

restricted circular

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



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Revolutionary Communist League of Britain



INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

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This is the last of an occassional internal bulletin designed to circulate information on the international communist movement, national liberation struggles and the analysis of, and developments within organisations of resistance.

There may be unacknowledged disagreements with positions expressed, and these articles should not be regarded as representing official R.C.L. positions.

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Solidarity Message to Marxist Leninist Party of Germany from the Revolutionary Communist League Britain

To Comrade Peter Borgwardt, International Secretary of Marxist Leninist Party of Germany

Dear Comrade Borgwardt

The RCLB extends its warmest comradely and revolutionary greetings to the MLPD.

Your plan to hold the fifth party congress has generated great interest in our organisation. As you have stated the central task is to define the correct political line in order to further integrate yourselves with the German working class. This objective can only be realised if the entire party's activities are carried out with a 'proletarian mode of thinking'.

We are convinced your congress will be a very successful one and such success will further advance the cause of proletarian internationalism.

Central to the advancement of revolutionary socialism is development of a deeper understanding of Marxism Leninism and Mao Tse Tung Thought. In face of relentless onslaught by the ruling class and their agents we must remain steadfast in upholding and defending the advances of the revolutionary essence of Marxism Leninism.

At this historical juncture the task of providing a correct leadership of the working class is indeed a very complicated one.

Therefore it is pivotal to have a concrete analysis of both the subjective and objective situation nationally and internationally.

We can only achieve success if we are continually summing up our experience in the class struggle and learning the lessons. From this development we must adopt the correct strategy and tactics to deal with the twists and turns of the class struggle.

Over the last decade revolutionary Marxist Leninist forces have had to face an adverse situation. With the collapse of revisionist forces on the world scene this has led to a temporary shift in the balance of forces in favour of the imperialists.

The ruling class claim this collapse proves they have a superior social economic system - capitalism/imperialism. Indeed they may be confident that globally they have completely destroyed socialism. Of course they have no understanding of historical materialism.

The impact of this development has been to weaken the resolve of many comrades and has led to the liquidation of many Marxist Leninist organisations and parties abroad. They have lost all confidence in the masses, failing to understand whatever setbacks they have experienced will be temporary. They fail to grasp the central truth that the masses are the makers of history.

On a global scale the class struggle is gaining momentum. Within the imperialist heartland we have seen fierce struggle between the working class and the ruling class. Racked by continuous economic and social crises the bourgeoisie are having to resort to more repressive policies. This is certainly the case in Britain; allied to this is an ideological offensive by the capitalist class and their agents. National chauvinism and racism have been part of a counter strategy. It is the national minorities, on the whole, who are facing the brunt of the onslaught.

This is a dangerous development as it is laying the foundation for fascism. Comrade Demetrov correctly pointed out that those who fail to oppose the reactionary strategy of the ruling class are in no position to resist the advancement of the most reactionary forces - Fighting great nation chauvinism and fascist ideology is a sacred duty of the Marxist Leninist, otherwise proletarian internationalism has no relevance. For us in Britain the main task is the rebuilding of a Marxist Party of a new type based upon the ideology of the Marxism Leninism and Mao Tse Tung Thought.

Currently there is the beginning of a realignment of the progressive forces in Britain. To advance the revolutionary struggle requires the destruction of social democracy and other types of petty bourgeois ideology.

We welcome your desire to deepen the comradely relationship between our two organisations. The RCLB eagerly awaits the report from the congress.

Once again we salute you on your noble and lofty endeavour.

Fraternally, Dannie Tomlinson-Morrell, Sarah Mudd, on behalf of the RCLB

PERU: A "BEND IN THE ROAD" OR A FORK ?

"We have managed to avoid a takeover by the rebels and make sure that the group's top leaders are imprisoned, but it has been impossible to wipe them out completely." [1] Peruvian President Fujimori's statement is both accurate and incomplete. Until the capture of its leadership in September 1992, Sendero Luminoso was expanding.

The arrest in Lima of Chairman Gonzalo - Abimael Guzman - was not the only blow to the organization. As well as members of the Central Committee and hundreds of other cadre were detained. With the cult of personality that had built up around the genius of Chairman Gonzalo, "with his inextinguishable light, all-powerful Gonzalo Thought who had brought us to this point", decision-making in Sendero Luminoso had been so centralised that with its "head cut-off" it had a disorganizing effect upon the organisation and the number of incidents nationwide dropped markedly, and hundreds of guerrillas surrendered.

Senderistas did reconstitute the organisation's infrastructure and Sendero Luminoso attacks increased in 1993 but not to the previous threatening levels of the 1980s. Government counter-insurgency activities saw a curbing of Sendero Luminoso activity in the Capital, Lima and some sections of Sendero Luminoso wary of expanding the urban front regrouped in the rural hinterland. Attacks on army convoys in Huallaga valley in North Peru show that Sendero Luminoso can still operate effectively in remote jungle areas. From these bases, Senderistas like Oscar Ramirez Duran (alais Feliciano) has threatened a Sendero Luminoso revival.

What has also blunted Sendero Luminoso onwards march was the eruption of two line struggle in the organisation following Guzman's capture. In October 1993, Fujimori announced that there had been a call from within Sendero Luminoso for peace negotiations [2]. The Peruvian government claimed that the call for peace accords originated from Guzman, yet they continued to hold him in complete isolation with no contact with the outside world. Obviously the government promoted capitulation, distributing leaflets over Lima's shantytowns proclaiming "Your leaders have given up, so you should do".

In a speech from the dock, Guzman had said that his capture after fifteen years of armed struggle represented a "bend in the road". To what extent did the call for a peace accord reflect the position of the imprisoned Sendero Luminoso leader? Denied access to the outside world, kept in isolation - it would be prudent to question the authenticity of its authorship. It is impossible to know with certainty the views of Guzman. In a real sense it did not matter. What mattered was that a group of party veterans emerged that promoted a line of "peace conversations to reach a peace agreement, whose application brings with it a conclusion to the war."

The call for the ending of Sendero Luminoso People's War centred mainly in the prisons - *The Prisoners of the Shining Trenches of Combat* as they signed themselves - and found some support amongst militants and sympathisers both in Peru and abroad. The initial argument to "fight for a peace accord" was published in the article "Take Up and Fight for the New Decision and New Definition". It made fundamental assessments on the current situation, internationally and in Peru, and of the ability to maintain and advance People's War.

The founding assumption (briefly expressed) was that there was a general political ebb worldwide, that the conditions were not favourable for a

strategic offensive to capture state power, and that the organisation should strive to maintain struggle in a form appropriate to the age. This meant an end to People's war.

This position was denounced as a Right Opportunist Line by those Sendero Luminoso elements who had issued its intention to remain "the torch bearer of the World Proletarian Revolution" and carry forward with the People's War. The fundamentalist approach was reported in "Reaffirm our Party Basis of Unity and Build the Seizure of Power" issued in February 1994. It reiterated that the organisation "is never paralysed, because it is clear on the road to follow". Internationally, it described a new revolutionary wave gestating and it called to "denounce, condemn and smash the black grouplet that is raising a revisionist and capitulist R.O.L., made up of infiltrators, traitors, capitulators and old revisionists."

Sendero Luminoso inspiration was overtly Maoist but in its application there are obvious divergence.[3] Sendero Luminoso eschews the United Front policy so successfully practiced under Mao's leadership. In Sendero Luminoso politics there is the assumption that in the oppressed nations, armed struggle is the main form of struggle, that a lengthy war, beginning from a position of weakness and gradually developing a position of strength, provides the opportunity for the Party-led People's army to be the main form of mass organisation.

The stress on armed action because of the example of the Chinese Revolution, when the PLA was the seed-machine of revolution, ignores some specifics of that experience: the space to manoeuvre in China, secured base areas, the fragmented reactionary oppositions, the social conditions and historic specificity of imperialism occupation. 'To make revolution' means more than uncritically adopting the template of the Chinese experience: attractive as the Chinese revolutionary warfare provides for would be practitioners, it was not without its setbacks (such as when 90% of the communist forces were defeated before the 1935 Long March was undertaken).

Victory or defeat is not pre-ordained. Maoist People's War is a political campaign reshaping the existing order using politico-military means. A tactical approach to local conditions and exploitation of existing social conflicts and contradictions is made real through human action. Communists should not hinder revolutionary development by adopting a single mode of struggle which could be inappropriate as in the shanty towns where political work takes precedent or building cross-class alliances to further isolate the main enemy of the moment.

Revolutionary struggle is protracted, subject to advance and retreats, twists and turns subject to shifts in class stance and changes in policy - the Chinese revolution illustrates that throughout its course into the 1980s. The arrest of Guzman was such a key junction. It is a duty to strive to maintain the revolutionary struggle even under difficult conditions and in the face of setbacks. But at key junctures, communist must assess, validate and evaluate their actions and perspectives.

Struggle and opposition of different ideas is a constant feature of revolutionary movements. Indeed Mao expounded that, "Class struggle in society inevitably has its reflection inside the Party, and this appears in a concentrated fashion in the form of the two-line struggle within the Party - this is an objective law. the reason why there can be no doubt that class

struggle in society has its reflection in the Party is that our Party does not live in a vacuum, but in a society in which classes exist, and it is possible for bourgeois ideology, the force of old habits and international revisionist trends of thought to affect our Party organisation."

But what should not happen is that every alternative, or difference in policy should be automatically consigned to the level of a two-line struggle. Revolutionary history shows that dependent on the circumstances, negotiation can be carried out and concessions given - Mao warned "There are limits to such concessions, the principle is that they must not damage the fundamental interests of the people." [4]

The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) have concluded that there is no basis for peace negotiations of any kind in Peru and reaffirms unconditional support for the PCP and its People's War. [5] The opportunity to correct a murderous sectarian approach to other progressive Left forces, consolidate its cadre force and strengthen the prospects of broad left advance was rejected by those who only saw capitulation, not opportunity, in the call for negotiations.

The two-line struggle did weaken the organisation but not fatally. What it did was dispell the defeatism of Lima's bourgeoisie who were predicting Sendero Luminoso's victory. That defeatist attitude has evaporated, and the People's War largely restricted to the marginalised areas, hounded by the army. For the moment, the "vanguard theatre of world revolution" has been restricted to the dense jungle of the Andres. Whether Sendero will achieve another high tide or wane into insignificance has still to be settle by the criticism of arms.

Contributed March 1996

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[3] For an earlier discussion on Peruvian Maoism see International Review No.9 Autumn 1990 "The Shining Path of armed struggle?"

A radical hardcore at the National University of San Cristobal de Huamanga located in Ayacucho city, was able to gain control of the rapidly-expanding university administration in the late 1960s and retain it until 1978. Breaking away from the orthodox Peruvian Communist Party it forms - under the leadership of a philosophy professor appointed in 1962, Abimael Guzman - what was the "Communist Party of Peru in the shining path of Mariategu. Hence commonly known as *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path).

It established systematic links with local peasantry, studying their language Quechua, recruiting members, educating them in the vision of the Cultural Revolution. Guzman visited China three times, others through several stays in China (1969-74) recieved ideological and military instruction. At the start of People's War, Sendero numbered at most 180 militants trained by Guzman while the University Personnel director (1971-74),

[4] Selected Works Vol 4 p49

[5] Rally to the Defence of Our Red Flag Flying in Peru, RIM Committee statement of March 1995, Reprinted in, and upon which this account draws heavily upon, issue 21 (October 1995) of A WORLD TO WIN.

Trotskyists had a choice of which 4th International to join, Moscow loyalists had the Prague-based "World Marxist Review" to show their allegiances - but for Maoists, what did they have ?

1960s --- The situation looked ripe for the formation of a new international with China as its logical focal point. In the wake of the Sino-Soviet polemic, newly-emergent anti-revisionist organisations mushroomed. About 27 parties associated themselves with the Communist Party of China in the ideological quarrel - with Albania's PLA the only ruling party to do so. But other important parties - like North Vietnam, North Korea, the Japanese and Indonesian parties - refused to go along with Moscow's anti-Chinese argument without fully endorsing the Maoist stance as had the Burmese, Thai and Malayan parties.

China's ideological allies did not comprise an organised international bloc but maintained bi-lateral ties with the CCP. A relationship more suited to the Chinese argument for equality and non-interference in other parties affairs.

There was an additional problem: what party would a Maoist International recognise ? There were many Maoist groups internationally, and in each country usually several vying for approval and recognition from Beijing . Italy provides a typical example whereby the "official" pro-Chinese PCI(ML) had at least seven rival ML groups and factions claiming a Maoist allegiance.

1970s --- Throughout the early 1970s, there was less impetus from China for the formation of a new international. Theoretical articles dealing with the problems of the communist movement in general largely disappeared, and very little could be taken as organisational guidance for ML organisations. A small number of ML delegations visited China [such as the CPA(ML) and Birch-led CPB(ML)] but no commiques were issued, and the CCP began to mend fences with more independent minded revisionists such as the visit by the PCE led by Santiago Carillo in 1971. Visits by Maoist organisations were easily out-numbered by the visits of bourgeois political personalities [the disgraced Richard Nixon and former Prime Minister Edward Heath to name but two] who were given greater official prominence in China's media.

As the CCP had denounced the concept of a "Soviet camp", and sought to benefit from the decline of the CPSU's hold on revisionist parties, the prospect of creating a smaller, less influential rival international communist organisation diminished. When Mao died in September 1976 over a hundred Maoist organisations telegraphed their sorrow at the loss of the Great Helmsman. In the aftermath of the arrest of the Gang of Four and the publication of the Three Worlds theory - designed to be the strategic line of the pro-China organisations - there was further fragmentation of the Maoist movement into four main trends:

- The RCP of Chile and the USA denounced the CPC in its defense of Mao, the Gang of Four and the Cultural Revolution.
- Those who defended Mao and the Cultural Revolution without endorsing the enhanced status of the Gang of Four.
- The PLA denounced Mao as anti-Marxist and considered the international communist movement as those organisations who adhere to the PLA's 7th Congress report and agreed with Enver Hoxha's attack upon the 1977 Three Worlds Theory.
- Those whose allegiance remained with the CPC led by Hua Guofeng.

The basis for a unified international had evaporated as "a hundred schools of thought contend".

1980s --- As the CPC re-established party-to-party links with revisionist parties the *raison d'etre* of separate maoist organisation was questioned : what happened to the lines of demarcation against modern revisionism ? The early 1980s saw the collapse of seemingly strong ML parties in Canada, the USA and Germany. In the Third world only the Communist Party of the Phillipines flourished and others faded. The suppression in China of mass protest in 1989 further fragmented those nominally pro-Chinese forces.

Any prospect of a Maoist international had fallen by the wayside. The RCP(USA) did sponsor the formation of the RIM based on the journal "A World To Win" which developed as publicists for the struggle of the Peruvian Sendero Luminoso. There was an attempt by Albania to constitute an international that faltered when Albania became engulfed in the general disintegration in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s. A rudimentary attempt survived into the 1990s based on the journal "Unity & Struggle".

1990s --- And now in less favourable times, there are concerted attempts to rally communist forces to an international allegiance. The most active driving forces behind this search for reforming an authoritative international are the PTB [now stressing the contribution of Stalin, and under-playing Mao] and the MLPD [early critics of China's new line]. Both organisations are engaged in informative process of correspondence, the sharing of views and experiences that attract a variety of forces internationally. Both organisations seek to stimulate exchanges and cooperation, and do attract a different constituency. It is not possible to build a new international organisation on the model of the Third International with a leading body and a common discipline for all members. Indeed, the dominance of the CPSU over the Third International and its historic record provides a poor model for the 1990s. It would be a step too far for any regular gathering of international ML organisations to be firmed up into a structural arrangement. The PTB issued proposals for the unification of the International Communist Movement in May 1995 as a means to encourage "a process of theoretical and political unification", whilst the 5th International Conference of ML organisations sponsored by the MLPD in June 1996 "follows the path of gradual ideological and political unification". Unity amongst communist activists is to be welcomed, and our position should be based on the position given by the League speaker at the 1994 Soweto Commemoration:

Internationalism is a key question for revolutionaries. The application of proletarian internationalism breaks out of the corporatist consciousness dominant in the English Left. In its wake it moves one away from a parochial consciousness of the poverty, misery and inequalities of Capitalism. Internationalism incorporates knowledge, the how bourgeois hegemony is exercised. Internationalism is both an act of resistance and affirmation of human solidarity. Proletarian internationalism, if it is to be transformed into an instrument of liberation must be applied in the conditions that confronts us. Departure from this principle has always been linked with the degeneration of communist organisation. As an organisation we uphold internationalism, not the existence of Internationals. We are for support and aid across capitalism's boundaries and against organising other people's struggles. Those guidelines for any anti-imperialist solidarity still hold fast, in the words of the Internationale, there are no saviours from on high.

SPRING 1996

THAILAND: DEMISE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THAILAND

After Vietnam, several observers looked to Thailand as the next domino to fall. But by the mid-1980s it was clear that the revolutionary tide, with the exception of the Philippines, had receded in South East Asia. There was nothing inevitable in the demise of the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT). What did happen was that its weakness came to the fore, and remained unresolved.[1]

May 7 1965 marked the first clash between the government forces and CPT forces. Armed struggle had been declared the proper strategy for revolution in Thailand at the Third Party Congress in 1961. Training to prepare to launch the insurgency had been undertaken in Vietnam, and a jungle HQ established in the North East Region of Thailand in 1962.[2]

This area was seen as susceptible to revolutionary action. It retained a regional identity, culturally distinct with a Thai-Lao orientation. It was politically estranged, a populous but poor region with rural poverty and debt widespread. It was geographically near allies, bordering on Lao and Vietnamese communists had worked amongst Vietnamese refugee groups in the Thai-Isan region. It had a tradition of leftist opposition to Bangkok, and Bangkok officials thought all North-east dissent as communist-inspired rather than "genuine" grievances were quick to call in the military. 'Search and destroy', rather than developmental programmes to address the poverty of the region, was the government's principal response. By 1973, the armed guerrillas were estimated at 3,000 - recruitment escalated by the destruction of the H'Mong tribespeople villages.

The CPT's Maoist leadership took the Chinese experience and attempted to interpret Thai realities imitating the Chinese emphasis on the peasantry and imperialist threat. Thailand was seen as a semi-colony of American imperialism. A judgement understandable given Thai support for the USA in the Vietnam War, politically engaging in an anti-communist crusade at home and militarily active in Vietnam and providing a rear base - rest and recreation - for American combat troops.

However, the CPT neglected the contradictions that were evident in Thai society that differed from those in China. There were contradictions at the top of Thai society in the form of the dominance of a military bureaucratic elite which excluded others from positions - it was a fragmented elite subject to much corruption and nepotism; there was a substantial proportion of the 'rural population' concentrated in local urban areas; and the CPT avoided urban struggle amidst the four million Thais in the true power centre and locus of the kingdom, its capital, Bangkok. (Partly because of the urban slaughter in Shanghai in 1927 and Indonesia in 1965.) The factors that contributed to strains and dissatisfaction within the body politic were a growing population, accelerating urbanization with decline in the quality of life, an overstretched social services, the substantial growth in workers in export-orientated industry and the dramatic expansion of students numbers when the system's ability to absorb them was declining. [3]

The CPT fought its rural armed struggle in the the marginalised areas unable, and unprepared to penetrate the urban heartland of the kingdom. Thus it was ill prepared to benefit from the radicalising aftermath of both the wave of student protests in 1973 which brought down the regime of premier Thanom

Kittikachorn and the military coup of October 1976. Then some 2000 Thai students took to the hills to join the CPT.

There were attempts to widen the social cleavages and build a oppositional base. The *Voice of the People of Thailand* - the CPT's clandestine radio station that had operated since the early 1960s - called increasingly for a united front "to oppose the fascist warlord clique, the US imperialist lackeys." It focused on the need of "the people who love democracy and justice" to unite against "the common enemy" the government. The repressive nature of the government was met with wide-spread opposition and popular dissatisfaction. United Front organisations were given a new lease of life but the focus of CPT operations remained its armed action. As one commentator remarked, in the CPT's historical sketch "again and again returns to the theme of armed struggle, as if this is the only organisational purpose of movement and party." [4]

This military emphasis brought some results but there were always evident weaknesses in the strategy. There was little evidence that the CPT could surmount the geographical obstacles to support and unify its different theatres of operations. There was dissent of Thai Muslims in the southern province of the kingdom which came under the CPT's tutelage in 1977, but with which there was no co-ordination or liason at an operational level. As importantly, was the failure to widen the area of operations outside of the north and north-east strongholds on the Thai border regions. There was no inward progress to the lowland population to challenge either politically or militarily at the central core of the kingdom. But the true achilles heel was that internal sources were incapable of meeting minimum logistics needs. There was a dependency on external sources of weaponry which compromised the CPT's ability to sustain and accelerated the armed struggle.

This dependency became more acute with Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Cambodia in December 1978. The dilemma that faced the CPT leadership (dominated by Sino-Thais) and a membership (influenced by Laotian and Vietnamese training) was whether to support one side in the Sino-Vietnamese dispute, or attempt to stand aloof and hope events would resolve themselves. The dispute caused dislocation of base areas and disruption of supply lines, more damaging it was the ideological issues that tore the party apart embroiled in internal disputes over strategic approach.

The CPT suffered from the geostrategic considerations of its former supporters. The Vietnamese party had a history of seeking to influence the CPT. It had campaigned to deal directly with the CPT's northeast party structure, which contained Hanoi-trained cadre, rather than the Party Centre. The CPT had rejected suggestions that the Pathlet Lao operate with the CPT units inside Thailand. Supplies to the CPT were regulated according to its pronouncements on the Sino-Vietnamese dispute.

In January 1979 a substantial blow was delivered by the Lao ultimatum for CPT units to leave their bases on the Lao-Thai border, where more than a third of their operations originated. On July 1979, Yunnan-based *Voice of the People of Thailand* radio station - which served as the principal means for dissemination of party directives and theory since 1963 - announced it was temporarily going off the air. Apparently a victim of Beijing's desire for better relations with Thailand as they both faced down Vietnamese aggression.

Internal splits saw pro-Vietnamese members form a rival communist organisation *Pak Nai* which resulted in armed clashes with forces loyal to the CPT. Disorientation within the leadership saw several high ranking CPT members defect to the Bangkok government. Before VOPT was taken off air, it had, in June 1979, carried an offer of a united front to the government to fight against "threats from Vietnam" but whether this was seriously entertained as a strategic move by the CPT is unclear; certainly Bangkok did not take it as a viable option.

Reevaluating progress, a group emerged that argued that the CPT should abandon a crude analysis of Mao's using the countryside to encircle the cities and adopted what was seen as the successful Vietnamese strategy of a fusion of military and political, urban and rural, actions to advance the revolution.

The long delayed Fourth Party Congress in 1982 occurred against a background of counter-insurgency offensive, the loss of the North East jungle HQ and principal base area in the Khaokhor mountains. The dissidents pushed for modification to the party's classic Maoist orientation.

This would have involved a strategic approach which called for three zones of operations. The use of united front tactics in Bangkok, building up an infrastructure in the lowland rural areas, and the maintenance of the main CPT strike force in the northern jungles. Each would be equally important, with independent command HQ for policy and tactical decision making. The Central organs would issue only overall policy guidance.

The Old Guard reportedly beat off the challenge by two votes. Splits in the ranks became more pronounced. The disillusionment of the membership intensified under the government's hearts-and-minds counter-insurgency programme under Premier Prem Tinsulanonda. It addressed socio-economic concerns, welcoming defectors not as prisoners of war but as returning to the fold, allowed to resume normal lives with minimal security precautions. This approach had worked before with the return of a more moderate, but militarily dominated, regime in October 1977 led by Thai supreme commander Chamanand, several hundred students returned home under an official promise of amnesty. The trickle of defectors became a hemorrhage. The government maintained its armed pressure against the CPT: the locally armed militia had grown to 13,000 men by 1981, outnumbering the CPT's estimated armed strength of 12,500. The militias were reinforced by the Thai army. The "communist threat" was contained.

By 1983 the CPT had, for all practical purposes become a nuisance rather than a threat. A position paper dated July 1984 was distributed under the title of "Four Strategic Zones and Five Battle Areas" but it was too late to rebuild the party organisations, although government "mopping up operations" continued throughout the 1980s.

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Revolutionary Greetings !

We regret we cannot be present today but send internationalist greetings for the event.

The Revolutionary Communist League express its solidarity with your laudable and lofty endeavours for Pan Africanism, the guiding theme that led the forward march for national independence in earlier decades. And today Pan Africanism as a philosophy has still great resonance amongst the oppressed African masses. Essentially Pan Africanism as a revolutionary philosophy has been rooted in the historical struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism. It seeks to bring about the greater unity of the African people both on the continent and in the diaspora. Under the banner of Pan-Africanism, the national independence movements had gained national independence.

President Nkrumah was one of the foremost exponents of Pan-Africanism. He was a leader who recognised the importance of African unity and independence. As a visionary leader his was a strong expousal of Pan-Africanism as a revolutionary ideal to deal with the legacy of colonialism. For President Nkrumah, these ideals were not confined to the African continent. He recognised that Pan-Africanism has to encompass those Africans on the continent and those abroad - this was key to Pan-Africanism. To demonstrate his firm commitment to Pan-Africanism, Ghana was to become the base for the national independence movement in Africa. He provided political aswell as material support which enable these force to aid their political goals.

President Nkrumah recognised that Ghana's independence would be meaningless if it was not linked to the continent wide struggle. Pan-Africanism was not about "flag independence". It meant for Nkrumah the mobilisation of the human and material resources for the greater social upliftment of the poor masses. As an important political thinker Nkrumah understood that with the inevitable defeat of colonialism, new forms of oppression would ensue. This he expounded in his book 'Neo-Colonialism, the highest stage of imperialism'. Nkrumah recognised in his book on class struggle that Pan-Africanism has to be rooted in marxist social categories. His vision was to unite Africa under scientific socialism, but this concept of scientific socialism has to be rooted in the African reality. It is no wonder the hand of imperialism could be discerned in the military coup which deposed Nkrumah in 1966.

As we approach the twenieth-first century and the beginning of a new millennium, Pan Africanism has to redefine Pan-Africanism more clearly. Africa today is saddled with mass foreign debt accompanied by massive transfer of capital flow from Africa to services this debt. African development has remained stunted wracked by famine, social upheaval and civil wars that cost millions of lives.

Like yester year, Pan-Africanism and revolutionary socialism has to be top of the African political agenda.

The Revolutionary Communist League proclaims its solidarity for those who struggle for an Africa united and free !