

restricted circular

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



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Revolutionary Communist League of Britain



INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

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This is an occasional internal bulletin designed to circulate information on the international communist movement, and the analysis of, and developments within fraternal organisations.

There may be unacknowledged disagreements with positions expressed, and these articles should not be regarded as representing official R.C.L. positions.

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF MARXIST LENINIST PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Seventeen parties and organisations from four continents were represented at the 4th conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations held in April 1994. The occasion organised by the Joint Coordinating Group provided the opportunity for communists to debate and discuss issues of common concern. The main objective of the conferences is to facilitate ideological-political exchange and to help develop unity on important questions. The basis for participation in the International Conference is the defense of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought and involvement in the struggle against modern revisionism. Cooperation among the organisations involved is based on the following principles:

- a) Independence and equality, mutual respect, mutual support and cooperation;
- b) Non-interference in the internal affairs as well as in the bilateral or regional relations of any party or organisation by other parties and organisations;
- c) Consensus and unanimity in decision-making; and
- d) Gradual achievement of unity; no public debate among the parties/organisations and no public criticism or attack by any party/organisation on another.

Further work towards a 5th Conference was agreed.

Amongst the organisations present for the 4th Conference were:

- * Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Afghanistan
- * Partido Comunista Revolucionario de la Argentina (PCR)
- * Bangladesh Workers' Party (BWP)
- * Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany (MLPD)
- * Organisation Communiste de Luxembourg (OCL)
- * Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninists)
- * Groep Marxisten-Leninisten (Rode Morgen), Netherlands
- * Workers' Party of Norway (AKP)
- * Partido Comunista del Peru (Patria roja)
- * Communist Party of Philippines (CPP)
- * Unificacion Comunista de Espana (UCE)
- * Nucleo del partido Comunista Revolucionario de Uruguay
- * Workers' Party of Yugoslavia
- * Revolutionary Organisation from Zaire

We reproduce, without comment, some resolutions agreed on ideological-political issues at the meeting.

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Resolution on Topic 5 of the Agenda

I. "The Sharpening of the General Crisis of Imperialism and New Developments in Economy and Politics"

1. With the collapse of Soviet social-imperialism, bipolar interimperialist contradiction has given way to sharpened multipolar contradictions among all the major powers -- the United States, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and Russia.

The heightened global integration of the capitalist mode of production as a result of the unprecedented use of high technology and of finance capital has exacerbated the contradictions within the economic structure of imperialist capital and all the contradictions within the imperialist system. The interimperialist struggle among the capitalist powers and monopolies for economic and political spheres of influence and for military dominance has intensified.

2. The current general crisis has intensified the principal contradictions in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution. As before, the imperialists are shifting the effects of the crisis to the oppressed countries. The ongoing enormous destruction of productive forces continue to inflict ever greater suffering on the proletariat and the masses of the people. But the intensity of the crisis has recoiled upon the imperialist powers themselves. Massive unemployment and cutbacks on social gains have extended to the metropolis of imperialism and have undermined the pervasive control/influence of monopoly capital on the masses.

3. From these, favorable conditions have arisen for the development of a new upsurge of the revolutionary movement internationally against hegemonist ambitions (hegemonism), imperialism and all reaction and for national liberation and socialism. This is manifested by the upsurge and the growing political consciousness of the workers' and people's struggles in the imperialist countries as well as by the growth of militant anti-imperialist mass movements of the working class and people of the oppressed countries.

Imperialism has manifested its strategic weakness more clearly. This does not mean, however, that tactically its capability of dealing blows on the masses has diminished. Imperialism will not collapse automatically; it must be overthrown. Thus, the subjective factors for this must be created:

** Unity in struggle between the movement of the workers in the imperialist countries and that of the oppressed masses in the dependent, colonial and semicolonial countries.*

** Building and strengthening revolutionary vanguard parties of the working class.*

** Developing the practice of proletarian internationalism.*

** Struggling against revisionism as an essential factor in order to achieve a new high tide in the struggle for national and social liberation, and for socialism.*

Resolution on Topic 6 of the Agenda

"The Development of Class Struggle in the Imperialist Countries and Conclusions for Marxist–Leninist Strategy and Tactics"

1. *The current crisis of capitalism has led to attacks on the living conditions and historical gains of the working class and the rest of the people in the imperialist countries on a scale unprecedented since World War II. The increasing impoverishment of the masses has impelled social tensions and political unrest and instability. The objective basis for developing the revolutionary movement is favorable in most of the imperialist countries, including the imperialist metropolis such as the United States, Japan, Europe and Russia. The working masses are increasingly being challenged to resist the effects of the rivalry among the monopolies.*

2. *Although there is an upswing in the people's and workers' struggles in the imperialist countries, social conditions alone do not yet suffice in effecting their transformation into revolutionary struggles. It is necessary to build in each of these countries a Marxist–Leninist/Mao Zedong Thought party capable of integrating theory with practice and leadership with the masses.*

3. *There is a gap between the objective and the subjective conditions; i.e., the level of the building of revolutionary parties to exploit the situation and lead the struggles towards a revolutionary direction. Racism, bourgeois chauvinism and neofascism spurred by the economic crisis and by monopoly bourgeois policy pose a special danger directed particularly against peoples and nations oppressed by the imperialist system.*

4. *Marxist–Leninist parties and organizations must participate in struggles and at the same time take initiative in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people to defend both their immediate and long–term interests. Communists must gain trust by going into the center of the struggles. They must assume the task of giving direction to the struggle against the capitalist system and in so doing defeat reformism and revisionism in order to achieve leadership in the workers' and peoples' movement.*

5. *While the main responsibility of Marxist–Leninist parties is to develop the class struggle in their own countries, it is also important in the current world situation to strengthen proletarian internationalism and cooperation among themselves and the class struggles in various countries. It is also necessary to strengthen the links between the struggles of the working masses in the imperialist countries and those of the masses in the oppressed countries.*

It is the responsibility of revolutionary parties to take advantage of the situation in order to bring about an upswing in the struggle for socialism by taking steps to move from the defensive towards the offensive. This means making a distinction between the strategic weakness of imperialism and its tactical strength.

Resolution on Topic 7 of the Agenda

III. The Development of the Struggle for National and Social Liberation and Conclusions for Marxist-Leninist Strategy and Tactics

The oppressed nations and peoples in Asia, Africa, Latin America and in most countries of the former Soviet bloc are the overwhelming majority of the people of the world. They are the most exploited economically, financially, politically and culturally. Their national independence has been undermined and negated. Their dependence has been aggravated by further integration into the world capitalist system.

In these last years, their conditions have aggravated as a consequence of dictates of the transnational corporations and banks, so-called structural adjustment programs (SAP), imposed through the World Bank and other multilateral agencies, restriction to raw-material production and lopsided investments, ever deteriorating terms of trade, extraction of superprofits through transfer-pricing by foreign monopolies and ever growing debt burden. The imperialists brandish the slogans of neoliberalism to extort more antinational privileges in investments and in the market, privatize public assets and impose austerity measures, wage freezes, cuts in real income and massive unemployment on the people.

In the mode of production of a majority of oppressed countries, landlord exploitation through land rent and sharecropping together with semifeudal, precapitalist and even more primitive forms of exploitation persist. Class polarization and social turmoil are mounting. This has engendered increasing mass resistance.

U.S. imperialism and the other imperialist powers have arrogated unto themselves the "right to intervene" in order to secure the "new international order". They have mounted an ideological offensive to justify the liquidation of the right to self-determination of peoples and the sovereignty of states. They have threatened and intervened -- in many cases under the umbrella of the United Nations -- in Iraq, Panama, Somalia, Haiti, Yugoslavia, Georgia. At the same time, the imperialists and the reactionaries are unleashing such monstrosities as chauvinism, militarism, fascism, ethnocentrism or tribalism, racism, religious fundamentalism and the threat of recolonization against the people.

The objective conditions for waging the struggle for national and social liberation are favorable. The exposure of bankruptcy of modern revisionism and of neocolonialism practiced by the defunct Soviet social-imperialism, pretending as the "natural ally" of oppressed nations and peoples, opens the way further for genuine Marxist-Leninist parties to grow in strength and advance. The people of Afghanistan opened a new chapter in the anti-imperialist struggle.

There are Marxist-Leninist parties leading the revolutionary mass movement and the protracted people's war. In varying degrees, they are significant in their own countries. There are states defending national sovereignty and independence against imperialism. And there are anti-imperialist struggles.

The 4th Conference supports the revolutionary struggle being waged by the oppressed nations and peoples for national and social liberation. The oppressed nations and peoples must wage the revolution in two-stages -- new-democratic, followed by socialist -- under the leadership of the proletariat and within the context of the world proletarian revolution.

Until now, the countries of the oppressed nations and peoples are the main arena of counterrevolutionary violence, social turbulence and armed revolutionary resistance. The new world disorder is most conspicuous in the areas of the oppressed nations and peoples. The proletariat in the oppressor countries must unite with the struggle for national and social liberation in the in the dependent colonies and semicolonies.

Parties adhering to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought are the decisive factor in the rebuilding of the international workers' and communist movement. They must creatively integrate Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought with concrete conditions and practice in their respective countries.

All possible forms of revolutionary struggle must be waged in the struggle for national and social liberation. Ultimately, armed revolution for the seizure of political power is necessary for the basic completion of the new-democratic revolution before proceeding to the socialist revolution. Marxist-Leninist parties are encouraged to study where and under which concrete conditions the strategy and tactics of protracted people's war as in the Philippines can be developed. Protracted people's war enables the proletariat and the people to build and accumulate Red political power.

The Fourth International Conference supports the struggle of peoples for their national sovereignty and independence, for national liberation against imperialism. These constitute an international united front, under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat, against imperialism.

Resolution on Topic 8 of the Agenda

IV. The Tendencies of Revisionism after the Collapse of the Soviet Union

- 1. All parties present emphasized that common among their roots had been their struggle against Khrushchovite modern revisionism, which surfaced at the 20th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and particularly the defense of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the right to revolutionary violence.*
- 2. Revisionism is the most dangerous form of bourgeois ideology as it acts to corrode class consciousness within the working class and impedes the struggle for socialism. Modern revisionism can only be overcome through resolute struggle to uphold and develop the proletarian ideology. The struggle against modern revisionism is necessary above all to guarantee preparations for a new upsurge for socialism. Without overcoming the influence of revisionism within the working-class movement, there can be no new upsurge for socialism.*
- 3. The discussion dealt critically with the development in the People's Republic of China. There was wide divergence of views over the assessment of the reforms of Deng Xiaoping and the character of the state and society of the People's Republic of China and the class character of the Communist Party of China. Therefore, all participating organizations emphasized the need for further critical analysis of the concrete social process in China and the continuation of discussions on this question. The basis of this is independent formation of opinion and analysis by each individual organization.*
- 4. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, modern revisionism has in practice decisively suffered bankruptcy. This has led to a weakening of the international revisionist tendency. Against this backdrop, various new forms of revisionism have emerged to join the old. Revisionism has changed in concrete appearance but its basic character remains. All the participating organizations emphasized the great importance of Mao Zedong Thought in the struggle against modern revisionism, notwithstanding their varying ideological-political foundations.*
- 5. Tactical cooperation, for example in anti-imperialist solidarity, is possible with certain forces coming from revisionist tendencies. However, such cooperation must be dialectically related to further debate in the struggle against revisionism.*

BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT OF AZANIA

18TH COMMEMORATION
OF THE
SOWETO UPRISINGS (1976)



SPEAKERS FROM

SOUTH ASIA SOLIDARITY GROUP

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE

BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT OF AZANIA

SOLIDARITY MESSAGES
CULTURE
REFRESHMENTS

DATE: THURSDAY 16TH JUNE 1994

VENUE: CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, WC1

TIME: 6.00 - 10.00 PM

Buses: 68, 77, 168, 25, 20

Tube: Holborn

THE FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

18 YEARS AGO when the first of the Soweto children were mowed down by apartheid's mighty guns, the world was collectively caught with its pants down. The Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and shouts of 'solidary' were the only forces uniting the people.

When people in Azania were still protesting about inferior education (during the 1980's), some liberation movements were encouraging school children to boycott the education. BCM villified for encouraging the students to get back to school to learn and establish programmes to overcome the flaws that existed in the apartheid education system the best they could - even apartheid education was better than no education at all. Today, generations of Azanians are illiterate.

On April 27-28-29 they were expected to vote for the very people who encouraged them to stay away from school whilst their children attended multi-racial schools or were sent to schools abroad. Was this a deliberate ploy to keep them servants in the so-called "new South Africa"? Has anything changed in the past four years?

As predicted, the so-called leadership in South Africa have sold the rights of the Azanian masses to their oppressors. We, in the BCM, believe that the children of Soweto who died so violently in the hands of the white racist regime in South Africa on June 16, 1976, must be turning in their graves. Everything our people have fought for has now been swept under the carpet.

It is for these reasons that the BCM did not take part in the recent "peaceful" elections in South Africa which appear to be fair and free to most people, but with many hidden agendas. How can we trust those who we know have betrayed us in the past and those that have been holding a gun to our heads after all these years? Our people cannot live on false hopes and promises - they need to be able to see and experience structural changes that will benefit them totally, and free them from slavery, physically and psychologically to determine their own future.

We, in the BCM, believe that the current developments in South Africa will not change to benefit the black Azanian masses, and the structures that are being introduced will serve to entrench the whites much deeper into power. The very butchers who mercilessly massacred our people, are the very machinery who conducted the "peaceful" elections, including bantustan leaders who led some of the masses to perpetual poverty, have now been given the reigns of power to lead the people. This is now the time for the BCM and revolutionary communities to ensure the mighty task ahead to mobilise the masses is carried forward diligently for the liberation of Azanians, and the repossession of our land.

FORWARD WITH THE PEOPLE!!!

FORWARD WITH THE BCMA!!!

FORWARD WITH AZAPO!!!

Speech of the RCL Representative at the SOWETO COMMEMORATION
Organised by the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania
June 16 1994 at Conway Hall, London.

The Revolutionary Communist League is honoured to speak at this evening's commemoration, to share a platform with an organisation that has steadfastly struggled against the evil that was apartheid, and whom recognises that the struggle doesn't end with the use of the ballot box.

June 16th 1976 saw the rebellion which ignited the flames that consumed Apartheid. The schoolchildren's revolt served notice that another generation would not endure - they would have liberation. It was their resistance, part of a long history of resistance, that marked the end of the beginning of the long road to freedom.

The RCL welcomes the changes in South Africa: decades of suffering, resistance and revolt has borne fruit - the election of a government, which for the first time, is the choice of the majority of the people. But in a very real sense the elections had symbolic importance: it was not that they were voting to endorse a pre-agreed settlement between the ANC and the National Party. What was important was that they could vote.

The establishment of bourgeois democracy has seen the dismantling of apartheid laws but not the legacy of racist rule. There is a government of national reconciliation dominated by the ANC which has its own priorities: the reconstruction of the country's free market economy with the prescriptions of the IMF and World Bank. The promises of the ANC's Freedom Charter remain unfilled. The attainment of one person one vote is but a stage towards a better society. The capitalist system cannot deliver the things that they have been promised. As comrades from the BCM(A) have pointed out: *"Effectively the state machinery in the form of the army, police and civil service have been left intact, thereby ensuring the continued repression of our people and the sustenance of white supremacy."*

What we are witnessing in South Africa is the victory over apartheid, not the birth of a liberated and free Azania. The impetus for developing a revolutionary socialist movement will bring forth those organisations who still acknowledge that there is no easy road to freedom. The raised expectations of those dispossessed given nothing but the vote, will subside as the ANC's promises are wrecked upon an intact white power structure. The ANC's policies have conceded so much that the old economic order remains unchallenged in a capitalist and social-democratic post-apartheid South Africa.

The problems of reconstruction faced by the ANC's development plan are those who administered apartheid, those who grew rich upon the backs of Black labour, those who stole and farmed the land of the rural dispossessed, those who tried to suppression the anger of a people in revolt, those who talk of the interests of all South African but wish to preserve their own. There is no strategy involving the people in their own liberation - afterall they had a vote. The demands for bourgeois rights, that is equality before the law, one person one vote have still to be secured given the manipulation and intimation evident during April's election. But lets us not dwell on that past event. The important issue that now arises is the question of taking the struggle forward. That struggle will be decided and fought in South Africa.

What I want to address is what is the role of activists in this country. The RCL's thinking on this matter is reflected in our *Political Platform* which I shall draw upon to illustrate our guiding principles. Simply put, we should listen to those engaged in the struggle, and we should maintain the stance anti-imperialist solidarity with a people in struggle.

Internationalism is a key question for revolutionaries. The application of proletarian internationalism breaks out of the corporatist consciousness dominant in the English Left. In its wake it moves one away from a parochial consciousness of the poverty, misery and inequalities of Capitalism. Internationalism incorporates knowledge of how bourgeois hegemony is exercised. Internationalism is both an act of resistance and affirmation of human solidarity. Proletarian internationalism, if it is to be transformed into an instrument of liberation must be applied in the conditions that confronts us. Departure from this principle has always been linked with the degeneration of communist organisation. As an organisation we uphold internationalism, not the existence of Internationals. We are for support and aid across capitalism's boundaries and against organising other people's struggles.

In our work, we promote unconditional support as a beginning point for anti-imperialist solidarity. What this signifies can be outlined in three propositions:

1. We recognise the right of oppressed nations to determine the appropriate means of their struggle. The League rejects the eurocentric chauvinism that thinks it can direct the struggles of other peoples on little more than extensive book knowledge. Whether the means of struggle is armed struggle or where appropriate negotiations with the enemy, it is for those engaged in the struggle to judge their relative merits.

2. There is no solidarity with the struggle of the people without acknowledging the organisations to which that struggle necessarily gives rise. It is ludicrous that the once dominant solidarity movement in this country, the Anti-Apartheid Movement, at best rarely acknowledged the existence of organisations over than the ANC and at worst slanderously attacked those organisations. It is not for solidarity activist to choose the representatives of the struggle, it is those engaged in struggle who will create their organisations.

3. Within any struggle there are several different trends. As communists we do critically assess differences in line, but we do not pose conditions as to whether the orientation of particular movements is explicitly socialist or not. Within the context of the national liberation struggle solidarity activists should not be premature in claiming whether an organisation by its actions has abdicated its role as representatives of an oppressed people. That choice will be made in the real world by those engaged in the struggle.

The League's work has been within an overall context of clearly siding with the oppressed against imperialist aggressors. Today an important field of anti-imperialist struggle takes place in neo-colonial conditions, that is in countries where a supposedly independent regime is subservient to imperialism. Those guidelines for any imperialist solidarity still hold fast, in the words of the Internationale, there are no saviours from on high.

We are proud to be on this platform today to salute those who have fallen and dedicate our support for those who continue to struggle for a free and just Azania. The Revolutionary Communist League gives unconditional support to the B.C.M. and other progressive forces struggling to regain political and economic power, so that the Azanian people can determine their future and that of a free Azania.

In July the Khmer Rouge were reported forming a provisional government in the northern Preah Vihear province of Cambodia. The announcement came after the Phnom Penh National Assembly had made illegal the Khmer Rouge. The 72 year old, King Norodom Sihanouk, being treated for cancer in Beijing, was against the move to formally outlaw the Khmer Rouge. He believes that a dialogue should be maintained because the alternative is more fighting.

While Phnom Penh claims its troops inflict crushing defeat on the guerrillas, it was driven out after only a month's occupation of the Khmer Rouge's headquarters at Pailin and into retreat to the provincial capital of Battambang. Constant, small attacks ruthlessly expose the frailty of the government's armed forces, underscoring their inability to cope with the threat posed by the Khmer Rouge, who are thought to muster only 10,000 troops countrywide.

The Phnom Penh coalition government appears fragile: it had diffused a coup attempt in early July. Tanks were used to end an attempted coup led by a disaffected Prince Norodom Chakrapong with General Sin Song, a former Interior minister and backed by two hundred heavily armed troops. The soldiers were disarmed without a shot being fired and drove themselves to their barracks in eastern Cambodia.

Government control of the urban areas is unchallenged but the inequalities that polarised Cambodian society prior to the military coup in March 1970 are there to see. The Khmer Rouge are safe in the malarial rainforest in the mountains where experienced veterans of the liberation struggle fought from the sixties onwards. As in the past, the Cambodian countryside remains the main battlefield, with the main conflict around the road network. The international relief agencies have told staff to stop using Highway 4 that runs from the capital down to the southern port and resort of Sihanoukville. Foreigners who do not observe the advice to keep off the road after 4pm are vulnerable to guerrilla attacks, and a number of foreign residents are believed to be held by the Khmer Rouge.

The victory at Pailin confirms the control of lucrative gem-producing and timber rich area in north-west Cambodia that could sustain the financial base of a prolonged struggle. The Khmer Rouge are engaged in political organisation in remoter areas where peasants have yet to see any improvement in their lives from the actions of the urban-based coalition government of the royalist Funcinpec party and the Vietnamese-inspired Cambodian People's Party.

Today the same level of corruption that existed in Phnom Penh in the 1970s is evident again. Just as under Lon Nol, army officers siphoned off American money by making up lists of "phantom" troops, in the present 60,000 strong Cambodian army there are more than 2,000 generals and 10,000 colonels. *"We have seen this all before"*, said one diplomat adding that outlawing the Khmer Rouge will not bring peace. The perspective of Cambodians is altering: *"While the Khmer Rouge still have a harsh social and political control in their areas of control,"* said one Western correspondent. *"The fact is they don't rape your daughter and steal your money. And they are not corrupt. And you can't say that for the government controlled zones."*