

CONFERENCE JUNE 30 - JULY 1

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AGENDA

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THE MINERS' STRIKE

Resolution in paper no.173, moved by outgoing EC.

PERSPECTIVES AND TASKS

'Some immediate tasks', from outgoing NC - IB 86
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Amendments:
1. To section 1E, from Joplin - IB 121, page Tasks/2
2. To section 1F, from Cunliffe - this IB, p.7
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AFGHANISTAN

'For the withdrawal of USSR troops', from Carolan for the EC - IB 116

SOUTH ATLANTIC WAR AND OUR PROGRAMME AGAINST IMPERIALISM

'The adopted resolution' - WSR 2 supplement

'The defeated resolution' - WSR 2 supplement

Amendments to 'the defeated resolution', from Kinnell - this IB, p.4-7

1. On the 'enclaves' theory
2. On military dictatorships in the Third World
3. On 'Fortress Falklands'
4. On the Trotskyist movement and the war

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

'International report', draft from Kinnell - IB 116

Redrafted section on Palestine, from Keith - IB 121
Amendments from Mellor - this IB, p.11

NC ELECTIONS

AGENDA

The following resolution from the DCF was passed at the June 17 NC:

"The Control Commission, elected from the previous WSL conference, has considered and reported to the NC on grievances put to them by former faction members prior to their expulsion. Conference therefore calls on the Control Commission to present a brief report of its findings in the sections of the agenda dealing with matters affecting the NC expulsion decision and the former faction's appeal".

APPEAL

Conference opposes the NC decision to expel the former Faction members and calls for their full reinstatement to WSL membership.

Proposed: DCF.

WSL ORGANISATION

Amendment to 'Organisation Report', IB 116. Page Org/4, para.2, delete "major". Proposed: Jagger.

Addendum to IB 92, section 2(b) of the proposals at the end.

Add to the end: "These Aggregates could take various forms - for example a Summer School, an educational Day School or weekend, a prepared discussion on an international issue of importance (e.g. Central America or Afghanistan) or on a crucial struggle (e.g. the miners' strike). The object is to share knowledge and experiences, to develop understanding and comradeship, to plan more effective interventions. No vote need necessarily be taken, though it could be if the NC and/or the membership so decided in advance".

Proposed: Oliver & Armstrong for the DCF.

Addendum to Organisation Report - page Org/6, IB 116. Add after first para under 'Summary and Tasks':

"It is noticeable that these turns have never been carried out since being decided in the 1977 conference of the I-CL and every conference since. Some discussion needs to be started by the incoming NC as to why this is."

Proposed: Oliver.

Addendum to 'Addition to "Building the WSL"' - page BWSL/1, IB 116. Add after para 3,

"In struggling for truth we must maintain a scrupulous, conscientious and loyal attitude to our opponents - particularly to minorities and individuals within our own organisation. Personal attacks and denigration and deliberate distortion of political positions as exemplified in IBs by Carolan, for example, together with violent and angry outbursts in meetings, as exemplified frequently by Kinnell at the NC, should behave no place in the WSL. Whatever the intention, the effect of this behaviour is to intimidate comrades and induce conformity, or alternatively, of course, antagonism."

Proposed: Oliver.

Addendum to 'Addition to "Building the WSL"' - page BWSL/2, IB 116. Add after "... parting of the ways".

"The failure to abide by commonly-agreed rules and norms of behaviour as laid down for example in the Constitution and in NC standing orders has led to an imbalance of power in favour of the EC over the rest of the membership. This has been a noticeable feature of the group in the past period".

Proposed: Oliver.

MINERS' STRIKE

The EC asked Hill to do updating amendments on this, but because of pressure of work round the strike itself these were not to hand at the deadline date.

PERSPECTIVES AND TASKS

Addition to 'Some Immediate Tasks' (revised version IB 121)
Youth report, by Joplin.

How to organise our J work

As things stand Js are left to do things more or less as they please, with national coordination for conferences and special events. As a result our J work is patchy. Youth have been recruited over the last year, but it hasn't led to C* growing into a real youth movement, nor has C* actually been the tool used in this recruitment. (Though returns have been quite high from sales of C* on demonstrations, for instance, to people from areas where we do not have comrades).

However, we do now have a solid base and a large number of experienced and very capable comrades to start to make a turn to the sort of work we were looking for at last conference when we talked about 'Wiganisation'.

But the experience of the year suggests that the work must be centrally coordinated and monitored more closely.

That we have been able to recruit well from O. Clubs has meant that we have a base in NUS/N**S to build from. Over the next year we should turn to techs. Unemployed youth (and others if possible) should take a tech course. Where we can, either by having a comrade in the college or through the area NUS for instance, we should start to involve ourselves in FE SUs. Where that is not possible, J/YCND/YTS campaigns should start to campaign around an FE.

Tech colleges are now one of the few places where hordes of working class youth congregate. We should go to them.

Within the framework of a turn to techs our campaigning work should be more structured and intensified.

One of the problems with the whole League, and a problem which is especially serious when it comes to organising raw youth, is our lack of 'pazzazz'. We don't sell ourselves very well. Our activity is often not appealing to raw youth. We don't always create a feeling for new members of actually belonging to an organisation.

Our image is rather staid. We do not come across as having much life to us. While it is generally recognised that we're very serious and don't suffer the same delusions as say the SWP about their own immediate organisational significance, we should shift part of our approach to make ourselves a far more 'up-front' organisation.

Carrying out basic 'party-building' work which increases our profile gets us talking to raw youth and is easy for new comrades to get involved in.

Structuring our J work will increase its effectiveness and more systematically draw in new comrades. It will also ensure that the youth paper is used more, taking advantage of its 'saleability'. By all accounts the youth paper is well received and the small number of branches who do street sales have few problems selling it.

The 'youth year' should be organised around specific events. It is artificial to try to map out a full year's campaigning programme, but it is possible to give a general idea of what we're driving at.

September/October is the start of the academic year. It is also when most of the YTS schemes have a new intake.

So all branches should be looking for a stall at 'societies day' and paper sales etc at an FE or HE college. It can be done through S*, C*, a YTS

action group, or whatever.

Comrades should go along to O. Club meetings where they exist.

Where they don't exist we should be looking to set one up, as one way of getting FE youth involved with us.

A tour of college S*/C* meetings where we already have a base, on our politics, should be fixed up.

October-November: The next national event after the start of the academic year will be C* conference - the first big national youth event for us to work around.

For this period, and with the aim of bringing new youth to C* conference, there should be a single-issue campaign which we all concentrate on and is a continuation of the groundwork done in techs the previous month. A youth commission will have to work out what is the most appropriate campaign - one of our own like CAC/YTS, or maybe YCND.

Material should be organised centrally and branches' work closely monitored. Bigger branches should have a youth organiser to help the branch organiser get the work off the ground.

When we're talking about campaigns, it is not as grand/intimidating as it sounds. A campaign does not have to culminate in something flash. It means organising activity around an issue, ^{and} in these cases reaching out to raw youth.

Campaigns should consist of outgoing activity like leafletting, petitioning, public meetings, and perhaps organising stunts as well as working through the movement. The intention is to meet as many new youth as possible and draw them into this kind of 'low-level' activity quickly. In conjunction with such campaigning branches should sell the youth paper on the streets, etc.

The next calendar event after C* conference is J regional conferences. We should be aiming to take all our contacts and J members to it. Even new contacts should be encouraged to attend if we have a high enough profile at the conference.

The rest of the year's programme is either obvious - J conference, J summer camp, etc - or impossible to work out so far in advance. But the idea is clear. A constant, monitored series of campaigns with ends and aims to them. Which campaigns should be taken up will be - ideally - sorted out at youth commission meetings, and there will have to be some room for regional flexibility.

Obviously routine work like YTS monitoring will still need to go on - but here we're talking about a way of organising J work and building C* and Js in an active, outgoing, and campaigning fashion.

Our national orientation to the J should remain as it is. Revo are right to go after the dozen or so active, independent Js, but to decide they constitute a 'Bennite current' and go back to the drawing board to plan a whole youth orientation around them shows their disorientation. Should a junior B get off the ground we will have to participate, but for us the focus is working in the local Js, building them, linking up with the independents where we can and taking on M politically.

When we've got 3000 or so supporters, we can start to worry about the mechanics of actually taking over the J. That said, we should continue to treat South London as our target area, even though the Southern region is more open.

Revo 's regional bulletins are presumably to be the springboard for their national activists' paper. But in themselves J bulletins are a good idea - we have produced them on and off for donkey's years. Where a J is developing a base among local youth, or we're looking to draw in neighbouring Js, we should start one. (Simply producing a bulletin can be a recruiting

exercise in itself).

Although these bulletins will develop their own style, most likely they will be political fanzines which concentrate on youth issues, and local ones at that - not, as Revo seem to see them, J internal newssheets.

Pazzazz. As well as becoming more up-front with our campaigns, either as Js or as ourselves, we should try out a series of schools for new comrades.

Every three months or so (hopefully in the new centre), about half a dozen new comrades should come down for 5 days and learn some practical skills, elementary layout, poster-making, chairing meetings and so on - as well as taking part in classes which will have to be geared to the needs of the new recruits. The aim is to educate and involve new comrades early on, show them how the League operates, and hopefully instill in them a sense of commitment and enthusiasm.

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Amendment to McInnis resolution (IB 116).

Delete: "beginning with the framework outlined in 'A Question of Strategy'".

Proposed: Kinnell.

SOUTH ATLANTIC WAR ETC.

Additions to defeated resolution from September 1982 conference.
Proposed: Kinnell.

Add a new section after section 8 (2nd column, 2nd page)

We reject the notion (point 5 of the September 1982 resolution) that imperialism rests on "a system of enclaves... in strategic places round the globe".

Mercantile-capitalist 'imperialism', in the 16th-18th centuries, did indeed in many places rest on a system of enclaves. Modern capitalist imperialism in China in the early part of the 20th century also utilised such a system.

But today imperialism operates overwhelmingly through economic mechanisms (backed up, of course, sometimes, by military intervention). Residual mini-colonies like the Falklands - and various other tiny British, French and Spanish colonies - have no strategic role for imperialism. They are essentially anachronistic loose ends of the period of European settler expansion over the globe.

Add a new section after section 11 (3rd column, 2nd page)

We reject the notion (implicit in point 7 of the September 1982 resolution and explicit elsewhere) that military dictatorships in the Third World are simply the creatures of imperialism: they are strengthened when imperialism is strengthened, weakened when imperialism is weakened.

Military dictatorships are as common in Third World countries which are relatively alienated from the big capitalist powers - Libya, Algeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Syria, etc - as in those closely linked to the big capitalist powers (Chile, El Salvador, Nigeria, etc.)

The political regime is fundamentally a product of internal class relations. Frequently, of course, imperialist powers to intervene to prop up or install dictatorships when that suits their purpose. But dictatorial regimes in the Third World are quite capable of pursuing policies hostile to the big capitalist powers without thereby becoming progressive or unleashing a progressive 'process'. Iran is a clear example.

Add another new section after section 8.

We condemn the Fortress Falklands policy and call for British military withdrawal. But we deny that the present British military base there retrospectively justifies Galtieri's war. It is conceivable that the British forces on the Falklands could be used against revolution in South America. It is much more certain that the Argentine army will be used against any revolutionary movements of the Argentine working class; that at the time of the war it was helping to prop up the military regime in Bolivia; and that its forces have been used against revolutionaries in Central America.

Add a new section at the end.

The great majority of would-be Trotskyist world-wide took an Argentine nationalist position on the conflict.

The Morenists - the biggest would-be Trotskyist organisation in Argentina itself - called for national unity in the war, and demanded that the trade unions set up recruiting offices for Galtieri's army. Politica Obrera - the second would-be Trotskyist organisation in Argentina - was more restrained, but also supported the mini-colonial war and called for an 'anti-imperialist united front' (supposed to include workers and the middle class, but not the big bourgeoisie).

The SWP-USA applauded the speech of Argentine foreign minister Costa Mendes to the Non-Aligned Conference, and reprinted it.

The Mandel and Lambertist currents were more circumspect (the French and West German Mandelite organisations, indeed, initially took an internationalist position), but still sided with Galtieri's war. The whole USFI press, both SWP-USA and Mandelite, carried an article on Argentina's relation with imperialism which reproduced the crudest notions of middle-class nationalist 'Third Worldism'.*

A similar position to that we took during the war was taken - for varying reasons - only by some groups set apart from the Trotskyist mainstream: Lutte Ouvriere, the SWP (Britain), and the RWP Sri Lanka; and by the non-Trotskyist, but important, Workers' Party of Brazil.

This experience sheds further light on the politically degenerate condition of would-be Trotskyism, and the need for ideological regeneration.

The roots of the problem go back to the political crisis which shook the Trotskyist movement in the late 1940s.

In that period the Trotskyist movement declined drastically. (The French section, for example, which was central, suffered an almost complete halt in activity in summer 1948, and by 1952 was only 150 strong, probably less than one-tenth of its peak numbers). At the same time gigantic revolutionary events unrolled on a world scale.

Striving to understand this, the leaders of the movement essentially

* Notes on this amendment (Kinnell). The Morenist position is documented in IB 118. For Politica Obrera see IB 15, and also IB 77. For the SWP-USA on the Non-Aligned conference, see paper no. 91. For the USFI article on Argentina and imperialism (Will Reassner, 'Argentina - a semi-colonial economy', Intercontinental Press May 3 1982), see Ellis's article in IB 11.

lost faith in the centrality of Trotskyism and the working class to revolutionary politics. In the aftermath of Tito's surprise 'break' with Stalin and populist measures designed to rally mass support against any Kremlin moves to oppose him, and in the midst of the drive to power by Mao's Stalinist forces in China, Pablo and the FI leaders increasingly looked to some 'objective process' which would repeat such political developments and take them further.

The outbreak of the Korean war and the conviction that World War 3 was imminent lent fuel to this fire, and the schema of the 'war-revolution' which would automatically line up the forces of Stalinism in the 'camp' of the revolution made its appearance.

The independent role of the working class and Trotskyists was submerged in a conception of global 'class camps' in which the Stalinist bureaucracy, petty bourgeois leaders and sections of reformism were included in the 'proletarian' class camp, in which the Trotskyists merely became respectful advisers and camp-followers.

Some Trotskyists took on the role of blustering denouncers of the 'bad leaders' of the 'Revolution' instead of advisers. But their view of the camps and the issues remained the same.

The two sides of tailist 'objectivism' and sectarian arbitrariness into which Trotskyism was thus decomposed were present, in various combinations, in all the currents after 1948-50.

For all the 'mainstream' currents, world politics is fundamentally not so much a story of class struggle as a story of the struggle of two forces - Imperialism and 'Revolution' - deemed to operate behind and beneath class movements. While Marxists seek to analyse events as interactions of class forces, they analyse them fundamentally as interactions of Imperialism and 'Revolution'. Imperialism, for them, is not a system, but a homogeneous force; 'Revolution' is not an event, but a continuous process.

They are, of course, concerned for working-class action. They see such action as a desirable feature of the Revolution, even an essential feature for the process to be fully healthy. But for them the (same) revolutionary process goes on, working class action or no working class action. The difference between revolutions is not a class difference, but a difference between more or less healthy and developed manifestations of the same process.

This framework is common to them all: it was common, for example, to those who applauded the Vietnamese CP as good leaders of the Revolution and those who denounced the Vietnamese CP as trying to sell out to US imperialism. Because of their common view of the camps and the issues, none of them could conceive that the VCP was making a revolution, but not our revolution.

There is here a mistaken view of the Stalinist states and the Stalinist-led revolutions, and of the relation of the Stalinist camp to imperialism and to the workers' revolution. The notion that embraced Galtieri as in our 'class camp' was an extrapolation from a campist attitude to the Stalinist bloc - an attitude completely alien to Trotskyism, and which appears within would-be Trotskyism as a direct reflection of the pressure of Stalinism on the weak and mainly petty-bourgeois would-be Trotskyist movement.

Central to the problems of post-war Trotskyism is the refusal to register in any stable way the fact - attested to by repeated experience in China, Vietnam, etc. - that Stalinist forces can be both revolutionary against capitalism and simultaneously counter-revolutionary against the working class. Stalinism is always counter-revolutionary against the working class, including in the process in which capitalism is overthrown to be replaced not by workers' power but by bureaucratic dictatorship on the basis of collectivised property and the repression of the working class.

The campists operate with a concept of revolution in which such key

facts as the bureaucratic counter-revolution within every Stalinist-led anti-capitalist revolution is ignored, treated as a mere detail, or denied. The 'Revolution' they embrace is nameless and classless, defined negatively by what it is against more than positively by what it is.

This framework led most of the would-be Trotskyists to see the South Atlantic war as a conflict - however refracted and distorted - between Imperialism and 'Revolution'. Since Galtieri was fighting British imperialism, and since Imperialism was seen as one homogeneous force, therefore Galtieri's war was against Imperialism, and must be a distorted, underdeveloped form of Revolution - even if Galtieri was a bad, sell-out leader of the Revolution.

Thus the concrete class forces were obscured, and most of the would-be Trotskyists tied themselves to a crude 'Third Worldist' view of imperialism and anti-imperialism. This view increasingly obscures reality given the increasing differentiation in the Third World, with the emergence there of major industrial powers, capital-exporters, and regional big powers (since the 1960s), and the increasing frictions between the big imperialist powers (since the 1970s).

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TASKS AND PERSPECTIVES

Amendments to NC resolution on Immediate Tasks, by Cunliffe.*

Section 1 (industrial) Clause F (Cuts). Delete all and insert:

Health cuts are another area in which League comrades should become actively involved. Important in themselves, anti-cuts campaigns and struggles offer an important opportunity to unite trade union and O work, and to link up different sectors of trade unionists in common struggle. The marginal role of other left groups - even of the CP - means that we can play a significant role despite our limited numbers. The central involvement of women workers - who comprise the vast majority of the NHS workforce, are the hardest-hit as patients, and who shoulder the burden of the cuts by caring for sick and elderly relatives in the home - is another important element that should draw our comrades into this fight.

We must recognise that in many areas the cutbacks are taking the form of 'creeping cuts' in services, standards and staffing levels over and above the more blatant wholesale closures of hospitals - which are themselves often preceded and prepared by 'creeping cuts'. While we argue for policies of occupation and supporting strike action to halt closures, we must also ensure that shop-floor organisation of hospital workers is prepared and alerted to take the firm action needed to beat back 'creeping cuts'.

At the centre of the Tories' attack on the NHS is the drive for privatisation, beginning with cleaning, laundry and catering services. Though only 40 cleaning contracts are so far in operation in the NHS, Tory directives have instructed the District Health Authorities to embark on a timetable of privatisation which the business press expects will open up a £100m market within a year, and a possible total of £400 m to low-wage contracting firms exploiting part-time largely female labour.

The resistance to wage cuts shown by the 4-month strike at Barking Hospital, and the scale of support it has generated in spite of the blocking tactics of the NUPE bureaucracy (the June 13 Day of Action was backed by 40% of NUPE's membership in London's NHS - as many as came out at one time during the 1982 pay fight) can be repeated elsewhere, provided the reluctance or

* These amendments, of course, are based on the IB 86 text. All except the one on Section 3 Clause C seem to apply equally to the amended/revised text in IB 121. That latter amendment appears to be more or less identical in sense to the one written in to the IB 121 text.

outright class collaboration of the health union bureaucracies can be overcome. To fight privatisation it is essential that the shop-floor movement of health workers is alerted to the danger of any involvement in the tendering process and is prepared to undertake all-out indefinite strike action before wages are cut, before redundancies take place, and before contractors start work in the hospitals. Well-established local campaigns can play a valuable role in such preparations: without the local campaign in Barking, the strike would have collapsed in the first week.

The League has a significant opportunity to intervene in these struggles through the medium of the London Health Emergency Campaign, whose bulletin can be used to generate discussion of policies, and which is open to affiliations from O and union bodies.

Section 3. Trade Unions. Clause B, line 1

Amend to read: "While recognising that such work must in no way become a propaganda substitute for our comrades' active involvement in the day-to-day struggle on shop floor issues and for our politics in the workplace, we should also participate in and seek to build trade union Broad Lefts. Within them we should argue for..." etc.

Clause C, para 2, line 2 (on Militant)

Delete remainder of sentence after "dominant left force in the unions", and insert: " - though still in no way equalling the bureaucratic links and the influence over the rank and file exerted by the crisis-ridden Communist Party".

Section 4. Women. Clause A.

Delete all and insert:

The impact of local government and health cuts on women's jobs and wages and upon women as carers in the home, as well as the need to involve unemployed women from the communities and council estates in anti-cuts struggles, underlines the need for specific campaigning material which will confront the political and practical problems in mobilising against the cuts. A conference along these lines, drawing on our supporters and contacts in both the NHS and local government, should be organised in the autumn, when the NHS struggle against privatisation will begin to break more widely to the surface.

Section 5. Labour Party. Clause E.

Amend introductory para to read:

Our broad groups have generally speaking ceased to be broad groups, despite conference decisions to the contrary. Many have in practice reduced themselves to League members in non-League hats with a few long-standing contacts who are resistant to joining the League. This is a bad thing in itself, since it indicates a diminution of our periphery, a problem in our implementation of broad work, and of course offers a decreasing opportunity for recruitment. It is significant that such a large proportion of recruits have come not from S* work but from the youth. We are plainly not attracting fresh forces around the paper or functioning the broad groups as we decided to do at our 1983 conference.

This conference recognises however that the 'preconference discussion' this year has not seriously address^{ed either} the O. work - which appears to be in a state of confusion - or the work of the broad groups. To make an assessment of these - let alone to make sweeping changes in our adopted policy and tactics in relation to the broad groups - would require adequate prior discussion involving the whole membership. Any major change in the work which has been so central a tactic since prior to the 1981 fusion must be decided by a vote at a League conference. Only in this way can we be sure that our tactics will be fully explained and clarified to the membership and carried out in a united fashion.

RESOLUTIONS SHEET FROM
NATIONAL COMMITTEE JUNE 17 1984

11am to 5pm, in London (precise place will be notified by 'phone).

Agenda is: current situation; conference documents.

Enclosed please find conference documents submitted so far. The following have also been received for the NC;

1. Resolution from Brent branch

This branch considers the conference agenda decided at the May 5 NC to be unreasonable in its present form. This branch proposes that the appeals regarding the recent expulsions should be taken at the end of day 1, following on from the discussions on IB 92 and 'Building the WSL' and the organisational report. Failure to do this makes a nonsense of the crucial relevance of the latter items to the appeal hearing.

2. Resolution from East London branch

The East London branch is concerned that the NC will adopt the multi-vote/first-past-the-post system for the forthcoming NC elections. This could lead to a NC majority recommended slate being carried with only 51% of conference's votes, restricting minority representation to members of tendencies or factions only. This will leave comrades who wish to elect to the NC comrades who are not on the majority slate no choice but to form further tendencies or factions or join existing ones in order to guarantee their minority rights. Therefore the branch calls on the NC to continue the use of the Single Transferable Vote for the election of the NC.

3. Letter from the York/Harrogate branch

The comrades propose "a time set aside if possible at the conference for brief reports from the areas about what is being done by League members, problems encountered by groups on work, finance etc... If there is no time at conference session perhaps an evening meeting..."

On this, the EC wishes to propose a conference session on the Sunday morning on the miners' strike and work round it.

4. Resolution from Brent branch

This NC censures ed Hill in his role as O. organiser for failing to ensure that model resolutions for O. conference were circulated, particularly on the miners' strike.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE DECISIONS ON REPORT OF CONTROL COMMISSION
rep. ted from IB 87.

The NC notes the CC's report. We note that while the CC disagrees with the NC's political judgment on some issues, and while the CC has not heard the NC's case, it does not find the NC was acting unconstitutionally and present new facts to the NC.

On the recommendations:

a) We will schedule the general question of the scope of the CC for later discussion.

b) The NC reaffirms its existing policy on the paper, as defined by the last Conference and the NC since, which includes a generally liberal attitude to the appearance of minority views in the paper;

c) Lapsings are carried out as stipulated by the CC - see below. The NC cannot accept the CC's recommendation on fines. Here warning and a chance to appeal are sufficient. Or else the use of fines as a small disciplinary measure is impossible. The Constitution recognises this explicitly in the case of fines for absence.

d) The issue of the NC's instruction to Cunliffe to work on the paper was not one of the charges put to the CC. The CC has not heard the NC's political case, and from its report does not seem to be aware of it.

In addition the following recommendations from the CC were carried:

That the NC reaffirm the policy of open access to the paper.

The CC will investigate whether the process of debt collection has been administered impartially. Lapsings should be carried out under procedures allowing anyone penalised to have a hearing at the meeting at which the penalty is decided.

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A NOTE ABOUT THE CONTROL COMMISSION REPORT - Kinnell

The CC report has been circulated to many members by the expelled faction. Some extra copies have been duplicated and are available on request to anyone who has not got the report.

Since the expelled faction has alleged that this report has been 'suppressed' bureaucratically, a few words are in order.

The CC constitutionally reports to the NC; normally its report would not go further. Smith asked that this particular CC report be circulated to the whole membership; the NC, on Carolan's proposal, agreed.

A number of copies of the CC report had been supplied to the previous NC, but I had not got one. I told the NC this and asked for someone who had a copy to let me have one so it could be circulated. Still not having a copy, I wrote to Mason, the CC secretary, for one. He replied that he didn't have a copy either, but he would get Parsons to send me one.

Time passed and nothing happened. Eventually I discovered that Parsons did not have a copy, either. Requests to various other NC members individually also failed to find a copy. Then the expelled faction - discovering at an area meeting that the CC report was not yet out - scored a 'coup,' so they thought, by circulating it themselves with their own introduction.

Obviously if I had made finding a copy of the CC report my no.1 priority I would probably have found one earlier. I do not think that I need apologise for not doing that. Suppression it wasn't.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

Amendments to section on Ireland, from Mellor.

1st para: Delete all after second sentence, and insert instead:

Despite their shift to the left and their dramatic growth in the North the Provisionals have failed to make a breakthrough in the South. The southern working class have shown a willingness to take up the national struggle during flashpoints in the North. These shows of solidarity (Bloody Sunday, hunger strike) have been systematically derailed by the southern trade union bureaucracy, the Irish LP, and the Workers Party. In the south the Republican movement is subjected to considerable repression and censorship (e.g. RTE) even during election campaigns. The growing North/South cooperation is likely to increase this trend.

4th para and after. Delete and replace with:

The shift to the left within the Provisionals has given activists in the British labour movement an opportunity to build links. The revitalised LCI with its more popular approach has been central to this. The organisation has the responsibility to consolidate these links via work in the LCI, the O, and the unions.

We have a responsibility to learn from our radically wrong assessment of the LCI and the new L&I magazine, which far from derailing the solidarity movement has given it a new lease of life.

Since Ireland is the anti-imperialist struggle in our backyard we have to relate to the question on a number of levels.

- ✓ 1. The reconvening of the Irish fraction to draw up proper perspectives for effective work on Ireland.
- ✓ 2. National priority to be given to LCI work, to be monitored by branches, responsibility of branch to establish LCI branches where possible.
- ✓ 3. A national discussion on the politics and nature of the Republican movement and its likely evolution.
- X 4. Redressing the scandalous failure to develop a dialogue with any forces in Ireland with a view to developing a group of co-thinkers.

Addendum to Report

The total failure of the leadership to carry through the September conference decision to initiate discussions with the USFI needs to be condemned. Though a letter was sent, and motions gone through, there was no serious follow-up to the discussions - and a clear conference decision has been flouted.

Since the demise of the ill-starred TILC the organisation has grasped at two fig leaves to cover its total unwillingness to do international work.

a) The annual jaunt to the LO fete. This scarcely equals international work.

b) The mini-TILC. How many comrades know that the Socialist Fight have joined a Castroite dominated USFI section in Australia? The total forces involved in this project can be no more than 15. No international links or working relations exist in practice: there could in any event only at best be a client relationship between the two remaining groups and WSL.

This flows from a nationalistic and sectarian approach on the part of the leadership.

ORGANISATION REPORT

Amendments from Christel

1. On 'Membership' (IB 116, page Org/1)

First sentence of last para of section: for "We do not have sufficiently detailed material to hand to give a precise picture of changes in the composition of the membership", read: "We do have sufficiently detailed material to hand to give a more detailed breakdown of the membership".

2. On 'Centre' (page Org/3)

Last sentence of page - for "administration, youth work and paper sales organisation have suffered," read "administration, youth work, finance, and paper sales organisation have suffered".

3. On 'Finance' (page Org/4)

In 5th para, line 5, for "higher old WSL rate", read "slightly higher old WSL rate".

4. On 'Women' (page Org/2)

Insert:

Since the collapse of W*, following the political capitulation of Khan, this area of work has suffered more than most from the disorganisation at the centre; and the measures decided by the leadership to counteract this have been inappropriate and unsuccessful.

The problems have been too often seen in terms of the possibility of a full-timer for women's work; and of the League organisation or members substituting for a broad organisation of women. Also, women's work is seen too often only in terms of the 'broad group'.

The July NC elected Fraser as women's organiser. This was interpreted as her in the first instance taking full responsibility for the production of the women's paper. Fraser resigned as women's organiser, being unwilling to continue with this responsibility.

The second attempt to resurrect this area of work was decided by a meeting of Kinnell, Parkinson and Collins. This decided that two women would be excused all commitments to local work, etc., to provide a 'full-time' resource, namely Short, who would then resign from the c***, and Collins.

This attempt started to fail when Short proved not to have taken up the first responsibility in that process. The immediate answer, of looking to Kinnell to produce the women's paper, was insufficient anyway in the short term and this decision should not be accepted as a desirable method of working.

These experiences should show us that trying to run the women's paper and its organisation by trying to find the unattainable 'perfect' solution of a sole woman full-timer hasn't worked. It should also lead us on to look at whether this is the best solution.

The women's paper and its organisation has been revitalised largely due to the impetus received from a non-League member, backed up by women League members who have been working on the women's paper on their own initiative. This process has worked the best of any attempted by the League to revamp the women's paper over the last 2 years. The paper has appeared regularly for 6 months, for the first time ever. It is proving as useful asset to League members in day to day work. It has also attracted a following among non-League women, who have been instrumental in organising groups of campaigning women around the paper.

The League has not been instrumental in the success of the last 5 6 months. This work has had to be carried out by League women in the face of no allowance made for this in their League commitments; in the face of the League putting extra demands on women involved in it and using information to persuade them to take on the extra commitments which have proved to be less true than they were painted; and even direct harassment of women

But there are further considerations. What should our "women's work" cover?

There should be two areas.

1. Within the WSL. (a) It's a long time since we developed any theoretical work on the general question of "the oppression to women in capitalism and women's liberation in socialism". We need to examine our past positions, acquaint the WSL with them, and with the process of arriving at them; and develop them. (b) The WSL, as any other predominantly male organisation, has problems of male supremacy and oppression of women. The symptoms of this are revealed in representation on leading committees; women members' participation in internal and external events; and women members' experience of sexist attitudes and behaviour from male members.

The position of women in the WSL must be examined by women members; as this is the best way of any concrete proposal being formulated.

2. External work. The immediate area for this is W*. There would be dangers with the 'full time' approach. We've been looking for a 'full time woman' for at least a year without success.

It would be nonsensical to expect the 'within the WSL' work to be done by one woman: it is obviously the type of work that should be participated in by all women.

The same problem would occur if a single 'full time woman' were expected to shoulder a large part of the 'external' work, i.e. W*; but also women involved in that broad group remember the problems which occurred with that strategy when carried out by Khan. Especially as none of the women currently involved in W* is an obvious candidate to undertake doing such full-time work, problems would be exacerbated by the woman concerned being new to W*; it would be unnatural for someone to arrive and be the mainstay of the campaign. The intentions would be obvious; and may well destroy all that has recently been achieved.

Only single women, without jobs or families, could undertake such a post. We need to do the opposite: to facilitate the participation of women with jobs; women outside London; with families and children.

We should also be wary of expecting "women's commissions" (in the form of national aggregates) to be the axis of our women's work. Families and distance prevent some women from ever attending; and other women from attending frequently.

To organise our women's work we need to: (As a principle, we need to organise in branches and/or areas to establish decent basic childcare arrangements, establishing contact between male comrades and women comrades' children, to free women comrades completely from childcare responsibilities as and when they wish to be free to undertake women's work; and logically, then, any other work.

Internal: We should arrange discussion on (a) and (b): to take the form of regional/area/branch meetings to increase the opportunities of women members to discuss together. National discussions should be continued at national women's aggregates, and in between them by written discussion, which should be closed to women members only when they wish.

'Coordinators' or 'joint coordinators' of areas (a) and (b) should be appointed by the women members to act as a focus and to maintain the impetus of the discussion. On (b), i.e. W*, the child care arrangements should be implemented to free the women who already work on and with W*, to enable them to develop this, as the most concrete practical and best way of continuing this work successfully.

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