

Revolution

NUMBER 5 MAY 1977 25p



CONTENTS

- MESSAGE TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA ON THE PUBLICATION OF VOLUME FIVE OF THE "SELECTED WORKS OF MAO TSETUNG"...page 1
- CALL TO THE BRITISH MARXIST-LENINIST MOVEMENT.....page 3
- ON THE TEN MAJOR RELATIONSHIPS.....page 12
- GRASP FIRMLY THE MASS LINE IN BASE-BUILDING.....page 15
- THE 'BRITISH ROAD': AN OPPORTUNIST PATH TO COUNTER-REVOLUTION.page 24
- TRANSFORM THE FAMILY INTO A FIGHTING UNIT OF THE PROLETARIAT.....page 34

THEORETICAL JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF

THE COMMUNIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN

(MARXIST-LENINIST)

THE COMMUNIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN (MARXIST-LENINIST)

The Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) holds that the central task in Britain today is to build the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, the party of the working class. This revolutionary Communist Party must unite the various struggles of the working class into a struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of the monopoly capitalist state to set up a dictatorship of the proletariat and build genuine working class socialism.

The Party must be constructed by ideological, political and organisational struggle. By a bold internal struggle the CFB(M-L) has recently decisively defeated serious opportunist errors. One of these was liberalism, which refuses to stand up boldly for what is in the interests of the working class, but believes in unprincipled peace to keep on good terms with everyone. As a result of the internal struggle the CFB(M-L) has taken important steps away from federalism and towards a united and democratic-centralist Party.

The CFB(M-L) is self-reliant in Party-building but it will not be self-sufficient: where it can learn from other British Marxist-Leninist organisations it will do so. We must break down the small group mentality which exists between Marxist-Leninist organisations in Britain, and struggle for unity on correct principles so as to build the revolutionary Communist Party as fast as possible.

We have to apply the general truths of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete practice of the British revolution. In the contradiction between theory and practice, at present theory is the principal aspect. However practice is an important second. Training and tempering comrades in practical work is essential to build the revolutionary Communist Party.

The most important practical task is to build bases in the industrial working class. This will make sure that the future Marxist-Leninist Party is a firm proletarian party with deep and unshakable roots in the working class.

"BUILD THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY TO LEAD THE REVOLUTION!"

For information about the Communist Federation of Britain contact:-

National Secretary
c/o New Era Books
203 Seven Sisters Road
London N4.

For criticisms, correspondence or contributions to 'Revolution' write to:-

The Editor, 'Revolution'
c/o New Era Books
203 Seven Sisters Road
London N4.

EDITORIAL

'CALL TO THE BRITISH MARXIST-LENINIST MOVEMENT!'

Building the revolutionary Communist Party of the working class is the central task in Britain today. At the present time the Marxist-Leninist movement is small and is divided into a dozen or so organisations of various types. Small group mentality is widespread, and prevents the groups and circles from actively struggling for unity.

These negative features can be overcome. This call to the British Marxist-Leninist movement is being published at this stage in order to struggle to win conviction for the line that active ideological struggle is the key link in uniting the movement for party building. At this moment, there is a strong subjective desire for unity, which is a positive factor, but there is also a danger that this will be sidetracked into a new form of federalism, which is an opportunist method of avoiding the major factors of ideological struggle and democratic centralism. The call outlines what are the main steps to be taken now in the struggle to unite the Marxist-Leninist movement for party building.

ON THE TEN MAJOR RELATIONSHIPS.

Mao's speech 'On the Ten Major Relationships' has recently been published by the Communist Party of China, following the successful struggle to overthrow the gang of four. This speech, first made in 1956, is a bold and militant defence of Marxism-Leninism, and a brilliant application to Chinese conditions of the principles of Marxism-Leninism. Marxist-Leninists all over the world will have much to learn from it. This article, in 'Revolution 5', picks out the most important points from Mao's speech, and draws out some lessons which we can learn and apply today.

FIRMLY GRASP THE MASS LINE IN BUILDING BASES.

In an article in 'Revolution 2', the Communist Federation of Britain (ML) put forward the policy of building bases within the industrial working class. The future revolutionary Communist Party must be built where the struggle of the masses against their exploitation is most concentrated and is sharpest. As this task unfolds, it is necessary for revolutionary Communist to integrate with the masses, to investigate conditions, and to propagate policies to give direction to the struggles in the factories. In taking up each of these aspects of work, it is of key importance to grasp the mass line. The mass line is the method for integrating the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with concrete conditions in Britain, and is an important weapon in building bases.

BRITISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM - AN OPPORTUNIST ROAD.

Revisionism is right opportunism. It revises the truths of Marxism-Leninism and so defends the capitalist road against the socialist road. Modern revisionism, organised politically in the 'Communist' Party of Great Britain does this at the same time as using the name and terms of Communism, and so it does invaluable service to the bourgeoisie. Marxist-Leninists have the duty to unfold a criticism of revisionism and so arm the working class to see through it. This article criticises the new draft of the revisionist programme 'The British Road to Socialism' which has been recently published. It concentrates particularly on the way in which the revisionists prettify the bourgeois state, and shows how the revisionists plan to take power, and bring in a fascist state monopoly capitalist regime.

TRANSFORM THE FAMILY INTO A FIGHTING UNIT OF THE PROLETARIAT.

In 'Revolution 4' the line of the CFB(ML) on Women's Emancipation was published. The line stated that revolutionary Communists should begin to struggle now to transform the family into a fighting unit of the proletariat. This article in 'Revolution 5', was first published in China in 1962. It discusses relationships between husband and wife in a socialist society, and states what the ideological basis of unity between men and women in the family should be. It contains some valuable lessons for revolutionary Communists in capitalist countries also. It is necessary to struggle now to mobilise women for the socialist revolution and the struggle to transform the family is a valuable part of this task.

The Editorial Committee

MESSAGE TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY
OF CHINA ON THE PUBLICATION OF VOLUME FIVE OF THE "SELECTED
WORKS OF MAO TSETUNG"

To the Central Committee
of the Communist Party of China

16th April 1977

We send our warmest congratulations to you on hearing the excellent news that yesterday, 15th April 1977, Volume Five of the "Selected Works of Mao Tsetung" was distributed throughout the People's Republic of China.

This is a devastating blow to the schemes of the "gang of four". The bold decision of Chairman Hua Kuo-feng and the Central Committee, taken on October 8th immediately after crushing the conspiracies of the anti-party clique, puts its faith in the people and arms the people with Mao Tsetung Thought. The great mass campaign the Central Committee is launching among the whole Party, whole army and whole people to conscientiously study Volume Five of the "Selected Works of Mao Tsetung" will arm the masses still better to fight against all revisionist attempts to work for a privileged bourgeois stratum instead of for the overwhelming majority. It will arm the masses with materialism and dialectics even better so that they will themselves in the course of struggle expose the type of bourgeois idealism and metaphysics pushed by the "gang of four". The bold decision of the Central Committee headed by Chairman Hua Kuo-feng vividly proves beyond all doubt its determination to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat by carrying through the class struggle to the end.

Since the crushing of the "gang of four" the Chinese masses have been elated. The great enthusiasm which thousands of comrades have shown in speedily carrying out the decision of the Central Committee in publishing Volume Five, demonstrates concretely yet again that the line and policies of the Central Committee headed by Chairman Hua Kuo-feng conform to the demands of the masses and strengthen the Party's ties with the masses and are correct. By contrast it strikingly shows how incorrect the revisionist line is and how alienated and isolated from the masses the "gang of four" are.

The publication of Volume Five of the "Selected Works of Mao Tsetung" is, as you say, a major event in the development of Marxism and of far-reaching historic significance in the international Communist movement.

Chairman Mao Tsetung was the greatest Marxist-Leninist of our time. He inherited, defended and developed Marxism-Leninism to a new, higher level. Among his many theoretical achievements Chairman Mao systematically summed up the historical experience of socialist revolution and put forward the great theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Volume Five of the "Selected Works of Mao Tsetung" will greatly help the international Communist movement to smash modern revisionism and win the leadership of the working class and masses in all countries in the course of unrelenting and victorious struggles against the superpowers, imperialism and all domestic reactionaries. We therefore eagerly await the opportunity to study Volume Five ourselves.

We are elated to learn that active preparations are already in progress to print Volume Five of the "Selected Works" in a number of foreign languages, including English, and that these translations will soon be available!

Once again we see the tremendous and unstinting assistance the Communist Party of China repeatedly gives to the international Communist movement, the international working class and oppressed peoples and nations of the world. This is a model of proletarian internationalism. On behalf of the National Committee of the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) we send our sincerest thanks and warmest congratulations on your great achievement!

The Executive Committee of the
Communist Federation of Britain
(Marxist-Leninist).

CALL TO THE BRITISH MARXIST-LENINIST MOVEMENT

British monopoly capitalism has severely cut the standard of living of the British working class in the last two and a half years. Yet until recently the working class have hardly fought back. Why? Because the economic organizations of the working class, the trade unions, are in the grip of the revisionists, social democrats and trotskysts. These opportunists are the principal political prop of the bourgeoisie. Without the opportunists British imperialism would not last six months.

Why has all the economic militancy of the British working class in the early 70's collapsed? Mao Tsetung pointed out:-

"If the masses alone are active without a strong leading group to organise their activity properly, such activity cannot be sustained for long, or carried forward in the right direction or raised to a high level".
(*'Quotations'* p132)

The need for a genuine revolutionary Communist Party is now clearer than ever. Building the revolutionary Communist Party of the working class is the central task in Britain today around which all other tasks must be unfolded.

Yet the record of the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain is bad. Fourteen years after the great split in the international Communist movement and the denunciation of modern revisionism by the Chinese and Albanian Parties there are still only a few hundred Marxist-Leninists in Britain, a country of over 50 million people. And these few hundred are divided among a dozen different parties, organisations, groups and circles.

The picture looks bad. But it is far from hopeless. On the contrary there is much that we can do.

What are the factors in our favour? Firstly, we have Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought as the theoretical basis guiding our thinking. So long as we increasingly integrate it with the concrete practice of the class struggle in Britain we can be certain of ultimate success.

Secondly, we have the rising class struggle in Britain. Although the opportunists have temporarily paralysed the organisations of the working class, the smouldering resentment and anger of the class is becoming ever more threatening to the imperialist bourgeoisie. The British Marxist-Leninist movement must go deep among the working class, learn from them and fan the glowing sparks of discontent into the angry flames of a powerful counter-attack by the working class.

Thirdly, the British Marxist-Leninist movement now has 14 years experience. Most of that experience is negative; but one of the strengths of Marxism-Leninism is that it enables us to learn from negative experience; from our mistakes, as well as from our successes. Those comrades who have stayed in the Marxist-Leninist movement over the years have become more tempered, are less subjectivist - less likely to believe "it must be so because it seems so to me". They are less ready lightly to denounce a comrade as opportunist and then ignore him, instead of struggling with him in a militant and scientific way for a correct line.

The situation is serious in Party building but far from hopeless. The prospects are bright and the need is urgent. We must set about our tasks energetically!

1. CRITICIZE SMALL GROUP MENTALITY!

On 26th December last year, to mark the 83rd anniversary of the birthday of Chairman Mao Tsetung, the great teacher of the international working class, the Communist Party of China for the first time published an extremely

important article by Mao Tsetung, "On the Ten Major Relationships". The entire Chinese people are studying this article, which is a masterpiece in showing how Marxism-Leninism should be applied to solve the problems of the working class.

We too should study this article, because it has rich lessons for us in Party building, the central task for us today.

The article starts off by saying that its purpose is to focus on one basic policy:-

"The basic policy of mobilizing all positive factors".

Here immediately is a question for us. Shall we too follow the basic policy of mobilizing all positive factors for Party building or shall we leave positive factors lying idle? We have a choice.

Comrades, let us determine to mobilize all positive factors for Party building.

At present the few hundred Marxist-Leninists in Britain are divided into a dozen different organizations. This is an impossible position that prevents us mobilizing all positive factors. Each group is severely limited by shortage of cadres and can do only a fraction of the tasks that we must master in building the Party. The work is rushed and one-sided. Often work in one group duplicates the work in another quite needlessly. At other times one group manages to grasp one aspect of a problem, for example the problem of industrial work, but not another essential aspect. Meanwhile another group grasps the second aspect of the same problem but not the first. But because there is no democratic centralist method of concentrating correct ideas in a single correct policy, the work of cadres in both groups remains inadequate, one-sided and misleading. Like frogs at the bottom of a well they look up and see only a small part of the sky and think it is the whole sky! What a waste of resources! What criminal neglect of the urgent needs of the working class for its own revolutionary Communist Party!

How can such a situation happen? In part it is a problem of history. The different groups and circles have developed separately and they have little or no communication between them. They lack a common language. This will take time and perseverance to overcome. Therefore it is important for the different organizations to increase communication among themselves. An essential first step is to ensure they regularly exchange their publications.

But also the fact is that at present many of the frogs actually prefer to remain at the bottom of their own well. They actually prefer to remain in small isolated groups rather than work energetically in a democratic centralist structure. They would rather preserve their "independence" in small isolated groups than to mobilize all positive factors to build the Party of the working class.

The reason is small group mentality. Chairman Mao hit the nail on the head when he wrote:-

"Some people...act as though the fewer the people, the smaller the circle, the better. Those who have this 'small circle' mentality resist the idea of bringing all positive factors into play, of uniting with everyone that can be united with, and of doing everything possible to turn negative factors into positive ones..."

('On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People'. Selected Readings. page 461).

It will be impossible to mobilize all positive factors for Party building in Britain without a complete victory over small group mentality.

The thorough defeat and rooting out of small group mentality is our first and most immediate task in Party building. We need to stimulate a widespread

movement of criticism and self-criticism to hound out every manifestation of small group mentality, both open and hidden.

In order to win complete victory in our battle it is necessary to understand small group mentality well. Chairman Mao describes it in 'On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party':-

"'Small group' mentality. Some comrades consider only the interests of their own small group and ignore the general interests. Although on the surface this does not seem to be the pursuit of personal interests, in reality it exemplifies the narrowest individualism and has a strong corrosive and centrifugal effect".

(Selected Works, Vol. 1, p112).

It is a particular manifestation of individualism. This is seen most sharply in the attitudes of the leading comrades in the different small groups. Often it is their individualism, their reluctance to accept the collective discipline of a larger democratic centralist organisation, that is the reason for the small group mentality of the group. The leadership produces all sorts of reasons why it is impossible to unite with genuine Marxist-Leninists in another organisation. The real problem is that in their heart they lack any real desire to accept collective discipline themselves. In these cases small group mentality is a manifestation of the individualism of the leading comrades.

In the fight to mobilize all positive factors for Party building and to defeat small group mentality rank and file comrades must exercise comradely supervision over their leading comrades and ensure these leading comrades overcome their individualism.

The social roots of individualism lie in what Chairman Mao called "the petty bourgeoisie's individualistic aversion to discipline". At present a significant proportion of the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain come from the petty bourgeoisie or from the middle strata. In order to win wholehearted acceptance of the proletarian principle of democratic centralism we must be ready to wage a firm and protracted ideological struggle against individualism, and against its most serious immediate expression, small group mentality.

By a resolute campaign against small group mentality we will succeed in mobilizing all positive factors for Party building!

2. CRITICIZE THE OPPORTUNIST ERRORS OF THE CPBML!

The Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) is the largest of the Marxist-Leninist organizations in Britain and has been widely regarded as the leading one of them. On that basis it has attracted many honest workers and intellectuals to its ranks who earnestly desire revolution.

But recently its leadership has become more entrenched in a number of serious opportunist errors. The leadership has arrogantly suppressed and rejected criticism both within the Party and from fraternal Parties and organisations in the international Communist movement.

The leadership of the CPBML grossly glosses over the threat from Soviet social imperialism. They completely surrender their responsibility to act as a vanguard and educate their comrades and the British working class to understand that the Soviet Union is demanding a redivision of the world, is the more dangerous of the two superpowers and the most dangerous source of the next world war.

The leadership of the CPBML falls into social chauvinism by completely ignoring the question of British imperialism and its oppression and exploitation of the oppressed peoples and nations. In the statement of their Fourth Congress there is not one reference to British imperialism! They deny Chairman Mao's great strategic thesis that the world is divided into the first, the second and the third world. They deny that the struggles of the

third world are great anti-imperialist struggles and are the main force in the broadest possible international united front against imperialism, especially the hegemonism of the superpowers. What is this but a denial of Lenin's theory of imperialism, a denial of the fact that the world is largely divided up between a handful of oppressor countries and a great majority of oppressed countries? This opportunist line of the leadership of the CPBML totally fails to teach the British working class that the road to socialist revolution in Britain lies in the revolutionary alliance between the British working class and the oppressed peoples of the world.

The metaphysical 'two class line' of the leadership of the CPBML denies the existence of a large middle stratum in imperialist Britain. It denies the importance of the middle stratum being led by the working class and it opens the Party of the proletariat to being swamped by the errors of comrades coming from the middle stratum. This opportunist class analysis surrenders the leadership of the revolution to the middle strata.

These points were made in a militant and comradely letter delivered by hand by the CFBML to the CPBML in November 1976, and later published in 'Revolution' no. 3. The leadership of the CPBML did not reply.

A leading member of the CPBML has been reported as saying that they have a policy of never replying to correspondence from other Marxist-Leninist organizations in Britain. There is no record of them ever having done this.

Such refusal to struggle for unity behind a correct line is a severe manifestation of small group mentality which must be sharply criticized. Through this opportunism the CPBML shares a large measure of the responsibility for the continued fragmentation of the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain into a number of small groups.

In the last few months certain other opportunist errors of the leadership of the CPBML have become more glaring.

The most serious is their hostility towards the present leadership of the Communist Party of China. Up to March 1977 not one word of congratulation have they expressed for the great victory over the bunch of intriguers, revisionists with a 'left face', subjectivists and idealists, - the gang of four! The CPBML holds weekly public meetings in London. In the issue of their paper on January 10th they announced a new list of titles for these meetings lasting for the next three months. Not one of these meetings was on China, even though in the case of two weeks no meeting was planned!

The exposure and criticism of the Gang of Four as enemies of the working class by the Chinese Party and people under the leadership of the Central Committee of the CPC has been thorough, careful and penetrating in all three main aspects of the work of Communists; ideological, political and organizational. How long must it take before the leadership of the CPBML decide that the present leaders of the CPC are worthy successors to Mao Tsetung and Chou En-lai and before they give a clear cut lead to their own comrades and to the British working class on this extremely important question?

In the last six months too, a number of comrades who used to be in the CPBML and who have formed the "Communist Workers Movement", have vividly drawn attention to the serious errors of inner Party life of the CPBML, errors of bureaucratic centralism and of liberalism.

These are some of the most serious opportunist errors of the present leadership of the CPBML.

These opportunist errors will not go away of their own accord! Unless they are corrected, the CPBML will continue to mislead genuine Marxist-Leninists down the wrong path of Party building. We have a clear choice before us. We can be liberal, remain silent, and play safe; or we can wage a bold, militant and scientific campaign against these errors in the interests of

winning unity of all genuine Marxist-Leninists behind the correct line for Party building.

In order to build the genuine Party of the working class it is important now to take up the task of criticising the errors of the CPBML. It must be a widespread campaign in which all genuine Marxist-Leninist organizations contribute. Each major opportunist error must be thoroughly examined, and boldly, clearly and penetratingly exposed.

The manner in which we carry forward this campaign is very important. It must be in the spirit of "curing the sickness to save the patient". The criticisms must be stern but they must also be militant and scientific. We must not give way and simply lash out in an attempt to "finish them off with a single blow".

It is important to direct the target against the errors of the CPBML and not against the CPBML as such. We must unite with and help educate the great majority of comrades of the CPBML and help them to fight more clearly and firmly for the correct way forward. In this way we ensure that whatever the leadership of the CPBML do there is the least possible harm done to Party building. Either the rank and file will wage a protracted struggle and successfully overthrow the incorrect line within the CPBML; or, if the leadership entrenches itself further in their errors, the rank and file will leave in large numbers and the CPBML will be reduced to an opportunist rump.

At this stage it is important to narrow the target to the opportunist errors of the leadership of the CPBML. Until the struggle has developed much further we must not conclude that the present leading comrades have become out and out opportunists, rather than comrades who have made serious opportunist errors. Our policy must be to call on them to make a bold self-criticism. If their self-criticism is sincere and deep they will learn some important lessons and will be able to make a better contribution to Party building. Only if they dig in their heels, refuse to make a self-criticism and persist in leading the working class down the wrong path will they objectively have become enemies of the working class, out and out opportunists.

By following a militant and scientific policy of "curing the sickness to save the patient" we increase to the maximum the possibilities of uniting all who can be united on the right way forward in building the Party of the working class.

There are many opportunities to unfold this campaign against the errors of the CPBML. Each issue of "The Worker" contains one or two articles which can provide the basis for an important and educational exposure of the errors. Different organisations must take up their responsibility to unfold this work as part of a collective campaign to expose the errors of the CPBML in a bold, careful and penetrating way.

A campaign to criticize the errors of the CPBML is far more important than just a question of overcoming these errors in themselves. As Chairman Mao said:-

"What is correct invariably develops in the course of struggle with what is wrong".

('On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People' . Selected Readings p464).

In the course of struggle against the errors of the CPBML we will grasp much more firmly the correct way forward in Party building and in speeding the socialist revolution. The Marxist-Leninist movement cannot be united without making substantial progress on ideological and political lines. A protracted and united campaign against the errors of the CPBML gives us the opportunity to make great advances in ideological and political line. It will have a powerful effect in speeding up the movement towards a single united democratic centralist Party building organisation.

3. UNITE TO FORM LARGER DEMOCRATIC CENTRALIST ORGANIZATIONS!

An attempt at present to found the new revolutionary Communist Party would be premature. No Party programme exists and there is no single leading centre.

In the middle term our aim must be to weld together a single democratic centralist organisation of all genuine Marxist-Leninists. An organisation which will not itself be the Party but which can use democratic centralism to mobilize all the positive factors available for Party building. It will use democratic centralism to concentrate correct ideas speedily and to ensure unity of action in testing and strengthening those ideas in practice. In the middle term then, we need a single Party building democratic centralist organization.

But what do we do in the short term? It is here that federalism, an opportunist short-term organisational solution to the urgent need for the proletarian Party, creeps in.

Small group mentality can manifest itself in a deceptive form which is especially dangerous at this stage of Party building in Britain - federalism. The Marxist-Leninist movement must be particularly vigilant against the danger of federalism. Why is this?

In the British Marxist-Leninist movement today there is a rising desire for unity. This is excellent. It must be strengthened. But many comrades at present have only a hazy idea of how to put this desire for unity into practice. They make proposals to set up a co-ordinating committee between different groups. Then step by step further proposals spontaneously come forward to strengthen this or that co-ordinating committee in a piecemeal fashion. A federation spontaneously comes into existence.

It is then that the trouble starts! All these individual steps on the surface look like attempts at moving towards Party building and greater centralism. But after a certain point no real further movement towards democratic centralist unity by the groups involved takes place. They remain suspended in the structure of a federation like fruit suspended in fruit jelly.

What then has gone wrong? The federal road is an opportunist road. In the organizational field of Party building, federalism does not lay clearly and openly on the agenda the question of democratic centralism. Federalism compromises with small group mentality. It fails to take an openly-declared, clear-cut stand against small group mentality.

Instead federalism tries to get round small group mentality, hoping that the tide of forward movement will automatically carry the groups towards democratic centralism, if no one puts the matter too bluntly! But small group mentality, and the individualism of which it is an expression, will still remain deeply rooted in the thinking of comrades until these errors are boldly challenged and rooted out.

Until small group mentality is openly challenged and overcome the different small groups will resist any real step which makes them subordinate to a single higher level central committee, according to the correct democratic centralist principle that the lower level must be subordinate to the higher level. On every issue a hundred problems will crop up which the small groups will say must be sorted out first before they can implement a certain national decision. But the real problem is that they lack any desire to implement national decisions in a united democratic centralist way.

Those who have fallen into small group mentality may make a great show of supporting unity at the federal level; they may make a great show of declaring the crying need for the Party. But will they make a single move to implement the proletarian principles of democratic centralism as an organizational step towards Party building? No! Not a single move. Not until their own small group mentality has really been overcome.

Precisely because it looks such an obvious and attractive step-by-step solution to Party building, the federal road is a great danger at the present stage in Britain.

Acquiring a common language among different Marxist-Leninist organizations by the exchange of publications and by meetings is useful in providing a basis from which we can hammer out unity on major ideological and political principles. However, through lack of vigilance against small group mentality and federalism, some comrades are trying to transform a system of contacts between Marxist-Leninist organizations, which can be useful, into a federalist system, which is harmful. The opportunist path is paved with good intentions.

For example, where appropriate, it is useful to try to co-ordinate practical activity between different organisations. But if this is organized by a federalist committee in which the different groups have not agreed to abide by the democratic centralist principle that the minority is subordinate to the majority, then such attempts at common activity soon turn sour. One group does not want to take part in one project and so drops out. Another group does not want to take part in another project and refuses to do so. No real basis has been won for their unity, and so it perishes. We end up no nearer a disciplined proletarian Party but have been led once again up the federalist blind alley.

Another form in which lack of vigilance can lead the subjective desire for unity up the federalist blind alley is when comrades produce long lists of problems to be studied before democratic centralist unity can be achieved. They propose that a federalist committee should immerse itself in studying them. But study of these problems under conditions of federalism has to be done without any centralized guidance and without any democratic-centralist structure for concentrating the correct ideas that come forward in the course of study. Meanwhile lists so long would take several years study to complete. Such a proposal therefore objectively holds up democratic-centralist unity for several years.

Another type of apparently innocent step towards federalism is when a proposal is made that a co-ordinating committee of Marxist-Leninist organizations should publish a discussion journal. Such a journal cannot be given any centralized guidance by the federalist organization. It is therefore very liable to be dominated by verbally skillful pushers of opportunist lines. Such a federalist journal becomes an obstacle, not an asset in Party building.

Yet another step towards federalism is the type of proposal that each organization should have the same number of delegates on a federalist committee. This appears very "fair" on the surface. But a system of delegates means that every comrade sitting on such a committee does not speak and act with the interests of the working class as his or her guiding principle. Instead, as a delegate, he must represent the interests of a small group and not the interests of the working class. Whenever there is a difficult problem, instead of boldly giving a correct lead, he insists he has to refer the matter back to his small group. All this turns democratic centralism on its head. It ends up with the rank and file discussing everything first, before the leading comrades can give any lead to them.

A federalist committee composed of "delegates" from the separate groups is a system in which the committee is subordinate to the groups. It can never peacefully evolve into a system in which the groups become branches subordinate to the higher level, the central committee. It can never peacefully evolve that way. The only way to implement the democratic centralist principle that "the lower level is subordinate to the higher level" is through conscious struggle.

A proposal for having equal number of delegates on a co-ordinating committee is a typical step towards federalism. It presents itself as being very fair. But it is very "fair" only to small group mentality and it is very unfair to the working class, because federalism deprives the working class of its democratic centralist Party.

The CFBML and its predecessor, the J.C.C., had painful experience of how harmful all these innocent steps are down the opportunist blind alley of federalism. We hope all fellow Marxist-Leninists will listen to these warnings from us. Federalism is a recipe for stagnating many years in the marsh of opportunism. It causes harm to the working class.

We must reject the federal road and choose the correct short term organizational solution to the problems of Party building. That solution is to unite to form larger democratic centralist organizations.

We cannot unite the whole movement into one single democratic centralist organization all at once; but we can take important steps in that direction right now. Existing organizations in twos or threes must unite to form larger democratic centralist organizations. Each unification of two existing organizations, so long as it is done on a principled basis, and it implements democratic centralism, enables them to mobilize their forces more efficiently and powerfully to take the next step in Party building.

If all genuine Marxist-Leninist organizations took this up seriously and vigorously, within a year we could substantially reduce the figure of a dozen separate Marxist-Leninist organizations in Britain to perhaps half a dozen. If we repeat this again it will bring into sight far sooner than we expect the day when there is a single democratic centralist Party building organization in Britain.

We must unite to form larger democratic centralist organizations. This is our specific immediate task in the organizational field.

But if our task is to cross a river we cannot cross it without a bridge or a boat. What method can we use to carry out this task? Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought points out the method.

In the first place, when two Marxist-Leninist organizations take up the task of uniting into a single, democratic centralist organization, the essential thing, as Mao Tsetung said, is to start from the desire for unity. This must be our fundamental attitude.

A statement by Mao recently made public by the CPC is of very great importance in pointing out how to put this into practice. Chairman Mao issued this call:-

"Do more self-criticism and seek common ground on major questions while reserving differences on minor ones".
(Peking Review 1976 No.49, p8.)

The whole Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain must study the meaning of this call, grasp both its overall approach and its guidance in specific detail and must use it in the struggle to form larger democratic centralist organizations. This fundamental approach is of tremendous significance.

At the same time we must not fall into liberalism. In the course of struggling for unity, organizations will come across certain major questions which are differences of principle. These must not be glossed over. Such a liberal approach makes real unity impossible, and over a period of time it inevitably smashes what unity has already been won. If unity is sought through struggle it will live, if unity is sought through yielding it will perish.

The key slogan for handling the inevitable and important contradictions that occur in the course of a struggle for unity is summed up in a further call by Chairman Mao:-

"Struggle is the means to unity and unity is the aim of struggle".
('Current Problems of Tactics in the Anti-Japanese United Front',
Selected Readings, p184)

This is the key unlocking the major contradictions which close off the

path to unity between Marxist-Leninist organizations.

Lenin made the same point in different words in 'What Is To Be Done?':-

"In order that we may unite, we must first of all draw firm and definite lines of demarcation".

(Peking Edition, p26).

Drawing lines of demarcation firmly and definitely is a skill which requires repeated practice to perform well. With perseverance we can master it and put it to good effect in Party building.

Struggles for militant democratic centralist unity are not time-consuming chores which prevent organizations making real progress toward Party building. Such struggles are crash courses in Marxism-Leninism. They force comrades to look with fresh eyes at issues which were long forgotten by them but which are crucial to the working class. They enable organizations to learn from each other's strong points. Most importantly, as Mao Tsetung said: "What is correct invariably develops in the course of struggle with what is wrong". Each struggle will help the organizations involved to contribute better in the next stage of applying Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of the working class in Britain. Organizations will have to decide on first and second priorities among the other organizations with which they intend to struggle for unity. But no struggle is wasted in Party building so long as the comrades concerned strive to deepen their grasp of proletarian principle and learn from each other's strong points.

Struggling to form larger democratic centralist organisations takes hard work; but it is a principled solution which is certain to bring big gains in building the Party of the working class over a period of time. Forming federations is an easier course in the short term but it is an opportunist solution which does not challenge small group mentality head on. Before long it gets stuck in the marsh of opportunism.

This choice between two paths towards winning greater organizational unity lies before the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain. We must study, discuss, debate and struggle over it to ensure that the greatest possible number of comrades are firmly united to advance down the correct path - the road of forming larger democratic centralist organizations!

There is much work to do in building the Party of the working class in Britain. But with determination to stick to principle and overcome obstacles one by one, we can turn a bad situation into a good situation. The road is tortuous. The future is bright!

In particular we must grasp the three key immediate tasks.

CRITICIZE SMALL GROUP MENTALITY!

CRITICIZE THE OPPORTUNIST ERRORS OF THE CPBML!

UNITE TO FORM LARGER DEMOCRATIC-CENTRALIST ORGANIZATIONS!

Executive Committee of the
Communist Federation of Britain
(Marxist-Leninist)

ON THE TEN MAJOR RELATIONSHIPS

The publication of Mao Tsetung's 'On the Ten Major Relationships' is an event of great significance. Originally written in 1956, it is a bold and militant defence of Marxist philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism. It is a thorough going example of the integration of the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with concrete conditions in China in the period of socialist construction.

The article was published in December 1976, whilst the struggle against the "gang of four" was unfolding. It is a stark contrast to the one-sided, sectarian and anti-proletarian lines of the "gang of four".

'On the Ten Major Relationships' was delivered by Mao as a speech in April 1956. This was after the Khrushchev clique had viciously attacked the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, and had slandered Stalin. Also at that time some defects and errors made in socialist construction in the Soviet Union had come to light. In China many victories had been gained in socialist construction since Liberation in 1949. For these reasons it was necessary to defend Marxism-Leninism against revisionism, to make an all round analysis of Stalin's merits and demerits, and to sum up China's experience in socialist construction.

In the course of tackling these problems Mao outlined the basic policy for building a powerful socialist country. In his own words:-

"It is to focus on one basic policy that these ten problems are being raised, the basic policy of mobilizing all positive factors, internal and external, to serve the cause of socialism".

This basic policy of mobilizing all positive factors is of great importance for all Communists. In order to mobilize all positive factors, Mao says that we must unite with all who can be united with and as far as possible, turn negative factors into positive ones. Marxist-Leninists in Britain should also apply this policy to the central task of building the revolutionary Communist Party in Britain.

How do we apply this policy? Firstly we must grasp that contradiction is in all things, and that the two aspects of a contradiction are closely bound together. There is unity as well as opposition between them. We must study contradictions to grasp how the aspects relate to each other. This is studying things in an all round way.

Secondly, we must assess what are positive and negative factors, and how the negative can be turned into positive. For example, in some things the positive aspect is clearly dominant, whilst in others the negative aspect is dominant, but there are aspects which can be turned into positive things. In society, the proletariat is the revolutionary class. It is the leading force and the main force in the revolutionary movement. The positive aspects are clearly dominant. The bourgeoisie is a reactionary force, and is negative, but there are also positive aspects to it which should be mobilized. There are many splits and divisions within the bourgeoisie, and these are to the advantage of the revolutionary forces.

There are also things in which the positive and negative are more finely balanced. In all situations there are middle forces or vacillating elements. It is important to have a correct approach to these middle forces, to sum up the positive and negative in an objective way, and aim to win over the vast bulk of the middle elements. Those who cannot be won over we should aim to neutralize by our work and propaganda. Mao criticizes the dogmatists for rejecting the middle forces - this is a sectarian and splittist method of work, which treats friends as enemies.

This is one of the main crimes of the "gang of four". They aimed their

attacks at a wide range of people, instead of 'narrowing the target of attack'. They failed to distinguish between different types of contradiction; between the people and the enemy, and among the people. They therefore split the revolutionary ranks, and could not unite all those who could be united. If they had been successful they would have sabotaged the work of socialist construction in China.

The ten major relationships Mao deals with are all contradictions. In studying contradictions it is necessary to look at things in an all round way. This is a powerful weapon for combating dogmatism and empiricism, which are both two sides of the same subjectivist coin. It is dogmatism to place all the emphasis on the principal aspect of a contradiction and so ignore the secondary aspect. It is empiricism to look superficially at a problem, seize on its most obvious characteristic, and then only engage in activity around that. The weapon for overcoming these two errors is the same. It is the dialectical materialist method. It is necessary to look at things all-sidedly, to investigate all aspects of a problem, and the relationship between the aspect A policy can then be devised which takes this into account.

For example, in discussing the contradiction between light and heavy industry in socialist construction Mao says:-

"...the emphasis in our country's construction is on heavy industry. The production of the means of production must be given priority, that's settled".

But he goes on to say that there are two approaches to the question. The metaphysical viewpoint emphasises only the principal aspect which is heavy industry. This leads to the neglect of agriculture and light industry. But whilst heavy industry is the core of China's economic construction, agriculture is the foundation of the national economy - people must eat. Agriculture also provides raw materials for light industry, and taken together, agriculture and light industry are an important source of funds for heavy industry. This is because agriculture accounts for 80% of the working population, and also because the return on investment in light industry comes more quickly than in heavy industry. Summing this up, Mao says that, in order to develop heavy industry it is necessary to give importance to agriculture and light industry. This is one example of how to study problems in an all round way. The key is not to remain content with grasping the principal contradiction, but to look at things all-sidedly.

In section 5, Mao discusses the contradiction between local initiative and central leadership in the socialist state. The principal aspect is the need to strengthen central leadership and to develop socialist construction. In order to achieve this "we must bring the initiative of the local authorities into play" and "we must attend to the interests of the localities".

To be dialectical, it is necessary to look at things in their motion, to look for the tendency of things. Mao makes it clear that bad things can be turned into good things, and vice versa. In section 10, Mao points out the two main weaknesses of China - that it was "poor" and "blank". He then shows that "from the point of view of potentiality, this is not bad" and "being 'poor' and 'blank' is therefore all to our good".

In section 9, there is an illustration of how a good thing can become a bad thing if it is not handled correctly. In discussing mistakes, the article shows how those who have made mistakes should be helped to overcome them and make a better contribution to the revolution. It then points out clearly that even those who have made no mistakes must be on their guard because "since it is easier for those who have not made mistakes to become cocky, they are prone to make mistakes".

There are innumerable examples in this article of combining scientific precision with revolutionary boldness to confront the big and complex problems inevitable in a large socialist country. Although dealing with

questions of the first importance, this article is written in a clear and simple style that is understandable to everybody.

By using the proletarian weapon of dialectical materialism as exemplified in 'On the Ten Major Relationships', and in a spirit of revolutionary optimism that *"while the road ahead is tortuous, the future is bright"*, Communists in Britain must go all out to mobilize all positive factors for uniting the Marxist-Leninist movement and sinking deep roots in the working class. In this struggle, we must cast aside the subjectivist attitudes that have kept the Marxist-Leninist movement split for so long, and work hard to mobilize all positive factors to serve the interests of the working class.

GRASP FIRMLY THE MASS LINE IN BASE-BUILDING

The mass line will be a sharp and invaluable weapon in the central mass work task of building bases in the industrial working class.

WHAT IS THE MASS LINE?

The mass line is the link between theory and practice and the method for ensuring that Communists - that part of the working class which is most conscious - give leadership to the working class. Communists should neither tail behind the spontaneous level of consciousness of the working class, nor run so far ahead of that level that it isolates them from the working class.

Grasped firmly, the mass line will ensure that the political line of revolutionary Communists is increasingly in accord with reality, corresponds closely to the real needs of the working class and therefore that the class-conscious vanguard of the working class rallies round the revolutionary Communist Party, the political Party of the working class. In the long term it is a sure guarantee that the Party's correct practice will win over the mass of the working class and lead them in their everyday struggle and in the struggle for socialism.

WHY MUST THE MASS LINE BE APPLIED?

Although the revolutionary Communist Party is absolutely essential for the struggle of the working class for socialism to succeed, the Party cannot be a substitute for the class. The Party will lead the working class, but it is the class itself which will seize state power, smash the bourgeois state and build socialism. As Mao said, "*The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history*". ('Quotations from Mao Tsetung', p118).

This point has been expressed differently by Mao in his famous thesis that:

"The masses are the real heroes, while we ourselves are often childish and ignorant, and without this understanding it is impossible to acquire even the most rudimentary knowledge". ('Quotations', p118).

As Mao says it is impossible to acquire even the most rudimentary knowledge without this understanding. The task of Communists is not to lead the working class by the nose or to idealistically impose sectarian principles of their own on the class struggle, but to arm the objectively existing class struggle of the working class with scientific consciousness, i.e. to lead that struggle.

This scientific consciousness will develop through the integration of the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the British revolution.

At the present stage, when the workers' movement lacks direction and a guiding theory, it is necessary to study the principles of Marxism-Leninism. These are not developed out of our heads, but reflect the experience of class struggle internationally. Theory, as Stalin pointed out is "*the experience of the working class movement in all countries taken in its general aspect*". ('Foundations of Leninism', Peking edition. p22).

Marxist-Leninists study theory as a guide to action. The integration of the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with concrete conditions will necessitate investigation of the conditions, learning from the masses, and struggling for correct policies, in the class struggle. Giving importance only to the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism would lead to dogmatism. For example, the tendency to think that what we read in books is necessarily correct, or applicable to every circumstance.

Listening attentively to the views of the working class and learning from

their experience in practice can speedily correct any such dogmatist tendencies. Take the question of rallying the vanguard itself for instance.

Rallying the vanguard must be the main aspect of practice for the Marxist-Leninist movement at this stage of revolution, but it is not the only aspect. For a while there was a dogmatist and metaphysical tendency in the CFB(M-L) to think that it was only necessary to rally the vanguard. In reality, whilst leading the masses in practical political activity will only be the main aspect of practical work at a much later stage of the revolution, it is also a secondary aspect of practice now.

Failure to grasp this led to an idealist view that the vanguard could be rallied by propaganda and fighting the opportunists only, without uniting and giving leadership to the working class in the everyday class struggle. In practice class conscious workers will quite correctly not take seriously Communists who only talk about the need for the Party and socialism but who appear to pay no attention to the actual struggle of the working class against their exploitation and oppression. Paradoxical as it may appear, the main aspect of practice, rallying the vanguard, can only be successfully carried out by paying considerable attention to a secondary aspect, leading the masses in practical political action.

Through the application of the mass line, listening attentively to the views of workers and rank-and-file comrades, this essential truth has been quickly grasped and put into practice. This matter has been summed up and generalised in the line that we build bases in the course of practice at the place of work.

In order to give correct leadership to the working class Communists must have close ties with the masses and be firmly integrated with them.

Communists cannot win the leadership of the working class by confining themselves to shouting from the touchlines. They must convince the working class that it is the Communists who are the best elements of the working class, who tirelessly lead both the immediate and long-term struggles of the working class and who most closely represent their interests.

To do this Communists must be in the midst of the struggles of the working class: "A leading group that is genuinely united and is linked with the masses can gradually be formed only in the process of mass struggle, and not in isolation from it". ('Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership', Selected Readings, p289).

This is the main way that the leadership of Communists is combined with the mass struggle of the working class. Neither of these two aspects can be dispensed with. Work by Communists alone will come to nothing if it is not combined with the struggles of the working class. On the other hand:

"...if the masses alone are active without a strong leading group to organize their activity properly, such activity cannot be sustained for long, or carried forward in the right direction, or raised to a high level". ('Quotations', p132).

The experience of the past few years of class struggle has vividly demonstrated the truth of this thesis. The great struggles of the British working class in the late 1960s and early 1970s against the attacks of the bourgeois Labour and Conservative governments in 'In Place of Strife' and the Industrial Relations Act gave way to a lull in struggle which lasted until very recently. Again it has been demonstrated that the biggest single factor in the class struggle in Britain is that the working class has no Party.

The purpose then of applying the mass line is not just to develop the leadership abilities of a few Communists as a form of self-cultivation, but

to ensure that correct leadership is given to the struggles of the working class.

At this stage of the revolution, when Party-building is the central task and basebuilding is the central mass work task, this means that the mass line is absolutely essential in building the revolutionary Communist Party to lead the revolution.

HOW SHOULD THE MASS LINE BE APPLIED?

"In all the practical work of our Party, all correct leadership is necessarily 'from the masses, to the masses'. This means: take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action. Then once again concentrate ideas from the masses and once again go to the masses so that the ideas are persevered in and carried through. And so on, over and over again in an endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge." ('Quotations', p128-9)

The policies that guide the practical work of revolutionary Communists must follow the principles that Mao outlines above.

The ideas that the working class has spontaneously are fragmentary, scattered and unsystematic. No one individual by himself can comprehend an entirely or even mainly correct view because each individual's views are formulated out of his own direct experience and whatever he knows of other's direct experience. Therefore to formulate a policy on what one individual, or even quite a few individuals think, would be to make the error of empiricism - to mistake fragmentary experience for universal truth.

For instance, many workers, out of their own direct experience of economic class struggle, may come to the conclusion that it is necessary to have a general strike to overthrow all the capitalists. This is a partial truth which only sees one aspect of the whole - that an individual capitalist can be defeated through a strike. This view, if generalised, leads to the incorrect tendency of Syndicalism. The International Communist Movement has correctly generalised this partial truth into an overall view, which takes into account this partial view and much other experience, that it is necessary to build the revolutionary Communist Party to lead the working class in overthrowing the bourgeois state.

This is the principal idea, which takes unsystematic and scattered views and concentrates them into correct ideas, that it is necessary to take back to the working class and explain until they "embrace them as their own".

But we cannot confine the mass line to such general lines as this: specific policies must also be formulated in this way.

Recently there was a big strike of toolmakers working for British Leyland. Several years of pay freezes have seen the pay differentials between the toolmakers and non-skilled workers eroded to such an extent that in some cases the toolmakers were getting less than production line workers. The view of the toolmakers is that they should have a considerable differential over non-skilled workers. What is correct and what is incorrect in this view?

What is correct is that it is just for workers with particular skills to be paid a just reward for those skills - even under socialism skilled workers will be paid more than unskilled workers. The toolmakers can be united with on this just demand.

On the other hand the bourgeoisie uses the multitude of differentials in workers' pay to play off one section of workers against another. This introduces the bourgeois ideology of competition into the ranks of the workers.

Further there is often an element of petty craft mentality in the demands of these highly skilled workers, so they will not unite with other, less skilled workers, in their just demands.

The policy that takes into account all these different factors, unites with what is positive in the demands of workers, and introduces the proletarian ideology of co-operation into the economic struggle, is the policy of a simplified wage structure, which also recognises the need for differentials. This is why the CFB(M-L) has a slogan of 'simplified wages for unified struggles' in its base-building work.

Again this is a policy that should be taken back to the workers until they embrace it as their own. When the working class do recognise the correctness of the idea it can be tested in practice. Through this practice much rich experience will be gained leading to further ideas which reflect that practice. These ideas are concentrated again, and again the idea is taken back to the working class and tested in action. The policy's correctness in terms of how accurately it reflects objective reality and leads the struggle of the working class is strengthened again and again in practice. As Mao says the process is an "*endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time.*"

Even incorrect ideas of the working class should not simply be rejected out of hand, but should be examined to see what is positive in them.

Even apparently blatantly bourgeois ideas often contain a substantial element of truth in them. Take for instance the fuss created by some sections of the bourgeoisie about 'social security scroungers', particularly the fact that some lower-paid workers can now find that, after tax, their wages are not a great deal higher than some people on social security.

It is entirely understandable and correct that these workers should resent this situation. But many workers are fooled by this into joining the attack on social security claimants and the lies that are spread about them having holidays in Spain and running Jaguars.

The real villain of the situation is the bourgeois state. Inflation has been so high that many lower-paid workers are paying income tax for the first time. The government's policy of trying to prop up capitalist industry by taxing the working class has severely curtailed the living standards of the working class.

Lenin pointed out that under state monopoly capitalism "*the yoke of a few monopoly capitalists on the rest of the population becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and terrible.*" This is the line that should be propagated, particularly the line that nationalization is state capitalism, as the explanation for the falling living standards of the working class, in answer to the bourgeoisie's attempts to play off one section of the working class against another.

The mass line is a key part of integrating theory with practice. We must learn from the indirect experience of the international working class movement, and grasp the principles of Marxism-Leninism. But these are still 'abstract' if they are not integrated with the concrete conditions of the class struggle in Britain. Specific policies will be formed and tested in the struggle against incorrect ideas and by listening to the masses, taking their ideas and concentrating them.

WHEN SHOULD THE MASS LINE BE APPLIED?

"The masses in any given place are generally composed of three parts, the relatively active, the intermediate and the relatively backward. The leaders must therefore be skilled in uniting the small number of active elements around the leadership and must rely on them to raise the level of the intermediate elements and to win over the backward elements." ('Quotations', p130)

Particularly because revolutionary Communists in Britain are still at the stage of rallying the vanguard, it is necessary to pay particular attention to finding out which workers are the advanced elements, those most conscious of the bitterness of their exploitation and oppression. In Britain, because of the grip of the opportunists on the official 'labour' movement, the advanced elements are not necessarily the active elements.

It is necessary to pay particular attention, not exclusive attention to the advanced elements. Attention must be paid also to finding and working with the intermediate and backward elements.

In the period of the first historical task of the revolution, the main aspect of mass work is to rally the vanguard: during the second historical task the main aspect is leading the masses, the majority of the working class, in practical political action. These two aspects are not though metaphysically opposed to each other: they are dialectically related, both aspects must have attention paid to them in each period. If the now secondary aspect of working with the majority of the working class is ignored, then it will be impossible to lead them later when the vanguard is won: the majority of the less advanced workers would quite correctly assume that the revolutionary Communists were not interested in their struggles.

The main way that this secondary aspect of working with the majority of workers is carried out is by finding out who the advanced workers are and relying on them to "*raise the level of the intermediate elements and win over the backward elements*".

Although revolutionary Communists themselves can do valuable work with the intermediate and backward elements and give them some leadership, mainly by uniting with them in their just struggles, this is secondary to relying on the advanced elements of the working class. Only when substantial numbers of class conscious workers have rallied to the revolutionary Communist Party will it be possible to give real leadership to the workers as a whole. If revolutionary Communists themselves try to do this, instead of relying on the advanced workers, then tailism or commandism, opportunism or adventurism will be the inevitable result.

This means that revolutionary Communists should apply the mass line at all times in their mass work. The quote from Mao above continues:

"...and, according to their present level, to awaken them or raise their political consciousness and help them gradually to organize themselves voluntarily and to set going all essential struggles permitted by the internal and external circumstances of the given time and place".

An important aspect of the mass line is that the masses themselves must organize their own struggles and fight for their own liberation. This truth is reflected in the words of the 'Internationale':

"no saviours from on high deliver; our own right hands the chains must sever".

In building bases at the place of work it will be necessary to rally the advanced elements ('to awaken them') and rely on them to 'raise (the) political consciousness' of the majority of the workers. The Trotskyist and Anarchist ultra-left style of rushing into a factory and immediately stirring up trouble must be avoided: it is a method of work which attempts to substitute a few heroic individuals for the struggle of the working class. The Marxist-Leninist method of work is to rely on the working class "*to set going all essential struggles permitted by the internal and external circumstances of the given time and place*".

There is not yet a revolutionary struggle in Britain though there is a rising tide of class struggle. The revisionist, social democratic and Trotskyite agents of the bourgeoisie in the working class movement still have a substantial ideological, political and organizational hold on the

working class movement and are still able to suppress to an extent the struggle of the working class. It is the task of revolutionary Communists to wrest the leadership of the working class from the opportunists in the course of a protracted struggle in the working class movement.

The only way that this can be done is in the course of actual struggle on all three fronts, ideological, political and organizational. As Mao said: *"A leading group that is genuinely united with the masses can be gradually formed only in the process of mass struggle."*

WHERE SHOULD THE MASS LINE BE APPLIED?

At this stage of revolution to win the leadership of the working class it is essential to devote all the practical activity of Communists to the working class movement: the mass line must be grasped firmly in base-building work. The slogan that is the guiding principle for the application of the mass line is 'integrate, investigate, propagate'. This way we can correctly *"set going all essential struggles"*.

Integrate

There are two main aspects to integration with the working class. In the different stages of base-building different aspects will be primary. In the early stages the aspect of making friends with the workers and being good work-mates will be primary. This is an aspect of relying on the working class themselves to carry out the class struggle and not acting as 'saviours from on high'.

But even in the early stages of base-building this cannot be the only aspect. The purpose of making friends with the workers and being good workmates is to win the trust and confidence of the workers so that they can see that revolutionary Communists are not sectarians who try to impose their views on things and to run things their way, so that the working class will look to Communists for leadership. The working class are bitterly exploited and oppressed by the bourgeoisie: only Marxism-Leninism shows the way to end that exploitation and oppression.

Therefore just to be good workmates denies that leadership and surrenders the leadership of the working class to the opportunists. All comrades must therefore speak out in the interests of the working class when necessary. Even at this early stage of base-building Communists must also integrate with the working class in the sense of uniting with the working class in the factory in their just struggles against the employers. It is incorrect to stand aside from these struggles for the sake of protecting individual Communists. Certainly in the early stages we should not stir up trouble but where workers are struggling against their exploitation and oppression Communists must play a full part and give what leadership they can. If we fail to unite with and lead workers on these everyday issues then our use of the mass line to make friends with the workers becomes a form of self-cultivation which fails to see that all of our work must be done in the interests of the class struggle of the working class. It is easy to integrate with the working class in a friendly way: it is not so easy to integrate in a principled Communist way.

Investigate

Communists must thoroughly investigate the state of the class struggle in each factory to find out what the grievances of the workers are: is there no heating in the lavatories? are the prices of canteen meals too high? are there problems with shiftwork? Communists should not imagine that they are too grand to consider these problems - they all stem directly from the exploitation and oppression of the working class by the bourgeoisie. The views of the workers on these questions of the general struggle for the defence of pay and conditions should be listened to attentively in order to formulate correct policies on the basis of "from the masses, to the masses". As Mao

pointed out "All work done for the masses must start from their needs and not from the desire of any individual...". ('Quotations', p124).

Mao further pointed out:

"We should pay close attention to the well-being of the masses...All... problems concerning the well-being of the masses should be placed on our agenda. We should discuss them, adopt and carry out decisions and check up on the results. We should help the masses to realise that we represent their interests, that our lives are intimately bound up with theirs." ('Quotations'. p132).

Whilst Communists must certainly not ignore these questions in a leftist way they must also guard against the rightist errors of economism and spontaneism.

Propagate

The main reason why Communists must concern themselves with the immediate well-being of the working class is that this is the main way that the question of the struggle for socialism can be raised. Economism neglects to do this and confines itself to the everyday economic struggle, forgetting Lenin's words that Communists must not be "mere trade union secretaries" but must be "tribunes of the people".

Out of the everyday economic class struggle Communists must draw general conclusions from particular experience: they must show how each and every instance of exploitation and oppression of workers stems from capitalism and that only the overthrow of capitalism by socialism can liberate the working class and the people. Mao pointed this out when he said, in the rest of the quote above:

"We should help them to proceed from these things to an understanding of the higher tasks which we have put forward, the tasks of the revolutionary war, so that they will support the revolution and spread it throughout the country, respond to our political appeals and fight to the end for victory in the revolution".

By showing the working class that Communists "represent their interests" through these methods we teach the working class that it is in their economic and political self-interest to fight for socialism. We do not do this by petty-bourgeois appeals to abstract moral justice.

Mao says that Communists should "*help them to proceed*". This is because the working class cannot spontaneously come to a scientific understanding of its exploitation and oppression and of how to end it - to Communist consciousness. Lenin summed up the experience of the working class movement in its first hundred years or so by saying:

"The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, i.e., the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc..."

('What Is To Be Done?', Peking edition, p37).

If Communists confine themselves to working on the basis of the spontaneously generated ideas in the course of the economic class struggle they will never help the working class to raise their class consciousness to Communist class consciousness. Lenin further pointed out in 'What Is To Be Done?' that:

"...all worship of the spontaneity of the working class movement, all belittling of the role of the 'conscious element', of the role of Social-Democracy (Communism), means, quite irrespective of whether the belittler wants to or not, strengthening the influence of the bourgeois ideology over the workers". (p46).

Propagating the rich lessons of well over one hundred years experience of the international working class movement is therefore an absolutely indispensable aspect of base-building.

The policies which are propagated must be policies which are in conformity with the views and demands of the working class. Mao teaches us that:

"...the right task, policy and style of work invariably conform with the demands of the masses at a given time and place and invariably strengthen our ties with the masses, and the wrong task, policy and style of work invariably disagree with the demands of the masses at a given time and place and invariably alienate us from the masses. The reason why such evils as dogmatism, empiricism, commandism, tailism, sectarianism, bureaucracy and an arrogant attitude in work are definitely harmful and intolerable, and why anyone suffering from these maladies must overcome them, is that they alienate us from the masses".

('Quotations', p123).

Take the question of unions. Unions are an indispensable and hard won weapon of the working class in its struggle with the bourgeoisie: in the long run it is necessary to turn the unions into fighting organizations of the working class, in the meantime they remain essential defensive organizations.

Some comrades, mistaking the reactionary trade union leaders for the unions themselves, have the view that unions are completely reactionary and that they should not be supported or worked in. Many workers also, fed up with the betrayals of the union leaders, have similar views. Yet there is no doubt that unions are indispensable for the working class and that Communists must work in them.

The view that unions should not be worked in is an ultra-left line that is in essence most reactionary. If persisted in it would leave the majority of the working class under the influence of the Scanlons, Jones, Bassetts and other died-in-the-wool and incorrigible opportunists. As Lenin said:

"To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the insufficiently developed or backward mass of workers under the influence of the reactionary leaders, the agents of the bourgeoisie, the labour aristocrats, or the 'workers who have become completely bourgeois'".

('"Left Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder', Peking edition, p44).

Most workers recognise the value of unions and join them: supporting and working in the unions is a policy that *"conforms with the demands of the masses"*, and will in time *"strengthen our ties"* with the working class. When workers have the view that 'unions are a waste of time', it is necessary to unite with them on the often correct criticisms they have of the reactionary features of unions, whilst patiently educating them on the vital necessity of unions to the working class.

At times it will be necessary to go against the tide in fighting for a correct policy. Take the question of racism. The history of Britain as an imperialist power has brought about a situation where there are substantial black national minorities in Britain. Racism is a product of imperialism and is deliberately used by the imperialist bourgeoisie to divide the working class and play off white workers against black workers.

Communists must have an absolutely uncompromising policy on racism, make no concessions whatever to it and firmly support the just struggles of the black national minorities against their bitter oppression. By doing this Communists are taking a stand which is in the interests of the working class and will in the long run unite the whole class, although in the short run it may isolate us from more backward workers.

At the same time the leftist method of attacking those white workers who have some racist views must be guarded against. The responsibility for their views

lies ultimately with the bourgeoisie and many otherwise class conscious workers have some racist views. In these cases we must explain our policy firmly and patiently until they embrace a correct view. Even here the mass line must be applied. The economic roots which allow the bourgeoisie to infect many white workers with racism are poor pay, unemployment and poor housing conditions: when white workers blame black workers for these things we should unite with them in their concern over their conditions whilst pointing out the real culprits - the bourgeoisie. Patient education must be carried out on the fundamental unity of interest of both black and white workers against their common bourgeois enemy.

Grasped firmly, the mass line used in base-building will weld together the struggle to build the revolutionary Communist Party and the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. In this way a Party will be built which has deep roots in the working class and which eventually leads the working class to overthrow capitalism and build socialism.

THE 'BRITISH ROAD': AN OPPORTUNIST PATH TO COUNTER-REVOLUTION

The essence of revisionism was summed up by Mao in 1957 when he said:-

"It is revisionism to negate the basic principles of Marxism and to negate its universal truth. Revisionism is one form of bourgeois ideology. The revisionists deny the differences between socialism and capitalism, between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. What they advocate is in fact not the socialist line but the capitalist line".

(*'Quotations'*, p21).

With the new draft of its programme, 'The British Road to Socialism', the revisionist 'Communist' Party of Great Britain tries for the fourth time since 1951 to sell its bourgeois socialism to the British working class.

Is it 'fair' to call it 'bourgeois', to say that it is essentially a capitalist programme propping up the present system of exploitation? Yes, it is not only fair but essential if we are to nail its class essence. The bourgeoisie say that we live in a democracy. So do the revisionists. Both refuse to say that it is a bourgeois democracy and in fact a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. They both say that it is up to the people to change the system if they want to. All you have to do, they both agree is to use parliamentary elections to put forward your ideas. If you win a majority of seats you can form a government and propose and pass the laws you want.

In Italy and Finland both revisionist parties are already necessary parliamentary props to open capitalist governments. In India and Sweden they have been until recently, when their social democratic allies were defeated in elections. Revisionist leaders in France are in the process of heading to their kind of 'socialism' in their peaceful and calm parliamentary way. In this way the revisionists act like any other bourgeois party, wheeling and dealing for power within the bourgeois parliamentary system. If that were all they would be no greater enemy of the working class than any other capitalist party.

The great difference is that they use the name and terms of Communism while practicing capitalist policies. They speak in the name of Marxism but,

"rob Marxism of its revolutionary living spirit".

They,

"recognise everything in Marxism except revolutionary methods of struggle".
(Lenin. 'The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky')

At present the revisionists in Britain and more especially elsewhere in Western Europe have some influence. As Lenin pointed out in 1910, in 'Differences in the Labour Movement', at periods when the bourgeoisie principally changes from using the tactics of concessions rather than that of force against the working class, the result is a

"one-sided echo of bourgeois reformism: opportunism in the labour movement....This change is always more dangerous".

Opportunism in the labour movement including its most dangerous form, revisionism, is generally stronger in imperialist countries like Britain, where the super-profits coming from their dominant position in investment, trade and other world-wide forms of exploitation, to some extent cushion the class struggle within these countries. The bourgeoisie in imperialist countries can more easily afford the 'concessions' which breed opportunism.

But imperialism, especially British imperialism, is losing its strength. The cushion of super-profits is deflating. The class struggle is growing more intense and the bourgeois revisionist clap-trap sounds hollow and hollow.

By stepping up the fight against opportunism and especially revisionism in a militant and scientific way we will certainly destroy the influence of the opportunists. To do this we will have to study their statements closely and carefully. The 'British Road To Socialism' can be an excellent lesson by negative example.

There is nothing essentially new about the British revisionists. Indeed Lenin's profound attacks on the ideas of the German revisionist Karl Kautsky about sixty years ago, teach us many lessons about the modern revisionists. Lenin summed up their function in 1919.

"The bourgeoisie needs lackeys whom a section of the working class could trust and who would paint in fine colours, embellish the bourgeoisie with talk about the possibility of the reformist path, who would throw dust in the eyes of the people by this talk, who would divert the people from revolution by depicting in glowing colours the charms and possibilities of the reformist path. All the writings of Kautsky reduce themselves to such a painting..."
(*'Tasks of the Third International'*)

Like Kautsky's writings, 'The British Road to Socialism' reduces itself to such a painting of the "*charms and possibilities of the reformist path*".

WORKING CLASS

The British revisionists in their new draft deny the central revolutionary role of the working class. They do this by defining the working class as

"those who sell their labour power...in return for a wage or salary and who work under the direction of the employer". (lines 518-520).

Using this deceptively simple definition, they try to include in the working class, technicians, salesmen, lecturers, civil servants, local government officers and junior managers. While they say that 'industrial workers' are 'at the heart of the working class' - a typically liberal and elusive phrase - their only explanation of this is that this section has the 'experience' and the 'organization'. Putting the industrial worker on par with the civil servant or junior manager helps the revisionists obscure the essence of why the working class is the really revolutionary class. Sale of labour power is one, but only one, fact of exploitation. Of course sections of the intelligentsia are exploited. They are workers by brain who are generally exploited in individual tasks for which they are employed. But the fundamental contradiction in capitalist society which inevitably leads to its downfall is that between the social character of production (workers collectively producing commodities) and the private character of ownership. Producing together in factories, exploited together, dependent on each other, subject to the increased pace of ever more powerful machinery the working class develops as a disciplined and united force.

"The very conditions of their lives makes the workers capable of struggle and impel them to struggle. Capital collects the workers in great masses in big cities uniting them teaching them to act in unison. At every step the workers come face to face with their main enemy the capitalist class".

(Lenin. 'The Lessons of the Revolution'. 1910)

Working people of the intelligentsia are not subject to the same harsh collective exploitation and are therefore not the same tempered and united force as are the working class. The lower and middle sectors of the intelligentsia will certainly be won for revolution but it will be under the leadership of the working class.

Why do the revisionists muddle the working class with the intelligentsia? It is because they treat the working people as voting fodder and not as a

revolutionary force. To them one person is mainly one vote. The journal of the Australian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) summed up modern revisionism like this:

"Revisionism denies revolution. Hence it is not interested in the leading role of the working class. Its (the revisionists') organization is based on the localities. These emanate from parliamentary electoral boundaries because revisionism believes in the parliamentary road to socialism". (Australian Communist, no. 54 1972)

It is a clear question for Communists. Do we organize primarily where the workers collectively produce, in the factory, or where they live in their separate homes? Of course Communists work to mobilize the working class at work and at home. But which is primary? It is in the factories where the working class are strongest because of the social nature of production. This is where they engage daily in class struggle against their exploitation. In their homes workers are less easily united in struggle. How can they strike such powerful blows against the ruling class from their homes?

But the revisionists mainly organize their membership based on where they live so they can organize for their parliamentary road through the bourgeois voting charade. According to their own recent figures less than one in ten of their members are in work-place branches. Last year they admitted that scarcely 2000 of their members are in such branches and this included university staff and similar groups from the intelligentsia. Taking account of their low level of branch attendance, the 'C'PGB can hardly effectively organize more than a few hundred industrial workers in factory branches. Any wider opportunist influence they have in industry is through the manoeuvring of individual full time officials and shop stewards. They are incapable of united and consistent campaigning because of their political and organizational bankruptcy. Their 'influence' is not rooted in the industrial working class.

DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP

Throughout the 'British Road' there is no mention of the class character of the present bourgeois democratic system. The words 'democracy' and 'freedom' litter the draft but without ever saying whether it is bourgeois or proletarian 'democracy' or whether the 'freedom' is for the capitalist or the working class. The assumption is that present-day British 'democracy' exists with no specific class character and that it only needs 'extending' or 'developing' to lead directly to socialism.

The very introduction to the draft forms a classic support for the gradualist Fabian approach of Social Democracy. It wants to build socialism on what it regards as the firm foundations of current bourgeois parliamentary institutions and political practice.

"Socialism in Britain can only be achieved by the fullest development of democracy, involving far greater participation by the people in the running of the country, recognition of the elected Parliament as the sovereign body in the land, freedom for all democratic political parties, including those hostile to socialism to operate, genuine freedom of the press, independence of the trade unions and the consolidation and extension of civil liberties won through centuries of struggle".
(lines 31-36)

All of this makes it quite clear that the revisionists want to increase bourgeois democratic rights in order to get socialism! As Lenin said of Kautsky:

"in the manner of liberals (he) speaks of democracy in general and not of bourgeois democracy".

And that is the dividing line. For Communists bourgeois democratic rights for the working class are fought for under capitalism as some protection against the oppressive capitalist state. To organize in trade unions, to demonstrate against injustice, to have certain limited rights in bourgeois courts, to elect spokesmen in bourgeois parliaments, all these bourgeois democratic rights help to defend workers in immediate struggles and demonstrate the need for a complete break with bourgeois rule and the introduction of working class power. But if these defensive struggles are once confused with the idea of capturing these capitalist institutions and converting them for working class purposes, the basis is laid for out-and-out opportunism. This qualitative and necessary distinction is brilliantly explained in Lenin's 'The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky', especially in chapter 2, "Bourgeois and Proletarian Democracy". There he explains,

"Bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with medievalism, always remains and under capitalism cannot but remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and deception for the exploited and the poor... this truth...forms a most essential part of Marx's teaching."
(Peking edition. p20).

And then again,

"even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed masses at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the formal equality proclaimed by the 'democracy' of the capitalists and the thousands of real limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletariat in to wage slaves....It is this contradiction that the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly explaining to the masses in order to prepare them for revolution. And now that the era of revolutions has begun, Kautsky turns his back upon it and begins to extol the charms of moribund bourgeois democracy". (p24).

In fact Kautsky argued for what he called,

"The conquest of state power by winning a majority in parliament and by converting parliament into the master of government"
(Quoted by Lenin in 'State and Revolution'. Peking edition. p141).

The 'British Road' has exactly this revisionist perspective.

"Parliament has to be won by the people, made into a mirror of the country with the activities of the working class parties in Parliament being intimately linked to the mass struggle outside it, each interacting on the other".

There will, they promise, be no 'insurrection' or 'civil war' or 'new organs of power' (like workers' Soviets).

"Parliament, itself the product of past battles for democracy, can be transformed into the democratic instrument of the will of the vast majority of the people....Democracy can be carried to its utmost limits, breaking all bourgeois restrictions to it through the democratic transformation of society, including the State, in all stages of struggle".
(lines 1078-1112)

So the revisionists allege that Parliament can be 'won by the people', become a 'mirror of the country' and can be 'transformed into a democratic instrument'. To them it is not British Parliamentary democracy that is bourgeois but only its 'restrictions'. The pure forms of this classless democracy will be revealed 'in all forms of struggle', except of course those involving working class 'insurrection' or 'civil war' against the exploiters.

This glorification of Parliament is in strict opposition to working class

experience both here and abroad. How did Lenin sum up this experience on the usefulness of Parliament to the working class?

Firstly, his assessment of the general revisionist line on the parliamentary road:

"In mockery of the teachings of Marx, those gentlemen, the opportunists including Kautskyites, 'teach' the people that the proletariat must win a majority by means of universal suffrage, then on the basis of the voting of that majority, obtain state power, and only after that on the basis of 'consistent' (otherwise called 'pure') democracy, organize socialism". ('Constituent Assembly Elections, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat'. December 1919).

Secondly, on the nature of elections under capitalism:

"To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to oppress and crush the people through parliament: such is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism..."

('State and Revolution', Peking edition. p54)

Thirdly, on the importance of everyone having the vote - 'universal suffrage':

"Engels is most definite in calling universal suffrage an instrument of bourgeois rule...(It is) the gauge of the maturity of the working class. It cannot and never will be anything more in the present day state...the opportunists of Western Europe expect just this 'more' from universal suffrage. They themselves share and instil into the minds of the people the false notion that universal suffrage 'in the modern state' is really capable of ascertaining the will of the majority of the toilers and securing its realisation". ('State and Revolution', p16)

Fourthly, on the nature of Parliament itself, for the bourgeoisie and the proletariat:

"Take any parliamentary country, from America to Switzerland, from France to England, Norway and so forth - in these countries the real business of 'state' is performed behind the scenes and is carried on by the departments, chancelleries and General Staffs. Parliament itself is given over to talk for the special purpose of fooling the "common people"...We cannot imagine democracy, even proletarian democracy, without representative institutions, but we can and must imagine democracy without parliamentarism, if criticism of bourgeois society is not mere empty words for us, if the desire to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie is our earnest and sincere desire and not a mere 'election' cry for catching workers' votes..." ('State and Revolution', p55-57)

We have quoted Lenin at some length because it is often implied by the revisionists that Lenin is no longer relevant, 'in the modern state'! To these false Marxists, theory, the experience of the working class, is something to be discarded like a change of clothes for different seasons. But who can read these biting attacks of Lenin on the revisionists of sixty years ago and want to change a comma or a syllable in the light of more recent experience? They form a sharp colour photo of the modern British revisionists in 1977, caught in the very act of cooking the books.

Let us consider just one of Lenin's formulations in more detail.

"Parliament itself is given over for talk for the special purpose of fooling the people, (while) the real business of 'state' is performed behind the scenes..."

How many fine and militant campaigns have been terminated by the reformists and revisionists leading a lobby of parliament? Milling round the entrance to the House of Commons, waiting to see the MPs from the 'talking shop', while the real decisions were being carried through elsewhere in the State

machine. Even the fact that demonstrations have to break up a mile from Parliament is a recognition of the way that those who serve in the 'talking shop' refuse to accept the basis of class solidarity and insist on lobbying being individual. Workers' experience of Parliament is concentrated in the well-known joke about the last Labour Government.

Question: "How do you know when Harold Wilson's lying?"

Answer: "When his lips move".

The hypocrisy and cant of the Parliamentary system and bourgeois elections are widely recognised by the working class, but the revisionists try to restore faith in the rotting political system. This is their plan.

THE REVISIONIST PLAN

Firstly, they advocate a Left Government of Labour MPs with a "'Communist' (revisionist) presence". Such a Government would, they say, carry out 'Left' but not 'socialist' policies.

"The aim of the left must be to win the working class and other democratic forces...to defend the gains already won and take steps in extending democracy, improving living standards and opening the way to socialism".
(Lines. 1068-1071)

The main 'left' policies listed then are, nationalisation, increased investment for the "transformation of the structure and efficiency of British industry", more social spending on the health service, pensions and so on, increased wages and more control of the private sector. Monopoly control of the mass media is to be ended on the basis that, "no-one should own more than one newspaper"(!) and that the BBC and ITV should be 'democratically controlled'.

The revisionists are caught in a trap of their own making. All of these policies they say will be carried through by this Left Government under capitalism with a capitalist state and with the same employees running most of the industry. (Line 1183). These policies they say are an 'immediate alternative programme the situation requires'. The 'Left Labour Government' carrying it out, "would not be a socialist government carrying out a socialist revolution". (Line 1380)

But yet this government would raise living standards, extend democracy, transform British industry, increase social services and democratise the mass media: all under capitalism! This revisionist programme is not only an almost exact copy of the Labour Government's Manifesto for 1974. It is also a disgusting attempt to spread the Social Democratic illusion that capitalism can be reformed into socialism. What abject reformism to say that moribund British monopoly capitalism can be made to start serving the needs of the British people simply by means of another government. In the whole section devoted to this 'Left Labour Government' (over 5000 long-winded words) the key questions of the crisis of capitalism are ignored. Nothing is said about the necessary and inevitable crisis of overproduction throwing workers on the scrap heap of unemployment, nothing on the anarchic switchback of 'boom' and 'slump', nothing on the constant class war going on against the bosses' attempts to increase the rate of exploitation by speed-up, work re-organization or rationalisation. Nothing in fact on how the essential contradictions of capitalism are to be overcome and the list of election promises fulfilled. To the revisionists, who is elected to Parliament is much more important than whether the system is capitalist or socialist. A system which has become bloated and poisonous with its exploitation and oppression is to start producing the milk and honey of rising living standards, industrial growth and improved social services just because there is a 'Left Labour Government'.

STATE POWER

Lastly, the revisionists outline what will follow this miracle of Parliamentary politics: "the revolutionary change to socialism". Although they make a gesture to Marxism at this point, by saying that "state power is critical", they collapse back into revisionism by adding,

"What is needed is the winning of state power from the old ruling class by the working class and its allies, and the democratisation of the state apparatus." (our stress)

In this they guarantee their position as the 'Step toe and Sons' of modern revisionism by the following guide to the taking of state power.

*"A left majority in the House of Commons and the establishment of a left government would mark a major change. It would mean that the House of Commons and the Government - that is the legislature and the executive - were won by democratic struggle from the control of the capitalist class, the minority, so that they served the interests of the working class and its allies, the majority of the population. At this **stage**, the armed forces, the police, the civil service, the judiciary, etc., - that is the state apparatus - would still remain in the hands of the class representatives of capitalism."*

Here the revisionists pose their parliamentary problem on their peaceful road. They look around desperately for an answer: it is the 'British constitution' threadbare from overuse but now the magic weapon for these 'Communists'! Immediately after the quotation above with not a word omitted, they follow on:

"The nature of the British constitution, under which Parliament has supreme authority, gives the left government the democratic right and means, backed by the mass struggle of the people, to carry through drastic and necessary reforms(!) in the state apparatus to correspond to the political change in the country expressed in the electoral verdict of the people..." (lines 1453-1464)

What imperialist and opportunist in British history, what Ramsay MacDonald or Baldwin, Churchill or Attlee, Heath or Wilson, have not based all of their actions on the great British constitution, all the 'greater' because it is unwritten. 'The supreme authority of Parliament' is the opportunist cover for all their anti-working class acts. It is the height of bourgeois political propaganda to proclaim Parliamentary sovereignty and thus of course the 'sovereignty' of the people who elect it. That is the basis of the false claim of the bourgeois state to represent all of the people. The British revisionists are indeed the rag-and-bone men of modern revisionism. In taking over the second hand constitution of the bourgeoisie it uses the second hand propaganda of the Italian revisionist 'Communist Party'. Fifteen years ago that party proclaimed that the Italian constitution, "affirms the principles of the sovereignty of the people", and therefore allowed, "the Italian Road to Socialism." (From the 'Theses of the Tenth Congress of the CPI', quoted in 'Whence the Differences': a collection of brilliant articles by the Communist Party of China.)

The British revisionists' job is almost done. All they have to do is to organise "changes in the top personnel" of the armed forces, the police and the civil service. The 'revolutionary transformation' is complete and the road to socialism is open. As they themselves sum it up,

"The later stages of the democratic process would, in effect, be the period of the revolutionary transformation to socialism... the complete ending of the grip of monopoly capitalists on society and the transfer (our emphasis) of political and economic power, of the state apparatus into the hands of the overwhelming majority of the population, the

working class and its allies." (lines 1533-1539)

In short, the revisionists deny the essence of all the working class lessons on the taking of state power.

They say that bourgeois democracy must be 'extended' and 'developed' to achieve socialism, deny that democracy is a form of state power which oppresses either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie, depending which class holds power.

They say that there must neither be a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie nor a dictatorship of the proletariat. To them there is just 'democracy'; less under capitalism, more under socialism. Their refusal to use the concept the dictatorship of the proletariat marks another clear break with the Marxist approach to problems. Lenin, dealing with a similar attempt to revise Marxism by Kautsky, called the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', "*the root content of proletarian revolution*", and "*The most important problem of the entire proletarian class struggle.*" ('Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky' p5)

The revisionists allege not only that power can be taken through 'the democratic process' but also that after the revolution the bourgeoisie can have the same rights as every one else. To them democracy is a neutral mechanism which can be used by any class and that because the people are in the majority and the bourgeoisie in the minority present bourgeois democracy can enable the working class to gain power. But Lenin sums up the problem in this way in his conclusion to Chapter 3. of 'State and Revolution'.

"The essence of Marx's teaching on the state has been mastered only by those who understand that a dictatorship of a single class is necessary not only for every class society in general, not only for the proletariat which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but also for the entire historical period which separates capitalism from "classless society," from Communism. The forms of bourgeois states are extremely varied, but the essence is the same: all these states, whatever their form, in the final analysis are inevitably the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The transition from capitalism to Communism certainly cannot but yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same: the dictatorship of the proletariat." (all emphases are Lenin's)

Since the period that Lenin wrote there have of course been many changes in the world. But the revisionists wish to imply that everything has changed and that they can therefore present plans diametrically opposed to the theoretical conclusions summed up by Lenin and the Communist movement. But in fact these 'changes' on which the revisionists place so much stress, in fact only reinforce the lessons drawn by Lenin. In Britain for example the armed forces of the bourgeois State are larger and better armed than before the First World War. A much larger proportion are now in or near Britain rather than holding down the old British far-flung empire. The police forces have grown from 50,000 at the beginning of the century to over 150,000 at present. The 'bureaucracy' the other factor which Marx argued might allow peaceful transition to Socialism if it were weak enough is now many times larger than when Lenin wrote on this particular problem. ('Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky' p13-14). In fact the armed and civil power of the State today strengthens the case for preparing for a violent revolution.

One of the main arguments the revisionists use for relying on the peaceful road is the 'strength' of the Soviet Union and its 'socialist world': the states it controls in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. The implication is that if (it should of course be 'when') the British imperialist bourgeoisie

fighters back supported by its fellow imperialist allies, the Soviet troops will march in to save the revisionists and their 'revolution'. (lines 297-300 for the mealy-mouthed presentation of this.)

The crucial point for understanding the threat of the revisionists is to grasp that they are not merely mistaken, ignorant, cowardly or naive as the trotskyists suggest. It is not a matter of reasoning with their leaders to remind them of the realities of the working class revolution. The 'C'PGB was a revolutionary party formed under the guidance of the Bolshevik Party and Lenin and which developed generally correct policies for Britain. The present leadership are conscious opportunists who have robbed Marxism of its revolutionary content.

The bourgeois nature of revisionism was summed up very well by Palme Dutt in his book 'The Political and Social Doctrine of Communism', which was written when he was still a Communist. He says, on page 32:

"They (the social democrats of the Second International) advocated... what they termed the 'evolutionary' 'democratic' or 'gradualist' path to socialism, that is, the policy of co-operation in capitalist reconstruction, support and strengthening of the capitalist State (including violent suppression of the widespread working class and colonial revolt) and coalition with capitalism, as the practical method of harmonious development, through extending reforms and prosperity, to an eventual socialist goal."

Earlier on, on p. 30 he says:

"To the bourgeois observer, who sees capitalism from the basis of the unrestricted freedom of the leisured rentier or in terms of the formal democratic liberties which it is in practice engaged in destroying, the dictatorship of the proletariat represents an intolerable restriction of liberty. To the class-conscious industrial worker, who knows the reality of factory slavery and class-subjection under capitalist rule, the dictatorship of the proletariat represents a vision of liberation and material realisation of freedom which leaves the formal democratic liberties of even the most democratic capitalist republic a pale shadow by comparison and cover for real slavery. Between these two viewpoints no argument will bring conciliation."

This is the choice outlined by Dutt - the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat. The road followed by the revisionists of the 'C'PGB is clearly the former. But it poses as the best of both roads, just like the old revisionists of the Second International. The final revisionist degeneration of the 'C'PGB is their declared plan to take a permanent subordinate relationship to the best bosses' party - the Labour Party. To do this it has to disguise the bourgeois nature of the Labour Party and distort and exaggerate the support it receives from the working class.

Firstly it claims that the Labour Party is "the mass party of the working class" when its clear function has been to be a party of the bourgeoisie, both in its ideology and in the class that it serves. The only aspect which allows this revisionist pretence is that at elections more workers vote Labour than Tory. The passive voting habits of many workers, when there is no working class revolutionary party in existence, is what determines the revisionist's judgement: again to the revisionist, votes are all important.

Secondly it exaggerates Labour's individual membership by supporting the Transport House propaganda of 600,000 members. But even Transport House has had to admit recently that membership is grossly exaggerated by the constituencies and probably does not amount to much more than 300,000: hardly 1 in a hundred of the adult population. Of these only a small minority even

attend monthly ward meetings let alone engage in other activity. A growing number of members are petty bourgeois and from the intelligentsia. Working class constituencies like those in Glasgow and parts of London are hollow shells: hence all the fuss about Trotskyists taking them over by 'entering' a handful of their members. All in all it is doubtful whether there are 50,000 workers who are in any sense active members of the Labour party. As for trade union political affiliation that is a cloak behind which trade union leaders shovel money into the Labour Party coffers.

The truth is that the 'C'P has ambitions itself to take over the Labour Party not in Trotskyist raids on one or two constituencies, but at national level. That is why the 'British Road' states that "The CP does not seek to replace the Labour Party as the federal (our stress) party of the working class". (864-865) It only yet hints at its longer term ambitions for control by adding, "as bans and proscriptions are removed, so new opportunities will open up for still more developed forms of Labour Communist unity". (869-871)

SUMMARY

The British Road to Socialism is another revisionist attempt to sell bourgeois socialism under the label of Communism. It tries to divert people from the revolution by making reform appear an attractive possibility.

- * It obscures the vanguard role of the industrial working class.
- * It praises bourgeois democracy especially Parliamentary elections as the main way to achieve socialism.
- * It pretends that a 'Left' Government could make capitalism work until it was changed into Socialism.
- * It revives the old revisionist illusion that the bourgeois State machine can be peacefully transferred to the working class who can then use it for socialist purposes.
- * It denies the need, after the revolution, for the working class to exercise its dictatorship over the bourgeoisie for the whole period of transition to Communism.
- * It prettifies the Labour Party as a 'working class party' and plans to take it over.

All of these revisionist lies and illusions spell deadly danger to the working class. The revisionist leaders and their Party are bourgeois agents and are the main danger within the working class movement. In the struggle to rally the vanguard of the working class their influence must be decisively defeated.

TRANSFORM THE FAMILY INTO A FIGHTING UNIT OF THE PROLETARIAT!

In a socialist society, love between husband and wife is built on the identity of political beliefs and on the foundation of struggling together for the revolutionary cause. The relationship between husband and wife is first of all comradely relations and the feelings between husband and wife are primarily revolutionary sentiments. For this reason, a husband should take the attitude of a revolutionary comrade toward his wife. This is reflected in the attitude of regarding one's wife as a revolutionary comrade-in-arms in the common struggle in the political sphere, as a class sister with whom one labours together in production or work, and as a companion with whom one lives together at home, respecting and loving each other, helping each other, and encouraging each other in making progress together. This is the Communist standard, morally and ideologically speaking, by which a revolutionary deals with the question of love, marriage and family. Only by conforming to this standard can one handle correctly all problems that may arise in the life between husband and wife...

Although the old economic foundation has been destroyed, the influence of bourgeois and feudal ideas and the force of habit left by the old society cannot be completely eliminated overnight. In varying degrees, these ideas and force of habit still influence the mind of a certain number of people. Have we not noticed that certain men, in the first few years of their marriage, showered affections upon their wives and pledged to stay married with them until old age? However, with the lapse of time in later years of their marriage, they began to cool off in their feelings for their wives until eventually they got so tired of their wives that they would seek the end in the tragedy of divorce. Have we not also noticed that some men in doing their work have treated others on equal terms and performed their duties with industry? However, once back in their homes, they will put on the airs of the "master of the house", letting their wives do all the housework, while they themselves move about here and there, waiting for meals to be served and clothes to be cleaned and pressed. If the wives are slightly negligent or disobedient and protesting, they will think that the dignity and self-respect of being husband is hurt and will then start a big quarrel...

We must take note of the fact that some men are very often inclined to take a superior attitude toward their wives under the guise of "affection". On the surface, at least, they may appear to be very fond of their young wives and take good care of them in every possible way. However, in their mind, they seldom regard their wives as class sisters and revolutionary comrades with whom they labour and struggle together. Rather, they regard their wives as cherished piece of private property for their own appreciation. Instead of regarding their wives as revolutionary companions, helping each other and seeking progress together in the life they are sharing together, they regard their wives merely as "nurses" keeping them company and serving them. Although in this case there is the love of husband for his wife, this kind of love is not real love, class love and comradely love, which is built on the foundation of political ideology. This kind of love cannot be strengthened and cannot last long. If the wife loses the bloom of youth, if she is stricken with this or that ailment, and becomes physically disabled one way or other, the husband, finding that she is no longer the object of appreciation and can no longer keep him company and do housework for him, may turn his attention to other women and find his new object of affection disregarding the suffering of his wife. This is a reflection of bourgeois thought on the question of marriage and family during the transition period. This is the root-cause of the unfortunate tragedy that has befallen many husbands and wives and families.

Everybody is now striving for the revolutionisation of his own thought. This means that in handling all kinds of problems, one should adhere steadfastly to the proletarian stand, point of view, and method, including the attitude toward love, marriage and family according to communist principles. Revolutionisation of the thought of man should find expression not only in work but also in everyday life, in love, marriage and family, and between husband and wife. This is because when a man and a woman become husband and wife, it is not merely a private affair in the life of an individual but that on the day they are married, both have certain responsibilities to society in that they may struggle together, labour together, live together, and bring up and educate their children together. Whether the relations between husband and wife are handled well or poorly has a bearing not only on the happiness of family life and on the growth of the next generation of successors, but also, in an equally important way, on the development of the socialist revolution and socialist construction. It is in line with the communist moral standard that one should take the revolutionary attitude toward love, marriage and family. This standard demands that the husband should never take a fickle, reckless and irresponsible attitude toward his wife and children in the pursuit of his own so-called "romantic desires".

It cannot be denied that youth and good looks are indeed factors that make men and women fall for each other. This is because when a man is young, his physical and intellectual growth in many aspects exudes fresh vigour and vitality that draws admiration. However, man is a rational creature and, therefore, he should realise that apart from the natural attractions of the sexes, the main concern for a man and a woman to become husband and wife should be whether or not their political ideas are identical, instead of regarding youth and good looks as the only condition for choosing a wife. Since all things tend to grow and change, it is impossible for any mortal being to preserve its youth forever. This is also so with man. It is the unalterable law of nature that man will slowly grow old and change his looks with the increase in age. If young people are merely after youth and good looks when choosing their life-mates without taking heed of the political qualities of the other party, the result will not necessarily be true happiness. Just look at those young people, who become man and wife on the impulse of the moment and on the basis of good looks and love at first sight disregarding compatibility based on identical political ideas and mutual understanding. See how in most cases they cannot get along well with one another in everyday life, quarrel with each other constantly, and suffer greatly. They find it difficult to live together or apart after discovering the difference in political ideas and each other's defects in manners and moral qualities. Then, look at those who become man and wife after they have built their true revolutionary feelings on the basis of labouring and struggling together. Although they are not necessarily attractive in their looks, they have a common ideological foundation and fine moral qualities. Because they respect and love each other, help each other, care for each other in everyday life and seek progress together, are they not very happy in their married life? This shows that whether life between husband and wife is happy or not is determined by whether their moral qualities are good or bad, and not by their looks. This is because good looks do not mean inner beauty. True and lasting beauty can only be found in political qualities, inner feelings, good thought and fine style of doing things, and only love built on this foundation is forever green.

Attention to housework is an important part of the life between husband and wife. Mishandling of this part of married life may also affect marital harmony and happiness. By suggesting that a husband should take the revolutionary attitude of equality toward his wife, do we mean that both husband and wife should divide housework equally between themselves, or that the husband should devote more of his time and efforts to housekeeping and

attend to his wife's other needs? No, it is not so. If housework is divided in this way, it cannot be considered as true equality, for the key to this question does not lie in the form of sharing household chores, but rather in the attitude of the husband toward the wife after he is back home. Will he regard her as a revolutionary comrade and companion or a "slave" and a "servant" at his beck and call and who is around in the house to attend to his needs? Will he regard housekeeping as the common obligation of both husband and wife or as the "natural duties" of a woman in her lifetime? If both husband and wife take the correct attitude, then this problem will of course be solved without any difficulty. Just look at many couples around us, who help each other regardless of the nature and amount of housework when they are back home every day and who talk and laugh freely, bring up and teach their children together and keep their house in order. Sometimes when the husband's regular work is heavy, the wife will of her own accord do a little more housework, so that the husband may concentrate his efforts on the completion of his task. Or sometimes when the wife is a little indisposed, the husband will also of his own accord do more things in the house, so that the wife may have proper rest. How pleasant and happy is the life of these couples! This shows that whether the life between husband and wife is happy or not depends on the attitude of revolutionary comradeship toward each other by caring for each other and helping each other, and not on the question of who obeys whom, who attends to whose needs, who does more household chores and who does less housework.

New Era Books

A PROPAGANDA WEAPON IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE MARXIST-LENINIST COMMUNIST PARTY!

REVOLUTIONARY THEORY - *"Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."* (Lenin.)

NEW ERA BOOKS stocks and distributes MARXIST-LENINIST CLASSICS, the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung. The ideology of the class conscious workers is Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung thought, and the principal aspect of party building in Britain today is to build theory from the historical experience of the international Communist movement.

CHINESE AND ALBANIAN BOOKS AND PERIODICALS give a lead in applying Marxism-Leninism to the present struggle against imperialism and social imperialism, and for the building of socialism through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE CFB(M-L) AND OTHER MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATIONS IN BRITAIN advance the struggle for the principal task of building the Marxist-Leninist party in Britain.

PUBLICATIONS OF MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES are an important source of revolutionary theory; for *"theory is the experience of the working class movement in all countries taken in its general aspect."* (Stalin.)

PROGRESSIVE LITERATURE New Era Books stocks ANTI-IMPERIALIST BOOKS, PAMPHLETS AND JOURNALS, which publicise the great achievements of countries fighting for independence, nations fighting for liberation and people fighting for revolution throughout the world. They expose and condemn the vicious nature of imperialism and social-imperialism.

Literature on the struggles of the working class against exploitation, racism and for women's emancipation, and progressive novels, document the class struggle in Britain and abroad.

New Era Books also stocks handicrafts, posters and artwork from the socialist countries which emphasise and publicise the achievements of socialism in a concrete way.

NEW ERA BOOKS
203 SEVEN SISTERS ROAD
LONDON N4.
Tel. 01-272-5894.

Nearest Tube - FINSBURY PARK.
Opening hours 10 - 6pm.
Monday - Saturday.
Late Night Thursday till 7.30pm.

CLASS STRUGGLE

Today the two superpowers, Soviet Social Imperialism and United States imperialism threaten the peoples of the whole world. The two superpowers speak 'detente' and prepare for war.

British imperialism, wounded and limping, still throws its weight around, tries to oppress and exploit countries like Ireland, the Arab countries, Southern Africa, and Iceland. At home it steps up its attacks on the working class with massive job cuts, pay cuts, and cuts in essential services, in a desperate attempt to resolve the crisis of decaying capitalism.

There is only one answer to these problems. The working class itself must come forward, lead the people in opposition to the superpowers, and overthrow the British imperialist ruling class by force.

The working class must speak out loud and clear. It must speak out in its own voice, the voice of no other class. It must speak out strongly to rally its forces and build a truly revolutionary Communist Party, the vanguard of the working class.

'Class Struggle' is being published to help the working class rally its forces and build that revolutionary Communist Party. It is the organ of the National Committee of the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

'Class Struggle' is primarily a propagandist paper aimed at the class-conscious vanguard. Its main aspect is to present 'many ideas to the few', to win over the advanced workers to Marxism-Leninism.

The central task of building the revolutionary Communist Party guides every aspect of the paper. In the task of rallying the working class vanguard to build the Party, it serves the central mass work task: building Communist bases in the industrial working class.

It shows how the working class and progressive forces fight back against oppression and exploitation. 'Class Struggle' upholds Comrade Mao Tse Tung's profound analysis of the present era:

COUNTRIES WANT INDEPENDENCE!

NATIONS WANT LIBERATION!

PEOPLE WANT REVOLUTION!

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO 'CLASS STRUGGLE' ARE AVAILABLE FROM NEW ERA BOOKS
£1.60p a year.