
COMPASS

MUNIST LEAGUE

The National Committee for the Marxist-Leninist Party (NCMLP)

On the 11th January 1998, representatives from several Marxist-Leninist groups including the Communist League met in London's Conway Hall. This meeting formally established the Committee for the Marxist-Leninist Party. The aim of the National Committee is to work towards the unification of the Marxist-Leninist anti-revisionist forces in Britain with the eventual formation of a single communist party. This strategy is fully endorsed by the Communist League.

The Marxist-Leninist movement in this country is characterised by ideological disunity and sectarianism, which has resulted in confusion and the isolation of Communists. Despite what common ground there may already be among communists at present, we are not nearly ready to form the Communist Party. It is, however, our duty to work towards communist unity. A number of groupings have already promoted the concept of a United Front between communist organisations in order to facilitate working together in spite of currently existing theoretical differences. It is in this spirit that we are now working in the National Committee for the Marxist-Leninist Party - a 'pre party' committee.

It must be noted that the slogan of a united front between communists and the foundation of the NCMLP should not be confused with a call for the immediate foundation of a single Communist Party, founded on democratic centralism and sharing the same revolutionary platform. Undoubtedly this is the goal, but between the present period of disunity and the formation of a single Communist Party lies a period in which we must work towards this achievement.

Attempts have repeatedly been made to proclaim the Communist Party into existence. This voluntaristic declaration is made by individuals who have rejected the struggle for unity and who seek to skip over this task. The proliferation of self-styled 'parties' testifies to the consistent failure of such attempts. Communist unity is something for which we must be prepared to work. Open and thorough discussion between communists, consensual agreement and consistent collaboration is a prerequisite for achieving the level of ideological and practical unity necessary between revolutionaries which alone can lead to one revolutionary programme and the formation of a Communist Party with roots in the working class.

We take the view that Communist unity can only be achieved over a period in which the different groups work together while maintaining their separate identities. Individuals who are not members of groups are also invited to take part in the work of

the Committee. The plan of action set out by the NCMLP though clear, is not set in tablets of stone, and the constructive input of all participants who subscribe to our aims is welcome. The basic principle of the Committee is that the gradual process of resolving the main ideological differences in the Marxist-Leninist movement should be accompanied by increasing unity of action.

The NCMLP invites the advanced contingent, at present organised in diverse groupings and parties, or working in isolation, to join it in the work of uniting and developing the movement. As the crisis of imperialism deepens, with the prospect of a new revolutionary upsurge, the formation of the Communist Party is an urgent task. We are in the preparatory period in this country. At this time attention must be devoted principally to the formation and training of a nucleus of like-minded revolutionary communists. The present period of communist disunity, characterised by theoretical muddle and sectarianism can only serve the interest of reaction and the obsolete ruling class. It is in the interests of our class and of all contingents of our divided movement that we overcome our fragmentation and disagreement.

With a view to bringing about closer ideological unity within the Committee, the Marxist-Leninist Research Bureau has been set up to investigate and report on designated questions where there is a lack of clarity or divergence of views. We are currently preparing material for a new initiative, the Marxist-Leninist Study Group, which aims to help disseminate understanding of Marxist-Leninist principles.

The National Committee for the Marxist-Leninist Party publishes its own theoretical journal: 'The International Marxist-Leninist Review'. To attend one of the regular meetings of the NCMLP, or to submit written material, please contact the Secretary or the Editor at the following

addresses: BM Leo, London WC1N 3XX, e-mail address: NCMLP@hotmail.com

GENOCIDE IN KOSOVA!

The following statement on Kosova was released by the NCMLP:

In common with all progressive people, the National Committee for the Marxist-Leninist Party fully supported the right of the predominantly ethnic Albanian population of Kosova to self-determination and - since even the limited autonomy won by the Kosovars under Tito had been forcibly withdrawn by the Serbian dictatorship of Slobodan Miloshevich - fully supported the national liberation struggle being waged by the Kosova Liberation Army.

At the same time it opposed any military intervention in Kosova by imperialist powers, saying: "The strategy of trying to achieve . . . this (national liberation - Ed.) through military intervention from outside, as a gift from 'philanthropic' powers, is a dangerous illusion. The imperialist powers are interested in Kosova only as they are interested in Britain - as a source of profit". (The Struggle in Kosova, in: International Marxist-Leninist Review, Volume 1, No 1, Spring 1999, p81).

In order to maintain a consensus, at the recent peace talks in France, representatives of the Kosova Liberation Army made the concession of agreeing to postpone their dreams for independence from Serbia in return for a common demand with the imperialist powers for the restoration of the autonomy of Kosova within Serbia.

Western politicians " . . . saw Miloshevich as a man they could do business with", (Independent on Sunday, 28 March 1999; p.15) and, threatening the 'big stick'

of air attacks on Serbia, ". . . hoped that Miloshevich could be persuaded to negotiate" (Independent on Sunday, 28 March 1999; p. 15). But the threat of bombs from the air was not sufficient to induce the Serbian dictatorship to agree with the restoration of autonomy for Kosova. The Paris peace talks broke up without agreement leaving the Western powers with the alternatives of either losing credibility or sending in the bombers. They chose the latter course and attempted ". . . to bomb Miloshevich into submission" (Independent on Sunday, 28 March 1999; p. 15).

On 24 March 1999, British and US planes began bombing Serbia from the air, and this continues at the time of writing. As Malcolm Harper, director of the United Nations Association in Britain, says bluntly: "The NATO action is illegal; it has not been authorised by the UN Security Council and therefore it should stop". (Malcolm Harper, in: The Guardian, 31 March 1999; p. 2), while the Independent on Sunday' declares in an editorial, "This is not a just war. The NATO action is wrong in law . . . In shedding blood in the present conflict it is acting ultra vires . . . The United Nations . . . is the only . . . global guardian backed by international law" (Editorial, Independent on Sunday; 28 March 1999; p. 26).

The Serbian fascists responded to NATO's bombs by a campaign of terror and genocide against the entire population of Kosova - executing men of military age and forcibly expelling the elderly, women and children from the country. The stories are tragically similar: "There are tales of frightened people waiting for Serb police and killers in black masks to knock on their doors, of people crossing mountain roads to unfriendly borders, of men separated from their families, of Kosova's Albanians being forced from homes, panicked and terrorised into flight", (The Guardian, 29 March 1999, p1).

By 29 March, ". . . NATO reported that a million refugees have crossed the border into neighbouring Macedonia and Albania, a quarter of the Kosovar population", (The Guardian, 29 March 1999. p1). The Independent on Sunday notes in an editorial: "Bomb bursts provide the perfect cover for death squads. They inspire ethnic cleansers with a sense of urgency. Moderate voices in the region are inaudible over the roar of the jets". (Editorial: Independent on Sunday; 28 March 1999, p 26).

Thus, ". . . far from alleviating the plight of the inhabitants, Serb reprisals for the bombing have made it far worse", (Evening Standard, 29 March 1999; p 5). But the very idea that a war can be won by bombs from the air is fatally flawed: "If the lessons of the Korean, Malayan, Vietnam, Falklands, Gulf and Chechen conflicts teach us anything, it is that victory only comes when your troops physically occupy the streets of the region you are fighting over", (Evening Standard, 29 March 1999; p 5). Not only do military experts agree: ". . . that any ground action would require as many as 200 000 soldiers . . . a force that would not be ready for months", (The Guardian 31 March 1999; p 4), but ". . . NATO insists that it will not commit ground troops", (Independent on Sunday', 28 March 1999; p 16), with ". . . Washington even more fearful than Whitehall", (Evening Standard, 29 March 1999, p 7).

Of course, the national liberation of Kosova is a matter for the people of Kosova, and the removal from power of Miloshevich's racist thugs a matter for the people of Serbia. But does this mean that nothing in keeping with international law can be done from outside to help the plight of the people of Kosova? Not at all. As Zbigniew Brezinski, former National Security adviser to US President Jimmy Carter, proposes in the Guardian, there could be ". . . a deliberate decision by the

West to arm the KLA. Such a decision is both politically, and morally justifiable". (Zbigniew Brezinski: 'Arm the KLA' in: The Guardian 31 March 1999, p 15).

And even if this proposal is too radical for Clinton and his British stooge Blair, there are other legitimate alternatives - such as that suggested by Malcolm Harper, director of the United Nations Association in Britain: "We should seek its (Russia's - ed.) agreement to the sending of some form of UN protection force on the ground into Kosova, under chapter VII of the charter which allows the UN to authorise military action. This force would not go to make war, but would be there to protect all people in Kosova". (Malcolm Harper, in: The Guardian, 31 March 1999; p 2).

MEETING OF GERMAN AND BRITISH MARXIST-LENINISTS

In April 1999, representatives of the Communist Party of Germany (Marxist-Leninist)[KPD/ML] and the Communist League (CL) of Britain met in London and held a fruitful discussion on the contemporary world situation.

The representatives are pleased to report that the two organisations found that their views were in agreement on all the major issues of the past and present.

For example, both organisations agreed on the following basic principles of Marxism-Leninism:

- that the transition to socialism requires the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of the political power of the working class (the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'), and of centralised state planning in place of the profit motive;

- that this transition can be brought about only under the leadership of Marxist-Leninist Parties;
- that in every country Marxist-Leninist Parties shall attend to the political education of their members in the principles of Marxism-Leninism so that any future attempt on the part of the leaders to divert a Party along the path of revisionism may be checked and eliminated before it has done any permanent damage;
- that the two organisations must work, in cooperation with other Marxist-Leninist organisations and parties, for the unification of the Marxist-Leninist forces in each country into a single Marxist-Leninist Party;
- that the two organisations agree to work for the reconstitution of an international Marxist-Leninist organisation on the principles of the former Communist International.

The representatives also agreed:

- that the liquidation of socialism in the Soviet Union and Albania was not due to the failure of socialism, but to its distortion by traitorous revisionists pretending to be 'modernisers' of Marxism-Leninism;
- that particular tribute should be paid to Josef Stalin and to the Party of Labour of Albania, under the leadership of Enver Hoxha, for their role in the international struggle against revisionism;
- that 'Mao Tse-tung Thought' and 'Kimilsungism' are not developments of Marxism-Leninism, but must be

exposed for what they are -- brands of revisionism;

- that the continued existence of revisionism presents the most serious hindrance to Marxist-Leninists everywhere, and we must particularly beware of those who call themselves 'Marxist-Leninist' but in reality practise revisionism;
- that, while condemning alike the military intervention of the NATO powers in Yugoslavia and the genocidal atrocities committed by the Serb social-fascists, full support must be given to the heroic fighters of the Kosova Liberation Army (KLA) in their correct struggle for the national liberation of the Kosovar people; however, the KPD/ML express reservations on the role of some mafia-type elements which they believe to be operating within the KLA;
- that European integration in the EC helps the European imperialists -- and particularly the German imperialists -- in their struggle against the European working people and the peoples of the colonial-type countries and should therefore be opposed, as should rival attempts at globalisation on the part of American imperialism;
- that the current world situation reflects the accentuating crisis of decaying capitalist society at the end of the 20th century and must be utilised by the working people to further the cause of socialist revolution.

During his visit to London, the visiting German comrade attended, by invitation, a meeting of the 'National Committee for the Marxist-Leninist Party' and gave a brief talk

on the political situation in Germany.

Signed: on behalf of the Communist Party of Germany (Marxist-Leninist) by Wolfgang Eggers, Chairman; on behalf of the Communist League by John Puntis, Secretary.

THOMAS MALTHUS AND POPULATION GROWTH

Last year was the 200th anniversary of the anonymous publication by Thomas Malthus of his "Essay on the Principle of Population, as it affects the Future Improvement of Society". In it he made the following assertion, that:

"The power of population is indefinitely greater than the power in the earth to produce subsistence for man.... This implies a strong and constantly operating check on population from the difficulty of subsistence. This difficulty must fall somewhere and must necessarily be severely felt by a large portion of mankind".

This concept was to earn him long-lasting notoriety, one implication being that there was little point in striving to keep the poor alive when it was both natural and desirable that population growth should be limited (birth control excluded). This concept proved attractive to the ruling classes, as the poet Thomas Hood wittily illustrated:

*Oh Mr. Malthus I agree...
The world's too full, there is no doubt,
And wants a deal of thinning out...
And yet some Wrongheads
With thick not long heads,
Poor metaphysicians!
Sign petitions*

*Capital punishment to abolish;
And in the face of censuses such vast ones
New hospitals contrive,
For keeping alive,...*
*Why should we let precautions so absorb us,
Or trouble shipping with a quarantine -
When if I understand the thing you mean,
We ought to IMPORT the Cholera Morbus!"*

(Hood T. Ode to Mr. Malthus. The poetical works of Thomas Hood. Chandos Classics, London 1978, p457-459)

The 200th anniversary provoked a number of reappraisals of Malthus in scientific medical literature, but without shedding much light on the historical implications of his contribution to political economy. In fact, Malthus was only one of many clerics who were preoccupied with the 'population question'. For Marx, his distinction lay simply in that as a Fellow at Cambridge he was required to take a vow of celibacy, unlike the other clergy

"...who have... taken "Be fruitful and multiply" as their special Biblical mission....that they contribute to the increase of population to a really unbecoming extent, whilst they preach at the same time to the labourers the "principle of population" . (Marx K. Marx and Engels on Religion. Progress Publishers, Moscow 1975, p119-120).

Darwin read Malthus and may have been struck by his portrayal of the struggle for existence in human society, but Malthus did not suppose that the struggle for existence within a population would ever lead to improvement. In this sense, Darwin's principle of the survival of the fittest is clearly anti-Malthusian, even if its conception did require the theoretical detour via Malthus. Engels' views were as follows:

"The whole Darwinian theory of the struggle for existence is simply the transference from society to organic

nature of Hobbes' theory of bellum omnium contra omnes (a war of all against all) and of the bourgeois economic theory of competition, as well as the Malthusian theory of population" (Engels F. Dialectics of Nature. Progress Publishers, Moscow 1974, p307-308).

He pointed out that once this feat had been accomplished, it was easy to transfer the theories back again from natural history to the history of society and maintain that these assertions had been proved as eternal natural laws of society. However, not only was this a sleight of hand, but the most that the animal can achieve is to collect; whereas man produces, he prepares the means of life, in the widest sense of the words, which without him nature would not have produced. This makes impossible any unqualified transference of the laws of life in animal societies to human society.

With the constant threat of revolution and repeated rounds of violence and repression in England from 1789 to the European uprisings of 1848, Malthusian doctrine was enthusiastically promoted by the ruling elite as a necessary antidote to such 'dangerous' eighteenth century ideologists as Condorcet who argued that although population might exceed the means of subsistence, this threat could be averted by universal education, sexual equality, and the progress of reason and science.

Of course, scientific theories do not exist in a vacuum. The 1834 New Poor Law Act vividly demonstrated how 'the population question' influenced government in ways of very real consequence to the poor. This legislation did away with outdoor relief for the destitute, forcing them either to compete in the labour market or face the workhouse. It was denounced by William Cobbett as a

"Malthusian bill designed to force the poor to emigrate, to work for lower wages,

to live on a coarser sort of food". (Desmond A. The Politics of Evolution. The University of Chicago Press, London 1989, p126.).

Cobbett's friend Thomas Wakley, founder of the progressive medical journal 'The Lancet' and MP for Finchley, presented petitions from General Practitioners to the Commons pointing out the

"...ruinous and cruel consequences to the poor who are farmed out to the lowest bidder" (Desmond A. The Politics of Evolution. The University of Chicago Press, London 1989, p126.).

When first introducing the Poor Law Bill to the House of Peers, the Lord Chancellor

"...condemned, in terms of unreserved severity, hospitals for foundlings, hospitals for ordinary diseases, hospitals for infants, and almshouses for succouring the aged and decrepit." (The Lancet 1834;26:666-668).

The Lancet was opposed to Malthusian solutions to 'the population question' and allied itself with the many who envisaged society progressing through cooperation, education, emancipation, technological advance, and democratic participation. The huge rise in world population, rather than proving Malthus' writings to be prophetic, have demonstrated their fallibility, the major cause of hunger today being inequitable distribution rather than absolute lack of food.

In the present era of 'workfare' and 'radical' re-examination of the welfare system, it is not difficult to imagine that the ghost of Malthus may be invoked once again. Historically, we should reflect on the bitter hostility of the working class towards Malthus, and remember that during a period of social crisis his pseudo-scientific teachings were used as a weapon to punish the poor and needy.

SARAT

(The following talk was given to the Sarat Academy by Bill Bland):

It was the ideologist of British imperialism Rudyard Kipling who wrote:

*East is East, and West is West,
And never the twain shall meet.*

Rubbish, of course! For here we are, meeting in the capital of what was once the British Empire, celebrating an 'obscure' Asian writer.

If I say that Sarat was an 'obscure' writer, I use the word not in any derogatory sense, but rather in criticism of the narrow insularity of Western culture, most of whose encyclopaedias contain no entry for Sarat.

Being a poor young student who can afford to buy few books, I use the British Library a lot. Among its millions of books, its computers list only one book in English by Sarat which only goes to show - never believe a computer! There are in fact at least twenty works by Sarat in English in the library, but they are listed under different transliterations of his name. Here, surely, is a task for the Sarat Academy - to contact the British Library and correct this confusion for future generations!

When I mentioned to a friend that I was speaking to the Sarat Academy, he said: 'But you don't know the language. You can't really appreciate Sarat unless you read him in the original'.

Now, of course, I accept that all literature loses something in translation. But every nation produces wonderful works of literature. It would be impossible in one lifetime to become fluent in all the languages of the world, and a good translation - even if

it does lose something of the original - makes a literary work available to millions to whom it would otherwise be inaccessible.

Of course, all nations produce great artists, but Bengal has been particularly favoured in this respect - who would question, for example, that Satyajit Ray was among the world's greatest artists in the medium of the cinema.

Perhaps, indeed, the West - in spite of its bloody history of oppression and exploitation of the East - may even claim some little credit for Bengali culture, for Bengal numbers among its finest writers not so much the Sanskrit writers from the ossified native Ashrams, as those who were influenced by Western Culture - I am thinking here of the pioneering Bankim and of Rabindranath Tagore as well as Sarat.

Just as the European Renaissance was the product of the rising bourgeoisie and the influence of classical Greek and Roman culture, so the Bengali Renaissance was the product of the rising bourgeoisies of the nations of India and the influence of British culture. In Bengal, secular literature - and particularly the novel and short story - was the product of this fusion of cultures.

Saratchandra Chatterjee, the second of nine children, was born in 1876 and died in 1938 at the age of 62. His grandfather was a wealthy Brahmin who lost his money, so that Sarat says of himself:

"My childhood and youth were passed in great poverty. I received almost no education for want of means. From my father I inherited nothing except, I think, his restless spirit and his love of books". (Sarat, cited in: Edward J. Thompson: Preface to : Sarat: 'Srikanta'; Calcutta, 1922; p. vii).

At the age of 27, he went to Burma as a penniless vagrant, and his range of experience was greatly broadened by the ten

years he spent in that country, which in those days enjoyed freedoms that were non-existent in Bengal. In his novel 'Srikanta', for example, there is a marvellous picture of human beings travelling to Rangoon as deck passengers.

As with Dickens, whom he greatly admired, many of his novels were first published as serials.

Sarat saw and wrote from the viewpoint of ordinary people and he portrayed in a realistic manner their everyday lives. Although he became relatively well-off in later life, he never lost his understanding of and sympathy with ordinary people - demonstrably in his portrayal of the poor, the oppressed and the outcasts of society. Perhaps his greatest short story is of the love of a poor peasant for his bull, Mahesh.

He wrote in the spoken language of ordinary people, and even in translation, the simple, clear, precise, unornamented style of his writing emerges. He is above all a storyteller, but one who strips off false cloaks of respectability to rotteness that often lies beneath. Perhaps no other Indian writer has drawn such vivid pictures of the Hindu extended family, with its contrasting tensions and harmonies.

He was a master of character drawing, and his portraits of women are particularly striking - especially of women who dared to challenge the stifling conventions of the period, which did not recognise a woman's - let alone a widow's - right to love. He also had a penetrating insight into the psychology of children.

Sarat lived in no ivory tower. He joined Congress in 1921, and threw himself feverishly into the struggles of the Indian people for liberation from British rule and from the fetters of feudalism, which was hand in glove with British occupiers.

Who can forget the cry of Keshab as the body of the little Charan is being cremated:

“It did not take long for the little body of Charan to burn into ashes. Keshab watched, heaved a terrible sigh and shouted:

“Lies! All lies! Those who say that whatever God does is for the best, they are all wicked bastards and crooks!”
(Sarat: ‘The Pundit’, in: ‘Collected Works’ (Bengali); p. 338).

And who cannot but admire the woman who has the courage to tell her husband that she has become an atheist:

“My husband seemed surprised and said: “Who doesn’t believe in God?”

I said: “I do not”.

He said: “But why don’t you believe in God?”

“Because god doesn’t exist”, I replied, “that’s why!” (Sarat: ‘The Husband’, in: ‘Collected Works’ (Bengali); p. 386)

May I conclude by thanking you for the honour you have done me by inviting me to speak to the Sarat Academy, and expressing my gratitude to my friend Bhaskar for having first introduced me to the incomparable writing of Sarat.

BIBLIOGRAPHY - Western Languages

HUMAYUN Kabir: ‘Sarat Chandra Chatterjee’; Calcutta; 1963

SEN GUPTA, Subodh Chandra; ‘Sarat Chandra - Man and Artist’; Calcutta; 1945

TARA-PADA Vasu; ‘La societe bengalie du vingtieme siecle dans l’oeuvre de Sarat Chandra Chatterji’ (The Bengali

Society of the 20th Century in the Work of Sarat Chandra Chatterjee); Paris; 1940

THOMPSON Edward J: Preface to: SARAT: ‘Srikanta’; Calcutta; 1922

Letter to the Stalin Society

The following letter was sent to the Stalin Society by a former soldier on the Eastern Front. We reprint it with acknowledgement and thanks.

Ofcourse I agree with the sentiments expressed in the August sheet of the Stalin Society. Having been a soldier at what was to us the Eastern Front, I have learnt many lessons from that human catastrophe. No doubt, Stalin was a hard man, and that job he took over from Lenin demanded a man of steel nerves. Amidst the absolute necessity to build up the Soviet Union, there were many other great advances in so many fields like education, the health service, and housing which had ofcourse to be measured against the enormous economic/social difficulties which prevailed at that time in that large country. A straight comparison with the Wesern situation wold have been laughable.

Stalin has often been accused of having had no idea about Barbarossa, the German attack on his country in the high summer of 1941. To believe that is ridiculous. Soviet Intelligence knew exactly what was preparing on the other side of its western borders. The time gained by signing the Ribbentrop Pact was not enough. And in the end it was the plan prosecuted by his able Generals Zhukov and Timoshenko, agreed to by Stalin, to let the German armies far into their country as the only chance to succeed, to then smash the German military power. The Russian sacrifices were enormous, they went into the millions, But I think that there was no other way. Had they opposed the initial onslaught of Barbarossa, I imagine that they probably would have lost the war.

I was in the Crimeria (Manstein) and as a Panzer soldier (the under Paulus' VI army) took part into the advance to Stalingrad in the summer, long and hot of 1942. I took part in many other battles and I think I know what I am talking about. By the time we reached Stalingrad - and that happened to the other German advances towards Moscow and Leningrad as well, our losses in material and men were such that we were very exhausted and unable to win victory at these cities as history now records. That was due to Stalin's acceptance of the Zhukov-Timoshenko plan which ground us down.

When I look at Russia today with that drunken clown Yeltsyn and the mafia at the helm, I could weep. Capitalism has totally failed the Russian people. And isn't that surprising...! They have suffered under the Tsars, they had to put up with incredible hardships during the Soviet attempt to build a socialist society and I now dread to think what the coming capitalist winter holds in store for them.

But history is a long process, it hasn't come to the end with the fall of the Berlin wall as some propagandists in the West would like to make us believe. Stalin was a man of his time, the same conditions do not apply today. The Russian people will not go under! They are enormously strong - Napoleon can sing a song about it and it were they who "tore the guts out of the ghastly German war machine."

I am sure, although I don't think that I will see it, that another Lenin one day will organise them into a better human future, all our future.

CAPITALISM TAKES YEARS FROM LIFE AND LIFE FROM YEARS

Following a period of steady improvement in the health of the Russian people, life expectancy at birth began to lag

behind the West in the mid-1960s. Between 1990 and 1994 life expectancy has fallen by 5 years. According to an article published last year in the British Medical Journal (BMJ 1998;317:312-8) this decline is driven by 'profound economic, social and political changes'.

Increasing rates of death between the ages of 30 and 60 accounted for most of the fall in life expectancy, the largest fall occurring in regions that were predominantly urban, had high rates of labour turnover, large increases in recorded crime, and a higher average but unequal distribution of household income.

ALBANIA

The situation in Albania with regard to Marxist-Leninist organisations is debated at the present time. We therefore reprint three items, two from the journal of the Communist Party of Albania, 'The Phoenix', and one from 'Shkendija' (The Spark), initially circulated by the CL in the form of electronic mail. Together they provide some clarification of the political realities in Albania, the role of Hysni Milloshi and the stance of Nexhmije Hoxha.

HYSNI MILLOSHI CONTINUES HIS FRAUDULENT POSITIONS
From: 'FENIKSI' (The Phoenix), No. 4, May 1998; translated by WB Bland.

THE CENTRAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE OF THE CPA (Communist Party of Albania) CONDEMNS SPLITTING ACTIVITY AND WORKS TO STRENGTHEN UNITY IN THE RANKS OF THE PARTY.

The Central Organising Committee of the CPA, at its regular meeting on 3 May 1998, discussed the tasks which confront the Party in the broadening of its ranks and the

extension of its activity in the conditions created after the annulment of the illegal neo-fascist decision of 16 July 1992.

In this context, the participants in the meeting unanimously condemned the splitting and sabotaging activity of Hysni Milloshi and decided to explain its position publicly,

1. Comrade Hysni Milloshi was appointed to the Preliminary Commission for the Creation of the CPA in September 1991 and in the same month, at an unconstitutional meeting of some members of this Commission, was appointed Chairman of the Preliminary Commission. With the transformation of the Commission into the Central Organising Committee (November 1991), he remained Chairman of this committee and not Chairman of the Party as he has claimed.

2. During the period up to the illegal banning of the CPA he was frequently criticised by members of the Central Organising Committee for systematic and deliberate violations of the organisational norms and principles of collegiality, for breaches of decisions taken collectively, for the public expression of mistaken political and ideological views, and for expenditures outside the financial control of the Party.

While the greatest tolerance was shown, in the belief that some at least of these actions and positions arose from lack of experience, Hysni Milloshi responded consistently with arrogance, conceit and extreme voluntarism.

3. In December 1992, exploiting the difficult conditions of illegality, Hysni Milloshi, together with a minority of the members of the Central Organising Committee, in breach of communist principle, organised a secret meeting which

he called an 'Extraordinary Conference of the CPA'. At this meeting, in the most arbitrary manner conceivable and using methods of intrigue and deceit, the Central Organising Committee was disregarded and decisions were taken as though it did not exist. By this action, Hysni Milloshi excluded himself from this Committee, thus discharging himself from further duties as its Chairman.

This meeting, called an 'Extraordinary Conference', using on a wide scale the most banal and absurd fraud, slander and insults, 'expelled' some of the members of the Central Organising Committee, although none of them took part or wished to have links with the group created by Hysni Milloshi.

The so-called 'Conference', in fact, sowed the seeds of a split in the CPA, inaugurated a fractional group which broke away from the CPA as it was officially known on 9 November and merely fed the careerist megalomania and ambition of Hysni Milloshi, who was elected Chairman of the new party which was invented.

4. Faced with this unexpected and despicable behind-the-scenes activity, members of the Central Organising Committee and the three deputy chairmen of this Committee reacted immediately and did everything in their power to correct this fractional step with its dangerous consequences for the unity of the CPA and its very existence. However, Hysni Milloshi, either at his own wish or on advice from outside the Party, refused to return. Precisely for this reason, a letter was sent to all organisations and committees of the Party with the aim of clarifying the situation, correcting errors made, and assisting the communists to re-establish the unity so severely and treacherously damaged.

5. With the aim of re-establishing the unity destroyed by the obstinacy and shamelessness of Hysni Milloshi, the majority of the members of the Central Organising Committee decided that the activity of this legal forum should be continued, without interrupting for a moment efforts to resolve the differences, to unify all communists in a single Marxist-Leninist Party, and to convoke a Congress of the CPA at which a Programme, Constitution and political line of the Party could be approved and a legitimate leadership elected. In all the many initiatives which the Central Organising Committee has undertaken without the participation of Hysni Milloshi and some of his supporters, it has had the approval of the overwhelming majority of communists in the four corners of the country.

6. In the conditions created after the elections of 29 June 1997, efforts for reunification have continued through discussions. Up to the end of April of this year, the Central Organising Committee has undertaken more than twenty initiatives with the aim of re-establishing Party unity. Towards these initiatives, Hysni Milloshi has maintained a dishonest, fraudulent stance. On not a few occasions he has welcomed them, has agreed to discussions and to deadlines for reply. But each time he has cheated and given proof of his determination to travel further along the road of splitting and sabotage of the communist movement in Albania, while putting forward the bourgeois-imperialist view that the existence of 'several communist parties' is acceptable. It would seem that he is obsessed with the position of 'Chairman', the undeserved title he has adopted which has brought him not few benefits at a time when genuine communists were suffering in the prison cells of Berisha's dictatorship.

7. After the failure of all attempts at reunification, the Central Organising

Committee decided unanimously to cease further attempts at discussions with Hysni Milloshi, to call on communists, organisations and committees of the PCA to distance themselves from his splitting and sabotaging activity, not to fall into bourgeois-imperialist trap of 'several communist parties' and to be vigilant.

8. The participants in the meeting of the Central Organising Committee expressed their determination to take without wavering the road taken up to now to build the CPA, to broaden its activities and increase the influence of communists in the social and political life of the country.

In the framework of this task and this perspective, work will be done to clarify further the views and positions of Hysni Milloshi, analysing in detail, with facts, documents and serious arguments the mistakes and faults in his practical activity and in the ideological and political positions which he has held and holds.

The communists, organisations and committees of the CPA, as in the evaluation of every phenomenon, must begin from the difficult situation through which Albania is passing, must hold on high the flag of the nation and the people, and make the Communist Party, as the people want, a vanguard force in the struggle for national sovereignty and independence, for people's democracy and social equality.

CENTRAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF
ALBANIA; Tirana, 3 May 1998.

WHILE WE WERE SPENDING THE YEARS OF OUR OLD AGE IN THE PRISONS OF SALI BERISHA, HYSNI MILLOSHI WAS WALKING FREE IN TIRANA AND THROUGH THE WORLD . . .

by Nexhmije Hoxha (widow of the Albanian Marxist-Leninist leader, Enver Hoxha).
Translated by WB Bland from 'Feniksi' (The Phoenix), No 6, July 1998

The self-styled Chairman of the still unlegalised Communist Party, Hysni Milloshi, is attempting to wipe out a whole 45 years of my life as wife and co-fighter of Enver Hoxha. By what right does this individual, who was never a member of the Party of Labour, claim the right to judge from Olympian heights my life, which nothing can dim. Hysni Milloshi makes himself ridiculous when he declares: "Nexhmije Hoxha is not a communist; she is an anti-fascist and nothing more". Probably he had not yet been born when, before the foundation of the Party, I was active in the communist groups of Qemal Stafa and Vasil Shanto.

Why does this 'Chairman' of a Communist Party which has not yet emerged on to the battlefield, denounce from all sides the Party of Labour, a 50-year-old party, a party which had 160 thousand members and cadres, a party which led the people, enduring many sacrifices and privations, through rain and snow to establish in the farthest corners of Albania schools, health centres and electric light, creating work for all, constructing a new Albania?

Why was this 'great revolutionary', although writing 'fiery' articles extolling Enver Hoxha, allowed to walk free in Tirana and through the world, while we and other comrades were spending our old age in the prisons of Sali Berisha? When Ilir Hoxha

defended his father in an interview, he was immediately given a year's imprisonment and only escaped assassination by a whisker. While accusing our children of crimes, Hysni Milloshi continued to pose as Enver's 'faithful and trustworthy heir'!!!

Only someone suffering from insane delusions of grandeur could go so far in his ravings. By the outlandish declarations he has made recently, Milloshi has brought discredit on himself, surprised and disappointed many of his sympathisers, and harmed to a considerable extent the efforts of Albanian communists to unite in a single party. Hysni Milloshi, if he truly admires Enver Hoxha, must follow his teachings: must fight for Party unification, without laying down any preconditions as to who should be its Chairman, just as Albanian communists did in 1941, when the Communist Party was founded. Enver Hoxha did not try to predetermine such an issue. The Party elected its leadership in the course of the struggle.

RESOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL ACTIVE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ALBANIA (R)

Translated by WB Bland from 'Shkendija' (The Spark), of 16th August 1998 p. 3-4.

On the 16 August (1998 - WBB) a 'National Active of the Communist Part of Albania (Reconstructed)' met in Tirana. The participants, after discussing comprehensively the present political aims and tasks of the Party, adopted the following resolution:

1. The Communist Party of Albania was revived as a Necessity of the Time in Conditions of Counter-revolution and Pluralism

The initiative for the founding of the

Communist Party of Albania (today the CPA-R) arose in July 1991, shortly after the 19th Congress of the PLA, when the opportunism of the top leadership of the PLA, headed by Ramiz Alia, culminated in the arbitrary dissolution of this party and its arbitrary replacement by the Socialist Party, at a time when the anti-communist forces of reaction, incited and supported by foreign imperialism, hurled themselves into frenzied anti-socialist and anti-national activity. This initiative took organised form in the formation of the Founding Commission, its transformation into the Central Organising Committee and the legal recognition of the CPA on 9 November 1991.

From November 1991 to 16 July 1992, the Central Organising Committee, in spite of objective and subjective difficulties, undertook the praiseworthy tasks of organising some activity by the Party and the masses in Tirana and the districts, the participation of the CPA in two electoral campaigns, the commencement of publication of the Party's newspaper, the creation of a financial fund, the printing of the Party's these, etc.

The fundamental weakness of the Central Organising Committee was the indecisiveness of the National Conference of the PLA at which the Programme and Constitution would be approved and the leadership of the Party elected. The causes of this indecisiveness were mainly of a subjective character.

After the banning of the Party (16 July 1992), meetings of the Central Organising Committee became impossible because of the groundless opposition of Hysni Millosi, the former Chairman of this Committee and self-styled Chairman of the CPA. Millosi's responsibility for this situation must be shared with certain other members of this committee, including its

three Deputy Chairmen, who carried out splitting activities.

On 12 December 1992, in contravention of every organisational and moral norm and without the knowledge of the Central Organising Committee and in the absence of the majority of its members, a meeting was held which was called an Extraordinary Conference of the CPA at which Hysni Millosi was declared to be chairman of the CPA and the Central Organising Committee was declared non-existent.

This splitting activity was opposed by the majority of members of the Central Organising Committee, who decided to continue legitimate activity and, in order to save the Party, sought to correct the serious mistake which had been made. However, despite the repeated efforts to restore Party unity during the period 1992-8, Hysni Millosi and his fanatical followers continued along the road of splitting and sabotage.

In these circumstances, the Central Organising Committee convoked, at the beginning of March 1996, the First national Conference of the CPA, at which the Programme and Statues were adopted, the leading bodies of the Party were elected, and it was decided to condemn publicly the anti-Party activities of Millosi, without interrupting for a moment the attempts to unite all communists in a single Marxist-Leninist Party. These attempts were continued in the period 1997-1998, not only with the Millosi group but with other communists as yet unorganised.

When these attempts also did not produce the desired result, and after the Ministry of Justice had arbitrarily declared our activity illegal, the Central Committee, for legal reasons, added the word 'Reconstructed' to the Party's name, without

making any change in the Party's Programme, Constitution, political line or organisational structures.

This active expresses the conviction that our policy is correct, and that it is necessary to go forward with determination, overcoming every difficulty and obstacle.

2. Let us make the Party the Trusted Leader of the Masses of the People.

At the present time the tasks before the communists are to reorganise the Party on a nation-wide scale after its emergence from illegality, to eliminate the consequences of splitting activity, to overcome the obstacles and difficulties which confront us, keeping well in mind the circumstances in which we are living and the economic, social and political environment which has been created in Albania after the counter-revolutionary coup of the year 1991.

Our decisive weapon for the achievement of all these objectives is organisation. Without organisation, without unity, without militancy and without strict and conscientious discipline, a communist Party cannot be successful in achieving its aims. The organisation of the Party is at present the Number One task of every communist and of every Party organisation, something which must be achieved at the earliest possible moment through dedicated common efforts on the basis of democratic centralism.

Only a party well organised throughout the whole country, composed of dedicated members and with a reputation among the people, conscientious in carrying out its historic mission, can mobilise and bring into action the masses of the people and hold their respect. For this reason communists must fight against opportunism and sectarianism, against social-democratic

and Eurocommunist ideology, as well as against tailist concepts and practices.

It is the task of the Central Committee to define criteria, to give the necessary guidance on admission to the Party, and to pursue this important question up to the Congress of the CPA.

Marxist-Leninist ideological clarity, ability to determine short and long-term political objectives, capacity to correctly orientate itself in every situation and to take the initiative in bringing the masses into activity -- these must be another distinguishing characteristic of the CPA(R). While organisation is the weapon, the political objectives are the goal of our Party's existence, as well as the index of its strength and influence.

The leading bodies of the Party have the principal responsibility in this direction. But the organising committees in the regions also must play a role. They must assess the political in the regions where they operate, must undertake studies on the problems which concern the people of the respective region, and must undertake Party and mass actions in connection with them.

To establish live and effective links with the masses of people is the principal aim of the Party and its members, so that reorganisation, an increase in its political activity and recruiting to its ranks are continually necessary. The ways and means to strengthen the mass work of the Party are manifold. The communists must familiarise themselves with the problems of the masses, must concern themselves with the solution of these problems, must draw the people's attention to their work, If this is done, the masses of the people will see in the PCA(R) and its members their faithful and firmest representatives and will follow its lead up to the achievement of its fundamental aims.

In the conditions of political pluralism, of the existence of many parties, trade unions and other organisations, our Party, while guarding its identity and independence, and aiming to strengthen its influence among the people, must give importance to finding wise tactical moves, without falling into opportunism, sectarianism and dogmatism. It must protect its philosophy from alien influences and its ranks from the penetration of corrupting elements, even when these are hidden behind 'ultra revolutionary' phraseology.

Making a clear distinction between anti-communist and non-communist parties, and pursuing the road of debate, criticism, polemics and opposition, the PLA(R) in its attitude to other parties, must not reject cooperation on tactical questions or necessary compromises which do not infringe principles. It must start from their programmatic attitudes towards major questions of the nation and the people, from their class aims, from the physiognomy and activity of the respective leaderships. But it must reject as unacceptable the determination of political line by, or the dependence of parties upon, foreign states and governments.

In order to have a strong party, able to lead the masses of the people, we must learn from our mistakes and from the past, employing criticism and self-criticism, from the base organisations of the Party right up to the Central Committee and the Congress, the first concern after the determination of the political line must be the selection of comrades who can take on the responsibility of ideological, political and organisational leadership. Only thus will the Party and its organisations act in unity and attain success in all their initiatives.

3. Aims and Political Tasks in the Present Period

The Party's aims and political tasks arise out of a careful and objectively scientific study of the historical circumstances and the internal and external situations and are a concretisation in time of strategic goals.

Our concern in this period of anti-socialist counter-revolution and of feverish anti-communist activity on a world scale is to be resolute and prudent, to avoid leftism, ultra-revolutionary provocations, voluntarism, Trotskyism, and any kind of premature activity, to think out every step and to be skilful in exploiting every opportunity.

We are living in a period of continued, general counter-revolutionary, anti-socialist crisis, of fullest open dependence upon imperialism and its economic, financial, political and military organisations. The crisis has been caused by the imperialist powers, headed by the USA, has embraced all sectors of life and social activity and all strata of the population that have been expropriated and divested of power.

The working class, the revolutionary backbone of society, has been seriously and deliberately attacked, has been disorganised and brought into dependence on counter-revolutionary, corrupted trade union leaders, The peasantry has lost interest in the cultivation of the soil and is on the verge of ruin. The youth is without work and hope. Women have again be confined to housework and sexual exploitation. Intellectuals work for a crust of bread or have been forced to seek employment abroad.

Communists have a duty to explain to the people that what has happened and is happening in Albania since 1991 is not the failure of socialism, but the result of a counter-revolutionary coup carried out by degenerate, bourgeoisified elements linked with and supported by imperialist circles, using pressure, blockade and savage diversionary acts.

In the waves of vandalism and chaos of 1991-2 and 1997, a major part of the economy and national resources were destroyed and systematic sabotage caused colossal damage not only to the living standards of the masses but also to national sovereignty and independence. The true cause of the poverty of the majority of Albanians, of the mass unemployment, of the economic migration and of the other social evils is not the socialist system which was in course of construction, but this reactionary, anti-national activity.

Linked with the wave of sabotage and impoverishment there has been brought into effect a process of privatisation in the most arbitrary and dictatorial form, treating the collective property of the people as the war booty' of the gangs which were brought to power, as a means of bargaining with foreigners, to the profit of a new voracious, pro-imperialist, cosmopolitan, comprador bourgeoisie which is the basis of the new capitalist system. Smuggling, speculation, corruptions, the interweaving of mafia activity with political circles inside and outside the country, have worsened ever more the condition of the mass of the people and have opened the road to robbery, prostitution, drug peddling, hideous murders and organised criminal gangs.

This is the price, along with national sovereignty, which the Albanian people are paying for the anti-socialist, counter-revolutionary coup and a

pro-imperialist policy. This is the price, along with the alarming increase in foreign debt, which the masses of the people are paying for so called 'humanitarian aid', 'technical assistance' and plans for 'economic recovery'. We have now, in fact, an economy which is oriented not on the needs of the people and the country but on the demands of imperialist circles. Therefore, the promises of a speedy end to the crisis; and a 'rosy future' awaiting Albania are mere lying propaganda serving the quisling gangsters in government. The people must wake up, discard these illusions and take in their hands their destiny and that of the country by means of direct mass actions for true democracy, national sovereignty and social equality.

Our Party greeted the people's victory against the satrap regime of Sali Berisha and will fight with all its strength to prevent a return to power of the discredited and criminal DP or the seizure of power by the extreme right. But at the same time they do not wish this people's victory to be exploited by continuation along Berisha's road without Berisha.

Today, not only in Albania but in some other capitalist countries, including those of the former socialist camp, there have come to power, with the support of the USA and other imperialist states, so-called left forces' of social democracy which, in truth, along with political liberalisation do the work of the right and have the tendency to side more and more openly with the right. A year of government by the heads of the Socialist Party and their allies has shown that, apart from the cessation of political terror, they are zealously following in all directions the road laid down by Berisha, both internally and in foreign affairs. The majority of the members and sympathisers of the SP are now disillusioned and in revolt.

The sharp criticism of the CPA(R) towards the coalition government headed by the SP is caused not by party aims or by some extremist tendency, but by unwillingness to accept a new edition of the tragic events of 1991 and 1997.

Politicians must realise that, if they are not to become a joke or marked with the ugly and shameful stain of treason it is essential to oppose armed intervention from abroad, such as occurred in 1997 under the pretext of the distribution of humanitarian aid.

The Communist Party of Albania (Reconstructed), as a result of its convictions, in this period of general crisis and deepening of anti-socialist counter-revolution, will fight with all its strength in defence of national sovereignty and independence, of the interests and aspirations of the people, for ever greater democratisation of the life of the country, for recognition and support of the struggle of the Albanian population of Kosova, for self-determination, for the defence of the rights of the Greek minority and its equality with ethnic Albanians in the economic, social and political life of the country.

The communists have been and are opposed to the neo-colonial practices which are pursued beneath the mask of 'international cooperation'. The imperialist states which, separately or together, use blockades, embargoes, threats, interference in the internal affairs of small and poor states, in order to exploit them and keep them in poverty.

We do not want Albania to become a protectorate of any other state, or become a bridge or base for aggression against other peoples. That is why communists defend the right of nations to self-determination, while the hegemonistic imperialists play the game

of so-called 'rights of the individual'.

With this general political platform, our Party re-enters the Albanian political scene in order to take its deserved place in the social and political life of the country as representatives of the interests and aspirations of the masses of the people, of national ideals, of friendship and cooperation among the peoples.

LONG LIVE THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE!

LONG LIVE OUR COMMUNIST PARTY!

The National Active of the CPA(R)

Published by The Communist League.

Correspondence to: JP, PO Box 24
Leeds LS8 1JU,
UK