

The CPBML is an organisation of modern revisionism and not a Marxist-Leninist organisation making opportunist errors. It was one of a number of groups claiming to uphold Mao Tse Tung Thought but actually practicing modern revisionism.

The CPBML has been revisionist from its inception when it effectively sabotaged the party building programme of the anti-revisionist committee in 1968.

Its bureaucratic-centralist methods made criticism and self-criticism virtually impossible and since its formation it has shown the utmost arrogance and sectarianism towards the Marxist-Leninists in Britain and to genuine Marxist-Leninist <sup>parties</sup> abroad.

The modern revisionism of the CPBML stems from the idealist orientation of the 'labour aristocracy' and the intelligentsia which could not fail to influence their political line.

Ignoring the historical lessons of class struggle, with no continuous analytical review of the development of classes and class struggle, relating this to the economic base reveals an attempt to present imperialism minus opportunism, a political impossibility.

the CPBML portrays imperialism as the misguided policy of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Imperialism is a socio-economic phenomenon the highest stage of capitalism <sup>whose laws operate</sup> independently of the will of the bourgeoisie and which they are powerless to alter.

Lenin clearly shows in his work 'Imperialism the highest stage of capitalism' the indisputable link between the superprofits looted by oppressor nations from their colonies and the bribery of a stratum of the working class of the oppressor nation with part of this loot.

He identified this stratum as the 'labour aristocracy' and as the principle prop of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement. What the CPBML puts forward as a great and original contribution to Marxism-Leninism, <sup>is</sup> in fact, profoundly reactionary.

According to the CPBML, its 'refutation of the crumbs theory' is again against the proposition of the Fabians i.e. that of class collaboration in the imperialist exploitation of the colonies.

They wilfully confuse this proposition with Lenin's correct thesis that imperialism gives rise to opportunism in the labour movement and together with Engels, he is accused of having dismissed the whole of the British working class as being 'bought off' with the 'crumbs' of imperialist superprofits.

It is with such twisted logic that the exposure of opportunism in general and of revisionism in particular, is crudely sidestepped; i.e. on the pretext of 'stamping out the crumbs theory'. The often repeated 'to the ultra-left, politics is the exposure of leaders and the hope of self-substitution' is the spiritual cudgel wielded to suppress all such criticism.

in Apr '76

It therefore <sup>came</sup> comes as no surprise when the CPBML belittled the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China and the anti-revisionist struggle in the rest of the world as merely 'furors of international and internal polemic'!

'Without the complete preliminary victory over opportunism in the labour movement there can be no question of the dictatorship of the proletariat and proletarian revolution.' - Lenin.

By attacking the Leninist thesis on the source of opportunism and in the process violating historical materialism, they also sought to justify a fundamentally incorrect class analysis i.e. 'the two class line' a simple division of British society into proletariat and bourgeoisie.

And according to their pamphlet 'The definitive statement on the internal polemic (1972-4)' produced towards the end of 1974, 'a new dialectical analysis of the character of the proletariat within declining bourgeois society is not required'!

This line not only made it very difficult for its members to handle contradictions among the people correctly, but it also denied the leading role of the proletariat, blaming the sins of an apathetic and semi-radicalised intelligentsia on the working class and negating the Marxist-Leninist concept of the leading role of the party of the proletariat.

Marx revealed the key to understanding the progress of mankind by examining the material world and scientifically showing that history is not a series of inexplicable or 'god-willed' accidents, but that the past and present daily life of society is a continual struggle between the different classes that arise from their relations to the means of production.

"In the social production which men carry out, they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will. These relations of production correspond to a definite stage in the development of the powers of production... the totality of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society ... to which definite forms of consciousness correspond."

from Marx's 'Preface to contribution to the critique of political economy'.

"Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in an historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy."

from Lenin on 'A new beginning'.

Each class while having the same general characteristics can be sub-divided into strata with specific characteristics of their own such as the labour aristocracy etc.

Note that surplus value <sup>is</sup> that proportion of value in a commodity created by the unpaid labour of the worker and appropriated by the capitalist as profit.

A further consequence of 'the two class line' i.e. the disappearance of the intelligentsia and the petty bourgeoisie, has been the economism of the CPBML.

Being eternally critical of economism (restriction of political agitation and thus of class political consciousness) it, the CPBML, practices economism in a new form, characterised by its uncritical attitude to bourgeois culture.

This economism has its source in the narrow craft mentality of the very 'labour aristocracy' dominating the CPBML and which they were naturally unwilling to acknowledge. It subjectively raised to the level of Marxist theory a one-sided view of society based on the experience of the trades union struggle. "our industrial comrades get bored with political discussion" - R. Birch 1968.

The result is a line of the spontaneously revolutionary nature of the working class, infantile leftism and putchism. When the working class fails to meet their expectations, the CPBML speaks of the working classes 'self-imposed limitation in struggle' and its lack of the 'class conscious understanding of the opposing class' as if class consciousness was an innate quality and as if political consciousness develops only through intensified struggle in the economic arena.

So this logic runs, that because of the 'uneven development of sections of workers' 'guerrilla struggle' as a technique, as a 'concept of struggle in every place of work' is 'the only form of struggle that can lead to advance to victory, enabling those directly involved to control and conduct the struggle'.

Disregarding the misleading military jargon, this formula arbitrarily excludes other forms of struggle which are, according to them, "impractical" and "demand a higher level" etc.

instead of uniting the class in struggle, such narrow terms of reference can only lead to a credo of survival of the fittest in the economic arena.

In this way the CPBML degrades Marxism-Leninism to the level of militant trades unionism, which though itself vital in the struggle of resistance against capitalism, cannot, on its own, develop the political consciousness needed for the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

*Therefore* a clear distinction should be made between an ideology (manner of thinking characteristic of a class) and the political and economic theories of that class, the relatively conscious activity of a class leadership. The CPBML make no such distinction thus enabling them to confuse the roles of a class and its leadership.

History should be studied to serve the needs of the proletarian revolution, but from the subjective idealism of the CPBML, comes a confusion of historical processes with conscious actions, which has nothing in common with historical materialism. e.g. 'we were the first modern proletariat' - historical fact - the British proletariat once had 'the strategic goal of survival' 'once again we must lead' - utterly nonsensical phrases.

So

The CPBML recognises class struggle, but contrary to what is implied in *their* approach, the lessons of class struggle are not automatically transmitted from generation to generation; this always needs conscious effort.

4.  
if man's consciousness is the product of his social being, then no ideology can possibly be separate from the growth of any class. But according to the CPBML, a priori, social-democracy is 'separate from the organic development of the class' and has 'usurped the place of Marxism-Leninism in the mind of the working class'!

social-democratic politics should not be made the primary target by confusing it with bourgeois ideology in general otherwise its chauvinist content and indirectly that of modern revisionism, the greater danger to the working class, will be obscured.

Having its roots in the bourgeois radicalism of the last quarter of the 18th century, it took its fabian form and explicitly chauvinist content at the close of the 19th in the shape of the Labour party founded by the opportunist trade union leaders and bourgeois intellectuals of the time. It was the party of class collaboration bringing "civilisation" to the colonies.

As part of the 2nd international set up to prevent revolution, as well as being anti-communist, it has always avoided an official evaluation of the situation in the middle-East owing to the influence of the Zionist circles within it.

To say that the working class had accepted the social contract and that it chose to live with capitalism etc is quite wrong. Under the influence of bourgeois ideology, one does not accept a lie as a matter of choice!

Here we see the CPBML attributing its own failings to the working class, "showing" with a collection of half-truths and distortions that the working class is the source of opportunism!

The working class is the most progressive and revolutionary class in the history of class society, yet the CPBML would have us believe that "fascism begins as soon as the workers succumbed mentally", thus leading us to the absurd conclusion that fascism has its origins in ~~the~~ mind of the working class!

Now we get the line that "the unions have begun to outlive their usefulness as a defensive weapon, having adopted the role of collaborators and policemen to the bourgeois state" in spite of the fact that it is the opportunists in general and the revisionists in particular who have consciously adopted this role!

The genuine Marxist-Leninist party must both learn from and educate the class to which it belongs. It is not 'sheer apathy' as the CPBML insists 'that allows the ruling class to call the tune'. Such pompous phrases simply confirm that the CPBML has no genuine desire to either learn from or educate the class they have the effrontery to claim the leadership of.

The task of Marxism-Leninism is the leadership in the struggle to overthrow the exploiting class from three co-ordinated and inter-connected sides, the theoretical, the political and the practical economic (resistance to the capitalists)

Once more, to quote Lenin, "It is not enough to explain to workers that they are politically oppressed, nor enough to explain to them that their interests are antagonistic to the interests of the employers; without undertaking the organisation of the political exposure of imperialism in all its aspects, in the most varied spheres of life and activity we shall not be fulfilling our task of developing the political consciousness of the workers"...

... "it is absolutely untrue that 'the economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of drawing the masses into active political struggle' or that 'political agitation must follow economic agitation' (theory of stages) or even that political agitation should be mainly on an economic basis."

from Lenin on 'What is to be done?'

It is the spirit of proletarian internationalism that is indispensable to the building of such political consciousness

This spirit can only come from learning the lessons of and rendering active support to the national liberation struggles of the peoples oppressed by our own imperialism.

Therefore this consciousness cannot develop "without a stubborn, continuous and determined struggle against the dominant nation chauvinism of the 'socialists' of the ruling nations..."

...who do not want to fight imperialism or support the national liberation struggles of 'their' colonies and do not want to form a common revolutionary front with them." - 'no nation oppresses!' R. Birch 1972.

In an article in the May 1973 issue of 'The Worker' entitled 'Revolution surges forward', the CPBML had begun to extend its metaphysical 'two class line' to the international situation more openly than in the past while continuing to suppress any discussion of 'China's foreign policy'.

Chauvinism on the national question became more pronounced. Finally at the '4th Congress' in April '76, the CPBML openly proclaimed their "one world theory" i.e. the proletariat versus the bourgeoisie on a world scale.

According to this logic, 'a key misconception is that the only divisive force in the world is not class but nation'. The suspicion that this verbal trickery serves the interests of the expansionist soviet social-imperialism is strengthened when the CPBML tried to con us that soviet social-imperialism does not seek world hegemony.

This shelving <sup>also</sup> of Lenin & Stalin's theory on the uneven development of capitalism justified an unqualified opposition to Britain joining the EEC. From the same standpoint the CPBML deny that the third world today is the main force impelling history forward and the main force against the hegemonism of the two superpowers particularly that of Soviet social-imperialism, the superpower which is on a worldwide offensive.

Why? because the CPBML is opposed to the three worlds theory of Mao Tse Tung which is a major obstacle to the expansion of Soviet social-imperialism.

Consequently, with its own policy of national isolationism, the CPBML has made no effort whatsoever to mobilise the people of Britain against the impending third world war or to mobilise the working class against the fifth column of Soviet social-imperialism. Indeed how could it? Since the CPBML itself, is part of that fifth column.

from mid Sep '76.

SOURCES

What is to be done? Lenin 1902.

Dialectical & Historical Materialism. Stalin 1910.

The Proletarian Revolution & the Renegade Kautsky. Lenin 1918.

Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism. Lenin 1917.

British Labour & British Imperialism. Lenin 1921.

The Foundations of Leninism Stalin 1924.

Analysis of Classes in Chinese Society. Mao Tsetung 1926.

Economism or Revolution, a critique of the CPBML CUAML Aug''73

The Absolute Decline of the CPBML CWM May/Jun '76?

Forum for Discussion on CLASS CWM 76/77?

Is There a Middle Stratum? Bajram Abdiu Mar''74.

Towards a Class Analysis Red Flag pre-JUN''77

Why Paul Foot Should be a Socialist pp.189-94. CWM 1978.

CPBML

The British Working Class & its Party, (2nd C) April 1971.

Burning Questions for our Party, Nov''71.

Guerrilla Struggle & the Working Class May''73.

Imperialism & the Working Class (3rd C) Jul''73.

The Struggle of Ideas (3rd C) Jul''73,

The Definitive Statement on the Internal Polemic (1972&4) *mid 74?*

No to the Common Market (leaflet) Jun''75.

Ireland, One Nation Jul''75.

Revolution, Social-democracy, Class & Party. (4th C) Mar''76.

Dialectics (4th C) Mar''76.

Fourth Congress Document. Apr''76.

enquiries, criticisms and or comments to:

G.N.Henshaw, 444 Moseley Rd, Balsall Heath, Birmingham I2.

Letter to the secretary of the Birmingham branch of the CPBML: (I was prevented from discussing these issues in the branch, was suspended Sep '76, ceased to attend the branch and was "no longer on the books" after May '77)

Comrades,

At the 4th Party Congress, I opposed the false practice/theory squabble and the "freedom of criticism" which was advocated by some. I voted in support of the report from the congress and all that was in it, although I did have some misgivings.

Although in the subsequent struggle to overcome opposition, I confirmed my support for the document, this support was not whole-hearted, particularly in regard to the interpretation of the international situation.

Since then these doubts instead of being resolved in discussions, grew into a conviction that the document contained serious errors stemming from a subjective orientation and which I now see as related to the line on opportunism.

Concerning imperialism, the "refutation" of the crumbs theory is false. Firstly it attributes to Engels and Lenin, a line which their writings on Britain do not prove. Secondly, it wrongly insists that there is no material basis for opportunism.

On both counts therefore, it is anti-Leninist and anti-materialist and should be denounced as a dangerous falsification concocted in opposition to Lenin's correct thesis that imperialism gives rise to opportunism in the labour movement.

The campaign on the EEC Referendum and the congress document portray imperialism itself as a collection of policies instead of showing imperialist policies to be the symptom of and not the root cause of capitalism in crisis.

In my opinion a revisionist line has for a long time (1971) given first place to opposing empiricism and the Labour party, and treated revisionism as only of local or historical interest. Yet modern revisionism is said to be the main danger to the international communist movement. Without doubt, revisionism and social-imperialism have a definite link, so it would be wrong to consider one without considering the other. \*

Non-aligned nations, I take to mean, nations which have taken the course of self-reliant development, in this way opposing and weakening imperialism; but I still don't see what this has got to do with class-collaboration.

You probably know about an organisation which calls itself 'Second World Defence' which in febr 76, made a plea for class-collaboration in a 3rd imperialist war, using the false argument that the countries in NATO impose a "milder imperialist yoke" than that of the Soviet Union.

This would make no difference, even if it were true, since it goes without saying that war is a class question. Class-collaboration and a patriotic front led by the communist party are two completely different, diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive things!

continued:

I no longer feel compelled to support out of ignorance and blind obedience a document which my own practice and study have exposed as wrong and will not allow myself to mislead others by lending support to it.

G.N.Henshaw, 2.7.77.

\*

To fight Social-democracy effectively, revisionism must be substantially eradicated from the ranks of the party of the proletariat.

Should we attach significance to Birch's visits to Vietnam in 1974? What significance should we give to the fact that on the 25th Nov 75, at the invitation of the CPG, R.Birch took part in comradesly talks with none other than Chang Chun-chiao, ex-member of the Politburo and the party, and member of the "gang of 4"? And what are the lessons to be learnt from Mr.Birch's sentimental journey to the Soviet Union as related in AUEW Journal, Mar 88 Vol45, No3 p8?

This all seems to lend weight to the fact that R.Birch is a leading exponent of modern revisionism in Britain, which is also part of an extremely pernicious international trend otherwise known as the 4<sup>1/2</sup> international.

Excerpts from:

3 points concerning M/L unity, by J.G. at Jul77 B'ham conference.

"...some comrades suggest that the CPBML was a failure because it was declared to be a party without there having been a struggle for political and ideological unity; this has made them very careful about uniting prematurely in a single new party building organisation. The real point about the CPBML is, I think, that it was always a revisionist organisation, under revisionist leadership, though for some time a majority of its rank and file were good Marxist-Leninists. Except for one or two more obvious points, such as the questions of "peaceful transition" and "state of the whole people", its leadership never did break with revisionism- it just came out with neo-revisionism! It wasn't forming a party too early that was the fault with the CPBML- that could have been put right fairly easily; the fault was that revisionism was always in command. The real lesson that the experience of the CPBML teaches us is that the fight against revisionism is a hard and complicated one. I think that great efforts should be made to ensure that the lesson is learned, that the fight to master Marxist-Leninist politics and philosophy is stepped up (All opportunists and counter-revolutionaries have this in common - that they are idealist in philosophy, and do not grasp dialectical materialism), and that revisionism in its various forms is combatted in our fight for unity. This is the right answer, I think, to those who use the experience of the CPBML as an argument against Marxist-Leninist unity in one party building organisation..."