

An Appeal to the Leaders of the International Communist Movement

Differences of opinion in the international communist camp have turned into recriminations to the delight of the imperialists and to the detriment of the revolutionary working class movement. Warning against this dangerous possibility, the article emphasized, more than two decades back, the scientific process of resolving the differences among the communist parties.

There is no denying that serious differences over a number of ideological and organizational questions have appeared within the international communist movement, especially between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of China. Concretely put, these questions are as follows. What is the real significance of the change that has taken place in the international alignment of social forces since the last World War? What should be the attitude of the communists towards imperialism, including neo-imperialism as distinct from old colonial imperialism? Is the law formulated by Lenin at the time of the First World War that imperialism inevitably generates war still valid in the changed international situation today? What is the revolutionary significance of the relative weakening of the strength of world imperialism and the growing strength of the forces of peace and socialism? Can permanent peace be established so long as imperialism continues as a world system with its present military might? What are the possibilities, limitations and the revolutionary significance of the present-day peace movement? How should the communists approach the question of war and peace? Does the concept of peaceful co-existence, which is the cornerstone of the foreign policy of every socialist state in its relation with the capitalist states, negate the responsibility on the part of the socialist state to carry out the sacred duty of encouraging and intensifying the struggle by the oppressed classes in the capitalist countries for overthrowing capitalism and establishing socialism and of actively helping the peoples in the colonial and dependent countries to organize their revolution against the imperialists and, in the event of necessity, of even coming out with armed forces against the imperialists in support of such struggling peoples? Socialism, no doubt, is to give defeat to capitalism in peaceful economic competition and establish its supremacy over capitalism. But will capitalism die a spontaneous and automatic death without conscious and active organized efforts of the forces of revolution, simply because of the supremacy of socialism over capitalism in the peaceful economic competition? If not, and if the end of capitalism and establishment of socialism require the proletarian mass and other exploited masses to unite and progressively transform themselves individually and, still more, collectively into an army of revolution under the leadership of a revolutionary working class party, wage revolutionary battles against the exploiting class and its state, overthrow the old exploiting order and establish, consolidate and maintain the new order, then should the peaceful economic competition between socialism and capitalism be posed as an alternative to the task of actively intensifying revolutionary struggles by the workers, peasants and other exploited masses of the peoples? Has the international situation undergone so much change, both quantitatively and qualitatively, that it is possible now, as a general rule,

to go over from capitalism to socialism peacefully ? Is the parliamentary way one of the various forms of peaceful socialist revolution in the capitalist countries ? Can Parliament, an organ of bourgeois democracy and the political superstructure of capitalist economy, be transformed into a genuine 'instrument of people's will' ? How should the communists evaluate the role of resurgent nationalism in the newly independent bourgeois countries in Asia and Africa ? Is their anti-war and anti-imperialist role, which is objectively helping preservation of world peace, alone to be taken into account, to the exclusion of any consideration of the potential danger of imperialism inherent in the economy, increasing tendency of fascization and expansionism, and rapid appearance of fascistic characteristics in diverse forms in the state structure and administrative setup of these newly independent bourgeois states ? Are these resurgent nationalist states going to act, or not, more and more, virtually as agents of world imperialism in Asia and Africa in the matter of forcible suppression of the growth and development of the revolutionary struggle for socialism unless the national democratic revolution — achieved in a half-baked and truncated way in these countries — and which in the present international situation is part and parcel of world proletarian revolution, is successfully pushed along to its logical conclusion, viz., the accomplishment of socialist revolution ? Can the communists, like the pacifists, adopt the same attitude towards all kinds of war in the era of intensive class war or must not the communists always stand for just wars and against unjust wars ? It is known to all that one of the principal tasks of all progressive forces in general and the communists in particular, is to actively fight for prevention of all unjust wars and thermonuclear war, particularly. But what is the objective way of achieving this end ? Can it be achieved by mainly depending on diplomatic attempts through the UNO, summit conferences and such other acts, or so long as the imperialists do not agree to ban completely all thermonuclear tests and destroy all nuclear weapons, does the objective means of preventing thermonuclear war consist in always keeping ahead of the imperialist powers in thermonuclear strength, intensifying the revolutionary struggle in capitalists countries and the anti-imperialist national liberation movements in the colonies and semi-colonies, constantly exposing the nuclear blackmailing by the imperialists and combining all these with the intensification of the world peace movement along with all possible diplomatic measures and activities aimed at prevention of war and preservation of peace ? Should the threat of a thermonuclear world war, constantly held out by the imperialists by not agreeing to ban completely all nuclear tests and destroy all nuclear weapons, primarily determine the attitude the communist parties and the forces of revolution are to adopt towards the burning issues of the day ? If so, what is the prospect of world revolution ? What is the correlation between the struggle for averting a thermonuclear world war and complete banning of all nuclear tests and destruction of all nuclear weapons, on the one hand, and the task of accelerating the course of world revolutionary movement, on the other ? Do they contradict each other, or are they mutually conducive ? On the basis of the correct attitude to these vital questions, what should be the general line of the world communist movement ? What is the root cause that gave birth to and nurtured the cult of personality in general and the Stalin-cult in particular, which dominated the party life of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the international communist movement ? Do the measures taken by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to de-Stalinize have any relation with the real task of eradicating the root cause of the cult of personality ? Stalin being the leader of not only the Communist Party of the Soviet Union but also of the international communist movement, can the Communist Party of the Soviet Union be the *sole*

judge to evaluate Stalin, or should the evaluation be made by the communist international forum ? What is the Leninist code of conduct which should bind every communist party in its relationship with any other fraternal communist party ? Can the decision of the Congress of any particular communist party, however big and powerful, be imposed on other communist parties against their will as the general line of the international communist movement ? Can any difference with the leading communist party on matters of ideology and principle be branded as departure from proletarian internationalism ? Is the decision of the communist international forum binding on the individual communist parties or not ? To what extent does a particular communist party enjoy the right of pursuing an independent line in determining its relationship with a fraternal communist party and what are its obligations in following such a line ? Can a communist party after agreeing to a decision of the communist international forum, act unilaterally in a manner which goes against that decision, before placing its revised views on the question to the international forum and having them discussed there ? These do not, of course, exhaust all the questions involved in the present ideological differences between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of China. But these are enough to give us an idea of the importance of the present ideological struggle and the gravity of the situation.

There cannot be two opinions as to the importance of the questions involved in the present ideological differences within the world communist camp. These cover a wide range of ideology and principle and relate to communist approach to and attitude towards the burning problems of contemporary world and include the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary struggle by the exploited masses of the peoples of the whole world for emancipation from all sorts of exploitation of man by man. For successfully conducting this revolutionary struggle, these questions are to be correctly handled and the differences resolved without any further delay. But though we are fully aware of the necessity of resolving the ideological differences between the different communist parties and are not prepared to minimize its importance a whit, we feel that the resolution of the differences of this nature would take a long time. In fact, without an intensive ideological struggle and painstaking education and persuasion, which require a considerable period of time, the ideological differences cannot be correctly resolved, too. But what cannot wait, so to say, for a single day more is the end of the bitterness that has developed of late in the mutual relationship between the different communist parties centring round the ideological differences in the communist camp, bitterness of such intensity that it has adversely affected not only the relation between the different communist parties but also that between the socialist states. Whatever may be the ideological differences, no serious communist can do anything that will have the effect of disrupting the unity of the world proletariat and the international communist movement, weakening the consolidation and solidarity of the socialist camp comprising the different socialist states and creating obstacles in the path of presenting a united face by the socialist states against the imperialists, their common enemy. *The maintenance of the unity of the working class and the international communist movement and the solidarity of the socialist camp is now of paramount importance. All other issues are subordinated to it.* Hence, is there any earthly reason that there should invariably be bitterness and animosity between different communist parties, affecting the very unity of the communist movement since they are engaged in bitter struggles to resolve the ideological differences ? Unity of the working class and the international communist movement, solidarity of the socialist camp and united movement by the socialist states against the imperialists — these have got to be ensured without any further delay, serious

ideological differences between the communist parties notwithstanding. In the present article, therefore, we do not intend to go into the ideological questions themselves over which there are differences in the world communist camp. On our part we have, on more than one occasion, presented to the public our view on the questions involved in the present ideological differences. If the situation so demands, we shall certainly reiterate our stand. But, for the present, we limit ourselves to discussing the present strained relation between the different communist parties and between the socialist states that has developed centring round the ideological differences between them, the factors that are responsible for the setback in the mutual relationship and the measures that should be immediately adopted to restore normalcy in the relation.

In the foregoing paragraph, we have expressed our apprehension that, however much may be the importance of the questions and the urgent necessity of resolving the differences thereon between the different communist parties, the present ideological differences cannot be resolved immediately. Is not there some ground for this apprehension of ours? Yes, there is ground. First of all, the resolution of such serious ideological differences, as the present ones are, requires strict adherence to the Leninist code of conduct and maintenance of proper relationship between the communist parties that alone can ensure the suitable atmosphere necessary for conducting an ideological struggle. But unfortunately that relationship is conspicuous by its absence now and, hence, the proper atmosphere also is lacking. Some comrades may disagree with us but we still feel that the bitterness that has developed and is increasing with the passage of time on account of the ideological differences, is mainly due to the lowering of the standard of ideological consciousness of the communists, not excluding some of the present leaders of the international communist movement. *Otherwise, so long as they consider their respective opponents as fraternal communist parties, there is no earthly reason why ideological differences between the different communist parties should adversely affect their mutual relationship and that between the socialist states.*

The purpose of conducting an ideological struggle is always to strengthen really the unity ideologically, politically, organizationally and in action. It is, however, no easy matter to achieve this unity on questions of ideology and principle by rectifying others' ideology and correcting their long held principles, viewpoints and prejudices. Attempts to resolve ideological differences between the different communist parties by organizational methods like breach of diplomatic relations between the socialist states, withdrawal of promised economic aid, revocation of trade relations, etc., are bound to fail in bringing about unity. Because, this method of bullying the opponent into submission, even if it succeeds in a few cases, can, at best, achieve superficial unity and not conscious, voluntary unity based on unity in ideology, will and action, which an ideological struggle aims at achieving. Real unity can only be achieved through the painstaking process of education and persuasion of the erring comrades, through various kinds of complicated struggles and through a considerable period of education, struggle and practice in revolution. Persuasion presupposes proper psychological treatment of the person whose erroneous ideology and principle are sought to be corrected, choice of appropriate time and renunciation of personal sentiments, likes or dislikes of the one who intends to reform others. To avoid this path of painstaking education and persuasion and make haste to *anyhow* resolve the present ideological differences, even sacrificing principle, would end in either virtual rift in the world communist camp or, what we may call, in history repeating itself, viz. that the ideological differences would be patched up and compromises made on the basis of some *via media* formula, just to bypass the differences and present a united

face to the world at large, leaving still the ground of differences. Such compromises on questions of ideology and principle, as had been done in the *Declaration of 1957* and the *Statement of 1960*, only worsen the condition. The present situation in the world communist camp testifies to such worsening of condition.

It is now known to all that serious ideological differences on some major questions of ideology and principle between the different communist parties cropped up at the time of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. But instead of conducting a principled struggle and thrashing out all outstanding ideological differences, the representatives of the different communist parties, in the meeting in Moscow in 1957, bypassed the ideological differences, patched them up and, even sacrificing principles, adopted an apparently united stand in the form of the *Declaration of 1957*, which under cover of a seeming unity was actually nothing but a queer admixture of contradictory views on ideological questions of fundamental nature. But these compromises on questions of ideology and principle did not bring real unity between the communist parties, as it cannot. The *Declaration of 1957* became the breeding ground of fresh differences. Again, these differences were not thoroughly thrashed out and a definite line was not adopted, when the representatives of the eightyone communist and workers' parties met in Moscow in 1960. The *Statement of 1960*, like the previous document, the *Declaration of 1957*, instead of presenting a definite clear-cut line to guide the international communist movement, became once again a hotchpotch of two fundamentally different lines keeping the door open to each to propagate its own line of thought. Such unprincipled compromises on questions of ideology, always remain the breeding ground of more violent future differences. As a result, compared to 1957, in spite of pious wishes, the sphere of differences has widened, the tone of mutual criticism hardened and tempers frayed, all tending towards a violent showdown between the disputant parties. Had the ideological differences been correctly resolved at the initial stage, when they were first detected, instead of patching them up by unprincipled compromises, the international communist movement would have been saved from the setback which the present ideological differences between the powerful communist parties have brought on.

It must not be forgotten that in case of ideological differences concerning questions of principle, there can be no middle line, no compromise. The work must be based on 'either this or that' principle. The middle line always muddles up the whole thing and worsens the situation. Attempts to *anyhow* resolve the present ideological differences immediately, as is expressed in the viewpoint of the CPSU and some other parties, even at the cost of principles by patching up the differences and adopting a *via media* as in the past, would further complicate the issues and keep alive the ground of ideological differences only to make it worse in future. So, let the ideological differences be kept open for the present and let the ideological struggles be conducted through polemical discussions, bipartite meetings and conferences of the different communist parties, maintaining the communist code of conduct and decorum, with a view to creating a proper atmosphere necessary for conducting correctly the ideological struggle and helping each other reach real unity in ideology, principle, organization and action.

Some comrades argue that it is because of the ideological differences that the relation between different communist parties and between the socialist states has become so strained. We are sorry, we cannot agree with them. Because, this argument betrays lack of understanding of the principle that should govern different communist parties while conducting an ideological struggle, as also of the communist code of

conduct that should govern the relationship between different communist parties. It, at the same time, is tantamount to, in effect, to surrender to fatalism. Furthermore, if ideological difference as such means strained party-relation and state-relation, as the argument of these comrades implies, then there can be no struggle and interaction of ideas within the world communist camp. Absence of struggle and interaction of ideas between the different communist parties in the world communist camp would invariably lead to formalistic mechanical relation, as against dialectical relation, being established between them and consequently, to the complete absence of the dialectical process of *unity-struggle-unity* indispensable for the growth and operation of collective leadership in the international communist movement.

As such, ideological differences within the world communist camp are no new phenomena. Nor can their future occurrence be absolutely ruled out. There had been ideological differences between the communist parties in the past and it goes without saying that in future also, even after the present differences are correctly resolved, there would crop up fresh differences. In the present historical epoch, when the national form of existence has not outlived itself, when the communist parties of different countries are maintaining separate existence, there is every likelihood of differences cropping up between them over approach to different world issues because of differences in experience gained by the different communist parties in course of the revolutionary struggle conducted by them in their respective national spheres. Such differences are not unnatural and there is nothing for the communists to be perturbed over these. Within an individual communist party also differences, even on matters of ideology and principle, may arise among its members. So long as the inner-party struggle is conducted on the basis of education and persuasion with a view to resolving the differences and strengthening the unity of the party ideologically, politically, organizationally and in action, there is no harm. And *unless and until the conclusion is finally reached that ideological rapprochement is no more possible, the inner-party struggle should not disturb the unity of the party and united action against the enemy*. If any inner-party struggle widens the differences within the party, if it intensifies disunity and adversely affects united action against the enemy (unless it is concluded that ideological rapprochement between the disputants is an impossibility), then it is to be realized that the struggle is being conducted without principle or that there is lack of understanding of the principle that should govern the communists in conducting an ideological struggle or that the understanding of the communist ethics is seriously lacking. What has been said here about the inner-party struggle within a particular communist party applies with equal force to the ideological struggle which the different communist parties in the world communist camp conduct. If a principled ideological struggle is conducted between the communist parties, due regard being given to the object of such struggles and to the principle that governs conduction of such struggles, there is no reason for the relation between the communist parties and between the socialist states to get strained, resulting in the weakening of the working class and the international communist movement, the weakening of the solidarity of the socialist camp and the creation of hurdles in the path of united action by the socialist states against their common enemy, the imperialists. But facts prove that the present ideological differences between the communist parties are adversely affecting these very relations, much to the weakening of the world communist movement and the jubilation of the imperialists and the warmongers.

Why have the present ideological differences created so much bitterness between the communist parties and even seriously affected the relation between the socialist

states ? Why is it that the struggle, now being conducted by the communist parties to resolve the ideological differences between them, is adversely affecting the unity of the working class and the international communist movement and the solidarity of the socialist camp ? Why could not the socialist states, on more than one occasion, adopt a united stand against the imperialists, their common enemy, on account of the ideological differences ? The communist international forum has got to find out the answers to these questions *immediately*. And in doing so, if need be, the forum should make a careful probe into the whole matter so as to determine which person or which party first set the ball rolling and sowed the seeds of bitterness and disunity in the world communist movement. We intend to pinpoint the factors which, in our opinion, are responsible for the strained relation between the communist parties conducting the present ideological struggle and between the socialist states. The factors are mentioned below.

First, though the communist parties conducting the present ideological struggle have said, times without number, that the maintenance of the unity of the world communist movement and the solidarity of the socialist camp is of paramount importance to which all other issues are subordinated, yet *it is doubtful if some of their leaders have ever realized the significance of it truly*. Because, anyone who correctly understands the importance and significance of maintaining the unity of the international communist movement and the solidarity of the socialist camp in the present situation can never act in a manner in which some of the present leaders of the international communist movement are conducting themselves to the detriment of the unity of communist movement and the weakening of the solidarity of the socialist camp, whatever may be the ideological differences between them.

Second, *lack of dialectical approach to the question of unity and struggle is another factor* that is responsible for the present strained relation between the different communist parties and between the socialist states. Some comrades understand unity in a mechanical sense. Their conception of unity negates any struggle of ideas. To them unity means unity with no struggle. So they term criticism on the basis of genuine ideological differences an attack. And precisely for this very conception, criticism also has virtually taken the form of attacks and counter-attacks. Similarly, struggle, to these comrades, means struggle without restraint with *no unity*. Consequently, the struggle — on matters of ideological and organizational principle, as well as on the conduct of the leading party personalities — between different communist parties has virtually turned into a struggle as if between enemies. Clearly, it speaks of complete lack of understanding of the nature of contradiction involved in this ideological struggle. So the way this struggle is being conducted is not strengthening the unity in the world communist camp ideologically, politically, organizationally and in action, as it should do. On the contrary, it is widening the differences, intensifying the feeling of bitterness and animosity, and widening the breach of unity between the different communist parties. It must be realized that unity and struggle go together — *unity in struggle and struggle for unity*. Communist unity presupposes and is achieved, maintained and strengthened through struggle and interaction of ideas. So the struggle between the communists should always be conducted with the sole object of further strengthening that unity. Leave one or the other and you do not get real communist unity.

Incidentally, it may be mentioned here that the idea, as yet prevalent in the world communist camp, that any difference between communist parties, even differences over questions of ideology and principle, should be resolved in secret meetings limited to the top leaders of the communist parties and the practice of this idea have

contributed no less to the growth and development of the erroneous concept about unity and struggle mentioned above. The aim of ideological struggle is to educate. Education does not mean education of the leaders alone. It means also education of the rank and file, the class and the masses. Closed door secret meetings of the top leaders of the communist parties over ideological differences between them deprive the ordinary members of the parties, the class and the masses of the peoples of the opportunity of *directly* participating in the ideological struggle and thereby educating themselves. Besides, such secret meetings smack of conspiratorial movements which neither communism nor communist education are. Open polemical discussion, on the other hand, brings into bold relief the ideological differences and helps to get them resolved. Further, open discussion and public admission of mistakes minimize the scope of wrong apprehension and misgivings in mass mind and the possibility of distorting the opponent's views and shifting one's own stand constantly, which secret meetings are liable to engender. For, in an open polemical discussion the respective views of the parties participating in it do not remain confined among the leaders of the parties alone but get world-wide publicity which makes it very difficult for one to distort others' views and change one's own stand surreptitiously. And even if the views of the opponents are distorted or one's own stand conveniently changed without publicly admitting the mistakes, others can easily detect these. Then again, since the discussion is open, ordinary members of the parties, the class and the masses are actively involved in the ideological struggle and get the opportunity of judging the correctness or otherwise of the respective views of different communist parties, educating themselves accordingly and of even exercising pressure on the leaders to rectify themselves. The participating parties, too, in an open polemical discussion on ideological differences, get the opportunity of learning from the class and the masses. Thus, *an open polemical discussion on questions of ideology and principle, if conducted on principle, may serve as an antidote to party fanaticism and blind allegiance to leaders.* So, open polemical discussion as such cannot be held responsible, as some comrades allege, for the setback in mutual relationship between the different communist parties and between the socialist states that has of late taken place centring round the present ideological differences between them.

Third, the term, "leading communist party" has created a good deal of confusion; particularly, the non-dialectical understanding of the leading role and obligation of the leading communist party is another factor. There is nothing objectionable in the idea of the leading communist party, provided it does not presuppose an unchangeable permanent leadership of a particular communist party on each and every issue that confronts the world communist movement. So, accepting a particular party as the leading communist party in a particular historical phase does in no way mean blind obedience to that party and blind acceptance of all its stands as correct. It, on the contrary, presupposes uninterrupted struggle and interaction of ideas between the leading communist party and other communist parties, which is the only way to ensure the dialectical process indispensable for the growth and operation of collective leadership. The idea of the leading communist party does not even contradict the position that both on general line and on a particular issue the correct analysis may be advanced by any small party other than the leading party which, being the correct expression of collective leadership, should be accepted by all other communist parties. The presentation of the correct line by another party, either on the international situation or on a particular issue, does not, of course, mean that the leading communist party no longer remains the leading party or that the other party has become the leading party. Because, the position of a party as the leading

communist party is dependent on so many other conditions. As the founder of the first socialist state in the world, as the possessor of the richest experience of socialist construction and as the guide of the world's most powerful socialist state, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union still enjoys that unique position in the world communist movement.

But from this it does not follow that it is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that is to make decisions on all the issues confronting the international communist movement, and other communist parties are to lend blind support to those decisions. Unfortunately, what is being practised in most cases is the very opposite of the correct idea of the leading communist party. As a result, any difference over any decision of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is being branded as departure from proletarian internationalism. Otherwise, how can the decisions of its Twentieth and Twentysecond Congresses be claimed, in practice though not in so many words, by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to be binding on all the fraternal communist parties or how can the Albanian Party of Labour be held guilty of anti-Sovietism and anti-proletarian internationalism by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for its differences over some decisions of the said Congresses ? They and they alone who suffer from formalism and lack proper understanding of the complex dialectical process involved in the maintenance of unity between the different communist parties, consider any difference over any decision of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as anti-Sovietism and renunciation of proletarian internationalism. *These persons make the mistake of confusing every contradiction with antagonism and forget that collective leadership in the international communist movement grows and operates only through the dialectical process of struggle and interaction of ideas between the different communist parties and not through renunciation of struggle. The unity between the communist parties is not based on formalistic mechanical relation : the relation between them, on the contrary, is governed by the dialectical principle of 'unity-struggle-unity' on the basis of a new understanding of the values of life and cemented by the common objective of the world proletarian revolution and establishment of world communist society.* Then again, so far as the question of mutual relationship between the parties is concerned, every communist party, no matter how big or small it is, stands on the same footing, none being inferior or superior to any other. In the circumstances, the decisions of the Congress of a big party and those of a small party enjoy equal status, in so far as their enforceability on other fraternal parties is concerned. Hence, the decisions of the Congress of any particular communist party, however big and powerful, cannot take the place of the general line of the international communist movement as adopted by the communist international forum and be imposed on all other communist parties against their will directly or indirectly. And in case any communist party, may be very small, refuses to bind itself by the decisions of the said Congress of the big party, then the former cannot be called a deserter from the camp of proletarian internationalism. Similarly, no communist party, even if it is the leading communist party, after agreeing to a decision of the communist international forum, can act against that decision before submitting its differences on the question to the international forum and have the question discussed there. *To refuse to recognize, in practice, the equality of status of all the communist parties in the matter of mutual relationship between them by trying to enforce one's decisions on others against their will or to act against the decision of the communist international forum after agreeing to it, without placing one's revised view on the question at the international forum and having it discussed there, objectively amounts to placing some premium on oneself over others. Such an attitude*

smacks of big party chauvinism. To restore a healthy relationship between the communist parties this attitude should, at all costs, be done away with immediately.

Fourth, it is an accepted principle that in conducting an ideological struggle every member has the right to approach every other member and convince the latter of the correctness of his stand. Indeed, ideological struggle loses its purpose if this right is taken away or obstacles are created against exercising this right. For, in that case it would deprive one of the opportunities of correcting the incorrect ideology and principles of others, or of getting one's own views corrected by others through education and persuasion which every ideological struggle aims at. But in the ideological struggle now going on in the world communist camp, some of the leaders are not prepared to extend this right to their opponents while they themselves enjoy it. Otherwise, *how can the attempts by one party to convince, through literature, the rank and file of another communist party of the correctness of its stand be branded as attempts to create disruption of communist unity and interference in the internal affairs of a fraternal communist party, particularly when those very leaders who are condemning the attempts as subversion and interference, are not only carrying on ideological struggle in favour of their own stand among the members of the fraternal parties in all possible ways but are actually interfering in the internal affairs of the fraternal parties as well by exerting undue pressure on the fraternal parties to change the composition of the various units of these parties, according to the likings of these leaders ?* A party that is conscious of the correctness of its ideological stand and is not afraid of admitting mistakes, if any, and correcting itself, never fears or objects to expose its rank and file to its opponents' views, while a party that is not prepared to admit its mistakes openly and correct its stand accordingly and is ideologically weak and in the wrong, favours a *hush hush* policy and objects to the propagation of its opponents' views among its rank and file, lest the weakness of its leadership would be exposed to its rank and file. The ideological campaign by a communist party among the rank and file of a fraternal communist party through literature can by no means be called an interference in the internal affairs of another party. Because, these two are fundamentally different matters.

It has also been shown earlier that the unity in the world communist camp is based on struggle and interaction of ideas between the different communist parties. Ideological campaign by a communist party among the rank and file of other communist parties through books and other literature is only one of the various methods of conducting this struggle and helping in interaction of ideas. To deny the opponents this right of *direct* ideological approach to the ordinary members of one's own party and prevent, by all means, the circulation of the opponents' views on any plea — be it on minimizing tension between the peoples of the socialist countries or the plea of creating a proper atmosphere conducive to early solution of ideological differences or any other plea — is an attempt to silence discussion. All silencing of discussion on matters of ideology, principle and epistemological questions, whether by way of preventing the opponents' views from being circulated, or the burning of books and witch-hunting of the holders of opposite views, as the fascists did in the pre-War days and are still doing in several capitalist countries, or otherwise, is an *assumption of infallibility*. At the same time it signifies weakness and vulnerability of the ideological stand of the person or the party that opposes the discussion. When it is the duty of every communist party to circulate the ideological stand of its opponents among its rank and file, initiate discussion on it and encourage such discussion by the ordinary members as a means to resolve correctly the ideological differences on its own, prevention of circulation of opponents' views particularly when attempts to

circulate it are being made by the opponents, is all the more objectionable. Such silencing of discussion is incompatible with the communist code of conduct. Not to speak of communism, even bourgeois humanism in the early stages of capitalism, upheld the freedom of thought and expression. "If all mankind minus one were of one opinion and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind... All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility". This is what John Stuart Mill, the bourgeois humanist philosopher, had said in his famous essay *On Liberty*. The concept of proletarian democracy guarantees much wider and more real democracy than what Mill had ever thought of. Communism, more doggedly than bourgeois humanism, rejects as incorrect all assumptions which attribute the quality of infallibility to one, whether an individual, a committee or a party. Thousand times more repugnant to communist ethics than prevention of circulation of the opponents' views is the distribution among the rank and file of one's party of a so-called summary of the opponents' ideological stand which, in reality, is nothing but one's own version of the opponents' stand and, for that matter, an extremely distorted version.

In the circumstances, is it correct on the part of the leaders of the international communist movement to try to prevent, by all means, the circulation of the views of their opponents among the rank and file of their party? Is the silencing of discussion by the ordinary members of their parties on the questions involved in the present ideological differences between the communist parties, in the interest of correctly resolving the differences and strengthening the communist unity? Is there any logic in accusing the opponents of unfriendly acts for their success in ideologically winning over to their side the students and technicians sent by some leaders to the countries of their opponents, especially in view of the fact that there is an ideological struggle going on between the parties where every party has equal right of winning over to its side the supporters of its opponent ideologically? Last but not least, does communist ethics permit a communist leader to deliberately distort the opponents' views and present to the rank and file of his party a mutilated account of the opponents' ideological stand, amounting to complete distortion? The answer to each of these questions is an emphatic NO. But the fact is that some of the communist leaders engaged in the present ideological struggle are doing these very things, which should, in no case, be done.

It should be borne in mind that it is an important task of every communist party to raise the level of ideological consciousness of the leaders and ordinary members and of the working class and the masses of the people constantly so as to enable them to face correctly the various complex problems that confront their lives and society. Ordinary members are to be raised to the advanced level of the leaders. Individuals belonging to the working class are to be so educated as to make them fit for membership of the communist party. The level of ideological consciousness of the masses is to be upgraded so that they become free from bourgeois influence and forces of habit inherited from capitalism and are steeled in revolutionary training. This immense task would remain ever unfulfilled if the rank and file of the party, the class and the masses are kept away from directly participating in ideological struggles and education.

Besides, another point also needs to be discussed in this connection. The unity of will and action, which is a must in every communist party, requires an iron discipline in the party-life which calls for submission of the rank and file to the leaders, of the lower bodies to the higher bodies and of the minority to the majority. But this iron

discipline is not based on passive support by or forcible submission of the members. On the contrary, it is based on active, conscious and voluntary submission of the rank and file to the leaders. The more conscious and voluntary the submission of the rank and file to the leadership is, the more monolithic is the unity within the party and hence, the more solid is the ground for exercising the iron discipline. *In fact, the revolutionary consciousness, the constant upgrading of the ideological standard of the ordinary members of the party and the active discharge of the conscious communist role are, in the ultimate analysis, the real guarantee in the party against ideological error and deviations. To develop the ideological consciousness of party members as a whole, it is incumbent on the leadership to instill in the rank and file the mind to judge every issue on the anvil of Marxism-Leninism, to impart the training to shun every form of fanaticism, including party fanaticism and to inculcate the spirit to rise against the leadership of the party, in case the leadership refuses to correct its mistakes though pointed out.* Not to train the ordinary members of the party in this revolutionary spirit but, on the contrary, to whip up party fanaticism by urging the rank and file to stand solidly behind the leadership of the party in case of an ideological struggle with another communist party, without giving the rank and file a chance to know the view of the other party and judge the correctness or otherwise of the respective views of the parties concerned, is to indulge in the worst type of party fanaticism and thereby encourage the rank and file, the class and the masses to commit the greatest sin against communist education. It is really surprising to note that in this present ideological struggle, some of the communist leaders, particularly the leaders of the CPSU, are trying their very best to withhold their opponents' views from their members and the working class and masses of the peoples in their countries, and to incite party fanaticism and even national sentiment as a means to counteract the ideological stand of their opponents, instead of steeling the rank and file of their parties and the class and the masses in their countries with proper revolutionary understanding and spirit that would enable them to abhor all forms of blindness and fanaticism, and fighting out the differences ideologically. It should be realized that whatever may be the temporary gains of these leaders for the present, this appeal to blindness and party fanaticism is sure to create not one but several Frankensteins in the world communist movement, which would cause incalculable damage to communism itself. The damage already done far outweighs the temporary gains of these leaders. These present leaders would perhaps not be there to see the damage caused by them to communism by fanning up party fanaticism openly, and narrow national sentiment subtly, in the minds of the ordinary members of their parties and the peoples of their countries, but their legacy would keep on weighing like a millstone for decades on the workers and the masses of the countries of the globe, who have got to rise above national isolation, narrow national sentiment and party fanaticism to secure the establishment of world communist society.

For the victory of communism on a global scale, the level of ideological consciousness of the communists in all the branches of knowledge should be raised and party fanaticism completely rooted out. These leaders of the international communist movement should, therefore, desist from appealing to narrow national sentiment of the peoples and party fanaticism of the rank and file of their parties as a means to counteract the ideological stand of their respective opponents. Furthermore, all restrictions on conducting the present ideological struggle should be immediately withdrawn and every opportunity for free and fair ideological polemics among the members of the fraternal communist parties should be ungrudgingly given, subject to the sole condition that the communist code of conduct and decorum that govern inner-

party struggles of a particular communist party should be strictly adhered to in this case also.

Fifth, let alone communist code of conduct, even bourgeois humanism enjoins on every person the observance of the ethical code to have the modesty and courage to admit mistakes openly when these are pointed out by others, rectify the same and move correctly. The observance of this ethical code is still more demanded of the communists. Not to admit one's mistakes openly but at the same time to constantly keep on shifting from the original stand in the face of the opponents' arguments in the course of an ideological struggle means to suffer from egoism and lack of modesty. Egoism and lack of modesty are stumbling blocks in the way of correct resolution of ideological differences between different communist parties. But it is a pity that these very defects and shortcomings of character are in evidence in the behaviour of some of the present prominent communist leaders who are constantly shifting from their original stand without admitting their mistakes openly and even claiming, on the contrary, that they had been correct all through. These comrades forget that open admission of mistakes and recognition of the superiority of a comrade in some matters do not lower the one who admits these, rather it helps one to constantly perfect oneself as a communist. A man who suffers from a sense of inflated ego and lack of modesty easily falls prey to the cult of personality also. Hence the sooner the trend of egoism and lack of modesty manifested in the behaviour of some of the leaders in the present ideological struggle goes, the better would be the chance of restoring healthy relationship between different communist parties and creating a proper atmosphere necessary for resolving the ideological differences between them correctly.

We have discussed already that unless and until it is finally concluded by a party that the other party or parties, as the case may be, have ceased to be communist, and that ideological rapprochement is impossible, an ideological struggle between different communist parties to resolve ideological differences between them should not disturb the unity of the working class and of the international communist movement, weaken the solidarity of the socialist camp and create obstacles to presenting a united face of the socialist states against their common enemy, the imperialists. In the present ideological struggle, the disputant parties have not yet gone so far as to consider their mutual opponents as renegades and enemy-agents and to conclude that ideological rapprochement between them is no more possible. They still hold that their opponents are communists though suffering from serious defects and deviations of either reformism or dogmatism, as the case may be. They still hope, and in this particular case rightly hope, too, that there is every possibility of ideological rapprochement between them by resolving the differences and of strengthening the unity within the world communist camp ideologically, politically, organizationally and in action.

This being the basic stand of the disputant parties, it is only logical that, so long as the present leaders of the international communist movement do not acquire that necessary standard of communist education and mutual understanding which would have enabled them to treat with complete indifference any personal attack, rude manners and even use of abusive language, the present ideological struggle should be so conducted as to at least prevent misrepresentation and misinterpretation of the opponents' views, use of abusive language and rude manners. This standard of communist character expected of the leaders also demands of the ordinary members a relatively high level of revolutionary consciousness which would instill in them the mind to judge every question on the anvil of dialectical materialism and the spirit to rise along with the members of other communist parties against the leaders of their

own respective parties, if necessary, in order to establish the correct line of thought in the international communist movement.

It has also been explained that a considerably long time is needed to reach unity on questions of ideology and principle. Any hasty step in this regard would only complicate the issues. So, let the ideological differences be kept open for the present and ideological struggle conducted on the above mentioned basis, maintaining proper decorum. But the strain in the relationship between the communist parties as also between the socialist states that has cropped up during the present ideological struggle, has got to be immediately removed and a normal healthy relationship restored. It is the imperative duty of every communist to work to that end. And for that purpose, we suggest that the following measures should be immediately adopted, regardless of how wide the ideological differences between the communist parties are and how trenchantly this struggle to resolve those differences is being conducted.

- (1) No communist party or socialist state should interfere in the internal organizational and administrative affairs of other parties or socialist states, directly or indirectly, using its advantageous position *vis-a-vis* the difficulties of others.
- (2) Every communist party should have the right to carry on open ideological struggles among the members of all other fraternal communist parties on the exclusive question of ideology and principle involved in the present ideological differences between them.
- (3) In no case should any communist party indulge in any act which will have the effect of disrupting the unity of the working class and the international communist movement.
- (4) No communist party or socialist state should take any step which would strain the normal diplomatic relation between the socialist states. Where there has been a breach of such relation, that should be restored forthwith.
- (5) No socialist state should withhold promised economic aid or change trade relations to the disadvantage of any other socialist state. Where the trade relation and economic co-operation between the socialist states have been adversely affected, the relation and co-operation should be normalized immediately and promised economic aid given.
- (6) No communist party or socialist state should do anything that would weaken the solidarity of the socialist camp. The socialist states should present a united face against the imperialists on all issues pertaining to revolutionary struggle by the peoples against imperialism-capitalism.

We appeal to the leaders of the world communist movement to exert themselves wholeheartedly so as to restore healthy relations between the different communist parties and between the socialist states. Let them not, by hasty steps, weaken the mighty edifice of proletarian internationalism and socialism, which legions of workers, peasants and other exploited masses of the peoples of the whole world have built up at the cost of their blood and labour and push back the advance of the revolutionary struggle by several decades.

Long live proletarian internationalism !
Long live the unity of the working class !

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