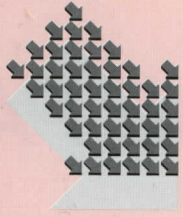


WHERE'S THE PARTY?



A booklet on Britain, for people who want progress



THIS is a publication for people who think that individuals can make a difference when they work together. It is a pamphlet for people who value honesty and humour; for people who want a better future for themselves and others, and are prepared to work for it.

If you have preconceived ideas of what a communist is, forget them and read this booklet.

You may find yourself agreeing with our views on working people, Britain and the world. If you also agree on the need to put ideas into practice, then get in touch.

Please pass the pamphlet on.

**Mike Johnson, Chairman,
Communist Party of Britain
Marxist-Leninist**

Preview: from the CPBML.

People: what makes a worker?

Place: what's so special about Britain?

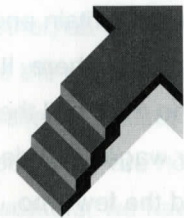
Planet: who is really ruining our environment?

Power: where does real power comes from?

Politics: is it all rubbish?

Party: where's the party?

Progress: an invitation to change things



If an alien landed outside your home and asked you to explain the differences between people in your area, where would you start?

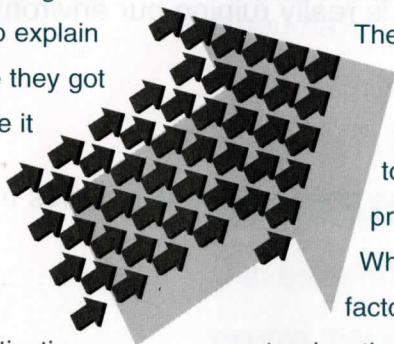
Some old, some young, men, women, children, black, white, big, small, with interests ranging from music to movies and gardening to grumbling. But if you had to explain **how** they lived, where they got their money and where it went to, you might describe things differently.

CLASS

There is one great distinction which shapes modern Britain and the life of every person living here. It is between those who must sell their working-power for wages in order to live (workers), and the few who, through their ownership of capital, make fortunes by feeding off the labour of others (capitalists).

This definition divides Britain into two classes; a working class made up of more than 95% of the

population, and a capitalist class which is small, crafty, and currently in the driving seat. The working class includes all the different types of worker that the ruling class has done its best to divide. It includes everyone who must work for a living, and those robbed of work – the unemployed.



There are different sections, but every worker uses hands and brain to make something or provide a service.

Whether they work in a factory or office, in transport, education or healthcare, they are all workers.

The idea of a "middle class" has been a useful hiding place for those who would look down on manual workers, as well as a coward's castle for those who pretend that only manual workers are 'real' workers.

We do not say that people are all the same or even similar. For instance, the engineers who founded the CPBML had a particular set of skills

and experiences that gave them a real grasp of the idea of power – where it lay and what it could do. But every group of workers has something to contribute.

Workers in Britain, whether new arrivals or the hundredth generation, share a debt to previous workers. Their determination to improve things, plus the effects of the world's first industrial revolution, helped to shape our country. Anything good or progressive in our society was fought for and won by workers. Now a new generation must fight for a decent future.

UNITY

Britain's workers are united by more than an economic relationship with their exploiters. All workers want to enjoy life and develop despite the pressures of work, or looking for work.

The factors that make us into one class and set us apart from the exploiters are far greater than the things that divide us. That is why we reject US-style politics based on pressure groups squabbling

for a bigger slice of the cake for their own pet section. Splitting ourselves into sections whether on the basis of religion, colour, age or sex means that we would spend valuable time fighting each other rather than reversing the basic injustice at the root of all injustices. We don't want a bigger slice for one group, we want to run the bakery.

POTENTIAL

Our view of workers, including ourselves, is that workers are thinking people, neither led nor misled by anyone but themselves. They are individuals and are proud of their uniqueness, yet they are strongest when they act together, as they do in unions. They have the capacity to learn from past mistakes or success. They are not all heroes; they are not all fools.

As workers, we have the capacity to change ourselves, our workplaces, the country or the world. Such an outlook requires patience, perspective and determination in a never-ending task, but it's better than being a slave.

It's a small, small world if you happen to be a capitalist. So many people to exploit, and so little time.

Luckily, most of us don't have to worry about it. We're workers.

For workers, the world also seems smaller. Global communications via computer and satellite mean we can watch the world being carved up into new areas dominated by multi-national companies and their pocket politicians. Increasingly, workers all over the world face the same problems, even the same employers. The US aims to dominate the Americas and beyond; Japan seeks to control southeast Asia, and the European Union is run by Germany.

At home, profits soar, and living standards decline, while in the less developed parts of the world, hundreds of thousands are left to starve each year, despite the modern world's ability to feed everyone five times over. In Europe and America, workers lose

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their jobs as capitalists use cheaper labour in their new

back yards. Yet as workers see the scale of the threat, some also see the need for new thinking.

Here, workers face the prospect of a 'United Europe'. The European Union, with its social chapter, is sometimes seen as a way of rescuing us in Britain from our own politicians, but the EU was set up to be run exclusively in the interests of big business, with the Bundesbank in control.

The EU is designed to make it easier to exploit working people in every member state; to move labour around to suit employers; to lower wages, control currency and create a huge captive market.

The EU has nothing to do with workers' internationalism, and everything to do with international exploitation.

We are for Europe's workers, and for the right of workers in Britain to control their own future, so we oppose the EU. Our future is as an independent state run by and for the people who live and work here. That's real internationalism.

At home, England, Scotland and Wales form one modern country. We are proud of the cultural diversity within Britain, but also proud of our economic unity. We need integration, not disintegration.

EMPLOYMENT

Workers in every area face the results of decades of destruction of the industries which allowed us to have a rising standard of living.

Unemployment is not a by-product of government policy – it is government policy, used to keep wages low and workers worried.

Shipbuilding, coal, steel and newer jobs in computing and electronics have all been starved of investment. Imports flood in, and the only export capitalists care about is exporting the wealth we create.

We can only reverse the destruction by building a new Britain, making what we can and trading for what we need. We have the skills, resources and people to provide real employment for

everyone. Historically, Britain is unique – first to industrialise, and the first where workers banded together to stop themselves being exploited to death. Britain has long been a melting-pot of ideas and peoples, but it always forms them into one unit, increasingly into one huge working class with a common enemy. Those who divide workers on the colour of their skin or the colour of their collar miss the point. High above such divisions is what unites us: our class and where we live.

That's why we are for workers' nationalism – very different from old-style nationalism and nothing to do with the flag-waving bigots who have tried to steal the word. Workers' nationalism means the majority of people in a country using the wealth of that country, human and material, to run things for themselves. Britain's workers have the imagination and skill to make a future our exploiters couldn't even dream about.

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It's like watching a compulsive gambler at work. One after another our natural resources, in Britain and around the world, are squandered. Most people now realise the importance of the environment and the responsibility we have to future generations. But it isn't enough to save the whale while people starve, and it's not enough to see the environment as just a collection of resources. For communists, the environment is the entire world in which we live and work. It is our ability to live well in a modern society, not to try going back to some medieval pre-electric nightmare. We must look after the physical environment, and the human one too.

PLANNING

Capitalists need to increase profits to survive. They do so by paying their workers less or getting raw materials cheaper, ideally by both. For developing countries, crippled by global loan sharks, this means watching vast natural resources being sucked out of the earth

while thousands starve. It means rare wilderness and animals being destroyed as their habitat is cut down, despite our ability to grow whatever we need, including wood, without touching either the rain-forests or Britain's ancient woodlands. But avoiding such disasters takes planning, which capitalists hate. They need maximum immediate profit at minimum cost.

For example, the EU's Common Fisheries Policy, under the guise of preserving fish stocks, is wrecking our traditional fishing grounds. Britain's fishing fleet, with a centuries-long record of care for the resource, is confined to harbour, while others use six mile driftnets. Capitalism, as a parasite, has wrecked other fishing grounds. Now it's coming for ours. On land, crops are left to rot, just to maintain profit and Britain's best farmland is 'set aside' instead of feeding workers here and abroad. Previous generations could say they did not know the damage they were

doing, but today's corporations and their governments have no excuses. Though their actions sometimes seem like vandalism on a global scale, this madness has a clear method and reason. A few exploiters, motivated by a desire for massive profit, knowingly ruin landscapes and economies. Modern capitalism is an ideology with no tomorrow. If there is 'no society', why should they worry about the chaos they leave behind? They don't mind the price, because we pay it for them.

Underpinning their attitude to the environment is a more universal motive for destruction. Capitalism exploits people as well as resources. They even call us 'human resources'. For capitalists, people's working power is a commodity to trade in and exploit like an intelligent lump of meat. They will keep on feeding off us and our world until they destroy it or are stopped. Too many

who call themselves 'green' blame industry for pollution instead of tackling the real enemy.

In Britain, thanks to technology, coal could be burned cleanly and efficiently, but profit was greater from other fuels and the mines were unionised, so the capitalists shut an industry. Our class could reopen mines and invest in cleaner, safer technology. Capitalists used billions of pounds from North Sea oil to fund unemployment and destruction. We could use that wealth to build a new industrial base, giving employment and so funding healthcare and education.

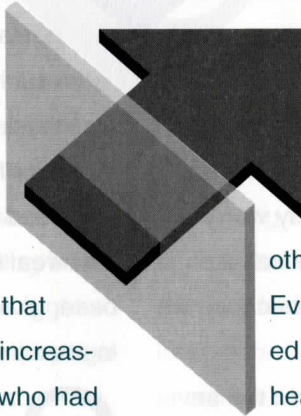
Capitalists grow rich on road-building, ruining the countryside; generating more pollution while selling public transport or starving it of funds. We could have the world's best public transport, built here alongside cleaner cars, generating new jobs and breathable air. None of this is pie in the sky. It's all there to be lost, or won.

When most people talk about power, they think of crazed figures wanting to run the world, or sleazy politicians clambering up the greasy pole of wealth and privilege. Real power is different.

Power is people thinking and acting in their interest as workers. It is about having the ability to stand up for yourself or others when someone tries to trample on you. It relies on working with others. Karl Marx analysed economic power, and how the world really worked. He saw that Britain, even in his day, was increasingly divided between those who had to sell their labour power for wages and those who dealt in workers' labour power in order to make huge profits from others' efforts.

Marx recognised, and Lenin went on to prove, that power did not naturally lie in the hands of our 'elders and
10 'betters'. It is a prize which can be won or lost by working

people. Real wealth is created by workers alone. Power lies wherever workers make useful things or provide useful services. It lies in workplaces, particularly in industry, but within every workplace, from colleges to hospitals. Power means not only control over material resources, but the will to use them in our own interests.



Our ancestors realised that unless they stood together they would always be powerless – played off against each other and treated like cattle. Everything we take for granted, from education and healthcare to leisure time, even the right to listen to music, has been fought for by previous generations. What they won we can build on or lose. That's why trade unions are so important to us as a class, and so in need of new life.

The basic reason for a trade union is people getting together to improve wages and working conditions. Joining

a union is one of the most political actions a worker can take. Unions are as strong or weak as their members make them. Communists respect unions as a vital power, created by workers to defend and further their interests. Capitalists portray unions as backward obstacles to the creation of wealth. They mean *their* wealth.

OPPOSITION

But the people who exploit us are extremely shrewd and have much to lose. They stole from our parents, and previous workers, and are now bringing unemployment and misery to a new generation. They will hang on to power by any vicious means they need. If they can bribe some workers, they will. If they need to use force or lock them up they will. Yet their methods for hanging on to power can also be subtle, such as the development of a parliamentary system designed to give minimum power to working people and maximum power to capitalists. The ruling class knows all about power, but the working class -all those

who must work for their living - rarely recognise our collective strength. In terms of being powerful enough to provide everyone with a good life, Britain has everything that we need: a skilled population, natural resources and a unique industrial history. We have the capacity to build new industry with real jobs and a real future.

Power always lies with the class, not the party. We are interested in class power, not replacing one ruling clique with another. Our class objective is to create a better world through revolution, that is, a radical, fundamental shift in society, in people's minds and in the reality around us. That depends on changing the ideology of our class to one operating in the interest of the workers in a complex, modern society; hence the need for a party. If you are interested in real power rather than ego trips and in real leadership rather than being an armchair general, then there is only one party worth joining – and much that needs to be done.

Most of what passes for politics in Britain is rubbish and most people know it. The antics of MPs squirming to get re-elected and TV sound-bite politics are parts of everyday life. Yet we allow these fools to shape our lives. We are players, not spectators, and the politics of cynicism is not enough. Opting out, despite its popularity, is no longer a long-term option. Real politics is about a better future. It is about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. It's about where we live and work, and how to improve them.

PARLIAMENT

Britain's current parliamentary system is social democracy. Parliament evolved partly as a response to workers' demand to have some voice in running our own country. But it also acts as a safety-valve which continues to run things in the interests of the exploiters, while keeping a

lid on the aspirations of workers. Within this system, the Labour Party, has a long record of fine words in opposition and betrayal in power. Ever since previous generations fought through their unions for a voice in parliament by creating the Labour Party, there has been an endless battle to stop a handful of self seekers in a rigged parliament, running our lives in the interest of others.

Now Labour is sloughing off even the traces of socialism it once claimed. It offers working people nothing.

The Tories on the other hand are simply a straightforward reflection of capitalist interests, designed to appeal to some workers who think they can get ahead by standing on others or grovelling to the rich. There's one thing worse than being a leech, and that's being a slave to one.

Then there are the various centre parties – just a counterbalance capitalism finds useful to avoid sudden shifts

which are bad for business. There is also the ultra-left. Trotskyites howl around the edges of this system, blaming others but rarely doing anything useful themselves. These are the hectoring paper sellers outside stations or students' unions, mostly more in need of a psychiatrist than a revolution. Their organisations chew up and spit out thousands of young people, leaving behind only cynicism and a hatred of themselves. They have the strategy of toddlers and the political perspective of goldfish. They hate real workers. We have no more in common with them than with Labour, Tories, or the Mormons.

Seeing politics in terms of social democracy is like viewing the room you are in as the entire world. There is life outside. An understanding of people and place, plus a willingness to work with reality rather than wishful thinking can lead to a different kind of politics.

In our politics, the guiding factor in any debate is how it affects our class. This

perspective means that we are sometimes called left, sometimes right, sometimes cheered, at others shouted down, often by the same people. But that class perspective also means that you can not be bullshitted or bamboozled by the promises of those whose politics only ever last a lunchtime.

PERSPECTIVE

Our politics is based more on a way of looking at the world than a list of beliefs. It is based on honesty and determination, gradually winning respect from fellow workers. This is politics as part of life. It requires the discipline to hammer out collective decisions and then carry them out. It is **real** democracy, democratic centralism, with participation and collective responsibility. It is not for windbags or prima donnas.

Real politics sticks out like a diamond in the dustbin and is rarely easy. Yet a combination of determined workers and clear politics can change things completely, from a single workplace to the entire world.

The thought of the mountain of work and the changes in attitude that will be needed to transform Britain is enough to send most of us back to bed. That's why there is a party.

Only a party, and a special one at that, could bring together the people, ideas and effort needed to start the task of Rebuilding Britain.

The Communist Party of Britain Marxist-Leninist was founded in 1968 by Reg Birch and leading engineers. They identified that there were only two classes in Britain and that only workers could make the change that was needed. Birch pulled together a diverse crew – hard-bitten industrial veterans, students, teachers, all sorts of workers, and over some 25 years, turned them into a party with a difference.

The dozens of political parties formed in the 1960s and 70s have come and gone, while the CPBML has grown up, is alive, well, and welcoming new recruits.

One reason for its success has been that the founders were very clear about what they didn't want. Unlike the old Communist Party, now defunct, there would be no division between lofty thinkers and humble foot-soldiers. Every CPBML member would be a thinker **and** a do-er. There would be no paid officials.

The party would be made up of ordinary working people, but would help them develop as leaders who would earn the respect of fellow workers. There is no such thing as a ready-made Communist or hand-picked Marxist. Everyone learns from experience and we try never to make the same mistake twice.

The party vowed never to put itself above the class which created it, but to serve the interests of its class.

For the CPBML, that means striving to understand the world together, learning from other workers, and never pretending things are different from reality. To that end, every party

branch undertakes discussion and study, both of our history and current events. If we don't understand something we say so. Apart from contributing to their branch, every member is active in their workplace (or looking for work) and in their appropriate union.

One unique aspect of the Party is its style of work. Our founding engineers were famous for their style and ingenuity in the guerrilla struggle which makes up day to day life in any workplace. The tradition of using lateral thinking and a wicked sense of humour as weapons of war is more valuable now than ever.

A sense of perspective is equally vital. We recruit slowly and carefully, and most of our members stay for good. We leave it to the Trotskyites and other political Moonies to grab anyone, exploit them and spit them out. And we leave it to the Parliamentary Labour Party to

bore people to death. Those who join us know we are in for a long haul; we look after each other and take events in our stride. We don't tolerate zealots on the one hand or armchair generals on the other.

DEMOCRACY

Structurally, our organisation is based on democratic centralism. We have a weekly paper, *The Worker*, written and produced by the Party.

We discuss ideas and reach a consensus, usually with no need for votes or motions. When we do vote, for instance to endorse a new way forward at our Congress, the debate is always open, thoughtful and democratic. Once a decision is made, everyone, and we mean everyone, works towards the agreed objectives.

What about you? If you are interested, get in touch. In the long run, the only thing harder than being a communist is not being one.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

So that's it; an analysis of Britain's people, problems and potential. Marx said that philosophers sought to understand the world, while Communists must go one step further and change it.

We have branches around the country, and if there isn't one near you, we can help you set one up.

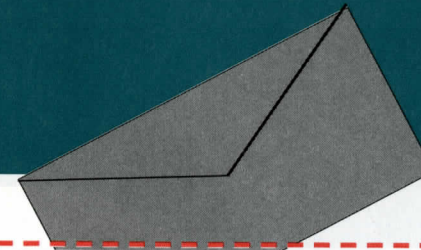
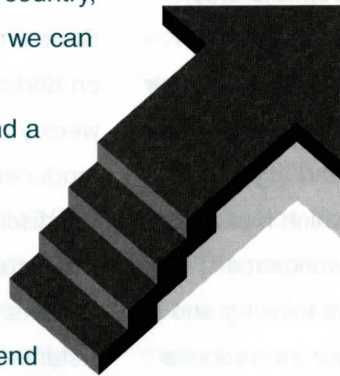
We have discussion groups and a candidate membership period which are intended to ensure that the Party is right for you and you are right for it.

If you want to find out more, send one of the forms opposite and we can meet up for an informal discussion.

You can subscribe to our weekly newspaper *The Worker* or, better still, subscribe **and** contribute to it.

To those pondering whether to get in touch or tip-toe away, all we can say is:

...“It's not the fights you've dreamed of, but those you really fought; it's not what you've been given; it's what you do with what you've got”...



Yes, I'm interested in helping to rebuild Britain

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone: _____

If you want, tell us something about yourself (eg age, job, interests):

Please send the completed form in an envelope to the address overleaf

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The Worker

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KILL POLLUTION, NOT PEOPLE

Levels of pollution are continuing to rise through the country, with most major industrial areas being particularly affected. The 1992-93 air quality index shows that the average level of pollution is 10 per cent above the target level. This is a record high, and has led to a number of deaths and illnesses. The main culprits are the power stations, which are still burning coal, and the factories, which are still burning oil. The government has failed to take any action to reduce pollution, and has instead increased the number of power stations and factories. This is a disgrace, and the people of Britain should demand that the government take action to reduce pollution, and to protect the health of the people.



Power: no cuts but price cuts
The government has announced that it will not cut power, but will instead increase the price of electricity. This is a disgrace, and the people of Britain should demand that the government take action to reduce the price of electricity, and to protect the interests of the people.

Lots of profit, not enough water?
The government has announced that it will not increase the price of water, but will instead increase the profit of the water companies. This is a disgrace, and the people of Britain should demand that the government take action to reduce the profit of the water companies, and to protect the interests of the people.

Editorial

A land fit to live in...

The land in Britain is being sold off to the highest bidder, and the people of Britain are being driven out of their homes. This is a disgrace, and the people of Britain should demand that the government take action to stop the sale of the land, and to protect the interests of the people.

US and Britain out of Bosnia

The US and Britain have failed to do anything to stop the war in Bosnia. This is a disgrace, and the people of Britain should demand that the US and Britain take action to stop the war, and to protect the interests of the people.

Home capitalism, not industry

The government has failed to do anything to protect the interests of the people, and has instead increased the profit of the capitalists. This is a disgrace, and the people of Britain should demand that the government take action to reduce the profit of the capitalists, and to protect the interests of the people.

Frontiers

The government has failed to do anything to protect the interests of the people, and has instead increased the profit of the capitalists. This is a disgrace, and the people of Britain should demand that the government take action to reduce the profit of the capitalists, and to protect the interests of the people.

The Worker is the weekly four-page newspaper of the Communist Party of Britain Marxist-Leninist.

It has been published continuously since 1969. It is written and produced by and for workers.

It contains news and analysis of current events, plus features on Britain and the world, both modern and historical.

Send your name and address together with £8 for a six month trial subscription. This covers 22 issues and includes postage.

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