

Dear Paul,

How are you doing? I wanted to write you a personal note of self-criticism about how you were treated in the OCIC. As you may or may not know I left the NSC of the OCIC last April. Since that time I have been trying to do a summation of my experience, as well as organize other OCIC and ex-OCIC to do so.

I feel that TMLC was treated poorly throughout the history of the OCIC. This was primarily a function of our sectarian line, and our anti-democratic approach to ideological and theoretical struggle. In particular, I think that we really were unprincipled in relationship to the TMLC during the second national conference and later on in the July conference. I feel that my own role at the July conference was branded by a moralistic approach to the struggle against racism, in addition to various ~~xxx~~ sectarian ideological weaknesses.

While I have been devoting the bulk of my efforts to summing up the incorrect line, and pushing forward my theoretical formation around the issues; I did want to make this personal apology to you in particular since a couple of times we struggled and I was not very principled. While I view this as a problem of the OC's line, which systematically corrupted its cadre, all of us in the OCIC do bear individual responsibility for the reasons we united with such an incorrect line. It is in this spirit that the self-criticism is offered.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could give me some feedback on the article that I sent you. This is not a final draft but a beginning for discussion. Could you drop me a note or make a collect call with feedback? Also I am taking a vacation, long awaited, during the month of October into the Southwest. I would very much like to stop in Tucson and meet with you and the other comrades if this is possible.

As for myself, I am trying to regain my bearings on partybuilding. I've become reintegrated into mass work and am doing PATCO support work, and mobilizing for the Sept. 19th solidarity day. I am also trying to get into some serious theoretical work, some comrades and myself are thinking of starting a serious study group on political economy and the present economic crisis. I look forward to this greatly... after the OC experience. In terms of partybuilding work I am trying to help comrades from around the country sum-up the OC experience. That is the reason that I wrote the papers to help people do local summations. I have attended a number of conferences and discussions by the LOM, but do not feel much political unity. I am afraid that I see the LOM comrades making many of the same sectarian errors the OCIC made. The form of the errors is a little different, but basically I think that they are not handling the ~~xxx~~ fact that they are the big fish in the little pond very well. They seem to, like the OCIC, continually want to make the pond smaller (trend) so that they can feel bigger.

At any rate, after a few months of demoralization I feel basically back to my political work. I am particularly impressed with the BASOC, and we are working to build closer political relationships. After the OCIC experience I can appreciate their emphasis on summing up ultra-leftism. I have talked to Charlie K., and a few comrades closer to you a little bit. I am going to establish a ~~xxxxx~~ more formal contact soon.

I have begun to seriously review the theoretical positions of Theoretical Review. Initially I feel that I have a number of differences on methodology, but I am just starting to look at the journal with fresh eyes. My main criticism is that I feel more of a need to have theoretical work define itself by presenting more programmatic alternatives for communists in this period. I realize that you comrades feel that relooking at the legacy of Marxism-Leninism, and particularly Stalinism, is crucial for correct theoretical production. This is true, but I also feel that the line struggle has become somewhat abstract without connecting it up to what the decisive differences will mean for communist strategy and program. Perhaps you would say this is still my Fusionist, pragmatist, legacy? But this is still a key point to me. I feel that as a member of the OCIC we contributed to a lot of heat in our polemics, but very little theoretical clarity, and certainly not a correct path forward. I am looking for theoretical work which not only will clarify struggles of the past, but most importantly clarify the path forward for communists in this period. While perhaps we have differences on this point, I think that we probably have unity that the party is quite a ways away and that we will have a number of years to work together and struggle through our differences. In the spirit of breaking with the sectarian legacy of the OCIC, I look forward to more joint work and comradely struggle in the years to come.

Revolutionary greetings,

Dave Forrest
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PS. As I really study the Theoretical Review, I will try to write you my comments and perceptions.