

RACISM AND THE DANGER OF FASCISM



COMMUNIST
UNITY

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RACISM AND FASCISM

Why an Analysis is Important

Racism, with all its vicious effects on the lives of millions, is one of the principal weapons of capitalism. Ultimately, the power of the exploiting class rests on its command of the gun, that is, on the organised forces of violence, the army and the police force. This is its final line of defence, but its first lines of defence are ideological, that is, institutions and ideas aimed at deceiving and misleading the working class into passivity and cooperation with capitalist exploitation.

This ideological attack on the working class takes two basic forms; there is, firstly, the diversion of workers' struggles into safe, reformist, economic, limited forms, such as parliamentary elections and the whole sideshow of parliamentary parties, the social-democratic Labour Party and its tail, the revisionist CPGB and the various Trotskyist factions, all of which are in the forefront of the struggle to mislead workers up this blind alley, and secondly, there is the appeal to irrational prejudices, and their spreading and stimulation, in order to divide the working class, and even to enlist sections actively on the side of reaction and oppression. In Britain today, the principal form of this approach is the spreading of, and appeal to, racism.

Through racism, the bourgeoisie aims to divide workers and to prevent or destroy a united workers' movement. It further aims to bring white workers in the imperialist countries to indifference to, and concurrence with, the super-exploitation and oppression of the colonies and neo-colonies. In these aims, the bourgeoisie has had great success, and can even enlist workers from the imperialist countries to fight to suppress the national resistance of their class brothers in the oppressed countries.

Today we live in the era when imperialism is headed for total collapse. The people of Asia, Africa and Latin America are standing up and waging heroic struggles against imperialism. U.S. imperialism, the principal enemy of the world's peoples, has been defeated in Indo-China. It has been increasingly weakened and isolated throughout the world, and is faced with extreme economic and political crisis at home. The other super-power, the revisionist, social-imperialist U.S.S.R., is becoming more and more exposed as it conspires with U.S. imperialism to oppress the world's peoples, while contending with it for power. The socialist countries, in particular the great People's China, grow ever stronger, building

and consolidating socialism, they stand as a powerful support and a great inspiration to the working class and oppressed peoples of the whole world.

With the victories of national liberation struggles, the economic and social crisis of imperialism grows ever more acute. In this situation, the monopoly capitalists of America and of Britain and of all imperialist countries, are striving to prevent their rate of profit from falling, by increasing the exploitation of the workers at home. As the battle among imperialist powers for the shrinking sources of raw materials, areas for investment and markets, becomes more fierce, so will the oppression and exploitation of the working class at home.

Racism is very important to British imperialism. It isolates a section of the working class, black people, by increasing its racist propaganda, so 'justifying' its sharper oppression of black people and increasing divisions in the working class as a whole. Thus, the unity of all workers to defend their working conditions and living standards, and to defend democratic rights, is broken. Most important, racist division prevents the rise of a united workers' movement aimed at ending the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression.

Racism is one of the most evil and revolting products of capitalism; it results in misery, degradation and fear for the millions of black people who suffer its direct effects. From a humanitarian point of view, all with any understanding must oppose it, and even bourgeois liberals do so. As communists, we must see beyond liberal, simply humanitarian and ineffective opposition; we must understand the roots of racism, understand its use as a weapon against the whole working class, and learn how to totally destroy it.

A revolutionary mass movement in Britain is inconceivable without the defeat of racism as a force within the white working class. The true spirit of proletarian internationalism must be built in the workers' ranks, the understanding that their class interests lie in unity with black workers, and with the oppressed and exploited of the whole world, in the struggle against imperialism.

Even the defensive struggles of workers, and all their democratic rights, are directly threatened by racism; as imperialism's crisis grows, the danger of Britain's ruling class turning to a fascist 'solution' to its difficulties grows. Utilising racism as its main ideological weapon, a fascist dictatorship could be instituted in Britain.

Therefore an analysis of racism, and the development of a clear Marxist line on this question, is of great importance. In struggling for a clear line on this and other questions, we are struggling to create the basis for a revolutionary communist party. Only such a disciplined, organised party of the proletariat can fight racism consistently, and carry out a correct broad front policy against racism.

The purpose of this document is therefore not to systematically expose the racist onslaught on Britain's black people, nor to smash the 'arguments' of racists. These tasks must be continually undertaken, but here we aim to briefly analyse racism and its historic roots from a Marxist-Leninist point of view, in order to know how to defeat it. We aim to examine the principal forms it takes concretely in Britain, and to examine the related danger of fascism. The document is written in order to contribute to the struggle of the most advanced sections of the proletariat to develop a clear revolutionary line on this question, and is closely related to the struggle for a revolutionary party. Therefore, when we examine weak or incorrect lines in any detail, it is because they appear amongst those attempting to represent the most advanced revolutionary theory, Marxism-Leninism Mao-Tsetung Thought, in Britain today.

WHAT IS RACISM?

Racism is a system of beliefs and attitudes that regards humanity as divided into clearly-defined 'races', all of which are inferior, primarily mentally and morally, to the racist's own 'race'. 'Races', identified by certain superficial characteristics, principally skin colour, are supposed to have inherently different intelligence, honesty, courage, ambition, and so on.

In fact, such beliefs are in complete contradiction with reality; the very concept of 'race', as it is commonly thought of, has no scientific validity or usefulness. All serious research long ago disproved any 'racial' superiority of any group, as do the facts of history. But these facts make no difference to racists, because racism is a completely irrational, subjective attitude, historically developed and fostered by the class interests of the exploiters and by the deliberately-maintained ignorance and miseducation of the masses. It does, however, make sense in terms of a theory for the imperialist oligarchy and others who have an objective interest in imperialism, to the extent that it justifies, and attempts to recruit support from the masses for, colonialism and the super-exploitation of third world peoples.

It is important to define racism as it exists, as a vicious reactionary force in present-day Britain, in order to distinguish it from other, less evil forms of nationalism, social suspicion or exclusiveness. It is closely connected to the most reactionary form of nationalism, big-power chauvinism, in the most powerful imperialist states. But it is not identical with this, since it particularly identifies all black, brown or yellow-skinned peoples as inferior 'races', to be justly exploited and oppressed.

In many societies, modern or ancient, simple or complex, forms of suspicion, fear, or hostility to outsiders have existed. These attitudes are a reactionary force to be defeated, as is the narrow nationalism that can prevent united struggles against imperialism. But their connection with the racism and chauvinism of the white racist is less than is often thought; racism is not based on fear, or suspicion of strange cultures, or physical appearance, and nor is it simply hostility to those who are different. It is the ideological justification for the oppression and exploitation of whole peoples, by claiming these peoples to be inferior, naturally suited to being exploited, and deserving of nothing more. In essence, enslavement, oppression and exploitation came first in history, and the 'justification' of this on the grounds of racial inferiority came afterwards.

The attempts of liberal bourgeois ideologists, and even some 'Marxists', to equate white racism with the exclusiveness of certain societies, must be rejected. For example, old imperial China in its first contacts with the West, regarded Europeans as 'foreign devils' or barbarians. In one sense this is a reactionary, arrogant, complacent and harmful attitude, but in the sense that 'foreign devils' referred to colonisers and European oppressors it is qualitatively different from the imperialists' attitude towards Chinese 'coolies', who could be enslaved, exploited, and treated with less consideration than animals, because they were 'racially inferior'. Even worse is the equation of the nationalism of the oppressed with the chauvinism and racism of the oppressor. These concepts are dealt with in later sections.

For any real understanding of racism, it is necessary to analyse it in terms of its roots in the economic life of society and in its historical development. This is not an academic exercise, but an effort to "understand the world in order to change it". This is the Marxist approach to such questions.

THE HISTORIC ROOTS OF RACISM

At the time when earlier versions of this pamphlet were being developed, some of our comrades were members of the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist). There, a struggle took place hingeing mainly on the origins of racism. The leadership of the CFB(ML), and principally the Secretary Sam Mauger, put forward the line that racism is a product of class society in general. It was argued by him that racism was practised in ancient slave Rome and Greece, and that modern racism differed in its specific history only. This position, presented with a great deal of 'profundity', actually constituted an objective denial of super-exploitation by modern imperialism, and the capitalists' quest for super- and maximum profits, since this view denies the specific role of capitalism and particularly monopoly capitalism-imperialism, in creating the economic base for racism, bringing about the necessity for racist ideology to back up bourgeois super-exploitation of black and third world peoples. Only this latter view is in line with the basic Marxist tenet that ideas, views and political institutions are products of the "conditions of the material life of society". We assert that, as an important element of reactionary ideology, racism came into being with the development of capitalism, and came to full evil flowering with the development of capitalism into imperialism. Since capitalism developed first in Europe, and powerful capitalist economies have remained mainly restricted to nations of European origin, racism has been primarily a white European disease.

Human society has gone through four basic stages: primitive communism, slave society, feudalism and capitalism. Today it is in the process of transformation to the higher stage of socialism and communism. The material life of these stages of social development is primary, and the superstructure of social institutions and ideology arises from it. We do not have time or space here for any thorough examination of the historical evidence, but we intend to briefly show that only capitalist society provides the material base, and has the need, for any central role of racism in its ideology.

Primitive communism can be dealt with most briefly. In primitive communism the means of production were so poorly developed that the subsistence economy did not allow the possibility of any regular-surplus from labour and so no system of exploitation could exist, and neither could classes exist. It was even less possible for the domination and exploitation of whole peoples to exist. Therefore, while in the struggle for tribal survival hostility to other tribes

might arise, no racist ideology regarding others as inferior, justifying domination and exploitation could come into being.

In slave society, the development of large-scale agriculture, animal husbandry and many associated techniques had brought about the possibility and necessity of a system of class exploitation. The great civilisations of classical Greece and Rome rested entirely on the labour of armies of slaves, driven to the fields and mines by whips and kept in shackles. The ideological justification for this was that slavery was necessary to support civilisation, that slaves were inherently inferior and suited to their condition, and that this was the natural order of things. Slaves were inferior whether culturally and racially of the same stock as their masters or not.

The Roman Empire certainly grew through military conquest and political domination over other societies. However, these societies were mainly of an equal or even superior level of technology. Economic exploitation could only take the form of forced tributes and taxation, and the Empire could develop stability only by giving the rights and privileges of Roman citizenship to the ruling classes of the provinces. After the first period of the Empire, few even of the emperors were Roman or Italian. With no possibility of the stable exploitation of whole nations, and with no reason to distinguish between the exploitation of slaves of their own and of another race, there was no necessity for any important role of racism in the ruling classes ideology. The closest resemblance to the racist belief in the inherent inferiority of groups of people was in the attitude to the class of slaves at the foundation of the whole society.

The same things apply to the ideology of feudal society. The economic base of society remained agriculture, but there was a significant development of technology, requiring greater individual initiative on the part of the producing, exploited class. Peasant serfs, therefore, had the motivation of producing for themselves as well as for the feudal landlord. The ideological justification of this class society was similar to that of slave society, but there was a greater emphasis on religious and other ideological indoctrination of the exploited class, because a greater degree of free cooperation was required. Slaves were kept exploited almost exclusively by force, serfs by a combination of physical and ideological enslavement. Feudal society still lacked the economic capacity to exploit whole nations and races. When, in the late feudal period, Europeans first came into contact with the great Eastern civilisations, or the kingdoms of West Africa, they were awed and impressed by their richness and complexity. They certainly did not have, nor

was there any basis for, any sense of the superiority of their own civilisation or race, as distinct from religious hostility and suspicion of the strange or the foreign.

However, the particular conditions of European society were leading to the rapid rise of the bourgeoisie and a more advanced technology. With the development of a more powerful economy and social organisation in Europe, the possibility arose of the plunder and exploitation of the Americas, Africa and the East. Trade with the East forced by gunboat diplomacy, the conquest of America and the extermination of its native peoples, the establishment of sugar and tobacco plantations in the West Indies, and the African slave trade, began in this period. These were some of the principal methods by which European mercantile capitalists, particularly the British, accumulated the vast sums of capital that accelerated the development of industrial capitalism. Marx said:

"Capital comes (into the world) dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt."

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the growth of the rich plantation economy in the New World, the African slave trade reached vast proportions. Britain, being the most advanced mercantilist power, was able to dominate this evil traffic. Slavery brought such atrocities as the following on slave ships:

"The space allotted to each slave on the Atlantic crossing measured five and one half feet in length by sixteen inches in breadth. Packed like rows of books on shelves, as Clarkson said, chained by two, right leg and left leg, right hand and left hand, each slave had less room than a man in a coffin. It was like the transportation of black cattle, and where sufficient negroes were not available, cattle were taken on."

Capitalism and Slavery, Eric Williams, p.35

In Britain, many of the fathers and grandfathers of the nineteenth century's leading industrialists made their millions on the slave plantations of the West Indies; David Barclay of Barclays Bank fame was a slave trader and owned vast Jamaican plantation, and the city of Liverpool grew from a tiny village to a great port entirely as a centre for slave ships. Hardly any field of economic life was not connected in some way or other with the slave trade.

There is a great contradiction here; in Europe, the rising bourg-

ois class represented the new technology, the industrial revolution, manufacturing industry, based on the exploitation of wage labour. In the colonies, this same bourgeois class reintroduced a plantation economy and slavery, the most barbaric and historically outmoded form of production. The reasons for adopting this form of production probably lay in the nature of the crops involved and the impossibility of obtaining the field labourers in any other way. Whatever the reasons, the slave system was in the sharpest contradiction with the developing relations of production and bourgeois ideology at home.

The capitalist class in Europe was leading the masses, under the slogan of democracy, to smash feudal relations of production and the feudal state. Capitalist exploitation required 'free' wage labourers, no longer tied to the land and with no means to live except by selling their labour power. This form of exploitation is disguised by the wages system, by the turning of labour power into a commodity that can be purchased to produce surplus value for the capitalists. The ideology of bourgeois democracy, of individual liberty and the sanctity of private property, enabled capitalism to deceive the working class and to win its cooperation with this system of exploitation.

For the first time on a large scale the two key factors requiring the ideology of racism had emerged; firstly, the exploitation of whole peoples by the ruling class of another people, and secondly, a more vicious and open form of exploitation of the subject peoples. The contradiction of this vicious system of exploitation and oppression with the content of bourgeois ideology at home needed ideological justification, which soon emerged. At the height of the slave trade, in 1753, the British philosopher David Hume said:

"I am apt to suspect the negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites."

In America, the most developed bourgeois democracy co-existed with the ruthless extermination of the native Indians, and with the most large-scale and longest-lasting system of black slavery. Here we find the great bourgeois democrat, author of the Declaration of Independence, and a slave-owner, Thomas Jefferson, advancing:

"...as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments of body and mind."

In the nineteenth century, with its economic usefulness passing away, slavery disappeared. In the earlier period it had been the only way to obtain field hands for the plantations in the Americas,

but really was never as productive as other forms of exploitation, such as share-cropping or hired labourers. When settled populations on a large scale came to exist, often the descendants of slaves, these latter forms of exploitation were adopted in place of slavery. Despite their resistance to the ending of slavery, the plantation owners in the American south after the civil war, for example, found their profits even greater through the share-cropping system than before.

Slavery disappeared, but super-exploitation of black and colonial peoples continued; the rapidly developing industrialisation of the capitalist countries, particularly Britain, enabled them to exploit, using force where necessary, such foreign markets as India and China, destroying the native economies in the process. Where direct colonies existed, as in India, the British rulers applied a rigid colour bar, lording it over the despised 'natives'. Racism had come to stay as an aspect of capitalist ideology.

IMPERIALISM AND RACISM

With the development of competitive capitalism into imperialism, racist ideology became of absolutely central importance to the capitalist class.

Imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism, when the concentration of production in the hands of a few monopolies and the merging of 'bank capital' with 'industrial capital' brings about the dominance of 'finance capital' over the whole economy. A huge surplus of capital requires the expansion of the monopolies' field of investment throughout the world. Capital cannot be continually reinvested at home in developing the means of production, for only that portion of capital invested in purchasing labour power produces surplus value, the capitalists' profit. As the amount invested in machinery and plant increases in proportion to the amount invested in wages, there is a tendency for the rate of profit to decline. In this situation, if capitalism is to continue to expand and make even the average rate of profit, it must export capital to sources of raw materials, and to areas with a more backward economy. Thus, the export of capital, rather than of goods, becomes of great importance and a few monopoly capitalist combines come to dominate not only their own national economies, but the economy of the whole world. The territorial division of the entire world between the biggest capitalist powers is thereby completed.

The mercantile empire inherited and extended by the British capitalist class became Britain's vast sphere of influence for imperialist exploitation. The world has since been divided and redivided between a mere handful of imperialist powers who keep the vast majority of the world's peoples under political, military and cultural subjection, in order to extract super-profits. This system of imperialism still dominates the whole world, except countries like China and Vietnam, where the people have defeated imperialism and taken the socialist road. The substitution of neo-colonial for direct colonial rule, as in most of the British Empire, has not changed the essence of the situation; through alliance with the most feudal, reactionary local elements, imperialism keeps the economies of the third world backward. This enables the monopolists to extract cheap raw materials and agricultural produce, and huge super-profits through the exploitation of the misery and poverty of these countries. Britain today, for example, has investments of approximately £1000 million in South Africa alone, from which huge super-profits are drawn. She has investments and profits from human misery throughout the world. But Britain's power and the size of her imperialist sphere of influence is small compared to that of the

giant super-power, U.S. imperialism.

The beginnings of capitalism created the necessity for a racist ideology, as we have seen, and the development of this world-wide system of the super-exploitation of oppressed nations by a small number of oppressor nations brought racist ideology to the very central role in imperialist ideology. "Suspicions" of black racial inferiority were replaced by certainty. Listen to the hysterical ravings of the nineteenth century writer, Anthony Trollope:

"But yet he has made no approach to the civilisation of his white fellow creatures whom he imitates as a monkey does a man....He is idle, unambitious as to worldly position, sensual, and content with little. Intellectually, he is apparently capable of, but little sustained effort; but, singularly enough, here he is ambitious. He burns to be regarded as a scholar, puzzles himself with fine words, addicts himself to religion for the sake of appearance, and delights in aping the little graces of civilisation."

By the end of the nineteenth century, with the imperialist system in full sway, such racist garbage became commonplace. Song-writers, journalists and poets were commissioned to glorify and popularise the imperialist ideal; Kipling, for example, wrote about the "white man's burden", his 'duty' to rule the childlike, black, inferior peoples.

The imperialists were keenly aware of the importance of spreading chauvinistic, racist, imperialist ideology. The following quote from 'The British Labour Movement' by Morton and Tate makes this clear:

"It was hoped that imperialism would smooth over class antagonisms by winning over the mass of the population to a belief in a community of interest with the ruling class in the exploitation of the Empire, by providing an 'outlet' for 'surplus' population and markets which would give stable employment. Cecil Rhodes said in 1895 that, after attending a meeting of the unemployed in the East End of London and listening to the "wild speeches" which were just a call for "bread, bread, bread", he became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism as a solution for "the social problem". "The Empire, he said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become

imperialists."

From that time onwards, the spreading of racist attitudes toward colonial peoples among workers has been especially important to imperialism.

NATIONALISM OF THE OPPRESSOR AND OF THE OPPRESSED

In Nazi Germany, racism was a total ideology bound up with national chauvinism and the concept of a master race. Nobody would hesitate to brand such rabidly reactionary chauvinism as the fever pitch of an imperialist bourgeoisie out to conquer the world. It is well to remember that such counter-revolutionary ravings are done in the name, and under the cloak, of nationalism. Is it nationalism which the fascists stand for? No! This word embellishes their evil, which is better characterised as bellicose, annexationist, warmongering chauvinism. This sums up the nationalism of the world's imperialist oppressor nations.

The nationalism to be found in the third world peoples' just struggles against imperialism cannot, and must not, be lumped together with the 'nationalism' of the aggressor nations, thereby confusing the oppressed with the oppressor. We know that this nationalism is not only confined to the struggles of colonial and semi-colonial peoples; there are national minorities in every country of the capitalist-imperialist heartlands, either recently immigrated, or with historical links with Asia, Africa or Latin America. These minorities suffer a special oppression and super-exploitation and racism is increasingly used to justify this and to split the working class. In addition, there is discrimination against national minorities generally. Ireland is a case in point, and the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) and the British and Irish Communist Organisation, by denying the national rights of the Irish people, have taken a pro-British imperialist position on the national question of Ireland. The struggle of minorities against special oppression, and the national form these struggles are bound to take, even if only in the beginning, cannot be condemned outright as being only nationalist.

It is the job of communists to do all in their power as far as the racist campaign against black people and the Irish is concerned, to win the working class of the oppressor nation to support the just struggles of immigrants and the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland against racism, wage and job discrimination and their general lack of rights. Further, the British working class must be won to the demand for the full self-determination and freedom from imperialist domination of all third world peoples. This is one of the most important aspects of our agitation among British workers.

BLACK NATIONALISM

The communist party's programme and politics must be based on class, not nationality or colour. Marxism teaches that the working class has no nation. The party must organise among all sections of the working class, but especially the lowest stratum, that is, that stratum most oppressed and exploited and least corrupted by opportunism. Clearly, immigrant workers come within this category in the majority of cases. There is no place for nationalism within a communist party, since this would change the class nature of the party and prevent it from uniting and rallying behind it the workers of all nationalities and colours. Further, the party would become a tool in the hands of the bourgeoisie in provoking and inciting worker against worker. Leaders and skilful agitators are needed to organise in a communist way among black people, but most of all, a party is needed which will unite all the most class-conscious proletarians in pursuance of a programme of revolution.

Black nationalism is the nationalism of the oppressed, but in the ranks of a communist party it cannot be tolerated. The mass of black people in Britain will not, and cannot, win liberation apart from the socialist revolution, and may even be cynically used by some black nationalist leaders. Black nationalism is completely incompatible with our aim of helping to build a party which will lead working people in all forms of struggle and in all walks of life in order that they can become convinced by their own experience that the dictatorship of the proletariat must replace the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The demands of the extreme black nationalists have no such perspective. Therefore we feel that any movement of black people under such leadership is doomed to failure, or to only very limited success.

We are particularly referring to those Black Panthers who have in the past claimed that it is up to black people alone to bring revolution to Britain and America. They say that the white working class is bought off and has thus 'betrayed' its historical role. They point to the fact that liberation movements are threatening and cutting off colonial super-profits, and worsening the economic crisis in the imperialist heartland, and so, supported by various cranks in the Marxist-Leninist movement, they conclude that British people will never give up their racism and support the right to self-determination of colonial peoples, the assumption being that British workers have no means of supporting themselves, and that not even socialism would prevent Britain from being dependent on super-profits. A wild notion indeed, which is in no way based on a class analysis. It is true that relative prosperity since the

Second World War has witnessed the continued dominance of opportunism in the working class movement and a low level of socialist consciousness among workers, but it is clear that this is changing as the crisis matures and a subjective analysis of the workers' consciousness will not speed matters up, but only hinder the revolutionary struggle. The majority of the working class in imperialist Britain has a large amount of racist ideology in its thinking, imposed by generations of ruling class indoctrination, but this thinking is in direct contradiction to the real class interests of the working class.

It must be said, therefore, that the narrow nationalism of some Black Panthers in the context of the British working class movement does not play a progressive role. Their anti-imperialism, however, does. We support the formation of black organisations aimed at resisting the special oppression of black people. These can play a very important and progressive role, but they cannot in any way be substituted for the leading role of a communist party.

The equation of black nationalism with white racism, often seen even in 'communist' organisations, is one form of racist ideology. The Progressive Labour Party in the U.S.A., for example, which in the beginning seemed to have a correct line and to be conducting a sharp struggle against racism, reached the point where the divisions in the working class were blamed as much or more on black nationalism as on white racism. Early drafts of this document made the error of being slow to see this trend towards opportunism in P.L., which eventually turned the organisation into one of the worst of capitalism's agents in the working class movement. In making this mistake, the authors were more impressed with P.L.'s vigorous campaign against racism and, although disagreeing with their line on nationalism and the struggle for national liberation in third world countries, treated this as secondary. This was a definite mistake, and P.L.'s small error proved to develop into a hopeless blunder involving Trotskyist ravings against China. Any analysis of P.L. should have made this error its starting-point. This line of the equality of racism and black nationalism is to be totally rejected. The divisions between black and white workers are brought about exclusively by white racism. Even the worst, most harmful, extremes to which black nationalism may go, are caused by and are not the cause of white racism. Once there exists a white mass movement really aimed at destroying imperialism and racism, black nationalism will create no obstacle to unifying black and white workers.

This pamphlet is primarily concerned with racist ideology in white

workers, and how communists must defeat it. However, a few more words must be said about the role of black people's resistance to their special oppression. The final defeat of racism and special oppression can only come with the complete destruction of the system of imperialism and capitalist exploitation. Nevertheless, every success black and colonial peoples have, has an important effect in strengthening black resistance everywhere, and in dealing blows at the propaganda of racism.

The continent of Africa is still dominated by imperialism, but even such things as the formal existence of independent black states, with black representatives appearing in the United Nations, have an important significance. For example, consider the effect of this on black and white workers in America. Before the war, the total picture given to them of black Africans was as in the films, either savage cannibals or flunkys carrying the great white hunters' luggage. Events in Africa have forced a change to such a picture, and have provided Afro-Americans with the conditions for a new pride in their African origins.

However, we have seen how such things can be institutionalised and turned into diversions by capitalism. Any one-sided emphasis on cultural, national aspects of the struggle can be defeated by imperialism, but even so these things are an important part of the struggle. All successes, even minor, on the part of black people to assert their right to equal treatment, help to provide conditions for the unity of black and white workers. But it is only when such unity exists, and when the whole working class is led to utterly smash and destroy capitalism by a multi-national communist party, that the complete ending of racial inequality can come.

THE MIS-EDUCATION OF THE WORKING CLASS ON RACIST LINES

Systematic imperialist propaganda and the indoctrination of the British working class, putting forward the view that colonial peoples are 'sub-normal' and 'inferior', dates back to 1871 with the beginning of compulsory education. Lenin, in 'Under a False Flag', characterised the era following 1871 as "...the epoch of the full domination and decline of the bourgeoisie, an epoch of full transition from the progressive character of the bourgeoisie to reactionary, even rabidly reactionary, finance capital". It must be said that the bourgeoisie required elementary knowledge to be taught to the workers in order that they could operate the increasingly complicated factory machines, but along with this, heavy doses of religion and chauvinism were administered. The bourgeoisie thus began to teach, and teaches, that the interests of the workers at home lie with the imperialism of their own predatory bourgeoisie and not with the struggling colonial peoples.

This imperialist mis-education was never fought consistently by early Labour Party leaders. As apologists for colonialism, they helped the bourgeoisie mis-educate the working class by claiming the dependence of the British people, capitalist and worker alike, on "the closest possible cooperation among all the various members of what has become essentially not an Empire in the old sense, but a Brittanic Alliance", quoted in 'Aims of Labour', in 1917. Today, neo-colonialism has largely replaced the old Empire and colonialism and so the Labour Party and the bourgeoisie no longer speak of a Brittanic Alliance. Instead, such euphemisms as 'Britain's prosperity depending on developing the under-developed countries' are used, the notion being that the peoples of the third world are dependent on the philanthropy of the capitalist West, which has a civilising mission. The essence of imperialist plunder is obscured by all this talk.

The bourgeoisie gains at least three advantages from racist mis-education:

1. The working class does not link up its own struggles at home with the liberation struggles of colonial peoples against imperialism and it, therefore, retards its own emancipation.
2. With an increasing number of black, Irish and other immigrant peoples in Britain, the bourgeoisie is able to divide the working class on racial and religious grounds, thus weakening and blunting the class struggle of all workers against the bosses.

3. The capitalist class is able to 'justify' paying less to black, Irish and other immigrant workers in line with its whole racist teaching.

There are, of course, other advantages to the bourgeoisie of the racist mis-education of the working class, but what we are most concerned with here is the broken unity of the working class and its results. So long as the bourgeoisie is able to isolate the struggles of black people from white people, and more, to stir up the actual hostility of white workers and so divide the metropolitan working class from the national movements in the colonies, the British working class will remain wage slaves. That is how important fighting racism is for communists.

THE SUPER-EXPLOITATION OF THE BLACK WORKING CLASS

We do not have the space here for any thorough exposure of the discrimination against, and special oppression of, black people. However, a cursory examination of the figures, whether for the U.S.A. or for Britain, will give a clear enough picture.

In the U.S.A., black workers earn an average of 1,000 dollars per annum less than white workers. Multiplied by the number of black people living in the U.S.A., which is 22 million, this means that the bosses earn 22 million dollars per annum out of racism. The Southern states, which have the highest black population, have the lowest average wage both for black and white workers compared with all other states. So racism forces down the wages of all working people.

Unfortunately, there are no figures available for the average household income of immigrant families for the whole of this country, none that are published, that is. However, an analysis of the 1966 Sample Census material for London and the West Midlands, described in 'Colour and Citizenship', by E.J.B. Rose et al, revealed that:

1. In Lambeth, skilled black manual workers earned £3.10.0 per week less than white skilled workers, and for the whole sample, an average difference of £2.10.0 per week less was calculated.
2. In Birmingham, the average household income for West Indians, Indians and Pakistanis was £21.19.0, £23.2.0 and £17.18.0 respectively. This is compared with an average household income for the U.K. as a whole of £23.10.0. This last figure included immigrant groups, which therefore makes the apparent difference in average incomes less.

The immigrant population in Lambeth at the time of the Sample Census was 20,550, and so we can show, using the fact that on average immigrant workers in Lambeth earned £2.10.0 per week, or £130 per year, less than white workers, the existence of super-exploitation of black workers. If we take the percentage of the male and female population which is economically active as 84.05% and 42.18% respectively, we get the following picture, taking the average of these percentages for convenience, although the percentage of the immigrant population which is economically active is in fact higher than of the population as a whole:

Lambeth's immigrant population	63% economically active	Amount of money saved by employers per year, that is, 12,946 times £130
20,550	12,946	£1,682,980

We have taken the average of these percentages for convenience of exposition, but by doing so it must be remembered that there is also a wage differential between men and women.

If we apply the £2.10.0 differential between immigrant wages and white wages to London, and then to England and Wales, we get the following picture:

	Immigrant population	63% economically active	Amount of money saved by employers per year
London	191,300	120,519	£15,667,470
England and Wales	1,185,000	746,550	£97,051,500

So it can be seen that the bosses earn approximately £100 million per annum in super-profits out of racism. This is taking the wage differential calculated for Lambeth and applying it to the whole country, but, as the Institute of Race Relations has noted in its 1970-1971 facts paper for the U.K., from which the figures for the above tables are taken, "there is no reason to suppose that they differ greatly from the national picture".

When properly estimating the measure of super-exploitation of immigrants, we must further add that they pay more extortionate rents for less living space, in London 29% less space and in the West Midlands 18% less space, plus the many other factors which add extra to the immigrant family budget. It can be expected that these differences are increasing with the growing hostile climate towards immigrants in general, and black people in particular.

RACISM, IMPERIALISM AND THE LABOUR ARISTOCRACY

Racism is a product of imperialist super-exploitation and so we must assess the position of the labour aristocracy that is bought off by the capitalists out of the super-profits of imperialism.

When Lenin first analysed imperialism and the collapse of the Second International, he drew attention to the connection between crumbs from imperialist super-profits falling to labour 'leaders' and their support for their own bourgeoisie in a predatory imperialist war. These 'leaders' of the Second International, most notably Karl Kautsky, hatched up countless theories regarding imperialism, all of which denied, or glossed over, the essence of imperialism. The same is true of today's trade union 'leaders' and modern revisionists such as J. Jones and H. Scanlon.

The labour aristocracy is distinguishable as a stratum of the working class by its position of power and influence; they are an aristocracy of the working class because they sell their ability to mislead, disorganise and sell out workers' struggles to the capitalists, who depend on them for maintaining 'industrial peace'. Their positions bring them an above-average income and a style of life equal to the petty-bourgeoisie and even to the bourgeoisie. As such, they viciously defend their positions and their monopoly of power in the trade unions. As apologists of imperialism, they do not recognise that the workers and the trade unions should be mobilised for an anti-racist and anti-imperialist stand. More, a tacit approval is given to job and wage discrimination, and not always tacit, but they even make a definite defence of such discrimination. There can be no meaningful struggle against the capitalist class in Britain without totally discrediting their front line in the working class, the labour aristocracy.

The argument that the whole working class in the metropolitan capitalist countries is a labour aristocracy must be discounted; only a stratum substantially benefits from the super-profits of imperialism. This stratum permeates the Labour and Communist (revisionist) parties and the trade unions. The further one looks into the 'leadership' of these organisations, the more opportunist and imperialist-bribed they are seen to be. The labour aristocracy has an objective interest in colonial super-profits. As the class struggle sharpens and the imperialist crisis deepens and becomes more acute, this upper stratum of the working class will increasingly join the bourgeoisie in resorting more often to crude racism and anti-communism to break working class militancy.

In the same way that the victory of the proletarian revolution is linked with the defeat of British and world imperialism, so also is the struggle against racism connected with the defeat of imperialism and the victory of the proletarian revolution. Therefore those members of the labour aristocracy, whether trade union or Labour 'leaders', who claim opposition to racism without fighting imperialism and rousing the working class to respond to the super-exploitation of black people in such places as South Africa and Rhodesia, cannot be trusted. It is true that an ordinary honest person can be passionately opposed to racism without seeing the need to connect this struggle with the one against imperialism. With such people we must explain patiently, but when communists are dealing with the politics of the upper stratum of the trade union and labour movement generally, we must judge their seriousness by their opposition to imperialism and by how prepared they are to expose special oppression and super-exploitation. We must do this, if we are not to fall into the error of reformism on this issue.

BLACK WORKERS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

"The Congress condemns all manifestations of racial discrimination or colour prejudice whether by governments, employers or workers. It urges the General Council to lose no opportunity to make trade union attitude on this issue perfectly clear and to give special attention to the problems emerging in this country from the influx of fellow workers of other races with a view to removing the causes of friction and preventing exploitation." T.U.C. Congress, 1955.

"This Congress reaffirms its opposition to all forms of racial discrimination."

T.U.C. Congress, 1966

So reads official trade union policy on this question and it must be admitted to be a perfect example of flabby liberal labour policy, flabby because it poses the question of fighting racism as a struggle for liberal labour justice, but this is not good enough; even the Tories' official policy is one of liberal opposition, in principle, to racism. Even so, W.W. Daniel, author of the P.E.P. report entitled 'Racial Discrimination in England', says rather naively that there seems to be wide divisions between official policy and the situation among employees on the shop floor.

Where there are no black workers in a factory, there have been cases of shop-stewards and the rank and file having threatened militant action if immigrant labour were employed; witness the London dockers who walked out and marched in support of Enoch Powell in 1967. There are no black dockers in London docks, where you can only become a docker if you have a father or a relative who is a docker. In such a situation, the most reactionary trends with regard to immigrants can, and do, gain ground.

This is not to say that racism can be easily solved in the factories or on the docks, just be there being immigrant labour among the workforce, this is only one small aspect. Racism will begin to be broken down when, united in struggle with black workers, white workers see in immigrant workers their class brothers fighting with them against one enemy, the boss. For communists, fighting racism is not a fight for liberal labour justice, but part of the struggle to increase the political and class consciousness of the working class.

It is the racism prevalent among white workers that causes disunity.

The recent example of the black Mansfield hosiery workers' strike against job discrimination is a case to note. The strikers received not support, but opposition, from white workers in the factory, and virtually no support from the trade union movement generally. And the conference held recently at Birmingham on 'Racism in the Trades Unions', was a complete failure, because of the weakness or opportunism of the platform, the very sharp struggle necessary against opportunism could not emerge. The Labour Party and revisionist line of a sham, token anti-racist struggle won by default.

Black workers suffer a special, more intense exploitation and oppression in Britain than the white working class. They are discriminated against in looking for work, suffer more unemployment and are forced into the lowest-paid, most menial and dirty jobs. The discrimination in housing, in the educational system and in all walks of life is appalling. To take the educational system as an example, where the system is biased very greatly against working class children in general, this bias is doubly directed against black children, who are now being pushed into schools for the 'educationally sub-normal'. And as we have shown in the previous section, the super-exploitation of black workers in the U.K. today is putting about £100 million into the pockets of the capitalists each year.

Unless the trade union movement recognises such facts, and struggles against all such discrimination, oppression and super-exploitation, the T.U.C. resolutions quoted at the beginning of this section will remain a hollow sham, like the T.U.C. policy on equal pay for women, which has been a part of its official policy since there has been a T.U.C., but women still are far from achieving equal pay. The present 'leadership' of opportunists and labour-aristocrats will never carry out such active struggles. That is why there must be a consistent struggle of communists to raise white working class consciousness to fight against all examples of discrimination and oppression. Unless this is done, all pretensions to an anti-racist policy in the trade unions is a fraud.

IMMIGRATION

With regard to immigration, the issue for communists is not just a line on immigration, but it is the necessity to expose all immigration controls as racist, and to fight racism amongst workers.

The Movement for Colonial Freedom, and Campaign against Racial Discrimination has repeatedly pointed to such facts as follow in an attempt to show the truth about immigration:

1. The number of black immigrants entering Britain has been much lower than the number of white immigrants from Ireland, other parts of Europe and the bourgeoisie's Commonwealth.
2. The number of black immigrants (and indeed of all immigrants) is very much less than the number of British people who have emigrated.
3. The Commonwealth Immigrants Act restricts only the inflow of black people, not white people.

There are more such points, but these suffice for the purpose of illustrating our argument. What these points reveal is the racist policies of the government, which most certainly must be exposed and fought, but such liberal argumentation as above does not fight racism among the working class effectively. Of course, our analysis and forms of struggle against racism must conform to the facts and to the reality of the situation, and it is not being suggested that our agitation should do otherwise, but this form of liberal argumentation is dangerous because it accepts the basis of racist ideology.

The 'immigration question' has been raised by the bourgeoisie as a move toward stepping up the propagation of racist propaganda to divide the working class. For communists to wrangle with the bourgeoisie over questions of their immigration control is to place the whole argumentation completely on a social-democratic footing. For communists the issue is racism, which must be fought among the working class by appealing to their solidarity and class consciousness, and by organising systematic exposures of racist atrocities.

The above liberal arguments are the stock-in-trade of various liberal bourgeois and social-democratic parties and it can be seen that they go part of the way in accepting, or compromising with, racism; obviously if one argues against Powell on the 'numbers issue', it follows that he would be right if his facts were right. The line of Powell and other racists is that the very fact of numbers of black people being in Britain causes racial strife. Those

who 'play the numbers game' with Powell in fact agree. They see the influx of workers from the West Indies, India and Pakistan that took place in the 1950's when British capitalism needed more labourers, as giving rise to the beginning of racism as a problem in Britain. But as we have seen, racism is an integral part of imperialist ideology, extremely important in moulding British workers' attitudes long before any substantial numbers of black immigrants came to Britain.

Even in the Marxist-Leninist movement, opportunistic errors on the question of immigration controls and growing fascism exist. An example of opportunism which led to a line supporting "strict control of immigration" was published by the Brent Industrial Group in a leaflet headed "Paisley, Powell and Castle, or how to divide and rule". The leaflet attempted to expose Powell whilst at the same time uncritically accepting "widespread demand" among workers to control immigration. This position amounts to passive acceptance of, and a failure to fight, reactionary trends among the masses. Speaking of Powell in this leaflet, the Brent Industrial Group have this to say:

"Well maybe he is on our side on the race questions? Sure! He takes advantage of the widespread demand for strict control of immigration to make snide attacks on coloured people as a whole."

It is not being said that the Brent Group does not want to fight racism but the above criticism of Powell is almost apologetic and adds up to being merely a criticism of Powell's opportunism.

Another organisation, the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), has shown itself to be very weak on the question of fighting racism. In the December, 1972 issue of their paper 'Struggle' they published what they apparently regarded as a model anti-racism leaflet. We were so disturbed by the leaflet that we wrote a letter criticising it. No reply has ever been received from the CFB(ML). The CFB(ML) leaflet and our letter are published as appendices to this pamphlet. Most striking of all the weaknesses in their leaflet is the total absence of any mention of the Immigration Act or the racist campaigns on the issue of immigration. A very remarkable 'oversight'.

We have also yet to see any mention of the question of immigration control in the pages of 'The Worker', the paper of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist). Indeed, this 'party', which claims to be the 'vanguard of the proletariat', rarely says anything at all about racism. Their political line is economism, bas-

ing their strategy on trade unionism, not on a revolutionary political struggle. So, not surprisingly, they take a line indistinguishable from any trade union official on racism, that is, they ignore it as much as they can, hoping it will not rear its ugly head and force them to take a stand.

When such people do refer to racism, they speak of the danger to unity, but racism is a fact, and disunity is a fact, requiring a struggle to expose and defeat racism and to create real unity. To hail such things as trade union struggles uniting black and white workers as great victories over racism, while ignoring such 'difficult' questions as racist immigration controls, is opportunism of the worst kind.

This question is difficult because the majority of workers have a racist outlook and support immigration controls. We must struggle against such attitudes, not ignore them. In a letter to the Socialist Propaganda League in America, Lenin said:

"In our struggle for true internationalism and against 'jingo socialism', we always quote in our press the example of the opportunist leaders of the Socialist Party in America, who are in favour of restrictions of the immigration of Chinese and Japanese workers...We think that one can not be internationalist and be at the same time in favour of such restrictions. And we assert that Socialists in America, especially English Socialists, belonging to the ruling and oppressing nation, who are not against any restrictions of immigration, against the possession of colonies (Hawaii) and for the entire freedom of colonies, that such Socialists are in reality jingoes."

The successive immigration laws of Labour and Tory governments have been inspired totally and without qualification by racism. They have reduced the legal rights of black workers to an extreme and all 'non-patrial' immigrants, which in common language means all black people, are subject to the constant threat of deportation. The passing of these laws has been accompanied by a great intensification of racist propaganda. In Germany and other European countries, special groups of immigrant workers are totally without any effective rights. Not to be outdone, British capitalists, through the Immigration Act, are preparing the way for the same thing. To quote from the October, 1973 issue of Labour Research, in which the provisions of the act, effective since January, 1973, are explained:

"A non-patrial, usually black, is not allowed in

unless he has a work permit which is for a particular job for a particular employer. The permit covers him for one year only and will not be renewed unless his employer applies for it. He cannot change his job without the permission of the Department of Employment and if this is not given can be required to leave the country."

In the concrete situation that exists in Britain, any immigration control is racist, and must be resolutely opposed. So as communists, in our line and in our slogans, we must oppose all immigration control as racist, and we must further link this question to the super-exploitation by British imperialism of the Caribbean, Africa, India and Pakistan and all the colonies and neo-colonies.

ENOCH POWELL

Enoch Powell's first racist speech did the job of uniting a few worked-out fascist groupings and individuals into a new organisation, cultivating more of an air of respectability, the National Front. Conservative Party branches split into two factions on the basis of that speech, and since then Enoch Powell has been speaking at Tory Party branches all over the country. We have learned as a result of the 'controversy' about Powell's speeches leading up to the June, 1970 General Election, that Tory Party branches are autonomous, and it is now acknowledged that at Annual Conferences of the Tory Party, Powell is a very strong figure.

Powell's election 'enemies within' speeches, although construed by many people to be a great mistake (being reminiscent of McCarthyism), are quite consistent with the fascist theory of foreign influence and elements subverting a country from within. These 'enemies within' usually take the form of being communists. So far, with Powell, they have not. Powell's inference in the June, 1970 General Election speeches, especially the 'enemies within' speech, is that there are subversive elements in the Civil Service (he will probably say at a later stage that these are in the pay of communists), who are trying to subvert Britain by 'turning the country into a racial hotchpotch'. It cannot be denied that Powell is giving national coverage to what the National Front is saying in a cruder way, and the National Front certainly regards him as its parliamentary spokesman.

This raises the question, is Powell really only a laissez-faire capitalist? Powell's economic theories are certainly only suited to laissez-faire capitalism, and so if we take Powell at face value without taking into consideration his speeches and manoeuvres leading up to the 1970 General Election, or his overtures to the Labour Party for unity against the Common Market, we would say that he was a fool of a man divorced from reality, who in no way understood the requirements of monopoly capitalism. We could point to some of his economic theories and say that he is a laissez-faire capitalist and if many of his ideas were implanted, they would be repugnant to the monopoly capitalist class. It may follow for some people, that because what Powell writes is laissez-faire, he is not a fascist and cannot be taken seriously as a force for fascism. But, according to The Times of 16th June, 1970, Andrew Roth, "Powell's self-appointed biographer, believes that most observers are under-estimating Powell's power by concentrating their attention on the Parliamentary Conservative Party". The Times quotes Andrew Roth as saying that Powell is a "populist politician" who is going for "mass

backing". Events are undoubtedly proving this to be true.

Traditionally, which sections of the people, who do not have an objective interest in fascism, are the first to gravitate towards somebody like Powell? The dispossessed petty-bourgeoisie and the lumpen proletariat, which Marx termed the "dangerous class". For the dispossessed petty-bourgeoisie, Powell's laissez-faire capitalist theories have a real meaning because they stand in contradiction to monopoly capitalism which has ruined, and is ruining, the petty-bourgeoisie. And is not this proved by what took place at the Tory Party National Conference in 1970? Enoch Powell was conspicuous by his absence and, instead, there was a number of small shop-keepers at the conference wearing Powell face masks, and market store-keepers and self-employed meat porters are proving rabid supporters of Powell.

If Powell is uniting these dregs into a real fascist force, as he seems to be doing, through racism and laissez-faire theories,⁶ then the incompatibility of Powell's laissez-faire theories with the requirements of the monopoly capitalist class and imperialism is unimportant. It is inconceivable that Powell would try to wield these dregs into a new right-wing party by appealing only to the monopoly capitalist class. When evaluating Powell's orientation, which, despite the contradictions and zig-zags in his line, is essentially fascist, our yard-stick should be, does it increase or decrease Powell's influence in the forces for fascism?

RACIST AND FASCIST ORGANISATIONS

All the parliamentary parties support racist immigration controls, so combining a token opposition to racism with really racist policies. Within these parties, in society in general, there is a struggle between bourgeois liberalism and bourgeois fascism, between liberal sham 'anti-racism', and open, blatant racism.

It is important to examine those organisations and political forces whose central line is unconcealed racism and fascism. The fascist movement in Britain today has as its main plank racist, anti-immigration propaganda. It aims to win support on this issue by appealing to the most backward racist attitudes, and hopes to win even sections of workers. The pre-war line of anti-semitism is today of minor significance compared to racist attacks on West Indian and Asian immigrants.

The principal fascist organisation, the National Front, is apparently larger and stronger than the remnants of the Mosleyites and other small fascist groups. Recent by-elections at Uxbridge and in the Liverpool area revealed one-tenth and one-third of the votes going to the National Front. These votes are being won with racist and anti-Common Market slogans. At the same time, the National Front and other fascists are busy committing acts of terrorism against black people. Families have been burnt out of their homes and shops owned by immigrants have been destroyed by petrol bombers. Always the police dismiss these criminal and murderous acts as the work of hooligans, not organised or politically motivated. They most certainly are organised and politically motivated. These people will use any resistance organised by black people as an excuse for further repression and terrorist acts.

The National Front has a large number of members in the police force. Police victimisation of black youth and the subsequent cell beatings and false charges of mugging, are being treated with a conspiracy of silence by the press.

The National Front also, in the style of all fascists, does extensive work to recruit unemployed youth. In recent years, gangs like skinheads and hell's angels have sprung up. Both have been used at various times to do dirty work for the police or the fascists. Skinheads were mainly working class and their dress of boots and braces expressed a pride in being working class. In gangs they acted in a very organised way and were prepared to accept the leadership of one person. Gangs of skinheads were involved in beating up and murdering Pakistanis and other black people in 1969

and 1970. Since then, Pakistanis have organised into vigilantes, although it is not known whether they are still in action. Hell's angels are much more petty-bourgeois and individualistic. They usually represent an elite clique who have initiation ceremonies or tasks. There is a general fondness for Nazi emblems and culture among them. Such groups of youths, if disciplined behind a fascist organisation like the National Front, would surely be the new storm-troopers.

RACISM AND THE DANGER OF FASCISM

The organised fascist movement, the fascism of Enoch Powell and others, is of great service to capitalism simply as another arrow in its quiver, a means of corrupting some elements of the population to the most rabidly reactionary outlook. It gives the thoroughly reactionary bourgeois parties the opportunity to pose as democratic, moderate and liberal, and helps to build up pressure to support the reactionary measures the bourgeoisie wishes to impose. All of these things show the necessity of smashing and defeating the fascist movement, without even considering the greater dangers. Nothing could be more opportunistic than the line of ignoring the fascists and expecting them to just fade away. But certain social democrats, revisionists, Trotskyists, and even some 'Marxist-Leninists', do put forward this line.

What we must be very aware of, is the danger that monopoly capitalism in crisis may turn to a fascist 'solution' to its difficulties, and establish a fascist state. We live in the era of imperialism, when capitalism is in its final, moribund state, when social revolution is on the agenda all over the world. In such circumstances the formation of a fascist state which would abolish the few precious freedoms and democratic rights workers have, along with the facade of parliamentary democracy, is an ever-present danger. But how 'imminent' is the danger of fascism in conditions of deepening and chronic crisis?

On this question there are two incorrect lines in the Marxist-Leninist movement; one is that fascism is no danger at all at present, that the monopoly capitalists are so securely in power that they have no need to turn to this expedient within the foreseeable future, and the other incorrect line is that fascism is around the corner, that the bourgeoisie is in the very process of introducing it at present, that the anti-fascist struggle and the popular fight against fascism must be the main content of our work, and that even the task of building the communist party must be subordinated to the anti-fascist struggle. Both these views lack scientific objectivity in facing up to this question so crucial for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics.

Britain, like all developed monopoly capitalist states, is over-ripe for socialism. The largest section of the population has long been the proletariat, the economy is centralised with the forces of production developed to the point where their full utilisation, let alone their further development, is in sharp contradiction with capitalist relations of production. The crisis of capitalism, and

its internal contradictions are insoluble. Further development of the means of production means inevitably a falling rate of profit, as Marx long ago analysed would occur. The imperialists have for a long period, by one expedient or another, and principally by the super-exploitation of the colonies, been able to keep the decaying capitalist economy from stagnation and have even had periods of growth and prosperity. Now more and more, with the rising tide of national liberation struggles limiting the possibilities for imperialist plunder, and with the competition amongst the imperialists growing sharper, the economic crisis forces imperialism to intensify exploitation of the workers in the metropolitan countries.

Yet the imperialists need more than anything stability and secure rule at home. They must have a secure base from which to operate their world-wide system of exploitation. The highly-developed capitalist industry of a country like Britain requires the cooperation of a skilled labour force. Like any exploiting class, the capitalist class of Britain must ensure the cooperation of its exploited, producing class by a combination of force and deceit. Because of the historical process by which it arose to political power, and because of the degree of intelligent, skilled cooperation required, the bourgeoisie has always been best able to achieve its ends, the exploitation of the workers, by the deceit of parliamentary democracy. The direct use of force has been used only where necessary, remaining as the ultimate weapon of the capitalist class. The advantages to the capitalists of bourgeois democracy in concealing their absolute rule and in creating the best conditions for the exploitation of labour power are very great. So long as the possibility remains of doing so, they will operate in this manner. It is still true that social democracy, the labour aristocrats of the trades unions, the myth of social change through parliament, and the whole bourgeois apparatus of ideological manipulation, retain sufficient hold on the working class to permit the enforcement of such measures as capitalism requires.

Given the increasing crisis of capitalism, these measures are becoming more and more reactionary; the Industrial Relations Act, the Housing Finance Act, the government's 'anti-inflation' policy and similar measures add up to a determination to lower the living standards of the British working class in order to preserve capitalist profits, and to cripple even the long-held economic bargaining powers of the workers. The increased use of police repression, the heightening of reactionary and racist propaganda and the Immigration Acts, all add up to increasing reaction, necessitated by the crisis of weakened British imperialism.

Yet all these measures have been implemented within the framework of bourgeois 'legality' and 'democracy'. The token 'resistance' and 'struggle' against such attacks on the working class by the Labour Party and the trade union mis-leadership certainly is profoundly unsatisfactory to the mass of workers. However, mass consciousness of their betrayal does not extend to an understanding by the working class that the bourgeoisie cannot be defeated by any leadership through the accepted channels of legal bourgeois 'democracy'. We see the frantic attempts of 'left' labour, the revisionist C.P.G.B. and the Trotskyists to preserve the illusion that all that is necessary is a better leadership and that social democracy can really do something for the working class. Therefore, the ideological enslavement of workers' minds by bourgeois parliamentarism, economic 'trade union' politics, and bourgeois social democracy remains the principal enemy that must be defeated. This further implies that the monopoly capitalists have not committed themselves to the path of dispensing with these weapons by turning decisively to the alternative of fascism and direct military dictatorship. Whilst this is generally the case, there remains the problem of continuing the struggle for revolutionary leadership of the working class in conditions where the principal enemy is the fascist organisations and/or their growing influence in the state apparatus. There is a dialectical relationship between the struggle against fascism and the defence of bourgeois democracy, as against bourgeois fascism, and the struggle against social-democracy and parliamentarism. But we will not go into this matter here. We will just note that it would be a mistake not to utilise Dimitrov's tactics of unity and struggle with social democracy against the fascists.

As far as the danger of fascism is concerned, many ominous danger signs are present. We are not able as yet to conduct a thorough analysis of the crisis and future prospects of Britain's capitalist economy, to understand, for example, what will be the long-term effects of E.E.C. membership, but all indications are that this crisis can only deepen, necessitating sharper exploitation of British workers.

In the struggle with other imperialist powers, Britain's relative position has steadily declined. In 'peaceful' economic competition, its exports have fallen, and its currency lost value. In the control of colonies, U.S. imperialism has taken over most of what was once British imperialism's private preserve. One way out of these difficulties seen by the British ruling class is entry into the E.E.C, and merger with the other European powers. This may fail in the hopes British monopoly capitalism places in it, leaving the on-

ly alternative the desperate course of an economic and political system, fascism, aimed at resolving these contradictions by imperialist war. The whole Common Market might develop into a fascist system or might be a brake on the development of fascism in a member state. All such possibilities need analysis.

With regard to internal politics in Britain, we have said that parliamentary illusions, the diversion of social democracy and reformism, retain a considerable hold over workers. Yet we are witnessing in Britain the beginnings of a break-up of the two-party system. More especially, there are definite signs that the working class is turning away from the Labour Party and looking for an alternative to the Labour-Tory farce. In the tenants' movement, there are cases of almost total rejection by the rank-and-file tenants of Labour Party interference in the politics of their rent strikes. The Pilkington glass strike and the rejection of union mis-leadership by workers indicated a move to rank-and-file initiative and a bold stand against sell-out policies. Despite the election hysteria which accompanies every General Election, the number of people turning out to vote is decreasing. The press either speaks nervously about such matters or contents itself by saying that people are not voting because they have nothing to complain of. But a moment's reflection by the bourgeoisie soon knocks the stuffing out of such complacency. The revival of the Liberal Party and the success of Dick Tavern's 'Democratic Labour Party' were assisted at least a little by the press; even bourgeois commentators have referred to Liberal successes as reflecting disillusionment not only with the two major parties, but with parliamentarism itself.

The spontaneous disillusionment of the working class with parliament, with social democracy and with the trade union bureaucracy could reach the point where these traditional means of controlling and containing workers' struggles break down. This could occur very rapidly, given a sudden sharpening of the economic crisis. In such circumstances, the ruling class, in major political and economic crisis, could no longer rule in the old way, and would certainly turn to fascism in some form or other.

Unless a revolutionary party has been built, capable of uniting and leading the working class to victory, fascism would temporarily triumph. It is in such circumstances, where what amounts to a revolutionary crisis has developed and the organisation and leadership necessary for working class victory is absent, that the capitalists can and will turn to fascism.

The ruling bourgeoisie, while not guided by the scientific theory

of Marxism, is conscious of many of these factors. Therefore, increasing ideological attacks on the working class appealing to the most reactionary, backward prejudices of the population, serve as preparations for the possible eventuality of a fascist state as well as being immediately useful to reaction. Racism is the principal form such attacks take. Others are often closely bound up with racism, such as the resurrection of 'over-population' myths and the creating of public opinion for sterilisation projects. Constantly increased attempts to whip up hysteria about declining 'law and order' are also in evidence, and whilst it is capitalism which with one hand promotes sexual and moral degeneracy, with the other it blames it on the left, the youth or on immigrants. Further, middle class movements preaching the usual drivel, albeit dangerous drivel, of a 'return to the soil', and blaming the machine and industry for capitalist crisis, are being courted by the press, radio and T.V. They represent the dispossessed petty-bourgeoisie, but the danger comes in the mass of workers accepting only a particle of such ideas. This is the political and ideological climate of British imperialism in deep crisis.

All these things and the existence of, and financial support for, the fascist movement and Enoch Powell, indicate conscious preparation by at least some sections of the monopoly capitalist class for the reserve weapon of fascism.

Speaking of the fascist regimes of the thirties, Stalin said that the imperialist crisis and the world-wide advance of socialism explained:

"...why the ruling classes in the capitalist countries are so zealously destroying or nullifying the last vestiges of Parliamentary and bourgeois democracy which might be used by the working class in its struggle against the oppressors...(and)...why they are driving the Communist parties underground and resorting to openly terrorist methods of maintaining their dictatorship.

Chauvinism and preparation of war as the main elements of foreign policy; repression of the working class a necessary means for strengthening the rear of future war fronts - that is what is now particularly engaging the minds of contemporary imperialist politicians.

In this connection, the victory of fascism in

Germany must be regarded not only as a symptom of the weakness of the working class and a result of the betrayals of the working class by social democracy, which paved the way for fascism; it must also be regarded as a sign of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, a sign that the bourgeoisie is no longer able to rule by the old methods of Parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy."

Report to the 17th Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B)
(Our emphasis - C.U.A.(M.L.))

The danger of conditions emerging in which British imperialism would attempt to institute a fascist dictatorship is very great, and communists must have a policy based on sound principles to counteract this danger.

First, we must raise the struggle against all forms of reaction, fascism, racist ideology and fascist organisations to a higher and higher level. The more success that can be achieved in this, the more difficult would it be to institute a fascist state. These struggles must be conducted, without slackening the struggle against what remains the principal enemy, that is, social democracy and reformist rot in the workers' movement. This problem is not insoluble, since the primary way of exposing this enemy is by showing up its opportunism in the struggle against more open reaction.

Secondly, we must master the strategy and tactics, in practice, of broad front struggles against reaction. The principle must be applied of basing ourselves firmly on the working class, on working class ideology and preserving our independence, while uniting on a correct concrete programme of action all those who can be united. The pitfalls of opportunism and sectarianism, of "all unity and no struggle" or "all struggle and no unity", must be avoided.

Thirdly, and most important of all, is the understanding that such policies can have only the most limited successes and are doomed to ultimate failure, until the revolutionary party that can unite and lead the working class has been built. Without a party, no correct broad front policy can be applied, nor can resistance to fascism, racism or reaction be organised and led correctly. Further, only the party based on a correct programme for socialism can win workers to a consciousness of the need for socialism, to a determination to end the system of capitalist exploitation.

The political and ideological battle against fascism and reaction is lost before we begin if it is fought only defensively, on the

grounds of preserving bourgeois democracy, trade union rights and bourgeois democratic liberties. We must raise such issues, because these threats endanger the conditions under which the working class can best organise and struggle, and further, it is on such issues that allies can best, most easily, be won from the petty-bourgeois democratic forces. But unless a solid base among workers on the direct commitment to socialist struggle exists, defeat is inevitable in any decisive struggle.

Finally, another important aspect of the danger of fascism must be considered. Communists now work in conditions of legality, and it is correct and necessary to use all possibilities to do so. Fascism, or even certain sharp turns to reaction under 'democracy', could make legal work impossible. At present, comrades are familiar with police harassment and sporadic prosecutions under trumped-up charges in the courts. But how much of the organised movement would survive the abrupt transition to conditions of total illegality? And make no mistake, the transition would be shockingly abrupt, however much we attempt to prepare for it. The problem of surviving the transition from legal to illegal conditions without a totally crippling loss of continuity of organisation and leadership must be given very serious thought. Unless organisational steps, plans and preparations are made in advance, it would be too late to begin on the day arrests on even the suspicion of being communist activists begin.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on our analysis of the questions of racism and the danger of fascism, we put forward the following conclusions:

1. Racism is specifically a product of imperialism and central to imperialist ideology historically inculcated in the working class. Without its substantial defeat, no revolutionary movement based on the working class can grow. Therefore we must have a strategy for exposing and attacking racism continually, not simply defensive tactics to deal with explicit, blatant racism.
2. On the issue of immigration we must uncompromisingly oppose all immigration controls, using slogans such as: 'British imperialism exploits black people throughout the world. Say no to racism, say no to immigration controls!'
3. We must campaign actively in all broad organisations, such as trades unions or tenants' associations, for a particular struggle against the special oppression suffered by black people.
4. Systematic exposures of racist atrocities by police or fascists and systematic exposures of discrimination in education and in all fields of social and economic life are necessary in our agitation and propaganda.
5. In all struggles on such issues in Britain, the role of British imperialism throughout the world must be raised. Any heightening of British workers' level of solidarity with the anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed colonial peoples is a direct blow against racism and fascism.
6. Strenuous efforts are essential to counter and smash the attempts of the organised fascist movement to spread its influence and propagate its racist filth.
7. In all these struggles, we must seek tactical unity with all who can be united, while preserving independence and struggling against the waverings and opportunism of non-proletarian allies. Success in such a policy will vary directly with the strength and firmness of our line, organisation and base among workers. This points directly at our decisive weakness until a revolutionary party is built.
8. Certain conditions of acute crisis may emerge very rapidly. There is therefore a great danger of capitalism resorting to a form

of fascist state, although at present the capitalist class places principal reliance on the facade of democracy. Therefore communists must struggle to defeat, and prepare against, the danger of fascism, while continuing the struggle against social democracy, reformism and parliamentary cretinism.

9. The struggle against the menace of fascism must take as a principal form the above struggles against racism, because of the intimate connection between fascist and racist ideology. Such struggles must also involve resistance to all reactionary economic and political attacks increasingly being directed at the working class in general.

10. Any strategy limited to defence of democratic rights or economic standards is doomed to failure. We must build a growing workers' movement committed to socialism, to the complete overthrow of imperialist exploitation and the capitalist state in all its forms.

11. Special attention must be paid immediately to preparations for organisationally surviving the transition to illegal forms of activity in the event of fascist dictatorship.

12. The most important point concerning the threat of fascism, the struggles against racism and reaction, is the urgency of the need for a revolutionary party. This party must possess a revolutionary programme and strategy based on a concrete analysis of British conditions, guided by the ideology of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism Mao Tsetung Thought, and developed in practice. It must be capable of building a base in the working class and giving correct leadership in the class struggle. Party-building centres on building this capacity for leadership and creating these conditions for the party's existence. This must be the priority task towards which all our work is directed.

APPENDIX I

COVENTRY LEAFLET

OFFENSIVE AGAINST RACISM

Whilst it is important that the obscene racialism being purveyed by the Powellites and National Front should be countered, and claims that immigrants cause unemployment, are responsible for the housing shortage, create ghettos and gum up maternity hospitals should be exposed as filthy lies, we should not go on the defensive and let the fascists call the tune and dictate revolutionary propaganda. It is imperative that revolutionaries, action committees, workers and students go on the offensive.

The Coventry Action Committee of trade unionists does not see racism in isolation, but as a part of a concerted attack by the ruling class (rent increases, wage freeze, unemployment, Industrial Relations Act) on workers, and has circulated a leaflet, the text of which is printed below:

RACISM ATTACKS ALL WORKERS

The Government/Employer alliance in Britain frantically attempts to overcome the crisis of their capitalist system.

The working class is attacked:

Industrial Relations Act
Housing Finance Act
Wage Freeze
Rising Unemployment
Reduced Social Services

Workers fight back:

Miners' wages battle
Dockers' defeat of the Industrial Relations Act
Rent strikes against higher rents
Factory occupations for the right to work

The 'establishment' is worried by the increasing opposition to their attacks hence the increasing use of the weapon 'divide and rule' and the intensification of the obscene campaign of racism. This has been a dominant feature of their existence since the days of colonialism and the slave trade, two of the main planks for their present position of economic and political dominance.

In Hitler's Germany, the Trade Union and Labour Movement was smashed following the divisions the Nazis perpetrated by their attacks upon the Jews.

The 5 dockers imprisoned under the Industrial Relations Act were released due to the Miners, Engineers, Dockers, etc., who united against the Tories and the Employers. Country of origin and the colour of the workers was irrelevant.

If this Government/Employer alliance can divert the attention of workers to each other's nationality or colour, they move nearer to

smashing opposition to their quest for maximum profits.

RENTS AND MORTGAGES ARE HIGH AND ACCOMMODATION CHRONICALLY SHORT DUE TO LAND SPECULATORS, MONEYLENDERS, AND HIGH INTEREST RATES.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND INFLATION RAGE BECAUSE THE PROFIT DRIVEN SYSTEM CAN NEVER MEET THE NEEDS OF THE WORKERS.

Education is deplorable. This system only provides the required education for machine-minders to produce profits.

These are issues of discrimination against all workers irrespective of colour. When a black worker is further discriminated against; in jobs, housing, social services, police harassment, it is another victory to the ruling class in diverting attention from the number one enemy - Capitalism.

Take the offensive - fight racism - We have to do it because the Harold Wilsons and Vic Feathers will not.

Force your Employer not to discriminate between black and white Trade Unionists.

Boycott and campaign against all racist establishments - pubs, clubs, dance-halls.

Agitate in your Trade Union branch and Shop Stewards Committee for the rate for the job - black/white, man or woman.

Ensure that your Trade Union allows no discrimination between black and white members.

WE CALL ON REVOLUTIONARIES, ACTIVISTS AND TRADE UNIONISTS TO SET UP SIMILAR ACTION COMMITTEES TO FIGHT FOR SIMILAR DEMANDS AND TO GO ON THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST RACISM AND OTHER ATTACKS ON WORKERS.

(Published by the Communist Federation of Britain (M-L) in their monthly paper "Struggle" Dec.1972. C.U.A. comment on this leaflet is overleaf in Appendix II.)

APPENDIX II

Communist Unity Organisation
 London Committee
 6th February, 1973

Dear Comrade,

It was with some concern that our comrades read the article in 'Struggle', "Coventry Leaflet - Offensive Against Racism". We are of the firm opinion that this example of an attempt to fight racism contains some very important errors. It is our duty therefore as fellow communists to point out these errors and to express them to you in this letter.

We do not disagree with the general demand for Action Committees. This is a strong demand. The question is, where in the leaflet do you prove that racism really needs to be fought at all? Further, where do you show that action committees, of the kind you envisage, will fight racism? Also, what would your attitude to immigrant-based action committees, specifically established to combat racism, be? This is not clear at all in the leaflet. What is clear is the obvious use such a committee would be in fighting against the employers' offensive, but we contend that this in itself is insufficient to combat racism.

These are a few general comments that we would like to make. Now let us take a look at the leaflet in detail.

The leaflet opens by speaking of the "government/employer alliance". This is an unfortunate phrase which leaves the implication that the employers and the government need not be allied; some workers might conclude that a Labour government would not be allied with the employers.

Then the attacks on the working class are enumerated. There is: Industrial Relations Act, Housing Finance Act, Wage Freeze, Rising Unemployment and Reduced Social Services. Where is the Immigration Act? Has it vanished? Or is this not an attack on the working class? Comrades and workers were informed that this was a leaflet against racism. Yet no mention of the Immigration Act?!

Then the leaflet enumerates the workers' fights against the capitalist offensive. There is the miners, the dockers, rent strikes and factory occupations. No mention however of the struggle of the Mansfield hosiery workers against racial discrimination and the

complicity of the union leaders in the super-exploitation of these black workers. Is this really a leaflet against racism?

The main text of the leaflet commences, "The 'establishment' is worried". Need the enemy be so vaguely described? What follows is some perfectly correct comments on the capitalist policy of divide and rule. However, this is marred by the description of racism as a "campaign" and the expression that racism has been a "dominant feature....since the days of colonialism and the slave trade". We are worried about this peculiar combination of words. Are we to believe that colonialism has ended? Was it something that existed only with the slave trade? What of modern imperialist society which has elaborated racial prejudice into an ideology which is constantly pressed upon the workers from all sources? What of neo-colonialism? Is modern racism merely a campaign?

The point about Hitler's Germany is quite correct and could do with some expansion, for example, some analysis of the growth of the conditions for fascism in this country. A real danger in our opinion.

The instance of the struggle of the workers against the imprisonment of the five dockers is not one that directly supports the case for fighting racism. The leaflet says that "colour of the workers was irrelevant" in this struggle. We would add that colour was not an issue in this struggle, and Enoch Powell and other fascists are not slow in grasping this point. Powell has attacked Heath for dictatorial behaviour over industrial and other questions. We contend that a fascist may easily involve himself in the struggle against the government so that he may gain the confidence of the workers. In short, the struggle by the miners, engineers and dockers was not directed against racism.

The next paragraph suggests that the government might divide the presumably united workers with racism. The leaflet seems to put aside its duty to call for the unity of the workers (and indeed go on the offensive) and presumes that the workers may become divided at some future date. Where is this grand unity may we ask, if it already exists? Any black worker in a British trades union will tell you what the attitude of his union is to him. Why should it have become necessary for black workers to organise separately in many cases if this stirring unity is offered by the overwhelmingly white trades unions? Of course this unity does not exist. It is our duty to build it by combatting national chauvinism and imperialist racism in the unions. As you are well aware, chauvinism in the unions is nothing new and it split the workers long ago according to

its racial prejudices.

The two sentences that follow this are undeniably true generalisations about capitalism. What do they have to do with fighting racism? Education is mentioned without a word about E.S.N. schools into which immigrant youth is herded indiscriminately in accordance with the usual racist guidelines.

But the worst is yet to come:

"These are issues of discrimination against all workers irrespective of colour. When a black worker is further discriminated against..."

What sort of offensive against racism is this? "When a black worker is further discriminated against"!! The editors of 'Struggle' seem unconcerned to state the facts as they really are. Black workers are discriminated against. If the innumerable instances of the most savage and brutal oppression were taken into account, there would be no possibility of carelessly commencing such a fact with the word "when". The pages of 'Black Voice' and the papers of other black militant groups are crammed with instances of this oppression. Again, if the unemployment figures for black people were studied a different approach would be made. (For example, the proportion of black unemployed youth is 16% compared to the national average of 8%) Further, the meniality and low pay of the jobs offered to black people must be taken into account. On top of all this there are questions of slum accommodation and many other aspects to the special oppression of minority groups in this country. If this were all truly appreciated by the editors of 'Struggle', then this paragraph would not have been written in this way.

Then we are implored to take the offensive and fight racism; "we have to do it because the Harold Wilsons and Vic Feathers will not". The most striking thing about the attitude of the Labour Party and the T.U. leaders and officials towards racism (this includes the C.P.G.B., for that matter) is that the issue is underplayed. It is felt to be a 'hot' issue, a dreadful monster that best be forgotten lest the mention of it might anger the mysterious being into taking some awful vengeance. That is why the Labour gents make cowardly concession after concession to the racists, and clearly adopt the racist logic of modern imperialism. Of course, imperialist logic is their stock in trade but the liberal/social democratic veneer that covers their approach to the workers makes them doubly dangerous. In fact they bolster racism amongst the workers by urging such things as immigration control and refusing, as trade union leaders, to champion the rights of workers belonging to national minorities. It is all sealed by a hypocritical contention that

racial equality exists in a situation where it plainly does not. So is it a question of Wilson and Feather not fighting racism? That is the least that can be said! Wilson and Feather favour racism and it is proven by their attitude to immigration control and the fact that they will not expose the racial oppression that exists in this country, but instead give that racial oppression the seal of respectability representing as they do 'the Labour movement'. Why not cite these facts in this case?

And now we come to the final demands of the leaflet:

"Force your employer not to discriminate.
Boycott...racist establishments.
Agitate...for the rate for the job - black/white,
man or woman.
Ensure that your Trade Union allows no discrimination."

All (but one) are economic and trade union-orientated demands. Even here they go nothing like far enough, and leave the reader with bourgeois illusions about the employers, etc. Comrades who remember the liberal bourgeois 'Campaign Against Racial Discrimination' may recall that this organisation went much farther than this in its struggle against racism. For example, some branches actually helped protect immigrants from violent racist attacks. So in some ways the Marxist-Leninists have retreated from the position held by bourgeois liberals 5 to 10 years ago. All in all the leaflet says that if we stand together to oppose the Tory government (why only Tory?) on the Industrial Relations Act, then that is an offensive against racism. But nothing could be farther from the truth. Such a simplistic notion can only be the product of minds which deny the character of modern imperialism. Remember it is only in the twentieth century and under twentieth century economic and political conditions that the imperialists established a 'racist state' or rather an imperialist state with the extreme racial policies of the Nazis. That was forty years ago and today the economic and political conditions that gave rise to this phenomenon are repeated all over the imperialist world.

Racism is a doubly dangerous thing. It must be opposed for this special reason as part of the struggle against fascism. It cannot be regarded as an incidental matter. It must be exposed. Enoch Powell, the National Front, the Monday Club and all extreme rightist organisations must be opposed. The opening to the leaflet by the C.F.B.(M-L) editors is profoundly wrong. It is clearly the spirit of the Labour Party and all the social traitors that is expressed in the opening remarks, "we should not go on the defensive and let the fascists call the tune". The struggle against racism

is a struggle for the defence of the working class. Any offensive must surely be against the racist ideology of the imperialists. It must be to expose racism in all its forms and subject it to open attack and criticism. Surely the most extremely dangerous and also very influential forms cannot be ignored? When it comes to Powellism and the National Front we cannot choose to stand above the attempts of these fascists to increase their power. We cannot regard an open attack on Powellism as 'defensive' whilst calling a mere economic struggle by an economic 'action committee' an offensive! This is a reversal of the truth and must be recognised as such. Remember that social democrats have chosen always to stand aside from the struggle against racism and fascism and by doing so have rendered service to the reactionaries.

We make these criticisms not because we see an isolated mistake in the leaflet. There are several mistakes and a generally incorrect approach. Even this would be less important were it not for the fact that it is presented as a "model" of anti-racism for others to follow. It is not an example which comrades in the movement should follow, but it may prove useful by virtue of its negative example.

Yours fraternally,

London Committee of the C.U.O.(M-L)

Open letter to:

Association for the
Realisation of Marxism

Communist Unity Association
44 Greencroft Gardens
London N.W.6
26th June, 1974

Dear Comrades,

This letter is an open comment on certain questions concerning fascism and social democracy that have arisen in your publication 'Scientific Socialism' and in discussions with you.

The development of capitalism into its final stage of imperialism, state monopoly-capitalism, created new problems as well as opportunities for the revolutionary movement. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party creatively developed Marxism in applying it to the changed conditions of imperialism and the specific problems of the Russian revolution. Mao Tsetung and the Communist Party of China further developed Marxism-Leninism in applying it to China. Imperialism created sharp contradictions between the imperialist states and the oppressed colonial peoples, converting these peoples into the allies of the world proletariat. It placed national liberation wars and democratic revolution leading directly to socialist revolution on the agenda for backward, semi-feudal and colonial countries.

In imperialist countries there has been no corresponding development of the revolutionary movement. With the development of imperialism, the old social-democratic parties almost universally became completely opportunistic tools of reaction. After the First World War and the October revolution, new communist parties were born, based on Leninist principles of recognising the imperialist nature of their respective countries, and reaffirming the necessity for the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, the Leninism of these parties was often superficial, and the growth of revisionism in the Soviet Union was heartily welcomed by them as they became completely revisionist themselves.

Lenin's analysis of the political and economic developments of imperialism was not sufficiently understood and developed by communists in the imperialist countries. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the attitude of the C.P.G.B. in the 1930's to the colonies and to the role of social democracy. Only a clear and developing analysis of imperialist societies could have provided the basis for a successful fight against developing revisionism and opportunism.

Today, the building of a revolutionary party is the central task of Marxist-Leninists in Britain. This task centres on the application of theory to imperialist society and the development of a clear analysis and strategy. Our starting point must be Lenin's analysis of imperialism. Lenin pointed out the principal developments: the concentration of capitalism into giant monopolies; the merger of industrial capital with finance capital; the developed role of the state and the emergence of state monopoly-capitalism; the complete division of the world between a few imperialist powers and the parasitism of the economics of imperialist states upon the colonies.

The super-profits of imperialism made possible the increased stratification of society in the imperialist countries, and particularly the "buying-off" of sections of workers, the labour aristocracy. In this way, imperialism laid down the material base for the triumph of opportunism and social-chauvinism in the 'working class' movement.

At the same time, imperialist countries had become over-ripe for socialist revolution. The high development of the means of production and of the centralisation of the economy was in the sharpest contradiction with the concentration of ownership and control in the hands of a very few. The crises of imperialism were more fundamental and far-reaching than the recurrent economic crises of developing capitalism.

Imperialism, to survive, therefore needed to make certain adjustments to the changed conditions. The state machinery of imperialism had already increased in size and importance because of the military and administrative needs of colonialism and because of inter-imperialist war and threats of war. It now became necessary for the state to become involved in the economy and in directing and controlling the relations of production on the largest scale. Keynesian economic policies of deficit financing, bringing inflationary influences on the market, were introduced. The nationalisation of key but ailing industry was carried out and efforts were made to impose elements of a planned economy on capitalist anarchy. Capitalism's earlier efforts to crush the rise of mass trade unions were altered to (largely successful) efforts to turn trade union bureaucracies into auxiliary agents for controlling and disciplining the work-force.

Politically, imperialism continued to make use of the deception of bourgeois democracy where it could. In this, it frequently made use of social-democratic parties like the British Labour Party to bring in much of the economic and social adjustment imperialism

required. It played such parties off against traditional 'laissez-faire' bourgeois parties, to preserve the charade of democracy. Where conditions made it impossible to do this, as in Italy and Germany, it had recourse to fascism. The economic policies of fascism were very similar to those of social democracy, except for an even greater channelling of production to military needs.

Comrades, the above brief outline of political and economic conditions under imperialism is the context in which the C.U.A.(M-L) sees its party-building task. The fundamental recognition of the fact of imperialism is the first step in analysing imperialist society and developing a revolutionary strategy, and this fundamental recognition is the most basic dividing line between Marxist-Leninists and revisionists, Trotskyists and other diversionary 'left' elements in imperialist society.

In 'Scientific Socialism', you advance views that are in general agreement with much that we say. However, the conclusion you reach and the general proposition you put forward are mistaken. Imperialism, state monopoly-capitalism, you say, is fascism. The differences between what you term "classic fascism" as in Hitler's Germany or Mussolini's Italy and the state monopoly-capitalism of Britain today are superficial. Therefore, you argue, any policy for resisting the rise of fascism can only be opportunism, since it conceals the 'fascism' already existing and promotes illusions about the 'democracy' in imperialist societies.

In the first article in 'Scientific Socialism', entitled 'Angela Davis and Theories of Growing Fascism', some correct criticism is made of the revisionist manipulation of the struggle against the danger of fascism and against more openly anti-working class politicians (Nixon, the Tory Party) in order to spread illusions about other bourgeois politicians (McGovern, the Labour Party) and to obscure the realities of imperialism and its state. You then proceed to more "profound" conclusions:

"To view fascism as a policy implies the real possibility of alternate policies within the capitalist framework; consequently 'fascism as a policy' becomes an apology for confining the struggle to the purely defensive."

Error leads to revisionism by "the attempt...to pass off a strategy of defence as offensive in nature". Whereas others, you say, see fascism as a "policy", you understand it to be "the sum total of those phenomena in the superstructure of bourgeois society which correspond to the economic development of monopoly capitalism".

Comrades, what a remarkable argument! We must shut our eyes to the obvious differences between fascist and 'democratic' forms of the dictatorship of monopoly capitalism. Otherwise you will condemn us as believers in some theory that fascism is a policy that monopoly capitalism puts on and off like a glove, and insist that we wish to "confine the struggle to the purely defensive".

The fact is that fascism is resorted to by imperialism when it has no alternative. The deception of bourgeois democracy is a more secure, stable and efficient method of imperialist rule. It will abandon this form of the state only when fascist, open military dictatorship is the only way it can maintain its rule. But this will inevitably occur unless prevented by socialist revolution, because in conditions of really acute economic and political crisis this is required by the needs of imperialism. Growing fascism can be diagnosed not from this or that example of increased repression in isolation, but in the context of acute economic crisis and political crisis, and primarily from the disappearance among the masses of illusions about 'democracy', social-democratic parties and official trades unions.

Not fascism but imperialism is the "sum total of those phenomena in the superstructure of bourgeois society which correspond to the economic development of monopoly capitalism". Fascism is a method of exercising and ideologically 'justifying' imperialist power. 'Democratic' and fascist imperialist states have the same purpose. Like all class states, they are the instrument for maintaining 'order', that is, the continuation of the system of exploitation. Imperialist states go beyond being the armed policemen of class society, however, to serve as a controlling element in all facets of the exploitative system.

The concentrated economic power, means of communication, transport, weapons, methods of organisation and propaganda in the hands of the imperialist state gives it more control over the lives of the people than could ever be imagined in earlier societies. It is important that the power of the state be understood. Even more important to understand is the ultimately much greater power of the working class, once it becomes united in a co-ordinated revolutionary struggle. As Chairman Mao teaches, imperialism is a "paper tiger" strategically, in the long term, but tactically, in the short term, a very real tiger.

Fascism does not differ from imperialist 'democracy' in its economic organisation, nor in the extension of state control over wider areas of life in the imperialist countries. It differs in the method of doing these things, the extent of open violence and the

manner in which it is used and in the form of ideological justification for the state.

Both forms of imperialist state in their propaganda promote the idea of the 'unity' of all classes in the 'national' interest. However, where 'democratic' states try to minimise violent coercion and deceive the workers into cooperation with capitalism, in the name of democracy, fascism glorifies 'discipline' and 'order', openly uses terror and attempts to create the illusion of the omnipotence and utterly ruthless power of the state.

Both utilise chauvinism and racism, but fascism nakedly and openly, 'democracy' indirectly as a secondary reinforcement of its hold on workers' minds. Fascism makes ideological appeals only to the most irrational prejudices, abandoning the props of liberalism, 'democracy' and the rule of 'impartial' law.

In practice, the fascist state ruthlessly crushes the slightest opposition. It carries out the militarisation of the whole society. Trades unions are coerced into becoming state agencies completely, and no vestige of shop-floor democracy or 'wild-cat' strikes is permitted to remain. In 'democratic' societies like Britain, the official trades unions cooperate in general with imperialism, and have a large measure of control over their membership. So long as this works, some economic struggles and a degree of shop-floor democracy is a small price for imperialism to pay.

'Democracy' is happy with the numerous safety-valves (for letting off steam) provided by a great diversity of political organisations. So long as imperialist power is secure, they provide very useful diversions and form displays for proving that 'democracy' really exists. Fascism, the exercise of power in conditions of more basic insecurity for imperialism, requires the ruthless suppression of all diversity of political organisations and 'freedoms'.

The very fact of the increased and concentrated power of the state makes possible, in 'democracy', the relatively controlled and limited use of violence. On the other hand, when the weakness of imperialism requires the use of terroristic dictatorship, it has more power to make this effective and to appear omnipotent and irresistible.

Having pointed out these facts, let us look at your "profound" conclusions again. Fascism is not a "policy" decided on this week and abandoned next week, but a general method of exercising the imperialist dictatorship forced on the ruling class by circumstances beyond its control. It is, however, a method of rule

that has important and obvious differences in ideological emphasis and in the use of violence from 'democracy'.

As to a "strategy for defence", Marxist-Leninists hold this to be the era of the final stage of capitalism, when proletarian revolution is on the agenda. Our strategy, therefore, must be offensive, a strategy for revolution. Our tactics are "offensive" where possible and "defensive" where necessary. Any "offensive" strategy must encompass tactics of attack and retreat, offence and defence. This is elementary.

Open fascist dictatorship offers even less advantageous conditions for the struggle for proletarian power, in that open 'legal' political propaganda and organisation cannot be undertaken. Therefore we must give leadership to the defence against fascism, not creating illusions as to the nature of bourgeois 'democracy' in the process, but showing that fascism inevitably will grow out of this 'democracy' in crisis unless forestalled by proletarian revolution.

In the main article in 'Scientific Socialism', entitled 'The Monopoly Capitalist State: George Jackson's Analysis', what is correct is the distinction drawn between imperialism and the period of developing capitalism. As you quote from Lenin:

"The political superstructure of the new economy of monopoly capitalism (imperialism is monopoly capitalism) is the turn from democracy to political reaction. Democracy corresponds to free competition. Political reaction corresponds to monopoly. Finance capital strives for domination, not for freedom."

Bourgeois democracy, from being an instrument for destroying feudalism and providing the political framework for the capitalist transformation of the means of production, has become an instrument for the rule of decadent, decaying capitalism, and a hindrance to the further development of the means of production. There never was any 'pure' democracy; it was always a form of bourgeois class rule. At one stage bourgeois rule was historically progressive. Today it is completely reactionary. However, the analysis of the reactionary nature of imperialist 'democracy' and the tendency everywhere to more and more reactionary state policies should not be used to obscure the differences between open fascism and 'democracy'. So long as any advantages for the working class can be wrung from bourgeois 'democracy', it is 'left' nonsense for you to oppose "defending obsolete political forms against erosion". The struggle for proletarian power absolutely requires the struggle to expose and combat the constant "erosion" of democratic rights in

imperialist society.

We agree that there is ultimately no question of preserving bourgeois democracy. As deepening crisis faces imperialism, the only alternatives are open fascism or proletarian power. In the struggle to develop working class unity and revolutionary consciousness, however, the contradictions between bourgeois liberalism and reaction must be utilised to the full, and all 'democratic' rights defended and utilised as long and as well as possible.

Comrades, we must say that some of the arguments in your publication seem like empty playing with words. For example, the argument you give for avoiding the "unscientific approach" of "defining fascism in terms of the methods it employs" does not frighten us a great deal, even though that is basically what we do. True, "fascism is uniquely the product of monopoly capitalism". True, we do not call "Bismark's Germany" or "Romanov Russia" fascist states, although they were militaristic police states. But how or why does it follow that therefore "it is not possible to define fascism in terms of the methods it employs"?

The fact is, comrades, that we see a real difference in the method of exercising the imperialist dictatorship in countries which can no longer make 'democracy' workable in monopoly capitalism's interests, monopoly capitalist states which have resorted to open, terroristic dictatorship and the systematic appeal exclusively to the most irrational and reactionary forms of imperialist ideology. We require a word to describe monopoly capitalist states using such methods, and we use 'fascism' because this is the common usage of the word. We will not be deterred from this use of the word because you have forbidden it, or because earlier states also were military dictatorships in certain circumstances.

From this dismissal of the method of state rule as being of no importance to a definition of fascism, you proceed to the "scientific" approach of George Jackson and A.R.M.; "laissez-faire" economics no longer apply, but, instead, all imperialist states have massive state intervention in the economy. This was apparent first in "classic" fascist states. Therefore, all imperialist states are fascist. But the "science" in this argument escapes us.

The concept of the "corporate state" is then introduced. The fascist state introduced this by "physically destroying the trade union structure". In America and Britain, trades unions were "subverted by the lure of reform". It is indeed remarkable to see no significant difference between the two methods and what they

achieve. In 'democracies', economic struggles emerge again and again, at least at shop-floor level, whereas fascist corporativism placed a rigid clamp on any economic struggle of workers, enforced by direct terror. To over-exaggerate the significance of the economic struggles that exist is very bad, but to give them no significance at all is nonsensical.

Your reflections on fascist ideology are similar; "classic" fascism's ultra-chauvinism and racism are unimportant compared to the common ideology of all "fascisms", that is, the common ideology of all imperialist societies. This is "anti-communist, anti-class, anti-liberal, anti-democratic and corporativist, just like the prevalent ideology of contemporary imperialist states which are not often judged to be fascist". There are, as we have pointed out, common themes of chauvinism, anti-communism and intra-class unity in the 'national interest' in all imperialist societies. It is, however, really incredible that you have never observed that the central theme of the anti-communist propaganda in 'democratic' Britain is that communism is 'undemocratic' and a 'totalitarian ideology', whereas fascism preaches order, discipline and force to serve the nation against an 'international conspiracy', communism, to subvert it.

True, as you point out, racism was not central to fascist ideology in Italy as it was in Nazi Germany. This is a very poor argument for a British Marxist to use, however, when it is overwhelmingly apparent that racism is increasing in ideological effectiveness for imperialism in Britain today, and would certainly be central to the ideology of a fascist Britain.

The final summing-up of your article on George Jackson is very interesting. Fascism, you say, may be defined this way or that, but the important thing is to define it so that it serves as a guide to action, to practice. By defining all imperialist states as fascist, attention is focussed on the "target of revolutionary activity", illusions are dispelled about 'democracy' and opportunism will be avoided. This appears to be your conclusion.

We believe that it is your lack of interest in practice, not your desire for a "guide to action", that makes possible such a definition. In terms of the tactics, the forms of practice, available to communists under conditions of open fascism and 'democracy', your definition is so nonsensical as to need no refutation. Where open propaganda and agitation are possible, communists must carry them out. When these 'rights' are threatened, they must be defended. When they no longer exist, the most intensive illegal, 'under-

ground' work must be engaged in.

In our practice, the thorough exposure of the fraud of 'democracy', of the role of social democracy and of the reactionary trades unions is not opposed by the necessity to expose the growing danger of fascism. The exposure of growing fascism, on the contrary, is necessary to the complete exposure of the nature of imperialist 'democracy'.

You are aware that a basic difference between the policy of our two organisations is our insistence on the necessity for organisational involvement in practical struggles of workers and for agitational and propaganda work among workers. We put this forward although we regard the theoretical tasks as primary at this stage, and although we are aware that the results of such practical work will necessarily be limited at present. We are also constantly made aware by daily experience of the time-consuming nature of such work. Why, then, do we regard it as necessary?

Because the correct carrying-out of the primary theoretical tasks requires engaging in practical work. Unless we are among workers, joining with them in struggles, we cannot maintain a thoroughly proletarian outlook. We must constantly relate general theory to practical tasks or our theory will become academic and sterile.

It is in the struggle to unite theory and practice, to relate the general to the particular, our general analysis to the requirement of specific tactics and lines on specific questions, that correct ideas can emerge. Your sneer in 'Scientific Socialism' about "ritual obeisance to the 'unity of theory and practice'" does not affect our belief that the lack of any real effort to unite theory and practice has been a principal weakness in the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain.

Your line that there is no significant difference between fascism and 'democratic' imperialist states can only be accounted for by a complete lack of interest in practical struggles, in the attempt to apply theory to the reality of class struggle. On the one hand, 'democracy' relies primarily on deceiving workers with phoney elections, trades unionism, social democracy and other diversions, permitting a certain level of political freedom and using direct, open violence only as a secondary weapon. On the other hand, fascism makes open violence and terror its principal weapon, abandons the subtle deception of 'democratic' freedoms and ruthlessly crushes any opposition.

These differences in method make the most basic differences in our

practice and in the tactics we must employ. Only the most childish 'leftism' could fail to understand this. Such a viewpoint is understandable from those who have suffered direct violence and oppression of the most extreme sort under 'democracy', as certainly occurs. If such comrades do not understand that their experience is not universal and thereby leaves out much that is necessary in a general analysis, they will make errors. To arrive at such a position from a detached, academic approach, however, reveals only a sterile, pompous intellectualism which is alien to the working class outlook.

Comrades, at the time of our earlier exchange of letters concerning our 'Broad Fronts and United Fronts' pamphlet we did not have the benefit of knowing your views on fascism. Nevertheless, our stand on the question of correctly utilising tactics of broad or united fronts where they serve the revolutionary strategy remains unchanged. We were pleased to see that you published our letter to you.

The most central theoretical question facing Marxist-Leninists, not just in Britain but in all imperialist countries, is the full analysis of the imperialist state, its economy, the political and ideological methods it employs and the balance of class forces in imperialist society. The most important ideological battle in the 'left' is combatting the refusal of revisionists, neo-revisionists (such as the CPB(M-L)) and Trotskyists to recognise the fundamental reaction in all ways existing in imperialism and the distinction between monopoly capitalist states and the developing bourgeois democratic states of the last century.

Your position that all imperialist states are fascist is 'left' only in appearance and is not really useful in this ideological battle. You one-sidedly see only certain common aspects of imperialist states, 'democratic' or fascist. In neglecting the differences between such methods of rule you neglect the analysis of how or why such different methods are employed.

In particular, the basis of imperialist 'democracy' is ignored. How is it possible for 'democratic' imperialism to achieve much the same co-operation from trades unions, through the "lure of reform", as fascism achieved by corporativism and terror? How could social-democratic movements command fairly wide working class support for long periods while carrying out policies required by the needs of imperialism?

The answer to such questions lies in the parasitism of imperialist states on the colonies, in the extent to which colonial super-pro-

fits provided the basis for economic expansion and prosperity for decadent monopoly-capitalist states. The stratification of society, the creation of large strata of professional, technical and managerial employees, the buying-off of sections of workers, the labour aristocrats, was made possible by the super-profits of imperialism. The confident, complacent big-power chauvinism and racism of oppressor nations was created by decades of successful super-exploitation of colonies.

The national liberation wars and the internal economic crisis of imperialism are destroying the material base for the labour aristocracy and the social-chauvinism and class collaboration of which they have been the principal agents among the working class. The imperialist ideology will not disappear automatically, however. Economic crisis and political crisis will destroy the basis for the fraud of 'democracy' in imperialist states, but unless imperialist ideology and the outlook of labour aristocrats, social-fascists and their tail of revisionists and Trotskyists is defeated among the working class, such crises will be more likely to produce racist, fascist movements.

Comrades, you draw attention to the concentrated power in the hands of all imperialist states by calling them all "fascist", "corporate" states. This concentrated power is real, but it is not omnipotent. The potential power of the working class, of the masses, is much greater and the imperialist state must rely on deceiving, disuniting and dividing the masses to rule. Only in weakness does it resort to crude terror as its main weapon, and even then it must whip up some mass support by appeals to the most irrational aspects of the imperialist ideology that has been drummed into the workers.

We must certainly analyse the imperialist state, not on some, but on all sides. Even more important is the task of analysing the class forces and political lines that are utilised to maintain this main enemy in power, and the forces that can be united to defeat it. Your "scientific" definition of "fascism" obscures, rather than casting light on this problem.

Fraternally,