

June 6, 1979

STEERING COMMITTEE - OCIC

Comrades,

Your letter of May 15 is a fine example of "diplomatic intrigue" attempting to pass itself off as "principled struggle". The seeds of the future party and its capacity to conduct rigorous inner-party struggle must be cultivated in this pre party period. Your letter reeks with liberalism and innuendo and reflects badly on your line and orientation. The real political and ideological line differences are obscured, which only serves to obstruct the dialectic of unity-struggle-higher unity.

There are times for tactfulness and times to be extremely blunt and straightforward. The time for tact and patient persuasion is drawing to a close and being replaced by conspicuous struggle and rigorous debate. Our differences in line are maturing and taking on a deeper, more all-sided character. Although it is true that not all line differences necessarily develop into 2-line struggles, our differences are clearly shaping up in that direction, which will probably define and characterize our movement for some time to come.

Your sentimental pretense for "unity" should be dispensed with. I suggest we replace it with the confidence that our movement will be reunited, in the wake of this 2 line struggle, on a higher and stronger level. That is, as the incorrect party building line becomes widely identified and discredited. Of course, not all the individual cadre will make it through this process. There will be some who take a diehard position and refuse to break with the incorrect line even after it has become thoroughly discredited. Their opportunism will be consolidated possibly because they have "invested" too much in the incorrect line's "construction", etc. Of course, I believe this possibility applies to the fusion/OCIC line and I assume you comrades believe it applies to the rectification/Clubs line. In any case, time, struggle, and practice will determine which line is correct and our movement will undoubtedly grow and advance in the course of this struggle. There is no room here for sentimentality, the future of the U.S. Marxist Leninist movement is at stake.

A turning point in our struggle relations was marked by Clay Newlin's public attack (April 4) on our line and our class standpoint (i.e. the charge that our differences with the OCIC are not based on principled concern for the direction of the party building movement, but rather on a narrow, circle warfare mentality). The line struggle has entered a new stage - with new characteristics, new alignment of forces; and new methods of struggle. You comrades should face this fact squarely - or if you already have, at least be more straightforward in admitting it.

Our substantial differences on party building line have become compounded recently by the emergence of a sectarian deviation. And a certain element of antagonism and distrust has therefore been injected. I am convinced that this sectarian atmosphere does not inherently flow from our differences on party building line. But rather it is principally rooted ideologically in conspicuous tendencies toward opportunism and liberalism in the manner in which the line struggle gets conducted. I would locate the main source of this sectarian deviation within the center of the OCIC process. Despite your official assertions to the contrary, the OCIC's sectarian line is already beginning to paralyze your rank and file cadre and their capacity to interact fully with the political debate over party building line. In particular, those who are less developed politically and theoretically are the sharpest reflection of the essentially splitting effect of the new line you have adopted and are presently consolidating.

I dare say comrades, your polite and diplomatic letter to me is a carefully calculated implementation of the OCIC's new sectarian line. Through the innuendos, a serious charge is being labeled against me in attempts, I suspect, to discredit me politically in the eyes of your rank and file cadre throughout the country. Let me take the liberty to restate more frankly your charges against me so we can save your cadre the trouble of "reading between the lines".

Apparently, I am engaged in intrigue to split and wreck the OCIC in an unprincipled and opportunist fashion. Apparently, I practice liberalism and dishonesty in concealing my differences with the OCIC in my dealings with its "elected leadership" and "authorized representatives", while scurrying around behind their backs. Apparently, I have managed to disguise my questionable motives behind false posturing for "unity" and "principled struggle". Apparently your steering committee is gravely disappointed and shocked at my political and ideological degeneration since previously you held some high hopes at the possible contributions I might have made to the party building movement. However, you have apparently decided to extend to me a "warning" in hopes that I might begin to correct my practice...therefore your letter states sarcastically that you are "certain" (sic) that I have "no desire to undermine" the OCIC's "unity".

First of all, let me plead guilty to one charge - I presently have every intention of undermining the OCIC's "unity"! Because I am convinced that it is united upon, and consolidating at its center, an incorrect party building line, compounded recently with a sectarian deviation. Although I have never agreed with the "fusion" line and orientation "associated with" the OCIC, in the past, my assessment was that the line was not yet consolidated at the center. Therefore, I attempted to alter the line and direction of the OCIC process through numerous consultations and struggles with leading and active OCIC cadre over the past two years or so. While not hiding my basic differences, the struggle aspect was given secondary stress compared to the aspect of unity, cooperation and interpenetration of party building efforts.

But as I mentioned above, that stage has come to an end. I am now convinced that the OCIC's incorrect line has become thoroughly consolidated at the center (principally PWOC) in conscious opposition to many of mine and other comrades criticisms (i.e. rectification line). In my experience, the OCIC center has never adequately refuted my criticisms through rigorous struggle, but rather have tended to

dismiss or reject them or else have made some superficial alteration in line as some type of "concession" to the criticisms. This is precisely the kind of sloppy theoretical struggle a Marxist Leninist party could never stand upon and it is the basis for my opinion that opportunism is increasingly characterizing the OCIC line and center.

In face of this development, informal consultations, protracted struggle, and patient persuasion must now be replaced by open polemic and more conspicuous division and polarization on line. The principal aspect of our relations will now be "differences" which will predominate over "unities". Since we are not engaged in a mere "academic debate", naturally we will expect there be more tension, a "cooling" of more all sided relations and a bit more formality in our relations. But this is a natural phenomena accompanying line struggle and qualitatively distinct from a sectarian deviation. Of course, the secondary aspect of unity and joint efforts will still continue. Unfortunately, however, as mentioned earlier, I think that the sectarian deviation within the OCIC will generally tend to limit and discourage both the quality and quantity of our contact and interaction.

Given these new development then, I am no longer confident that the OCIC "as a process" can be won over to surrendering its incorrect party building line. Consequently, in my opinion, the advanced OCIC cadre will have to "break with" the line and process in the course of the struggle. Recent events make me more convinced than ever.

I offer this analysis, that our line struggle has objectively entered a new stage, as a more adequate explanation of my changing attitudes and practices toward the OCIC.

So much for the basis of my differences with your line. However, your letter to me stresses principally the method of my struggle with the OCIC, implying it is marked by liberalism and opportunism. To this charge I plead "not guilty".

However, in beginning my defense, I would like to first compliment you on your clever and demagogic use of the term "privately" in describing the manner of my political struggle with the OCIC.

How "privately" could mean that I have conducted numerous, informal discussions and struggles with OCIC comrades; and have not taken to writing manifestos, articles and open letters on my differences with your line and process. This sense of "privately" would be a fairly accurate description of my previous struggle with the OCIC.

But the use of "privately" in your letter has a distinct connotation meaning sneaky and unprincipled intrigue. This charge I reject as a gross distortion of my political practice and interaction with OCIC cadre. If your steering committee is anywhere near successful in getting over with this crude caricature, without meeting widespread and stiff protest from within your own ranks, then your process has degenerated further and more rapidly than I had expected it would.

I will state briefly a few related points, then "rest my case":

1. I dare say, your tone of "surprise" is a surprise to me! I believe I have never given any OCIC cadre the indication that I intended to join the OCIC. And I have always linked that decision with my disagreement and lack of confidence in the line and direction of the OCIC process.

2. I have had, on more than a half dozen occasions, extended and explicit discussions with Clay Newlin always centering on our differences over fusion, party building approach, methodology, etc. If this is not direct, straight forward and sustained struggle with the leading representative of the OCIC, then what is? Of course, you comrades may argue that this "does not count" since Newlin was wearing his "PWOC hat". But that would be the height of ridiculous "formalism", undeserving of a serious response.

More recently:

3. As early as November 1978 I explicitly discussed with Clay Newlin my basic disagreements with the OCIC formulation of "ideological center" and its approach to forging it. Due to our line differences on party building I said that we had no intention of joining the OCIC despite our split with Jack Smith.

4. Again in January 1979, Tyre Scott and I had an extremely frank and extended exchange of views on a number of matters. This included my critique of the guiding line of the OCIC (ideologically, politically and organizationally) and an explicit restatement that we did not intend to join the OCIC. At this meeting I advanced the observation that sectarianism was increasingly characterizing the line and practice of the OCIC. Tyre is an "authorized representative" of your committee. I assume he reported back my "differences" to you all.

5. As late as February and March 1979 the OCIC is still posing the suspenseful question - will the Clubs network join OCIC or not? The punch line of course is - if they don't it is proof of their sectarianism. Needless to say I find your official posturing a bit suspicious, since I knew your steering committee had the answer to that question months earlier! Apparently a "trap" of sorts is being set for "dramatic affect".

6. The big day seems to be April 4th in Oakland. The morning before Clay Newlin and I had what may prove to be our last "informal" meeting. Once again we exchanged views and criticisms on party building line and practice. I criticized the growing sectarianism of the OCIC. He described our line as bankrupt and sectarian. We both agreed that our struggle in this form reached a deadlock and it can only be resolved in a broader arena, which he intended to launch into the following evening in his public speech. Our meeting ends with Newlin's confident prediction that the rectification party building line and our sectarian practice will be exposed and routed easily in public debate before the communist movement. And my rejoinder that it may prove to be a bit "rougher going" than he thinks. We part in a civilized manner, but clearly in mutual recognition that our line struggle was entering a new stage.

7. On the night of April 4 itself when Newlin opened up the OCIC attack on our line, I was one of the first people to stand up and "publicly" challenge it.

8. Given all this, I must conclude your May 15 letter to me was carefully written more to "create an affect" as opposed to communicate any substantive criticism. I find it curious indeed that your letter says, "It has come to our attention that you have criticisms of the line...expressed by our chairman in a speech April". Come now comrades, you really can't be serious about such nonsense!

9. A week or so later, I arrived in Detroit for the Point 18 Conference. I proceeded immediately to attempt to engage in struggle over the line and approach of Clay Newlin's April 4 speech. Only to discover that leading comrades in DML0 were not yet aware that Newlin had given the speech, much less the content of it.

Consequently, they were not in a position to struggle over the significance of the April 4 speech and the charges brought out in it. Interesting enough, these comrades included Pat Frey a member of your steering committee. If the two of us did not get to discuss my criticisms of the OCIC's line and sectarianism the very first night we met, it was due more to the fact that there was a sore lack of coordination within your own committee and not because I did not broach the struggle openly.

10. In light of this situation, I believe I exercised principled restraint over the next couple of days in choosing not to open up this particular struggle. Thereby giving Clay Newlin a chance to inform and unite the OCIC regional forces around the substance of the steering committee's attack on the "rectification line" and the Club network. I believe this was fully accomplished by the Sunday morning OCIC meeting after the Point 18 conference. At that point, I began more actively to initiate meetings with various OCIC forces in the midwest. I would contend that without my initiation no such political interaction and struggle would have taken place. Your cadre were incredibly reticent and cautious in their dealings with me after the Sunday meeting. At any rate, even the best of your cadre engaged in struggle with me only after I went to incredible lengths to create the conditions to do so. All the rhetoric about "principled" Marxist Leninism struggle aside, by even bourgeois liberal standards the treatment I received in my relations with some OCIC forces in the midwest could generally be termed inconsiderate and rude. Needless to say, in the wake of this experience, my patience runs thin when confronted with your extraordinarily "polite" and supposedly "unity" letter of May 15. From my point of view, I have far more to be upset by my midwest experience than you do. The cadre under the influence of your line generally displayed liberalism and a sectarian complacency in their attitude and openness toward struggle over our differences.

11. Soon afterwards I went to L.A. and initiated a meeting with representatives of the local OCIC. (I assume these comrades are "authorized", "official", and "elected" representatives.) Despite some confusion about agenda, the meeting allowed me to present a systematic critique of the OCIC's party building line and growing sectarian deviation. Significantly, these comrades also give the indication that they are not fully clear on the content and significance of Newlin's April 4 speech and are not prepared to struggle over it.

Comrades, if we are to usher in a new stage in our struggle over party building line, we must do so decisively. You can not have it both ways - the method, approach, and forms of struggle are now different.

But returning to the farce we are playing out here...

Comrades, are these the political activities of mine which have "come to your attention?" Are these the "private" discussions in which I attempted to avoid your "authorized representatives"? If so, it seems to me that in fact it is your "authorized representatives" who have been avoiding each other. The absence of their joint consultation must more accurately account for your "surprise" at my activities.

I admit that my activities have been "private" in the sense of informal meetings. But I reject the innuendo (accusation) that they have been "private" in the sense of secret, unprincipled intrigue and liberalism. In fact, some of the most discouraging and insidious liberalism I have ever encountered has been in some of my dealings with OCIC forces!

Comrades, I strongly suggest that you put a stop to this "diplomatic" nonsense immediately. It is no way to forge "party spirit", much less a Leninist party capable of sustaining rigorous inner party struggle over substantial line differences. I intend and look forward to having future struggle and interaction with your committee in defense of my political views on party building, etc. However, this is the last time I intend to struggle with you in defense of my general practice, method and approach to struggle with the OCIC. I am dead serious about this. Therefore, I ask that you please spare me any response to this letter. I have neither the time nor the inclination to extend this "diplomatic farce" beyond the point it has already reached.

In struggle,

*Bruce Accia*

P.S. I have written jointly with other comrades a more extensive critique of the New April 4 speech. It is presently being distributed by the Clubs entitled, "Circle Warfare in our Trend - Who is responsible?"

I also accept your generous and gracious offer to xerox this letter and distribute it to various OCIC groups. But please, no RSVP, thank you.  
Yours truly...