

In Memory of Michael McCreery

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MICHAEL McCREERY WITH CDE. ENVER HOXHA

MICHAEL McCREERY

MARXIST - LENINIST LEADER

April 10th 1968 is the third anniversary of the tragic death of Michael McCreery at the age of 36. His premature death was a terrible blow for the young Marxist-Leninist movement in the British Isles and especially in England. But his clear analysis of the British situation and of how to apply Marxist-Leninist principles concretely to our own condition is still with us - playing a leading role in the development of the British Marxist-Leninist movement. His ideas - Marxism-Leninism in and for Britain - can never die.

At the present time, the programme and organisation of the Marxist-Leninist Party of England are being forged through struggle and through discussion, and are gaining a real base among working people throughout the country. The Working Peoples' Party of England will hold its inaugural Congress on May 4th and 5th.

Meanwhile phoney revolutionaries, fearing this development, are hastily setting up organisations in the King Street mould with a false front of allegedly pro-Mao window-dressing for the purpose of propping up the tottering political careers of the "leaders" and obstructing real revolutionary advance. These neo-revisionists mouth quotations from Chairman Mao like passwords to worm their way into the Marxist-Leninist movement so as to confuse honest militants and revolutionaries and get their support - so that they can go on making a comfortable living out of the class struggle. But these "leaders" and status-seekers have no intention of applying Mao's Thought in practice to develop a revolutionary mass movement here in Britain. They continue to practice King Street economist, defensist politics only with a slightly more 'left' phraseology. Moreover, these neo-revisionists have begun to rewrite the history of the anti-revisionist and Marxist Leninist movement in Britain. Their fables contrive to ignore all developments before 1965. Michael McCreery - his life, works and struggles - is an embarrassing indictment of their own opportunist careers. It is therefore all the more necessary to keep fresh and vivid the memory of Michael - the leader of an organised group of comrades who took the decisive lead in 1963 of publicly repudiating the revisionist CPGB leadership and starting out to rebuild a Marxist-Leninist Party in these islands.

BACKGROUND

McCreery was born into a bourgeois, military family and was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He also served in Military Intelligence and was trained in security and police methods. It is therefore most significant that his intimate knowledge of the British

ruling class and their state apparatus convinced him above all else that the rotten imperialist system could only be destroyed by the working class achieving state power for the building of socialism through revolutionary violence. The bourgeois state machine must be smashed and replaced by the independent organisations for state power of the working class. The petty-bourgeois leaders of the CPGB on the contrary (and especially since the "British Road to Socialism" of 1951) believed and propagated the notion that socialism could be achieved through a Labour-Communist majority in Her Majesty's Parliament enacting "sweeping reforms" and backed by "massive trade union strength" in case the ruling class tries armed counter-revolution - as though the class struggle were a game of cricket and everyone is going to abide by the constitutional rules.

McCreery wrote a number of criticisms of the "British Road to Socialism" and of other articles by leading revisionists which blurred the Marxist-Leninist analysis of the state. He also attacked the CPGB international policy of neo-colonialism and paternalism towards the National Liberation Struggles and of peaceful coexistence with imperialism.

He became known as an opposition leader within the CPGB and together with Comrades Kenny Houlison and Johnny James, he began to build an inner-party opposition of anti-revisionist forces.

From about 1962 it had been clear to McCreery and other comrades that the CPGB could not be transformed into a revolutionary organisation by inner party struggle but that a new Marxist-Leninist Party must be rebuilt in open, public struggle against imperialism, social democracy and revisionism. Honest rank and file members of the CPGB would be won in such a struggle for the Marxist-Leninist Party. Other 'anti-revisionists' continued to believe that the CPGB could be captured by inner party struggle and denounced any move to publicly oppose the CPGB revisionist leadership as "splitting the Party" and "playing into the hands of the bourgeoisie and the trotskysts".

In 1963 Cde. James was expelled from the CPGB for openly attacking the Khrushchov-King St. line of Peaceful Coexistence with Imperialism on the London District Cttee (of which he was a member) and for advocating the Mao-Marxist-Leninist line of opposing and defeating imperialism by mobilising the masses of the people in revolutionary struggle for national liberation and socialism. The strong Stoke Newington branch of the CPGB (Cde James' branch) fiercely opposed King St over Cde James' expulsion and was expelled en bloc. (The King St. hatchet men revealingly told the Caribbean comrades of the Stoke Newington branch during this fracas that they were "fascist wogs".)

In the November of this same year, 1963, Gollan speaking for the CPGB intervened in the intensifying International Communist Movement polemics. He slandered the Chinese Party and Chairman Mao as "racists" and "warmongers". The Party press was closed to all

anti-revisionist views on this. This necessitated a repudiation of the revisionist leadership by anti-revisionists and a call to all members of the CPGB to join in the struggle to build a genuine Communist Party. Following the historic Lucas Arms meeting in London, Cde McCreery and 16 other comrades made such a repudiation of King St. and such an appeal to all Communists. A number of anti-revisionists found it possible to ignore developments and to stay on in the CPGB making critical noises while anonymously attacking McCreery and the other Marxist-Leninists as "left adventurists", "police agents" and other slanders. Some of these brave souls still find it possible to possess CPGB party cards! Others hung on in the CPGB until they were quietly eased out by Gollan and co. without so much as a squeak.

CLEAR ANALYSIS

In the ideological, political and organisational confusion that followed the final death agony of the CPGB (it is now a zombie organisation) McCreery's analysis of the British situation in the light of Marxist-Leninist general principles has shone like a beacon.

- (1) As already pointed out, McCreery brought back absolute clarity to the central issue - that of the class nature of the state in any society and of the consequent need in our society for the working class organised and led by their own Marxist-Leninist Party to break the state power of the bourgeoisie in socialist revolution and establish working class state power for the building of socialism. The chief ideological difference between revisionism and Marxism-Leninism is over this central issue. By cogently restating this Marxist-Leninist truth in "Destroy the Old to Build the New" and in "The Way Forward" and exposing the nonsense of the parliamentary, constitutional road, McCreery brought Leninism back into the British class struggle.
- (2) Following on from this key issue, McCreery pointed out that the Marxist-Leninist Party in the British Isles must be built on democratic centralism - with initiative returned to the branches and the cadres to implement the general line of the Party; with the branches organised principally on the place of work not on a parliamentary and local council electoral basis. The Party must develop a MASS LINE to mobilise the worker masses and all possible allies against the main enemy - US imperialism and its British imperialist quislings. The Party must be on a cadre basis seriously organised for revolution by all means necessary.
- (3) McCreery also analysed the National Question in the British Isles in the light of the teachings and practice of Lenin, Stalin, Connolly and John McLean. He pointed out that the rising national liberation movements in Wales, Scotland and Ireland were not only progressive but of key importance in aiding the break up of the British imperialist state and the hegemony of English imperialism. Marxist-Leninists in Britain must

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take the effective lead of such national movements and transform them into revolutionary movements with working class leadership, supported by all possible allies against the main imperialist enemy. Cdes. Houlison and Sutherland, who stood with Michael in 1963, have since played a leading role in helping to create the Workers Party of Scotland as vanguard of the working class in Scotland.

- (4) The detailed analysis of British imperialism carried out by "Workers Broadsheet" is a development of the essential work undertaken by McCreery. It was he who pointed out that British imperialism was still very much in existence at a time when CPGB, trotskyist, Labour and Tory "theoreticians" and "experts" were pretending it no longer existed. In 1964 McCreery showed how the British balance of payments deficits were the result of continued imperialist export of capital for overseas investment. In the past year capitalist "experts" have frankly admitted this. McCreery also pointed out the anti-patriotic nature of imperialism in his essay ironically entitled "The Patriots" and he clearly exposed how British imperialism was happy to become the quisling sidekick of US imperialism. In the Huyton Election Manifesto of 1964 he clearly stated that the Labour government would be even more servile to US imperialism than the Tories - a point amply confirmed by experience.

McCreery was never a sectarian and was always ready to discuss fully and in a comradely spirit with all honest militants. His international proletarianism was not merely verbal and he played an active part in helping the national liberation struggles, especially in Azania (South Africa) and the Caribbean - his role in helping "Carib" and associated movements in their early days are well remembered by Caribbean and indigenous comrades alike. He was a blood brother to the black liberation fighters.

Long Live the Memory of Michael McCreery - Marxist-Leninist Leader!

-London Workers Committee-

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