

On the Formation of International Communist League

International Department
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Fifteen Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties working in fourteen different countries have founded an organization named the International Communist League (ICL) and released its declaration on December 26, 2022. In addition, the ICL published an appeal on February 8, 2023. It reads, "We call on the entire international proletariat, all Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties and organizations to join the red flag of ICL to strengthen this new wave of world proletarian revolution." Our party, the Revolutionary Communist Party of Nepal, releases in brief its opinion on the formation of the ICL, the declaration it issued, and the call through this declaration to join the ICL.

For the past year, we were busy in bilateral discussions and debates for party unity between our two parties, the then CPN (Revolutionary Maoist) led by Comrade Kiran and the then CPN (Majority) led by Comrade Kanchan. We did not think it appropriate to publicize separate views of the two parties on ICL while the unity process was undergoing, and we did not do that. After the success of the unity talk between the two parties and the formation of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Nepal under the leadership of Comrade Kiran, our party has prepared its opinion on this question. Mainly because of this unity process, our party was a little late in publicizing its views on such an important international event for the world proletariat. We apologize for this.

After the undeclared dissolution of the RIM, we, the constituents of the United Party, have been continuously working hard to build an international organization under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. In this sense, we were positive yesterday, and we are so today to any initiative taken or to be taken by genuine Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties to build that kind of organization. Not only this, but we also have a clear opinion that the foundation of an international centre of genuine communist parties based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is inevitable today. In this situation, our party offers revolutionary greetings to the ICL and the constituent parties that formed it aimed at facing the current challenges of the world proletarian revolution.

But our party has disagreements on some issues of this international event. We believe that the way the ICL was constituted, and its declaration was adopted without discussing with many influential parties has failed to build a strong ideological and political foundation that unifies the ICM. Therefore, in the given situation, our party will not join the ICL according to its call. However, it does not mean that we do not want to work together with ICL and go ahead. Our party is in favour of trustworthy and enduring cooperation and principled unity. Also, pursuing the Maoist method of unity-struggle-transformation and new unity on a new basis, our party wants to go ahead for a higher level of unity. We are striving for this and will continue to do so.

ICL has taken positions on many ideological, political, and organizational issues in the declaration. We agree with many of them and disagree with a few others. We believe that not by negating one another but by learning from each other's positive aspects through a healthy two-line struggle and reducing one's limitations and weaknesses can create a strong base that helps achieve a higher level of unity. This is what we mean by saying that the two-line struggle is the driving force of the Communist Party. In this context, we have presented our position in points as follows.

First, ICL says, "The principal problem for the ICM is still the dispersion of forces and the main danger is revisionism." This statement is correct. In addition, it has identified five questions that draw a demarcation line between Marxism and revisionism in the present world context. They are: "1) acknowledging or not acknowledging Maoism as the third, new and higher stage of Marxism and the necessity to combat revisionism and all opportunism; 2) acknowledging or not acknowledging the omnipotence of revolutionary violence in order to make revolution in each one's own country; 3) acknowledging or not acknowledging the necessity to demolish the old state apparatus and replace the

dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat; 4) acknowledging or not acknowledging the necessity of the revolutionary party of the proletariat, 5) acknowledging or not acknowledging the necessity of proletarian internationalism." Our party agrees with the four points mentioned here. However, the terminology 'omnipotence of revolutionary violence' in point No. 2 seems to mislead and create some confusion. It is necessary to be clear on this.

Mao spoke in one context about the "omnipotence of war." In an article titled "Problems of War and Strategy," Mao says, "Some people ridicule us as advocates of the "omnipotence of war." Yes, we are advocates of the omnipotence of revolutionary war; that is good, not bad; it is Marxist. The guns of the Russian Communist Party created socialism. We shall create a democratic republic. Experience in the class struggle in the era of imperialism teaches us that it is only by the power of the gun that the working class and the labouring masses can defeat the armed bourgeoisie and landlords; in this sense, we may say that only with guns can the whole world be transformed. We are advocates of the abolition of war, we do not want war, but war can only be abolished through war, and in order to get rid of the gun, it is necessary to take up the gun." (Mao, Selected Works, Vol. 2, Page 225). In this article, Mao has again said, "Every Communist must grasp the truth, "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." Our principle is that the party commands the gun, and the gun must never be allowed to command the party." Right at this point, it is notable what Mao meant by saying, "Put politics in command" during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China.

In that article, when Mao said "the omnipotence of war" is Marxist, he meant that violence is an integral part of Marxism but not more powerful than Marxism. By saying so, Mao has emphasized that violence is inevitable for revolution, it is universally applicable, and the role of war guided by Marxist principles in revolution is omnipotent. The way the ICL has put forward the subject matter is not logical. We believe the debate that puts aside other related aspects and picks up only those that serve one's logic does not help anyone reach a correct conclusion. If the demarcation line between Marxism and revisionism is drawn based on whether one accepts the "omnipotence of war," there is a severe danger that Marxism is reduced to revolutionary violence. The revolutionary violence is an integral and decisive aspect of Marxism but not more powerful than Marxism. We want to draw ICL's serious attention to this question. MLM is omnipotent, not the revolutionary violence. To clarify this Lenin said, "The Marxist doctrine is omnipotent because it is true." (Lenin Volume 19 Page 23). But we agree that ICL's emphasis on revolutionary violence is undeniably justified in the present context where parliamentarism has prevailed in the international communist movement.

Second, the ICL declaration reads, "The new international organization is a centre of ideological, political, and organizational coordination, based on democratic centralism." Given the present level of ideological and political unity among the parties, the subjective conditions of our movement to build an international organization based on democratic centralism have not been met yet. The formation of an international organization based on democratic centralism, among Communist Parties that have weak ideological and political grounds and are unable even to publish a joint statement on May Day does not match the actual objective condition of the movement. In the given situation, every communist party must emphasize the development of a revolutionary class struggle consistent with the characteristics of its country, learn from the experiences of the fraternal communist parties, and develop a healthy two-line struggle to achieve a higher level of unity. The form of an international organization that helps exchange experiences and organize ideological debates is a loose coordination centre of MLM parties that makes decisions based on consensus. At this time, all our international work should be focused on this.

We have acquired experiences of First, Second, and Third Internationals active in the past. Summation of all those experiences is not possible here. But it is relevant to mention Mao's conclusion about the Third International (Comintern) that operated based on democratic centralism. In a question asked after the dissolution of the Comintern, Mao said, "At present, the form of revolutionary organization known as the Communist International is no longer adapted to the necessities of the struggle. To continue this organizational form would, on the contrary, hinder the development of the revolutionary struggle in each

country." (Mao, Selected Works, Vol. 6, Page 332). We must seriously take this statement of Chairman Mao, who rejected the instructions issued by the Comintern and said that maintaining an organization based on democratic centralism means hindering the development of the struggle in every country. How can democratic centralism be operative now, while it was not so in the past when the communist movement had its global influence and there were established proletarian leaders like Stalin and Mao to lead it?

Third, the draft proposal placed by the Coordinating Committee for the Unified Maoist International Conference (CUMIC) asserted that the guiding principle of the international communist movement would be Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, mainly Maoism. But now, ICL's declaration does not contain the term mainly Maoism but says Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the guiding principle. It is a correct political decision. However, it is silent on why they deemed necessary yesterday and irrelevant today. It is not a minor issue that someone can retain or remove on will, but an important theoretical question. It would impart its political significance had it clarified why 'mainly Maoism' was wrong to add to our guiding ideology. By not doing this, ICL has shown its ambiguity on this question.

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the integrated revolutionary principle of the proletariat. It is not the arithmetic sum of three different doctrines: Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism. Leninism was born on the foundation of Marxism and became Marxism-Leninism. In the same way, Maoism was born on the foundation of Marxism-Leninism, and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism developed. So, Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism are not separate theories; they are inseparably interconnected, and the latter stands upon the base of the former. It is what is meant by saying no party or person can be a Marxist without being a Maoist in today's era. The terminology 'mainly Maoism' separates Maoism from Marxism and Marxism-Leninism, so it is wrong. Although the declaration did not give any reason why ICL stopped saying 'mainly Maoism', its decision to adopt Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the guiding principle is correct. In today's situation, the theoretical foundation of unity of the international communist movement is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, nothing else.

Fourth, another question of debate raised by ICL in the declaration is that of people's war. The way the ICL uses the terminology people's war in its declaration is ambiguous. During the new democratic revolution in China, the form of violence developed and applied by Mao was a protracted people's war, not merely a people's war. Some communist parties, including ICL, use the term people's war. But no one has yet explained and clarified whether it is the protracted people's war defined by Mao or its different or developed form that corresponds to the present context. The ICL declaration writes, "People's War is a war of masses led by the Communist Party to conquer and defend the New Power for the proletariat." This statement implies that all forms of violence that are applied in revolution are people's wars. Here lies ICL's serious theoretical problem regarding the nature of violence. It is necessary to be clear whether the People's War is a protracted people's war as defined and applied by Chairman Mao or different from it, and if it is different, how it is so. If we are not clear on this, we will not wage revolutionary war but will be infinitely groping in the dark in pursuit of finding the correct path of revolutionary violence.

The lesson we have learned from Mao is that the protracted people's war goes through three strategic stages: namely defensive, equilibrium, and offensive. In these three stages, the guerilla war, mobile war, and positional war, respectively play principal roles. Moreover, the base area is the backbone of the protracted people's war. In capitalist countries, the development of science and technology and the information, communication, and transportation networks they have laid have made it impossible to establish the base areas. Then what kind of people's war will it be without base areas? It needs to be identified. Even in the semi/neo-colonial countries oppressed by imperialism, the protracted people's war cannot now be applied as it was done during the Chinese revolution. In this situation, the models of revolutionary violence in developed capitalist countries, where the centre of class struggle is the cities, and in oppressed countries, where the centre of revolution is the countryside, should both be developed relative to new objective conditions. It is necessary to correctly identify to what extent the two models of violence applied in the past revolutions – protracted people's war and armed people's insurrection –

resemble or differ from the terminology people's war that the international communist movement, including ICL, is using now. The word people's war is lovely to hear, but if we are not clear about how it is applied in the field of revolution, the communist movement will not advance but will continue groping in the dark.

In the past few years, there have been spontaneous rebellions in many countries of the world. In the absence of revolutionary party leadership in those countries, all those rebellions have disappeared as the high waves of the sea do. We all witnessed the spontaneous uprising of the people of Sri Lanka last year. The Sri Lankan military and armed police remained mute spectators. It was inevitable for the spontaneous public outcry to subside, and in due course that did. Let us imagine, had there been a genuine revolutionary communist party and even a small but committed army under its leadership, what would have happened in Sri Lanka at that time? When we talk of using force in the revolution, we must pay attention to such events. Besides, when we speak of developing the military line, we should seriously consider the development of science and technology. The crux of what Lenin meant when he said, "the concrete analysis of concrete conditions' is the essence of Marxism" and 'Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action', remains here. We believe that none of the two models of the successful revolutionary violence of the past can be applied without timely modification that corresponds to the changing objective reality.

Fifth, the ICL declaration reads, "With the ongoing people's war in India, Peru, Turkey and the Philippines, and preparations for it in many other countries, a new great wave of world proletarian revolution has arisen in the world." In our party's opinion, it is a subjective analysis; it does not correspond to the present reality of the world communist movement. This analysis is nothing except a mechanical replication of Chairman Mao's 1962 statement, which said, "The next 50 to 100 years or so, as of today, will be a great epoch of radical change of the social system in the world." This interpretation was objective and correct when the Socialist Revolution and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China had spread a revolutionary message around the world, and imperialism was weak. But in the present condition, when the Communist Party is nowhere in power after 1976, and the international communist movement is dispersed, the ICL position is subjective. We disagree with this.

Six, the correct analysis of the fundamental and principal contradictions of the world is one of the essential conditions for the development and success of the proletarian revolution. ICL declaration has defined that the contradiction between capitalism and socialism, the contradiction between labour and capital, the inter-imperialist contradiction, and the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations and the people are the fundamental contradictions of the world today. In addition, it has identified the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations and people of the world as the principal contradiction. Our party believes that the ideological contradiction between capitalism and socialism will remain so long as there are classes in society. Nevertheless, to consider it as a fundamental contradiction in the present condition when no single socialist country exists in the world does not confirm the objective reality. It is one of the contradictions of the world, but not the fundamental one at present. As far as other contradictions are concerned, they are correct.

However, there is a problem with the declaration on comprehending the relationship between the imperialist powers and the present international balance of power. There exists always a state of contention and collusion among the imperialist powers, in which the former is absolute, and the latter is relative. Imperialist powers collude with other forces to form temporary alliances and blocs to undermine their rivals. They confront each other to establish their monopoly and capture the natural resources and markets. In the present world, Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea have formed a bloc against another bloc, the US-led NATO. Right in this context, the ICL declaration reads, "The imperialist dispute is absolute, and the collusion is relative. This determines the circumstantial and temporary character of the imperialist alliances; this is why one cannot speak about "imperialist blocks;" this is revisionism. Thus, the European Union is not a block, or an "European imperialism," but an alliance of countries of Europe, under hegemony of Germany." According to them, the concept of the circumstantial alliance between the

imperialist powers is Marxist, the bloc is revisionist, and the European Union is not imperialism. What kind of Marxism is this? Our party does not agree with this kind of metaphysical argument.

Again, the declaration reads, "On the side of the imperialist powers, Yankee imperialism is the sole hegemonic superpower. Russia is still an atomic superpower and there is a handful of second-tier imperialist powers." This interpretation implies that the US is the only enemy of the world proletarian revolution because it is the sole hegemonic superpower, and all others are not so because they are second-tier imperialists. Right here, the declaration does not write a single word about the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the war that is going on between the US-led NATO and Russia in Ukrainian Land. Why is ICL indecisive on such a formidable international issue with worldwide political and economic implications? We think it is a serious question.

As a result of the unequal development of capitalism, the imperialist country that is weak today can become powerful tomorrow and vice versa. No imperialist power is number one forever, including the US. At present, the development of China is pushing the US behind in many respects. And another country may emerge as a superpower tomorrow. In this way, ICL's analysis of the current balance of power between the imperialist superpowers and their level of confrontation does not correspond to the existing objective reality. It is a metaphysical understanding.

Seven, there is no unity among the Maoist forces in understanding Comrade Gonzalo and his valuable contributions to the international communist movement. Gonzalo's contribution is vital in defining Maoism, applying it in the specific conditions of Peru, and establishing it in the international communist movement. There is no doubt that his firm conviction in MLM, and relentless struggle and sacrifice for the emancipation of the world proletariat are exemplary and unique. He has exhibited a great ideal of being a revolutionary communist. The communist movement should highly admire him. Notwithstanding this, we do not think it is a mature decision to address him as Chairman Gonzalo and synthesize his contributions as Gonzalo Thought.

Eight, the issue of evaluating the Comintern and Stalin has been controversial in the international communist movement. Our party considers Stalin a true successor of Lenin, a builder of socialism in Russia, the hero of the Second World War, and a great leader of the world proletariat. Our party believes that the decision taken by the Seventh Congress of the Comintern under Stalin's leadership to defeat fascism and protect the proletarian power in the Soviet Union was correct. In this regard, our party agrees with ICL. Our party believes that although he was a great revolutionary, he made some metaphysical mistakes. We think the evaluation of Stalin made by Mao is correct.

Nine, there are differences in the contemporary communist movement as regards the evaluation of RIM. After the counter-revolution in China, and particularly after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the establishment of the Committee of RIM (CoRIM) was a revolutionary step of far-reaching significance. It was a befitting reply to the apologists of imperialism when they had attacked the communist movement from all angles, saying Marxism has failed, socialism has been defeated, and capitalism has been proved to be the only viable option. The RIM Manifesto prepared by the Second International Conference held in 1984 and the document Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism adopted by the Second Extended Meeting of CoRIM held in 1993 had become the correct ideological and political guidance to the world communist movement at that time. In our party's opinion, the role played by the RIM at that time was vital in sharing the experiences of people's wars in Peru, Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Turkey, and other countries and in building communist parties in several others. Also, RIM was established as a trustworthy Marxist-Leninist-Maoist international centre of the world proletariat among the revolutionary communists the world over.

However, given the sectarian and authoritarian trend of RCP, USA, and the unhealthy competition that had developed among the chief leaders of the prominent parties in RIM, the role of the CoRIM weakened in the later period. The class and national capitulation of Prachanda and the post-Marxist deviation of Bob Avakian resulted in the undeclared dissolution of CoRIM in 2008. Although it could not last long, we

should highly evaluate the revolutionary role the CoRIM had played in most parts of its existence. Now, we are on a mission of constituting an international organization of the proletariat; the experiences the world proletariat has accumulated in the past are valuable to guide the upcoming tasks. The initiative to build an international communist centre should be based on the synthesis of the overall experiences of the first, second, and third internationals, including the RIM.

Finally,

We placed above our party's critical comments on the formation of ICL and the major ideological and political positions adopted by it. We believe the pursuit of forming ICL is admirable, and an international centre of the Maoist parties is a must in the present world situation. Nevertheless, the process of its formation, the organizational method and principle it has adopted, the ideological and political positions of the declaration, and the path of revolution it has pursued do not correctly grasp the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist principles. There are problems with militarist thinking in the document adopted by ICL. Instead of understanding the organization as a unity of opposites, the sectarian and monolithic thinking that entertains the unity of like-minded parties seems to prevail in the ICL. The opinion of our party is that the ideological and political line expressed in this manifesto cannot unite the dispersed MLM parties and thereby face the current challenges imposed by imperialism. Instead, it has split the movement and made it weaker.

The international unity of the revolutionaries is the imperative need of the moment. At present, the communist parties are not only internationally scattered but also, are not ideologically and politically strong and unified as well. An organization based on democratic centralism in such a shaky situation cannot bring desired results. It is the time to build a solid ideological and political base that enables scattered Maoist forces to confront the impending challenges. The healthy and sharp two-line struggle that helps develop ideological and political unity can materialize this task. It makes us go along the spiral path to achieve a higher level of unity through unity-struggle-transformation, not through a circular one of unity-struggle-unity. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, Mao emphasized that the target of the two-line struggle should be revolutionary transformation. It is the imperative need of the present day to grasp and apply it scientifically.

ICL declaration says that all fundamental contradictions, including the world's principal contradiction, are intensifying. This is a correct analysis. Now, the imperialist superpowers do not seem prepared for a world war, but the danger of the inter-imperialist conflict turning into a Third World War still exists. Mao's synthesis that either the world war would give rise to a proletarian revolution, or the proletarian revolution would prevent the world war, therefore, revolution is the main trend at present is relevant even today. But an important weapon to turn this basic trend into reality is the united intervention of revolutionary communists scattered around the world based on MLM.

Many important revolutionary communist parties have remained outside even after the formation of ICL. They have presented their disagreements with ICL in their political documents. In the given situation, the ideological and political line adopted by ICL is short of making the genuine Maoist Parties rally under its red flag. To realize the international unity of the genuine Communists, it is necessary to take the initiative from a newer height. It is our firm opinion that every genuine Maoist Party should play its creative role in building a new international coordination centre among those parties united in ICL and outside of it. It is the need of the day. We are ready to play a required role in this regard. Prejudice does not help us unite. Working without prejudice can the scattered Maoist parties be united at the international level. And by so doing the ideological, political, and organizational basis to build a communist international centre based on democratic centralism is prepared for tomorrow. In the present context, it is the appropriate way to bring together the entire scattered revolutionary communists in one international centre.

Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!

Down With Imperialism and All Sorts of Reactions!

Down With All Sorts of Revisionism!
Long Live the World Socialist Revolution!