Pacific Journal of Mathematics

A NOTE ON $C\theta\theta$-GROUPS

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Vol. 39, No. 3 July 1971

PACIFIC JOURNAL OF MATHEMATICS
Vol. 39, No. 3, 1971

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L. R. FLETCHER

A $C\theta\theta$-group is a finite group of order divisible by 3 in which centralisers of 3-elements are 3-groups. Several authors have studied such groups; in particular it is known that, given the additional hypothesis that the Sylow 3-subgroups intersect trivially, a simple $C\theta\theta$-group has abelian Sylow 3-subgroups. In this note it is proved that this additional hypothesis is superfluous.

More precisely the following will be proved:

THEOREM. *Let G be a $C\theta\theta$-group in which $0^3(G) = G$ and let M be a Sylow 3-subgroup of G. Then M is a TI-set in G.*

The proof of the theorem depends on two lemmas:

LEMMA 1. *Let H be a $C\theta\theta$-group. If any element of order 3 in H is conjugate to its inverse; or, equivalently, if any 3-local subgroup of H has even order; then Sylow 3-subgroups of H are abelian and hence TI-sets in H.*

Proof. Suppose t is an element of order 3 in H conjugate to its inverse. Let T be a Sylow 3-subgroup of H such that $t \in T$. Now the extended centraliser $C_H^*(t)$ is a Frobenius group with the 3-group $C_H(t)$ as kernel. Since $|C_H^*(t) : C_H(t)| = 2$, $C_H(t)$ is abelian and every element in it is conjugate to its inverse. Now $Z(T) \leqslant C_H(t)$ so we may assume that $t \in Z(T)$. In this case $C_H(t) = T$ and so T is abelian.

LEMMA 2. *Let H be a $C\theta\theta$-group in which $0_3(H) > 1$. Then H is soluble and one of the following occurs:*
(i) *a Sylow 3-subgroup of H is normal in H*
(ii) $0^3(H) < H$.

Proof. Put $L = 0_3(H)$, $\bar{H} = H/L$. Suppose first that $|H|$ is even. Every element of L is conjugate to its inverse so, by Lemma 1, Sylow 3-subgroups of H are abelian. Clearly $L = C_H(L)$ is a Sylow 3-subgroup of H, case (i) arises, and $|\bar{H}|$ is prime to 3. $\bar{H}$ can now be regarded as a group of fixed-point-free automorphisms of L so, if p is odd, the Sylow p-subgroups of $\bar{H}$ are cyclic and the Sylow 2-subgroups are either cyclic or generalised quaternion. A group all of whose Sylow subgroups are cyclic is soluble. (See [2] Theorem 7.6.2.) On the other hand it is not difficult to show that a group having generalised quaternion Sylow 2-subgroups either involves A_4, the alternating group on 4 letters, or satisfies the hypotheses of Frobenius' theorem on the existence of a normal p-complement for $p = 2$. $|\bar{H}|$ is prime to 3 so $\bar{H}$ is soluble.

If $|H|$ is odd then it is well-known that H is soluble. Suppose that a Sylow 3-subgroup of H is not normal in H i.e., $|\bar{H}|$ is divisible by 3. A Sylow 3-subgroups of $\bar{H}$ can be regarded as a group of fixed-point-free automorphisms of $0_3'(\bar{H})$. Thus $\bar{H}$ has cyclic Sylow 3-subgroups. But the only 3'-automorphism of a cyclic 3-group has order 2 and $|\bar{H}|$ is odd. Hence, by Burnside's Theorem, $\bar{H}$ has a normal 3-complement; in particular $0^3(\bar{H}) < \bar{H}$ and so $0^3(H) < H$.

Proof of Theorem. Suppose M is not a TI-set in G. Then M is not abelian so, by Lemmas 1 and 2, the normaliser of every non-identity 3-subgroup of G is soluble and of odd order. In the terminology of [2], this means that the normaliser of every non-identity 3-subgroup is 3-constrained and 3-stable (see [2] p. 268) and so satisfies the conditions of [2] Theorem 8.2.11. Hence G satisfies the conditions of [2] Theorem 8.4.2. and 8.4.3.

Write $N = N(Z(J(M)))$. If N is of type (ii) in Lemma 2 then $M \cap N'$ is a proper subgroup of M. By [2] Theorem 8.4.3. $M \cap G'$ is a proper subgroup of M and so, by [2] Theorem 7.3.1. $0^3(G)$ is a proper subgroup of G. This is not the case and so N is of type (i) in Lemma 2.

Let M_0 be a maximal intersection of Sylow 3-subgroups of G contained in M. By the maximality of M_0, $M_0 = 0_3(N(M_0))$; by Lemma 2, $N(M_0)$ is soluble. Hence $C(M_0) \leqslant M_0$; in particular, $Z(M) \leqslant M_0$. Let $m \in Z(M)$ and $h \in N(M_0)$. $m, m^h \in M$ so by [2] Theorem 8.4.2. there is an element $n \in N$ such that $m^h = m^n$ i.e., $n.h^{-1} \in C(m)$. Clearly then $n.h^{-1} \in M \leqslant N$. Hence $h \in N$ and so $N(M_0) \leqslant N$. But N has a unique Sylow 3-subgroup, $N(M_0)$ does not. This contradiction proves that M is a TI-set in G.

COROLLARY. *A simple $C\theta\theta$-group has abelian Sylow 3-subgroup.*

Proof. This follows immediately from the theorem and work of Ferguson [1] and Herzog [3].

I am indebted to Mrs. Ferguson for letting me see a preliminary draft of her Ph.D. thesis.

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Received August 14, 1970.

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The *Pacific Journal of Mathematics* is published monthly. Effective with Volume 16 the price per volume (3 numbers) is $8.00; single issues, $3.00. Special price for current issues to individual faculty members of supporting institutions and to individual members of the American Mathematical Society: $4.00 per volume; single issues $1.50. Back numbers are available.

Subscriptions, orders for back numbers, and changes of address should be sent to Pacific Journal of Mathematics, 103 Highland Boulevard, Berkeley, California, 94708.

PUBLISHED BY PACIFIC JOURNAL OF MATHEMATICS, A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

Printed at Kokusai Bunken Insatsusha (International Academic Printing Co., Ltd.), 270, 3-chome Totsuka-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160, Japan.

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