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A PROPOSAL CONCERNING THE GENERAL LINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

**THE LETTER OF
THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA
IN REPLY TO THE LETTER OF
THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION
OF MARCH 30, 1963**

**FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS
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A PROPOSAL CONCERNING THE GENERAL LINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

**THE LETTER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA IN REPLY TO THE LETTER
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PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION OF MARCH 30, 1963**

(June 14, 1963)

June 14, 1963

**The Central Committee of the
Communist Party of the Soviet Union**

Dear Comrades,

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China has studied the letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of March 30, 1963.

All who have the unity of the socialist camp and the international communist movement at heart are deeply concerned about the talks between the Chinese and Soviet Parties and hope that our talks will help to eliminate differences, strengthen unity and create favourable conditions for convening a meeting of representatives of all the Communist and Workers' Parties.

It is the common and sacred duty of the Communist and Workers' Parties of all countries to uphold and strengthen the unity of the international communist

movement. The Chinese and Soviet Parties bear a heavier responsibility for the unity of the entire socialist camp and international communist movement and should of course make commensurately greater efforts.

A number of major differences of principle now exist in the international communist movement. But however serious these differences, we should exercise sufficient patience and find ways to eliminate them so that we can unite our forces and strengthen the struggle against our common enemy.

It is with this sincere desire that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China approaches the forthcoming talks between the Chinese and Soviet Parties.

In its letter of March 30, the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. systematically presents its views on questions that need to be discussed in the talks between the Chinese and Soviet Parties, and in particular raises the question of the general line of the international communist movement. In this letter we too would like to express our views, which constitute our proposal on the general line of the international communist movement and on some related questions of principle.

We hope that this exposition of views will be conducive to mutual understanding by our two Parties and to a detailed, point-by-point discussion in the talks.

We also hope that this will be conducive to the understanding of our views by the fraternal Parties and to a full exchange of ideas at an international meeting of fraternal Parties.

(1) The general line of the international communist movement must take as its guiding principle the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory concerning the historical mission of the proletariat and must not depart from it.

The Moscow Meetings of 1957 and 1960 adopted the Declaration and the Statement respectively after a full exchange of views and in accordance with the principle of reaching unanimity through consultation. The two documents point out the characteristics of our epoch and the common laws of socialist revolution and socialist construction, and lay down the common line of all the Communist and Workers' Parties. They are the common programme of the international communist movement.

It is true that for several years there have been differences within the international communist movement in the understanding of, and the attitude towards, the Declaration of 1957 and the Statement of 1960. The central issue here is whether or not to accept the revolutionary principles of the Declaration and the Statement. In the last analysis, it is a question of whether or not to accept the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism, whether or not to recognize the universal significance of the road of the October Revolution, whether or not to accept the fact that the people still living under the imperialist and capitalist system, who comprise two-thirds of the world's population, need to make revolution, and whether or not to accept the fact that the people already on the socialist road, who comprise one-third of the world's population, need to carry their revolution forward to the end.

It has become an urgent and vital task of the international communist movement resolutely to defend the revolutionary principles of the 1957 Declaration and the 1960 Statement.

Only by strictly following the revolutionary teachings of Marxism-Leninism and the general road of the October Revolution is it possible to have a correct understanding

of the revolutionary principles of the Declaration and the Statement and a correct attitude towards them.

(2) What are the revolutionary principles of the Declaration and the Statement? They may be summarized as follows:

Workers of all countries, unite; workers of the world, unite with the oppressed peoples and oppressed nations; oppose imperialism and reaction in all countries; strive for world peace, national liberation, people's democracy and socialism; consolidate and expand the socialist camp; bring the proletarian world revolution step by step to complete victory; and establish a new world without imperialism, without capitalism and without the exploitation of man by man.

This, in our view, is the general line of the international communist movement at the present stage.

(3) This general line proceeds from the actual world situation taken as a whole and from a class analysis of the fundamental contradictions in the contemporary world, and is directed against the counter-revolutionary global strategy of U.S. imperialism.

This general line is one of forming a broad united front, with the socialist camp and the international proletariat as its nucleus, to oppose the imperialists and reactionaries headed by the United States; it is a line of boldly arousing the masses, expanding the revolutionary forces, winning over the middle forces and isolating the reactionary forces.

This general line is one of resolute revolutionary struggle by the people of all countries and of carrying the proletarian world revolution forward to the end; it is the line that most effectively combats imperialism and defends world peace.

If the general line of the international communist movement is one-sidedly reduced to "peaceful coexistence", "peaceful competition" and "peaceful transition", this is to violate the revolutionary principles of the 1957 Declaration and the 1960 Statement, to discard the historical mission of proletarian world revolution, and to depart from the revolutionary teachings of Marxism-Leninism.

The general line of the international communist movement should reflect the general law of development of world history. The revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and the people in various countries go through different stages and they all have their own characteristics, but they will not transcend the general law of development of world history. The general line should point out the basic direction for the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and people of all countries.

While working out its specific line and policies, it is most important for each Communist or Workers' Party to adhere to the principle of integrating the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of revolution and construction in its own country.

(4) In defining the general line of the international communist movement, the starting point is the concrete class analysis of world politics and economics as a whole and of actual world conditions, that is to say, of the fundamental contradictions in the contemporary world.

If one avoids a concrete class analysis, seizes at random on certain superficial phenomena, and draws subjective and groundless conclusions, one cannot possibly reach correct conclusions with regard to the general line of the international communist movement but will inevitably

slide on to a track entirely different from that of Marxism-Leninism.

What are the fundamental contradictions in the contemporary world? Marxist-Leninists consistently hold that they are:

- the contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp;

- the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries;

- the contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism; and

- the contradictions among imperialist countries and among monopoly capitalist groups.

The contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp is a contradiction between two fundamentally different social systems, socialism and capitalism. It is undoubtedly very sharp. But Marxist-Leninists must not regard the contradictions in the world as consisting solely and simply of the contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp.

The international balance of forces has changed and has become increasingly favourable to socialism and to all the oppressed peoples and nations of the world, and most unfavourable to imperialism and the reactionaries of all countries. Nevertheless, the contradictions enumerated above still objectively exist. 317

These contradictions and the struggles to which they give rise are interrelated and influence each other. Nobody can obliterate any of these fundamental contradictions or subjectively substitute one for all the rest.

It is inevitable that these contradictions will give rise to popular revolutions, which alone can resolve them.

(5) The following erroneous views should be repudiated on the question of the fundamental contradictions in the contemporary world:

a) the view which blots out the class content of the contradiction between the socialist and the imperialist camps and fails to see this contradiction as one between states under the dictatorship of the proletariat and states under the dictatorship of the monopoly capitalists;

b) the view which recognizes only the contradiction between the socialist and the imperialist camps, while neglecting or underestimating the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist world, between the oppressed nations and imperialism, among the imperialist countries and among the monopoly capitalist groups, and the struggles to which these contradictions give rise;

c) the view which maintains with regard to the capitalist world that the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be resolved without a proletarian revolution in each country and that the contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism can be resolved without revolution by the oppressed nations;

d) the view which denies that the development of the inherent contradictions in the contemporary capitalist world inevitably leads to a new situation in which the imperialist countries are locked in an intense struggle, and asserts that the contradictions among the imperialist countries can be reconciled, or even eliminated, by "international agreements among the big monopolies"; and

e) the view which maintains that the contradiction between the two world systems of socialism and capital-

ism will automatically disappear in the course of "economic competition", that the other fundamental world contradictions will automatically do so with the disappearance of the contradiction between the two systems, and that a "world without wars", a new world of "all-round co-operation", will appear.

It is obvious that these erroneous views inevitably lead to erroneous and harmful policies and hence to setbacks and losses of one kind or another to the cause of the people and of socialism.

(6) The balance of forces between imperialism and socialism has undergone a fundamental change since World War II. The main indication of this change is that the world now has not just one socialist country but a number of socialist countries forming the mighty socialist camp, and that the people who have taken the socialist road now number not two hundred million but a thousand million, or a third of the world's population.

The socialist camp is the outcome of the struggles of the international proletariat and working people. It belongs to the international proletariat and working people as well as to the people of the socialist countries.

The main common demands of the people of the countries in the socialist camp and the international proletariat and working people are that all the Communist and Workers' Parties in the socialist camp should:

Adhere to the Marxist-Leninist line and pursue correct Marxist-Leninist domestic and foreign policies;

Consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat and the worker-peasant alliance led by the proletariat and carry the socialist revolution forward to the end on the economic, political and ideological fronts;

Promote the initiative and creativeness of the broad masses, carry out socialist construction in a planned way, develop production, improve the people's livelihood and strengthen national defence;

Strengthen the unity of the socialist camp on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, and support other socialist countries on the basis of proletarian internationalism;

Oppose the imperialist policies of aggression and war, and defend world peace;

Oppose the anti-Communist, anti-popular and counter-revolutionary policies of the reactionaries of all countries; and

Help the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed classes and nations of the world.

All Communist and Workers' Parties in the socialist camp owe it to their own people and to the international proletariat and working people to fulfil these demands.

By fulfilling these demands the socialist camp will exert a decisive influence on the course of human history.

For this very reason, the imperialists and reactionaries invariably try in a thousand and one ways to influence the domestic and foreign policies of the countries in the socialist camp, to undermine the camp and break up the unity of the socialist countries and particularly the unity of China and the Soviet Union. They invariably try to infiltrate and subvert the socialist countries and even entertain the extravagant hope of destroying the socialist camp.

The question of what is the correct attitude towards the socialist camp is a most important question of principle confronting all Communist and Workers' Parties.

It is under new historical conditions that the Communist and Workers' Parties are now carrying on the task of proletarian internationalist unity and struggle. When only one socialist country existed and when this country was faced with hostility and jeopardized by all the imperialists and reactionaries because it firmly pursued the correct Marxist-Leninist line and policies, the touchstone of proletarian internationalism for every Communist Party was whether or not it resolutely defended the only socialist country. Now there is a socialist camp consisting of thirteen countries, Albania, Bulgaria, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Poland, Rumania, the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. Under these circumstances, the touchstone of proletarian internationalism for every Communist Party is whether or not it resolutely defends the whole of the socialist camp, whether or not it defends the unity of all the countries in the camp on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and whether or not it defends the Marxist-Leninist line and policies which the socialist countries ought to pursue.

If anybody does not pursue the correct Marxist-Leninist line and policies, does not defend the unity of the socialist camp but on the contrary creates tension and splits within it, or even follows the policies of the Yugoslav revisionists, tries to liquidate the socialist camp or helps capitalist countries to attack fraternal socialist countries, then he is betraying the interests of the entire international proletariat and the people of the world.

If anybody, following in the footsteps of others, defends the erroneous opportunist line and policies pursued by a certain socialist country instead of upholding the correct

Marxist-Leninist line and policies which the socialist countries ought to pursue, defends the policy of split instead of upholding the policy of unity, then he is departing from Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

(7) Taking advantage of the situation after World War II, the U.S. imperialists stepped into the shoes of the German, Italian and Japanese fascists, and have been trying to erect a huge world empire such as has never been known before. The strategic objectives of U.S. imperialism have been to grab and dominate the intermediate zone lying between the United States and the socialist camp, put down the revolutions of the oppressed peoples and nations, proceed to destroy the socialist countries, and thus to subject all the peoples and countries of the world, including its allies, to domination and enslavement by U.S. monopoly capital.

Ever since World War II, the U.S. imperialists have been conducting propaganda for war against the Soviet Union and the socialist camp. There are two aspects to this propaganda. While the U.S. imperialists are actually preparing such a war, they also use this propaganda as a smokescreen for their oppression of the American people and for the extension of their aggression against the rest of the capitalist world.

The 1960 Statement points out:

"U.S. imperialism has become the biggest international exploiter."

"The United States is the mainstay of colonialism today."

"U.S. imperialism is the main force of aggression and war."

"International developments in recent years have furnished many new proofs of the fact that U.S. imperialism is the chief bulwark of world reaction and an international gendarme, that it has become an enemy of the peoples of the whole world."

U.S. imperialism is pressing its policies of aggression and war all over the world, but the outcome is bound to be the opposite of that intended — it will only be to hasten the awakening of the people in all countries and to hasten their revolutions.

The U.S. imperialists have thus placed themselves in opposition to the people of the whole world and have become encircled by them. The international proletariat must and can unite all the forces that can be united, make use of the internal contradictions in the enemy camp and establish the broadest united front against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys.

The realistic and correct course is to entrust the fate of the people and of mankind to the unity and struggle of the world proletariat and to the unity and struggle of the people in all countries.

Conversely, to make no distinction between enemies, friends and ourselves and to entrust the fate of the people and of mankind to collaboration with U.S. imperialism is to lead people astray. The events of the last few years have exploded this illusion.

(8) The various types of contradictions in the contemporary world are concentrated in the vast areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America; these are the most vulnerable areas under imperialist rule and the storm-centres of world revolution dealing direct blows at imperialism.

The national democratic revolutionary movement in these areas and the international socialist revolutionary movement are the two great historical currents of our time.

The national democratic revolution in these areas is an important component of the contemporary proletarian world revolution.

The anti-imperialist revolutionary struggles of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America are pounding and undermining the foundations of the rule of imperialism and colonialism, old and new, and are now a mighty force in defence of world peace.

In a sense, therefore, the whole cause of the international proletarian revolution hinges on the outcome of the revolutionary struggles of the people of these areas, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the world's population.

Therefore, the anti-imperialist revolutionary struggle of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America is definitely not merely a matter of regional significance but one of overall importance for the whole cause of proletarian world revolution.

Certain persons now go so far as to deny the great international significance of the anti-imperialist revolutionary struggles of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples and, on the pretext of breaking down the barriers of nationality, colour and geographical location, are trying their best to efface the line of demarcation between oppressed and oppressor nations and between oppressed and oppressor countries and to hold down the revolutionary struggles of the peoples in these areas. In fact, they cater to the needs of imperialism and create a new "theory" to justify the rule of imperialism in

these areas and the promotion of its policies of old and new colonialism. Actually, this "theory" seeks not to break down the barriers of nationality, colour and geographical location but to maintain the rule of the "superior nations" over the oppressed nations. It is only natural that this fraudulent "theory" is rejected by the people in these areas.

The working class in every socialist country and in every capitalist country must truly put into effect the fighting slogans, "Workers of all countries, unite!" and "Workers and oppressed nations of the world, unite!"; it must study the revolutionary experience of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, firmly support their revolutionary actions and regard the cause of their liberation as a most dependable support for itself and as directly in accord with its own interests. This is the only effective way to break down the barriers of nationality, colour and geographical location and this is the only genuine proletarian internationalism.

It is impossible for the working class in the European and American capitalist countries to liberate itself unless it unites with the oppressed nations and unless those nations are liberated. Lenin rightly said,

The revolutionary movement in the advanced countries would actually be a sheer fraud if, in their struggle against capital, the workers of Europe and America were not closely and completely united with the hundreds upon hundreds of millions of "colonial" slaves who are oppressed by capital.¹

¹ Lenin, "The Second Congress of the Communist International", *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1952, Vol. II, Part 2, pp. 472-73.