

# STATEMENT FROM WEST HAM

A STATEMENT by the West Ham North Branch of the C.P.G.B. — sent to the East London Area Committee, the London District Committee, and the Executive Committee of the C.P.G.B., and to all Branch members.

For some months now a campaign has been waged by the "higher committees" and certain branch members, for the removal of the Branch Committee.

This campaign has NOT been conducted through normal Inner Party channels but in the main has been carried out by letter and through individuals in collusion with the Area and District Committees.

The Branch membership have been bypassed, misinformed, and lied to, and an open split has been created.

Events have reached the present stage, precisely because the normal process of Inner Party Democracy has been violated by the now bureaucratic, Area and District Committees, whose swollen-headed and self-complacent members, while willing to listen to praise and flattery cannot bear criticism, and do all in their power to silence the critics and stop their Resolutions and legitimate complaints from reaching the Party comrades.

In the present dispute this committee has simply been asked to attend a private meeting with Higher Officials, although it has consistently demanded that all business be conducted through the branch, in accordance with the principles of Communist organisation.

In a Communist, a Marxist Party, the principles of *Democratic Centralism* hold good at all levels from the lowest branch member to the General Secretary. All activity is conducted from the branch (the basic unit) to the Area to the District to the E.C. and from the E.C. to the District to the Area and back to the Branch.

The present "Leadership of the C.P.G.B." however think differently. For them *Democratic Centralism* means direction from the top to the bottom.

*Direction from below is now unheard of.*

How can we Marxists tolerate such a state of affairs? We must insist that the branch play its full part in Party affairs.

The slow drift away from Democratic Procedure has been evident for some time now, and this has lost the Party many formerly active workers.

Comrade Gollan and Co., must bear a large measure of responsibility, for this drift, which is a direct result of their policy of compromise in all fields. For example, the D.W., in pandering to the (Bourgeois) sentiment of the time, said on its front page "The new Pope a Progressive." What was the first act of this "progressive" Pope? An Encyclical attacking Communism; what could be more "progressive" than that.

We have said before and we must repeat again **ONE CANNOT COMPROMISE ON PRINCIPLE** (as the Gollan Group is doing) and get away with it.

A C.P. is a C.P. only so long as it is a Marxist Party. This is its characteristic, its special quality, it cannot keep on compromising without eventually losing all its Marxist clothing and becoming unashamedly a naked class collaborator.

In order to pander to the bourgeoisie and at the same time keep his Marxist fig leaf, Comrade Gollan and his group have redirected the "theories" of the opportunities of the second international, put them in modern dress and then offer them to the party comrades as "fundamental new ideas." What rubbish! What a cheap swindle! These moth-eaten ideas have been repudiated by Lenin and others a thousand times;

every day life shows them to be further divorced from reality.

But this is not all. At a time when Parliament is falling more and more under the thumb of the Monopolies and International Cartels, at a time when Britain's economic and military policies are being decided, more in Washington than London, Comrade Gollan's group decides that "the possibility now exists for peaceful transition to Socialism" via "the Parliamentary road."

If Lord Hume had uttered these words, who would have believed him, who wouldn't have said—you are a liar—the British monopolies and their American "partners" haven't the slightest idea of allowing the British people to build Socialism. When Socialism appears in England they will try to crush it as ruthlessly as they have done in other parts of the world.

But Comrade Gollan, not Lord Hume, has spoken and lo and behold Party members believe the Imperialists and Capitalists will respect our "traditional institutions and rights" so we can "transform Parliament and thus effect" the major legislation measures of the change to Socialism.

But there are no fairies at the bottom of Comrade Gollan's garden, for we are solemnly warned in the British road to Socialism (from which the above quotes also come), "that this change can only be brought about by struggle. The British ruling class is experienced and ruthless in defence of its selfish interests. It is necessary for the Labour Movement to understand this, and at the same time to realise that the working class has the strength united in struggle for Socialism to overcome all resistance and reach its final goal." Presumably with that most deadly of all weapons the terrible ballot paper.

Where is this struggle Comrade Gollan speaks of? It is all around us, in the fight for wages, for work, for democratic rights, in the fight against anti-Semitism, race hate and fascism. In the fight for improved educational welfare and social services; in the fight for peace and against U.S. bases and foreign domination; in the fight for representation in the press, on the radio and T.V., and in Parliament and local councils; in the fight for militant trade union leadership and the struggle to win the industrial working class to the Socialist cause; in the fight to isolate the reactionaries and win over our allies in other classes; in the work of propagation and studying Marxism-Leninism and its application to all fields in the fight to give the masses a class understanding.

In a word the struggle for Socialism is here, and now. What we do today will condition what we can do tomorrow. This applies to all fields, for everything has a class nature whether we like to admit it or not; thus our job as Communists is to work, not for *Bourgeois*, but *Working Class recognition* in order to build a party defended and supported by workers *which the bourgeois dare not refuse to recognise.*

In doing all these things, therefore, *we must expose the Gollan group and their allies* before they further bemuddle and confuse the people with their votes for Socialism," and socialism in little bits." Does this mean we reject the need for M.P.s and Parliamentary struggle? Certainly not, the Marxist uses all forms of struggle. We simply say this, we do not only seek votes. They will not remove the bases of U.S. Imperialism from our soil; we seek people, active workers, potential Communists who among other things also vote.