

New Year Statement from Struggle Sessions

JANUARY 12, 2019

STRUGGLESSESSIONS

We are a new and growing theoretical journal dedicated firmly to the struggle for a correct ideological grasp of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. We enter 2019 confidently on this basis, taking up our modest post in the world proletarian revolution which soars ever higher in the age of strategic offensive!

We reiterate the truth that imperialism, fascism, and all reaction are paper tigers. Tactically these tigers can and do provoke fear; they are dangerous—but strategically they are weak and weakening still, primed to be ripped to pieces by the hands of the angry masses. We reaffirm that the principal contradiction of the world today is that between imperialism and the oppressed nations. With this understanding we issue our utmost solidarity to the International Communist Movement as it struggles for ideological unity on the basis of Maoism. Latin America stands at the forefront of this ideological struggle—a struggle which informs our political line and approach greatly. Following this, we extend the greatest honor to the People’s War in Peru and the struggles led by Maoists in Brazil which fill us with optimism and revolutionary fervor.

The principal task of all revolutionaries in countries without a Communist Party is to constitute or reconstitute their Communist Parties on the basis of MLM. Following this, their task is the initiation of Protracted People’s War, a task universally applicable to every country. The task at hand for all countries follows the line of People’s War until Communism. Our journal must humbly situate itself in this interest. We support and defend the effort to reconstitute the Communist Party of the United States—the country in which we live. In this the role of theory cannot be understated: our job is of importance and we must do it well.

Theory must always be sharpened, it must not be left to accumulate rust or sit tucked away for the educated and the elite. Theory must not posture or consider itself inanimate; it must not confine itself to telling people what they already know in a different way. It must rise to the task of answering the burning questions of our times with merciless scientific precision. It must not be concerned with appeasing populist ideas, which would lead one down the road of ideological surrender. It must not slip into the unprincipled peace of fearing ideological confrontation, which would negate class struggle in the theoretical sphere. We make no apology to fighting tooth and nail in the theoretical trench of combat. We are not writers; we are soldiers who write, soldiers in service of a cause.

Our journal welcomes and promotes ideological struggle, be it in the form of theoretical papers, polemics or varying rivaling positions. We are a nationwide

project which welcomes guest writers and contributors, including those who may not unite with our own position. It is important to hear the views of today and to organize debate on these views—if our journal can accomplish this we have met our immediate aims. This does not imply a concession to revisionism but celebrates the struggle of two-lines and the ability of the left to impose itself upon the right. We will not give platform to reaction or revisionism. In this spirit we are open to criticism and encourage critical engagement with our published material.

According to *A Basic Understanding of the Communist Party of China*—an essential text by the revolutionaries of the 1970s in China which was seized off the presses and banned by the revisionists who carried out their black coup against the revolution—criticism and self-criticism must be understood as such:

“To correctly carry out criticism and self-criticism, we must first conscientiously apply the principle of ‘unity-criticism-unity.’ This means that we must start from the desire for unity and make a clear distinction between true and false, through criticism and struggle, and on this new basis, arrive at a new unity.”

This desire for unity requires struggle to accomplish its goal. Struggle takes on the principal aspect during criticism at most times, as it is the method for separating the true from the false. This position clearly demarcates criticism from the bourgeois methods of slander and badmouthing, methods which are passed off by opportunists as criticism. Much talk takes place about our journal which does not fit the criteria of criticism but that of opportunism, consequently much of this is not made available to our editorial board, it is—instead of being presented and articulated clearly and directly to us—tucked away in the annals of social media. We wish to encourage our would-be critics, if they actually desire unity, to struggle with us directly. Do not be cowardly with your theory, if it is worth the time to rant about it must certainly be worth engaging with officially! Our email is made available on our website for anyone of any theoretical opinion to contact us. Our position is clear: we wish to unite all who can be united with on the ideological basis of MLM. We insist on carrying this out in a mature and organized manner.

Oppose Social Media Worship

Just because it is posted on the internet does not make it true, even if it appeals to one's emotional condition. We challenge all of our readers to struggle for the truth, to be ruthless critics of all things in existence, to interrogate presented positions, and to not take positions causally. The method of establishing the truth is Marxism—that is, dialectical and historical materialism. Positions should be based on reality, with verifiable facts and proof. We oppose the “hot takes” method of coming to a position which is a cultural byproduct of social media politicization.

The best cure for the bad habits engendered by social media politics is to get out into the streets, to join alongside the masses in the fight for Communism! Marxists have always prescribed this against what Mao called reading too many books. Communists must always condemn talking nonsense:

“Talking nonsense solves no problems, as everyone knows, so why is it unjust to deprive you of the right to speak? Quite a few comrades always keep their eyes shut and talk nonsense, and for a Communist that is disgraceful”

Mao explained the culturally backward peasants as having a tendency to believe whatever they read in books, for us today this comes in the form of the culturally backward believing whatever their friends on the internet say, no proof needed.

So what of the burning issues?

With the near hegemony of postmodernism and its mutated spawns, many culturally backward ideas are imported as “common sense.” Many of the issues that activists, workers, and the masses find concerning are not new, while some issues and contradictions are new, and there are new distortions and imports to attempt to understand them. For these matters it is more crucial than ever that we revisit the foundational texts of our ideology, using the best teachers of Marxism to form a framework with which we analyze all living issues.

The most important realm of theory which we must engage with today is the character of the vanguard Party: how it is to be understood and adapted to our specific conditions. The question of the Party is central to other burning questions, like the national and colonial question, the question of the women's struggle, the question of the military line, and the question of the united front.

New conditions and new issues presenting themselves require a living theory; this does not mean that we jettison the basis of theoretical formulation, or the formulas presented to us by the great teachers Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and Gonzalo. We revolutionaries are well equipped with a historical wealth of evidence and analysis, which we must not come to view as antiquated.

Opportunists wish to spread cynicism, view ideological struggle as sectarianism, and posit adherence to the classics as dogmatism. Ironically, these types always succumb to their own sectarianism—the sectarianism of demanding that all adhere to “multi-tendency” approaches. They attack anyone who on the basis of Marxism rejects their eclectic grab-bag approach to bargain-basement politics. They also cling to their unique form of dogmatism, for them the sacred tenants of their imports to Marxism are now common sense, to question these (question and interrogation are methods of struggling for the truth!) is unforgivably backward and a deviation from eclectic, but also brittle and unyielding, cultural-political standards—the person who through critical engagement challenges or opposes their dogma is now hopelessly backward. As they center their pet projects and play favoritism among a minutia of society they come into sharp disagreement with Marxism, finding themselves in irreconcilable contradiction with it, so they just avoid all writing on the matter and pretend that Marxism means whatever they like, means whatever appeals to their sub-culture or favorite group.

Our approach and our goals must work in unison

We wish to defend and spread MLM theory to both those who have already grasp the basics of Maoism, thus sharpening their grasp, as well as to new audiences of

those who have not yet come to MLM. This cannot be done without precise terms and fleshed out arguments; it cannot be done casually from isolated individuals. By organizing the views and positions of our authors we can present our theories in a principled manner.

Revisionism is the main enemy of the Communist movement and theory combats revisionism in two ways: first, we must attack the theoretical positions of the revisionists, and secondly, we must prevent the further spread of revisionism by redeeming those affected by it. We do this with political education. Our journal must combat and educate, defeat and convert, destroy and create.

On the coming year

We have a duty to improve and expand our work, to increase the number of writers, researchers, editors, analysts and visual artists, and to address economic and cultural issues. We must begin—always through destruction and combat—to establish red cultural projects and promote Maoism in the cultural sphere. We must increase circulation by spreading the online articles far and wide, as well as developing our journal in print and distributing it widely. Our readers and supporters can help with the project and are encouraged to contact us directly to discuss how. We must also train new comrades to carry out our work and recruit those capable without haste.

As internationalists, we must develop and recruit capable translators who can translate our work into as many languages as possible, inviting comrades of the world to contend with our work. English as the international language is a sad consequence of imperialist domination; while our English language articles can and do reach people all over the world, theory which speaks best speaks in the language of the people.

We must sharpen our theory and our productivity; we must never cut corners or relent. These are our goals. No revolutionary publication can exist without support,

defense, and usefulness. If you find our work useful, then we encourage donating some time to the project, giving criticism and feedback, defending what you agree with publicly and, most importantly, putting this theory into practice.

It is not enough to simply agree with a line, the line must be carried out in practice! This is our chief concern: what we publish must be useful to the practice of those who wish to see Communism. Take our theoretical articles; use them in your organizing work for 2019 in the forward march of the international proletarian world revolution!

-Struggle Sessions, Editorial Board, 2019

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