

# **Revolution**

**No 4 April 1977 25p**



- GRASP DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM!.....page 2
- DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM IN PARTY COMMITTEES.....page 9
- COMBAT WOMEN'S OPPRESSION! MOBILISE WOMEN  
FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION.....page 14
- WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION.....page 19

---

**THEORETICAL JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF**

---

**THE COMMUNIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN**

---

**(MARXIST-LENINIST)**

## THE COMMUNIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN (MARXIST-LENINIST)

The Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) holds that the central task in Britain today is to build the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, the party of the working class. This revolutionary Communist Party must unite the various struggles of the working class into a struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of the monopoly capitalist state to set up a dictatorship of the proletariat and build genuine working class socialism.

The Party must be constructed by ideological, political and organisational struggle. By a bold internal struggle the CFB(M-L) has recently decisively defeated serious opportunist errors. One of these was liberalism, which refuses to stand up boldly for what is in the interests of the working class, but believes in unprincipled peace to keep on good terms with everyone. As a result of the internal struggle the CFB(M-L) has taken important steps away from federalism and towards a united and democratic-centralist Party.

The CFB(M-L) is self-reliant in Party-building but it will not be self-sufficient: where it can learn from other British Marxist-Leninist organisations it will do so. We must break down the small group mentality which exists between Marxist-Leninist organisations in Britain, and struggle for unity on correct principles so as to build the revolutionary Communist Party as fast as possible.

We have to apply the general truths of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete practice of the British revolution. In the contradiction between theory and practice, at present theory is the principal aspect. However practice is an important second. Training and tempering comrades in practical work is essential to build the revolutionary Communist Party.

The most important practical task is to build bases in the industrial working class. This will make sure that the future Marxist-Leninist Party is a firm proletarian party with deep and unshakable roots in the working class.

**"BUILD THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY TO LEAD THE REVOLUTION!"**

For information about the Communist Federation of Britain contact:-

National Secretary

c/o New Era Books  
203 Seven Sisters Road  
London N4.

For criticisms, correspondence or contributions to 'Revolution' write to:-

The Editor, 'Revolution'

c/o New Era Books  
203 Seven Sisters Road  
London N4.

## EDITORIAL

### THE STRUGGLE FOR UNITY IN THE MARXIST-LENINIST MOVEMENT

The Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) recently sent a criticism to the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), pointing out five main errors in the 6th Congress Statement of the CPB(ML). This criticism was published in 'Revolution' 3. It was made in a fraternal way, and concentrated on the main errors in the Congress statement. The aim of the criticism was to struggle for unity in the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain, in the interests of the working class.

The CPB(ML) did not reply to this criticism, which was sent to them some time ago. It is correct that we inform the Marxist-Leninist movement of this, and point out the significance of the refusal of this organisation to struggle for unity. Mao says:-

*"To check up regularly on our work and in the process develop a democratic style of work, to fear neither criticism nor self-criticism, and to apply such good popular Chinese maxims as "Say all you know and say it without reserve", "Blame not the speaker but be warned by his words", and "Correct mistakes if you have committed them and guard against them if you have not" - this is the only effective way to prevent all kinds of political dust and germs from contaminating the minds of our comrades and the body of our Party." (Quotations pp259-260)*

The CPB(ML) has not reacted in this proletarian spirit. They are digging in their heels over the errors in their line. Those who do this will intensify their errors, and make the contradiction worse. They will therefore put the interests of their own organisation before that of the Marxist-Leninist movement as a whole, and act against the interests of the working class.

The struggle for unity in the Marxist-Leninist movement will continue, independently of the wishes of the CPB(ML). The CPB(ML) will now struggle in a more determined and protracted way with this organisation.

### GRASP DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM!

Democratic centralism is a class question of great importance. The working class, the leading force in the socialist revolution must be united into a disciplined army to smash the bourgeoisie. To lead it in struggle it must have a revolutionary Communist Party organised with steel-like discipline. This proletarian self-discipline is democratic centralism.

At this stage on the road to the revolutionary Communist Party grasping democratic centralism is a most important stage. The two articles in this issue of 'Revolution' deal with the main aspects of democratic centralism. The first, 'Grasp Democratic Centralism' is a result of progress made in the CPB(ML) to grasp and implement democratic centralism. The successful conclusion of this struggle will be marked by the end of federalism, and the founding of a fully democratic centralist league.

The second article is from 'Peking Review', 1973, no.47. It sums up the experience of the Communist Party of China and examines in detail the implementation of democratic centralism in the work of party committees.

It links the question of democratic centralism firmly to the need to constantly remould the world outlook of cadres at every level. Centralised leadership must develop on the basis of a firm proletarian class stand, and democracy must be a lively proletarian democracy. Both are necessary for the proletarian Party.

COMBAT WOMEN'S OPPRESSION; MOBILISE WOMEN FOR SOCIALIST REVOLUTION.

This document is the line of the National Committee on the oppression of women, and the road to their emancipation. The line militantly takes the stand of the working class. Firstly it stresses the need to study the historical materialist view of the origins of women's oppression in class society. Secondly it integrates these truths with the present situation of women in monopoly capitalist society.

The line states that the working class, both men and women, must be united in the class struggle. The policies which Marxist-Leninists fight for must be those which mobilise women to take part in class struggle side by side with men, particularly the struggle for the revolutionary Communist Party. The victorious struggle of the proletariat against capitalism and imperialism will lay the basis for the full emancipation of women under socialism.

Editorial Committee

## GRASP DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

### EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

This article is an edited version of the National Committee statement which resolved to fully implement democratic centralism in every part of the Communist Federation of Britain (ML).

Grasping democratic centralism is not just a question for the CFB(ML). It is of importance to all Marxist-Leninist organisations whatever their size or length of experience. To give just one example, the prevailing tendency in the local Marxist-Leninist circles is towards ultra-democracy, in the form of the idea that the circle is not yet 'big enough' to develop a leadership. Experience shows that there is a need for a leading committee even in a small group. Leadership is something which must be developed, through training cadres, it does not suddenly appear when a group or organisation reaches a certain size.

The last section of the document refers in detail to the present organisational structure of the CFB(ML). It is included in the statement as an example of the application of Marxist-Leninist principles to our present situation. The study of this section should make clear how these principles are concretely applied at this stage.

It is important to grasp that democratic centralism is not only an organisational question. It has great ideological and political importance for the working class. As Lenin pointed out, "*In its struggle for power the working class has no other weapon but organisation.*" The working class must be united into a disciplined army if it is to succeed in the battle for state power.

Democratic centralism is a contradiction. As Mao says:

*"This unity of democracy and centralism, of freedom and discipline, constitutes our democratic centralism."* (Quotations, p254)

The proletarian party must be a disciplined force, and a democratic one. This must be a lively proletarian democracy in which the rank and file comrades speak out in the interests of the working class. This is not just a catch-phrase. It sums up the essence of proletarian democracy. It is not a question of 'everyone having their say' for the sake of it, or of all having equal speaking time, but a question of comrades raising questions,

and criticising defects in work where they occur, with the aim of improving the effectiveness of the organisation as a whole. It aims to increase the 'combat effectiveness' of the Party of the proletariat in its fight.

### GRASP DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM!

#### WHAT IS DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM?

As article 5 of the Constitution of the Communist Party of China concisely sums it up, democratic centralism is the organisational principle of the Party.

What is the nature of democratic centralism? Mao Tsetung explains this on p. 254 of the Quotations:

*"This unity of democracy and centralism, of freedom and discipline, constitutes our democratic centralism."*

Democratic centralism is a contradiction. It is essential to grasp this truth and understand both aspects of the contradiction, both democracy and centralism. Only by grasping both aspects can we grasp the principle of democratic centralism. It will be necessary to come back to this question many times.

#### WHY MUST DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM BE FIRMLY GRASPED?

This is a class question of the greatest importance. The central task in Britain today is to build the revolutionary Communist Party of the working class. The working class must have its own Party organized with steel-like self-discipline in order to lead its forces to overthrow the bourgeoisie and establish a dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin put the question very sharply at the end of 'One Step Forward, Two Steps Back':

*"In its struggle for power, the proletariat has no other weapon but organization. Disunited by the rule of anarchic competition in the bourgeois world, ground down by forced labour for capital, constantly thrust back to the 'lower depths' of utter destitution, savagery and degeneration, the proletariat can become, and inevitably will become, an invincible force only when its ideological unification by the principles of Marxism is consolidated by the material unity of an organization which will weld the millions of toilers into an army of the working class."*

Ideological unification must be consolidated into an invincible force by welding the workers into an army of the working class.

The Party of the working class does not try to win unity of ideas for subjective reasons of self-cultivation or because it is nice to be at one mind with other comrades. It wins unity through struggle for a purpose - to lead in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

There is an additional reason of great importance why democratic centralism must be firmly grasped. As the British imperialist bourgeoisie lurches deeper

and deeper into crisis it may suddenly attempt desperately to prolong its days by bringing in open fascist suppression of the working class. This can in no way save it from defeat. Fascism will merely ensure that the fall of the bourgeoisie will be all the greater. Nevertheless the working class must prepare now for struggle under any conditions, including fascism. And to be ready for such struggle we need to practice strict democratic centralism in a highly conscious and disciplined way.

#### HOW MUST DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM BE GRASPED?

First of all, we grasp democratic centralism through ideological struggle and education. All comrades must grasp the deep truth that democratic centralism is an essential weapon for the working class. All comrades must be ready constantly to fight for an understanding of this truth in order not just to introduce democratic centralism into the organization but to maintain it militantly year after year.

#### IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

Everything of real value the working class win, we win only through struggle. Deep conviction of the importance of democratic centralism for the working class will be won and maintained only through protracted struggle against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas which constantly crop up to attack democratic centralism and disarm the working class. In particular it is necessary to fight a relentless battle against individualism. The errors of ultra-democracy and the small-group mentality must also be combated whenever they occur.

The main ideological task of the CFB(ML) at present is a protracted struggle against the ideological errors associated with the intelligentsia, but which can infect working class comrades also. We have linked these errors together under the name intellectualism.

Intellectualism is a whole range of ideological errors associated with the intelligentsia. The intelligentsia is a stratum of the people who do mainly mental rather than manual work. Like the petty-bourgeoisie, they are caught between the working class and the bourgeoisie, and they have many of the weaknesses of the petty-bourgeoisie.

Whilst intellectualism must be named as the main error to be struggled against in general, it is not a sufficiently accurate way of naming the specific forms that the error manifests itself in. In the struggle for democratic centralism the main error to be guarded against is the individualism of the intelligentsia.

The intelligentsia spontaneously kicks against discipline and leadership. Their very existence teaches them that it is the individual who is all important. The petty-bourgeois intellectual thinks that he is *"the supreme power of the world order"* (Hoxha), that through his own personal qualities he can solve all problems and that he can achieve his ends only by expressing his individuality.

As Hoxha says the intellectual *"does not accept discipline for himself but only for the masses."* For the intellectual it is a betrayal of all he has been taught to subordinate his personal views to the discipline and leadership of the proletarian Party.

The history of the international Communist movement teaches us that democratic centralism has always been forged in the struggle against

individualism. Lenin said that:

*"...it is precisely its individualism and incapacity for discipline and organization that in general distinguishes the intelligentsia as a separate stratum of modern capitalist society."*

Individualism takes a number of forms. Two of these are ultra-democracy and small-group mentality. The source of ultra-democracy is the petty-bourgeoisie's individualistic aversion to discipline. It is utterly incompatible with the fighting tasks of the proletariat. Ultra-democracy must be rooted out in the fight to grasp democratic-centralism.

Small-group mentality is a form of selfish departmentalism and as Mao said *"exemplifies the narrowest individualism."* It is a form of saying 'me first', instead of putting the interests of the whole organisation and the working class first. It too is utterly opposed to democratic centralism.

If we forget about either of these errors they may well cause temporary but severe setbacks to the task of building the revolutionary Communist Party of the working class.

### IDEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

As well as ideological struggle we need ideological education to help all comrades grasp the importance of democratic centralism and how to implement it. Comrades must grasp both the essence and the details of democratic centralism.

Democratic centralism is the *"unity of democracy and centralism, of freedom and discipline."* We must study both aspects of the contradiction in order to grasp the contradiction as a whole.

The working class needs centralism so it can fight as a whole. By themselves the individual fingers of a hand are weak. But when the individual fingers are brought together, united and concentrated into a fist they become a strong weapon. We must unite the working class through the leadership of the Party into one mighty fist to smash the bourgeoisie! Therefore the working class must have centralism.

What is centralism? First of all it is the centralization of correct ideas. If people's ideas differ and lack unity there cannot be any centralism. Therefore in order to achieve centralism we must do continual work to achieve unity of ideas. The main weapons for achieving unity of ideas are ideological struggle and ideological education. Centralism must also be centralization of action. That is the aim of centralism - so that the working class can fight and overthrow the bourgeoisie through united action.

Why must centralism be democratic? Because without democracy there cannot be correct centralism because it is impossible to establish centralism when people have different views and don't have unity in thinking. Therefore the democracy of democratic centralism is for a purpose - to achieve unity in thinking and action for the sake of the working class. It serves the working class. This is completely different to ultra-democracy - the aim of ultra-democracy is to let every petty bourgeois individualist have their own say. That is why ultra-democracy cripples the cause of the working class.

The working class does not want democracy in abstract but democracy in order to serve the interests of the working class. Therefore the working class demands that in a democratic centralist organization there is democracy under centralized guidance. As Mao Tsetung says on p.116 of the Red Book:



*"In the sphere of organization, ensure democracy under centralized guidance. It should be done on the following lines:*

- (1) The leading bodies of the Party must give a correct line of guidance and find solutions when problems arise, in order to establish themselves as centres of leadership.*
- (2) The higher bodies must be familiar with the situation in the lower bodies and with the life of the masses so as to have an objective basis for correct guidance.*
- (3) No Party organization at any level should make casual decisions in solving problems. Once a decision is reached, it must be firmly carried out.*
- (4) All decisions of any importance made by the Party's higher bodies must be promptly transmitted to the lower bodies and the Party rank and file...*
- (5) The lower bodies of the Party and the Party rank and file must discuss the higher bodies' directives in detail in order to understand their meaning thoroughly and decide on the methods of carrying them out."*

The whole of this quotation must be studied many times in the struggle to implement democratic centralism.

This democracy under centralised guidance must be a lively, proletarian type of democracy, in which comrades at all levels dare to speak out in the interests of the working class, use their initiative and accept responsibility, in the way Mao Tsetung describes on p.160-161 of the Quotations:

*"In the present great struggle, the Chinese Communist Party demands that all its leading bodies and all its members and cadres should give the fullest expression to their initiative, which alone can ensure victory. This initiative must be demonstrated concretely in the ability of the leading bodies, the cadres, and the Party rank and file to work creatively, in their readiness to assume responsibility, in the exuberant vigour they show in their work, in their courage and ability to raise questions, voice opinions and criticize defects, and in the comradely supervision that is maintained over the leading bodies and the leading cadres. Otherwise, "initiative" will be an empty thing. But the exercise of such initiative depends on the spread of democracy in Party life. Only in an atmosphere of democracy can large numbers of able people be brought forward."*

The revolutionary fight of the working class requires iron discipline. Once a decision has been reached it must be carried out with the greatest determination, selflessness and conscientiousness. Working class discipline is not mechanical or bureaucratic. It is iron discipline precisely because it is voluntary discipline, based on deep loyalty to the historic destiny of the working class and on full understanding of the decision which the Party has reached. Only "democracy under centralized guidance" can ensure that all comrades fully grasp the correctness of every decision and carry it out with iron determination and discipline.

The four principles of democratic centralist discipline are summarised on p.255 of the Quotations from Mao Tsetung.

1. The individual is subordinate to the organization.
2. The minority is subordinate to the majority.
3. The lower level is subordinate to the higher level.
4. The entire membership is subordinate to the Central Committee.

These must be closely studied, grasped and applied to particular cases. At the present stage points 2 and 3 are the most important.

*"The minority is subordinate to the majority."* When struggling for a correct line all comrades must put the interests of the working class first and if necessary dare to go against the tide even if in a minority of one. But once a decision has been reached the minority must be subordinate to the majority and carry out the decision wholeheartedly. If necessary the minority must reserve its position and bring the matter up again when the time comes to review the achievements and shortcomings of the work. Meanwhile the majority must not be liberal and rest content with a mere majority vote. It must struggle to win unity and complete conviction for the correct line to ensure that all comrades carry it out not only because of their high level of discipline but also because they support it with one heart and mind. If after a period of struggle and testing the line in practice, the minority is still not convinced the majority must examine the line in a self-critical way to check whether it really is in the interests of the working class and whether it really does conform to reality.

*"The lower level is subordinate to the higher level"*. Democratic centralism, the organizational principle of the working class, requires a vertical not a horizontal form of organization. Proletarian leadership is essential for the working class. Therefore care must be taken to ensure that comrades are elected to higher bodies in a correct way. There must be full discussion of their achievements and shortcomings so that as much as possible leading comrades take a bold working class stand and are best at integrating Marxism-Leninism with concrete practice. All comrades must help leading cadres to develop by fully supporting their correct leads and also by pointing out their shortcomings so that these can be corrected.

The bourgeoisie regards democratic centralism as a terrifying machine. Terrifying it is - for the bourgeoisie - because it enables the working class to concentrate all its forces to smash the rule of the bourgeoisie for ever. For the working class democratic centralism is fine!

When contradictions occur in a democratic centralist organization there is an infallible method for overcoming them, criticism and self-criticism. Whatever the contradiction, whether it is between the individual and the organization, between the minority and the majority, or between the lower and the higher body, it can be solved by criticism and self-criticism, so long as all comrades put the interests of the working class first and start from the desire for unity. Criticism and self-criticism is like the oil that keeps a machine working smoothly and at maximum power. Whenever the wheel jams a bit, we add some oil and the difficulty is overcome.

The working class has got in democratic centralism a machine of great power which is also capable of adapting itself to carry out many different types of work.

With democratic centralism and criticism and self-criticism, the working class can create *"a political situation in which there is both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and personal ease of mind and liveliness."* (Article 5 of the Constitution of the C.P.C.)

#### WHERE WE MUST PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO IMPLEMENTING DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

Much progress has already been made in grasping the principle of democratic centralism in the CFB(ML). The organisation must concentrate on grasping it firmly. The main thing is to concentrate on really consolidating comrades' grasp of the ideological principles by thoroughly studying the points in this document and the passages in the Quotations which have been pointed out. The secondary task to which attention must be paid in

accordance with priorities, is to hunt out the remaining areas of our work in which democratic centralism is not being fully implemented. Therefore the leadership at every level must conscientiously check the actual practice of the committee, branch etc., against the principles of democratic centralism, and arrange that all errors which violate democratic centralism are eliminated. The principle is to shine a powerful light into every corner within the organisation in which the bourgeois ideas may try to hide.

Certain questions need particular attention.

1. Although committees must uphold collective leadership, at the same time the secretary must be a "squad leader" in the sense Mao explains in the 'Quotations' p.106-107. To deny this is to fall into ultra-democracy.

2. In every committee the minority must be subordinate to the majority. Every committee must have a united face in giving leadership at a lower level. The only exception is where a committee decides it is in the interests of the working class to open the question for struggle at the lower level.

3. The National Committee must be, after the National Conference, the highest leading body of the organisation. The work of the NC must become equivalent to that of the Central Committee. That is how we must apply the principle that the entire membership is subordinate to the Central Committee.

4. The Executive committee is the leading core of the National Committee. It is a standing committee of the National Committee, composed of the leading comrades of the NC, and is responsible to the National Committee. When the NC is not in session the EC exercises the powers and functions of the NC. When the NC is in session, there is democracy under the centralised guidance of the NC.

5. Individual NC members are subordinate to the majority decisions of the NC. When NC members have been in a minority on the NC, they must not use their local branches as mountain strongholds from which they are to defy the NC. This would be individualism. If they are in a minority they must continue the struggle on the NC for what they believe to be in the interests of the working class when correct opportunities arise. Meanwhile they must uphold the united face of the NC in their different branches and argue for the NC decision.

This is not a bureaucratic rule to be applied mechanically. It is the essence and spirit of the rule that must be applied:- comrades must serve the working class and combat individualism. Upholding the decisions of the NC does not mean claiming that the NC can never make an error or a mistake. When rank and file comrades in the branches correctly point out weaknesses or shortcomings in an NC decision it may be right at times to say that these points should be referred back to the NC for further consideration.

6. Special committees such as committees on publications are subordinate to the EC and must report to the EC. The EC in turn has the responsibility to ensure that a report on their work is made to the NC.

7. Branch committees are subordinate to the Executive Committee. They should study EC leads with the prime aim of understanding them in order to implement them. When they do not understand the lead or think that there is an error, they should refer the question back to the EC. The EC must aim to win conviction for its leads but in the event of a dispute the branch committee must carry out the EC decision and the question should be reported to the NC.

8. All comrades must understand that the branch is on a lower level to the branch committee and is subordinate to the branch committee. This must be grasped clearly and comrades must combat liberalism in this question. At the same time the branch committee must urge the branch to help them develop as a leading core by pointing out weaknesses in the committee's leadership when these appear.

9. As a general rule branch committees do not report to their branches. However they should present a report to the branch general meetings, held to review the work of the branch and this should include an assessment of their leadership. Branch committees should not circulate their minutes to branch members as they are not subordinate to their branches.

## DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM IN PARTY COMMITTEES

by Chiang Hsueh-yuan

(Reprinted from 'Peking Review' No.47, 1973)

The new Party Constitution adopted by the Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly stipulates that "*the organizational principle of the Party is democratic centralism.*" Carrying out democratic centralism seriously in the spirit of the Tenth Party Congress is a matter all Party committees should pay constant attention to in building up the Party. This is of great importance in strengthening the Party's centralized leadership and implementing Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line still better.

That the organizational principle of democratic centralism must be followed is determined by our Party's correct political line and is necessary for carrying it out. The political line formulated for our Party by our great leader Chairman Mao scientifically elucidates the objective law governing social development and represents the will and fundamental interests of the proletariat and the broad masses of the people. To implement Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line, it is necessary to bring out the initiative of the whole Party and lead the masses to make concerted efforts. Ours is a big Party which has a membership of 28 million and which is giving leadership to the hundreds of millions of people of all nationalities in our country in carrying out the great task of socialist revolution and socialist construction. A large country like ours coupled with a big Party membership, however, entails a greater number of problems. Only by practicing democratic centralism, letting everyone speak out and express his views and bringing into full play their wisdom and initiative and at the same time effecting a correct centralization on the basis of democracy and laying down strict discipline to achieve unity in thinking and action can we implement Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line well and seize one new victory after another.

Historical experience tells us that to uphold or oppose democratic centralism is an important question in the inner-Party struggle between the two lines. As seen from the ten major two-line struggles in the history of our Party, all the chieftains of the opportunist lines - from Chen Tu-hsiu, Wang Ming, Peng Teh-huai, Kao Kang and Liu Shao-chi to Lin Piao - frantically undermined the Party's democratic centralism. Their pursuance of opportunist lines in total betrayal of Marxism-Leninism and the fundamental interests of the proletariat and the revolutionary people could not stand the light of day. In the presence of proletarian democracy, they could not conceal themselves and their counter-revolutionary features were clearly exposed. With centralization on the basis of democracy as well as unified discipline for the whole Party, they could not possibly succeed in splitting the Party and all their conspiracies and intrigues met with complete bankruptcy. The criminal aim of the Lin Piao anti-Party clique in doing everything possible to undermine the Party's democratic centralism was to usurp the supreme power of the Party and the state, change the Party's line and policies, subvert the dictatorship of the proletariat and restore capitalism. From the struggle to smash this clique we have arrived at a deeper understanding that democratic centralism is closely linked with the Party's political line. By conscientiously carrying out democratic centralism, Party committees at all levels will be able to carry through the basic principle "*Practice Marxism, and not revisionism; unite, and don't split; be open and aboveboard, and don't intrigue and conspire*" put forward by Chairman Mao.

## GIVE FULL PLAY TO DEMOCRACY

Chairman Mao has pointed out: *"In the present great struggle, the Chinese Communist Party demands that all its leading bodies and all its members and cadres should give the fullest expression to their initiative, which alone can ensure victory. This initiative must be demonstrated concretely in the ability of the leading bodies, the cadres and the Party rank and file to work creatively, in their readiness to assume responsibility, in the exuberant vigour they show in their work, in their courage and ability to raise questions, voice opinions and criticize defects, and in the comradely supervision that is maintained over the leading bodies and the leading cadres. Otherwise, 'initiative' will be an empty thing. But the exercise of such initiative depends on the spread of democracy in Party life. It cannot be brought into play if there is not enough democracy in Party life."* (The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War.) This teaching of Chairman Mao's profoundly indicates that democracy in Party life is an important condition for bringing the initiative of the whole Party into play. Our Party members and cadres are imbued with extremely great enthusiasm and initiative in implementing Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line. By developing democracy to the full in Party committees which constantly discuss how the Party's line is being carried out, favourable conditions will be created for each of their members to have a chance to voice opinions. This will enable all the members to increase their sense of responsibility, be concerned with the Party's line, give full play to their own initiative and creativeness and set an example by deeds.

When Party committees develop democracy fully and let all express their views fully on problems under discussion, when they "let all people have their say" and do not "let one person alone have the say," they will be able to avoid or reduce one-sidedness, do their work better, handle problems and take decisions more correctly and thus prevent or reduce mistakes in matters of line. This is because *"people always examine and handle problems and express their views in the light of their own experience, and unavoidably they sometimes show a little one-sidedness."* (Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work.) As class struggle and the two-line struggle in the socialist period are sharp and complex, it is difficult for Party committees, no matter what the level, to demand that each of their members be free from any one-sidedness in studying and handling problems. Chairman Mao has said: *"To fulfil its task of exercising leadership, a Party committee must rely on its 'squad members' and enable them to play their parts to the full."* (Methods of Work of Party Committees.) By "letting all people have their say," relying on the "squad members" (meaning all members) of a Party committee and enabling them to fully air their views when discussing problems and then making a comparison and analysis - this will help the Party committee enhance its cognitive ability, correctly size up the situation of class struggle, clearly see the orientation and distinguish right from wrong, so as to better implement Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and improve their art of leadership.

When problems are discussed, the Party committees should not be afraid of the many opinions expressed, for this is not a bad but a good phenomenon. Indeed, it is bad if everyone keeps silent. *"The law of contradiction in things, that is, the law of the unity of opposites, is the basic law of materialist dialectics."* (On Contradiction.) All things exist in contrast with one another and they develop through struggle. When everyone is allowed to speak out, what is said is bound to be correct, incorrect or utterly wrong. However, after serious and full, instead of perfunctory and hasty discussion, what is correct can be promoted, what is one-sided and imperfect supplemented and perfected and what is wrong corrected. The process of

discussion with everyone voicing opinions is one of achieving unity in thinking among the "squad members" of a Party committee and also one of effecting correct centralization on the basis of democracy. Unanimity among "squad members" is realized in the course of unifying the different opinions of all the members. There will be no real unanimity in thinking without such a process. All comrades on a Party committee must be good at using the Marxist viewpoint to analyse different views and must listen to all words, nice or nasty, right or wrong. When something wrong is said, it helps us to make comparisons and differentiate right from wrong, and call our attention to guarding against certain tendencies and strengthening ideological work. This is all to the good.

Chairman Mao has pointed out: *"Only in an atmosphere of democracy can large numbers of able people be brought forward."* (The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War.) Applying democratic centralism in earnest in Party committees is also of great significance in raising their members' consciousness of the two-line struggle and bringing up successors to the proletarian revolutionary cause. Now that all Party committees are made up of the old, the middle-aged and the young, this is an important manifestation that our Party's cause is prospering. Among the "squad members" of a Party committee, the three categories of cadres have their own strong points. Constant study and discussion of major issues related to class struggle and the two-line struggle in an atmosphere of inner-Party democracy is helpful to all members using their heads and giving full play to their strong points and enables them to learn from one another's strong points and overcome their own shortcomings and advance together in the course of studying and discussing problems. With democracy in Party life, the new cadres who have come to the fore in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the movement to criticize Lin Biao and rectify the style of work can better display their vigorous revolutionary spirit of daring to think and speak out and constantly increase their ability, while the veteran cadres who have been tempered through long years of revolutionary struggle and have rich experience in class struggle and the two-line struggle can play their role to the full, passing on their experience to the new cadres and helping them mature quickly while learning from their strong points. Since in this way each Party committee member is being constantly tempered and making progress in inner-Party democratic life, there is a better guarantee for the implementation of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line.

#### STRENGTHEN PARTY CENTRALIZATION

Chairman Mao has taught us: *"The Communist Party not only needs democracy but needs centralization even more."* (Rectify the Party's Style of Work.) Fundamentally speaking, to develop democracy, extend democracy in the Party and "let all people have their say" are aimed at achieving still better centralization, that is, unifying the "squad members" thinking and action under Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and enabling them to work in unison in leading the revolutionary masses to strive to fulfil the tasks set by the Party. Putting democracy into practice without centralization and unity is aimless. In practising democratic centralism, therefore, it is essential to strengthen Party centralization on the basis of democracy. A Party committee's "squad members" must observe the unified discipline for the whole Party, namely, *"the individual is subordinate to the organization, the minority is subordinate to the majority, the lower level is subordinate to the higher level, and the entire Party is subordinate to the Central Committee."* They must consciously safeguard the decisions made by the collective which conform to Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line. When discussing problems, all Party committee members should voice their opinions. And all members should carry out the decisions made after collective discussion and, in the course of implementation, they should give play

to their initiative and creativeness and assume responsibility of their own accord. All of them, secretaries and members alike, must not take it upon themselves to revise the decisions made by Party committees and go their own way according to their own will. Our Party is one that has discipline. If everyone only wants others to listen to his views and does not carry out the decisions made by the collective, if one only wants the initiative of the individual and renounces unified action, if one only puts stress on the work charged to him and does not take into consideration the overall work, he is liable to sink into mountain-stronghold mentality and sectarianism and will undermine the centralization and unity of the Party. If this is the case, how can Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line be carried through? *"Discipline is the guarantee for the implementation of the line," "whoever violates these articles of discipline disrupts Party unity."* We must keep these teachings of Chairman Mao's firmly in mind and constantly heighten our sense of the Party's discipline.

So long as Party committees carry out democratic centralism, strengthen collective leadership and persevere in the mass line, they will be able, under the leadership of the Party Central Committee headed by Chairman Mao, to bring into full play their leading role as vanguards of the proletariat and carry out the Party's centralized leadership even better. As far as the relationship between Party committees and other organizations at the same level is concerned, only by practising democratic centralism and achieving *unity in thinking, policy, plan, command and action* on the basis of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line can the Party committees shoulder the responsibility of giving leadership to all other sectors and correctly exercise their power of leadership. As regards subordination to the leadership of the Central Committee and Party committees at higher levels, it is also by practising democratic centralism that there will be effective guarantees for the thorough implementation of the line, principles and policies laid down by the Central Committee and the directives and decisions of the Party committees at higher levels. Nothing will come of the Party's centralized leadership if Party committees do not carry out democratic centralism, that is to say, if they let only one, two or a few people have the final say with the result that the "squad members" do not think alike and march in step but go their own way.

Chairman Mao has said: *"A secretary or deputy secretary will find it difficult to direct his 'squad' well if he does not take care to do propaganda and organizational work among his own 'squad members,' is not good at handling his relations with committee members or does not study how to run meetings successfully."* (Methods of Work of Party Committees.) To carry out democratic centralism well, it is necessary for "squad leaders" to do much patient and painstaking work. They must be good at looking into matters related to the "squad members" and pay attention to bringing into play each member's strong points, while they themselves work in a democratic way. Only when "squad leaders" have a democratic style of work and give full play to each member's initiative can they unite people "from all corners of the country" and "let all people have their say," and the whole squad is united in implementing Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and *"leading tens of millions of people in fighting and construction."*

#### REMOULD WORLD OUTLOOK

The Tenth Party Congress called on us to criticize revisionism and the bourgeois world outlook. This is of great importance for practising democratic centralism well. Whether a Party committee practises democratic centralism well or not is always closely linked with the world outlook of the "squad members". Only when a Party member has established the proletarian world outlook and always gives first place to the interests of the



Party and the revolution can be, in an atmosphere of democracy in Party life, dare to express his views on cardinal issues of right and wrong concerning the line and, proceeding from the Party's interests, voice criticism and make suggestions about shortcomings and problems in work, taking a clear-cut stand and not mincing words. Only thus can he correctly handle the relationship between the individual and the organization, between the minority and the majority and between the lower and higher levels, and consciously safeguard the unity of the Party committee and carry out its decisions. On the other hand, the bourgeois world outlook is incompatible with democratic centralism. Those with such a world outlook cannot take a correct attitude towards democracy in Party life, nor can they observe the Party's discipline. More often than not they speak and deal with problems out of self-interest and in the light of personal loss and gain, and place themselves in an improper position, asking others to respect them while showing no respect for others. They are afraid of assuming responsibility and being at variance with others. Faint-hearted in upholding what is right and correcting what is wrong, they take the attitude of "being worldly wise and playing safe" and "saying as little as possible." With all these drawbacks, the Party's democratic centralism is out of the question. While putting democratic centralism into practice, all Party committees should make it a process of remoulding the world outlook of their "squad members." They must see to it that each and every person reads and studies conscientiously in the light of what is on their minds and consciously uses the stand, viewpoint and method of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to look at and handle problems.

## COMBAT WOMEN'S OPPRESSION! MOBILISE WOMEN FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION!

Women are grievously exploited and oppressed by capitalism. The fullest possible mobilisation of working class women is essential for the success of the socialist revolution, which alone can clear the path for their emancipation. The revolutionary Communist Party will win the leadership of the struggles of working women as part of its struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. Communists will struggle for the militant revolutionary unity of the whole proletariat, and will develop women comrades to fight side by side with men.

### ORIGINS OF WOMEN'S OPPRESSION.

1. The division of society into exploiting and exploited classes and the oppression of women are rooted in the same social development - the private ownership of the means of social production. *"The first class opposition that appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression coincides with that of the female sex by the male"*. (Engels. 'On the Woman Question'. p21).
2. In primitive communist society a non-oppressive division of labour based on sex existed. Because of their child-bearing function, women collected food in the locality of the settlement, and looked after the children at home, whilst the men went hunting. Because production was at subsistence level with no surplus, everyone had to work, and no possibility of exploitation existed, and no division into classes was possible.
3. *"The increase of production in all branches - cattle-raising, agriculture, domestic handicrafts - gave human labour power the capacity to produce a larger product than was necessary for its maintenance"*. (Engels. WQ. p9). The possibility of surplus led to the historic struggle for the transfer of the commonly owned herds into the individual private property of clan members. These individuals were always men, because under primitive communism, procuring food was the men's tasks and the implements for achieving this were owned by them. Thus they owned the new means of production - cattle and slaves. Those who were successful formed the basis of a privileged class, which oppressed and exploited the dispossessed of the clan, men and women alike.
4. In the old society, the domestic labour of women had been an equally important part of social production. Women therefore had an honoured place in the clan. In class society, as men took possession of the necessities of life, *"the very cause that had formerly made women supreme in the house, namely being confined to domestic work, now assured the supremacy of the man"*. (Engels). The centre of production moved away from the home with the development of agriculture. Women's labour lost its status and was made a petty and private affair, cut off from the social production of the necessities of life. As slave society developed, the position of women of the household became more like that of slaves. Their political, economic and personal freedoms became more and more restricted during this period.
5. The family has changed throughout history in accord with historical development. The earliest forms of marriages were group marriages. The monogamous family arose in the earliest stages of civilisation in order to produce children of undisputed paternity, so the inheritance through the father could be ensured. This monogamy was female monogamy only. As Engels pointed out - *"Monogamous marriage comes on the scene as the subjugation of the one sex by the other"*. (WQ. p21.).
6. The old family system based on Mother-right (where kinship was traced through the mother) was antagonistic to the political and social degradation

of women and the economic supremacy of men; therefore it had to be overthrown by monogamy. *"The overthrow of Mother-right was the world historical defeat of the female sex. The women were degraded and reduced to servitude; she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of his children"*. (Engels. WQ. p16).

#### CAPITALISM OPPRESSES WOMEN

1. Women are primarily oppressed in the economic base of society. Under capitalism, women's main tasks are still those of domestic slave, isolated from social production, to reproduce and maintain the labouring-power of waged workers in the family. Many women do go out to work and form part of the permanent work force, but they are generally employed in low status, unskilled and badly paid jobs, with little chance to improve that situation through training and experience.

Other women workers are used as a reserve army of labour, which - because they are usually poorly organised - can be used entirely in the employers' interest. In times of economic boom, women are brought into industry in large numbers; when they are no longer needed, they can just as easily be pushed back into the home.

2. Many women workers are super-exploited. In badly organised factories grading systems, job descriptions and 'bonus schemes' can be used to disguise the fact that women are being paid less than men in the same work. This increases the rate at which surplus is appropriated by the employer.

3. Women also suffer many forms of political oppression. Because most women are economically dependent on men, their legal rights to property, unemployment and social security payments, admission to higher education and many occupations, responsibility over children and many other things are less than men. These political and legal inequalities in turn reinforce the economic oppression of women.

4. Women are oppressed ideologically. Bourgeois ideology attempts to justify the oppression of women by propagating the myth that women are inferior to men. These ideas of male superiority are often accepted by men and women alike, and contribute to the many instances of social discrimination against women. Because women are seen as inferior they are treated more as playthings and servants than thinking, sensible beings. Bourgeois ideology reinforces the economic oppression of women by glorifying domestic slavery and thus causing women to accept their position of social inferiority.

5. The family under capitalism is the basic economic unit of society. Women work in the home providing the catering, cleaning and child-care facilities that are necessary for reproducing and maintaining the labour-force for capitalism. It is in the bourgeoisie's interests that these things are provided free in the home; for the bourgeoisie to provide them in adequate quantities would lead to a reduction in their profits. The bourgeois family is oppressive to women because it traps them in a continual round of unproductive, monotonous tasks, and excludes them from taking a full part in social production, and political activity. Women isolated in the home are much less able to resist the continual flow of bourgeois propaganda from the media. This, plus their lack of personal experience of exploitation can make such women politically backward at this stage.

6. Although capitalism has provided the means for many women to take part in social production, it can never emancipate them. The marginal improvements in women's position under capitalism are purely to enable the capitalists to exploit larger numbers of workers. Social facilities, female employment, legal reforms are provided only as far as they are in the bourgeoisie's interests. Under capitalism, working-class women at best have nothing more than a freedom to be exploited.

## SOCIALIST REVOLUTION CLEARS THE PATH FOR WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION

1. Only the socialist revolution can lay the basis for the complete emancipation of women. Under socialism, women will not be oppressed, although they will be unequal. As class contradictions are resolved in the development towards Communism, so the inequalities of women's position will be eradicated. The socialist countries of China and Albania are making great progress in this struggle; they have proved in practice the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist position that the most important aspect of the struggle for women's emancipation is to bring women into production and political life.
2. It is only a socialist, planned economy that can provide full employment for all who are willing to work. This lays the economic basis for equality between men and women. It also develops the social and political consciousness of women.
3. Before the vast majority of women can take part in social labour, it will be essential that much of their private domestic labour be socialised. Whereas in capitalist society, this is done only in so far as it serves the interest of profit; under socialism, facilities will be provided wherever there is social need. Nurseries, dining rooms, laundries, repair shops will all serve to help the proletarian family to make a greater contribution to socialist construction.
4. Only proletarian ideology can overcome the contradictions within the proletariat, and forge militant unity of all workers, by showing how racial, sexual and other such contradictions serve the bourgeoisie. Only the proletarian dictatorship can thoroughly defeat all forces hostile to the interests of the working class and all ideas which seek to undermine and destroy a socialist country by setting one section of the people against another.

## WHO ARE OUR ENEMIES?

1. It is the capitalist system that is the main cause of women's oppression today. The principal contradiction in capitalist society is between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. We must struggle to develop militant women communists and class conscious workers to fight alongside men for the victory of the socialist revolution.
2. We will carry out a bold struggle against all forms of opportunism as part of the task of rallying the vanguard around the Party. Within the working class, social democracy, revisionism and trotskyism are the main enemies. We must firmly oppose the economism of these bourgeois ideologies on the question of women's emancipation.
3. We must oppose and expose the bourgeois feminists who seek to deepen the divisions between working men and women by denouncing all men as the main enemy and by glorifying "womanhood". The strongest such tendency at present is "wages for housework". We are opposed to separatism, the idea that the struggle against women's oppression is the task of women alone. It is reactionary to organise women in separate sections of trade unions, as this fosters separatism. The future Party will organise and lead mass organisations of women, primarily working class women, in the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The Party will have no place for separate women's sections, or for any organisations which seek to usurp its role as leader of the struggle against women's oppression.

## CONTRADICTIONS AMONG THE PEOPLE

1. Bourgeois ideas are dominant in the working class. The ideas of male superiority and female inferiority as part of an unchangeable 'human nature' are particularly strong at this stage in the struggle. We will point out the class basis of these ideas and struggle to unite the working class by working at it from two sides.

The revolutionary Party must be aware of the objective problems women face and help them overcome them so that they can play the fullest possible role as militant communist fighters and leading cadres side by side with men.

2. We will struggle to win conviction among men for the greater sharing of domestic labour, and child care to help the greater and better participation of both men and women in the class struggle. Rightist short-sightedness and 'Left' absolute equalitarianism on this question must both be guarded against.

3. *"Monogamous marriage comes on the scene as the subjugation of the one sex by the other"*. (Engels. WQ. p21). Personal relationships based on subjugation and social inequality will destroy the unity of men and women in the struggle for the proletarian revolution, and give rise to antagonistic contradictions between them in their everyday life together. We will explain clearly that this is not the fault of the family as such, or of men, but of the capitalist system, which oppresses both men and women. We will defend the proletarian family, based on individual monogamous sex-love, and struggle to transform it into a fighting unit of the revolution.

4. Homosexuality is in general a subjectivist and individualist reaction to certain subjective contradictions within class society, and can offer nothing to working class women. It must be expected to decline after the socialist revolution, and to progressively disappear with the advance towards communism. We will distinguish between the majority of homosexuals and the feminist lesbians who put homosexuality forward as a political and personal "solution", thus denying class struggle.

5. The living standards of many working class families, the bourgeois ideology of male superiority and the economic dependence of women in the family are the main cause of domestic violence against women. We support the struggle to protect battered women, and we support the setting up of refuges for this purpose. At the same time we firmly oppose feminist attacks on the family as the main cause of women's oppression.

Again the bourgeois ideology of male superiority and the economic dependence of women are the principal cause of rape. Rape centres to help victims of rape are progressive and we support them. At the same time, we firmly oppose feminist and reformist reliance on punitive laws against rapists.

## POLICIES

1. We will struggle for policies that enable women to take part in social production. It is at work that the working class is exploited, and where it organises collectively to defend itself. Working class women in industry will more easily be persuaded of their class interests and the contribution they must make to the class struggle, than will women isolated at home.

We must rally all workers to the struggle against redundancies and unemployment, whether they affect men or women.

**FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO WORK!**

2. The demand for equal pay and conditions is a just demand, which we support. Lower pay for women also helps the bourgeoisie to undercut men's wages by using women as a cheap pool of labour.

**EQUAL PAY AND CONDITIONS FOR WOMEN!**

3. We support the demand for equal job training and opportunities because the restriction of women to certain jobs is an integral part of their oppression. We oppose the bourgeois attempts to remove protective legislation governing the employment of women; instead we should struggle for this protection to be extended to all workers. Bourgeois ideology on the 'weakness' of women and their 'unsuitability' for certain work must be exposed as thoroughly unscientific. We will struggle for all educational opportunities - in schools and in industry - to be open to women and men and for all jobs to be open

to all regardless of sex or marital status.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND JOB TRAINING FOR WOMEN!**

4. We struggle for the greater socialisation of domestic labour because "*petty housework crushes, stultifies and degrades women*". (Lenin. WQ. p56). At this stage the most important demand is that the state increases the provision for child-care. This will enable many women to enter production and prevent women having to withdraw from work because of domestic responsibilities. We demand that the state compels the employer to provide free creches and nurseries at the place of work, open as long as the agreed working day, and that the state provides free creches and nurseries in every locality, open 24 hours a day.

**FREE CRECHES AND NURSERIES AT THE PLACE OF WORK!**

5. We will struggle to protect the rights of those women and working class families who do have children, and this is an important part of the struggle to enable women to play a fuller part in production and political activity. We struggle for maternity leave on full pay for 8 weeks before, and 12 weeks after childbirth, with no loss of job prospects. This should be available to all women, regardless of marital status.

**FULLY PAID MATERNITY LEAVE!**

6. All women regardless of marital status, should have access to free and widely available contraceptive advice and methods. Because of inadequate child-care and contraception facilities, we support the struggle for abortion to be free and available on demand. At the same time, we will oppose and expose all attempts to bully and force working class women to limit the number of children they have through abortion or sterilisation. The right to control the size of their own families is important to working class men and women.

**FREE CONTRACEPTION AND ABORTION ON DEMAND!**

7. The social role of women as primarily responsible for domestic tasks is manifest in many restrictions on their legal rights. We will struggle against all discrimination on mortgages, tenancies, passports, hire-purchase facilities, income tax, social security and pension rights.

**FIGHT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN!**

8. We are opposed to the oppression of homosexual men and women, and we support their just struggles against their specific oppression.

**FIGHT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST HOMOSEXUALS!**

National Committee of the CFB(M-L)  
August 1976.

## WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION

"Combat Women's Oppression! Mobilise Women for the Socialist Revolution" is the line of the National Committee, CFB(M-L) on the oppression of women under capitalism and the path to their emancipation. It is a strong and militant line, upholding the fundamental truths of Marxism-Leninism on this question, and drawing a clear line of demarcation between Marxism-Leninism, and feminism and reformism.

### Self-criticism

This line is a public refutation of the many erroneous statements made by the CFB(M-L) or by individual members over the years. The dominant attitude in the CFB(M-L) on the question of women's emancipation, until the struggle for this line broke out, was one of bourgeois feminism. The ideological roots of this lay in the main bourgeois ideological errors running through the work of the CFB(M-L) at that time.

Such errors were bound to thrive as long as the CFB(M-L) retained a 'federal' approach to Party building. Revolution 2 firmly declared - "the federal road is an opportunist road".

Liberalism and empiricism in past practice led to the situation in which struggling for a correct line was reduced to merely exchanging experiences; only those with direct experience felt able to contribute. On the question of women, this inevitably meant relying on the women comrades to do all the work. The organisation fell into separatism.

Because of the absence of bold proletarian leadership, the local groups carried on their work independently of central leadership and in isolation from the other local groups. The work of the local groups was dominated by the ultra-democracy of small circles. The cadres engaged in Broad Front work on women were also influenced by the ultra-democracy of the "Women's Movement". In the "Women's Movement" the main emphasis is on the unconditional equality and unity of women as women and rejection of discipline and organisational principles, which are characterised as 'masculine'. This spurious 'equality' and organisational anarchy made it impossible for the cadres to sum up the work clearly, as well as encouraging their own tendencies towards ultra-democracy and spontaneism.

The CFB(M-L) was composed mainly of revolutionary intellectuals, who brought many of the characteristic ways of thinking of the Intelligentsia into the organisation with them. This range of errors has been called intellectualism in the CFB(M-L). One form of this error was the arrogance of the intellectuals which makes them think they are '*the supreme power of the world order*'. (Hoxha. Selected Works. Vol 2. p728). The CFB(M-L) time and again failed to study the policies and writings of the great Marxist-Leninists, tried and tested through the decades of revolutionary struggle; instead it tried to be self-sufficient and do all the work itself. The temptation to fall into this way of thinking on the question of women was particularly strong, since the historic position of the International Communist Movement bore little or no resemblance to the subjectivist view of women's emancipation prevalent then.

Hoxha says of the intellectual: "*His position between the classes makes him think that he is not prompted by any class interest...He thinks he stands above the classes, and represents a morality independent of the economic forces and class antagonisms*". (Selected Works. Vol 2. p728). This was precisely the standpoint from which many comrades analysed women's emancipation. It was, for them, primarily a question of abstract morality, of comradely attitudes, of treating women as equals; it was hardly ever a question of transforming the relations of production, of raising demands that helped women involve in production and political activity. It is true that the necessity of these things was never denied, but the emphasis was placed overwhelmingly on

secondary - and, at times, trivial - aspects of women's oppression.

Instead of examining and learning from objectively existing class struggle and setting the struggle for women's emancipation in that context, the CFB(M-L) adopted various radical 'solutions' and attitudes, which were in reality irrelevant to the struggles of the working class; they, in fact, drew a line of distinction between the CFB(M-L) and the working class. The CFB(M-L) was more concerned with the personal and emotional development of its members than with the double oppression of working class women; objectively, it fell into intellectualist self-cultivation, and denied the class content of women's oppression.

#### THE STRUGGLE FOR WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION IS PART OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASS

There are two basic questions we must be clear on - a) the importance of this question to the proletarian revolution. b) the relationship between the struggle for women's emancipation and the class struggle in general.

Women's emancipation is a vitally important question for the working class, because the militant unity of all sections of the working class, fighting side by side, is essential to the success of the proletarian revolution. Bourgeois propaganda on women is spread far and wide; it seeks to undermine and destroy the unity of men and women, Bourgeois feminist propaganda claims that men are the reason for women being oppressed; it consciously seeks to divide men and women. Feminists attack the family by claiming that it, too, oppresses women; their only solution to women's oppression is to abolish the family. Women are not oppressed by the family in itself but within the family as it exists at present - that is the family under capitalism. Feminism is blind to the other aspect of the working class family under capitalism. For many working class men and women, their family life is the only part of their life to give them comfort, mutual support and affection. Under socialism, when women are no longer oppressed, this aspect of the family will be the dominant one.

The revolutionary struggle in Britain will inevitably contain many twists and turns; the ranks of the proletariat will remain strong through all difficulties as long as the class is united. For the working class, contradictions between men and women, black and white, young and old, etc, are non-antagonistic contradictions among the people. They can be resolved through discussion and education, because there is the strategic unity of class interest.

The proletarian line on women's emancipation will maintain and deepen the unity of men and women, will train large numbers of working women to fight alongside men, will educate men and women to have a correct attitude to problems arising; and will help working women to begin to break the shackles that centuries of oppression has bound them with.

What then, is the relationship of the struggle for women's emancipation to the class struggle? It is the relationship of a part to the whole. Working class women in advanced capitalist countries are "*the most oppressed among the oppressed*". (Stalin. Woman Question. p44). Their common oppression and exploitation which they share with working class men will be ended, only by the revolutionary overthrow of capital. Their particular oppression as women, which is inevitable under capitalism, can have a crippling and demoralising effect. To ignore this, and to fail to give leadership to the particular problems of women, will lead to failure to mobilise their enthusiasm and abilities for the class struggle. Under capitalism, Communists must struggle to make it easier for women to involve in social production. This means demanding better job opportunities, training facilities, adequate nursery and creche facilities, equal pay and so on. Women who work are more directly aware of the bitterness of class oppression and exploitation. They will also see that, although as individuals they are weak, collectively and



in united action they can be strong.

Communists must also understand the effects of the ideological oppression of women; they can learn to give leadership to women in ridding themselves the passive attitudes instilled in them by bourgeois society.

The struggle for women's emancipation is an integral part of the class struggle. The contradiction between the two - between the part and the whole - is the means of propelling both aspects forward. "*Contradictoriness within a thing is the fundamental cause of its development*". (Mao. Quotations. p213).

#### UPHOLD THE TRUTHS OF MARXISM-LENINISM

It is a commonly held opinion in the petty-bourgeois "Women's Movement" that Marxism-Leninism has no analysis of women's oppression and their emancipation. The bourgeois feminist, Selma James, speaks with the voice of the 'Movement' when she says "*The 'left' analysis of class has left us (women) out completely*". This assertion is totally without basis. From the very beginnings of Marxism, the great teachers and leaders have put forward a clear analysis of the position of women in society and have given bold leadership on the struggle for their emancipation. What they have failed to do - and this is what upsets the feminists - is to look at the question of women as an independent phenomenon, free from the influence of social and economic developments and the class struggle. Engels in "Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State" gives a thoroughly historical materialist account of the origins of women's oppression, and the particular forms it has taken in particular stages of the development of society. He shows how women's oppression coincided with the beginnings of class oppression. The feminists claim that the division of labour along sexual lines in primitive society was oppressive in itself. But Engels shows that under primitive communism there was a sexual division of labour which was not oppressive, since there was no ruling elite which was in a position to oppress.

All the great Marxist-Leninists since Engels have defended his correct analysis, and have used it to guide their strategy and tactics in their own particular conditions of struggle. The great socialist countries of China and Albania have proved in practice the correctness of this analysis. In less than 30 years of socialism, the position of women in these countries has been elevated from that of a semi-slave to that of being able to take a great part in political life and socialist construction, alongside men.

Mao says "*Unite, and take part in production and political activity to improve the economic and political status of women*". (Quotations. p296). This gives communists a very clear orientation for the struggle for women's emancipation. Firstly, there must be the unity of the working class. Without that, nothing will be achieved. Secondly, women should take part in production. As well as improving their economic situation, this gives women direct experience of collective work and mutual help; it also gives them direct experience of the worker's exploitation and oppression at work. Thirdly, women should take part in political activity, to change the relations of production, and overthrow the class which is oppressing them. Although the material conditions for these three steps are only fully available to all under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the struggle starts under capitalism. Communists must give leadership to that struggle.

The history of class struggle teaches us to be optimistic about the role women will be mobilised to play. Stalin (Woman Question. p44), sums this up in an excellent manner:-

*"Not a single great movement of the oppressed in the history of mankind has been able to do without the participation of working women. Working women, the most oppressed among the oppressed, never have or could stand aside from the broad path of the liberation movement. This*

movement of slaves has produced, as is well known, hundreds and thousands of martyrs and heroines. Tens of thousands of working women were to be found in the ranks of the fighters for the liberation of the serfs. It is not surprising that millions of working women have been drawn in beneath the banners of the revolutionary movement of the working class, the most powerful of all liberation movements of the oppressed masses".

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

PUBLICATIONS OF THE CFB(M-L) advance the struggle for the principal task of building the Marxist-Leninist party in Britain.

REVOLUTION. The theoretical journal of the National Committee of the CFB(M-L).  
1 year - £1.50 2 years - £3.00 3 years £4.00

CLASS STRUGGLE. Newspaper of the National Committee of the CFB(M-L). The working class itself must come forward, lead the people and overthrow the capitalist class by force. "Class Struggle" is being published to help the working class rally its forces and build a truly revolutionary Communist Party, the vanguard of the working class.

1 year - £1.60

CHINESE AND ALBANIAN BOOKS AND PERIODICALS give a lead in applying Marxism-Leninism to the present struggle against imperialism and social-imperialism, and for the building of socialism through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

PEKING REVIEW is a political weekly on Chinese and World affairs.  
£1.80 per year. £2.70 for 2 years.

CHINA PICTORIAL. Large format monthly with fine pictures and short articles on China's achievements in all fields.

£1.50 per year. £2.25 for 2 years.

CHINA RECONSTRUCTS is an illustrated monthly of general coverage on the building of socialism in China.

£1.20 per year. £1.80 for 2 years.

ALBANIA TODAY is a bi-monthly political review. Detailed analysis of the achievements and problems of construction of socialism in Albania.

£1.50 per year.

also

VIETNAM is a monthly review of the Vietnamese struggle for socialism and against the remnants of US imperialism.

£1.50 per year.

VIETNAM COURIER is a monthly paper of political analysis of events in Vietnam and South East Asia.

£0.80 per year.

---

ORDER FORM (cheques payable to NEW ERA BOOKS)

I wish to subscribe to: (list periodicals and duration of subscription)

I enclose payment of.....

NAME

ADDRESS

Mail Order from NEW ERA

Mail Orders welcomed and promptly attended to: send 10p for further details and catalogue

---

# CLASS STRUGGLE

Today the two superpowers, Soviet Social Imperialism and United States imperialism threaten the peoples of the whole world. The two superpowers speak 'detente' and prepare for war.

British imperialism, wounded and limping, still throws its weight around, tries to oppress and exploit countries like Ireland, the Arab countries, Southern Africa, and Iceland. At home it steps up its attacks on the working class with massive job cuts, pay cuts, and cuts in essential services, in a desperate attempt to resolve the crisis of decaying capitalism.

There is only one answer to these problems. The working class itself must come forward, lead the people in opposition to the superpowers, and overthrow the British imperialist ruling class by force.

The working class must speak out loud and clear. It must speak out in its own voice, the voice of no other class. It must speak out strongly to rally its forces and build a truly revolutionary Communist Party, the vanguard of the working class.

'Class Struggle' is being published to help the working class rally its forces and build that revolutionary Communist Party. It is the organ of the National Committee of the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

'Class Struggle' is primarily a propagandist paper aimed at the class-conscious vanguard. Its main aspect is to present 'many ideas to the few', to win over the advanced workers to Marxism-Leninism.

The central task of building the revolutionary Communist Party guides every aspect of the paper. In the task of rallying the working class vanguard to build the Party, it serves the central mass work task: building Communist bases in the industrial working class.

It shows how the working class and progressive forces fight back against oppression and exploitation. 'Class Struggle' upholds Comrade Mao Tse Tung's profound analysis of the present era:

COUNTRIES WANT INDEPENDENCE!

NATIONS WANT LIBERATION!

PEOPLE WANT REVOLUTION!

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO 'CLASS STRUGGLE' ARE AVAILABLE FROM NEW ERA BOOKS  
£1.60p a year.