

The development of technology over recent decades has had far-reaching cultural, social and political effects. Particularly, the recent rapid development of video, computer and information technology, together with changes in media techniques, are altering the character and the consciousness of the working-class and also changing the methods of the ruling-class. It is imperative that we analyse the implications of these developments if we are to fully understand changes taking place in this society and develop our approach to the class-struggle. Therefore, the National Committee will initiate discussions throughout the organisation which include analysis of the following;

1. Changes in the make-up of the working-class as a result of new employment patterns which result from New technology and the restructuring of industry. This will result in shifts in the comparative power of various groups of workers. We need, for instance, to examine the position of electrical power engineers, computer operators and programmers etc.

2. These changes also affect management, giving rise to problems with their traditional structures, a lot of confusion and attempts to use new approaches to a lot of old problems (Like how to deal with revolting workers) We need to examine how management is adapting and will adapt to further computerisation.

3. The introduction of more advanced technology can result in severe changes in working conditions. As well as being used to cause layoffs- new technology can lead to deskilling (eg Word Processors). So it is necessary for us to understand how best to resist its misapplication from the workers' point of view.

4. New technology could develop in many different ways- in relatively creative or destructive directions. Technology is not 'neutral' but has specific effects which depend only partially on how it is used. Therefore we have to look at the question of 'Alternative technology'. So far this has mostly been discussed in the Movement by people looking for alternatives to the arms & industry or safer forms of energy production than Nuclear Power. We should also be examining whether the demand for/or creation of/Alternative technology and transference of skills can be integrated into the fight against the closure of industries and for the expansion of the Public Sector. This can only be understood clearly if such demands are not confused with the idea of alternative strategies for reforming capitalism.