



Communism in Crisis in Britain and Abroad, 1931-1979

Collection Summary

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John Gollan (1911-1977) was a political leader and communist activist in Britain during the 20th century. Gollan joined the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) in 1926 following his involvement in the General Strike of the same year.

A close apprentice and confidante of Harry Pollitt, he was seen as the most appropriate and able person to take over his crucial role of **General Secretary** in **1956**.

Gollan's leadership became **characterised by crises in both the international communist movement and in his party back home**. His and others' apologist attitude for the Soviet Union's interventions in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) caused reputational damage to the CPGB and sowed deep divisions in the very fabric of the party.

This collection, drawn from Gollan's personal papers, attests to the slow decline of the CPGB as it increasingly lurched from firefighting international controversies to domestic irrelevance.

The collection is also accompanied by three contextual essays written by Professor Kevin Morgan.

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