

Correspondence from the Birmingham Conference [1977] on Marxist-Leninist Unity

CWM - Proposals on the suggested conference of Marxist Leninists

CFB (ML) - Theses of the CFB (M-L) for the conference of Marxist-Leninists

CWA – Coventry Workers Association Amendments to the Thesis

JG – Some points concerning Marxist-Leninist Unity

MD – On “The Way Forward”

Dear Comrades (Three letters)

After the Conference – Towards Unity

PROPOSALS ON THE SUGGESTED CONFERENCE OF MARXIST LENINISTS,

From the Communist Workers Movement.

To all Marxist Leninists in Britain,

Comrades,

More than ever before there is an urgent need for unity among Marxist Leninists to forge a path for the British Revolution.

Not only is the crisis deepening, with the possibility of its devolpping into a revolutionary situation, but as a corollary, the forces of reaction are getting organised, and shamefully to admit far better than we are.

The proletariat fights back, but still remains trammalled under the illusions of social-democracy and trade union consciousness, while the betrayals of revisionism have only strengthened and per-petuated this confusion.

In these pressing circumstances, the responsibilities on the shoulders of Marxist-Leninists are great.

Yet we are disastrously weak, organisationally, and ideol-ogically. For years we have recognised the need for a revolutionary party, and have tried in our seperate ways to build it, or at least lay the foundations for it.

Today, we can no longer go our seperate ways... difficult though it may be, we must come together to synthesise our collective exp-erience to formulate a common line and programme.

When the Communist Workers Movement was formed, it set itself no other task than this --a stimulus to unity. In our 'Open Letter to Marxist Leninist Organisations', we called upon Marxist - Leninists to work together for the convening of a National Conference, this year , the aim of which will be to bring together the collective experience of Marxist Leninists, and to develop a programme of practical and theoretical work towards the founding conference of the revolutionary party.

Since then there have been various discussions with organisations and individuals across the country, and now the planning of this conference is well under way.

1..... It is proposed that the conference should take place in Birmingham on Saturday and Sunday, 2nd and 3rd of July 1977.

2..... Marxist Leninist groups or individuals from all over Britain will be invited. It is hoped that where groups are involved, all members of the group will be able to attend.

3..... The proposed agenda is :-

Saturday 2nd

10a.m. conference opened

Introductions

The Crisis -National and International
-economic, political , ideological.

1 p.m. Meal Break

2 p.m. Towards a Class Analysis

5p.m. Break

5.45 p.m. On Ideology -Marxism-Leninism, Revisionism, Soc. l. Democracy, The threat of Fascism
The Trade Union Movement

7.30 p.m. End of Session

Sunday, 3rd July

10 a.m.....On Practice, The Mass Line

1p.m. Meal Break

2p.m.....The Way Forward

The Party

A Congress

Organisation

4p.m.....The Internationale

4.....Discussions will be based on papers prepared and distributed in advance of the conference and will consist of the full texts of all contributions from groups or individuals attending the conference. Therefore you are asked to submit all such papers, well in advance of the conference, and either ready duplicated or on Gestetner stencils.

5..... The buildup timetable is as follows:-

- a)deadline for preliminary lists of comrades attending, and numbers needing accomodation.....3rd May
- b)Deadline for receipt of written contributions 17th May
- c)deadline for final attendance lists/accomodation etc. and for fees 17th June
- d) conference papers to be distributed 31st May

6.....It is essential that we know the numbers attending as soon as possible, 1

7.....Because of security it is obvious that where avoidable we do not expect names of delegates to be sent, and so each comrade attending will be issued with a numbered conference ticket, which will act as a means of identification. In the case of organisations they will get the requested number of tickets and documents to apportion themselves. Nobody will be allowed entry without a ticket.

8..... Accomodation will be provided where requested, and the conference fee (provisionally £2 per head) will include a mid-day meal.

These then are the proposals. We welcome any ideas you may have to improve the agenda but ask that these be submitted by 30th March, so that adequate time be given for the preparation and submission of documents. Local discussions can be arranged for groups and individuals about any agenda amendments for before the 30th March.

We would also appreciate an estimate of numbers attending by that date.

Yours Fraternally

THE COMMUNIST WORKERS MOVEMENT

OCTOBER BOOKS

4B TEMPLE COURT

LIVERPOOL 2

THESES OF THE CFB(M-L) FOR THE CONFERENCE OF MARXIST-LENINISTS.

I. A conference to found a new revolutionary Communist Party is premature. There is still no Party programme and no Party rules and there is still no single leading centre.

2. However a conference that has the following limited but definite aims will be useful:

a. To clarify and win unity of thinking on major questions of ideological and political line, internationally and nationally.

b. To agree on what organizational steps towards Party-building are correct and should be taken at the present time.

3. Therefore the CFB(M-L) submits the following theses on the main questions to be discussed at the conference.

The crisis - international.

4. The principal contradiction in the world today is between the oppressed peoples and nations of the world and the two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States.

5. The Soviet Union is the more dangerous superpower and the most dangerous source of war.

6. The international working class and oppressed peoples of the world must resolutely unite, and in so doing, must build the broadest possible united front against imperialism, especially the hegemonism of the two superpowers.

7. The main force in the struggle against the hegemonism of the two superpowers are the countries of the third world.

8. An intermediate vacillating force in the struggle against the hegemonism of the two superpowers are the countries of the second world, the minor imperialist powers such as Britain.

9. In the present international struggle against the superpowers, the existence and enlargement of the EEC is primarily positive.

10. War is inevitable and Europe will be the main battleground of the next world war. Only a people's war can defeat the Soviet aggressors; the working class will have to struggle with the bourgeoisie to win the leadership of any people's war of national resistance.

The crisis - national.

II. In Britain the principal contradiction is between the working class and the imperialist bourgeoisie.

12. The working class must overthrow the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie by socialist revolution, smash the bourgeois state and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

13. The struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie must be combined with the struggle against the hegemonism of the two superpowers. Revolutionary Communists must struggle to make the British government line up with the third world.

14. The basic contradiction is between the social character of production and the control of the means of production by the members of the monopoly capitalist class. This basic contradiction gives rise to economic and political crises which the bourgeoisie are unable to solve.

15. The monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie try to solve their crisis by loading it onto the backs of the working people; mainly by trying to stepping up the rate of exploitation of the working class through increased productivity, inflation, wage restraint, unemployment and taxation.

16. British monopoly capitalism is being wiped out by competition from rival imper-

ialist powers; the means of production in Britain is being destroyed by imperialism.

I7. The third world's struggle for national liberation and a new international economic order is striking relentless blows against British imperialism.

I8. The crisis of British imperialism compels more and more state control of industry. Nationalization and 'government assistance' represent merely the general tendency to extreme concentration and centralization of capital under monopoly capitalism.

I9. The working class must fight all attempts by the monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie to shift the burden of their economic crisis onto our backs. We must make the bourgeoisie pay for their crisis!

20. The fundamental political problem for the monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie is how to maintain an efficient state which protects the class interests of only a small minority of the population while disguising its true nature from the great majority of the people.

21. The so-called two party system is but a device for maintaining the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The two main political parties are two wings of a single bird of prey. Both unite in trying to soften the working class and keep it trapped and exploited under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

22. As between the two main bourgeois political parties, the Labour Party is not the "lesser evil" as the opportunists shout. The Labour Party is the greater danger! By their cry the opportunists try to tie the working class to the coat-tails of a bourgeois reformist party.

23. The bourgeoisie prefer to conceal their dictatorship under the mask of bourgeois democracy. But increasingly, as their rule is threatened and whenever it is in their interests to do so, they will attempt to prolong their rule by introducing fascism and fascist methods.

Towards a class analysis.

24. Who are our enemies? Who are our friends? This is a question of the first importance for the revolution.

25. Our enemies are the monopoly capitalist class and all those in league with them.

26. The leading force and the main force in the socialist revolution in Britain is the working class, and in particular the industrial working class.

27. The petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia form a large body of middle strata of working people most of whom can become the close friends of the working class in the struggle for the socialist revolution.

28. The small and medium bourgeoisie is partly oppressed and exploited by the monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie, but in general it lines with the monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie. Our aim with these sections of the bourgeoisie is to neutralise them in the struggle for the socialist revolution.

On ideology.

29. The British monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie would long ago have been overthrown, but for the existence of bourgeois ideology and of opportunism within the working class.

30. A serious form of bourgeois ideology within the working class is opportunism. The fight against imperialism is a sham and a humbug unless it is inseparably bound up with the fight against opportunism.

31. Opportunists are agents of the bourgeoisie within the working class movement. The active people in the working class movement who adhere to the opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie than the bourgeoisie itself.

32. The task of winning over the class-conscious vanguard to a conviction in the

necessity for revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be accomplished without a complete ideological and political victory over opportunism within the vanguard of the working class.

33. Revisionism is the most dangerous enemy in the working class movement because it uses the name and terms of Communism to deceive the working class.

34. Within Britain, social democracy is the most widespread ideological enemy within the working class movement.

35. Racism is a serious divisive ideological tendency which imperialism uses to split the ranks of the working class. It is the main ideological weapon which the monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie use in order to try and bring in fascism, and to justify their increasing use of fascist methods.

On practice.

36. Although in general practice is primary over theory, at the present stage in Britain theory must be primary over practice. However practice is essential and in some specific aspects of work it is already primary.

37. It is essential to grasp priorities correctly on the basis of the two historical tasks of revolution. The first historical task is to win the class conscious vanguard to a conviction in the necessity for revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The second historical task of revolution is to lead the masses in practical activity towards the revolution.

38. At this stage when organized resources are limited we must choose priorities strictly between different classes: we must direct all mass work to the working class, and concentrate particularly on the industrial working class.

39. At the place of work, in the course of struggle against the employer and the capitalist class, we 1) rally the advanced workers around the revolutionary Communist Party, and 2) strive to turn the trade unions into fighting class organizations.

40. Our basic method is the mass line, "from the masses, to the masses". The revolutionary Communist Party will increasingly lead and guide the mass of the people to struggle for their just demands, sum up their experience and raise their ideological and political consciousness and their organizational strength step by step, until they form a giant army capable of overthrowing the monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie.

The national question in the British isles.

41. We oppose all national oppression within the United Kingdom in order to strengthen the fighting unity between the working class of the British isles against the British monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie.

42. We uphold the right to self-determination, including the right to separation, for peoples of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

43. We support the demand for regional autonomy within a federal republic for Scotland and Wales, but do not advocate separation for them.

44. We advocate separation of Northern Ireland from the British state, and demand that British troops get out of Ireland. We hope to see the unity of the fraternal people of Ireland gradually grow in the common struggle against imperialism and reactionaries.

45. In order to build the strongest possible proletarian organization to resist and overthrow the united forces of British imperialism throughout the British imperialist state, the revolutionary Communist Party must be built and must rally the working class and working people in the struggle against British imperialism and opportunism in all parts of that British state. This includes Northern Ireland unless and until the struggle to separate Northern Ireland from the British state is successful.

The Way forward.

46. Building the revolutionary Communist Party of the working class is the central task in Britain today. We must arrange all our work around this central task, and to serve this central task.

47. We must overcome the division of the small British Marxist-Leninist movement into a number of parties, organizations and circles. However it is premature to found the new revolutionary Communist Party until we have a Party programme and a single leading centre. The target in the middle term must be to form one single democratic-centralist organization.

48. Federal forms of unification are opportunist because they do not challenge small group mentality openly and they violate democratic-centralism.

49. We must struggle hard to unite all genuine Marxist-Leninists. In uniting Marxist-Leninists, the struggle for ideological and political unity must play the leading role. When ideological and political unity has been won on major questions between different groups it must be consolidated organizationally by uniting in a single democratic-centralist organization.

50. Active ideological struggle is the key link in uniting the Marxist-Leninist movement for Party-building.

51. We must grasp 3 specific tasks to fulfill the aim of establishing a single democratic-centralist Party-building organization.

1. Ideological struggle and education against small-group mentality.
2. Unfolding of a militant and scientific criticism of the errors of the CPB(M-L) as the first step of a protracted struggle against incorrect ideological and political lines on the British revolution.
3. Forming larger democratic-centralist organizations by uniting smaller organizations. This is the key immediate step on the road to a single democratic-centralist organization.

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES AND NATIONS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

LONG LIVE MARXISM-LENINISM-MAO TSETUNG THOUGHT!

BUILD THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE WORKING CLASS!

The Executive Committee of the CFB(M-L) May 1977.

Coventry Workers Association Amendments to the Thesis

Point 5 Delete substitute

" The influence of the two super powers is not exercised in the same manner every where. Consequently the revolutionary forces whilst denouncing both ~~will~~ in their own spheres of influence have to ~~pin~~ point the principal enemy .

Point 6 Accept

Point 7 delete refer to point 6

Point 8 Oppose substitute

" In the struggle against the two super powers the lesser imperialist states such as Britain France Germany Japan etc have to be opposed and exposed as contending and colluding powers" .

Point 9 oppose substitute

" The Party Of Labour Of Albania, the Albanian state and people are against NATO and the Warsaw Treaty , against Comecon and the Common Market, because these organisations are the basic instruments of the expansionist policy of the two superpowers, because they oppress exploit and impoverish both the peoples of Europe and the peoples of the developing countries, undermine both the revolution and the liberation of the peoples, and are instruments of enslavement."

Point 10 oppose substitute

" as the crisis of imperialism deepens so do the threat of World War increases. War may break out in any part of the World . The reactionary bourgeoisie of Britain cannot be separated from the forces of world imperialism. Therefore the prime task of revolutionaries in Britain is the overthrow of the British ruling class. This is our major and prime task in the struggle to avoid a world war.

Point 11 accept add at end

"i.e. that of Britain, U.S and W. Europe and Japan"

Point 13 reword

"the struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie operating in Britain is the focal point of our struggle against the hegemonism of the super powers. In its attempt to maintain its position the British ruling class will collude and contend with either of the super powers, however its basic imperialist character cannot be modified, it has to be smashed."

Point 17 reword

"The national liberation movements of Asia Africa and Latin America are striking relentless blows against British Imperialism"

Point 18 reword

" The crisis of British imperialism compels more and more state control of industry . Nationalisation and 'government assistance' demonstrate this crisis and is a manifestation of the dilemma of capital. Revolutionaries have to intensify the contradictions between the bourgeois forces who strive for state monopoly capital and those who seek to preserve parts of industry for existing monopoly and multi nationals. Within this contradiction we seek to demonstrate the central question of property and class state power.

The subjective support that exists in the working class for nationalisation as a challenge to 'the private ownership of the means of production' has to be won ... for the developing opposition to the bourgeoisie starts at e"

Point 19 delete 2nd sentence

Point 20 delete "the fundamental" and substitute

"an increasingly difficult"

then add at end point 23

Points 21 and 22 combined and reword.

" The so called two Party system is but a device for the maintaining of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. However it is essential to understand that the two parties-the tories and labour-have different origins and bases for their mass appeals. The grip that social democratic ideology has in the working class makes the Labour party the more dangerous in diverting the class from the revolutionary path. Whilst both parties serve the interests of the bourgeois system the subjective characteristics of them are different and revolutionaries will have to develop different tactics in opposing them. These tactics will have to take into account the history the origin and the subjective characteristic of the Labour Party in particular if we are to win large elements amongst its membership and supporters for the revolutionary path."

POINTS CONCERNING MARXIST-LENINIST UNITY

I am sure many other comrades will make valuable contributions to the conference on the items on the time-table. The conference will, hopefully, mark a significant step forward in our struggle for Marxist-Leninist unity. To help ensure that this is the case, I think it is important that we try to deal with three major questions, which have been raised by different comrades on a number of occasions, before the conference; otherwise, they will hold back our struggles for unity, in the future, including at the conference. These questions are:-

1. That of the struggle for political and ideological unity.
2. The reasons for the failure of the C.P.B.(M-L).
3. The need for a programme of practical work.

1.) Many comrades have stressed the need for ideological and political struggle to attain unity. No Marxist-Leninist would deny this, but I think a couple of points need to be borne in mind when comrades talk about this. Firstly, that to put the emphasis one-sidedly on struggle is wrong. We should start from the desire for unity, and proceed to conduct ideological and political struggle in order to attain unity. Without the desire for unity, there is a danger of these struggles becoming academic and un-productive. Furthermore, the purpose of political and ideological struggle, at the present stage of the Marxist-Leninist movement's development is to increase our unity; to talk simply about attaining unity suggests that there is no unity between us at the moment, which is not true. There is, in fact, considerable unity on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought- that's why there can be a large and productive conference in July and why, on various occasions, comrades from different organizations have been able to work well together.

Secondly, the struggle for political and ideological unity is sometimes spoken about as though it is one that has to be completed before a party or a united party-building organization can be established. This is idealist. This struggle is one that will continue when a party has been established, and throughout the period of socialism, as the history of the Communist Party of China shows. Communists develop at different rates, bourgeois ideas influence them all the time, and whenever problems arise, comrades are bound to have some disagreements about how to tackle them, so there will never be complete political and ideological unity among British Communists. Therefore, to delay organizational unity until complete political and ideological unity is attained is to delay it forever. Rather, it is a question of attaining sufficient ideological and political unity before we unite in one party-building organization; it is my view that most of the Marxist-Leninist movement already has that degree of unity politically and ideologically-JAC(M-L)'s 7 points are the essential ones, which I think all true Marxist-Leninists would accept. These don't represent "the lowest common denominator" as some people would suggest, but a high degree of unity.

2.) In connection with the above, some comrades suggest that the C.P.B.(M-L) was a failure because it was declared to be a party without there having been a struggle for political and ideological unity; this has made them very careful about uniting prematurely in a single new party-building organization. The real point about the C.P.B.(M-L) is, I think, that it was always a revisionist organization, under revisionist leadership, though for some time a majority of its rank and file were good Marxist-Leninists. Except on one or two more obvious points, such as the questions of "peaceful transition" and "state of the whole people", its leadership never did break with revisionism-it just came out with neo-revisionism! It wasn't forming a party too early that was the fault with the C.P.B.(ML) - that could have been put right fairly easily; the fault was that revisionism was always in command. The real lesson that the experience of the C.P.B.(M-L) teaches us is that the fight against revisionism is a hard and complicated one. I think that great efforts should be made to ensure that that lesson is learned, that the fight to master Marxist-Leninist politics and philosophy is stepped up (All opportunists and counter-revolutionaries have this in common- that they are idealist in philosophy, and do not grasp dialectical materialism), and that revisionism in its various forms is combatted in our fight for unity. This is the right answer, I think, to those who use the experience of the C.P.B.(M-L) as an argument against Marxist-Leninist unity in one party-building organization.

3.) Some comrades, notably in the EMLA, have pointed out that ideological and political unity is not enough; comrades need to be able to unite in practical work in an ongoing way. This is correct. A detailed programme of work will need

sorting out, but at the moment, I think that our joint practical activities should be concentrated on the following:-

a). Strengthening the foundations for the revolutionary party. In concrete terms, this means :- Increasing our efforts to give Marxist-Leninist leadership to mass struggles in the sectors of work in which comrades are involved. Co-operation should be stepped up and developed there-for example, comrades working in the same industry, for the same firm, in the same union, in students' or tenants' work should get together to exchange experiences, attempt to establish a firm basis for co-operation and work together as far as possible. Efforts need to be made to win new recruits, who should be trained carefully as revolutionaries. Due allowance must be made for new comrades, or we will not be able to extend recruitment: their process of development may be slow, and they should not be forced along, or faced with responsibilities that should really only go to more experienced, tried and tested comrades. Priority should be given to recruitment in the proletariat, so that the revolutionary party of the future has a strong basis-people working in other sectors of society should try to assist these directly involved in this work. Efforts should be made to co-operate in spreading Marxist-Leninist politics via leaflets, pamphlets, papers, demonstrations, etc. All comrades can be involved in these activities. Those who argue that this is impossible before a detailed class analysis or a thoroughgoing programme has been determined, etc., are wrong—the history of the international communist movement shows that these things have been worked out in the course of struggle by revolutionary parties, and not in advance; generally, they have started from a fairly low level and developed in depth analyses, etc, as they have progressed,

b). Building the united front against imperialism and fascism. Much of the above applies here of course, but in this work we should be seeking to unite all who can be united against the main enemy, under Marxist-Leninist leadership. Anti-imperialist struggles strengthen us by weakening our enemies; it is correct that we should work to build a strong front of anti-imperialist solidarity in this country. With the decline of British imperialism, due primarily to the struggles of Third World peoples against imperialism, for national-liberation, the British ruling class is resorting to fascism. Therefore, the building of the united front against imperialism should also be the building of the united front against growing fascism. All Marxist-Leninists in Britain, wherever they are, can work on this,, building the united front from below. This is an essential part of the preparation for socialist revolution in Britain.

Let us step up the struggle for Marxist-Leninist unity; this becomes more vital than ever as each day goes by. There is little reason for further delay in uniting in one party-building organization; we should aim to do this in the very near future.

J.G.

ON "THE WAY FORWARD"

Submitted by ~~I.P., S.P., J.H.~~ and M.D. (London)

Introduction

No one who claims to be a Marxist-Leninist will deny that we need a revolutionary party of the working class. Equally, no Marxist-Leninist can disagree that this party will only be forged through struggles involving both theory and practice.

Can we deny that the main task facing us is to form the party and can we refuse to unite when it is not only possible to unite but urgent that we do so? We firmly believe that if those who attend the conference are really determined to unite then we will unite and get on with the real tasks. For after all, the formation of a party is only the first step, the means to an end.

What should follow the conference - a proposal

We propose that after the conference, in the interim period before the formation of a party, in which several different Marxist-Leninist organisations continue to exist, Marxist-Leninists in different organisations or in no organisation begin to work together in an all-round way.

For this purpose we propose the setting up of a new kind of organisation, a kind of joint organising committee, whose central task would be to work to prepare the conditions for a single Marxist-Leninist party to come into being.

This joint organising committee would do the following:

- 1) Draw up a programme of work nationally and locally to be carried out collectively by the Marxist-Leninists.
- 2) Draw up a programme of theoretical work to answer some of the important questions facing the Marxist-Leninist movement - to be investigated by the Marxist-Leninists collectively.
- 3) Work out a Party Programme and Constitution based mainly on the experience of joint work and investigation envisaged in 1) and 2)
- 4) Work towards organising the founding congress of the Party when the necessary conditions have been created.

The joint organising committee should elect, at the conference or at its first meeting, a small functional committee. The joint organising committee should meet within a short time after the conference and at regular intervals subsequently.

The joint organising committee should set up local branches and particular efforts should be made to shift the centre of the revolutionary movement closer to the industrial heartlands of Britain. The joint organising committee should have some provision for finance in the form, for instance, of affiliation fees.

Examples of work which could be carried out collectively by Marxist-Leninists working through such an organisation

1) Spreading Marxist-Leninist ideas by means of leaflets, pamphlets, regular publications, pickets, demonstrations, stickers, posters and so on and so forth - i.e. a wide range of work which can be carried out far more effectively by larger numbers of Marxist-Leninists working together than isolated groups working separately.

Two specific proposals: Activities around the coming 60th anniversary of the October Revolution. Mass leafletting (plus posters, stickers etc.) in working class areas, particularly London, to counter the growth of Fascism and make widely known the revolutionary alternative.

2) Promote exchange of experiences between Marxist-Leninists so that we can learn from each-other and promote positive examples.

3) Co-ordinate work - help Marxist-Leninists working in the same area or maybe in a different area but in the same company, industry or T.U. etc. to get together to co-ordinate their work and maybe begin to work out Marxist-Leninist policies for their places of work.

We put these proposals forward as general proposals for discussion and we hope comrades will consider them and put forward amendments and suggestions for improvement - or put forward alternative suggestions on how we may get out of the present state of disunity and go forward towards building a united party of the working class.

In support of the above proposal we would like to make some general points concerning "The Way Forward".

There are numerous contradictions and differences within our Marxist-Leninist movement. We believe that the overwhelming majority constitute contradictions amongst the people and are not antagonistic. What we propose is that they should be handled in such a way that both the work to build the party of the working class and the revolutionary work itself - may go forward.

We also firmly believe that the necessary unity for the formation of the party will be forged mainly through Communists taking part in the revolutionary class struggle together. This is born out by historical experience - for instance the formation of the Party of Labour of Albania as outlined in the "History of the Party of Labour of Albania".

We propose that we should start off on an equal basis and work together. There are important questions of line, of theory to be answered. Let's draw up a list of questions which need to be answered and go about trying to answer them and testing our answers in practice - together. There is work to be done - let's draw up a programme of work of the kind that any one can see has got to be done in Britain today - work that only the Marxist-Leninists and no one else will do - and in a way which will be much more effective and give the proletariat some confidence and cause to listen to us, namely by Marxist-Leninists working together and in harmony, not separately and antagonistically.

Fascism, Unemployment, the Cuts - and so on and so forth - let's not let the revisionists, the Trotskyists, (or the Fascists) get away with fooling the working class on these questions and leading it up blind alleys - let's have our Marxist-Leninist line put over loud and clear on these questions. What is socialism? What is the cause of the difference between China and the U.S.S.R.? - International issues: the two superpowers, the third world, China and Albania - who but the Marxist-Leninists is going to put a correct line on these issues.

The Marxist-Leninist forces are a very small force and even these forces are divided. The voice of Marxism-Leninism is not making itself heard and the Marxist-Leninist movement has made virtually no impact upon the working class. It is a very small force yet its scope for work - and its potential for growth - is enormous. Why should we keep looking for points of disagreement amongst ourselves when workers should get to know - and want to know - about the points we agree on! The workers want to know the way forward, they want to know about socialism, what it is and how you get it (and how you keep it when you've got it). The workers don't want Fascism - nor do they want revisionism, as practiced in the U.S.S.R.

We are absolutely certain that the working class will support an organisation that 1) genuinely unites all the revolutionaries 2) adopts a correct attitude towards the workers and the working class in general i.e. is striving to become a genuine working class party and 3) that is, and is seen to be, not basically self-serving, opportunist, but is really out to serve the working class. There is no such organisation in existence but when one comes into being the working class will definitely support it.

What do we agree on and what do we disagree on? It sometimes would seem from meetings of Marxist-Leninists which are divorced from the practice of class struggle that disagreements are maybe 70% - 90% and agreement only 10% to 30% - but when we take part in the class struggle against the bourgeoisie, the revisionists, the imperialists, we can get things into perspective and see that agreement is maybe 90% and disagreement only 10%. That is why Chairman Mao stressed that "Class struggle is the key link." Precisely what we should be doing is hitting at the class enemy together. It is the class struggle alone - the real class struggle in the real world - which can sort out our agreements and disagreements, our demarcation lines, friends and enemies, as well as many 'theoretical' questions.

Can we work together for socialism? - that is the question. We believe that what is lacking is precisely the style of working together with others with whom one has maybe quite big disagreements on certain questions - and the style of friendly and comradely discussion to resolve points of disagreement. This reflects petty-bourgeois individualism.

It's very easy to say "We disagree - let's split" and for the past 12 years or so Marxist-Leninists have done that and look where it's got us. It's more difficult to say "We disagree on many things but we agree on the most important things - let's unite." The key factor is the will to unite and to resolve differences in a Communist way.

The most important thing, our basic principle, is to "practice Marxism not revisionism" - opposition to revisionism is our cardinal principle because if you don't fight revisionism you can't fight imperialism. - this is where we have to draw the line on the question of unity - between principled unity and unprincipled unity, between principled disunity and unprincipled disunity. We must carry on the struggle against revisionism in all its forms - as much that of the CPBML as that of the CPGB - in the struggle to develop a correct line for the British revolution. Revisionism and Marxism represent an antagonistic contradiction and the struggle between revisionism and Marxism will go on all the time, on just about every question, within the Marxist-Leninist movement as well as outside of it. But just as we should distinguish between the two types of contradictions we should distinguish between those who consciously practice revisionism and serve the bourgeoisie and those who may be influenced by revisionist ideas. - between those who push a wrong line and those who follow it.

There is a lot of talk about 'demarcation lines' in the Marxist-Leninist movement. It is very important to draw demarcation lines and draw the right demarcation lines - behind the correct demarcation lines a party of as many genuine Marxist-Leninists as can be rallied will be built. But demarcation lines should not be drawn all across the Marxist-Leninist movement in every direction - for basically there is only one demarcation line - that between Marxism and revis-

ionism - which reflects the demarcation line between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Shouldn't we try to rally and unite with all those who are willing and able to carry out the tasks demanded of us at this stage. The main test is not what people say when they are at a meeting but what they do amongst the broad masses - that is the criterion of a true Marxist as defined by Chairman Mao: "How does he stand in relation to the broad masses of workers and peasants."

We hope comrades will not come along to the conference with fixed views just to prove others wrong but for discussion i.e. exchanging ideas, listening to others opinions, learning from others, and pooling the collective wisdom and understanding to get to the truth, to arrive at something higher and richer than any one person's individual understanding. There will always be differences of opinion and line as is very clear from the history of the C.P.C. The call for complete 'ideological and political unity' is idealist and metaphysical. Unity is not absolute, it is relative, it develops dialectically from a lower to a higher level. Those who will attend the conference must have a certain level of unity otherwise they wouldn't be there. As for the correct line for the British revolution, this will emerge gradually in the course of the practice of the revolution, i.e. by applying what we know and in the process finding out what we don't know - this understanding likewise develops through practice of the class struggle under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism.

The question of permitting different ideas inside the party and allowing the struggle of ideas to carry on - and knowing how to handle this struggle - is very important for any party and for us today. Different ideas should never be suppressed. When different ideas occur every attempt should be made to reach agreement. If a question cannot be resolved immediately it should be left to be resolved at a later date. If a decision has to be taken on a concrete issue the minority must abide by the decision of the majority but have every right to reserve their opinion and bring it up at a later date. At all times differences in a comradely way in a spirit of finding the truth. Except in cases of proven counter-revolutionary elements people should not be labelled for having different opinions.

Dear Comrades,

Our written contribution to this Conference does not, unfortunately, fit neatly into the outlined agenda. We think it fits best under "Ideology" and there is also a section which should come under "Organisation". The material also includes a critique of the Voice of the People paper and its associated organisations such as the "Communist Workers League of Britain", which, though not put forward for discussion at the Conference as such, we would like to draw to the attention of comrades, since it deals with what may yet prove to be a stumbling block on the path to the creation of a Communist Party.

A Communist Party will not be made in this country just because a few, or lots of, people wish it, but because it is part of an inevitable historical trend. Moreover, it will not be prevented from being made because a few, or lots of, people would rather it wasn't. That is equally inevitable. How can Communists in general, and this Conference in particular, assist history to arrive at its inevitable conclusion? We give our ideas in the hope that comrades will subject them to serious consideration and criticism, as we have seen from observation that they are rather different from certain other lines which have been put forward about the potential role of this Conference, and the way in which the struggle for a Party should progress.

One of the most interesting results of the calling of this Conference (which we regard as definitely having been called because of a genuine desire of the CWM for unity) has been the effect it has had on the so-called "groups" which have, up until now, tended to monopolise for themselves the name "Marxist-Leninist". This effect might be called "panic". "You can't do without us", "A Party cannot be built otherwise than by us" is the general cry from the "groups". Some have gone so far as to claim that only members of the "groups" should be "allowed" to participate in the Conference. Others, predictably enough, have proclaimed that they and they alone are capable of making any positive contribution whatsoever!

Many things are said to "justify"-with the "deepest regret", of course the existence of "groups". Some people even cite the example of Russia before the CPSU, or China before the CPC. Of course it is always implied that it is this or that particular "group" which is just about to play the role of Lenin, of Chairman Mao, and so on. What presumption!

Why did Chairman Mao write these words?: "The world rolls on, Time presses. Ten thousand years are too long, Seize the day, seize the hour." He wrote them to tell us that it's no good going on in the same way, that the world, the time, and the people demand CHANGE! Yet some of these "groups" have existed for ten years and more, still "tolling the bell" the same faces, the same "principled debates", the same "struggle". Of course, every so often the "groups" might change their names, but that's about all. And all the time, "The world rolls on...." (For a discussion of a particularly pronounced feature of the "group" phenomenon, see our appendix, on the "Voice of the People" paper).

We cannot claim that what we are writing has any great originality-as a matter of fact, no-one in Britain has earned the right to the title "theorist"- but we do believe that it is in accordance with the experience of the world Communist movement, and not in contradiction with the line of the Communist Party of China. It is to that source that the British Communists must look for the most solid, scientific guidance, just as they looked to the Soviet Union in the twenties, thirties, and forties. Surely anybody can understand that, and yet there are some persons who act as though NO problems in the international Communist movement had yet been solved, and the people of the whole world are waiting for them to solve them, and the People of Britain will put off forming their Communist Party until these same persons have proved just what great "theorists" they are!

Nor are our proposals based on the idea that the "groups" are "all bad" which would be as one-sided as the claim that "only the groups are any good". But, where good lines and individuals exist, whether inside the "groups" or outside, we should see them primarily as reflections of the deeper aspirations of the working class for REVOLUTION. Bold steps must be taken to unite them both with each other and with the class they represent, so that their knowledge and understanding can be deepened, their ranks broadened, and their ultimate goal achieved.

Our proposals are briefly that:

(1) Here and now Communists should take steps to hammer out, with the intention of achieving, IDEOLOGICAL UNITY.

(2) Such ORGANISATIONAL steps should be taken as are essential to safeguard and develop this unity, and on its basis to build a thoroughgoing POLITICAL unity in the struggle to end the exploitation of man by man.

We put forwards draft proposals. They are not conceived in the spirit "take it or leave it", though they are serious proposals which we feel could form the basis of what is needed. Of course, they are by no means complete, for only a serious, honest struggle by all concerned can ensure that, but we feel that such a process is not only necessary but inevitable, and must start soon, for "The world rolls on..."

It is also essential to remember that, at any stage in struggle, it is only possible to say so much with certainty, before one goes off into the realms of subjectivism and assertion. What should we do then? One-sidedly elevate matters on which unity cannot be achieved, because knowledge has not been attained, and ignore all those questions on which we can unite and over which, united, our efforts will have a hundred times more effect, patiently waiting till we have accumulated the understanding to solve those other questions? Well, some people do put forwards such a line, saying, for example, that the Conference should deal only with "points of difference between the groups", or that we cannot unite until we have solved and agree on every question down to the last detail. Unfortunately, such a line is flying in the face of the teachings of Lenin, who made it quite clear that only a certain kind of organisation, democratic-centralist, armed with Marxist-Leninist theory and engaged in revolutionary struggle of national scope, can answer ALL questions and lead the working class to victory. The point is, can we allow our "great heroes", our "theorists", another ten years to prove this, undoubted fact?

Thus, in speaking of the programme adopted at the founding conference of the Party of Labour of Albania, the 'History of the PLA' says:

"This programme was far from complete, and the tasks had not been worked out in detail, for such a thing required a far greater experience of the revolutionary work and the struggle of the Party and of the masses, but this programme was built on Marxist-Leninist scientific principles".

Communists in Britain- and throughout the world- recognise the leading role played in the international movement by China. in fact this recognition is a test, a dividing line between Marxism-Leninism and revisionism. Therefore we don't think it a weakness, or something to be ashamed of, that our proposals are largely drawn, in some cases word for word, from Chinese publications. Of course, China plays its leading role differently from the Soviet Union in the thirties, but that doesn't in the least the fact that the well-known "Little Lenins" of the "British Marxist-Leninist Movement" are objectively playing the same splittist role as that played by trotskyism in those days and before.

Take the question of class analysis for example. Class analysis, the scientific tool of Marxism which divides all social facts into the contradictions which make them up, so their essential nature can be understood, is distorted by some people and reduced to a sterile and vulgar squabble over whether there are "two classes", "three classes" "four classes" and so on. Moreover, these same people say that unity can only be achieved after this question has been resolved, without ever saying anything serious as far as HOW it is to be resolved is concerned.

...citing that Chairman Mao's "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society" is the first item in his Collected Works, these people obviously look forwards to the day when "Analysis of the Classes in British Society" is the first item in their "Collected Works", rashly ignoring the fact Chairman Mao's article was the result of six years' struggle of the Chinese Communist Party, six years of INTENSE CLASS STRUGGLE, of learning from mistakes and it must be said, of successes. Of course we all have our own ideas on this, and many other questions. But the only way to transform all these ideas, characterised by Chairman Mao as being the "first leap in cognition", into KNOWLEDGE, is to build for ourselves and for the working class, a democratic-centralist organisation uniting ALL honest revolutionaries in the struggle to know Britain, that is, the struggle to CHANGE Britain, for we have no other aim in knowing it but to change it. Of course there will be some dishonest ones too- but we'll find out all about them in the course of struggle.

Once again, look at the quote from the "History of the PLA".

Our organisational proposals are also draft in nature. But we think all comrades should seriously consider the meaning of Lenin's injunction to "Raise organisation to the level of politics", so that as we consider the problems involved in hammering out ideological unity, we can also take steps to replace loyalty and service to this or that particular street, town, factory, group, town or whatever, with loyalty and service to the working class as a whole and, ultimately, to a Bolshevik Party right here in Britain.

Left Proposal for a Statement of the Ideological Bases for Unity for Communists in Britain.

- 1) Workers of all countries, unite! Workers of the world, unite with the oppressed peoples and oppressed nations! Oppose imperialism and reaction in all countries! Strive for world peace, national liberation, people's democracy and socialism! Oppose superpower hegemonism! Bring the proletarian world revolution step by step to complete victory, and establish a new world without imperialism, without capitalism, and without the exploitation of man by man!
- 2) Imperialism is the highest, last stage of capitalism, and Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. Leninism is the theoretical basis guiding the thought of all Communists in the world today.
- 3) There are four major contradictions in the world today: the contradiction between the oppressed nations on the one hand and imperialism and social-imperialism on the other; the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist and revisionist countries; the contradiction between imperialist and social-imperialist countries and among the imperialist countries; and the contradiction between the socialist countries on the one hand and imperialism and social-imperialism on the other. The existence and development of these contradictions are bound to give rise to revolution.
- 4) The national democratic revolutionary movement in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and the international socialist revolutionary movement are the two great historical currents of our time. The national democratic revolutionary movement in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, is an important component of the contemporary world revolution.
- 5) There are therefore three fronts of the revolutionary struggle of the world's people:
 - (a) The front of the oppressed people and nations struggling against imperialism, which includes the majority of humanity. On this front the objective of the first revolutionary stage is complete national liberation and establishing popular democratic dictatorship. The broad masses of workers and peasants, under the leadership of the proletariat, defeat

imperialism and win national independence. After liberation, they work to build the national economy and the foundations for the transition to the socialist stage under the leadership of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

On this front the armed struggle is generally against foreign armies or puppet armies hired by the imperialist powers and therefore the strategy is one of protracted people's war.

(b) The front of the popular masses in the industrially developed countries dominated by the imperialist and social-imperialist bourgeoisies. On this front the objective of the first revolutionary stage is the establishing of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the immediate task of building socialism.

Generally the kind of strategy to be applied here is that of insurrectionary struggle prepared by educating the masses politically and by organising the insurrectionary forces, the painstaking accumulation of revolutionary strength.

(c) The front where the working class is in power. On this front, which already includes one quarter of humanity, the people struggle to defend the dictatorship of the proletariat from counter-revolutionary attacks, from the internal and external agents of capitalism who are doing all in their power to penetrate proletarian power and seize the Communist fortress from within.

One example of the strategy here is the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

6) Britain belongs to the second front. Our first objective is establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, our revolutionary strategy is that of armed insurrection to smash the bourgeois state power.

7) In Britain, finance capital has gained the upper hand over industrial capital. This has brought about the oligarchic rule of a small minority of monopolists, who, as well as oppressing the large majority, also oppress other nations. Of particular significance is the oppression of Ireland.

Communists will always struggle to prevent the proletariat being dragged into war on behalf of the bourgeoisie, by forging solidarity with the victims of aggression, boycotting the war, and waging a hard struggle against the regime in their own country, in order to overthrow it and win peace, which is only possible through socialism.

8) Bourgeois democracy has become an empty formula to mask the dictatorship of the most reactionary section, minority, of society. The only way to achieve progress is through the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

9) Bourgeois democracy breeds fascism. As Lenin said, the politics of imperialism is "Reaction all along the line". Therefore Communists should not have illusions about the scope of legal struggle, and prepare for illegal struggle side by side with the development of their legal struggle.

10) However, bourgeois democracy offers better conditions for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat than fascism, and therefore Communists will always struggle to defend democratic rights, and to prevent bourgeois democracy degenerating into fascism.

11) The British proletariat must at all times wage a protracted struggle against the two superpowers who contend and collude together for world hegemony, and constantly pose the threat of a new world war. The British proletariat must therefore prepare itself against the threat of war and lead a united front of all sections of society against the superpowers and the threat of war, and for peace. But there can only be one lasting guarantee of world peace, and that is the victory of the revolutionary struggle of the people of the world.

12) The British monopoly capitalist class seeks to make the labouring people bear the burden of the inevitable crisis of the capitalist system. As well as waging a protracted struggle against this, the proletariat

12) Form a united front of all sections of society who can be united in opposition to the monopoly capitalist dictatorship.

13) While actively leading immediate struggles, Communists should link them with the struggle for long-range and general interests, educate the masses in a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary spirit, and ceaselessly raise their political consciousness to undertake the historical task of the proletariat. If they fail to do so, if they regard the immediate movement as everything, determine their conduct from case to case, adapt themselves to the events of the day, and sacrifice the basic interests of the proletariat, then that is social democracy.

14) Social democracy is a bourgeois ideological trend. Communists must at all times draw a clear line of demarcation between themselves and social democracy on the basic question of proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and liquidate the influence of social democracy in the working class. We must win over the masses under the influence of social democracy, and whenever it furthers the revolutionary struggle, be prepared to unite with "left" social democrats, all the time safeguarding our own ideological, political, and organisational unity.

15) We stand for the Mass Line. Every Communist must love the people and listen attentively to the voice of the masses; he must identify with the masses wherever he goes, and, instead of standing above them, immerse himself among them; according to their present level he must awaken them or raise their political consciousness. The organisation as a whole must be a reflection of this on a mighty scale, and in all its work among the masses it must work according to this principle.

16) Internally, we stand for active ideological struggle, the combination of democracy with centralism, and the scientific method of class analysis. It is inevitable that there should be two lines on every question, and the way to resolve the contradiction is through struggle. The grave errors of dogmatism and empiricism must be avoided since they will prevent a correct struggle taking place. We must develop a lively and active school of criticism and self-criticism.

17) Be resolute, fear no sacrifice and surmount every difficulty to win victory!

Draft proposals for Organisational measures to be taken to strengthen and develop ideological and political unity.

All Communists who find themselves in agreement with a basic ideological programme such as that given above, should dissolve their present organisational links in order to bring into existence a new, democratic-centralist organisation. This organisation will set itself, first and foremost the task of overcoming the present fragmented state of the movement, uniting serious Communists around their programme, and through the course of the struggle to place that programme before the popular masses in as widespread a movement as possible, laying the basis for the solution of the tactical questions and problems which will inevitably arise. This is not by any means to suggest that the work will proceed on a spontaneous level, for by conducting its work in this way, the organisation will also accrue to itself the theoretical strength to develop its programme to such a degree that, in the inevitable event of a revolutionary situation arising, it will encompass all the sentiments of the masses which are against the bourgeois dictatorship and for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The basic unit of the organisation would be the branch or cell, which would initially be set up on a geographical basis, though in the course of development and growth they would be set up on the basis of factory, neighbourhood, school, and so on. These would elect their own officers and also, delegates to regional committees and the general Congress,

h would be the supreme policy-making body of the organisation. The Congress would elect a central committee to carry on its work between its meetings. Anybody could join a branch who agreed with the programme and constitution of the organisation, supported it financially, and was prepared to play an active and honest part in its work. The main job of the branches would be, in practise, to carry the programme of the organisation to the toiling masses with the utmost DRIVE and CREATIVITY.

At a founding Congress, the organisation would inaugurate itself and, elect a central committee(provisional) to carry out the work necessary to place itself on a sound organisational footing. In the initial period after its inaugural Congress, the organisation and its provisional central committee would be faced with the following immediate tasks:

- I) Producing its programme in a form easily available to the working people.

- 2) Producing a newspaper, to the guidelines given by Lenin in "What is to Be Done?", capable of acting as both a scaffolding and a blueprint for the revolutionary movement in Britain. The paper, as well as popularising the organisation's line, and M-L politics in general, would also be the vehicle for analysing the situation, laying it bare to the people, exposing it, winning people over to the scientific, truthful view of society, counteracting the bourgeois ideological onslaught.

- 3) Preparing a unified and realistic study programme for members of the organisation, raising their level of consciousness. Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.

- 4) Overcoming the sectarian and splittist tendencies shewn by many Communists today, waging a determined all out fight against any such tendencies which manifested themselves in its own ranks.

- 5) Conducting serious frank and vigorous discussions with Communists who had not joined it as yet, whether in or out of organisations, in an effort to remove the barriers which are keeping us apart.

- 6) Solving (as far as possible) the question of finance.

- 7) Producing realistic, creative solutions to the whole question of professional revolutionary work upon which Lenin placed such key importance in "What Is to be Done?"

- 8) Solving the major Theoretical questions so far as possible, which the organisation identified as being holding up the further development and strengthening of its programme. Two major errors would have to be avoided: a) Picking up issues simply because they were "in the public eye", not fundamental to the development of the organisation's programme and practice. b) dealing with questions which appeal to the Petit-bourgeois intellectuals taste as "Interesting topics of study" but are likewise of marginal, or no, significance.

There are no doubt many other immediate tasks which a serious, revolutionary, democratic-centralist Party-building organisation would set itself at its inaugural Congress. We put forward this as being a basic, but by no means complete, list. Hasten the day.

Dear Comrades,

This letter comes from most of the individuals in the JAC. We did not like some attempts made at the Conference to create opposition between JAC and CWM. We always considered CWM our closest comrades: we suspended publication of Proletarian Mirror, and sold a lot of copies of Workers' Notes; we did propaganda about the CWM in this country and abroad and said that ~~its~~ its formation was the best thing to happen to the ML movement in Britain for a long time. In our view CWM was part of JAC and the rest of JAC was made up of individuals who felt that joining a small group would hinder party-building: we wanted to remain a very loose organisation because we felt this was the best way to create conditions for a strong, proletarian organisation!

There was quite a lot of dogma talked at the Conference and some people referred a lot to the Red Book while missing the real substance of Chairman Mao's thought: which class do we serve, who are the real makers of history and the source of correct ideas? Our ideology has a definite class character. Theory is important, but we must go through the process: theory-practice-theory; definitely not theory-theory-theory. Our line develops dialectically from the masses to the masses.

Comrade I.W. should not have made the reproach that "the CWM and JAC haven't even been able to join together". We did not want to prevent the Conference from achieving what we hoped it would achieve, i.e. progress towards the dissolution of all the groups.

But the Conference did not achieve this hoped-for result, so now there is a new situation. We fully agree with Comrade I.W. that now we have to organise ourselves.

We now propose that comrades of the CWM and JAC should join to form one organisation. This would be a single organisation and we would not form a faction within it. We propose a meeting attended by all or as many as possible of the comrades of the CWM and JAC to ~~express~~ approve a constitution which could be drafted in advance.

We were pleased to note that most of the participants in the conference, even those who disagreed with us on many things, said they would co-operate on specific projects; our organisation should co-operate with others wherever possible.

We enclose a draft outline for a constitution for our joint organisation. We are not doing this in order to pose conditions but only to show that it is not difficult for us to unite. We are ready to negotiate on all our proposals in the spirit of Mao Tsetung's article published in our pamphlet.

We think this letter should be circulated among all members of CWM for discussion.

With communist greetings

PRINCIPLES

The organisation takes the class stand of the proletariat and its guiding ideology is Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought

The organisation seeks to contribute towards mobilising the working class to overthrow capitalism and imperialism, to carry out the socialist revolution, smash the bourgeois state and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat (the working class organised as ruling class).

Our ultimate aim is to realise communism, a classless society.

Our immediate aim is to work towards building a genuine Communist Party.

Our organisation upholds proletarian internationalism, supports the genuine socialist countries like China and Albania, and supports the national-independent movement of Asia, Africa and Latin America. We seek to unite with all forces that can be united against imperialism, particularly against the two superpowers, the USA and the USSR.

We resolutely oppose chauvinism and racism, and work for a united front against fascism.

We have to struggle really firmly against bourgeois ideology inside the workers' movement, especially against modern revisionism headed by the renegades of the Soviet Union.

MEMBERSHIP AND DUTIES

The organisation is open to anyone who accepts the principles of this constitution, who is determined to carry out the mass line and learn from and serve the working class, who works actively and pays his or her dues.

Procedure for enrolling members (to be discussed).

Good care must be taken to keep out opportunists and spies.

We observe proletarian discipline: the majority decides and the centre leads the whole organisation. Policies are decided on through broad democratic discussion. Those who are in a minority can reserve their views but must strictly carry out the collective decision.

Practice Marxism not revisionism, unite and don't split, be open and aboveboard and don't intrigue and conspire.

There is a danger of our organisation turning revisionist, and to prevent this all members must conscientiously study Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and dare to struggle against any wrong tendency. We practice criticism and self criticism and must always be vigilant against revisionism which includes both empiricism and dogmatism.

ORGANISATION

This section should deal with election of the leading body, frequency and procedure for general meetings, local branches etc. (to be discussed)

PARTY BUILDING

We are ready to co-operate with all groups or individuals who share the same principles as we do, particularly in carrying out joint specific joint activities. We will not have a sectarian attitude towards them. Our urgent common task is to build a unified Communist Party, the vanguard party of the proletariat.

Dear Comrades,

We are writing to you as individuals who have been associated with the JAC. We are not happy with some attempts made at the Conference to create splits between us and the CWM, since we always regarded you as our closest comrades. One of us warned you in a letter on about 15th June that there was a danger of splits of this kind.

We think it was wrong for one of the CWM comrades to make the reproach that the JAC and CWM "hadn't even" been able to unite. The whole point was that we hoped the conference would lead to a process whereby all the groups would eventually be dissolved. The JAC was seen as a way of drawing together as many groups and individuals as possible around the aims of the CWM in holding the conference, i.e. the dissolution of groups in the interest of building a party. ~~8mm~~

Some of us should be criticised for saying certain things at the conference which might create splits within CWM. But on the whole, you know what our practice has been. We suspended publication of Proletarian Mirror, we sold a lot of copies of Workers' Notes, did propaganda for the CWM ~~8~~ (not only in this country but in other parts of the world!) and said that the CWM's formation was the best thing to happen in the ML movement in this country for a long while.

Now the conference is over without achieving the big success we hoped for, and there is a new situation. We fully agree with the CWM comrade that CWM can't continue in the same way, and will have to work out some principles of organisation. We too can't continue in the same way. So we propose uniting with the CWM into a single organisation.

The real line of demarcation is between proletarian and bourgeois politics. When Marx criticised unprincipled unity he meant unity between a genuine revolutionary force and a bourgeois party pretending to be for the workers. Lenin sharply distinguished between ideology which arises "spontaneously" (in fact bourgeois ideology) and real revolutionary socialist ideology. The workers' movement is only really socialist in so far as the workers are "conscious of the irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system." (What is to be done?, p. 36) In talking of the importance of revolutionary theory, Lenin did not mean that revolutionaries should go in for purely theoretical discussions, but rather that they should strive to raise the workers' movement to the level of revolutionary politics. He advocated "sounding the call to go forward, towards the consolidation of the revolutionary organisation and to the expansion of political activity." (p. 43) The trend of retreating away from revolutionary politics has now grown into modern revisionism.

The writers of this letter and the CWM comrades have generally, in their publications and practical work, tried to follow the revolutionary line set out in these quotations of Lenin. We should split more and more firmly from the revisionist-CPML line, but we should unite and not split among ourselves.

If we let petty jealousies get in the way, this would reduce the ML movement to the level of a second-rate comedy show - call it "Carry On Splitting", or "No Organisation Please, We're British", and it might run for years!

There is a story of a worker who has to have an operation, and the surgeons say they have to remove part of his brain, but then they will put it back after 6 months. When the time comes to put it back he says "no thanks, I don't need it now, I've joined the Labour Party in the meantime". We all know that this story could also be told about the CPML. We should beware of setting up any more ideologically dead organisations.

If we can unite with CWM we strictly undertake not to form any faction. We will practice Marxism not revisionism, unite and not split, be open and above board and not intrigue and conspire. We will accept collective decisions, including the question of the future of JAC. We are of the opinion that something like it (some people may be allergic to the actual name!) ought to continue and do the work which the JAC set out to do before the conference, i.e. promote the co-ordination between CWM and other groups and individuals over specific concrete common activities. *but - we are not going to be - co-dictators*.

After the Conference -- Towards Unity

Our work post conference should have the dual purpose of moving towards the unity of Marxists Leninists in Britain, on principle and in practice, in a democratic centralist organisation towards the formation of a revolutionary party; and of strengthening the ML revolutionary movement among the masses.

Since the purpose of the conference is to bring together MLs in Britain to pool their collective experience, to find areas of agreement from which we can organise jointwork, and to clarify those areas of disagreement which will need further study, practice and debate, a programme of work is needed to consolidate and develop the results of the conference, leading onto a second conference at a later stage.

We propose the following programme of work.

- 1) Meetings to arrange and discuss the findings of study and investigation of areas, decided on by the conference, needing further clarification. The conference will appoint a convening group, to arrange 6-8 weekly meetings. The group will be responsible for bringing together the findings of the investigation, study and debate in a regular broadsheet to be sent to all MLs.
- 2) To summate the findings of the conference into a document to be published, the conference should appoint a work group. This will also be responsible for the preparations for a second conference.
- 3) Joint practical work in fields of propaganda, agitation and organisation on major issues for the revolution in Britain, involving work in Trade Unions, broad fronts, localities, together with demonstrations and propaganda campaigns. To coordinate this work, the conference should appoint 2 people to convene regular, possibly six-weekly meetings.

There are many important questions which MLs must take up in their practical and ideological work, including- Ireland, Danger of war and the Soviet Union, Cuts, Racism/ fascism, Unemployment, wages and prices. However there are some central issues which we should particularly concentrate our forces on.

To decide which are these issues, we must remember Mao's advice on mass work - that all work should start from the need of the masses, from the ones they are conscious of, not from those objective needs, that we might recognise, but which the masses are not yet aware of. If we took the latter course, we would isolate ourselves, and any work we planned needing the participation of the masses would just remain a formality. Such central issues that are consciously felt by the masses today, we should say are

- 1) Wages 2) Prices 3) Unemployment 4) Racism / Fascism.

It is essential for the building of a Marxist Leninist movement among the masses, that a concrete alternative is provided, a concrete programme of action, not just vague words on a socialist future. This is the only way that the ML movement can really mobilise the masses by showing through our practice that we are serving the masses and leading the way to socialism.

Proposals for Joint Practical Work

Wages

A) MLs to work on the shop floor, in trade union branches, on trades councils to

1) Oppose the Social Contract and other forms of wage freeze. MLs in the same union or in the same area to coordinate their work on this issue, in agitating for a change in union policy, in agitating for their trades council to oppose wage controls..

2) Expose trade union leaders and officials who push such contracts with capitalism and sell the workers out by working with government employers and management. In individual disputes where TU officials are selling out, MLs to coordinate action to mobilise branches in area, exposing corrupt officials from their posts while extending all possible support to the shop floor workers. MLs to investigate and publicise employers' actual bribery of TU officials.

3) Expose CPGB, Trotskyites and left Labour Party false opposition to the social contract, their reformism.

B) MLs to participate in and/or organise national demonstrations against

the social contract.. To put on campaigns, with pickets, leaflets, press meetings and posters, agitating against the social contract.

Prices

- A) Nationwide campaign to boycott certain highly priced goods. MLs would produce and distribute posters and leaflets, arrange public meeting meetings and coordinate pickets of major supermarkets.
- B) Propaganda to
 - 1) Expose high profits of food companies
 - 2) Government prices policy
 - 3) The stockpiling of food to keep prices up.
- C) Investigate where stockpiles exist, and organise demonstrations outside them.

Unemployment

- A) MLs to work on shop floors, in trade union branches, on trades councils to
 - 1) Fight closures, redundancies, voluntary redundancies among the employed, as well as "natural wastage" and early retirement schemes.
 - 2) Extend every support to workers involved in such struggles, mobilising support from other shop floors, trade union branches and unemployed.
 - 3) Expose sell-out of any TU official on this question and mobilise workers to remove the official.
 - 4) Expose the Left of various shades and their "solutions"- nationalisation, "workers control" - on the shop floor and in general propaganda.
- B) Propaganda campaign to:
 - 1) counter "scrounger" propaganda, which tries to split workers.
 - 2) Expose social security system. We pay anyway!
 - 3) Expose Labour Govt. line on unemployment.
- C) Formation of a national organisation of the unemployed to organise young and old, and to which TU branches can affiliate. The aims of this broad front organisation should include:
 - 1) Organisation of the unemployed in to a programme of action.
 - 2) Propaganda, with marches and demos, of protests against unemployment, and 'scrounger' propaganda.
 - 3) campaign for higher social security.
 - 4) Win support of rank and file TU members, by working in branches and getting branch to affiliate.
 - 5) To forge unity between employed and unemployed by helping each other in strikes, pickets against closures, wages issues on demos.
 - 6) Together with employed to demand shorter working week with no reduction in wages, providing more jobs.
 - 7) Propaganda to show up capitalist system eg. shortage of housing and building workers on dole; hospitals closed and health workers out of a job; schools overcrowded with unemployed teachers etc. Organise unemployed with such organisations as tenants associations unions, patients, students to demand that these workers be employed..MLs to leaflet unemployment offices, publicising organisation, aims inviting unemployed to form local groups to be responsible for work as outlined above.

Racialism and fascism

Our aim should be to strengthen all anti-fascist forces in Britain. To do this MLs should a) fight racialism and fascism on the shop floor, among fellow workers, and expose the splitting tactics of management, and the vicious anti-working class tactics of the NF. The NF must be isolated and defeated.

- b) participate in, or, if lacking, instigate broad front work against racialism and fascism across the country.
- c) organise discussion and action groups in definite geographical areas, linked to the broad-front committees, which would work locally putting out propaganda, or public meetings against all manifestations of racialism or fascism.
- d) expose in propaganda work corporate measures being introduced by the Labour Govt. and the erosion of bourgeois democratic rights.