

Debriefing of a Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) Source

Introduction and Work as a Close Contact

HN106 introduction to the RCP was arranged through paper sales and public political meetings. Because of his previous involvement on the periphery of the Spartacist League of Britain (SLB) and with the Revolutionary Marxist Tendency (RMT), HN106 felt reasonably familiar with the highly political atmosphere of the RCP. His fluency on political matters and his obvious maturity made him easily recognizable to leading members of the RCP as a close contact and possible candidate member. There would appear to be a slight danger (in London) in becoming immersed in the huge number of potential contacts that the RCP attempts to run with inadequate supervision. A reasonably unusual background and some political fluency was an obvious asset in this instance.



2. During a conversation with [redacted] it was casually announced that the leading members of the RCP expected State agencies to make efforts to penetrate the group. [redacted] felt that the obvious way for the security agencies to achieve this was through the large number of university and polytechnic students that the RCP seemed readily to attract. The RCP deliberately worked its students hard and was prepared to accept examination failures as this would minimize the risks of state penetration, it being argued that no agent would be prepared to blight his career for the state. As a consequence leading members of the RCP paid much greater attention to younger inexperienced candidate members that they did to HN106.

3. The first six to nine months of a contacts association is generally the most testing time for individuals; a conscious effort is made to place new contacts under strain from active work schedules and large amounts of theoretical reading. Each contact is assigned to a full member for supervision. The schedule for a full working day for an unemployed member can be quite daunting - a working day of 12-16 hours is generally the norm.

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[REDACTED]

4. [HN106] reported that a misdemeanour system operated at the Brixton office. He stated, further, that the system is taken seriously by all candidates (and by more long standing members.) Lapses of duties are frequent, due in the main to the grindingly boring nature of average RCP activity. Good candidate members with good discipline records could be expected to be approached for full membership after 6-9 months. It should be noted that many RCP contacts fail to meet the required standards for membership.

5. [HN106] always retained a political distance between himself and RCP, criticising its concentration on the two issues of Ireland and colour and difficulties in agreeing policy on Gays, Woman and USSR. This enabled him to refuse membership without loss of credibility. The RCP continued to want his assistance because of his age and maturity, his reliability, his "being waged" and paying dues and the fact that he had transport that was used on RCP work.

Members views on the RCP:

6. [HN106] was intrigued by the apparently sustained interest and support given by new candidate members and contacts to the activities of the group. Much of the motivation seems to be generated by the careerist structure of the group: a new entrant is faced with a complicated set of rules and regulations, and a strong authoritarian line which encourages discipline and commitment.

7. Competition amongst new recruits appears to be formidable. This is encouraged through group instruction which is heavily political in flavour. Contacts are assigned to an established member for training and supervision

[REDACTED]

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Social and sexual pressures within RCP

8. [HN106] stressed that RCP could only survive by developing and sustaining the dedication of members from an early age. Although marriage was accepted and would be held, in a limited way, as an excuse for reduced commitment, RCP maintained its pressure at the point of rupturing marriages particularly where one party was hostile to or indifferent to RCP politics.
9. Heterosexual relationships were frequent and with a variety of partners within the group. Members slept with members but a relationship with a contact would be frowned upon.
10. RCP adopted an intellectually permissive attitude to homosexuality stressing the human rights of people to express their own sexuality. Once joined by the Gay Revolutionary Caucus their sexual politics were thrown into turmoil by the open sight of male homosexuality and cases of seduction.

RCP and Trade Union membership

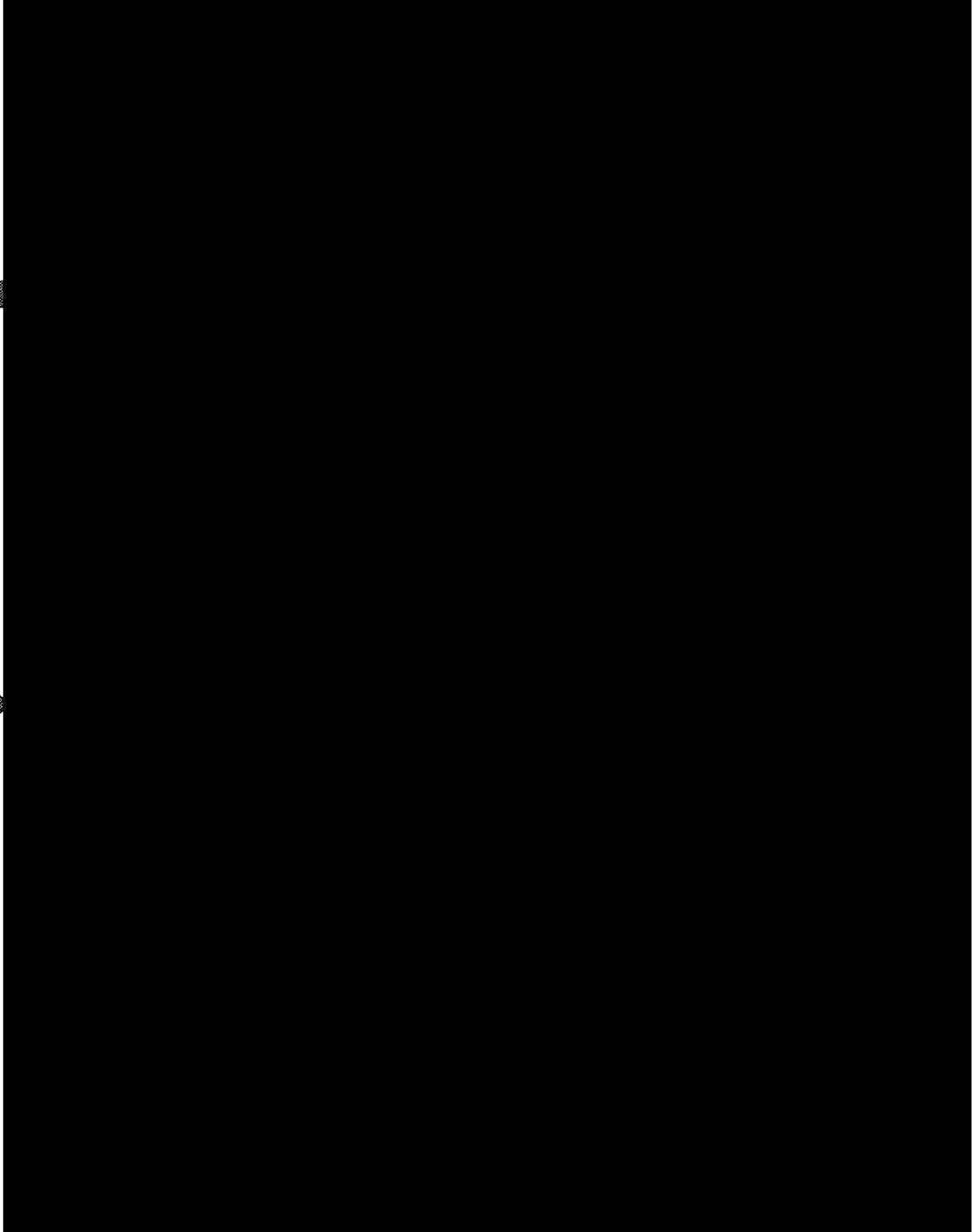
11. [HN106] was a member of T and G W U through a branch office. RCP took no interest in his employer or work situation but wanted him to be active at branch level and aspire to membership of a Trades Council. [HN106] avoided this without apparent loss of credibility and allowed his membership of T and G W U to lapse.

[HN106] talked of the continued ambivalent attitude within RCP to trade unions and to the issue of the closed shop. Some saw trade unions as an obvious expression of working class power and thought membership should be compulsory others stressed the oppressive bureaucratic trade union leadership which always "sold out to capitalism".

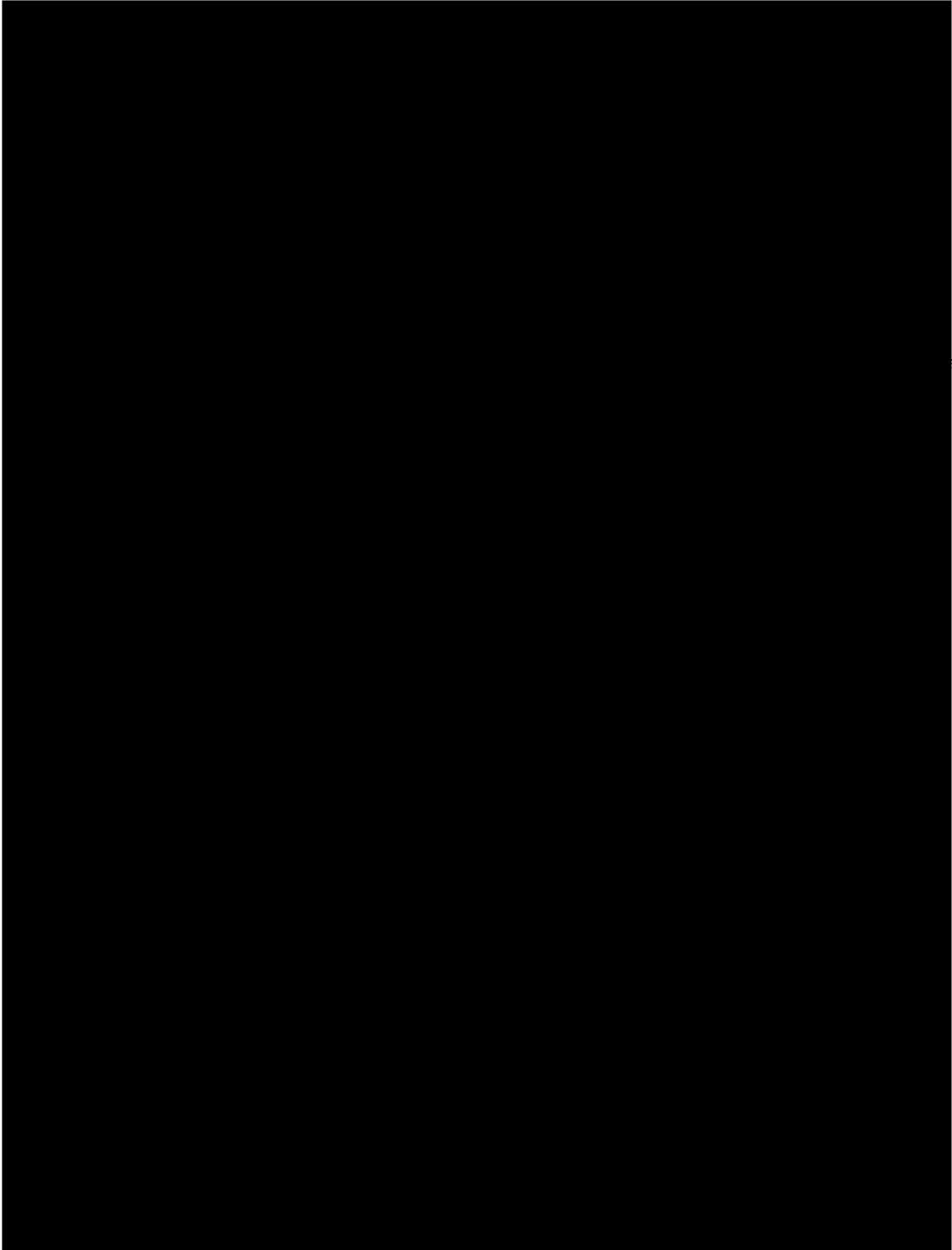
- [REDACTED]
12. The following are [HN106] impressions of [REDACTED] RCP members he was associated with [REDACTED] during the past two and a half years.
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

HN106 provided information on four individuals connected with the RCP.



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Future Developments in RCT activity:

13. During the final part of our discussion, [HN106] outlined his views on the future developments in RCP policy. In general he felt that the pendulum was swinging away from the pro-violence and confrontational views held by leading members 1980-82. Whilst it is too early to detect a pattern in the development of RCP policy, [redacted] has at least indicated to [HN106] that he believed the party to have found the wrong balance in its activities. The cause of this, in [redacted] view, has been the over reaction of leading members to the criticism levelled by other groups at the RCT in the early days for its heavy intellectual approach.

14. [HN106] further believes that efforts in the provinces had met greater success both politically and in increased membership. Liverpool and Sheffield were considered to be the best examples. Future policy will undoubtedly involve the posting of experienced members to the provinces and the formation of new branches in Glasgow, Portsmouth, Bristol and Brighton.

[redacted]

17 October 1983