

The Golden Rule of Marxism-Leninism: Hate Thy Neighbour

*An Analysis of the Relationship between the Two
Norwegian Self-Proclaimed Marxist-Leninist
Parties, AKP and NKP, between 1973 and 1979*

Ferdinand Eide Rode



Master's Thesis in Peace and Conflict Studies,
Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History

UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

Spring 2019

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2019

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<http://www.duo.uio.no/>

Print: Representralen, University of Oslo

Word count: 34 901

II

Abstract

Why did the relationship between AKP and NKP grow so hostile during the 1970s? How could two self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist parties develop such tension and hate for one another and find it natural to claim that the other was a fascist party? This thesis examines the relationship between the two Norwegian parties, AKP and NKP, between 1973 and 1979 by analysing their attitude towards each other represented in material meant for both internal and external use. The thesis approaches the relation on three levels: regarding domestic issues, international issues and ideological differences. It furthermore points to the ideological differences of the parties, with NKP being a part of the Soviet-communism and AKP a part of the Maoist movement, as the underlying factor for why the relationship grew hostile during the seventies. The year 1975 stands out as a special year for the relationship as both parties consolidated ideologically, tightening its bond to respectively China and the Soviet Union. The ideological consolidation had ripple effects on how AKP and NKP perceived different issues, both at the domestic and international level. Even though AKP continued to be formally tied to the Chinese Communist Party until 1989, the party lost attraction to AKP at the end of the seventies as a result of problems within the Maoist movement, which again led to internal problems for AKP. In turn, this was one factor for why the relationship between AKP and NKP became less hostile at the end of the seventies as both parties either lacked or were reluctant to use energy on the other party after several years of hysteria between them.

Acknowledgements

Several people have helped me in different ways with this thesis and therefore deserves to be thanked. First, I want to thank my supervisor Øystein Sørensen for enlightening conversations and discussions about the left-wing parties in addition to thorough guidance. Sørensen has shared his knowledge and made this whole process much more manageable than expected. Second, I want to thank the whole PECOS gang for many quizzes and tons of chess games in the common room. Thank you to Fride, Ingeborg and Sofia, for reviewing my thesis, correcting all my English flaws. Third, I want to thank my parents for supporting, helping and cheering me on. Fourth, I want to thank Arsenal Football Club for re-orienting my frustration from the thesis to football this semester. Nevertheless, Arsenal-games has been something to look forward to in a stressful period. And last, a big thank you to Vilde for your help and support! You have made it possible to focus entirely on this thesis and have carried my weight of house-duties. I owe you more than you can imagine!

All errors are mine,

Ferdinand Eide Rode,

May 2019

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List of abbreviations

AAB	Norwegian Labour Movement Archives and Library
AKP	Workers' Communist Party (Marxist-Leninists)
CCP	The Chinese Communist Party
CIA	The Central Intelligence Agency
CPSU	The Communist Party of the Soviet Union
DNA	The Labour Party
DNS	The Norwegian Students' Society
IWD	International Women's Day
LO	The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions
MLG	<i>Marxist-Leninistiske Grupper</i> (translated: Marxist-Leninist Groups)
NKP	The Norwegian Communist Party
PLA	The Party of Labour of Albania
POT	The Police Surveillance Agency
RV	Red Electoral Alliance
SF	<i>Sosialistisk Folkeparti</i> (translated: The Socialist People's Party)
SUF	<i>Sosialistisk Ungdomsforbund</i> (translated: The Socialist Youth Association)
SV	The Socialist Left Party
TWT	The Three Worlds Theory
USSR	The Soviet Union

Chapter 1

Introduction

In the 1970s two Norwegian self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist parties competed over the ownership of the term ‘communism’, what true Marxism-Leninism was and how the Norwegian society could reach ‘the dictatorship of the proletariat’¹ followed by communism. One of the parties, the Norwegian Communist Party (NKP), was rooted in Soviet-communism and was established in 1923. The other party, the Workers Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) (AKP)², established in 1973, was rooted in Maoism. When established, AKP claimed that the only reason for a new Marxist-Leninist party was that NKP had failed as a communist party. By 1975 the two parties consolidated ideologically, and the hatred between them was evident, and criticism of the other became mandatory for both parties. However, in 1979, they were both supporting the Iranian revolution without criticising each other, and it seems like the relationship between the two parties had become less hostile. Thus, this thesis seeks to find the explanatory factors of how the relationship evolved in the period between 1973 and 1979.

NKP’s focus in 1973 was on a new electoral alliance and subsequently a new grand left-wing party together with *Sosialistisk Folkeparti* (the Socialist People’s Party) (SF), *Demokratiske Sosialister* (Democratic Socialists) and individual socialists. NKP tried to increase its relevance in Norwegian politics, and the new grand party would summon the leftist parties in Norway and empower the working class and labour movement in the fight against the social-democrats and the bourgeoisie class. AKP, on the other hand, was part of the Maoist wave that swept over the world and emerged

¹ ‘Dictatorship of the proletariat’ is the “rule by the proletariat – the economic and social class consisting of industrial workers who derive income solely from the labour – during the transitional phase between the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of communism”, The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Dictatorship of the proletariat," in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Retrieved 21.05.2019 from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/dictatorship-of-the-proletariat>).

² Original name was *Arbeidernes Kommunistparti (marxist-leninistene)* and was most often referred to as *AKP (m-l)* but will in this thesis be shortened to only AKP or called “the Maoists” or “the Norwegian Maoists”.

as a contender to the position as the Norwegian Marxist-Leninist party. AKP was open to the idea of an electoral alliance together with the left-wing parties but was excluded. The relationship between AKP and NKP was in the period between 1973 and 1974 marked by futile attempts of cooperation. The two parties mostly agreed about what type of movements around the world, or labour unions in Norway that deserved support during the period. However, they were unable to agree on what methods to pursue in order to strengthen the labour movement.

Both parties consolidated ideologically in 1975, and the relationship between them grew into hostility. Both accused the other of attempting to ruin the working class' chance to reach communism, which led to accusations of fascism, 'revisionism'³ and 'reactionary behaviour'⁴ to constantly flow between the parties, particularly between 1975 and 1978. AKP was more of a prominent party in this period than NKP, and significant parts of the politically active youth on the left-wing joined the Maoists. At the same time, the Norwegian Maoists became known for being somewhat fanatical and were continually in opposition to everyone else in Norwegian society. The unique attitude of the party was most visible in its defence of Pol Pot in Cambodia. While most political parties in Norway condemned the Pot's systematic genocide in Cambodia, AKP continuously accused the other political parties, as well as the press, of lying.⁵ Thus, the period between 1975 and 1978 was characterised by AKP and NKP's strong disagreement about who the enemy was, and who constituted the evil forces of the world. AKP firmly believed that the Soviet Union (USSR) was a social-imperialist state, and one of two superpowers in the world. Meanwhile, NKP claimed that the only imperialist superpower was the United States.

³ 'Revisionism' is «[...] revise Marxist doctrine. Rejecting the labour theory of value, economic determinism, and the significance of the class struggle [...]', The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Revisionism," in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Retrieved 21.05.2019 from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/revisionism-Marxism>).

⁴'Reactionary' is "a political position that maintains a conservative response to change, including threats to social institutions and technological advances. Reaction is the reciprocal action to revolutionary movement", Marxist.org, "Glossary of terms: Re: Reactionary," in *Marxist.org* (Retrieved 05.01.2019 from <https://www.marxists.org/glossary/terms/r/e.htm>).

⁵ Hans Petter Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall* (Oslo: Cappelen, 2005), 151-61.

Towards the end of the decade, the parties attempted once more to cooperate on different demonstration days like 1 May and 8 March, without any luck. However, the parties were able to have the same positive perception of the revolution in Iran, which both parties supported.⁶ AKP and NKP rallied together against common causes at the end of the 1970s: western democracy, imperialism and right-wing extremism.

In order to explore how the relationship between the parties developed from tolerance and attempts of cooperation to mutual hate and severe hostility and back to a less hostile relation at the end of the decade, the thesis' research questions (RQs) are:

RQ1. In what way can rivalry between the two parties at the domestic level explain how the relationship evolved?

RQ2. In what way can conflicts and events at the international level explain how the relationship evolved?

RQ3. In what way can the parties' different Marxist-Leninist ideological affiliation explain how the relationship evolved?

The research questions are interconnected even though they are parted into three different levels. The main focus regarding RQ2 will be on the Sino-Soviet relationship and events that were connected to the two states, such as the situation in Southeast Asia. This is because the leaders of NKP and AKP looked to the leadership of respectively the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) as guiding stars when working out the policy of the parties. Therefore, the policy of the communist parties of the Soviet Union and China had, to some degree, also an impact on the domestic policy of the parties and the solidarity movements established by AKP and NKP. The three RQs have created a false separation between ideology, domestic issues and international issues that in reality were highly interconnected.

⁶ Friheten, "Nytt tap for USA-imperialismen," *Friheten*, No. 05, 1979; Klassekampen, "Det iranske folkets seier," *Klassekampen* 14.2.1979.

The research questions will be answered through an empirical study of the period 1973 to late 1979, with the point of departure being AKP's establishment in 1973. The endpoint signifies the shattering of AKP's worldview as China changed its policy under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping after Mao's death in 1976. Xiaoping's policy was more pragmatic than Mao's policy, and Xiaoping did not use unnecessary energy or resources on small Maoists parties around the world. Thus, the bond between AKP and China was shattered with Chinese policy no longer being as appealing to AKP as it had been earlier in the 1970s.⁷

This thesis will contribute to previous work carried out on relationships between parties at the left-wing and will shed light over previous unexamined dimensions of the two Marxist-Leninist parties.⁸ These dimensions are concerned with how the two parties related to the competition over the term 'Marxist-Leninist party'/ 'communist party' and how national and international events, in addition to ideological differences, influenced how they acted. Additionally, the thesis will shed light on in what way AKP and NKP acted as puppets, as they accused the other of being, for respectively CCP and CPSU. This thesis thus represents a contribution to the literature on communist movements in general.

1.1 Background information

1.1.1 The parties

NKP was established in 1923 by dissidents from the Labour Party (DNA) who decided to leave when the Labour Party (DNA) broke with Comintern the same year. NKP was ideologically rooted in the Soviet-communism in 1973 and had been closely connected to the Soviet Union since 1923. However, there was a decline in support from USSR to NKP after 1965 when USSR decided to stop the monetary support to

⁷ Tron Øgrim, *vestlige maoismens sammenbrudd og krise i AKP(m-l)* (Oslo: Oktober, 1982), 60-63.

⁸ See: Dag Jostein Juvkam, "Et uunngåelig brudd? : Norges Kommunistiske Partis holdning til venstresamarbeid og samling i Sosialistisk Venstreparti, årene 1970-75" (Master's degree, Universitetet i Oslo, 2011).

NKP, which at the time was under the leadership of Reidar T. Larsen. Sven Holtmark speculated that Larsen's policy was unpopular in USSR since he did not support the principle of one centre of communism that should have 'control' of all communist parties. Larsen was reluctant to choose between USSR and China after the Sino-Soviet split that occurred in the 1960s.⁹ Furthermore, Ole Martin Rønning wrote that NKP stopped being a 100% USSR-loyal party in the 1960s and that Reidar T. Larsen stopped sending NKP-members on study-trips to USSR because the topics in other countries often were irrelevant for Norwegian politics.¹⁰ Thus, NKP was in 1973 focused on domestic politics and helping the Norwegian working class.

NKP had both before and after the Second World War been accused by other Norwegian parties of being controlled by Moscow but had experienced a rare surge in popularity immediately after the war as a result of its resistance work against Nazi-Germany.¹¹ NKP experienced internal turmoil right after the war in 1945, with the *Furubotn-oppjøret* (the Furubotn-showdown) in 1949 where several key members, and many regular members, were expelled from the party.¹² The showdown occurred only a year after NKP was categorised as a threat to the Norwegian people by the Norwegian Prime Minister, Einar Gerhardsen in his Kråkerøy-speech.¹³ The speech led to a decrease in public support for NKP, who quickly was reduced to the periphery of Norwegian politics. Twenty-four years after NKP was at the peak of its popularity, NKP only got 1% of the votes in the 1969 national election and 0.7% in the local

⁹ Sven G. Holtmark, *Gullet fra Moskva : sovjetisk pengestøtte til norske kommunister 1917-1990*, (Oslo: Institutt for forsvarsstudier, 1999), Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/11250/99653>. 21.

¹⁰ Ole Martin Rønning, "Kommunistenes hemmelige skoloring" *Norgeshistorie.no*, Retrieved 28.4.2019 from <https://www.norgeshistorie.no/forste-verdenskrig-og-mellomkrigstiden/artikler/1653-kommunistenes-hemmelige-skoloring-i-sovjet.html>.

¹¹ Per Maurseth, *Gjennom kriser til makt (1920-1935)*, ed. Arne Kokkvoll and Jakob Sverdrup, *Arbeiderbevegelsen historie i Norge - 3* (Oslo: Tiden, 1987), 434, 542; Tore Pryser, *Klassen og nasjonen (1935-1946)*, ed. Arne Kokkvoll and Jakob Sverdrup, *Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge - 4* (Oslo: Tiden, 1988), 366-72, 546-47.

¹² For more information about *Furubotn-oppjøret*, see for example: Terje Halvorsen, *NKP i krise* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1981).

¹³ For more information about Gerhardsen's speech, see for example: Eirik Wig Sundvall, *Gerhardsens valg : Arbeiderpartiets tunge avskjed med Sovjetunionen 1917-1949* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2016).

election in 1971.¹⁴ The party had become an isolated, peripheral party. Meanwhile, the Maoist movement had the wind in its sails in the 1960s with the ongoing Cultural Revolution and the student riots in several western countries.¹⁵

In Norway, the Maoist movement did not spring out of the traditional communist party as it did in many other countries. It instead sprung out from the youth section of the social-democratic party *Sosialistisk Folkeparti*, namely *Sosialistisk Ungdomsforbund* (SUF). The signs of a Maoist fraction within SUF became evident in 1967, with a group being led by Tron Øgrim.¹⁶ The Maoist fraction of SUF managed to get a majority in the central committee, and SUF quickly evolved into a Maoist group with the non-Maoists members leaving the party. The youth section then broke with *Sosialistisk Folkeparti* in 1969 and changed its name to SUF (m-l). An ml-party or person saw itself as Marxist-Leninist. According to Kvilstad, it essentially meant that the party/person was Maoist.¹⁷ Sjøli argued that the movement should be called 'mlm-movement' (as in Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) and not only ml-movement as it could be misleading since other parties like NKP saw themselves only Marxist-Leninist and not Maoist¹⁸. While both NKP and AKP saw Stalin as an extension of the Marxist-Leninist ideology, only AKP regarded Mao as a continuation as well.¹⁹

1.1.2 International influence

The relationship between the Chinese Communist Party and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union shaped the dynamic between NKP and the Maoists, even in the time

¹⁴ Øivind Stenersen, "Venstrekreftene i norsk politikk 1945-65," in *Vekst og velstand: Norsk politisk historie 1945-1965*, ed. Trond Bergh and Helge Pharo (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1989; reprint, 2), 353-54.

¹⁵ For more information see for example: David Priestland, *The red flag : communism and the making of the modern world* (London: Penguin, 2010); Robert J. Alexander, *Maoism in the developed world* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2001).

¹⁶ Jon Rognlien and Nikolai Brandal, *store ML-boka* (Kagge, 2009), 22.

¹⁷ Dan Roger Luneborg Kvilstad, "Fyrtårnet som slukket : -AKPs forestillinger om Albania 1973 til 1979" (Master's degree, Universitetet i Oslo, 2011), 13.

¹⁸ Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 17.

¹⁹ Anders Holsbø Istad, "Politiske endringer i den norske ML-rørsla 1969 - 1980" (Hovedfagsoppgave, Univeristy of Oslo, 1992), 5.

preceding the formation of AKP.²⁰ The ideological affiliation of the parties, with NKP looking to CPSU and AKP looking to CCP, made it possible for the Sino-Soviet relationship to affect the relationship of AKP and NKP. The Sino-Soviet relationship gradually worsened from the end of the 1950s, before it broke in 1963 and turning severely hostile in 1966 with Mao's Cultural Revolution.²¹ The Sino-Soviet split had had implications for NKP when one fraction of the party argued that NKP had to distance itself from CCP. The anti-Chinese members of NKP claimed that it was an ideological battle between CCP and CPSU and warned against NKP being associated with the extreme Chinese views. NKP-leader, Reidar T. Larsen, argued that NKP should not choose a side because the ties to CPSU had previously caused NKP to lose public support. As shown previously in this chapter, the reluctance of Larsen to distance NKP from China most likely led to a loss of monetary support to NKP from USSR.²²

Larsen's side won, and NKP did not distance itself from the Chinese Communist Party, because it would strengthen NKP's relation to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Larsen argued that every communist party should have the ability to choose its politics without being controlled and instructed by a power centre. The Maoist-friendly members of NKP disliked the fact that those who were in favour of NKP distancing itself from China were not excluded from the party. They thus decided to leave NKP, because the NKP-leadership only reprimanded the Maoist-hostile members. In turn, this power struggle led NKP to take the stance that Larsen had opposed since the remaining members were either neutral regarding the Sino-Soviet relationship or in favour of USSR. Larsen's attempt to create fellowship and independence had failed, and his position as leader weakened over time with the presence of a new Marxist-Leninist party.²³

²⁰ For more information about different branches of Marxist-Leninist movements, see: Priestland, *The red flag : communism and the making of the modern world*.

²¹ Gunhild O. Lurås, "Kamerater? : striden om Norges kommunistiske parti 1963-1967" (Hovedfagsoppgave, University of Oslo, 2002), 61, 215.

²² Ibid., 231-33.

²³ Ibid., 270-73.

The split between USSR and China was based on a mutual hostile perception of the other part. Historian Andrei Lankov argued that USSR's propaganda against China was more aggressive than the propaganda against the United States after the mid-1960s. The propaganda was rooted in the claim of China being a 'socialist country gone bad' because of Mao. Mao, the most despised foreign politician in USSR, was nowhere near as popular in the Soviet Union as he was among Western intellectuals. Last, Lankov wrote that in the 25 years from 1960 to 1985, the relationship between USSR and China was mutually hostile, but gradually declined when Xiaoping and his government developed a policy distanced from Maoism after 1977.²⁴

1.2 Scholarly literature

1.2.1 NKP

There has been written substantially more about AKP than NKP in the period between 1973 and 1979. This period was the prime of AKP, while NKP, as stated earlier, experienced its prime during, and immediately after, the Second World War. There are, however, some publications worth mentioning regarding literature on NKP focused around the 1970s. Gunhild O. Lurås' dissertation about the internal conflict in NKP between 1963 and 1969 and Dag Jostein Juvkam's master's thesis about NKP's break with the Socialist Left Party (SV) between 1970 and 1975 gives valuable insight into NKP in the period relevant for this thesis.²⁵ Besides, Arne Kokkvoll and Jakob Sverdrup edited the six-volume series about the history of the labour movement in Norway where the 6th volume (1965-1990) elaborates on how the labour union and the leftist parties facilitated AKP's entrance into Norwegian politics.²⁶

²⁴ Andrei Lankov, "How Comrade Mao was perceived in the Soviet Union," Retrieved 14.05.2018 from https://www.rbth.com/blogs/2015/09/02/how_comrade_mao_was_perceived_in_the_soviet_union_4889_3.html.

²⁵ Lurås, "Kamerater? : striden om Norges kommunistiske parti 1963-1967."; Juvkam, "Et uunngåelig brudd? : Norges Kommunistiske Partis holdning til venstresamarbeid og samling i Sosialistisk Venstreparti, årene 1970-75."

²⁶ Jostein Nyhamar, *Nye utfordringer (1965-1990)*, ed. Arne Kokkvoll and Jakob Sverdrup, Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge - 6 (Oslo: Tiden, 1990).

According to Juvkam's thesis on NKP's break with SV, there had not been a scholarly focus on NKP in the period between 1970 and 1975. Regarding the relationship between the different leftist parties, the unification of SV has been the topic of several books and theses, and the focus in the products are on the cooperation between *Sosialistisk Folkeparti*, *Demokratiske Sosialister* and NKP, and SV after the new party was established in 1975.²⁷ Juvkam argued that his thesis was meaningful precisely because no one had done a systematic examination of NKP in that period and that NKP's attitude towards SV was unusual for the Left in Norway.²⁸ Juvkam's argument could be adopted in this thesis, by saying that this thesis is meaningful because no one has previously done a systematic examination of the relationship between AKP and NKP in the period 1973 to 1979.

1.2.2 AKP

AKP became part of the popular culture through Hans Petter Sjøli's book *Mao, min Mao. Historien om AKPs vekst of fall*.²⁹ The book outlines the development from the ml-movement, through the creation of AKP and to its downfall into the margins of Norwegian politics in the 1980s. *Den store ml-boka*³⁰ by Jon Rognlien and Nik. Brandal and (*ml*) by Terje Tvedt are both books with first-hand stories from members of AKP and gives great insight into the milieu/social environment in the organisation. Autobiographies and biographies on key actors from either NKP or AKP have also been useful in order to understand the members' worldview.³¹ Additionally, there are several master's theses written about AKP or the ml-movement with different

²⁷ Dag Jostein Juvkam, «Et Uunngåelig Brudd?: Norges Kommunistiske Partis Holdning til Venstresamarbeid og Samling I Sosialistisk Venstreparti, Årene 1970-75» (Universitetet i Oslo, 2011), 10-11.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Translated: *Mao, my Mao. The history of AKP's growth and decline*.

³⁰ Translated: *The great ml-book*

³¹ See Pål Steigan, *En folkefiende* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 2013); Reidar Toralf Larsen, *Styrt av Moskva* (Oslo: Cappelen forlag, 1980); Bo Brekke, *Tron Øgrim : det revolusjonære fyrverkeri* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 2015).

approaches, see for example the thesis' of Håkon Kolmannskog³², Anders Holsbø Istad³³, Robert Herman Rød³⁴, Dan Roger Luneborg Kvilstad³⁵ and Ole Martin Reime.³⁶

1.2.3 The relationship between AKP and NKP

Even though no studies have looked specifically into the relationship between AKP and NKP, both academic and other factual prose, has touched upon AKP and NKP's perception of the other part throughout the seventies. The literature on AKP mentions NKP as an enemy of the Maoists because of its ties to USSR and because of its false claim of being a Marxist-Leninist party. Furthermore, the subject of the parties' willingness to cooperate has been touched upon in different works. There is unanimous agreement that AKP's behaviour changed drastically in 1975 with *Tesene om høyreavvik* (The theses on Right deviation)³⁷, written by a key actor in AKP, Tron Øgrim. The theses examined how AKP had failed in its attempts at cooperation and unity among the leftist parties and how the party had acted, and subsequently got influenced by revisionist parties like NKP. The theses allegedly led to AKP becoming an extreme leftists party, growing increasingly more hostile towards USSR and an opponent to cooperation in general since it implied that AKP had to compromise. Regarding NKP's willingness to cooperate, Juvkam argued that NKP was open to cooperation until its break with SV in 1975, which allegedly led NKP into isolation.³⁸

According to Sjøli, another factor regarding cooperation was NKP's internal dispute that had led to China-friendly members leaving the party, as stated previously in this chapter. The dissidents of NKP started to cooperate with the young Maoists and attempted to establish a new party. However, the attempt was futile, and the NKP-

³² Håkon Kolmannskog, "Ideologisk leiarskap i den norske ml-rørsla : det umogleges kunst 1965-1980" (Master's degree, Universitetet i Oslo, 2006).

³³ Istad, "Politiske endringar i den norske ML-rørsla 1969 - 1980."

³⁴ Robert Herman Rød, "AKP (m-l) og ideen om renhet: : Om kulturell og sosial renhet innenfor den norske ml-bevegelsen i perioden 1973 – 1980." (Universitetet i Oslo, 2013).

³⁵ Kvilstad, "Fyrtårnet som slukket : -AKPs forestillinger om Albania 1973 til 1979."

³⁶ Ole Martin Reime, "Tjen folket - koste hva det koste vil : en kvalitativ studie av totalitarismens utvikling i ml-bevegelsen i perioden" (Master's degree, University of Oslo, 2010).

³⁷ Will also be referred to as "Øgrim's theses".

³⁸ Juvkam, "Et uunngåelig brudd? : Norges Kommunistiske Partis holdning til venstresamarbeid og samling i Sosialistisk Venstreparti, årene 1970-75."

dissidents were left out of the project to establish a new Marxist-Leninist party. Additionally, Sjøli has argued that he has proof that AKP monitored NKP-members from 1977, which undoubtedly indicated that the relationship between the two parties evolved into a bitter and hostile one. Furthermore, he wrote that the monitoring was a result of the feud between USSR and China, with Moscow being pointed to as the global centre of imperialism.³⁹ In other words, international events have allegedly formed the trajectory of at least AKP.

Furthermore, Nyhamar wrote in his volume on the history of the labour movement that the only constant about AKP's approach in Norwegian politics was the hostile attitude towards the Soviet Union, with the culmination being the conviction of that there would be an imminent Third World War between the superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Nyhamar also wrote that AKP, in its first years, was against all parties who wrongly (according to AKP) called themselves socialists/communists. The parties AKP perceived to be 'false-communists' were DNA, NKP and SF.⁴⁰

Thus, there are clear indicators in various publications that the relationship between AKP and NKP was unfruitful. Some of the works point directly to topics of disagreement between the parties, but the relationship has not been the sole topic of examination in any product. I argue that this would be a useful aspect to look at because it can give more understanding and shed further light on Marxist-Leninist movements and how they perceived each other. Additionally, it would be interesting to see in what degree the Sino-Soviet relationship could be an explanatory factor for the dynamic between AKP and NKP.

³⁹ Hans Petter Sjøli, "De verste fiendene er de som står oss nærmest," in *Arbeiderhistorie* (Oslo: Forlaget Aktuell, 2007), 146-47.

⁴⁰ Jostein Nyhamar et al., *Nye Utfordringer* (Tiden, 1990)

1.3 Sources

The thesis will be based on an empirical examination of relevant sources in order to answer the research questions. Since the research questions revolve around how the relationship evolved, sources that give insight at many points of time is most useful. The newspapers of the parties are therefore essential sources, as one can trace the development of the relationship from week to week, and at the end of the decade, from day to day, as AKP's party newspaper, *Klassekampen* (Class Struggle), became a daily newspaper. Internal magazines often published six times a year are also valuable in order to answer the research questions, and especially regarding the research question on ideology since the internal magazines were ideologically based and not news based as the newspapers were.

There are substantial amounts of material and information available from both parties, but especially from AKP. Thus, certain delimitations had to be made. I chose to focus on the parties' newspapers, internal magazines, party programs and bylaws. When I found a reference to a possibly crucial document in either of the selected sources, I visited the archives and looked it up. For instance, AKP's party newspaper, *Klassekampen* referred to an internal NKP document about how to handle the Norwegian Maoists. I thus went to the archive of NKP, located at the Norwegian Labour Movement Archives and Library (AAB), and found a document written by NKP-member Ørnulf Godager, which is examined in chapter three. I decided not to use an unnecessary amount of time at the archives, looking up documents at random, as it was more productive to do a systematic examination of the newspapers.

Based on the fact that the official statements from the party leadership mostly consisted of support or denouncement of various groups, both nationally and internationally, it is fruitful to examine the different party newspapers. Hence, I believe the newspapers will hold more information about the different views of the parties that will be useful for this thesis, rather than the public statements. In

internal magazines, I strived to get information about the ideological reasons behind the tense relationship between AKP and NKP.

Most of the primary sources are highly accessible, with several of the AKP-sources being located at the digital archive of AKP⁴¹ and the Norwegian Labour Movement Archives and Library. Specific sources for AKP in this thesis are *Klassekampen*, *Røde Fane* (Red banner) and *Tjen Folket* (Serve the people). Additionally, *Klassekampen* is available in scanned editions at the webpage of the Norwegian National Library.⁴² NKP-sources are also available at the Norwegian Labour Movement Archives and Library in addition to NKP's party newspaper, *Friheten* (Freedom), being available on microfilm at the Norwegian National Library too. The internal magazine of NKP, *Vårt Arbeid* (Our Labour), has also been used in this thesis and is located at NKP's archive. The party-programs and bylaws for the parties are at least available through the webpage of Norwegian centre for research data in the archive for party documents⁴³, but some are also available at the Norwegian National Library.

1.4 Methodological considerations

The thesis examines the period when AKP was at its peak while NKP was in the margins of Norwegian politics and was regarded as an irrelevant party. Subsequently, the amount of literature on the parties in the period differs substantially as far more has been written about AKP, than NKP – which is evident in the bibliography. This thesis utilises a comparative approach, and I have looked at sources from the two parties and compared the apprehension they had of each other. I have systematically compared the similarities and differences between the parties and how the relationship between the parties evolved in the period analysed.

As the aim of this thesis is to look at the relationship between AKP and NKP, I will not exhaustively examine all aspects of the two parties. Various events, international

⁴¹ See: www.akp.no

⁴² See: www.nb.no

⁴³ See: <https://nsd.no/polsys/data/parti/partidokumentarkivet/>

and national, are thus not profoundly examined. Instead, the focus is on the different aspects of conflicts or other events where the parties either agreed or disagreed. Nor is the purpose of this thesis to discuss what party that was most Marxist-Leninist. Hence, there is no need for a chapter on Marxist theory, as this thesis accepts both parties' claims of being Marxist-Leninist.

The way these two parties were organised between 1973 and 1979 constitutes an essential aspect of this thesis, which had implications for how I conducted my study. Both parties had authoritarian central committees deciding the policy of the parties, which were based on the principle of democratic centralism. Discipline and subordination were demanded from the members under democratic centralism. This implied that the members discussed political issues and sent their proposals on how to solve different problems to the party-leaders who then decided the outcome. The organisational structure implied that the leaders made the final decision, and the majority within the leadership decided the policy of the party. A general problem with democratic centralism is if the party has a paragraph on exclusion, which both AKP and NKP had. Such a paragraph makes it possible to exclude disloyal members who refused to bow for the majority. Since AKP was built on the Leninist cadre-party model, this could lead the democratic centralism to become even more centralised in leadership, and less democratic by not listening to the membership masses.⁴⁴ The principle of democratic centralism influenced the party newspapers, *Klassekampen* and *Friheten*. The two newspapers were under total control by their respective leadership. The leaders decided what topics were to be debated and from what angle, effectively framing the news, and basically deciding how it was presented and thereby interpreted by the readers.

A clarification of what I mean by *relationship* is required. The term 'relationship' should be understood as the bond between the two parties and how they perceived

⁴⁴ Nyhamar, *Nye utfordringer (1965-1990)*, 222-23; Lurås, "Kamerater? : striden om Norges kommunistiske parti 1963-1967," 33; Alfred G. Meyer, "Democratic Centralism," in *Leninism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1957).

each other. The relationship is a constructed term for this thesis based on their common self-proclamation of being Marxist-Leninist, as both parties claimed to be the legitimate communist party in Norway. The use of the word *relationship* does not imply that there was any formal relationship between the two parties. The relationship is thus, in this thesis a term that comprises the topics the two parties agreed or disagreed on, and how their perception of the other party was.

An operationalisation of the term 'degree of ideological proximity' is also necessary. In this thesis, it explains how close, ideologically, the Norwegian parties (AKP or NKP) was to their respective ideological 'host'-party (CCP or CPSU). A low degree of ideological proximity implies that the Norwegian parties had more self-determination, and the policy of the ideological host-party only loosely influenced the policy of the Norwegian party. A high degree of ideological proximity implies that the Norwegian parties had less self-determination and that it changed political views by the policy changes in the host-parties. This term will not be used before the analysis-chapter of this thesis, but an ideological consolidation of the Norwegian party to the ideological host-party implied a rise in the degree of ideological proximity while distancing itself from a country/host-party implied a decline in the degree of ideological proximity.

The sources used to compare the ideologies are the internal theoretical magazines, the policy manifestos and other documents of importance. In order to compare the opinion of the parties, regarding different national and international events, the party newspapers *Klassekampen* and *Friheten* has been mostly used because of my assumption of them having more valuable information available in them, with additional information from internal magazines. Additionally, the secondary literature has been used as a support to the empirical findings in the primary sources from the parties. Furthermore, all quotations from material written in Norwegian has been translated by me. Another important note regarding the method is that the publishing date on *Friheten* for the volumes 1978 and 1979 was invisible on the

microfilm. Therefore, the citation of articles from editions in the period 1978 and 1979 are cited with edition number and year, but not the publication date.

1.5 Outline of the thesis

The three empirical chapters, chapter two to four, are focused on the period from AKP was established in 1973 to USSR's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Chapter two examines the period between 1973-1974. This period was characterised by failed attempts of cooperation between AKP and NKP, which seems to have been rooted in AKP's unusual approach in Norwegian politics as well as NKP's ties to USSR. Chapter three examines the period between 1975 and 1976. This period is characterised by massive changes that led to ideological consolidation in both parties, and the relationship between the parties grew substantially worse.

Chapter four examines the period between late 1976 to 1979. I have looked at different events, both nationally and internationally in the period, to see how the parties positioned themselves. It becomes evident through the chapter that the parties also changed throughout the latter half of the 1970s, and in the end, were able to take the same stance towards an international occurrence without attacking one another.

Chapter five is the analysis chapter where I attempt to find an answer to the research questions by analysing the empirical chapters. The chapter is sectioned in four parts, with the first three relating to the research questions: one section analysing national events, one analysing the ideological factor and one section analysing international events. Additionally, there is one section that discusses some characteristics of the two parties in light of modern terms. Finally, the last chapter concludes the main findings and answers the research questions based on them.

Chapter 2

1973-1974: “Now, comrades, which side are you on?”

The establishment of a new Marxist-Leninist party, AKP, created a duel between the two self-proclaimed communist parties in Norwegian politics: NKP and AKP. The tension between the parties was unavoidable since the Maoists argued that AKP was only necessary because NKP had failed as a communist party and was no longer fighting for the working class. An important factor was that NKP no longer was in favour of an armed revolution, an aspect that was important to AKP. According to AKP, an armed revolution was essential to achieve communism, and this was also the goal of AKP.⁴⁵

NKP faced two threats to its survival in this period: the first one was the external threat that AKP represented based on its accusations against NKP considering NKP's close tie with the Soviet Union. The second threat was the internal discussion considering an electoral alliance, *Sosialistisk Valgforbund*, and the possibility of the alliance to become a new grand left-wing party over time. The new party implied that all parties that were a part of the fusion had to be dissolved. AKP, on the other hand, sought all the attention it could get, striving to become relevant in the Norwegian political context. AKP was open to cooperation with the other left-wing parties and was interested in being included in the discussions about the electoral alliance. However, AKP was excluded from the alliance after scepticism from *Demokratiske Sosialister*.⁴⁶ At the same time, AKP never strove to build alliances, because its behaviour was based on a strict manifest, where the goal was to be the first to reach the dictatorship of the proletariat through a revolution.

⁴⁵ Klassekampen, "Stiftelseserklæring," *Klassekampen* 21.02.1973.

⁴⁶ Sigurd Allern, "Valgfront eller partikoalisjon," *ibid.* 4.4.1973.

2.1 AKP's memorandum and the following meeting with NKP

AKP's memorandum, published 21 February 1973 in *Klassekampen*, stated that AKP was to be built on the best of Norwegian communist traditions. It looked to the Thranitter-movement of 1848, the establishing of DNA in 1888 and the establishment of NKP in 1923 as motivation and guiding lights. However, all previous attempts of a Norwegian communist party had failed as they all had started as revolutionary working-class parties who lost their revolutionary dimension over time. AKP, on the other hand, was to succeed as the fourth and final attempt which was necessary because of the bourgeoisie class' continuous exploitation of the working-class and AKP argued that a revolutionary working-class party was needed as long as a class-based system existed.⁴⁷

AKP's members were prepared to argue for the establishment, expecting criticism regarding the necessity of a new communist party: "Some may ask: Is it necessary with a new political party based in the labour union? Wouldn't it increase the disunity and create confusion in a difficult situation, which demands unity against the class-enemy?"⁴⁸ The answer to these questions was:

We agree that disunity in the Norwegian labour movement is unwanted. However, AKP cannot be blamed for the disunity. The foundation of the disunity was first laid by DNA, and later by NKP when they broke with the revolutionary foundation. They are the ones who broke with the original goal of the labour movement; they are responsible for the disunity and not those who defend the labour union. AKP is necessary because a Norwegian revolutionary communist party is necessary if socialism is to become a reality at some point.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Klassekampen, "Stiftelseserklæring," *ibid.* 21.02.1973, 6.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

NKP had failed through its strong relationship with USSR and USSR's influence on NKP was unacceptable because a communist party should be independent of foreign interference, according to AKP.⁵⁰

Both NKP and AKP spoke at a meeting at The Norwegian Students' Society (DNS) in March 1973, where the topic was the necessity of the new Marxist-Leninist party, which both *Klassekampen* and *Friheten* reported on. *Friheten* was critical to AKP, while *Klassekampen* defended the establishment as it had close ties to AKP. NKP leader Reidar T. Larsen was unhappy with the situation and argued that AKP did not bring anything new to the Norwegian political context since NKP defended and represented the Norwegian working class and fought for a revolution. AKP, on the other hand, was a group of teenagers with unacceptable behaviour and without political experience. AKP's predecessors, SUF (m-l) and *Marxist-Leninistiske Grupper* (Marxist-Leninist Groups) (MLG) had committed sectarian errors and had as late as in 1972 pointed out NKP and SF as their main tactical enemies. Therefore, Larsen argued that the arguments for the new party were weak. Nevertheless, he acknowledged the Maoists democratic right to establish a party if they wanted to.⁵¹

Newly elected leader of AKP, Sigurd Allern, was happy with AKP being established and made it clear that AKP was not a friend of NKP, and that the DNS meeting marked a divorce within the communist family. NKP was not Marxist-Leninist and did not work for a revolution as Larsen claimed. NKP did no longer support an armed revolution, but rather a peaceful parliamentary transition from democracy to communism. Allern responded to people who had accused AKP of having close ties to China by pointing to NKP's relation to USSR and how it was far more worrying since AKP argued that USSR was neither a communist nor a socialist state. Instead, USSR was a social-imperialist and capitalist state.⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ *Friheten*, "Svake argumenter for å danne AKP," *Friheten* 12.3.1973.

⁵² Ibid.

2.2 Denial of AKP participation in leftist cooperation

The electoral alliance decided to not include AKP in March 1973 after an ultimatum from *Demokratiske Sosialister*. The exclusion forced AKP to find another solution for the upcoming election in the autumn of 1973 since it had no interest in supporting an alliance it had been excluded from. Allern saw the exclusion of AKP as a confirmation that SF, *Demokratiske Sosialister* and NKP did not want to empower the political left-wing and that the electoral alliance had no future. Also, the SF-newspaper *Orientering* (Orientation) had revealed that the electoral-alliance was to be the first step towards the establishment of a new, united party. Allern was not interested in risking AKP's future for a non-communist, leftist catch-all party.⁵³

Klassekampen published a statement from the Political Committee of AKP where it stated that it was in favour of a broad leftist coalition in the national election of 1973 but was sad to inform that it seemed difficult to obtain because of AKP's exclusion. The exclusion was characterised as anti-communism and increased the leftist disunity ahead of the election. At the same time, AKP still hoped that the electoral alliance would change its mind and include AKP.⁵⁴ However, the hope was shattered in April when it became clear that the alliance was the first step towards a new, bigger and united left-wing party. *Demokratiske Sosialister's* ultimatum to exclude AKP from the electoral alliance had been accepted, and *Klassekampen* suspected that the alliance feared that AKP would grow into a real threat. Despite this, AKP was willing to negotiate with the parties if they were to change their minds.⁵⁵

AKP tried one last time to be included in the alliance with an open letter in July 1973, right before the deadline for registering parties for the election. AKP argued that it agreed with the alliance about the need of a united leftist force, creating an alternative and opposition to both the social-democrats, the bourgeois parties and the

⁵³ Allern, "Valgfront eller partikoalisjon."

⁵⁴ "Stortingsvalget uttalelse fra AKP (m-l)," *Klassekampen* 28.3.1973.

⁵⁵ *Klassekampen*, "Teller snevre partitaktiske hensyn mest?," *ibid.* 11.4.1973.

new right-wing party, *Anders Langes Parti*⁵⁶. AKP wanted to gather the left-wing parties and independent socialists and promoted that there at least should be a friendly tone between AKP and the electoral alliance if the approach was declined. AKP saw a united working class as a way to focus on those who had betrayed the Norwegian working class, and that the left-wing parties should strive to not use unnecessary energy on each other.⁵⁷

However, the alliance did not have a change of heart and AKP decided to run alone in the election and informed the Ministry of Local Government of its intent. NKP opposed and complained to the Ministry that ‘AKP’ was too similar of a name to ‘NKP’, which the Ministry agreed to. The ministry said that ‘AKP’ was too similar to ‘NKP’ and it could confuse the voters. The Ministry’s decision irritated AKP who argued that it had a right to run under AKP since it was the only communist party in Norway while NKP was a revisionist party. AKP solved the hindrance by creating an electoral organisation named Red Electoral Alliance⁵⁸ (RV), which was accepted by the Ministry.⁵⁹

NKP member, Åge Fjeld, wrote an article in *Klassekampen* where he addressed the concerns within NKP regarding AKP and the electoral alliance. He claimed that some people were positive to include AKP in the alliance within every party, but that they were a minority. The key argument for the exclusion was that AKP had a history of being unpredictable and that a sudden change of heart could constitute a problem for the alliance. For instance, AKP had previously run an election boycott, and NKP and SF had been characterised as AKP’s main tactical enemies. The systematic secrecy in AKP was also a worry to Fjeld as parts of AKP’s leadership were kept secret from the

⁵⁶ The full name was: *Anders Langes Parti til sterk nedsettelse av skatter, avgifter og offentlige inngrep* (Anders Lange’s party for the reduction of taxes, charges and public encroachments), changed name to the Progress Party in 1977.

⁵⁷ *Klassekampen*, "Åpent brev til valgforbundet," *Klassekampen* 4.7.1973.

⁵⁸ Not to be confused with what is called “the electoral alliance” in this thesis.

⁵⁹ Steigan, *En folkefiende*, 260-61.

public, and he believed such secrecy belonged to wartimes and countries with fascist regimes.⁶⁰

However, Fjeld ended his article with some positive notes regarding AKP's entry in Norwegian politics. He noted that NKP's new Policy manifesto had a clearer revolutionary form than previous editions because of AKP's entry into Norwegian politics. It had created a demand for NKP to renew itself to stay relevant. Besides, Fjeld and others were positive to the development in AKP's policy, as it was clear that AKP became increasingly similar to the other left-wing parties.⁶¹

2.3 "In a revolution, the pacifist-socialists end up in the churchyard."

Both AKP and NKP claimed to be the only rightful Norwegian communist party, which unavoidably led to criticism and conflict. In a *Klassekampen* interview with Reidar T. Larsen, Larsen and the journalist had an intense discussion in which they were both equally critical of one another. Larsen called AKP a reactionary party while the journalist accused NKP of being a revisionist party.⁶² Pål Steigan, a member of AKP's leadership, discussed NKP's policy manifesto in a three-piece article and argued that NKP was ambivalent and unclear about the path to communism regarding the necessity of a revolution. NKP's claim of a peaceful transition to communism from a capitalist system was naïve in Steigan's eyes. He argued that NKP did not discuss if the state was created by, and for, the bourgeoisie class or if it was a neutral apparatus that could be utilised by whomever. AKP, on the other hand, saw the state system as a bourgeois tool and would be impossible for the working class to rule with the existing state apparatus.⁶³

⁶⁰ Åge Fjeld, "Oppklaring og perspektiver," *Klassekampen* 1.8.1973.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² *Klassekampen*, "Den moderne revisjonismen: Et svik mot arbeiderklassens interesser," *ibid.* 14.11.1973.

⁶³ Pål Steigan, "NKP's programutkast: Hvilken vei velger NKP? Del 1," *ibid.* 3.5.1973.

NKP's policy manifesto-draft included a five-step path to communism: 1) Forming the electoral alliance. 2) Electoral success for the alliance. 3) Establish a democratic government with a majority in parliament. 4) The government makes an 'all-encompassing democratisation' of the state and creates a state in covenant with the desire of the majority. So 5) would lead the way for the revolutionary democratisation process where the goal is to abolish capitalism and create a socialist production regime. The five steps were of high interest to Steigan, and he was especially critical to one of them. He argued that NKP had implemented a new step between capitalism and communism – the democratic state that was in line with the majority's interests. The new point was not true to the spirit of Lenin and Marx according to Steigan. It was proof of NKP no longer being a communist party. He furthermore argued that a similar strategy had been laid out by the former leader of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, which confirmed NKP's tight bond to USSR and that NKP contradicted Lenin.⁶⁴ The draft lacked proof of NKP not being a puppet of the Soviet Union, and the decision not to mention the sovereignty of Czechoslovakia, in relevance to the USSR's march into Prague in 1968 was astounding. Overall, the draft did not argue in favour of NKP's independence from USSR. Steigan saw AKP and NKP as rivals and ended his three-piece article by asking his comrades the rhetorical question: "Now, comrades, which side are you on?"⁶⁵

NKP's draft led to a formal manifesto presented and adopted at the party's Congress in October 1973. Steigan analysed the adopted manifesto that he claimed was unnecessarily negative to AKP compared to other parties, which disappointed him. Steigan presumed that the 'leftist-opportunists' were the members of AKP and he did not agree that AKP was worse than the more rightist parties: The Liberal Party, the Christian Democratic Party and Centre Party. Similarly, Steigan had difficulties

⁶⁴ "NKP's programutkast: Hvilken vei velger NKP? Del 2," *Klassekampen* 9.5.1973.

⁶⁵ "NKP's programutkast: Hvilken vei velger NKP? Del 3," *Klassekampen* 16.5.1973, 8.

believing that the manifesto was representative for anyone outside of NKP's central leadership since he knew about regional branches of NKP who were positive to AKP.⁶⁶

As mentioned previously, whether an armed revolution was necessary or not was a hotspot for discussion for the two parties. AKP leader, Sigurd Allern, was clear about the necessity for an armed revolution, and more specifically a 'people's army' in an interview in *Klassekampen*. A people's army was needed because no small country could expect protection from an imperialist superpower. The country, therefore, needed an army in order to defend itself. However, the people's army had to be based on a leadership grounded in the working class according to Allern, or else it would not be functional. The main function of the army would be to create a strong, organised, united front, and a strong communist party would empower it.⁶⁷

The weapons would be useful in the future revolution since history had shown that the peaceful way to communism was neither reliable nor functional. NKP had failed fundamentally at that point, with its openness to a peaceful, democratic transition, according to Allern. He argued that an attempt to overthrow a reactionary state system, unarmed, would fail. It would instead lead to every man and woman ending up in the churchyard – together with the other pacifist-socialists.⁶⁸

NKP's criticism did not revolve around a possible revolution. Instead, NKP accused AKP of not representing the labour movement or the working class, but rather the bourgeois people who threw away good education at universities to proletarianise. NKP argued that the Maoists pretended, and attempted, to fake themselves into becoming working-class heroes. NKP's perception of AKP being rooted in the bourgeoisie class made it easier for NKP to make sense out of AKP's harsh anti-Sovietism since anti-Sovietism was a bourgeois trait. NKP thus believed that AKP had a secret agenda.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ "Skal støtten til Moskva styrkes?," *Klassekampen* 31.10.1973.

⁶⁷ *Klassekampen*, "Supermaktene sloss om å dominere Europa," *ibid.* 9.10.1974.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Arne Jørgensen, "Tanker om Mr. Jacksons rapport," *Friheten* 19.8.1974.

2.4 The problem of the Soviet Union

Chief editor of *Friheten* and member of NKP, Arne Jørgensen, claimed that AKP believed in an antagonistic relationship between China and USSR, that only one of them could be a proper communist state. NKP, on the other hand, was neutral in its view between the two countries.⁷⁰ NKP felt, despite being self-proclaimed neutral, that the Soviet Union was a victim of vocal attacks from the bourgeoisie, social-democrats and the so-called left-wing parties like AKP.⁷¹ AKP, on the other hand, stated that it was unscientific to say that USSR was a socialist country whereas NKP argued that AKP lacked evidence for such an accusation. Moreover, in an analysis in *Klassekampen*, USSR was accused of being a “bureaucratic monopoly-capitalist dictatorship, with fascist traits in its politics and an imperialist foreign policy”.⁷² The analysis was written by scholar Johan Galtung who was a self-proclaimed Maoist, but not a member of AKP. NKP-member, Reni Høigaard responded to Galtung in *Friheten* where he argued that no true Marxist-Leninist could end up with, or support, Galtung’s conclusion. Høigaard claimed that the Maoists lacked knowledge about both communism and capitalism since they clearly did not know the difference. Also, it was inconvenient that AKP perceived USSR in such a hostile way because a more positive perception could have made cooperating with AKP more appealing to NKP.⁷³

The tension between AKP and NKP became more evident throughout 1974 as AKP was increasingly accused of anti-Sovietism and accusations of anti-communism were being thrown back and forth. USSR’s march into Czechoslovakia on 21 August 1968, and whether USSR had an imperialist foreign policy or not, re-occurred as a topic and created disunity between the parties. AKP decided, together with Red Youths, DNS and The Norwegian Communist Student Association to arrange a demonstration at the six-year commemoration of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. They also

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Torger Størseth, "Vår proletariske internasjonalsisme," *ibid.* 27.5.1974.

⁷² Reni Høigaard, "En fredsforskers forunderlige reiser," *ibid.* 6.5.1974, 11.

⁷³ Ibid.

demonstrated against NATO, the Warsaw-pact and the pan-European security scheme, which Arne Jørgensen, chief editor of *Friheten*, viewed as an anti-communist campaign against USSR.⁷⁴

Jørgensen's accusations against the demonstration were perceived as support of USSR's occupation of Czechoslovakia by AKP, and it seemed like the Maoists were disappointed by NKP's continuous support of USSR's 'military procedure' after six years. *Friheten* had in 1968 written that "the troops must leave", but the troops' presence was apparently acceptable in 1974. NKP was, according to *Klassekampen*, undoubtedly defending, and supporting, social-imperialism.⁷⁵ NKP's board member, Kolbjørn Harbu, saw AKP's statements about USSR as a case of anti-Sovietism and anti-communism. *Klassekampen*, on the other hand, saw Harbu's criticism as a political echo of USSR. *Klassekampen* argued that it was impossible that NKP was a communist party because of its support of a social-imperialist state like USSR.⁷⁶ AKP's accusations against NKP and USSR in the early spring of 1974 was a continuation of the article "Pro-Soviet fifth column in Norway?"⁷⁷ by Tron Øgrim in *Røde Fane*, in which he discussed the likelihood of any parties or persons in Norway supporting USSR if it came to USSR invading Norway – an invasion AKP viewed as highly likely.⁷⁸

Øgrim argued that NKP was the only Moscow-loyal party in Norway and it was likely that NKP had a small number of potential 'quislings'⁷⁹ in its ranks. AKP, on the other hand, was the only party the Norwegian people could trust if it came to an invasion.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Arne Jørgensen, "AKP og UH i felles demonstrasjon 21. august," *ibid.* 12.8.1974.

⁷⁵ *Klassekampen*, "NKP-redaktøren: - Forsvarer okkupasjonen," *Klassekampen* 21.8.1974.

⁷⁶ Kolbjørn Harbu, "Kampen gjelder politikken - ikke personer," *Friheten* 11.3.1974; *Klassekampen*, "NKPs standpunkt: Et ekko av sovjets politikk," *Klassekampen* 13.3.1974.

⁷⁷ 'Fifth column' is a «[...] clandestine group or fraction of subversive agents who attempt to undermine a nation's solidarity by any means at their disposal», The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Fifth column," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Retrieved 27.04.2019 from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/fifth-column>).

⁷⁸ Tron Øgrim, "Pro-Sovjetisk femtekolonne i Norge?," *Røde Fane* 3, no. 1 (1974).

⁷⁹ Vidkun Quisling was prior to and during the Second World War the Norwegian equivalent to Judas and the name has since become a term for a traitor.

⁸⁰ Øgrim, "Pro-Sovjetisk femtekolonne i Norge?."

AKP accused NKP of supporting and defending USSR politics and actions – both in a national and international context. Øgrim excused many of the older members of NKP for being blinded by loyalty. He claimed that they did not understand how NKP had betrayed the Norwegian working class. USSR had, over the years, changed completely in terms of policy and politics, and it was argued that a contra-revolution had occurred in USSR that had removed the state from the Marxist-Leninist ideology. At the same time, Øgrim did not believe that all members of NKP were possible fifth columns. He stated that many of the local members, except the leadership, would realise what was right, and turn their back against USSR.⁸¹ NKP-member, Martin Gunnar Knutsen, answered Øgrim's accusations of NKP being a fifth column in *Friheten*, pointing out that NKP and its members were first and foremost Norwegian, and Norway would always be prioritised. Knutsen stated that Øgrim's accusations were a combination of anti-Sovietism and anti-communism and that Øgrim showed reactionary behaviour. Furthermore, Knutsen perceived Øgrim's article as dangerous. It legitimised a continuation of NKP and was as evil as those who spread suspicion about Norwegian communists' loyalty before the Second World War. He was nothing more than a provocateur creating disunity.⁸²

Based on its relation to USSR, NKP was accused by AKP of being a possible fifth column and being no communist party at all. AKP grounded its argument in Lenin's demand for the dictatorship of the proletariat and how it was the core of Marxism-Leninism. NKP's denial of the importance of the dictatorship of the proletariat implied that it could not be a Marxist-Leninist party. AKP perceived NKP's denial of Lenin as an insult to the whole communist ideology and NKP had distanced itself far from communism, together with the Soviet Union.⁸³ NKP saw the accusations from AKP as unjustified and meant that the Maoists had no evidence to back it up. NKP could not understand how the home of the October-revolution could be accused of not being a communist state. NKP viewed it as impossible that capitalism had been

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Martin Gunnar Knutsen, "Tron Øgrims provokasjon mot NKP," *Friheten* 22.4.1974.

⁸³ Klassekampen, "Muren, vårt vern, er partiet - sverdet er Lenins lære.," *Klassekampen* 30.1.1974.

introduced in USSR while Marxism was still spreading around the world.⁸⁴ The difference between the parties was anchored in the Sino-Soviet split and Mao's accusations against the Soviet Union.

AKP argued that it was fundamentally important for any communist party to distance itself from USSR in order to be taken seriously and characterised as a communist party. NKP maintained a strong relationship with USSR and was therefore worth criticising, according to AKP, since it had not understood that USSR in 1974 was a different country from the Soviet Union in the 1920s, 1940s and 1950s. The leaders of USSR were no longer representing, and fighting for the labour movement, but were a part of the bourgeoisie class.⁸⁵

2.5 May Day, May Day – Marching towards a collision

1 May in 1974 is explored in this chapter because the storyline shows that at least one party deliberately lies in its newspaper, but perhaps most likely both lied at some point.

Roald Halvorsen, who was expelled from NKP in 1949 as part of the *Furubotn-oppgjøret*, wrote an analysis of AKP's policy manifesto in *Friheten* early in 1974. He claimed that AKP in no way was the only communist party in Norway and that the Maoists' behaviour belonged on the right-wing due to their obsession with provoking NKP. Halvorsen argued that AKP's goal was to create disunity within the SV-project.⁸⁶ NKP-member Erik Eriksen supported Halvorsen in a later edition, in which he argued that NKP should strive not to use energy on the Maoists, but instead, focus on the real enemy – the capitalists and the capitalist system – and on unity within the working class. He argued that every single incident of disunity on the left-wing

⁸⁴ A., ""Klassekampen" kaster masken," *Friheten* 8.7.1974.

⁸⁵ Klassekampen, "Hva mener egentlig sv-ledelsen? Er kamp mot begge supermaktene en "provokasjon"?," *Klassekampen* 31.7.1974; "Livsfarlig å ikke kjempe mot begge supermaktene," *Klassekampen* 14.8.1974; *ibid.*

⁸⁶ Roald Halvorsen, "Roald Halvorsen på den faglige konferansen: Vi må gjenreise LO som kamporganisasjon," *Friheten* 7.1.1974.

was valued by the bourgeoisie class, which saw a successful 'divide and conquer'-strategy unfolding.⁸⁷

NKP-board member, Kolbjørn Harbu, showed signs of concern regarding the International Labour Day on 1 May, or 'May Day'⁸⁸. Ahead of May Day, the different parties had organised into different groups. The groups had the responsibility of planning the marches and parades, either together or separately. The groups most often sought to be bipartisan and not based in party politics. The organising was, according to Harbu, coloured by disunity and lack of consistency on the left-wing. The left-wing had lost track of its primary goal: to fight imperialism both nationally and internationally. Instead, they were competing and disagreeing about the themes for the main-parades in a possible joint march. The preparations were characterised by accusations and unwillingness to cooperate, often rooted in superficial differences. Harbu argued that AKP was to blame for the untidy process ahead of May Day, as AKP was too focused on attacking key people in DNA and LO instead of focusing on unifying topics.⁸⁹

The worries of NKP became a reality during the negotiations of a joint march. There were two organising groups on the Left that discussed the possibility of a joint march, and when they did not manage to cooperate, the respective party-newspapers framed their readers into believing that their party was innocent. NKP was represented through *Arbeiderfront 74* (Labour front 74) together with the electoral alliance, and AKP was represented through *Faglig 1. maifront* (Labour Union front of 1 of May). They disagreed heavily on the topics for a possible joint march. AKP wanted the parades to be based on party-politics while the electoral alliance wanted the labour union to work out the parades across party politics since May Day was the day of the labour union.⁹⁰ The negotiations between the two groups stalled in January, but an

⁸⁷ Erik Eriksen, "Venstrerevolusjonen og hva som må gjøres," *ibid.* 21.1.1974.

⁸⁸ By May Day I refer to 1 May as the International Labour Day and not to May Day as the traditional spring holiday.

⁸⁹ Harbu, "Kampen gjelder politikken - ikke personer."

⁹⁰ Friheten, "En brevutveksling om 1. mai," *ibid.* 25.1.1974.

exchange of letters published in *Friheten* kick-started the negotiations after resolving the misunderstandings.⁹¹ However, *Friheten* wrote later that a joint march was no longer on the table as a result of a series of provocations from AKP. NKP argued that AKP's desire to let party-politics influence the paroles had led to the breakdown. AKP had at the last minute demanded to include the parole 'Freedom for the Czechoslovakian people', according to NKP. The parole indicated that Czechoslovakia had been invaded by the Soviet Union in 1968 and had been occupied since. Furthermore, it implied that USSR had a social-imperialist foreign policy and was equally evil as the imperialist United States, which was unacceptable to *Arbeiderfront 74*.⁹²

Klassekampen interviewed Sverre Knutsen, who was a part of the leadership of AKP, about the Czechoslovakia-parole. He said that the reports in *Friheten* were untrue but acknowledged that the parole had caused problems. However, he argued that it was impossible for AKP to yield on the subject because of AKP's stance on social-imperialism. Knutsen claimed that the parole had been discussed as early as the first meeting between *Arbeiderfront 74* and *Faglig 1. maifront*. Representatives from the electoral alliance had at that point raised a concern about the connection between the Czechoslovakia-parole and the 'fight against imperialism'-parole. The organising groups had solved the issue by agreeing to separate the two paroles, making sure that there was no connection. However, when the two groups met again on 29 March, representatives from the electoral alliance had informed *Arbeiderfront 74* that the Czechoslovakia-parole was unacceptable and that *Arbeiderfront 74* had to break with *Faglig 1. maifront* if it refused to remove it from the march. The members of the electoral alliance saw the Czechoslovakia-parole as a major issue that created difficulty for them. Thus, *Arbeiderfront 74* was forced to inform *Faglig 1. maifront*

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² "AKP-provokasjon førte til 1. mai-brudd i Oslo: SV står samlet bak "Arbeiderfront 74"," *Friheten* 1.4.1974.

that it would have to withdraw, leaving *Faglig 1. maifront* shocked since the protocol was scheduled to be signed the next day.⁹³

At the day of signing, *Arbeiderfront 74* raised the issue with *Faglig 1. maifront* suggesting that the Czechoslovakia-parole could be a sub-parole. This implied that only those who walked behind the parole supported the message and not the whole march. *Arbeiderfront 74* accepted the suggestion, and the protocol was signed. However, only a few hours later a representative from *Arbeiderfront 74* called *Faglig 1. maifront* and said that it would have to break the cooperation if *Faglig 1. maifront* forced the full protocol, including the Czechoslovakia-parole, into action. The parts scheduled a new meeting on 1 April where the *Arbeiderfront 74*-representatives demanded the Czechoslovakia-parole excluded from the joint march – in effect censoring the subject according to AKP-leader, Allern.⁹⁴

AKP assumed that *Arbeiderfront 74* made a U-turn because of all the Moscow-supporters in NKP who also held central positions in the electoral alliance, thus wielding influence over *Arbeiderfront 74*. AKP believed that the Moscow-supporters could not handle criticism against USSR and argued that the NKP-members acted as anti-communists and pro-imperialists. *Arbeiderfront 74*'s demands were unacceptable to *Faglig 1. maifront* because the freedom of the Czechoslovakian people was perceived as essential. The lack of willingness and the absence of consistency in *Arbeiderfront 74*'s approach towards cooperation on May Day 1974 was not presented in *Friheten*, which was why *Friheten* argued that AKP was to blame for the breakdown.⁹⁵ *Friheten* claimed that AKP never really wanted a joint march and, in the end, Harbu warned *Friheten*'s readers against cooperating with the Maoists. He accused AKP of creating disunity and conflict within the working class, and the labour

⁹³ Klassekampen, "- Avvis all splittelse 1. mai - enhet på klassekampens grunnlag," *Klassekampen* 18.4.1974.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

union. AKP exploited May Day as a means to promote anti-communism, according to Harbu.⁹⁶

In the days after May Day *Friheten* reported about several occurrences where the Maoists had broken their agreements with NKP in different regions of Norway. An occurrence in Elverum was heavily reported after the jointly elected speaker from AKP said that USSR was an imperialist state in his speech, which made NKP-members react with anger. The speaker, Tor Obrestad, was a member of AKP, which led *Friheten* to accuse AKP of breaking the agreement. However, Obrestad wrote an answer to *Friheten* where he disagreed with the foundation of *Friheten's* accusation. He claimed that he had followed the agreement and had held a speech that was within the topic of the paroles of the march with one parole being 'Fight against imperialism'. Obrestad argued that he saw the situation in Czechoslovakia as an example of imperialism, and that was why his speech should be acceptable to NKP.⁹⁷

NKP began to speculate on why Czechoslovakia was so important to AKP and thought that the Maoists perhaps used Czechoslovakia as a means to spread confusion and disunity on the left-wing. It was possible that AKP was a puppet for the Chinese leaders, and that it used Czechoslovakia to shift focus away from the American presence in West-Germany, which the Chinese leaders had proclaimed was necessary. The anti-Sovietism in AKP had blinded the members, according to NKP, who furthermore argued that AKP did not see the danger the United States amounted in West-Germany and that the real imperialist was not the Soviet Union, but the US and NATO.⁹⁸

May Day grew to be a day that represented disunity, disloyalty and reluctance to cooperate for NKP and AKP's relationship.⁹⁹ NKP felt that AKP's treatment of an important, traditional day like the International Labour Day showed a lack of dignity. Also, the willingness to sacrifice 1 May was proof that AKP was an opportunist party.

⁹⁶ Kolbjørn Harbu, "Kampen for 1. mai-kravene," *Friheten* 6.5.1974.

⁹⁷ Tor Obrestad, "Kven skal ein solidariserere seg med?," *ibid.* 13.5.1974.

⁹⁸ *Friheten*, "Svar til Obrestad," *ibid.*

⁹⁹ "Splittelsesmanøvre 1. mai," *Friheten* 6.5.1974.

AKP on the other hand probably felt that it acted according to the expectations of a Marxist-Leninist party, and May Day was just further proof that AKP was the only true communist party in Norway.¹⁰⁰ It could be assumed that NKP expected more of AKP since NKP had experience as a political party and knew the importance of 'give and take' in politics, while AKP only saw the 'gives' as opportunities that could be exploited. As Harbu wrote in his warning: AKP had to grow up and show a different approach and mindset before anyone should consider cooperating with it again. Whether it was on May Day or another happening.¹⁰¹

2.6 Revisionism and reactionary behaviour

Scholar Johan Galtung's analysis of the Soviet Union, which was mentioned previously in this chapter, provoked NKP considerably. USSR was accused of being a revisionist, social-imperialist state and *Klassekampen's* decision to print Galtung's analysis was perceived as an attack on NKP by Torger Størseth. Størseth, who was member of NKP, claimed that the analysis was a part of a bigger propaganda scheme and that NKP should strive not to take the bait as it was unwise to waste precious column space on AKP. However, the accusations from *Klassekampen* were too severe and could not be left unchallenged. AKP was a part of a larger international movement with the intention to attack socialist countries and communist parties, with the Chinese Communist Party as their leader, according to Størseth. He also saw Maoism as a clear opposition and danger to Marxism-Leninism as it sought to divide existing communist parties and to confuse other socialists.¹⁰²

The accusations were followed by critique against the Chinese Communist Party. Størseth argued that it was not a communist party and that the policy was similar to, and supportive of, imperialism.¹⁰³ Størseth's accusation against China was very similar to what AKP said about USSR. The battle against AKP and the imperialism

¹⁰⁰ Kjell Gulbrandsen, "AKPs vandring i blinde," *ibid.* 24.6.1974.

¹⁰¹ Kolbjørn Harbu, "Kampen for 1. mai-kravene," *ibid.* 6.5.1974.

¹⁰² Torger Størseth, "Vår proletariske internasjonisme," *ibid.* 27.5.1974.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

in China was an absolute necessity because imperialism was tangled into many other issues at the time. Imperialism and capitalism could not be separated, and the fight against the capitalist forces was a key factor to reach communism. Additionally, the fight against capitalism was an international one, and not unique to Norway. It was, therefore, important to engage in the discussion and fight for USSR against the Maoists who tried to establish a consensus where USSR was equally evil as the United States.¹⁰⁴ However, Størseth's claims were not representative of the entire NKP. Fellow NKP-member Åge Fjeld commented on the article a few weeks later and said that NKP members should not speak in absolutes. Fjeld sought to empower NKP's position as a self-proclaimed, neutral communist party regarding the opinion in certain countries were communist or not. He argued that NKP-members should not strive to undermine socialist countries, as it only helped the bourgeois. It was also important to leave such unwanted behaviour to the provocateurs on the left-wing, pointing to AKP.¹⁰⁵

Another NKP member, Kjell Gulbrandsen, argued that AKP acted fanatically and that the Maoists perceived anything positive for USSR as something negative. An example of this was how the Maoists originally were against NATO, but since USSR was against NATO, AKP was positive to the defence-alliance. AKP was a party without a backbone, and Gulbrandsen argued that the Maoists belonged together with Haakon Lie¹⁰⁶ and Anders Lange¹⁰⁷ regarding their anti-Sovietism.¹⁰⁸ NKP basically saw the accusations against USSR as both anti-communist and anti-Soviet, and that AKP's behaviour only proved that the Maoists were reactionary. Moreover, there was a continuation in the argument of AKP not having roots in the working class, but rather representatives for the bourgeois. The tie to the bourgeoisie class explained

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Åge Fjeld, "Størseth på AKP-nivå," *ibid.* 10.6.1974.

¹⁰⁶ Haakon Lie was a prominent Norwegian politician who was an opponent of authoritarian regimes and ideologies, like communism, and worked to empower the thought of democracy as fundamental for Norwegian politics.

¹⁰⁷ Anders Lange was the founder of the right-wing party *Anders Langes Parti*, and he was heavily against public encroachment and subsequently high taxes and socialism.

¹⁰⁸ Gulbrandsen, "AKPs vandring i blinde."

why the Maoists behaved as they did and why they were against USSR – because they were anti-Soviet in their nature of being bourgeois people.¹⁰⁹

2.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have looked at how the relationship between AKP and NKP deteriorated quickly after AKP was established. I have tried to find and expose the underlying causes of why the relationship developed so badly by pointing to the different views of USSR as the most consequential one. Also, the difference in the parties' composition has been discussed, including how AKP seems to have more sense of a purpose as a result of being established for a reason because NKP had failed in its task as a communist party. AKP was established to fight for the working class, striving to reach the dictatorship of the proletariat and then communism in Norway.¹¹⁰

I have shown how the parties wrote and spoke about each other and how AKP perhaps was more eager in its actions because of a need to legitimise itself. May Day 1974 has served as an example of how a small disagreement that was necessary for possible cooperation caused a breakdown between the parties. It shows how fragile the relationship was and how *Klassekampen* and *Friheten* framed happenings differently, leading their readers to believe that their respective party had acted perfectly while the other was the guilty party.

It has been essential to show how AKP and NKP strongly disagreed regarding who was the rightful Marxist-Leninist party with roots in different branches of the Marxist theory. At the same time, it seems both parties were open to cooperation on some level, which is entirely different from the situation that will be described in the following two chapters. In the 1973-1974 period, AKP was open to cooperation. The same was NKP, who cooperated with other left-wing parties on the electoral alliance, but AKP was viewed as a threat to the cooperation. NKP showed little willingness to

¹⁰⁹ A., ""Klassekampen" kaster masken," *ibid.* 8.7.1974.

¹¹⁰ Røde Fane, "Kulturrevolusjonen i Kina," *Røde Fane* 3, no. 5 (1974).

give into AKP's several attempts to be included in the electoral alliance. The exclusion of AKP seems to have reinforced its view of the other parties, feeling frustrated about being left out and not considered necessary or relevant enough despite AKP itself feeling that it represented the most crucial task in the world.

AKP's behaviour of accusing NKP, time after time, for deviating to the Right was viewed as unjustifiable by NKP. The Maoists, on the other hand, was accused of having too many internal problems that needed to be solved before they could become a prominent and active part of the Norwegian political milieu. Gulbrandsen described what could almost be designated as a concern for AKP. According to him, it seemed like AKP was so eager to compete with the other parties that it lost track of its origin and the purpose of being a communist party.¹¹¹ Jørgensen's thesis was that the fanatical Maoists only wanted to confuse, divide and destroy the work on unity in the labour movement – they were anti-communists who belonged together with the rest of the bourgeois in parties like the Young Conservatives.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Gulbrandsen, "AKPs vandring i blinde."

¹¹² Arne Jørgensen, "AKP og UH i felles demonstrasjon 21. august," *ibid.* 12.8.1974.

Chapter 3

1975-1976: From cooperation to isolation

The period between 1975 and 1976 stood in stark contrast to the period between 1973 and 1974 where the focus was on cooperation for both parties. Although, I have shown that NKP was clearly more sceptical about cooperating with AKP than vice versa. This chapter examines the factors that led to the change in the parties' approach towards each other and looks at how they tried to make each other insignificant in Norwegian politics. Both parties started to paint a hostile picture of the other, and both parties went through internal changes that impinged upon the evolution of their relationship. AKP became increasingly invested in the importance of criticising and taking distance from the other left-wing parties because of Øgrim's 'Theses of right deviation', and NKP became more isolated and determined in its policy after the split from the SV-project.

3.1 Internal revision

3.1.1 Tron Øgrim's 'Theses of right deviation.'

AKP drastically changed direction in 1975 partly because of the adoption of Tron Øgrim's 'theses of right deviation'. It would, fundamentally, change the policy of the party and it also led to Sigurd Allern resigning as leader of the party with Pål Steigan being elected as his successor. Steigan would continue as the leader until 1984.¹¹³

Øgrim's theses were originally a 100-page long document that discussed AKP's failures over the last years, starting in 1972. It demanded AKP to be more ruthless in its approach and never compromise for the sake of cooperation. Øgrim stressed the importance of remembering the purpose of the party, and how essential it was to not deviate from the path to communism. The party's deviations could, in their ultimate consequence, annihilate the party, according to Øgrim. It was thus essential for AKP

¹¹³ For more information, see: Steigan, *En folkefiende*.

to get back on track before the party became severely hurt.¹¹⁴ The theses were written by Øgrim alone, and the members of AKP were not given the opportunity to have their say on the matter as Øgrim gave the theses directly to the leadership of AKP, who decided to implement them. This is a clear example of democratic centralism. The process regarding the theses marked a new type of decision-making for AKP since the party usually had focused on developing politics 'by the masses – for the masses.'¹¹⁵ Many issues were discussed in the theses, but for the purpose of this paper, the most relevant parts were those on structural change and how AKP needed to approach NKP differently.

The deviations within AKP had occurred in many ways. Most visible was the opinion that AKP had developed a wrongful understanding of the modern revisionism. The party had attempted to correct the faults as they came but had never confronted or identified the underlying causes, hence the necessity of the theses, according to Øgrim.¹¹⁶ One major problem was that the leaders had compromised while working for unity on the left-wing. Another significant problem was that the members had limited knowledge and awareness about the proletariat and Marxism-Leninism in general. This was because many of the uneducated members came from the lower middle or the bourgeoisie class. Thus, the bourgeois had influenced the party with right-wing politics because the party had forgotten that all revolutionary people, regardless of their background, had to have a deeper understanding of the proletariat. Øgrim's solution was to promote and demand that more members proletarianised since the lack of proletarian representation in the party were a de facto victory for the bourgeois and revisionist line. The party should also demand the members to study more, to acquire the necessary knowledge about both Marxist-Leninism and the proletariat. He stressed that AKP should remind the members that certain obligations followed with the membership. AKP was, according to Øgrim, no better

¹¹⁴ Tron Øgrim, "Teser om høyreavviket (1975)," (Forvaltningsorgan for AKPs partihistorie www.akp.no/ml-historie/2011), 39.

¹¹⁵ Steigan, *En folkefiende*, 294.

¹¹⁶ Øgrim, "Teser om høyreavviket (1975)," 9-10.

than the revisionist parties, like NKP, since it had let negativity, indifference and organisational decay take hold of the party.¹¹⁷

Øgrim argued that the modern revisionism was no longer a tool for the monopoly and the imperialist forces, but rather a tool for the up and coming, soon dominating power in the world, the Soviet Union. By this point, the modern revisionism amounted to a real threat not only to the working class but for world peace in general. Besides, the revisionist presence was an obstacle to all true communists and an obstacle on the road to communism because the revisionists had no interest in a communist society. That was the underlying reason why it was so important for AKP to distance itself from the revisionists, which was represented through NKP in Norway.¹¹⁸ USSR, as a social-imperialist state, was a threat to Norway, and NKP was the Norwegian puppet of it. AKP had, by seeking cooperation with NKP, deviated from the climactic fight against social-imperialism, which, in Øgrim's mind, was unacceptable.¹¹⁹

Although the theses were distributed to the AKP-masses in May 1976, when the members were told how AKP had a new policy regarding unity and bipartisanship, changes had already begun in 1975. Øgrim argued that AKP had, especially during the election in 1973, accepted the revisionist way too much. The reason for the acceptance had been the victory of the labour movement in the Norwegian referendum on membership in the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1972. The successful cooperation in 1972 had confused the Maoists and led them to believe that the leftist parties had much in common, which was false according to Øgrim. He claimed the cooperation had caused the adoption of revisionist traits.¹²⁰

The result of Øgrim's theses for AKP was sectarianism, extreme isolation and the power in the party to be concentrated in the leadership. This made internal debates

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 4, 42-43, 54-56.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 10.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 15-16.

¹²⁰ Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 105-06; Brekke, *Tron Øgrim : det revolusjonære fyrverkeri*, 162.

almost impossible.¹²¹ AKP became stricter in its view of NKP, consistently calling it a false communist party and a possible fifth column. NKP saw AKP's intensified hatred as a continuation of Haakon Lie and the McCarthy-era¹²² and that AKP's attitude towards NKP in the 1970s echoed the attitude of Young Conservatives during the 1950s. Furthermore, NKP perceived the policy-change in AKP as a continuation of its anti-communist work. Arne Jørgensen argued that AKP was hiding its true identity and that the organisational name functioned as a veil, hiding the truth. The 'truth' was that most members of AKP were bourgeois youth and that the party promoted an ideology that was nowhere near close to being Marxist-Leninist. AKP was a hoax, and the sole purpose of the party was to create disunity within the left-wing, to create distrust among the Norwegian communists and to create a hostile picture of the Soviet Union. All in line with the desire of the bourgeoisie class.¹²³

3.1.2 Godager's manuscript on how to handle AKP

In 1976, NKP-member, Ørnulf Godager, worked on a manuscript considering the Maoist problem in Norway. Although the article was published in 1978, it will be discussed in this chapter since the manuscript says something about how NKP viewed AKP in 1976.¹²⁴ The manuscript contained instructions for how NKP should respond to the Maoist behaviour, and Godager's key argument was that AKP was a party built on several ideologies, not only Maoism. AKP sought power instead of helping and representing the working class. The medley of ideologies influenced the strategy and politics of the Maoists and made it indistinct, and the Maoists forgot to think about what message they wanted to communicate. Instead, AKP was built on enthusiasm

¹²¹ *Tron Øgrim : det revolusjonære fyrverkeri*, 162.

¹²² The 'McCarthy-era' or 'McCarthyism' was "[...] the period of time in American history that saw [...] Sen. Joseph McCarthy produce a series of investigations and hearings during the 1950s in an effort to expose supposed communist infiltration in various areas of the U.S. government. The term has since become a byname for defamation of character or reputation by means of widely publicized indiscriminate allegations, especially on the basis of unsubstantiated charges", Paul. J. Achter, "McCarthyism," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Retrieved 24.04.2019 from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/McCarthyism>).

¹²³ Arne Jørgensen, "'Ny verdenskrig er uunngåelig'," *Friheten* 13.10.1975; Øgrim, "Teser om høyreavviket (1975)."

¹²⁴ Kjell Gulbrandsen, "Viktig hefte om maoismen i Norge," *Friheten*, No. 39, 1978.

and desire. The equivocal foundation of AKP led the party to embrace a very different worldview than NKP with AKP arguing that USSR was an imperialist superpower and that a Third World War would occur within five years. Godager argued that AKP's worldview led it to overlook the possibility of a peaceful transition to communism. AKP was, according to Godager, not a Marxist, proletarian or communist party and NKP should, therefore, strive to distance itself from AKP in terms of ideology and politics.¹²⁵ In a sense, Godager agreed with Øgrim that it was important with a distance between the parties. Thus, there was an internal promotion of distancing the parties in both AKP and NKP, mostly anchored in domestic policy.

Furthermore, Godager claimed that the anti-Soviet trait was introduced to the Maoists long before AKP was established. Anti-Sovietism was a trait that demonstrated true anti-communism and AKP shared this trait with DNA and the bourgeois parties. The difference between AKP and DNA was that the trait was much more evident and stronger in AKP and it could only be compared to the hatred certain right-wing parties showed towards USSR. Godager stated that AKP's foreign policy was anchored in anti-Sovietism, but that it also affected the views on domestic politics for AKP, which came to light in AKP's agenda against NKP.¹²⁶

Moreover, AKP was the reason for the problems regarding cooperation between the left-wing parties, and the Maoists' fundamental lack of showing respect and ability to cooperate had influenced the other parties. The bipartisan aura that had led to victory in the fight against Norwegian EEC-membership had vanished because of AKP's perception of everyone else being possible enemies. Godager was especially annoyed by AKP's approach in attempts of cooperation. AKP demanded that all contact was to be held on AKP's premises and that a joint march on May Day had to serve all the goals of AKP - with no possibilities for compromises.¹²⁷ He concluded that AKP was a

¹²⁵ AAB. NKP's archive – ARK110. D: Saksarkiv 1907-1991. Saker, 140.11-150.24 1976. 150.0 Andre organisasjoner 1976: 150.7: Ørnulf Godager, "Hvilke problemer fører virksomheten til AKP med seg; og hva bør NKP gjøre i den forbindelse?"

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

significant problem, but much smaller than the reformism of DNA. It was, therefore, important not to use much energy on AKP and instead strive to be present at happening, namely strikes and demonstrations. NKP needed to be more visible and make it clear to others that it was the only real alternative if the working class was to beat the social-democratic forces in DNA and LO.¹²⁸

3.2 The SV-project: From fusion to collision

NKP was, like many other communist parties in Western Europe, lacking popular support. The SV-project was an attempt at breaking out of the political isolation it had been left in since Gerhardsen's Kråkerøy-speech in 1948. As a result of the bipartisan success in the EEC-debate, several parties and groups on the Left decided to explore the possibility of establishing a new party based on the electoral alliance, namely *Sosialistisk Valgforbund*.¹²⁹ The new party, the Socialist Left Party, was established at the Congress in March 1975 with the participating parties set to dissolve within January 1977.¹³⁰ It ended with NKP breaking with SV in November 1975 after internal dispute and discussion and the decision led NKP into isolation according to Dag Jostein Juvkam. Reidar T. Larsen quit as leader of NKP, and joined the Socialist Left Party, while Martin Gunnar Knutsen became the new leader of NKP. Moreover, Trond Gilberg wrote that the new leadership was less willing to cooperate with the other left-wing parties and that NKP had become of little significance in Norwegian politics. The Maoists perceived the election of Martin Gunnar Knutsen as the new leader as a sign of NKP consolidating with the Soviet Union, and that NKP would in increasing extent follow the orders of USSR in the

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Trond Gilberg, "Communism in the Nordic Countries: Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland," in *The changing face of Western communism*, ed. David Childs (London, England: Croom Helm, 1980), 249.

¹³⁰ Juvkam, "Et uunngåelig brudd? : Norges Kommunistiske Partis holdning til venstresamarbeid og samling i Sosialistisk Venstreparti, årene 1970-75," 94. See Juvkam's thesis for a thorough review of the SV-project and NKP's decision not to be a part of it.

future.¹³¹ Ole Martin Rønning wrote that as Larsen left NKP, the party kick-started its study-trips to USSR again and the relationship between NKP and USSR grew increasingly important and was tight until the fall of the communist movement with the fall of the Berlin Wall.¹³²

Juvkam's assertion of NKP isolating itself can be explained by NKP's new leadership's acknowledgement that the party needed to have a clearer policy to survive. The new leadership expected that both SV and AKP would try to attack NKP. The re-shaping of NKP led Martin G. Knutsen to be called a "110 per cent obedient jack" of USSR and Brezhnev by AKP.¹³³ AKP had followed the development of SV closely and speculated that Moscow would not allow NKP to dissolve in order to be a part of SV. NKP's break, therefore, functioned as a confirmation of AKP's theory. Additionally, AKP saw NKP's strengthened bond with USSR as dangerous and the accusation of NKP being a fifth column intensified.¹³⁴

Martin G. Knutsen, the new leader of NKP, spoke at the party's Congress. His speech was interpreted by the Maoists as an attack on both AKP and China. NKP had formerly been self-proclaimed neutral in terms of the Sino-Soviet relationship, but Knutsen criticised the development in China the Maoist's claim of a Third World War. He also said that AKP belonged on the right-wing because its behaviour was anti-communist and that AKP, or 'the bourgeois provocateurs' as he called the members, were a threat to NKP. Therefore, he demanded a stricter policy for NKP regarding cooperation.¹³⁵ Knutsen argued that NKP still was a neutral party and claimed that one could be critical to one part without being any closer to the other. Furthermore, Knutsen claimed that a neutral stance regarding the Sino-Soviet relationship was

¹³¹ Ibid., 82-83; Klassekampen, "Bryt enhver kontakt med Bresjnev-partiet!," *Klassekampen* 6.11.1975; Gilberg, "Communism in the Nordic Countries: Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland," 250.

¹³² Rønning, "Kommunistenes hemmelige skoloring".

¹³³ Observatør, "Mer Bresjnev enn Bresjnev sjøl," *Klassekampen* 9.3.1976, 3.

¹³⁴ Klassekampen, "Etter SV-splittelsen - hva nå? NKP er blitt et 100-prosent lojalt Bresjnev-parti. Se opp for NKP's "fredsarbeid" i fagbevegelsen," *ibid.* 3.12.1975; Observatør, "Mer Bresjnev enn Bresjnev sjøl," *ibid.* 9.3.1976; Klassekampen, "SF/NKP-striden: Kollisjonskurs - men likevel "manifest" kompromiss i mars?," *ibid.* 5.2.1975.

¹³⁵ "Etter SV-splittelsen - hva nå? NKP er blitt et 100-prosent lojalt Bresjnev-parti. Se opp for NKP's "fredsarbeid" i fagbevegelsen."

important to NKP and that all the talk about NKP being controlled by Moscow were rootless accusations.¹³⁶

The Maoists were provoked by the 'bourgeois media's'¹³⁷ portrayal of NKP/SV during the discussion about the SV-project that had been ongoing since the electoral alliance was established. The press wrote that NKP demanded SV to have a Marxist-Leninist manifesto, which AKP claimed misled the Norwegian people to believe that NKP was a Marxist-Leninist party. AKP-leader at that time, Sigurd Allern, called the portrayal of NKP for fake branding and that NKP knew that what the press wrote was a lie, but that NKP exploited the situation. At the same time, Allern only accused the leaders of being fake. He said that most members of NKP would flee the party if they realised what NKP had become and how far it was from what it previously had been.¹³⁸ However, over time the excuses for the NKP-members disappeared, and NKP had grown into a social-imperialist, Brezhnev-supporting party as a result of the consolidation with USSR. There were no longer any excuses for the older comrades of the party who remained members out of affection and affiliation. AKP saw every member of NKP as pure Brezhnev-supporting anti-communists. AKP, therefore, recommended that every progressive person, both within and outside of NKP, should distance themselves from NKP, because of NKP being more loyal to USSR than to Norway. It should be clear, as a result of NKP's break with SV, that AKP was the only viable option for the progressive, socialist individuals.¹³⁹

3.3 Mutual Criticism

NKP's break with SV was, according to AKP, the first step in a new, tragic, more social-imperialist and anti-communist direction for NKP. USSR's social-imperialism was a threat to socialist movements all over the world and communism could not

¹³⁶ "NKP-formannen husvarm hjå quislingen Husak," *Klassekampen* 13.1.1976.

¹³⁷ 'Bourgeois media' refers to the popular newspapers and news broadcasters such as *Aftenposten*, *Morgenbladet*, *Verdens Gang* and *NRK*.

¹³⁸ Sigurd Allern, "NKP, SV og "marxismen-leninismen"." *Klassekampen* 12.3.1975.

¹³⁹ Klassekampen, "Etter SV-splittelsen - hva nå? NKP er blitt et 100-prosent lojalt Bresjnev-parti. Se opp for NKP's "fredsarbeid" i fagbevegelsen," *ibid.* 3.12.1975.

function if social-imperialist forces existed as the revisionist would fight against a communist revolution. Martin G. Knutsen and NKP's leadership had betrayed and deceived the naïve NKP-members and told them lies about an alleged connection between AKP and the United States, comparing AKP-members to Nazis. The attitude of NKP towards AKP was, according to an AKP-member, so dangerous that he acknowledged that the Maoists would have been in serious trouble if NKP was a bigger and more influential party.¹⁴⁰ Luckily for AKP, NKP had low popular support and few members, with several prominent members switching to SV after NKP's break with SV.¹⁴¹

NKP did not believe that AKP had the bigger popular support than itself and claimed that the Maoists scored 0.2-0.6% on Gallups. NKP continued to argue that the Maoists members were opportunistic, bourgeois students. The NKP-member Åge Fjeld wrote that he understood that the milieu in AKP was tempting for youths and that the Maoists had an effective recruitment system. However, he perceived the foundation of the party to be fragile as many members were likely to turn their backs on the party as they got older, which left AKP with a problem. AKP lacked adults, and it lacked consistency in its behaviour. Nevertheless, AKP's well-organised recruiting was bad news to NKP, since it, in NKP's view, misled many potential cadres into the trap of Maoism. If NKP was to recruit the misled youth, it had to exploit the lies and betrayals of *Klassekampen* and AKP.¹⁴²

AKP's relationship to, and dependency on, China became a subject of criticism from 1975 by NKP. Maoism received criticism for having close ties to the conservative forces in China, and that it had distanced itself from Marxism and was no longer a continuation of the thoughts of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Mao was affected by his heritage, originating from the bourgeoisie class, and influenced by Chinese philosophy like Taoism and the thoughts of Confucius. NKP also criticised China for

¹⁴⁰ Røde Fane, "Programkritikk," *Røde Fane* 4, no. 6 (1976): 79.

¹⁴¹ O.F., "Sovjet truer Norge," *ibid.* 5, no. 4: 16.

¹⁴² Åge Fjeld, "Supermaktene og lakeibegrepet," *Friheten* 9.6.1975.

accepting visits from different European political leaders, with some of them being ultraconservative according to statements in *Friheten*.¹⁴³ Another NKP-member, Hylje Tveitdal, argued that AKP's chaotic behaviour, which the Maoists claimed to be in Marxists-Leninist spirit, was problematic. Tveitdal stated that AKP's approach made Marxism-Leninism difficult to understand for average people from the working class and that AKP created a gap between the 'intellectuals' in AKP and the rest.¹⁴⁴

The Maoists became heavily accused of being a reactionary party, and that several international happenings demonstrated that AKP supported anti-communist movements and it led to the speculation of AKP being a tool for the bourgeoisie class. Anti-communism had through the history been a rightist trait, both in Norway and internationally, and NKP saw it natural to suspect AKP of being a right-wing party. Most AKP-members were from a bourgeois milieu and had been influenced by the bourgeois propaganda against communism, which explained the Maoists attitude. NKP's problem was that as long as the rest of Norway did not realise that AKP was no communist party, the Norwegian people would continue to believe that AKP's actions were communist, which subsequently confirmed the bourgeoisie class' fear about communism.¹⁴⁵

NKP-member Knut Lindtner took the speculation about AKP being a tool for the bourgeoisie class one step further as he presented a theory where he connected the American foreign intelligence service, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and AKP. CIA operated all over the world and infiltrated organisations within milieus it found threatening. Additionally, a NATO-document that classified Norway as the most important country for the alliance had been leaked, and Lindtner found it reasonable to believe that the CIA operated in Norway as well. The primary goal of CIA in Norway would be to secure Norway as a NATO ally and make sure that the left-wing

¹⁴³ Ragnhild Riise, "Hva skjuler seg bak maoismen?," *ibid.* 5.7.1976; Arne Halvorsen, "Klassekampen og Kina-besøket til Strauss," *Klassekampen* 3.2.1975..

¹⁴⁴ Hylje Tveitdal, "Orden i rekkene," *Friheten* 4.8.1975.

¹⁴⁵ Regi Th. Enerstvedt, "Er AKP'erne kommunister? Noen betraktninger og en viktig slutning," *ibid.* 1.9.1975; Knut Lindtner, "Maoist-partiet er bra for CIA," *ibid.* 3.5.1976.

parties did not cause any problems. AKP's organisational structure, with systematic secrecy, made it a perfect organisation to infiltrate according to Lindtner since it would be difficult for AKP's members to figure it out. Furthermore, Lindtner argued that the Maoists had to accept the suspicion against them based on AKP's anti-communist and anti-Soviet behaviour.¹⁴⁶ *Klassekampen* responded to Lindtner's accusations, believing that Lindtner was alone in his opinion. *Klassekampen* argued that Lindtner was not a representative figure of NKP, but rather an outcast of the party. However, it was important not to ridicule Lindtner's behaviour as he was an example of how strained the relationship between AKP and NKP was, with many NKP-members echoing Haakon Lie.¹⁴⁷

This way of comparing the other party to Haakon Lie or Hitler/the Nazis became a defining feature of the discourse between the parties. One sought to compare the other with historical enemies of communism. Haakon Lie was the Norwegian example of this, while Hitler/the Nazis and McCarthy were the most used international examples. One NKP-member, Bjarne Bjørshol, claimed that AKP was equal to Hitler in the way it lied and deceived its members: "Adolf Hitler writes in 'Mein Kampf' that the falsere a lie is, the faster it is accepted as truth."¹⁴⁸ Bjørshol argued that AKP attacked the Soviet Union the same way as Nazi-Germany had done, as both claimed that USSR amounted a growing danger to the world. Nazi-Germany had tricked people into looking past the real danger, which at that time was Nazi-Germany. It was in the same way that AKP screamed about the danger of USSR when USSR was working for peaceful coexistence while the real agitators, NATO and the bourgeois class was promoted as peacebuilders when they, in reality, was legitimising a rebuilding of armies in western countries.¹⁴⁹

As a result of Øgrim's theses, this period is characterised by AKP as a time when it was necessary to exploit NKP, both in terms of faults and shortcomings, theoretically

¹⁴⁶ "Maoist-partiet er bra for CIA."

¹⁴⁷ Klassekampen, "Vårt liv som CIA-agent," *Klassekampen* 25.5.1976.

¹⁴⁸ Bjarne N. Bjørshol, "Anti-kommunisme i ny forkledning," *Friheten* 21.6.1976, 12.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

and in practice. The shortcomings in question would often be about the right way towards communism, and that the bourgeois state could not function as a tool to achieve communism. NKP had promoted an idea where the state would buy stocks in different companies and nationalise them, thus empowering the working class through the state. Such actions were perceived as revisionist since the state would become just another monopoly in the capitalist system, which in turn would lead to the exploitation of the working class. It was therefore essential with a revolution in order for the state system to become favourable of the working class. NKP's willingness to skip the revolution and attempt to utilise the capitalist state was revisionist, and NKP's suggestion would only give life-prolonging support to the dying capitalism, thus preventing the proletarian revolution. NKP's suggestion contradicted with the interest of the working class and showed why AKP was needed, NKP had failed the working class.¹⁵⁰ NKP's suggestion was an attempt to deceive its members, and the working class, in the same way as NKP tried to deceive people into believing that USSR was a socialist state when it, in reality, was a social-imperialist state.¹⁵¹

The relationship between AKP and NKP was growing increasingly hostile after Øgrim's theses and NKP's break with SV. By September 1976 it had reached an 'ice age' if we are to believe AKP-member Jon Michelet's portrayal of a meeting with Chief editor of *Friheten*, Arne Jørgensen at the main street of Oslo, *Karl Johans Gate*. The accidental meeting was unfriendly, with Michelet being unwilling to shake hands with Jørgensen because of Jørgensen's accusations against AKP. Jørgensen had written an article where he called AKP a quisling-party, referring to the Svalbard Treaty and the possible USSR base on Svalbard.¹⁵² Jørgensen did not excuse his action and allegedly said that everyone who was against USSR at that time, were idiots.¹⁵³ Michelet's story, whether it was portrayed correctly or not, functions as an example

¹⁵⁰ Klassekampen, "Utbygting eller "folke-eie": Om statsovertakelse under kapitalismen," *Klassekampen* 20.8.1975.

¹⁵¹ "Sigurd Allern: Mens "Farmand" & Co representerer kapitalismens fortid, står SV for kapitalismens framtid," *Klassekampen* 27.8.1975.

¹⁵² For more information about the Svalbard Treaty, see for example: Geir Ulfstein, *The Svalbard Treaty: from terra nullius to Norwegian sovereignty* (Aschehoug, 1995).

¹⁵³ Jon Michelet, "Et møte med "friheten"s redaktør," *Klassekampen* 14.9.1976.

of high tensions between the members. They were not interested in showing any respect for one another as both parties felt that the other was deceiving its members, creating disunity and confusion among the working class.

3.4 Strikes, demonstrations and a most likely world war

Strikes and actions were hotspots for conflict in this period and caused headaches for both parties, with NKP's feeling like AKP was sabotaging the labour union purposively. This subchapter does not seek to examine all the different strikes, solidary movements and demonstrations thoroughly, but rather to establish an overarching impression of how AKP and NKP responded to each other. The two parties fundamentally disagreed on how strikes and demonstrations were to be carried out. AKP focused on promoting party politics since the Maoists had the correct solution – in all cases regarding the labour movement. NKP, on the other hand, focused on bipartisanship and unity, and support of the labour union. Leaders of both parties had at different times recommended that neither they nor their members should cooperate with the other party or their members, but both parties continued to act as if cooperation at some point was on the table – especially concerning the labour movement and strikes.¹⁵⁴ NKP argued that AKP lacked loyalty to the labour union and solidarity movements and that AKP's need to infuse bipartisan work with demands of party politics was not in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism but was rather an opportunist trait. Opportunism was, according to NKP, a Maoist trait and Maoists, Norwegian or Chinese, would always seek to promote and protect themselves, even if it was at the expense of others.¹⁵⁵

AKP was unhappy with NKP's behaviour and dedication regarding strikes, and Øgrim categorised NKP as the worst and most reactionary party of them all.¹⁵⁶ NKP was incompetent. The party lacked energy and willingness to fight for the labour union,

¹⁵⁴ Kolbjørn Harbu, "Lærdommen av en streik," *Friheten* 27.1.1975.

¹⁵⁵ Ragnar Audunson, "Sektisme må bannlyses," *ibid.* 17.11.1975; Ragnhild Riise, "Hva skjuler seg bak maoismen?," *ibid.* 5.7.1976.

¹⁵⁶ Tron Øgrim, "Partiet," *Røde Fane* 5, no. 3 (1976): 39.

and AKP perceived the few times NKP was active as sabotage. NKP's anti-socialist trait was also present through NKP's cooperation with DNA/LO. To cooperate with DNA/LO was class-cooperation, which was unacceptable, and it showed how NKP was not focused on the working class. Class-cooperation could never lead to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Instead, it was treason and class-betrayal.¹⁵⁷ Besides, AKP never perceived itself to be a problem; the problem was the parties who were unwilling and unable to accept AKP as a part of the left-wing and as supporters of the working class.¹⁵⁸

AKP's desire to conduct party policy through the labour union led the party to develop a clever strategy where the goal was to coup the solidarity movements. AKP would ahead of a solidarity movement's Congress recruit AKP members into the organisation *en masse*, creating an AKP majority among the organisation's members. This led AKP to be able to win control over the organisation and implement its party policy, leaving NKP and other groups furious, accusing AKP of sabotage. The solution for the victims of AKP's strategy was to leave the organisation and create a new one, which AKP was excluded from.¹⁵⁹ The discord was grounded in a difference of opinion regarding who to support or not, and it was important for AKP to support only those it felt deserved support. It was essential for AKP only to support the active parts of the resistance while NKP and the bipartisan group were more willing to support resistance groups that did not actively fight against a suppressing regime, but all those who were hurt by it.¹⁶⁰

Regarding demonstrations and marches on days like May Day, Øgrim's theses stated that AKP had been strategically weak, and the party had not been able to mobilise

¹⁵⁷ Klassekampen, "Harbu i NKP ope mot streikevåpenet," *Klassekampen* 23.3.1976; "NKP-angrep i VG-stil mot streikestøttekomiteene," *Klassekampen* 9.6.1976.

¹⁵⁸ Torstein Arnesen, "En faglig kommentar til faglig kommentar," *Friheten* 3.3.1975.

¹⁵⁹ Friheten, "AKP torpederer Aksjon Kyst-Norge: Kupp i velkjent stil bryter enhetsarbeidet," *ibid.* 14.4.1975; "AKP tok knekken på viktig organisasjon: Aksjon Kyst-Norge oppløst," *Friheten* 12.5.1975; "AKP-erne overtok Chile-komiteen: Sekterisme og maktmisbruk trusel mot solidaritetsarbeidet," *Friheten* 23.6.1975.

¹⁶⁰ Klassekampen, "Landsmøte i Chile-komiteen: - støtt den aktive motstandskampen," *Klassekampen* 25.6.1975.

the proletariat. The Maoists had instead focused on how to beat the revisionists, having too much of an external focus, which in turn had amputated the participation of the proletariat on demonstration days. Øgrim argued that if AKP focused on mobilising the proletariat, it would subsequently lead to the Maoists to beat the revisionist too.¹⁶¹ An example of AKP's new approach was the International Women's Day (IWD) on 8 March in 1976: The parties were organised in two different movements that both strived to organise a joint march at IWD. Negotiations broke down, and AKP argued that the conflict had occurred due to NKP's front wanting the march to support USSR but at the same time criticise the United States' imperialism. Alternatively, in AKP's words: NKP wanted to continue the USSR propaganda. As always, AKP had little interest in defending USSR and demanded that USSR was to be called a social-imperialist state and the Maoists recommended NKP to leave party politics outside the discussion for a joint march on 8 March.¹⁶² NKP, on the other hand, felt that AKP's behaviour on IWD was in line with the behaviour the Maoists had demonstrated under previous attempts of cooperation that had failed. NKP claimed to know that AKP was not willing to compromise on its politics in order to reach an agreement, which was correct as AKP after Øgrim's theses no longer was open to compromise. *Friheten* urged their readers to remember that AKP was a false communist party who only wanted to promote itself, and was not interested in helping the working class.¹⁶³

AKP and NKP's different perception of the Soviet Union was the root of the disagreement between the two parties on many occasions. AKP argued that USSR grew into a more extensive threat to Norwegian security and claimed that a Third World War became increasingly likely. The war would be fought out between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. USSR's actions in Asia had to function as a wake-up call for the Norwegian people and leaders as it showed how

¹⁶¹ Øgrim, "Teser om høyreavviket (1975)," 38.

¹⁶² Klassekampen, "Avvis NKPs splittelsesforsøk foran 8. mars," *Klassekampen* 17.2.1976; "Framgang i kvinnekampen over hele landet 8. mars," *Klassekampen* 11.3.1976.

¹⁶³ AAB. NKP's archive - ARK 1110. D: Saksarkiv 1907—1991. Saker, 140.11-150.24 1976. 140.0 Egne organisasjoner 1976: 140.11: Marit, "Kvinnedagen i klargjøringens tegn," *Vårt Arbeid*, no. 3 (1976): 3.

USSR was no stranger to invading other countries. Furthermore, AKP pointed to Europe as the most likely target for USSR to attack next.¹⁶⁴ Nevertheless, it was important for AKP that its members, and hopefully others, were prepared to fight against one or both of the imperialist states. The revolution became even more important in the light of a possible Third World War since it could be the solution to escape the war. At the same time, the Maoists claimed that the danger of a world war made the period they lived in the “most revolutionary era in world history”.¹⁶⁵

AKP focused increasingly on a possible new world war throughout the period analysed in this chapter, with Øgrim's theses as a reinforcement. Neither USSR nor the US would strive to protect Norway from the other according to AKP, and it was, therefore, necessary for Norway to prepare for the looming coming war. The solution to withstand a superpower was to fight a ‘people's war’¹⁶⁶, which was an armed people's army that sought to outnumber the invader over time, as Vietnam had done during its fight for liberation. Norway needed an alternative to the military since history showed that the leaders of the bourgeois state could not be trusted, as they had often capitulated in the first meeting with the enemy. NKP saw AKP's prediction and alleged necessities as a trait of ‘war hysteria’, which was baffling to AKP since the future of Norway was at stake. Communism and the working-class had history on its side because social-imperialism, after a historic law, in the end, was doomed.¹⁶⁷

AKP's support of ideological warfare against USSR was once again connected to the bourgeois by NKP, and it was reasonable to question AKP's affiliation on a political left-right spectrum. The fight against the Soviet Union, in the name of anti-social-imperialism, was unfortunate according to NKP-member Kåre Wahl. He stated that USSR's development had proved useful and necessary in many international events.

¹⁶⁴ Klassekampen, "Reis kamp mot supermaktene Sovjet og USA," *Klassekampen* 2.7.1975.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 12.

¹⁶⁶ People's war was a long-term war which intends to neutralise the super powers advantage by enforcing the factors that benefits the invaded country. In the end, the strengthen relation will turn around, leaving the invading country to overcome the invader over time. Thornæs, "Hvordan skal vi møte krigsfaren? Propaganda langvarig folkekrig. Del 2," *ibid.* 22.6.1976.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

USSR had gathered support and empowered peaceful labour movement protest all over the world. In other words, when it came to violent conflicts, it was the capitalist system and imperialist forces who were the agitators. Furthermore, Wahl argued that AKP had been a supporter of the violent forces who fought against the revolutionary movements in Vietnam, Laos, Cuba and Angola, and was not the knights of the working-class.¹⁶⁸

Another factor for AKP's policy changes was a theory introduced by China in 1974 - the Three Worlds Theory (TWT). The theory divided the world into three parts. The first part was the superpowers - the Soviet Union and the United States. The second part was Europe, Japan, Australia and Canada and the third part where the rest of the world, including China. Part one and two were imperialist countries, and the third part was countries that had to stand together and fight against the imperialist powers.¹⁶⁹ Sjøli argued that the main reason behind policy changes in AKP was due to this theory. The theory would later on in the 1970s become the reason for extensive internal problems for the international Maoist movement when the leader of Albania, Enver Hoxha, declared that TWT was a revisionist theory, which caused the split between Albania and China. A dimension of the theory was that USSR was pointed out as the biggest agitator in the world, and the anti-Sovietism thus grew stronger in the Maoist movements, including AKP.¹⁷⁰

3.5 Monumental disagreement

The monument for the fallen members of NKP's central-committee, who was killed during the Second World War, became an inflamed topic in 1975 when AKP started its new tradition with a wreath-laying ceremony at the monument on Norway's National Day on 17 May in 1975. The discussion revolving the monument developed into a battle of ownership throughout the 1970s between the two Marxist-Leninist

¹⁶⁸ Kåre Wahl, "Høyrekreftenes støttespiller," *Friheten* 22.3.1976.

¹⁶⁹ Steigan, *En folkefiende*, 465.

¹⁷⁰ Sjøli, "De verste fiendene er de som står oss nærmest," 143-44.

parties.¹⁷¹ The two parties disagreed on who had the historical and ideological right to the monument with NKP having a tradition of a wreath-laying ceremony at the monument every 1 May since the day the monument was put up. AKP's new tradition provoked NKP who felt that AKP mocked both the fallen comrades and their decedents. NKP sent a letter to AKP before the National Day where it requested that AKP did not visit the monument. The request was declined, and NKP's behaviour provoked AKP.¹⁷² The situation led to an article published in the 'bourgeois newspaper', *Verdens Gang*, where the descendants in NKP called a possible AKP visit to the monument a 'grave desecration'.¹⁷³ NKP's cooperation with *Verdens Gang* was perceived, by AKP, as NKP trying to hinder the fallen comrades from receiving the respect they deserved, by their ideological heritage.¹⁷⁴

Karen Holtsmark, from AKP, held the eulogy on 17 May 1975. She spoke of how the war was more imminent than ever and how USSR had risen to be the primary provocateur, with Norway as a possible victim of USSR's social-imperialism. The AKP-members honoured the fallen and distanced themselves from the revisionists in NKP. Holtsmark argued that the NKP of 1975 had left the ideology that NKP had during the Second World War, effectively betraying the fallen comrades. NKP had evolved into a revisionist party, which would have been unrecognisable for the fallen comrades if they had been there in 1975. NKP used energy on distributing propaganda for the social-imperialist USSR instead of working for the working class and the labour union, according to Holtsmark.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, she continued to argue that the ownership of the monument had to be taken back from NKP who utilised it

¹⁷¹ Istad, "Politiske endringer i den norske ML-rørsla 1969 - 1980," 100.

¹⁷² Friheten, "Anti-kommunistisk provokasjon ved NKP's bauta," *Friheten* 26.5.1975; Klassekampen, ""Gravskjending" - eller når NKP trækker erfaringene fra den anti-fascistiske kampen ned i søla," *Klassekampen* 21.5.1975.

¹⁷³ ""Gravskjending" - eller når NKP trækker erfaringene fra den anti-fascistiske kampen ned i søla."

¹⁷⁴ "Ved minnesmerket over falne NKP-medlemmer: - Vi hedrer dem ved å ta ett oppgjør med dem som forrådte deres kamp," *Klassekampen* 21.5.1975.

¹⁷⁵ Friheten, "Anti-kommunistisk provokasjon ved NKP's bauta."

as a smokescreen to hide its real agenda, to prevent a revolution, working for the bourgeois.¹⁷⁶

NKP perceived Holtsmark's eulogy as an attack on all Norwegian communists. It confirmed that AKP was part of the bourgeoisie class since it used the same type of criticism as the bourgeois had used against NKP previously.¹⁷⁷ NKP's accusation of grave desecration was not fair according to AKP, who argued if anyone desecrated the grave, it was NKP who had done so ever since it followed USSR despite the contra-revolution that had occurred in Moscow, which made USSR evolve into a fascist state.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, if AKP committed grave desecration, then the NKP-members were stomping on the grave, betraying them every single day through their politics.¹⁷⁹

NKP also argued that AKP should respect the descendants' wish, but AKP did not accept the argument as several AKP-members also were descendants of the fallen comrades. It was AKP, the progressive, anti-imperialist movement, who had the right to pay respect at the monument since it continued the ideology and work of the fallen comrades, and the Maoists would nevertheless continue to visit the monument, paying their respects.¹⁸⁰

The accusations of grave desecration re-occurred on 17 May 1976 after NKP once again requested AKP not to visit the monument. AKP questioned NKP and Martin G. Knutsen alleged rights to the monument. NKP stood firm on its request, continuing to argue that NKP was closest to the fallen comrades and the Maoists were nothing close, at least not in ideology since they were not socialists at all.¹⁸¹ The dispute in 1975 had led the National Day onto the same path as IWD and 1 May, where the original thought of creating unity and cooperation was replaced by conflicts and

¹⁷⁶ Klassekampen, "Ved minnesmerket over falne NKP-medlemmer: - Vi hedrer dem ved å ta ett oppgjør med dem som forrådte deres kamp."

¹⁷⁷ Friheten, "Anti-kommunistisk provokasjon ved NKP's bauta."

¹⁷⁸ Klassekampen, "'Gravskjending' - eller når NKP trækker erfaringene fra den anti-fascistiske kampen ned i søla."

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Torstein Thoresen, "Maoistenes prinsipløse politikk," *Friheten* 18.5.1976.

disunity, according to AKP.¹⁸² However, it was clear that AKP was not willing to ease its demands on either of the days.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have looked at how the relationship between AKP and NKP changed in 1975 because of the policy changes in both parties. Both parties consolidated ideologically, got new leaders who were closer to the ideological host-parties and the degree of influence from China/USSR rose. The parties got more isolated, with AKP closing the door for future cooperation with other leftist parties and NKP broke with SV. NKP lost the members who had been more moderate regarding the party's relationship to the Soviet Union. The new Maoist theory, the Three Worlds Theory, influenced the new policy of AKP. NKP became increasingly critical to China under Martin G. Knutsen, and the anti-Sovietism grew stronger in AKP. The period between 1975-1976 marked a major shift in the relationship between the two parties, going from tolerating each other to establishing a firm hostility between them.

¹⁸² Klassekampen, "Striden for nasjonalt sjølvstende vert atterreist 17. mai," *Klassekampen* 25.5.1976.

Chapter 4

Late 1976-1979: On rough terrain

Hans Petter Sjøli described the late 1970s as a period of aggression and fanaticism within AKP. The constant willingness and dedication of the members of AKP were manifested in the upgrade of *Klassekampen* from a twice weekly to a daily newspaper in 1977.¹⁸³ Furthermore, the party's Congress in October 1976 has been categorised as the climax of the party by Øystein Sørensen and Anders Holsbø Istad before the party faced both internal and external struggles, which ultimately led to the downfall of AKP. Within just a couple of months in 1976 died Mao (9 September), the 'Gang of Four'¹⁸⁴ was imprisoned (6 October), and Albania took its first steps away from China (November). Sjøli argued that AKP by 1980 was on the edge of survival.¹⁸⁵ The change in the member composition was also a surfacing problem for the Maoists. The members aged, and it was, in 1979, ten years since SUF (m-l) broke with SF and six years since AKP was established. The fanatical students had turned into blue-collar workers and teachers with families and responsibilities. The eagerness and high pace of the youth were no longer as prominent, and the downward spiral was inevitable according to Tron Øgrim.¹⁸⁶

NKP's tiredness, aggression and vexation over AKP bloomed with AKP's constant fuss over a Third World War, armed revolution and how USSR was social-imperialist. Martin G. Knutsen described the period as a time when NKP was open to cooperating

¹⁸³ Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 141.

¹⁸⁴ The 'Gang of Four' was "[...] the most powerful embers of a radical political elite convicted for implementing the harsh policies directed by Chinese Communist Party chairman Mao Zedong during the Cultural Revolution. The group included Mao's third wife, Jiang Qing, and Wang Hongwen, Zhang Chunqiao, and Yao Wenyuan", The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Gang of Four," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Retrieved 23.04.2019 from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gang-of-Four>).

¹⁸⁵ Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*; Øystein Sørensen, "Venstreekstremisme og dens omland," in *Venstreekstremisme Ideer og bevegelse*, ed. Øystein Sørensen, Bernt Hagtvat, and Nik. Brandal (Oslo: Dreyer Forlag, 2013), 14; Istad, "Politiske endringer i den norske ML-rørsla 1969 - 1980," 112.

¹⁸⁶ Øgrim, *vestlige maoismens sammenbrudd og krise i AKP(m-l)*, 60, 134.

with other progressive forces. Cooperation was perceived as useful in order to establish the necessary demand and willingness for a peaceful transition to communism among the working class. Knutsen argued that the point of departure to communism had to be rooted in a desire for communism within the working class and that an organised and united labour union had to follow the Norwegian traditions of peaceful transitions.¹⁸⁷

Nationally, the parties had gone into a repetitive circle regarding the days 8 March, May Day, 17 May and 21 August with a demonstration on the anniversary of USSR's invasion of Czechoslovakia. In addition to the 'red letter days'¹⁸⁸, the election campaigns for the 1977 and 1979 election will also be discussed in this chapter. Moreover, a selection of international events which affected either the parties or the relationship between them will also be discussed: China after Mao's death and the situations in Southeast Asia, Iran and Afghanistan.

4.1 Mao's death, the Gang of Four and the Sino-Albanian split

Øgrim wrote in 1982 that the Maoist movement went through an internal crisis from 1976. The leader of Albania, Enver Hoxha, attacked the Three Worlds Theory and called Mao a revisionist. Hoxha furthermore denounced USSR as the most dangerous superpower and thus created a crack in the Maoist movement. Vietnam broke with China and aligned with USSR. Mao died, and the Gang of Four were imprisoned by Hua Guofeng who later lost the 'throne' to Deng Xiaoping. The Chinese Communist Party acknowledged Yugoslavia as a socialist state, in addition to the possibility of other Eastern European states being considered as socialist as well. China stopped with its propaganda against USSR, and all in all, the changes created mass-confusion

¹⁸⁷ Friheten, "Martin Gunnar Knutsen i Studentersamfunet: - Vi leker ikke med revolusjon," *Friheten* 1.11.1977.

¹⁸⁸ 'Red letter days' refers to re-occurring days of significance for the working class and the labour movement: 8 March, 1 May, 17 May and eventually for AKP, 21 August too.

amongst the Maoist movement. China betrayed the words of Mao, the words that AKP, and other Maoist parties, believed in. AKP became desperate.¹⁸⁹

Mao's death led to upheaval for the Chinese policy and a fight for succession, which led to the imprisonment of the Gang of Four. The new de-facto leader of China, Deng Xiaoping, made China more open and received leaders from all over the world as visitors. Visitors NKP claimed competed in being the most fascist. Xiaoping's willingness to open up to the US baffled NKP as it thought it went against the Maoist thesis of relying on your powers and NKP argued that China's openness was a crucial factor for Albania's break with China.¹⁹⁰ Even though the new Chinese leaders implemented new policies, which often was in stark contrast to the previous policy, it was essential for the Norwegian Maoists to accept them without any hesitance. China, as the leading Marxist-Leninist state, could do no wrong and AKP had to keep quiet about the changes that happened in China out of fear of losing internal control over its members.¹⁹¹ The central committee of AKP needed to process the news from China and find a suitable way to present it to its members.

The Gang of Four, who were pivotal during the Cultural Revolution in China and considered as Maoist heroes, saw their status change under the new leadership. The new leadership was sceptical of the Gang, who became imprisoned because of fear of losing power, and a possible coup, among the new leaders. According to Sjøli, Øgrim said that the imprisonment was an important victory for communism in all countries while he attacked Mao's widow Jiang Qing and the Gang. He was favourable to the new, more open policy.¹⁹² Pål Steigan wrote that Øgrim's long articles in *Røde Fane*, under pseudonyms, tied AKP's policy closer to the Chinese Communist Party than

¹⁸⁹ Øgrim, *vestlige maoismens sammenbrudd og krise i AKP(m-l)*, 60-63.

¹⁹⁰ Friheten, "Maoistisk forvirring," *Friheten* 6.9.1977.

¹⁹¹ Brekke, *Tron Øgrim : det revolusjonære fyrverkeri*; Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*.

¹⁹² *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 134-44.

ever in the autumn of 1976. AKP, through Øgrim, turned according to the wind and denounced those who previously had been regarded as heroes.¹⁹³

The Sino-Albanian split tested the Maoists movement as Enver Hoxha, leader of the Party of Labour of Albania (PLA), criticised China's development with his speech at PLA's 7th Congress in November 1976. The speech was followed by an article published in July 1977 where Mao's Three Worlds Theory was criticised and debunked. This led China to stop all economic and military aid to Albania.¹⁹⁴ The split eventually forced the Maoist parties to pick sides, and Hans Petter Sjøli wrote that AKP had no choice. It had to pick Mao, and thus China, even after Mao's death as Mao's theories was the root of AKP's ideology. Hoxha broke with Maoism when he questioned Mao's theory, and it could not be accepted.¹⁹⁵

The split was kept hidden from AKP's members, in the same way as with the changes in China, and they were not presented with the final analysis of the split until January 1979.¹⁹⁶ *Friheten* noted that *Klassekampen* only published favourable articles about China and became quiet about Albania after the split was completed in the summer of 1977. In other words, *Klassekampen* indirectly told its readers what side to support. NKP saw AKP's unwillingness to comment as a confirmation of AKP's unscrupulousness and being theoretically weak since AKP gave into the orders from the new Chinese leaders and rejected what previously had been a core of AKP's policy.¹⁹⁷ NKP's support of Albanian leaders was not acceptable to AKP who supported China's decision to stop all economic and military aid to Albania.¹⁹⁸ The split caused a problem of explanation for AKP. The party had previously looked to both China and

¹⁹³ Steigan, *En folkefiende*, 337.

¹⁹⁴ Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 134-44.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ *Friheten*, "Maoistisk forvirring."

¹⁹⁸ *Klassekampen*, "Kommentar fra Klassekampen," *Klassekampen* 27.7.1978.

Albania when it had decided its party policy and opinion regarding international occurrences, but due to the split, this was no longer possible.¹⁹⁹

Three Worlds Theory did not become an adopted doctrine of AKP until 1978, but it had heavily influenced the new line after Øgrim's theses in 1975. Despite this, neither *Klassekampen* nor *Røde Fane* discussed TWT until the end of 1977, but the leadership of AKP had TWT in mind when it worked out AKP's policy from 1975. By AKP's third party Congress in 1980, TWT had become the foundation of the party policy.²⁰⁰ AKP continued to embrace Mao despite the new policy, and it was an important factor for why China's attraction towards AKP declined in the latter stage of the seventies.

NKP accused the Norwegian Maoists of lacking self-determination and not being a communist party. Instead, AKP was portrayed as a Chinese puppet that followed the orders of the leaders of China no matter if the Chinese policy continued to change and contradict itself.²⁰¹ AKP had already shown, through the denouncement of the Gang of Four, that it was willing to turn 180 degrees around in order to please CCP and could therefore not be trusted with responsibilities, or given influence, in the labour union. The combination of the unpredictable leaders of CCP and NKP's experience with attempts of cooperation with AKP left NKP with trust issues. NKP felt that AKP was an executioner of solidarity movements, with the death of more than one movement on its résumé.²⁰²

4.2 Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia became a hotspot of disagreement between AKP and NKP in the late 1970s. Both parties had supported Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in their fight for

¹⁹⁹ Rune Ottesen and Bjørn Westlie, "Da "Klassekampen" ble dagsavis. Eller hvorfor ingen kan starte dagsavis i Norge uten en fanatisk vilje til å lykkes," in *(ml)*, ed. Terje Tvedt (Oslo: Ad Notam, 1989), 187-88; Friheten, "'AKP': Ja til NATO," *Friheten* 22.11.1977.otte

²⁰⁰ Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao: historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 137-40; "De verste fiendene er de som står oss nærmest," 143.

²⁰¹ Friheten, "Det såkalte AKP (m-l): Reaksjonært parti under falsk flagg," *Friheten* 30.8.1977; Klassekampen, "Entusiastisk 4-års festmøte for AKP (m-l): "4-åringen voker og trives i kampen"," *Klassekampen* 24.2.1977.

²⁰² Friheten, "Det såkalte AKP (m-l): Reaksjonært parti under falsk flagg."

liberation in the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. However, Vietnam's change of allegiance, from China to USSR, led AKP to change its view of Vietnam. Vietnam was then accused of being a fascist state seeking dominance in Indochina at the orders from USSR and AKP's view of the two conflicts, Vietnam-Cambodia and Vietnam-China, was heavily influenced by the perception of Vietnam. NKP, on the other hand, supported Vietnam, most likely because of USSR doing so. Furthermore, NKP argued that AKP acted foolishly and ignorantly. AKP's blind support of China, who supported Pol Pot as the Cambodian Mao, led to AKP arguing that the lousy coverage of Pol Pot was part of a bourgeois press' campaign of slander. AKP's unconditional support of Pol Pot made little sense to NKP and others who perceived Pol Pot's regime as a fascist one.²⁰³ Sjøli wrote that AKP's continuous support of Pol Pot, despite the negativity from the press, was enabled by the same factors that enabled it to support China, Albania and other liberation movements all over the world: to be in opposition to the bourgeois press. AKP advocated for everything the bourgeoisie class was against, and vice versa. Additionally, the gradual embrace of the Three World Theory forced AKP to support Pol Pot because Cambodia was part of the Third World. The height of the support was perhaps when AKP arranged a study trip to Phnom Penh in the autumn of 1978, where the members of AKP reported that they did not see any signs of the supposed genocide on their guided field-trips.²⁰⁴

According to *Friheten*, AKP's revised perception of Vietnam led to *Klassekampen* calling the leaders of Vietnam fascist lackeys. It also led NKP to accuse AKP of false claims of solidarity with Vietnam, that AKP was an opportunist party who only sought to promote its politics on an anti-Soviet foundation. Kåre Wahl speculated that Vietnams alignment with the Soviet Union, and denouncement of TWT, had removed

²⁰³ Øgrim, *vestlige maoismens sammenbrudd og krise i AKP(m-l)*, 105; Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*.

²⁰⁴ *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 151-54.

AKP's initiative to support Vietnam. Wahl essentially said that AKP was a fake party without a backbone, who only followed orders from China.²⁰⁵

Klassekampen saw the Chinese intervention in Vietnam as a necessity for it to learn its lesson, both regarding Cambodia and the Chinese-Vietnamese border-dispute, and also to stop USSR's influence in Indochina. The Maoists believed that Vietnam amounted a serious military threat, through the support of USSR, against China and the Chinese intervention was therefore merely a legitimate reaction to the Vietnamese provocations. NKP did not agree that Vietnam was any threat to China and argued that China's military capability was much larger than Vietnam's. Moreover, NKP believed that the Chinese actions against Vietnam were part of a larger scheme, a campaign of slander against Vietnam, because of the intervention into Cambodia.²⁰⁶ NKP-member Per Lothar Lindtner claimed that the Norwegian and Chinese Maoists had entered an alliance with the US against Vietnam, that this was proof of Chinese imperialism. The international press had been bribed into writing dishonestly about the situation in Southeast Asia, from the point of view of the imperialists. AKP's alliance with the imperialist was just another set of evidence that AKP was a pure-blood, right-wing party, according to Lindtner. Furthermore, he argued that NKP had to expect that AKP shortly would begin to cooperate and create an alliance with Norwegian parties at the right-wing, which would be costly for Norway.²⁰⁷

At the same time, an article by AKP-member Jon Michelet showed that many Norwegian Maoists were worried about China's intervention in Vietnam. Michelet assured his comrades that intervention was legitimate since Vietnam had provoked China and several Chinese people had died.²⁰⁸ Many Vietnamese people fled because

²⁰⁵ Kåre Wahl, "'AKP' og Vietnam," *Friheten*, No. 16, 1979; *Friheten*, "Maoistane: Rettferdig Kina-invasjon," *ibid.*

²⁰⁶ "Maoistane: Rettferdig Kina-invasjon.;" "Verdensfreden i fare," *Friheten*, No. 15, 1979; Harald Syvertsen, "Ikke ny dato," *ibid.*, No. 24.; *Klassekampen*, "Når revisjonister fordømmer Geng Biaos besøk," *Klassekampen* 26.5.1979.

²⁰⁷ Per Lothar Lindtner, "Maoistene tar siste skritt over i det usminkete høyre," *Friheten*, No. 28, 1979.

²⁰⁸ Jon Michelet, "Brennende spørsmål," *Klassekampen* 20.2.1979.

of the intervention, and AKP was first opposed to accepting Vietnamese refugees but changed its mind and instead demanded a stop of humanitarian aid to Vietnam as a result of AKP's growing unfavourable opinion of the country.²⁰⁹ NKP-leader, Martin G. Knutsen, on the other hand, demanded that Norway should give more aid to Vietnam and agreed with Lindtner that there was an ongoing conspiracy against the country. However, *Klassekampen* argued that NKP feared that the aid would go to the refugees instead of the Vietnamese state and essentially weaken Vietnam in Indochina.²¹⁰ *Friheten*'s word of choice in the article about AKP's change of mind is fascinating as it denied that anyone would want to flee from Vietnam and used quotation marks on the word *flykter* (fleeing).²¹¹ NKP's defence of and attempt to embellish Vietnam frustrated AKP who claimed that the Vietnamese leaders had forced hundreds of thousands to flee and die at sea.

Furthermore, *Friheten*'s claim of Vietnam being a victim of a CIA-China scheme led *Klassekampen* to see *Friheten* as an echo of *Pravda* and AKP compared the genocide of Chinese people in Vietnam to Hitler's genocide of the Jews:

They too [the Jews] were agents and capitalists, merchants and bloodsuckers. Both the tsars in Kremlin and their Norwegian servants, 'NKP', explains the streams of refugees by claiming that most of them belonged to the bourgeoisie class.²¹²

According to *Klassekampen*, NKP followed USSR blindly and defended its interests without reservations. USSR's progress internationally had turned NKP increasingly black, going further and further away from communism every time it stood up for USSR. AKP called for a ban on NKP in Norway where no party or organisation was

²⁰⁹ *Friheten*, "Morgenbladet-ros til Pål Steigan," *Friheten*, No. 2, 1979.

²¹⁰ ". Norge er inne i den mest langvarige og dyptgående krise i etterkrigstida," *Friheten*, No. 42, 1979; *Klassekampen*, "'Sann humanisme' i 'NKP'," *Klassekampen* 20.7.1979.

²¹¹ *Friheten*, "Morgenbladet-ros til Pål Steigan."

²¹² *Klassekampen*, "Pravda og flyktningene," *Klassekampen* 17.7.1979.

allowed to cooperate with NKP, and that the only sensible solution was to isolate NKP in the dark and let it rot.²¹³

4.3 Red letter days: annoyance, frustration and violent meetings

4.3.1 21 August

As seen in previous chapters, 21 August had developed into a day of severe animosity between the parties and accusations of being a fascist party were tossed back and forth. The Maoists accused NKP of being a fascist party based on NKP's support of USSR in Czechoslovakia while NKP accused the Maoists of using fascist work methods and was confident that AKP did not care about Czechoslovakia; its primary motivation was to promote anti-Sovietism, thus acting purely anti-communist. The accusation of anti-communism was boosted by the constellation of those who supported AKP's anti-Soviet mission, who were mostly rightist political parties. All parties except NKP was blinded since it could not see the American forces that occupied places such as West-Germany, where 400 000 American soldiers were stationed.²¹⁴

NKP's frustration regarding 21 August reached a climax in 1979 with the establishment of *Initiativkomiteen for 21. August 1979* (the initiative committee of 21 August 1979). The committee had AKP as the 'primus motor' and asserted that suppression in Czechoslovakia was more prominent than ever before. *Klassekampen* pointed out that the committee was for everyone who was against USSR's occupation of Czechoslovakia and not only for AKP-members.²¹⁵ *Friheten* mostly pointed to the genocide in Cambodia and the Chinese presence in Vietnam, trying to re-orient the focus away from Czechoslovakia and arguing that AKP was not a defender of the

²¹³ "Talerør for fascisme og undertrykkelse," *Klassekampen* 26.7.1979.

²¹⁴ *Friheten*, "Maoistene med fascistiske metoder mot NKP i Trondheim," *Friheten* 23.8.1977; "SV og maoister hand i hand," *Friheten*, No. 47, 1978; Kolbjørn Harbu, "Kriminalisering av politisk virksomhet," *ibid.*, No. 65,.

²¹⁵ *Friheten*, "Antikommunistisk provokasjon!," *ibid.*, No. 50, 1979; *Klassekampen*, "En okkupanttilhenger skummer over," *Klassekampen* 13.7.1979.

working class or the suppressed people. Instead, *Friheten* proclaimed NKP and USSR as the defender and the goal of détente and disarmament was the proof.²¹⁶ 21 August developed into a red-letter day for AKP, who was able to provoke NKP every single year with its focus on USSR presence in Czechoslovakia, and NKP always responding by screaming about Maoist hypocrisy.

4.3.2 Elections

The enmity of 21 August was brought into the election campaign in 1977 with violent actions taking place at NKP's election campaign kick-off in Torshovdalen. Several Maoists attended the kick-off, provoking NKP, eventually leading to a brawl breaking out. NKP blamed the Maoists for the violence and accused them of attending the kick-off only to provoke, and the Maoists' behaviour was linked to Quisling and how he and his men acted against the communists in the 1930s. According to NKP, the Maoists shared Quisling's fanatical hate against Bolshevism, communism and the Soviet Union.²¹⁷ The Maoists, on the other hand, claimed that NKP was to blame for the violence, that 'the Brezhnevists' kicked and pushed the peaceful Maoists who only came to the kick-off to discuss politics.²¹⁸

AKP claimed that it had a different approach to the election campaign in 1977 than the other parties. While others only sought to get popular support, often through spreading lies, the Maoists wanted to inform the working-class about how DNA, SV and NKP were the enemies how the working class was betrayed. AKP wished to enlighten and illuminate the progressive parts of the working class about the conditions in Norway, and how the bourgeoisie class exploited self-proclaimed working-class parties as its agents in order to cover up the power-relations in the Norwegian society. AKP (or RV during the election) was the only party that could be

²¹⁶ *Friheten*, "Antikommunistisk provokasjon!."

²¹⁷ "Quislings arvtakere," *Friheten* 25.8.1977.

²¹⁸ *Klassekampen*, "'På tørre never'," *Klassekampen* 16.8.1977; *Arbeiderkorrespondent*, "Rock & Roll og pøbelopptreden," *ibid.* 20.8.1977.

trusted, and the only party who fought for the working-class, while NKP, in reality, belonged on the right-wing of Norwegian politics.²¹⁹

AKP received a bigger percentage of the votes in both the 1977 and 1979 elections compared to NKP, which proved to the Maoists that they were on the brink of winning ownership over the term 'communist' in Norway. However, it was essential to continue the isolation of NKP in order to reach a final victory over the Brezhnevists.²²⁰ NKP experienced the two losses in 1977 and 1979 as equally disappointing, and the victory of AKP in 1977 was not only described a defeat for NKP by *Friheten* but the whole labour movement. At the same time, *Friheten* wrote that the loss to AKP was not surprising since AKP rode on the same wave as other rightist parties and had gathered support from the bourgeois press.²²¹

4.3.3 International Women's Day – 8 March.

The women's movement had, as other demonstration days, problems with uniting the different organisations into one united march at the International Women's Day in Oslo. Kjersti Scheen from NKP discussed the problem in 1979 and wrote that a united march perhaps was unobtainable because the differences and disunities were significant, and a joint march would have to cover up those differences.²²² *Klassekampen* saw the disunity as unfortunate and argued that only communism could guarantee a complete liberation of women. Furthermore, *Klassekampen* argued that in order for the Norwegian society to achieve communism, the other groups had to adopt the policy of AKP since only AKP's version of communism was the correct one.²²³

Despite attempts of cooperation throughout the 1970s, AKP's common strategy 'Well if you want to march with us, you have to accept our paroles' led the Maoists to

²¹⁹ Klassekampen, "Opprop for Rød Valgallianse 1977," *ibid.* 22.3.1977; "Stortingsvalget 1977. Utdrag fra Røde Fane artikkel: Hva betyr valget for borgerskapets partier?," *Klassekampen* 25.5.1977.

²²⁰ "Vi har meir på lager," *Klassekampen* 14.9.1977; "Hva viste valgresultatet," *Klassekampen* 28.9.1977.

²²¹ Friheten, "Valgresultatet," *Friheten*, No. 70, 1979.

²²² Kjersti Scheen, "8. mars i Oslo: De borgerlige leiker "taktikk"," *ibid.*, No. 16,.

²²³ Torunn, "To tog - for hvem?," *Klassekampen* 7.3.1979.

unfortunate outcomes, even though AKP was open to cooperation from 1978. In NKP's eyes, AKP, and its organising group regarding the International Women's Day, *Kvinnefronten*, lacked knowledge on how to cooperate and behave, and its behaviour in 1977 affected the negotiation for the subsequent years.²²⁴ *Klassekampen*, on the other hand, asserted that NKP followed a reactionary ideology that was hostile to women and that NKP attempted to limit the women from revolting against the existing system. The women's organisations related to NKP had to be isolated because it was they who created disunity.²²⁵ The disagreement about whether party-politics were welcome on IWD or not was the core of the discussion in 1978, and *Kvinnefronten* was not helping with its chaotic behaviour according to NKP. The question was whether the demand for women's rights should be prioritised ahead of party politics, but as stated previously: AKP was not interested in compromising if it would weaken its policies.²²⁶

4.3.4 International Labour Day – 1 May

1 May was, according to the historian Anders Holsbø Istad, the exception from AKP's willingness to seek cooperation on different demonstrations days during 1978.²²⁷ When NKP sought cooperation with SV and DNA in 1977, the Maoists called it class-cooperation and looked at it with disgust and AKP stated that NKP was opportunistic through its cooperation with DNA ahead of the election, attempting to get more popular through cooperation with the enemy. NKP's actions functioned as a confirmation for AKP who proclaimed that its organising group on May Day, *Faglig*

²²⁴ Friheten, "Viktig krav i forgrunnen 8. mars," *Friheten* 7.2.1977; Kjersti Scheen, "Ennå uklart om 8. mars," *ibid.*, No. 12, 1978; "8. mars i Oslo: De borgerlige leiker "taktikk"."; Istad, "Politiske endringer i den norske ML-rørsla 1969 - 1980," 147.

²²⁵ *Klassekampen*, "Bruk Røde fane i 8.mars-mobiliseringa," *Klassekampen* 1.2.1977; "Entusiastisk 4-års festmøte for AKP (m-l): "4-åringen voker og trives i kampen"."

²²⁶ Scheen, "Ennå uklart om 8. mars."

²²⁷ Istad, "Politiske endringer i den norske ML-rørsla 1969 - 1980," 147.

1. *maifront*, was the only march for progressives, the labour union and those who wished to fight the class struggle.²²⁸

In 1977 and 1978, 1 May followed the same path as in previous years with disagreements regarding whom the parades should be targeted at and who the real enemy was. After 1 May in 1977 AKP-leader, Pål Steigan announced that AKP's march had gathered the most support in Oslo that year – which was no surprise according to him. In 1978, *Klassekampen* warned its readers against supporting NKP's march since NKP had made it clear that year, as many years before, that it would not cooperate with anyone who had Soviet-hostile parades, directly or indirectly.²²⁹ NKP's refusal to cooperate led it into further isolation, according to *Klassekampen*, when SV refused to cooperate with the Brezhnevists in both Oslo and Tromsø. This was by AKP's wish and desire, namely that NKP was to be as isolated as possible on May Day.²³⁰

Three different marches were going through the streets of Oslo on 1 May 1979. One of them was *Faglig 1. maifront*, affiliated with AKP, who suffered the rage of a Norwegian neo-Nazi. The right-wing neo-Nazi threw two home-made bombs into the *Faglig 1. maifront* march and severely injured two people. *Friheten* wrote several articles about the event and demanded that the party affiliated with the bomber, *Norsk Front* (Norwegian Front), to be declared illegal by the government. Interestingly, *Friheten* never wrote what parade the bombs were thrown into, but instead perceived the attack as an attack on the entire labour movement. It is made clear, in both *Klassekampen* and *Verdens Gang*, that the bomb was thrown into the AKP affiliated march, but not in *Friheten*. However, it was not mentioned in

²²⁸ Klassekampen, ""Det tredje alternativet" kjem denne veka: Valkamp-oppmarsj også for SV og "NKP" 1. mai," *Klassekampen* 29.3.1977; "To grunnar til å sky SV/"NKP"-toget," *Klassekampen* 29.4.1977; ""NKP" ønsker felles valgparole med DNA 1. mai," *Klassekampen* 27.1.1977.

²²⁹ "SV's og "NKP"'s 1.mai: Ikke et ord mot LO-ledelsen og imperialismen," *Klassekampen* 2.4.1977; "1. mai: SV "strekker seg langt"," *Klassekampen* 22.4.1977; "To grunnar til å sky SV/"NKP"-toget.," "Steigan: Stor seier å slå begge samarbeidstoga," *Klassekampen* 3.5.1977; "1-0 til "NKP"," *Klassekampen* 14.4.1978; "Formannen i Oslo SV: - Godtek ingen parolar mot Sovjet," *Klassekampen* 14.4.1978.

²³⁰ "Klassekamptogenes dag," *Klassekampen* 3.5.1978.

Klassekampen that *Friheten* did not write which march that was attacked.²³¹ This says something about how the newspapers framed the situation in their own parties' favour, and since a bourgeois newspaper like *Verdens Gang* wrote that it was AKP's march that was attacked, it was clearly publicly known.

4.3.5 The Norwegian National Day – 17 May

The discussion about the rights to the monument of the fallen comrades at Nordre Gravlund continued at the National Day in both 1977 and 1978, while AKP's visit was not mentioned in *Friheten* in 1979. NKP, on the other hand, continued to perceive the presence of AKP at the monument as an abuse of the fallen, and that the monument represented the working class, which AKP did not. AKP continued to act against NKP's protest, while NKP argued that the Maoists did not pay tribute to the fallen comrades, but rather behaving as anti-communists, only seeking to hurt NKP in Norway – as AKP did not care about those the monument was put up for. NKP was, according to the Maoists, attacking the fallen comrades when it accused AKP of committing grave desecration and the dead belonged to the true patriots, the working class, the Norwegian people and the Norwegian communists. NKP did not represent Norway or communism; it represented USSR, social-imperialism and fascism.²³² The tone of the speech in 1979 (and 1980) differed from previous years, where NKP no longer was the main enemy, but rather the neo-Nazis, especially in 1979 in addition to internal problems.

²³¹ *Friheten*, No. 32-38, 41, 45-56 1979; *Klassekampen*, No. 99-100, 102 1979; VG, "Arrestasjoner i løpet av dagen," Retrifer, Retrieved 01.04.2019 from <http://web.retrifer-info.com.ezproxy.uio.no/services/archive/displayPDF?documentId=02001919790502Ar00700&serviceId=2>.

²³² *Friheten*, "Maoistene misbruker de falne," *Friheten* 9.5.1977; *Klassekampen*, "Hansteen og Wickstrøm - et lysende forbilde i kampen mot fascismen," *Klassekampen* 18.5.1977; *Friheten*, "Ny gravskjending," *Friheten*, No. 37, 1978; *Klassekampen*, "Oslo AKP (m-l) hedra minnet over norske kommunister frå krigen," *Klassekampen* 18.5.1978; "Finn Sjøe ved minnesmerket over falne NKP-medlemmer: - Vi må føre den stolte arven vidare," *Klassekampen* 18.5.1979; Istad, "Politiske endringar i den norske ML-rørsla 1969 - 1980," 147.

4.4 Surveillance, proletarianisation and common accusations

A common trait of AKP and NKP was the eagerness to compare the other party to the worst possible manifestations of evil, such as Hitler and the Nazis in Germany, and Quisling and *National Samling* in Norway. AKP arranged a demonstration against NKP in June 1977 that *Friheten* claimed was an example of where the “Maoists followed in the footsteps of the Nazis.”²³³ AKP demonstrated against NKP’s defence of fascism and how the Brezhnevists represented fascism in Norway. The underlying reason for the demonstration was an episode in Poland where a student had died. NKP and USSR supported, and trusted, the official Polish statement that the student had suffered a fatal fall in a staircase. AKP, on the other hand, claimed that the Polish government had killed the student after he had demonstrated against the alleged fascist government in Poland.²³⁴ NKP perceived the Maoist demonstration as a joke and stated that the AKP-members acted as perfect ‘office boys’ for both the CIA and the bourgeoisie class in Norway.²³⁵

NKP’s attempt of connecting AKP to CIA continued throughout the late 1970s with NKP-member Jan Herdal arguing that AKP was the only probable CIA-cover on the left-wing in Norway since many of AKP’s leaders previously had been right-wing activists. AKP’s policy was too similar to the interest of the US-imperialist in order for it to be coincidental. This, together with AKP’s alleged expertise in creating confusion in the labour movement and the proletarianisation project, made AKP the perfect party for CIA to infiltrate.²³⁶

The proletarianisation-project led to irritation for NKP, and several articles about how the labour union had become infiltrated by students who had quit their studies

²³³ *Friheten*, "Maoistene følger i nazistenes fotspor: Demonstrerte mot Friheten og NKP," *Friheten* 6.6.1977, 5.

²³⁴ *Klassekampen*, "-NKP" forsvarer fascistisk terror," *Klassekampen* 6.6.1977; "Når Dorenfeldt skal vaske blod," *Klassekampen* 31.5.1977.

²³⁵ *Friheten*, "Maoistene følger i nazistenes fotspor: Demonstrerte mot Friheten og NKP.," *Klassekampen*, "Rasende "Friheten" tegn på vellykka demonstrasjon," *Klassekampen* 10.6.1977.

²³⁶ Jan Herdal, "CIA's arbeidsmetodar," *Friheten*, No. 12, 1979.

in order to become blue-collar workers were on print in *Friheten*.²³⁷ The behaviour of the AKP-members at the workplace and in the labour union, characterised by little willingness to reach compromises with non-AKP-members, was perceived as frustrating to others. The union hoped that the AKP-members would mature, grow up and act civilised.²³⁸ The proletarianisation-project was accused of being a hoax by NKP who argued that AKP only sought to discredit and destroy the labour union. *Friheten* wrote that the proletarianisation led to serious consequences with many newly educated doctors deciding to become blue-collar workers upon finishing their degree. This led to a doctor deficit in northern Norway, and AKP was the only one to blame according to NKP.²³⁹ The proletarianisation led NKP to believe that the Maoists did not belong to the labour union or working class and that they faked a sense of belonging in order not to be exposed as right-wing activists with bourgeois roots. The link between the bourgeoisie class and AKP became increasingly evident for NKP in how *Klassekampen* emulated the alleged right-wing newspapers, *Aftenposten* and *Morgenbladet* when it called NKP for a black, fascist party and a potential traitor. It became increasingly obvious to NKP that the Maoists did not represent the working class at all.²⁴⁰

The working-class parties were monitored by the Police Surveillance Agency (POT) as part of a state organised surveillance of possible threats and traitors. Rumours had circulated in the labour movement that the left-wing parties were being monitored by the state, which was confirmed in 1978 when the chairman of the control committee for the secret services said on the news broadcast on NRK, the public broadcaster, that there had existed cooperation between POT and different companies. The companies had received information about job applicants, whether they were 'radical'

²³⁷ Bjørn Westlie, "AKPs ekstremisme," in *Ventreekstremisme Ideer og Bevegelser*, ed. Øystein Sørensen, Bernt Hagtvat, and Nik. Brandal (Oslo: Dreyer, 2013), 74-76; *Friheten*, "Uroen blant de ansatte ved Sporveien i Bergen," *Friheten* 12.4.1977.

²³⁸ Ole Larsen, "Oppsigelser, suspensjoner og utelukkning," *ibid.* 18.4.1977.

²³⁹ *Friheten*, "Legemangelen i Nord-Norge samfunnets ansvar!," *ibid.* 1.5.1978; "Det såkalte AKP (m-l): Reaksjonært parti under falsk flagg."

²⁴⁰ Jan Herdal, "Rapport frå bakvendtland," *ibid.* 1.11.1977; *Klassekampen*, "Opprop for Rød Valgallianse 1977."

or not. POT had in other words stored information on several members of the labour union and leftist parties, which neither AKP nor NKP appreciated. Both parties demanded all existing information to be destructed.²⁴¹

The surveillance was a bigger shock to some than others, and AKP stated that the working class had been naïve since it had not taken pre-emptive measures to reduce the possibility of being monitored. AKP had already established a new policy on secrecy in the party. The system parted the group of members into four separate groups: 1.1 and 1.2 were public members, while 2.1-members were active, but only internally. The last category, 2.2, consisted of members who were erased from the party-register and was on paper no longer affiliated with AKP. The ironic part of it all, according to Sjøli and his secure sources, is that AKP began to monitor NKP and other organisations in 1977-1978, even though there has been no official confession from AKP as of yet.²⁴²

The states' surveillance of the leftist parties exploded as a topic when *Verdens Gang* revealed that POT had not used the same measures against the neo-Nazi group *Norsk Front*, who attacked *Faglig 1. maifront's* march on 1 May. Both AKP and NKP reacted with resignation and anger and saw the lack of surveillance of right-wing parties as confirmation that the state hated and feared the socialists and the leftists most, even if they were not as violent as the right-wing.²⁴³ On a side note, the Lund-report from 1994, concluded that the Police and the state had committed illegal surveillance of both AKP and NKP and that the illegalities began right after the Second World War.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ "Mellbye avslører omfattende overvåkning: Underskrivere av opprop registreres!," *Klassekampen* 28.8.1978; "Skal "Friheten"-arkiva brennast?," *Klassekampen* 5.8.1977.

²⁴² Hans Petter Sjøli, "Den svarte tradisjonen," in *Venstreekstremisme Ideer og Bevegelser*, ed. Øystein Sørensen, Bernt Hagtvet, and Nik. Brandal (Oslo: Dreyer, 2013), 322-23; *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 131.

²⁴³ Friheten, "Først nå skal "norsk fronts" virksomhet bli gransket," *Friheten*, No. 35, 1979.; *Klassekampen* No. 100/79-104/79.

²⁴⁴ Kjetil Lund, "Rapport til Stortinget fra kommisjonen som ble nedsatt av Stortinget for å granske påstander om ulovlig overvåkning av norske borgere (Lund-rapporten): (handed over to the presidential cabinet of the Storting 28 March 1996)," (1996).

4.5 Third world war, armed revolution and Afghanistan

As stated in chapter three, NKP's break with SV and the election of Martin G. Knutsen as NKP's new leader led NKP to align even closer with USSR, affecting how NKP interpreted different international events and increased NKP's willingness to defend USSR against accusations of fascism and social-imperialism. NKP's willingness confirmed the Maoists' allegations against NKP that the Norwegian Brezhnevists only fought for USSR's interest. This explained NKP's weak effort in strikes since USSR could not care less about Norwegian strikes. NKP was a dying party that subsisted on USSR who was reluctant to let NKP die since it was a part of the limited Western support of USSR. The limited support was necessary for USSR, according to AKP, who believed that the Soviet Union primed NKP to be a fifth column when the time came for the coming invasion of Norway.²⁴⁵

NKP saw the continued war propaganda from AKP as a symptom of war hysteria. NKP speculated that the Maoists preferred war over peaceful coexistence. On the other side, the Maoists suspected that NKP tried to suppress AKP's war warning because it would make it easier for USSR to invade Norway and the description of war hysteria did not fit according to AKP. AKP, on the other hand, who pointed to the two superpowers and how they were planning attacks, both on each other and third-party countries. The Maoists questioned if it was war hysteria if one predicted war correctly. Alternatively, it could be a warning to the people? AKP argued that it merely warned the people, helping them to prepare for the coming war. It acted in the same way as Stalin when he predicted the Second World War and warned his people. NKP attempted, without success, to connect the Maoists actions to those of the German Nazis, but the Maoists viewed themselves as heroes and drew lines to the honourable communists who defeated Hitler.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ Klassekampen, "Heim frå stovevarmen i Kreml," *Klassekampen* 8.3.1977; "Opprop for Rød Valgallianse 1977."

²⁴⁶ "Forbud mot krigspropaganda," *Klassekampen* 10.1.1978; Friheten, "De driver propaganda for krig," *Friheten*, No. 2, 1978.

USSR's invasion of Afghanistan was the proof AKP needed for its theory of a Third World War, and it argued for the Norwegian government to acknowledge USSR as a real threat to Norway. The Soviet Union was rotten, and undoubtedly an imperialist state, and only the biggest fools would deny it.²⁴⁷ Martin G. Knutsen defended the invasion, and it made *Klassekampen* call him "Soviet's right hand in Norway".²⁴⁸ However, the decision to support USSR was not unanimous with eighth out of 13 members of the central committee being in favour. AKP speculated that many members would leave and claimed that NKP's support led NKP into total isolation with no one else in Norway supporting USSR.²⁴⁹ However, the invasion of Afghanistan made it clear that NKP had once more become 100% loyal to USSR, as it had been before Reidar T. Larsen became the leader in the 1960s.²⁵⁰

According to AKP, Norway could not trust NATO or the US, based on the lack of a US reaction on USSR's invasion of Afghanistan. AKP leader, Pål Steigan believed that a USSR attack on Norway would lead to a Third World War because of Norway's strategic position. At the same time, it was possible that the US would be willing to bargain over the future of Norway or solve the issue by using atomic bombs on Norway. The invasion of Afghanistan had to function as a wake-up call for Norway's leaders and population, and the Norwegian leaders had to invest more money on building up the military capability. Self-defence became increasingly critical to small countries like Norway according to Steigan, and one had to be prepared in order to not end up like colony of USSR.²⁵¹ AKP had been right, in its minds, and the invasion of Afghanistan led to AKP to be, in practice favourable to the state military apparatus.²⁵²

²⁴⁷ Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 160-61; Rognlien and Brandal, *store ML-boka*, 28.

²⁴⁸ Rem, "Kampanje mot MGK. Blir han isolert?," *Klassekampen* 12.1.1980, 2.

²⁴⁹ B.W., "Mens NKP isoleres: Hvor mange hopper av?," *ibid.* 16.1; Rem, "Kampanje mot MGK. Blir han isolert?," *ibid.* 12.1.1980.

²⁵⁰ Åsmund Egge and Terje Halvorsen, "'-kriteriet på en kommunist er hans forhold til Sovjetunionen" ; de norsk-sovjetiske partirelasjoner 1917-1991," *Arbeiderhistorie* (2002): 29.

²⁵¹ Pål Steigan, *Krig i vår tid* (Oslo: Oktober, 1980), 24.

²⁵² Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 162.

4.6 The Iranian revolution

The particular case of the Iranian revolution shows that the parties, at the end of the 1970s perhaps was moving into a new phase, where it was possible to have the same perception of an event without needing to find one tiny aspect that could be criticised. Both parties supported the masses in their fight against the Shah and his regime. *Klassekampen* called the regime a terror-regime, which *Friheten* agreed on, in addition to also calling the Shah a tyrant. The Maoists argued that they had to support the Iranian people's fight for independence in light of the Three Worlds Theory, and the victory for the Iranian people was also perceived as a victory for the TWT. The Iranian revolution had confirmed Mao's theory, that the Third World countries had to stand together against the imperialists, and that the Third World forces and the working-class masses had to be counted for in terms of military. NKP claimed similar things, without referring to TWT, that Iran was an example that the international power-relations had changed and that the ruling class no longer had the ascendancy.²⁵³

Both parties argued that the fight of the Iranian people was a fight against imperialism, with both parties saying that the US imperialism lost because of the successful revolution to overthrow the Shah. The main difference was that the Maoists argued that USSR was weakened too and that USSR attempted to wield influence in Iran since the USSR had many industrial interests in Iran. Also, *Klassekampen* accused the USSR press of lying when it portrayed the Iranian anti-imperialist fight to be only against the US and not also against USSR.²⁵⁴ *Friheten* printed a statement from USSR that said it was positive too and acknowledged the new government in Iran and that USSR had the utmost respect for national

²⁵³ *Friheten*, "Aftenpostens bekymring," *Friheten*, No. 01, 1979; "Nytt tap for USA-imperialismen."; T.L., "Hva skjer når sjahen reiser?," *Klassekampen* 8.1.1979; *Klassekampen*, "Det iranske folkets seier," *ibid.* 14.2.1979.

²⁵⁴ *Friheten*, "Nytt tap for USA-imperialismen."; *Klassekampen*, "De iranske folkets kamp mot de to supermaktene," *Klassekampen* 6.1.1979; "Farvel til sjahen," *Klassekampen* 17.1.1979; D.Z., "Sovjets interesser i Iran," *ibid.* 19.1.1979.

sovereignty and that USSR was a supporter of anti-imperialist revolutions like the one in Iran.²⁵⁵ Additionally, NKP stated that Xiaoping was negative to the liberation that happened and that he had said that the US should have been firmer against the liberation movements in different countries and that the US should strive to avoid defeats such as in Iran.²⁵⁶ Nevertheless, both parties saw the overthrow in Iran as an important victory despite both parties claiming that the other party's ideological host-party being negative to it, without the other party taking the bait. It was also clear that AKP had distanced itself a bit from China and Xiaoping.

4.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have looked into how national and international happenings affected NKP and AKP internally and how the changes in the parties again affected how they viewed each other. The ideological consolidation of the parties became increasingly evident. At the same time, a change occurred in 1978 with AKP's willingness to cooperate on demonstration days again. One could argue that it was the behaviour and attitude of AKP that guided the dynamic between the two parties after NKP broke with SV in 1975, where NKP's responses were reactive. The period has a distinctive hallmark of AKP changing its policy throughout the years because of international happenings in 1976, with the new leaders in China and the Sino-Albanian split. The extent of critique against NKP and the rest of the left-wing reduced after 1978, but the view towards NKP within AKP fundamentally stayed the same.

NKP's perception of AKP at the end of the 1970s was affected by their differing views in the international context. AKP had through international events marked itself as a reactionary party according to NKP: The Maoists had flirted with the fascist in Chile, unconditionally supported China, supported American presence in Europe, hailed Pol Pot and his terror-regime in Cambodia, and applauded the Chinese attack

²⁵⁵ Friheten, "Tudeh-partiet om utviklingen i Irak: Imperialismen kan bare slå tilbake gjennom enhet," *Friheten*, No. 13, 1979.

²⁵⁶ "USAs kommunister om Deng Xiaopings besøk: Kynisk og skammløs opptreden," *ibid.*, No. 12,.

on Vietnam. AKP was first and foremost anti-Soviet, but it did also create disturbance and anxiety within the Norwegian labour union and working class.²⁵⁷ The Maoists, on the other hand, continued to see NKP's Soviet-support as something highly problematic: USSR had proved that it was no socialist state through its actions in Czechoslovakia, Eritrea/Ethiopia and the Barents Sea regarding fishery and Svalbard - by its defence, or denial, of USSR's presence, NKP had proved that it was a pro-social-imperialism and anti-communist party.²⁵⁸ Additionally, AKP continued to enjoy arguing and provoking NKP, and NKP's reactions led the Maoists to think they did something right.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷ ". Norge er inne i den mest langvarige og dyptgående krise i etterkrigstida," *ibid.*, No. 42,.

²⁵⁸ Klassekampen, "Kvifor er "NKP" eit ekstremt høgreparti?," *Klassekampen* 30.1.1978; "Svart falskneri," *Klassekampen* 2.2.1978; "Er NKP et fascistisk parti?," *Klassekampen* 22.6.1978.

²⁵⁹ "Entusiastisk 4-års festmøte for AKP (m-l): "4-åringen voker og trives i kampen"."

Chapter 5

What factors can explain how the relationship unfolded?

In this chapter, I will analyse the empirical chapters (chapter two, three and four) in light of this thesis' research questions. Recall how the first RQ questioned in what way the rivalry between the parties in domestic politics, and in the labour movement, could explain the development of the relationship. The second RQ questioned in what way international power-struggle, politics, conflicts and events could explain the development of the relationship. Moreover, the third RQ questioned in what way ideological differences, being rooted in different branches of Marxist-Leninist theory could explain the development of the relationship between the parties.

The three first subchapters analyse the empirical material in light of the RQs: First domestic politics, second international politics and third ideology. It is important to stress that even though the subchapters and the RQs are separated within this chapter, they are without doubt interconnected – which becomes evident throughout this chapter. The fourth subchapter is an additional chapter that seeks to connect different traits of either one or both parties to modern terms like 'whataboutism' and 'red-pilling'.

Overall, it seems like the parties' degree of ideological proximity serves as the main explanatory factor for how the dynamic between the two parties changed over the years. NKP had a low degree of ideological proximity between 1973 and 1974 with Reidar. T. Larsen as the leader. However, it rose after NKP's break with SV and with Martin Gunnar Knutsen as the leader, and it stayed high throughout the 1970s. AKP, on the other hand, had a high degree of ideological proximity from the time it was established and until approximately 1978, when China became less attractive to AKP. The new, more pragmatic, policy of Deng Xiaoping had little focus on small Maoist parties in Western countries compared to Mao's policies. Thus, the adjustments in the degree of ideological proximity and the level of hostility between the two parties seem

to correlate, with the years 1975 to 1978, when both parties had a high degree of ideological proximity, were the most hostile ones regarding their relationship.

5.1 Domestic level

In this subchapter, the focus of the analysis is on the domestic happening and politics, which includes everything that happened in the Norwegian political sphere that was grounded in the interests of the Norwegian population.

5.1.1 From competitors to enemies

First, the thesis looks at whether there was a specific rivalry between the two parties, and if so, can it serve as an explanatory factor for how the relationship developed over the years. It became clear that even if the parties attempted to cooperate after 1976, both Øgrim and Godager recommended that respectively AKP and NKP should distance itself from the other in their works. Thus, both parties start to picture the other as an enemy and not just as a political competitor.

As demonstrated earlier in this thesis, several occurrences in Norwegian politics affected the relationship between AKP and NKP. NKP instantly criticised AKP after it was established. NKP questioned if AKP was a necessary party for Norwegian politics and argued there was no need as a communist party already existed. Thus, the rivalry between the parties was evident from the start, with AKP stating that the new party was only necessary because NKP had failed as a communist party. Both pointed out the other as quite similar, which must have laid grounds for an antagonistic relationship. Both parties stressed the importance of not creating unnecessary disunity on the left-wing, and that the real enemy was the social-democrats and the right-wing. It is clear that both parties acknowledged the other as a left-wing party in the beginning, despite sometimes claiming otherwise. The similarity in names became the topic of the dispute in the summer of 1973 when AKP decided to run for election as RV. We can recall how NKP protested against AKP's wish to run under 'AKP' and how it ended with AKP establishing Red Electoral

Alliance. The rivalry was anchored in fear of losing votes and confusing the voters and not based on NKP precepting AKP as a part of the right-wing.

Furthermore, AKP and the Maoist movement were excluded from two alliances in 1972 and 1973: the electoral alliance *Sosialistisk Valgforbund*, and the united leftist front in the Norwegian EEC referendum campaign in 1972. In terms of the electoral alliance, the Maoists practically begged to be included but was shown no mercy. AKP was ridiculed as a fanatical party by many of the left-wing, and it was clear that NKP was commonly accepted as the communist party in Norway. This is important for the rivalry, as it seems like an essential dimension of the rivalry was based on the word 'communist', with both parties claiming that the other party was unworthy of using it in its name.

However, recollect that it was not NKP's decision to exclude AKP from the electoral alliance. It happened after an ultimatum from *Demokratiske Sosialister*. Perhaps NKP considered allowing AKP to join the electoral alliance, as it would have put AKP in a delicate situation. Would it be difficult for AKP to argue for its existence, and difference to other parties if it was natural for it to join an electoral alliance with all the other leftist parties? NKP, on the other hand, could be interested in including AKP in the alliance in order to prove to people how AKP was no different to the already existing parties at the left-wing, and that it was an unnecessary party. AKP had a recruitment system that NKP lacked, and it must have hurt NKP to see all the youths flocked to AKP instead of NKP.

Prior to Øgrim's theses, the Maoists were blamed when things did not go well in the labour union. It seems like the parties exploited the labour union to promote party policy, despite both parties accusing the other of promoting party policy instead of empowering the labour union through cooperation. It was evident that it was important for the parties to be visible in the labour union and the solidarity movements as I will show later on in this chapter.

Whether or not this was a motivation for Øgrim when he wrote the theses, it must have provoked the Maoists that their approach to cooperation was always declined. Perhaps it was easier to be against cooperation on principle instead? Nevertheless, the ideological consolidations of the parties kicked off a new type of rivalry between the parties. It became impossible to cooperate and increasingly important to criticise the approach of the other party in different situations. The rivalry became more rooted in the ideological differences of the parties after 1975, and it became ever more critical to win ownership over the term 'communist'.

The most prominent manifestation of rivalry was regarding the disagreement over the monument at Nordre Gravlund. It showed how real, but at the same time how meaningless, the discussion was. It seems like it was impossible for the two parties to agree on anything in the period 1975 to 1978 with the dispute getting no attention in *Klassekampen* or *Friheten* in 1979. However, the different worldview was the underlying factor for the disagreement. The monument was subject of disagreement regarding ideology and heritage, and it is striking that it seems like NKP's tradition was to visit the monument at 1 May, while AKP's tradition, which started in 1975, was to visit the monument at 17 May. This indicated that the presence of the other party was enough to agitate the other. The dispute regarding the monument became an open wound, at least to NKP, who felt that AKP was causing much hurt with its behaviour. The monument was in many ways the manifestation of communism in Norway, and those who had ownership over the monument were the rightful successor of the Norwegian communists who fought for Norway during the Second World War. The monument itself made the period in May more hostile and created more tension. It does, however, not explain why the relationship became as hostile as it did, but it shows how impossible it was for the two parties to find a solution to even the smallest issue.

The elections brought turmoil, and we can recall how NKP's election campaign kick-off in 1977 ended in violence between the activists from both parties. Furthermore, the election in 1977 became the day when AKP was larger than NKP in terms of

popular support. This caused great joy in AKP and great frustration in NKP. AKP had reached its goal and felt that it had won ownership over the communist-term.

5.1.2 Right and wrongs on red letter days

The red letter days were the days when the rivalry between the parties became most evident. May Day, 8 March and 17 May were the days the parties attempted to cooperate but always failed. This led to harsh accusations and a more hostile tone. Additionally, 21 August developed into a red letter day for AKP, and it was seen as a provocation to NKP every year. AKP was unwilling to cooperate from 1975 to 1978, on all red letter days except on 21 August. This made the relationship increasingly hostile as AKP, or its organising groups (*Faglig 1. maifront* or *Kvinnefronten*) always were open to discuss the possibility of a joint march early on, but it became apparent during the discussions that AKP was unwilling to compromise for the sake of cooperation. It was AKP's way or no way – which was unacceptable to NKP and its organising groups. Through its behaviour, AKP created false hope among the labour movement, which was shattered every time. The failed attempts of cooperation had a snowball effect, where the parties became increasingly annoyed every time cooperation failed, instead of realising that it was impossible. The disagreement about which paroles should be included or not, without doubt, fuelled the tension between the parties over the years. Interestingly, the most heated discussions occurred over the Soviet Union's presence in Czechoslovakia. Thus, it is evident that international issues influenced domestic politics, but the disagreement over the international issues was again anchored in ideological differences.

The tension between the parties regarding the red letter days declined at the end of the 1970s, with AKP being open to cooperation again on all red letter days except May Day. The bomb in AKP's May Day march in 1979 showed who the true enemy of the working class really was – the right-wing of Norwegian politics. The attack kick-started the debate surrounding surveillance again, and it seems like AKP and NKP turned their hatred towards the right-wing party *Norsk Front* and the government for only monitoring left-wing parties. The common enemy may have canalised the hatred

of the parties away from each other and to a common enemy, as they understood that the right-wing parties were those who really wanted to hurt them. On a side note, when it was clear that it was a right-wing activist who attacked the May Day march, neither AKP or NKP accused the person of being in conspiracy with the other party. The accusation of the other party belonging to the right-wing vanished.

Thus, the sub-conclusion on in what way the domestic issues could explain how the relationship between the two parties unfolded, one must say that it, without doubt, fuelled the tension between them. This was because they were never able to work out their differences, and AKP refusal to cooperate after 1975 made it more difficult. The rivalry was intense, especially from when the parties consolidated ideologically, to the bomb attack on May Day in 1979. The bomb, in combination with other effects, shifted the focus of both parties to a new enemy of the Norwegian labour movement. At the same time, it is clear that international politics, such as USSR's presence in Czechoslovakia, the case of the Polish student who died, and the fact that the parties were rooted in two different branches of Marxist-Leninism made the local rivalry between them more hostile as shown in chapter 5.2.

5.2 International politics

In this subchapter, the focus of the analysis is on the events in other countries and how these events affected the relationship between AKP and NKP through for instance the solidarity movements based in the labour movement. The relationship between China and USSR, and how it affected the policy of AKP and NKP is also very important for this subchapter.

As demonstrated previously, the parties' characterisations of each other were primarily rooted in the ideological differences of the parties and that both claimed to be a Marxist-Leninist party. Furthermore, the parties did, most of the time, disagree about whom to support in different international conflicts and events – often based in the leaders of CCP and CPSU's different view of different events. Throughout the decade, AKP and NKP went from both supporting Vietnam in its fight for liberation

against the US imperialist power, to heavily disagreeing on whether Vietnam was a fascist state or not after Vietnam entered Cambodia to end Pol Pot's regime, and when China entered Vietnam after re-occurring border disputes. AKP switched perception of Vietnam because China changed its perception after Vietnam's change of allegiance from China to the Soviet Union. The degree of ideological proximity between AKP and the Communist Party of China was so high that AKP lacked self-determination regarding the situation in Southeast Asia.

Both parties accused the other, at some point, of being a puppet for respectively the Chinese and the leaders of USSR. An example is how Mao opened up China to the US, and how it substantially worsened the relationship between AKP and NKP. We can recall how NKP began to believe that the international Maoist movement had a conspiracy with the CIA, against the Soviet-communism. The Soviet Union was a constant theme of discussion and frustration, and both parties refused to budge. AKP refused to call the Soviet Union anything else than 'Soviet' because, after Mao's denouncement of the state in the 1960s, AKP no longer perceived USSR as a socialist state. Thus, USSR was arguably the biggest headache for the relationship between NKP and AKP based on the strong anti-Sovietism in AKP and NKP's ideological consolidation with USSR after the break with SV.

Czechoslovakia was a constant headache for NKP, who had to defend USSR's behaviour within Czechoslovakia throughout the whole decade, despite being against USSR's entrance into the country in 1968. Czechoslovakia was the biggest proof AKP had of USSR imperialism, and NKP had to argue against the accusations constantly. It was a constant factor, as a part of the two parties different view of USSR, that reoccurred every time NKP accused the US of imperialism. At every 21 August and every meeting regarding a demonstration day, the parties were discussing possible cooperation that rarely became a reality. The disagreement over Czechoslovakia was perhaps the clearest example of how international issues affected the domestic issues between the parties as 21 August became a day of significant tension between the parties.

An exception to all of this, which happened right at the end of the decade in early 1979, was both parties support of the Iranian revolution. At that point, AKP had started to distance itself from China after the change of policy in CCP under the leadership of Xiaoping, but the anti-Sovietism was still present. The difference in 1979 was that both *Klassekampen* and *Friheten* published articles favourable of the revolution, but without looking for an insignificant difference between the parties that could be blown into a big disagreement. However, *Klassekampen* argued that USSR was no supporter of the revolution due to economic interest, but *Friheten* did not respond to the criticism. There was no defence of the Soviet Union in sight.

As shown in chapter four, the case of Iran showed an international occurrence the parties agreed on. However, AKP and NKP had perhaps gone into a new phase in 1979 since neither of them took the bait when the other claimed that the host-state of the other party was unhappy with the revolution in Iran. AKP had in 1979 distanced itself a bit from China after experiencing a turmoil of events that had weakened the Maoist movement internationally.

5.2.1 Solidarity movements

However, later, it was increasingly common for the parties to disagree about whom to support, with Vietnam/Cambodia as the most prominent example of this. The rivalry was then again grounded in the different branches of Marxism-Leninism, which had been a source of dispute for the two parties throughout the nineteen seventies.

International conflicts created arenas for the parties to disagree on, especially in Southeast Asia since both USSR and China had an interest in the region. It also created forums of discussions through solidarity groups. The solidarity groups were the manifestation of international events in Norwegian politics. They were focused on helping fractions of a population under a totalitarian regime or help someone during a revolution. The focus around them varied by the way conflicts unfolded. However, while NKP and AKP in many cases agreed that for instance, Chile deserved a solidarity group, they disagreed about who should receive the monetary support. After 1975 they took different stances in different conflicts, as in Angola and Southeast

Asia. Both parties had supported Vietnam in its fight against the US, but as a part of Vietnam's change of allegiance from China to USSR and Pol Pot's entrance into leadership in Cambodia, the tone changed. During the later 1970s, the disagreement about whether it was Vietnam or Cambodia who executed a genocide created a much more hostile relationship between the parties.

5.3 Party characteristics

5.3.1 Ideology – It is my way or no way

The parties followed two different branches of Marxist-Leninist ideology: NKP followed the Soviet-communism and AKP followed Maoism. These two branches had been in opposition to one another since Mao criticised the Soviet Union, under the leadership of Khrushchev, for its openness to 'peaceful competition' with Western countries like the US. Khrushchev cut all monetary support to China in the early 1960s, and the Sino-Soviet split was on.²⁶⁰ This split started the strong anti-Sovietism in the Maoist movement but was also the reason behind USSR cut in monetary support to NKP when Reidar T. Larsen refused to distance NKP from China.²⁶¹

The relationship between USSR and China continued to be hostile throughout the seventies. AKP was grounded in Maoism where anti-Sovietism was a fundamental part, which AKP kept as a trait even though the ties to CCP weakened. It is clear that AKP, at the end of the decade, decided to consolidate ideologically to 'vintage' Maoism.

Even though NKP was a part of the Soviet-communism, it did not receive monetary support after 1964 according to Holtsmark. One possible reason was that NKP-leader Reidar T. Larsen did not want to maintain the relationship with NKP's sister party in USSR, and Larsen has stated that he saw it as essential for NKP's survival that the party was independent of CPSU. NKP denied taking a stance in the conflict between CPSU and CCP. It is likely that CPSU was unhappy with the political line

²⁶⁰ Priestland, *The red flag : communism and the making of the modern world*, 256-57.

²⁶¹ Holtsmark, *Gullet fra Moskva : sovjetisk pengestøtte til norske kommunister 1917-1990*. 21.

in NKP, as NKP maintained its connection with CCP and was critical of USSR's invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.²⁶²

The electoral alliance, *Sosialistisk Valgforbund*, and the possibility of a new party, the Socialist Left Party, created uncertainty within NKP regarding its relation to CPSU. Holtsmark argued that NKP was not attractive to Moscow under the leadership of Larsen and that the monetary support was restored when NKP broke with SV. The selection of the pro-Soviet Martin G. Knutsen as the new leader of the party was appreciated in Moscow.²⁶³ Furthermore, we can recall how both parties went through ideological consolidation and selected new leaders in 1975. This had great implications for the dynamic between AKP and NKP, as AKP's anti-Sovietism intensified and NKP became increasingly willing to defend USSR against the critiques from AKP. Additionally, NKP changed its stance regarding the Sino-Soviet split because of the ideological consolidation and begun to criticise China, which provoked AKP.

Recollect how AKP was open to cooperation, but without any luck prior to the ideological consolidation and how NKP showed little willingness to 'help' AKP in its first year – both regarding the electoral alliance and the name-dispute before the election in 1973. The ideological consolidation led both parties into isolation, which most likely strengthened both parties' belief that they had the 'correct' opinion. AKP took it as far as refusing to compromise for the sake of cooperation. The change of policy had ripple effects, and the proletarianisation-project of AKP frustrated NKP, and the ideological consolidation of the parties had led the tables to turn in 1975 when AKP became the restrictive part regarding cooperation.

How can this explain the dynamic between the parties in the period 1973-1974? The anti-Sovietism of AKP was present in the first period too. NKP seems to have been less provoked and hurt by the accusations against USSR in 1973 and 1974, possibly because it was necessary for the leadership in NKP to not pick sides considering the

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Ibid.

Sino-Soviet split. NKP strove not to be the defender of USSR and critical to AKP but was instead focused on domestic issues. The accusations against USSR, especially regarding Czechoslovakia, provoked NKP without a doubt. Nevertheless, moral and mutual respect was emphasised by NKP, who demanded of its members to not descend to the level of AKP and its way of behaving.

The ideological consolidation of NKP, therefore, opened a new door for the relationship between the two parties. From 1975 NKP began to defend USSR unconditionally against all accusations, and it was willing to attack AKP's relation to China in the same way. What had been frowned upon in NKP under the leadership of Reidar T. Larsen was welcomed under the new leader, Martin Gunnar Knutsen. NKP's pro-Soviet attitude from 1975 thus confirmed the Maoists belief, that NKP was a revisionist party and the defender of social-imperialism. As a part of Øgrim's theses, it became increasingly important for AKP to demonstrate to the members of the working class how NKP no longer served them, and that the champion of the working class was AKP.

Another aspect regarding the ideological consolidation was that NKP more and more began to connect the Maoists to the bourgeoisie class after AKP implemented proletarianisation as part of its policy. The proletarianisation enabled a new type of confrontation between the members of AKP and NKP. Before 1975, some of AKP's members had proletarianised, but most AKP-members who worked in working-class jobs had origins from the working class. With the new proletarianisation policy, the industrial workplaces were filled by youth with roots in the bourgeoisie class. The difference between an AKP- and an NKP-member became evident to NKP. The bourgeoisie class' march into the labour movement enabled more provocations both ways between the parties. Thus, while the groups of members had been located at different spheres in society, the proletarianisation created a new arena of conflict – namely blue-collar workplaces.

Thus, it seems like the parties confirmed each other's theories through their ideological consolidation in 1975-1976. The tension between the two parties was self-

reinforcing anchored in ideological differences. Because of the confirmation of theories, the two parties served well as each other's enemy in the period, since it enabled the parties to fight for their ideological host-parties at the domestic level and gave the parties perhaps a sense of purpose with their presence.

5.3.2 Revolution is the solution, and war is coming.

The discussion about whether an armed revolution was necessary was a reoccurring and constant disagreement between the parties. We can recall how AKP stated that the key reason for why it was necessary to establish a new party was because NKP had failed as a Marxist-Leninist party. NKP had developed into a revisionist party according to AKP, and NKP's decision to follow the instructions from Moscow of 'peaceful coexistence' in the 1950s was the reason for why NKP to no longer was in favour of an armed revolution.

Armed revolution was essential for AKP from the day it was established, but Øgrim's theses reinforced the importance of this as the ideology of the revisionists were debunked. However, the disagreement over an armed revolution seems to have been rooted in disagreement whether it was possible for the working class to exploit the existing state system if it was to have a majority in the parliament at some point. I have demonstrated how AKP, contrary to NKP, perceived the state system as a bourgeois tool, which was why AKP saw the armed revolution as necessary. AKP argued that every state structure was built by the bourgeoisie class to defend the bourgeoisie class and pointed to Chile to show how a non-armed revolution only led to death among the working class. The discord over the state system was an ever-present factor that split the parties throughout the whole period because neither of the parties revised the policy of the party on this specific topic.

Closely related to the armed revolution was AKP's belief that the Third World War was imminent. The fear of a Third World War, which most likely would include the Soviet Union invading Norway, was increasingly likely to AKP, especially after the ideological consolidation in 1975. Recall how AKP, because of the fear of USSR invading Norway and categorised the leadership of NKP as possible fifth columns.

The accusation of being possible traitors to its own country provoked NKP, who denied all accusations. I am not sure whether the Maoists accused NKP in order to raise doubt about the party within the labour movement, essentially weakening it, or if it was purely ideological. However, the accusations of NKP being a fifth column were raised by Øgrim in *Røde Fane* before the theses were published, but one can speculate that he then knew it would be included in the theses. The accusations were intensified by the theses, and AKP did no longer spare the members of NKP. It was clear to AKP, most likely especially after NKP's consolidation, that all remaining members of NKP were fifth columnists.

5.3.3 Organisational structure

Rognlien and Brandal argued that the bitter conflict between the parties was tougher for NKP than AKP since the Maoists were much younger and it did not cost them anything to be brutal and insensitive.²⁶⁴ The young age of the Maoists enabled the fanaticism and sectarianism of the party as the youth were susceptible to indoctrination. While several members of NKP had experienced war, most of AKP's members were born after the Second World War. It is likely that the older members of NKP perceived the Maoists as dumb and naïve in the beginning, and that AKP should listen to the advice from the wiser and older communist. AKP, on the other hand, saw NKP's lack of desire to wage an armed revolution as a weakness. NKP had, according to AKP, failed as a communist party and had been deceived by USSR's social-imperialist policy.

AKP's organisational secrecy, especially after 1975, caused groups and parties to be reluctant to cooperate with AKP. We can recall how AKP established four different types of membership, and how Pål Steigan, when elected as the new leader, became the only public spokesman of the party. The parties' different view of secrecy was grounded in their different views regarding the world system and the possibility of a Third World War, as discussed previously in this chapter. The secrecy was in many

²⁶⁴ Rognlien and Brandal, *store ML-boka*, 22.

ways built on scepticism to both the state, but also possible foreign agents who had interest in infiltrating the organisation. The Maoists perceived NKP to be incredibly naïve considering how easy it was to access records over all members in addition to *Friheten* publishing greetings from members of different regional branches around every Christmas.²⁶⁵ The different approach regarding secrecy and surveillance made it difficult for NKP to cooperate with AKP, and it was used as an explanation of why AKP could not be included in *Sosialistisk Valgforbund*.

At last, as stated in the introduction, both parties were formed after the idea of *democratic centralism*, which implied that the leadership of the party decided the policy of the party based on proposals from the members. However, AKP was substantially more centralised than NKP, and the power was concentrated in the executive committee of the central committee (SKAU). Thus, the opinion of those who sat in SKAU influenced the policy of the party and was how Øgrim's theses were so quickly implemented, as he was part of the executive committee.²⁶⁶

5.3.4 Wash your filthy mouth

The discourse between AKP and NKP was filled with accusations of revisionism, fascism, social-imperialism, right-wing politics and much more. The characterisation of the other party of being the worst thing imaginable was a trait the parties shared with other self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist parties and groups, and it was frequent in both the discourse between USSR and China and the discourse between USSR and Albania.

It is likely that they most often did not literally mean what they said but used the insults as a tool to their propaganda. It is important to remember that it was crucial for both parties to be accepted by the labour movement, but at the same time promote the other party as a hoax. Both *Klassekampen* and *Friheten* wrote more than once that the other party had 'taken the final step over to the right-wing and was no longer

²⁶⁵ Klassekampen, "Skal "Friheten"-arkiva brennast?."

²⁶⁶ Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 89.

a Marxist-Leninist party'. As demonstrated, the insults were often followed by a comparison between what the other party had said or done and how it was similar to what a right-wing party or newspaper had written or done. However, it is interesting to see how the parties were sensitive when it came to insults, and especially after the ideological consolidation in 1975. My point is that as Marxist-Leninist parties, the two parties were primed to use a harsh polemic, which did not make cooperation more likely to be successful, but rather the opposite. Additionally, if the parties genuinely wanted to cooperate, they should have enough self-awareness to see that the way they were communicating was not helping.

The word 'communist' was a trigger-point for the parties since both had it in its organisational name. The word created rivalry and constant frustration. Subsequently, both parties began to write the name of the other with quotations marks, which must be categorised as a domination technique where one sought to humiliate and create disfavour among the labour movement of the other. *Friheten* and *Klassekampen* also often wrote 'the so-called' before the name of the party to insinuate that it was not a communist party. The use of the quotation marks provoked both parties, and it was a part of the mutual campaign of slander to expose the other party as a hoax in order to prevent it from getting new members. The willingness of the parties and their respective newspapers to continually provoke the other, on purpose, from the beginning, must have made it difficult for the parties to create a fruitful relationship.

It is essential to discuss how the internal discourse about the other party differed from the external. It seems like internal magazines and documents were focused on how the other party had to be defeated while the newspapers, which were available for everyone, were more focused on why the other party was horrible. Internal publications were oriented around what the party wanted to achieve, for instance how Godager wrote that NKP had to eliminate AKP. Publications meant for external actors, in addition to the members of the party, were the treatment to achieve the said

goal. Regarding Godager's manuscript, it is reasonable to believe that *Friheten* was used to portray AKP in the way Godager had recommended.

5.4 The behaviour assessed in modern terms

Throughout the work with this thesis, modern terms have popped up in my head when researching how the two parties behaved. This subchapter draws parallels between the behaviour of one or both parties and other types of movements and/or groups. It is mostly regarding the way the parties argued, and how they sought to find explanations of the other party's behaviour, which was quite similar to how a conspiracy theorist would argue.

The first trait I want to shed light on is the method of saying 'but what about [...]' when confronted with an uncomfortable topic. This method is today termed as 'whataboutism'²⁶⁷. NKP was the most frequent user of whataboutism. Recall how NKP answered when confronted with the situation in Czechoslovakia. The solution was most often to say, 'but what about the American troops in West-Germany'. When NKP was confronted with its connection to USSR, the reply was 'but what about AKP's relation to China'. The frequency of NKP pointing to AKP and China's relationship increased after the ideological consolidation of NKP in 1975. The use of whataboutism created frustration among the members of AKP. The Maoists argued that it showed how weak NKP was with its complete defence of USSR and the use of whataboutism led AKP to argue that Moscow orchestrated everything Martin G. Knutsen said.

Another method used in discussions between the parties, which is equally represented in discussions on the internet nowadays, is the act of comparing the opponent to Hitler or the Nazi's and claim that the party was equally as evil as Hitler because it allegedly was similar in some way. The act is called *Reductio ad Hitlerum*, or to reduce the

²⁶⁷ "Whataboutism [...] [is] a reversal of accusation, arguing that an opponent is guilty of an offense just as egregious or worse than what the original party was accused of doing, however unconnected the offenses may be", Merriam-Webster, "What about 'Whataboutism'?", Dictionary by Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/whataboutism-origin-meaning>.

argument into Hitler, and *Reductio ad Hitlerum* is a pun on the original term *Reductio ad Absurdum*. The term implies that the argument of one part of the discussion is so absurd that it ruins the debate. Some claim someone who ‘draws the Nazi card’ in a debate automatically loses the debate. In that sense, one could say that AKP and NKP competed in losing the debate.²⁶⁸ However, as stated previously in this thesis, the method of comparing the opponent to the worst thing imaginable is a common method among Marxist-Leninist supporters. It is thus not likely that neither AKP or NKP felt that the other party lost when they were compared to Hitler by the other.

The point of mentioning this is not to ridicule the parties’ ways of comparing the other to Hitler, but rather to show how the method is viewed nowadays, and that it has been the situation for a long time. One could imagine how outsiders saw the discussion between the parts with disgust or resignation. The reason for the use of Hitler in argumentation seems to have been rooted in accusations of anti-communism, and that fascism and national socialism was what was furthest away. Fascists and Nazis were the real manifestations of evil. The willingness to say that the other part was as evil as it gets, despite only demonstrating rather peaceful, at least based on my findings, is quite extreme. This tendency of ‘drawing the Nazi-card’ was an extreme habit that the AKP and NKP shared.

The discussion has in the 21st century moved from the streets and the newspapers to the internet, where everyone can discuss freely, but it has also created echo chambers. In the male activist milieu (and other alt-right movements), a term originally from the Matrix movie-franchise has flourished, namely ‘red pill’. The red pill “[...] refers to the truth behind a situation, especially a truth that is difficult to accept”²⁶⁹. The red pill-argumentation was evident in AKP’s argumentation, especially during elections. AKP claimed that it had understood what others had not, and it sought to illuminate the truth to the rest of the people and enlighten them. The inclusion of this term is

²⁶⁸ Gabriel H Teninbaum, "Reductio ad hitlerum: Trumping the judicial Nazi card," *Mich. St. L. Rev.* (2009).

²⁶⁹ Dictionary.com, "Red pill," Dictionary.com, <https://www.dictionary.com/e/slang/red-pill/>.

not done to say that AKP was a right-wing party or anything related to that, but instead to say that the behaviour we see today is nothing new. Furthermore, red pilling is closely related to conspiracy theories and closed communities who have established rootless 'truths'. AKP's approach during elections, especially for the 1977-election, with secrecy regarding organisational structure and view on a specific international event like the genocide in Cambodia, could all serve as signs of AKP being a conspiratorial party.

5.5 Summary

The analysis has looked at the relationship between the two parties at three levels, which are interconnected despite being fractioned in the analysis. The ideological consolidation in 1975 and the varying in closeness between the parties and the ideological host-parties provides as a great explanatory factor. Furthermore, it seems like when both parties experienced a high degree of ideological proximity, with respectively CCP and CPSU, in the period where the relationship between AKP and NKP was at its most hostile – the period from 1975 to 1978.

Thus, it implies that the RQ on ideology provides the most explanatory factor and that it manifested itself through national and international occurrences. In other words, the different red letter days, the elections, the situation in Southeast Asia and so on, enabled the discussions between the two parties where the different ideological foundations became evident and unfolded through harsh discussion, which led to a hostile relationship.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The introduction of this thesis proposed three research questions about the relationship between AKP and NKP. They offered different approaches to examine why the relationship evolved as it did: The first one focused on the parties' behaviour at the domestic level, the second one on the influence international issues had on the parties' behaviour and the third one on the ideologies of the parties. This thesis has sought to answer the RQs through a thorough examination of the parties' newspapers, *Klassekampen* and *Friheten*, with additional material from the internal magazines, party documents and publications, memoirs and various secondary literature. I have conducted a subjective, comparative analysis, through the examination of selected sources. I have attempted to create an overarching understanding of how the relationship between the parties changed in the period between 1973 and 1979 and what caused the changes.

The parties had a domestic focus between 1973 and 1974, where both parties stated the importance of independence from foreign influence and that left-wing parties should strive not to attack each other but rather focus on the right-wing and the bourgeoisie class. The attempts of cooperation failed and created frustration in the two parties as it became clear that the two parties competed for the same voters. However, my findings suggest that the parties within this specific period were able to act civilised and professional, focusing on the greater cause and not the other party. Thus, domestic issues were important for how the relationship between the parties evolved in the first period.

AKP was a goal-oriented Maoist party, and open to an armed revolution, which consolidated ideological based on a theoretical review of the party by Tron Øgrim. The ideological consolidation in NKP, on the other hand, was the result of two internal disputes. The two disputes had led the ideological composition of NKP to be in favour of the Soviet Union and Soviet-communism in 1975. Hence, a clear gap between the

two parties was established based on the parties belonging to two different branches of Marxism-Leninism that perceived the other as wrongful. Ideological differences explained, from 1975, in what way the relationship evolved in a more substantial degree. Both parties shifted their focus from domestic issues to international issues as they began to mirror CCP and CPSU. The importance of a united left-wing vanished as both parties became to perceive the other as an enemy of the working class. The ideological consolidation made the relationship more hostile as the parties became more determined to protect their ideological host-parties against accusations, which created a more significant gap between the two parties since they supported two different branches of Marxist-Leninist theory.

Different perceptions on international issues, anchored in different ideologies, affected the relationship between the parties from 1975. It thus becomes clear that the policy of the parties was not deadlocked since foreign powers clearly influenced both parties. The international focus had ripple effects on the domestic level within the solidarity movements. The solidarity movements were the manifestation of the international issues at the domestic level. Furthermore, the differences between the parties became more apparent as disagreement regarding solidarity movements, which created headlines in both *Klassekampen* and *Friheten*.

It seems that the level of tension between AKP and NKP was at its highest in the period when both parties experienced a high degree of ideological proximity to their respective ideological host-parties, which was the period from 1975 to 1978. In the years prior to 1975, NKP had a lower level of ideological proximity to CPSU, under the leadership of Reidar T. Larsen. However, NKP's break with the SV-project in 1975 led the party to consolidate ideologically, which boosted the party's relationship with the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, it is essential to state that the domestic rivalry between the parties enabled the dispute and hostility between the parties to bloom. The fact that AKP stated that its existence was only necessary because NKP had failed and that NKP perceived AKP as a group of bourgeois teens increased the tension between the parties which was based on ideological differences. Additionally,

the internal problems that AKP experienced from 1977 might also explain the decline in the tension between AKP and NKP. The Maoist did perhaps not have the extra energy to focus on NKP with all the turmoil within the party as a result of the issues within the international Maoist movement.

Hence, my findings suggest that the ideological consolidation had ripple effects both in terms of how the parties acted in domestic politics and how they perceived international issues, in a large degree, explains why the relationship unfolded as it did. At the same time, it is important to look at what made the ideological consolidation happen within the two parties. My findings might suggest that Øgrim's theses were necessary for him to write because of how the other left-wing parties treated AKP. NKP's consolidation happened after two internal disputes, over ideology, where the first the pro-China members left the party in 1970 and then the neutral members left after NKP's break with SV in 1975. Thus, the composition of the ideology within the group of members, and more importantly, the leadership was the essential reasons for why the parties consolidated ideologically.

Based on what Ole Martin Rønning, Sven Holtsmark and Terje Halvorsen and Åsmund Egge wrote, it is reasonable to believe that USSR had a significant influence on NKP's policies and behaviour until the collapse of the communist movement with the fall of the Berlin Wall. Since the anti-Sovietism stood firm in AKP throughout the 1980s too, it is interesting to observe that the two parties run for election together in the national election in 1989 as the election-list *Fylkeslistene for Miljø og Solidaritet*. The list only received 0.8% of the popular votes. However, the cooperation was most likely made possible because of both parties experience of being 'freed' from the ideological host-parties at the end of the eighties. The internal problem in the Soviet Union that removed NKP from USSR, and AKP formally cutting its ties to CCP in the spring of 1989, removed in a large degree the fundamental issue between the two

parties.²⁷⁰ Hence, the 'liberation' of the parties made cooperation possible – even though without great success.

²⁷⁰ Rønning, "Kommunistenes hemmelige skolering "; Egge and Halvorsen, ""-kriteriet på en kommunist er hans forhold til Sovjetunionen" ; de norsk-sovjetiske partirelasjoner 1917-1991."; Holtmark, *Gullet fra Moskva : sovjetisk pengestøtte til norske kommunister 1917-1990*; Sjøli, *Mao, min Mao : historien om AKPs vekst og fall*, 201-14.

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