developed in these countries to a greater or lesser extent, their production relations are still predominantly feudal and semi-feudal. The two main tasks of the new-democratic revolution in these countries are the attainment of national independence and the abolition of feudalism by means of the agrarian revolution, and the principal strategic slogan for these countries must generally be ‘democratic dictatorship of the people.’ In this context, the path of revolution in these countries will generally be protracted people’s war.”

We think that here, the comrades of the TKPM-L underestimate the leading role of the proletariat and its party in the revolutionary process. Indeed, the proletariat develops from day to day in these countries, under the influence of imperialism, which introduces capitalist relations of production into it. In these countries, feudalism is in decline, and capitalism is on the rise. The feudal class itself is forced, in order not to die out, to transform itself into an agrarian bourgeoisie, bringing about the expansion of the agricultural proletariat. This shows the necessity of the proletariat and its party to exercise leadership over the revolutionary process, in order to carry through the new-democratic revolution and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the support, of course, of the oppressed section of the peasantry, which makes up the majority of the population.

With regard to the struggle against economism: The struggle against economism is very important, because economism holds back the development of the political consciousness of the masses. A party in which economism reigns, trails behind the masses instead of playing its leading role. But neither can one fall into the opposite extreme, that is, not paying enough attention to the struggle of the masses, which would mean abandoning in fact the leadership of these struggles. These struggles, as minimal as they are, represent a step forward for the political consciousness of the masses, if they are well led.

Let’s go back to the text of the Communist Party of Turkey Marxist-Leninist. This text says: “It is possible to establish certain distinctions among the imperialist countries themselves, and these should not be regarded merely as different stages of the revolution. The ‘Joint Communiqué’ does not deal with the situation in imperialist countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic and other countries under the influence of Russian social-imperialism. In our view the strategy and tactics of the road of the October Revolution are also valid for these countries. But above and beyond that, the political, financial and military influence of the Russian social-imperialists has a particular significance. In revisionist-capitalist coun-

tries of this type the proletarian revolution, in attacking the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, must at the same time set its sights on Russian social-imperialism because the two are bound together by a thousand threads. And this aspect will influence the tactics to be followed on a number of questions of the class struggle, such as alliances, military strategy, etc., etc. In our opinion it is necessary—especially in view of the growing revolutionary situation in Poland—for the world's Marxist-Leninists to take up this issue and subject it to close scrutiny."

Like the comrades of the TKPM-L, we think that the Joint Communiqué doesn't deal with the case of countries under the influence of Russian social-imperialism. Yet, differing with these comrades, we don't think that the countries of Eastern Europe are imperialist. Indeed, it must not be forgotten that:

—these countries are occupied militarily by Soviet troops.

—the economy of these countries is tightly bound to the Soviet economy through the "international socialist division of labour."

These countries, in our opinion, are not imperialist countries but *bureaucratic capitalist countries dominated by Soviet social-imperialism.*

Let's make note of the fact that the countries of Eastern Europe differ from other capitalist countries only in the different means with which they exploit the workers. Accordingly, the revolution in these countries must be made under the leadership of a vanguard workers' party. One of the characteristics of the revolutionary situation in Poland is that the struggle of the workers has not been guided by a Marxist-Leninist party leading the workers. And only this party can develop a correct strategy and tactics to carry through the revolution successfully.

On the subject of the mass line, we must say that we think that, although the mass line is found in Lenin's works, Mao Tsetung systematised the formulation of it, by giving it a precise definition for the first time. Thus we think that a reference to Mao was necessary there.

We agree with the view that "proletarian internationalism is something inseparable from Marxism-Leninism and a constant need of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist vanguard in all countries." (p.9, Joint Communiqué) Still, we think that the statement is too general and that concrete reference points are needed. Indeed, the revisionist camp does not hesitate to justify military interventions in certain Eastern European countries by presenting this as a demonstration of proletarian internationalism. For example, the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. On the economic front, the so-called "international socialist division of labour," which binds the economy of the dependent countries of Eastern Europe to that of the Soviet Union, is presented as an achievement in "proletarian internationalism."

We agree completely with the Joint Communiqué where it states: "We are still living in the era of Leninism, of imperialism and the proletarian revolution; at the same time we affirm that Mao Tsetung Thought is a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism. Without upholding and building on Mao's contributions it is not possible to defeat revisionism, imperialism and reaction in general." (p. 10)

We think that the present epoch is still that of Leninism, of imperialism and proletarian revolution. However, new phenomena have appeared in the world, such as modern revisionism, social-imperialism, protracted people's war, etc. These new phenomena required developing the Marxist-Leninist science further. This is what Mao Tsetung did, and it's why we say that Mao Tsetung Thought is a new stage of Marxism-Leninism, adapted to new phenomena, the Marxism-Leninism of our epoch. Mao did not replace the theses of Marx and Lenin with another theory, he developed them to correspond to new

developments in the modern world. This is what in his time Lenin did for Marxism (the theses of Marx and Engels). This task also faces Marxist-Leninists of all countries in the present epoch: to defend and develop the theses of the great Marxist-Leninist thinkers in light of new phenomena which arise as the class struggle develops in every country and on a world scale. By proceeding this way we can also overcome the harmful influence of imperialism and modern revisionism which, through counter-revolutionary theories like "peaceful revolution," the "three worlds theory" or the workerist theses of Trotskyists and of the Albanian Party of Labour, attack the foundations of Mao Tsetung Thought, aim to sabotage the revolution and perpetuate the rule of the bourgeoisie, whether it be the classical (the U.S. imperialist) or "new" (the Soviet social-imperialist) bourgeoisie.

The negative influence of social democracy must also be exposed and fought. This is no small matter, because social democracy, through its political inconsistency, stemming from its bourgeois class position, habitually turns down the bed for fascism (e.g., Chile).

Like the comrades of the Communist Party of Turkey Marxist-Leninist, we think that certain phenomena such as the "self-dissolution of the Comintern, the conciliatory tendencies during and after World War 2, the capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and in a list of other socialist countries, and the degeneration of the majority of parties of the Third International must be analysed."

(p. 13) "In the face of the demoralisation caused by these facts among broad sectors of the masses, and given that the bourgeois sectors are taking advantage of these facts, claiming that they prove the 'failure' of Marxism, it falls on us communists to show that it is not scientific socialism which has failed, and that, on the contrary, scientific socialism makes it possible for us to grasp what objective and subjective factors gave rise to these events." (Joint Communiqué)

Here, it seems to us that the TKPM-L and the Joint Communiqué are showing the same concern and recommending the same thing for pursuing investigation, analysis and struggle for the unity of Marxist-Leninists.

In conclusion, we Marxist-Leninist militants of the international communist movement must state the following:

—This text is an important contribution to the process of unifying the international communist movement.

—Writing this article has demonstrated to us that in the course of studying the Joint Communiqué a number of points came up which we did not agree with while at first glance it had struck us that we agreed with the whole text. We think that this is healthy. And we also think that the same is true for other Marxist-Leninists who are discussing or will be discussing the Joint Communiqué and even for the organisations and parties which already signed it. We think that these organisations and parties and all Marxist-Leninists must encourage this discussion and participate in it actively, in order to strengthen this Joint Communiqué which represents an important step toward the unity of Marxist-Leninists on a principled basis. This Communiqué draws a clear dividing line between Marxism-Leninism and modern revisionism, despite some limitations which we have brought out in this text.

Long Live the Unity of Marxist-Leninists Throughout the World!
Develop the Debate Around the Fundamental Problems of Marxism!
Fight Against the Different Forms of Modern Revisionism!
Take History Into Our Hands!

October, 1981

The following is a list of public addresses of groups signing the Joint Communiqué (we will attempt to forward correspondence to signatory parties and organisations which are not included here):

Ceylon Communist Party
9 De Mel Street
Colombo 2
Sri Lanka

Organizzazione Comunista Proletaria
Marxista-Leninista, address to:
Andare Contra Corrente
Via Burzio 9
10122 Torino
Italy

Unión de Lucha Marxista-Leninista
(formerly Grupo para la Defensa del
Marxismo-Leninismo), address to:

Apartado de Correos
17026 Madrid
Spain

Partido Comunista Revolucionario de
Chile, address to:
Silvia Chateau
B.P. 198
75864 Paris, Cedex 18
France

Mao Tsetung-Kredsen
Geysergade 5
8200 Arhus N
Denmark

Revolutionary Communist Party, USA
P.O. Box 3486, Merchandise Mart
Chicago, Illinois 60654
USA

New Zealand Red Flag Group
P.O. Box 72117
Auckland 9
New Zealand

Stockport Communist Group
c/o 6, Willis Road
Stockport, Cheshire SK3 8HQ
Britain

Nottingham Communist Group
c/o Flat 2
10, Villa Road
Nottingham NG3 4GG
Britain

The press communiqué and resolutions from India were reprinted in the fortnightly *Mass Line*. Newspaper orders can be directed to:

Mass Line Publications
No. 80A/1, New Hosiary Singh Quarters
Munirka, New Delhi 110067
India