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DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM DURING THE COLD WAR, 1943-1991

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Study British communism from party discipline...

British Online Archives updated collection, *Democratic Centralism during the Cold War, 1943-1991* is drawn from the papers of the Communist Party of Great Britain's (CPGB)'s ruling Executive Committee (EC).

The Executive Committee met on a bi-monthly basis to carry out decisions made at the annual National Congress.



This collection is one of many CPGB resources hosted on the British Online Archives website.

Although formally subordinate to Congress according to the CPGB constitution, the Executive Committee, through its appointment of committee members and enforcement of democratic centralism, operated the internal apparatus of the party machine and dealt with dissenting members in no uncertain terms.



It was decided to send telegrams of congratulation to the successful candidates in the local Elections.

AGENDA

1: POLITICAL SITUATION.

- Comrade Mahon made the report and replied to the discussion after fifteen comrades had spoken. The report and proposals were ENNORED.
- WEST LOTHIAN BY-ELECTION The meeting decided to sum its best mishes to the Scottish courades, and the branches to send similar messages and launch a by-election fund.

The collection contains over 28,000 unique images.

Content from meetings of the Executive Committee largely include official minutes and agendas, handwritten personal notes by attending individuals, and reports delivered to the EC on various important topics.

As such, the collection offers insights into everything from Cold War tensions and decolonisation, to internal power struggles and the expulsion of CPGB members.

'According to the party rules adopted in 1943... the Executive Committee (EC) ...exercised "full responsibility for the direction and control of the Party's work" including control of the party press, publications and other enterprises.'

- Professor Kevin Morgan

Sources include: Archive Trust of the Communist Party of Great Britain

...to loyalty to the Soviet Union during the Cold War

EC September 10/11 1983

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CRUISE

In the next few weeks and months a great mobilisation of millions of people against the siting of Cruise missiles needs to take place. A high point of this mobilisation will be the October 22nd demonstration in London, organised by the CND. The Communist Party will make every effort to ensure that this event is the biggest demonstration against Cruise, for peace and disarmament. Those taking part will not only be showing the opposition to the siting of Cruise missiles in this country. They will be part of a great international movement that includes the other countries in which the US controlled Cruise and Pershing II are to be sited - Holland, Italy, West Germany and Belgium.

The collection is set against the backdrop of the Cold War and featured material shows the stances and political maneuvering the Executive Committee made in light of ongoing developments between the Soviet Union and the West.

TO ALL E.C. MEDBERS

APPEAL OF E. JACKSON, W. HORTON, D. DANIEL (Bexley Branch) KENT MICK LAWS (Erith Branch) KENT

10th MARCH 1972.

On December 21st 1971 the Kent District Committee expelled the above named members.

They subsequently appealed to the Appeals Committee.

They did not submit any written appeal, but three of them appeared in person bofore the Appeals Committee. The fourth, W. Horton, who is physically handiacapeed wrote to say he would be astisfied to have his appeal heard in his obsence, and associated himself with the position of the diker three appealents win be acked to act on his behalf.

No written meterial has been propered for the Executive Committee since the charge is concerned with the production by the four real concerned of the concerned of the second second second second collegious of the horty Congress. Babesguery their documents were issued, and distributed in various ways, including at the Horning Oter Bally, Frahlgar Square demonstrations, and so on.

As one of the highest organs of the CPGB, the Executive Committee was the site of ongoing battles between various factions within the party. November 14 1 9 7 2

Dave Homer, Cheltenham Branch, 28, St. Georges Place, <u>Cheltenham.</u>

Dear Comrades,

Thank you for your letter of Novembor Sth. with your Branch resolution. The Executive Committee did consider once again the question of "Rod Rag" at its asseting last week-and, and decided to re-affirm that "Red Rag" is not a Party journal.

Tes sek for clarifiestion shout our stitude. The fasts of farty we have a publish this journal until we reserve a litter informing we that the first issue sould sook so ot. This, so I as surp you will agree, is contrary to the norms of other farty makenes only, or Yorty and non-farty makers, wish to publish a Journal first spreash the Farty for a discussion on the matter and seek agreement.

We have had two meetings with the comrades who are concerned with the publication of "Ead Hag" and on meither occasion have these comrades given any indication that they were ready to accept any Party direction or decision in connection with its

A range of correspondence shows passionate and fraught disputes over the direction of the party and its stance on various issues.

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