

Murdered in Kampuchea, January 23rd 1978

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On December 23rd, Dr. Malcolm Caldwell was murdered in Phnom Penh at the end of his visit to Democratic Kampuchea.

A statement by the government of Democratic Kampuchea said, "This murder is a political crime committed by the enemy of the Kampuchean revolution aiming at opposing the activities of the sincere friends of Democratic Kampuchea the world over in order to prevent them from spreading the influence and prestige of the Kampuchean people."

A committed anti-imperialist

Dr. Malcolm Caldwell was a brilliant scholar, a committed anti-imperialist revolutionary and a tireless worker who was modest and unassuming in his approach. He was the co-editor of the "Journal of Contemporary Asia", and the author or co-author of numerous books, pamphlets and articles.

Born in Scotland, he studied at Edinburgh and Nottingham Universities before becoming a lecturer in the economic history of East and South East Asia at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, a post he held from the late 1950s until his death.

In the 1960s, he began increasingly to devote himself to anti-imperialist work, and this was greatly spurred on by his visits to Vietnam and Kampuchea where he witnessed at first hand the American imperialist aggression. From

then on he was always in the forefront of the campaign against US imperialism in South East Asia.

Dr. Caldwell also took an anti-revisionist stand and came out against Soviet revisionism and in support of the Cultural Revolution in China. Only last November, he pointed out in an article in the China Policy Study Group Broad-sheet that "every opportunity should be taken to expose Russian economic imperialism and sinister political interventions in the internal affairs of smaller countries". Malcolm himself was active in this respect, exposing the nefarious activities of the Moscow Narodny Bank in Singapore, as well as stalwartly defending Kampuchea against the lies propagated by the social-imperialists.

Malcolm also visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by invitation in the summer of 1977 where he was able to study the building of an advanced socialist state with modern agriculture and industry. He was an active member of the Korea Committee of Great Britain. He was known as a firm friend of the Marxist-Leninist parties of South East Asia and was particularly optimistic about the important and increasingly successful struggle being led by the Communist Party of Thailand.

A supporter of self-reliance

Malcolm eagerly followed the struggles of the Asian socialist countries for independent, self-reliant development, and this was

one of the principal things he wished to study in Kampuchea.

In his recently-published book, "The wealth of some nations" (which was to have been the first volume of a trilogy), he began to develop his ideas that self-reliance was imperative for all countries. He analysed how the imperialists deliberately keep the vast majority of countries underdeveloped so as to preserve their own parasitic existence. By contrast, he looked at the efforts of China, Korea and Kampuchea rationally to develop both agriculture and industry on the basis of self-reliance.

In the book, he held out the prospect of more countries in the third world completing the national democratic revolution and embarking on the road of self-reliance. He pointed out that such changes would have a major effect on the imperialist countries themselves, built up as they are on the basis of centuries of super-exploitation of the third world countries and peoples. Malcolm was notable for his freedom from the white metropolitan chauvinism that plagues so many western 'leftists'.

A serious loss

The events of recent weeks, culminating in the massive and blatant Vietnamese-Soviet invasion of Kampuchea, show why the enemy thought it so important to kill Malcolm. They knew that he would tirelessly campaign against them and expose

them and defend Democratic Kampuchea, and that he was widely respected by progressives in many countries as a man of great personal integrity.

The statement of Democratic Kampuchea said, "During his visit to Democratic Kampuchea, ... Malcolm Caldwell said, 'I have been trying for years to create more sympathy and clear understanding for your country in Britain. And I know that I shall be able to carry on this work very much more successfully as the result of having the opportunity to visit * your country.'

"In fact," the statement continued, "the enemy of the Kampuchean revolution want to prevent ... Malcolm Caldwell from speaking and spreading the truth he has seen and been aware of in Democratic Kampuchea."

Malcolm was a friend of the CWM. He read our publications and contributed a major article to "New Age" on Kampuchea. We had plans for ongoing work on Kampuchea following his return.

Malcolm will be remembered by us as well as by many thousands of others around the world. He was a true friend and comrade to the working class, socialist countries, oppressed nations and peoples, in particular those of South East Asia. His death is a great loss at a critical juncture.

We pledge ourselves to carry on his work, which was in the best traditions of anti-imperialism.