

Revolutionary Communist Party of
Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

RCPB(ML) Holds Social

Setting the Course for 2015

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THE CHALLENGES FOR 2015

RCPB(ML) Holds Social Setting the Course for 2015



Michael Chant and His Excellency Hyon Hak Bong

The Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) held a New Year Social on January 10 to which were invited Party activists, friends and sympathisers from across the country.

The Social was a great success and manifested a lively, forward-looking and comradely atmosphere, with a varied buffet, much discussion and the meeting with old and new friends. Present at the event was His Excellency Hyon Hak Bong, Ambassador in London from the DPRK, and three other diplomats from the Embassy of the DPRK.

Mid-way through the evening, Michael Chant, as General Secretary, gave an extended toast. Following this Ambassador Hyon also spoke of the situation in the DPRK and of the close

ties between the Workers' Party of Korea and RCPB(ML).

A cultural programme of songs and instrumental music rounded off the evening, chiming with the militant atmosphere of the Social.

Below we present an slightly edited version of the remarks of Michael Chant to the gathering.

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Comrades and friends,

I would just like to say a few words of welcome and ushering in the New Year.

Once again, I very warmly welcome everyone here. It is great to see everyone. The Party normally has a New Year event

sometimes right at the end of the old year, sometimes at the beginning of the new. This is our setting the scene for 2015. We think it is going to be a significant year for a number of reasons.

One thing to say is that, I don't know how many people are on twitter. I responded to someone's twitter, and I got retweeted I don't know how many times. This is in 140 characters. It says: year of solidarity, year of resistance, year of unity against war, year of getting organised to realise our vision of the new.

So that is in a nutshell what 2015 is going to mean! For all the twitterati, this is the New Year!

Of course, we live in turbulent times, dangerous times. And the events of the past few days have underlined that, with the terrorist attacks in Paris and the associated hypocrisy of the warmongers and torturers over the issue of "free speech". But these kinds of events are going on on a daily basis in Syria, in Libya – you name it – these atrocities are taking place. So one could look at this world situation and say that it is negative for the people.

And then domestically there is the issue of the anti-social offensive, the attacks on public services, privatisation, the assault on the dignity of people. Another way of describing it is that there is this climate of dictate everywhere, that the people are excluded from any say in the control of their lives and they are expected to toe the line in their jobs, behave in a certain way. If they step out of line, or are organisers amongst the people, those who set the agenda in line with the austerity agenda have no hesitation in trying to sack them.

So it is very important that these atrocities are laid not at the feet of the people but of the state and the ruling elite, that that is who is causing problems in the world. The state is being used to further the interests of the monopolies, to push through this programme of austerity and privatisation. So what is needed is a change of direction of society, and it is the people who are the force that can do this.

Resistance is building. It has been very clear over the past year. For instance, there is the direction of fighting for an anti-war government, there is the necessity for a new direction for the economy and society as a whole, there is a necessity to oppose the austerity agenda including privatisation, dictate, stepped up exploitation, and the whole movement to prevent people from taking control of their lives. So the fight is to turn that situation around. What we are fighting is the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a tiny minority. And it is being used against the people to deprive them of their future.

There are a number of reasons why 2015 is such an important year. In fact, May is a significant month, because May 7 is the date of the general election; and May 8/9 is the 70th anniversary of the victory over fascism in Europe. The Party intends to mark this anniversary in various ways. What perspectives that victory opened up have been almost totally reversed now: the progress of humanity, this aspiration for the new that came with the defeat of fascism, the fact that every human being has rights, the UN Declaration of Human Rights, and so on – all these were very important conclusions of the victory over fascism that the ruling elite, the monopoly capitalists, have thrown in the mud.

As regards the election: our overall slogan as the election approaches is – *No to the Coalition, Defeat the Austerity Agenda, and Vote for Candidates who Oppose Austerity and Stand for*

the Rights of All! We regard the election as a kind of battleground. It is not an occasion where the people drop their interests, and just put an X or abstain, whatever they want to do. Rather it is an opportunity to push the independent politics of the working class. And this means that a path has to be opened to reject all the rationales or justifications for the austerity agenda. Many people are going to be in struggle. There are new forces in the making like the NHA Party who stand for the alternative or are fighting for the new in various ways. There are other forces like the Green Party, the Socialist Labour Party who we have close relations with, and others, who are all participating in the election on the side of progress. It is important that the ruling elite should not have the upper hand in this, because the experience of the elections in this country, ever since 1997 when Tony Blair took power is that the ruling elite, the bourgeoisie, tries to stage an electoral coup. In other words, they try and promote someone like they did in 1997 with Tony Blair, who repeated *ad nauseam* "New Labour, New Britain", all these illusions that something new was coming into being, and then look what happened. Illusions were shattered, Britain was taken into illegal wars with Iraq, the privatisation agenda was developed. But the ruling elite has problems formulating these champions today. Obviously at the last election there was a coalition, so there was nobody, you could say, they saw – let's vote for him, and he'll get elected, and then we'll push our reactionary agenda under a progressive veneer. That is why this time we are calling on people to say No! to the Coalition, and to organise to defeat the austerity agenda, because this is the crucial issue facing the people. But it is not that we say, vote for another party. We say that it is an opportunity for the people to get further organised and develop their own motion.

We think that it is an important call, as 2015 gets under way, that there is the necessity for everyone to actually get organised, to strengthen their organisations, to become part of the organised resistance movement. This is a call on a very basic level, that society is not just made up of individuals. Margaret Thatcher infamously said that there is no such thing as society, only individuals and family values. But in denying society, she was also denying the rights of individuals and family values also. In the North East, only the other day there was a strike on the basis that the company was trying to impose shifts which were against the family. This is an example of how far things have gone. The collectives of the people are what is crucial, they are the link between individual rights and the overall rights of society, the general interests.

The other thing we wanted to emphasise in this call to get organised is the necessity to put the question of rights at the centre of all struggles, whether it is in the health service, the right to health care, in education the right to education, in the women's movement, the rights of women as a collective and so on. This is crucial to the overall well-being of society and to oppose the austerity agenda.

Another issue we wanted to emphasise in 2015 is the question of the Workers' Opposition. We have upheld the necessity to build the Workers' Opposition for many years now. But the Party thinks that it is particularly crucial at this time that the focus should be on building this opposition, an organised opposition amongst the workers. This means being political. The

workers have to take up their own politics. Which means not that they have to support one party or another but they have to fight for their own interests, they have to fight for what is characteristic of the workers, which is the collective, the public good, the interests of society as against monopoly right which imposes the rights of a handful of individuals, of the financial oligarchy, above all things. This is consistent with our overall slogan, that *Only the Working Class Can Save the Day*, which we put forward in 2003, that this is the call of history, that the working class, which is basically everyone who produces value through their work, and is the majority of society, that has to get into motion.

The Party also wants to emphasise the importance of unity in action of the people's forces. This is key to developing the struggles of the people and avoiding splits and divisions. It should be a principle, for instance, not to divide over, that is, to create lines of demarcation, over tactics. Rather it is necessary to work out through discussion on a mass democratic basis what is actually what, what is going on in the world, what are the issues, and through that bring the broadest possible forces to bear in hitting at the source of this assault on the public good, on the working class and people. And we think the Party, RCPB(ML), has an important role here in formulating the slogans and tactics which are consistent with this line of march, which will bring about a new society with human beings at the centre.

Also we want to call on everyone in their various ways to join with the Party in its activities. In 2015, it goes without saying that we will further develop our work. We are planning on holding a journalists' school at some time during the year. So we encourage anyone interested to participate in this school so we can broaden and improve the Party's journalism. And the cutting edge of this journalism is to give direction to the resistance against the anti-social offensive and towards the new social organisation with the working class and people as the decision-makers.

We also want to seriously mark International Women's Day, March 8, this year. And we think that guaranteeing the rights of women is an issue for the whole of society. One only has to look at the struggles which are going on, and almost without exception it is women who are the forefront. If you take the health work, anti-war work, trade union work, it is actually very true that concretely it is the case that women are the most advanced in the struggles.

Finally I wanted to look back and say that 2015 is also the fifteen years since the launch in January 2000 of the Party's document, *The Line of March to a New Society*, which still embodies the principles around which we are organised and the line of march we are advancing along. It is also fifteen years since the launch of the Party's Millennium Project, which was a project of developing the Party press and the non-Party press in the 21st century, so the working class and its allies can have the mass media they require today. So all these are ongoing projects as we are advancing into the 21st century with these programmes and lines.

I definitely want to congratulate all the members, sympathisers and supporters of the Party for the work that has been carried out in 2014. The activists of the Party have shouldered much work and taken really important stands in the working class and

people's movements, defending the right to conscience, and defending the right of nations to self-determination, organising in the midst of the people's struggles and defending the rights of all. With our friends from the DPRK present, I particularly want to mention our work with the Friends of Korea organisation, which has had many meetings to combat the disinformation against the DPRK and uphold its right to chart its own destiny and for the people to decide their own future without outside interference. This is a very important part of the work.

You may have seen that the Centre has a new painting in the front room. We are very pleased to have it there, painted by an artist who is with us tonight. We think that it is an important decoration to our Centre. My view is that it represents what we are in 2015, the breaking through of past limitations, and it also represents the horizons on which we set our sights.

Our watchword, finally, is to further bring into play the human factor/social consciousness in 2015, to march along this line which brings about a society in which the people are sovereign, where the people are the decision-makers and can administer the state in their own favour with mechanisms that serve them and not serve the ruling elite. So we think this is a very exciting prospect in 2015, despite the fact that there is a hard struggle ahead. It involves putting on the agenda the defence of the rights of all, it involves putting on the agenda the fight for a change in the direction of society, and as we have said on our New Year card this year, the perspective is that there is a world to win and this is where we set our sights for the people in 2015.

Thank you.

So a toast to the work in 2015! Cheers!

To Celebrate International
Women's Day

Social and Discussion

**“Women, Society
and
Enlightenment”**

March 8, 2015

For further details and invitation, contact:

office@rcpbml.org.uk