

MILQ

THE THEORETICAL JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN (M.L.)

1976 No. 11 25p.

IN THIS ISSUE:

NATIONALISATION

CFB STATEMENT AND OTHER ARTICLES

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

LOWER AND DEEPER INTO THE PROLETARIAT

SOCIAL IMPERIALISM

CFB STATEMENT

RELATIONS WITH MARXIST LENINIST ORGANISATIONS

THE INTERNATIONALE

PLUS ARTICLES ON IRELAND, THE ANTI-FASCIST WAR, ETC.

**Marxist
Leninist
QUARTERLY**

THE COMMUNIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN (MARXIST-LENINIST)

The C.F.B.(M-L) is an organisation of Communists whose purpose is to help create the conditions to form a revolutionary party. The rising level of struggle against all oppression in Britain will not effectively challenge the ruling-class until the lessons of these struggles are widely understood by the working-class and its allies. A disciplined party guided by scientific socialism is needed to lead in this process of raising the struggle to a conscious political level.

No such party exists. The historical contradictions leading to the split in the international Communist movement in the early 1960's have not yet been resolved and the lessons applied to the actual conditions existing generally in Western Europe. Without this being done there will be no guiding political line and programme and no unity within the Marxist-Leninist movement.

The C.F.B.(M-L) is comprised of groups of Marxist-Leninists who have been working together since 1967 to aid in this vital task of forming a party. It has consistently worked to achieve this goal by combining two forms of political work.

FIRSTLY: We study the main problems facing the British people and the world revolutionary movement, applying the scientific socialist method developed by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung.

SECONDLY: We engage in immediate struggles on the main issues of exploitation and oppression.

We believe that only in combining the lessons of both these forms of political work can a correct line be developed. Without such a guiding line and programme the struggles on all the vital and immediate issues will continue to demonstrate the treadmill characteristics of the last 150 years.

In developing this line we recognise the need to destroy the influence of social democracy, revisionism and Trotskyism - the main defeatist ideological trends which act to disarm the working-class.

We understand that as all these tasks are increasingly achieved it will become possible to build a mass revolutionary movement capable of withstanding ruling-class attacks and finally of overthrowing and smashing the present system and its State machine. The working class and its party will then implement its own dictatorship over the present employing class to build socialism and prevent the restoration of capitalism.

Our basic policy document is 'The Marxist-Leninist Movement in Britain; Origins and Perspectives' published in 1969. Readers wanting to know more about our policy and political work should contact their local group or the Secretary of the C.F.B.

Signed articles in M.L.Q. do not necessarily represent the political line of the C.F.B.(M-L)

EDITORIAL

This issue of MLQ contains three statements from the National Committee of the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist). The first, on Nationalisation, states the line of the CFB on this central question. The second outlines our position on the Soviet Union, and the third states our policy towards other Marxist-Leninist Organisations. The publication of these articles in the name of the NC illustrates the progress that we have made over the past year in combatting our previous errors, and marks a step forward for the journal as it develops as a fighting organ for the development of policy in the Marxist-Leninist movement.

Nationalisation

As the current crisis intensifies sections of the bourgeoisie promote state ownership as an attempt to stabilise an already moribund capitalism. At the same time this bourgeois policy is echoed in the working class by the reformists, the revisionist Communist Party of Great Britain and the various Trotskyist organisations. Our line clearly combats these tendencies and states that we oppose nationalisation as a policy opposed to the interests of the working class.

We are also publishing a minority position on Nationalisation. We do not do this out of liberalism - but as part of the struggle for unity in the CFB. Some comrades, after a two-line struggle still persist in the erroneous line that nationalisation is progressive. Although these comrades are in a minority we will carry on struggling with them in order to win a principled unity on this question.

Soviet Union.

In the past we have not made a firm statement on this, and our practice has been opportunist and liberal. In particular our statement on the World Situation was characterised by compromise, rather than by a struggle to make a bold statement (See MLQ 7 and the criticism published in MLQ 10). We now state that the Soviet Union is a monopoly capitalist state, and that its foreign policy is social imperialist - socialist in words, imperialist in deeds. It is important for us to fight within the working class movement for this position. The threat posed by the Soviet Union in India, the Middle East, Angola and Portugal is a threat to the world's peoples, as the comrades in the Communist Party of China have pointed out. Within the workers movement however, the revisionists of the CPGB actively mislead the workers on this question, and the Trotskyists fail to take a clear class stand, although they pay lip service to criticising the Soviet Union. In so doing they disarm the working class in the face of the threat posed by the Soviet Union.

Relations with other Marxist-Leninist Organisations

At the present time in Britain the Marxist-Leninist movement is weak and fragmented. There has also been sectarianism and small group mentality within the movement, with each group regarding itself as the 'movement' and regarding other groups as enemies. This was an incorrect view, which we ourselves fell into. We now state that the principled position is to strive for the unity of the movement, and with this in mind we will struggle to draw clear lines of demarcation with other organisations and to carry out polemic in order to win higher unity. The aim of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party should be put before the interests of the small groups.

Social Democracy.

Readers of MLQ will know that a sharp struggle has been waged on this question. Social democracy, like nationalisation is one of the most crucial questions facing the working class, in a period when the Labour Government openly acts as the "principal social prop of the bourgeoisie". In the course of the polemic demarcation lines have become sharper and the current article, "Lower and Deeper into the Proletariat", focuses on the central question of which section of the working class is the vanguard. Opposing the line that the advanced elements are the Trade Union and Labour Party activists, the writer has clearly argued that we must not rely on reformists, but must go, in Lenin's words "lower and deeper" into the working class in order to rally the vanguard.

"Engels draws a distinction between the bourgeois labour party of the OLD trade Unions - the privileged minority - and the LOWEST mass, the real majority, and he appeals to the latter who are not infected by 'bourgeois respectability'. This is the essence of Marxist tactics.

And it is therefore our duty, if we wish to remain socialists, to go down LOWER and DEEPER to the real masses. This is the whole meaning and whole purport of the struggle against opportunism."

This is clearly our first task in this early stage of the struggle for a proletarian Party.

Ireland.

The article in this issue is a minority position. The minority in a Communist organisation has the right to continue its criticism of a line which it sees as incorrect, and the majority has the duty to accept the criticisms if it thinks them correct, and to show that they are wrong if it rejects them. This article raises a number of questions which the CIB Resolution on Ireland did not answer (see MLQ 7), and further polemic on Ireland will follow in future issues of the journal.

"Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of Victory Over German Fascism".

In the last issue of MLQ we published an article by two comrades entitled 'Neither Adventurism Nor Opportunism' (MLQ 10). This article represented a minority position in the CFB, and moreover questioned a long standing line of the Communist Movement. It was therefore incorrect to publish this without a refutation of the position, or without explanation. As a response to this we publish an article from Reking Review no 20 1975, which clearly puts the line that:-

"The anti-fascist war was a gigantic struggle between the world anti-fascist forces and German-Italian-Japanese fascism, a just war on a scale unprecedented in the history of mankind."

It also points out that the victory over anti-fascism laid the basis for further advances towards socialism, and links the post war retrogression which took place to the victory of revisionism over Marxism in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Comrade Chou En Lai.

On January 8th, we learnt of the death of Comrade Chou En Lai, an outstanding leader of the Communist Party of China, who dedicated his life to the cause of the working people of China and of the world. As a young man Chou joined the CPC and played a leading role in the struggle of the Chinese people against Imperialism, Feudalism and reaction, and to establish New Democratic China. Following this he played a leading role in the struggle to construct socialism, and in implementing the line of Chairman Mao Tse Tung against revisionism, and the two superpowers. He was a staunch defender of the oppressed nations and those fighting for social and national liberation. During the Cultural Revolution he resolutely combatted those who were bent on restoring capitalism in China, and those like Lin Piao who were enemies of the Chinese people. The life of Comrade Chou En Lai is an example to all Communists and to all those struggling against oppression. It is our task to turn grief into strength, and to redouble our efforts to bring about the victory of socialism.

The Editorial Committee.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE POLICY STATEMENT ON NATIONALISATION

British imperialism is dying. The bourgeoisie's policy of nationalisation, as pushed by its social-democratic wing, is one of their last ditch efforts to revive the feeble patient. This policy goes against the interests of the working class in Britain.

In order to have a correct policy towards nationalisation, Marxist-Leninists must put it in the general context of the general decline of British capitalism. Over the past few decades British industry has become out-dated, uncompetitive and of a very low profitability. The result of this trend has been a steady increase in the amount of capital sent abroad and a steady decrease in the amount of capital spent on investment at home.

Since the beginning of the century the state has had to intervene in British industry, either to provide large amounts of capital which could not be raised privately or because there was a strategic advantage in the state controlling a particular industry, e.g. the Post Office. Since the mid-sixties a similar bourgeois policy has arisen in which the state does NOT nationalise the industry or enterprise but merely provides the funds for continued investment.

The Labour Party's programme has nothing to do with socialism. It is a programme to rescue capitalism from crisis. Though this is the principal aspect of the Labour Party's plans we should not neglect a secondary aspect - the part played by rank-and-file pressure. Among many sections of workers there exists a desire for socialism; because of the influence of Social-Democratic ideology this desire for socialism is diverted into support for the bourgeois socialism of the Labour Party. This gives the Labour Party the mass base it needs to carry out its policies.

The theoretical confusion and lack of clarity on the British left enables the bourgeoisie and their parties to label the policies of the Labour Party as socialist and to confuse the mass of workers about the real nature of capitalism and socialism. The reformists, revisionists and Trotskyists are unclear and muddled about the nature of socialism, of capitalism, the nature of the state and the class character of political parties. Thus the equation of nationalisation with socialism, the description of the Labour Party as a working class party and the demands for nationalisation as a means of making inroads into the capitalist state.

The vast majority of British industry is corporately owned; by banks, by finance or insurance companies, by monopolies or by the STATE. These are all forms of capitalism in which capitalist property relationships remain intact. Surplus-value is still appropriated and production is governed through the market by the operation of the law of value and commodity exchange. These laws operate whether private companies or the state control production. The essence of capitalism is property relationships; ownership is merely a formal question, which can take MANY forms. To portray nationalisation as a means of making inroads into the capitalist system is to ignore the central role of the bourgeois state and that this state must be SMASHED before the revolutionary transformation of the relations of production. Hence nationalisation can never be a means of making 'inroads' into capitalism. To argue so is to deny the fundamental teachings of Marxism-Leninism - to put forward a revisionist policy. For all these reasons there is no advantage, either strategic or tactical, in calling for the nationalisation of private industry. It is irrelevant to the real interests of the working people of Britain whether profits are in private or state hands.

The primary battle for Marxist-Leninists is, therefore, to combat nationalisation ideologically; to struggle against the social-democratic and revisionist ideology which diverts the fight for socialism to a fight for reformism and gradualism.

Secondly, we must combat nationalisation politically. We must oppose the reformist policies of Labour's 'hangers-on' - the revisionists and Trotskyists - who support British capitalism. At this stage, the advanced elements in the working class must be won over to the fight for the "Right to Work" - and away from the dead-end reformism of nationalisation.

An important part of the CFB's work must lie in exposing the socialist pretensions of the Labour Party and in opposing the false strategies of the revisionists and Trotskyists who demand that they nationalise more and more industries. The Labour 'left' and the Communist Party demand nationalisation as a means of making inroads into the capitalist system - as a form of creeping socialism. The WRP and the 'Militant' say that they are making 'transitional' demands, their ideological approach is different to that of the Labour 'left' and the CP but in essence their strategy is as reformist. The IS and IMG claim that slogans for more nationalisation raise the question of state power and heighten the consciousness of the workers. Objectively all these organisations are serving the bourgeoisie in that they are attempting to mobilise the working class in order to bring about the expansion of state monopoly capitalism to rescue bankrupt private industries and enterprises.

We must differentiate between the GENERAL policy of nationalisation and SPECIFIC acts of nationalisation. It is clear from government policy that support for decaying private industry is conditional on 'improving efficiency' and 'rationalisation'. In the long-term nationalisation cannot stem the tide of redundancies and indeed may accelerate it; this should be our answer to the demands for nationalisation as a means of avoiding redundancies. Any support for specific acts of nationalisation can only arise out of concrete investigation and must be SECONDARY to our PRINCIPAL task of ideological and political opposition to bourgeois socialism.

The call for nationalisation as a means of saving jobs is an aspect of the general reformist outlook of the British labour movement. Instead of begging the bourgeoisie to save their jobs the working class urgently needs to develop a consciousness of its latent strength. The strength of the working class lies in their labour and their relationship to the means of production - let us help them to learn to use it! Not nationalisation but the right to work! Opposition to the sack based on factory occupations, resistance to redundancies and short-time working, solidarity strikes etc., will all help the working class to develop, with Marxist-Leninist leadership, a consciousness of the power that they have, will help them to develop the independent, revolutionary fighting spirit needed for the eventual overthrow of the capitalist system.

FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO WORK!

STATE CONTROL IS BOSSES' CONTROL!

NATIONALISATION IS 'RATIONALISATION'!

NATIONALISATION: NO - SOCIALISM: YES!

The National Committee of the CFB (M-L)

NATIONALISATION AND THE CRISIS OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM

The question of the nature of nationalisation in imperialist countries has been a cause of polemic since the earliest days of the Labour movement. In the current crisis of imperialism state intervention in the economy has greatly increased and right opportunist deviations on the nature and purpose of this intervention are dominant in the British Labour movement.

In bold struggle against these opportunist positions in the counter-revolutionary tendencies of reformism, revisionism and Trotskyism, the Marxist-Leninist movement in general, and the Communist Federation of Britain in particular, say boldly and forthrightly; nationalisation is STATE CAPITALISM. It is part of the desperate attempts of the British bourgeoisie, in particular its social-democratic wing in the Labour Party, to revive British imperialism.

British imperialism is probably the weakest of the western imperialist powers. British industry is out-dated, with generally obsolete means of production which are unable to compete with the other imperialist powers (1). Unprofitable British industry is unable to attract new finance capital. Recent years have seen a vast increase in the amount of finance capital invested abroad and a similar vast decrease in the amount invested at home (2).

BOURGEOIS NATIONALISATION

Nationalisation has existed ever since the emergence of imperialism and is essentially an aspect of the principal feature of imperialism; that imperialism is moribund, decaying, parasitic capitalism. Imperialism is the epoch where capitalism has long since exhausted its progressive aspects and where it has become PARASITIC, dependent on super-profits from colonial and neo-colonial exploitation, and MORIBUND capitalism, increasingly dependent on the state for capital investment at home, as its super-profits decline with the victories of peoples' war.

Early acts of nationalisation were largely for strategic purposes (arsenals, the Post Office and telecommunications). But by the end of the nineteenth century not even

(1) See Notes.

(2) See Notes.

joint-stock companies could provide the capital needed for the more and more highly developed means of production; as Engels observed:

"At a certain stage of development even this form no longer suffices: the official representative of capitalist society, the state, is constrained to take over their management." (3).

The growth of state capitalism in most of Europe was fairly slow until 1945. The exceptions to this being the Fascist states of Germany and Italy where massive state intervention took place in the 1920s and 1930s. The end of the war saw a situation of severe political and economic crisis throughout Europe. British imperialism had lost its old pre-eminence and, as with the Fascists in pre-war Germany and Italy, an overtly state-capitalist party, the Labour Party, came to power. By the end of its two terms of office the party had nationalised most of British basic industry, coal, gas, power, steel and internal transport, and provided the necessary link with finance capital by nationalising the Bank of England. This massive extension of state capitalism provided the basis for a temporary stabilisation of British imperialism which lasted until the early sixties.

The crisis which has been developing since then, and which is now maturing into the final crisis of imperialism, has seen a further vast increase in government control of the economy. Significantly it is the social-imperialist Labour Party which has been in power for most of this period. (4).

The Industrial Re-Organisation Corporation of the 1964-70 Labour governments intervened massively in industry, notably the creation of GEC-ABE, and nationalised the steel industry; in both cases thousands of jobs were lost through 'rationalization'. The manifesto of the current Labour government commits it to the nationalisation of development land, oil, ship-building and aircraft, ports and cargo-handling, road-haulage and construction. (5). Although the manifesto is only partly implemented the deepening crisis has meant that a more radical programme of nationalisation and control has already

(3) Engels - 'Anti-Duhring'.

(4) See Notes.

(5) Labour Party Manifesto- October 1974. The struggles in the Labour Party over the implementation of the manifesto are a manifestation of the division referred to in Note 4 above. The pragmatic wing struggles against its full implementation, the 'left' wing for its implementation and extension. The realities of 1975 generally ensure that a centrist road is followed.

been carried out: government control of a firm like British Leyland would have been unthinkable only a few years ago.

As significant as the actual extension of state OWNER-SHIP is, the principle becomes more widespread in the form of state INTERVENTION. The National Enterprise Board (NEB) whatever form it eventually takes will effect an historic shift from a TRADITIONAL free-enterprise economy to a centrally owned and controlled state capitalist economy. The functions of the NEB will be:

- (a) a new source of investment capital in return for planning agreements with private industry,
- (b) a source of funds for firms in temporary financial difficulties,
- (c) to start new ventures and participate in joint ventures with private firms,
- (d) to extend nationalisation into profitable industry in certain circumstances,
- (e) to function as a holding company for government shares in private enterprise. (6).

In summary then the growth of state ownership, control and intervention is an aspect of the crisis of imperialism. It is a process whereby the state provides funds for private industry which can no longer be raised by private capital and in consequence government control of all aspects of the economy grows apace. (7). It is therefore a process which attempts to prop up a dying system and avert its eventual and inevitable doom and destruction: it is a process which has nothing whatsoever to do with socialism. In the vivid words of Lenin:

"State monopoly in capitalist society is nothing more than a means of increasing and guaranteeing the income of millionaires on the verge of bankruptcy in one branch of industry or another." (8).

NATIONALISATION IS STATE CAPITALISM

The CFB(M-L) makes no claim to originality in declaring that bourgeois nationalisation has nothing to do with socialism. In saying this we are but defending the science of Marxism against the various opportunists who support nationalisation. Engels dealt most explicitly with the nature of bourgeois nationalisation:

"But neither the conversion into joint-stock companies nor into state property deprives the productive forces of their character as capital. In the case of joint-stock compa-

(6) Command Paper no. 5701 - HMSO.

(7) See Notes. 4

(8) Lenin - 'Imperialism'.

nies this is obvious. And the modern state, too, is only the organization with which bourgeois society provides itself in order to maintain the general external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against encroachments either by the workers or by individual capitalists. The modern state, whatever its form, is an essentially capitalist machine; it is the state of the capitalists, THE IDEAL COLLECTIVE BODY OF ALL THE CAPITALISTS. The more productive forces it takes over as its property, the more it becomes the real collective body of all the capitalists, the more citizens it exploits. The workers remain wage-earners, proletarians. The capitalist relationship is not abolished; IT IS PUSHED TO AN EXTREME." (9). (Our emphasis).

The essential point to be grasped is that ownership by INDIVIDUAL CAPITALISTS is immaterial. The essence of capitalism is PROPERTY RELATIONSHIPS. Individual ownership of the means of production ceased to be dominant after the emergence of joint-stock companies in the nineteenth century. The vast majority of British industry is corporately owned - by banks, finance and insurance companies, by giant monopolies and by the STATE. All these are FORMS of capitalist ownership within which capitalist property relationships remain intact. Surplus value is still produced through the labour-power of the proletariat and that surplus-value is still appropriated by the bourgeoisie.

As we have seen the extent of state ownership and control increases as the crisis of imperialism deepens. At the same time the bourgeoisie are compelled to mount increasingly savage attacks on the rights and living standards of the labouring masses. (10). State ownership and control are an INDISPENSABLE WEAPON in the hands of the bourgeoisie in this attack:

"Under the conditions where private ownership of the means of production is preserved, all these steps to bigger monopolies and increased nationalisation of production are accompanied by INTENSIFIED EXPLOITATION OF THE LABOURING MASSES, INTENSIFIED OPPRESSION, GREATER DIFFICULTIES IN RESISTING THE ATTACKS OF THE EXPLOITERS, the strengthening of reaction and military despotism, and at the same time lead inevitably

(9) Engels - 'Anti-Duhring'.

(10) See Notes. 5

to the increase of profits of the big capitalists at the expense of all the other strata of the population, to the saddling of the labouring masses for many decades with tribute to the capitalists in the form of thousands of millions in interest on loans." (11). (Our emphasis).

The absence of any individual capitalist or obvious controlling bourgeoisie in state industries is a major contributory factor to the theoretical confusion and mystification about bourgeois nationalisation that exists in the British 'left' and the working class in general. It is an understanding of the nature of the state that is the key to theoretical clarity on this question. According to Marx:

"...the state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another...". (12).

As long as the bourgeoisie holds state power then the state can, in general, only act in their interests. Trifling and petty concessions to the masses in order to maintain bourgeois rule may be made but the bourgeoisie will never make concessions which seriously threaten their state power.

The fact that an essential task of a socialist society is to take state ownership of the means of production adds further confusion and mystification to the British 'left'. Marxists have always argued that monopolisation of the means of production, particularly state monopolisation, builds the formal shell within which SOCIALISATION of the means of production can take place. Engels argued:

"State ownership of the means of production is not the solution of the conflict, but it contains within itself the formal means, the key to the solution." (13).

But what is this solution?:

"This solution can only consist in the recognition in practice of the social nature of the modern productive forces, in bringing, therefore, the mode of production, appropriation and exchange into accord with the social character of the means of production. And this can only be brought about by society,

(11) Lenin - 'The 7th National Conference of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party.'

(12) Cited in Lenin - 'The State and Revolution'.

(13) Engels - 'Anti-Duhring'.

openly and without deviation, taking possession of all the productive forces which have outgrown all control other than that of society itself." (14).

This task cannot be accomplished within the framework of bourgeois society but only after the SOCIALIST REVOLUTION has taken place:

"The proletariat seizes state power, and transforms the means of production in the first instance into state property." (15).

Note the order: first the SEIZURE OF POWER, then state ownership.

WHEN CAN NATIONALISATION BE SUPPORTED?

In general it is clear that state intervention, whether in the form of direct ownership or loans and subsidies, **cannot** save jobs. In fact nationalisation usually leads to 'rationalisation' - massive redundancies. The experience of the mines and railways in the past and the current demands on the part of the British Steel Corporation for 20,000 redundancies and of British Rail for 8,000 amply proves this point. Similarly the government is making it quite plain that any support for bankrupt private industry is conditional on rationalisation and will provide financial support only when it is convinced that tough measures to that end will be taken. At the October 1975 talks of the National Economic Development Council the Secretary of State for Industry made it quite clear that such support was conditional on a return to financial viability within three years (16) - a process which can only mean large-scale redundancies.

DEFEND THE MASSES, ADVANCE THEIR STRATEGIC INTERESTS

Communists do not refuse to support acts which maintain or improve the lot of the masses: but they put that support in the general context of the strategic aim of the eventual overthrow of the capitalist system. This relationship is best expressed in the words of 'The Communist Manifesto':

"The Communists fight for the immediate aim, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class: but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement".

(14) Ibid.

(15) Ibid.

(16) 'Sunday Times' - 9/11/75.

Any support for a specific act of nationalisation which will save jobs is a part of the "fight for the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class". In the same way we would support government loans, a take-over by another company or anything else which served the immediate aim of saving jobs. Which action is taken is immaterial.

Later on, in the same section of the 'Manifesto', Marx and Engels point out:

"In all these movements they (the Communists) bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time."

This is why it is the most gross right opportunism not to fearlessly and consistently point out that nationalisation is state capitalism, that it cannot save jobs anymore than can private industry, except on the most temporary basis, and that only the violent overthrow of the bourgeois state and the building of socialism can guarantee work for all. More important than support for problematical government intervention is the mass struggle for the right to work and for Marxist-Leninists to struggle against the reformists, revisionists and Trotskyists from diverting that struggle into reformism. The fight for the right to work is important because the working class can, by REFUSING to accept redundancies, assert their strength. Any independent means that the working class chooses to use in this struggle - a shorter working week, work-sharing, no overtime, etc. - all develop the consciousness of the working class and make them aware of their latent strength. Factory occupations in particular are a crucial weapon in this struggle. Occupations assert the rights of labour over those of capital and FUNDAMENTALLY challenge bourgeois notions of property rights.

All these struggles develop the strength, confidence and political maturity of the working class. What is lacking at present is the leadership of Marxist-Leninists. Only that leadership can ensure that the SPONTANEOUS struggles of the working class eventually develop into a conscious awareness of the need for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

REVISIONISM AND NATIONALISATION

In the ideological and political struggle for a correct line on nationalisation we are struggling against revisionism. The Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) still has a significant hold on large numbers of militant workers and the defeat of the CPGB's bourgeois ideology is essential if those workers are to be won to Marxism-Leninism.

As early as 1944 they argued that a "new type of Labour

and progressive government" would have to take over significant sections of the economy:

"The government would have to own some important industries and businesses, and exercise strict control over others." (17).

It was not argued that such governments would be socialist:

"...the capitalist would still make profits and the worker would still draw wages. We have no illusions about that. But this policy will mean higher wages, shorter hours and full employment." (18).

The fundamental mistake made here is the complete misunderstanding about the nature of BOURGEOIS nationalisation; as we have already seen nationalisation in capitalist society, far from improving the lot of the masses ("higher wages, shorter hours and full employment"), means rather, to repeat Lenin: "intensified exploitation of the labouring masses, intensified oppression, greater difficulties in resisting the attacks of the exploiters".

This has been clearly seen in practice: the post-war nationalisation programme meant the loss of thousands of jobs in the mines, railways, steel industry etc. Low wages (rather than Pollit's "higher wages") are the norm in nationalised industries and productivity drives (particularly in the mines) have greatly increased the amount of surplus value screwed out of the workers by the bourgeoisie.

Revisionist policy on nationalisation is an inseparable part of the CPGB's strategy for a 'peaceful transition' to socialism. In 1944 the CPGB argued, in defence of its line on post-war policy:

"It may be argued that what we have outlined here represents a series of developments that can only lead to state capitalism. Well what is wrong with that?... (it)...enormously assists the speedy advance towards working class power and the full establishment of socialism." (20).

Note the subtle phrase "FULL establishment of socialism". The implication here is that nationalised industries are no longer fully capitalist but are in transition to socialism. Indeed this line is now CPGB policy. 'Marxism Today' of August 1974 argued that:

"...the relations of production are still capitalist because the PRINCIPAL means of production are still in private ownership." (Our emphasis).

Here the line is that once the "principal means of production"

are in state ownership then the relations of production are mysteriously changed into socialist relations.

The CPGB does argue that this process must be undertaken under the direction of a 'left' government'. But how is this government to be established?:

"...at a time of mounting class struggle... a socialist Labour and Communist majority could be returned to parliament, and a socialist government established." (21).

For the CPGB the central question is a majority in parliament. Token attention is paid to the bourgeois state, but the central question for Marxists - the VIOLENT OVERTHROW AND SMASHING OF THE STATE MACHINE is simply dismissed. The Marxist position on the nature of parliaments and the bourgeois state needs to be restated here:

"In mockery of the teachings of Marx, those gentlemen, the opportunists, including the Kautskyites, "teach" the people that: the proletariat must first win a majority by universal suffrage, then, on the basis of the voting of that majority, obtain state power, and only after that, on that basis of "consistent" (otherwise called "pure") democracy organise socialism.

But we say on the basis of the teachings of Marx and the experience of the Russian revolution:

"The proletariat must first overthrow the bourgeoisie and win for itself state power, and then use that state power, that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat, as an instrument of its class for the purpose of winning the sympathy of the majority of the toilers." (22).

And how is that state power to be achieved?

"We have already said above, and shall show more fully later, that the teachings of Marx and Engels concerning the inevitability of a violent revolution refers to the bourgeois state. The latter CANNOT be superseded by the proletarian state (the dictatorship of the proletariat) through the process of "wi-

(21) 'British Road to Socialism' - 1967 edition.

(22) Lenin - 'The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat'.

thering away", but, as a general rule, only through a violent revolution. The panegyric Engels sang in its honour, and which fully corresponds to Marx's repeated declarations - (recall the concluding passages of 'The Poverty of Philosophy' and 'The Communist Manifesto', with their proud and open proclamation of the inevitability of a violent revolution; recall what Marx wrote nearly thirty years later, in his criticism of the Gotha Programme of 1875, when he mercilessly castigated the opportunist character of that programme) - this panegyric is by no means a mere 'impulse', a mere declamation of polemical sally. The necessity of systematically imbuing the masses with THIS and precisely this view of a violent revolution lies at the root of ALL the teachings of Marx and Engels. The betrayal of their teaching by the now predominant social-chauvinist and Kautskyite trends is expressed in striking relief by the neglect of SUCH propaganda and agitation by both these trends." (23). (Emphases in the original).

The CPGB argues that the tasks of a 'left' government will include:

"Socialist nationalisation of all monopolies and other large scale concerns in productive industry and distribution, of the banks and insurance companies, and control of foreign trade and overseas investments.

Initiation of socialist planning to cover the economy as a whole, in order to improve the working and living conditions of the people." (24).

As long as the bourgeois state remains, as long as the bourgeoisie hold state power, such a programme can only be a programme for the establishment of state monopoly capitalism of the type now existing in the social-fascist regimes of the Soviet Union and most of eastern Europe. Typically the CPGB opportunistically attempt to use Lenin as a cover for their revisionism. In 'Marxism Today' of August 1974 they argue:

"The idea that the transition between capitalism and socialism will involve various stages and take some period of time is not of course a new one. In 1918 for example, Lenin argued:

(23) Lenin - 'The State and Revolution'.

(24) 'The British Road to Socialism' - 1967 edition.

"If in approximately six months time state monopoly capitalism became established in our republic, this would be a great success and sure guarantee that within a year socialism will have gained a permanently firm hold...the present system contains elements ...of both capitalism and socialism." (25).

It is a characteristic of opportunists to use quotes from Lenin and other leaders of the Communist movement torn out of their political and historical context. This example of opportunism is particularly impudent. Lenin was attacking the ultra-left opponents of state-capitalism in 1918, after the Russian masses, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, had seized state power THROUGH VIOLENT REVOLUTION and were BUILDING SOCIALISM UNDER THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. The CPGB attempt to use the quote as a justification for their support for BOURGEOIS NATIONALISATION IN A BOURGEOIS STATE.

THE CPGB IS A BOURGEOIS PARTY

The CPGB is a party of state monopoly capitalism. It is a junior partner of the social-imperialist Labour Party. The CPGB equates the struggle between the Labour and Tory parties as a struggle between socialism and capitalism. The Labour government is attacked not principally because it is a party of state monopoly capitalism but because it is not carrying out all the allegedly 'progressive' policies of the Labour Party manifesto. Thus the 'left' MPs who struggle for the implementation of the manifesto are seen as being 'progressive' and fighting for 'socialism'. The following quote exactly illustrates the CPGB's interpretation of the Labour Party:

"In the 1964-70 period, the Labour government acted mainly as the means of extending state monopoly capitalism using such instruments as the Department of Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Technology, and the I.R.C. MUCH OF THE PROGRESSIVE ELEMENT THERE WAS THEN IN THE LABOUR PARTY PROGRAMME BECAME MEANINGLESS FORMALITIES. The far more comprehensive and radical Labour Party programme drafted before the recent elections UNDER LEFT PRESSURE could itself be transformed into a further strengthening of the links between big business and the state if the Labour movement itself does not act to prevent this happening." (26). (Our emphasis).

(25) The quote from Lenin is from 'Left Wing Childishness and the Petit-Bourgeois Mentality'. It is cited in an article entitled 'Economic Problems of a Transitional Government' by Phil Goodwin. Goodwin is the secretary of the economic committee of the CPGB and presumably his views are representative of the position of the party's leadership.

(26) Sam Aronovitch-'The Next Stage' ('Marxism Today'-August 1974)

The policies of the Benn wing of the Labour Party are presented as a real threat to capitalism and the opposition of the Tories to those policies as a struggle against socialism:

"Left unity around the type of programme I have discussed represents, under present conditions, a serious challenge to bourgeois state power. The present offensive by the CBI and the Tory leadership against the arguments presented by Benn is part of an attempt to forestall such a challenge." (27).

The policies of the Labour Party (of whatever wing) and of their ideological parasites in the CPGB are, as we have shown, not socialist policies. The choice presented to the people in the periodic charades of general elections contested by the two major bourgeois parties, is not a choice between socialism and capitalism (or as the CPGB more vaguely expresses it, between 'progress' and 'reaction'), but rather a choice which enables the masses:

"To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament - such is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarianism." (28).

In their support for the Labour Party and their advocacy of a government of 'left unity' the CPGB is establishing its credentials to represent state monopoly capitalism in its attempts "to repress and crush the people".

'TRANSITIONAL' DEMANDS AND TROTSKYIST REFORMISM

'Transitional' demands were first invented by Trotsky in his 'Transitional Programme of the Fourth International' in 1938. Modern British Trotskyist sects, from the rigidly orthodox 'Workers' Revolutionary Party' and 'Revolutionary Socialist League' (who modestly deny their existence, and hide inside the Labour Party selling a reformist paper called the 'Militant'), to the 'revisionist' 'International Marxist Group', all use 'transitional' demands in one way or another. The essential theory of 'transitional' demands is to raise a theory which cannot be met by the bourgeois state, rally workers' support around that demand and then when the struggle fails, use its failure to 'expose' the bourgeois state for its inability to deliver the goods.

Thus the 'Red Weekly' (organ of the 'International Marxist Group') of 13/11/75, in an article on the Chrysler crisis

(27) Ibid.

(28) Lenin - 'The State and Revolution'.

said:

"A campaign for nationalisation without compensation based on plans drawn up by elected workers' committees opening Chrysler's books would sweep through the working class like wildfire, shattering the attempts of the Wilson government to solve the economic crisis at the workers' expense through mass unemployment".

Similarly the 'Militant' of 7/11/75, in an article entitled 'Nationalise Don't Subsidise', demanded of the Labour government:

"...nationalisation of firms which threaten sackings, under workers' control and management."

Not content with this fearless attack on the bourgeoisie our heroes of the R.S.L. take on the city itself, and further demand that the workers:

"...fight for the nationalisation of all banks insurance companies and finance institutions, and their incorporation into a state bank... to be administered by the organizations of the working class itself."

These 'transitional' demands illustrate the correctness of the thesis that Trotskyism is 'Left in Form, Right in Essence'. Firstly, Trotskyists are confused about the NATURE of nationalised industries: in some vague and undefined way they are assumed to be in transition to socialism. The fact that capitalist property relationships remain intact in nationalised industries, indeed are intensified ("pushed to an extreme" in the words of Engels), is ignored. Trotskyist confusion on capitalist and socialist property relationships is illustrated by their belief that socialist property relationships exist in the Soviet Union. The state ownership of the means of production is for the Trotskyists the decisive factor - the relationships that exist WITHIN the formal shell of state ownership are simply ignored. The SOURCE of their confusion, as with all variants of social-democracy, is that they do not really understand the nature of the STATE: that as the state is a bourgeois state it will necessarily carry out policies in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Further the process of demoralisation which takes place when the masses are conned into campaigns around 'transitional' demands is simply not taken seriously. As in all their mass work the Trotskyists have no conception of the mass line. Demands are made of bourgeois governments, campaigns organised around hacks from the official labour movement. But as for the masses, the Trotskyists fear them, they have nothing but contempt for them. They substitute cynical and manipulative learning situations for militant leadership; for mass struggle

they substitute reformist reliance on the bourgeois Labour Party.

In the fight for the right to work the policy of the Trotskyists is objectively reformist. The various Trotskyist sects all raise the demand for nationalisation as part of their 'leadership' of the struggle for the right to work. The 'Red Weekly' in its issue of 1/11/75 said:

"Against the reformist non-solutions of the Labour left and Communist Party WE MUST FIGHT THE WILSON GOVERNMENT for the 35 hour week, work-sharing with no loss of pay, nationalisation of all firms creating redundancies, a programme of socially useful public works, and the opening of the books to prepare a workers' plan to defend jobs". (Our emphasis).

Similarly the 'Socialist Worker' (organ of the 'International Socialists) said (referring to workers at Plessey and ITT) in its issue of 8/11/75:

"They should occupy their factories, hold the machinery and goods and DEMAND THAT THE GOVERNMENT nationalise the companies, under shop floor control of manning levels".

The Keynesian economics of the 'Red Weekly' is interesting evidence of the continuing degeneration of British Trotskyism and both papers are making 'transitional' demands on nationalisation. But a further serious error of both lines is their outright reformism. Both the I.M.G. and I.S. claim to be revolutionary organizations and therefore opposed to reformism, but their reformism shines through in every word. Trotskyist reformism is formal only - they all pander to the reformist illusions of the British Labour movement. The emphasis of their line is to demand that THE GOVERNMENT rescue the jobs of the workers. In the words of the 'Internationale', instead of boldly saying "our own right hands the chains shall sever", the Trotskyists meekly ask for "saviours from on high deliver". Furthermore, in peddling the reformist illusion that nationalisation can significantly help in the fight for the right to work, the Trotskyists are betraying the long-term interests of the working class for momentary gains.

RIGHT-OPPORTUNISM IN THE MARXIST-LENINIST MOVEMENT

The two-line struggle in Communist organizations is a struggle between proletarian and non-proletarian ideology: a struggle between the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and incorrect ideas. Right opportunism has been the principal error in the CFB(M-L) and although significant victories have been won in the struggle against right opportunism, it has not yet been decisively defeated. The adoption of the policy statement on nationalisation was a major victory in this struggle: it is therefore necessary to refute right-opportunist lines that have been argued on this question in recent issues of 'MLQ'.

DJ IN MLQ 7 (29)

This article makes several grossly right opportunist errors. DJ starts by saying that:

"The decisions of the 1973 Labour Party conference and the 1974 election manifesto were probably the most 'progressive' policies adopted by the Labour party since 1945".

Despite the disarming inverted commas around the word 'progressive', DJ certainly has illusions about the nature of Labour policy. Part of the so-called 'progressive' policies of the Labour Party are, according to DJ, its nationalisation programme. DJ lists, with evident approval, some of the 'key' decisions of the 1973 Labour Party conference, one of which is:

"This conference considers that industry will best serve the people of this country when they control it, through public ownership."

This sort of vague and pious resolution has been passed at every Labour Party conference since the Party's formation. It reflects the social base of the state monopoly capitalist Labour Party in the Labour aristocracy. It is part of the annual ritual dance between the right and 'left' wings of the party. When DJ goes on to discuss more specific proposals his opportunism becomes clearer. DJ quotes the Labour Party manifesto asserting:

"...Labour's determination to ensure not only that the North Sea and Celtic Oil and gas resources are in full public ownership, but that the operation of getting and distributing them is under full public ownership".

DJ's response to this is not to expose it as state capitalism, but to say:

"It took three Labour governments to nationalise the coal industry when the industry had so stagnated that it was no longer a viable proposition for private capital to make the necessary investments in order that coal could be an efficient prop to the rest of the privately owned manufacturing industries."

This is apparently a bad thing! DJ doesn't tell us why. He ignores the process of increased exploitation and oppression of the masses which accompanies state monopolisation of capital. More importantly he ignores the fact that nationalisation is state capitalism, an expression of imperialism in

(29) All quotes from DJ are from his article in MLQ 7: 'Expose the Reformists of Every Stripe and Hue'.

crisis. The general agreement put (although in characteristic opportunist fashion it is nowhere made explicit) makes it evident that DJ considers that there is a QUALITATIVE DIFFERENCE between state and private capital. This becomes clearer when DJ says:

"How many Labour governments will it require before the BOOMING PROFITS of the oil companies operating in Britain are brought under "FULL PUBLIC OWNERSHIP". Are those companies who in the first few months of 1974 made larger profits than ever before...going to stand idly by whilst their 'midas touch' investments ARE TAKEN OUT OF THEIR HANDS?". (Our emphasis).

The whole point that DJ completely misses is that it is completely irrelevant to the strategic interests of the working class whether profits are in state or private hands! State or private ownership, capitalism remains! Further, in his confusion about the nature of nationalisation he actually OBJECTIVELY demands that Marxist-Leninists should campaign for the extension of state monopoly capitalism. In a passage referring to the 'pledge' to nationalise North Sea Oil he says:

"...it is imperative that the Marxist-Leninist movement is seen by the forces who have fought for the inclusion of such a clause in the Labour Party manifesto to be campaigning for the Labour government to carry out its pledge."

For DJ the central feature of Labour policy is not that the policies themselves are BOURGEOIS policies but that in some mysterious way the Labour Party is unable to compell the bourgeois state to carry out its policies:

"...central to its whole existence has been a complete adherence to the parliamentary system of government. In other words, the dependence on the monopoly capitalist state machine for any measures on which it legislates."

Of course the Labour Party relies on the state machine; THERE IS NO CONTRADICTION BETWEEN THE POLICY OF THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE INTERESTS OF CAPITALISM! DJ's outlook is the common currency of 'left' mythology. It is mythology which paints a picture of frustrated Labour politicians being thwarted at every turn by 'Tory' civil servants. Again DJ misses the central point - the Labour Party is a bourgeois party and its policies are bourgeois policies. There is nothing, nor will there ever be, in the conference decisions or manifestos of the Labour Party which in any way threaten capitalism - at their most radical these policies would lead to a massive extension of state monopoly capitalism.

DJ's misunderstanding of the nature of the struggles between the Tory and Labour parties and of that inside the Labour Party leads him on to make what are essentially 'transi-

tional' demands of the sort described elsewhere in this article. DJ is, unlike the Trotskyists, at least honest in his approach:

"These policies are not presented here as vehicles for achieving workers' power, because they are far removed from that, nor are they presented as issues around which we should campaign to make social-democracy and parliament work in the interest of the working class but as a basis from which we can show the inability of social-democratic policies and methods to make any inroads into control of state monopoly capitalism."

DJ's position on nationalisation is not a Marxist-Leninist position, but a sophisticated revisionism with Trotskyist undertones. He shares with the revisionists their opportunist formulations on the nature of nationalisation and the Labour Party. He rejects their 'parliamentary road' to socialism: that we are agreed on, but a fierce ideological struggle on DJ's right opportunism is needed if a principled unity is to be reached.

JB IN MLQ 10 (30)

As the crisis of imperialism deepens so the pressure of bourgeois ideology on the Marxist-Leninist movement will increase; only active ideological struggle will prevent us from succumbing to that pressure. In this context it is instructive to examine the positions taken up by JB in his article in MLQ 1 and MLQ 10. The former article, despite a certain lack of militancy and a few minor errors, is nevertheless an excellent statement on the general Marxist-Leninist position on nationalisation. In the intervening period JB has lapsed into right opportunism.

JB still has a generally correct analysis of the nature of nationalisation in bourgeois society - he recognises that it is state capitalism and that its role is to attempt to rescue imperialism from crisis. JB's opportunism takes the form of sophisticated appeals to take account of the contradictions between different sections of the bourgeoisie, a refusal to recognise the role of the Labour Party, and, as with DJ, a variant of 'transitional' demands.

JB says that: (viz. the crisis of British imperialism)

"In this situation British imperialism is certain to go to the wall, in a world of increasing capitalist competition, WITHOUT MASSIVE STATE INTERVENTION." (Our emphasis).

Amazingly enough JB then goes on to argue nationalisation

(30) All quotes from JB are from his article in MLQ 10: 'Spontaneity, Parliamentarianism and the Labour Party'.

should be SUPPORTED. The reason for this is that although there is general theoretical agreement about nationalisation as state capitalism, it breaks down when we look at the role of the principal agent of state capitalism - the Labour Party. JB thinks that we must support nationalisation because of its support in the organised Labour movement. In criticising an article in MLQ 8&9 (31) JB says:

"Developing a generalised account of the contradictions generating capitalist crisis enables NR to bypass its concrete expression in the POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLES WITHIN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT." (Our emphasis).

JB's incorrect approach is the reverse of that which he criticises NR for: HE bypasses the principal aspect of nationalisation, that it is a result of the crisis of imperialism, and concentrates on a secondary aspect - its base in the reformist illusions of the working class. Inevitably this wrong analysis leads to a whole string of opportunist errors. Like DJ, JB makes 'transitional' demands:

"Only by being leaders of the demand for total nationalisation of major industries can we maximise political struggles of the class and destroy every kind of reformism at source."

JB also has a defeatist approach to Marxist-Leninist leadership and the mass line. He says:

"The demands for nationalisation without compensation provides us with much wider opportunities when raising fundamental questions embracing the principles of commodity production, the functioning of the bourgeois state, in stark contrast to the social-democrats' policies."

The basic approach of these 'transitional' demands is, like that of DJ, a form of MENSHEVISM. It is a defeatist and un-Leninist tactic which hands over responsibility for exposing the nature of the capitalist system to the bourgeois state and the bourgeois Labour Party. In contrast, the BOLSHEVIK method is that it is the conscious leadership of Marxist-Leninists which is the crucial factor in exposing capitalism and the bourgeois state. The whole method of the exposure tactic must be shown to be incompatible with Leninism: it is a tactic which has nothing but contempt for the masses and which imagines that they can only learn from manipulation, not from militant leadership.

JB then constructs an incredible scheme whereby the contradictions between the Tory and Labour parties can be used

(31) 'The Labour Party and the Crisis of British Capitalism'- MLQ 8&9.

to the advantage of the masses. He outlines the differences between Tory and Labour, Labour right and 'left', and then asks the ingenuous question: "Are these differences significant for Marxist-Leninists?". He uses these differences to justify the opportunist formulations quoted above and then tells us:

"The existing FORM of state capitalism obscures the laws of capital and the realities of class exploitation. The DEMAND for nationalisation creates an agenda with wide possibilities for focusing struggle towards the heart of the system - production for profit as opposed to use-creating improved conditions for building the ideas, politics, and organisation, for a real revolutionary socialist movement. It widens the fight against redundancy and rationalisation - as already noted, stepping-up exploitation is the main factor behind growing state intervention - throwing the rationale of the bourgeois state and social-democracy into very sharp relief. To those comrades who feel that this is too sophisticated, that really the differences within the bourgeoisie are of no significance, Lenin poses some difficult observations for your 'purism'."

This is followed by the well-known quote from Lenin's 'Left-Wing Communism' to the effect that Communists should take advantage of the contradictions between the "Churchills and the Lloyd Georges...on the one hand" and the "Hendersons and Lloyd Georges on the other" in order to expose the nature of the social-democratic leaders to the masses. JB really will have to do better than this if he wants to SUPPORT rather than DESTROY his arguments. Does he really imagine that the tactical arguments of Lenin in 1920, designed to demonstrate to the masses the bourgeois nature of the Labour leaders, are relevant to the current struggle inside the bourgeoisie on nationalisation? Apart from the fact that the masses can already see from their own direct experience that nationalisation means redundancies, speed-ups, low wages etc., and do not need further experience of nationalisation to confirm it, there is the MAIN point that the Labour Party is the MAIN SOCIAL PROP OF STATE-CAPITALISM. JB will have to stop equivocating - does he really believe his own statement that: "...British imperialism is certain to go to the wall...without massive state intervention?".

AGAINST BARGAINING OVER PRINCIPLES, CONCESSIONS ON THEORY

Considerable attention has been paid in this article to right opportunism in general and in the CFB in particular. This is because particularly in the early-stages of party-building ideological struggle against all manifestations of bourgeois and petit-bourgeois ideology is essential to guard against opportunist degeneration.

The Communist movement in Britain is in what Lenin termed a "period of theoretical chaos". It is therefore crucial that no bargaining over principles, no concessions on matters of theory are made to the opportunists. This is why it is the most gross right opportunism to say as JB does that:

"The demand for nationalisation as formulated by the conference decisions of the Labour Party present Marxist-Leninists with favourable opportunities in waging the battle against concepts of social-democracy, and for Communist ideas and policies among the best organised and most class-conscious workers."

Other comrades, active in the mass struggles of the industrial proletariat, advocate a similar line on the basis that nationalisation is supported by significant numbers of advanced workers. These comrades, and JB, are making opportunist errors because they are making unprincipled compromises on matters of crucial theoretical importance and are objectively uniting with social-democracy and its allies in the revisionist and Trotskyist movements. (32).

The principal reason that those workers who support nationalisation do so is because of the effect of decades of indoctrination with social-democratic ideology. How do those comrades who want to unite with these workers on this basis imagine that we can break the stranglehold of reformism if we make theoretical concessions to social-democracy? These comrades' rebellion on their knees against social-democracy is a teacher by negative example of how NOT to fight it. Away with unprincipled compromises! Bold and uncompromising ideological struggle for the conviction that nationalisation is state-capitalism is the principal task now! As Lenin said:

"Nothing is more important than to rally ALL Marxists who have realised the profundity of the crisis and the necessity of combatting it, for the purpose of defending the theoretical foundations of Marxism and its basic propositions, which are being distorted from diametrically opposite sides by the spread of the bourgeois influence to the various 'fellow-travellers' of Marxism." (33).

TAILISM

It is necessary to combat the idea, among those comrades who support nationalisation, that they are uniting with the

(32) See Notes. 6.

(33) Lenin - 'Certain Features of the Historical Development of Marxism'.

advanced workers. They are not! They are, as we have pointed out, uniting with the time-serving bureaucratic hacks of the official labour movement, with the LABOUR ARISTOCRACY, the main agents of reformist ideology in the labour movement. In the absence of Marxist-Leninist leadership the mass of the workers may well go along with these hacks: but the demands do not arise spontaneously from the working class - they arise on the contrary out of the bourgeois ideology of the official labour movement.

The mass of workers who support these demands usually do so quite unenthusiastically and because they can see no alternative. Yet these workers CAN see what little difference nationalisation makes. In not giving them leadership on this question, by not applying the method of "from the masses, to the masses", and instead uniting with social-democracy, those comrades who support nationalisation are guilty of TAILISM:

"Tailism in any type of work is also wrong, because in falling below the level of political consciousness of the masses and violating the principles of leading the masses forward it reflects the disease of dilatoriness. Our comrades must not assume that the masses have no understanding of what they themselves do not yet understand. It often happens that the masses outstrip us and are eager to advance a step when our comrades are still tailing behind certain backward elements, for instead of acting as leaders of the masses such comrades reflect the views of those backward elements and MORE-OVER MISTAKE THEM FOR THOSE OF THE BROAD MASSES." (34). (Our emphasis).

In struggling against tailism we are also struggling for a recognition that our fight against some of our comrades "tailing behind certain backward elements" is a fight to understand what stage of party-building we are at. There are two separate historical tasks in party-building. In 'Left-Wing Communism' Lenin pointed out that the first historical task is that of "winning over the class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat to Soviet power and the dictatorship of the working class" a task which "could not be accomplished without a complete victory over opportunism...". The second historical task "consists in being able to lead the MASSES to the new position that can ensure the victory of the vanguard in the revolution.". Clearly we are still very much at the first historical stage: that of winning over the 'Class-conscious vanguard'. That is why ideological struggle for proletarian po-

(34) Mao - 'On Coalition Government'.

licies and against the opportunists in order to win over the vanguard to a correct position, in this case that nationalisation is state-capitalism, is our PRINCIPAL task now. (35).

MARXISM-LENINISM WILL WIN!

"What is a true bastion of iron? It is the masses, the millions upon millions of people who genuinely support the revolution. That is the real iron bastion which it is impossible, for any force on earth to smash." (36).

Marxism-Leninism is weak in Britain today. We are only just emerging from the stage of anti-revisionism and entering the stage of party-building. We have learnt many lessons in past struggles - as we apply those lessons in party-building the CFB(M-L) will participate in the struggle to build a revolutionary party which will sweep away the opportunists who seek to divert the class struggle into the blind-alley of reformism and state capitalism, and, basing itself on the "bastion of iron", recognising that "the masses have a potentially inexhaustible enthusiasm for socialism"(Mao), will lead the masses in overthrowing the state machine and in SOCIALISING, not nationalising, the means of production.

(35) See Notes. 7.

(36) Mao - 'Be Concerned With the Well-being of the Masses, Pay attention to Methods of Work'.

NOTES

- (1) The extent to which British imperialism has been outstripped by the other imperialist powers is simply illustrated by the following tables.

A) Gross Domestic Product (base of 100 in 1961).

	<u>1961</u>	<u>1974</u>
Japan	100	325
USA	100	185
Germany	100	160
UK	100	125

(Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) National Accounts, 1975).

B) Share of World Trade (expressed as %).

	<u>1961</u>	<u>1974</u>
Germany	20%	25%
USA	22%	17.5%
Japan	7.5%	14%
UK	16%	7.5%

(Source: National Institute Economic Review, 1975).

- (2) The profits of manufacturing companies have dramatically fallen in REAL terms over the past decade or so. The following table gives the amount of capital available for investment and dividends after allowance for capital consumption, stock and tax.

<u>1961</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1973</u>
14.5%	13.5%	9.5%	3.5%

Although the method of economic calculation used here is a bourgeois method it does starkly reveal the truth of the Marxist thesis of the falling rate of profit. The general tendency for the rate of profit to fall occurs because of the changing organic composition of capital: as the ratio of constant capital (plant, machinery etc.) to variable capital (labour power) increases so the rate of profit decreases. The increased ratio of dead labour (machines) over living labour (the actual labour power expended in the course of work) inevitably leads to a falling rate of profit as it is the amount of labour expended

in the production of commodities which produces the surplus value expropriated by the bourgeoisie.

It is this process which produces an investment crisis like that which currently is crippling British industry. Capital is invested wherever it can make the maximum profit (see Note 5). In imperialist countries this usually means a shift in investment from domestic industry to investment in colonies and neo-colonies.

British Investment at Home and Abroad.

	<u>1968</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>
Domestic	1425	1514	1359
Abroad	350	744	1350

(Source: Financial Times, 12th Sept. 1974).

- (3) Although the Tory Party is in reality also a party of state monopoly capitalism in that it is the alternative bourgeois party in an imperialist (state monopoly capitalist) country, its close links with the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie makes it difficult for it to carry out extensive nationalisation. The Party is compelled because of its social base to periodically attempt to reverse the tide of nationalisation (e.g. the 'hiving-off' campaigns, such as the last Tory government's selling off of Thomas Cook's, British Rail Hotels and Carlisle state pubs to private enterprise). The realities of economic life in Britain make these attempts futile in contrast with the fact they are COMPELLED to intervene in industry at the same time (e.g. the same government's nationalisation of Rolls-Royce). This fact accounts for the division of the Tory Party into 'interventionist' (Heath, Barber, Carr) and 'monetarist' (Thatcher, Joseph) wings of the party.

The Labour Party is peculiarly suited for the role of expanding state monopoly capitalism. An important element of the party's ideology since its origin has been Fabian bourgeois 'socialism' like that of the Webbs, who saw in state ownership and control a means of rescuing imperialism from its doom. At the same time the social base of the Labour Party in the reformist Labour Aristocracy, and the reformist illusions of the masses generally, give it the mass base it needs to carry out its policies of state capitalism. The split between right and 'left' in the Labour Party is not a split between two wings of social-democrats and 'Marxists' as the bourgeois media would have us believe, but a split between two wings of social-democracy: a pragmatic right wing (Wilson, Healey, Jenkins) who are little different from the 'interventionist' wing of the Tories, and a 'left' wing (Benn, Foot, Heffer) who are ideologically committed to 'socialism', i.e. state capitalism.

- (4) The funds for capital investment in industry provided by the government come from taxation. State capitalism shifts the burden of the capitalist crisis from the bourgeoisie onto the backs of the working people and thus increases their already grievous exploitation and oppression. As Lenin puts it;

"Production becomes social, but appropriation remains private. The social means of production remain the private property of a few. The general framework of formally recognised free competition remains and the yoke of a few monopolists on the rest of the population becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and terrible". (Imperialism-The Highest Stage of Capitalism).

Furthermore the great increase in government spending on investment in capitalist industry should be contrasted with the savage cuts in public expenditure - on schools, hospitals, housing, transport etc.. The misery of the people is increased still further to prop up an odious system, the property of the bourgeoisie.

- (5) In the crisis of imperialism profits cannot be maintained at a level sufficient to maintain the current volume of capital. Furthermore the central dynamic of capitalism is the quest to maximise profits:

"It is said that the average rate of profit might nevertheless be regarded as quite sufficient for capitalist development under modern conditions. That is not true. The average rate of profit is the lowest point of profitability, below which capitalist production become impossible. But it would be absurd to think that, in seizing colonies, subjugating peoples and engineering wars, the magnates of modern monopoly capitalism are striving only to achieve the average rate of profit. No, it is not the average of profit, nor yet a super-profit - which as a rule, represents only a slight addition to the average rate of profit - but recisely the maximum profit that is the motor of monopoly capitalism. (Stalin-'Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR').

- (6) Lenin has strong words to say on the question of uniting with the demands of the opportunists:

"But this is not the point, messrs. the Kautskyites. The point is that at the present time, in the imperialist countries of Europe, YOU ARE FAWNING on the opportunists, who are ALIEN to the proletariat as a class, who are the servants, the agents of the bourgeoisie and the vehicles of its influence, and unless

the labour movement RIDES itself of them, it will remain a BOURGEOIS LABOUR MOVEMENT. Your advocacy of 'unity' with the opportunists... is objectively a defence of the ENSLAVEMENT of the workers by the imperialist bourgeoisie with the aid of its best agents in the Labour movement. The victory of revolutionary Social-Democracy is absolutely inevitable, only it is moving and will move, is proceeding and will proceed, AGAINST you, it will be a victory OVER you. One of the necessary conditions for preparing the proletariat for its victory is a long, stubborn and ruthless struggle against opportunism, reformism, social-chauvinism, and similar bourgeois influences and trends, which are inevitable, since the proletariat is operating in a capitalist environment. If there is no such struggle, if opportunism in the working-class movement is not utterly defeated beforehand, there can be no dictatorship of the proletariat. Bolshevism would not have defeated the bourgeoisie in 1917-19 had it not learnt before that, in 1903-17, to defeat the Mensheviks, i.e., the opportunists, reformists, social-chauvinists, and ruthlessly expell them from the party of the proletarian vanguard." (From 'The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat' (emphases in original)).

The importance of theory to combat 'activism', to strengthen our political line and to SMASH OPPORTUNIST TENDENCIES was emphasised by Lenin at a similar stage of party-building to our own:

"Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This thought cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation with the narrowest forms of practical activity. Yet, for Russian Social-Democrats the importance of theory is enhanced by three more circumstances, which are often forgotten: firstly, by the fact that our party is only in the process of formation, its features are only just becoming outlined, and it is yet far from having settled accounts with other trends of revolutionary thought, which threaten to divert the movement from the correct path. On the contrary, precisely the very recent past was marked by a revival of non-Social-Democratic revolutionary trends... Under these circumstances, what at first sight appears to be an 'unimportant' mistake may lead to the most deplorable consequences, and only shortsighted people can consider

FACTIONAL DISPUTES AND A STRICT DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN SHADES SUPERFLUOUS. The fate of Russian Social Democracy for many, many years to come may depend on the strengthening of one or other 'shade'." ('What is To Be Done' (our emphasis)).

In struggling for this truth we are struggling not only against right opportunism generally, but also an objectively right opportunist tendency in the Marxist-Leninist movement: a tendency which worships mass work ("the narrowest forms of practical activity") to the detriment of theory. Again to quote Lenin:

"Those who have the slightest acquaintance with our movement cannot but see that the wide spread of Marxism was accompanied by a certain lowering of the theoretical level. Quite a number of people with very little, and even a total lack of theoretical training joined the movement... We can judge from that how tactless the Rabocheye Dyelo is when, with an air of triumph, it quotes Marx's statement: 'Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes.' To repeat these words in a period of theoretical chaos is like wishing mourners at a funeral 'many happy returns of the day'. Moreover these words of Marx are taken from his letter on the Gotha programme, in which he SHARPLY CONDEMNS eclecticism in the formulation of principles: if you must unite, Marx wrote to the party leaders, then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but do not allow any bargaining over principles, do not make 'concessions' in questions of theory. This was Marx's idea, and yet there are those among us who strive - in his name - to belittle the significance of theory! (What Is To Be Done' (emphasis in original)).

- (7) Who are the 'class-conscious vanguard'? Marxist-Leninists understand that the advanced workers are not necessarily those to be found most active in the official labour movement. The reformist, revisionist and Trotskyist orientation of the movement of the class struggle around the hacks of the official labour movement must be boldly struggled against. We will go to the masses for support for Marxist-Leninist policies:

"Engels draws a distinction between the bourgeois labour party of the OLD trade unions - the privileged minority - and the "LOWEST mass," the real majority' and he appeals to the latter who are not infected by "bourgeois respectability".

This is the essence of Marxist tactics!...

And it is therefore our duty, if we wish to remain socialists, to go down LOWER and DEEPER, to the real masses. This is the whole meaning and whole purport of the struggle against opportunism. By exposing the fact that the opportunists and social-chauvinists are in reality betraying and selling the interests of the masses, that they are defending the temporary privileges of a minority of the workers, that they are the vehicles of bourgeois ideas and influences, that they are really allies and agents of the bourgeoisie, we teach the masses to realise their true political interests, to fight for Socialism and for the revolution...

The only Marxist line in the world labour movement is to explain to the masses the inevitability and necessity of breaking with opportunism, to educate them for revolution by waging a relentless struggle against opportunism..." ('Imperialism and the Split in the Socialist Movement' (emphasis in original)).

OPPOSE OPPORTUNISM AND TAILISM ON THE QUESTION OF NATIONALISATION

This issue of MLQ carries a policy statement and article on the question of nationalisation. It states clearly the National Committee position that nationalisation is a form of state capitalism, that it should be opposed by Communists, and that support for it clearly goes against the interests of the proletariat. We also publish a minority position. We consider that despite its incorrect line, this article should be published, but that it should be accompanied by a refutation of the minority position, in order to draw firm lines of demarcation, and to continue the struggle to convince the minority of the incorrectness of their view. It is only in this way that a lasting and principled unity will be attained.

The article, by Comrades DJ and DS, states that the National Committee statement is academic and abstract, and that it falls into the errors of subjectivism and sectarianism. We believe these criticisms to be incorrect, and that the criticisms are merely a cover for the rejection of Marxism-Leninism on the part of DJ and DS. This rejection of Marxism-Leninism leads DJ and DS into a right opportunist position on Nationalisation, one which leads them to advocate support for this policy of the bourgeoisie and to defend the policies of the revisionists and Trotskyists on this question.

Strategy and Tactics.

What is the main line of attack of DJ and DS? On the first page of their article they advance the view that the NC position is 'academic in its approach' precisely because the statement does not present a detailed consideration of the tactics applicable in every possible situation where nationalisation might be raised as a demand. In doing this they begin not with a strategic line, but with the fact that demands for nationalisation are spreading and that the immediate task is to transform these into 'mass campaigns'. They then set about deciding the tactics for this campaign, without pausing to consider the general principles behind their tactics.

This is a clear example of the empiricist error of elevating tactics above strategy. The prime thing for a Communist organisation is policy, which is the general guide to our work. Without this we will be like the revolutionaries attacked by Mao, 'blind, half-baked, muddle headed revolutionaries' who 'lose our bearings and vacillate now to the left and now to the right...' (Red Book p.7.)

The NC Statement is consequently correct to stress the primacy of attacking the principle of nationalisation, to point out what its essence is, and to attack the idea that we should argue for it now, and attack it later, when the workers are 'ready' for this type of exposure politics. In

popularising the line, and in fighting for it in our work we will indeed show 'that there is no material benefit for workers in the existing nationalised industries...' as DJ and DS demand that we do. (We will not however show that returning nationalised industries to private ownership will strengthen the working class, anymore than the early socialists, in attacking capitalism should have argued for a return to feudalism.) But the aim of the NC in fighting for its policies will not be to tail behind the revisionists and Trotskyists in their campaigns for nationalisation, and will not be to mislead the class. The aim will be to boldly fight for Marxism-Leninism in the workers movement in the attempt to build the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party - an aim which DJ and DS reject completely.

Spontaneism and Tailism of DJ and DS.

Readers of the article by DJ and DS will see, from their quotations that these comrades have read Lenin's 'What Is To Be Done?' It is also clear from their article that they have not drawn the correct lessons from it. According to DJ and DS, our present task is to '...show how in the present crisis the demands and activities of the working class can be utilised to build a movement armed with a Marxist-Leninist perspective.' But in the present situation, where reformism dominates the demands of the working class, this would be to 'bow down before spontaneity' at a time when the crucial task is to break from this ideology, to win the vanguard of the working class to Communist politics. The slogans of the National Committee reflect this task.

In opposition to this DJ and DS argue that we should support '...an intensification of the type of activities that the working class have undertaken ever since its creation...' and that we should rely on the fact that 'class struggle is a fact of everyday life...'. They argue this at a point where state aid to Chrysler has meant thousands of redundancies, where British Steel announces thousands of job cuts, and where the class collaborationist policies of the TUC over wages have been foisted on the working class. How can DJ and DS equate 'class struggle' with Communist consciousness in this situation? As Lenin argued discussing the strikes of the Russian workers in the 1890's:-

"Taken by themselves, these strikes were simply trade union struggles, not yet Social Democratic (i.e. Communist -Editor) struggles. They marked the awakening antagonisms between workers and employers; but the workers were not, and could not be, conscious of the irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system..." (Lenin, What Is To Be Done? Selected Works, Vol. One, p.143.)

Lenin is very clear on what the nature of spontaneous class struggle is. As he argues 'The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own

efforts, 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.' (ibid.)

Thus the lesson of 'What Is To Be Done?' is surely that the 'type of activities undertaken by the working class since its creation' is the trade union struggle. It is only with the leadership of a Communist Party that real proletarian consciousness will develop. This is the lesson of the past 100 years of the Communist Movement, the lesson which the National Committee takes as the basis for its policy, and which DJ and DS reject completely. In their rejection of our 'partisan commitment to Marxism-Leninist' about which they are so scathing DJ and DS repeat exactly the Economist position attacked by Lenin. Like the Economists, DJ and DS 'worship the spontaneity of the working class movement', and actively 'belittle the role of "the conscious element" which means as Lenin showed, that they are 'strengthening the influence of bourgeois ideology upon the workers'.

"All those who talk about 'overrating the importance of ideology' about exaggerating the role of the conscious element, etc., imagine that the labour movement pure and simple can elaborate, and will elaborate, an independent ideology for itself, if only the workers "wrest their fate from the hands of the leaders". But this is a profound mistake". (Lenin, ibid, p. 149)

Yes Comrades, like Lenin we do have a 'partisan commitment to Marxism-Leninism' of which you are so disdainful, we do stress the conscious element, the centrality of Marxist-Leninist politics and ideology which you argue will 'only increase the confusion existing in the movement' ! Correct policies will only be developed on the basis of such a commitment. They will not be developed by rejecting the science of Marxism-Leninism and adopting the policies of the Revisionists and reformists.

What do these comrades propose to do, after they have rejected principles? They argue that they will 'convert trade union politics into Communist political struggles'. They will do this by educating the workers, and they will be assisted in this because:-

"The economic struggles for jobs and conditions are increasingly becoming an overt expression of political struggle as more and more industry is showing, under its criteria of maximisation of profit, its inability to provide jobs or the goods necessary to maintain living standards."

Again, DJ and DS, in spite of quoting from 'What Is To Be Done?' never raise the question of the class character of these political struggles. Are these struggles Communist political struggles, or the bourgeois working class politics

of trade unionism? Clearly, the latter. They are under the leadership of reformist trade union officials, and in the case of Chrysler this has had its inevitable result - the absence of policies to defeat the bourgeoisie. What DJ and DS really propose, undercover of high sounding phrases, is merely to 'lend the economic struggle a political character' - a view which Lenin attacked as an attempt to 'degrade Social Democratic (Communist) politics to the level of trade union politics'.

This tailist and economist line is nowhere clearer when DJ and DS begin to discuss what they mean by the 'flashes of political consciousness' which they mention so frequently. The content of these 'flashes' is:-

"...the understanding of the superiority of a planned centrally directed industry over that where competition and anarchy reign supreme".

This we are told is 'in opposition to the whole system of determining production by market forces...' But what DJ and DS fail to see is that the firmest struggle of recent months has not been by workers demanding nationalisation, but has been by steel workers opposing redundancies within a nationalised industry, i.e. a struggle against a 'planned and centrally directed industry'. The workers of Port Talbot are well aware that 'planned and centrally directed' redundancies are no more pleasant than any other redundancies. The example of Steel, Coal and the railways also make clear that the laws of capitalism still operate in a state owned industry, as long as that state is a capitalist and not a workers state.

This error is further proof that DJ and DS reject Marxist-Leninist analysis of nationalisation. They use vague phrases about 'state monopoly capitalism having many of the ingredients of a Socialist economy' - ingredients such as the 'planned, centrally directed use of resources'. They quote Engels in their support. But again this is another example of the opportunism of DJ and DS. They abstract the arguments of Engels which agree with their line, and ignore the bulk of this argument which opposes it. Engels argues clearly in 'Anti-Duhring' that we are not centrally concerned with 'ingredients', or with 'formal means' but with the essential features of production relations:-

"The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of the productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage workers-proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head.

But, brought to a head, it topples over. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution." (Anti -Duhring, p.330-331.)

Private ownership is then a formal matter, capitalist relations remain under a system of collective capitalist ownership as the NC statement clearly states.

The 'Practical DJ and DS, and the 'Dogmatic' National Committee.

What then are the tactics advocated by DJ and DS on the basis of the errors identified above? In fact there is no clear strategic line argued for at all. They propose a fight for jobs and conditions but argue that such a fight is conditional on being linked with the demand for nationalisation. They thus refuse to support the demand for the right to work - we should 'gel our perspective with the positive demands of the workers'. We should also 'initiate the investigation and publicity for schemes of production that could utilise the plant and skills of the industry for the benefit of the people as opposed to the industry'. We are thus asked to tail behind social democracy and not to boldly combat it, we should talk about production for the people before the proletariat has state power. In doing this, we should 'associate ourselves with reformists of all shades who demand nationalisation'. In their desire to be 'practical' (a word they use many times) DJ and DS would use the 'transitional demand' the Trotskyist device by which unobtainable demands are advanced. But this can only demoralise the workers, which is why Marxist-Leninists reject the whole conception which lies behind this style of work.

The essence of DJ and DS tactics are that we campaign, along side reformists, revisionists and Trotskyists for nationalisation thereby actively assisting the bourgeoisie, strengthening social democratic illusions. The result of their desire to be 'practical' is this sort of right opportunism, which clearly leads them to a revisionist position on nationalisation.

The NC statement on the other hand rejects this type of politics completely. It concretely analyses the essence of nationalisation, and places the task of boldly combatting it on the agenda. Furthermore, it situates this campaign and our slogans in the context of the struggle to build the party, and the struggle for Communist ideology and politics, against revisionism, reformism and Trotskyism. It is for these reasons that the National Committee statement is correct, and the line advocated by DJ and DS should be rejected.

NATIONALISATION.

The C.F.B. (M.L.) National Committee policy statement on nationalisation of 26.10.75 is diverting in its presentation, confusing in its conclusions and academic in its analysis. Most importantly it fails completely in the test of its ability to provide a guide for action to revolutionaries and the working class that they strive to lead in the ideological, political and organisational struggle to overthrow capitalism.

It is hoped that any policy statements of the C.F.B. will be critically examined by "reformists, revisionists and Trotskyists"; by definition it is almost inevitable that people who currently operate under these headings are the ones whom we aim to convince of the correctness of the analysis and action of Marxism-Leninism. That aim is hampered by the type of presentation used by the NC in its policy statement on Nationalisation. Unsubstantiated statements like "and oppose the reformist policies of Labour's 'hangers on' - the revisionists and Trotskyists - who support British capitalism" do nothing to improve the central theme of the line being presented and can only provide ammunition to the enemies of Marxism-Leninism. The whole policy statement is riddled with similar statements, and consequently will direct discussion into a variety of areas but the central one of Nationalisation. The presentation could also lead readers to totally discard it and the organisation who produced it as being an irrelevance.

ACADEMIC APPROACH.

The confusion in the conclusions of the statement is best illustrated by quoting from it.

"Any support for specific acts of Nationalisation can only arise out of concrete investigation and must be secondary to our principal task of ideological and political opposition to bourgeois socialism."

Does that mean that on occasions 'concrete investigation' will be contrary to the ideological and political position of the National Committee? As critics of the NC line we would claim, and hope to show, that indeed is the case. For the NC itself to make that admission when submitting its line is to say the least confusing. Similarly confusion is apparent when the statement says: "It is irrelevant to the real interests of the working people of Britain whether profits are in private or state hands." Is the NC trying to say that on occasions "concrete investigation" will show that there will be instances when the question of whether profits are in private or state hands is relevant to the British working class? If

the committee does consider that on occasions it has a relevance for the class, and presumably on these specific occasions the committee would support the call for Nationalisation, then they should say so and give examples of where they consider this support should be given. If the NC considers that there could be no occasion on which they could support Nationalisation - as the slogans they advance imply - then they should say that and not confuse things by such statements as:-

"We must differentiate between the General policy of Nationalisation and Specific acts of Nationalisation."

One of the results of the academicism of the analysis is shown in its confusion. It talks of concrete investigation and completely fails to apply it either in ascertaining the political basis for the demands for Nationalisation that exist in the working class, or in establishing the economic and political criterion that would exist in those specific acts of Nationalisation that the NC could support. That however is only one of the errors due to the academic approach. The whole statement fails to relate to the problems of the working class because it fails to examine in concrete terms the political implications of the struggles within the working class movement based upon the history of the demands for Nationalisation, the material reasons for the support that exists, and the contradictions that the demands create in the ranks of the ruling class. The statement of the NC appears to be based solely on the premise that all campaigns that do not have as its central theme the smashing of the Bourgeois state are of no consequence to the working class and are objectively the tools of the bourgeoisie. We say that it appears to be the premise because the diversionary method and confusing statements make it difficult to deduce the concrete reasons that the concluding slogans are based on. If we are correct in this assumption then it is necessary that the NC demonstrates concretely that there is no material benefit for workers in the existing nationalised industries and that any extension of nationalisation can lead only in one direction - that is the greater exploitation of the working class and the consolidation of the strength of the Bourgeoisie. Within this it is therefore incumbent on the NC to show that the working class would be strengthened and the bourgeoisie weakened if the already nationalised industries were returned to private ownership. The academic approach of the 'policy statement' is also illustrated in its failure to recognise the inter-relationship between campaigns for nationalisation and specific demands for jobs and conditions; it fails to take into account or understand the material basis for the support for nationalisation in the ranks of the working class movement. Marxism-Leninism is not an abstract theory that attempts to impose a dogma on all situations. It is a guide to action based on a dialectical method of historical and materialist understanding.

As a guide to action the policy statement fails completely. Because of its own inability to recognise the basis for the support that exists for nationalisation and consequently its failure to examine that basis, the N.C. is totally unable in its statement to show how in the present crisis the demands and activities of the working class can be utilised to build a movement armed with a Marxist-Leninist perspective capable of taking on and defeating capitalism in its entirety. The only conclusion that the N.C. can draw is that the working class must not "beg the Bourgeoisie to save their jobs" but must increase their militancy. What does the statement say as a way forward for the class. "Not nationalisation but the right to work! Opposition to the sack based on factory occupations, resistance to redundancies and short time working, solidarity strikes etc." Leaving aside the underlying arrogance of the equating of working class campaigns with begging from the Bourgeoisie, we can see that the only direction that the N.C. can give is to call for an intensification of the type of activities that the working class have undertaken ever since its creation. Class struggle is a fact of class divided life. Militancy is a necessary ingredient in that class struggle and an ingredient frequently displayed by the working class of the whole capitalist world. Is the National Committee claiming that the lack of revolutionary advance in Britain is due only to lack of militancy? The statement says that the development of that militancy will help the working class develop. "With Marxist-Leninist leadership, a consciousness of the power that they have, will help them to develop the independent, revolutionary fighting spirit needed for the eventual overthrow of the capitalist system." Nowhere in the N.C. statement is this essential ingredient of 'Marxist-Leninist leadership' described nor is it explained how it is to be established in the struggles surrounding the issue of nationalisation. A partisan commitment to Marxism-Leninism, parodied with a presentation put forward without analysis and with no concrete examination of the relevant issues will not achieve leadership for the revolutionary forces, but will only increase the confusion existing in the movement and multiply the sacrifices to be made by the class in the struggle to overthrow capitalism.

"The asks of the Communists however are not exhausted by political agitation on the economic field; their task is to convert trade union politics into the Communist political consciousness which gleam in the minds of the workers during their economic struggle for the purpose of raising them to the level of Communist political consciousness." (1)

(1) Lenin - 'What Is To Be Done?' (Though in the original text Lenin uses the term 'Social Democratic' - in 1975 it is more politically accurate to use the word Communist).

NATURE OF THE STATE AND QUESTIONS OF OWNERSHIP.

In the current situation of capitalism's economic crisis and its developing breakdown of political institutions, a fundamental aspect of the work of Marxist-Leninists is the development in the working class movement of an understanding of the composition, the purpose and role of the whole bourgeois state apparatus. The present debate and demands surrounding the issues of nationalisation present us with an arena where the nature of the state can be demonstrated in practical terms and where the necessity of, and methods needed for the overthrow of that state can be shown. However that task will not be fulfilled if, as the N.C. statement advocates, we restrict our activities to 'touch line shouting' and do not immerse ourselves in the movement to the extent of discovering the aspects of the demands that are positive in that they reflect a material desire on the part of the working class for concrete changes in the running of industry that will benefit them in conditions of work and job security. We will be an irrelevance in these struggles if we work from the premise that the movement will arrive at an evaluation of the state common to our own spontaneously, and without the experience of struggle for demands that show in practice the correctness of Lenin's 'State and Revolution'.

The economic struggles for jobs and conditions are increasingly becoming an overt expression of political struggle as more and more industry is showing under its criteria of maximisation of profit, its inability to provide jobs or the goods necessary to maintain living standards. In this situation the demand for nationalisation is an expression of the rejection of the private ownership of the means of production and in that sense is indeed "a flash of political consciousness gleaming in the eye of workers." The N.C. should recognise that "flash of consciousness" and not relegate it to something of no consequence as it does when it says "ownership is a formal question, which can take many forms." Another "flash of political consciousness" included in the campaign for nationalisation is the understanding of the superiority of a planned centrally directed industry over that where competition and anarchy reigns supreme. That aspect is one that the N.C. should attempt to utilise and maximise into one of opposition to the whole system of determining production by market forces, and not ignore, as it does in its policy statement. Nowhere does the N.C. recognise the inevitability of the development of Capitalism into monopoly capitalism and state monopoly capitalism, and neither does the recognition emerge that state monopoly capitalism has many of the ingredients of a Socialist economy, i.e. the planned centrally directed use of resources.

"State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but it contains within itself the formal means, the key to the solution." (2)

(2) Engels - 'Anti-Duhring'.

The flash of political consciousness that gleams in the eye of the N.C. when it rejects "the equation of nationalisation with socialism, the description of the Labour Party as a working class party and the demand for nationalisation as a means of making inroads into the capitalist state", unfortunately seems to have blinded them to the positive aspects of the campaign for nationalisations amongst the working class movement and to the contradictions that are demonstrated in a practical way in the ranks of the ruling class, and their political legislators at Westminster. This point can best be illustrated by examination of industries that are at the moment the focus of attention of debate in the broad working class movement and are the subject of state financial aid either by direct nationalisation or through the auspices of the National Enterprise Board (N.E.B.) under the guidance of Sir Don Ryder.

AN EXAMPLE - THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY.

The proposals of the Labour Government for the nationalisation of the aircraft industry are an excellent example of how we can co-ordinate the positive aspects of the demands of aircraft workers with a campaign to show the class nature of the state and at the same time expose the Labour Government for not only being an arm of Monopoly Capital but also as an enemy of the many working class people who worked for its return and fought through the Labour Party machine for the adoption of policies consistent with the demands of the aircraft workers.

The Government plans for the aircraft industry only include the nationalisation of three firms. Hawker Siddeley, British Aircraft Corporation and Scottish Aviation. The other sectors such as Westland Helicopters, Rolls Royce, Dunlop Aviation, Lucas Aero Space, etc. are omitted, as are all the sub-contractors and suppliers of the industry. It is easily demonstrated that the proposals are irrational when judged against the criteria of a planned centrally directed industry, and also that within the proposals is no challenge to the private ownership of large profitable sections, though undoubtedly they will continue to reap the benefits of the research and development costs borne by the state. It is also common knowledge in the industry that plans are being developed for its re-organisation and rationalisation that will result in massive attacks upon jobs. Along with this the 'authorities' are hoping to erect 'worker participation' schemes to better facilitate their plans.

In this situation it is objectively simple for Communists to demonstrate the class character and control of the state and also to use the fertile ground provided by the Government proposals, to develop an industry-wide movement geared to fight for jobs and conditions. In the concrete conditions of the industry we have to advance slogans and initiate campaigns for its complete nationalisation, to work for a grass roots organisation committed to use its industrial strength against any sackings and attacks on working conditions. Also for us to initiate the investigation and publicity for schemes of pro-

duction that could utilise the plant and skills of the industry for the benefit of the people as opposed to that of the monopoly capitalist state. In doing this we will be able to gel our perspective with the positive demands of the workers and begin to build the type of understanding and movement required to overthrow capitalism and its state.

The Labour Party captures, whenever it can, the feelings of many of the working class, and twists them in the interests of the bourgeoisie. For example, take the slogan "Public accountability for public money". They have used this demand to try and foist on the working class schemes of class collaboration under the guise of 'worker participation' and 'industrial democracy'. We must do the opposite.

"The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class, but in the movement of the present they also represent and take care of the future of that movement." (3)

Similarly if we look at the motor car industry we can recognise the positive aspects of the demand that the state provides security of jobs. This demand is not one of "begging the bourgeoisie" for jobs as portrayed by the N.C. but one of asserting that the class that provides all the wealth of society has the right to demand of that society the right to work. In our support of that aspect of the campaign we can easily demonstrate in a very practical way that the state is not a neutral overseer of the affairs between the employer and employed, but is the tool of the whole employing class. Also in the motor car industry (as indeed in aircraft, ship-building, oil docks, etc.) is the call for nationalisation without compensation. When this is associated with the whole industry the opportunities for advance in working class consciousness and organisation, and the intensification of contradictions in the ruling class are enormous. This industry with its sub-contractors and suppliers, with its overseas investments and its American penetration here in Britain employs over a million workers. The call for complete nationalisation without compensation directs the campaign at large areas of finance capital and at U.S. Imperialism's holdings in Britain. It is an essential part of the job of Marxist-Leninists to do the investigation to provide the facts and demonstrate the size of the task that such a campaign sets itself. In such a situation Communists cannot stand aside and shout 'Socialism' from the side lines, but they have to listen to the demands of the class, recognise the material conditions from which the demands have emerged and attempt to demonstrate that in fighting for jobs, against speed ups and for higher wages and by linking these demands to 'nationalisation without compensation' the working class are placing demands on Monopoly Capital and its state that it cannot provide. In this way we begin to play a part in the recognition by the working class that class struggle alone, albeit waged with great militancy and courage, is not sufficient to bring into being the conditions of work and the richness of life for which the ambitions

of the class sparked off the very struggles in which they are engaged. Immersed in these struggles in the way described, we can help to extend class struggle into the arena of the recognition that it is the overall control of the employer that has to be defeated. It is the state machine that has to be smashed.

EXPOSING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

Again the demands for the nationalisation of the oil industry included in the Labour Party manifesto have the positive aspects already mentioned in other industries and also allows us to deepen the exposure of Social Democracy in office by contrasting the Manifesto with the proposals of the Wilson Government for 51% control with massive compensation to the multi-nationals. If we are to do this successfully we need to associate ourselves with those in the Trade Unions and Labour Party who fought for the inclusion of the demand in the programme of the Labour Government. This shows us as being on their side in the struggle for democracy in the Labour movement and with them in their recognition that a Socialist Britain will need a centrally controlled and co-ordinated power industry. In that association we can demonstrate in a way and in an arena that ensures we are listened to, that the struggle for workers power cannot be waged by legislation, no matter how progressive, at Westminster, in the Council House, Scottish or Welsh Assemblies, or by reliance on Social Democratic methods and programmes no matter how well intentioned. We can show in practical campaigns and by the analysis we draw from them, that to achieve our mutually desired goal - a Socialist Britain - the working class will have to take control of its own industry with its own methods and will have to run it with its own criteria and institutions if employment, conditions and social usefulness are to be extended.

"Communists must never separate themselves from the majority of the people or neglect them by leading only a few progressive contingents in an isolated and rash advance, but must take care to forge close links between the progressive elements and the broad masses. This is what is meant by thinking in terms of the majority." (4)

NEED FOR INVESTIGATION OF EXISTING NATIONALISED INDUSTRY.

No one in the C.F.B. would argue that nationalisation is a step towards socialism or that extensive nationalisation would mean that Socialism had arrived. Nevertheless it is unfortunate that the N.C. neglected to demonstrate this in a concrete manner by an examination, however brief, of the situation in the already nationalised industries. An examination along these lines strengthens tremendously the contention that programmes advanced by reformists and revisionists no matter how radical in content, remain mere words unless they are associated with the need for independent working class struggle directed against the centre of capitalist power - the bourgeois state. The experiences of the nationalised industries show this aspect of the politics of the C.F.B. as clearly as any. Massive compensation paid to the former owners; the supply of cheap energy and other facilities to private manufacturing

(4) Mao - 'Selected Works' Vol. II, p. 201.

industry, the salaries and conditions enjoyed by Chairmen and 'industrial relations men' of the industries compared to the other employees, the output per man figures and the massive redundancies in rail, coal, steel, electricity supply, the way that successive governments have used nationalised industries as wage policy proving grounds etc. etc. These and numerous other examples (and every industry has its own particular story to tell) demonstrate in a practical way that the class character of an industry is determined by the class that owns and runs the state. The reasons why the various representatives of the bourgeoisie have found it necessary to nationalise certain industries are correctly identified in the opening few sentences of the N.C. resolution. Capital will invest only where it can achieve a maximum return, and British manufacturing industry has practically ceased to attract any finance capital. Similarly research and development costs that in modern industry are increasingly expensive but necessary for survival, do not attract capital because the time scale as well as the rate of profit is too slow. The state is forced to intervene in certain industries and provides the necessary funds for the continuation of those industries due to the overall needs of the state as opposed to the particular aims of individual sections of capital.

Details of already nationalised industries are essential tools for Marxist-Leninists in the struggle to build a movement, based on the current state and consciousness of the working class, capable of overthrowing capitalism. It is necessary for us, in our campaigns in the motor and aircraft industries etc. to build support within the current campaigns for nationalisation, for multi-industry, multi-union organisation to oppose sackings, speed ups and wage cuts, to be able to show concretely the effects of state ownership on workers who saw nationalisation as an end in itself. The coal industry is a prime example of this. We have to be capable of explaining how and why for example there were 710,000 miners working for the N.C.B. in 1957, 401,000 in 1967 and 264,000 in 1973; why since 1947 almost 7,000 miners have been killed at work, over 32,000 seriously injured at work and many thousands more have choked to death with pneumoconiosis. (5)

Also we can show that during the period of nationalisation output per man shift has increased from 21.85 cwt. to 42.06 in 1971/72. These facts alone demonstrate the efficiency of nationalisation compared to the old private owners, and at the same time the ruthless disregard for conditions and lives displayed by both. These are the types of facts so necessary for us to have, both to substantiate any analysis and policy statement and at the same time pro-

(5) See evidence of working conditions given to Wilberforce in Hughes and More, "A Special Case? Social Justice and the Miners." Penguin 1972.

vide the basis for a guide to action. If the N.C. continues to deal in abstract formulations as used in its statement on nationalisation then it will finish up talking only to itself.

LEARNING FROM ACTUAL CLASS STRUGGLES.

If Marxist-Leninists are to involve themselves in the struggles of the working class (and if they don't do that there can be no more reason for their existence than there is for the Oxford Union Debating Society) they must acquaint themselves with the specific problems of the class and an ability to recognise all aspects of a question. A ready made formula, applied dogmatically to any situation is not the method of that living science Marxism-Leninism. Unfortunately the N.C. policy statement on nationalisation has all the marks of such a dogmatic approach.

The future for the working class movement in Britain however is not so bleak as the plea for militancy of the N.C. would indicate. There have been tremendous struggles by the working class for the right to work, to the extent that today not even the most economistic or reformist Trade Union Official can openly side with the employer on a redundancy issue. This level of consciousness in the class was first demonstrated in the mid 50's in the tremendous struggles of the Midland car workers against the proposed redundancies. Those struggles, for the first time, established the right to work-sharing as opposed to the sack.

The struggles of the French and Italian working class, with the development of 'sit ins' and factory occupations have taught lessons from U.C.S. to Fisher Bendix. The massive demonstration for the Right to Work on November the 26th, against the Labour Government and against the advice of the T.U.C. General Council demonstrated a readiness to fight. All this is not to say that the working class movement is not still gripped with the politics of reformism and gradualism, but it does demonstrate that the conditions for revolutionary advance are emerging if only revolutionaries can find the methods and analyses necessary to aid that advance. Unfortunately the N.C. policy statement does not.

"No political party can possibly lead a great revolutionary movement to victory unless it possesses a revolutionary theory and a knowledge of history and has a profound grasp of the political movement." (6)

D.J. & D.S.

(6) Mao - Selected Works Vol. II, p. 208.

LOWER AND DEEPER INTO THE PROLETARIAT

The purpose of this article is mainly to argue against JB's formulation in MLQ 10 about who the 'advanced workers' are. JB says they are "those elements who still actively identify with the Labour Party and the struggle for democracy, and the implementation of conference decisions, who in fact present the greatest potential for communist ideas because of their experiences and contacts". (p.23). This formulation will be criticised specifically later in the article.

The major error in JB's article - and this is also a criticism of all the articles in the polemic on social democracy - is that it fails completely to come to grips with the fundamental question of what is the material basis of the strength of reformist and social-democratic ideology within the proletariat. This must be clearly identified, before going on to confront the contradictions currently within the working class and before identifying which sections of the working class are the most advanced.

At this time in Britain social democratic ideology must be clearly seen as the major enemy within the proletariat. It is the ideology which constantly attempts to divert the proletariat from its historical task of revolution; it is the ideology which denies the primacy of class contradiction in this society; it is the ideology of the bourgeoisie, and its material basis is the British bourgeoisie's imperialist plunder of other countries. The historical role of imperialism is to alleviate and delay the crisis inherent in capitalism by

- 1) creating new markets for commodities
- 2) creating new opportunities for investment
- 3) providing new cheap raw materials
- 4) providing cheap new sources of labour-power.

For a limited time, this strategy is successful for the capitalists. The conditions are favourable for expansion of industry, increased demand for commodities and, of course, increased profits. Imperialism allows the development and extension of bourgeois democracy within the heartlands of imperialism by the ability to grant economic reforms demanded by workers.

The British working class as a whole began to organise itself into trade unions at the same time as the British bourgeoisie was in its imperialist heyday. The super profits squeezed out of the oppressed countries paid for the improved

living and working conditions of the proletariat at home. Without this, the proletariat could never have been led into a general acceptance of economic reform as the solution to their own exploitation and oppression.

This, then, is the importance of social democratic ideology to the bourgeoisie. Before imperialist expansion capitalism granted reforms to only a relatively small section of skilled workers in order to identify their interests with those of the bourgeoisie; imperialism and its super-profits created the conditions for extending these reforms to the whole of the working class. The obvious reason for the bourgeoisie is that it is always in the interests of a ruling class to rule by consent rather than force, whenever that is possible. Turning the whole of the proletariat into "labour aristocracy" of the world laid the basis for the deep contamination of the class by reformism, and laid the basis for an essentially docile workforce.

In recent years, because of the unrelenting struggles of the people of the world against imperialist domination, the capitalist crisis has become more acute. But now there are few, - if any - opportunities for new markets, etc. So the crisis is pushed onto the backs of the workers in the imperialist countries with the evident results of unemployment, wage freezes, cuts in social spending, etc.

The fact that social democracy can still generally hold its own, even without the material crumbs that have been used in the past to back it up, shows just how pervasive and deep rooted is the ideological corruption of the proletariat. So, many workers agree to "tighten their belts" in the "national interest" - NOT to give up the fight, but to limit the fight to the arena provided and recognised by the bourgeoisie and its state. In doing this the workers are forfeiting their own class interests for those of the bourgeoisie.

What must Marxist-Leninists do?

This analysis is not presented as an argument for not involving in the struggle against social democracy, quite the opposite; it is an argument for combatting social democracy in the correct way and in the correct arenas. JB and DJ fail in their understanding of the arena of struggle. It is not our immediate task to defeat social democracy in the working class, but to win over and rally those who have already rejected many aspects of social democracy to proletarian politics and organisation. This is why we struggle against the 'traitors to the class' in the trade unions, etc.

JB correctly quotes Lenin's advice that we must not refrain from activity "right in the midst of the proletarian masses". DJ correctly says that we cannot "stand aside from the struggle for Trade Union direction". Of course not. It is our duty to bring Marxist-Leninist politics into the every day lives and struggles of the workers, precisely in order

to lead the "struggles against the traitors to the working class". But, objectively, what JB is condoning is working right in the midst - not of the struggles against the traitors - but of the traitors themselves. We must work in Trade Unions to get rank and file support for our exposure of bourgeois ideology. We cannot see our priority as winning over those who still have strong illusions in that ideology, and are actively carrying it out.

Who are the advanced workers?

Advanced workers must be seen as those who are the most politically advanced at this stage - those who are most aware of their exploitation and oppression that they suffer under capitalism, AND who are disillusioned with bourgeois solutions and parties. Without Marxist-Leninist leadership such people can, and will, sink into apathy and cynicism, distrusting all 'politicians'. While in itself this is a bad thing, and can lead to demoralisation and defeatism, the positive aspects of it are dominant - they have to one degree or another seen through the farce of social democracy and its inability to significantly improve their lives. With correct leadership these people will become the real proletarian "activists" and fight defiantly for their class interests against bourgeois ideology.

These are the people who "present the greatest potential for communist ideas". Present levels of activity and militancy are not, in themselves, indications of class consciousness - rather correct practice and proletarian militancy will stem from a correct class stand.

To fight in the midst of the masses

Trade union branch meetings are not the only arenas of class struggle, though they are important. The major arena for our struggle must be the shop floor. We work in the Trade Unions not to be super-militants, but to learn to apply Marxism-Leninism to the concrete situation of the work place. Our main task is to seek out, develop and organise, the most advanced elements. It is precisely the social democratic practice that means that many workers, although having been disillusioned with social democracy, will not attend branch meetings regularly. That is why we must go deeper and deeper into the ranks of the proletariat to organise these elements into communist cells. This is our main task - to draw clear lines of demarcation with social democracy, to take a clear unwavering stand on the side of the proletariat, to carry out the building of communist cells at the place of work. Until that has been achieved, and until these cells have built the respect for our political stand, then emphasis on the seeking of official positions in the trade union meeting is diversionary.

So, while we are in what has been called 'the first historical stage' - that of winning over the vanguard - we will rarely have the political strength and deep roots in the masses to lead mass struggle.

Our current task is primarily propagandist: to spread 'many ideas' on a whole range of questions among the 'few' whose respect we have earned.

In order to develop and win leadership over these workers we must clearly distinguish ourselves from social democratic activists and militants, and from all self-named revolutionaries, who constantly shore up social-democratic ideology by putting demands on it and making deals with it.

At the present stage of a generally low political consciousness within the proletariat we gain credibility for ourselves initially by our style of work, and only later by our general political line.

To win support and respect from the grass root workers, it is important for communists to be A) honest to the workers by 1) not hiding our own politics, 2) not making opportunist errors of failing to tell workers of problems and mistakes in order to be accepted; B) hardworking - to be prepared to be involved in the mundane tasks and not just seek the limelight; C) reliable - to consistently apply Marxism-Leninism and to make our positions clear even when we are in the minority, and not to waver from that position; D) democratic - not to wheel and deal behind people's backs, not to pack meetings or use bureaucratic procedures to determine the outcome of a struggle. This means being prepared by investigation to educate the workers with the facts, and strive to lead them to a correct decision, rather than rely on powers of argument and rhetoric; E) to be real activists - not to do everything 'on behalf of' the workers - but to lead them in their own activity. A Communist activist must always be engaged in trying to build up a cell of activists at work; F) to be a 'tribune of the people' - to make concrete investigation of conditions of the workers, to determine what workers are most concerned about, what the specific issues are at any time. It is through struggles on specific issues that communists must break down any economist tendency and struggle for a political perspective.

It is only by such an open and simple method of work that we can sink roots deep in the proletariat and become trusted by them. It is only by such a method of work that we can expose all the reactionary elements in the proletariat. As DB correctly pointed out (MLQ 10. Vote Labour is Tailism) one of the strongest aspects of social-democratic ideology is the stress it lays on a docile and passive working class. The contradiction between this passivity and the working class spontaneous struggle to defend and improve its material conditions is generally resolved by throwing up 'leaders' from the ranks of the working class to take on themselves the responsibility of struggling against the individual capitalists or the state.

In this way the representatives of the workers become isolated, and coerced into working and thinking entirely within the apparatus of the bourgeois state. This can only serve to increase the pressure of social-democratic ideology

on those 'leaders' and it is not surprising that they often become the most hard-bitten reformists, seeing themselves, and being seen by the workers, as "saviours from on high". Only the mass involvement and activity of the grass roots can withstand such pressure, by teaching the workers the collective power that they have to act independently and in the firm interests of their own class.

SUMMARY

The fruits of imperialism laid the basis for the spreading of social democratic ideology deeply throughout the proletariat: the material benefits to workers masked the bourgeois and repressive aspects of that ideology. With the increasing crisis of imperialism in the world social democracy is being forced more and more openly to take up its stand alongside the overtly bourgeois ideologies, and is in fact dominating them as the only means of alleviating the present crisis. To do this it is becoming more repressive to the workers and relying on the deep rootedness of reformism in the class to maintain good relations and cooperation; even without many of the material bases of the past. Those workers actively fighting for social democracy are the ones most taken in by the ideology and most blind to the erosion of the conditions for workers. We must break through the superficial 'activity' and go deeper into the proletariat to seek out those who have ceased to support a system and a party that they can see does not serve their interests.

At present there is no alternative. Our present main task is to build the alternative ideology and organisation. We must rally and activate these advanced elements around communist-led cells that uncompromisingly oppose all forms of oppression and exploitation, and uncompromisingly expose the main ideological enemy - social democracy - 'right' and 'left'.

J.T.

THE SOVIET UNION IS A SOCIAL IMPERIALIST STATE !

THE SOVIET UNION IS A SOCIAL IMPERIALIST STATE !
Resolution on Social-Imperialism passed at the National
Committee of the CFB (ML)

Resolution on Social-Imperialism passed at the National Committee of the CFB (ML) explicitly declares that the Soviet Union is a social-imperialist state, social-imperialist in words and imperialist in deeds, ruled by a new state-monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie with an imperialist, class character, as has been pointed out by the Communist Party of China.

The passing of this resolution follows continued polemic within the CFB over the nature of the Soviet Union. (1) This polemic followed the resolution of the Second Special General Meeting and was waged against the opportunist and diffuse aspects of that resolution, in order to reach a correct general line. The main weakness of that resolution was that it opportunistically avoided characterising the class nature of the Soviet Union. Instead of speaking of a ruling class, it spoke of 'new ruling forces' instead of 'Soviet Social Imperialism'. It used the term 'Soviet Revisionism' and, instead of attacking the Soviet Union, as a major enemy of the world's peoples, it vacillated over the seriousness of the threat posed by the Soviet Union as a major enemy of the world's peoples it vacillated over the seriousness of the threat posed by it. In making these errors the earlier resolution failed to apply Marxism-Leninism rigourously. This was a serious error in a period when the Soviet Union poses a growing threat, and when revisionism and Trotskyism continue to sow a confusing error ideas amongst the masses concerning the nature of socialism and to reach a clear class position, it is essential to clearly grasp the idea that mass socialist society necessitates that the proletariat holds state power, and is actively engaged in constructing a socialist economy, under the leadership of a genuine Communist Party. If these conditions are not present, then a capitalist restoration is always possible. As Mao has pointed out: 'If these conditions are not present, then a capitalist restoration is always possible.'

As Mao says: 'Socialist society covers a considerably long historical period. In the historical period of socialism, there are still classes and class contradictions and class struggle; there is the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road, and there is the danger of capitalist restoration. We must recognize the protracted and complex nature of this struggle.' (2) We must recognize the protracted and complex nature of this

(1) See MLQ Nos. 8/9 and 10.
(2) Mao "Documents of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution".
(1) See MLQ Nos. 8/9 and 10.
(2) Mao "Documents of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution".

In the Soviet Union the masses play no part in controlling the state apparatus, in the planning of production etc. Planning is a bureaucratic process, which has increasingly restored production for profit as the main production criterion, and has also placed power in the hands of the managers of individual firms, thus losing its power of coordination of the economy as a whole. The most recent Five Year Plan clearly reveals that the Soviet growth rate has fallen over recent years to that achieved by the western capitalist nations. It also reveals a failure to attain its earlier goals of a developed consumer goods sector, since resources are now having to be diverted to the heavy industry sector.

Similarly in agriculture, collective farms are now run by "experts" who are empowered to dispose of farm property and funds, to buy and sell machines, to transfer land, to fix wages and bonuses etc. (3) The overall degeneration of Soviet agriculture is most starkly illustrated by the Soviet grain purchases over the last three years. In 1972 for example the Soviet Union bought 19 million tons of US grain (some of which was subsequently used in a speculative fashion in the world market). (4) "Planning" in Soviet agriculture is so anarchic that production of many crops in the private plots exceeds that of state enterprises. (5)

The fact that much of the farming sector, and all industrial means of production are state owned is no proof that a socialist economy exists in the USSR. Legal ownership by the state exists in western capitalist nations, and grows rapidly as monopoly capitalism grows more moribund, (see the article on Nationalisation in this issue of MLQ). State ownership of the means of production does not change the fact that surplus value is still extracted from the producers of that value. In the Soviet Union it is the state monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie which extracts this surplus, and which holds state power.

Social Imperialism

The class nature of a state determines the external policies followed by that state. Whereas a socialist foreign policy is based on the principles of proletarian internationalism, mutual interest of the trading partners, respect for sovereignty, and non-interference in internal affairs, the external policy of the Soviet Union is based on competition with the USA for world hegemony, the spurious concept of "limited sovereignty" (the cover for the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968), and a trade policy which is every bit as exploitative as that of the western imperialist na-

(3) "Soviet Collective Farms Degenerate", Peking Review, 1975, No. 36, p. 17.

(4) Ibid. p. 17

(5) See MLQ Nos. 8/9, article on Mandel.

tions. Soviet leaders frequently speak of 'launching a tactical offensive', of 'spheres of influence'. A striking illustration of Soviet imperialism is the degree of militarisation of the economy. Lenin long ago outlined the connection between this phenomenon and imperialism:-

"Any other basis under capitalism for the division of spheres of influence, of interests of colonies, etc. than a calculation of the strength of the participants in the division, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc. is inconceivable". (6)

Militarisation is far from the same thing as a militant defence of the revolution achieved through arming the people, and struggling to integrate the army with the people, as happens in China. Militarisation of the economy is primarily based on super-power rivalry, and distorts the economy in its attempts to outdo its rivals.

"According to official Soviet statistics, the Soviet Union's national income is about 66 percent of that of the United States, while actual military spending tops that of the United States by 20 percent. In 1974, 35 percent of the Soviet Government's expenditure was swallowed up by its military machine". (7)

This super-power rivalry is nothing to do with a socialist defence of the revolution. It is clearly a necessary element of social imperialism.

The Soviet military machine, like its western counterparts is used to defend, and extend its external interests. Between 1954 and 1972 total capital exports from the Soviet Union exceeded 13 million US dollars, enabling it to control key industrial sectors in many developing countries. Peking Review recently gave the following figures for Soviet trade:-

"Through capital exports, it (the SU) has looted more than 19 million dollars worth of primary products from the third world. Of these raw sugar accounted for nearly 3,600 million US dollars; cotton, 2,600 million; natural rubber, 2,400 million; coffee, cocoa and tea, 1,600 million; ores 750 million." (8)

In the so-called Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) the Soviet Union controls heavy industry, and mono-

(6) V.I. Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism".

(7) "New Tsars Feverish Arms Expansion and War Preparations", Peking Review, 1975, No. 48, p.9.

(8) Peking Review, 1975, No. 13, p. 19.

polises the raw material supplies and allocations of some Comecon members. For example, over 90 percent of Czechoslovakia's uranium production, 94 percent of Bulgaria's bauxite exports and 49 percent of its lead, and 43 percent of Poland's zinc went to the Soviet Union. (9)

Many more examples of social imperialist policy could be outlined. The blatant interference in the affairs of such nations as India and Angola, seizure of Japanese territories, Soviet policy in the UN in defending the so-called "freedom of the high seas" against the third world demand for 200 mile maritime rights - all these show the out and out imperialist character of Soviet policy. Our task however is to grasp the essence of the nature of the Soviet state - that it is capitalist, and the essential nature of its external policy - that it is social imperialist. A class analysis of the Soviet Union is a crucial plank in the platform of Marxist-Leninist organisations, because it is the duty of Communists in all countries to alert the people to all its enemies. Revisionism and Trotskyism only serve to provide a 'cover' for the counter revolutionary activities of the Soviet Union, and so disarm the working class. It is our duty to expose this false socialism in our propaganda, and to struggle for a genuine policy of proletarian internationalism.

United States to prevent the Soviet government's expenditure was swallowed up by its military machine". (11)

This super-power rivalry is not to be with a socialist bloc of the revolution. It is a rivalry of necessary elements of social imperialism.

The Soviet military machine, like the western powers, has a need to expand its external interests. Between the two super-powers there is a constant rivalry. The Soviet Union is a key industrial power in the world. Her key industries are in the heavy engineering, chemicals, power, and other sectors. Her military machine is the most powerful in the world.

The Soviet Union is a key industrial power in the world. Her key industries are in the heavy engineering, chemicals, power, and other sectors. Her military machine is the most powerful in the world.

(9) Ibid.

THE INTERNATIONALE

"This song has been translated into all European and other languages. In whatever country a class-conscious worker finds himself, wherever fate may cast him, however much he may feel himself a stranger, without language, without friends, far from his native country - he can find himself comrades and friends by the familiar refrain of the Internationale. The workers of all countries have adopted the song of their foremost fighter, the proletarian poet, and have made it the worldwide song of the proletariat".

This is what Lenin wrote in commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Death of Eugene Pottier, the author of the Internationale.

Eugene Pottier composed the militant words of the Internationale only one month after the end of the Paris Commune. It was this historic struggle that Marx called "the dawn of the great social revolution which will liberate mankind from the regime of classes for ever." The words of the song defiantly express the confidence of the working class in the victory of the Communist cause.

As one of a number of right opportunist errors in overreacting to left opportunist errors in other parts of the British Marxist-Leninist movement, the CFB(ML) has failed in the past to make militant use of The Internationale to strengthen our revolutionary proletarian spirit. In accordance with a recent decision of the National Committee of the CFB(ML) this must now be corrected.

The Internationale was composed in French and there is more than one English translation. The National Committee has considered the older translation, which begins, "Arise ye starvelings from your slumbers, arise ye criminals of want!", and the relatively newer translation, which begins, "Arise ye prisoners of starvation, arise ye wretched of the earth!". It has resolved that the second version is the better and more politically correct version, and is therefore the one that the CFB(ML) will sing.

The second version, "Arise ye prisoners of starvation, arise ye wretched of the earth!", uses clearer language and in most cases makes the political points better. Many of

these are fundamental Communist principles.

"A better world's in birth," states clearly the qualitative transformation that will come throughout the world with the victory of Communism. "No more tradition's chains shall bind us," concisely declares that the victory of Communist ideology involves a radical break with all previous bourgeois ideas.

"We have been naught; we shall be all", emphatically states that the historical mission of the working class is to rise from its oppression to overthrow the capitalist order and in the course of liberating itself, to liberate all mankind.

"We want no condescending saviours to rule us from the judgment hall. We workers ask not for their favours." This is a sharp criticism of social democracy, against which we must wage a relentless struggle as part of the struggle for proletarian revolution.

"Let us consult for all," concisely expresses the principle of the mass line, which the Marxist-Leninist Party must use in leading the working class and other progressive strata to victory over capitalism.

"We must ourselves decide our duty. We must decide and do it well." These words remind us of Marx's saying that "the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves". They remind us that we need iron unity of will and resolution to crush and overthrow the forces of the bourgeoisie.

The translation beginning "Arise ye prisoners of starvation, arise ye wretched of the earth," is the one used by the Communist movement in the USA and is the more widely used version among the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain.

In the CFB(ML) and in the British Marxist-Leninist movement we must make good use of the Internationale in learning the historical lessons of the great Paris Commune and in strengthening our militant commitment to the proletarian communist principles so well summed up in Eugene Pottier's words.

The Internationale

1. Arise ye prisoners of starvation. Arise ye wretched of the earth
For justice thunders condemnation. A better world's in birth.
No more tradition's chains shall bind us, Arise ye slaves no
more in thrall.
The earth shall rise on new foundations, We have been naught,
we shall be all.

Refrain:-

'Tis the final conflict, Let each stand in their place.
The Internationale shall be the human race.

2. We want no condescending saviours to rule us from the judgement hall.
We workers ask not for their favours; let us consult for all.
To make the thief disgorge his booty, to free the spirit from its cell.
We must ourselves decide our duty, we must decide and do it well.

3. Toilers from shops and fields united, the union of all who work.
The earth belongs to us the workers, no room for those who shirk.
How many on our flesh have fattened, but if the bloody birds of prey
Shall vanish from the sky some morning, a golden sunlight will stay.

Introduction to National Committee Resolution
ON RELATIONS BETWEEN MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATIONS IN BRITAIN

The principal task in Britain today is to build the Proletarian Marxist-Leninist Communist Party. We must be absolutely clear about this, otherwise we will muddle along blindly and not carry out the task.

The Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain has been split into many small bodies. The chief ideological errors have been sectarianism and liberalism. There are therefore two main principles for building the Party at this stage: to start from the desire for unity, and to fight for principled unity behind correct ideas through active ideological struggle.

The following is a resolution of the National Committee of the CFB(ML) combating empiricism and other opportunist errors in our past relations with other Marxist-Leninist organisations.

We urge other Marxist-Leninist organisations to study this statement carefully, declare their support for it, and put it into practice by combating sectarianism and using active ideological struggle.

If we firmly grasp the principal task, and persevere in doing what is right and correct what is wrong we will inevitably build a victorious Proletarian Marxist-Leninist Communist Party.

A. Principles

1. The British imperialist ruling class is in greater and greater crisis. The British working class is rising in militancy and revolutionary spirit. The principal task in Britain today is to build the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party. Guided by Marxism-Leninism this Party will lead the British working class to overthrow the bourgeoisie in socialist revolution and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

2. The Marxist-Leninist Communist Party will be built in the struggle to apply the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete practice of the British revolution.

3. The key to this task is to handle correctly the contradictions within the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain. The essential thing is to start from the desire for unity behind correct principles. The serious study of Marxism-Leninism and the correct practice of the mass line are also very important.

4. Ideological and political unity behind correct lines and policies will not be won passively, but must be won through struggle, through active ideological struggle against the bourgeois and petty bourgeois ideas which are the prevailing ideas in capitalist society.

5. Contradictions must be handled by bold but not sectarian criticism and self-criticism. The development of comradely links must be assisted by means of exchange of views and comradely assistance.

B. Policy

In the past we have made certain errors of liberalism and sectarianism on this question. As one of a number of Marxist-Leninist organisations in Britain we now state the following policy, in order to take Party building as the principal task in Britain today, a task that must be achieved primarily through active ideological struggle.

1. To fight to win recognition and conviction in relations with other Marxist-Leninist organisations that Party building and the development of the programme are the two most important tasks facing Marxist-Leninists in this country.
2. To oppose liberalism and to draw firm and definite lines of demarcation in order to develop the struggle for unity behind correct principles. To combat errors of left and right opportunism through active ideological struggle.
3. To distinguish between friends and enemies of the working class. To distinguish between opportunists, and those who have made opportunist errors but who can still correct them through struggle.
4. To handle contradictions with other Marxist-Leninist organisations in Britain by criticism and self-criticism. To set an example in bold objective self-criticism.
5. In assessing the work of other organisations to distinguish between achievements and shortcomings and not to overstate or understate either. To combat the sectarianism of overestimating our own strengths and underestimating those of other organisations, and of underestimating our own weaknesses and overestimating those of others. We must assess the strengths of organisations in terms of the correctness of the lines, policies and tactics. We must not think that numbers in themselves are a sign of political strength.
6. To follow as long as necessary in the CFB the principle of self-reliance but not self-sufficiency in Party building.
7. To exchange views and experience with other Marxist-Leninist organisations and be ready to learn from what is correct in their line and practice.

8. To give comradely assistance for the sake of the proletariat and the future proletarian Party.
9. To aim for ideological and political unity on the basis of ideological and political struggle.
10. To take organisational steps appropriate to the degree of ideological and political unity that has been won.

National Committee of the CFB(ML)

CRITICISM OF THE CFB RESOLUTION ON IRELAND

In May 1974 the CFB passed a resolution which analysed present events in Northern Ireland as a National Liberation struggle.

It is not enough in a Marxist-Leninist organisation to win a simple majority and leave it at that. Ideological struggle must go on until complete victory is won behind any policy, so that it can be carried out by all members of the organisation with conviction and militancy.

In the months since the passing of the resolution on Ireland, the London group remains convinced of the weakness of the national liberation line. The resolution has not given an adequate explanation of developments in Ireland and has not given adequate guidance for our work. London's objections have still not been answered.

The present divisions in the CFB on this question should not be allowed to continue without active attempts to overcome the contradictions through principled struggle. We therefore make the following criticisms.

If they are wrong we must be shown where they are wrong and we will make a self criticism. If they are right it will be the supporters of the majority line who will have to make the self criticism.

The CFB resolution is vague and ambiguous on many critical questions. But a strategic resolution just as much as a tactical resolution, must be clear about the line it is putting forward. It is not enough to sound vaguely progressive.

1. Vague Description of the Catholic Movement.

The resolution states correctly that the present day Catholic struggle started "with a movement of democratic civil rights in 1969". It then follows with a vague statement that "it is fighting the British State politically and militarily". This side steps the question of whether this struggle is basically a continuation of the fight for democratic civil rights, or whether it is, as the Provisionals believe, a struggle for national liberation. Such ambiguity is characteristic of the resolution as a whole.

2. Inadequate Analysis of the Protestants.

The resolution was debated on the weekend of the Protestant Ulster Workers strike, and before the results of this strike had become fully apparent. In the light of this strike

we can see that the only sentence in this resolution about the Protestants is inadequate:- "The majority community, consisting of descendants of colonial planters and led by comprador capitalists and landed gentry stands for the British Crown in opposition to the minority."

The phrase 'stands for the British Crown' has no precise meaning. It is also incorrect in this case. One of the aims behind the Ulster Workers Strike was opposition to the "Council of Ireland" and other schemes of the British ruling Class for a peaceful united federal Ireland under its economic control. In this respect the Ulster Workers Strike had progressive features, and cannot be said to 'stand for the British Crown'.

While it is true that most loyalist organisations are reactionary and under the leadership of bourgeois and petty bourgeois chauvinists who fan sectarian feelings against the Catholics it is wrong to condemn the Protestant working class as totally politically reactionary. Yet this is what the resolution implies. Despite their predominately sectarian stand, certain progressive tendencies exist within this class which arise from its basic objective conflict of interests with the British bourgeoisie.

These tendencies can be seen from time to time not only in opposition to schemes such as the Council of Ireland, but also partly in the opposition to internment from some sections of the Protestant working class, in the contacts that have on occasions been made between Protestant and Catholic working class forces, and in the good record of the working class in Northern Ireland fighting the Industrial Relations Act under the last Conservative government even though this act was not enforced in Northern Ireland.

Although these progressive features are at present politically only the secondary aspect of the Protestant working class, they never the less exist and are important. Because they arise from the objective position of the Protestant workers as victims of capitalist exploitation we believe as Marxist-Leninists that these progressive features will persist when the more superficial effects of sectarianism and religious ideology have passed away.

The resolution does not make clear these important points about the Protestant working class.

Its analysis is very different from what appeared in the pages of Struggle less than a month after the General Meeting. In the June issue an editorial article on the Ulster Workers Strike said "the mass of the Protestant working class now confront the British Government and many face the strike-breaking British army". The same article criticised the "T.U.C. who sent General Secretary Len Murray to Belfast to scab on the strike". An editorial article in the July issue of Struggle said "The principal aspect of the Ulster Workers Council Strike is that it signifies a real move to the left amongst large sections of the Protestant working class."

3. The "Colonial" Nature of the Economy of Ireland.

There is similarly an unprincipled vagueness in the resolution about the nature of the Northern Ireland economy.

The supporters of the resolution devoted a substantial proportion of it to economic questions, correctly so in view of the fundamental importance of economics in Marxist analysis. As Lenin said in the "Preliminary Draft of Theses on the National and Colonial Questions", 1920, "The Communist Party must base its policy in the national question too, not on abstract and formal principles, but firstly, on an exact estimate of the specific historical situation and primarily, of the economic condition".

Although at times the resolution makes points about the North and the South separately, on the major points it tries to lump them together. Yet economically the North and the South are not a single closely-integrated economy. Only about 10% of the trade of the Republic is with Northern Ireland. Each case has to be shown separately to suffer a specifically colonial form of exploitation. This has not been done.

The major contradiction in the CFB on the question of Northern Ireland is not about the Republic but about the present position of Northern Ireland. Yet the resolution does not concentrate on and clarify the analysis of the status of Northern Ireland.

It vaguely states that "the relationship between Britain and Ireland has been between exploiter and the exploited for the last 800 years". This does not clearly explain what is the present nature of the exploitation of Northern Ireland - national exploitation, or class exploitation.

In paragraph 5 the resolution states in regard to Northern Ireland "in essence the basic nature of British exploitation is neo-colonialist". The vagueness in the use of the words "in essence" is not accidental. How it can be implied (it could never be stated outright) that Northern Ireland is a neo-colony when it has been under direct rule for the last 100 years is not capable of explanation. (Even in paragraph 1 it is described as "British annexed".)

If the supporters of this resolution want to argue that Northern Ireland is a colony or a neo-colony of a 'special type' let them do so, but do so in a systematic and rigorous way, not by using vague formulations about the exploitation being 'in essence neo-colonialist'.

Some of the evidence actually brought forward in the resolution in fact explains why the formulation had to be kept vague.

It states "the ownership of the means of production in the North is almost exclusively in the hands of British big business". This is apparently included as an illustration of 'neo-colonialist exploitation'.

Yet in the preceding debate in the Federation it was clearly shown on the basis of detailed analysis that for at least one comparable county of England a slightly higher proportion of businesses were owned outside the area than was the case for Northern Ireland (see MLQ 4, p.26). Under conditions of advanced monopoly capitalism, the fact that ownership of the means of production in a particular area is concentrated in the hands of finance capitalists operating from the metropolis, does not in any way automatically imply that the area in question is a colony. So what was this point in the resolution supposed to show?

The resolution tried to substantiate a "neo-colonialist" analysis of Northern Ireland in other ways. It talked in paragraph 5 about "the backward economy dominated by agriculture". Yet in paragraph 3 it admitted when talking about "the uneven development of industrialisation in the north east and in the rest of Ireland" that Northern Ireland was an industrialised economy.

Again in paragraph 5 the resolution refers to the decline in traditional industries in the North. Yet there are many in England with traditional industries that have substantially declined, such as Cornwall or Tyneside. How does this prove exploitation that is specifically neo-colonial rather than class exploitation?

The resolution refers to the so-called subsidies to Northern Ireland (really subsidies to the capitalists there) as neo-colonial aid, as if similar subsidies were not made in other depressed parts of the British state, including Wales, Northern England and Scotland.

As for the "devastated population" the population of Northern Ireland was under 1,750,000 in 1841, about 1,400,000 in 1851 and over 1,500,000 in 1971. It has increased with every census since 1926, which cannot be said of Scotland. Yet are we to start arguing that Scotland is suffering from neo-colonialist exploitation? A stagnant or falling population is a fairly common feature of outlying parts of capitalist markets.

There is not a single valid argument in the resolution in favour of a neo-colonialist analysis of Northern Ireland's economic position.

The handling of the economic situation, on which as Lenin said, our policy should primarily be based, is loose and unprincipled.

4. The Origin of Partition.

The explanation given of the origin of partition of Ireland, and of the present significance of Irish Unity is confusing.

The resolution points to the existence of two bourgeois groups in Ireland. In paragraph 2 it refers to imperialist exploitation "creating rival bourgeois groups", and in paragraph 6 it says that "the competing bourgeois groups in Ireland were divided before the present administrative partition".

What then were they competing for? This question is not answered in the resolution.

In MLQ 5, TS, who supported the resolution in May 1974, wrote that by the beginning of this century "the bourgeoisie in the north-east" could only survive on the basis of the British market".

As we know, the backward bourgeoisie of the South, with its less developed and smaller productive machinery, wanted the Irish market to itself and protection from British competition. Thus the two bourgeoisies had quite different interests. The southern Irish bourgeoisie needed to produce for the imperial market because of the larger size of its units of production.

The different bourgeoisies had different economic needs and took the people of their areas in quite different directions. The British ruling class was split on its policy. Hence partition came about.

The resolution is also ambiguous about whether partition was imposed from Westminster - from on high as it were - or whether it developed out of the contradictions between the two "bourgeois groups". Paragraph 1 talks about "British annexed Northern Ireland". But paragraph 6 implies that local forces were the principal cause of partition: "the insistence by the British on a united Ireland would have resulted in Britain losing the North to the propertied classes there".

Yet T.S. says "the bourgeoisie in the north-east...could only survive on the basis of the British market". So how could the Northern Irish bourgeoisie have ever left the market, and Britain have lost "the North to the propertied classes there, as the resolution says was possible?"

The explanation given in the resolution for the origin of partition is grossly confused and cannot provide the basis for a correct policy on the question of present day Irish unity.

5. The Northern Irish Bourgeoisie

Fundamental to an analysis of partition is an analysis of the Northern Irish bourgeoisie. But here the resolution is hopelessly contradictory.

In paragraph 2 we are told that the ownership of the means of production in the North is almost exclusively in the hands of British big business. That is to say there is

virtually no separate local bourgeoisie owning any of the means of production in Northern Ireland.

Yet in paragraph 1 there is said to be comprador capitalist class in Northern Ireland; and in paragraph 7 there are said to be "northern propertied class" which do not desire unification.

So is there a local bourgeoisie or isn't there? Do the supporters of this resolution in fact know?

The statement that "insistence by the British on a united Ireland would have resulted in Britain losing the North completely to the propertied classes there" implies that there was a Northern Irish bourgeoisie and implies that it was a comprador one. This is implied but is characteristically not stated clearly.

In fact there is no declaration in the resolution that states clearly whether there is or not a national bourgeoisie in Northern Ireland although the existence of a national bourgeoisie is fundamental to any national struggle. The complete absence of a national bourgeoisie implies that the economy has been assimilated into a larger capitalist market and state.

So confused is the resolution on the two Irish bourgeoisies that it is impossible to untangle its line.

It is however clear what the resolution was trying desperately not to say - that the northern Irish bourgeoisie were assimilated into the British bourgeoisie. This is the only basis on which historical developments in Northern Ireland can be understood and a clear line developed on the national question.

6. Irish Unity.

Because the resolution cannot explain the causes of Irish partition it cannot give guidance on whether it is important and progressive to reverse that partition.

Just as it fails to analyse the position of the local bourgeoisie so it is ambiguous about the position of the British ruling class on the Irish unity.

The resolution implies that the British bourgeoisie divided Ireland: it talks of "the imperialist solution of a divided Ireland", of "British-annexed Northern Ireland", of the "present administrative partition", and of how a partitioned Ireland ensured Britain the major political control over both parts.

On the other hand the resolution implies that only the opposition of the bourgeoisie in the North prevented Britain setting up a united Ireland under Home Rule! It says that "Britain's exploitative interests can be prolonged only with a united bourgeoisie in Ireland"! Furthermore Britain, it

says, is trying to aid Irish unity through the Council of Ireland.

So what are the interests of the British ruling class on the question of Irish unity? The resolution is unable to say.

The resolution cannot clearly explain the class interests of any group in Ireland. It is therefore unable to state which of the various possible future developments are progressive and which reactionary.

Irish unity brought about by the North joining the South would certainly help the British ruling class rationalise its control over Ireland. Yet the resolution failed to state clearly that this is not a progressive solution, although many people are attracted by the idea and are in need of clear leadership on the question. Why can we not have an explicit statement on this point?

What of the possibility of a "unilateral declaration of independence" by Northern Ireland? The resolution does not give guidance on this possible outcome either, or make clear which class interests would be served by it, and whether or not it would be a progressive development. Which would be the ruling class in such a state? The resolution cannot say.

A single state in Ireland may indeed be desirable in the long term, but this resolution is quite unable to handle the question of Irish unity in the short term in a concrete and practical manner.

7. Working Class leadership of the Struggle.

The two resolutions passed at the General Meeting in May 1974 do state a fundamental principle on the question of Ireland - the need to develop working class unity. The second resolution refers to the "necessary development of unified class action". The first resolution says that "the divisions that have been created among the Irish working class constitute the main obstacle to progressive political advance in Ireland."

But the statement should not stop at that. Even if the CFB believes there is a genuine national liberation movement in Ireland, history has shown that for national struggles in the era of imperialism just as for socialist struggles, the working class must not only play an important part but must play the leading part. All other classes vacillate and compromise with the enemy on fundamentals.

If it is said that we in Britain must not interfere with the Irish struggle and must not make statements on such points we reply that this resolution was an internal one to the CFB and the question of whether to publish it in full or not is another matter. What is important, particularly in view of the fundamental errors that have retarded the struggle in Northern Ireland, is for us at least to be clear in our poli-

tical analysis of what has happened and what, from previous historical experience, has to happen if the revolution is to succeed.

Why can we therefore not have a clear statement that the working class must lead the progressive struggle in Northern Ireland?

8. Coercion of the Protestant Working Class.

In building working class unity a fundamental question is whether this unity can be achieved by coercion. The position for Marxist-Leninists is, or should be, clear - such unity can only be built on political class consciousness.

The progressive forces must certainly struggle against the present "loyalist" bourgeois and petty bourgeois leaders and against their policies. But at the same time they must build a united front from below with the Protestant working class.

Certainly the Catholics must defend themselves against sectarian attacks and must continue the struggle against oppression and discrimination, but they must not attempt to coerce the Protestant working class to do what it does not yet understand.

On the contrary in order to build working class unity it is essential to make clear that workers cannot coerce workers on the national question.

Yet the resolution does not state this.

Even the Provisional IRA declares this principle: "the aim of the present campaign is not to force any section of the Ulster population into a united Ireland", "it is wrong to force a million Ulster Unionists to become something they are not"; "making the Ulster Unionists a dissatisfied minority in a 32 County Ireland is no solution" (Irish Republican Information Service, published in An Problacht, 17 Jan. 1975).

Why can the CFB resolution not state this clearly?

9. No Assessment of the Provisionals.

The Provisionals have been the leading group in the Catholic community for the last four or five years, and the nature of the struggle and its lack of success have been substantially affected by the dual nature of the Provisionals - their positive and their negative features.

Yet the resolution does not analyse these. Again such passages need not necessarily have been published in full by the CFB, but they are essential to our political clarity.

10. Running together of the Stages of Revolution.

The resolution is opportunistically vague about distinguishing between the bourgeois democratic stage of revolution and the proletarian revolution.

It states, "The democratic movement that has continued since 1793 has been rejuvenated with a new and last phase". It speaks of "the present struggles against British imperialism" and the "fight to throw off the domination of all foreign imperialism and to help achieve a socialist republic".

Certainly the bourgeois democratic revolution prepares the ground for the proletarian revolution but it is a Trotskyist error to confuse the two. For Marxist-Leninists the distinction is fundamental. Lenin made the distinction in the three different programmes he drafted up to 1917, during the 1917 bourgeois Kerensky government, and after the 1917 socialist revolution. Mao also makes the distinction in many works, including 'On New Democracy'.

The key question is that of uniting all available progressive class forces against the main enemy.

In the phase of the bourgeois democratic revolution the main enemies are feudalism and foreign imperialism. Only when these have been overthrown does the main enemy become the bourgeoisie, and does the struggle become that for a socialist revolution.

The fact that it may be necessary to fight for full bourgeois democratic rights (as is the case now in Northern Ireland), cannot be allowed to confuse the question of the basic stage of revolution, which is related to who is the main class enemy. ("The forces that determine the character of a revolution are the chief enemies on the one hand and the chief revolutionaries on the other". Mao, Selected Works, Vol.4, p.208).

Indeed lack of full democracy for the people is a feature of all bourgeois states and is an increasing tendency as capitalism collapses further into its decadent monopoly capitalist stage.

Therefore to attempt to hold back the struggle to a bourgeois democratic stage solely because it includes a fight for full democratic rights is a tailist error.

On the other hand if there genuinely is still a feudal class and a foreign imperialism to be overthrown by a broad alliance of progressive classes including the patriotic national bourgeoisie, then it is adventurism to attempt to make the revolution into a specifically socialist one.

Mao said 'it is a utopian view rejected by true revolutionaries to say that the democratic revolution does not have a specific task and period of its own but can be merged and accomplished simultaneously with another task, i.e. the so-

cialist task(which can only be carried out in another period)".
(Selected Works, Vol. 2, p.360).

This resolution opportunistically fails to make clear this important distinction.

11. Slogans and Immediate Policies.

In the final paragraph, the only prospect the resolution holds out for overcoming the serious divisions in the working class in Ireland is that "the CFB as part of the international working class movement will work to develop links with the working class forces throughout Ireland".

Obviously this is a completely inadequate answer; is overoptimistic about our ability to influence the situation and in view of our small size and other commitments is overoptimistic about our ability to establish links at all (no links in fact have been developed by the CFB since the resolution was passed). Of course we should indeed establish links but the formulation here is obviously grossly erroneous and the result of particularly hasty drafting.

The paragraph ends "We demand that the British state sever all imperialist connections with both parts of Ireland." Leaving aside the question of whether the connection with Northern Ireland is in fact imperialist, this formulation is hopelessly abstract and general when we consider the need for Marxist-Leninists in this country to give a decisive lead in the critical situation in Northern Ireland.

To call on your own bourgeoisie to stop behaving like a bourgeoisie(for that is what the statement means) is so general that it cannot be used as a demand. A demand is something that sums up and focuses the mass struggle on a specific target. This sentence in the resolution says "the revolutionary thing" but does not tell us specifically what to do.

The second slogan "Solidarity with all forces in Ireland fighting British Imperialism" is a similarly abstract generalisation. It stresses subjective identification with allegedly "revolutionary forces" rather than campaigning among the British working class on specific issues to which we can pin down the British ruling class and thereby give concrete rather than imaginary aid to progressive forces in Northern Ireland. Besides some of the forces with which the resolution calls on us to show solidarity have substantial negative aspects(consider for example the consciously anti-communist elements in the Republican Movement).

However the resolution does correctly call for British troops out of Northern Ireland.

What else should it say to focus the struggle specifically now?

It should put our opposition to the presence of British troops in Northern Ireland not in the context of an out of date national liberation struggle, but in the context of a state-wide campaign against the violence and oppressive nature of the bourgeois army.

It should state clearly our opposition to any schemes that increase the power and authority of the police and army of the bourgeoisie over the working class.

It should call for the different communities to be able to settle their affairs free from military interference by the British state, and demand the right for the different communities to police their own areas.

It should warn clearly against the possible "Ulsterisation" of the conflict with the British Government preparing to hand over to a reactionary loyalist regime. The resolution should therefore call on people to be ready to go into action in a campaign against the British ruling class giving any support, financial, military, or political to a loyalist regime which oppresses the Catholics.

The CFB resolution has given little guidance to Marxist-Leninists working on Ireland. This is the result of its opportunist vagueness, both on questions of detail and on fundamental questions of Marxist theory. We have enumerated its major political errors and omissions:

1. Vague characterisation of the movement among the Catholic community;
2. Incorrect characterisation of the Protestant working class;
3. Loose economic analysis of Northern Ireland;
4. Confused explanation of the origin of partition;
5. Indecision about the Northern Irish bourgeoisie;
6. Lack of guidance on the question of Irish unity;
7. Failure to state the importance of working class leadership;
8. Failure to state that working class unity cannot be built by coercing the Protestants;
9. No critical assessment of the role of the Provisionals;
10. Confusion of the stages of revolution; and
11. Impractical slogans and immediate policies.

Why is this resolution so weak? We believe this is for a number of reasons.

Firstly, it is not based on any consistent theoretical understanding of what constitutes a nation and of the development and decline of nations. It reflects a weakness therefore also in the CFB's ability to make clear criticisms of

the petty bourgeois nationalists springing up in Wales and Scotland.

Secondly, there was not enough rigorous struggle between the different lines in the CFB in the polemic leading up to the general meeting. Some comrades contented themselves with believing that the minority line was "social chauvinist" and the criticisms of the national liberation line were not rigorously answered.

Thirdly, the other groups in the Federation maintained a relatively liberal and passive attitude to the polemic, did not join in and struggle for a correct line sufficiently and did not study the problem systematically enough.

The situation continues to develop in Northern Ireland. As a result of incorrect leadership the progressive forces are in some ways in a weaker position than they were three years ago. It is increasingly clear that there is no basis for a successful national liberation struggle in Northern Ireland. The Troops Out Movement is in urgent need of a clear line if it is to build a campaign that can prevent the British ruling class achieving a significant victory over the progressive forces.

We call on all groups in the Federation to criticise the resolution of May 1974, clarify the major questions and develop a correct line to guide our practice on the question of Ireland.

London Group

COMMEMORATING 30th ANNIVERSARY OF VICTORY OVER GERMAN FASCISM

Thirty years have elapsed since the great victory over German fascism. Thirty years ago, after a heroically-fought, hard and bitter war, the people of the Soviet Union and the people of other European countries and countries and peoples elsewhere participating in the anti-fascist war finally and completely defeated Hitler fascism. Several months after Hitler's defeat, Japanese fascism also completely collapsed. The anti-fascist World War II thus came to a victorious end. Today, together with the other people of the world, the Chinese people commemorate this historic day - the 30th anniversary of victory over German fascism - and pay high respects to the Soviet people who have a glorious revolutionary tradition and the other peoples who took part in the anti-fascist war.

The anti-fascist war was a gigantic struggle between the world anti-fascist forces and German-Italian-Japanese fascism, a just war on a scale unprecedented in the history of mankind. The defeat of Hitler fascism was a great victory of the socialist system and Marxism-Leninism. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union headed by Comrade Stalin, the Soviet people and the Soviet Red Army, who displayed lofty heroism and the revolutionary spirit in fighting bravely and unyieldingly, made outstanding contributions in the war to defeat fascist Germany and performed meritorious deeds never to be forgotten in the history of mankind. The defeat of Hitler fascism also was a great victory for the broad international anti-fascist united front, a victory shared by many countries and peoples of Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania and America. On the European battlefields, the countries in the anti-fascist alliance co-ordinated their efforts in a common struggle. The peoples of countries such as Albania, Yugoslavia, Romania, Poland and Czechoslovakia and the peoples of the fascist-occupied European countries either persisted in armed struggle, annihilating the invaders and liberating their homeland mainly by their own efforts, or staged successful armed uprisings and liberated their land, or carried out struggle in various forms to attack the enemy from all sides, playing an important role in the anti-fascist war. The Chinese, Korean and other Asian peoples persevered in their protracted armed struggle to resist Japan and played a decisive role in the struggle to defeat Japanese fascism. All these contributions combined to form a glorious chapter in the history of the anti-fascist struggle.

Chairman Mao has pointed out: "The victory of the anti-fascist Second World War has opened up still wider possibilities for the emancipation of the working class and the oppressed peoples of the world and has opened up still more realistic paths towards it." The history of the 30 post-war years is

ample proof of the correctness of this thesis. The appearance of the world has greatly changed. The imperialist system has been struck heavier blows. Socialism has triumphed in a number of European and Asian countries. The political consciousness of the proletariat and other people of various countries is higher. The liberation struggle of the oppressed nations and oppressed peoples is sweeping the entire globe on an unprecedented scale. Many countries have won independence. Asia, Africa and Latin America are in ferment. The third world has become a revolutionary motive force propelling the wheel of world history forward, and is the main force combating imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism. As Lenin has pointed out: "Millions and hundreds of millions, in fact the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe, are now coming forward as independent, active and revolutionary factors."

But as a result of the usurpation of Party and government power by the Khrushchov-Brezhnev renegade clique, and historical retrogression has taken place in the Soviet Union, the country which so greatly contributed to the struggle to defeat German fascism. The world's first socialist state has degenerated into social-imperialism and social-fascism, the socialist bulwark which Hitler's troops in their millions were unable to conquer has been captured from within by the Khrushchov-Brezhnev renegade clique. This handful of renegades has accomplished what Hitler wanted but failed to do. The Soviet Union today is under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the German fascist type, a dictatorship of the Hitler type.

Today a handful of chieftains of this Hitler-type fascist dictatorship pretends to "commemorate" the 30th anniversary of victory over Hitler Germany. These chieftains are trying to capitalize on the Soviet people's pride in the glorious history of their great Patriotic War and the feelings of respect the people of all countries have for the outstanding exploits of the Soviet army and people in the anti-fascist war. They negate Stalin's world-renowned meritorious deeds in the anti-fascist war and, with ulterior motives, laud Brezhnev instead. They ignore the contributions by the people of all countries in the anti-fascist war, styling themselves as the liberators of the European peoples. They claim the credit which rightfully belongs to the Soviet people and the people of other countries. They use every trick to hoodwink and mislead world opinion. As the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet people and as the supreme commander of the Soviet army, Stalin led the war as a whole and all major battles and won final victory. This objective historical reality cannot be written off. To negate Stalin's meritorious deeds in the anti-fascist war is in fact to negate the great exploits of the Soviet people and the Soviet army and nullify the socialist system under the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union at that time. As to the banner of liberators the Soviet revisionists are flaunting, it is no more than a cover-up for their colonialist rule over a number of East European countries. Their argument is that a number of European countries

which were liberated by the Soviet Union should consequently come under Soviet jurisdiction and protection. In short, by usurping the title to the victory over Hitler fascism, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique aims at covering up its ugly features as a renegade to Leninist and to the October Revolution and the Patriotic War. It does this, to intensify the pursuance of social-imperialism and social-fascism in the service of its criminal goal to contend with U.S. imperialism for world domination. This is the grossest insult to the millions upon millions of Soviet martyrs who laid down their lives in the Patriotic War and to the Soviet people who performed outstanding exploits in the anti-fascist war!

From Hitler's coming to power in 1933 to his complete collapse in 1945 was only 12 years. As Stalin said: Hitlers come and go, but the German nation remains. At that time, the upstart Hitler usurped state power in Germany, set up a fascist dictatorship, wildly expanded abroad, dominated almost all of Europe and then went head-on towards destruction. This process shows that those who seek hegemony inevitably arouse resistance from the peoples, find themselves besieged ring upon ring and thus court self-destruction. This is a law of historical development. The two super-powers, the Soviet Union and the United States, are now fiercely locked in contention for world hegemony. The later upstarts, the Soviet social-imperialists harbouring ambitious dreams and stretching their hands everywhere, in particular, are leaving no stone unturned in their efforts to replace the U.S. imperialists at a time when the latter are becoming increasingly vulnerable and strategically passive. They are trying to take Hitler's beaten path of world domination. However, anyone who observes history closely will find that the wheels of history pass relentlessly over the remains of empires. Today, the superpowers in pursuit of hegemony are utterly reactionary and weak, extremely arrogant and isolated. It can be predicted that, under the constant blows of the people of various countries in their united struggle against hegemony, the hegemony seekers will certainly meet the same fate as Hitler's Third Reich and will be consigned to the rubbish heap of history. With an irresistible force, the wheels of history of the people's revolution and national liberation are rolling ahead!

("Renmin Ribao" editorial, May 9)
Peking Review, 20, May 16, 1975

NEW ERA BOOKS

203 Seven Sisters Road
London N 4. 01 272 5894

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO PERIODICALS - 1976

Subscriptions are available through NEW ERA to the Marxist-Leninist Quarterly (theoretical journal of the Communist Federation of Britain) and to periodicals from China, Albania, Vietnam and the USA. Subscription details follow.

Marxist-Leninist Quarterly: 1 year - £1.50 2 years - £3.00
3 years - £4.00

CHINA - see enclosed catalogue

ALBANIA - Albania Today: bi-monthly political review. Detailed analysis of the achievements and problems of construction of socialism in Albania. £1.50 per year.
New Albania: bi-monthly magazine which shows in photographs and articles the achievements and developments in Albania. £1.50 per year.

VIETNAM - Vietnam: a monthly review of the Vietnamese struggle for socialism and against the remnants of US imperialism. £1.50 per year.
Vietnam Courier: a monthly paper of political analysis of events in Vietnam and South East Asia. 80p per year.

U.S.A. - The Guardian: a weekly newspaper with world and home news from a Marxist-Leninist perspective. £8.25 per year (ordinary); £5.75 (student).

ORDER FORM

I wish to subscribe to: (list periodicals and duration of subscription)

I enclose in payment.....

NAME
ADDRESS

Mail Order from NEW ERA

Orders welcomed and promptly attended to: send 10p for further details and catalogue.

COMMUNIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN (MARXIST-LENINIST).

For information about the C.F.B. contact:-

National Secretary
c/o New Era Books
203 Seven Sisters Road
London N.4

For criticisms, correspondence or contributions to
MLQ contact:-

The Editor, MLQ
c/o New Era Books
203 Seven Sisters Road
London N.4

NEW ERA BOOKS

203 SEVEN SISTERS ROAD, FINSBURY PARK, LONDON N 4.
Telephone: 01 272 5894

MARXIST LENINIST, PROGRESSIVE AND ANTI-IMPERIALIST LITERATURE

NEW ERA stocks a wide range of books and pamphlets from
BRITAIN, CHINA, ALBANIA, VIETNAM, INDIA, AFRICA, USA and
EUROPE.

All the classic works of Marxism in low cost editions.
Books on labour struggles, imperialist countries.
Black struggles, women's struggles and progressive novels.
The fight for national liberation in Africa, Asia and Latin
America.
The history of Britain and Ireland and the struggle of the
Irish people.
Marxist-Leninist journals and documents from other countries.

SUBSCRIPTIONS arranged for:

Marxist-Leninist Quarterly: 1 year - £1.50 2 years - £3.00
3 years - £4.00

For Chinese, Albanian, Vietnamese and US periodicals see
enclosed orders forms.

HANDICRAFTS. Low cost handicrafts from China, posters,
prints, records, badges.

MAIL ORDERS. Orders welcomed: for further details send 10p
for catalogue.