

November 21, 1979

Dear Comrade,

The Regional Coordinating Committee of the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center and the Boston Club of the National Network of Marxist-Leninist Clubs would like to invite your participation in the upcoming jointly-sponsored forum on the subject of "What are the requirements for a genuine, common party-building effort for our tendency, and how do we build such an effort?" We urge you to attend what we hope will be an important and clarifying event for the party-building movement in Boston and New England.

The forum will be held December 15, at the Group School, 345 Franklin St., Cambridge (in Central Square). It will begin at 2:00 sharp; we urge all interested to arrive at 1:30.

The evening's forum will consist of presentations on the topic questions by John Frampton of the OCIC Steering Committee, and Tim Patterson of the NNMLC National Leadership Committee.

The speakers will be questioned by a panel of comrades from the Boston party-building movement, whose challenges to the speakers will be designed to permit maximum clarity and sharpness, and to draw out the speakers' arguments. The panel will include two representatives chosen by the OCIC, two chosen by the Boston Club, and two agreed upon jointly by both, for a total of six.

To maximize your participation in this event, we suggest you prepare by reading a number of documents that the speakers have suggested. Essential documents, as well as some supplemental materials, are laid out in the enclosed reading list, with brief statements from both sides on their significance.

This is not a public forum. You may invite individuals who consciously identify with the politics of the anti-revisionist, anti-left tendency and who agree with the importance of party-building.

We will ask a donation of \$3.00 at the door (voluntary for unemployed and low-income), and will provide child care.

We hope you will attend this event and through your participation help us to collectively assess the question of building a common party-building effort in our trend.

Solidarity,

Regional Coordinating Committee, OCIC
Boston Club, NNMLC

List of Readings

In order to facilitate preparation for this forum, the Regional OC and the Boston Club are jointly making the following documents available. The first three pairs of documents are seen as having the highest priority and the greatest relevance to the subject of the upcoming forum; the remaining documents are also recommended, although they are seen as having a lower priority. (Costs of documents are in parentheses.)

Main Readings

- (1) "The OC's First Year" (15 pp., 45¢), and
"The OC's First Year: An Alternative View" (17 pp., 50¢)
- (2) Selections from Developing the Subjective Factor (20 pp., 35¢), and
Organizer articles in response, from 7/79 and 10/79 (4 pp., 15¢)
- (3) "Draft Plan for a Leading Ideological Center" (16 pp., 50¢), and
"Critique of the OC's Draft Plan" by the editorial board of the
journal "Rectification" (about 20 pp., 60¢)

Other Materials

- (4) Exchange on the Clubs' split with the Guardian staff (Organizer
article; letter from Irwin Silber and Fran Beal to PWOC; letter from
PWOC to Silber/Beal) (17 pp., 50¢)
- (5) Rectification vs. Fusion (pamphlet includes two major articles by the
NNMLC critiquing the OCIC, and a speech by Clay Newlin critiquing the
NNMLC) (53 pp., \$2.00)
- (6) "Our Aim is True" from Theoretical Review, #12 (6 pp., 20¢)

Brief statements by the Regional OC Coordinating Committee and the Boston Club of the NNMLC on the significance of the primary readings are enclosed. We encourage individuals to obtain these documents by contacting representatives of the Regional OC or the Boston Club. If necessary, they can also be obtained by mail order, prepaid in full by personal check or money order, to:

Tim Patterson
27 Whitney Avenue
Cambridge, Mass. 02139

In addition to the costs of the documents, include 30¢ per document for postage and handling.

Comrades planning to attend the forum are strongly encouraged to read or review the primary documents, since many of the formulations contained in them will be directly addressed by the speakers and the panelists.

Statements on the Significance of the Primary Readings, by the Boston Club

The Boston Club urges all comrades in the party-building movement to focus on the questions of party-building line which underlie all these documents. "The OC's First Year" is a summation of the accomplishments of the OC, and we believe that the summation (as well as the OC itself) is guided by the "fusion" line on party-building. "The OC's First Year: An Alternative View" is a very different evaluation of the OC, seen from the perspective of the "rectification" line. Clearly, the assessment of the work of the OC is a major question for everyone in our movement, and that assessment must focus not on organizational "success" but on whether the OC has in fact advanced our trend's understanding of the key questions of lines of demarcation and party-building.

"The OC's First Year" also contains a sharp attack on the Clubs, almost identical to the arguments made in the articles reprinted from the Organizer. Comrades should note that neither of these broadsides against the Clubs deals with the main political substance of the rectification line, which is summarized in the selections from "Developing the Subjective Factor".

The OC's "Draft Plan" advances a particular conception of the role and character of a leading ideological center for our trend, a conception which we again claim represents the line and strategy of the leading fusion forces. The "Critique of the OC's Draft Plan" is the first systematic critique of this plan by rectification forces, and it also amplifies our perspective on the unfolding of a trend-wide rectification movement, the process which we hold sets the best conditions for the emergence of a leading ideological center based on a leading line, not simply on organizational unity.

NOTE: The Boston Club feels that comrades who may study the Silber/Beal/PWOC exchange should bear two things in mind. First, the exchange clearly occurred prior to the formation of the NNMLC, which played no role as an organization in the exchange. Second, as the Silber/Beal letter explicitly states, it was intended as a private communication, not for movement-wide distribution. We see no useful purpose relevant to the upcoming forum served by distributing the letter, though we have made no move to prohibit it.

This description of the OC literature was prepared by the OC

"The OC's First Year" and "Draft Plan for a Leading Ideological Center," by the OC Steering Committee.

"The OC's First Year" is a sum-up of the OC's practice by the OC Steering Committee. A three-page resolution containing its most important points was passed at the OC's national conference in September.

The "Draft Plan for a Leading Ideological Center" represents the OC Steering Committee's thinking on what process would be most conducive to forging a leading ideological center for our emerging trend. This document has not been endorsed by the OC as a whole--it is a first draft of a discussion document, and is currently being revised by the Steering Committee on the basis of initial discussion at the OC's September conference. When these changes have been finished, the Draft Plan will be the subject of extensive struggle, within the OC and the tendency as a whole.

"Re-establishing the 'Left' Line on Party-Building," and "Rectification vs. Fusion--Why Not?" by Clay Newlin (from the Organizer, 7/79 and 10/79).

These articles form a short critique of Developing the Subjective Factor, generally concentrating on the NNMLC's sectarian approach to the OC.

"Cut Out the Warts, Spare the Cancer," by Clay Newlin (Organizer, 1/79); letter from Irwin Silber and Fran Beal to the PWOC; letter from the PWOC to Silber and Beal.

One of the OC's central arguments is that the NNMLC has not made a definite break with the sectarianism of the Guardian staff. One of the NNMLC's central arguments is that the OC is dominated by the PWOC and in practice adheres to the fusion line. This exchange deals directly with these issues. It was written at the time of the Clubs' split with the staff, and is of great importance for understanding the debate today.

"Our Aim is True," by Paul Costello (Theoretical Review #12).

A minority view from within the OC. Argues that the Clubs have adopted a sectarian course towards the OC, and that the OC has opted to "reply in kind."

NOTE on Clay Newlin's speech in Rectification vs. Fusion: This is a speech made by Newlin as Chair of the OC Steering Committee in the Bay Area in April of 1979, criticizing the Clubs' sectarian course. It summarizes the thinking that the OC's Steering Committee was then developing around the Draft Plan. Almost all of its main points are contained within the Draft Plan itself.