

## “deepest condolences on the passing of Chairman Mao”

IN September 1976 around eighty Marxist-Leninist organisations sent messages or letters expressing deepest condolences on the passing of Chairman Mao Zedong (old style: Tsetung).

Reproduced in the political weekly, *Peking Review*, from the Red Banner of Dominica to the East London Marxist-Leninist Association and the Marxist-Leninist Organization of the Faroe Islands, organisations large and small, there were common themes and sentiments expressed that reflected the assessment (at that time) of Mao's political legacy within the anti-revisionist movement.

- the passing of Chairman Mao Tsetung, they say, was a great loss beyond measure not only to the Chinese people but also to the revolutionary people of the world. they point out that Chairman Mao was the greatest Marxist of the contemporary era and the great teacher of the proletariat and the oppressed people of the whole world
- the messages and letters highly praise Chairman Mao for inheriting, defending and developing Marxism-Leninism.
- that the magnificent contributions he made to the Chinese revolution and the world revolution are indelible.
- Mao's leadership of the anti-revisionist struggle, not surprisingly featured in the various evaluation. Inspiration from that rupture and the antidote of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, had seen the creation and revitalisation of revolutionary struggles throughout the world.
- many organizations express determination to turn their grief into strength, study and disseminate Mao Tsetung Thought more assiduously and carry the cause of the proletarian revolution through to the end.

What was recognised was the practical Mao “masterly leadership” that acted upon the ideas and analysis - to apply the universal truth of the doctrine of the proletariat to the practice of the Chinese revolution.

Columbian Marxist-Leninists pointed out a common observation, that he led his Party in the armed struggle of peasants and the people in a prolonged and great revolutionary war and seized victory of the new-democratic revolution for the working class and the Chinese, people, thereby pointing out a brilliant road of victory for the revolution of colonial and semi-colonial countries. The identification of the success of the Chinese Revolution with Mao was a shared perspective of the Party he led, and those who studied its history. Hence, the magnificent contributions he made to the Chinese revolution and the world revolution are indelible.

The eulogies that poured forth from the international communist movement were on the positive side, noting his achievements, in a precise emphatic manner. Afterall, Argentina communists noted:

With his experience in leading the Chinese revolution, he has contributed to the development of the revolution of the oppressed countries and peoples. The exposure before the whole world of the counter-revolutionary role played by imperialism and social-imperialism is another contribution made by the Chinese revolution led by Chairman Mao.

Mao would have been remembered for the revolutionary victory of 1949 alone. It was a world shaping event that has had reverberations ever since – the liberation of a third of the earth's population should never be put into the shadows. Yet the subsequent contribution to the international communist movement in leading the anti-revisionist struggle (at home and abroad) was an action of equally significance.

Chilean communists noted,

Comrade Mao Tsetung made manifold contributions to the development of the Marxist-Leninist theories and enriched the theory of class struggle during the period of the socialist revolution and socialist construction and during the period of consolidating and developing the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was a manifestation of this theory.

Although with hindsight the Cultural Revolution proved to be a failed practice as it did not prevent the restoration of capitalism in China after Mao's death, at the time, the Brazilian letter echoed many when it said, Mao

exposed the counter revolutionary essence of revisionism and pointed out that its principal representatives are members of the Soviet clique which is today "headed by the renegade Leonid Brezhnev. He stressed that under this new, tendency, the Soviet Union has turned from a 'socialist' country into a social-imperialist state.

The transition (that not all could make) from anti-revisionist Marxist-Leninists to a more fully developed Maoist theory and practice involved a critical participation in the revolutionary struggle rather than a nostalgia for certainties and a vicarious historic past.

#### His thought has become Marxism-Leninism of our epoch

There was a recognition that his thought transcended what had gone before e.g.

the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Honduras reaffirms that the theoretical basis guiding its activity is Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, under the victorious banner of which, our Party is carrying out its present political tasks and directing the struggle of the Honduran people for democratic rights, the achievement of national independence in opposition to U.S. imperialism, the elimination of feudal remnants and the building in future of a socialist society in Honduras."

Maoism was not in the lexicon of its practioners. The continuity of the anti-revisionist movement had encompassed those who remained at the position associated with Enver Hoxha, the Albanian leader and those who embraced the developments and innovations of the Cultural Revolution period in going beyond the defensive anti-revisionism of the mid-fifties. That contradiction did not last and the emphasis given in the condolences letters

sent provide some evidence of the fault lines within the international movement at Mao's death. Whereas others would referred to Marxism-Leninism, parties like the Philippine party, engaged in substantial armed struggle, refounded in 1968, would openly proclaim, *hold high the invincible banner of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought*.

There has been a consistency in the evaluation offered on the legacy of Mao. The **Letter from Central Committee of Communist Party of the Philippines** [on the death of Mao] stated:

Comrade Mao Tsetung was the most outstanding Marxist-Leninist of our time. In the course of more than 50 years of revolutionary practice, Comrade Mao Tsetung made immortal new contributions in every field of Marxist science. He propounded comprehensively the theory of the new-democratic revolution, the concept of protracted people's war and the strategy of encircling the cities from the countryside, all of which have enormously enriched the Marxist theory of revolution in colonies and semi-colonies. In the course of socialist revolution, Comrade Mao Tsetung systematically summed up the historical experience of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat, analysed and. drew lessons from the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, unequivocally pointed out for the first time in history that classes and class struggle still exist in socialist society after the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production has in the main been completed and that the bourgeoisie is right, in the Communist Party and put forth, the brilliant theory of continuing the revolution, under the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the course of unremitting struggle against the Right and "Left" opportunist lines and counter-revolutionary revisionist lines within the Party at various stages of the revolution, Comrade Mao Tsetung developed a series of principles which are of extreme, importance in the building of a correct Marxist-Leninist Party of the proletariat. By exposing and opposing the betrayal of communism, by the Khrushchev-Brezhnev revisionist renegade clique, Comrade Mao Tsetung developed greatly the Marxist-Leninist cause of uncompromising struggle against opportunism and revisionism.

The idea that Mao's contributions were a qualitative development was clearly expressed in the contributions that came from the international communist movement; that this was not formally and substantially codified as 'Maoism' until two decades later should not detract from the recognition given at the time of Mao's death. His inspirational practice and ideas stood out as a departure from the revision-riddled Soviet dominated movement which it criticised and challenged. Chairman Mao Tsetung inherited, defended and developed Marxism-Leninism. This shared judgement lay the foundation for recognition of the universality that was part of Mao's legacy, in the words of Sri Lankan Marxist-Leninists that "The beacon of Mao Tsetung Thought will shine for ever more brilliantly and continue to inspire and guide all mankind".

Whilst (Spanish Marxists-Leninists were) proclaiming, "His teachings and all his writings are of immense benefit to us Communists and a genuine guide to our revolutionary action", within a few years they had totally reversed their evaluation under Albanian inspiration.

Just as the pre-existing divisions surfaced in the late 1970s, echoed the content and emphasis in the letters of condolence sent from the variety of organisations and groups, self-defining Maoists have marked out their trenches today reflecting the diversity in today's movement. Adherents of Maoism remain world wide in scope and variable in number. There are competing claims to authenticity and legacy of Mao's teachings even when wanting Maoists to unite.

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More than 100,000 people in the Ethiopian capital Addis-Ababa rallied on September 12 for the occasion of the second anniversary of the "Revolutionary Day". Paraders hold high a black-bordered portrait of Chairman Mao Tsetung to mourn his death.

THE memorial meeting in **Melbourne** on September 19 was attended by more than 700 workers, farmers, students and personages from other circles. Speaking at the meeting, E.F. Hill, Chairman of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) recounted Chairman Mao's exploits in leading the Chinese revolution and in the struggles against modern revisionism and the bourgeoisie within the Party. He said that Chairman Mao "was an outstanding teacher of the working class, working and oppressed people — a great proletarian internationalist just as he was a great patriot of China — the greatest Marxist-Leninist of our time."

THE Belgium-China Association held a memorial meeting in **Brussels** on September 25. It was attended by about 1,000 people. A huge portrait of Chairman Mao hung in the centre of the rostrum and a streamer below the portrait read: "Mao Tsetung Thought is invincible."

MORE than 10,000 **Parisians** staged a march and rally on September 11 in the deepest mourning for Chairman Mao-Tsetung. At 3 p.m., "workers, peasants, students, teachers and other working people, many of them women, began marching slowly and silently from The Republic Square. A big wreath at the head of the procession bore the inscription: "To Comrade Mao Tsetung, the greatest Marxist-Leninist." Big streamers read: "Eternal glory to Comrade Mao Tsetung, the great teacher of the international proletariat!" "Long live socialist China!" "Long live Mao Tsetung Thought — Marxism-Leninism of our time!"

A MEMORIAL meeting held in **Duesseldorf** on September 18 by the Germany-China Friendship Society was attended by more than 3,500 people including the organization's activists from more than 30 cities. The meeting heard addresses by Lois Snow, widow of American friend Mr. Edgar Snow, and other foreign friends who once worked in Yen-an in the years of the War of Resistance Against Japan and during the Chinese Liberation War. ... Similar memorial meetings were held in more than 20 other West German cities on September 14 and 15. West German Marxist-Leninist

organizations in Frankfurt, Hamburg, Mannheim, Koeln, Munich, Hanover, Stuttgart and other cities held, torchlight marches or memorial meetings on September 16 and 17 in tribute to the memory, of Chairman Mao.

OVER 10,000 Italian people, carrying a portrait of Chairman Mao and torches, staged a solemn march in **Rome** on the evening of September 18 to express their deep mourning for Chairman Mao Tsetung.

OVER 2,300 people staged a torch march in **Oslo** on the evening of September 17 to deeply mourn Chairman Mao Tsetung. The march was sponsored by the National Norway-China Friendship Association. On the same evening, the Oslo branch of the National Norway-China Friendship Association held a memorial meeting attended by about 1,200 people.

SOME 1,200 members of the Swedish Communist Party and other Swedish people took part in a march and a memorial meeting in **Stockholm** on September 17.



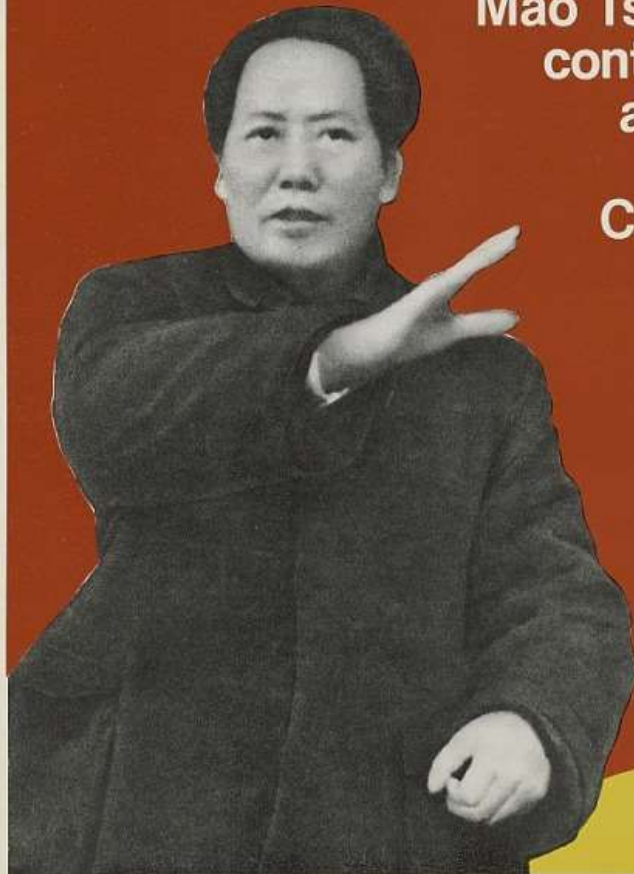
On September 17 people in Stockholm, Sweden, staged a torch parade and memorial meeting to mourn the death of Chairman Mao Tsetung. Paraders march into the site of the rally.



People in Paris, France, paraded on the street on September 11 to mourn the death of Chairman Mao Tsetung. The streamer reads, "The masses are the real heroes", a quotation from Chairman Mao.

# MAO TSETUNG MEMORIAL

Hold high the banner of  
Mao Tsetung's immortal  
contributions and the  
achievements and  
lessons of the  
Cultural Revolution



Mao Tsetung was the greatest revolutionary of our time. People all over the world remember him with deepest respect, hold him in highest regard, and love him from the bottom of their hearts.

The Revolutionary Communist Party announces Memorial Meetings to be held this fall. Information or contributions: Mao Tsetung Memorial Committee, c/o RCP, Box 3486, Chgo. 60654

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[Link to relevant pdf copies](#) sourced from massline.org

Eternal Glory [ [Peking Review #38 September 13 1976](#) Announces the death of Mao Zedong.]

[Peking Review #39 September 24 1976](#) mass memorial meeting in Beijing (undoctored photos)

[Peking Review #40 September 30 1976](#)

[Peking Review #41 October 8 1976](#)

[Peking Review #42 October 15 1976](#)

[Peking Review #43 October 22 1976](#)

[Peking Review #44 October 29<sup>th</sup> 1976](#)

[\*Peking Review # 45 November 5th 1976\*](#)

[China Pictorial #11 November 1976](#) Memorial issue after the death of Mao Tsetung.  
(doctored photos)