

PREAMBLE

If the working class is to play its historical role and lead the entire society out of the crisis and open up a path for progress, it must have its own independent programme, that is, it must set its immediate and long-term aims.

The first thing that must be stated is that the ultimate aim of a draft programme for the working class must be socialism and communism, for the working class to emancipate itself and all oppressed and exploited sections of society, to end the exploitation of person by person.

But how to get there? What are the immediate steps? What are the factors which must be taken into account in formulating a draft programme with an immediate programme and a programme of action to take such steps?

1. THEORY

(a) **THE FUNDAMENTAL CONTRADICTION.** Our theory tells us that the motion and struggle in capitalist society centres around a fundamental contradiction. This contradiction is that those whose labour produces the wealth of society do not own or control the products of their labour. Production is social, co-operative, increasingly large scale, while ownership is private, individual and competitive. This contradiction expresses itself in a divide in society, in a struggle between two irreconcilable classes. On the one side is a small minority comprising the exploiters, and on the other is the vast majority, the exploited: at the head of the exploiters stands the capitalist class and at the head of the exploited stands the working class.

Marx's theories explain and facts confirm that the basic mode of capitalist production rests on the appropriation of the unpaid labour of the workers in the form of surplus value. They explain that the capitalist extracts more value from the labour power of the worker than was paid for it. Capital is thus accumulated by the constant extraction of value and retention of the surplus value produced by

the workers. The development of modern industry, the concentration of capital, requires and brings into being the modern proletariat. This modern proletariat comprises not scattered workers, but workers organised and concentrated in production, whose interests as a class are in direct opposition to those of the capitalist class. It produces the material blessings of society and is in no need of the class which exploits it. With the advance of modern industry the proletariat, its special product, develops, with the task of organising itself consciously as a class and eliminating exploitation. What the bourgeoisie has therefore created, above all, is its own gravediggers.

(b) **FALL OF CAPITALISM.** Theory therefore shows that the fall of the capitalist class is inevitable and that it is the working class which has to deal the blow that fells it. Any programme of the working class must be based on this conclusion, must be geared to this end, and towards removing the obstacles which stand in the way of realising this historic role. The working class must become conscious of this role and avert the ruination of society to which the capitalist class is leading it.

Theory tells us that the emancipation of all the working people from exploitation cannot come about without there being a particular class in whose interest it is to open up the path to this emancipation. It is in the interests of the proletariat, the working class, to be this class, to open up the path to progress, to the overthrow of capitalist society. This path is therefore in the interests of the society as a whole, to the vast majority, in eliminating the conditions of their exploitation.

History shows that ascendant classes will rebel against the conditions which hem in and block their advance, and that this results in a trial of strength with the old forces and an overthrow of the old, moribund conditions. The struggle against and the overthrow of feudalism was led by the capitalist class, leading to the overthrow of medievalism, of absolutism, and to the removal of the block on the development of the new, capitalist, productive forces. In turn,

the working class, the ascendant class today, must take this struggle to its logical conclusion, and overthrow in its turn the capitalist system to begin the building of socialism. In opposition to this, the bourgeoisie today is trying to turn back the wheel of history, to reverse the gains over medievalism, to entrench the absolutism behind which stand the monopolies and oligopolies.

(c) **LAST STAGE OF CAPITALISM.** In its last stage of monopoly capitalism, the whole motive of production has become the making of the maximum capitalist profit. The state is run and the government policies formulated and carried out so as to ensure the greatest profitability for the capitalist class. The call of John Major for the “success of business” is a call for policies facilitating this maximum capitalist profit. But the mechanism of capitalist production itself, as the theory of surplus value shows, ensures that the pushing of profits to the highest level is at the same time a pushing of wages and living conditions to the lowest level, an intensification of the exploitation of the working people, a mechanism for the ruin of society. The anarchy based on the private ownership of the means of production leads to the rich becoming richer and the poor becoming poorer, to unemployment and all the other features of the crisis. The private ownership of the means of production and the virtually absolute rule by the executive is the basis of the economic and political crisis.

(d) **CAN THERE BE ADVANCE UNDER - CAPITALISM?** In terms of the development of the economic base of capitalism, the question arises: can this be developed further, can there be an advance in the development of the productive forces under capitalism? Theory again comes into play by showing that as capitalism in this century has reached its last and final stage, it has become moribund and parasitic. This has been proven by life itself. It is the stage of imperialism, of monopoly capitalism, of concentration of capital and production, and, with the growth of the modern proletariat, all the objective conditions are there for a new, socialist, social system, all the objective preparations are in place for the overthrow of the capitalist system. In fact, objectively, this overthrow is long overdue. Imperialism represents the domination by

finance capital, of parasitism and decay of capitalism, of profits made through money-lending and speculation. The bourgeoisie, unwilling and incapable of sanctioning the forward step towards socialism, is presiding over a moribund, parasitic and atrophying system.

Under monopoly capitalism, the process of production has become socialised while ownership of the means of production is concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. This is giving rise to crisis, a brake on any development of the productive forces, whereby the productive forces themselves are being destroyed on a massive scale. On a world scale, this has led to the devastation of famine and war. This is all being carried out with the motive of controlling markets and maximising profits. The scientific-technical revolution itself, far from being used for the benefit of society, has become one of the greatest factors for the destruction of the productive forces. Any development now of capitalism only further disintegrates and destroys these productive forces. The capitalist system is not capable of uninterrupted extended reproduction. The motive of making maximum capitalist profit is an extremely narrow base on which modern production rests.

(e) **THE COMING INTO BEING OF THE - SOCIALIST SYSTEM.** However, the socialisation of the process of production itself is the objective material basis on which a new socialist system will come into being. Ultimately, when the means of production are socialised, this will eliminate anarchy and chaos in the economic and other spheres. The conclusion drawn from the Leninist theory of imperialism and from its historical development in this century shows that the capitalist system is crying out to be transformed by revolution to socialism and that there can be no intermediate stage, no transitional social system, between capitalism and socialism. In other words, the time for the destruction of this mode of production has appeared in history. There can be no progress in history without the destruction of this mode of production. Theory confirms that this era remains the epoch of imperialism, whatever the ebbs and flows of revolution. It confirms that these are the ebbs and flows of revolution within the overall epoch of imperialism which, as Lenin points out and theory shows, remains the

eve of revolution. It follows that the working class must provide itself with the necessary consciousness and organisation and bring about this proletarian revolution, and make the necessary preparations for revolutionary upsurge. The bourgeoisie, especially the British bourgeoisie, knows that the working class will go for revolution. It offers varieties of pseudo-socialism, one of which is the Labour Party type, in order to sabotage the proletarian revolution.

(f) **THRESHOLD OF MODERN - CONSCIOUSNESS.** The working class movement in Britain is one of the oldest in the world. It has continued against all obstacles to fight for its emancipation and for a socialist society. Today its consciousness is growing about the necessity of challenging the type of society that exists in Britain. It stands on the threshold of providing itself with modern class consciousness, which is to say the necessary consciousness to lead society out of the crisis, the consciousness of developing its own revolutionary theory from the concrete conditions as prevailing nationally and internationally by using Marxism-Leninism as a guide. In this regard the necessary instrument for the working class providing itself with such a revolutionary theory is the proletarian party, the party of a new type, the vanguard of the working class. Without such a revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary working class movement aimed at the overthrow of the capitalist system, which is long overdue, and no revolutionary communist party to guide it in this noble cause of overthrowing capitalism and building socialism through revolution.

(g) **WORKING CLASS MUST EMANCIPATE ITSELF.** At the same time, theory also shows that it is the working class itself which must go into action, which must provide itself with the necessary consciousness and organisation to organise itself as a class, to be conscious of itself as a class. Modern large-scale industry, modern capitalist society, has given rise to a modern proletariat which must provide itself with revolutionary class consciousness. It must bring forth revolutionary intelligentsia and win over to its cause those coming from the petty bourgeoisie and middle strata in order to isolate the bourgeoisie to the extreme.

The conclusion is therefore that the working class must emancipate itself and its emancipation cannot be the act of other classes. Taken with the conclusion of the necessity of a proletarian party, it follows that the vanguard of the working class must be guided by Marxism-Leninism to work out and provide the working class with a revolutionary theory.

2. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In formulating a Draft Programme for the working class there are various theoretical considerations which must be taken into account. These theoretical considerations are based on existing theory and on the analysis of the present conditions. They provide the theoretical underpinning for the practical work.

(a) **RETREAT OF REVOLUTION.** The first theoretical consideration which must be taken into account is the nature of the present period, the period following the end of the Cold War and the bipolar division of the world, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the other pseudo-socialist regimes of eastern Europe. Our Party considers this period to be a period of the retreat or ebb of revolution. Both nationally and internationally there is an all-out and unprecedented offensive by the bourgeoisie and the forces of reaction against socialism and communism, against all the rights of the people. There is an attempt to turn the clock back on every front, to revert to medievalism.

The nature of the period must be taken into account when formulating the Draft Programme. The main content of this Draft Programme is to prepare the subjective conditions for revolution.

It must be emphasised that we are still in the epoch characterised by Lenin as the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution. The retreat of revolution is a retreat, or ebb, within this epoch. It is temporary, and many signs are that it not only may not last long, but that it may well already be changing.

It must be stressed that, although subjective factors play a part in the conditions giving rise to a change from ebb to flow of revolution, the change is mainly brought about by objective factors. For the working class movement, this must therefore be a period of preparation, for creating subjective conditions so

that when the tide turns, when ebb becomes flow, the working class can lead all the exploited to overthrow the bourgeoisie and construct socialism through revolution. The working class must use what space the conditions provide to make such preparations. This must be taken into account in formulating the Draft Programme.

(b) RECENT FEATURES OF CAPITALISM CONFIRM ITS BANKRUPTCY.

The new features of the deepening crisis of capitalism must also be taken into account. One of these is what has become known as “jobless growth” or “jobless recovery”. This has become a feature of capitalism world-wide. As the various economies come out of the current recession, and begin to show growth, even if hesitant, in terms of production and profitability, there is no concurrent drop in unemployment, as occurred with previous recessions. Unemployment remains at a high level. Jobs which have been destroyed are not replaced by new jobs. In fact what new employment there is is mostly of a part-time, fixed-term contract or self-employed character, without the benefits or guarantees associated with full-time work. At the same time, those remaining in full-time employment are constantly faced with the threat of job insecurity. This is certainly the case in Britain.

This shows that the bourgeoisie cannot solve the crisis and illustrates the fact that the scientific and technical revolution is not being used by them to benefit society, as it has the potential to do, but is having a negative effect. They do not put the well-being of the working class and people at the centre, but in this respect treat workers as appendages of technology used in the service of maximising profits.

(c) PARTY MUST NOT STRIVE FOR POWER FOR ITSELF. In formulating the Draft Programme, it is crucial that the British parliamentary system is deeply understood, its profoundly absolutist character, its opposition to the working class and other working people governing themselves.

It is also instructive to examine the experience of the Soviet Union of Lenin and Stalin and Albania under the leadership of Enver Hoxha, which were states where the working class was in power, which were run in the interests of the working people and where the

political processes ensured representation in the interests of the working class and people. These were the most advanced examples to date of states with democratic political processes. However, lessons can also be drawn from the fact that the socialist system was destroyed in these countries. A further advance was necessary which would have enabled the working people to actually govern themselves and not depend on representatives.

(d) THOSE IN POWER HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WELL-BEING OF SOCIETY.

Further attention in formulating the Draft Programme should be paid to what is the overall attitude of the bourgeoisie at this time. In recent times, governments have made the central focus of their policies the making of maximum capitalist profit by the monopolies and oligopolies. In pursuit of this aim in Britain for 20 years successive governments have made, along with privatisation, the cutting of public spending the main plank of their policy.

In previous times, governments had been willing to give guarantees of public well-being, at least in words. In fact the idea could be said to have come into being with the rise of capitalism and the very development of the modern nation state. However reluctant to embrace the idea were the ruling class and however inadequate the provision, the very fact of taking on the responsibility to run a national economy embracing an entire population implied a responsibility for the nation’s welfare. In the late 19th century this took the form of major public works; post-Second World War it took the form of the “Welfare State” which, even given that the motive behind this development was more staving off socialism and making profits for the monopolies than concern for the working people, it meant that the state was openly taking upon itself the responsibility for the well-being of the people.

Now, however, the governments justify their policies of public spending cuts by claiming that society has no obligation to provide the means or guarantees for the well-being of the members of society. They say that people must fend for themselves, that the families must provide. However, in modern highly integrated society, with large scale

production, families clearly cannot provide education, health, employment, culture, all that is needed. In the modern age people are born to society and society must provide all the necessities at the highest available level for every member of the society, irrespective of wealth, position, national background, gender, lifestyle or any other characteristic. If a system is such that those in power are unable or unwilling to meet this obligation then the only conclusion is that the system no longer meets modern requirements and must be overthrown and replaced with one that will. This theoretical consideration also must be taken into account in formulating a Draft Programme.

3. IDEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are a number of ideological considerations which must be taken into account in developing the Draft Programme.

(a) **THIS SYSTEM CANNOT GIVE RISE TO SOCIALISM.** The working class must have no illusions that this system can of itself give rise to socialism. As mentioned in Section 1 above, in its last monopoly phase, capitalism can have no other aim but to secure maximum capitalist profit for the monopolists themselves. If the monopolists were to act in any other way, they would cease to be capitalists and their system would cease to be capitalism. Thus the monopolists have no way out of the present crisis, even if they were to demonstrate a will to find one.

The working class must also have no illusions about the Labour Party. At the turn of the century, the establishment of the Labour Party was a big advance for the workers, a recognition of the fact that their interests were not served by any of the parties in Parliament and that they had to establish their own party. But over the period since then the links between the working class movement and the Labour Party have become a millstone around the necks of the workers, have turned into something which is preventing them taking up politics themselves. In its periods of power the Labour Party has shown itself again and again to be a party of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. Its policies at present differ in no fundamental way from those of the Conservatives. It too claims that progress depends primarily on the success

and competitiveness of "business". It must be remembered too that the present cuts in public services began with the Callaghan government of the late 1970s, not with the Thatcher government. Its present claim to electability is quite unashamedly that it can manage the capitalist economy better than the Tories can. On political and constitutional questions, none of its proposals, not even those of its most radical wing, challenge the outmoded absolutist Cabinet system of government or the monopolisation of political life by the major parties.

(b) **ONLY THE WORKING CLASS CAN LEAD.** The working class must have no illusions that any other class force can lead the society out of the present crisis and open up the way to the new socialist society. It is only the working class, the unique product of capitalism and large scale production, the producer of all the material blessings of society, which has the revolutionary capacity, the numbers, the position in society, the lack of any other interests than to end its own exploitation, that can lead all the other sections of the working people out of the crisis and bring about fundamental change.

(c) **THE WORKING CLASS MUST NOT - CONFINE ITSELF TO ECONOMIC STRUGGLE.** The working class must reject the notion that it should wage the industrial and economic struggle whilst the political struggle should be left to the politicians, particularly to the Labour Party. This is becoming increasingly important when the TUC are saying precisely this, while at the same time giving the working class no lead or a diversionary lead in the economic struggles. The so-called "Left" oppose this position by saying that all that is needed is to wage the economic struggle in the old way but more militantly, but they too want the workers to leave politics to the politicians. It is, of course, both inevitable and essential for the workers to wage the economic struggle, they have no choice, but they must take up the political struggle themselves as well. The breaking down of the alliance between the financial oligarchy and the labour aristocracy, the rejection of the Labour Party by workers and their disillusion with trade union leaders, is in fact opening the way for workers to become political themselves and take up a modern class

consciousness, a consciousness of the need to take a lead in building a new society on the basis of modern definitions. In this way a space has been created for the working class. This is an important consideration in formulating the Draft Programme.

(d) **NOTHING MUST BE LEFT TO CHANCE.** The working class must have no illusions that change will come about spontaneously. Only if it acts consciously and in an organised way can it fulfil its historic mission. Only if it adheres to its own independent class outlook, follows its own independent and worked-out aims and programme, can any progress be made.

4. IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

In formulating the Draft Programme and further developing it, the necessity to wage ideological struggle must be borne in mind:

(a) **THE PROGRAMME MUST MOBILISE THE MAXIMUM.** As privatisation and cutbacks in social programmes pick up speed and as the petty bourgeoisie and even the middle strata are being squeezed, the working class necessarily has to have a programme incorporating its interests. It is a space which must not be ignored in formulating a draft programme. The Draft Programme must be formulated in such a way that it opens up the maximum space and is designed to involve and mobilise around it, and around the working class, the maximum sections of society. The middle strata, for instance, must see it as the draft programme for their emancipation as well as that for the emancipation of the working class. The Draft Programme must oppose any sectarianism, any preoccupation with narrow interests. It must oppose all dogmatism.

(b) **MAIN BLOW MUST BE AGAINST KEY ENEMY.** The Draft Programme must be formulated so as to isolate and strike the main blow against the key enemy: against the neo-liberal policies of the bourgeoisie, with their return to medievalism and the withdrawal of guarantees for the well-being of all members of society, and against the apologists for these policies in the working class movement.

5. THE OBJECTIVE SITUATION

(a) **ECONOMY.** The economic situation is characterised by high unemployment, “jobless growth”, and the phenomenon of the rich getting richer and poor poorer.

Production and profitability continue to rise, while unemployment remains at a high level. Manufacturing output in the second quarter of 1994 was 4.2% higher than a year before while profits rose by 17.3% from those of the second quarter of 1993. An unexpected drop in manufacturing output in August suggested that the pace of the recovery may be slowing. Figures show that dividends quadrupled from 1984-1994 and continued to rise all through the recession. In September the official figure for unemployment fell again to 9.2% (2,580,000), compared with 10.4% a year previously. But this figure is masked by the fact that many of the new jobs continue to be part-time or self-employed, and that many who are unemployed are excluded from the count. The Unemployment Unit estimates (September 1994) that 12.5% (3,518,000) want jobs but cannot get them. Meanwhile latest Inland Revenue estimates show a distinct increase in inequality in 1992, with the share of the top 5% rising from 35% in 1990 to 37%, that of the top 10% from 47% to 49%. In 1990 the top 25% owned 71% of the wealth while the bottom 50% owned only 7%.

The economic policy of the government continues to be one of privatisation and the cutting of public spending. The whole economy is geared towards the needs of the big monopolies and the international creditors.

In the Keynesian period this was done through the state directly supplying cheap transport, steel and so on for the monopolies, whereas now the policy is for the state, having made huge investments in these sectors, to hand them back to the private sector at knockdown prices, for instance the sale of Rover to BAe for £100 million or the sell off of the railways, where the track, stations and so on are provided and the capitalists simply step in and make money. In his November 8 speech to the CBI, Chancellor Kenneth Clarke announced that private sector capital will be invited to finance all public sector capital projects, such that businesses will charge the state for leasing

facilities or for providing services. Kenneth Clarke insisted that there would be “no target rates of return or profit caps” for such projects.

The justification for such policies is the idea that everyone benefits if business is successful. This is the whole basis for government policy. The policy of low inflation is intended to benefit business in the international market. Cutting the deficit is a policy of cutting back on social spending to hand over money to the creditors. Kenneth Clarke openly says that “we took £15 billion out of public spending last year without threatening our priorities”, and this year he is planning to take out even more.

The claim is made by the government that they follow a policy of “non-intervention”, that they do not run the economy, that business does, all the government can do is create the right climate for wealth creation. But what happens in reality is that the government intervenes on a massive scale, without consultation with the people, setting the whole direction of the economy and ensuring it is run in the interests of big business.

The growth in the British economy that is taking place is increasingly in the so-called “global market”, while the service sector is largely stagnant. The government talks of a healthy economy on the basis that non-inflationary growth is occurring, and that this growth is in export markets. The success stories are said to be companies such as Rover which are growing on the basis of seizing markets abroad instead of worrying about the domestic market. During the 1980s a large number of the Midlands manufacturing sector restructured to focus on the international rather than the domestic market with, for instance, Lucas now doing a minority of their business within Britain. The enthusiasm among business and political parties for the European Union also reflects this enthusiasm to compete in the international market at the expense of meeting the needs of the national economy. Behind the talk of producing for the global economy is the aim of competing more fiercely in the competition between the different monopolies.

It would not be going too far to say that all this reflects a move on a world scale to destroy the national economies, the maintenance of which has been seen as a responsibility of governments since the rise of the modern nation

state. The best example of this is the European Union, where all national barriers are being broken down in the interest of the monopolies. People, however, do not live in a “global economy” or even within a European economy, but within distinct national economies. Such moves can therefore only be to their detriment.

At the same time the militarisation of the economy continues, with a colossal £22.5 billion on defence spending announced in the November Budget, with rises projected for the years ahead. Meanwhile recently revealed scandals concerning Britain’s burgeoning arms trade highlight collusion with the most oppressive regimes and the dangers to world peace as well as the damage to the economy caused by such militarisation.

All the statistics related to people’s wealth, such as consumer spending, the amount of poverty, the number of mortgages being taken out, private car purchases and so on, show that things are getting worse for the people despite the recovery. Unemployment, as mentioned above, appears to be falling, but this reflects both people dropping out of the workforce as well as a growth in part-time and self employed work at the expense of full-time jobs. Every week it is announced that a major company – water, oil, gas or whatever – is eliminating hundreds or thousands of jobs. This is the story which accompanied the recession of the early 1980s, but now it is taking place at a time when a “stable and sustainable recovery” is occurring. So a “healthy economy” occurs alongside increased poverty and degradation for the people. What this shows is that the economy is not directed towards meeting the needs of the people, which should be the only aim of an economy, but to something else.

A situation exists in which more is being taken out of the economy than is being put in. If this were not so, there would be no reason why there should not be rising production which could free more values produced to be invested in social programmes. But if in society there is a check on social production in such a way that its fruits are expropriated privately, such an equation will not work. It does not matter what the level of social production is, social programmes will remain minimal. At the present time, not only does this equation not work, but another factor has been added. As mentioned above, private interests are taking over various

state sectors in order to make maximum profits for themselves. If society is to meet its responsibilities to its members, this trend will have to be reversed. More will have to be put into the economy than is taken out.

In the face of the worsening economic situation, the last months have seen rising anger amongst the workers and increased refusal to accept the effects of the government policies of privatisation and public spending cuts. This was seen in the long struggle of the signal workers. Struggles in the fields of education and health, in particular, continue. In all these struggles there is growing frustration with the attempts of the trade union leaders to keep these struggles within narrow confines.

What becomes increasingly clear is that, as was pointed out in the draft document "There is a Way Out of the Crisis", the fundamental struggle in Britain is between capitalism and socialism, as can be seen in the necessity to create a new society. It is manifesting itself between those who are using the pretext of the "private sector" as the basis of prosperity, in order to plunder the state treasury and block the path to progress for their own benefit, and those who are demanding public guarantees for the well-being of all. A vigorous class struggle is raging on the issue of the social spending cuts, a war designed on the one hand to take society back to medievalism and on the other to take it forward towards the creation of a new system fit for human beings. A great space has opened to broaden this struggle. It is the working class which must lead this battle and it is this battle which must be the focus of its independent programme, in terms of the immediate aim of blocking the government and the monopolies in their drive to shift the burden of the economic crisis onto the shoulders of the workers, and the long-term aim of creating a socialist society.

(b) POLITICS. Events continue to emphasise the archaic nature of the political institutions and processes. Apart from the widening of the franchise, which took until 1928 to become universal, these institutions and processes remain unchanged in fundamental features since the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and its immediate aftermath. Sovereignty in Britain rests, as it has done since 1688, with what is called in constitutional terms the monarch-in-parliament, not with the people.

Over the centuries which followed 1688, this sovereign power of the monarch-in-parliament became concretised in the development of the party system and the dominance of the Cabinet representing the majority party. The Cabinet of the party with the majority in the House of Commons wields executive power. However, this Cabinet can be eliminated by a no-confidence motion, while if a majority emerged in parliament hostile to the bourgeoisie it could be removed by the royal prerogative, which can bring the armed forces into the picture. It is parliament with the royal prerogative which has absolute rule and is sovereign. The only role of the electorate is to file through the polling stations every four or five years to choose between candidates already selected by the major parties. The role of the big political parties is primarily a propaganda one to obscure the real issues and to prevent the masses of the people playing any role even in discussing, let alone resolving, the problems of the day. The lack of a Constitution, let alone a modern one based on modern definitions, means there is no yardstick by which arbitrary legislation may be measured or the rights of the people defined. For example, the government was able quite arbitrarily to legislate away the centuries-old right of silence recently in the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act.

All these institutions, processes and practices act as a block to the empowerment of the people, to a realisation of their right to govern themselves which is consistent with the modern requirements of democracy. This situation has led to a widespread discontent among the different sections of society, particularly with politicians and the political parties. There is growing demand for change. It is imperative that this discontent and demand for change finds a direction which will open up a path to the solution of this problem. Mechanisms must be found to empower the people, to break the monopoly of the big political parties – whose combined membership hardly reaches 2% of the population – on the selection of candidates. Serious political theory or debate does not exist in official circles or, for that matter, in political life generally. It is taken as read that the Westminster model, the Eurocentrist values of free market, private property, pluralism and "representative democracy", which the big powers of Europe

and North America are attempting to impose on the whole world, are unchallengeable and good for all time.

The working class must fight for the sovereignty of the people. The legislature, or parliament, must be subordinate to the people and the executive power subordinate to the legislative power.

(c) RIGHTS. A situation exists in Britain in which no rights are recognised as inviolable. No rights are recognised simply by dint of being human.

The Draft Programme must therefore take into account the necessity for inviolable rights simply by dint of being a human being. This must be the starting point. These rights cannot be given or taken away. What was fought for in the Civil War was civil rights due to those with property. Those with nothing had no rights. This situation has prevailed to the present day. In the modern times, the first claim must be simply the claim to be provided with all those things a human being requires in order to be human. This means that each society, according to its level, must provide its members with everything they require to assert their humanity. As basic needs are satisfied, then more and greater needs are created, which also require satisfaction. Having established this, people also have claims on the basis of the collectives to which they belong. Thus people have claims by dint of being women, workers, national minorities and so on. Women, for instance, who are experiencing a broad attack on their economic, social and physical well-being, especially in the sphere of health-care and child support, must have their rights guaranteed. By virtue of their participation not only in the production of real life but also its reproduction, women have claims upon society to guarantee their health, safety and well-being, as well as that of the younger generation. Workers must be guaranteed rights by dint of being workers, the producers of all the wealth in society. Society must ensure that their right to job security, to the highest living standards possible within the present conditions and to working conditions which pose no danger to their persons are guaranteed. Similarly, national minorities must be guaranteed the right to their own languages and culture, youth to education and employment, and the claims of the new-born, the children, the

poor, the disabled, the elderly must all be recognised.

There is at present in Britain no acceptable definition of citizenship, or of the rights and duties of citizens. In fact, through the 1981 British Nationality Act the state has mischievously mixed up citizenship and nationality, thus creating different classes of citizen, encouraging discrimination and giving the green light to the most backward elements to attack and even murder the national minorities. The lack of a Constitution defining concepts of citizenship and rights and duties of citizens, perpetuates the arbitrary, racist and thoroughly undemocratic acts of the state in this field. There is therefore a need for a modern definition of citizenship, which will be based simply on the fact of being a human being and resident in the country, and on no other criterion.

Meanwhile on the question of rights the bourgeoisie creates various diversions and myths which prevent the working class and people acting together to achieve their rights. Thus for instance, through the official policies of “multiculturalism” and “positive discrimination” the bourgeoisie ghettoises the various sections and interests among the people and thus decimates the people’s forces.

While the state and its laws are overtly racist – the British Nationality Act, the Immigration Acts – the government propagates the view that racism is a problem among the people, of people of different backgrounds not getting on with each other. Thus they obscure the source of racism and divide the people. At the same time they support, promote and incite various fascist organisations and gangs, as well as to be a reserve to attack the progressive forces, to create panic and to divert from the fact that it is the state itself which promotes racism and fascism in order to protect the bourgeoisie.

Arising out of these considerations of rights by dint of being human as well as by belonging to various collectives is the need for culture, in the broadest sense of the term, based on this humanity and these rights and serving modern political requirements and the development of the productive forces. Also it must be seen that the question of protecting the environment is not an abstract or sentimental question, but one of guarding against destruction of the environment or damage to it where this endangers human existence.

(d) SOVEREIGNTY AND THE STATE. The government continues to stubbornly defend the status quo of the Union of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In fact on December 2 John Major said that his party would defend the Union “with every fibre of our being”. The Labour Party too, while advocating a Parliament for Scotland and an Assembly for Wales, does not question the dominance of Westminster or accept the right of self-determination of these nations. Neither of these positions deals with the deeply entrenched injustice of the situation.

The British state as presently constituted was organised not along national lines but on the basis of the suppression of the peoples of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, on the one hand, and on the basis of the inter-colonial competition and plunder and conquering of the world, on the other. It must also be noted that Scotland was only united with England in 1707 by decision of a Scottish Parliament of traitorous elements in which the people had no representation. At the present time, the British state has further compromised sovereignty by its membership of the European Union and its moves, however tentative, towards further monetary and political integration. The fact is that the British state as presently constituted acts as a block to progress, to the fulfilment of the rights of all the nations which it oppresses, and is alien to both modern times and circumstances.

On northern Ireland, the British government has been forced to acknowledge for the first time in history the right of self-determination of the Irish people, in order primarily to free its hands to contend for influence in the world with the other big powers in this time of disequilibrium and redivision of the world. It refuses however to carry this to its logical conclusion, despite the pledge by Dublin not to take the north by force and despite the IRA cease-fire opening the path to peace. It will not take the logical and key step to peace of pledging to withdraw from the north of Ireland and to cease to interfere in the affairs of the Irish people. It stubbornly continues to manoeuvre so as to remain the arbiter of any progress.

A starting point for the working class leading the way out of the emerging constitutional crisis would be the establishment of modern sovereign states for the people of

each nation. Therefore, along with British withdrawal from Ireland, the working class should call for the replacement of the archaic and enslaving state of the United Kingdom with modern sovereign states of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, with a free and equal union between them if they so desire, along with withdrawal from the European Union.

The working class must take the lead in this work to establish modern states in which the people will be sovereign. It must carry out this work on the basis of the unity of the British working class and unity with the working class of Ireland and of all other countries. This work must be an important part of the Draft Programme of the working class.

Britain should also renounce immediately all claim to sovereignty over such territories as Gibraltar and the Malvinas which it still holds in colonial sway and hand them back to their respective rightful owners.

(e) FOREIGN POLICY. As it pushes medievalism in domestic policy, so the British government does the same in foreign policy.

In the Queen’s Speech on November 16, it was stated that the government will seek to enhance the role of the CSCE, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. It is to be recalled that the founding document of this CSCE was the Paris Charter, signed in November 1990 by all the countries of Europe, with the exception of Albania, which signed later, together with Canada and the US. This document was a declaration of the bourgeoisie of Europe, the US and Canada, under the sway of the monopolies, to impose on the whole world their conceptions of “free market economy”, pluralism and human rights, and to enslave the world anew with these Eurocentrist values. It is this pursuit which the government intends to strengthen. Britain’s foreign policy is based on advancing “Britain’s interests”, by which is meant not the benefit of the people but that of the monopolies and oligopolies. Thus a central plank of British foreign policy is further integration in the European Union. As Douglas Hurd said on October 10: “Our interest lies in steering Europe our way, rather than pretending we belong to another continent”. This promotion of the interests of the monopolies is resulting not only in a loss of sovereignty, with all national barriers being broken down in the further

integration in the European Union, but to the further creation of a bloc which, together with the other emerging blocs, threatens world peace. British foreign policy further endangers peace with its membership of the warmongering NATO alliance, now assuming authority to operate outside the European area, its continuing enormous defence spending and increasing development of a world-wide arms trade.

As well as continuing to cling on to various colonial territories such as Gibraltar and the Malvinas Islands, the British state continues to maintain unequal relations with various of its former colonies, in both economic and political/constitutional terms. Thus, for instance, the Privy Council in London remains the final court of appeal for a number of countries, while the British monarch remains the Head of State for these and other countries. In such ways Britain continues to impose its will on parts of the world. This imperial legacy cannot be accepted in the modern age.

In a world situation characterised by growing disequilibrium, the big powers, including Britain, openly reject the principles laid down at the end of the Second World War of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and of the peaceful coexistence of different systems. They follow the medieval diktat of "might is right", giving themselves the right to intervene anywhere they consider it suits their interest, even abandoning the long-held principle of not interfering in a civil war in another country, either using the UN Security Council as their instrument or ignoring it as they see fit. While contending with each other to redivide the world in the new situation, the big powers collude with each other in their interventions, as Russia agreed not to oppose the US intervention in Haiti if the US did the same regarding its interventions in Georgia, Chechnya and other countries of the former Soviet Union. Any countries which stand up against the big powers, such as Cuba or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, are subjected to the most brutal pressure. As the big powers form themselves into blocs, so the danger of greater conflict, of world war, increases. The foreign policy of the big powers is to contend with each other for hegemony while colluding with one another against revolution.

With the Cold War certainties over, what makes the prevailing instability so dangerous is

that the US thinks and acts as if the world is unipolar even though events continuously reveal its inability to definitively set the agenda any more. Either other big powers stand in the way or else countries which the US wants to target, such as Cuba or North Korea, remain defiant. Moreover, the emergence of middle-level powers such as India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Brazil, Mexico and others – who have aspirations of their own – has meant growing contesting of the US hegemony both regionally and globally.

The Draft Programme must include the demand for a modern foreign policy which bases itself on the principles of the equality of all sovereign states, of non-intervention and opposition to all military blocs like NATO and to all trade blocs like the EU. There must be democratisation of international affairs, including reform of the United Nations, especially its Security Council, by abolishing the veto and enlarging its composition on a geographically equitable basis. A new, stable and just equilibrium will also have to involve the abolition of international financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank in the way they are presently constituted.

6. FORMS OF ORGANISATION AND METHODS OF STRUGGLE

As the Draft Programme will be presented by the Party and the aim must be to develop it by ongoing discussion in the working class and other sections of the working people, appropriate forms of organisation and methods of struggle must be developed. The Party must immediately organise a national programme to disseminate on a wide scale the Draft Programme.

RCPB(ML) will popularise the following Draft Programme, continue to elaborate on its theory and its theoretical and ideological considerations, and organise the working class to take it up as its own and prepare the conditions for its implementation. This Draft Programme which is dedicated to the cause of the working class will only come into force with the working class taking it up as its own. This remains the goal of this work of RCPB(ML) at the present time.

DRAFT PROGRAMME

With the aim of formulating a Programme for the working class, the following Draft Programme is presented for ongoing discussion in the working class and other sections of the working people.

IMMEDIATE PROGRAMME

1. RIGHTS. The starting point must be that the working class calls for the recognition of inviolable rights. These rights can neither be given nor taken away. Having established that all people have inviolable rights simply by dint of being human, then further particular rights, also inviolable, must be guaranteed by dint of people being part of various collectives, that is for instance, being women, being workers, being national minorities, and so on. There must also be a modern definition of citizenship and the recognition that society must provide for all citizens all the benefits of society at the highest available level. The working class therefore calls for:

Recognition that all individuals are born to society and thus that all have inviolable rights simply by dint of being human. People must also have guaranteed rights by dint of being workers, of being women, of being youth, of being children, of being elderly, of being national minorities, of being disabled, and so on.

Full and equal citizenship for all resident in country irrespective of national background. All citizens must have equal rights irrespective of their position, wealth, ability, the colour of their skin, national background, religion, gender, lifestyle, political beliefs or any other characteristics. The benefits of society must be available at the highest level to all citizens irrespective of any of these characteristics.

Enabling legislation to guarantee the right to life, to a livelihood, to education, health care, housing and security during old age.

2. ECONOMY. Financing social programmes must be seen as an investment in the future and not a waste. It cannot be accepted that the state can afford to repay the creditors but cannot afford the necessary social programmes. It cannot be accepted that more should be taken out of the economy than is put in. The militarisation of the economy, with all its attendant dangers, must be stopped. The working class therefore calls for:

More to be put into the economy than is taken out.

A reversal in the cuts in public spending – more to be invested in education, health care and other social programmes.

A moratorium on national debt repayment.

An end to the militarisation of the economy.

The people themselves to decide the direction of the economy.

3. POLITICS. It is clear that the working people cannot exercise control over their lives without political power. Sovereignty must lie with the people. They cannot accept a political process which leads to the monopolisation of political life by the big parties or the imposition of candidates for election by these parties. There must be a stage before elections where the working people can select candidates from their own workplaces, educational institutions and communities. The working class therefore demands:

Democratic renewal of the political process.

Election candidates to be selected by the people.

A modern Constitution based on modern definitions.

4. CULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT. Culture must serve the people and environmental issues must be seen in the light of what is in the interests of human beings. The working class therefore strives for:

A culture based on humanity and on inviolable rights; a culture serving modern political requirements and serving the development of the productive forces.

and calls for:

Laws which protect the environment in the interests of human existence.

5. SOVEREIGNTY AND THE STATE. The British state as presently constituted acts as a block to progress and denies the right of self-determination of the nations it oppresses. The sovereignty of these nations is further compromised by Britain's membership of the European Union. The working class therefore calls for:

British withdrawal from Ireland and an end to British interference in the affairs of the Irish people.

Modern sovereign states of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, and a free and equal union between them if they so desire.

Withdrawal from the European Union.

Withdrawal from the Malvinas, Gibraltar and other colonial territories.

6. FOREIGN POLICY. Britain must give up all remnants of its colonial past. A modern foreign policy is needed based on the principles of the equality of all sovereign states, of non-intervention and opposition to all military blocs like NATO and to all trade blocs like the EU. There must be democratisation of the United Nations, especially its Security Council, by abolishing the veto and enlarging its composition on a geographically equitable basis. The working class therefore calls for:

An end to all Britain's colonial and neo-colonial relations.

Recognition of the equality of all nations, big and small.

Non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries.

Democratisation of international affairs, including reform of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council.

Recognition of the right of all peoples of the world to live according to the system of their choice.

British withdrawal from NATO.

THE IMMEDIATE PROGRAMME can therefore be summarised by the following principles:

- (1) Recognition of All Inviolable Rights.**
- (2) More into the Economy than is Taken Out.**
- (3) Democratic Renewal of the Political Process.**
- (4) Recognition of the Inviolable Right of all Peoples to Determine Their Own Affairs Nationally and Internationally.**

STRATEGIC PROGRAMME

The strategic aim of the working class is the creation of the conditions for the emancipation of the working class and for the opening up of the path for the progress of society, mobilising all the exploited in order to establish a modern system according to modern definitions and creating a modern socialist society on this basis. The working class supports the workers of all countries in their struggles for national and social emancipation.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Ongoing discussion will be organised on the Draft Programme in the working class and amongst all sections of the people. Forms of organisation and methods of struggle consistent with this work will be developed to carry this out, such as the establishment of Draft Programme Groups.