

3 August 1978

Milwaukee Alliance
Box 12029
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Comrades:

This is to reply to your communications of May 10 and July 7, 1978.

In our view your first letter asks the Steering Committee to take a position on the correctness of the recent split in your organization. For a number of reasons we do not feel that we are in a position to do so. First, we have only had the opportunity to study your interpretation of the differences that led to the split; the position of the Milwaukee Socialist Union only arrived a few days ago. Second, while it would appear that there are important differences in principle between the MA and the MSU, a thorough investigation would be required in order to determine whether the MA provided a context for struggling to resolve these differences or not; we do not have the resources to devote to such an investigation at this time. Finally, the conference that formed the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center set forth precise tasks for that body and directed that the Steering Committee see that those tasks were taken up. Nowhere in that mandate is there any implication that we should become involved in resolving contradictions that develop in member organizations. Rather, our task is to create the conditions where the obstacles facing the anti-"left" tendency can be overcome on a national basis. It is our intention to devote ourselves to this effort.

In your July 7 letter you raise several questions about the proposed conferences on Point #18. First, you recommend that we invite PUL to present its arguments on why the question of the main enemy of the world's peoples should not be a line of demarcation for anti-"lefts." After discussion, we have concluded that such an invitation should not be made. While on the surface PUL does hold a similar position to some members of the OC on the question of Point #18 as a demarcation, in reality the basis of its position is quite different. The bulk of the forces inside the OC are primarily concerned with the question of what lines of demarcation must be drawn in order to consolidate an anti-"left" tendency with the maximum potential to take up the struggle against ultra-leftism. PUL is also interested in this question but from a different motivation; PUL desires to gain a hearing for its "main blow against the Soviet Union" thesis among the anti-"lefts." Thus while there is a semblance of unity between the views of some OC members and PUL, a deeper examination clearly demonstrates two distinct positions. To blur the lines between them would do justice to neither and could not lead to developing clarity amongst our forces. It is our position that the conferences around Point #18 should concentrate on resolving the differences internal to the OC, leaving the OC's divergence with PUL to be addressed in a different context. We have, however, decided to invite PUL to send observers to the conference on the East Coast.

On the question of individuals and organizations attending conferences outside their particular region, we agree that this might be beneficial. We will be working out a procedure so that this can be done without at the same time destroying the representative character of the conferences or imposing on the sponsoring groups.

I hope that this letter adequately responds to your communications. If you have further questions or desire to discuss these points further, please do not hesitate to write again. If necessary it would also be possible to arrange a meeting.

For the Steering Committee

Comradely,

Clay Kurland