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NEW SCANDAL HITS CITY

£millions made from 'insider dealings'

STUDENT POVERTY

STUDENT grants do not provide enough to live on. The Department of Education and Science admitted this week that students on state grants are living below the poverty line.

Even official figures show the value of the student grant falling 13 per cent since 1979-1980, while student bodies claim a drop of 25 per cent.

Book prices have shot up 47 per cent and rents 70 per cent over the same period.

During an Education, Arts and Science Select Committee inquiry, the DES admitted that misleading information had been given to students claiming the grants.

Department officials admitted: 'We would not now maintain that the maintenance element of the

mandatory award is sufficient to meet all the essential expenditure of the average student.'

Officials also admitted they have no real method of calculating amounts needed to cover student needs.

The government has launched its own inquiry into the crisis chaired by junior education minister George Walden.

DES under-secretary Nick Summers was asked by Martin Flannery, Labour MP for Hillsborough: 'Do you think the review will be any good if it proceeds on the basis of no new money?'

Summers replied: 'The review will have to wrestle with that question, you cannot ask me whether the review will be much good.'

In other words: there will be no more money to raise student living standards to a decent level.

YET ANOTHER FINANCIAL scandal engulfed the City of London this week with the revelation that an inquiry is to be held into possible secret and illegal deals in the £2.5 billion Guinness takeover bid for Distillers.

Labour trade and industry spokesman Robin Cook demanded that trading in the shares of Guinness should be suspended while an investigation is carried out.

Trade and Industry officials swooped on seven separate institutions in London and Scotland at 9.30a.m. on Monday.

Over £300 million was wiped off Guinness shares on announcement of the investigation.

Amongst the firms visited were Guinness, the London and Edinburgh offices of Wood Mackenzie, Guinness's former stockbroker, Cazenove and Co, also Guinness stockbrokers, and their merchant bank advisers, Morgan Grenfell.

Geoffrey Collier, Morgan Grenfell's security chief, was last month forced to resign. He was paid £300,000 a year.

This week he was charged

with offences connected with transactions in AE, the engineering group. AE is the subject of an agreed takeover bid from Robert Maxwell's Hollis Group.

Distiller's two merchant bank advisers, Robert Fleming and Kleinwort Benson were also visited.

Attention spotlights on whether several supposedly independent share dealers operated a 'concert party' to build up a stake in Distillers or to deliberately boost the price of Guinness.

Two US financiers are also suspected of involvement.

One is Ivan Boesky, the notorious insider dealer who last month agreed to pay the Securities and Stock Exchange Commission \$100

million (£70 million) penalty for illegal share dealing.

Insider dealing involves using inside information about potential take-over bids to make fortunes.

Second is Mesulam Riklis, owner of the Rapid-American Corporation which has a liquor distribution contract with Distillers.

They both approached the Argyll group independently after its bid for Distillers was launched.

They offered to buy shares in the target company and pledged them to Argyll.

Boesky was interested in selling his shares at a profit to the successful bidder. Riklis was concerned to continue his lucrative contract to distribute Dewar's whisky in the States.

He controls a company, Schenley, which is earning \$30 million a year from these sales. His contract was renewed after the successful Guinness takeover.

● The Distiller's takeover was one of the largest yet seen in the City.

● Takeovers have risen fivefold in a year to £30 billion so far this year.

● In the 78 takeover bids in the first six months of this year there was an average

rise in share prices of 25 per cent before the takeover had been publicly announced.

● Of the 119 people referred to the Stock Exchange Council in cases of insider dealing only nine have been prosecuted.

● Nearly 140,000 cases of social security fraud have been brought before the courts.

● Thousands of students are now admitted to be living below the poverty line.

● Over 4 million are unemployed with thousands joining them each week as redundancies mount.

Here is exposed the parasitic nature of capitalism.

As the MI5 scandal unfolding in Australia reveals, it is a system based on the rule of faceless people who operate through lies, violence and intrigue. It is a system where speculators in the City wax rich while millions are condemned to poverty.

Capitalism can no longer satisfy the most basic requirements of millions of workers and their families.

It provides £millions for parasites who never work a day in their lives. It condemns millions of people to poverty.

Capitalism is a dying system. It must be ended by the socialist revolution.

REDUNDANCY TOLL MOUNTS

THE wave of sackings throughout British industry is gaining pace every week:

● HEAVY REDUNDANCIES are threatened at Rover Groups truck-making business.

In a statement to the House of Commons last Tuesday, Trade and Industry secretary Paul Channon said it was impossible to 'pretend there is no danger of job losses'.

Irrespective of a possible takeover bid by Paccar of the US, he announced that a 'restructuring' of Leyland Trucks was inevitable.

● BEDFORD, the General Motors truck making division in Britain, is to shut, bringing 1,500 redundancies.

● AVON Rubber Company has announced 730 sackings

at its Chippenham and Melksham plants in Wiltshire, cutting its 2,400 strong workforce by almost a third. ARC is Britain's last remaining tyre maker.

● BRIDON, the wire rope manufacturer, is to shed 260 jobs at its Doncaster factory.

The sackings are being carried out on the grounds of 'keeping pace with the best of competition'.

● SCOTT LITHGOW, the lower Clyde oil rig construction and shipbuilding yard, has announced it will throw 1,600 workers on the scrap heap, reducing its labour force by two thirds.

● HARLAND AND WOLFF are to sack 800 of its 5,000 strong workforce at its shipyard in Belfast.

BY CHRIS McBRIDE



Last Saturday's picket by Lambeth Trades Council, Lambeth NALGO and Lambeth Anti-Apartheid at Sainsbury's supermarket, Stockwell. See story page 3.

Workers Press

Printers and the Labour leaders

For almost a year, the printers have stood in the front line in defence of jobs, living standards and basic rights.

Who are their enemies in this fight? Lined up against them is the Murdoch empire, the Thatcher government and the state.

Armed with anti-trade union laws and a centralised police force built up during the miners' strike this state has set out to smash the working class and its communities.

At its last meeting, the General Council of the TUC refused to implement Resolution 11 which called upon the General Council to support the printers. They support Hammond's 'scab herding' EETPU against the printworkers.

Printers, like the miners, railwaymen, teachers, firemen, seamen, dockers and countless others before them, face a TUC which crawls before the bosses and their state.

There are no limits to the cowardice of these 'leaders'. Every trade union principle is to be sacrificed in order to avoid a confrontation with the capitalist state.

Instead of mobilising the entire working class against the Tory enemy they hide their treachery behind the plea to wait for a General Election and a Labour government.

But a Kinnock-Hattersley Labour government will continue the attacks against the working class. This is what Kinnock's 'New Realism' means.

The Labour leadership's subordination to the ruling class extends to key international questions. Kinnock is currently on an American lecture tour. It has one purpose: to reassure key sections of the US ruling class that their imperialist interests are safe under any government he heads.

In his Harvard speech Kinnock stressed that unlike New Zealand's Labour government, he would allow US nuclear port visits. Nor would a Labour government disturb the majority of American military installations in Britain. Kinnock stressed that he stood completely for the strengthening of conventional forces and waxed lyrical about his respect for US imperialism.

While Kinnock is wined and dined by top Democratic senators, members of the Labour Party are being treated like the printers. Constituency Labour Parties are not allowed to select their own candidates. Anybody who opposes the right wing is silenced or driven out of the Party.

Printers are learning that the EETPU is the only type of union the TUC will tolerate. A joint meeting of the Fathers of the Chapel last week decided to mount a picket five days a week at Congress House.

The purpose of the picket is an end to words and for real action from the TUC. The picket will demand the recall of Congress and the expulsion of the EETPU from the movement. Every class conscious worker will support this call.

But we warn printers to have no illusions in the trade union bureaucracy or the Labour leaders. Remember the Wembley Conference decisions: they have remained a dead letter!

The working class must be united in the fight for a General Election to force the Tories out of office. This must be made part of the struggle to expose the right-wing and Stalinist leaders of the working class and for the building of an alternative revolutionary leadership.

Printers to picket TUC

SACKED News International printworkers are to set up an indefinite picket of TUC headquarters in London to demand a recalled TUC — to expell the EETPU for their continued anti-union scabbing operation in Wapping.

The picket is because the TUC General Council on November 6 voted by 24 to 21 not to support the printworkers, despite a TUC Congress decision at Brighton this year to endorse the NGA's resolution No.11 to support the printworkers.

A recalled TUC must also demand to know why the TUC has sat and watched while the Thatcher government has torn into the trade union movement without as much as a squeak from Willis and Co.

Printers on the picket will also demand days of action from the rest of the trade union movement to support their fight.

Lessons from the printers' support groups

How did you get involved with the Tower Hamlets Printers Support Group?

WE set the group up when the strike started on the initiative of the Trades Council. My involvement has therefore been as a local trade unionist as well as a resident.

Can you say something about the role the Printers Support Group has played in the News International dispute.

INITIALLY we were purely a support group providing a tea-run for pickets, attending demonstrations and leaf-letting the local market.

However, once certain political groups like the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Campaign group and the Communist Party got bored, we began to intervene in the dispute by organising well attended meetings and a series of 'Reclaim the Streets' demonstrations.

Can you say something about the role of the police with regard to the road blocks and harassment of local residents.

WE had a police siege in our area. Local tenants were physically and verbally assaulted and arrested and prevented from getting home by the police.

Police surveillance was given a sinister twist after a

residents' demonstration on August 9.

Police claimed the support group was organised by political extremists who used local women and children like meat in a sandwich on demonstrations.

I was named in a letter to the local paper by deputy assistant Commissioner of Police, Wyn Jones. He claimed we were callous and had no regard for the safety of local people.

On December 13 the support groups have organised a march in solidarity with the printworkers. What do you hope this will achieve?

FIRST, we hope the demonstration will be very big, thousands rather than hundreds.

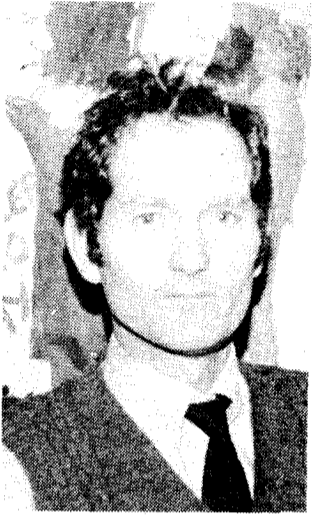
Second, we hope that we can yet again prove that the police do not have a mandate on working class streets.

We have learned from the disciplined and dignified marches of the risen people of the six counties their ability to demonstrate in the face of massive state provocation.

Third, we would like to drown Murdoch's 'Fortress Wapping' in a sea of working class activity.

Would you say something about the News International dispute.

THIS dispute cannot be won



DURING the printworkers' dispute at Wapping with Rupert Murdoch, many support groups have been formed. Workers Press spoke to JOHN REES, who has played a leading role with the Printers' Support Group in Tower Hamlets, where the Wapping plant is located.

A member of Tower Hamlets Trades Council and chairman of the NAT-FHE (lecturers') union branch at the London College of Furniture, he recently put forward a 'Workers Charter' at a public meeting.

without a massive intervention by Fleet Street.

There will be no resolution to the long battles of workers until a new leadership is built which is capable of posing a serious alternative to the collaborationist TUC leaders like Willis and the political bosses like Kinnock and Hattersley.

Militant action and politics is the only way forward.

You have put forward a charter for workers. What is this?

THE charter is no more than a series of points contributing toward a discussion for the way forward.

It lays down a method and immediate slogans for ac-

tion and some policy points.

We hope it will be taken up in our movement so that workers can see a way forward.

After December 13 we want to see a big lobby of the TUC General Council that can form the action base for a massive rally of working class leaders in 1987.

We have to show that the amateurism and propagandism of many on the left is a thing of the past and that in order to win we must, as first priority, train new layers of class leaders — particularly from the youth.

These are the lessons learnt by members of the Tower Hamlets Printworkers Support Group.



● Picture shows (left to right) Janet Seymour, Carol Hall and Cath Farley

Tower Hamlets print support group unites workers in struggle

A 'Workers in Struggle' meeting at Wapping's Highway Club on Wednesday 26 November, brought together the experiences of the Silentnight strikers, the striking Hanger's limbfitters, the sacked printworkers, the unemployed and the national liberation struggle in the north of Ireland.

Speaking at the meeting was Janet Seymour from Silentnight, who linked their struggle to the whole movement taking place in the working class.

Steve Lees, sacked Hanger's worker, told the meeting about the bravery of the women in the dispute. He stressed the role of women in struggle was of great importance. Cath Farley of 'Irish Women in Britain' told the meeting

about the atrocities committed every day by the Royal Ulster Constabulary and stated that rape was regularly used as an instrument of repression.

Other speakers were Carol Hall, who is in the forefront of the struggle against the print union bureaucracy.

Jim Laurie spoke on behalf of Tower Hamlets Unemployed Centre. He stressed the importance of the struggle against the use of the unemployed as a form of cheap labour against organised labour.

● Picture shows (left to write) Janet Seymour, Carol Hall and Cath Farley

Lambeth actions against apartheid

Anti-racist picket

ANGRY protesters have launched a picket outside three clubs in Southall which they claim operate a colour bar.

The pickets have been organised by Southall Labour Party Black Section and the Indian Workers' Association outside the Southall Trades and Social Club, the Southall Working Men's Club and the British Legion.

A leaflet distributed by the pickets said:

'The Clubs' membership rules and vetting procedures are used in such a way as to blatantly deny membership to Black people.

'Six years ago the Labour Party disassociated itself from the Clubs because of their well-known racist practices but there are still no signs of any change in the situation.'

The Labour Party Black Sections have issued the call:

● Join the picket, held every Saturday at 73 The Broadway, Southall.

● Raise the matter in union/Labour party branches to gain support for the campaign, including financial support.

● Write to the Council demanding that the licences of the clubs are revoked.

For more information contact Councillor Madhav Patil, 1 George Street, Southall, or phone 01-843 9407.

Building workers defy injunction

BY GERRY DOWNING

A HIGH COURT writ virtually 'forbidding them to breathe' as one bricklayer put it is being defied by striking building workers.

Members of UCATT and the T&GWU are on strike against the lump at the McCarthy and Stone site at Cedar Road in Sutton, Surrey.

The writ bans picketing, contact with workers on the site and any attempt to further the dispute.

The T&GWU have made the dispute official but all UCATT have done is send out a circular asking branches to take a collection for the strikers as Christmas is approaching.

All the bricklayers and labourers were sacked on November 7 when the subcontractor Pillely pulled off the site, despite the amount of work to be done and a written agreement promising direct employment.

McCarthy and Stone withdrew recognition from UCATT and the T&GWU and withdrew from the National Working Rule agreement.

They then slapped on the injunction under the Tory anti-union law.

The 'Building Worker' group has stressed the necessity to defy the High Court injunction and picket out other McCarthy and Stone sites.

No reliance should be placed in offers of support from union officials who had so openly betrayed the Laings dispute just a few months ago.

The strike committee are calling for a mass picket at 8a.m. on Monday December 8 at the site, which is 100 yards from Sutton railway station.

The High Court injunction has not been lifted.

● Donations can be sent to: J. Callaghan, 55b Godstone road, Purley, Surrey.

LAMBETH WORKERS took two important initiatives on sanctions against South Africa last week.

On Thursday, the Lambeth Workers Joint Trade Unions organised a special meeting, open to all local government workers, to plan boycotts within the borough.

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

Alan Russell, who was invited to speak from Hackney Direct Labour Organisation (DLO), described the work that trades unionists had done in Hackney.

He emphasised that the place to look for links with South Africa in the finances of the council was where the most money was invested.

This was where they would be trying to make savings by backdoor methods.

He also insisted that trustworthy investigations could only be carried out by the trade unions themselves.

A small group of workers in Hackney had demanded a list of all the companies in which their pension funds were invested and then inde-

pendently investigated their connections with South Africa.

Workers from the DLO also delved into the credentials of their major building suppliers — another huge source of expenditure by councils.

They investigated all the companies on the 'select' list, used by the council on the basis that these are companies with 'clean' records on equal opportunities, unionisation, and South African links.

They discovered that many of these firms have subsidiaries and connections in South Africa, as well as

infringing other criteria of the 'select' list.

Alan Russell advised workers from other boroughs to carry out similar investigations and to share their information by circulating their own 'select' list.

Lambeth workers at the meeting decided not only to carry out their own research, but also to go back to their respective unions and ask to be delegated onto a joint union/council committee which would investigate and sever all links with South Africa.

Lambeth council's 'select' list will be examined in detail, especially as one of the Lambeth architects present pointed out that almost all suppliers of building materials are involved in South Africa.

Hackney workers ensured the withdrawal of their pension funds and the removal of firms from the list by going to council committee meetings and kicking up the

biggest stink possible.

They prevented meetings from continuing by creating uproar, barricading themselves in and occupying the room until they got what they wanted.

Privatisation legislation, which is due to hit large sections of local government early next year, will make it illegal to bar dealings with companies which infringe the current regulations on equal opportunities, unionisation and South African connections.

Trades unionists are nonetheless prepared to continue to fight on these issues.

● On the Saturday following the joint trade union meeting, Lambeth Trades Council, Lambeth NALGO and the Lambeth Anti-Apartheid group held a picket of Sainsburys supermarket at Stockwell.

Sainsburys has stated that it will continue to stock South African goods as long as there is a market for them.

Trades unionists and the

community of Lambeth are mounting a sustained campaign against Sainsburys.

Lambeth Trades Council is in the process of contacting workers inside the shop to persuade them to refuse to handle the goods, like the successful Dunnes strikers in Dublin.

It is hoped that a combined campaign aimed at workers and consumers will convince Sainsburys' management to emulate Tesco's, which recently opened a new store in Brixton with an undertaking that no South African goods will be stocked.

Local actions like these are being taken by trades unionists all over Britain and Ireland.

The conference on December 13 called by Lambeth Trades Council, and sponsored by 14 labour movement organisations, is to co-ordinate and strengthen these local actions and to extend them into important areas where the issues have not yet been taken up.

Scottish TUC women in conference

BY SIMON PIRANI

INCREASED exploitation of low-paid and part-time workers and the devastating Social Security cuts, were discussed at the Scottish TUC women's conference last week.

So were two Thatcherite trends particularly affecting women: firstly, the growing use of part-time, casual or temporary female labour to undermine pay rates, conditions and trades union organisation; secondly the Thatcherite stress on family responsibilities and cuts in social security which are driving women 'back into the home'.

Women trades unionists face 'the cumulative effect of Mrs Thatcher's attacks on women's rights,' one activist explained to Workers Press.

This was made clear in debates which, although largely free of controversy, reflected those women workers who have come to the fore of union activity especially since the miners' strike.

LOW PAY: Women workers being underpaid was 'a major contributor to Scottish poverty', stated one resolution.

It referred to a recent Low Pay Unit document which showed that 57 per cent of Scottish full-time women workers, and 79 per cent of part-timers, were paid below the Council of Europe's 'decent threshold'.

The conference called for increased trade union recruitment of women, for unions to examine and improve the services they give to low-paid women, for bargaining strategies to concentrate on the elimination of low pay,

for the strengthening of Wages Councils and the introduction of a statutory minimum wage.

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS: The delegates at the Perth conference were vehemently opposed to the government White Paper, 'Building Businesses Not Barriers', whose attacks on employment rights will hit women especially hard.

The White Paper will raise the number of hours that need to be worked each week to qualify for most employment rights thus further casualising part-time workers; it will mean that the legal right to a statement of the reasons for dismissal will only be granted after two years' employment instead of six months, and limit the right to time off for trade union duties.

At workplaces with less than ten employees, women will lose their right to return to their jobs after pregnancy.

'Many women working in small offices and shops will find that they will lose their job if they become pregnant,' says a Congress resolution.

'Up to one and a half million women, currently working between 16 and 20 hours a week, will lose their rights, unless they have at least five years service with their employer.'

'The government will be creating a whole new section of the working population with little or no statutory rights.'

Activists point out that this will not only affect part-time workers but also those employed on fixed-term contracts (three months, a year, etc).

MATERNITY AND PATERNITY RIGHTS: A resolution from the shopwor-

kers' union USDAW condemned 'the continuing attack on the Social Security system and, in particular, the government's proposals to abolish the Maternity Grant except for those receiving Income supplement or Family Credit, to restrict the eligibility for Maternity Allowance to fewer women, and to make employers responsible for Maternity Pay from April 1987.'

The conference also passed resolutions on the social security cuts, nursery education and child care provision, medical facilities for women, the victimised miners and their families, as well as supporting the Wapping strikers.

Almost all the resolutions, and many of the speakers, directed their hopes for solving the most fundamental problems at the election of another Labour government.

WORKERS at Ford's Woolwich closure-threatened engineering plant in South East London expect solidarity action from their colleagues across the water at Dagenham to safeguard 300 jobs.

When management dropped the bombshell that its Woolwich factory would be closing and the work transferred to other factories they said no one would be made redundant. Anyone who did not want early retirement could move to their Dagenham plant.

Trevor Franklin, senior shop steward, told Workers Press Woolwich workers want support from the Greenwich council and from other Ford plants.

At present his members are working to rule and banning overtime working.

Components made at the Woolwich plant are now running into short supply.

Right-wing bomber gets three years

BY KEITH SCOTCHER

ON NOVEMBER 27, Anthony Lecomber, a member of the British National Party, and once bodyguard to former National Front leader John Tyndall, was found guilty at the Old Bailey on five counts of possessing and making explosives and jailed for three years.

Lecomber was in his car on November 1, 1985 when two home made bombs exploded in it as he was parked in Clapham High Street, South London.

The police accused him of intending to bomb the headquarters of the Workers Revolutionary Party in Clapham Old Town.

When anti-terrorist detectives raided his home in Brisbane Road, Ilford, they found an arsenal of ten home made grenades, seven detonators, two petrol bombs, three lumps of explosive material, five integrated circuit timing devices, mercury tilt switches and chemicals for making explosives.

The bomb in the car, explosive material packed into a tin and detonated with a flash bulb, had exploded prematurely.

Lecomber received head and face injuries and burns to both hands.

Andrew Burn, another BNP member, who was also in the car, fled the scene and spent ten days in hospital.

No charges were brought against him.

Philip Kersey, a mortuary manager at Guys Hospital, was charged with aiding and abetting Lecomber by supplying him with nuts, piping, potassium chlorate and diagrams of bombs drawn on the back of a body tag.

He claimed he had driven across London from his home opposite Valentines Park in Ilford in order to test his device on open land — Clapham Common, to see what size crater was made and 'the spread of the nails.'

The grenades were examined by an expert who found that they were made of a shotgun cartridge, a pipe, and a pop rivet.

The device was to be thrown like a dart.

The effect was like a sawn-off shotgun. The expert commented that he would like a wall between him and it when it went off.

It was similar to a device illustrated in a book 'the poor man's James Bond'!

Both Lecomber and Kersey admitted their right wing fanaticism.

Lecomber joined the National Front in 1980, met Kersey in 1982 at a 'survival school' and helped him form the National Socialist Action Party.

Kersey had received a conviction for an attack on a CND march.

Lecomber followed former NF leader John Tyndall into the New National Front which amalgamated with other right wing groups to form the BNP.

He used the pseudonym 'Tony Wells'.

Included in the evidence was a list of people and organisations including the Runnymede Trust and Labour MP Greville Janner.

Lecomber denied this was a 'hit' list, but said that when the nationalists came to power these people would be 'called to account.'

Kersey and Burns made statements against Lecomber.

Kersey said that Lecomber had asked him for nuts to throw at IRA marchers.

Burns said Lecomber had shown him timing devices and that the target was 'Blacks in general, provos and reds.'

Kersey was found not guilty of aiding and abetting Lecomber.

Lecomber was found guilty of making and possessing explosives but not guilty of intent to endanger life and property.

In passing sentence Judge Richard Lowry said: 'I accept that you are not a terrorist... nor were you acting on behalf of some extreme political group.'

Lecomber replied, 'Thank you sir.'

Lanarkshire teachers organise memorial meeting

JOHN MACLEAN, the Scottish revolutionary Marxist, was commemorated — not as a dead icon but as an inspiration to the working-class movement today — at a memorial lecture in Glasgow last week.

The lecture was organised by the Lanarkshire association of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), the teachers' union, in the midst of their fierce fight to defend pay, conditions and educational standards from Tory attack.

Chairman Norman Bissell opened the meeting referring to the crushing 84 per cent majority by which EIS teachers had rejected the government's deal, announced that morning.

Other workers involved in battles against Thatcher, such as firemen, printers, and council workers, were present.

So were comrades old enough to personally recall Maclean, including Harry McShane and Maclean's daughter Nan Milton.

James Young of Stirling University gave the lecture — which it is hoped will be the first of a series — on Maclean's role as 'educator of the working class'.

He spoke of Maclean's little-known activity in the Scottish Socialist Teachers' Society, which strove not only to cement the teachers' connections with the trade union movement — which at that time were tenuous — but also advanced demands for socialist education, in opposition to the reactionary syllabuses of the day.

Young also explained how Maclean regarded his Marxist education classes as inseparable from his revolutionary activity.

In discussion, the first speaker was sacked Wapping print worker Peter Gold.

'If it hadn't been for the Scottish and Welsh, the English working-class movement would be nothing,' he said in a broad cockney accent.

'But how would John Maclean have felt if he knew there was a scab factory in the middle of Glasgow today?' he asked, referring to the News International plant at Kinning Park.

'For the sake of the working-class movement, your working-class movement, get on to the street and help us close down that scabby joint.'

Teacher Glenn Tait said: 'Perhaps it is time the teachers turned to the parents and others, politicised

our campaign.

'We should go to people and say, "look what Thatcher's government has done to Scotland: they have destroyed mines, factories, now they are destroying Scott Lithgow" — and get them to support us actively.'

Nan Milton thanked the Lanarkshire teachers for organising the meeting, and emphasised Maclean's Scottish Republican beliefs in the 1920s.

Harry McShane, who used to chair Maclean's weekly classes on Marxism in the city hall, contrasted Maclean to reformist socialists like John Wheatley.

He told of an occasion when Wheatley interrupted Maclean, from the chair of a Catholic Socialist Society meeting, when the latter referred to the theory of evolution.

The audience had insisted Maclean should continue.

Another older comrade who attended Maclean's street meetings as a boy referred to 'the absolute incorruptibility of the man — at a time when it was easy to use political movements for per-



We can learn from Maclean's fight

sonal advancement.'

Joe Eyre, a teacher and Workers Revolutionary Party member, said that Maclean and others who had condemned the First World War had 'by standing out against the compromisers of that period, ensured the continuity of the workers' movement.'

Today, commemorating John Maclean meant fighting authoritarianism, the MSC, and 'the Tory idea that

young people have to be trained to jump through hoops'.

In the labour movement, it meant opposition to 'new realism', which was in fact 'old-style opportunism and reformism'.

The bureaucracy, he said, moved to the right as the working class moved to the left, and 'to penetrate the world, and understand it as it really is, we have to stand against the stream as Maclean did.'

JOHN MACLEAN'S struggle for working-class education, and for relations of mutual respect within the education system, was entirely relevant to the teachers' fight today, said Dr James D Young in the first John Maclean memorial lecture.

'I have no doubt about his importance as an educator of ordinary men and women as distinct from those in higher places,' said Young.

Although Maclean had been a member of the EIS (Educational Institute of Scotland) and the Scottish Socialist Teachers' Society, his time had been spent primarily on the education of his working class pupils.

As a socialist educator, he had despised the concept of indoctrination.

Primary education in the 1870s was controlled by school boards dominated by petty-bourgeois shopkeepers and clergymen, who paid schoolteachers a pittance.

Maclean was among those who fought the victimisation of socialist teachers, and also for free books, free school meals, sex education and egalitarian relationships between staff and pupils.

He was fighting a system in which, said Young, 'it was possible for the chairman of the Falkirk school board, a Reverend James Hutton, to describe as a "triviality" a boy losing his eye at the hands of a teacher.'

Contrary to the prevailing ethic of modern capitalism, John Maclean had always

Excerpts from James Young's lecture

'worn only one hat': that is, he had devoted himself exclusively to the cause of socialist enlightenment with no concern for his own reputation in the education establishment.

He firmly believed that socialism would establish its credibility through the behaviour of socialists themselves.

Maclean had used 'Das Kapital' for the first time as a school textbook, but this was not to be permitted for long.

From 1908-1916 Maclean taught Marxist economics in continuing education classes, as part of his commitment to the education of the adult working class.

His disillusionment with state education deepened after 1914, at the same time as the outbreak of war alienated him completely from the capitalist system.

He bitterly opposed the 'divine right' of headmasters over staff and pupils, and began to criticise the primary school curriculum.

Maclean was opposed to the political conformity and ideological tests in education so dear to Tebbit, said Young.

'He encouraged the working class to end the domination of the many by the few, and for this he was harried and hounded.'



Lanarkshire teachers marching to defend education.

Fight for general election now!

REPLY BY CYRIL SMITH

MY article on the front page of Workers Press on November 22, was headlined 'Fight for a general election now!'. It aimed to spotlight the refusal of the Labour leaders to press for a general election and contrasted this with the widespread opposition to Thatcher in both the working class and sections of the middle class.

Referring to the response to the miners' strike and to the Wapping printers, it ended with a call to join the WRP and campaign to bring down the Tories.

Last week's Workers Press carried a letter from Neil Dempsey, 'Super-optimism in lead article', vigorously attacking this piece. Dempsey was clearly angered by my suggestion that Thatcher could be removed.

Did he base his criticism on a firm alternative analysis? Did he propose some better line of action? Well,

right at the end we got this: 'The only way we can go forward is by actually participating in struggle and to do this we need a clear analysis of the situation, not confused rhetoric.' That's all.

I believe the Neil Dempsey letter voiced a feeling of despondency widespread on the left since the end of the miners' strike. These people are miserable about the appearance that Thatcher has got away with her attacks on jobs, social services, living standards and democratic rights. Only the miners fought back — and look what happened.

Rantings

They regard the Kinnock leadership as immovable. This is merely the other side of the coin to Healyite rantings about 'bonapartism', economic catastrophe and instant revolution. Healy too, it must not be forgotten, was driven to despair by the end of the miners' strike. He too pinned his hopes on sections of the Labour

bureaucracy, and wept when they let him down.

The explosion in the WRP in October 1985 brought into the open many contradictory viewpoints. Since then, the new WRP has fought to deepen its theoretical understanding of the crisis of British and world imperialism and to base its political activity on this knowledge.

We try to set out from the objective nature of this crisis and not from the immediate consciousness of the working class. Only then can we decide on action to develop that consciousness. We are opposed to those whose political mood is determined by reflection of the crisis in the actions of the Labour bureaucracy.

Yes, we must drop all the old nonsense about the imminent collapse of world economy. But we are able to see more plainly that capitalism is indeed in its death agony, and that its survival is only possible because of the actions of its servants in the labour movement.

That is why we can assert

that the miners' strike, which shook every corner of British society, was not a one-off affair, but the first of a series of such struggles. Has Thatcher resolved the problems of British capitalism? Not one. The decline of the oldest capitalist class is now accelerating.

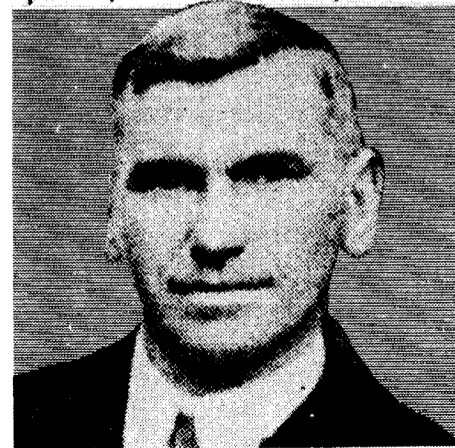
Subliminal

Neil Dempsey's letter carries a subliminal message: 'Give up this talk of a British and world revolution,' it whispers, 'reformism will always dominate the thinking of the labour movement. Careerist bureaucracies will always hold back the working class. A revolutionary party can't be built in Britain.' And in an even quieter whisper: 'Capital will rule forever'.

Super-optimism, indeed! We are absolutely sure that, whatever problems we face today, this is the epoch of world revolution and the time for Trotskyism to fight.

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John Maclean's
Speech from the dock, May 9th 1918



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HEALY'S SEXUAL ABUSE

GERRY HEALY was expelled for sexually abusing comrades in the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Michel Varga's article reprinted in Workers Press (November 22, 1986) rightly re-states this.

The other two expulsion charges — of physical violence and slander — were secondary, although completely connected. Healy's violence and slander had been known about and accepted, even if uneasily, by some long-time WRP members.

Comrade Varga rightly says the explosion revealed basic political and theoretical problems which the whole Trotskyist movement is now examining.

But it is important to remember that it was not political or theoretical differences, agent-hunting or violence that evoked the powerful and rapid reaction from the WRP membership which expelled Healy and his supporters.

Varga describes Healy's sexual abuses as the 'detonator' for the explosion in the WRP. Why was it this question that caused the explosion; and why in the 1980s? These questions are central to our political and theoretical clarification, and in no way secondary.

It is inadequate to describe Healy as a 'lord of the manor' exercising his right of the first night... and leave it at that, as Varga does in his article.

While there are elements of feudalism in what happened, there are also important differences.

The whole history of class society is also the history of the oppression of women and capitalism contains past forms of oppression within it.

But what sharply differentiates the relationship between Healy and his victims from that of a lord and his serfs is that these women comrades actually became victims out of total dedication to the socialist revolution.

They mistakenly believed that the revolution — in the form of its 'greatest' leader — demanded this, the most personal sacrifice of all.

They were not coerced by law or tradition or physically, but every pressure was brought to bear upon them as revolutionaries.

Many of Healy's victims believed his expressions of care and concern were genuine — if distasteful. Almost all believed theirs was the only relationship Healy had.

Further, while the actions of a 'lord of the manor' were legally sanctioned and open, Healy's were shrouded in total secrecy protected by a complicated political and 'security' machinery.

In beginning an examination of the Healy regime, the WRP Women's Commission believes his sexual abuse was not so much rape but is more accurately characterised as 'incest': sexual abuse by someone in a position of power and trust.

Several very important points came out of a discussion with Incest Crisis Line, who deal not only with child but also adult victims of sexual abuse:

- Sexual abuse is never the fault of the victim, though they are always made to feel responsible and guilty.
- Sexual abusers are in a position of power over their victims. Their motivation is domination and maintenance

BY LIZ LEICESTER
and CLARE COWEN

nance of that power, not sexual pleasure.

● The scale of the problem is unrecognised and embraces all classes in society. Many organisations have similar problems which are usually hushed up.

● When abuse is exposed in a family, it will usually split — some will defend the abuser, some will condemn.

● Multiple victims in a family never discuss the abuse with each other even when they are aware of the common abuse. They fear this will exclude them from the family.

● It is quite common for those in authority to turn away from sexual abuse when it is reported — they feel emotionally unable to cope with the problem, so prefer to believe it is not happening. Sometimes they are hiding a problem of their own.

IN addition to Healy's sexual victims, all active comrades were wound into a complicated network of relationships — politically battered at one point and praised at another.

Healy's system of rewards and punishments for 'good' and 'bad' behaviour extended throughout the party.

As Comrade Varga says in his article, Healy's method of degradation, violence and oppression was 'alien not only to democratic centralism, but to the most elementary communist principles'. It was the interpenetration of bourgeois ideology into the revolutionary movement at a very fundamental level.

We must study all the transmission mechanisms of this process, including relationships between people and through the family, a fundamental question in all class societies.

In 'Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State', Engels describes in great detail the development of society from savagery to barbarism to civilisation and explains that the individual family is rooted firmly in class society and is the 'economic unit' of that society. He describes this movement to class society and private property as 'the world historic defeat of the female sex' (Pathfinder Press edition, p.68).

Trotsky also treats these questions as fundamental. In the chapter 'Family, Youth and Culture' in 'Revolution Betrayed' he shows that the first attacks by the triumphant Stalinist bureaucracy were on the abortion, divorce and child-care measures brought in by the

Towards a theoretical understanding

IN October 1985, the Workers Revolutionary Party split over the expulsion of Party leader Gerry Healy, a member of the Trotskyist movement for four decades. The Party split was discussed in an article entitled 'Springtime' reprinted in the November 22 Workers Press. Some points made in that article are discussed here.

October Revolution. He links this 'cult of the family' with the urgent need of the bureaucracy to establish authority and power.

'communist relations' to something above politics and historical development.

It is now clear this was a cover for anti-Trotskyism and a rapid move towards Stalinism. Healy's sexual and other abuses were used as a reason to liquidate and attack the whole of Trotskyism.

AFTER the expulsion of the Healyites, we were engaged in a struggle with two groups within the party: one who now said the appearance of the party explosion (Healy's sexual abuse) had no importance, another who were completely obsessed with it.

The first group — now the International Communist Party, British section of the International Committee (IC) — eventually concluded that the question of sexual abuse was secondary, an historical accident.

In their IC document 'How the WRP Betrayed Trotskyism' there is barely a mention of why Healy was expelled. The destruction of several generations of women revolutionaries, in every section of the IC, is not considered a major betrayal.

Following the IC's split with the WRP, we faced the second group: those around Mike and Tony Banda who elevated the question of

Both groups' positions on this crucial issue must be carefully studied. Both represent a fundamental abandonment of historical materialism inseparable from their positions on other theoretical and political questions.

At a recent conference, the WRP deepened its discussion on these questions.

The British miners' strike represented an historical leap, particularly for miners' wives and women's support groups. It was these developments which provided the material conditions for the exposure of Healy by his secretary.

The determined struggle of women in the miners' strike was the most dramatic sign of massive changes in society, in the relations between men and women and in the family.

Revolution, and especially world

revolution, thrusts right into the forefront the most unexpected layers, the most oppressed masses. Who are the most oppressed masses? The women and the youth.

The Transitional Programme — the 1938 founding document of the Fourth International — makes this clear and points out that opportunist organisations concentrate their attention on the top layers of the working class and therefore ignore both youth and women workers.

The content of the world socialist revolution is so profound it will raise up the most oppressed layers — not just of capitalism but of thousands of years of class oppression, especially of women.

One of the important experiences of the history of the WRP is that so-called 'political' agreement can conceal fundamental differences in ideology. Politics and economics alone do not constitute Marxism.

The discussions now taking place between different Trotskyist groups — nationally and internationally — must include these questions if the Trotskyist movement is to win the leadership of the masses.



The determined struggle of women's support groups during the miners' strike was a decisive element in the exposure of Healy

Crisis in homelessness

RECORD numbers of families are joining the growing tide of homeless people in squalid and unhealthy hotels.

Homelessness is mounting in almost every English region.

Local authorities accepted 26,130 new households in the second quarter of 1986 — a rise of 2,820 on the same period last year — according to figures published by the

Health Visitors' Association (HVA).

Britain has over 100,000 homeless families — double the number in 1979. A quarter are in London where local councils spend £27 million on bed and breakfast accommodation.

Families are frequently victimised by hoteliers for complaining about their squalid living conditions and some family doctors refuse to accept homeless families on their lists.

Ann Cross, chair of the HVA's homelessness group warned:

'Lack of cooking facilities and space to play, as well as isolation, can cause children lasting damage through malnutrition and development problems.

'The government must enforce environmental standards in hotels and reverse its Scrooge-like cuts in spending on housing to provide decent homes for these desperate families.'

More hospital services threatened

ONLY two weeks after the decision to close the world-famous Queen Mary's Hospital for Children in Carshalton comes the threat to two more London hospitals.

St James' Hospital in Wandsworth — a large general hospital with a busy accident and emergency unit — could be the biggest single hospital closure yet with the loss of 203 acute beds in a

district which has already lost five major hospitals and 40 per cent of hospital beds.

A closure at the West London Hospital would hit maternity and geriatric services as well as irreplaceable special care baby cots.

This is only the start of a colossal programme of cuts needed to slice £30 million from Riverside's annual budget.

London Health Emergency organiser Geoff Martin pointed out that the closures are proposed purely to save money.

'Each closure will result in rocketing waiting lists, worsening services and huge job losses.

'Despite all the promises, the overall picture of health services in London is still one of continuing decline.'

BRITISH FIRM 'WORST TO DEAL WITH'

— says South African miners' leader.

Gold Fields of South Africa, a largely British-owned company, is going to the Rand Supreme Court as part of its fight to hold down wages and union rights for its black workers.

The company, 48 per cent-owned by Consolidated Gold Fields, has been described by South Africa National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM) general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa as 'the worst company we have to deal with.'

It has also been disclosed that armed security police, who attacked union meetings and were accused of forcing strikers to return to work at gunpoint, were part of a force directly set up and trained by the British company, Consolidated Gold Fields.

An industrial court in Johannesburg ruled on November 25 that Gold Fields should allow the NUM to hold strike ballots at its seven mines, allow the miners to hold strike meetings, and pay the union's costs.

Gold Fields rejected the ruling and announced it would appeal to the Supreme Court. This could mean the union would not hear a final decision until just before Christmas.

Back in July, Gold Fields dropped out of pay talks between the Chamber of Mines and the NUM. It then refused to grant pay rises of around 20 per cent agreed by the other mining companies.

Strikes which broke out at three of its mines were met by the usual claims that union members were 'intimidating' miners who wanted to work, and by the force of real intimidation in the shape of armed police.

Gold Fields of South Africa is not the only mining company whose police and thugs have attacked trade unionists. But as Cyril Ramaphosa of the NUM said in a Granada TV World In Action programme recently: 'It would be fair to say that Gold Fields is actually the worst company we have to deal with.'

During a pay dispute in

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

1984 the company had leaflets distributed warning that strikers would be sacked, even if the strike was legal.

A company video for migrant workers shows pictures of starving Africans while the presenter says: 'Do nothing foolish, there are many others waiting for your job if you lose it.'

To complete the picture of racism wedded to capitalist exploitation, a Gold Fields training manual for mine supervisors (whites only, of course) says: 'The black when wanting to discuss anything of importance cannot just raise the subject and get to the point.

'Please'

'A Bantu will always give an answer which he thinks will please the other person.'

Of course if the Black workers give an answer that the white baas does not like, the company calls the cops to shoot them!

Dozens of miners have been killed by police in the struggle for union rights in South Africa's mines in the past decade.

Meanwhile if anyone has been prevaricating dishonestly it has been the bosses, and particularly the British-owned Consolidated Gold Fields.

It was widely believed until recently that each mining company had its own security force, calling in the South African police to help when necessary.

Consolidated Gold Fields has for some years tried to



pretend that what went on in its South African associate company was not its responsibility.

Confidential company documents recently obtained show that a centralised Mine Security Force, with 6,000 men, operates throughout the mines with the exception of those directly run by Anglo-American Corporation, who have their own police.

The Mine Security Force liaises with the South African police and Army. It gathers intelligence on workers, combats 'subversive activities', and reports to the racist regime's National Key Points Committee, overlooking industry from a state security standpoint.

And the company that runs, trains and arms it, was set up by the London-based mining group, Consolidated Gold Fields.

Former Gold Fields industrial relations officer Richard Spoor told the World In Action team: 'It was part of my job to read security reports on all union meetings on the mines. They have paid informers, they have undercover policemen who infiltrate union meetings and take notes or recordings of all that is said.'

Documents show the Mine Security Force was formed from the merger of two separate mine police forces in 1969, and run by a Gold Fields company called Gold Fields Security Ltd.

At that time Gold Fields of South Africa was a wholly-owned subsidiary of Consolidated Gold Fields.

Besides still holding 48 per cent of Gold Fields of South Africa, Consolidated has the chairman of Gold Fields sitting on its London board.

JAPAN:

Miners and railworkers fight sackings

A 24-hour strike by 23,000 miners this month marked a growing struggle by Japanese workers against redundancies.

Under a plan to cut coal production by 50 per cent some 10,000 miners would lose their jobs over the next five years.

There has already been a fight developing on the railways, where 61,000 sackings are planned by the government.

The country's five main steel plants are also planning job cuts.

Figures

Official figures show Japan now has approaching 2 million unemployed. Trade unionists say the real figure could be twice that.

The main railway union Kokuro faced a revolt by rank-and-file militants in recent months against the leadership's capitulation to privatisation and union-bashing.

The Liberal Democrat (Tory) government has left Japan National Railways with huge debts due to massive investment in high-speed 'bullet trains' and en-

gineering projects, many of them prestige-building for the government.

Now it also wants a Beeching-style axeing of hundreds of loss-making rural branch lines, but realises this could endanger its political support in the countryside.

The government's answer is to break up the state railway system and hand it over to private capitalist companies.

This also provides the opportunity to break up the union. Already thousands of railway workers have been pressed into resigning to join tame company unions, by management intimidation and threats that they would lose their jobs under private ownership.

Nearly 40 railway workers committed suicide this year as a result of such pressures.

The teachers' union Nikkyoso has been hit by government 'education reforms' aimed at breaking its unity. Both unions support the opposition Socialist Party. Union leaders say the government is trying to smash all opposition in Japan.

● In October, when rail union leaders were to announce a compromise approach to management for a no-strike deal in return for the right to organise alongside the scab company unions, militant workers occupied the union's headquarters to prevent this.

MASS ARRESTS IN SOUTH KOREA

SEOUL — Ten thousand riot police turned out last weekend and over 2,200 people were arrested as President Chun Doo Hwan's regime enforced its ban on an opposition rally.

Squads of riot police in full gear were out on every street corner, and plainclothes police moved among people to pounce on protesters. Whenever groups managed to form the riot police attacked immediately with tear gas. Some students responded with stones and petrol bombs.

Besides individual charges of violence, attempted arson, illegal assembly etc., many of those arrested could be jailed under South Korea's national security law, which bans any action defined as 'pro-communist'. Chun's repression followed clashes between student demonstrators and police sent on to campuses. Left-wing students have reportedly called for re-unification of Korea.

Many people suspect the recent fake story that North Korean Stalinist leader Kim Il Sung had been killed in internal strife was put around by the South Korean regime as a diversion from its own problems.

Air Lanka picket to free

Perera

A PICKET of the Air Lanka offices in London is being held on Saturday December 20 to demand the release of a Sri Lankan Trotskyist who faces a possible death sentence from the extreme right-wing Jayawardene regime.

Brutan Perera, a member of the Revolutionary Communist League Sri Lankan section of the International Committee of the Fourth International is being held on charges of 'resisting arrest' — which carries a virtually unlimited sentence under the regime's emergency laws.

Perera's arrest is part of the repres-

sion directed against the RCL and any other organisations who are standing firm in Sri Lanka in support of the rights of the Tamil nation to self-determination.

The picket on Saturday December 20 aims to bring together trades unionists, immigrant organisations and all those who defend the rights of revolutionaries and working-class organisations in semi-colonial nations like Sri Lanka, where the savagery of the local bourgeoisie receives either tacit or open support from the British ruling class.

We aim to build up the campaign to defend political prisoners like Perera, the jailed Bolivian Trotskyist tin miner

Eleutio Guterrez and all other victims of anti-working class repression alongside the struggle against the racism of the Tory government which bared its fangs again last week in the east end of London.

The Workers Revolutionary Party, who have initiated the picket, call on all revolutionary and working-class organisations to send delegations, bring their banners and send speakers on the day.

The picket will be from 11a.m. to 4p.m. at Air Lanka offices, 6-10 Bruton Street, London W1.

● We also call on organisations to continue supporting the weekly picket of the Sri Lanka High Commission, at 13 Hyde Park Gardens, London SW7, on Thursdays from 12 midday to 2p.m. and to write protest letters to the High Commissioner at that address.

TAIWAN BATTLE

RIOT police used water cannon and tear gas to break up crowds heading for Taipei international airport last Sunday. The people had come out in the hope of greeting opposition leader Hsu Hsin-liang, returning from exile.

Fighting continued through the day, leaving scores of people injured, and 30 police cars burnt out.

Meanwhile, Hsu, who faces charges of sedition when he returns, was stranded in Tokyo. Rather than arrest him on return,

the Taiwan government had cabled all airlines in Japan a list of political 'undesirables' who would be refused entry.

Taiwan's Kuomintang — the corrupt bourgeois party which has ruled there since being driven out of mainland China in 1948 — is facing a challenge from the still illegal opposition Democratic Progress Party in elections this weekend. Hsu had pledged the party his support.

Riot police were called out again last Monday to stop a demonstration at the airport of Cathay Pacific airlines which had refused to fly Hsu.

HOW ISRAEL ARMED IRAN

IN April this year, Israeli reserve-General Avraham Baram was arrested in Bermuda, with seven others, trapped in a 'sting' operation set up by the US Treasury Department.

They were charged with plotting the illegal export of \$2 billion worth of US arms to Iran.

Baram insisted the Israeli government knew all about his arms dealing, and threatened to tell all if they did not intervene on his behalf. While he waits for his case to come to trial it has been overtaken by events that could bring down more than a retired general.

Israeli links with the Iranian armed forces go back to the late Shah's regime. The ongoing Zionist strategy was to weaken the Arab states by forging alliances on their outer flanks.

Came the Iranian revolution, and the Israeli embassy in Tehran was handed over to the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Ayatollah Khomeini arose proclaiming struggle against the Great Satan (US imperialism) and the Little Satan (the Zionist State).

Within a year, Khomeini's Iran was at war. Not with Israel, but with neighbouring Iraq.

The Iraqi government had announced it no longer upheld the 1975 Algiers agreement between the two countries, and begun provoking border incidents to press claims in the Shatt-el-Arab.

The Iranian government retaliated in force, and rejected calls for a cease-fire. Khomeini proclaimed the aim of bringing down Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime since it 'serves Zionism and American imperialism.'

While Iranian youth were thrown into battle with slogans about marching to liberate el Kuds (Jerusalem), and Khomeini proclaimed jihad, Iran's envoys in Europe were passing quieter messages to the Israelis.

Israeli prime minister Begin wrote to US President Carter, then trying to get the US hostages released: 'Two weeks ago we were approached by Iran with a request for military equipment, spare parts in particular. As friends of the United States we believe that the common interest of the free world lies in the support of the present regime in Iran.'

The Soviet Union had decided to halt arms supplies to Iraq. There were reports it was prepared to step into America's shoes as arms supplier to the new Iran, standing up to US imperialism.

But Iran's armed forces needed spare parts for their mainly US-manufactured planes and weaponry. Besides, the military and other elements may have been worried that links with the Soviet Union would strengthen Left-wing elements within Iran.

At any rate Prime Minister Radjai said Iran was not willing to compromise its independence by becoming dependent on Soviet aid.

On June 7, 1981, Israeli planes bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor being built at Tammuz near Baghdad. According to some sources, it was the Iranian air force who supplied the Israelis with aerial photographs of the Tammuz plant to encourage the raid. (See Naim Giladi, 'A Defiling Alliance', 'Israel and Palestine' magazine, May-June 1986).

On July 18, 1981, an Argentine cargo plane straying on the Turkish-Soviet border was brought down by Soviet fighters. It was carrying 32 tons of armaments.

It was revealed that the flight was one of several

arranged from Tel Aviv via Larnaca, Cyprus to Tabriz, Iran, carrying tank spares and ammunition.

The Iranian government claimed reports of Israeli supplies were Soviet or Iraqi propaganda. Several British and Norwegian freight firms reported they had been offered contracts for transporting arms from Israel to Iran.

In May 1982, General Ariel Sharon went to Washington to co-ordinate plans for the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Asked by American reporters about arms to Iran, Sharon replied:

'What do you want from us? Our deliveries were made with the knowledge of the US government. We sell arms to Iran to help in her defence in the war with Iraq. The US government knows about it and hasn't expressed any disagreement.'

In September 1983, during a Paris press conference, Sharon said: 'Israel has a vital interest in the continuing of the war in the Persian Gulf, and in Iran's victory.'

In August 1985, a senior US army officer and four others were arrested in California on arms smuggling charges. They said the head of their ring, former CIA agent Shek-louche Kader, had struck a deal with Israeli chief of staff Rafael Eitan and other officers in 1982, for arms for Iran.

Eitan, blamed by Israel's Kahan commission for his role in the Sabra-Chatila massacre, notorious for his remark about trapping West Bank Palestinians 'like cockroaches in a bottle', has said of the Iran-Iraq war:

'It's in our interest they kill each other, and as many as possible.'

On April 18 this year, the Jordanian newspaper 'El Rai' reported that Israel's former military attache in Tehran during the Shah's regime, Yaakov Nimrodi, was paying a ten-day visit to Iran. Nimrodi was known both as a Mossad officer and an arms dealer.

Three days later, General Baram was arrested in Bermuda. Accused with him were two Israeli arms dealers, the Eisenberg brothers, William Northrop, of the American aviation industry family, and London lawyer Samuel Evans.

The \$2 billion deal they were accused of offering the Iranians included Hercules transport planes, Skyhawk fighter-bombers, F-4 fighters, howitzers and TOW anti-tank missiles.

Fake end-user certificates were to be provided to get round US restrictions.

Iranian banker Cyrus Hashemi, reported to have helped the US Treasury Department set up its 'sting' by posing as Iranian buyer, had been promised immunity from other arms charges by US Attorney for Manhattan Rudolph Giuliani.

'But meanwhile he has made enemies,' wrote the often well-informed Patrick Seale. ('The banker and the \$2.5 billion arms sting', 'Observer', April 27). Powerful figures in the arms business and in Israel's defence industries are reported to be furious at the collapse of what was to be an immensely lucrative transaction.



Three months later the banker was found dead in his London flat. The cause of death was later officially given out as leukemia. Hashemi's shocked family said they had thought he was in good health.

In a letter smuggled out of Manhattan's metropolitan correction centre, William Northrop admitted involvement in the arms deals, but suggested the US government had known all along. His wife Paulina told the 'Jerusalem Post' she thought now Hashemi was dead the prosecution case would be dropped.

Meanwhile, Danish seamen had begun voicing suspicions about the mysterious cargoes their ships were picking up at Israeli ports, en route for Bander Abbas, Iran.

On May 4, the 'Observer' reported a ship loaded with 35 tons of weapons including TOW missiles, mortars, and spare parts had left Eilat for Bandar Abbas.

On November 26, following the revelations that have shaken the Reagan administration, the Israeli government admitted officially that it had supplied arms to Iran on behalf of the United States.

According to US Attorney General Edwin Meese, the Israelis paid the money from the Reagan arms deal into a Swiss bank account, for use of the right-wing contras fighting Nicaragua.

Although Israeli involvement in central America is well-known, the implication that they were used to circumvent the wishes of the US Congress had the Israeli

leaders worried. Congress has to approve Israel's aid allocation each year.

'If such a transaction took place, it had nothing to do with Israel, and the Government of Israel had no knowledge of it. Israel did not serve and would not have served as a channel for such a transaction', piously insisted Israeli prime minister Shamir.

Iranian parliament speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani was meanwhile insisting: 'We have never negotiated with Israel — which we consider an illegitimate sperm — for arms purchases. If we find out that the weapons reaching us have come through Israel, we will not even use them in the war fronts.'

And as the saying goes, if you believe that!

Arms rumpus splits Washington

REVELATIONS of America's secret arms deals with the Iranian regime and payments to the Contra rebels have thrown US foreign policy into turmoil.

Hints of Saudi involvement in the Iran arms deal, as well as contra funding, could bring a new crisis for US arrangements in the Middle East.

The Republican Party is more deeply split than at any time since Watergate.

'It's like France after Charlemagne' said White House communications director, Patrick Buchanan. 'The whole Empire is up for grabs.'

An opinion poll showed the US public's approval of their President has slumped dramatically from 67 per cent to less than 46 per cent since the arms deal scandal broke.

Reagan has had to yield to demands for a special prosecutor to examine the Iran-Contra scandal.

Sacking

Demands for the sacking of Reagan's chief-of-staff Donald Regan and the CIA director William Casey are mounting.

It has been disclosed that Texas billionaire, Mr Ross Perot, paid \$2bn into a Swiss account at the request of sacked National security official Lt Colonel Oliver North. The money was to pay ransoms for the release of US hostages.

This came at a time when Reagan was assuring the nation that 'America will never make concessions to terrorists. To do so would only invite more terrorism.'

Up to \$30mn of the Iranian

arms profits may have gone illegally not just to the Contra rebels but to anti-Soviet forces in Afghanistan and the South African-backed Savimbi forces in Angola.

Reagan has appointed Mr Frank Carlucci as new National Security adviser. So stable is the Administration that he is the fifth person to hold the job in six years.

Carlucci's curriculum vitae reputedly includes in-

volvement in the murder of Congolese President Patrice Lumumba, the CIA-organised bloody overthrow of Allende's government in Chile, and the fall of President Goulart in Brazil.

In Italy, he was accused of having a hand in the Aldo Moro kidnapping.

Clearly, excellent qualifications for continuing what Reagan calls his war 'against terrorism'!

Contra war hits villagers

BY KEITH SCOTCHER

AS NICARAGUA's President Daniel Ortega expressed fears last week that the Reagan administration might be tempted to a full-scale invasion of his country, US-backed Contras added to their bloody record by shooting-up a bus carrying villagers to market.

The brunt of the counter-revolutionary warfare waged by the contra rebels in Nicaragua is falling on the peasants in the central mountains, the region given top priority by the CIA in its war against the Sandinista government.

It was the contras in this area that Eugene Hasenfus was flying in guns to when he was shot down.

In the remote provinces of Boaco and Chontales, the Contras have made considerable efforts to build local infrastructures.

Being themselves on CIA

recommendations on how to 'neutralise carefully selected and planned targets,' the contras have assassinated 13 leaders of the important National Union of Farmers and Cattle-men in the past seven months.

The latest of these assassinations was that of Alfonso Nunez, a greatly admired local organiser, who was ambushed as he drove to a meeting.

On the same day, a farming cooperative was attacked and an entire peasant family, including three women and a four year old boy were 'neutralised'.

The youth of Nicaragua can take little for granted.

With the constant threat of a possible US invasion, the youth are called on to defend the gains of the revolution against Somoza and can be called up to the army or asked to join a production brigade to get the crucial coffee harvest out of the combat areas.

London centre for arms deals

ISRAELI arms dealer Yaakov Nimrodi, who figures prominently in the US-Iran arms affair, has conducted much of his business from London.

Last week's 'Observer' reports that a \$135 million deal concluded by Nimrodi in 1981 included Lance missiles and new laser-guided Copperhead anti-tank shells, both unlikely to have been obtainable without governmental backing.

'Observer' reporters say they have a copy of the contract between Nimrodi's company, International Desalination Equipment Ltd. and the Iranian Ministry of Defence.

'With the knowledge of the British government, London has become the centre for the lucrative arms trade which keeps the Iranian war machine supplied', the 'Observer' says.

It claims that the offices of the Iranian National Oil Com-

pany in Victoria 'staffed by Iranian military officers' were 'the central clearing house for deals around the world.'

Presumably they would have been handy for the nearby International Military Services (IMS), the British government's arms trading outfit on Abbey Orchard Street, which used to keep the Shah's regime supplied and also arranged some equipment sales to Iran when the Gulf war started.

Nimrodi, a former Israeli military attache in Tehran, and according to Israeli sources also a senior Mossad officer, conducted much of his dealing from a £400 a week flat in Montrose Court, Kensington, near the Iranian and Israeli embassies.

The 'Observer' reports he is in Tel Aviv at present, but a guest at his London flat said he was expected back 'at the end of December'.

Philippines Picket

ABOUT 50 trade unionists and supporters picketed the Philippines consulate in Kensington on Sunday 30 November in protest at the murder of trade union leader Rolando Olalia. The demonstrators were addressed by Jeremy Corbyn Labour MP (an executive member of the T&GWU), a War On Want spokesman and a Ford shop steward.

STALINISM IN

WHEN I came back from Russia I was expected to go around and speak to meetings about how I had seen Russia. I did 80 meetings in 1954-1955, including one at my old school.

Increasingly I became aware from the questions I was asked that I was engaged in presenting a pretty picture that wasn't at all true and this was not a very decent occupation.

Another thing which concerned me was the use of Soviet statistics. When I was in Ossetia I visited a collective farm. The chairman spoke very frankly. He thanked God for Malenkov and Khrushchev.

He gave me the prices he was getting in the past (some were below cost of production) and said that he was now at last getting prices that were fair. While at the SCR (Society

for Cultural Relations with the USSR) I'd been telling everybody about the prosperous collective farms.

The British Soviet Friendship Society delegation was given the task, on its return, of producing a pamphlet about Northern Ossetia, and this appeared under the title *A People Reborn* (1954). I wrote the chapter on the country's history. In this I mentioned that, after World War II, Northern Ossetia's territory had been greatly enlarged by annexation of part of the Chechen-Ingush republic — 'whose inhabitants were deported'.

BRIAN PEARCE

IN the first part of the interview, published in Workers Press last week, Brian Pearce outlined the growing doubts he had about the politics of the Communist Party in the period prior to 1956. In this second interview he recalls some further incidents which led him eventually to resign from the Communist Party.

My draft went to the editor, Andrew Rothstein, and he soon asked me to accompany him to the Soviet Embassy for a talk with the Cultural Counsellor. This official requested that I remove mention of the annexation of territory. To which I replied that, if this were not mentioned, the comparative statistics given elsewhere in the pamphlet would not be comparing like with like, and so could give a false impression.

Very well, then, he reluctantly agreed, but don't write 'deported' — use the official formula, stating that the Chechens and Ingushes 'were given an opportunity to develop elsewhere in the USSR'. To my shame, I agreed to this, and that was what was printed.

they feel Khrushchev is undermining.' This caused me to see them in a rather different light.

Quite a lot of people in the Party, in the light of what Khrushchev had said and in the light of the Tito business were very keen to go over the Party's history, over the history of the International. There were demands from various quarters that we consider different aspect of the Party's history.

I had written a letter to Pollitt saying that we should re-consider the Party's position during the war, especially now that we no longer considered that everything Stalin had ordered us to do we considered OK.

Gollan wrote on behalf of Pollitt: 'The proposition you made did come up at our Executive meeting during last weekend when we were considering the lessons of the 20th Congress. The Executive is against a discussion on this matter at this stage.'

'We entirely agree with you that it is of course an important question and precisely because of that it could not be a matter for one or two comrades. The whole executive would have to be involved. Discussions would have to take place at length throughout the Party... and we are of the opinion that all this would seriously hamper discussion of future policy we are initiating.'

'In addition of course, I think you understand with your knowledge of these matters that it is not only something of concern to our Party.' Well, I thought that was pretty poor.

* * *

AN important event of 1955 was Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade. The very fact that he visited Belgrade and was making it up with Tito was a shock to us. From 1948 there had been this war against Titoism and lots of personal friendships in the Party had been broken up.

There was a Youth Brigade that went to work on the railway and a lot of those people refused to believe that Tito was a counter-revolutionary. There was a deep wound in Party circles over this Tito business. It turned out that it was all a big mistake and Tito was OK.

Khrushchev made a ridiculous statement saying it had been all the fault of Beria. Well we all knew that although Beria was an important man everything was decided by Stalin. He couldn't have started this anti-Tito campaign on his own. Khrushchev was actually criticising Stalin. One started re-thinking the whole Tito business and looking over the documents.

For me the Khrushchev speech at the 20th Congress came as a kind of relief. Now a lot of things fell into place which had been awkwardly sticking out and not fitting into my mind. I thought: 'Now I begin to see how these things do fit together.' But what surprised me was that this was very much a minority reaction. Not only amongst Party officials but many rank-and-file members were anti-Khrushchev.

This interested me because I had understood that the proper thing was always to support the Soviet government, whatever it was saying. One had been used to some sharp changes in what the Soviet government was saying over the years.

But here were people who were showing distinct hostility to the head of the Soviet Communist Party. 'So their loyalty is not really to the Soviet government but to something else, something for which Stalin stood for and which they liked and



The Hungarian uprising of 1956: 'You couldn't deny that this was a struggle for the people.'

not really the essence of it. There is some particular type of regime, some particular type of attitude, some particular kind of politics which certain people are wedded to. Some in the Party thought that there was going to be a peaceful change for the better in Poland.

I was struck by the venom spat against the Poles by others for making what seemed adjustments for the better, later in 1956.

Saville and Thompson began to produce *The Reasoner* in July. I collaborated with them on that. At first this was tolerated. No action was taken against the comrades concerned, even though their names appeared. Mine didn't. I was still dependent on the Party, in effect. I was working at the Embassies.

I was rather careful at that stage not to let my name be used. I was writing under the names Joseph Redman and Leonard Hussey. I was teaching at the Russian and Polish Embassies and had many frank talks there about many aspects.

I was quite astonished at some of the things these diplomats were saying. I thought: 'You'd never get away with some of these

things at Party meetings, you know.' The contrast grew on me between these sophisticated, sometimes rather cynical people, and the attitude of most of the Communists here.



KHRUSHCHEV

From August 1956 onwards I found that letters I wrote to *World News* were not being published and I was fobbed off when I complained about this. I began to suspect that I was now on a little list of people who were not going to be allowed to infect the Party with their silly ideas.

One of the things I wrote

ANNOUNCING A NEW EDITION OF

HUNGARIAN TRAGEDY

PETER FRYER



The Hungarian revolution of 1956 and its brutal suppression by Russian tanks was a watershed in the history of socialism.

In October 1956 Peter Fryer was sent to cover these events for the *Daily Worker*. He reported what he saw — only to have his despatches suppressed and to be suspended and then expelled from the Communist Party.

He saw people in arms demolish a regime of fear and poverty and take power in their own hands. He saw security police atrocities — and the people's terrible revenge. Then he watched appalled as a nation's new-born freedom was relentlessly crushed.

Peter Fryer's eye-witness account, first published in December 1956, had an immediate impact, bringing home to many things which they wished were not true.

Thirty years later his *Hungarian Tragedy*, now published by New Park Publications with a new introduction by the author, still stands as a model of journalistic insight and integrity and is as valuable now as it was in 1956.

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CRISIS

The challenge for the Trotskyist movement



of the working class. I couldn't just dismiss them all as fascist reactionaries and enemies of

was about the 1929 affair. We then had a great dispute in the Party and whatever you might think about the position that was taken it was all fought out in the Party press. Why can't we have that now?

I was told by Gollan in a letter in September 1956 that they couldn't publish this letter; they were going to invite me to serve on a commission to prepare an official history of the Party where these matters could be better dealt with.

This Party commission did not meet until December. There was to be Pollitt, Arnot, Emile Burns, Dutt, Fagan, Hobsbawn, Hutt, Frank Jackson as secretary, Klugman, Leslie Morton, Brian Pearce, Andrew Rothstein and Bob Stewart.

In October the Party ordered those bringing out *The Reasoner* to close it down. The period of tolerance was now at an end. I stood around making a nuisance of myself before being expelled. When I was in touch with him this was the line which Gerry (Healy) recommended.

* * *

ON the Hungarian events themselves it was ob-

vious that there was a strong working class element in the revolt. It was the Budapest working



TITO

class which was carrying on the struggle even more clearly than in the case of Poland. You couldn't deny that this was a struggle of the working class. I couldn't just dismiss them all as fascist reactionaries and enemies of the people.

You might say to me:

'This was not the first such outbreak, there had been the Berlin affair in June 1953. What about that?' The Communist Party people were then still under the influence of war-time anti-German feeling, the campaign against German rearmament and so on. I remember Andrew Rothstein in his open way saying to me at the time of the German events: 'Well, Brian, this proves that when the Red Army took Berlin they didn't kill enough Germans.'

The way the Party handled the Hungarian events was very difficult for me to take, with its appeal to vulgar anti-Catholic prejudice. Another thing which upset a lot of people was that Edith Bone was released and returned to England.

A number of people had known Edith Bone and had always been worried about what had happened to her and were very pleased she had been released. They felt that she should be greeted in the Party press. But no mention of it at all.

One found one was having to swallow bigger and nastier toads even than before.

In December 1956 somebody who had recently resigned from the staff of the

Daily Worker told me that an instruction was now in force that any letters received from me were automatically to go on the spike.

Then we had the first meeting of the Party History Commission. This was a great turning point for me. Pollitt made it plain that he thought the whole thing had been a mistake, speaking with his brutal frankness: 'I personally think you can't produce a history of a Communist Party until the Communist Party in question comes to power.'

Then he really knocked the nail in when he added: 'And even then there are problems. When I was at the 20th Congress I was shown by Rakosi a beautiful history of the Hungarian Communist Party. Everything that went wrong was blamed on Bela Kun, enemy of the people. He said: "And now the Soviet Communist Party has gone and rehabilitated Bela Kun and all this has to be scrapped?"'

Pollitt was so cynical about this it more than worried me. None of this appeared in the minutes and I wrote and complained about that. Meanwhile, I was getting increasingly insulting treatment from members of my Party branch.

By the end of 1956 I decided that I must come out more into the open. I wrote to the *New Statesman* about the cross-currents in the Hungarian revolution and saying this was nothing unusual in a revolution. Gerry (Healy) later told me he had seen this and been impressed by it.

* * *

IN January 1957 there came to my door one cold night one Joe Pawsey with the first issue of the new series of the revived *Labour Review*. I was very interested and impressed.

Soon after that — I forget the actual mechanics of this — I met Peter (Fryer) and Gerry (Healy) on the steps of the British Museum and it was there that we discussed bringing out the first issue of *The Newsletter*.

I was summoned to London District HQ once more: first in 1949, now in 1956, to complain to me about my letters to the *New Statesman*. The District Secretary was fairly firm. Tom Durkin was with him and I thought he would have liked to take a much firmer line.

In March 1957 there began the Socialist Forum. I went to one of their meetings at Gloria Sigman's flat in Highgate. Joe Pawsey and Ted Grant were there. A Conference of Socialist Forum was then held at Wortley Hall where I spoke on 'Lessons of the Stalin Era'.

I indicated we might have a lot to learn from Trotsky. I presented very tentatively the disputes of the 1920s on the theory of Socialism in One Country. It marked a new development as far as I was concerned.

In September 1957 I was at last expelled from the CP, for refusing to break with the Socialist Forum. I continued to work at the Soviet Embassy for a few months longer, but then, one fine day, Harry Pollitt turned up there and saw me. Soon after that, my pupils, one after another, often very embarrassed, made excuses for terminating their lessons. This was in 1958. I had already joined the Labour Party and also Gerry Healy's clandestine 'Group' — later the Socialist Labour League.

CONCLUDED

50 Years Since Moscow Trials International Campaign Launched

An international campaign to clear the names of all the accused in the Moscow Trials frame-ups was discussed at a representative meeting in the House of Commons on 3rd December.

Leaders of the Russian Revolution were executed after being 'tried' and found guilty of being agents of fascism on the basis of forced 'confessions' in the infamous Trials of 1936-1938.

The Soviet Government and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union admitted in the famous Khrushchev speech in 1956 that Stalin had carried out criminal acts against the Soviet people.

Thousands of Soviet communists were imprisoned, tortured, murdered and slandered. Some of these men and women have been rehabilitated, but most of the victims of the Moscow Trials remain accused and convicted to this day.

Harry Wicks, secretary of a campaign against the Moscow Trials in the 1930s sent a message to Wednesday's meeting. Now over 80, Wicks welcomed this renewed attempt to clear the names of the accused.

Another prominent figure in the 1936-1937 campaign in London, Reg Groves, sent a similar message.

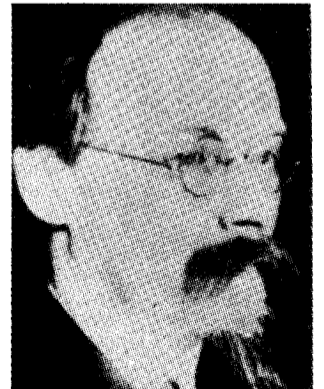
An ad hoc Committee was elected to start the work to launch the campaign. This will be united on this single issue.

Support has already been received from Eric Heffer, M.P., Eddie Loydon, M.P., Lord Fenner Brockway, Peter Fryer, author of *Hungarian Tragedy*, Brian Pearce, translator and historian, Georgy Krasso, leading Hungarian oppositionist as well as a number of Trotskyist organisations.

Workers Press will report on progress of the campaign.



G E ZINOVIEV



Y L PIATAKOV



N I BUKHARIN



L B KAMENEV

Part one of a *Workers Press* seriesVIETNAM AND
TROTSKYISM

APRIL 30, 1975: the National Liberation Front of Vietnam swept into Saigon, renamed it Ho Chi Minh city, and destroyed the last remnants of the imperialist puppet regime of Nguyen Van Thieu.

American imperialism suffered a crushing blow. Its officials and military 'advisers' scrambled for places on the helicopters evacuating their Saigon embassy. Since 1954 the US had used more bombs than all sides in the second world war, chemical and biological warfare, and the 'strategic hamlet' policy which turned villages into prison camps — and failed to crush Vietnam.

The struggle did not stop at the expulsion of the imperialists and their puppets. The Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP) leadership went on to nationalise the banks in the south by the end of 1975, re-unify the country in early 1976, and in March 1978 effectively destroy the capitalist economy with the 'anti-capitalist mobilisation'.

Socialists who witnessed the epic Vietnamese struggle may say, from their hearts, that only the most courageous revolutionaries could inflict such a defeat on US imperialism. And certainly there can be no doubt about the inspiring heroism and military ingenuity of the NLF fighters. But having said that, we are still obliged to develop a scientific understanding of the Vietnamese struggle, and a scientific characterisation of its leadership — without which the lessons it contains for the international working-class movement will remain concealed.

Factor

Such an understanding was never developed in the Trotskyist movement, and remained a factor in the movement's crisis throughout the years of the war.

The Vietnamese struggle compelled Trotskyists — who had always characterised Stalinism as 'the most counter-revolutionary force in the international workers' movement' — to explain whether the VCP was an exception to this rule. They had to explain how Vietnam, like China, had apparently taken major steps towards socialism under the leadership of a Stalinist party based on the peasantry. The question for the Vietnamese Trotskyists was literally: 'to be or not to be?' — for if the VCP was leading the nation towards socialism, why should they exist at all?

Just a year before the fall of Saigon, this problem was posed point-blank to the United Secretariat of the Fourth International at its tenth congress. A letter from the Bolshevik-Leninist Group of Vietnam, based in Paris, asked:

'Should the International

concern itself with a Vietnamese Trotskyist group which remained loyal to the International and which has carried on against great obstacles . . . Should we work towards the creation of a section of the Fourth International in Vietnam?' (*The letter, dated February 5, 1974, was reproduced in 'Stalinism and Trotskyism in Vietnam: a Spartacist pamphlet'*).

The letter condemned both those who 'prettied up the VCP to the point of labelling



Vietnamese Trotskyist leader Ta Thu Thau (top) was murdered, with hundreds of other resistance fighters, by the Stalinists. Ho Chi Minh (below) gave at least tacit consent to the murders.



it a revolutionary party', and those who refused to confront the fact that the Stalinists 'had successfully led the national liberation struggle'.

'In the very special histor-

ical conditions in Vietnam,' said the letter, 'where the enormous weight of the VCP crushes all the organisations to its left, maintaining a Trotskyist group, even a propaganda group, is an extremely difficult task. We have been able to do this during these last years with no help whatsoever from the International or from the Ligue Communiste' (the USFI's French section).

In words, this letter was never answered: in practice, the USFI, led by Ernest Mandel and with Pierre Rousset as its south-east Asia 'expert', glorified the Stalinist VCP and did nothing to assist the Vietnamese Trotskyist group, which exists to this day.

The USFI — despite criticism from a group of members of the American Socialist Workers Party — did 'pretty up the VCP to the point of labelling it a revolutionary party', and prettied up the Vietnamese state as 'socialist'. (For discussion documents, see 'On the Nature of the Vietnamese CP', by George Johnson and Fred Feldman, *International Socialist Review* July-August 1973; 'The Vietnamese Revolution and the Role of the Party' by P. Rousset, *ISR* April 1974; 'Vietnam, Stalinism and the Post-War Socialist Revolutions', Johnson and Feldman, *ISR* April 1974). Here was a classic case of liquidationism, that trend which denies the need to build the Trotskyist movement, claiming that changes in the camp of Stalinism or bourgeois nationalism enable those forces to carry through socialist tasks.

The events in south-east Asia since 1975 are a crushing refutation of this idea: they have underlined that Stalinism on a world scale remains counter-revolutionary, and that only the building of real revolutionary leadership on a world scale can take the working class and its allies in the peasantry forward.

Firstly, the VCP, not through its own 'stage-ist'



The picture that stirred the world: 15-year-old fighters aboard an NLF tank that brought the 21-year liberation war against the US to an end, April 30, 1975.

programme but rather with the knife of a ruthless imperialist blockade at the country's throat — and after the failure of its initial attempts to boost private economy — extended state property to south Vietnam by 1978. Secondly, the Chinese Stalinists (who in their time had been called 'revolutionary socialists' by liquidationist voices in the Trotskyist movement) combined with US imperialism to subvert, weaken and (in 1979) militarily attack Vietnam. Thirdly, the degenerate pro-imperialist Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia — hailed in 1975 by Moscow and Peking, and even by some Trotskyists, as a 'workers' and peasants government' — turned on its own people with medieval savagery, and on the Vietnamese workers' state like a bloodsucking leech. The fearsome bestiality of this regime alone shows the bankruptcy of international Stalinist politics, which has always sought not working-class revolution, but manoeuvres with 'worker-peasant parties', 'national roads to socialism' and other formulas designed to stifle the revolutionary role of the international working class.

The tasks of Trotskyists

was then, and remains today, both the unconditional defence of Vietnam and all deformed workers' states from imperialism, and the building of the Fourth International in all countries.

But which section of the world Trotskyist movement fought for this in 1975? Some leaders of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), which had split from the USFI in 1953 precisely in order to oppose liquidationism, had just as distorted a view of the Vietnamese Stalinists as Rousset and Mandel.

'Analysis'

The principal 'analysis' of Vietnam produced by the Workers Revolutionary Party, the largest ICFI section, admitted that the VCP leaders had 'seriously imperilled the prospects of ultimate victory' by 'mistakes arising from their Stalinist training' — but claimed that 'in breaking empirically from the dictates of Stalinist peaceful co-existence . . . were able to carry through the revolution'. (*'Stalinism and the Liberation of Vietnam'*, by S. Johns, *Fourth International Winter 1975*, p. 181). Here was reproduced exactly the

criminal error made by Pablo, secretary of the Fourth International in the 1950s: the idea that objective developments could induce changes in Stalinist parties which would make them subjectively revolutionary; only while Pablo had taken this reasoning to its logical conclusion and called on Trotskyists to join Stalinist parties, the ICFI 'resolved' the problem of leadership by dubbing itself 'the world party of socialist revolution' as its forces dwindled.

Unbounded illusions in Ho Chi Minh's leadership were inspired for years by Mike Banda, second-in-command to ICFI leader Gerry Healy, who claimed that a revolutionary party (i.e. the VCP) inspired General Giap's 'People's War'; that this party was 'derived from the example of Lenin's Bolshevik Party after it had been frightfully mutilated by Stalin'. Here again was the idea that somehow the 'frightful mutilations' of Stalinism could be spontaneously overcome, so that the Vietnamese struggle was 'the struggle of an entire class and its leading organs to assimilate and apply revolutionary theory and enrich revolutionary practice'. (*'FI'*, February 1968, p.3 — these quotations appeared in an editorial, but the next issue carried a note to the effect that they were Banda's personal opinions).

The most lavish praise of all for the VCP came from the Workers' League (US), who now laughably claim to be 'defending the heritage' of Trotskyism. Their book, *'Vietnam and the World Revolution'* by Martin McLaughlin, never once defines the role of the VCP in class terms, only emphasising their 'revolutionary' qualities, claiming not only that the VCP 'continually resisted the dictates of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Moscow and Peking', but also that it was 'always guided by a conception of the world struggle against imperialism'. (*'Vietnam and the World Revolution'*, p. 141).

McLaughlin uses an incredible sleight-of-hand to associate the Stalinist Ho Chi Minh with Trotsky: after quoting Ho's testament — which states that the reunification of the Vietnamese 'Fatherland' will be a 'worthy contribution to the world national liberation movement' — McLaughlin



Armed civilians in Qui Nhon in the final stages of the 1975 'Uncle Ho campaign' which freed Saigon.

By Simon Pirani



Pleiku students organising armed patrols of the city, March 1975



Women political prisoners, released in May 1975 from the 'tiger cages' on Con Son island prison — known under French occupation as Poulo Condor prison camp

claims that: 'this expresses a profound truth. Vietnam was the most powerful confirmation of Trotsky's perspective of the Permanent revolution . . . ' (*ibid*, p. 144). According to McLaughlin, objective events (the Vietnamese revolution) magically induce subjective changes (the Stalinist leader Ho 'expressing a profound truth'), rather than being mirrored by them in the indirect and complex way that happens in real life.

Rousset, Banda, Johns and McLaughlin — all reflecting the liquidationist pressure which fostered illusions in Stalinism and minimised the importance of building the 'Trotskyist international — excuse (or ignore), in their various ways, the reality: that the VCP was not a revolutionary workers' party but a predominantly peasant party; that it had not a socialist proletarian programme but a petty-bourgeois one infected by Stalinism.

But the biggest problem for all of them is the VCP's history, and especially its open treachery after the second world war, when on instructions from Moscow it sought to carve up Vietnam with the imperialist 'allies', and drowned the Trotskyists who opposed it in blood.

The Vietnamese Trotskyists, as these articles will show, won the leadership of the working class in the south from the Stalinists, by rejecting compromise with the 'popular front' government of French imperialism in the late 30s. As Japanese imperialist control disintegrated in 1945, they sought to turn the struggle against the 'allied' imperialist forces into social revolution by setting up soviet-type organisations, and were slaughtered in their hundreds by the Stalinists, who hoped to conclude a deal with the 'allies' in line with the Potsdam

agreement between Stalin, Truman and Attlee.

It was only after this physical destruction of the revolutionary leaders of the Vietnamese working class that the struggle took the path not of working-class revolution but of 'people's war'; and this not because of the Stalinists, who had hoped that their deal signed with the French in 1946 would stick, but in spite of them.

Murder

The mass murder of the Vietnamese Trotskyists, a counter-revolutionary crime second only to the Moscow trials, has never been properly understood or faced up to by most Trotskyists. Its implications for Vietnam and for the Fourth International have never been grasped. Indeed, it was minimised by 'Trotskyists' who sought to glorify the VCP: Rousset tried to brush over it; Banda and Johns deliberately lied about it, and employed slanders against the Vietnamese Trotskyists — which were repeated by McLaughlin almost word-for-word.

McLaughlin — who if he has a trace of revolutionary or even journalistic integrity will self-critically re-examine his book — lyingly claims that the Vietnamese Trotskyists 'committed a severe tactical error in pressing ahead with strikes and demonstrations in Saigon at a point where the revolution was threatened' in 1945; that their organisation was smashed because they 'had no base of support in the countryside'. In contrast, claims McLaughlin, the Vietminh, who were 'forced to manoeuvre' with imperialism, 'retained its solid base of support among the mass of peasants', and 'broke empirically with the Stalinist perspective of

permanent collaboration with so-called "democratic" imperialists' (*ibid*, pp. 15-19).

In the course of the last year's break-up of the ICFI, the liquidationist tendency embedded in its leadership has emerged openly, in Banda's case declaring wholeheartedly for Stalinism. Simultaneously, the implicit attacks on the Vietnamese Trotskyists, like McLaughlin's, have become explicit.

Thus John Spencer, one of Banda's leading supporters, has issued what purports to be a well-researched statement on the Vietnamese revolution of 1945, in which he justifies Vietminh collaboration with the imperialists, falsely claiming that they 'tried to save the revolution' thereby. ('Vietnamese Trotskyism and the August Revolution of 1945'. Available from the WRP Education Department, and — presumably — from 'Communist Forum').

Spencer also repeats the old Stalinist lie that the Trotskyists 'took part in the formation of the United National Front under Japanese auspices' in order to subvert the Stalinists' 'revolutionary administration'.

We will answer these slanders and set the historical record straight. We will raise the demand, overdue by decades, for the rehabilitation of the Vietnamese Trotskyists.

Above all, the WRP and its co-thinkers internationally, together with all Trotskyists, must confront the lessons of our Vietnamese comrades' struggle, and deepen our understanding of the various forms of liquidationism in the Fourth International, which have tried along with Stalinism to keep these lessons buried.

NEXT WEEK: The Vietnamese Trotskyists in the 1930s and during World War II.

Courts forced to release prisoners

ATTEMPTS by the British state to frame and imprison large numbers of republicans in the north of Ireland have had a major setback.

Over the last few weeks the judiciary have had to release prisoners held on remand — in many cases for periods equal to an eight-year sentence.

They were victims of the cases dubbed 'Supergrass Trials' by the British press.

Terry Robson, Derry community worker and victim of the 'paid perjurer' system, as it has become known, was first arrested in 1970 for incitement to riot and given six months.

He has been in Castlereagh and Gough Barracks ten times on 'Section 12', (seven-day detention orders). He is not sure whether his total number of 'Section 11s' (three-day orders) is 30 or 40.

These arrests generally happened in the early hours of the morning and although always traumatic became something of a routine. So when he was arrested in 1982 he expected to be out again in a few days.

It was 2 years and 10 months before he was to be released.

Charged with attempted murder on the evidence of a man named Jackie Goodman, Terry had become a victim of the British 'paid perjurer' system.

Asked about the feeling in Derry following the release of eight men jailed on the uncorroborated evidence of Robert Quigley, Terry said:

'The atmosphere in Derry is quite euphoric, that is the last of the Derry people out as a result of the "paid perjurer" trials.

'Although generally pleased that as far as Derry men are concerned the paid perjurer trials are over, people are apprehensive about what the next thing is going to be, what method are they going to use next.

'They have gone through

BY PHIL PENN

internment without trial, through the beatings received at Castlereagh and now the so-called "Supergrass Trials".

'After the hunger strikes the waves of support for the republican movement and to a lesser extent the IRSP (Irish Republican Socialist Party) was something which caused great problems for the British and Free State governments.

'The classic answer for the British, and the only way they knew at the time, was to stick republicans inside. It happened in 1971, and again in 1982.

'The people who gave evidence against us came in two categories.

'Some were basically weak, and could not stand the periods of interrogation. They gave evidence firstly incriminating themselves and then afterwards a whole lot of other people.

'When the Special Branch thought they had someone who was of value to them they would start offering deals, like immunity from prosecution or short sentences.

'An example was Goodman, who gave evidence against me. He had been inside three or four times. He had a long record of republican and anti-imperialist activities most of his adult life and a good part of his young life as well.

'But this time he was going to be charged with attempted murder. He had domestic problems and he had been out only nine months when he was rearrested.

'The combination of these factors caused Goodman to give up and admit to the

police that he was involved and he asked for assistance. They gave him immunity from prosecution.

'Others were not like that. Raymond Gilmore was recruited by the Special Branch because of his petty criminal activities and paid small amounts of money for information.

'He ingratiated himself first with the INLA (Irish National Liberation Army) and then with the IRA.

'Eventually he was in a position to give substantial information on people that the Special Branch wanted to put away.

'On the one wing I was on at Crumlin road, out of 200 people 180 were in as a result of the evidence of "paid perjurers".

'These were not ordinary rank-and-file members of the republican movement, but the middle and upper sections.'

Terry remains convinced of the necessity to continue the armed struggle.

'As long as the British are there they will find some way of ensuring that the republican movement does not move into a position of power either in the north or the Free State. The answer is to get the British out the North.

'That can only be done with the armed activities of the IRA and defensive activities of the northern nationalist working class, combined with a growing movement in Britain to demand a withdrawal of troops.

'The combination of these things will force a withdrawal.

'Short of that there is no way that we can stop the British from using the kind of tactic which they have used for the last 15 years.'

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN
HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ
LIAM BAKER: 20-year sentence, 464984.
JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sentence, 464989.
EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence, 338637.
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.
GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 132016.
JOHN McCOMB: 17-year sentence, B51715.
ANDY MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461576.
PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.

PARKHURST
HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX
NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence 879225.
PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603.
PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence, 863532.
TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence 69204.
PETER SHERRY: Life sentence, B75880.
GERRY McDONNELL: Life sentence, B75882.

WAKEFIELD
HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG
HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636.
SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661.
CON McFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662.
NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY
HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS
MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.
HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.
BILLY GRIMES:
SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence, 341418.

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicestershire Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP
ROBERT CAMPBELL: 10-year sentence, B32954.
RONNIE McCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799.
STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence 758663.
JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635

FRANKLAND
HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085
BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence, 758662.
PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence, 119034.
EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence, 135722.
ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

LEICESTER
HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ
PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1888.
BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, B26380.
PATRICK McGEE: Life sentence, B75881.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS
DONAL CRAIG: 4 years.

WANDSWORTH
VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274064.

DURHAM
HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham.
MARTINA ANDERSON: Life sentence, D25134.
ELLA O'DWYER: Life sentence, D25135.

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:
CAROLE RICHARDSON: 290719, HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire
PATRICK ARMSTRONG: HM Prison Gartree.
PAUL HILL: 462778. HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.
GERARD CONLON: 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin.
JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham.
HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison Gartree.
JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Long Lartin.
BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.
GERARD HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison Frankland.
RICHARD McILKENNY, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs
PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison Gartree.
They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

The information on this list is supplied and updated by An Cumann Cabhrach, British section, for which we thank them.

LETTERS

Send your letters to Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Board. Letters may be cut for reasons of space.

Struggle of youth

FIRST of all I would like to, and I hope I don't speak for myself here, thank A.G. for his letter in last week's Workers Press.

Two things you point out are important, to measure how far we have come since last year on the struggle of youth.

The explosion in our ranks followed the end of the miners' strike; that was the test which found us out. We now have just a handful of loyal young comrades who stayed with us through the last period.

The strike was for them their first major political experience and what an experience to begin with. And they have come forward to take up responsible positions inside our movement without hesitation.

Your two points: what happened to our youth page? and a little too much theory and not enough practice.

We have to say honestly that we have slipped up here, with all the material coming in and it has been no less important we have pushed to one-side the youth page.

Is this important? Youth need a medium to communicate.

To talk not only to each other but to reach older

workers and to say we saw what happened to the miners, we saw what the police did to your communities. We have had the same treatment, and we fought back just as you.

We must not let this out of our sights. We must now find ways of showing, in a vivid and living manner the connection between the everyday problems of the youth, the women, etc. and the major question of putting an end to a system which has long out-lived itself.

This is precisely what the Healy clique, could not do. We must make a start on this by re-establishing our youth page.

When Thatcher starts talking about the law of the land the most politically conscious youth know she has a truncheon behind her back.

We must broaden our theoretical and practical work to develop a living connection with youth, women etc., who appear to be non-political.

Our party took a decision at its last conference on fighting for a perspective of real socialist planning which for millions has become a need.

John Ballantyne



Scottish nationalist

TERRY BROTHERSTONE'S interesting article on James Connolly and John Maclean (November 22), while factually accurate as far as it goes, does not lay sufficient stress on the fact that Maclean was as fervent a Scottish nationalist as Connolly was an Irish one.

When the British Communist Party was founded in 1920, Maclean refused to join, since he wanted a specifically Scottish Communist Party, committed to Home Rule.

As he put it in an article in the December 1920 issue of *Vanguard*: 'We in Scotland must not let ourselves play second fiddle to any organisation with headquarters in London, as Scotland is a definite country.'

'Point 17 of the Third International says: "Each Party must change its old name to that of the Communist Party of such and such country"

Eventually, early in 1923, Maclean established the Scottish Workers' Republican Party, whose aim, as the name implies, was to set up a workers' republic north of the border, completely separate from England.

Humour please!

I AM preparing a book on the miners' strike (yes another one!), but one with a difference.

It is to be based on all the humorous incidents that I know occurred on picket lines, at meetings, on marches and even on the return to work.

I fear that this aspect of the strike could go unrecorded, and we could lose something that is every much a part of history as the strike itself.

I would like the help of readers, both miners and non-miners, in collating this information.

Please send stories (either written or on tape), photographs, cartoons by miners/miners' wives, anything you feel merits a mention in such a book. All correspondence and contributions will be acknowledged. Please send to:

Kevin Machin
Box 405
75 Farringdon Road
London EC1M 3JX.

Kevin Machin (Ex-South Derbyshire striking miner)

'Cycle rides for Mandela'

THE DISCUSSIONS we have been having with E. Mandel should be considered in the light of experiences of the practical work of the two factions of the United Secretariat (Usec) in Britain, 'Socialist Action' and 'International'.

Socialist Action supporters in Merseyside Anti-Apartheid blocked a resolution for a conference to organise Trade Union Sanctions against South Africa, claiming it was sectarian and would split the solidarity movement here in Britain, therefore aiding Botha.

Heeding

They said that the Anti-Apartheid movement was already heeding the call of the South African trade union organisation COSATU for sanctions now.

At this point we should recall how the National Anti-Apartheid Movement was doing this.

At the TUC conference in Brighton last September, while the WRP, Workers Power, City Anti-Apartheid and other groups lobbied for trade union action on the first day of the conference, the National Anti-Apartheid Movement handed out leaflets on the Wednesday for ten minutes during the debate on South Africa.

The level of National Anti-Apartheid work is at the level of 'cycle rides for Mandela' and the like.

Although they raise the issue of South Africa, they, like the trade union and Labour Party bureaucracies, do nothing to organise effective action amongst the working class.

Contrast this to the 'Non-stop picket' of the South African Embassy, which despite police harassment and the cold shoulder from the National Anti-Apartheid Movement, has campaigned

relentlessly outside the Embassy attracting wide support especially from youth.

Now it is forging links with the NUM on the issue of blockading South African coal.

Our support for the ANC is unconditional, but not uncritical — the task facing South African workers is not just getting rid of Apartheid but overthrowing the capitalist system, which uses Apartheid to maintain its domination economically and politically over the majority of the South African people.

How we actually struggle for these aims is not predetermined, and that is why no particular group can claim that 'we are absolutely right and you are wrong, if you say otherwise you are a sectarian.'

New forms of struggle in support of the South African masses must be supported and encouraged, not condemned.

The International Group, on the other hand, is part of the South Africa Sanctions campaign, and calls for trade union sanctions.

They have been engaging in joint work with the WRP and other organisations on this issue, and also other important campaigns, like the commemoration of the Hungarian Revolution

Uncritical

'Socialist Action', in their uncritical support for the ANC, and therefore the Anti-Apartheid Movement, have to support a popular frontist policy (the National Anti-Apartheid), and attack the united front (the trade union sanctions campaign).

This would be expected from a group like the Communist Party of Great Britain, but not from a group calling itself Trotskyist.

John Owen and Jolyon Ralph

The editorial board welcomes letters from readers. Because of pressure of space, letters will in future be restricted to 500 words except in special cases.

Please address your letters to The Editor, Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT.

Letters should arrive by first post Monday on the week of publication.

Tactics not principle

THE WRP took a step forward when it called for a vote for the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) candidate in Knowsley North.

But this advance is marred by its justifications i.e. simply a protest against the NEC imposition of their candidate against the wishes of the local Labour party.

The fact is that whoever the local Labour Party stood would have been standing on a class collaborationist anti-working class programme.

The RCP, despite some fears, were standing on a clear pro-working class programme.

Vote

The principled position for revolutionaries is clear. In all cases we vote for the pro-working class candidate and programme.

In constituencies where there is no pro-working class candidate in the next general election, should revolutionaries call for a vote for Labour?

The question is purely one of tactics, not principle.

The decision is based on whether such a call will help reinforce or dispel illusions the working class has in the Labour party.

To call for a Labour vote against the Tories is not a class question since both parties defend and always will defend the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The Labour Party is an irredeemably anti-working

class organisation. It is important to be clear on this fact when confronted by the usual barrage of rubbish from the entryists around the theme of 'for a Labour government committed to socialist policies'.

Square

A Labour government committed to socialist policies is no more likely than a square with five sides.

The very essence of the Labour Party is its anti-working class nature.

Its long subservience to the ruling class is not an accidental feature. Militants who are engaged in a fight to change this essence are in an impossible fight.

The call for a Labour vote can only be justified on the basis that the experience of a Labour government or council will tend to demonstrate the uselessness of the Labour Party to our class quicker and more forcibly than simple propaganda.

In Lenin's words, we support the Labour Party like a rope supports a hanged man.

Finally, in Workers Press (November 22), the RCP called for all left groups who see the need to challenge Labour at the next election to discuss the possibility of standing candidates on a clear pro-working class programme.

As an independent militant I would urge the WRP to take up that offer.

Sandy McBurney, Glasgow

Sectarianism — the child of British Imperialism

IN A recent article in *Socialist Organiser*, reproduced in Workers Press, Jim Denham attacks me for an article I wrote in Workers Press in August.

The IRA had warned all collaborators in the six counties, particularly building contractors, to stop repairing and building police and military installations.

Denham says my article was 'voyeuristic nonsense' and that the IRA statement encouraged sectarianism.

To support the armed struggle in Ireland against the forces of British imperialism may be 'voyeuristic' to Jim Denham but it is certainly not to me.

For 60 years sectarianism has reigned in the bastard loyalist state, created, nurtured and maintained by British imperialism.

Discrimination in jobs and housing along with gerrymandering of political boundaries left the Catholic population without any rights whatsoever.

Sectarianism and bigotry practised against the Catholic population was enshrined in the institutions of the loyalist state, underpinned by the anti-Catholic police force.

That, Comrade Denham, is what most people under-

stand as the true cause of sectarianism past and present in the occupied six counties of Ireland.

The struggle of the IRA to smash that same loyalist state is in every sense a struggle against the root cause of sectarianism in the six counties, which of course is the main reason why the working class is divided and polarised along religious lines.

Trying to compare the IRA threats to collaborators with the threat issued by the Ulster Volunteer Force to those in the DHSS offices is to fall into the pro-imperialist and reactionary trap of saying the IRA and the UVF are one and the same thing.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

The IRA is engaged in a struggle against the occupation of Ireland by British imperialism and against the forces of repression in the six counties.

Their war is against the army and police and against those who collaborate with them whether they be builders or informers.

The republican movement is not at war with the Protestant community in the six counties and have stated unequivocally on numerous occasions in their paper *An*

Phoblacht/Republican News that they are against any sectarian attacks on members of that community.

They have also condemned any such attacks that have taken place.

The UVF, UDA, etc. are right wing organisations whose sole aim is to carry out sectarian attacks and murders on members of the Catholic community.

They are closely connected with organisations such as the National Front and other extreme right wing groups in Britain.

Perhaps if Comrade Denham spent a few hours in the six counties — or better still in the custody of the thugs, in and out of uniform, in some of the more notorious police and military barracks — he might not be so enthusiastic in condemning the IRA for warning collaborators to stop building these torture centres.

Like Comrade Denham, I am in favour of a united working class.

However, until the national question is resolved in Ireland and the loyalist state in the north is smashed, a real and lasting solution to divisions in the working class cannot be found.

Charlie Walsh

LETTERS

Ralph Lee slanders were a political question

ALTHOUGH we feel embarrassed to ask for more space in your columns after the generous allocation you have already given to discussing our book *War and the International*, we feel that your correspondent Rae Ryan has still not grasped in its fullness the argument about the Workers Internationalist League's attitude to the fusion of 1938.

It is simply not true to maintain any more that either the original split of 1937 or the refusal to join unification of 1938 were 'on a subjective basis of personal attacks'.

The slanders against Ralph Lee handled so badly by the Militant Group's leaders were part — if only a small part — of the worldwide campaign against Trotsky and his movement.

As Trotsky, hard at work defending himself before the Dewey Commission, affirmed, they were a political question.

Moreover, even if the Lee affair had not blown up there would have been a split anyway — the disquiet of the Paddington and Liverpool group's younger members at the ineffectiveness of the Militant Group's activity — or lack of it — had already provoked deep conflicts.

Their objections to the 1938 'Peace and Unity' agree-

ment were similarly political.

The group set up was erected on a catch-all basis, had no democratic centralist discipline, and carried on precisely the half-open-half-entrist activity that had already been so often condemned by the International Secretariat.

True revolutionary activity in Britain has always been posed on the same lines — by Lenin when he demanded unification on the basis of work in the Labour Party, and by Trotsky and the International Secretariat in the so-called 'Geneva' Resolution of 1936.

Backwards

Cannon's unprincipled unification of 1938 was a step backwards from these basic principles, which are those of the relation of the Marxists towards the mass institutions of the British Labour Movement, and the norm in Leninist analysis in this country.

Moreover, it is not true that the WIL had a casual attitude to the Fourth International as the World Party of the Socialist Revolution.

Their statement to the founding Conference accepted its authority and requested sympathetic affi-

liation if refused — exactly what Lenin suggested if only part of the new CPGB was willing to follow the Labour Party orientation (the division into two sympathising groups) and what Trotsky and the IS had already accepted in the split of the two groups in 1933/4 and offered to the Marxist League again in 1936.

In placing the organisational question in front of the political one, Cannon was running true to form — reversing the relation between party and programme.

The Fourth International was founded as the instrument of the programme — the *Transitional Programme*.

As the WIL put it, 'the real bond that unites the national sections in the Fourth International is, of course, the common programme that determines the activity of each section; the WIL embraces the fundamentals of this common programme and thereby establishes its claim to affiliation as an entrant group'.

Is this not a more proper attitude to the international movement, whose programme it published, rather than that of the official section, which expressly refused to publish that programme — for political reasons?

Finally, although Rae expresses the opinion that the

reasons for the separation of the WIL from the International were 'not discussed thoroughly in the WIL during the war', the internal documentation of the WIL tells strongly against it.

Activity

In the incredibly high level of activity in those crowded years Rae Hunter, and the majority of the members, probably did not have time to study it properly, but all the frequent polemical interchanges with the RSL brought up this question, in particular an 18-page internal document issued to members in the summer of 1943 reproducing all the main documentation of the dispute.

Is it not time, after so many years, to reaffirm that revolutionary unity in this country cannot take place on any other basis than the application of the strategy of the United Front to the mass organisations of the Labour movement — the theory of revolutionary entry?

Sam Bornstein, Al Richardson.

● *'War and the International'* by Sam Bornstein and Al Richardson is published by *Socialist Platform*, price £5.95, available by post from *Paperbacks Centre*, 28 Charlotte Street, London W1, price £6.50 including postage

Barclays — the way forward

BARCLAYS Bank's decision to withdraw from South Africa presents a tremendous 'shot in the arm' to all those engaged throughout the world in the struggle against the apartheid regime.

It is also an important milestone in Britain in the struggle against racism and all associated bigotry, not least of all sexism.

Barclays' stake in South Africa, as its Chairman, Timothy Bevan, said on Monday, was a hangover from Britain's colonial past and has no place in the future of this planet.

The move by Barclays comes as a reward for a continuous struggle by members of BIFU, the banking union, which represents trade unionists in Barclays.

The move prepares the

way for the instigation of co-ordinated trade union sanctions against South Africa.

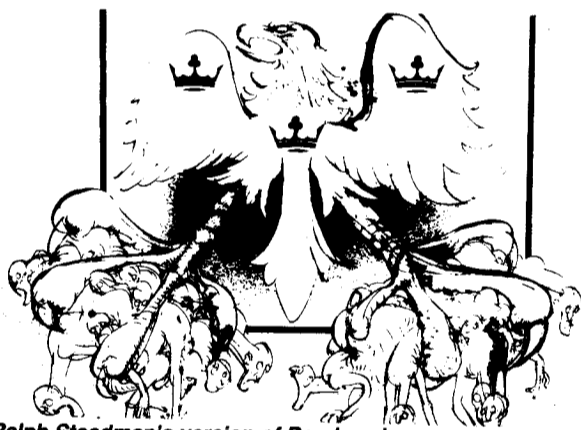
The South African Embassy has tried to play down the impact of Barclays' withdrawal, stating that ownership is merely being transferred to South African based companies.

Barclays also state that technological support and training will continue to be made to its old subsidiary.

Therefore the call must go out to all trade unionists that the withdrawal of Barclays from South Africa is only the beginning!

● Attend the conference on Saturday December 13 in Birmingham for trade union sanctions against South Africa!

W.P., Manchester



Ralph Steadman's version of Barclays logo — redrawn for War on Want's campaign 'Profits out of poverty'

Lessons of the Hungarian Revolution

Speakers:

Norman Harding (Workers Revolutionary Party)
Bob Pennington (International Group)
plus video of London Commemoration meeting with Peter Fryer and Michel Varga

Wednesday December 10
7.30pm

Sussex University, Falmer House,
Falmer, Brighton

A debate between socialists: IRELAND AND THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION

S. Pirani (WRP)
J. O'Mahony (Socialist Organiser Alliance)

Thursday December 11, 7pm

Woodside Halls, Glenfarg Street, near St George's Road/
Maryhill Road, Glasgow

MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

Bryant Street Methodist Centre
off West Ham Lane
(nearest Underground: Stratford)

Sunday December 14, 7.30pm
CUBA

Speaker: John Lister

LISTINGS

Listings are published free by WORKERS PRESS for organisations within the Labour movement. Please send details of any function or event you want to advertise to arrive by mid-day Monday for publication the following Friday.

CITY OF LONDON AA Group Dayschool Sunday December 7, 10.00am — 5.30pm. Polytechnic of Central London, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1 (nearest tube Baker Street)

A STRIKING EDUCATION The story of the SILENT-NIGHT strike in photographs taken by the strikers themselves. Available for hire as a portable exhibition. To hire, contact: Josephine Kelly, FTAT Strike HQ, 9 Frank

Street, Barnoldswick, Lancs., BB8 5AE (0282-816709)

NATIONAL PRINT SUPPORT GROUPS DEMONSTRATION Assemble 8.30pm on 13 December at Aldgate East Station. (South London Feeder March meets 7.30pm at St Thomas Street, outside Guys Hospital) Bring Your Banners!

ACTION CONFERENCE '86 Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign, Against Deportation & All Immigration Controls. Saturday December 6, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8. 10.00am — 5.00pm Speakers include Bernie Grant, Rages Bala and Shahid Syed. Workshops and Reports-back from many Groups. Followed in the evening by BENEFIT, featuring Orchestra Jazira and Support. Disco and Bar. Club of Man-kind, 1a Amhurst Road, E8. Tkts £3.50/£2.00 UB40.

WOMEN'S MARCH AGAINST MURDOCH Assemble 8.30pm, Saturday 13 December at Butchers Row junction of Commercial Road. Called by News International Women Strikers and WAM (Women Against Murdoch); Supported by SERTUC Women's Rights Committee.

NON-STOP PICKET OF SOUTH AFRICA HOUSE. For the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners in South Africa. For sanctions against the racist South African government. Outside South Africa House in Trafalgar Square, London. Organised by City of London Anti-Apartheid.

AIDS — Reality, You and What to Do Saturday, December 6, 10.30am at Elthorne School, Westlea Road, Hanwell, W7. The meeting is for

council employees and other interested members of the public, to provide a better understanding of AIDS. Speakers include Dr Shindler, Ealing Medical Officer.

RAGGED TROUSERED CABARETS Friday December 5, 8.00pm at Lamorbey Hall, Wellington Avenue, Blackfen, Sidcup. Featuring The Rhythm Rascals, John Hegley plus Special Guest (tba). Also Saturday December 6, 12.30pm at The William Morris Club, 267 The Broadway, Wimbledon SW19. Featuring Cornwall Rises who are also appearing on Sunday December 7, 12.30pm at The Lewisham Labour Club, Limes Hall, Limes Grove, Lewisham and at 8.00pm the same evening at The Red Rose Club, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7. All shows £2.50/£1.50 concessions.

Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund

IN SO FAR: £957.44 TARGET: £10,000

THE Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund of £10,000 is needed by February 1, 1987.

Half the fund is needed for the international work of the party. The party is participating in discussions with groups throughout the world Trotskyist movement in a way which was never possible before the explosion in the WRP last year.

The other half of the fund is needed to cover expenses already incurred in moving the party headquarters to more suitable premises.

The collection of the fund has only just begun, and we are asking all members and supporters to find ways of helping with this very necessary fund-raising.

Please send donations to: WRP, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT

DECEMBER FIGHTING FUND

TARGET: £2,000

WE ask Workers Revolutionary Party members and supporters to contribute to the funds we need to maintain and develop Workers Press. We have a target of £2,000 a month. Each week we will print an accurate account of the money received.

November total: £1,137.78

December total so far: £128.14

Please send donations to: Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT

WORKERS PRESS is the weekly paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party. If you wish to know more about us or are interested in becoming a member, why not fill in this form and send it to us?

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Please send me information about the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Name date

Address

Trade Union Age (if under 21)

SEND TO:
Secretary to the Central Committee
21b Old Town, Clapham
London SW4 0JT

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CITY GROUP CALLS FOR SUPPORT

'Don't rely on Kinnock — build a strong membership'

Carol Brickley, Convenor of the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, explains how the City Group has grown and thrived since its expulsion by the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the background to that expulsion.

FIVE years ago in January 1982, the phone call came through that Steven Kitson had been released from detention in South Africa.

He had spent Christmas there, visiting David Kitson, his father in jail only to be arrested by security forces.

Within hours of his release, his Aunt Joan Weinburg was murdered by an unknown attacker in Johannesburg.

By the summer of 1982, Norma Kitson and her children had become seriously concerned about the health of David Kitson, by then in his eighteenth year of imprisonment.

He was being held with other white prisoners in a wing for the criminally insane and condemned prisoners in Pretoria Prison, in damp dark cells.

The decision was made to hold a non-stop picket outside the South African Embassy in Trafalgar Square calling for the removal of these prisoners to better conditions and for the release of all political prisoners.

It was the success of this picket which incurred the wrath of the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM).

During the 82 days and nights it took to secure the removal of the prisoners hundreds of young people, political activists, trade unionists and local shopkeepers supported the picket.

A major rally filled Con-way Hall to listen to a platform which reflected the scope of support.

Almost immediately we became aware of the gossip and hostility being directed at us not from the South African Embassy but from the AAM itself.

Over the entire 82 days no staff member of the AAM offices in Charlotte Street visited the picket.

We heard rumours that the young people who kept the picket going were being described as drop-outs and drug addicts.

Worst of all, we were being accused of being racists for campaigning for a white prisoner.

It was amazing that a movement which claims to be campaigning for a non-racial South Africa was making that distinction.

To be accused of being racist by a movement which had persistently over the 25 years of its existence, directed itself at a white membership in Britain was gruesome indeed.

The AAM leadership reacted to the City Group as

a threat to their complacent existence.

During the 'March Month of Action' in 1983 ANC and SWAPO speakers were withdrawn from a 'Call to Action' Conference at the last minute on the grounds that City Group had had the temerity to call a demonstration from Hackney to Trafalgar Square within a week of a national lobby of Parliament.

We thought that it was meant to be a month of action.

The conflict with the AAM leadership reached a pitch in 1984 when the police imposed a ban on pickets on the pavement outside the South African Embassy.

President Botha had just visited Britain and Europe as part of a programme to rehabilitate apartheid.

The police clearly thought that they would get away with moving demonstrations further away from the Embassy.

The AAM leadership immediately instructed us to comply with the police ban.

City Group refused to do so.

Every Friday for eight weeks hundreds of people joined our picket on the steps of St Martins church and groups of people crossed the road to demonstrate on the pavement.

One hundred and sixty two arrests were made.

Virtually on the same day that five people were sent to prison for persistently crossing the road, the AAM issued a public statement calling on its supporters not to come to the picket. Their alternative to a public campaign was to hold private discussions with the police.

When the case came to court, the magistrate ruled that we had a right to demonstrate and that the police had exceeded their powers.

The only forces not delighted with this ruling were the police, the Embassy and the AAM leadership.

At the 1984 AGM of the AAM, the leadership mobilised its supporters in an attempt to defeat us. Arti-

cles attacking City Group appeared in the Times and the Guardian, and the Morning Star instituted their own 'red scare'.

Bob Hughes MP, chair of the AAM accused us of resorting to the bourgeois courts — an extraordinary ultra-left statement from the leader of a movement which was too timid to launch a public campaign.

Our motion calling for support for the South African Embassy Picket Campaign was defeated.

David Kitson was publicly attacked by representatives of his own movement in London for even standing for election. His 'crime' of course, was that he supported the Embassy pickets every Friday and had refused to publicly condemn City Group.

Following the AGM, the AAM leadership moved quickly to expel City Group. They demanded that we restrict our activities to the City of London (one square mile!) and that our membership be drawn only from those who

lived or worked there.

The accusation — customary in such circumstances — was made that we refused to hand over money belonging to the movement. We had collected nearly 100,000 signatures on the Free Mandela petition and used donations to fund our local activities as well as giving substantial amounts to the national movement. In the year after City Group was expelled no money at all was collected on the Mandela petitions.

By expelling us the AAM leadership hoped that we would be crushed.

They were due to be disappointed.

City Group has grown and thrived since its expulsion. From the start we have worked with important principles at the centre of our Group. There is no political censorship in City Group either on our pickets or at our meetings. We defend anyone arrested or harassed on our protests. We believe that solidarity with the liberation struggle in South Africa requires open, public, enthusiastic campaigning. Ordinary working class people in Britain want to oppose apartheid actively.

Young, black and white, employed and unemployed have boundless enthusiasm and commitment — they just need the opportunity.

The AAM leadership is now imposing a constitution at the AGM (10-11 January, 1987) which will ensure that the AAM can never be an open campaigning move-

ment.

Power will be vested in the hands of small committees who will not be obliged to call members' meetings more than four times a year. AGMs will be open only to delegates of local groups and a vast number of affiliated groups who need not necessarily be active campaigners.

In City Group we have no doubt that we represent a different political trend to that which dominates the national AAM.

The AAM is relying on a future Labour government to implement its policies. Neil Kinnock's support is therefore more important than building a membership of committed anti-apartheid, anti-racist activists.

They made the same mistake in the 1960s, relying on the Wilson government to oppose apartheid in South Africa and the racist regime in Rhodesia.

We are not alone in opposing this abject political stance.

We are building City Group precisely because we represent a democratic alternative which is active: we are committed to oppose racism in Britain; we supported the striking miners (we were told not to by the AAM executive). We are actively opposing the Public Order Act. We do not believe that British support for the apartheid regime is disconnected from racism in Britain — deportations, visa controls, police harassment.

We will be attending the AAM AGM in January to argue our viewpoint.

Come and join us.

Above all we want you to join us on the non-stop picket outside the South African Embassy in Trafalgar Square. We have been there since 19 April 1986. Since August 1984 the black people of South Africa have been fighting apartheid non-stop. We are offering non-stop support for their struggle. While we are outside the Embassy the regime cannot pretend to be anything other than racist, and barbaric.

While we have been there we have received wonderful support from a wide range of individuals and organisations. The picket is kept going by committed young people who are determined to stay until Nelson Mandela is free but our membership ranges from 8 to 85. Of course elements within the movement are abusing us again - terrified of our success. The police have tried and failed to prevent passers - by giving us money. The Embassy is trying to silence us by using the Westminster by-laws on noise. They are all terrified of our success too!

You are all welcome to join City Group, to come and speak on our picket, to join our singing group, our sewing group, organise events with us. Give us your support - we will use it no matter who you are, how old you are, your colour, creed or political viewpoint.



SIXTY Ford workers met last Tuesday to hear a South African trade union leader explain the struggle of the South African working class against the Apartheid regime and appeal for support from workers in Britain.

COSATU representative George Johan addressed the meeting organised by the 1/1107 and 1/667 T&GWU branches.

Johan told how trade unionists were rounded up and detained and youth were shot down by the fascist police. The main beneficiaries were the giant multinationals, who exploited the cheap labour, and financial institutions.

What was facing the African workers was the struggle for state power and the taking over of the factories under their control. Johan explained the need for armed struggle, you could not sit down and talk to fascists.

Also speaking was Bill Morris Deputy General Secretary

T&GWU who said the British trade unions must support the struggle against apartheid.

He gave details of Ron Todd's visit to South Africa and what he had witnessed.

Barry Canfield Regional Organiser T&GWU related the struggle in South Africa to the miners' strike and the international responsibilities of the trade unions.

'Marin, T&GWU organiser of contract workers in London, was murdered when he went back to Colombia to organise workers there', Canfield said.

Steve Hart District Official gave details of Fords links with South Africa: £47 million of trade exported to SouthA. and £10 million imported.

The meeting ended without time for discussion from the floor although many of the Ford workers wanted to discuss practical ways that they could give support.

CONFERENCE FOR TRADE UNION SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA

Saturday December 13, 11am - 6pm
Carrs Lane Church Centre
(off High Street, near Birmingham Central Station)

Called by: Lambeth Joint Trade Union Committee,
City of London Anti-Apartheid Group
For further details ring Bronwen Handyside,
01-274 7722 X2010 (Office hours)

REVIEWS

Police officer exposes Birmingham Six torture

TV

World In Action
ITV, December 1

TOM CLARKE was a policeman on duty during the torture and interrogation of the Birmingham Six in 1974.

On last Monday's World in Action programme he spoke about what he saw during two days of police barbarity against the six Irishmen picked up after explosions in Birmingham pubs.

The programme deserves credit for broadcasting his evidence.

Clarke was a policeman for 19 years. He spoke of the atmosphere when he started work on that first day.

The interrogations were conducted with the 'foregone conclusion that they had got their men'.

From where he worked he had an unrestricted panorama of all that went on where the six were held.

'I could see and hear clearly what went on in the cell block. They were petrified.'

Officers were 'under instructions not to let them sleep', forcing the detainees to sit to attention, then stand, then return to attention. And so it went on.

Threatened

All the time they were threatened with dogs and guns so they would move quickly as instructed.

Policemen pulled triggers on empty guns pointed at them during mock executions.

They were continually beaten, deliberately reducing them to a point at which they could 'take no more and admit to anything'. Clarke's evidence showed this is what happened.

An experienced first-aid, Clarke claimed on the second night 'their injuries were a hundred times worse' than when he left them.

'Judges' Rules were non-existent throughout the two

days.' One of these rules is that confessions have to be given voluntarily, not under fear of losing your life!

Mr Justice Bridge, summing up at the end of the trial, said: 'If the defendants are giving honest and substantially accurate evidence, there is no escape from the fact that the police are involved in a conspiracy to commit a variety of crimes.'

The defendants' claim of forced confessions was not believed, and the police were.

Clarke, asked what he would have said at the time if called to give evidence, said: 'I think I would have lied to protect fellow officers.'

This to me was the most pertinent question.

Clarke's answer made it obvious he had seriously considered the possible consequences of 'going public', after so long in the police force, and having first hand knowledge of what they were capable of.

The central planks not just of this, but all 1970s 'Bomb Trial Frame-ups' prosecution cases, were 'confessions' during detention.

All of these are now totally discredited.

The World in Action programme went on in great detail to expose the glaring holes in the forensic evidence, and whether or not Dr Frank Skuse (the Home Office forensic scientist) used a 1 per cent or a 0.1 per cent solution of caustic soda in a Greiss Test to determine whether the defendants had nitrocellulose, a commonly occurring component of Nitro-Glycerine, on their hands.

This is so much pantomime when you consider that only two of the six were supposed to have given a positive result!

All six were incarcerated because a jury was made to believe their confessions were legally obtained. They weren't and they should be cleared and set free now.

Tony Godfrey

Wapping: the inquest begins

FLEET Street news-hounds are already orchestrating evidence for an inquest on the Wapping dispute.

Linda Melvern, former 'Sunday Times' Insight Team journalist, has written a book 'The End of the Street'.

This is a history of the printing industry trade unions' struggle of the century.

It provides a detailed account of the circumstances leading up to and of the dispute itself: a surface scenario with an abundance of thumbnail sketches of the participating actors and actresses, but is a report lacking in political depth.

The excitement and tension of drama is provided by the chronicled cloak and dagger, undercover atmosphere in which Murdoch recruited his foreign legionnaires.

Australians, Americans, Canadians, a Dutchman and

The End of the Street. By Linda Melvern. Methuen, £9.95.

some British orators who were in the main skilled in the ways of new technology, who, in a climate dominated by secrecy and security, were held undercover in 'safe' houses to await the dead-line for 'Project X'.

'Project X' was the code name for a mock-up of electronic gadgetry that would produce photographically the type formerly produced by NGA compositor members.

'Project X' was held together by a middle-aged American woman named Joan Herring, project manager of Atex, an American electronics firm, who some years previously had played a part in the defeat of the International Typographical Union of America in similar activity to that in which she would now become involved.

The mock-up of the electronic complex was in a rundown warehouse owned by Convoys Ltd of Woolwich, a subsidiary of News International.

What would have particularly interested print union executives about the project was the fact that the lock-up had no provision for the type-setting of London Post, Murdoch's proposed new London evening newspaper, and a key factor in the negotiations between Murdoch and the print unions.

And the date was just before the middle of 1985. Over six months before the balloon went up.

About the same time, in fact Tuesday April 9, 1985, Tom Rice, National Secretary of the EEPTU, visited America to inspect the latest in electronic newspaper production equipment and methods.

His travelling companion was Murdoch-employed Christopher Pole-Carew, who had built up notoriety for himself as a union-basher when managing director of T. Baily Forman Ltd, a Nottingham newspaper printing and publishing firm, and whose name when mentioned by print TU activists is invariably accompanied by torrents of the colourful obscenities that regularly season their shop floor exchanges.

In view of such organisation, and the wealth at his disposal, it comes as no surprise that Murdoch's set-up out-maneuvred and out-smarted the union leadership at every turn.

This could be understood in the case of SOGAT leadership where Tolpuddle Martyr traditions and the open and unashamed class leadership of Tom Mann, Ben Tillet, A.J. Cook and Arthur Scargill took second place to a pretty face and a 'Come All Ye Faithful' Salvation Army morality.

With the NGA's general secretary, Tony Dubbins, there were glimmerings of hope that things may be different.

Speaking at the 1984 TUC Conference he had stated: 'It is not possible to have an effective industrial dispute and remain within the law, because Tory law is designed to outlaw effective industrial disputes'.

The substance of that statement could lead one to believe that he had accepted the Marxist social evaluation of the judiciary as being

part and parcel of the capitalist state and as such existed to protect the profit interests of capitalism, but such an inference would have been like living in a fools' paradise.

The entire leadership of the dispute was and is irrevocably welded to the policy of class collaboration.

During the first few weeks of the strike I attended at Congress House a meeting of the All London Trade Council Association.

Members were addressed by Chris Robbins, London SOGAT official, who spoke on behalf of the striking trade unions.

A spokesman for the ALTCA announced that as soon as the organisation received a request from the unions in dispute, it would organise support units comparable to those it had set up for the twelve-month long miners strike.

I do not believe that that offer was ever seriously taken up.

In fact, early in the dispute other union members were discouraged from giving active support on demonstrations, especially if they were miners.

In the book 'The End of the Street', there is a detailed account of how two printing trade unionists, at considerable risk to themselves, through moles they had contacted in Fortress Wapping, built up a name list of Wapping employees, together with plant sketches and much other invaluable information.

This was eventually handed to top SOGAT officials who thanked the two activists for their help!!!

This discouraging of grass roots activity — the death knell keynote of class collaboration — finds its contemporary expression in the 'don't rock the boat' policy of the social labour movement.

Trade union officials generally do not learn from history.

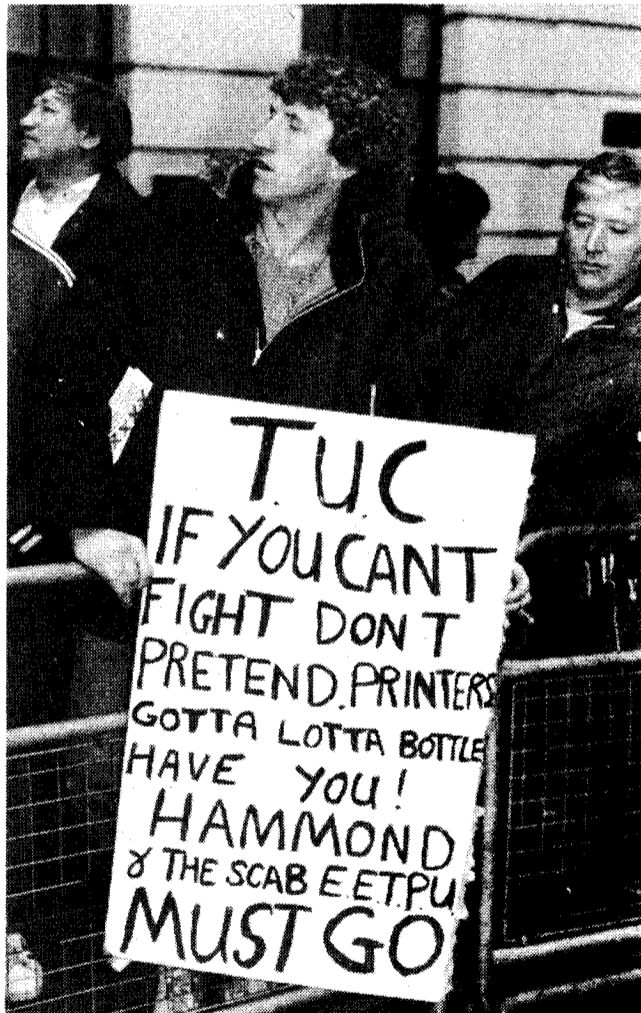
They sweep under the carpet the murdering of their German counterparts in Nazi concentration camps, and the similar fates of Italian and Spanish comrades.

In this Wapping dispute they are and have been like people defending themselves with feather dusters (leafletting etc) against mad dogs, when what the situation cries aloud for is the dynamism that 50 years ago won the Battle of Cable Street: 100,000 demonstrating the length of Wapping Highway.

They will not grasp that if the Thatcher government's Fascist Corporate State control of an increasingly demoralised working class continues, there will be no boat left to rock.

A.W. Shute

Retired member London Region NGA



A Woman's Place: The Changing Picture of Women in Britain. By Diana Souhami. Penguin, £6.95

THIS book is a delightful compilation of words and pictures taken from an exhibition commissioned by the British Council in 1984, which is presently touring thirty countries.

The exhibition ranges from 1900-1986 and shows the lives and struggles of British women.

It starts from the suffragettes' fight for the right to vote, and includes the role of women during the two wars, at Greenham Common, and the more recent development of the role of women during the miners' strike.

Josephine Barrie



Sylvia Pankhurst London 1912



Turkey Plucker



REJECT NOTTS DEAL

Campaign for a 'no' vote!

'We will deliver a massive NO vote from Yorkshire in the ballot on the Nottingham agreement,' Howard Roberts, West Yorkshire NUT executive member told Workers Press.

He was speaking after the NUT national conference held at Blackpool voted 122,537 for and 100,973 against the salaries and conditions agreement.

The results of the national conference shows the growing opposition to the deal. It is accompanied by growing hostility to the majority of the executive.

During the conference Harry Dowson, South Yorkshire NUT executive member made a surprise speech. He spoke against the deal, having changed his mind in the last few weeks. He told conference:

'This is the first time in a long history that I am speaking against the executive. Colleagues on the executive have misread the mood of many, many members. They feel that the acceptance of the deal would be a total abandonment of Houghton. It will not mean peace in schools if it goes through and it will not restore shattered morale.'

'At least one third of scale 3 teachers in Sheffield will be placed on the Main Profession Grade.'

He finished by saying 'Baker is not the only one which political ambitions. The Labour leader of management, Pearman, also has political ambitions.'

Doug McAvoy, Deputy General Secretary, opened the conference by saying

'This is a significant improvement on conditions of service.'

'The principles we have fought for are reflected in this agreement.'

'The money is extremely good,' and

'Baker intends to have powers to improve a settlement on pay and conditions. This agreement is far worse.'

Questioned

Bill Rippon (one of the three 'negotiators' for the deal) said 'The Baker package was infinitely worse than the Notts.'

Many teachers questioned the truth of these statements.

Ian Murch for the executive said:

'We are not in favour of the Nottingham agreement or of Baker. We are in favour of conference policy. We have heard time again 'we will never sell our conditions' yet this deal is precisely that.'

Concentrating on the conditions of service he said 'Job descriptions would be changed every year or more often without the teacher's consent and increments could be withheld by local authorities if they thought it was necessary.'

Two further teachers who spoke against the deal were given great applause.

Mary Compton, Radnor Association, Wales, said, 'I

feel completely betrayed by the executive. My Association covers a large area with few people. The teachers live in small communities and therefore have a high profile. Yet last summer they voted time and time again for three day strikes.'

'My members explained the reasons to parents. The campaign was not just over pay, it was for the future of the state education system in this country.'

'We can gain parental support for our fight but we have to go out and talk to them.'

'We are told if you don't accept this Baker will step in but our members are prepared to fight Baker as well.'

Nerve

'It is not the membership that has lost its nerve it is the executive who have lost their nerve.'

The right wing closed the discussion after two hours.

The executive will claim a victory. The effect of the conference will be to deepen the discussion, especially since the vote was so close.

This agreement is not an alternative to Baker. It introduces a productivity deal which would allow Baker's proposals to be introduced. conditions of service proposed at Nottingham.

Productivity deals have been delivered by other union leaders in other white collar areas. In banking an appraisal scheme is linked to a graded system of payment. Bankworkers are expected to work in their own time.

In the Civil Service there is a fight over regional versus national pay awards.

The alternative to the Nottingham agreement is the fight for conference policy.

The national executive is in dread of the government and its apparent power.

The role of the Stalinists at Blackpool was clear. Both wings of the Communist Party support the executive.

The Stalinists alone handed out propaganda before the conference in support of the deal.

This productivity deal will be a major step towards the Tories plans for education. It shows how the Labour Party will subordinate the interests of the middle and working classes to capitalism.

The deal will undermine the strength of the union. It therefore lays the basis for political attacks on teachers.

Blackpool gave only a glimpse of the fighting strength of teachers.

Teachers are campaigning in many areas for a no vote.

This campaign is also building forces to expose all those who are trying to sell this deal. — Reject the Nottingham Deal!

● Campaign for a no vote!

After the vote — Scottish teachers must defy sell-out deals

BY JOE EYRE

SCOTLAND'S largest teaching union threw out the government pay and conditions package by a massive 84 per cent majority in a ballot last week — and staged a defiant one-day strike on Thursday.

The sheer size of the 'no' vote — borne of bitterness that has accumulated throughout the two-year campaign for an independent pay review — temporarily silenced Scottish secretary Malcolm Rifkind.

He had hoped to push teachers back with a 'black propaganda' campaign in the Scottish media.

The vote also caused consternation among those section of the union's Stalinist and 'soft left' leadership who have been insisting upon 'flexibility' and a negotiated way out of the

dispute.

For 'way out' read 'sell out'.

By 'flexibility' they mean nothing short of selling conditions for a slightly higher level of pay.

This is of course completely contrary to union policy, which was reaffirmed at a Special General Meeting only three weeks ago — and specifically bans any trade-off of conditions for pay.

Deal

The Stalinist and 'soft left' majority on the union's executive have now entered negotiations with the government and local authorities. So desperate are they for a deal that they have refused to consider any strike action at all after the national one-day strike on Thursday.

Rifkind has recovered sufficiently to make threatening noises. He acknowledges that a 'gulf' exists between the government and teachers, says that there is only limited room for manoeuvre and that Thursday's strike 'will make the possibility of legislation much more likely'.

He is threatening to join Tory education secretary Kenneth Baker in imposing conditions on teachers by law.

The Stalinists and 'soft left' are working to present a sell-out as a more attractive proposition than a legally-imposed settlement.

But the determination of the EIS membership stands as a great bulwark against a sell-out. Many ordinary members of the union are only too aware of what the executive is up to, and determined to oppose it.

The recently-formed Scottish Socialist Teachers' Federation will have a crucial role in defence of teachers' pay and conditions.

In rejecting the arguments of the compromisers within the union, the Federation must develop its own strategy to unite the membership.

Strings

Teachers must demand a large pay increase, with no strings attached. Any talks on conditions must be clearly based on improvements to the present situation.

The next few weeks will determine the outcome of this long-running dispute.

It is essential that the left within the union mobilises the entire membership against a Rifkind-Stalinist 'soft left' sell-out.



The Scottish Asian Action Committee organised a march protesting against the fascist British National Party in Glasgow last Saturday. The BNP were holding their annual rally in the city.

MINERS AND PRINTERS IN PRISON

S WALES MINERS

DEAN HANCOCK: Oakdale — Eight year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicester

RUSSELL SHANKLAND: Taff Merthyr — Eight year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicester

KENT MINER

TERRY FRENCH: Betteshanger — Four year sentence from January 1985. B73383, Northey Prison, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex

PRINTER

STEPHEN SAVAGE: SOGAT Casuals — Three months from October 1986, Sheerness Prison.