

Enemies within the Working Class movement ...

number three.

REVISIONISM -
THE COMMUNIST PARTY
OF GREAT BRITAIN



COMMUNIST UNITY ASSOCIATION MARXIST LENINIST

WHAT IS REVISIONISM?

The socialist revolution must begin with the violent overthrow of the capitalist class by the working class, led by a revolutionary communist party. Whilst communists and workers would prefer to take power peacefully, it is clear that the capitalist state is armed to the teeth to prevent the socialist revolution, and the capitalists will resort to extreme violence against workers and communists to save their rotten system. No class has ever established its rule without using violence. So revolution, not 'peaceful transition', is an important principle of Marxism-Leninism.

The revisionist Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) has abandoned this and other principles as 'outdated'. In Britain, Northern Ireland and all over the world, the capitalists are using and threatening violence to suppress socialists and communists. But the revisionists ignore this reality and warn the workers 'not to be extreme in their demands, so as to avoid incurring the wrath of the capitalists'. Instead, they advise the working class to elect a parliamentary majority to 'legislate socialism' by peaceful means. The examples of Indonesia, Iraq, Greece and Chile, where armies have established fascist reigns of terror against democracy and communism, prove that restricting the working class to 'peaceful means' does not stay the hand of capitalism just by its moral example.

Revisionists, whilst claiming to support Marxism-Leninism, abandon everything in it which is not acceptable to the capitalists. After 'making peace' with the capitalists by renouncing revolution, the CPGB has been reduced to the left wing of the Labour Party which it trails behind.

HOW DOES THE CPGB TRAIL BEHIND THE LABOUR PARTY?

The CPGB is indistinguishable from the Labour Party in its sabotage of workers' economic and political struggles and in its support for British imperialism which is involved in economic plunder and aggression abroad.

The British army was sent to Northern Ireland by a Labour government and the 1974 minority Labour government extended the army's power there. Full support is given by the CPGB to these moves of British imperialism to maintain its domination in Ireland. Further abroad, British troops in the Middle East sultanate of Dhofar are committing acts of terror against the people on a scale usually associated only with the Portuguese or United States, supported by the Labour Party and the CPGB without a word of protest from either.

In the trades unions and tenants' associations, criticism of the Labour Party is greeted with hostility by the CPGB. They do not even have the courage to promote their own party at Labour's expense and do them the service of presenting the Labour Party as 'the only political alternative to the Tories'.

In the struggle against the Industrial Relations Act, the CPGB called off strike action in favour of simple 'non-registration' on the basis of an election promise from Labour. This gave the capitalists a breathing space to pick off one union at a time and has resulted in the NIRC plunder of AUEW assets.

Rent strikers have been viciously opposed by the CPGB which brands militant tenant leaders as 'adventurists' and even 'extremists', while demanding that rent strikes be called off, or restricted, and election pressure be put on the Labour Party.

When the Labour Party is in office, the CPGB abandons all struggle and steps up its policing of the trades unions and tenants' movement to maintain Labour's worthless 'social contract'. What the Tories are unable to achieve is imposed by the Labour and CPGB labour aristocrats.

WHERE DID IT ALL START ?

The CPGB has always been strongly influenced by the labour aristocracy (privileged sections of the working class) and the middle class. This influence corrupted the political line of the Party because their more comfortable living conditions made them forget or disregard the need for revolution and the long term aims of the Party.

During the years of the United Front against fascism, this opportunism was manifest in a failure to expose the Labour Party and a tendency to trim the Communist Party's aims to suit the Labour

Party, rather than maintaining the independence of the Communist Party, exposing Labour's compromises with fascism and winning the leadership of the United Front.

Most of the CPGB's activities are restricted to the economic struggle of the trades unions. This means restricting the workers to questions of wages and working conditions, which itself does not challenge the existence of the capitalist system. It is necessary to draw the workers into the political struggle for socialist revolution. This is the only way the working class can be trained to fight for its long-term interests in unity with the workers and peasants of Ireland and the colonies.

These errors resulted in the triumph of opportunism in the Party and the adoption of 'The British Road to Socialism' in 1952 which formally renounced revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Similar developments were taking place in communist parties all over the world. The flood gates of modern revisionism were opened by the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) held in 1956 when Khrushchev made a secret speech violently attacking Stalin, three years after his death, and renouncing revolution.

The struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism led by the Chinese and Albanian communist parties resulted in the 1957 meeting of world communist parties issuing a statement correcting the errors of the 20th Congress on 'peaceful transition' and on the 'tame' character of imperialism.

But the Soviet revisionists continued their appeasement and collaboration with imperialism and their sabotage of revolutionary struggles. Marxism-Leninism was upheld by the Chinese and Albanian parties in the face of immense opposition and provocation by the revisionists. This lead gave a new impetus to the struggle of anti-revisionists and Marxist-Leninists in the international communist movement whose principled stand came to a head around 1964 with the formation of anti-revisionist groups and Marxist-Leninist parties.

SHOULDN'T THEY HAVE
STAYED IN THE CPGB

TO WIN PEOPLE AND CHANGE THE POLICY ?

This is not possible. The leadership is too deeply and securely entrenched. The struggle of anti-revisionists following Albania's and China's lead was met with expulsions and the disbanding of whole branches of the Party. If there were democracy in the Party making it possible and worthwhile to carry out a struggle against revisionism inside the CPGB this would be useful in order to get the ear of its working class membership. But this is not a substitute for building a revolutionary party. An organisation would be necessary in order to direct this campaign of exposure which could not be restricted to within the CPGB.

Furthermore, politically the CPGB is indistinguishable from the Labour Party and has a fraction of its electoral support. By the same reasoning, it follows that Marxist-Leninists should be working to change the Labour Party too. These arguments to join the Labour Party or the CPGB, where they succeed in persuading working class fighters, serve to perpetuate the ability of social democracy to absorb workers' leaders and channel their energies into harmless legal and parliamentary channels.

It must be said that the Communist Party of Great Britain, despite the subjective feelings of some of its members to the contrary, is working to prevent socialist revolution and to disorganise the working class. It must be exposed as a faithful agent of capitalism and imperialism.

THE SOVIET UNION CAN'T BE CAPITALIST BECAUSE EVERYTHING IS STATE-OWNED.

State ownership does not mean socialism. Which class holds state power and the relations of production determine that. Production for the market and for profit is the hallmark of capitalist rel-

ations of production. Under the cover of production of 'socialist commodities' for the 'socialist market', capitalist relations now predominate in the Soviet Union. The rhetoric of the Soviet revisionists cannot conceal this. Little remains of the socialist planning of the Soviet economy according to people's needs. This has been replaced by a new type of planning where the most profitable sectors of the economy are extended at the expense of the people's needs. And new markets are sought at home and overseas. Warsaw Pact countries are being compelled to tailor their industries to the markets and requirements of the Soviet Union.

In the USSR, the managers of factories and enterprises have become a privileged stratum out of which the new ruling bourgeoisie has emerged. They have the right to hire and fire and sell state property. A right which they never had in Stalin's lifetime when such things were punishable under Soviet law.

Revisionism is a form of capitalist ideas in the working class movement, it does not stand somewhere between capitalism and socialism. The Soviet Union is not only a capitalist power today; it is a fully fledged imperialist power which is seeking colonial possessions and spheres of influence all over the world.

WHY SHOULD WORKERS SUPPORT A SMALL ORGANISATION LIKE THE CUA RATHER THAN THE CPGB?

The size of the party is not the most important thing. If its policy and programme are incorrect, it only means that more people are following an incorrect policy. Anyway, it is not just a question of giving support. The CUA is too weak an organisation to influence sizeable sections of the working class.

What must be built is a new revolutionary communist party which wages a consistent and determined struggle against social democracy and revisionism and which begins to win and train the working class

for the aim of socialist revolution. This party must firmly uphold the principle of anti-imperialism and proletarian internationalism. Such a party may be small for some time, but if it gives a correct lead to the working class it is sure to grow. The CPGB since it adopted 'The British Road to Socialism' and became the backside of the Labour Party, has lost most of its support.

WHY HASN'T AN ALTERNATIVE PARTY BEEN FORMED YET ?

The influence of the labour aristocracy and the middle class which corrupted and caused the degeneration of the CPGB is now acting to hold back forming a new party. It is necessary to learn the lessons of the history of the CPGB and not drift into similar errors. This, however, has happened, and since the formation of the anti-revisionist movement, new splits have occurred over questions of how to build the new party. Small group mentality, sectarianism and new attempts to revise Marxism-Leninism have occurred. This is not something to be laughed at, but something which shows that the struggle for a leading revolutionary line is a tortuous one which has to cut a path for itself through 1001 different capitalist influences aimed at corrupting revolutionary leadership.

HOW DO THE WORKERS KNOW THAT THIS NEW PARTY WON'T BECOME REVISIONIST ?

The workers do not know. Nor does anybody. Only by constantly fighting and remaining vigilant to the attempts of opportunism to lead the party on to an incorrect road can a leadership dedicated to revolution and the emancipation of the working class resist the attempts of capitalists to corrupt it with appeals to self-interest. For the communist party, this means firmly basing itself on

the lowest-paid and oppressed workers, and not on some sectional interest.

This means above all resisting the influence of the labour aristocracy which always pursues its own selfish interest in the working class movement and sabotages the economic and political struggles of the working class in order to secure privileges for itself.

In the Soviet Union, the Bolshevik Party ceased to be a party thoroughly dedicated to the working class and revolution not through the force of arms by the capitalists, but through capitalist ideas of self-interest which showed themselves in the revisionist ideas and policies of the Khrushchevites inside the Party.

SELF-INTEREST IS HUMAN NATURE, SO WON'T ALL COMMUNIST PARTIES BECOME CORRUPTED ?

Human nature is a class thing. There is capitalist human nature and working class, socialist human nature. The human nature of the capitalist class is guided by a striving for maximum profits, increased exploitation of the working class and ruining its competitors. The capitalist regards the private ownership of production as the natural order of things and anybody suffering from poverty and starvation should strive to become a capitalist like him. This is how the capitalists educate the workers to prevent them finding their real strength in unity, struggle, internationalism and proletarian revolution.

But the workers are forced to reject this in their struggle against the capitalists. The first sign of this is the formation of trades unions where the main slogan is 'Unity is Strength'. As individuals, the workers are powerless. But united, they are big and strong. This is the beginning of a different kind of human nature expressed in 'All for One and One for All'.

The socialist revolution to be successful must criticise and change

all capitalist ideas of self-interest and individualism which are likely to persist for a long time. But as surely as capitalist 'human nature' replaced the ideas of feudalism and the 'human nature' of the lords and barons, the working class will remould the world, and the exploiting ideology of the capitalists will be replaced by the ideology of the new socialist man.

The Soviet Union and China could not have built socialism without the selfless 'human nature' of the workers and peasants. But the Soviet Union did not go far enough in this direction and China has only just begun to go that much further.

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