

# Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

*Fighting for communism – the future that works!*



## About the CPGB-ML

An understanding of society (theory) and a way of uniting to change it (organisation) are the two things that we need to make a socialist revolution. Ordinary people in Britain have everything to gain by getting involved in this process sooner rather than later. This world isn't working for us and we deserve better!

Not only do we need to campaign against the bad conditions and lack of prospects for working-class people in Britain today, but we need to work for a completely different type of society – one where people's needs decide everything.

So many problems face this world: environmental catastrophe, poverty, disease, racism and war. They'll never be

solved while capitalism remains, but they could all be sorted if society was set up for the benefit of the majority rather than the private gain of a few billionaires.

Our party is different because we consistently apply Marxist science to all areas of our work, and we're not scared to tell it how it is. We refuse to be intimidated by the barrage of lying propaganda that fills Britain's mainstream media. It is the capitalists' job to try to stop us from building a socialist society; it is our job to do it anyway!

Challenge your ideas – challenge their propaganda – seek the truth – serve the people – change the world!

Contact the CPGB-ML to find out more.

watch: [youtube.com/proletariancpgbml](https://www.youtube.com/proletariancpgbml) :: read: [cpgb-ml.org](http://cpgb-ml.org)

Get in touch with local activists, find out more about the party and join the struggle!  
Send us this form or an email and we'll contact you:

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# Justice for Marikana

[www.cpgb-ml.org](http://www.cpgb-ml.org)

The 2012 massacre in South Africa of 34 platinum miners at the hands of the police, and the injury of another 78, forced to the surface a growing contradiction – that between the completion of the national-democratic revolution and the continuing neo-colonial activity of monopoly capitalism.

The liberation agenda laid down in the Freedom Charter in 1955 insists that the land and all the mineral wealth stored therein should belong to the people, yet South Africa remains a playground for the multinationals, and a killing ground for workers too.

## Massacre at Marikana

Marikana, where the massacre unfolded, is in the Bojanala district of the North West province, home of the richest platinum deposits in the world. The mine owners at Marikana, Lonmin, are just one of a number of huge multinationals making vast profits on the back of exploited labour and looted resources.

The dispute between the striking miners and Lonmin, the world's third-largest platinum producer, began 10 weeks before the police shootings, while in the lead-up to the massacre ten further people, including shop stewards from the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) were also killed.

A report from the Bench Marks Foundation found that miners in Marikana lived in appalling conditions and suffered high levels of fatalities, a state of affairs it attributed in part to the company's heavy reliance upon cheap and badly-trained contract labour, with workers earning a mere 4,000-5,000 rand a month (£215-270). The strikers at Marikana included casual workers brought in from outside the area. Multinationals like Lonmin deliberately adopt such tactics in an effort to divide the workforce and place

obstacles in the path of efforts to unionise.

South Africa and, indeed, the world was stunned by the scenes on 16 August when police fired on striking workers at the mine. To many, the events were reminiscent of the old apartheid regime, and outrage further increased at the news that a number of the dead had been shot in the back, undermining the police's claims to have acted only in self-defence.

## The response

Immediately following the killings, the striking workers were visited by President Jacob Zuma, who promised to set up an inquiry into the affair. Many of the workers declared that they would not go back to work without the substantial pay increase they had been demanding. They also made stinging criticisms not just of the police and their employer but of Zuma and his government. Despite 18 years of ANC government, South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies on earth, and there is now rising anger at government corruption.

Within days of the massacre, South African police prosecutors outrageously announced that 270 strikers arrested at Marikana would be charged with the murder of their 34 colleagues, even though there is no dispute that they were killed by the police, under a legal doctrine known as 'common purpose'. This discredited doctrine was frequently used in the waning days of apartheid to charge members of protesting crowds or mass movements with serious offences committed by a few individuals, or occurring in the midst of popular protest.

While the murder charges against the miners were dropped due to fierce opposition, still no-one from the police, government, or Lonmin has been criminally prosecuted for

their role in the massacre.

Although some groups of miners received a pay rise, Lonmin has still not provided decent housing, clinics, roads, and sanitation for mineworkers, despite the role these conditions played in the events leading up to the massacre. The 70 injured miners remain without compensation, and the widows of the murdered miners struggle to find work.

## The looting of Africa

As well as bringing to an end the white monopoly on political power, the ANC had vowed to effect a fundamental restructuring of the political and economic system to address the economic inequalities of the apartheid era. Through its Freedom Charter, drafted in 1955 with Mandela's participation, it declared: "The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole".

None of that has come about, for the agreements which brought down apartheid, signed by the ANC, included provisions to the effect that major corporations in South Africa, be they owned by South Africa whites or imperialist finance capital, could not be nationalised.

There is widespread corruption, racketeering and fraud. Over two decades since the end of apartheid, the ANC, from being an inspiring liberation movement, has become a self-serving and self-perpetuating elite. It has become a doorway to riches and patronage, with people joining for the purpose of promoting their commercial and political interests, rather than to serve the masses.

The black masses of South Africa have achieved political freedom – doubtless an historic advance. They have, however, yet

to achieve economic freedom. The power base of monopoly capital, local and foreign, as well as white economic privilege, is intact. The dichotomy between overblown rhetoric about civil, political, economic, social and human rights, on the one hand, and the omnipresent income inequalities and the conditions of squalor which blight the lives of millions of black South Africans, on the other hand, is all too obvious.

According to a 2007 survey, white South Africans earn seven times as much as their black counterparts. A white person born in 2009 can expect to live to the age of 71, as against the 48 years that a black person can expect. It is a shameful statistic, but true, that inequality of income presently is worse than even during the decades of apartheid, with the second-worst Gini coefficient (a measure of inequality) among 136 countries.

The practices of Lonmin are not an exception, but the rule. The entire apparatus of capitalism ensures that African nations remain underdeveloped in order that multinational companies can extract the most profit from the natural resources and labour power of these countries. Only by fighting imperialism, in Africa and in Britain where many of these companies are headquartered, can these exploitative and murderous conditions be ended.

"If, as would seem from all the evidence, imperialism exists and is trying simultaneously to dominate the working class in all the advanced countries and smother the national-liberation movements in all the underdeveloped countries, then there is only one enemy against whom we are fighting. If we are fighting together, then I think the main aspect of our solidarity is extremely simple: it is to fight." - *Amilcar Cabral*

15 August 2017