Workers' Weekly

Vol. 21 No. 21 September 3, 1994 20p

TUC Congress 1994

What Perspective for the Future?

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS THE TEXT OF A LEAFLET PRODUCED BY RCPB(ML) ADDRESSED TO THE DELEGATES AT THE TUC CONGRESS, BEGINNING ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5.

DELEGATES to this year's Congress will consider a number of questions vital to the needs and interests of working people in Britain. The working class has a great responsibility in these matters, since its historic role is to emerge as the leader of society driven by its vision of its own emancipation and that of the whole of society.

With society embroiled in crisis, it is quite clear that the present system is causing massive problems and hardship for the working people. The working class has to show that there is a way out of the crisis, and that the way is to reject the government's policies and chart a course which puts the needs of the people, rather than the interests of the few, at the centre. In so doing, it needs to develop its own independent programme, opposed to the status quo, and open the path for the progress of society towards a modern, socialist society, a society fit for humanity.

What stand will Congress take on this question? Will it foster illusions about capitalism, or will it raise that the working class must have its own short-term and long-term aims and open a perspective for the future? The General Council has raised itself the question of the future of the TUC. But its answer evades the question which events are placing in front of it. By suggesting that it should become a high profile campaigning organisation, that it should campaign for trade union values, it is refusing to answer the key questions: Is it for the status quo? Or is it for the creation of a new society? Not only the question of the future of the TUC, but all the other questions which delegates will consider this week – the economy, the cutbacks in social programmes, trade union law and others – all need to be considered from this standpoint.

In order to shore up the profits of big business, the government is on the one hand abandoning the responsibility of the state to look after the interests of all members of society and resurrecting the medieval doctrine of *each for him or her self*, and, on the other hand, handing over state assets to the private sector as a means of increasing its wealth. In all the major industrial countries, capitalism is in the phase of what is called *jobless growth*, whereby, despite recovery from recession, jobs continue to be destroyed at a greater rate

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British government must respond positively to IRA ceasefire

The complete cessation of military activities announced by the Irish Republican Army, the Provisional IRA, on August 31 is a positive step in what is referred to as the Irish Peace Process. It further opens the path to the resolving of the historical problems in northern Ireland. The eyes of the working class and progressive people are now focused on the British government. Will John Major's government grasp this opportunity or will they organise to ensure the peace process goes nowhere?

When John Major in the Downing Street Declaration conceded for the first time that the Irish people as a whole have the right to self-determination without external impediment, however qualified the Declaration then tried to make this

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THE PARTY AND ITS WORK

Party of activists and not of passive members

IN a recent article on the work of the basic units, *Workers' Weekly* posed the question, "How can the Party develop its positions and programme if it is detached from the class, if its general line and programme does not even reach the workers?", and went on to elaborate that it is the basic units of the Party that directly link the Party to the class and furthermore that it is only through the basic units that there can be recruitment into the Party's ranks. Thus it can be seen that the quality and progress of the Party's work is directly related to the quality, progress and level of activity of the basic units.

All bourgeois political parties, by definition, are political parties of active leaders and passive members. Members fulfil some formal requirements without any obligation to be involved in any work. The communist party is the antithesis of this; its aim is the activation of the working class around a programme through which it can emancipate itself. How could this ever be possible if the party members were not activists themselves? If the membership were passive then the units must be passive; passive units must mean detachment from the class followed by stagnation and decline. The party either becomes a bourgeois party or it withers and dies.

So the defence of the Party's policy on active membership is decisive. Those wishing to join the Party must come out of the movement and in turn must serve the movement. New members must take up work set by the Party, and only through this can they join. There is no such thing as a member who "joins" RCPB(ML) by just paying dues, filling an application, and nothing else. From the outset they must come under the discipline of a basic organisation, serving a probationary period as a candidate member before becoming a full member. All members have to work in a basic organisation. The Party has a policy that its cadres must always be involved in work – there can be no such thing as an individual not being involved in work, and there is no work that is not carried on the basis of organisation. By implementing this policy, by following this method as well as purging itself of alien class elements, RCPB(ML) works to consolidate and enhance its proletarian composition and character as a Party of activists.

The present period presents new challenges not only to the Party and the working class, but also to the whole society. The need to defend what is best in the struggle against medievalism is activating and will continue to activate more and more sections of society as their well-being, interests and livelihoods are undermined or threatened, and their struggles must be harmonised with those of the working class if they are to be crowned with success. For the working class itself, the key issue is the necessity for its own independent programme of action. The political battles ahead demand that RCPB(ML) continues to develop as a party of revolution and socialism. This must remain its feature, and even more so under the conditions of the retreat of revolution. RCPB(ML) must without wavering remain a party of activists under all conditions, and the policy of recruitment of new members as outlined above must be firmly adhered to.

Workers' Weekly

Newspaper of the
Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

September 3, 1994 Volume 21, Number 21

Subscription rates (cheques made payable to Workers' Publications Centre):
45p per issue, £1.80 for 4 issues, £11.70 for 26 issues, £23.40 for 52 issues

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Provisional IRA Declares "Complete Ceasefire"

Workers' Weekly is reprinting below an important article which appeared in _The Marxist-Leninist (TML)_, Organ of Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), of September 1, 1994,

On Wednesday, August 31, the Provisional IRA declared that it is stopping all its military operations, thereby giving the politicians a chance to deal with the problem of the British occupation of the northern part of Ireland. This declaration brings to a close another phase in the struggle of the people of Ireland to have their country united and free to set its own course.

A new phase in this struggle has begun at this time in which the British, Irish and US governments hold a decisive hand in determining the fate of Ireland. However, it is a phase in which the international bourgeoisie will completely play out its hand and stall a real solution by making "deals" which will become the source of future conflicts, just as the "protestant" veto was used in the past.

How far the working class in Ireland will play its role in determining the future of Ireland will also determine whether the country will enjoy real democracy and peace or not. Even though it may look as if the working class has no role to play at this time, such an impression is superficial and misleading for various reasons.

First of all, it would be foolish to think that there will not be an agreement at this time. It will

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British government must respond positively to IRA ceasefire

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recognition, the possibilities were created to move to a resolution. In practice, the British government stood in contradiction to its own declaration by reserving the right to maintain its interference in Ireland's affairs, on the grounds that the Republican movement must first renounce violence. The government must now make the decisive step of taking what it spelt out in words – the right of the people of Ireland alone to exercise self-determination – to its logical conclusion. It must declare its intention to relinquish British sovereignty in any shape or form over northern Ireland. The demand of the British working class at this historic juncture must be that Britain unilaterally withdraw from the north of Ireland.

This demand is given all the more weight by the disasters wreaked on Irish people by British policies in northern Ireland, particularly over the past 25 years. This period and the centuries of history before it have demonstrated that the British presence has never been a factor for peace in Ireland, but on the contrary has brought with it violence, unrest, bloodshed and divisions. If John Major's government now attempts once more to stamp its own interests on and set the agenda for the Irish peace process, if it attempts to dictate to the Irish people how they should conduct their own political affairs, and continues to interfere to the detriment of the resolution of the conflict, then a unique opportunity will be lost and history will judge it harshly.

The British government now has the responsibility of responding constructively to the end of military operations by the Republican movement and itself act to demilitarise the situation. It must neither act to create provocations and instigate violence in the six counties, nor must it use any pretexts to stand in the way of the aspirations of a people to control their own destinies in their own land, peacefully resolve their affairs and live as a free people, which is a common demand today of peoples throughout the world. Specifically, it must respond to the demand that all Irish political prisoners be released and that Britain remove its armed forces.

This is also an opportunity for the British government to begin taking the steps to modernise its Constitutional law and lead to the democratic renewal of the British state itself. It is not acceptable that legislation can still exist, some dating back to the 15th century, which asserts the right of Westminster to legislate for Ireland. The peace process cannot come to a conclusion without all such statutes being repealed.

The cessation of military operations by the IRA cannot by itself guarantee peace. What is crucially required is that British armed forces are withdrawn, together with the whole governmental apparatus by which Britain denies sovereignty to the Irish people. Only if Britain unconditionally ends its occupation of the north of Ireland and renounces all interference in Irish affairs can the conditions be created for an end to conflict in the future, and the Irish people be in a position to decide for themselves how their country can be reunified.

The working class of Britain, whose programme must include the recognition of the inalienable right of nations to self-determination, as well as the policy of good-neighbourly relations between the peoples of Britain and Ireland, cannot tolerate anything less than complete British withdrawal from Ireland.

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than they are created. On the other hand, the experience of eastern Europe shows that all the boasts that the replacement of pseudo-socialism by free market economies would bring prosperity have fallen flat.

All these developments show concretely that capitalism cannot give rise to a modern society which will utilise science and technology in the interests of the working class. The working class must fight for a new society. In other words, it must fight for its own independent class aims under the present conditions. Great pressure is continually exerted on the working class that it should take up some other aim or some other programme, that it support the aims of business in becoming more efficient, that it should support the aims of those who want capitalism without its worst excesses.

It is time to cast aside illusions that this or that political party will come to power and solve the problems of capitalism. Objectively, the capitalist system is deep in crisis and cannot be run in the interests of the working class and people **by any party**. It is only the working class which can lead society out of crisis. It needs to unite around its own political programme and call on all other sections of the people to support this. But it has to have its own politics and not rely on the politics of others.

A large number of resolutions will be under discussion this week. We call on delegates to bear in mind the following points in discussing how their delegations should vote:

- The General Council's proposals for the future of the TUC should be rejected as they do not make clear what the aims of the working class are and how its proposals are tied in with achieving these aims.
- Delegates should reject those motions which in any way suggest that the interests of workers can be helped through increasing the efficiency or profitability of business.
- Public spending is an investment in the future of society and should be increased rather than cut back. Any motion compromising on this principle should be rejected.

On this occasion of the 1994 Congress, our Party, RCPB(ML), calls on all delegates to give serious thought to the need for an independent programme of the working class. Earlier this year, our Party issued a draft document, *There Is a Way Out of the Crisis*, which analyses the current situation in Britain and elaborates on how the working class can lead society out of crisis. The drawing up of a draft programme for the class to be discussed as widely as possible among workers is a priority of the times. Any delegates interested in discussing these points can contact a distributor of the leaflet or write to RCPB(ML) at the address below. *There Is a Way Out of the Crisis* is available from the same address.

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be equally foolish to think that the agreement will end all conflicts. The agreement has to be looked at as a factor in pushing British interests internationally and those of the US. It will do so at the cost of the interests of the people of Ireland. Only the working class can ensure that the agreement must be based on the unconditional withdrawal of the British from the North of Ireland and the re-unification of the country according to the will of all Irish people as one people.

Furthermore, the future of Ireland is being determined by the governments of the monopolies which would like Ireland to be safe for them. Such an Ireland will create great difficulties for the working class and broad masses of the people, as is the case at the present time and has been the case in the past. The nationalists must be thanked for their persistence in fighting for a United Ireland but they cannot be relied upon to deal effectively with the complex problems as they appear at this time, in which, along with the need to get the British out, there is also a need to ensure that the working class gains strength so that it can determine the future of a United Ireland.

Finally, according to the prevailing international conditions in which the imperialists hold sway, it is imperative to place Ireland within the new equilibrium which can only be created by the international proletariat. The world bourgeoisie is neither interested in nor capable of creating a world order in which the interests of all the peoples are served. It cannot abide the emergence of the new world in which the precondition for the prosperity of one nation is the prosperity of all nations. The Irish working class will have to place the future of Ireland within the new equilibrium led by the international proletariat.

It is a good thing that there exist good prospects for a settlement in Ireland at this time. CPC(ML) welcomes this and applauds all those who have made great sacrifices to create the conditions for it. It would be unfortunate if the working class did not play a decisive role in this phase of the struggle to pave the way for a future for Ireland which is peaceful and prosperous, in which the working class and the broad masses of the people can enjoy the fruits of their labour and contribute to the same on the world scale.

TML takes this occasion to send congratulations to all the forces which have fought to end the British division of Ireland and wishes them success in this phase of the struggle. TML is confident that all communist and progressive forces will continue to play their role in order to ensure the withdrawal of Britain from Ireland and the re-unification of Ireland according to the will of all Irish people and lead the working class to play its historic role in the creation of a free, independent and socialist Ireland.

16th Consultative Conference of Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) successfully held in Ottawa

More than one hundred and fifty delegates and observers attended the Sixteenth Consultative Conference of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) which was held in Ottawa from August 12 to 14, 1994.

The main items on the agenda were the celebration of the decisions taken at an important conference of CPC(ML) five years ago and discussion on modern definitions of a basic organisation and a Communist Party. The agenda also included discussion on the role of the Mass Party and Non-Party Press in laying down the foundation for a mass Communist Party. A meeting was also held on the elections in Quebec. One of the highlights of the conference was the creation of poetry, music and songs on the basis of modern definitions.

Hardial Bains, national leader of CPC(ML), was the main speaker in the conference and led the discussion. His speeches were highly applauded by the delegates and observers present. A lot of discussion also took place in private sessions pertaining to the problems of the organising work at this time. The conference concluded on August 14 in the afternoon with the militant singing of *The Internationale*.

The conference was attended by delegations from our Party as well as from the US Marxist-Leninist Organisation, the Workers Party (USA), the Communist Ghadar Party of India and the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist). Two members of the RCPB(ML) delegation addressed the conference, one speaking about the work of the Party over the past year and the other about the work to strengthen the Party press in the recent period.

PARTICIPATION OF RCPB(ML) DELEGATION

The Consultative Conference was the focus of the visit by a delegation from RCPB(ML) to Canada during August to take part in different programmes led by CPC(ML). A number of youth and children from Britain took part in the Youth Organising Project, a most important initiative of the youth, the establishment of which was led by CPC(ML). Young people and children, assisted by a very small group of adults, took part in the "camp" from August 5 to 12 in the course of which not only the Youth Organising Project was born but it immediately took upon itself the task to lead the camp. It established its own organ, *Youth Today,* and organised all the different activities necessary for the functioning of the camp.

The Youth Organising Project (YOP) is not only a learning project in which youth and children learn, in the course of organising, what is in their interests, but it is at the same time a means to contribute to opening the door for the progress of society. This main feature of YOP developed in the course of the seven days. The issue for the participants was not "What is in it for me?" but "What is needed to organise and to do so in the interests of opening the door for the progress of society?" Participants served their individual interests by subordinating them to the collective interests of their learning projects and the general interests of the whole camp. As a direct consequence of this, the participants left with fond memories, announcing they would come back next year. Youth from Britain expressed the desire to see similar work developed in this country.

Members of the RCPB(ML) delegation also assisted the work of the youth in putting on a concert at the conclusion of the Youth Organising Project and worked together with CPC(ML) in the creation of poetry, music and songs on the themes of modern definitions.

In the estimation of *Workers' Weekly*, the visit of the RCPB(ML) delegation to Canada was very important and useful for our Party, in terms of what was gained from participating in the different programmes, in strengthening the collaboration and mutual assistance between our Parties and in terms of what was learnt by the delegation of RCPB(ML), particularly as a result of its participation in the Consultative Conference. The members of the delegation were greatly inspired by the work of CPC(ML), and *Workers' Weekly* takes this opportunity to express the firm conviction that the 16th Conference of CPC(ML) and the other programmes led by it which our delegation experienced at first hand will open the way to new victories for the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) in the coming period.

Cuba belongs to the Cubans

ON Friday, September 1, Cuban and American representatives met for a second round of talks centring around the "rafters". At the time of going to press, the Cubans are justly demanding that the agenda include the American economic blockade and other important issues.

The US policy was not prompted only by the Cuban revolution which overthrew US puppet Batista in 1959, although this provided the pretext for the US to impose its blockade and take other anti-Cuban measures, which are being intensified today.

The issue at stake today, as in the past, is one of Cuban sovereignty. The Clinton administration is continuing the policy of its predecessors, which goes back to the time of the fifth US President, James Monroe, whose "doctrine" – Americas for the Americans – outlining US colonial strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean, stated in 1823 that "the American continents ... are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonisation by any European power". Henceforth, Cuba became one of the victims of the American colonial policy in that region.

It is significant to note that in 1897 the American Undersecretary of War stated in his instructions concerning US policy towards Cuba:

"The island of Cuba ... has a greater population density than Puerto Rico, although it is unevenly distributed. This population is made up of whites, blacks, Asians and people who are a mixture of these races. The inhabitants are generally indolent and apathetic. As for their learning, they range from the most refined to the most vulgar and abject. Its people are indifferent to religion, and the majority are therefore immoral and simultaneously they have strong passions and are very sensual. Since they only possess a vague notion of what is right and wrong, the people tend to seek pleasure not through work, but through violence. As a logical consequence of this lack of morality, there is great disregard for life.

"It is obvious that the immediate annexation of these disturbing elements into our own federation in such large numbers would be sheer madness, so before we do that we must clean up the country, even if this means using the methods Divine Providence used on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

"We must destroy everything within our cannons' range of fire. We must impose a harsh blockade so that hunger and its constant companion, disease, undermine the peaceful population and decimate the Cuban army."

"... we must create conflicts for the independent government. That government will be faced with these difficulties, in addition to the lack of means to meet our demands and the commitments made to us, war expenses and the need to organise a new country. These difficulties must coincide with the unrest and violence among the aforementioned elements, to whom we must give our backing.

"To sum up, our policy must always be to support the weaker against the stronger, until we have obtained the extermination of them both, in order to annex the Pearl of the Antilles."

This is the same policy, but under present-day circumstances, which inspires the American ruling circles today. This is what Lawton Chiles, Governor of Florida, meant when he stated last week, "Cubans should be encouraged to stay at home and bring about the fall of Castro rather than escape."

The present problem in Cuba is created by the US, which has given itself the right to sabotage and impede the progress of others, to decide the limitations of another country's sovereignty under whatever pretext. A modern definition of sovereignty cannot be based on such an evil annexationist premise as the Monroe Doctrine of 1823.

The Cuban people have the right to build the social system of their choice. *Workers' Weekly* supports them and their legitimate government in their demand for an end to the US blockade, and an end to the US provocations and incitement of Cubans to relinquish their sovereignty.

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