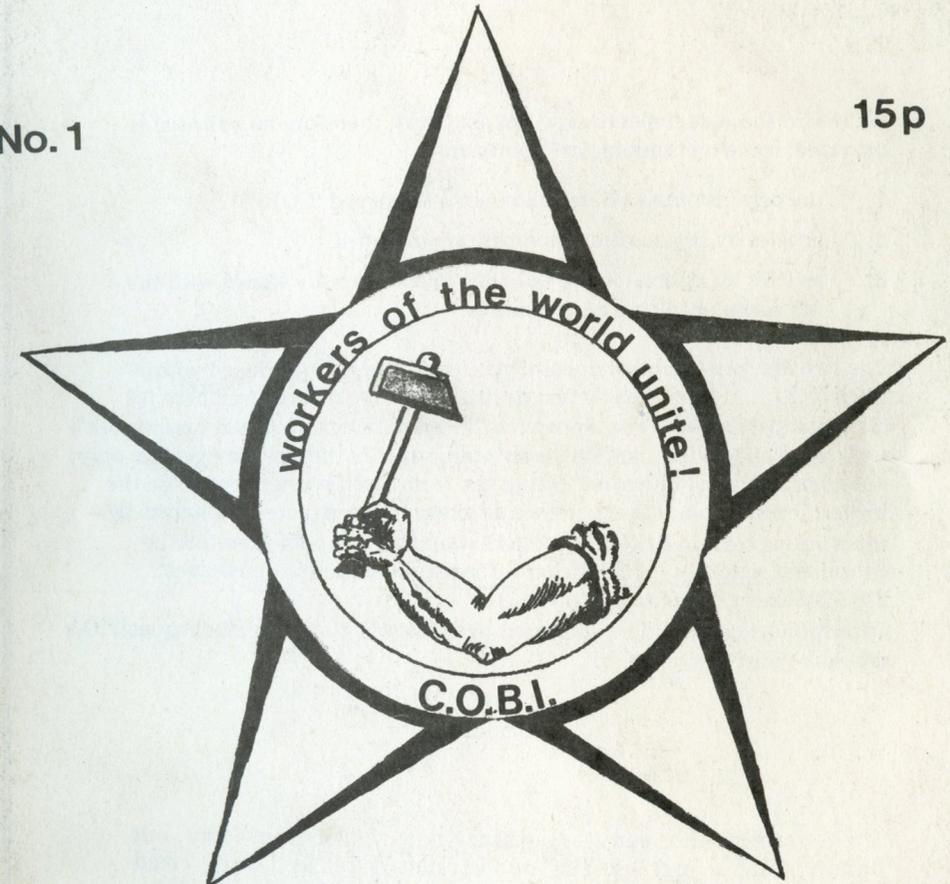


PROLETARIAN

JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST ORGANISATION
IN THE BRITISH ISLES

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Programmatic Documents

The fact that the capitalist mode of production involves the socialization of the actual process of production, that is, that many men come together and labour socially to produce a single type of product, watches, automobiles, structural steel, has made some men think that socialism is already rooted in capitalist society. Therefore, using Aristotle's ideas, they argue that socialism is potentially contained in capitalism, or that capitalism is potential socialism. The inevitable conclusion is that socialism will therefore gradually emerge from capitalism, or, in other words, that capitalism will of itself flower into socialism.

If you ask now, will capitalism evolve into socialism, the answer still is yes, but the process is conceived in an entirely different way. Marx, following Hegel, held that capitalism contains the germs of socialism, but as a contradiction within it. The processes of production are socialized in that large numbers of men combine their labour to produce a single type of product. But appropriation remains individualized. The owner or owners of the factory have sole possession and control of this product of socialized labour. This produces a contradiction between the mode of production and the economic organization of the productive process. This contradiction expresses itself in the periodic crises of capitalism, as well as in strikes, the use of the police power of the state to suppress the workers, in war, as well as in revolutionary uprisings. Thus capitalism contains the germs of socialism in itself, and will evolve into socialism, but only through the destruction of itself. The new social form is struggling within the old and will emerge from it not gradually but through an upheaval in which the old disappears and the new takes its place. It is easy to see that this conception of change or evolution, just like the Aristotelian one, preserves the continuity in the process, but it does not do so by ignoring or destroying the discontinuity.

Right here, in this application of Hegel's conception of evolution, known as the dialectical method, to social problems, we see the difference between certain liberals socialistically inclined, such as reformist Socialists or the British Fabians, and the Marxists. In this method we see the roots of the doctrine that the inherent contradictions of capitalism will eventually cause its downfall, that the workers are the grave-diggers of capitalism, and that capitalism is a system which breeds the means for its own overthrow.

From 'What is Philosophy' Howard Selsam 1938

It is the great advantage of the new movement that we do not seek to anticipate the new world dogmatically, but rather to discover it in the criticism of the old. . . . It is not our task to build up the future in advance and to settle all problems for all time; our task is ruthless criticism of everything that exists, ruthless in the sense that the criticism will not shrink either from its own conclusions or from conflict with the powers that be. —Marx

We regard these documents as self-explanatory, therefore no editorial is provided; some methodological points only:

1. the organisation's policy statements are signed 'COBI'.
2. articles by organisation members are unsigned.
3. articles by associates and outside contributors are signed with the full name or initials of the author.

The two Workers' Control documents (items 4 and 5) produced within the B+ICO (i.e. Nina Stead's first draft and our reply) are given here for historical perspective. The Appendix ('Proposed Organisational Framework') to Towards Socialism, and the descriptions of it in the text, are generic only; not a hard and fast blueprint. But in the form given it does synthesise the highest level of concrete experience attained under advanced capitalism by the working class in Britain and internationally; it should therefore be considered seriously. For further information/subscription contact: 3/8 May Court, Edinburgh EH4 4SD.

Correspondence should be addressed to J. Maisels, to whom all cheques/P.O.s should be made payable.

Of course, the counter-revolutionary philistines cry out "anarchism!" just as the opportunist Eduard David cried "anarchism" when he denounced Karl Liebknecht. In Germany, only those leaders seem to have remained honest socialists whom the opportunists revile as anarchists. . . .

Lenin

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WHAT IS THE COMMUNIST ORGANISATION IN THE BRITISH ISLES?

The Communist Organisation in the British Isles was formed on 1 January 1974, in secession from the British and Irish Communist Organisation, now become revisionist.

The Communist Organisation

The Communist Organisation in the British Isles is a Marxist-Leninist collective. Its purpose is to think communist and to act communist, to create communists and to elaborate communist practice in the working class of the British Isles. The Communist Organisation affirms its total commitment to the science of Marxism-Leninism, the unity of communist theory and practice, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the hegemony of the proletarian world-outlook.

The working class is not only held prisoner by the capitalist mode of production. It is shackled by the unperceived but overwhelming intellectual, social, political and moral hegemony of the bourgeoisie, which anchors it in capitalism. In the continuing crises of capitalism and with the disintegration of the world communist movement, that bourgeois hegemony, in a myriad deceptive forms, grips the minds even of militants who profess themselves Marxist and try to build revolutionary movements. The working class, particularly in the British Isles, lives in a chaos of ideologies and remains a prisoner.

It is necessary personally to re-experience that total rupture with bourgeois society and all its ideologies, that first creation of the essentials of a scientific and proletarian world-outlook, that first attempt at the unity of theory and practice which Marx and Engels effected. It is necessary personally and critically to re-possess the historical experience of successive generations of communists who struggled to advance the science of Marxism and to translate it into proletarian action. It is necessary, in daily struggle and to the best of our abilities, ourselves to advance the science of Marxism-Leninism in every sphere of human thought and action, to achieve the unity of theory and practice in commitment to proletarian struggle, to begin on that enterprise which leads to the communist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This comrades of the Communist Organisation in the British Isles, to the best of their abilities, pledge themselves to do.

In our critical revaluation, we take as patrimony the historical experience of the world communist movement. In our own sector, the British Isles, its history has been largely one of failure, but we recognise in the Socialist Labour Parties of America and Britain in the early years of this century organisations of kindred character. We adopt the emblem of the Socialist Labour Party of Britain, symbolically linked to that of the world communist movement, as our own.

Origins

1. The Communist Organisation in the British Isles, in recognising and working to promote the primacy of theory, is taking up that perspective reneged upon by the British and Irish Communist Organisation and the journal *Theoretical Practice*.

Not only do we agree whole-heartedly with Lenin that 'without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement', but we say emphatically with Engels that we will '...constantly keep in mind that socialism, since it has become a science, demands that it be pursued as a science, i.e. that it be studied.'

2. We identify the failure of the British and Irish Communist Organisation to be a degeneration into liberal constitutionalist politics. This has been clearly marked by the adoption of a series of Fabian positions, the latest of which is the policy on Workers' Control — a policy which, instead of promoting the power of the proletariat over their place of work, promotes power over the proletariat at their place of work. This can only be in the interests of the bourgeoisie and reduces the working class to a plastic object of bourgeois history. The B+ICO policy on Workers' Control is fundamentally anti-Marxist and must be rejected. It is symptomatic of the bourgeois degeneration of the B+ICO.

Formerly, the B+ICO, using Marxism correctly, was able to uncover and elucidate the realities of the existence of two nations in conflict in Ireland; it correctly demonstrated that this was the substance of all the confusion and mystification in and about Ireland, that British Imperialism was in no wise promoting such conflict, but on the contrary was and had been doing everything in its power, in its own interest, to remove the basis for such negative conflict. The role and position of the British bourgeoisie was therefore correctly identified as being the most progressive of the real social forces then active in an Ireland swamped by national conflict; only when the national struggle had been undermined would it be possible to bring class struggle to the fore.

Since the B+ICO had made a breakthrough in describing scientifically the real material basis of the conflict in Ireland, it made most of its recruits in Ireland on the basis of straightforward realism. But, due to that very swamping of class politics in Ireland by the national struggle, the development of class politics and class consciousness in Ireland remains at a seminal level. And since the formative influence in the development of the B+ICO to date has been the Irish situation, it was easy for the membership as a whole to be led by a clique of petty-bourgeois ideologues, peddling bourgeois rationality and disguising themselves as Marxists, to permeate with, and commit the organisation to, the line that not merely in the specific Irish situation but in relation to all the classes which it exploits, was the British bourgeoisie the most progressive force. It follows then that only when the proletariat have managed to out-bourgeoisify the bourgeoisie themselves (in law, order, responsibility and the development of the productive forces under the status quo) are they fit to become the ruling class.

We cannot, therefore, remain members of an organisation whose over-riding interests, despite Marxist verbiage and lip-service to proletarian interests, are those of the bourgeoisie.

But we shall build upon, and in so doing subsume, such positive advances as the B+ICO has hitherto made. These are: the analyses of the problems of Ireland and Wales, the economics of revisionism, the Stalin-Trotsky confrontation, and the E.E.C. We regard the theory of the Irish national question as more than adequately dealt with and therefore settled. The other positions, though substantially correct, have been inadequately dealt with; so these we will develop.

3. We identify the failure of *Theoretical Practice* to be scholasticism — a sterile and a political academicism; the cause and effect of divorce from concrete proletarian struggle. We regard their proclaimed technique, however, to be the correct one, viz., the necessity for painstakingly thorough and detailed research and theoretical rigour; but it must be organically related to the needs of a proletarian fighting organisation.

4. Recognising that the experience of the communist movement in the British Isles is largely one of negative example, and having both participated in and studied that experience, we believe that the lessons to be drawn by dialectical and historical materialists are incorporated in the approach we propose to adopt.

Methodology

1. The Communist Organisation in the British Isles will be constituted as a Marxist-Leninist organisation for committed revolutionaries of, and only of, advanced cadres. Its principal task will be the comprehensive development of operational theory for the working class to become sufficiently conscious to seize and maintain power as the ruling class by crushing the bourgeoisie. It will use the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao as bases. Where sufficient scientific data show any of their formulations to be inadequate or erroneous, we shall clearly say so: for example, the position of Marx and Lenin on Ireland was quite incorrect. Only by holding fast to classic premisses and formulations, while developing them comprehensively in a scientific manner, can the world outlook of the proletariat really be developed in breadth and depth. The Communist Organisation in the British Isles therefore will develop into the vanguard thinker and organiser of the proletariat to the extent that it fulfills its role of class educator and co-ordinator of advanced elements. In so doing, its intention is to engender the formation of the fully-fledged communist party (which alone can realise the proletarian revolution) when programmatic work has been sufficiently advanced to make this a meaningful step in qualitative development under the conditions prevailing in the course of its work.

2. The Communist Organisation in the British Isles is therefore a core organisation of communists, not a mass organisation. Neither is it even a political movement in

the orthodox sense of one that, containing a spread of members of varying levels of consciousness and activism, therefore addresses itself to a fairly diffuse and changing number of tasks. We shall strive for maximum homogeneity in level of consciousness and activism so that negatively, we shall to a large degree avoid the political-philosophical-personal eclecticism which is the dominant feature of advanced bourgeois society; and positively, allow our collective attention to be focussed on a specified range of key tasks.

3. The Communist Organisation in the British Isles therefore assigns itself the following initial priorities in the execution of this perspective:

- (a) the political economy of contemporary British capitalism, the EEC and the world market.
- (b) the study of the ramifications of this, particularly within the USA, USSR, China and India.
- (c) the elucidation of the political superstructure of the above, especially of the EEC states and their development into a European state.
- (d) problems in the promotion of the proletariat's own agencies of power within capitalism and for its replacement.
- (e) problems in the development of the dominance of the proletarian world-view (scientific socialism) in all cultural/ideological thinking of the working class and of the winning thereto of progressive members of other classes.
- (f) as the predicate of all, the deep and sustained study of Marxist sources and method, as well as of natural science, as the fundamental source for knowledge of objective reality.

4. Our method of working towards these goals shall be:

- (a) by encouraging as wide a group of associates as possible to undertake as much systematic research as possible to supplement that of the (necessarily limited) membership of the Communist Organisation in the British Isles. The Organisation shall undertake the overall political formulations for programmatic purposes. But for developmental purposes of individuals and of political positions, we shall encourage the establishment of Marxist study groups throughout the country.
- (b) by admitting to membership of the Organisation only those who have contributed to this effort work of a sufficient standard.
- (c) by insisting that there shall be no passengers whatever in the Organisation that all members shall be constantly engaged in work determined by the Organisation, to develop their own understanding, that of the Organisation and that of the class in a truly dialectical relationship.

(d) by aiming to work as closely as possible with all genuinely progressive movements and persons. However we shall be constantly on our guard against the corrosive effects of united-frontism, as it has brought communist parties so often to grief and to revisionism.

(e) by constantly practising criticism and self-criticism.

5. We shall on occasion work for democratic reformist advances but never 'in general' or for their own sake — as simply a 'good thing' in themselves. We shall support only such measures as will advance the ideological autonomy of the working class by enabling it, or sections of it, to act in their own right.

6. We are acutely aware of being situated in an international context. Consequently we shall strive to develop a thoroughgoing international perspective and to concretise this in international links towards full transnational co-ordination and indeed integration, should this prove to be called for by developments in bourgeois co-ordination. To this end, and to facilitate research, members (as opposed to associates) will be required to become competent in at least one foreign language.

7. In the continuing effort to think Marxist, it is essential not to be divorced from proletarian struggle. The organisation will, therefore, devote some of its members' energies to involvement in concrete working-class movements, for example trade unions and tenants' associations. But these will be seen as conducive to the correct enunciation of proletarian theory, not as ends in themselves.

8. We take our commitment and standpoint so seriously that we expect in the not too distant future that repressive measures will have to be taken by the bourgeoisie against communists. We therefore now put it on record that the Communist Organisation in the British Isles recognises the overwhelming necessity for workers, as soon as possessed of the elements of political organisation, to begin to prepare their physical means of defence. But further, they must also prepare the means of attack, for if these are not forthcoming at the moment of upsurge, the initiative and the momentum will be lost and the bourgeoisie will be able to retain their hold. The concept of a peaceful revolution is a contradiction in terms, flying in the face of all historical data. Without armed force, the workers have nothing to translate consciousness into the objective reality of a class power that can remake society. The bourgeoisie, even in the most unlikely situation of their not seeing any profit in resorting to force themselves, cannot be budged from their stranglehold on the nodal points of society, except by the deliberate and systematic use of whatever force may be necessary. During and after the revolution, capitalists must be liquidated as a class by force. Before it, their hegemony — ideological, organisational and physical — must be broken by a mental and physical aggressiveness.

9. The Communist Organisation in the British Isles publishes Proletarian as its theoretical journal. It shall (at least initially) be an occasional publication, appearing

only when we have something substantive to say. Therefore no issue shall appear with 'fillers' or potentially worthwhile material that has been rushed out raw to meet a deadline. Neither, therefore, will we engage in run-of-the-mill, non-theoretical polemic. We will be adjudged solely by our long-term contribution to proletarian consciousness; we eschew the scoring of debating points off other organisations and will ignore those who try to score such points against us.

10. To all this the Communist Organisation in the British Isles commits itself. We call upon all those who consider themselves Marxist-Leninists to work with us and to join the Communist Organisation in the British Isles, if they agree with what we have said above. We call upon all those who regard themselves as revolutionary socialists, whether organised or not, to work with us as associates.

11. An associate of the Communist Organisation in the British Isles becomes a member of the Communist Organisation in the British Isles when he/she has fulfilled the following conditions:

- (a) when he/she has demonstrated a command of the essentials of Marxism-Leninism to the satisfaction of the Organisation (a specific programme of reading will be required).
- (b) when he/she has produced theoretical work to a standard regarded as satisfactory by the Organisation (while the development of theory remains the primary task).
- (c) when he/she has been in contact with the Organisation for sufficient time for his/her style of work to be known to the Organisation.
- (d) when he/she undertakes a continuing programme of study and research satisfactory to the Organisation.
- (e) when he/she has learned or undertakes to learn at least one foreign language and undertakes to familiarise himself/herself with one branch of natural science.
- (f) when he/she undertakes to master the skills necessary to the physical functioning of the Organisation (e.g. typing, duplicating, etc.).
- (g) when he/she undertakes to maintain himself/herself in a state of mental and physical fitness and preparedness.

Together we can further genuinely proletarian revolution, sooner rather than later, and lasting.

(signed)	Paul Cockshott	C.K. Maisels
	Tony McCulloch	Jenny Nussey
	Neil McKeown	Gwyn A. Williams

1 January 1974.

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WHAT SORT OF "WORKERS' CONTROL" AND WHY?

1. The policy statement on so-called workers' control adopted by the British and Irish Communist Organisation, deliberately and fundamentally confuses the function of the communists with that of the progressive bourgeoisie: to Marxists these are qualitatively different. Marxism enables the working class through its most advanced members to understand the immanent laws of history, thereby to act in consciousness, ensuring the attainment of historical goals in as efficient and painless a manner as possible. This categorically demands the supplanting of the obsolete ruling class as soon as this becomes at all practicable, by whatever methods may be called for under the circumstances given. This goal is attained by examining the current reality, its developmental process and likely outcome, based on scientific analysis of historical experience to derive the dynamic laws therefrom. For, past, present and future are a continuum, inseparably linked; but not in a simple mechanistic fashion: rather as a process obeying complex, interactive, and all-pervading laws that only sustained, systematic study, using dialectical and historical materialism can reveal. Such an attempt has been necessarily abandoned by the B+ICO, in its turn to, and immersion within, traditional British empiricism and impressionism — for their world-view is now that of the radical bourgeoisie.

2. The progressive ideologues of the bourgeoisie enable bourgeois society to continue to develop by forcing the pace of super-structural change, so that the bourgeois mode of production itself, is not jeopardised. The proletariat can become a ruling class only by becoming a self-conscious class acting in its own interests, immediate and future. The creators and manipulators of bourgeois ideology will advise and implement any and every superstructural change except those which will specifically advance working-class self-consciousness. This is exactly the objective function of B+ICO policy on workers' control: it is of course exactly the opposite function of communists. It gives ideological cover, dressed as it is in Marxist terminology and frame of reference, to adaptation by the bourgeoisie at the interaction of political and economic struggle now that the proletariat is beginning to challenge the hegemony of the ruling class. In the name of leading the working class forward to extended consciousness through greater participation in the operations of capitalist production relations, the B+ICO are trying to get workers to accept just and no more than what it is well within the competence of the bourgeoisie to give — a greater say in the running of bourgeois society as long as the fundamentals of that society are never challenged.

3. Workers, with or without their unions, are enforcing economic demands in the face of all the ideological, social and administrative pressures brought to bear by the bourgeoisie. They do this empirically and spontaneously to maintain, and if possible develop, their standard of living at a time of increasing crisis for capital

world-wide, but especially acute in Britain. The proletariat do this despite cries for 'order' in a crisis situation, since they instinctively realise that the continuation of capitalism — or rather the status quo as they experience it — is not for them. The bourgeoisie therefore must establish a new social contract which enables capital to weather the storm — it must negotiate a period of social peace. To achieve this they must have collaboration from sections of the petit-bourgeoisie and of advanced workers, who have nominally placed themselves at the disposal of the working class by serving as their advisors and ideologues. The working class, on the contrary, must have those whose aim is solely to enable the proletariat to fight their way forward out of the closed loop of economic demands within capitalism — for these leave the relations of production intact. Solely the latter are Marxist — are truly scientific socialists.

4. Scientific socialists must support the working class in their economic struggles against capital, while explaining as fully as possible the implications of such limited economic struggles. Such struggles move the mass of workers from passivity to combativeness. The bourgeoisie especially in times of difficulty must have quiescence from the working class. On the other hand we must not fetishize economic struggle by regarding it as more than the force bringing labour into conflict with capital at the roots, i.e. in the productive process itself. So Marxists must tell the working class that economic struggle will in no wise do more than quantitatively increase their standard of living; that it cannot transform the quality of life. But without the mobilisation of workers at this level, no proposal for change in the nature of demands can be other than platitudinous since it is economic struggle that activates the class to confront capital in the first place.

5. Marxists must start with the craft and trade realities of unions, and point to the basic necessity of unions acting in concert to promote the interests of the class as a whole. Thus strong unions must be urged to support weak ones (especially in the same industry, where industrial unionism must be advocated) and sectional ones to fuse their interests into those of the rest of the industry in question. We must urge the end of 'free' collective bargaining and promote in its place the practice of co-ordinated collective bargaining in the interest of the raising of class consciousness at the economic level and not of the development of capitalist production. In doing so we must especially oppose any attempts by bourgeois government to interfere in the running of union affairs; particularly legal/institutional attempts to restructure, constrain and manipulate union organisation and activities in the interest of peaceful 'industrial relations'. Communists work for changes being made by the working class themselves in their own institutions, while opposing outright changes from the ruling class and their intermediaries. Hence the Industrial Relations Act (and similar Labour measures) must be vigorously opposed and the working class shown how to organise its forces for a disciplined attack on the power of capital. Co-ordinated

collective bargaining implies and promotes class unity transcending trade and category of worker. In immediate action, for example, it means assisting lower-paid workers by associating them with strong unions in the enforcement of joint demands. This kind of unity can arise only from a structure rooted in the point of production. This is also the point where capitalist crisis registers, empirically, on the consciousness of the worker and where communist consciousness can make its most meaningful entry. The organisation which can create this unity and foster the necessary consciousness can derive only from the shop-floor. This is the only form of organisation that can give the class the means to supplant the operative structures of bourgeois power. The precise form the councils must take will be a key area of communist work, and care must be taken to ensure that obsession with form does not retard the development of communist content. Councils can in no sense replace the party of the working class. But councils are the form in which an emerging class unity and class-consciousness express themselves among workers. Whenever and wherever the proletariat has acted on its own account, councils have been the spontaneously and empirically generated co-ordinators and leaders of workers' action. This was the case in the first decades of this century, in a developed form, in Britain, Italy and of course Russia. History knows no other method of working class organisation and autonomy from the ground up. Councils must act in parallel within and around trade unions, and by being more effective and comprehensive will gradually supplant their social power. They will not however supplant the functions of the proletarian party, but, will on the contrary have been fostered and led by that party. They will become complementary to it: dialectically united shall be the newly organised mass of workers creating their own organs of power within and against capitalism, and its advanced detachment providing the theoretical and organisational guidance indispensable for such development. The party will grow in breadth and depth with the Council Movement.

6. Workers' control which is not workers' collaboration in the perpetuation of capitalism, will be gained by the councils encroaching upon the traditional preserves of the trade unions. Councils will however be able to act in a much more farseeing manner, not being bound by the established functions of trade unions. For those have arisen under capitalism specifically to sell labour-power in the market to the best advantage of the labourers. Structurally and ideologically unions have been moulded to this purpose and this alone — they can never be the agency enabling the class to move into socialism. But some of their functions must accrue to the councils in the interim, so that there is a solid base in process of production for the extension of consciousness into and through new organs of power. Therefore in bargaining at plant or industry level (money) wage claims can be restrained as a bargaining counter, if and only if by this means councils can wrest progressively into their hands on the shop-floor, one management prerogative after another. This will add a much needed new dimension to the closed circuit of economic and welfarist struggles that the working class has become locked within. But the idea that the steady advance of

this kind of council action, progressively encroaching upon bourgeois 'right' and capitalist authority, will of itself expropriate the expropriators and bring in communism like a thief in the night, is utopian and has invariably been proven utopian by history. At some point, capital will react and a class war situation will result. Capital will be assisted by its own uneven development which will in turn fracture and weaken the cohesion of the working class. But it is precisely for this situation that a communist party exists. For the councils to have reached this point itself implies a massive development of communist consciousness among the working class which would completely transform the balance of political force. It is impossible to foresee what political conditions would then obtain; it is however the precise duty of a communist party to deploy its strength and intelligence fully, along the entire social, economic and political front towards this moment — applying its Marxist analysis to the exact form that capitalist crisis takes in British society. Any dereliction of duty on its part would constitute another historical failure. Without a council structure, in which the working class mobilises itself, organises itself and realises itself as a class, no lasting and effective transition to communism is possible. There are only two alternatives to this form of action: one is a 'revolution' arising from cataclysm (and in present circumstances this cannot be entirely ruled out); but it would be at root formless, self-defeating and anti-communist. The other is the form of adjustment in the name of evolutionary advance of consciousness allegedly in accordance with British particularities, but is in fact plastic adaptation to the 'reality' and 'practicality' of bourgeois stability and adapted continuation. Such is the objective meaning of the B+ICO policy statement on workers' control. It precludes any independent class development by the proletariat. It submerges the interests of the proletariat, and therefore of communism, under the petit-bourgeois cloak of 'all' and 'a-class' interests of 'the society', 'the nation', 'law and order and civilization'. There is no combativity whatever in the B+ICO's conceptions; there is only accommodation. But we, who know the realities of class power, since we promote a real political, ideological and therefore physical challenge to capitalism, shall prepare the working class to counter the armed forces of the bourgeoisie with their own. This necessity is being made explicit to proletarians from the outset, so that preparation will be an organic development throughout, and not a weak artificial grafting at a late stage. And we do this in renunciation of guerillism and putchism, putting politics in command.

7. The external coercive laws of capitalist competition, combined with the advanced organic composition of capital (and exacerbated by generalised primary commodity supply problems, both political and absolute), force capital world-wide, but particularly in Britain, to bridle the anarchy of capitalist production and appropriation. Extension and intensification of the socialisation of productive process at both national and international levels, has proceeded to such an extent that now the means of production are in conflict with capitalistic appropriation.

8. Keynesianism allowed one key contradiction — that of periodical booms and crashes — to be mitigated by the conscious management of the base for capital as a whole, by the central committee of the class as a whole; i.e. by government manipulation; in no wise to be confused with planning. Smoothing out a fundamental contradiction (though by no means eliminating it) in this fashion, brought capitalism another full generation of viability. A similar intervention is now required to solve the equally fundamental, but sequentially revealed contradiction of anarchy in a productive process that is everywhere growing into state monopoly capital. Just as workers were led by petit-bourgeois vanguard ideologists of capital, to demand Keynesian control under the banner of socialist advance, so workers are now being incited by the same stratum (this time with much fuller support from the bourgeoisie as a whole), to bridle the anarchy inherent in the capitalist mode of production under the same ideological guise. Thus in Britain the ruling class are anxious to implement Supervisory Boards and Works Councils on the German pattern, since they have proved over decades to have the desired pacifying effect. Indeed the British bourgeoisie is anxious to foster class collaboration at any and all levels, especially in key areas like national wage bargaining.

9. Assuming however bourgeois "workers' control" proposals to be a substantive extension of bourgeois democracy, the simple advocacy of quantitative extensions of such under the hegemony of an already democratic capitalism, cannot be the standpoint of communists. Such extension is something that capitalists themselves promote in their attempts to mollify the working class — to buy support from a stratum in order to perpetuate the oppression of the majority. It is their attempt to bury class struggle — it is the duty of a communist to promote it. The B+ICO present bourgeois "workers' control" proposals as a substantive extension of bourgeois democracy, saying that accordingly it is the task of communists to support same. This is incorrect and undialectical, in that it assumes that any and every quantitative advance in bourgeois democracy is an advance towards socialism. From a proletarian standpoint bourgeois democracy has two contradictory aspects: one of which aids the working class in its advance towards socialism, while the other actively hinders it. In its first aspect bourgeois democracy aids the proletariat by allowing freedom of speech of the press, and rights of assembly, to organise political parties, trade unions and societies etc. These bourgeois liberties enable the working class to establish its own independent organisation and means for the expansion of consciousness. On the other hand bourgeois democracy entails a shift in the form of capitalist dictatorship, from one relying predominantly upon repressive state apparatus to one which relies predominantly upon the ideological apparatus centred upon the state. In the political field the principle ideological apparatuses of the bourgeois state are the mechanisms of representative democracy. These 'participatory' bodies effectively exclude the working masses from developmental political activity (i.e. as a class) whilst at the same time legitimising the selection

of agents for the supervision of the reproduction of capitalist social relations. By making these agents responsible for the perpetuation of capitalism (under such guises as the smooth running of 'production' — for the 'community' of course — the maintenance and growth of the national economy, etc.) bourgeois democracy thereby limits within its own terms of reference the field of possible political questions; i.e. to those which in no way threaten the continued existence of bourgeois hegemony. The mechanisms of bourgeois representative democracy, (supplemented by all the other ideological apparatuses, from the school and the mass media to the family) act as conveyor belts for bourgeois ideology, carrying it from the functionaries of capital to the working masses. The capitalist enterprise and the management thereof, is a principled focus for the creation and perpetuation of capitalist economic ideology. The extension of bourgeois representative democracy into this field has the objective function of ensuring that this ideology shall consolidate its domination in the thinking and practice of the proletariat, now that the hold of explicitly 'political' participatory organs centred on Parliament is being increasingly rejected. Since the challenge to the political superstructure is coming from the point of production, a major new intervention from above into the place of production must be made to secure the creation of a truly load-bearing structure under much-changed, and rapidly changing, world circumstances.

10. The promotion of generalised extensions of bourgeois democracy under democratic capitalism by self-professed communists, derives from a linear and mechanistic interpretation of communist practice that is contrary to Marxist dialectics. The quantity that builds up to a quantum jump giving a qualitatively new entity, presupposes that the quantitative additions building up to the jump, are generically of the sort that will give the desired qualitative outcome at the critical time; for the new entity is predicated on the subsumptive transformation of what linearly preceeded. Thus only an egg will become a chicken — a chicken cannot derive from a tadpole. Hence communist parties in the thirties which were indiscriminately supporting the advance of bourgeois democracy in general, got exactly the result theory would predict: after the great democratic issue of the anti-fascist war had been settled, the culmination was a qualitatively higher stage in the development of capitalism itself. Hence welfarism and Keynesianism of necessity became the new orthodoxies; nothing qualitatively different from capitalism having been sufficiently mapped out. The contemporary new orthodoxy looks like becoming some sort of workers' control. This will have as little to do with actual workers and real control as can be got away with; calling for any sort of top-down 'official' structure that can effectively put the lid on (by diversion) genuine upswellings from the point of production.

11. Unless the communist objective is immanent, ever-present and dominant in every (communist supported) 'democratic' action then communist action will in

fact surrender to bourgeois democratic values, even if it takes a more militant and consistent form: the substance will have become bourgeois. Specifically, the struggle for Marxist science and a proletarian world outlook must be rendered permanently present in all thinking, in the face of an overwhelming bourgeois intellectual, spiritual and moral hegemony that pins us to the ground like the force of gravity. Under those (present) conditions it is a daily, hourly unremitting struggle even to think Marxist, but nothing less enables one, no matter what one's degree of militancy, to call oneself a Marxist. To be a Marxist is a synonym for being combative. No amount of scorn for 'insurrectionary leftists', no equation of 'leftism' with utopian impracticality will save a non-combative 'communism' from castration. The decisive rupture with liberal reformism must be the continuous and permanent assertion of conflict — the realisation of angst. The communist ultimate moment must be present in every 'democratic' action that we support — the B+ICO policy statement on workers' control postpones the communist moment to the Greek Kalends. The world outlook informing the document no longer promotes Marxism to control all actions, towards its only possible realisation in proletarian revolution, but sets up the communist moment as a Second Coming to shine like a remote star. The B+ICO policy statement is not a scientific socialist platform: it is an inclined plane into the swamp of democracy. There is one basic, crude but vital corrective: it is combativity.

12. Marxist strategy — as the overall programme of action — is derived from analysis of past and present using the tools of dialectical and historical materialism, enabling the goal of communism to be attained sooner rather than later, with less suffering rather than more. Strategy then, is the trajectory from the present, to the distant but discernible future.

Tactics are the sequence of points ('plots' in both senses) along the line that is the resultant of those of least resistance and of shortest distance in bridging capitalism to communism. Tactics therefore, exist as the implementation of strategy over time. Hence communist strategy must not become the reification of tactics, still less of expediency; for tactics are merely the co-ordinates and springing points of the strategic line as a process.

So there is a qualitative difference between strategy and tactics: strategy is not formed by, nor even approximates to, the mere assemblage of tactical action. Rather, tactics represent concrete furtherance by implementation, of the programmatic line in a specific situation. Strategy is primary, tactics are derivative therefrom; role reversal in this key area is always one of the first and surest signs of revisionist disease and is endemic to all forms of social-democracy, whose 'pragmatic' practicality always consists of what alone it is expedient for capitalism to concede; therefore social-democrats from bright yellow (Labour Party) through to bright pink (CPGB) can have no strategy, for they have no consistent world-view.

13. The proletarian state can only result from the progressive advance of specifically proletarian organs (dialectically linked to an advancing communist party) developing under the sway of, but in outright opposition to, capitalist relations of production. Control, to be really by the workers for the workers, must arise from the point of production and go upwards and outwards until, led by the communist party, it is strong enough to destroy the bourgeois state underpinning and administering capitalist production.

This is the only scientific way to socialism — to and through real workers' control.

All other routes are diversions and will be fought.

C.O.B.I.

3

The First Shops Stewards' Movement: James Hinton, Allen and Unwin, £5.95

This book fills a large hole in the field of political and labour history. In its combination of fact and analysis it has no peer, especially for situating the movement in its correct craft-unionist context under conditions of world war. The handling of this central aspect is masterly — fully dialectical: "The war precipitated a combined offensive of management and the state against the traditional values of the engineering craftsmen which threw the positive aspects of the craft tradition into high relief. Where the craftsman retained his pride in his skill and the conviction that his work should afford him spiritual as well as economic satisfactions then no amount of consultation and negotiation, no purely financial reward for this sacrifices, could prevent the head-on collision between the two value systems, between craftsmanship and capitalist rationality. At all times this conflict had existed, and no doubt there were large numbers of engineers even on the Clyde and in Sheffield who had long since received nothing but money and misery from the exercise of their labour power. But in wartime this struggle was generalised. In order to meet the demands of war, capital and state were driven not only to undermine once and for all the possibilities of exclusive craft unionism for most of the skilled workers in the industry, but at the same time to attack a vital part of that minimum spiritual reward that the craftsmen customarily expected from their work. Challenged in this way the subversive potential that had always been locked within the craft tradition was suddenly released..." (pp.336-7)

Likewise with John Maclean, there has been no better, more dialectical description of his role than: "In general Kendall overestimates the degree to which MacLean was a revolutionary leader, as against an educator and propagandist." "Maclean had no programme to offer the (Clyde Workers') Committee on the immediate practical problem that they faced: how to deal with dilution. Had he succeeded in persuading the Committee's leadership to take a consistent revolutionary defeatist stand — to refuse to do anything that might facilitate munitions production — the practical problems of the Committee would have been no nearer solution. There is nothing to suggest that the Clydeside munitions workers would have fought in open opposition to the war effort. In the circumstances any attempt to lead them into battle under a revolutionary defeatist banner, insofar as it evoked any responses at all would probably have degenerated into a stubborn and reactionary craft battle against dilution as such." (p.132 and note).

Also well demonstrated is Maclean's endemic impressionism, which caused his switch from internationalism in 1914 to rabid xenophobia by 1919; and had him arguing (p.309) against the correct position stated by Murphy of the SLP to be: "When it is remembered that trade unions are limited, constitutionally, to narrow channels of activity, and that officialdom is a product of this limited activity, it is only to be expected that the official leaders are essentially conservative in outlook and action... The whole machinery of the Trade Unions is constitutionally directed into channels of adaptation... to the capitalist systems... Trade Unions... are organised bodies for the modification of the existing system, accepting the capitalist idea of society". (p.313)

With this sort of quality, it is not surprising that Hinton has dissolved much of the tunnel vision (not to say jaundice) of Kendall and Middlemas. Not surprisingly though, with so much debris to be cleared, he is too lenient with the social democrats Klugmann and MacFarlane. So almost inevitably some of their errors of prejudice have clung to Hinton himself. Thus (inter alia) Klugmann, Vol. 1, p.19: "The SLP constitution forbade its members to hold positions in the official trade unions." And MacFarlane, p.27: "...Because of a rule forbidding its members to hold union office the SLP did not obtain the hold on the Scottish trade union movement which its influence should have made possible." This is repeated ad nauseam along with other hoary myths of the CP in its rightist phase and handed on from publication to publication nth hand, without the source itself being examined. So Hinton himself is induced to say: "The SLP had never opposed working within the existing unions at a grass roots level, but members were forbidden to stand for trade union office on the grounds that the existing unions were bulwarks of capitalism and must eventually be destroyed rather than taken over by the left." (p.283n.). At best a half-truth; but Pribicevic has not even that when he describes

“a so-called ‘trade union rule’ in the constitution of the SLP prohibiting members from taking up any office in the unions?” (p.15). ‘So-called’ is the right phrase indeed for in black and white the Party’s 1911 programme states: “Part IV — Any member of the Party accepting, or being elected to any office in a trade union shall notify the N.E.C. of such appointment.” “Part III — Members are also allowed to address meetings of trade union branches or non-political clubs confined to members of those branches or clubs, provided always that such members act in opposition to all principles save those laid down and defined by the SLP.” Scarcely exclusion clauses; rather the minimum restriction necessary for a revolutionary organisation to avoid slithering down the liberal slope into the morass of reformism. But surely this is the secret of the whole misrepresentation in these (and previous) reformist times and circles — discredit the correct Marxist approach and (the desired) reformism is sure to follow. So not only do the subsequent SLP ‘Platforms’ contain only the ‘so-called trade union rule’ cited above, but we must by now not be surprised to learn that Tom Bell (a leading member) was elected President of the Associated Ironmoulders of Scotland during the war. The truth of course is that unlike most of their so-called Marxist successors, both in and out of the CPGB, they did not fetishise the capturing of official positions, either in the unions or in Parliament. They well understood that usually it was the member that got captured by the institution, unless his position was due to a real demand for action from below. Then and only then could new content enter old forms. Anything else stifles the development of class-consciousness by imprisoning its activity within the inertia of old forms.

Sad, but not surprising then, to find Hinton subscribing to another piece of pernicious fiction invented by Bernsteinists: “Ferociously sectarian, and its direct industrial influence confined largely to the Clyde” it (surely?) was consigned to impotence? On the contrary “the SLP was nevertheless to make a more important contribution than the much larger BSP (or any other Marxist grouping) both to the development of the shop-stewards’ movement and to the subsequent foundation of the Communist Party”. (p.277). Specifically:

“ Apart from Gallacher, Kirkwood and Messer all the other leaders of the CWC were members of the Socialist Labour Party. Johnny Muir, convener at Barr & Stroud (Annie’s land), the leading theorist of the Committee during 1915–16 and editor of its paper, *The Worker*, had been editor of the SLP paper, *The Socialist*, until Christmas 1914. Arthur MacManus, shop steward at Weir (Cathcart) and later at Beardmore’s works at Dalmeir, one of the most able members of the leading group of the Committee, succeeded Muir as editor of *The Socialist*. At the age of twenty-one MacManus had been a leader in the abortive SLP attempt to organize the Singer’s works at Clydebank on dual unionist lines. The mass victimization which followed the defeat of this attempt — 400 militants were sacked — helped to establish a network of SLP and SLP-influenced shop stewards throughout the Clyde, a network which was undoubtedly to play an important part in the organization of the CWC. Tom Clark, treasurer of the

Committee and a shop steward at Parkhead, was another leading SLP agitator: ‘Glasgow’s greatest declaimer’, wrote Gallacher from the safe distance of the 1930’s. ‘of De Leon’s petty bourgeois phantasies’.

For many years Glasgow had been the centre of revolutionary propagandist activity in Britain. Both the SLP and the John Maclean group in the BSP laid heavy emphasis on educational work. The SLP’s influence was felt, typically, through the education classes which, year after year, turned out more ‘worker-tutors’. Small groups of SLP members, trained in these classes ran mealtime discussion circles in many of the Clydeside factories, instilling the principles of Marxism and the ideas of Industrial Unionism and distributing revolutionary literature. ” (p.123-4)

So what now remains of ‘sectarianism’, ferocious or otherwise? Obviously just a shibboleth for rightists to hide their politics behind. If sectarianism has a scientific meaning, it must describe an arbitrary and sterile distancing from the realities of social existence. Obviously, impotence, and its corollary, demagoguery/ phrasemongering, are the result of such isolationism. Obviously the contrary was true of the SLP; thus it follows that the SLP was not sectarian — so let that sacred cow die and good riddance.

Apart from the usual hagiology on the SLP, to which the author himself gives clues for exorcism, the book suffers from only minor faults. A lot of these are due to sloppy proofreading: most are simply annoying, some are fairly important. On p.250 John Maclean M.A., is spelt MacLain. This done, it is possible for confusion to arise between the aforementioned schoolteacher, Neil Maclean (first secretary of the SLP) and William McLaine who represented the BSP at the Second Congress of the Communist International in July 1920. It is obviously important that no confusion arise between those three. In one place the sense itself is changed: on p.294, line 24, surely what is meant is the official (not unofficial) movement. The book deserves better than this.

The work possesses a useful statistical appendix, and the topographical figure is a fine idea, inadequately executed. Shown is the situation of the major industrial plants of the Glasgow area, but the only frame of reference is the line of the Clyde. This is fine for us Glaswegians but pretty debilitating for those not so privileged. At least the city-centre and the city-perimeter must be indicated. But preferably, the works should be located in the general context of a city-grid (simplified).

Johnstone, mentioned several times in the text, ought to be indicated on the area outline. It is in fact outside Paisley which is contiguous with Glasgow; not outside Glasgow itself. Conversely, Springburn is not outside of Glasgow, but is the city’s northern extension. And lest anyone be looking for Pribicevic’s “Govan Hill” in riparian Govan (SW 1) what he means is Govanhill (S 2) the southern extension of Gorbals.

In the text and even in the index, we are referred to one F. Engles (sic)— the collaborator would you believe of a certain K. Marks. Otherwise the index is helpful (unlike too many) but not really the Bibliography, which only lists 'major primary sources'. These secondary but significant drawbacks don't do justice to a book of this stature, and it is to be really hoped that these matters will be attended to when the much-needed paperback edition is being prepared. In the meantime, for those who can afford the price, we strongly recommend the book to those at any level of knowledge/interest: it is quite simply the best thing available on the Shop-Stewards Movement to date.

NOTE: We shall shortly be publishing the SLP 'Platform'.

4

April 1973 QM WORKERS CONTROL DRAFT

Submitted by N. Stead
R. Jones
M. O'Riordan

1. With the development of the forces of production within capitalist society, comes the concentration of capital in ever larger units.
2. This is achieved through the extension of the credit system and the formation of joint-stock companies. It brings about monopolies in whole spheres of production, over-production, collapse of the market. As the market becomes incapable of regulating the vast productive powers of modern society, so arises the necessity for state control over production and distribution.
3. State control is effected principally through (i) nationalisation and extension of the public sector; (ii) the social services and social security systems; (iii) "Keynsian" management of the economy, through control over finance; (iv) state grants and selective taxation of private industry.

4. The use of "Keynsian" policies by the state in response to (i) the political demands of the working class for employment and (ii) the economic necessity for the state to take conscious control over credit and to use budgetary policy to manage the economy have meant that within each national economy, the means of production and labour power have been as fully employed as the bourgeoisie and the working class have chosen to make them. The availability of credit no longer depends purely on an arbitrary relation between private producers and financiers. It depends primarily on Government policies with regard to the rate at which the social production in general expands, with regard to employment, and with regard to the social usefulness of production in particular areas.
5. Government policies depend on the political force with which the working class presses its demands.
6. The working class has (a) fought for and won an accepted place in the politics of the nation; (b) through trade unions been attempting to regulate production so as to ensure employment; (c) using collective bargaining to increase the wages of the class.
7. The struggle for wages and employment, conducted as it is within particular occupations, companies, or industries, and assisted by the restriction of entry into these occupations etc., has always been sectarian. In earlier times, when there was no alternative, this form of struggle was not merely inevitable: it was progressive because it was a means of developing the organisation of the working class, and thereby its ability to overcome sectarian divisions.
8. State control over production and distribution is now such that the level of employment and the standard of living of the working class as a whole depend on Government policy, and therefore on the force which workers bring on the Government. The effect of the present form of trade union struggle is merely to determine how this employment and standard of living is shared among different sections of workers, i.e. to perpetuate inequalities within the working class.
9. There is no question of the working class opting out as a class from the regulation of employment and wages. Rather, to the extent that the working class recognises the dominant role of the state in these matters, and uses its political force to assert the interests of the class as a whole, to that extent is class struggle possible. In the absence of this action by the working class, what has now been described as class struggle (the present form of trade union struggle) can more correctly be termed Luddism: a blind resistance to change of the part of the working class. The existing forms of collective bargaining will not merely be sectarian. They will become more and more reactionary, and the workers less and less able even to defend themselves.
10. To the extent that the bourgeoisie succeed in changing the present methods of collective bargaining, they will be acting progressively because they will be acting out of the economic necessity arising from the development of the

productive forces. The bourgeoisie will take the interests of the working class into account to the extent that they are forced to do so. If the working class sees its interests as being the maintenance of the status quo, the bourgeoisie will be forced to take these into account and the working class will be holding back change. When the change comes (as it must if society is to continue to develop) it will have to be in terms and consciousness determined by the bourgeoisie, if the working class movement persists in offering this status quo as an alternative, instead of using the opportunity to seize the initiative from the bourgeoisie and progressively alter the balance of power in the relations of production in line with developing the productive forces.

11. Arising out of the changes in the productive forces and the relations of production, the following political changes are in the working class' interests: (i) that there be effective Parliamentary control over "public money" spent on nationalised industries, and to private industry; support for new products and technologies etc. This means coming out against the Labour Party's schemes from 1964-1970 for such control to be in the hands of specialised agencies like the Industrial Redevelopment Corporation (IRC) and instead coming down more firmly for Parliamentary Control: i.e. an adequate flow of information from the Treasury and the Ministries and the corporations applying for public money to Parliament and MPs; through public debate about the various options open to the Government; and the effective use of conscious class force to influence Parliamentary decisions. Upper Clyde was the first example of the working class demanding this in practice. The assertion by the working class of its demand for the right to work is essential. The limitations of the UCS issue, however were that it was purely defensive, and insofar as its basis was that members of the working class had the "right" to keep the same job that they always had in a relatively unproductive and declining sector, this particular defence had a reactionary aspect. The demand for the right to work would have been progressive and offensive instead of reactionary and defensive if the demand had been for adequate productive investment to be provided for new jobs in the Upper Clyde area to replace those which were being lost in the shipyard. In the long run this would have been more economical, would have meant a more productive allocation of resources and would have provided a greater guarantee for the progressive development of the employment opportunities and living standards of the Upper Clyde workers. In other words, the welfare of the working class would have been more firmly based on the progressive development of the productive forces instead of on the false security of Conservatism.

(ii) The present economic struggle waged by the trade union movement has led to an impasse. Wage increases which continue to exceed the increases in productivity must have either one of two results or a mixture of both. Such increases in unit labour costs must either be compensated for by price rises — thereby leading to the undermining of the real value of such wage increases by

the process of inflation, or alternatively, such increasing unit labour costs remain uncompensated, investment funds are consequently reduced, and new employment opportunities are greatly restricted because of the inevitable stagnation in the development of the productive forces. What is gained by one section of the working class in such a free for all economic struggle therefore, ultimately ends up by being at the expense of its more vulnerable sections. A continuation of this type of economic struggle, with its inevitable self-defeating and sectarian consequences, is clearly not in the interests of the working class. Progress demands that wages be consciously regulated at the level of the national economy including the actual wage of every member of the working class. Instead of sections of the working class combating against each other, open political discussion, debate and assertion of class force should lead to conscious determination not alone of the amount comprising the total wage fund, but actual individual wages.

(iii) Such a development on the wages front will not, of course, and must not, proceed in a vacuum. In the absence of a decisive change in the acknowledged balance of power and authority in the relations of production in favour of the working class, the present self-defeating form of economic struggle will continue as an instinctive defensive reaction to the detrimental effects of the elements of economic life uncontrolled by the working class — privately-decided production and investment decisions, inadequate price-controls over a basic item such as food, and other aspects of inflation. Such a defensive response will, however, not redress the situation but only make matters worse by widening further the existing vicious circle. The extension of democratic control by the working class over the elements of the economy as a whole as well as over decision-making in the individual plant is a prerequisite for any solution. Where the provision of adequate investment funds necessitates very definite wage-restraint, it would be naive to expect such restraint to be forthcoming without workers' control over the utilisation and allocation of such funds being secured as a quid pro quo. As long as the trade union movement continues to use its economic power in its current self-defeating manner — instead of making economic concessions in return for gaining control over production on the industrial democracy front, its role will become more and more reactionary. Insofar as the trade union movement does advance such a strategy, and such inroads on its power are registered by the bourgeoisie, it will only be in this context that the bourgeoisie will now have become demonstrably reactionary.

(iv) The working class' interests are furthered by the class enforcing the extension of democracy to the regulation of conditions of production at shopfloor level. At this level, management as the representative of the shareholder is unnecessary and unproductive. The working class have the ability to regulate production at the shopfloor level in order to maximise

production (their own exploitation). The fact that they are not doing so at the moment is actually holding back the development of the productive forces: management by representatives of the shareholders is in practice reactionary since the shareholders have never had any effective control over conditions of production and the management have in fact never managed as the shareholders dictated but always according to the objective conditions of production as management saw them, i.e. management have had an autocratic job. The "responsibility" of management to shareholders ends with the payment of dividends for the formal titles to capital the shareholders own. Again, the Labour Party's plans for "workers control" which envision the use of management consultants on behalf of the working class should be strenuously resisted because they seek to continue to enforce a division of labour which is both hierarchical and autocratic.

12. The above changes must involve changes in what trade unions and the political party of the working class do. To the extent that the trade unions as institutions recognise the need for such changes and fight for them to that extent will they continue to be mass organisations of the working class. This is similarly true of the Labour Party. Communists can have no a priori denunciations of either trade unions or the Labour Party: i.e. Communists cannot argue that these institutions have betrayed the working class by not organising on behalf of these changes, because these institutions have NOT flouted the working class' conscious will be so acting.

However, Communists can and must point out that the trade unions and the Labour Party have not been adequately defending and furthering the interests of the working class because they have refused to look objective reality in the face and change according to it. Communists must first therefore go to the working class and describe and analyse the changes in the economic base: explain the development of the productive forces under capitalism. Communists must then argue for the above changes (11.(i),(ii), and (iii)) as being in the interests of the working class. To the extent that Communists are successful in changing the consciousness of the working class and also organising the class in support of these changes, to that extent will the trade unions and the Labour Party be forced to change and reflect the change in the class. To call the trade unions and the Labour Party 'class traitors' before the class itself has changed is indeed to lay ourselves open for accusations of splitting the working class. It is more scientific to describe the Labour Party and the trade unions for what they are: reactionaries acting for the working class. The political initiative then lies with Communists: the Labour Party and trade unions must explain and defend their actions. Faced with 'class traitor', the Labour Party and trade unions can quite correctly state that they have flouted no consciously expressed direction of the working class.

13. To the extent that the bourgeoisie resist the above changes, to that extent will they be behaving as reactionaries and therefore the working class be able to effectively counter the resistance not only with the use of its class force but also with its conscious assertion of class initiative and class ability in developing the productive forces. Until this is the situation, the bourgeoisie cannot be criticised by Communists for urging change on the working class on the basis that they are "reactionary" and flouting working class' interests. Communists must insist on describing the actions of the bourgeoisie in a scientific way and if the bourgeoisie are acting so as to develop the productive forces, this must be acknowledged. Communists must show the working class that there is a need to assert the working class' interests in an ever more conscious and political way if the working class is even to 'keep up' with the development of the productive forces. Communists must show the working class that the working class has a 'right' to expect the bourgeoisie to curb its own interests to make concessions only to the extent that the working class can challenge the basis of the bourgeoisie's power: i.e. their role in the development of the productive forces.

Original spelling and syntax have been retained throughout here.

5

TOWARDS SOCIALISM: INTEGRATED PROPOSALS FOR THE QM

C.K. Maisels, J. Nussey and T McCulloch.

August '73

I. The Scientific World Outlook: the basis of Marxism

1. The central line of Menshevism (the attempt to use Marxism the more effectively to effect reforms for their own sake) in philosophy, is mechanical materialism, — the (now) historically obsolete world view of the radical bourgeois of the period of the Great French Revolution, whose highest exponents were Helvetius and Holbach. The world is seen as matter in given chains of cause and effect.

2. Since this is the combative ideology of rising capitalism, of necessity it appears in economics as the blind worship of the 'development of the productive forces.'

3. The standpoint of scientific socialism, as dialectical materialism, subsumes the standpoint of mechanical materialism and that of idealist monism (subjectivism) into a qualitatively new synthesis. Therefore any attempt to revert to mechanical materialism either in the field of philosophy or economics (where it is less obvious) is reactionary. Dialectics holds the process of change to proceed by quantitative steps until a critical point is reached, whereupon a quantum jump occurs resulting in a qualitatively new stage in the existence of the entity in question. It regards this as a continual, but discontinuous, spiral motion: the resultant of internal contradiction between and within its elements, and between the entity and its environment. With this interpenetrative dynamic model, equilibrium is momentary and transient (e.g. $\frac{dy}{dx} = 0$), disequilibrium change is the norm.

4. The standpoint of scientific socialism is that classes are relatively progressive to one another, according as one represents in a particular context the potential for the development of the means of subsistence and the advance of knowledge. Marxism conceives of everything as being relative, since it conceives of the universe in a state of flux caused by the tensions of antithesis. In the endless universal dynamic of generation, development, decline and demise, the only thing permanent is change. Marxism holds that the universe consists of matter in motion according to natural law; and that the fundamental course of human history is determined by the discovery and utilisation of these natural laws in procuring the means of human subsistence; therefore that history is determined by natural laws mediated by society, i.e. is natural law at one stage removed, creating a complex of new phenomena marking the evolution of human society, which only a truly dialectical approach can accurately describe, thereby allowing conscious determination.

5. Accordingly, in social matters there are no absolute categories. Feudalism is palpably progressive compared with slavery. And capitalism is progressive compared with feudalism. But these are transient and highly relative appellations. They apply only because, and as long as, the social system is another major link in the chain of history from primitive to scientific communism — when truly human history will really begin. But if we once lose that perspective of relativeness, we are reduced to mere apologists for, and appendages of, the prevailing mode of production.

6. If we consciously or unconsciously renounce the dialectical approach of seeing a thing in all its aspects, we become what Marx called “vulgar economists” and “vulgar philosophers” — we have elevated the relative to the absolute.

7. In developing the first purely and comprehensively scientific world view Marx, for the first time, was able to describe the real historic significance of capitalism as the penultimate stage of class society.

8. Materialism is the description of what is. Dialectical materialism is such a comprehensive description of what is, that truly conscious intervention is for the first time possible. Marx, therefore, in describing the very progressiveness of capitalism, had of necessity to stress graphically its demerits. Otherwise, there is nothing conditional, interim, and transient about the system described; the status quo has become the best of all possible worlds, or according to reformists, with minor changes not affecting its basis, will readily become the best of all possible worlds. In such a condition must be the worshippers of the productive forces and why, therefore, can it not continue to do so with the accession of some new helpers and ideas?

9. The working class, which, like the bourgeoisie, are, according to historical materialism, destined to effect a revolution in the society for and under the hegemony of their own class interest — no longer have this historical mission, according to mechanical materialism — the proletarians are to modify their outlook, as too are the bourgeoisie, and the two will grow into each other, simply because the productive forces are advancing, and all are supposed to worship this ‘good’ equally.

10. The dynamics of the development of history according to Marxism are ignored or repudiated by mechanical materialists. They choose to forget that upon the basis of any given means of production, there develops a superstructure representing and consolidating the relationships of individuals to the means of production, and therefore, of classes thereto, being those sharing a common relationship. It is forgotten that the relations of production thus generated hold until the techniques of production have outgrown the parameters of the relations of production, whereupon the class representing the new means of production supplants that class whose interests have given rise to the former mode, and establish their own in their place. This mechanism, and this alone, does historical materialism show us to be the only way in which progress is effected both in the base and in the superstructure. Therefore, since we believe that history is governed by law, and is not an arbitrary process determined by individuals, mobs or armies, it gives us no reason whatever for assuming that advance can happen in any other way whatsoever.

11. So, not only do the productive forces worshippers forget that production, as to quality and quantity, is always in the interests of the class owning them, and against the class working them, but even in their own narrowly philistine view, they themselves, if they could become a social force, would be a hindrance to the development of the very productive forces they have deified. Though a new mode of production revolutionises the means of production relative to its forerunners, unless we either assume that we have reached the final mode of production, or repudiate Marxism, it cannot possibly do other than develop up to, but not beyond the limits of its own mode — in the case of capitalism, the private ownership of these

means as capital. The existence of classes and private property itself shows us that the ultimate stage can certainly not have been reached — that the contradiction between increasing socialisation of the techniques of production at one pole and aggregation of capital at the other, must sooner or later break out into open class conflict with the supplanting of the old by the new class — of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat — when qualitatively new advances in the means of production can then proceed. Even the straightforward jettisoning of the more negative features of capitalism (but inseparable ones) as the duplication-advertising-waste, consumerist vicious circle would release an enormous amount of currently existing productive forces.

II Marxism is Contrary to Economic Determinism

12. “Communists must show the working class that there is a need to assert the working class’ interests in an ever more conscious and political way if the working class is even to ‘keep up’ with the development of the productive forces. Communists must show the working class that the working class has a ‘right’ to expect the bourgeoisie to curb its own interests, to make concessions only to the extent that the working class can challenge the basis of the bourgeoisie’s power, i.e. their role in the development of the productive forces.” (Workers’ Control Draft, p4, para. 13).

13. There is no challenge whatever in this perspective; as seen above, it is a simple, not to say simplistic, desire to convince the working class that their interests are equally, if not more, served by the development of the productive forces within qualitatively unchanged, but reformed, prevailing relations of production. As it happens, even if we were to abrogate our duty by failing to ask *cui bono?* “for whom?”, we have seen that there can be no qualitative development of the means of production until it is in the untrammelled interests of another class — the proletariat — to effect it. To say that the one comes about through the other, through the realisation and effecting of a common interest between the two classes in the development of the means of production, flies in the face of historical materialism, of Marxism, of class struggle, and therefore is class collaboration.

14. What remains to be asked is whether the productive forces are yet at the stage where the building of Socialism can begin. This question was clearly answered in the affirmative over a century ago by Marx and Engels themselves. That in our own century socialist construction was undertaken upon much inferior means of production than Britain already possessed at least fifty years previous, gives the lie to the economic determinists, who regard History as uni-causal — a direct linear

function of the advance of the base. Engels was highly explicit about economic determinists: “... According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure — political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions, forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into a system of dogmas — also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form. There is an interaction of all these elements in which, amid all the endless host of accidents (that is, of things and events whose inner interconnection is so remote or so impossible of proof that we can regard it as non-existent, as negligible) the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary. Otherwise the application of theory to any period of history would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree...”

“Marx and I are ourselves partly to blame for the fact that the younger people sometimes lay more stress on the economic side than is due to it. We had to emphasise the main principle vis-a-vis our adversaries, who denied it, and we had not always the time, the place, or the opportunity to give their due to the other elements involved in the interaction. But when it came to presenting a section of history, that is, to making a practical application, it was a different matter and there was no error was permissible. Unfortunately, however, it happens only too often that people think they have fully a new theory and can apply it without more ado from the moment they have assimilated its main principles, and even those not always correctly. And I cannot exempt many of the more recent ‘Marxists’ from this reproach, for the most amazing rubbish has been produced in this quarter, too...” (Engels to J Bloch, Sept 21-2, 1890, Sel Corr p417).

15. With this simplistic approach the RSDLP Mensheviks opposed the Bolsheviks and proletarian revolution. They at least had the excuse that capitalism itself was of recent advent in Russia, so too was the theory of Historical Materialism, as rendered Dialectical by Marx. Plekhanov himself, the Grand Old Man of Russian Marxism, who virtually single-handed launched it in Russia, was not free from elements of mechanical materialism in his thinking and writing (invaluable as it was); of necessity ending up despite much prevarication in the Menshevik camp fighting Lenin. Our contemporary Mensheviks have no such excuse — they do after all call themselves Historical Materialists.

III From the Particular to the General

16. The proposals offered in the draft by Stead, Jones and O'Riordan supposedly arise out of particular historical and contemporary events, giving rise to an overview from which their proposals are the practical outcome. As has been shown many times in the pages of the Communist, those particulars are individually and collectively false. However, in the draft only one, but a central one to their thesis, is directly cited — the experience of UCS. Since the title of their draft is "Workers' Control", and this is their central theme, the analysis of workers' control in UCS is their major prop in terms of the contemporary developments they hold invalidate "orthodox" Marxist analysis on British society and the British state. It must therefore be closely scrutinised.

17. "The limitations of the UCS issue, however, were that it was purely defensive, and insofar as its basis was that members of the working class had the 'right' to keep the same job that they always had in a relatively unproductive and declining sector, this particular defence had a reactionary aspect. The demand for the right to work would have been progressive and offensive instead of reactionary and defensive if the demand had been for adequate productive investment to be provided for new jobs in the Upper Clyde area to replace those that were being lost in the shipyards." (WC draft, p2).

18. Here we have blatant epistemological trickery: "insofar as the basis was that members of the working class had the 'right' " etc... "this particular defence had a reactionary aspect." Where was it ever shown that this was the actual basis of their demands? Nowhere. It has been smuggled in here as a gloss (but a crucial one) by someone who has no idea of even the number of men employed by UCS at the time of the crisis (TC 41, pl, where it is given as 6000) — and upon such knowledge and such logical consistencies are 8,290 men condemned as reactionary; and likewise virtually the whole Glasgow area proletariat in supporting these demands to a man, a working class described by NS as: "on Clydeside the working class is more highly organised politically than anywhere in Britain. The origins of the Shop Stewards' Movement are on Clydeside in the First World War." (TC 41, p3).

19. The substance of the demands and the background against which they were made is as follows:

(a) World trade over the past decade has been advancing at about 10% per annum. The world merchant fleet has been growing at 5% per year; 4% excluding tankers' tonnage. Excluding giant tankers and ore carriers (as the present state of the upper reaches limits tonnage to 100,000), there is enormous scope in this expanding

industry, as long as the yards are refashioned to consist of new capital formation with accompanying new production and management techniques, to produce specialised (market-researched) standardised ships on a production line basis.

(b) In an area which has been desperately, but with limited success, trying to diversify out of the traditional heavies since the war, the men's demand of their right to work in marine construction on the upper reaches was the only realistic demand — both economically, politically and socially — that they could have made. With Clydeside still very dependent upon marine engineering, male unemployment at the time ran at 8%, representing one-third of all Scotland's unemployed. The percentage might vary a few points from good to bad years, but structural unemployment is the central reality of Clydeside economics. The natural advantages upon which a successful economic revival would be based are still those of the river, with its industrial hinterland — an engineering conurbation. By making their demands for the capital to be made available to effect their right to employment, the workers in fact understood the economic geography of Clydeside far better than their traditional bosses (who would not re-invest) and the last two Governments with their alleged experts. The physical and sustained interference with the rights of private property, forced capitalism at local, national and international levels to develop the productive forces in actuality; in the only efficient way, by building and utilising to the full the historical assets of the area, consisting of an aggregation of engineering works and skills; a large pool of skilled and underemployed, but organised labour; space, services, and the river plus estuary, itself.

20. The more acute of the bourgeois commentators, i.e. those (relatively few) with a comprehensive understanding of economic processes, were in no doubt about what form "adequate productive investment to be provided for new jobs in the upper Clyde area" should really take;

"Under Douglas UCS was being confined to the relative mass production of types of ships actually needed in world trade in the future. And the cost of saving UCS as a whole is clearly limited. The reduction in losses shows that it is no longer — as it once was — a question of bottomless pit swallowing any likely Government aid, but of a once and for all payment of probably, around £10 million in working capital and physical improvements.

"Not spending money will, of course, cost the Government itself somewhat more than £10 million — and the economy as a whole far more. Given that there are twenty men looking for every job in the area, given too, that the average period for which men are out of work there is now reckoned as several months, the straight cost of keeping the UCS men on the dole will be more than £10 million. The cost to the economy in lost production and exports, avoidable imports, reduced spending power is, of course higher.

“But too much emotional pride (read; face and authority — CKM, JN, TMcC) is now involved for the Government to behave efficiently and rationally. No-one in Government has ever explained why the group could not be industrially viable — the report of the Four Wise Men (sic!) none of whom was professionally connected with shipbuilding-engineering, or indeed any other manufacturing industry, simply (in its published version at least) sums up the anti-UCS (and by implication anti-Douglas) feelings prevalent among Britain’s old-line shipbuilders. It could and did easily throw up its hands in horror at the past — but the change in UCS has been sufficient to make this history irrelevant.”

21. And his conclusion: “Both Labour and Conservative have behaved like very incompetent shareholder capitalism. The Government’s present behaviour is precisely that of a panic-stricken shareholder (of the more philistine sort — CKM, JN, TMcC) or banker who hasn’t bothered enough about an investment in the past, knows it, feels guilty about the results of his past neglect, therefore refuses to look coolly at the situation, simply says he will not throw good money after bad, damns the whole thing and tries to forget about it. This is the UCS pattern. But it doesn’t make sense, not capitalist sense, not socialist sense, not any sort of sense.” (Sunday Times Business News, 5.7.71).

22. But the workers made it make sense — being at the point of production they know what could and should be made to happen with the resources of the area. And there can be no dispute now about the correctness of their actions — events have spoken and as always have the final say. Their demands for all the jobs and all the yards to remain in existence have been fully met in the re-structuring that they demanded. The men always said they would fully co-operate in a genuine refashioning of the yards. They did so in Fairfields and throughout UCS itself; in 1970 steel erection was at the rate of 867 tons per week, in 1971 it was 1450 tons. At the onset of the crisis (as now) UCS had full order books — 30 ships valued at over £90 million i.e. 10% of tonnage, but 13% by value of the UK industry as a whole (312 ships worth £690 million). In 1968 UCS built three ships, in 1971, a ship every three and a half weeks.

23. Now the biggest and most obsolete yard, John Browns, is being rebuilt to take full advantage of the huge and lucrative North Sea Oil market — thanks entirely to the physical potential — the real going concern upon which to base new capital investment, being forcibly brought to the attention of competent international capital like Marathon. Likewise, grossly incompetent Government capital was compelled by proletarian consciousness to invest in the now thriving Govan Shipbuilders (UCS without Browns), instead of the castrated and unsound 2000 man affair originally proposed. All the yards, all the jobs (and more) are now solidly based in expanding key markets.

24. So what now of the supercilious platitudes of the Workers’ Control Draft: “In the long run this...(demand for adequate productive investment to be provided for new jobs)...would have meant a more productive allocation of resources and would have provided...” etc. (p2). The working class have already settled the matter in their own long and short term interests by direct conscious action. And it is precisely this that the Workers’ Control Draft is designed to obstruct; which is only to be expected considering the specious premises upon which that reactionary reformist document is based.

IV Proposals on Working Class Organisation and Communist Strategy

25. Accordingly, our specific proposals were conceived in direct opposition to the Workers’ Control Draft of NS, RJ and MOR. We cannot accept the principles behind that draft for the following reasons:

- (i) the draft was based upon wrong assumptions about the nature and function of the British state; such assumptions have arisen through a failure to view the state from a thorough historical materialist position, and lead inevitably to a blind and groundless confidence in a peaceful transition towards socialism in Britain, i.e. a non-dialectical, linear progression from a capitalist to a socialist mode of production (by quantitative steps without the necessity for a qualitative leap);
- (ii) the demands proposed by the draft are not consistent with the revolutionary class interests of the working class, either in the long or short-term;
- (iii) these (i and ii) because the whole line rests on a string of economic, historical and philosophical fallacies, as shown above and in articles in the Communist.

26. This draft will propose and set forth a long term strategy for the consideration of the B+ICO. It is a strategy based upon a form of organisation which will strengthen and foster the political and economic unity of the working class, helping to bring about a qualitative change in their class consciousness; an organisational structure which will be capable of defending the interests of the working class within capitalism more effectively than the Labour Party and orthodox trade union movement have been capable of thus far; and which will give the working class scope for increasing initiative and responsibility within industry, while at the same time being thoroughly suited to make the transition from the capitalist to the socialist mode of production with the working class. It is an organisational structure which is designed to enforce the dictatorship of the proletariat whilst the socialist transformation is enacted.

27. GA Williams has recognised the revolutionary potential of workshop committees for the working class. He has also pinpointed a serious problem to which he has not posited the solution: viz, how to prevent a form of working class organisation based upon a system of workshop committees degenerating into synicalism. This draft will propose a solution to that problem — a way to combine the economic and political activity of the working class along revolutionary lines. However, the ideas put forward in this draft are not original — they have the strength of being based upon the historical experience of the working class. Our proposals are alien to the social democratic tradition which has evolved in the working class movement: a tradition which now hampers and actively abstracts the further class-conscious development of the workers. They are, however, firmly grounded in the experience of the revolutionary wing of the British labour movement. Some of the ideas behind this draft were first articulated by Daniel DeLeon as far back as 1896; his original ideas were adapted by the Socialist Labour Party of Great Britain, whose members participated in and gave theoretical leadership to the WWI Shop Stewards' and Workers' Committee Movement. DeLeon's ideas were developed during this period by the SLP taking account of the material reality of the class nature of the British state. Members of the B+ICO are strongly advised to read the following works if at all possible: 'Reform or Revolution', DeLeon (1896); 'What Means This Strike', DeLeon (1898); 'The Burning Question of Trade Unionism', DeLeon (1904); 'Preamble to the IWW' (or 'Socialist Reconstruction of Society') DeLeon (1905); 'The State: Its Origin and Function'; Wm Paul (1918); 'The Workers' Committee': JT Murphy (1917); 'Direct Action' William Gallagher and JR Campbell (1919) (last two are available as reprints from IS at 20p)

These works are usually ignored by modern so-called Communists and are not widely available; yet they form an important part of the body of revolutionary literature and are fundamental background to the proposals in this draft. DeLeon developed his theory along the same lines as Lenin, although the two were quite independent and DeLeon died before Lenin came across his works. Lenin did, however, have the following to say to John Reed about DeLeon in 1918, as reported by Reed to the Americal SLP in May of that year: "Premier Lenin is a great admirer of Daniel DeLeon, considering him the greatest of modern socialists, the only one who has added anything to socialist thought since Marx. It is Lenin's opinion that the industrial state as conceived by DeLeon will ultimately have to be the form of Government in Russia." The British SLP is particularly an organisation which is worthy of more recognition and analysis by the B+ICO, especially as it is our direct forerunner in terms of its consciousness of the primacy of theory.

V The Nature and Function of the British State

28. If we are to accept the analysis of NS, the modern British State, despite the class nature stressed by Marx, Engels, Lenin et al, has historically evolved as a benevolent institution, capable of being used by all classes in society to further their interests, with the sole proviso that they must first convince society at large that changes will benefit 'society as a whole'. Let us examine the historical and present facts about the state to see if they really uphold this untraditional (for Communists, though not for reformists) assertion about the inherent non-class nature of the State. This point is fundamental for any true Communist strategy.

29. NS's present position vis-a-vis a peaceful transition to socialism and the nature of the British state is outlined in TC 59. There she notes that Lenin's comments about peaceful transition in Britain were based on the British state during World War I. Since the standing conscripted army and extensive wartime state controls and regulations were disbanded or fell into disuse after the war, NS would claim that Lenin's statement re the British state and the non-possibility of peaceful transition here are now no longer necessarily valid. Such a position must imply that the British state somehow returned to its pre-1914 condition, when Marx and Engels could posit a remote, but extremely dubious possibility of a peaceful transition. Did this in fact happen? The answer is no. Wartime conditions could not continue long after the war — but economic conditions had been drastically changed by the war, and the British state could not return to the pre-war reality — that reality no longer existed. The Defence of the Realm Act remains on the Statute Book, as do the emergency powers which the Executive (by-passing Parliament) can assume in times of crisis — both came into their own during the General Strike and in World War II and there is no reason to assume that they will not do so again when the working class asserts itself. In the field of industrial relations too, there exist numerous conciliation schemes — Whitley Councils were established during World War I and continue to this day, to cite just one example of that bureaucracy to which Lenin was referring, which did not die a death after war had ceased.

30. Let us examine the present state in Britain — we will find a continuing and increasing state bureaucracy. The Welfare state is composed of red-tape and a vast army of state-employed officials. In whose interests do they work? — are the working class informed by such officials of what they are entitled to under the National Health and welfare state legislation? — or is it not the case that the working class must first manoeuvre through a maze of form-filling and means test

measures before they receive payment and welfare services (and not their full entitlement either)! Is this bureaucracy therefore not a control mechanism? Then we have the nationalised industries which NS and RJ in their Communist articles view as a positive step towards socialism (what NS terms a 'socialist measure') — although:

- (i) public sector workers are still wage slaves;
- (ii) their income lags continuously behind their equivalent colleagues in the private sector, not to mention the red-tape that surrounds collective bargaining within the nationalised industries!
- (iii) the workers in the industries do not elect or participate in management, with the exception of 15 'worker directors' on the steel industry's plant boards, these being appointed by the BSC Board of Directors and the TUC not elected or selected by the shop floor workers. On the contrary, bourgeois commentators have pointed out that the distribution of plum jobs in the 'Public Sector' is the Government-of-the-day's major source of patronage outside the top ranks of the Civil Service.

31. Nationalisation is not a revolutionary step towards Socialism, since it leaves the system of wage slavery untouched; it is a quantitative reform measure necessitated by international competition and the need to strengthen, by centralising, those industries upon which capitalist production is most dependent — service and infrastructural industries such as gas, electricity, water; communications and transport — GPO, air, rail, and to some extent, haulage; and essential raw material industries such as coal and steel. State control of such industries was demanded by the capitalist class only as soon as competitive forces in the world market and the non-viability of small private firms demanded such action. 'State Socialism' has been endorsed by the capitalist class because it is not a threat to the capitalist system, on the contrary, it is a reform within the capitalist system, which enables that system to function more effectively, given the underlying changes in the means of production and increasing competition from other capitalist states (c.f. Tory nationalisation of Imperial Airways (BOAC) and Rolls Royce, excluding the still profitable car section). To focus on nationalisation as a 'socialist measure' is to falsely mislead the working class; it should be stressed that it is simply a quantitative development within capitalism, whereas qualitative change in the mode of production is required by proletarian class interests. But an important point to remember is that such increasing state control over social and economic affairs,

while not leading to Socialism, since it leaves the system of wage slavery untouched, does result in an increase in State officialdom to administer the industries or social services: in other words, the British State has (and continues) to develop a State bureaucracy (the latest example of which is the Pay Board set up under present Phase Two of the Government's statutory incomes' policy), which operates solely in the interests of the existing capitalist system, and therefore must by definition act against the revolutionary interest of the working class.

32. The ruling class in Britain today does not have a standing conscripted army as it had in 1917. But precisely because this is the case, it is false to deny that the state does have armed force at its disposal to use against a revolutionary working class movement. The following exist to uphold the capitalist system should the need arise: a well-equipped, disciplined regular army, navy and air force, all trained in the latest techniques of counter-insurgency, especially in an urban situation; a regular police force, which can be armed when necessary (there is an armoury in all police stations); a special police force to supplement the latter; a territorial army. The important point about these is that they are recruited in the main (with the exclusion of officers) from the ranks of the working class — they are volunteers, who have opted to become mercenaries in the service of the capitalist system, i.e. they identify themselves economically and ideologically with the interests of the bourgeoisie, not the working class. In addition, the British state is further served by the existence of: courts to uphold laws which protect the interests of property; a press and mass media complex which presents 'news' from the point of view of the capitalist interest; and an education system which teaches those skills and facts most requisite for the maintenance of capitalism — it does not propagate for example, historical materialism or encourage the reading of philosophy or even politically controversial literature (it does however propagate religion). But the most potent card in the hands of the bourgeoisie and the British state is the intelligence network, which keeps it accurately informed of events and organisations which act directly, or indirectly, against the interests of the present system. To be forewarned is to be forearmed; and intelligence allows the bourgeoisie to subvert and counter.

33. These weapons in the hands of the British bourgeoisie are built into the very framework of the existing British state. Yet they have received no detailed recognition in the articles of NS and RJ, nor yet in the Workers Control Draft. Also ignored by the Drafters is the existence of NATO and the EEC. NATO has always been as much a mutual insurance society against the internal enemy as a defence organisation against external attack. And the future integration of the various European state machines make more likely and effective intervention by other national bourgeoisies whenever the British bourgeoisie is faced with internal crisis. Where is the evidence to contradict these facts about the class nature of the British state, or to deny that the class interests which the state embodies and preserves are bourgeois, not working class?

34. The working class cannot hope to mirror all the weapons at the disposal of the British bourgeoisie. Yet any future organisation of the working class and all Communist strategy must of necessity take account of the existence of such weapons and their incorporation into the British state; Communists must devise means whereby the working class can effectively counter the use of such weapons by the bourgeoisie against the proletarian revolution. There are two key points to be made here: (i) the working class must be ideologically armed against these weapons — any emphasis upon 'peaceful transition' leaves the working class ideologically unprepared to face the possibility of the use of these weapons. (ii) historical materialism reveals that the seizure of power by a subject class has always involved the use of physical violence — if not actually necessary for the seizure of power, a resort to physical violence has always been required to retain power against counter-revolutionary forces which will naturally arise after the event — the working class must therefore be prepared for the use of physical violence to defend the proletarian revolution should the need arise — this is what is implicit in the term 'dictatorship of the proletariat'.

35. Finally, the bourgeoisie's weapons must be countered with economic and political force by the working class. This requires organisation; and that organisation must provide the framework through which future socialist society can be administered under a political and economic dictatorship of the proletariat. The organisational structure must therefore allow the working class to amass in its hands sufficient economic and political power to make the capitalist class redundant, both in planning and organising the means of production and in determining the relations of production. Thus, when the working class eventually seize power in the proletarian revolution, the bourgeoisie will be unable to dislocate production or take social reprisals on the working class — its only resort will be to physical violence and sabotage, against which possibilities the workers must have been prepared and fore-armed.

VI The Organisational Framework

36. The organisation we propose is based on both the economic and social needs of the working class.

37. Most industries can be easily divided according to factories — (in the rail industry it will be the depot/station; in the mining industry it will be the mine; and similar adjustments will need to be made where the particular industry requires it). Factories are usually divided into workshops, which in turn consist of various departments. The elementary unit of economic organisation will therefore be the departmental committee, composed of delegates elected by all the workers in the department irrespective of union membership or non-membership — to strengthen

the spirit of unionism in the working class, however, it will be necessary to insist that only union members will be eligible to act as delegates; the electorate though must be the entire work force to ensure the mandate of the departmental committee in dealings with the management and 100% strike action when required. Delegates will be elected (by a PR system) on a numerical basis — the proportion (i.e. 1 delegate per n workers) and size of departmental committee will obviously depend on the number of workers in the department and must be decided accordingly. The departmental committee will be responsible for all matters concerning departmental work conditions.

38. Each workshop in the factory will form a workshop committee, composed of delegates elected from the departmental committees: one delegate per departmental committee. It will be the function of the workshop committee to deal with all matters arising at workshop level and to co-ordinate inter-departmental activity where this is required.

39. Each factory will form its own factory committee, consisting of all the delegates on the workshop committees in small factories, or one delegate per workshop where the number of workshops is large. It will be the job of this committee to co-ordinate activity within the factory and to demand increasing workers' control of the management of the factory.

40. The next level in the economic organisational structure will be the area or district level, based on viable socio-economic geographic areas. Examples of such districts would be the Clydeside conurbation, Merseyside conurbation, Tyneside conurbation etc. At the district level there would exist two forms of district industrial committees:

- (i) a district committee for each industry, composed of one delegate from each factory committee of that industry within the area. This committee would co-ordinate the activity of all the factories should an industrial dispute arise — it would aim to raise and gain parity of workshop conditions and workers' managerial responsibility within the particular industry between all the factories under its jurisdiction;
- (ii) a district committee of all industries for the area — this committee will of necessity be larger than its intra-industrial counterparts and should likewise include one delegate for each factory, shipyard, mine, transport depot, etc., within its area. The function of this committee would be to co-ordinate industrial action between industries on an area basis.

41. At the regional level there would similarly be two ctees: a regional ctee. for each industry, and an inter-industrial regional ctee. Their functions would be to co-ordinate activity and demands at the regional level within each industry or between all industrial district committees respectively. The regions would be determined on socio-economic geographical criteria; they will approximate at first to local government regions determined on similar lines; the ctees would consist of one delegate from each district ctee. (industrial or inter-industrial respectively).
42. At the national level a similar arrangement would pertain: a national ctee. for each industry, and a national ctee. for all industries. Delegates would be elected on the basis of one per regional ctee. The size of the ctees. would therefore be determined not merely by the number of industries (in the case of the inter-industrial ctee), but also on the basis of the number of regions decided upon — this is a detail to be decided after the strategy has been accepted, and would need periodic review to ensure that the regions correspond to socio-economic geographic reality. The functions of the national ctees. would be: (i) in the case of the individual industrial ctees. — to negotiate on a national level with management on matters pertaining to wage levels, work conditions, and workers' control demands in their particular industry; and (ii) the inter-industrial ctee. would co-ordinate all industrial activity at the national level whenever disputes or demands for workers' control over investment, production priorities, etc. required national action to enforce the demand.
43. At all levels from districts upwards the industrial ctees will function as sub-ctees. of the inter-industrial ctee. — the latter having final responsibility for co-ordination.
44. The social organisation of the working class is proposed to counter the tendency towards syndicalism which would be inherent in any form of organisation which relied on economic units alone. The proposed structure is as follows:
45. Residential ctees. will be formed, based on viable socio-economic geographic community areas, within the district areas covered by the economic organisation. Delegates will be elected on the basis of one per thousand of the population, by a system of proportional representation. Since the residential ctees. are intended to fight for the social demands of the working class, only members of the working class would be eligible to vote or stand for election to the ctees. The residential ctees. would fight for working class interests, e.g. in housing, social welfare measures, amenities, educational facilities, etc. They would organise those members of the working class which are at present outside the scope of the traditional union structure — working class wives and families and the unemployed. Their areas and functions will be roughly equivalent to those occupied by tenants' associations at present, although the residential ctees. proposed would have far greater scope and force than tenants' associations, in that they will be co-ordinated with the economic organisational structure, thus being able to call upon the economic force of the

working class to support their broad social demands in an effective way. (The resolution of the rents question on Clydeside in WWI was achieved in this way).

46. Residential ctees. will be co-ordinated at the different levels through district and regional social ctees and a national social ctee. Delegates will be elected one from each residential ctee. to the district ctee; one from each district ctee to the regional ctee, and one from each regional ctee to the national social ctee
47. There is an obvious need for the co-ordination of the activities of the various economic and social ctees, so as to achieve the political unity of the working class. This would be achieved in the following way:
48. At the district level there will be formed a Workers' Council, consisting of all the delegates who sit on the inter-industrial district ctee. and the district social ctee. This Council will be responsible for co-ordinating the activity of both types of organisation — thus enabling the combined political activity of the working class to be used to enforce economic or social demands at the district level. Similar Workers' Councils would be formed along the same lines at the regional and national levels. They will form the political force of the working class outside of Parliament under the present system, and would be the political organisation for administering a socialist system of production. Political strategy and tactics will be decided and adopted at the national level and implemented at the regional and district level. The Workers' Councils at national and regional level would set up, jointly with the future Communist Party, Research and Information Bureaux, to provide social and industrial statistics, information etc. to the industrial and social ctees; they would be jointly responsible with a future CP for organising communist education classes for the working class and for distributing revolutionary literature down to the shop floor and housing estate level. The ultimate control of working class strategy, tactics, education classes and literature must reside with a future CP, since its activists would be developing and popularising the theory and propaganda required. The next step in the strategy is therefore to delineate the optimum lines of organisation for a future CP.

VII Communist Party Organisation

49. It must be the objective of a future CP to have its activists form the majority force on the Workers' Councils and related industrial and social ctees. For this to be achieved branches should wherever possible be coterminous with such ctees i.e. a branch should be formed in each factory and working class residential area.

Flexibility will obviously be necessary until membership is built up — at first branches would have to be formed where the required number of members were found, but such branches must eventually be directly related to the economic units and residential areas covered by the organisational cttees. if the CP is to be able to influence and guide the strategy and tactics adopted by the working class' organisational structure from the base upwards.

50. The crucial point of connection between the CP and the economic and social organisation of the working class will be at the district level — the level at which the first political co-ordination between economic and social activity by the working class occurs. A key body in the internal structure of the CP will therefore be the district cttee. of the CP, whose area will be coterminous with that of the district Workers' Council. The district committee of the CP must be responsible for guiding the struggle of the Workers' Council within their area in both social and economic demands — the members of the district cttee. of the CP would therefore seek to occupy places in the Workers' Council, forming a majority on that Council in relation to other political groupings: c.f. Trots of various breeds, reformists, social democrats, et al. Only in this way could the CP be assured of the strategy and tactics of the Workers' Councils and could the advance towards socialism be ensured.

51. It would be necessary to achieve such co-ordination between the CP internal organisation and the Workers' Councils etc. at the regional and national levels. At the national level of the CP, as well as a Central Cttee. to co-ordinate strategy and tactics and decide tactics between Party Congresses, it would be imperative to have a Social Cttee. and an Industrial Cttee of the CP for liaison with the National Social Cttee. and the National Industrial Cttee. (respectively) of the working class organisational structure, as well as the National Workers' Council. Thus the CP could effectively control and co-ordinate working class strategy and tactics at the national level along correct revolutionary lines, allowing no leeway for reformists or revisionists to influence such decisions.

52. As mentioned previously, the CP should be jointly responsible with the Workers' Councils for organising working class education classes in political economy, philosophy, historical materialism, etc., and for revolutionary literature and propaganda. Ideally, the CP should therefore aim to ultimately possess a press within each district and to publish a propaganda newspaper, or at least broadsheets, within each district reporting on local and national activity and demands, advertising education classes, demonstrations, etc. The Workers' Councils would then be responsible with the CP for distributing all literature, national and local, theoretical and propaganda, via industrial and social cttees. and CP branches. The CP would supply the teachers for the education classes, but such classes would have to be advertised and promoted via Workers' Councils and economic and social cttees.

Thus the knowledge and revolutionary consciousness of the greatest number of proletarians could be developed and tied in to their every day economic and social activity. The CP would have to retain sole responsibility for physically arming and organising the working class for seizure of power or protection of the proletarian revolution in the event of attempts at counter-revolution — although co-ordination could be attained by CP initiative via the Workers' Councils when such a situation was reached.

53. It is obvious that the membership of a future CP cannot influence events from the sidelines, being content just to formulate theory and abstractly 'persuade' the working class organisations to adopt the correct revolutionary strategy and tactics — there are too many competitors for such to be feasible; in any case it is ideologically vital (as well as a practical necessity) that the membership of the CP should be firmly based in the ranks of the working class, allowing no scope for intellectual 'dabblers', and that the membership should actively participate in working class organisation and struggle. The membership of the CP will therefore be drawn largely from the ranks of the working class at shop-floor and residential area level; and it should be a condition of membership that members shall be active in the organisational framework at such level, seeking to guide and influence working class action along the strategic and tactical lines set down by the Party. They would also provide in this way direct feedback from shop-floor etc. in deciding future CP tactics and the development of strategy. The movement cannot afford passengers — every member must pull their weight or lose the right to membership.

VIII Elections Within Organisational Framework

54. The attention of the working class must be channelled from Parliamentary and local government elections to the economic and social structure outlined in this draft, in order to ensure their full participation in that structure and give to it the class force to back the demands that will be made through the structure.

55. To be eligible to stand as candidates for industrial or social cttees. and Workers' Councils, candidates must satisfy the following criteria: they must be members of the working class; they must be nominated by at least two members of the working class in their dept., workshop etc, or residential area. To qualify for election to any economic cttee. (from departmental cttee upwards) candidates must have worked within industry for a minimum of 2 years and have been a member of an existing union for that time. To qualify for election to a residential cttee, candidates for a Workers' Council must have previous experience on an industrial or social cttee. For elections above departmental or residential cttee. level, including elections to Workers' Council, candidates must either be nominated by 2 members of the cttee. on which they already sit, or by 10 members of the

electorate of the cttee. to which they are seeking election.

56. Members of the working class will be eligible to vote in all elections to industrial or social cttees. at all levels. To allow for the maximum democracy in elections, all elections will be based on some form of proportional representation system.

IX Working Class Economic and Social Demands

57. It is not the object of this draft to set out specific tactical social and economic demands to be put by the working class — these will be determined by applying overall strategy to the particular situation as it arises. The first priority is not to anticipate and predict such specific tactics; it is to decide upon the strategic framework within which such tactics will have to be set.

58. The strategic revolutionary demands to be enforced by the working class are (i) workers control leading to demand for the ownership of all the means of production; (ii) workers' control of health services, education, social services, housing etc, i.e. leading to demand for hegemony over all aspects of social activity.

59. All tactical demands must therefore conform to the following criterion: they must be consistent with the revolutionary class interests of the proletariat both in the long and short-term.

60. The working class must be told that working class control of economic and social conditions is their historical right as a class: it is not a concession to be graciously bestowed by the bourgeoisie; it is not something to be bargained for and haggled over by the working class with the bourgeoisie; it is not a demand for which the working class will be called upon to make sacrifices in their present standard of living (e.g. by agreeing to a curb on wages, with or without reciprocal curbs on prices, rents, profits, etc, which is approved of by the Workers' Control Draft) — the working class must be made to understand their unconditional right to such a demand by virtue of their position as the revolutionary class in society, and that such a demand can only be achieved by control being seized by the working class' direct action, not given by the bourgeoisie.

61. Communists should therefore support the present economic struggles of the working class against threats to their economic organisation and standard of living, however limited and defensive their class perspective may be at present. Communists should also support the workers in their demands for increasing control over all aspects of production and social activity, but should at the same time attempt to give the workers a revolutionary perspective for those demands and an organisational form, through which such demands can be effectively enforced by the working class. Otherwise such support will fail to give constructive help towards the achievement of the proletariat's revolutionary class interests — it will be swamped by the mass of sympathetic clap-trap already offered by the 'left' to the working class.

X Conclusion

62. This document necessarily began with a re-statement of what we consider to be the only correct and validated Marxist world-view — upon which all Communist strategy must be predicated. We have shown that the Stead, Jones, ORiordan Draft is not built upon Marxist premises; on the contrary, neither in its world outlook not in its specific evaluation of contemporary events is it even dialectical.

63. It does great violence to historical materialism and, as one would therefore expect, has no regard for fact in specifics, nor theory in over-view.

64. Our proposals are necessarily comprehensive and integrated. Drawing upon the truly revolutionary historical experience of the proletariat and re-assessing it for the present, we here set out a structure within which large sections of the working class can attain self-consciousness.

65. Of necessity this must be achieved to a significant extent within capitalist society, before the proletariat can develop outwith it. But to do so, the proletariat must become self-acting in contradistinction to, in collision and contradiction with, the organs and ideology of capitalist society.

66. The organs of the proletariat developed in opposition to those of capitalism, when strong enough will supplant them. The capitalist state machine with all its ramifications will in no wise be taken over — they will be broken up, destroyed (sprengung, zerschlagen) by those created exclusively by the new class for its own use. From the very outset, the demands advanced and the structure with which they will be implemented, will be frankly proletarian and revolutionary: for the working class will be shown theoretically and organisationally just how to break out of capitalism by breaking away from it while it still dominates: starting now with its reformist diversions.

67. Accordingly, we can work neither within Parliament nor bourgeois councils, we can have no use for elections or their procedures on any pretext about using the machinery to expose the ideology or vice versa; for this constrains us objectively within bourgeois terms of reference, whatever we may subjectively think we are doing. Neither will we seek to capture posts in trade unions or on tribunals: but since trade unions are the basic training and fighting units (even if only defensively) of the working class, we will promote the substance of unionism (class organisation and solidarity) within our own Workers' Council movement, through our members belonging jointly to that and to trade unions. In so doing we shall fight the trade union establishment as we shall the Parliamentary one, seeking to supplant both. We must give the working class the clearest possible, most explicit alternative, if we are sincere in calling ourselves Communists — that can only be the fashioning of their own organs of power with Communist leadership towards revolution.

APPENDIX: PROPOSED ORGANISATIONAL FRAMEWORK

ECONOMIC		POLITICAL	SOCIAL
Departmental Cttee			
Workshop Cttee			Residential Cttee
Factory Cttee			
District Industrial (.....) Cttee (for each industry)	District Inter-Industrial Cttee	District Workers' Council	District Social Cttee
Regional Industrial (.....) Cttee	Regional Inter-Industrial Cttee	Regional Workers' Council	Regional Social Cttee
National Industrial (.....) Cttee	National Inter-Industrial Cttee	National Workers' Council	National Social Cttee

Key: (.....) acts as subcommittee

NB: There will be feedback on policy between Workers' Councils at all levels though there may not be necessarily direct connection between the delegates to Workers' Councils at different levels; i.e. members on Regional Workers' Councils will not be directly elected from delegates on the District Workers' Councils, and a similar relationship will apply to the National Workers' Council and the Regional Councils. Delegates at every level of the political structure will be drawn directly from Social and Inter-Industrial Committees to ensure the co-ordination of the whole structure at all levels. The work of delegates will of necessity be part-time; there will be no payment of salaries to delegates, only reimbursement of expenses, lost wages, etc, incurred while carrying out their work as delegates. This will prevent the organisation being infiltrated by political 'careerists'.

Title: Proletarian, No. 1

Organisation: Communist Organisation in the British Isles

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