

FIFTH PARTY CONGRESS

THE WORKER

The CPB(ML) Party newspaper, THE WORKER, is the main regular expression of the political dialogue between the working class Party and the working class itself. In its content must always be preserved this two-way flow of information and politics. The Party newspaper cannot but be on the agenda of a Congress primarily concerned with the relations of Party and class.

This weekly dialogue is listened in to by fraternal parties and by the representatives of fellow workers all over the world. What the working class of Britain, the world's first capitalist country, thinks and does cannot but have their effects and influence elsewhere. Thus THE WORKER figures under the general heading for this Congress: Britain in the World 1979.

Since the Fourth Party Congress the Party has acquired both the equipment and the skills to make us absolutely self-reliant in the writing, laying-out and printing of the paper, every single process of newspaper production now being under our control. These acquisitions both material and human were also achieved in a completely self-reliant way.

THE WORKER has now been a weekly paper for a year and a half with all that such a doubling of output means for the dialogue with our class. It has meant some new problems for the Party, particularly the metropolitan branches, in terms of manning commitments by those who all work at their jobs full time. However it has solved other problems and there is general agreement that the Party paper in both appearance and content has improved with the greater professionalism demanded by the increased incidence of publication.

The greater investment of Party funds and Party effort in the weekly production of the Party paper make it a political imperative that the distribution of THE WORKER should give it the widest possible influence among the working class. Party effort has to be concerted in distributing the Party paper so that it can play its full part in mobilising our class for its revolutionary tasks. As our class commitment grows at places of work and in our unions, so our need for more copies of THE WORKER to help us in our political work will also grow.

The easiest and most political form of distribution is among fellow workers in struggle whose efforts in class war are being covered in the Party paper as an encouragement to them and as an explanation of their action which will serve as a spur to others. Particularly is this so if it is a struggle in which our own members are actively involved. The working class has over the last year, ever since taking its correct stand on collective bargaining, multiplied the occasions on which this dialectic between political analysis of class action and distribution of the Party paper to the class could be maintained and strengthened.

It must be part of our resolve at this Congress to make a better Party paper better known to workers in Britain and elsewhere.

THE QUESTION OF DISCIPLINE IN A MARXIST - LENINIST PARTY

If there is a necessity for discipline in a marxist-leninist party there is no discipline. It must be remembered however that discipline in a party existing under bourgeois democracy will be different in detail if not in essence from that in a party where there is triumphant socialism or in one working under illegal conditions. Under capitalism, discipline must arise from conviction, from voluntary service, from reliability and capacity for self-sacrifice. Living in capitalism members are free to come and go from the party. Sometimes the reasons may appear reasonable, age, health, domestic or career difficulties or even pessimism. We should not accept these reasons without trying to persuade the comrade to think again but we part in friendliness and have perhaps an ally or at least a non-antagonistic contact. If however the ex-member parts in malice and slimes the party and its work with half-truths, with destructive criticism and with lies then we should not listen. A renegade does not have the right of criticism. It is unfortunate that many have doubts after enjoying the honour and material gain of acting as a party delegate to a socialist country. Delegations appear to be corrupting to weak people, perhaps we should have no more delegations.

Party discipline is on three levels. The simplest, the easiest to understand is the surface discipline, the body of rules thought out by any group of people wishing to work together in harmony. It may be simple to understand but this surface level of discipline is of vital importance to a party. A lost key, indiscreet chatter, or the unnecessary hampering of work by forgetting to arrive for a work appointment, causes the work to suffer, puts an extra burden on other people and to spies and enemies can give a handle-hold.

The second level is an intellectual understanding of the struggle of the British working class and the necessity for a marxist-leninist party. This means that all party members must have a thorough knowledge of the class, its history, the structure of its organisations, its aspirations. Prejudiced opinions based on ignorance, media propaganda and the opinions of enemies of the class are constantly quoted in the party. It is childish "left wing communism" with good Tory undertones.

The third and deepest level of discipline is the most difficult to acquire; the history of the communist movement of the last thirty years shows that in the whole world only a few ever achieve this. That discipline is the unshakeable conviction, gained by work, study, sacrifice, tenacity, an insistence on never accepting defeat or set back, that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the only way out of the intolerable situation forced on our class, that the working class is the only one capable of achieving this revolution and that the class (not individuals in the class) is the only source for progress and truth.

Discipline too gives a cohesion to the whole party. By means of discipline we shall learn to understand, to respect, to help each other to have the affection and the care that is seen in a successful family. The confusion in the world of capitalism and in the world of socialism, with the blow of the defeat of socialist China and the naive silliness being displayed in many fields affecting our own work in Britain by Albania, have to be understood. We cannot allow our work to be hampered by the ignorance and foolishness of others. The working class of Britain, in an organised way, is combatting its ruling class. Let us not either tag behind, late and timid, nor laud to the skies false militancy which is a cover for betrayal or for cowardice. Therefore it is the deepest level of discipline we must aim for. In so doing we shall show the modesty of a Stalin or a Chou en lai and hopefully some of their genius.

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ORGANIZATION

Main changes since last Congress

1. The membership has grown slightly and the number of branches has grown slightly. The ratio of Manual to Nonmanual, of men to women and of provincial to London has scarcely changed.
2. Moving to a weekly paper has meant changes all round in our patterns of work. Branches now have to organise their week's work around the receipt and distribution of the paper. In London the production and dispatch of "The Worker" throughout the country and around the world every week without a single full-timer requires the harnessing of the efforts of most (not yet all) members and relies ultimately on their dedication and sense of responsibility.
3. The greatest boost to the Democratic Centralism of the Party since our founding came with the decision to set up Regional Committees at Fourth Congress. These have begun very well but we must not start taking them for granted. They have increased immeasurably the degree of contact between the Branches and the Central Committee (especially the embryo Branches). As a consequence the CC are better informed and it has been possible to distribute the organisational responsibilities of the Party Centre more widely in the CC. The RCs are also beginning to increase the impact of the Party in the Regions. Unity is strength and strength is impact. This was shown most clearly in the 1978 May Day meetings.
4. The most important new organizational development was the formation of the Manual Industrial Committees. Their First Conference, whose success was due to the devoted work of the MICs in preparing their written material, put paid to the canard that we are "weak" industrially. We are not, but we have not yet made the most use of our strength. Part I

Style of work

Some points about our style of work need to be taught to every new generation of members:

- We start all meetings on time and finish them on time.
- At meetings we never prolong our speeches beyond the tolerance level of our audience (in Britain 20 minutes if you're lucky).
- If we commit ourselves to doing something for the Party we do it come Hell or High Water or a friend to help us.

What would you add to this list?

What are the main gains of our first ten years?

One is that we are still alive and well---not bad when you consider the mortality rate of alleged "Communist Parties".

Another is that we are developing from a force of beginners into a force of cadres. A Marxist-Leninist Party, if it is to be anything, must be the cream of the Working Class. Perhaps we are not that yet but we are not skimmed milk either.

What do you see as the main gains, and what organizational advances would you like to see over the next ten years? And how can these be achieved?

PROPAGANDA

Propaganda has two broad functions:-

- a) to advertise the existence of the Party to the class (eg posters)
 - b) to explain the line of the Party to the class (eg pamphlets)
- It can be left around for the class to find it or brought to the notice of members of the class.

Propaganda which advertises the existence of the Party
Mainly posters and stickers (also selling the Worker on the streets where few may buy but many see it).

In the past we have been wary of posters. Recently we have had some good posters which were well received by the branches,

- eg Now to Revolution
- For Britain, for socialism
- Read the Worker
- May Day 1978

We now have the skill and resources to design and produce good posters. The Party is very poorly advertised and needs to be known. May Day posters up and down the country were a great advert. We need more of it.

Propaganda which puts the line - Pamphlets, Public meetings
Leaflets.

Pamphlets

Since last Congress we have produced:-

- Congress '76
- Britain in the World, 1977
- Unity not Devolution
- Food for the People
- For an Industrial Revolution
- Party Programme (reprint)

The Propaganda Committee has been very slow about promoting pamphlets and will be putting out a list advertising them for libraries, bookshops, readers, etc. But also comrades do not sell many pamphlets to their friends: this is odd because most pamphlets go well in the bookshops.

We have learnt some rules about pamphlets: only produce it if the Party has something peculiar and fresh to say - a new growth of the line, and give it a good cover. With these two rules we get good propaganda which sells.

Meetings

Branches throughout the Party now hold Public Meetings and the Party appears to have learnt the value to contacts of a well prepared, well run meeting, however small. London also goes in for small meetings, and allows hours of preparation, years of experience and a great fund of knowledge to pass it by every week, abandoning its comrades to talk to rows of empty chairs. We have produced a beautiful machine in London which the comrades refuse to operate. Perhaps we have done the same thing for too long, and the new programme of fortnightly meetings, half of them in the Conway Hall will refresh the Party's interest.

Our propaganda for meetings improves slowly. The leaflets are more attractive. We advertise in the Worker, Time Out, London Almanac. We advertise Conway Hall meetings in New Statesmen and Labour Weekly. What we really need is to bring people.

May Day 1978 was a great success up and down the country; a show of our true stature to ourselves and the class. There was the right balance of centralism (central slogans and posters) with regional initiative. Next year Scotland also? (NE region have promised to help). We must review May Days yearly to prevent them getting stale. Better reports to centre needed before and after event - Leeds had a beautiful May Day float lorry which we found out about in August.

Equipment Basildon have modernised us in London with a stencil cutter and mechanical double stapler. We need to reorganise our room and to build a stock of Lettraset. We need a large guillotine but don't know what to buy. Other branches have helped increasingly with pamphlet collation.

SUMMARY

The Propaganda Committee has fallen short in production of posters, adverts for meetings and for pamphlets and for the Party itself. But this is not the real problem. The pamphlets are good and they are stockpiled on the shelves. The meetings are good but in London they are empty. The Worker is good, it gets better and better, but who sells it? Who reads it? If you offer it to a friend, they usually come back for more. Perhaps Party members should have a little more faith in their friends and in their Party.

THE CONDUCT OF THE PARTY UNDER MORE DIFFICULT CONDITIONS

The Party generally accepts that the conditions under which we at present function will not continue indefinitely. To the extent that the crisis of capitalism intensifies and the Party poses more of a threat to the system our efforts will be subject to more and more restriction. We know that already all our activities are subject to surveillance by the Special Branch. This is likely to become intensified. Furthermore, surveillance will be accompanied by positive interference. This can be accomplished without any new laws, but new laws, on some pretext or other, like the anti-terrorist laws, will be easily enacted where necessary. In other words activities such as writing, publishing, printing and distributing our paper and leaflets can become illegal and subject to repression. We can become illegal with all that that entails.

So how do we prepare to cope with such a situation? If we are so sure that such a situation will come about then we must prepare ourselves to meet it. The only other alternative is to accept the prospect of liquidation, and that is not acceptable.

To spell out in any details even suggestions as to how the Party would carry out its functions in conditions of illegality would be irresponsible and a denial of the fact that we are already under surveillance. But nevertheless we must, all of us, be prepared for such an eventuality.

The extent to which the Party will not only survive but advance, under such conditions, depends entirely on the Party's relation with the class. We could not survive in isolation. The best prospects for gathering the class around the Party exist in present conditions, not under conditions where our lines of communication with the class are under more serious threat.

Under illegal conditions we would not be able to speak and spread our propaganda freely. That raises the question of what advantage are we taking of conditions in which we can. Why would we envisage great risk to our persons to distribute our paper illegally when we take at present little advantage to distribute it legally? In short the most essential preparation for illegality is to exploit to the maximum our ability to function legally.

In conditions of illegality we would have to practice the utmost security. Without becoming an obscure and secret society we can prepare ourselves for this situation. We know already that we are under surveillance but you would hardly think so to judge by the present conduct of many Party members. We don't have to be a secret society to practice security. There is much chat and gossip that is unnecessary. How often do we consider that the bloke at the next table in the pub or cafe before or after our meetings may be a spy. Why would we assume that he is not? well, we can just ignore him and don't say anything that might be interesting to him if he is a spy.

We assume that our letters are opened and noted by the special branch but do we compose letters with this in mind? It is quite possible to communicate without communicating with the enemy. To take advantage of this situation does not necessarily mean curbing any of our activities. Our preparation must entail taking the fullest advantage of our present situation whilst at the same time preparing our minds for different circumstances.

SOVIET REVISIONISM

A distinction must be made between revisionism and the Soviet Union. The CPSU is certainly a revisionist Party and the Soviet State an imperialist state whose empire in Eastern Europe and its attempts at expansion in South Asia and Africa are obvious. But revisionism is a theory, albeit a wrong one, which is earlier than the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. The British Road to Socialism, that quintessential revisionist product of using the parliamentary road to achieve socialism antedates Khrushchev by several years. Similarly the rank revising and distorting of Marxism by those parties professing some rubbish termed 'Eurocommunism' cannot be laid at the doors of the Soviet renegades.

The Soviet Union's military might poses no threat to the British people at this point in time. It is no more and no less a threat than other imperialist states like West Germany, France in the European continent. To build it up as the bogey as the present Chinese regime does is quite erroneous and is intended simply as a form of blackmail as the H Bomb was for an earlier period. The present wave of anti-Russian propaganda flooding the British media is intended to discredit communism, and even if the present Russian state is anything but the dictatorship of the proletariat it used to be the whole purpose of the alleged 'human rights' campaign of Carter and Co is not only a further sop for Zionism though that aspect of it cannot be denied but another piece of the anti-communist chorus that has continued through the decades.

Yugoslavian revisionism should receive some attention. As the first example since the war of outright revisionism by Tito, and the target of justified criticism of its various anti-socialist measures well-documented both by Albania and China it is necessary to remind people of this especially now that China has jettisoned Albania in favour of Yugoslavia which it seeks to build up as the new lynch-pin of the Balkans.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM

While rejecting the wrong ideas associated with British imperialism such as the 'crumbs' theory we must remember that British capitalism continues to be a major imperialist power enjoying the direct and indirect profits from overseas assets. Our Party must expose the myth that British capitalism has been de-imperialised, the other side of the coin of the myth that country x or country y, still neo-colonies, have been 'de-colonised'. British direct colonies are very few though they continue to exist such as Northern Ireland, Hong Kong and several islands dotted across the seven seas. These have been very useful pawns, apart from their direct value as colonial possessions, to bargain with US imperialism. Indeed, ever since World War II the value of the British Empire was in good measure its dollar-earning capacity. Since the 1950's and 1960's they have been useful in British imperialism's efforts to hold on to whatever it can as economically and also as payment for American military protection. The Indian Ocean possessions and the Caribbean have been in some instances nakedly handed over to the US. Others like Hong Kong, apart from providing handsome profits to speculators and bloodsuckers of all sorts - was put to many unseavory uses by US armed forces during its war in Indochina. It continues to be a useful staging post for all imperialist powers concerned about ending socialism in China and by the present Chinese regime which has embarked on many sordid deals with companies like Jardine Matheson whose fortunes were built on the opium trade. The links with South Africa and British imperialism's vested interest in Rhodesia are all connected with fabulous profits and quid pro quo agreements with the USA. Our Party, therefore, goes on record as stating categorically that every vestige of colonial possessions must be eliminated and British troops and other forms of a military presence in any part of the globe to end. Naturally Northern Ireland stands on top of the list but we refer to the entire globe and demand an immediate end to protectorates, mandates, condominiums and a variety of other arrangements within NATO, EEC, ANZUS or UN, all intended to perpetuate the hold of British capital.

It goes on record against all forms of neo-colonialism now maskered as forms of philanthropic 'aid'. British capitalism finds it more profitable to invest in Asia and Africa, Latin America and Australasia than inside Britain. We say that foreign investments do not benefit the recipient countries but only a tiny handful of the compradore-landlord class in those countries. Trade is better than aid and we look forward to equitable terms of trade being established between industrial Britain and developing nations.

Pr 1978 Capm

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! It can work!

what indeed

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+ Discipline of rules, timeliness - to develop trust - no letter -
Relate to 2 Discipline.

Pr 1928 Copy

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Party discipline is on three levels. The simplest, the easiest to understand is the surface discipline, the body of rules thought out by any group of people wishing to work together in harmony. It may be simple to understand but this surface level of discipline is of vital importance to a party. A lost key, indiscreet chatter, or the unnecessary hampering of work by forgetting to arrive for a work appointment, causes the work to suffer, puts an extra burden on other people and to spies and enemies can give a handle-hold.

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The third and deepest level of discipline is the most difficult to acquire; the history of the communist movement of the last thirty years shows that in the whole world only a few ever achieve this. That discipline is the unshakeable conviction, gained by work, study, sacrifice, tenacity, an insistence on never accepting defeat or set back, that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the only way out of the intolerable situation forced on our class, that the working class is the only one capable of achieving this revolution and that the class (not individuals in the class) is the only source for progress and truth. *That is the only way out.*

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