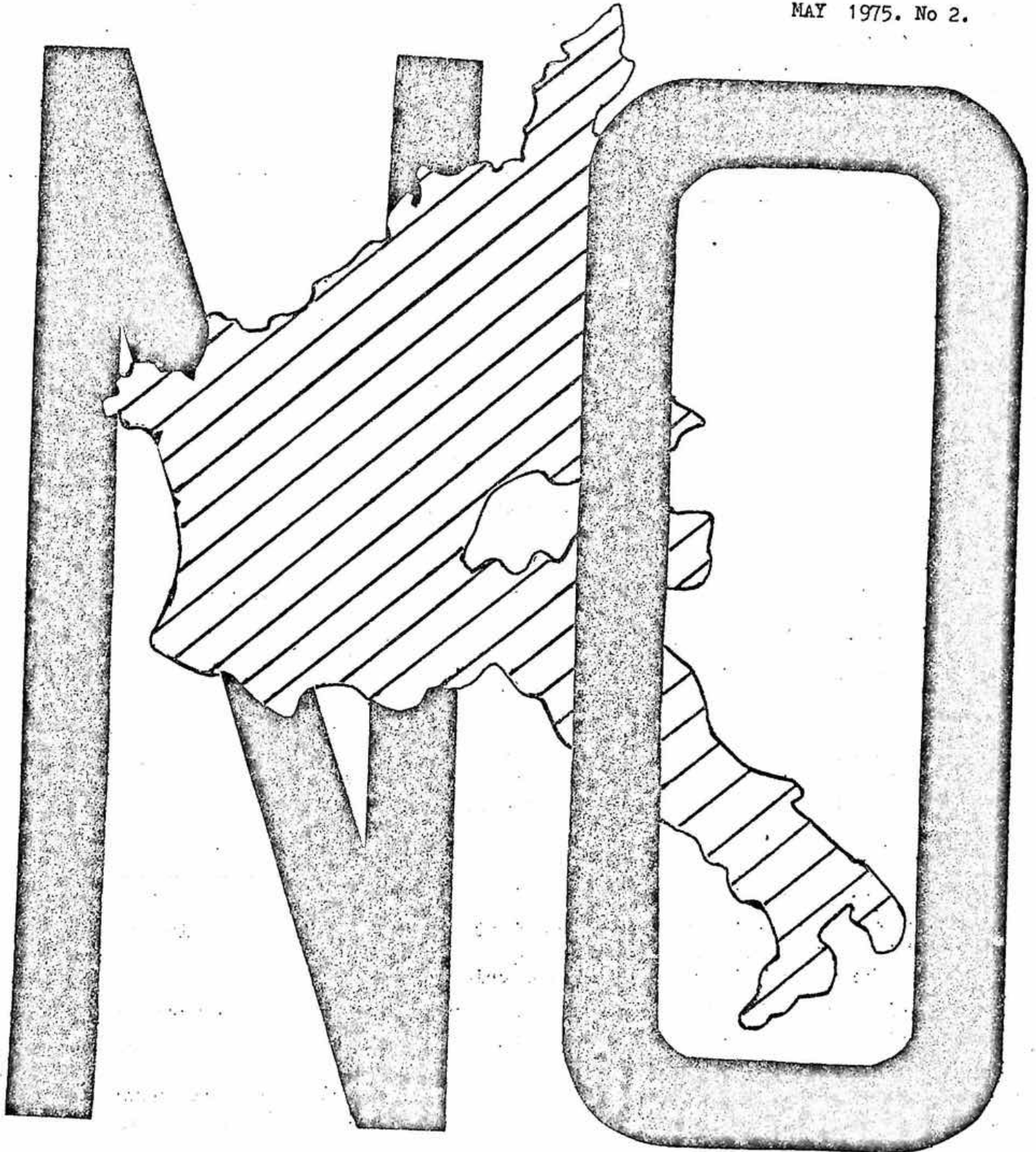


COMBAT

Journal of the

MUNIST LEAGUE
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This special issue of CCMbat is devoted to the issue of Britain's membership of the European Economic Community, which is the subject of the referendum on June 5th.

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The aim of the COMMUNIST LEAGUE is to establish a Marxist-Leninist Party of the working class in Britain free of all revisionist trends.

Enquiries about the COMMUNIST LEAGUE, or its other publications -- COMPASS and InterCCM -- should be addressed as above.

The April 1975 issue of COMPASS is devoted to Part One of a report on "Revisionism in Russia": "Trotsky against the Bolsheviks: to 1914".

The March 1975 issue of COMBAT carries articles on "The National Democratic Revolution in Portugal", "The Great American Come-Back" and "Terrorism or Revolution?".

The first two issues of InterCCM contain summaries of world news covering the year 1974.

N O!

WHEN BRITAIN JOINED THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY ON JANUARY 1st., 1973, THIS WAS DEVELOPING PREDOMINANTLY AS AN IMPERIALIST BLOC DIRECTED AGAINST UNITED STATES IMPERIALISM AND MOVING TOWARDS ITS EXTENSION, THROUGH THE "EUROPEAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY" SCHEME, INTO A WIDER ALLIANCE INCLUDING THE SOVIET UNION.

The character of the contemporary Soviet Union as a neo-imperialist state is analysed in the article "The October Revolution Betrayed" in the February/March 1975 issue of COMPASS.

DURING THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS, HOWEVER, AS A RESULT OF CHANGES IN THE BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN THE PRO-US AND ANTI-US SECTIONS OF THE IMPERIALISTS OF WEST GERMANY, FRANCE AND BRITAIN AND THE CONSEQUENT FORMATION IN THESE COUNTRIES OF NEW GOVERNMENTS WITH CHANGED ORIENTATIONS, THE EEC HAS, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, MOVED TOWARDS RAPPROCHEMENT WITH US IMPERIALISM IN A NEW "ATLANTIC ALLIANCE" AND IS MOVING TOWARDS A POSITION OF ANTAGONISM TOWARDS THE SOVIET NEO-IMPERIALISTS.

These developments are discussed in more detail in the article "The Great American 'Come-Back'" in the March 1975 issue of COMBAT.

Since the "Cultural Revolution" of 1966-68, the People's Republic of China has been dominated by a revisionist faction headed nominally by Mao Tse-tung which represents the interests of the pro-US ex-landlords and comprador capitalists and has also moved into a position of rapprochement with US imperialism.

The revisionist nature of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" and the character of the state system in China are analysed in "Revisionism in China", to be published shortly in COMPASS.

It is because of the changed orientation of the EEC towards US imperialism that the Chinese government has moved into a position of stronger support for the EEC and of Britain's continued membership of it:

"China has followed up its growing public support for a united Europe by a decision to establish full diplomatic relations with the EEC.

This was announced in Peking today by Mr. Christopher Soames, the EEC Commissioner responsible for foreign relations. . .

The Chinese Government -- a keen advocate of Britain's continued membership of the EEC -- has persistently warned the Europeans against 'the aggressive intentions' of the Soviet Union, masked by Moscow's detente policy. . .

After a one-hour meeting with Chou En-lai, the Chinese Prime Minister, who is reported to have stressed the importance of a strong and united Europe to counter the hegemony of the Soviet Union, . . Mr. Soames said that the two sides had taken the first step 'towards a closer and more fruitful relationship'".
("The Guardian", May 9th., 1975; p. 2).

THIS CHANGE IN THE ORIENTATION OF THE EEC IS THE FUNDAMENTAL REASON WHY THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT (WHICH HAS FOR MANY YEARS REPRESENTED PARTICULARLY THE INTERESTS OF THAT SECTION OF THE BRITISH IMPERIALISTS LINKED WITH THE US IMPERIALISTS) HAS CHANGED ITS POLICY FROM ONE OF OPPOSITION TO THE EEC TO ONE OF SUPPORT.

As Foreign Secretary James Callaghan said in the Commons debate on April 9th.:

"I believe I am right to have changed my mind. . . The man who never changes his mind in the light of the facts is no more than an unlicked cub".

("The Guardian", April 10th., 1975; p. 7).

The "re-negotiation" of Britain's terms of entry to the EEC carried out this year by the Labour government has brought about no change in the Treaty of Rome which lays down the principles under which the Community operates. The concessions granted by the continental imperialists have been of the most minor character. "Re-negotiation" must be seen as a mere charade aimed at providing a spurious pretext for the Labour government's change of attitude towards the EEC.

The Subordinate Position of British Imperialism in the EEC

BUT THE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR BRITISH IMPERIALISM WITHIN THE EEC ARE, IN THE PRESENT AND IMMEDIATE FUTURE, THE REVERSE OF BRIGHT.

British monopoly capital has so far failed to reorientate its investment policy from the days when it dominated a great imperial market which could, when necessary, be closed to its more technically advanced competitors, so rendering unnecessary the large-scale investment required to keep British industry technically abreast of its rivals.

Although the Labour government's programme of state investment in industry is designed to take the first steps to rectify this situation, at present British industry is capable of directly competing with the industry of most other developed capitalist countries only in a few exceptional fields such as steel. British imperialism's situation as "the Sick Man of Europe" makes it inevitable that, within the EEC, British imperialism will occupy, at least for some considerable time, a subordinate position.

This is a basic reason why the rosy economic picture presented in the propaganda of the pro-Marketters prior to Britain's accession -- the picture of vastly expanded exports to a market of 250 million consumers, of soaring investment in Britain's industries, of a rapid rise in the technique and volume of production, of full employment and a stable pound -- have proved so far from reality.

THE "SICK MAN OF EUROPE" HAS BECOME EVEN SICKER SINCE ACCESSION AT THE HANDS OF THE SURGEONS OF THE EEC COMMISSION.

Instead of a vast expansion of British exports to the other EEC member-states, Britain's entry into the EEC has resulted in a huge and increasing trade deficit with these states:

Britain's Balance of Trade with Other EEC States in £ million

	<u>Raw Materials</u>	<u>Fuels</u>	<u>Manufactures</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1972:	-530	-100	50	-580
1973:	-820	-100	-250	-1,170
1974:	-1,330	-260	-620	-2,210

And for the first three months of 1975 Britain's trade deficit with other EEC countries was running at a rate of £2,785 million a year.

The principal factor in this trade deficit is that entry into the EEC has brought British industry into direct, unfavourable competition with the more technically advanced industry of West Germany, on terms drawn up by the latter, as the following table shows:

<u>Britain's Trade Deficit in Manufactures with West Germany</u>				
<u>in £ million</u>				
	<u>Chemicals</u>	<u>Machinery</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1972:	-64	-213	-18	-295
1973:	-97	-387	-131	-615
1974:	-163	-456	-277	-896

But it is not merely Britain's less efficient industries that have suffered as a result of direct competition with more efficient industries in the continental member-states of the EEC. The British steel industry (especially its state sector) is more efficient than its continental rivals, and as a result British steel is 10% cheaper than that from the continent. Here (as the dismissed Minister of Industry Eric Heffer revealed on May 12th.) the EEC Commission has used its political powers to bring about a programme of cutbacks in British steel production (which fell in 1974 by 15.9% to 22.4 million tons, below even the level of Italy), of closures and redundancies, with the result that more expensive steel has been imported from the continent (1 million tons in the first three months of 1975).

Such steps are only a beginning. The EEC's own journal "Agence Europe" stated recently that the EEC Commission would be "reticent" about using its powers to impose production quotas under the Treaties of Paris and Rome "until after the referendum".

Again, the picture of massive investment in British industry by British and continental finance capital has also proved delusory. With freedom of capital movement within the Community (not yet complete) capital has gone to where highest profits may be expected -- on the continent. Not only has there been relatively little investment by continental finance capital in Britain, but British finance capital has rushed to invest (particularly in the field of property) on the continent. Such British property investment is now estimated at £5,000 million. The result has been a large and increasing net outflow of capital investment from Britain to the continental EEC states, as the following table shows:

	<u>British investment in Other EEC Countries</u>	<u>Investment from other EEC Countries in Britain</u>	<u>NET OUTFLOW</u>
<u>in £ million</u>			
1970:	93	58	-35
1971:	287	37	-250
1972:	241	39	-202
1973:	519	105	-414
1974:		not available	

The subordinate position of British imperialism within the EEC is also clearly shown by the terms of accession in relation to Britain's contribution to the EEC Budget, scheduled to rise from 8.64% in 1973 to 19% in 1977 and to 24% in 1980 (when it is estimated that Britain will produce only 14% of the EEC's Gross National Product). The "re-negotiated" terms make provision only for a rebate in three years' time if Britain is still in "economic difficulties", and then only to a maximum of £120 million.

The original pro-Market propaganda suggested that the Regional Aid Fund would bring great benefits to the more backward member-states such as Britain. But the West German imperialists have successfully resisted any significant "redistribution of wealth" in this way, so that the Regional Aid scheduled for Britain is a mere £20 million a year (about a twenty-fifth of the regional aid operated currently by the British government itself).

The accentuation of the economic weakness of British imperialism brought about by adherence to the European Economic Community is summed up in a document prepared by Brian Sedgemore, MP, who points out:

"Taking the whole of our trade with the Common Market in the first three months of 1975, the figures show that we are losing 150,000 manufacturing jobs to the EEC. . . Given a foreign trade multiplier of three . . ., this means that in the January to March trade figures we are losing 450,000 jobs in industry as a result of our deficit with the EEC. . .

Britain will stand in relation to the Common Market . . . as an offshore island supplying cheap, skilled itinerant labour for the industrial heartland of Belgium, France and Germany".
(B. Sedgemore: "Jobs and the Common Market", in: "Tribune", May 16th., 1975; p. 1).

THE ECONOMIC PROSPECT BEFORE THE BRITISH IMPERIALISTS WITHIN THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY IS THUS THE REVERSE OF BRIGHT.

IT IS A PROSPECT OF FURTHER DETERIORATION IN ECONOMIC STRENGTH AMOUNTING TO DE-INDUSTRIALISATION, UNDER THE PRESSURE OF AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THEIR STRONGER CONTINENTAL "PARTNERS".

AND, WITHOUT A SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, THE MAIN BURDEN OF THIS ECONOMIC WEAKENING WILL BE FORCED ON TO THE SHOULDERS OF BRITAIN'S WORKERS, WHO FACE ACCENTUATED INFLATION, MASS UNEMPLOYMENT AND ENFORCED EMIGRATION TO THE CONTINENTAL COUNTRIES OF THE EEC.

The Pro-Market Political Forces

In the new situation described in the first section, a majority of Britain's monopoly capitalists favour continued membership of the EEC, so that the pro-Market campaign has considerably greater financial resources than the campaign for withdrawal.

The pro-Market monopoly capitalists have their interests represented politically by a majority of the Ministers in the Labour government and by a majority of the Conservative and Liberal Parties.

But if the analysis in the previous section is correct, if adherence to the EEC is leading to an accentuation of the economic weakness of British imperialism at the hands of its imperialist "partners", the question arises:

WHY SHOULD A MAJORITY OF BRITAIN'S MONOPOLY CAPITALISTS FAVOUR CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP OF THE EEC?

The answer is that their motives are political, rather than immediately economic, as Edward Heath expressed it in the Commons debate on April 9th.:

"The European Community has been founded for a political purpose. We are today part of this vital political purpose in Western Europe as part of the Community. . .

The supreme issue is political".

("The Guardian", April 10th., 1975; p. 7).

Of course, in the propaganda of the pro-Marketees this political purpose is presented as "the preservation of peace":

"We have a unique and crucial role to play in building a Europe others have only dreamed of: free from tyranny and bloodshed, living in peace".

(E. Heath: "Britain Has Never Been Able to Opt out of Europe", in: "The Guardian", May 9th., 1975; p. 9).

But as long as imperialism exists in the world, war is inevitable and the formation of blocs and alliances of imperialist states (like the EEC) helps forward the drive towards an eventual Third World War for the redivision of the world.

The primary reason why a majority of Britain's monopoly capitalists

favour continued membership of the EEC in spite of its economic disadvantages is that they regard the major threat to their profits as coming from the British working class rather than from their imperialist rivals. They believe it to be in their interests to accept a subordinate position in relation to the monopoly capitalists of Western Europe and the United States in return for the increased political strength emanating from the alliance in dealing with the British working class, in forcing it to bear the burdens associated with the decay of British imperialism and its subordinate position within the EEC.

For contemporary capitalism is capitalism which has outlived its usefulness to the masses of the people, which has become a fetter on the development of the productive forces, on which the standard of living of the working people ultimately depends. The decay of capitalism forces the ruling class of monopoly capitalists to adopt policies the social absurdity of which becomes ever more obvious to the working people, to whose disadvantage they operate.

In an imperialist alliance such as the European Economic Community these policies can be operated with greater facility and to a greater extent than in a single imperialist country in isolation. This is illustrated in the operation of the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy, the main purpose of which is to raise food prices throughout the Community to the level which is profitable for the less efficient agricultural interests of France and Germany. The CAP involves the imposition of import levies on lower priced food from outside the EEC (and where necessary its complete prohibition), the accumulation of huge stocks of food purchased to keep it off the market in order to keep prices up, and the dispersal of these "mountains" and "lakes" of surplus food either by outright destruction or by "dumping" on markets outside the EEC (such as the Soviet Union) at low prices subsidised by the taxpayers (i.e., for the most part by the working people).

"Common Market countries paid over £21 million to destroy fruit and vegetables when prices dropped too low this year, according to figures from the EEC Executive Commission in Brussels.

The biggest sums went for surplus apples and pears. . .

Peaches, tangerines and oranges were also destroyed, as well as cauliflowers and tomatoes. . .

Under Common Market rules, farmers' associations can buy up surpluses to stabilise prices. They are then 'withdrawn from the market', that is, burnt or buried, and the joint farm fund of the nine countries compensates the associations".

("Daily Telegraph", December 18th., 1974).

At the time of writing (April 1975) beef, lamb, butter, cheese, maize and many other foodstuffs can all be bought cheaper outside the EEC than within it. The price of beef outside the EEC is £8-10 per live cwt., compared with £16 in Britain (still protected by transitional arrangements) and £21-24 in the continental EEC countries. It was in this situation that in 1974 the importation of beef into the EEC was banned and 40,000 tons of surplus beef sold to the Soviet Union at 40% below the EEC price. And all this at a time when for most British working class families beef had become an expensive luxury!

Of course, the pro-Market monopoly capitalists believe that in a few years' time the massive state investment of taxpayers' money into Britain's backward industry together with state control of Britain's huge North Sea oil deposits will bring about a considerable increase in the economic strength of British imperialism and so of its bargaining position within the Community.

But the more immediate advantage they see from continued membership of the EEC is the imposition by the EEC Commission of the first stage in the erection of a corporate state, in which the trade unions have been drawn into the machinery of the capitalist state and free collective bargaining has been abolished. The first stage in this process is the drawing of trade union officials into participation in company management. This process of class

collaboration is aimed at hamstringing the unions and converting them even more into organs serving the interests of Big Business by damping down militant class struggle. Although the pseudo-left has made some headway in persuading British workers to accept these measures under slogans of "industrial democracy" and "workers' control", they are as yet opposed by a majority of Britain's smaller industrialists who see them as "socialistic". The larger and more far-sighted industrialists believe that opposition to "industrial democracy" can be crushed more quickly, more easily and more effectively within the EEC, under the Community's company laws which are already being applied in several member-states and are due to be applied in Britain unless Britain withdraws from the Community.

The most prominent political role in the pro-Market campaign is being played by the leaders of the Conservative Party, who are building up the picture that the politician who really secured Britain's adherence to the EEC will be Harold Wilson rather than the now removed Edward Heath. This strengthening of the position of Wilson and his pro-Market Labour colleagues by the Tories serves the interests of Big Business, who understand that the programme outlined above (state investment in industry, state control of oil resources and the development of corporatism) can more easily be put into effect by a Labour than by a Conservative government. The same complex of factors underlie the election of Margaret Thatcher as leader of the Conservative Party. There is, of course, no reason why a woman should not lead a political party, progressive or reactionary, as efficiently as a man. But the Conservative Party makes its appeal to the least politically conscious strata of the working people, many of whom still accept the reactionary philosophy that "a woman's place is in the home" so long preached by the Tory Party itself. The election of Thatcher, notorious as the Minister who took away the children's milk, as leader of the Conservative Party is thus -- like the elevation to the Shadow Cabinet of Reginald Maudling despite his involvement in corruption scandals -- calculated to help the Wilson government to survive long enough to carry through the above programme.

The "Marxist-Leninist" Case FOR

The only organisation to our knowledge claiming to be "Marxist-Leninist" which supports Britain's continued membership of the EEC is the "British and Irish Communist Organisation".

This body became notorious a few years ago for presenting a "Marxist-Leninist" case in support of the partition of the Irish nation by British imperialism. This departed so far from Marxist-Leninist principles on the national question as to define a nation in terms of religion, claiming that the Protestant and Catholic communities in Ireland constituted "separate nations", so that the continued existence of the state of Northern Ireland should be supported on the basis of "the self-determination of the Protestant nation" in Ireland.

In its pamphlet "The Economic Case For!", the BICC claims that it ". . . has put the pro-Market case from a working class point of view".

(British and Irish Communist Organisation: "The Economic Case For!"; London; 1975; p. 16).

But in fact the B&ICO sees things not from the standpoint of the British working class, but from the standpoint of monopoly capital, as is seen by its references to the

". . . national interests"

(Ibid.; p. 4),

". . . the Germans and French"

(Ibid.; p. 4),

(as though there were no fundamental antagonism of interest between the ruling monopoly capitalists and the workers, between the exploiters and the exploited, of the same nation), and by its assertion that the continued membership of the British imperialists in the EEC is necessary

"... to make sure we (sic!) have a say in the world".
(Ibid.; p. 9).

But as long as the British monopoly capitalists dominate the state, it is they and not "we" (the British workers) who have a "say" in the world.

Marxist-Leninists have always held ("mistakenly", according to the B&ICO) that profit was surplus value extracted by exploitation from the working class and that socialists aimed to bring about the abolition of profit and of all exploitation. But the B&ICO regards "profit" as "money put aside by capitalists for investment" and therefore "socially desirable":

"The employer continues to take profit from the goods the workers produce because he needs profit for investment and expansion. . . .

When workers control the British economy, profits will still be made".
(Ibid.; p. 13, 14).

The primary cause of the economic weakness of the British economy, says the B&ICO echoing the Confederation of British Industry, is that, as a result of the "greed" of the workers, British capitalists have not been able to make large enough profits:

"The trouble with Britain is that her capitalists have not been able to make our (sic!) profits go up fast enough. . . .

The reason why there has been no expansion in the British economy is that when employers have tried to keep profits for investment, they have been unable to do so since their workers have demanded more wages".
(Ibid.; p. 14).

The solution offered by the B&ICO is that the power of management to impose its decisions on workers must be increased:

"In our view, the trouble with the British economy is that NO ONE is effectively running it. It has been management's job to do so, and they have been unable to do so as workers have vetoed many of the management's plans while management have been unwilling to fight or even argue with workers on the merits of their plans. Authority is of no use without power".
(Ibid.; p. 12).

Therefore, argues the B&ICO, Britain should remain in the EEC because by doing so Britain's capitalists will participate in powerful institutions through which they can more effectively impose their will upon the working class, by which they can hold down wages and increase their profits, by which they can rationalise and expand production (for the benefit of the "living standards of the working class"↓)

"The nine heads of state know that their political future depends on continuing prosperity throughout Europe. . . . They also know that the only way to ensure such prosperity is through close political cooperation. . . .

Inside the Common Market . . . we (sic!) could begin to reorganise production on a larger, more efficient scale. . . .

The Treaty dedicates the Market to achieve . . . a growing economy. . . . Every aspect of the EEC's social and regional policy is along these lines -- to . . . extend security and stability. There is no 'sordid reality' about bigger profits from 'capitalist rationalisation' when it is the working class whose living standards go up as a result of expanding capitalism".
(Ibid.; p. 6, 12, 14).

And through what machinery is this programme of increased management powers, wage restraint and increased profits to be realised; according to the B&ICO? Through the machinery of the corporate state, which is being constructed more quickly in the continental EEC countries than in Britain, under the slogan of "workers' control":

"If Britain remains inside the EEC, those changes can be made by workers' control over a period of years".
(Ibid.; p. 15).

THE B&ICO THUS PRESENTS A CASE FOR BRITAIN'S CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP OF THE EEC FROM THE STANDPOINT OF BIG BUSINESS. IT PRESENTS A STRONG CASE, IN FACT, WHY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS EVERYTHING POSSIBLE SHOULD BE DONE TO BRING ABOUT BRITAIN'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EEC.

The Anti-Market Political Forces

In the new situation described in the first section, a minority of Britain's monopoly capitalists favour withdrawal from the EEC.

The split in the ranks of the ruling class has led to splits in the two main political parties representing the interests of this class, the Conservative and Labour Parties. A minority of Ministers in the Labour government, a majority of the Labour Party and a minority of the Conservative Party represent, on this issue, the policy of this minority section of British monopoly capital, together with the revisionist "Communist Party of Great Britain", the fascist National Front, some prominent independent politicians of the extreme right like Enoch Powell, and some smaller political parties and groups.

The anti-Market monopoly capitalists believe that the economic strength of British imperialism is not so weak that it has to accept a subordinate position in the EEC/Atlantic Alliance. They believe that the main threat to their profits comes at present not from the British working class but from their continental rivals.

The anti-Market monopoly capitalists believe that, outside the EEC, the machinery of a corporate state can be built by a Labour government, while they manoeuvre themselves into a bloc of imperialist and capitalist states outside the existing developing power blocs. As Douglas Jay expresses it:

"Far the best solution for Britain would be to become a member of a West European industrial free trade area which left its members free to buy food and materials on whatever terms they wished and to trade as they wished with the outside world. This was the basic principle of EFTA (comprising Britain, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Austria, Switzerland and Portugal), as it existed from 1960 to 1972. But EFTA did not then enjoy industrial free-trade status with the EEC Six. . . .

But now . . . the West European industrial free-trade area exists; and all the other EFTA countries (now Norway, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal and Iceland) enjoy precisely the advantages which are crucial for the country's future. They will soon enjoy, under contractual agreements already made, free entry for nearly all their industrial exports into all the EEC countries' markets as well as each others without suffering the burdens of the Common Agricultural Policy, or the loss of self-government and Parliamentary democracy inherent in submission to Brussels so-called 'legislation'".

(D. Jay: "The Better Alternative for Britain"; London; 1975; p. 1).

In this connection the anti-Marketeers point to the example of

Norway:

"Norway, in particular, has enjoyed the most prosperous year in her history since she decided by referendum not to join the EEC. Her

balance of payments has been strong; her currency has been twice revalued upwards; unemployment has been kept low; and the rise in internal prices (only 10% in 1974) has been less than in many industrial countries. It is largely because of Norway's success outside the EEC that a majority of the Danish electorate is now opposed to continued membership and, according to opinion polls, would vote strongly for withdrawal from the EEC if Britain also decided to join EFTA. Like Britain, Norway has high hopes of North Sea oil; but it is notable that these high hopes have not yet enabled the British economy to overcome present difficulties nearly so effectively as Norway's".

(D. Jay: *ibid.*; p. 2-3).

The anti-Market politicians of the open extreme right, campaigning on a basis of national chauvinism and racialism, stress the "loss of sovereignty" to foreign bureaucrats in Brussels which membership of the EEC entails. Enoch Powell said in Bournemouth on May 11th.:

"The recrudescence of class consciousness is an evil portent.

I watch and listen to the voices that are raised to persuade electors to surrender their own birthright because they fear their fellow subjects".

("The Guardian", May 12th., 1975; p. 8).

And Neil Oliver, Official Unionist Chairman of the Northern Ireland branch of "Get Britain Out" told a press conference on May 19th.:

"The Convention election demonstrated that the majority of the Northern Ireland electorate will not tolerate power-sharing in executive government. How much less will they tolerate power-sharing and the future destiny of the province being surrendered to a foreign community?"

("The Guardian", May 20th., 1975; p. 8).

IF BRITAIN REMAINS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, THESE POLITICIANS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY UTILISE THE RESULTING ACCENTUATED HARDSHIPS FOR THE WORKING PEOPLE TO DEVELOP THEIR CHAUVINISM AND RACIALISM FURTHER, SO LAYING THE IDEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR A FUTURE FASCIST COUP.

The "left-wing" pro-Marketeers of the Labour Party and of the revisionist Communist Party give support to this chauvinism by their assertions that "loss of national sovereignty" is the primary reason for opposing Britain's continued membership of the EEC. In their joint declaration of March 18th., Labour Ministers Tony Benn, Barbara Castle, Michael Foot, Peter Shore and John Silkin stated:

"We believe it is the true interest of our people to regain the essential rights which permanent membership of the Common Market would deny us:

the right of democratic self-government through our own elected Parliament;

the right to determine for ourselves how we impose taxes and fix food prices".

("Morning Star", March 19th., 1975; p. 1).

The revisionist "Communist Party" expresses a similar view:

"In essence we are faced with two problems: First the national question. Secondly the parliamentary question".

(J. Woddis, in: "Morning Star", February 24th., 1975; p. 2).

"Common Market membership deprives Parliament of its sovereign powers. . .

It is vital to appreciate the significance of this loss of parliamentary sovereignty".

("Get Britain Out", in: "Morning Star", April 19th., 1975; p. 4, 5).

But Marxist-Leninists accept Lenin's analysis that, in a capitalist

country such as Britain, Parliament does not have sovereign power, but is a mere false facade concealing the real structure of the state as an apparatus of force in the hands of monopoly capital.

Marxist-Leninists also accept Marx's dictum that the workers in a capitalist country such as Britain "have no country", and that to urge them to "defend national sovereignty" is to urge them to defend the state machine which is in the hands of their class enemies.

THE LINE OF THE LABOUR AND REVISIONIST "COMMUNIST" PARTIES ON THE ISSUE OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY IS THUS, DESPITE ITS "DEMOCRATIC" CLOAK, CHAUVINISM WHICH OBJECTIVELY ASSISTS THAT OF THE OPEN EXTREME RIGHT.

Despite the support given by the Chinese revisionists to Britain's continued membership of the EEC, the maoist "Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninists)" is campaigning for Britain's withdrawal. This reflects the developing disintegration of maoism as an international revisionist tendency. As the Chinese revisionists increasingly throw off their "left" mask, so the maoist parties and groups in other countries are compelled to choose between retaining their own "left" mask and repudiating the line of Peking, and remaining loyal to Peking and suffering exposure to the working class as objectively serving the interests of imperialism.

But the "CPB(M-L)" also urges the workers to support Britain's withdrawal from the EEC on the basis of defending "national sovereignty", or, as the party puts it, on the basis of defending "the sovereignty of the working class", a "sovereignty" (i.e., power) which it admits the working class does not yet possess!:

"The EEC endangers the sovereignty of the working class -- . . . which has yet to be won in revolutionary struggle. . . .

Sovereignty is therefore a class question".

("EEC or Sovereignty", in: "The Worker", May 15th., 1975; p. 2).

But if the working class does not yet possess "sovereignty", if this power is still in the hands of monopoly capital, then to urge the workers to defend British sovereignty is to urge them to assist in defending the sovereignty of the British imperialists against their rivals. It is chauvinism, despite its "left" phraseology -- chauvinism which assists that of the open extreme right.

Conclusion

The Marxist-Leninist case for mobilising the British working people for a "no" vote in the referendum on the EEC on June 5th. is not based on fostering chauvinist prejudices which can only react to their detriment, nor on spreading illusions about the imaginary "sovereignty of the British parliament".

THE MARXIST-LENINIST CASE FOR A "NO" VOTE IS BASED ON THE FACT THAT BRITAIN'S CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY WOULD, IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES,

STRENGTHEN WEST EUROPEAN AND UNITED STATES IMPERIALISM;

STRENGTHEN THE POLITICAL POWER OF THE BRITISH IMPERIALISTS TO GAG AND BIND THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS AND TO IMPOSE ON ITS SHOULDERS THE MAJOR SHARE OF THE BURDENS EMANATING FROM DECAYING CAPITALISM AND FROM BRITAIN'S SUBORDINATE POSITION IN THE EEC;

LEAD TO ARTIFICIALLY RAISED PRICES AND REDUCED LIVING STANDARDS FOR BRITAIN'S WORKING PEOPLE TO A GREATLY ACCENTUATED EXTENT;

LEAD TO THE DE-INDUSTRIALISATION OF BRITAIN, TO MASS UNEMPLOYMENT AT A

HIGHER LEVEL THAN THAT EXPERIENCED IN A "NORMAL" CAPITALIST DEPRESSION;
AND TO ENFORCED EMIGRATION TO THE INDUSTRIAL HEARTLANDS OF WESTERN EUROPE;
ACCENTUATE THE DIVISION OF THE WORLD INTO POWER BLOCS AND SO ASSIST
IN FURTHERING THE PREPARATIONS FOR A THIRD WORLD WAR;
ASSIST IN THE FOSTERING OF CHAUVINIST AND RACIAL PREJUDICES, AND SO
ASSIST FASCISM.

Of course, Britain's withdrawal from the EEC would not solve the growing social problems of the British workers. That only a socialist revolution can do. And since the working class can carry through a socialist revolution only under the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist Party, the building of such a party remains the most urgent and pressing task before the British working class.

BUT THE WITHDRAWAL OF BRITAIN FROM THE EEC WOULD STRENGTHEN THE POSITION OF THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS VIS-A-VIS ITS CLASS ENEMY, THE RULING CLASS OF BRITISH MONOPOLY CAPITALISTS.

AND THIS WOULD BE A STEP, ALBEIT A SMALL ONE, IN THE DIRECTION OF SOCIALISM.

THE INTERESTS OF THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS AND THE CAUSE OF SOCIALISM
THUS CALL FOR A "NO" VOTE ON JUNE 5th.