

Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

Students Integrate With Workers

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STUDENTS INTEGRATE WITH WORKERS

JOHN HANNINGTON instruments maker, shop stewards convenor, AEF, founding member of Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), speaking at a conference of the London Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation.

TO begin at the beginning, there is no such thing as a student/worker alliance. It is but a hollow slogan similar in origin and objective to that of the other great non-starter "unity of the left." Both sound very nice, very positive and constructive, both can and do muster enthusiastic meetings, but when these half-baked theories are put into practice they lead the working class not forward but backwards and leave it confused and defenceless in the face of the class enemy.

We need as students and as workers to understand the meaning of these false slogans/policies, their origins and those responsible for them — those people and their political parties who have made a life-long study and practice of misinforming and misleading the British working class, i.e. Social Democracy in the form of the Labour Party and its faithful ally Revisionism in the form of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

The working class now are standing on the threshold of the greatest potential for real advance. They have the organisational experience, and they have proven in countless thousands of battles with the employing class that they are not lacking in courage. What is lacking and what has never existed is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist leadership. History has proven that no working class has ever won its freedom without such a leadership.

On the other side, I'm sure we would all agree that the British Ruling Class are the oldest, cleverest, most cunning, ruthless and barbaric ruling class in the world. They will spare no effort in this period of growing class contradictions to make sure that workers don't travel along that road which is the road of revolution, the road that is going to end exploitation once and for all in this country.

Just because the possibilities exist for real advance it would be absolute folly for any worker or student to believe that there is not going to be the most concentrated of all attacks on the working class that this country has ever witnessed. These attacks are being carried out by the crisis party of Capitalism, the social democratic Labour Party.

Time is running short if we are to fulfil this task. If we don't determine at meetings such as this one today where we are going, then the Ruling Class will decide for us.

How then can meetings such as this assist the working class in the coming struggles? First let us replace the false slogan of student/worker alliance with that of worker/student integration. How then can we bring this integration about? Should students talk to workers at factory gates, in the pubs and clubs, in their homes; should workers do as I am doing today? I would say yes to all these, but something more fundamental is called for: integration is not just an organisational question but a political one also. Such integration must have a common aim for workers and students, both sections must be subject to a common discipline. This can only be achieved by both workers and students integrating within a Marxist-Leninist party. Such a party does exist. Small as it may be, it is the party of which I am proud to be a member alongside many other active workers. Our party, the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) has set itself the task of building a revolutionary party embracing workers and students.

One thing you can be sure of — the British working class will not be led by students. I've had occasion to hear students expounding a theory that they, the students, were going to thrash out the policy in the universities in their little cells and when the "revolutionary" theory is ready for the workers then they, the students, will trot along to the factory gates and say to the

workers, "There you are, lads, we've worked it all out for you, get busy and make revolution." The worker's reply to such an approach would be similar to the one he would give to the employer: "Get Stuffed."

I hope the meeting does not think, based on what I have said, that I am against intellectuals, but rather that I'm very much in favour of worker intellectuals.

I say this because I and many others are convinced that one of the greatest single mistakes that has consistently been made generations of workers is that they tend to leave the political thinking and theorising to those "who are better equipped." It is this error that has led the British working class into the political jungle of social democracy, it is also this error that has blunted the workers struggle and given rise to revisionism in Britain.

The very word 'alliance' strikes me as something which is of only a temporary nature.

Can the student struggles, whether for a democratic control of universities or colleges, for improved grants, against social injustice, capitalism and imperialism, be apart or separate from the struggles of the working class?

At this moment in history we are witnessing most concentrated attacks against workers wherever they labour by the reactionary triple alliance of the Labour Government, the employers and the General Council of the T.U.C. Workers' resistance to these attacks is growing, but it has a spontaneous nature, there is no political cohesion, no fundamental objective; it is in short a brave and necessary struggle, but it remains nevertheless a defensive struggle.

What workers and students alike need to understand is that no real lasting freedom or democratic rights can be achieved, unless political power is seized by the working class, and that power held by means of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In closing I would like to stress the urgent task that confronts us all, workers and students alike — the development of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

We are all agreed, I'm sure, that the existence of our party will prove to be the all-decisive factor in the coming struggles.

Our party and its monthly paper THE WORKER is firmly based on experienced working class comrades, who have learned the hard way on the blind alley politics of revisionism.

We are indeed fortunate to have such able comrades as our party's Chairman, Comrade Reg Birch, and others whose long records in combating social democracy, economism and revisionism have given our party a firm ideological base on which to build.

Of course our party has its critics, but whilst they talk endlessly of the need for a Marxist-Leninist party in Britain — we have done it! Action speaks louder than words.

If we politically conscious people fail in our task the working class will never forgive us, for it is they who will pay the price for our failure.

You as students have much to contribute to a Marxist-Leninist party. You have qualities which are of vital importance in our historic task. You have youth and youth will always hold a very special place in our party, for it is the youth that is least corrupted by capitalist ideology. You have special abilities which will prove to be invaluable in the development of our party theory and practice. May I then in closing, on behalf of the Central Committee of our Party, wish you well in your coming struggles.