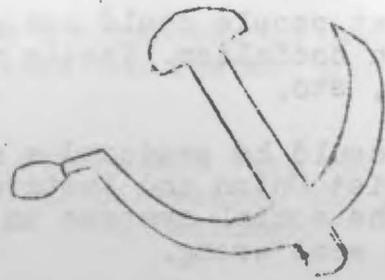


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LIVERPOOL LEADS THE WAY

A number of left wing former Labour Party members in Liverpool have decided to form an Independent Labour Party.

They evidently no longer believe that Socialism can be brought in by taking over the Labour Party.

Socialism, to most socialists, means public ownership, a planned economy, a fairer system, production for use and not for profit, etc.

An Independent Labour Party will be able to put these ideas straight to the people, rather than hope to have them adopted and implemented by the Labour Party.

It is fitting that an ILP should appear first in Liverpool, England's most militant town, where there is a rich experience of Left attempts to take over the Labour Party.

We hope that Left Labour people elsewhere will follow Liverpool's example. However, we shall not be joining them.

The ruling class will never let itself be deprived of power. Socialism will never be introduced by a majority in parliament, however good its intentions. As a last resort, the royal veto and the armed forces would be called in to disperse such a parliamentary majority.

The ruling class will show much the same determination to ensure that not a single independent socialist (or communist) MP enters or remains in the House of Commons for long.

At the present time, the ruling class hardly needs to exert itself. The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are doing its propaganda for it. They are busy demonstrating that public ownership, a planned economy, etc, were apparently a failure. As for the fairer system, communist officials were living off the fat of the land, such as it was. The free market system is all the rage, with thousands crossing the Western European borders to take advantage of it.

The ILP, and British socialists and communists generally, can put it all down to Stalinist bureaucratic mismanagement. Socialism in Britain would be better. In fact, in a different league altogether.

Unfortunately, the only European socialism that has existed up to

now, that people could see for themselves, was Soviet and East European socialism. That's the public relations dilemma facing the ILP, etc.

A list could be produced a mile long detailing what went wrong in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But it would be a waste of time. The social systems in those countries did not go down because of what went wrong.

The systems went down because living standards in the West were visibly better. Russian, Polish and East German workers could slog their guts out but they would live nowhere near as well as workers, or even the unemployed, in the West. As this became obvious, it led to deteriorating morale and a loss of prestige for the leadership which only made things worse.

Why are Western workers well off, by and large, while Eastern workers are poor? It's not "communism". It's not the Slav mentality. It's simply that the West super-exploits the Third World.

That's what the ILP and other British socialists and communists have got to tell the people if Socialism is to retain any credibility.

Telling the truth, however, is hard to reconcile with the usual British socialist practice of promising and lying. Conversations could go something like this:-

Liverpool ILPer: Socialism didn't really fail, like, in the Soviet Union despite the Stalinist bureaucracy and all that. The trouble was that we over here are all screwing our Third World brothers and sisters.

Potential supporter: So you're going to stop screwing our Third World brothers and sisters when you get in?

ILPer: Yes, we're thinking about that, yeah.

Potential supporter: And you're going to cut rents, increase pay and services, build more homes, hospitals and schools, pay a minimum pension of half the average wage and spend more on research and investment. How are you going to do it?

ILPer: Well, it's like this here.....It's what you call socialist planning, see.

THE "HARDLINERS" COUP

"Historically, all reactionary forces on the verge of extinction invariably conduct a last desperate struggle against the revolutionary forces" (Mao Tsetung).

Eric Trevett, General Secretary of Britain's New Communist Party had a letter published in the Morning Star on 22 August, 1991, acclaiming the August 19th coup in the Soviet Union. By that time the coup had been defeated. Hard luck, Eric.

Several of our own readers probably fall into the Trevett category.

They imagine that all that was needed was a clampdown in the Soviet Union to stop the slide to capitalism and restart support for world revolution.

"Some comrades leave ease and comfort to others and take the heavy loads themselves, they are the first to bear hardships, the last to enjoy comforts. They are good comrades" (Mao Tsetung).

The "hardliners" in the Soviet Union do not come into the good comrade category. They are the first to enjoy comforts - nice homes, privileges, good jobs, high pay, special shops, and the happy feeling of being able to tell other people what to do without being answerable to any of them. They feared that Gorbachev was about to sell them out.

Even capitalists are progressive, by comparison with these parasites. They turned their backs on world revolution years ago. Everybody in the Soviet Union wants to see the back of them. They are a disgrace to the name of communism. It is a libel on Stalin to call them Stalinists. For all his faults, Stalin was a revolutionary and a Marxist-Leninist.

"It is people, not things, that are decisive" (Mao Tsetung).

The "hardliners" had the weapons and the media on their side. But they had not got the people.

And no one, whether in Russia or Britain, who believes in the "hardliner" doctrine of power and privilege for me, discipline and sacrifice for you, will ever win the people for Socialism.

ONE WAY PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

When countries became socialist they adopted a policy of peaceful coexistence towards the Western imperialist countries. They joined the United Nations, turned their backs on world revolution, and settled down as members of the club.

This has now proved to be their undoing.

The imperialist countries not only embarked on campaigns of subversion against the socialist countries. More importantly, they used the imperialist loot to improve living standards and make themselves attractive to the citizens of the socialist countries. People could look across the Iron or Bamboo Curtain and say "If that's capitalism, I want some of it".

The socialist countries never even bothered to point out to their own citizens where the wealth of the imperialist countries had come from, never mind about making this knowledge more widely available in the Third World and the imperialist countries themselves. Just not done, old chap.

Socialist countries should not attempt to spread world revolution by armed force. They are too weak for that. In any case, revolution cannot, and should not, be exported in this way.

Nor should socialist countries resort to interference in other

countries' communist parties or revolutionary movements, "recognizing" some and not others.

What socialist countries do have it in their power to do is to research, produce and disseminate hard information which would be of value to the revolutionary struggle.

Finsbury Communist Association has produced figures showing the extent to which the imperialist countries exploit the Third World.

The socialist countries could easily have produced far more comprehensively researched figures. The publication and dissemination of these figures would set the world ablaze.

The Chinese have a saying that a man-eating tiger is a maneater whether you irritate him or not.

The imperialist countries proved this by trying to subvert China in 1989. We hope that China will draw the necessary conclusions.

ONE DIVIDES INTO FIFTEEN PLUS

The split in Moscow between the "hardliners", the Gorbachevites and the Russian nationalists has given the nations of the Soviet Union the opportunity to try and break free from parasitic central Soviet control.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have already done so and have been recognized by most of the Western powers. The West maintains that the Baltic nations were illegally grabbed by Stalin in 1940.

Strangely, the West is more reluctant to recognize the independence of nations, such as Ukraine, which were illegally grabbed by the Tsars. The West, of course, has a number of similar skeletons in its own cupboard, such as Wales and Brittany. Or perhaps Western bankers are a bit worried about who will pay off the Soviet debt if the USSR breaks up.

Boris Yeltsin was quite heroic during the coup. But he is a Russian nationalist. Russian nationalists, like Serbian nationalists and English nationalists, have settled in nations other than their own. Their motto is "What's yours is mine and what's mine is my own". They do not want to integrate. Hence the demand to redraw national borders or to secure compensation for Russian settlers in the other nations of the USSR.

What Russia has grabbed already is bad enough. From the map it appears that Russia stretches from Kaliningrad to Vladivostok. Most of the East of that territory is, however, non-Russian in its original ownership even when it is not dignified with the title of an Autonomous Republic or whatever.

Marxist-Leninist communists are for the self-determination of all nations, however small. Whether they choose to join together after that is up to them.

This is not just because we wish to preserve nations, though we see them as a valuable part of the world's heritage.

It is also because, when the national question is settled, the proletariats of the various nations will be able to concentrate on overthrowing their own ruling classes.

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