

# Workers Press

25p

Number 99

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

# THE SPECTRE OF TROTSKY HAUNTS GORBACHEV

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S crude attack on Trotskyism and his defence of Stalin in his speech to the assembled bureaucracy in Moscow last Monday proves one thing: 70 years on from 1917 Trotskyism lives and fights in the Soviet Union and throughout the world.

We urge every worker, youth and student to answer Gorbachev's slanders against Trotsky: make Sunday's Rally the biggest success possible! Our Rally has one purpose: to celebrate 1917 by preparing for the World October. It is this coming World October that Stalinism fears above all.

The hallmark of Gorbachev's speech was a series of old Stalinist lies aimed at covering up for Stalin's role from the 1920s onwards in the fight to drive Bolshevism from the Communist International:

Here are two examples of his lies:

- According to Gorbachev, Stalin was responsible for leading the defence of the Soviet Union during World War II. In fact Stalin hid himself away in the Kremlin for the war's duration and took no part in the defence of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev also ignored completely Stalin's systematic murder of the Red Army General Staff in the 1930s which brought Russia almost to its knees following Hitler's 1941 invasion.

- Gorbachev praised Stalin's brutal collectivisation programme in the 1930s. He ignores the fact that millions were slaughtered as a result, that vast damage was done to Soviet agriculture from which its has not yet recovered after more than half a century.

Praise for Stalin's butchery is no accident. Gorbachev's speech was addressed not to the world working class but to the capitalist class. He pledged to imperialism: we will spare no effort to crush the revolutionary upsurge of the working class and the oppressed throughout the world. He did so at the start of a week which saw a further plunge in the stock markets and brought the banking system a step nearer to a major collapse.

Gorbachev went nowhere near as far as Khrushchev did 30 years ago in attacking the 'negative' aspects of Stalin's record. This is a measure of the bureaucracy's chronic crisis, with Gorbachev walking a tightrope between those who wish to push ahead with the 'reform' programme and those who want to halt it.

In the face of mounting pressure from the working class and sections of the intelligentsia, the bureaucracy is forced to continue the lies about Stalin and Stalinism. To tell the truth about these matters would expose its own role today.

Gorbachev and the bureaucracy as a whole are the political heirs of Stalin: a parasitic counter-revolutionary caste whose ideology remains the Stalinist theory of socialism in one country and peaceful co-existence with capitalism.

The Fourth International was established 49 years ago on the following basis: the Stalinist bureaucracy represented the interests of imperialism both within the USSR and internationally. It would not and could not reform itself. It had to be overthrown by a political revolution led by the Fourth International.

Our Rally brings together in the Preparatory Committee those forces who have fought internationally against the political and ideological capitulation to Stalinism within the Fourth International, assembles those who have rejected the theory of the 'dual nature' of the bureaucracy (having a 'progressive' side within the USSR and a 'reactionary' side internationally).

This was Gorbachev's line on Stalinism. It is the line of revisionists such as Unified Secretariat leader and long-time Pabloite Ernest Mandel.

On one question Gorbachev speaks accurately of Stalin: Stalin's real contribution to the counter-revolution was his attempt to crush Bolshevism inside the international working class movement. This remains the task of Stalinism.

But Stalinism is in mortal crisis, racked by internal divisions, faced by a working class on the offensive throughout the world. Its crisis is a reflection of the mounting crisis of imperialism.

Stalinism no longer commands the authority in the international working class to carry out its counter-revolutionary plans unaided.

It now relies on self-styled 'Trotskyists' whose task is to present the Gorbachev wing of the bureaucracy in a 'progressive light'.

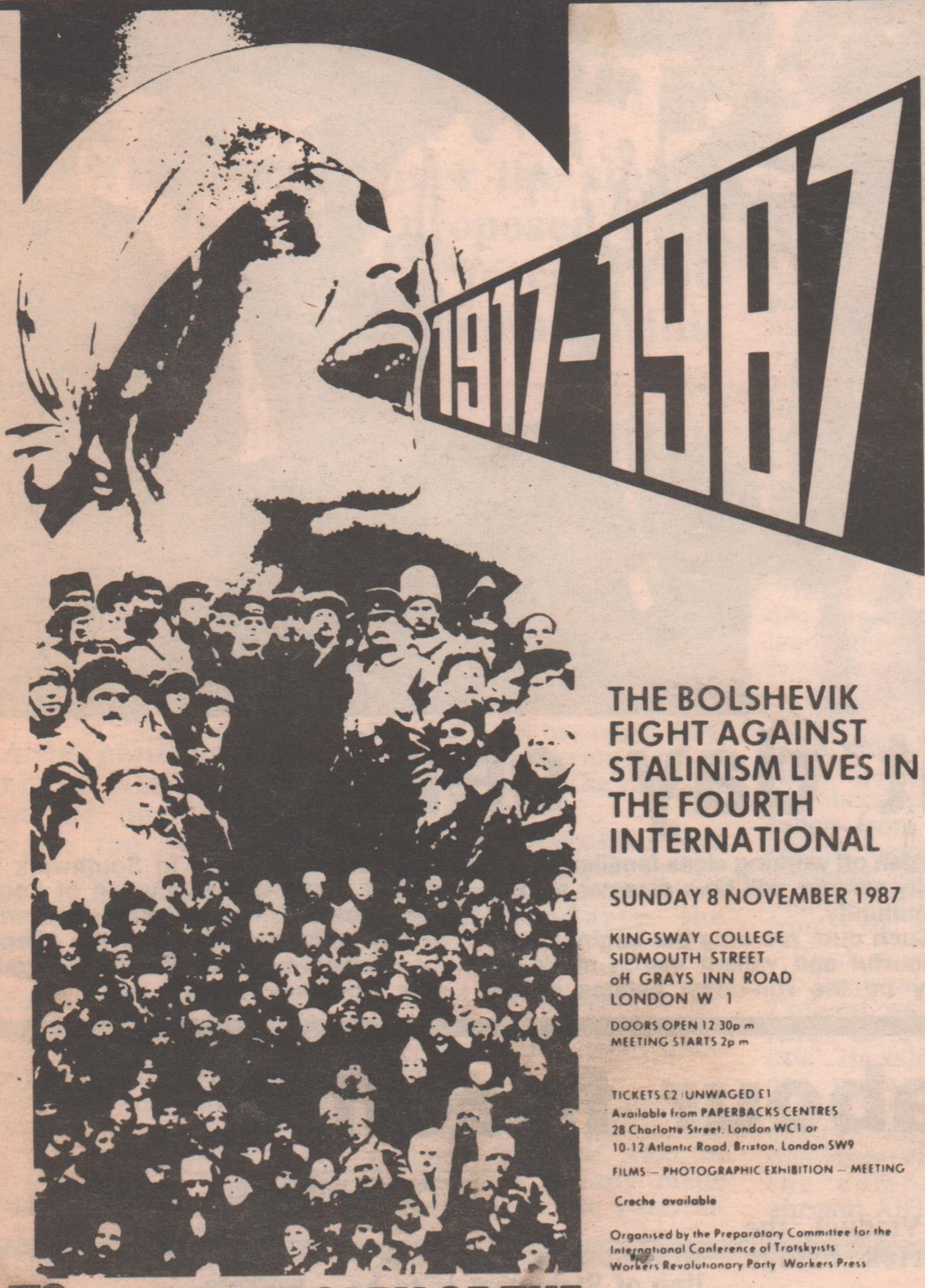
Former Workers Revolutionary Party leader Gerry Healy has joined the ranks of apologists for a crisis-ridden Stalinism. Healy, together with former WRP secretary Mike Banda and Corin and Vanessa Redgrave, is amongst the first of those who are crawling to Stalinist Gorbachev.

The expulsion of this group from the WRP in 1985-1986 was a mighty blow against a pro-Stalinist cancer in the Fourth International.

The unbroken fight against revisionism is the bedrock of our movement, the means by which the continuity of the Fourth International was secured against all the efforts of the Mandels, Healys and Bandas.

We urge all those attending Sunday's Rally who are not WRP members to join us in building the Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution. What finer way is there to celebrate 1917?

- All out for 8 November!
- Down with Stalinism and its apologists!
- Long live the Fourth International!



THE BOLSHEVIK FIGHT AGAINST STALINISM LIVES IN THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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**SPEAKERS:**

- Cliff Slaughter — WRP Central Committee
- Jean-Phillipe Dupont — International Workers League (Fourth International)
- Michel Varga (Balasz Nagy) — Group of Opposition and Continuity of the Fourth International
- E. Regik — Workers Front, Turkey
- Speakers from the organisations on the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference of Trotskyists
- Paul Trehwela — Former South African political prisoner



The South African strikers sacked by the British Tyre and Rubber Company who have been touring Britain for two months with their play 'The Long March' enjoyed the reception given to them by Lambeth Trades Council and other Lambeth unions last Sunday (above).  
They were presented with a cheque for £400, partly

raised by collections in workplaces throughout Lambeth and donations from the unions.

The BTR Sarmcol workers belong to the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, the most openly socialist union in South Africa. Their secretary is Moses Mayekiso, currently on trial for treason.



## Workers Press

# 'Perestroika' and Trotskyism

THE most significant feature of Gorbachev's speech last Monday was the priority he gave to approval of Stalin's fight against 'Trotskyism'. Today as always, this is the issue which unites all sections of the Soviet bureaucracy, and ties them to their old leader: Stalin.

Speaking of the period following the death of Lenin, Gorbachev told his fellow bureaucrats as well as the world ruling class: 'It was essential to disprove Trotskyism before the whole people. . . the party's leading nucleus headed by Josef Stalin had safeguarded Leninism in an ideological struggle'.

The history of the 1920s lies at the heart of Gorbachev's difficulties as with Khrushchev before him. As Bill Hunter's recent series of articles in Workers Press has shown, the bureaucracy must continue to lie about Trotsky and the history of his struggle for the defence of the principles and the defence of the October Revolution.

Gorbachev promises to uncover some of the truth about Stalin's blood purges, when many respectable bureaucrats loyal to Stalin suffered along with oppositons but that 'river of blood' which Trotsky insisted separated Stalinism from Bolshevism cannot be bridged.

Denouncing Stalin's responsibility for the murders of the 1930s, he defends the forced collectivisation, the international betrayals of the peoples' front period, the destruction of the Communist International and the signing of the pact between Stalin and Hitler. Forgetting that Stalin had murdered the best leaders of the Soviet army, he tells us that, 'a factor in the achievement of victory was the tremendous political will, purposefulness and persistence, ability to organise and discipline people played in the war years by Josef Stalin.'

Here is the essence of 'glasnost' and 'perestroika'. The bureaucracy wants to separate itself from certain features of Stalin's rule, which hamper their 'reconstruction' of the economy. But at the same time it must continue Stalin's anti-working class, anti-internationalist and anti-socialist fight against 'Trotskyism', whose real name is Bolshevism.

It must try to head off the developing movement of the Soviet working class by softening some of the more repressive features of the regime. But, as the 'conservative' forces in the bureaucracy keep reminding him, each such move threatens the continued existence of the bureaucratic structure which Stalin had built.

In the discussion about the significance of 'glasnost', many people have stressed the way Gorbachev's promised 'reforms' open the door to capitalist influence on the Soviet economy. There is no doubt that they do, as did the policies of Stalin of 40, 50 and 60 years ago.

But this emphasis can miss the point of 'perestroika'. As Trotsky explained — and as was so well illustrated by Gorbachev's speech — the bureaucracy which rules the USSR is not a ruling class: It does not have a viable historical role. It is 'a caste alien to socialism', a cancer, a parasitic growth which attacked the first workers' state under the pressure of world imperialism, but which has still not destroyed it.

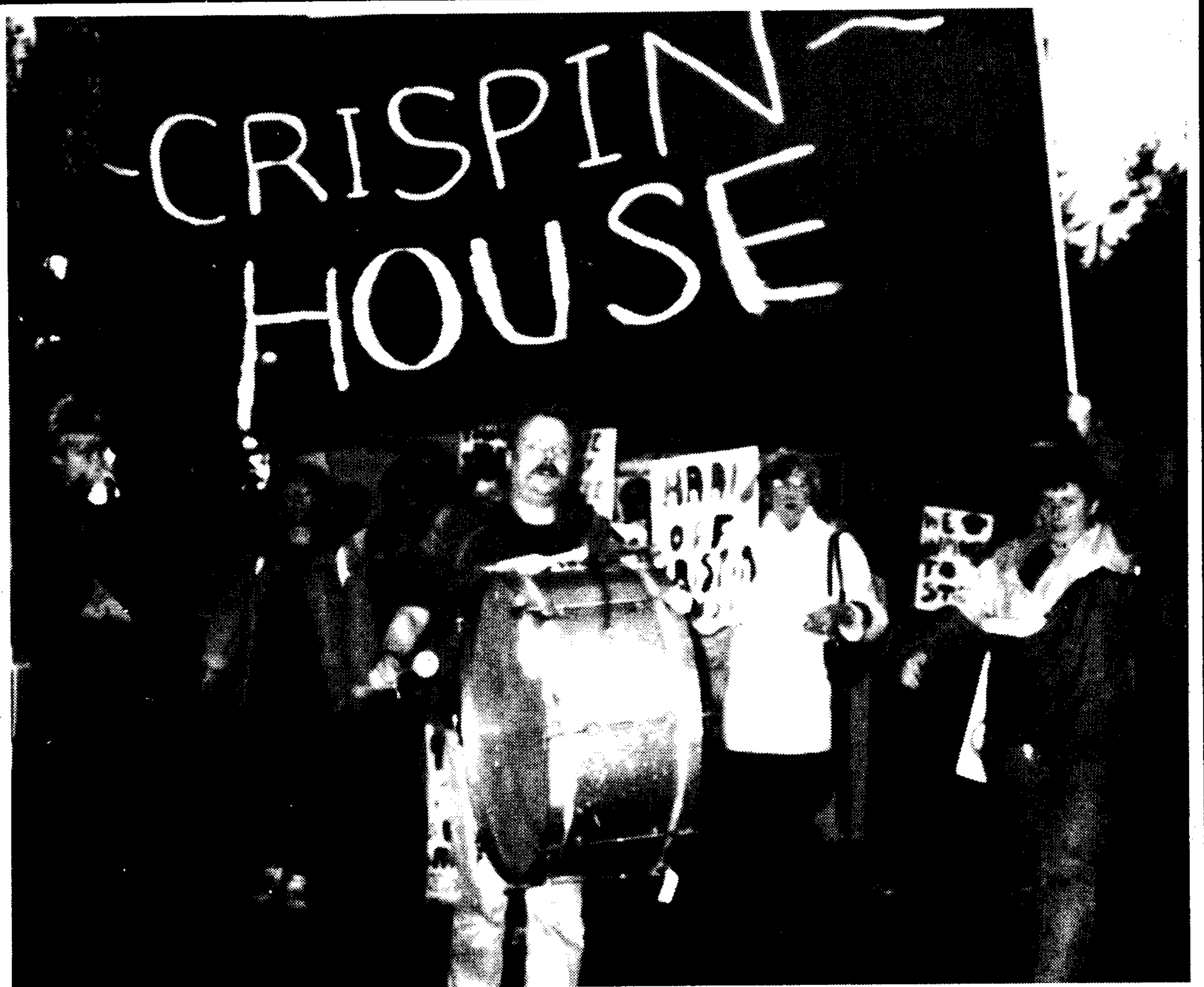
The bureaucracy continually endangers the gains of the October Revolution. It usurps control of the state and the economy. But in this epoch of revolutionary transition from capitalism to communism, it is incapable of placing itself at the head of a new exploitative system.

This layer of apparatus-men, fighting to defend and expand their privileges, cannot resolve the crisis of Soviet society. Even if Gorbachev manages to make some kind of deal with Reagan, the policy of 'peacefully co-existing' with imperialism entails a crippling burden of armaments expenditure on what is still a backward economy.

Gorbachev's speech is not addressed to the working class but to the imperialists and their friends his fellow bureaucrats. For their benefit he has reaffirmed his determination to continue Stalin's battle to destroy Bolshevism, under the new conditions. Gorbachev has revealed the crisis of the bureaucracy today, inseparable as it is from the crisis of imperialism. A large youthful and powerful working class now confront the parasitic growth which sucks the blood of the workers' state.

Its demands, not just for a rise in living standards but for control over economic and political life, arise from the very nature of Soviet society. These demands cannot be satisfied except by the complete destruction of the privileges of the bureaucracy and its power.

But to accomplish this political revolution, a leadership must be built based on the theory and practice of Marxism, including the experiences of the struggles of the international working class. This leadership, the Fourth International, will restore the historical connection between the October Revolution of 70 years ago and the battle for world socialism. In working to rebuild the Fourth International, the Trotskyists will break through Gorbachev's efforts to keep hidden the truth about Stalin's war against Bolshevism.



## Cuts hit day centre

Adults with learning difficulties are being forced by Southwark Council, London, to vegetate at home all day, every day, seven days a week. The proposed closure of Crispin House day centre which has taken some of the

burden off working class families, especially women, will be a disaster for the community.

Such cuts are only the beginning. A colourful and vallant march made its way by the run-down estates where

youth rioted in 1985 in Southwark to protest. National Association of Local Government Officer members, parents of the home's clients and the clients themselves marched and lobbied outside Southwark Town Hall.

## Slave-labour facelift

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST face-lift. brick structure is to Stockport Viaduct, the get a slave-labour imposing brick bridge

BY PETER WINDELER

## Defend hospitals! No to abortion restrictions!

BY JOHN OWEN

CHANTS of 'Not the Church, Not the State. . . A Woman's Right to Choose!' rang through the streets of Liverpool, in opposition to David Alton's Abortion Bill being read in parliament.

The march and demonstration called in defence of 5 hospitals under threat of closure, and against the attempt to reduce the abortion time limit from 28 to 18 weeks linked the two struggles together.

There was a rally afterwards outside the Senate House Area Health Authority headquarters. The Authority is threatening to close the Womens Hospital, Oxford Street and Mill Road Maternity Hospitals, Myrtle Street Childrens' Hospital and St Paul's Eye Hospital, in a £5 million cuts programme.

Speakers at the rally included ambulancemen, nurses and a Labour Women's Group spokesperson. All made the point that Alton's energies would be better spent fighting for more facilities.

The reactionary policies of this Liberal MP, who has staked his political career on the campaign, must be opposed and the fight extended to include better treatment and an end to administrative delays in the treatment of women facing abortion.

## Hospital porters in dispute

SECURITY porters at Liverpool Childrens' Hospital have been in dispute since last Tuesday (20 October).

The 13 porters, all members of the Transport and General Workers Union, say that management's modernisation plans would leave the security staff as well as visitors in danger.

Shop steward Des O'Connor said: 'The general manager took the decision and refused to listen to our proposals for security.'

'We face the brunt of the problems here, like drunks

and addicts who get violent with staff. The manager referred to us as "scruffy porters" who she got some uniforms for.

'We now have physiotherapists doing our work. They're carrying out rubbish and then seeing to patients on the wards. This is breaking Health and Safety regulations.

'At the moment we are running emergency services and the children in the hospital have not been affected, despite management slanders.'

which dominates the skyline of Stockport is to be refurbished using MSC funding.

The work should be the sole responsibility of British Rail and the local NUR branch is opposing the facelift scheme which will be launched on 2 November by Tory (un)Employment Secretary Norman Fowler.

Stockport Trades Council passed a motion moved by Stockport NUR branch condemning the MSC scheme which will cost in excess of £2 million.

The NUR delegate explained to the Trades Council that the work involved, as well as being extremely dangerous would normally

be done by British Rail workers.

This scheme, the delegate went on, was part of the overall plan by the management of British Rail to reduce its permanent staff of maintenance workers allowing the railways to become a prime target for privatisation.

Recently British Rail has arranged its intention to reduce the workforce at Crewe by 2,000.

The scab labour scheme to renovate the Viaduct has received support from the Town Council and conservation groups. The labour movement in the north-west must ensure that its forces are mobilised to fight this latest attack on the working class.

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IN SO FAR: £4,625.93

WE are pleased to report an encouraging response for the final stage of our Special Fund. With one last effort we can make it by our Rally on Sunday! Please make sure that we do. But let's do more. Go beyond the £5,000 and strike a blow in our struggle to rebuild the Fourth International. We assure you that every single penny is needed. Do not let us down! Make sure that every Workers Press supporter is asked to give the maximum possible to lift the Fund way over the top. Please, into action immediately!

WRP Special Fund, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

### WORKERS PRESS NOVEMBER FUND

In so far: £10.00

WE CLOSED our October Fund almost £850.00 short of the £2,000 target. This is a very dangerous situation. We have explained regularly to our readers that unless our Fund is met month in and month out the future of Workers Press cannot be guaranteed. We are therefore asking that extra money be raised by our weekend's Rally so that this deficit can be made up. Please give as generously as possible. We are sure that the deepening crisis of Stalinism is an inspiration to all our readers and underlines the necessity of developing Workers Press. But that inspiration must be transformed into material resources.

Rush your donations to: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS.



# Willis forced to intervene over Dundee Ford deal

**GROWING** anger over the single-union deal for the proposed Ford plant at Dundee has forced TUC general secretary Norman Willis to intervene.

The deal, granting sole union rights to the engineering union AEU, was signed on behalf of the union by secretary Gavin Laird and James Airlie.

Willis is to meet the national leaders of the ten Ford unions hostile to the deal.

Airlie, prominent Euro-Stalinist, is now claiming that the deal does not breach the Ford 'Blue Book' because the Dundee plant would be a direct subsidiary company, Ford of America.

But Airlie is at odds with his fellow members of the Ford Joint National Negotiating Committee, of which he is secretary. Airlie bypassed this body to make his deal and demonstrated his contempt of members' fears that it gives Ford man-

agement the green light to break agreement and sack workers at other factories.

Other unions claim that the AEU has breached TUC rules which prevent a union from infringing the rights of other unions.

The Dundee deal has been backed in Scotland by the Tories, by the Scottish Nationalist Party, the Church, the Labour right wing and the Stalinists.

Gavin Laird said on TV that he would welcome the 450 jobs, even without trade unionism.

Laird and others are justifying the deal on the grounds that the AEU in Dundee has already made such deals in the past, in-

## BY A SCOTTISH CORRESPONDENT

cluding those at Timex and Astral, and that the Transport and General has also made such deals elsewhere.

Laird says that Ford would not set up in Dundee if they had to face a proliferation of unions. Airlie claimed that the deal was 'universally welcomed in Scotland as a breakthrough for union organisation in the high tech field.'

He maintained that Dundee has a proud record of trade union history and that in engineering a 100 per cent organisation of hourly-paid workers had been achieved.

He did not mention that since the early 1970s, AEU membership in Dundee has fallen from 15,000 to 6,000 mainly because a series of closures. In Timex alone membership has dropped from 6,000 to 600.

Ford workers' fears for job losses at the Enfield and Treforst were dismissed by Airlie as 'a divisive hypothesis'. He said that the AEU's one main objective is to attract manufacturing industry. 'Any difference on this issue will only result in the company locating abroad' Airlie said.

Scottish Tory vice-chairman Michael Hirst met with 'Conservative trade unionists' in Dundee last week and called for Willis and Campbell Christie of the Scottish TUC to 'get together with the Ford trade unions and bang a few heads together.' He repeated the 'one-union or Ford go' argument.

A resolution put to a ward Labour Party in the town calling on the Party to condemn the deal failed to find a seconder from the 17 present. The proposer was condemned by the chairman (who learned his trade in the Communist Party, as did many Labour Party members in Dundee) for moving a disgraceful anti-trade union motion.

Despite this, there is opposition to the deal in all the trade unions in Dundee, including the AEU.

This opposition must join with Ford workers in defending trade union rights. The 'job at any cost' argument is a scab argument that would never have built the trade union movement.

Workers must reject Airlie's contention that any union is better than none and that trade union principles are being defended.

# Dagenham walk-outs

**WALK OUTS** involving over 2,000 workers at Ford's Dagenham Body and PTA plants have greeted the company's refusal to meet their pay claim and demands for a shorter working week.

In addition, workers in the Engine Department voted unanimously last Wednesday to take one-day strike action and lobby the talks in Bayswater on 11 November.

The Ford Motor Company has offered its 32,500 manual workers a three year agreement and an increase of just 4.25 per cent in the first year with no guaranteed increase for the subsequent years, only adjustments according to a price index.

In return Ford is demanding wide-ranging changes, including acceptance of skilled workers working on production lines and 'group leaders' or leading hands who are paid 10 per cent extra to 'assist' supervisors — changes which have been resisted for a long time by the unions.

Ford admit that productivity has increased from 6.4 vehicles built per employee in 1984 to 9.5 vehicles per employee last year. But management are demanding this must be further increased to keep up with Ford continental plants and the 'Japanese threat'.

Ford Director of Personnel, John Hougham told the union negotiators 'to meet that challenge, and stay in business, we need to control our labour costs and con-

tinue the improvements in productivity we have begun over the last few years. We have reached the foothills, but the mountain is still there to climb.'

Transport and General Workers negotiator Mick Murphy described the proposed deal as 'revolutionary'. Workers obviously thought differently, as reported above.

Friction between plant leaderships and the full-time union officials on the National Joint Negotiating Committee has been exacerbated by the signing of the AEU single union agreement at Dundee by James Airlie, secretary of the committee. The new Ford plant is seen as taking work away from existing plants and establishing lower wages and a completely separate negotiating structure with all unions except the AEU shut out of the plant.

Airlie collaborated with the Tory government's Scottish Office in secretly securing the deal signed in Detroit. He argues that it will bring jobs to Scotland. Fords say they will pull out if the other unions block the deal.

## East Anglia support for Moses Mayekiso

THE FOLLOWING resolution has been adopted by the East Anglia Region of the TUC:

This East Anglia Regional TUC agrees to exert maximum pressure on the TUC to organise a demonstration in support of the campaign to release the general secretary of NUMSA, brother Moses Mayekiso. Brother Mayekiso has been charged with treason, the first time such a charge has been brought against a South Africa union leader and one which carries the death penalty.

The South African trade union movement has been in the forefront of the struggle to create a democratic, just South Africa, and East Anglia Regional TUC fully supports a campaign for the release of Moses.

There were 30-40 delegates and trade union officials present at the meeting. There were no votes against and two abstentions. The resolution had previously been unanimously supported by both Cambridge Trades Council and the Cambridgeshire County Association of Trades Councils.

# NALGO out in Camden

**THOUSANDS** of Camden Council workers went on strike last week in protest at the cuts being forced through by the Labour-controlled council.

Eighty per cent of NALGO's (National Association of Local Government Officers) 5,500 members took part in the one-day strike action which was also in support of workers from the Mental Handicap Residential Section on strike following the suspension of one of the workers without pay for carrying out union policy.

## BY ANDREW BURGIN

Members of the Building Department unions joined NALGO members on picket lines which were flanked by large numbers of police — there to ensure only six pickets at a time stood outside the council buildings.

Many members of NUPE (National Union of Public Employees), the second largest Camden union, refused to cross picket lines and voiced their opposition to their unions policy of collaboration and co-operation with the cuts.

At a mass rally in support of the strike speaker after speaker reported the success of their picketing. A special round of applause went to strikers from the Mental Handicap Residential Section who have now been on strike for 45 weeks.

David Eggmore, branch secretary and Jo Fawkes, chair, outlined to the meeting the council's attempts to undermine the strike.

Fawkes read from council documents which cited strike laws on balloting and restrictions on pickets sent out to workers to intimidate them from joining the strike.

These memos included threats to call the police against the pickets.

Eggmore said that this was the first strike in many years that had not had the employers support.

He recollected how, in 1985 the council was only too happy to use the NALGO as a stage army against the Tories.

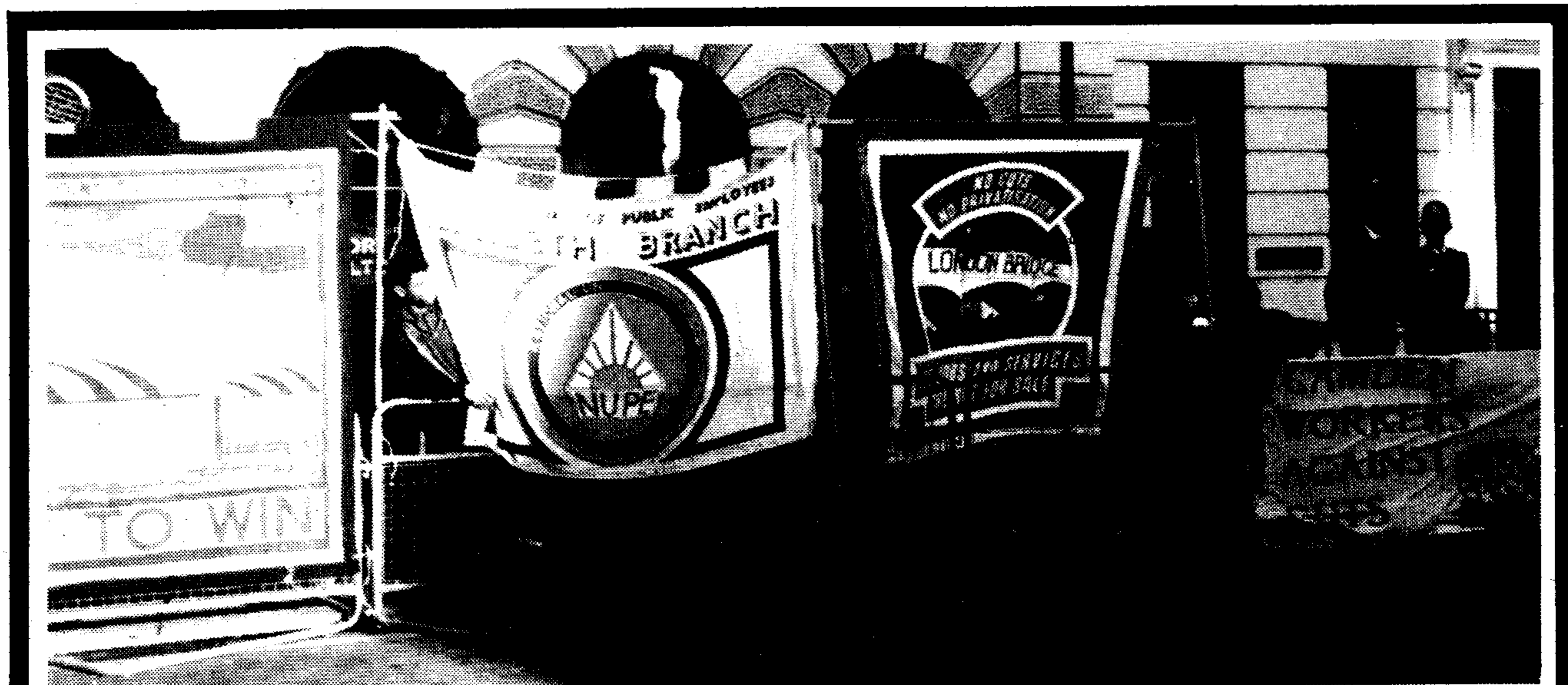
Vic Heath, convenor of the Joint Shop Stewards Building Department, pledged support for their common struggle.

Many stewards had been on the picket line that morning and had been threatened with disciplinary action by the council.

Graham Surety brought solidarity greetings from the Manifesto Group, the 11 councillors who are defying the cuts policy.

He said the council were scared of putting their policies before the working class or even discussing them within the Labour Party.

Speakers from NUPE, ILTA, London Bridge and voluntary organisations all welcomed the action taken and called for a widening of the campaign.



## TUC lobby against cuts

**COUNCIL** workers from Lambeth, Southwark, Camden, Islington, Hackney and other boroughs lobbied the TUC last Wednesday to demand that Union leaders start a national campaign against the cuts which will destroy local government services.

John MacReady of the CPSA came to speak to the lobbyists, Arthur Scargill took the leaflet with thanks, and the rest of the General Council hurried by so quickly that the two leafletters allowed to stand on the forecourt of the Congress House had to run to catch up with

them.

By request of the TUC only two lobbyist are allowed to approach the sacred portals. One thing you can say for the Tories, they allow you to have three times as many pickets as the TUC.



# 'Star' breaks links with porn-king

LORD STEVENS, owner of Express Newspapers, which also prints the 'Daily Star', has just ended his association with porno journalism by sacking Mike Gabbert editor of the 'Star' for the past eight weeks, as well as severing all connections with 'Sun-

**BY ALAN CLARK**  
day Sport' — the paper that does for sport what 'Playboy' does for art.

Gabbert was brought in by Stevens to help him liven up his ailing daily paper but Gabbert's style of journalism: boobs, distortions; a combination of soft porn and the worst

kind of gutter journalism did not go down at all well with the journalists, many of whom promptly left.

Jan Walsh, the 'Star's' Consumer Affairs reporter resigned saying that no self-respecting journalist would work for the paper.

She described it as 'The Beano with boobs'.

David Buchan, the chief leader writer was sacked when he said the 'Star' was 'a soft porn rag', and Agony Aunt columnist, Alix Palmer, resigned after she refused to spice up her column to Gabbert's requirements.

What worried Stevens more than Gabbert's style of journalism was the fact that several major companies cancelled their advertising contracts. In addition, ITV had considered banning the 'Star' because of its link-up with 'Sunday Sport'.

There was no longer any point to increased circulation when advertisers were running away in droves.

Stevens' link up with David Sullivan's and Mike Gabbert's 'Sunday Sport' was to stop them bringing out a daily paper which would have rivalled the 'Star'.

Now that these plans have broken down, what is in store for the ailing daily 'Star' and its workforce?

Will it be able to carry on? Will Stevens want it to?

The clean up of the 'Star' will be welcome news for the advertisers and should no doubt help new editor Brian Hitchen to attract back his lost Star journalists who left when Gabbert arrived.

But the news might not be too good for printers and journalists alike in the months ahead when Sullivan and Gabbert intend to bring out their colour daily paper as originally planned.

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## Council's claim in question

LEICESTER CITY council declares itself to be an 'equal opportunities' employer. Recent events there have shown this to be in question.

A couple of weeks ago council and voluntary workers took part in a protest about racist and sexist discrimination which have been expressed in the Council's attitude.

Mrs Chouhan, a black woman, made a complaint of race and sex discrimination. She was told the City Council would not hear her grievance on the grounds that they were not 'legally competent' to do so.

This was after Mrs Chouhan had been through the first two stages of the internal grievance procedure and been informed in writing that her complaint was appropriate to be dealt with under the procedure. Mrs Chouhan was told she

must go to an industrial tribunal.

Her experience was in complete contrast to another case in which a white male complained of discrimination when being interviewed for a job with the Council.

On that occasion the Council proved eager to settle with an offer of hundreds of pounds rather than go through the tribunal system.

There have been more than 18 other cases since January of black employees complaining of discrimination. They remain unresolved.

What the protesters are asking is: How can an employer call itself an 'equal opportunities' employer while at the same time declare itself incompetent to deal with grievances of racism and sexism.

● A well-attended rally was organised last month by the Leicester Black Workers' group and NALGO Leicester City branch on behalf of council employee Karen Chouhan (speaking, right) who is facing race and sex discrimination was held at the council's main building.

# The Haymarket — 100 years on



ONE hundred years ago the American labour movement called for mass demonstrations to be held on 1 May 1886 for the eight-hour day. Chicago was the centre of this campaign.

Saturday 1 May saw huge demonstrations and strikes. All through Sunday 2 May the agitation continued.

On Monday 3 May a large crowd of strikers gathered outside the McCormick Reaper Workers (International Harvesters). The police fired into the crowd killing many. A protest

**BY NORMAN HARDING**

meeting was called for Tuesday evening 4 May — to be held at the Haymarket

At this meeting a bomb was thrown and many more workers were killed by the indiscriminate shooting of the police.

Eight Labour leaders were arrested. Seven were sentenced to death: Albert R. Parsons, August Spies, Samuel J. Fielden, Michal Schwab, Adolph Fischer, George Engel, Louis Lingg. Oscar Neebe was sent-

enced to 15 years imprisonment.

Louis Lingg was found dead in his cell, Fielden and Schwab had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment, Parsons, Spies, Engel and Fischer were executed for their beliefs on November 11 1886.

The words spoken by Spies just before the trapdoor opened are inscribed on the Haymarket Monument in Chicago:

'The day will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you are throttling today.'



PHOTO: MARK SALMON



## TROTSKYISM AND STALINISM CLASH OVER HISTORY

# 1917 The impact on Scotland

**THE impact of the Russian Revolution on the Scottish working class was discussed at a Scottish Labour History Society seminar last week.**

An audience of 200 first heard Scottish TUC general secretary Campbell Christie explain, from the chair, how he would spend next week at the 70th anniversary celebrations in Moscow.

(Unfortunately, no opinions were voiced on how, had they been alive, either the Bolsheviks or the 'Red Clydesiders' would have viewed such a gathering of Labour and Stalinist bureaucrats).

The Scottish reaction to the Bolshevik seizure of power was described by Professor John Foster of the Paisley College of Technology. Two weeks after the revolution, he noted, the 'Glasgow Herald' was reporting that Kerensky was firmly in control — only on November 22 did that paper acknowledge that 'pro-German wreckers' had taken over and pulled Russia out of the war.

'What difference was there between what happened in Scotland as a result of the revolution, and what would have happened anyway?' asked Foster. This could be answered by studying four themes:

- The Bolshevik appeal for world peace, the publication of the secret imperialist treaties, and the Brest-Litovsk negotiations — which caused 'panic' in the British government;

BY SIMON PIRANI

- The dynamic anti-war movement in the factories, culminating in the famous meeting of 3,000 shop stewards, chaired by communist Willie Gallacher, which sent Minister of War Geddes back to London with an 'armistice now — no conscription' resolution; the 100,000-strong 1918 Glasgow Mayday rally which declared solidarity with the Soviet Union;

- The internal struggle in the Independent Labour Party (ILP), whose Scottish membership voted 155-20 in June 1920 to affiliate to the Communist International.

- The 1919 election campaign, in which John Maclean received 7,000 votes in the Gorbals against 14,000 for a pro-war Labourite, and where pro-Bolshevik Neil Maclean won Govan against Liberals and Unionists.

Foster, a member of the Communist Campaign Group, said that the 70th anniversary was being commemorated in the Soviet Union with 'perestroika', which was 'the elevation of working-class collectivism to a state form through which the working class rules'. Thus was the revolution being regenerated, he claimed.

Aberdeen University lecturer Terry Brotherstone, addressing the seminar on John Maclean's role, began: 'I want to start with an assumption, that the working class is an international class.'



William Gallacher being brought round after an 'encounter' with a police truncheon, George Square, Glasgow, 1 February 1919.

That had been Maclean's assumption when he was tried for supporting the Bolsheviks, and his assumption when he opposed the war in 1914.

Brotherstone, a member of the Workers Revolutionary Party, went on: 'I find it impossible to discuss Maclean from this standpoint, without saying that the Russian Revolution was part of a process, of which we are still a part today.'

'Gallacher, Bell and others were not only associated alongside Maclean with the revolution of Lenin and Trotsky, but also with the crimes of the Stalin regime — and we would not be behaving in a historical manner if we did not discuss how they became, eventually, supporters of the Moscow Trials and the destruction of the Bolshevik Party, which culminated in the assassination of Trotsky.'

### First step

Brotherstone stressed that Maclean — who was appointed Soviet ambassador in Britain — personified the international revolutionary movement of which Lenin saw the revolution as the first step.

Distinct from other socialists, Maclean made internationalist and Marxist propaganda central. He had 'fallen out' with the Clyde Workers Committee because he insisted that industrial struggles could not be separated from an internationalist perspective.

Historian James Hinton has described this as 'unrealistic': the most 'unrealistic' socialist at that time, Brotherstone said, was Lenin.

Further study of Maclean would have to negate the limitations of previous biographers: the Stalinists Willie Gallacher and Tom Bell, whose slanderous insinuations about Maclean's mental health could be put 'off the agenda'; the Scottish nationalist poet Hugh Macdiarmid which had

over-played Maclean's nationalist side.

Maclean had felt the need to 'put himself on the line' against the war and for the Russian Revolution, concluded Brotherstone, but had not understood how that revolution was made and the role of the Bolshevik Party. That was why he did not join the Communist Party when it was founded in 1920.

In discussion, a questioner asked what the Trotsky-Stalin conflict had to do with studying Maclean, since it took place after his death. Brotherstone insisted that the Marxist approach to history was from the viewpoint of present-day struggles, and that the issue could not therefore be avoided.

The opening session was followed by a showing of part of 'The Battleship Potemkin', and there were workshops on Maclean, the CP's early years, women in the Russian Revolution, and its effect on the media.

One contributor at a later session complained of 'too much Stalin-bashing', suggesting, at least, a welcome reversal of the usual situation at Scottish labour movement meetings.

This clash between Stalinism and Trotskyism was quite relevant to the study of labour history, for in the two main presentations were two opposing methods:

Foster answered the question he posed — what difference the revolution made to Scotland — by presenting a procession of events, uninterpreted, and ended by greeting the 'Soviet comrades' humble re-appraisal' of the intervening 70 years.

Brotherstone insisted that the development of international revolution, in which 1917 was a central step forward, and the development of internationalist principle, had to be grasped as processes of which present struggles are a direct continuation.

The past history of the international working class had to

be understood from the standpoint of its struggle today.

- Terry Brotherstone will speak on 'John Maclean and the Russian Revolution: nationalism and internationalism' at the second annual John Maclean memorial lecture, organised by the Lanarkshire

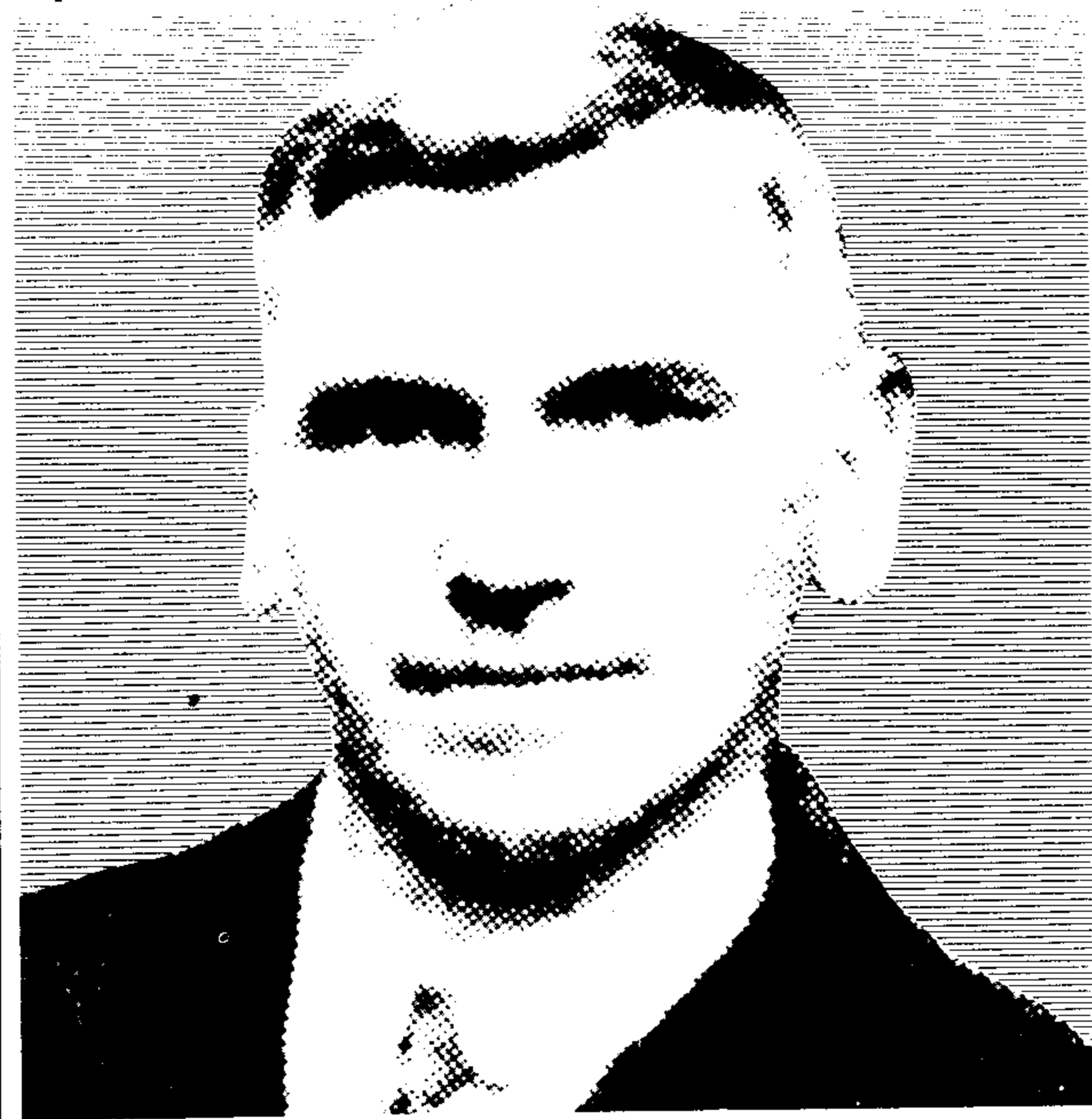
Association of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) in Glasgow.

The lecture is on Thursday December 3, at 7.30 pm, at the McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. Tickets are available from the EIS at 25 Gordon Street, Glasgow.

## ACCUSER of CAPITALISM

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Speech from the dock, May 9th 1918



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## 200,000 march against NATO

SPANISH opponents of NATO and US bases marched nearly 200,000-strong through Madrid on Sunday, 1 November, at the beginning of a week in which US negotiators were due to see the Spanish government.

Socialist Party prime minister Felipe Gonzalez has asked the Americans to withdraw their 72 F-16 fighters stationed at Torrejon base, just outside the capital.

He is hoping that by reducing the US presence in some way he can defuse the massive opposition to NATO membership and US bases in the country.

But Sunday's huge demonstration called by peace groups and left-wing organisations made it clear that such gestures and haggling will not be enough.

Chanting 'NATO no, bases out', the marchers, who had come from all over Spain, jeered at effigies of Gonzalez and Ronald Reagan. It was the second such demonstration in two weeks.

Under an accord signed by Franco's fascist dictatorship in 1952, US forces are allowed to station 12,500 military personnel in Spain.

The Spanish government has said that unless it gets agreement on reduction of the US presence it will annul the accord. A recent opinion poll showed not only overwhelming support for this, but that most voters want total withdrawal of US forces anyway.

Spanish Foreign Ministry officials have begun drafting a new military agreement, however, assuming that Spain will stay in NATO under different terms, and that the US will want continued use of Rota naval base, watching over the approaches to the Mediterranean.

## PINOCHET OUTLAWS MARXISM

ANYONE considered a Marxist will be denied freedom of speech and barred from employment as a teacher, journalist or trade union officer under a new law passed by the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile.

The military regime which seized power with CIA backing in 1973, murdering former leaders and trade unionists, and burning Left-wing literature, has long had a ban on Marxist groups. A seven-member tribunal was set up under General Pinochet's 1980 constitution to enforce this ban.

Under the new laws, the regime can fine any newspaper or broadcasting service which is found to have expressed 'Marxist' views or even reported the activities of Marxists.

The law will also bring instant dismissal of leaders of any political party found to have entered an alliance with a Marxist organisation. Local judges will be empowered to condemn individuals as 'Marxists' or 'collaborators' and strip them of all civil rights.

### Greek approach

**THE Preparatory Committee for the International Conference of Trotskyists has received an important statement, 'Our participation in the Struggle for the International Conference', from former members of the WRP (WIL), Greek section of the International Committee of the Fourth International (Healy). Workers Press will publish this statement in our next issue.**

# 'Brainless' US missiles could hit London

'BRAINLESS' US missiles armed with ten nuclear warheads apiece could hit London, according to senior engineers who worked on them.

The 18 MX missiles are supposed to be precision guided to a target thousands of miles away by an electronic brain.

But the experts say they are not sure whether the brain would work. Missiles aimed at the Soviet Union might hit Chicago, or London.

Northrop Corporation chairman Thomas Jones, whose company received \$12,000 million from the Pentagon for building the electronic guidance system, has admitted they falsified inspection certificates for the cooling system of the MX brain.

'We were on a tight schedule and when we began to get behind schedule there were efforts to back. Some of these efforts were just wrong.'

As a grand jury investigation gets under way in Los Angeles, CBS news has reported that Northrop made so many last-minute design changes the company could just not get parts into production fast enough.

To get around tests and certification, a phoney company was set up with a post office box. Former Northrop manager David Peterson said he and other employees would walk across the road from the main plant, to pick up parts from the mail drop.

'People would have the parts in their pocket,' Peterson said. 'They'd walk up to

a girl on the assembly line and say: "Here's the part you're missing," and she'd put it in.'

CBS reports that thousands of properly tested parts arriving later were thrown into the scrap bin.

Engineers say that if untested parts were put into the missile's control system there is no way of predicting whether the missile would hit its intended target or where it would end up.



REAGAN

## Torture 'routine' in Syria

On 1 May last year, the family of Suleiman Mustafa Ghaibur, a Syrian soldier, received from the authorities their son's body in a sealed coffin.

They were told he had committed suicide, and that they should bury him immediately.

The family defied the instruction not to open the coffin. They found Suleiman's body was bruised, particularly around the wrists, and had bullet wounds in the neck.

Knowing he had been in the hands of Syrian military intelligence, they were convinced he had died under torture, and been shot afterwards to make it look like suicide.

Amnesty International, whose requests to the Syrian government for an investigation into Suleiman's death went unanswered, says that torture is 'routine' when people are detained by Syrian security forces.

Last year the London-based organisation asked about four cases of people reportedly tortured by military intelligence. Hafez al-Assad's regime did not respond once.

Palestinians loyal to Yasser Arafat's leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) have been among thousands of people detained by Syrian security forces in Syria or Lebanon, the Amnesty report says. Palestinians taken from refugee camps in Lebanon have been handed over by the Amal militia to the Syrian forces.

One victim, arrested at Beirut airport, described how he had been taken to the Syrian forces' headquarters.

At 4a.m. he was hung from a suspended tyre, beaten with sticks and whips, and had electric shocks to the heart, before being taken to Anjar detention centre in the Bekaa valley, where there were more beatings.

Although torture is illegal in Syria, it is 'a regular experience' for thousands of political prisoners there according to Amnesty. Its report, published last week, lists 38 different torture methods described by for-

mer prisoners, including:

- The 'Black Slave' — a heated metal skewer is forced up the victim's anus.
- The 'Washing Machine' — the victim's arms are forced into a spinning metal drum where they are crushed.
- The 'Syrian Chair' — a metal chair with blades, to which the victim is tied so they cut into her or his legs. An adjustable backrest can be used to wrench the person's spine out of joint.

Amnesty says thousands of political prisoners are held without charge under the Assad regime's continuing state of emergency. People are often arrested arbitrarily, without warrant or proceedings, simply abducted from the street, or taken from their homes during the night.

### Accused

Several sections of the security forces, each with its own detention centre in Damascus, are accused of using torture. Each of Syria's 11 provinces is said to have four detention centres of its own.

In its annual report last month, Amnesty said that it had investigated a report that Syrian troops and their allies killed over 200 people in the north Lebanese port of Tripoli in December.

Although some were apparently Islamic Unification Movement militia fighters killed in clashes with Syria, the evidence suggested that many of the victims were unarmed civilians summarily executed shortly after capture.

The report said four main Lebanese militias — the Christian Lebanese Forces, Amal, the Druze PSP, and the Israeli-backed South Lebanese Army — had all detained and tortured opponents. Hundreds simply 'disappeared'.

## Immigrants lead jobs fight

MINERS in France's Nord-Pas de Calais coalfield, half of them Moroccan immigrant workers, have been on strike for over a month against mass sackings.

Some 5,000 miners have been involved, including 2,500 Moroccans who were told in a company letter on 25 September that their jobs would go at the end of the year.

The Houillères company offered them two choices — repatriation to 'your country of origin' or such 'help as the company can give you to search for alternative employment'.

On 1 October, when the CGT unions called a national day of action on jobs, the Moroccan miners came out — and decided to stay out.

Large numbers of miners in France originally came from Italy, Poland or Yugoslavia. Moroccans have worked in the coalfields of the north for 20 years, originally on short contract, until they fought for, and won, permanent status in 1980.

Now, as the 'last in', they are being singled out as first to be sacked. The bosses are plainly hoping to divide the workforce as prelude for large-scale pit closures.

Many miners have had injuries or silicosis in the pits. They see no future in returning to Morocco on the companies' meagre compensation.

The miners say they are entitled to be offered redeployment. And they say they are fighting not only for their right to work, but for their children's future too.

## ISRAELI SECRET POLICE

# 'Sixteen years of lying'

ISRAELI secret police have lied to the courts and the country for the past 16 years while routinely using 'physical means and pressure' to extract confessions.

And that's OFFICIAL. It comes in the report of a three-man commission headed by former Israeli Supreme Court Justice Moshe Landau, released last weekend.

That the Israeli security services — usually known as 'Shin Bet' (from the Hebrew initials for Sherut Bitachon, service of security) tortured Arab prisoners has long been known, and has been the subject of charges from international bodies like Amnesty and the Red Cross.

Last year, Amnesty called for an inquiry into the death of Suleiman Khater, a Palestinian guerrilla, in an Israeli prison hospital. The authorities' claim that he committed suicide was widely questioned.

The Israeli inquiry was brought about by concern over two cases which brought Shin Bet into the headlines and controversy within the state.

First was the high-level cover-up over the murder of two Palestinian youth from the Gaza Strip, who had tried to hijack a bus. The Israeli government, and it must be said, most public opinion, would have shrugged off the killing of the two 'terrorists'.

However, not only did the Shin Bet agents lie about the fact that the two had been killed after capture and interrogation, but they were prepared with the help of their political patrons to let a senior army officer take the rap, before the truth came out.

Then in May, in what some Israeli papers called 'Israel's Dreyfus case', an officer who had served seven years of an 18-year prison sentence for alleged 'treason' and espionage was

cleared by the High Court, and revealed that he had been tortured and framed by the security services.

The Court found that Shin Bet officers had mistreated Nafso, destroyed transcripts of the interrogation, fabricated other evidence, and lied at the initial trial.

After investigating the Gaza youths case, retired Major-general Meir Zorea said he found it 'unacceptable, after what had happened, that everyone should be allowed to get away scot-free.' Shin Bet boss Avraham Shalom resigned, but was promptly granted a pardon along with ten other culprits by President Herzog.

Yossi Ginnosar, who had left the security service after admitting taking part in the bus killings cover-up and who was also concerned in the Nafso frame-up, was appointed chairman of the Israel Import-Export Institute by Ariel Sharon.

### Action

It was reported last week that there would be no legal action against Shin Bet men who interrogated Nafso. The Landau commission's report does not call for prosecution of agents who committed perjury in court or used violence on prisoners.

In fact, it accepts that 'limited and clearly delineated psychological and physical pressures may legitimately be exerted in the interrogation of those suspected of terrorism'. A second, classified section of the report, sets out guidelines.

Some lawyers for Palestinian prisoners said they would apply for retrials, following the admissions on Shin Bet interrogation methods and lying.

Jerusalem lawyer Felicia Langer said: 'The report raises questions about the military courts, which for 20 years have placed blind faith in testimony by the Shin Bet, and where my clients have never succeeded in convincing the courts that their testimony is true.'



# IRANGATE à la France

BY PIERRE DUMONT

A SECRET report from the French army's Controller-General, Jean-Francois Barba, which a magistrate wants declassified, says five or six French generals helped arrange a £100 million arms deal with Iran in breach of an official embargo.

Two years ago, Egyptian customs intercepted a French ship with false cargo documents. As well as about 500,000 artillery shells, the cargo was said to include quantities of powerful C4 explosive — the same kind used in bombings in Paris in 1985 and 1986, in which thirteen people were killed.

According to newspaper claims, Barba's secret report not only shows top army brasshats took a nice three to five percent commission for helping the deal through, but that as much as £4 million went to Socialist Party leaders.

At the centre of the allegations is former Defence Minister Charles Hernu, who resigned in 1985 because of his involvement in the Rainbow Warrior state terrorism.

At the time the arms cargo was discovered, directors of the Luchaire company involved insisted the Iran deal had been fully 'covered' with senior Ministry of Defence officials.

Hernu declared that 'if any

such deliveries took place, it was without the knowledge of the government.' But a report was made to his ministry by overseas intelligence chief Admiral Pierre Lacoste, later sacked during the Rainbow Warrior affair.

According to the press, the Controller-General's classified report says Hernu approved the generals' helping the Luchaire deal and personally supervised the forging of documents to falsify the arms shipments' destination.

The right-wing news magazine 'Le Point' has named Francois Diaz, a close political and business associate of Hernu, as recipient of commission.

It was Hernu's Socialist

Party successor in the Defence Ministry, Paul Quiles, who first raised the issue of Luchaire's deal, on 13 March, 1986, after a newspaper in Cherbourg, where the ammunition was loaded, had exposed the shipment.

When Chirac's Tories took office, new Defence Minister Andre Giraud asked the Controller-General to prepare a report. Socialist Party leaders, already hit by the scandal over moneys shifted from overseas development funds, are accusing the Right of a 'disinformation' and dirty-tricks campaign.

With his privatisation drive upset by the plunge on the bourse, and economic policies increasingly generating workers' resistance, Chirac needs every trick he can find if he's to stand a chance in next year's presidential election.

The way reformist 'Socialist' ministers smuggled up to the corrupt capitalist state, typified by Hernu's relationship with the military and secret service, embroiled them in one 'affaire' after another. Now the Socialist Party leadership is wide open to the ruthless 'war of scandals' that's been launched.

# Police clampdown in Malaysia

MALAYSIA is under a tight police clampdown on political activity, with all public gatherings banned, several newspapers closed down, and political leaders arrested.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad ordered the clampdown within days of his return from the Commonwealth conference in Vancouver.

By last week over 90 people had been detained under the Internal Security Act.

Shares on the Kuala Lumpur stock exchange defied world trends by rising 12 per cent on 29 October, after Mahathir announced the ban on political rallies.

The United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), a major part of Mahathir's ruling National Front, had planned a national rally at the weekend which they hoped half a million people would attend.

There were fears it would turn into a Malay chauvinist demonstration against the Chinese minority, as did a rally held last month by the UMNO youth section.

As economic recession hits Malaysia, right-wing politicians have been deliberately stirring up hostility against the Malaysian Chinese.

In the past the main source of recruits for the anti-imperialist people's liberation army guerrillas, the Chinese also include many wealthy merchants.

The government has used fears of inter-communal vio-

lence to justify its repressive measures, although most of those arrested are from opposition parties, and span all three main ethnic groups — Malay, Chinese, and Indian.

Police chief Haniff Omar said detentions had been necessary to prevent an 'imminent breakdown in law and order', and claimed some of those arrested had 'acted in concert to destabilise the country'.

## Violent

'We all remember the May 13, 1969 incident', he said, referring to violent clashes between Malays and Chinese then. 'Surely there is none among us who would want to cause a riot.'

Over 30 MPs were arrested, including Lim Kit Siang, leader of the opposition Democratic Action Party (DAP) and seven other members. Mahathir claimed DAP leaders were using racial issues to broaden their support, causing Chinese and Indian parties to com-

pete in taking up the issues.

But a Western diplomat, talking about recent racial incidents, said: 'The trouble-makers were undoubtedly members of the government. They have allowed the trouble to develop to try to save their own skins.' ('Guardian' report, 30 October)

The head of television channel III, Ahmad Sebi Abu Bakr, was arrested last weekend, as were three church workers returning over the causeway from Singapore.

Besides its economic difficulties, Mahathir's government has been hit by corruption scandals and a split within the UMNO, with former Finance Minister Tunku Razaleigh Hamzah leading a rival faction, the 'B-team', against Mahathir's 'A-team'.

Some observers say there may be a deliberate strategy of tension by some ruling politicians, aimed at creating enough disorder for the government to announce a state of emergency.

In those circumstances the regime could dispense with the judiciary, impose stricter repression, and restore discipline within its own party ranks.

Eleven political, social reform and environmental organisations joined forces last week to demand release of detainees.

They said there was no evidence to justify the government's 'harsh action against personal liberties and press freedom.'

## Dhaka siege prepared

TENS of thousands of Bangladeshis could be mobilised for a 'siege' of the capital, Dhaka, on 10 November, to bring President Ershad's government down.

Already several people have been shot by police, and hundreds injured, in clashes in

the capital. Trouble broke out on 26 October after the regime arrested 300 opposition leaders and workers in a midnight round-up.

About 21 opposition parties, including the two largest, Awami League and Bangladesh National Party, have joined forces in calling for the 10 November siege.

# AUSTRALIA: LABOR BAILS OUT BANKER

SYDNEY: The Labour government of West Australia has pitched in \$150 million of taxpayers' money in a desperate move to prevent the collapse of one of Australia's high-flying merchant banks, Rothwells Ltd, run by Laurie Connell, friend of state Labor Premier Brian Burke and Labor Prime Minister Bob Hawke.

The near collapse came as Australian shares plunged a record 34.1 on the all ordinaries index.

BY DEREK MOORE

The Burke government's cash prop was the largest single sum in a \$370 million package pulled together over two days and nights of frantic dealings with some of the nation's biggest entrepreneurs, like Alan Bond, Robert Holmes à Court and John Elliott.

The move followed frantic scenes at Rothwells over the last two weeks when angry businessmen attempted to withdraw funds after hearing the bank was in trouble.

Rothwells had run over its credit limit with the National Bank which had begun returning depositors' cheques.

Connell then tried to get the ANZ bank, one of the

biggest in the country, to honour Rothwells' cheques. It refused and the fall was on.

Connell said the \$200 million plus run on the bank was 'sheer panic. We were faced with a level of calls that was quite unprecedented'.

Connell, one of the most obscene of the big spenders who have made a killing over the last five years of stock market boom, was delighted by the help of state premier Brian Burke.

'I am extremely grateful to the West Australian government for the part it played in putting into place the surety that has enabled us to have a bill enhancement facility of some \$150 million'

He said his only regret was

that 'Brian Burke is not the president of the US'.

Absolutely no risk to taxpayers' money'.

Alan Bond, who also has a mutual friend in the right-wing Laborites Burke and Hawke, was equally delighted with the premier.

'I would like to see all political parties supporting private enterprise' he said.

Leading business newspaper 'The Australian Financial Review', acknowledged: 'The whole deal hinged on the support of the West Australian government.'

The move is sure to anger even further Australian workers who over the last few years of a Labor govern-



Connell explains how Rothwells was saved as entrepreneur Bond listens

ment in Canberra and in most states has had its wages driven down and unemployment, particularly of young people, driven up.

At the same time the number of millionaires like the Bonds, the Connells and Holmes à Courts have increased dramatically.

The first move of the federal government when the stock market avalanche began was to suspend a national wage case hearing on a 7-per-cent pay claim.

Connell, along with most of the other millionaires who helped bail him out, is a close friend of Bob Hawke.

The prime minister recently accompanied him and his equally wealthy associates on a fishing trip off the coast of West Australia.

Connell evoked wrath of the not-quite-as-wealthy residents of an exclusive Perth suburb when he demolished

six mansions to make way for a new, super, \$30 million mansion for himself. He hopes the construction will still go ahead.

Connell, who apart from his conventional business interests, also has 400 race horses, was listed among the nation's richest people earlier this year with a fortune of \$80 million.

His close friend Holmes à Court is well known in the city of London and other financial centres of the world.

Like other heroes of the fast buck his finances have taken a pounding over the last week.

He has lost heavily on both the London market and the Sydney market. \$1.30 a share was sliced off the UK Standard Chartered Bank in which Holmes à Court is deputy chairman and the largest single share holder.

This has chopped \$200 million from the value. Only 12 months ago Holmes à Court spent \$500 million acquiring the stake which is now worth almost half.

The Labor governments, both state and federal, have made it quite clear where their sympathies lie, both in the boom and the bust.

Workers and the lower middle class financed the massive profits of the super-rich entrepreneurs in a score of years over the past years.

Brian Burke, and by implication the Hawke government, have signalled quite clearly that they intend the same people will passively finance the massive rescue operations — and, they hope, the reconstruction of the diminished fortunes.

They might just be heading for another crash.



Statement by the Preparatory Committee for the

# 70th Anniversary of the

**1.** Seventy years ago, on 7 November 1917, the world socialist revolution began. The working class of Russia, leading the peasant masses, took power and set up the first workers' state, opening a whole new chapter in the history of humanity. They expropriated the capitalists and landlords and distributed the land to the peasants; they brought to an end the imperialist war, and established a government of workers' democracy.

Seventy years after, one-third of humanity live in countries where capitalism has been overthrown. The Russian Revolution was and still is the beacon which lights the only path to end imperialism, which is the world socialist revolution led by the working class and its internationalist, Bolshevik party.

That world socialist revolution and that party will be successfully built against the bureaucratic Stalinist caste, which has usurped the power of the working class in the Soviet Union. The workers' state won in 1917 has, under Stalinist domination, become a degenerated workers' state. The workers of Russia will overthrow this bureaucracy and restore workers' democracy by means of a political revolution, a revolution which is in unity with the socialist revolution in the capitalist countries.

**2.** The Russian Revolution was carried out by the oppressed: the soldiers — worn down by the imperialist war — and the vast masses of the peasantry — subjected for centuries to Tsarist misery — under the leadership of the workers of Moscow and Petrograd.

But what made it possible was the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. This party had been built during decades of persecution, exile and clandestinity, and with it the Bolsheviks were able to win the majority of the working class in the few months between the downfall of the Tsar in February and the taking of power in October.

They were the only ones who knew how to interpret workers', peasants' and soldiers' demands for 'peace, bread and land'; the

only ones who, since February, had pointed out that the only way to achieve those demands was for the working class to take power.

The Stalinist bureaucracy set out to liquidate this Bolshevik party. Today, continuing the struggle of Trotsky and the Left Opposition, Bolshevism lives on in the building of the Fourth International, the building of its revolutionary parties in every country, against the counter-revolutionary Stalinists.

**3.** Thanks to the revolution, the Russian people put behind them the misery and backwardness of thousands of years. They stood fast against the destructiveness of imperialist war and civil war and experienced colossal economic growth.

In the capitalist world, some 750 million people are suffering starvation and millions die every year from famine and disease. The workers of the Soviet Union, emerging from Tsarist backwardness, despite the isolation of their first workers' state, despite the destruction wrought by war, civil war and imperialist intervention, and despite also the consequences of the reactionary Stalinist politics of 'socialism in one country', have been able to achieve great gains in industrialisation and in the basic conditions of life.

Living standards, health provision, housing, education, despite being held back by bureaucratic plundering and distortion, already place the Soviet masses at a totally new level from the masses oppressed by imperialism.

Under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, workers and peasants of the USSR enjoyed the fullest democratic freedoms during the first five years of the revolution, freedoms superior to any granted by imperialist countries today. The government was in the hands of the workers' delegates elected in the factories, and of the soldiers' and peasants' delegates. Different cultural currents flourished and developments in poetry, painting, sculpture, cinema, city-planning etc rapidly turned the USSR into a pole of attraction to great artists around the world like Brecht, Picasso, Breton, Grosz, Weill, Au-

den, Isadora Duncan and many others.

It was the revolution which made it possible to found the Third Communist International, the world revolutionary party which rapidly assembled under its banner millions of workers all over the world in order to spread the socialist revolution and defeat imperialism world-wide. For Lenin and Trotsky the Russian Revolution was but the first step in the European and world Revolution on which they pinned their hopes. To achieve this end they built the Third International: the finest and most thoroughly tested revolutionary leadership.

**4.** But of the great conquests of the Soviet masses, the only one that remains is the first, i.e. the economic basis of the workers' state. The counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy which emerged in the early 1920s eliminated workers' democracy and usurped the political power of the working class in its soviets. The Stalinist dictatorships developed by the 1930s into a terror regime which physically annihilated the old guard of the Bolshevik Party, including Trotsky, and abolished all political freedoms.

Under the slogan 'Socialism in One Country', Stalin and his henchmen substituted Lenin and Trotsky's struggle to defeat imperialism internationally with the policy of 'peaceful co-existence' with imperialism, an agreement which betrayed the revolutionary process itself. The most tragic consequences of this policy, the one which cost the world proletariat dear, was the degeneration and subsequent dissolution of the Third International during the Second World War. The workers of the world thus lost the greatest conquest the Russian October could bestow on them: that world revolutionary leadership of which the Fourth International is the continuation.

The socialist conquests of the October revolution, the planned economy, shielded from the imperialist world market by the state monopoly of foreign trade, are being undermined and their very existence threatened by the con-



Vladimir Ilyich Ulianov, Lenin: a pre-revolutionary photograph.



February 1917: a demonstration outside the Winter Palace, St. Petersburg (above, right). November 1918: communist supporters during street fighting (below, right).



Yuri Annikov's illustration for Alexander Blok's 'The Twelve', the most celebrated and enduring poem of the Russian Revolution.



the International Conference of Trotskyists

# the Russian Revolution



Leon Trotsky, in his student days.



Force (above). January 1918: groups of Red Guards in the workers take over a Moscow tram and use it as a barricade

tinuing rule of the bureaucracy and its 'socialism in one country'. No policy of the bureaucracy can preserve and defend these conquests. The Stalinist autarchy has proved untenable and has made inevitable the present situation, in which the bureaucracy, in order to preserve its own parasitic existence, is more and more opening the countries it rules to the penetration of imperialist capital, with the inevitable consequence of growing social inequalities, unemployment and the destruction of all social conquests.

The Gorbachev leadership is seeking to preserve the domination of its caste by opening the safety-valves of democratic reforms — but the Soviet workers, intellectuals and farmers want workers' democracy. Their movement for these objectives comes into conflict with the rule of the bureaucracy. The only way forward to continue and fulfil this movement is the political revolution, for which it is the preparation.

**5.** But in spite of this 'historical accident', as Trotsky defined the bureaucracy, the lessons of the Russian Revolution are more relevant today than ever. We are living, under imperialist and capitalist domination, in the most revolutionary period of humanity. From South Africa to South Korea, from Haiti to the Middle East, from Nicaragua, Chile, Argentina to the Philippines, from Poland, Yugoslavia, the USSR to Great Britain and France, the working

masses and the oppressed are extending their struggle.

Imperialism, enveloped in its economic crisis, cannot ensure even the survival of the most oppressed. The counter-revolutionary bureaucracies of the deformed workers' states are being dragged along the same crisis. The world socialist revolution with workers' democracy which will put an end to imperialism and to the bureaucratic caste of the workers' states is the only possible way out. Paraphrasing Marx we could say: 'A spectre is haunting the world, the spectre of the October Revolution.'

**6.** Those millions who today are fighting all over the world against imperialism and the bureaucratic domination of workers' states: those millions who are today fighting, though not consciously, for socialism with workers' democracy, are the true heirs of the teachings of the October Revolution. Together with them the Fourth International, founded by Leon Trotsky, is the only world political current which defends the great conquests of October.

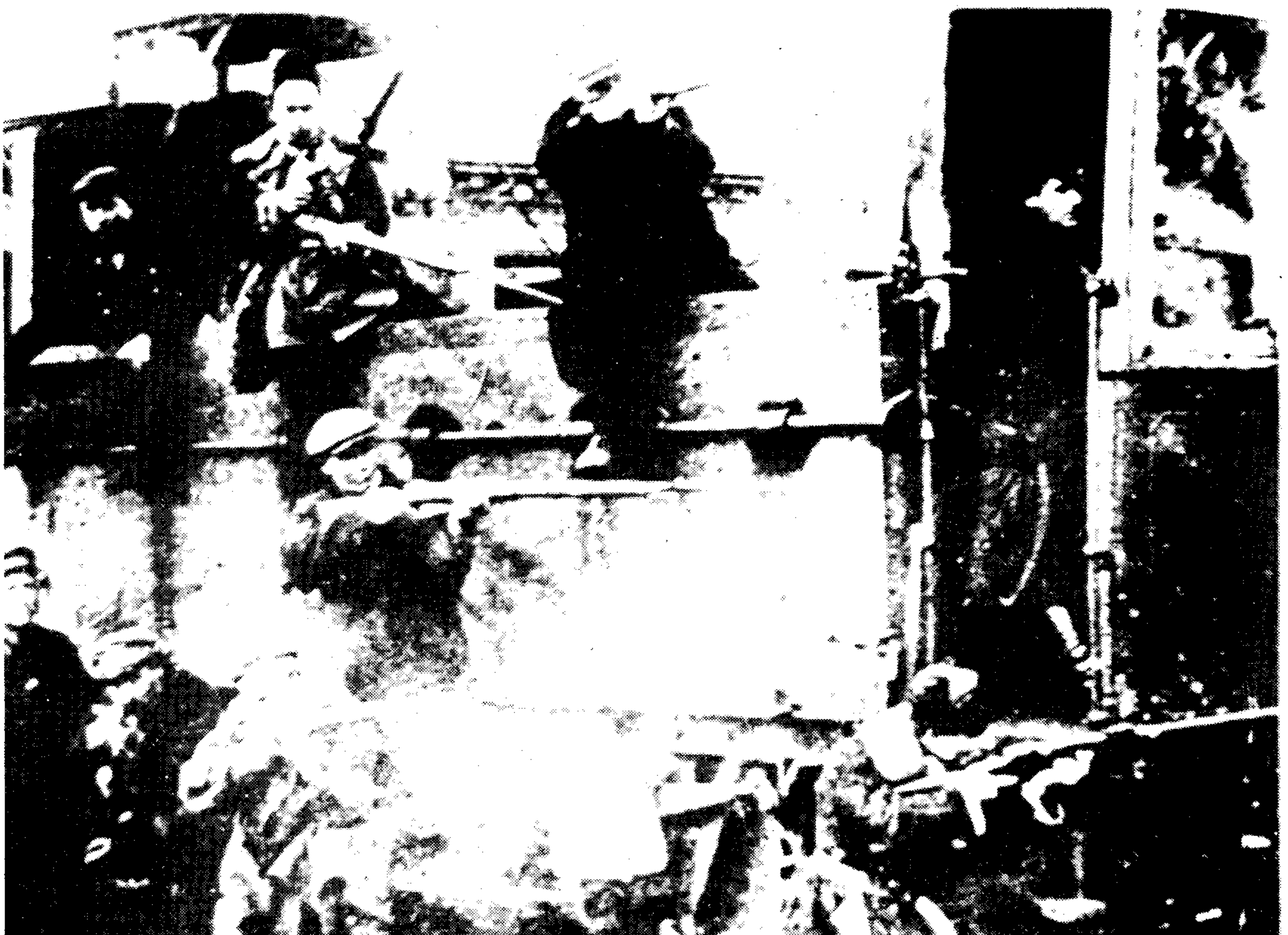
Only the Fourth International defends the Soviet workers' state unconditionally against all attacks by imperialism. It is the only one which calls on the international working class to follow the example of the Russian working class and fight to establish socialism all over the world. It is the only one which raises the call to fight for the expropriation of imperialism in

order to live without hunger, without unemployment, without illiteracy, with health and education.

Only the Trotskyist movement, the Fourth International, calls the workers of the bureaucratically controlled workers' states to the political revolution against the caste which rules them. Only the Fourth International proposes this political revolution to restore the workers' democracy of the early years of the Soviet Republic, the most complete democracy ever to have existed.

The Fourth International is also the continuation of the Third International of Lenin and Trotsky; it is the one that fights for a revolutionary world leadership which draws together millions of workers to bury imperialism.

- Down with imperialism throughout the world!
- Long live the world socialist revolution!
- Long live the October Revolution!
- For workers' democracy!
- Down with bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and all over the world!
- Long live the Fourth International!
- Forward to the World Federation of Republics of Workers' Councils!





# New light on history of American Trotskyism

**TOM KEMP** continues his review of Alan M. Waud's important new book: 'The New York Intellectuals — The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s'. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and London. pp 440. 1987.

**THE central position accorded to Trotskyism is a particularly valuable characteristic of Waud's study and this review concentrates on this feature.**

As he shows, 'without Trotskyism there would never have appeared an anti-Stalinist left among intellectuals in the mid 1930s'.

Few of the New York intellectuals drawn into left-wing politics, apart from those who remained steadfastly Stalinist (and just as frequently finding their way to the right), escaped its influence.

The roll-call of names is long and sometimes remarkable. It includes such well-known figures as Saul Bellow, James T. Farrell, Sydney Hook, Irving Kristol, Melvin Lasky and Seymour Lipset.

In addition to the sympathisers and fellow-travellers, there were those intellectuals who were fully committed politically, and became leading members of the Socialist Workers' Party. Some of them remained with the movement through all the trials and tribulations of the 1940s and 1950s, others gave up at some point along the way or went over to the enemy class.

Waud devotes an important chapter of his book to the history of the American Trotskyist movement which adds some important new information to what has already been written about it.

He examines the political records of a number of its leading figures including James P. Cannon, Max Shachtman and James Burnham. They illustrate three paths followed by others.

Waud's portrait of Cannon is fair and rings true. He rescues him from his prejudiced critics without hiding his faults.

His account has to be put against those who, for purposes of their own, wish to present Cannon in an unfavourable light or, wise after the event, castigate his wrong decisions or dubious tactics (such as his suspicion that any criticism was the beginning of a split, and a hasty resort to expulsion where he saw, perhaps wrongly, a danger to the party).

The other side of Cannon was that, in a period of great peril, he was able to maintain the integrity of the SWP; after the death of Trotsky he was the principal support for the unity and continuity of the movement, and not only in the US.

Trotsky recognised in Cannon a genuine working-class leader. It was mainly thanks to Cannon that the SWP was turned towards the working class and struck roots in the unions.

Moreover, the achieve-



**Trotsky recognised in Cannon (above) a genuine working-class leader. After Trotsky's death he was the principal support for the unity and continuity of the movement, and not only in the US.**

ments of Cannon have to be compared with the record of others, such as Max Shachtman, his collaborator over many years. The latter was a skilful writer and a brilliant polemicist, contemptuous of Cannon as a theoretician. He was more in tune with the young radical intellectuals drawn to the party, just as Cannon appealed to the workers.

## Fight

The factional fight which broke out in the SWP at the outset of World War II was, to some degree, a split between these two elements in the party, but it was far more than that. It raised fundamental questions not only about the nature of the Soviet Union and its defence, but about the dialectical method and about what sort of party the SWP should be — Menshevik or Bolshevik?

At the time, Trotsky de-

scribed the opposition as 'petty bourgeois'. This was much more than a description of its social composition, it was also an accurate perception of the class origin of its ideas. Trotsky's diagnosis was immediately confirmed by the rapidity with which Burnham abandoned Marxism and moved to the far right.

In the case of Shachtman, to a superficial observer it might have appeared that he, unlike Burnham, remained a Marxist — ironically, only a year or two before they had jointly penned a blistering attack on those intellectuals who had already abandoned the revolution. It took decades before Shachtman openly followed the same path.

During World War II he ostensibly took up a 'revolutionary' position — refusing to call for the defence of the Soviet Union on the grounds that it had joined one of the camps in an imperialist war.



**A factional fight broke out in the SWP at the outset of World War II which raised fundamental questions not only about the nature of the Soviet Union and its defence but about the dialectical method and about what sort of party — Menshevik or Bolshevik? Max Shachtman refused to call for the defence of the Soviet Union on the grounds that it had joined one of the camps in an imperialist war. Above: US troops in Normandy.**

In the era of the Cold War he elaborated the theory of the Third Camp (neither Moscow nor Washington) — a concept as unrealistic as it was unrevolutionary, expressing the intermediate and untenable position of the petty bourgeoisie in the new world situation.

In fact, more and more they were obliged to take sides. In the United States this increasingly meant lining up behind American imperialism as the lesser evil, a position to which Shachtman's theory of bureaucratic collectivism readily lent itself.

By the time of the Vietnam

War, Shachtman had openly espoused that position. He became an advocate of entry into the Democratic Party (like so many other American 'lefts'), ending up by supporting its right wing.

Waud's epitaph is eloquent: 'He supported the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, America's intervention in South Vietnam, and the decision to bomb North Vietnam, making a mockery of his one time boast: 'I will support American imperialism when hair grows on the back of my hand.'

While it took decades for him to reach a point which for others had only taken a

short time, the completeness of his final apostasy 'appalled not only many of his associates but even those who had previously left his group'.

As long as Shachtman headed a recognisable political tendency with a socialist goal (and even a veneer of Trotskyism) an open move into the imperialist camp was blocked.

Once he had dissolved the Independent Socialist League his shift to the right became a headlong flight, all the more extraordinary for being 30 years late.

**TO BE CONTINUED**

## LISTINGS

**Saturday, 7 November 10.30a.m.-3.30p.m.** Holborn Library, Theobalds Road (nearest tube: Kingsway). Speakers include Massa el-Jeries (Palestine Trade Union Federation), Salwa Abu Khadra (Palestinian Women), Betty Ward (NUPE), Swee Ang (Medical Aid). Organised by Trade Union Friends of Palestine.

**A LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCE** Solidarity with workers in the Eastern Bloc. **Saturday, 7 November 11a.m.-5p.m.** Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Speakers include: Zbigniew Kowalewski (exiled former leader of Solidarity); Eric Heffer MP, Chris Mullin MP.

**PRISON PICKETS** Frankland and Durham. **Sunday 15 November 1.30p.m.** Coaches leave Birmingham 1 at 9a.m.

**TRADE UNIONS, LABOUR, AND MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROSPECTS** Conference,

**Saturday, 7 November 10.30a.m.-3.30p.m.** Holborn Library, Theobalds Road (nearest tube: Kingsway). Speakers include Massa el-Jeries (Palestine Trade Union Federation), Salwa Abu Khadra (Palestinian Women), Betty Ward (NUPE), Swee Ang (Medical Aid). Organised by Trade Union Friends of Palestine.

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE — TOWARDS A SOCIALIST GOAL** Day Conference, **Saturday 14 November.** Red Rose Club, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N4. Organised by Labour Campaign for Criminal Justice. For further details phone Ruth Allan, Northwood (65) 24666; Bron Roberts, 01-903 4921; Chris Naylor, 01-226 3396.

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**RACISM AND IMMIGRATION LAWS, THEN AND NOW** Meet-



# SOVIET WORKERS ANSWER GORBACHEV

BY PATRICK KANE

'IZVESTIA' has recently reported that the introduction of Gorbachev's policies in Soviet industry for the restructuring of the economy 'cannot be said to be taking place smoothly'.

In this case 'Izvestia' was not referring to those hardliners attempting to defend 'old obsolete ways' and 'their own privileges' but a potentially more dangerous opponent to Gorbachev's 'workers' state' — that of the working class itself.

The Gorbachev leadership has staked not only its reputation but also its political future on its ability to resolve the social and economic crises facing the USSR.

The new leadership has declared its aim to overcome stagnation, blindness to social problems and opposition to progress. It has promised to replace this 'pre-crisis situation' with 'truly revolutionary' changes and widespread improvements.

In order to carry out 'perestroika' (restructuring) and achieve a modernised economy capable of competing and surviving, Gorbachev needs allies. He has himself stated that there is opposition not only in the party apparatus but also among the intelligentsia, managers, peasants and workers.

To win the support of the massive Soviet working class, the new leadership must offer more than promises. Fyodor Burlatsky of 'Literatura Gazeta' points out:

'In order for economic reform to be accepted by the masses, for the workers to take part in it or become the active force in it, it is not enough to appeal to an "ideal", above all in a society so saturated with scepticism, hypocrisy, double-talk, not to say cynicism, as Soviet society is today. The workers need guarantees that extra exertions will not rebound against them.'

Guarantees for workers, however are hard to come by. Gorbachev's aim to increase management powers is in direct contradiction.

Gorbachevists such as Central Committee member Lev Tolkunov resolutely reject 'conceptions of barracks communism which deny the democratic forms of workers' self-management in order to give primacy to bureaucratic methods.'

Soviet workers are understandably sceptical of 'radical reforms' being drafted to introduce 'workers' self-management'. From what Tolkunov himself says, the proposals are obviously another institution for control.

The party is at the same time against 'anarcho-syndicalist theories of workers' self management' because they would 'counterpose themselves to the socialist state'.

The law on workers' participation in the running of the economy is constructed in such a way as to pose no threat to state management. Councils will include not only workers, but will 'bring together representatives of the administration, the party organisations, the unions and the Komsomol'. Workers' representatives will be easily outmanoeuvred.

Workers who are supposed-

ly the 'complete masters on their home ground, the factory' were only recently given the inadequate right to 'elect the factory director' as in Yugoslavia. Scepticism towards 'perestroika' is turning to anger and confrontation with the existing structures both old and new.

In Moscow young workers struck over working conditions in their factory which had resulted in injury to one of the employees. The main impetus of the strike was failure of official institutions to defend them. V. Buzychkin covered the strike in the official weekly 'Moscow News' — one of the first such reports on a conflict. He blamed the youth for not knowing their rights, asking why they didn't complain to 'soviet power' or 'elect a two-fisted honest lad as their trade union representative'.

The young workers' replies reflect their lack of faith in existing institutions and even fear of sticking their neck out. As one said: 'Everyone keeps silent.'

Buzychkin himself wrote: 'In the past it was considered that since there are no class antagonisms in our country, neither could there be such a means of overcoming them as strikes.' But as one of the strikers said, workers — 'the formerly silent majority' — are beginning to 'press from below' in response to 'perestroika,' with or without class antagonisms.

The possibility of the first price increases since 1928 is another source of potential working-class opposition. It was price increases in Poland which sparked the rise of Solidarnosc. The USSR is certainly not immune to such a reaction.

Aganbagyan, one of Gorbachev's leading economic advisors, is a strong advocate of the abolition of price subsidies, arguing that higher wages will offset price increases. Yet price rises are likely to be massive.

In Moscow's 'cooperative stores' people are spared the usual long lines, but pay up to ten times the regular price for good quality food. Here 1lb of sausages costs ten roubles, the equivalent of \$50 for a skilled worker on 300 roubles a month.

Gorbachevists argue that workers will be able to cope with 'carefully introduced' price increases. Under the new system they will receive higher wages for higher productivity. Yet there have already been a number of confrontations over wages — perhaps a taste of things to come.

Last January, 'Soyetskaya Rossiya' reported that some workers' wages had dropped by up to 50 roubles a month due to the new performance-related wage system. In December, a strike at the giant Kamaz truck plant led to 'stormy protests' according to 'Pravda' whilst more recently the transport system in Chekov, south of Moscow, was ground to a halt by striking bus drivers.

According to a 'Moscow News' report, which also avoided the word 'strike', workers' wages were reduced by 10 roubles. Some

# 'As old as my grandmother and always breaking down'

workers claimed their pay had been cut by as much as 50 roubles.

One of the strikers highlighted the injustices of the performance-related pay system: 'How can we work properly when some of our buses are like tanks after battle, as old as my grandmother and always breaking down?'

Another striker argued: 'This is legalised levelling down, and no one asked us how we felt about it. We go to work early. There is nowhere to have lunch and the prices in the cafe are appalling. We don't have anywhere to rest.'

A driver, Nicolai Solankin said: 'The considerations of ordinary people are not taken into account. If someone had talked to us before, this would not have happened.'

There was another strike over wages and poor working conditions in a glass factory in Vladimir Obla near Moscow. The strikers demanded to speak to the authorities.

As a result a Party official was sent and agreed to meet all the strikers' demands. Soon afterwards workers were rounded up for KGB interrogation. The entire workforce was subsequently fired.

A defiant poster appeared on the factory gate: 'We need a Dubcek in the USSR.'

A recent survey conducted by the Moscow Sociological Research Institute reflected

working class antagonism towards both the new pay system in particular and 'perestroika' in general.

The survey, carried out in 500 plants around Moscow, showed that over half of the 6,000 polled thought reform had brought little benefits and harder work.

Professor Vilen Ivanov who organised the survey said: 'People involved in reforms want dividends today in terms of more goods, higher pay and better apartments. For most people though, all that has happened is a heavier workload.'

Gorbachev's reforms produce discontent, yet contain certain safeguards. A new law on state enterprises will allow more autonomy for individual plants, including the right for management to control wages, increasing 'competition' by allowing workers to be punished or rewarded according to productivity.

The regime will thus tighten its control over workers, and yet increase support amongst the upper echelons of the working class — technicians, designers, medical staff, engineers and so on.

Management will be able to reward the loyal and the diligent, thus creating a layer of prosperous and reliable workers — a revitalised labour aristocracy. In the Donbass mines for example, roughly a third of the workforce are in this 'happy position' — ready to side with the regime.

Although unemployment was officially abolished in October 1930 (benefits were in fact stopped!) the reality behind 'really existing socialism' is very different.

Leonid Kostin, chairman of the State Ministry for Labour wrote recently in 'Izvestia' that out of 75 million workers in manufacturing, 3 million had been 'released' — the new word for sacked. In the railways, Kostin boasts of 280,000 workers being 'released' with 70,000 workers in the oil industry suffering a similar fate.

Advocates of streamlining industry through such measures have made employers in the West look like liberals. A recent article by Professor Vladimir Kostakov in 'Sovetskaya Kultura' talked about 13 million being

'released' from manufacturing by the end of the century.

Kostakov warned that people 'will have to accustom' to the thought that finding a job is to a considerable extent 'the individual's own concern'.

The speed at which redundancies are now taking place is creating a potentially explosive situation, for the authorities have taken no measures to provide welfare for the sacked. There is no unemployment benefit in the USSR: 'released' workers have to rely on their families.

The reintroduction of unemployment in the USSR is fraught with complications, just one of the many aspects of a mounting crisis that is facing a deeply divided bureaucracy.

## HUNGARIAN TRAGEDY

PETER FRYER



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

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# LETTERS

## The split with the IC

G. PILLING'S article 'Two years since Healy's expulsion' (Workers Press, 24 October 1987) very briefly summarised the political evolution of Healy and others who were expelled from the WRP in October 1985, and the subsequent and separate splits of Banda and the Hyland Minority in early 1986.

It is necessary however to correct Geoff's sharply nationalistic appreciation of the WRP splits. Above all they affected the International Committee of the Fourth International (IC) of which the WRP had become the leading party.

Formed in 1953 to continue Trotsky's struggle for independent Trotskyist parties against the liquidationism of Pablo, by 1985 the IC had dwindled to eight sections.

Thus parties of the IC existed in Britain, Ireland, Sri Lanka, West Germany, Peru, Spain and Greece. Additionally there was a sympathising section in the US which was prohibited from affiliating owing to the reactionary Voorhis Act.

The primary significance of the explosions in the WRP was that they shattered the IC. The Greek and Spanish sections departed with Healy.

In December 1985 the majority of the remaining sections then suspended the WRP. Charged with a 'betrayal of the ICFI and the international working class', this betrayal, said the IC, consisted of 'the complete abandonment of the theory of permanent revolution, resulting in the pursuit of unprincipled relations with sections of the colonial (sic) bourgeoisie in return for money'.

At no time did the majority of the WRP deny the primary responsibility of the Healy leadership for the degeneration which became manifest in the mid-1970s and intensified in an increasingly systematic way thereafter.

However the majority rightly denied that this leadership alone bore sole responsibility. It is a matter of historical fact that no challenge to the deepening decay came from leaders of other IC sections until 1981/1982, when D. North (Workers League, US) opposed Healy's bogus dialectics and mid-east perspectives and policies — only later to withdraw his criticisms.

The WRP majority also rejected as absurd the IC's suspension of the WRP. Suspension was clearly tantamount to condemning the struggle by the Party, fought through to the bitter end — in contrast to D. North's retreat — to overthrow the Healy clique.

Through this action the Party had proved in practice that it opposed all that Healy and his supporters stood for and continued to defend. And that majority of the WRP were fighting for regeneration and a reclamation of Marxist theory and practise including that of Permanent Revolution. None of this warranted suspension by the IC.

With equal 'justice' the majority of the IC (led by D. North) might just as well have suspended the entire IC. For all other sections had chronically adapted to WRP/ICFI perspectives and policies between 1976 and 1981, not to mention North's ignominious retreat in 1982 and thereafter.

But as the struggle unfolded it became increasingly clear to the majority that behind the double standards of the IC (and its supporters within the WRP, the Hyland Minority) lay an urgent need to block the path charted out by the Party's majority.

Namely to block our struggle for a return to Permanent Revolution against opportunism and sectarianism, against adaptations to Stalinism and Social Democracy and against violations of democratic centralism.

Throughout this period (October 1985 to March 1986) the IC repeatedly charged the WRP with refusing to 'subordinate itself to the IC'. We rejected this hopelessly formal, organisational approach and summary of the political differences.

Instead the WRP recognised — and acted upon this recognition — that the differences could only be fought out politically and internationally which had to include the free circulation of our documents to all sections, a matter which was prohibited by the IC.

Unable to advance any further within the confines of the IC, we were obliged to break with the IC in March 1986, side by side with a turn to opening discussions internationally with Trotskyist forces from whom the old IC had maintained a sectarian aloofness.

In the course of rupturing relations with the IC we won the support of the Irish and Peruvian sections and a minority within the Australia

lian party, confirming once again the international consequences of a struggle led by the WRP majority.

Finally, there is one other point in Geoff's article that needs clarification. He remarked that D. North and D. Hyland have made 'absolutely no attempt to explain the split'.

In fact their analysis of the split is to be found in the IC journal 'Fourth International' Summer 1986.

It is, I think, one thing to disagree with this analysis but quite another thing to say it does not exist.

Norah Wilde  
North London WRP

## One or two details

I THOUGHT I would write to add one or two details to reports appearing in this week's Workers Press (17 October 1987).

Firstly, it is by no means sure that, as Comrade Bill Hunter states, Nin was 'taken away in a closed van and murdered'.

This was the generally accepted view immediately afterwards but reports received since suggest that after Orlov had failed to break him down, Nin was actually smuggled out of Spain to be dealt with by the more sophisticated methodology employed in Russia itself (cf the reports quoted in B. Bolloten, 'The Spanish Revolution' pp 457-8).

A further slip appears in your obituary of Albert Matlow, that he 'took part in the struggle for the disaffiliation of the ILP from the Labour Party'.

In fact, he was so strongly against the disaffiliation that at one time he had resigned from the ILP in protest at it (cf 'Against the Stream' p.167).

With reference to Peter Fryer's remarks in his letter to Charlie van Gelderen, I feel that you should have given Matlow the credit for helping to frame the policy of revolutionary entry into the Labour Party, as it was his paper on which Trotsky based himself when he argued for that policy.

In that same sense I do not see what Comrade Fryer means when he talks about van Gelderen sharing Workers Press's view on the Labour Party: van Gelderen's organisation works inside the Labour Party whilst the WRP still clings to the attempt to build a revolutionary party by open recruitment to a group.

In saying this, and trying to draw attention to Matlow's real contribution, I hope that it will not be interpreted as giving any sanction to the policies of the 'International' Group (now 'Socialist Outlook') whom I believe are repeating the politics of the Communist Party's entrists in the Labour Party at the time that Matlow was arguing for the united front of the working class.

Just as important as being in the Labour Party is the question of what policy you

defend whilst you are in there, and the policies of Charlie's comrades are indistinguishable from those of the rest of the middle class left, the yuppies of 'Marxism Today' included.

Al Richardson

## Leeds clash

I AGREE with your analysis of the Chesterfield socialist conference and was glad to read that the WRP will be taking part in regional and national gatherings that may follow Chesterfield.

In the light of this analysis I would be interested to know what your position is on the the solidarity conference of strike- and support-groups at Leeds on 7/8 November.

The statement which has been adopted as the basis for the conference puts those taking part firmly within the framework of an acceptance of the idea that capitalism is here to stay.

It speaks of defeats for the miners and printers and while it refers to lack of support by the leadership of the official movement, by adopting a syndicalist and chauvinist analysis it puts the support group network in a straitjacket which will allow the sell-outs to continue.

These sell-outs by trade union leaders and the leadership of the Labour Party need a political analysis. You wrote of those attending the Chesterfield conference:

'The fact that the new manifestation of the economic crisis heightens the necessity for revolutionary leadership and the development of revolutionary theory that is quite outside the framework in which many of them think about politics.'

If the same applies to those attending the Leeds conference then it is surely the task of a revolutionary party armed with revolutionary theory to make a major input at Leeds.

It is a great shame that the WRP did not claim its date for the anniversary of the October Revolution/international conference at the time it was fixed. This would have prevented the nonsense of a major British working class conference conflicting with the international conference.

The fight for theoretical development is made that much more difficult within groups when a party claiming to be revolutionary passes over the opportunity of a major theoretical intervention in the building of a national network of support groups while at the same time criticising others on the left for not being conscious of the 'eruption of the economic crisis'.

If you are really serious, get to Leeds, at least for Saturday 7 November.

Pat Brady  
Tower Hamlets Workers Support Group (in a personal capacity)

Workers Revolutionary Party members will be attending the Leeds conference on Saturday and a report of the proceedings will appear in next week's Workers Press.

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Friday 4 December: The Stalinist Theory of Socialism in a Single Country

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### REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

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<b>MAIDSTONE</b> HM Prison County Road, Maidstone, Kent DONAL CRAIG, 4-year sentence, L40579.	<b>LEICESTER</b> HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ PAUL KAVANAGH, Life sentence, 1888. BRIAN KEENAN, 21-year sentence, B26390. PATRICK MCGEE, Life sentence, B75881.
<b>PARKHURST</b> HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX PATRICK HACKETT, 20-year sentence, 342603. GERRY McDONNELL, Life sentence, B75882. PAUL NORNEY, Life sentence, 863532. SEAN McSHANE, B75888. TOMMY QUIGLEY, Life sentence, 69204. PETER SHERRY, Life sentence, B75880.	<b>WORMWOOD SCRUBS</b> HM Prison, PO Box 757, Du Cane Road, London W12 0AE DONAL CRAIG, 4 years.
<b>ALBANY</b> HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS MARTIN BRADY, Life sentence, 119087. HARRY DUGGAN, Life sentence, 338638. BILLY GRIMES, 10-year sentence, 78647. SEAN KINSELLA, Life sentence, 758661.	<b>DURHAM</b> HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham. MARTINA ANDERSON, Life sentence, D25134. ELLA O'DWYER, Life sentence, D25135.
<b>GARTREE</b> HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP RONNIE McCARTNEY, Life sentence, 463799. PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, LB83694. STEPHEN NORDONE, Life sentence, 758663. JOE O'CONNELL, Life sentence, 338635 ROY WALSH, Life sentence, 119083.	<b>INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:</b> CAROLE RICHARDSON, 290719, HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire PATRICK ARMSTRONG, HM Prison Gartree. GERARD CONLON, 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin. PAUL HILL, 462778, HM Prison Long Lartin. JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham. HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs. JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs. BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs. GERARD HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs. RICHARD McILKENNY, 509497, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs. PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs. PATRICK McLOUGHLIN, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs. They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

**FREE THE Framed Irish Prisoners!**

*'If the (Birmingham Six) win it will mean that the police were guilty of perjury, that they were guilty of violence and threats, that the confessions were involuntary and were improperly admitted in evidence and that the convictions were erroneous... This is such an appalling vista that every sensible person in the land would say; it cannot be right, these actions should go no further.' (Lord Denning, denying the Birmingham Six the right to proceed with an action against the police for injuries received while in custody), 1980*

10p

A new pamphlet outlining the cases of framed Irish prisoners, including the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four. Copies available from Free the Framed Irish Prisoners, c/o DM 1320, London WC1 3XX.

We thank An Cumann Cabhrach, British section, for supplying and updating this information.



# The Newsletter on 1917

**T**HE EVENT whose 40th anniversary we celebrate today is the greatest in the whole story of man.

No matter what crimes have bloodied and scarred the Soviet Union in these four decades, or ripped from the hands of the Russian workers the fruits of their victory of November 7, 1917, the Revolution they made was humanity's first decisive step across the threshold of a new society.

The achievements the Russian people have conquered, despite cruel invasions and the crippling toll extorted by bureaucracy, already demonstrate for all who have eyes to see the immense superiority of socialist economy over any form of class society.

Russia has passed through war, civil war, pestilence and famine. She has known hardships that no other people in the world has suffered. None other has made such efforts.

The Russians' energy and zeal, born in the flames of the October Revolution, have swept them in less than half a century from the Slough of Despond that was Tsarism to the level of an advanced industrial power.

No other nation ever went forward at such a tempo, even at the time of the Industrial Revolution. Before 1917 the symbol of Russia was the wooden plough. Today it is the TU 104 and the first earth satellite, which has amazed the world.

And the secret of this breathtaking economic progress is neither the Russian soul nor the genius of a Stalin or a Khrushchev: it is the impetus, still unspent, still redoubtable, furious, elemental, of that autumn day when the 'Aurora' trained her guns on the Winter Palace and sleepless men in the Smolny guided the seizure of power by the revolutionary workers, soldiers and sailors.

Though Stalinism has sought by every means to damp down the fire lit 40 years ago, destroying the party that Lenin built and murdering its leaders, mocking and perverting revolutionary forms by filling them with an alien content, restoring privilege in the mask of equality and injustice dressed up as socialist legality, fostering national arrogance while preaching internationalism, squeezing the spirit of Marxism into the mould of dogmas and parrot-cries — yet the fire has gone on burning, steadily and imperishably, in the hearts of men.

Forty years after the English Revolution its traditions were dissipated in the false consciousness of the Restoration and the 'Glorious Revolution'. Forty years after the French Revolution its grandeur and élan seemed to a new generation a temporary and unaccountable aberration.

The Levellers and the Jacobins were scarcely more than ripples in the stream of history. But the Bolsheviks have diverted the whole stream till it has engulfed one-third of the earth in a torrent of social change.

For this is the epoch of proletarian revolution, and its traditions cannot be destroyed. Bourgeois and proletarian, white man and African, intellectual and Philistine, bureaucrat and revolutionary: all live today in the shadow of October.

It dominates our times like a volcano destined yet again by its eruption to shake and reshape the world, to topple rulers and bring empires crashing to ruin.

The caste which rules the Soviet Union is obliged to celebrate the October Revolution, just as it is obliged to maintain and make more efficient the socialist economic basis.

Its dominance depends both on its success in propagating

**THIRTY** years ago today, on November 7, 1957, 'The Newsletter', not quite six months old, published a special enlarged issue to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution.

The 24 contributors included the graphic artist Paul Hogarth, the philosopher Hyman Levy, the composer Bernard Stevens, and the educationist Beatrix Tudor-Hart, as well as Bill Hunter, John Daniels, Don Renton, and Tom Kemp. Between them these 24 writers covered many aspects of the social, political, and cultural history of the USSR since its birth.

My unsigned editorial in that special issue was entitled: 'No Force Can Quench the Flames Lit Forty Years ago by Russia's Workers and Peasants'.

Thirty years on, this article's flaws are obvious: above all, its over-optimism about the pace of change in both the Soviet Union and the capitalist world.

All the same, it did reflect the position of a number of people who had left, or been expelled from, the British Communist Party in the preceding 18 months, and had begun to study the Trotskyist analysis of Soviet history.

For my generation, October was the touchstone of a genuine revolutionary. And we found in 1956-1957 that the Trotskyist tradition alone had remained loyal to October, and to the world-wide extension of October, while at the same time steadfastly combating the Stalinist bureaucracy and — no less important — providing a Marxist explanation of the bureaucracy's rise to power.

So, despite its flaws, this editorial summing up our findings seems to me to have a certain documentary interest 30 anniversaries later. It is reprinted below.

the fiction that it is the rightful heir, defender and champion of 1917, and on its effective extraction of tribute from Russia's nationalised industries.

Its parasitism must be concealed beneath the mantle of respect for such aspects of October as can decently and legitimately be called to the attention of that majority of Soviet citizens which lacks personal recollection of the Revolution and of its leaders.

Years of 'correcting' historians, of re-evaluating heroes who became traitors overnight or vice versa, have necessitated constant patching and repatching of this mantle. The bureaucracy, turning tradition into mystique, relies on the figures '1917' to dazzle all but the longest memories and the most sensitive consciences. At present it does not rely in vain.

**B**UT the very soil on which the bureaucracy depends for its existence inevitably breeds resistance to its domination, just as the celebration of such a cataclysmic event as the October Revolution must inevitably excite interest in and curiosity about the real history of the Soviet Union, the original meaning of soviets, the democratic traditions of the Bolshevik Party, the exact positions taken by the protagonists in far-off controversies and the part played by men who were later imprisoned and killed as 'enemies of the people'.

Among the millions of Soviet youth there will be some at least whose imagination is so stirred by the revolutionary past of their country that a mere repetition of familiar forms of speech cannot satisfy them.

And once the dust is blown off the archives and the seals torn from the forbidden books, there can be no return to the decades of falsification which sought to canalise scientific investigation and strait-jacket creativeness in the arts. The fifth decade of the USSR will witness a re-education of Soviet youth, with consequences impossible to predict.

The 10th anniversary of the October Revolution came at the point where the bureaucracy, relying on the fatigue of the Russian workers and the defeat of the Revolution in Germany and China, was able to consolidate its power inside and outside the party. November 7, 1927, was the last occasion on which representatives of the Opposition were able to make an open and public appeal to the workers.

The 20th anniversary came in the midst of the dreadful excesses of the purge, when a generation of revolutionary leaders was massacred to the monotonous refrain of confessions and the high sounding but void articles of the most democratic constitution in the world.

The 30th anniversary found the Soviet people, battered and bled by the fascist onslaught, straining to restore their national economy despite the

bafling and frustration of their initiative by officialdom and the grotesque cadences of the paean of praise to Comrade Stalin, then approaching its climax.

Ten years later mass pressure and the fear of its intensification have forced certain important concessions from an unwilling ruling stratum, including admissions about past tyranny and the disgrace of prominent and seemingly permanent leaders, which have intensified the incipient intellectual ferment.

This 40th anniversary coincides with the first anniversary of events in Poland and Hungary which, despite compromise solutions in the former and savage repression in the latter country, are the writing on the wall for Stalin's heirs.

The bureaucracy sees in the Commune of Budapest and the workers' councils of Győr and Tatabánya its own approaching doom, when new soviets, new soviet parties and new proletarian democracy will arise to complete the work October began.

The swift changes and shocks of the fourth decade may well be succeeded by a still

the disaster of war.

The greatest achievement of the coming decade would be the creation of a new Marxist leadership, the long-delayed rebirth of Lenin's party.

**T**HE ATTITUDE of British socialists to the Soviet Union is not, and cannot be, determined either by the character and actions of the present leadership or by the vulgar and unprincipled anti-Soviet barrage in the capitalist press.

A trade union remains an instrument for working-class advance even when it is thrown out of focus by the domination of trade union bureaucrats. The Soviet Union remains a working-class conquest despite the temporary exclusion of the working class from the seats of power.

Forty years ago the chain of capitalism was snapped; the distortions and deformations that have attended the building of a socialist economy are unfinished business for the workers to settle; and in settling this overdue account they need neither help nor advice from the imperialists.

From the proletariat of the rest of the world, however,

Stalinist leaders of the Communist Parties. They have used to veil their drooling desire to the International Department of the CPSU; they have used it to blunt the finest revolutionary and international instincts of the workers under their influence.

In the name of the defence of the USSR the temporary and sectional interests of the Soviet bureaucracy have taken precedence over the victory of the revolutionary movement. In fact Pollitt, Thorez and Togliatti have transformed this slogan into its opposite, and have betrayed the real interests of the Russian workers.

Real defence of the Soviet Union, from the standpoint of socialist principles, means, not apologetics, lies and whitewashing, but unconditional defence of the socialist property relations, unflinching criticism of every bureaucratic distortion and unwavering support of the Soviet workers in their struggle for genuine socialist democracy and the preservation of the traditions of October.

It means speeding by every possible means the advance to real socialism in the capitalist

socialist means, to any attempt by imperialism to take advantage of working-class opposition to bureaucracy.

Ten years ago talk of such opposition could be dismissed as revolutionary romanticism. Today it is not so easy to close one's eyes to the future.

The Hungarian Revolution in particular, despite every attempt by King Street and Fleet Street to portray it as the work of reactionaries, is generally accepted as the struggle of industrial workers and communist intellectuals.

To suppose that the tensions which brought about this upsurge are confined to the bonapartism of the capitalist world is to surrender Marxism to its perverters and log along hopelessly in the wake of events, shocked at each fresh revelation, unable to generate or learn from each fresh revelation.

Not if there are any comfort to be derived for capitalism from the reawakening of the spirit of October, the renaissance of all the mass creative initiative of the soviets, the political consummation of Russia's economic seven-league strides, which will ultimately come on the order of the day.

Socialist democracy, soviet democracy, in the Soviet Union, will be a powerful magnet for the workers of the capitalist countries. As she is today the Soviet Union is a potential beacon of hope for the oppressed: they see in her their future, but the mirror is clouded and the image distorted by grave and terrible abuses.

The redemption, painful and harsh though it may be, will hasten the elimination of exploitation and oppression with new and startling swiftness. History will more than compensate for the delay, for the long night that fell in 1923, and that is now coming to an end.

☆

**F**ORTY years after the words 'We shall now proceed to construct the socialist order' were spoken the past and the future are subtly interwoven in Soviet society.

There are greed and parasitism, inequality and intolerance, a hundred and one prehistoric, pre-human traits. There are also the civic consciousness, dignity, respect for labour and, above all, class feeling, which can and will eliminate the abuses and cleanse and heal the new society.

Those who hate and fear the Soviet Union speak only of the bad, because they are terrified of the decline of their own civilisation and the onset of what seems to them a new dark age. Those who serve the interests of the bureaucracy speak only of the good, for they seem to themselves to shine in the reflected glory of bureaucratic privilege.

Marxists must not flinch from the complex interweaving of bad and good, and must pin their hopes on the one social force which, as science shows, can shoulder the responsibility of leadership in the leap to a new and really human existence.

To love humanity and understand the process of social development is to love the working class, understand its historical mission, and have confidence that it can fulfil it; to love, too, its first creation, the Soviet Union.

On this 40th anniversary our love for the Soviet people and our gratitude for their incomparable efforts is blended with steady confidence in their ability to return to the road of October, the road that leads to communism.

## THE NEWSLETTER

Edited by Peter Fryer, 180 Clapham High St, London, S.W.4. Subscription 8s. for 12 issues, post free.  
Vol. 1, No. 27 Two Shillings November 7, 1957



swifter march of events in the fifth. Side by side with the re-education of Soviet youth there is bound to come a powerful revitalisation of the Russian proletariat, a renewal of revolutionary energy and self-confidence which could be postponed, as the revival after 1905 was postponed, only by

they need the utmost fraternal help and understanding. The principle of international working-class solidarity imposes on us in 1957, no less than in 1917, the pre-eminent duty of defence of the Soviet Union and of its planned economy. No slogan has been more misused than this one by the

countries. In the event of war between world imperialism and the USSR it means support for the USSR, even with its present leadership, against the ruling class of one's 'own' country. Not least, it means active, vigorous and determined resistance, by all the traditional



## EXHIBITION

# Hogarth and his contemporaries

**THIS exhibition traces the development of a British School of painting of which Hogarth is generally acknowledged as the prime mover.**

The establishment of the Hanoverian succession in the first part of the century meant a move away from the aristocratic, 'small world' paintings of, for example, Charles Phillips and Gawen Hamilton, to the detailed scenes of the often unpalatable side of life as experienced by the lower classes, depicted especially by William Hogarth.

Even Hogarth's individual and group portraits breathe life and character against the poker-faced and pallid faces of the formal set-piece portraits of the wealthy families of the time.

The exhibition is one of contrasts as the old style of portraiture lingered on to be overshadowed by the humanity of Hogarth and the more delicate colourings and naturalistic settings of Gainsborough at the end of the period.

Examples of the aristocratic 'shutters up' type of portrait are by Phillips, Hamilton and Nollekens, whose Tynney Family look somewhat startled!

**'Manners and Morals — Hogarth and British Painting 1700-1760'. Tate Gallery, London. Until 3 January 1988.**

William Hogarth's group portrait of the Graham children is very different — lively children in a 'homely' interior, with other details, such as the cat stalking the bird in its cage, providing the viewer with many points of interest.

I was glad to see three of Hogarth's series of paintings which he developed into his social commentary on the contemporary period. The Rake's Progress, drawn in part from his family's experiences in the Fleet Prison for debtors is a powerful portrayal of the downfall of a young gentleman.

Details abound in all the eight paintings, alluding to contemporary characters and events. His other scenes on show are the four paintings of 'The Election' — again masses of details for the patient observer to seek out and to savour as Hogarth puts across his view of the corruption rife in elections of the time.

Another series of paintings, by Joseph Highmore is 'Twelve Scenes from Samuel Richardson's 'Pamela', based on a Richardson novel (sub-titled Virtue Rewarded — emphasised by the heroine being bathed in light) is, to my mind not in the same league, being rather simple and lacking in the interesting detail of Hogarth's paintings.

The Tate must be congratulated however, on hanging the whole series together for the exhibition: some of the paintings have

been sent from Melbourne in Australia.

Pictorial crowd scenes, as distinct from detailed crowd scenes are also a feature of the exhibition. The several views of Covent Garden Market move from the closed-in view of van Aken to the wide open space of Richard Wilson seven years later.

In the paintings it is, however, the straight lines of the buildings which dominate; the painting by Joseph Baker of Lincoln Cathedral is the extreme example of this. The painting takes on a draughtsman's 'front elevation' appearance.

Canaletto, a visitor to Britain during the period, is represented by his views of London including Vauxhall Gardens and Westminster Bridge — the light echoes his views of Venice rather than the less 'brilliant' light of his Dutch and English contemporaries.

One room of the exhibition is devoted to the Foundling Hospital founded in 1737 by Captain Coram to care for unwanted and abandoned children.

Hogarth became a governor and patron of the hospital and encouraged his contemporaries to donate works of art which were to be on public view, thus pioneering public art galleries.

Hogarth's admiration for the sea captain and his cause comes through in the majestic treatment given to the portrait of a person who, by contemporary standards, was not particularly high up the social ladder.

● The exhibition runs until 3 January, admission £3 (£1 concessions). If you want to revisit Hogarth's detailed paintings, season tickets cost £7.50 (£2.50).

**GEOFF THURLEY**



Detail from Hogarth's 'The Graham Children'. Off on Canvas. The Trustees of the National Gallery, London.

## ROBSON'S CHOICE

**Saturday** kicks off appropriately enough with a new production of Ronald Gow's *Love on the Dole*. This radio play, set in Salford in the early 1930s, starts at 7.45p.m. (Radio 4). At 7.55p.m. (BBC2), a new documentary on the celebrated Soviet composer **Dmitri Shostakovich**. At 10.10p.m. (BBC2), John Sayles' love story set in the 1960s, *Baby It's You*, followed at 11.55p.m. by Mirra Bank's *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute*.

On **Sunday**, at 2.30p.m. (C4), Italian director Vittorio de Sica's justly famous *Bicycle Thieves*, one of the finest examples of Italian neo-realist cinema (made in 1947) which influenced European cinema for decades. For children, also starting at 2.30p.m. (ITV), Walt Disney's *Escape from the Dark*. At 3.55p.m. (BBC2), in *Music in Camera*, Vladimir Ashkenazy plays Schumann. At 4.35p.m. (BBC2), *Review*. At 9.05p.m. (BBC2), Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (a simultaneous stereo broadcast with Radio 3).

On **Monday**, at 8.30p.m. (BBC2), second documentary on the pioneers of modern surgery, *Into the Heart*. At 9p.m. (BBC2), Woody Allen's irresistible *Annie Hall*. At 11p.m. (C4), *Victory to Consensus*, the third film in the series *The People's Flag*, looks at working class politics between 1945 and 1964 — written by Stuart Hood, directed by Chris Reeves. At 11.20p.m. (ITV), *Belginners Please*.

On **Tuesday**, at 9p.m. (C4), final part of *Apartheid*. At 9.30p.m. (BBC2), the imperial *Footsteps* of Jean Louis Bruckhart (1784-1817) in search of the source of the river Niger stumbled across the legendary 'rose-red city' of Petra, carved out of rock more than 2000 years ago. At 10.30p.m. (ITV), *Viewpoint 87* presents a new documentary by Mike Grigsby, *Living on the Edge*, a look at recession-torn Britain. At 10.45p.m. (Radio 3), *Arrangements of Bach*.

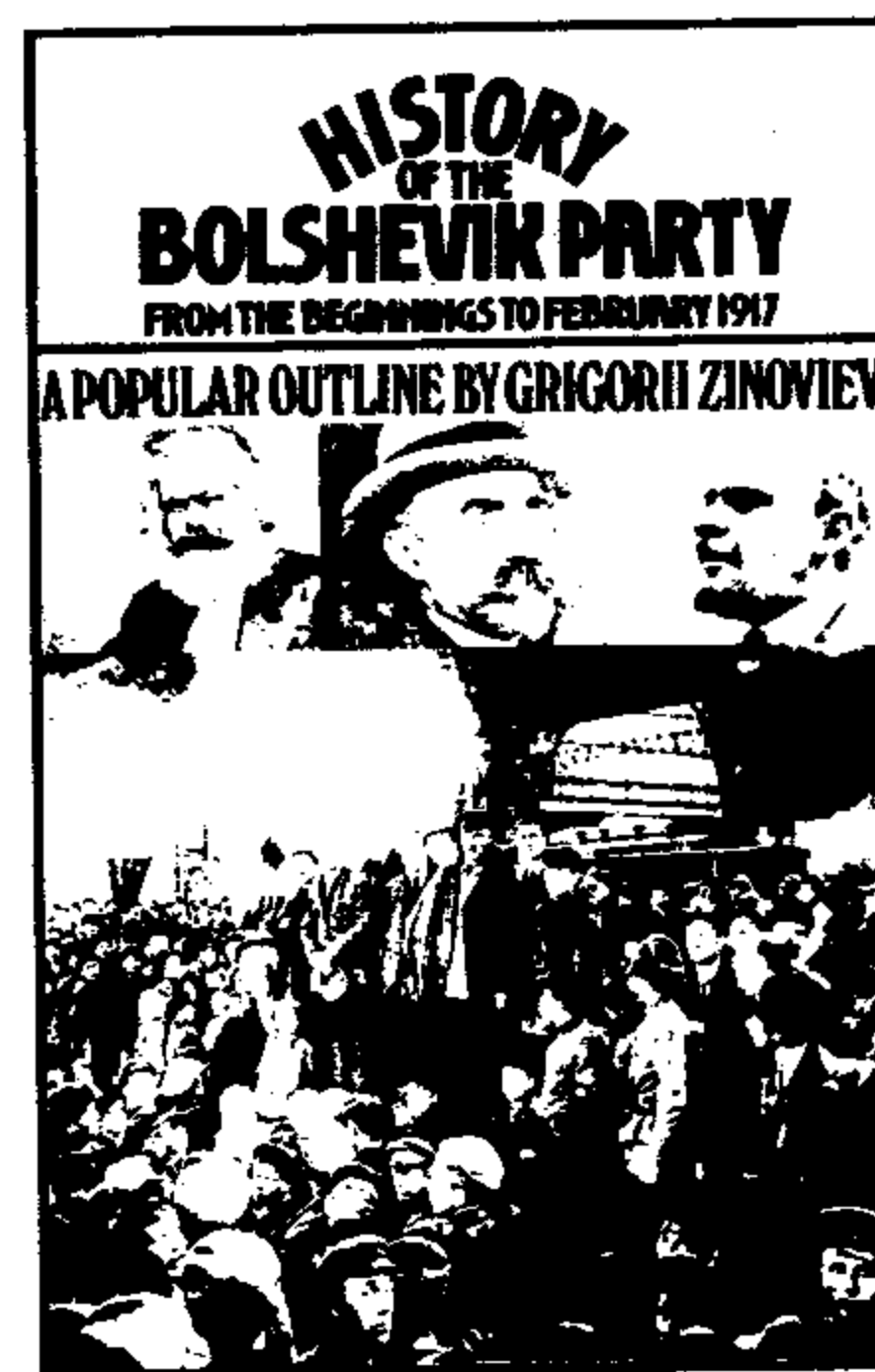
On **Wednesday**, at 2.15p.m. (C4), Thorold Dickinson's 1940s classic, *Gaslight*. At 4.05p.m. (Radio 4), *File on 4* presents part two of *A Revolution without Shots*. At 9.30p.m. (BBC1), *Fourteen Days in May*, a documentary about the death penalty in the state of Mississippi.

On **Thursday**, at 7.30p.m. (Radio 3), *Latin American Music for Guitar*. At 9.30p.m. (BBC2), *40 Minutes* presents a comparative study of two teenage South African girls: one black, one white. At 10.50p.m. (C4), *A Russia of One's Own*, a documentary that follows a 'dissident artist' exiled in the US back to his homeland in the USSR. At 12.25p.m. (C4), Henri-Georges Clouzot's *Les Diaboliques*.

On **Friday**, at 9.50p.m. (BBC2), a programme about the funniest man in movies: **Woody Allen**.

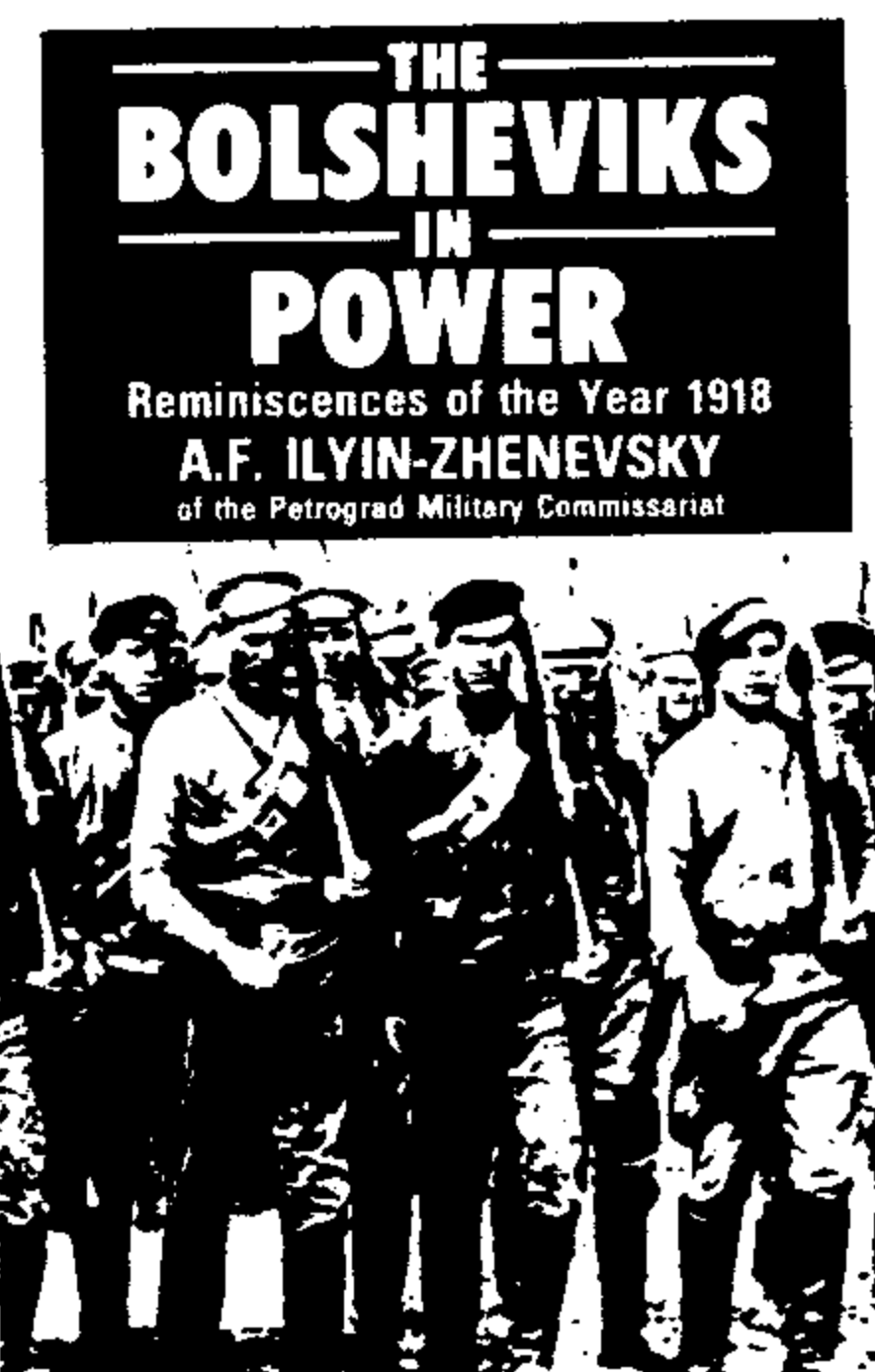
**TOM SCOTT ROBSON**

## 70th ANNIVERSARY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION:



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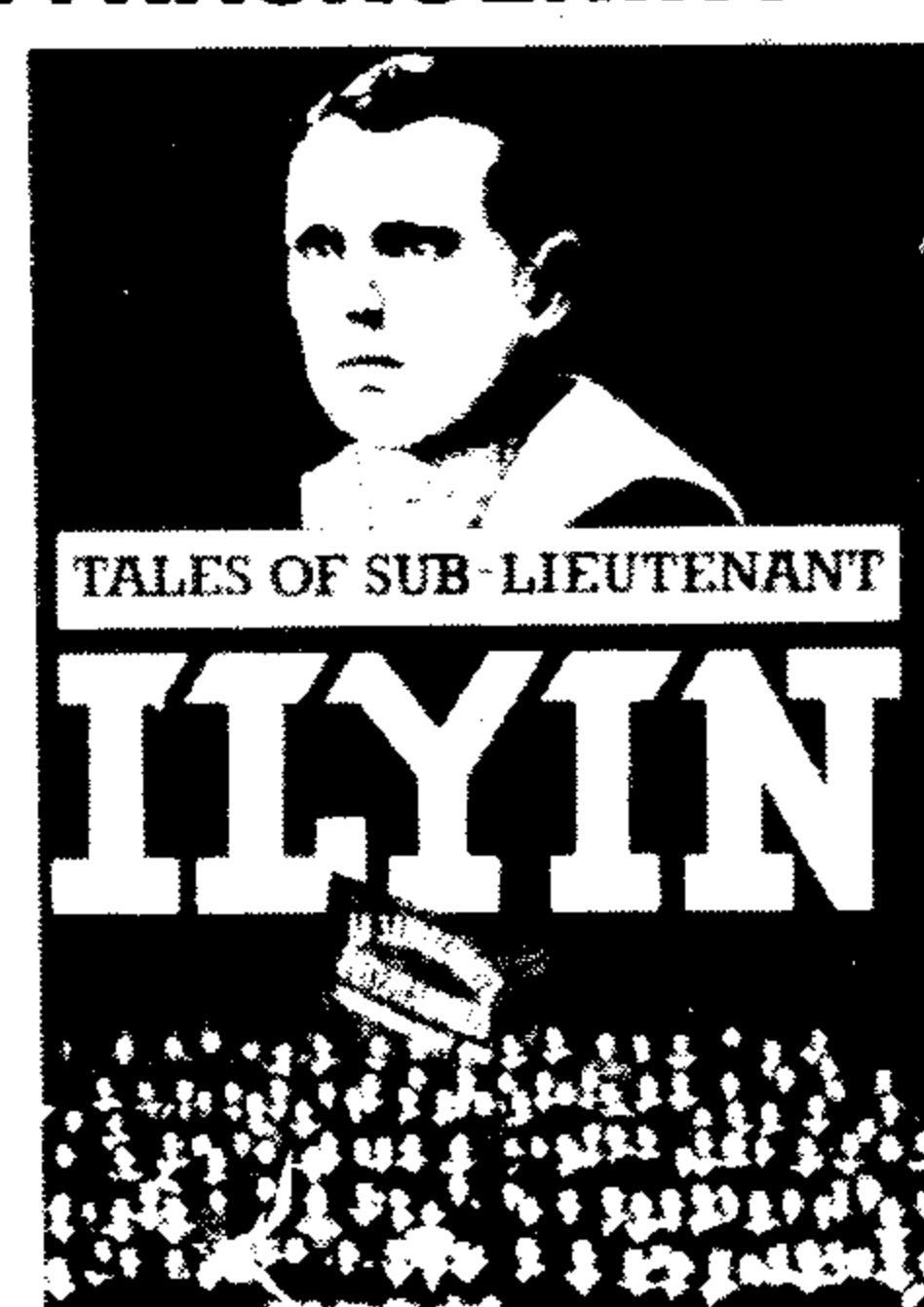
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# BOOK REVIEW

A Man Apart. By Gilles Perrault. Zed Books. £7.95.

**THEY** were ready when Henri Curiel came down in the lift. Four shots from a Colt 45. His assailants sped away, leaving him to die within minutes. Rue Rollin, a quiet street in Paris, 4 May, 1978.

An hour later, there was an anonymous phone call to Agence France Presse. 'Today, at 14.00 hours, the KGB agent, Henri Curiel, militant of the Arab cause, traitor to the France which adopted him, ceased his activities once and for all . . .'

The caller signed-off 'Delta' — the name used by the hitmen of the OAS, of French Algeria, years before.

Had the past really come back to take Henri Curiel, who had served his time in Fresnes prison for his support of the Algerian independence struggle?

Curiel had a long past, with many enemies, some more recent and deadly than the OAS. There were the South Africans, blaming him for underground activity and the exposure of their atom secrets; the Israeli Zionists' Mossad, anxious at his contacts with the PLO; the American CIA, whose hacks and disinformation experts had been busy inventing stories of Curiel 'the terrorist boss'.

The French state itself had jailed him once, sent him into internal exile more recently, and its DST agents were apparently keeping his home and his friends under surveillance when he was murdered.

Rosette Curiel, his widow, and comrades like Joyce Blau, found the police more interested in interrogating them like criminals than in pursuing the killers. To this day, nobody has been caught for the murder.

Those with cause to mourn Curiel were many, — trade unionists in his native Egypt, British and Greek soldiers who were there during the War, Sudanese, Algerians, Palestinians, Israelis, — but not in positions of power.

One person he was in touch with just before his death was to meet the same fate four years later in Lisbon, when due to attend the Socialist International — Issam Sartawi of the PLO. Another, older friend, had been hanged in Khartoum some years before — Abdel Khalek Mahjoub, trade union leader and secretary-general of the Sudanese Communist Party.

Someone remembered Curiel saying then: 'One day I'll end my days like that, from a violent death. And it's just the way I want to go. It's the most beautiful of deaths, a soldier's'.

Curiel was far from being a 'terrorist', and he would have made a most unlikely agent. To present the real Henri Curiel, Gilles Perrault skillfully uses cinematic flashbacks, weaving past and present into a dialectical unity, depicting a fascinating history in full colour.

Egypt had been hauled into capitalism's world market, as he says, like a country bumpkin whose pockets

are fleeced on his first day in the big city. British bayonets enforced the rule of imperialist finance-capital, its burden passed down by the rich landowners on to the suffering fellaheen.

A small urban middle class and skilled working class developed in the cities, mainly Greek, Italian or Jewish. Among this enclave the trade unions sprang first, and the first attempts at a communist movement.

Above them, insulated behind high garden walls and an adopted French culture from the surrounding poverty, were a cosmopolitan haute-bourgeoisie, like the banker Daniel Curiel.

Among their children, linked by education to the latest in European culture and unable to remain insensitive to the misery and struggles of the Egyptian masses, emerged communists like Henri and his brother Raoul.

Henri Curiel was, we suppose, in rough terms, a Stalinist. But the label will not fit neatly. He was certainly nobody's 'agent', but always his own man.

## Refused

When World War II broke out, Curiel's circle were for the Allies. But he refused to be compromised by the British embassy, and understood why Egyptians would not believe a German yoke would be worse than the one they had.

When the Greek army and fleet at Alexandria mutinied against their right-wing government-in-exile in 1944, demanding to join the heroic resistance being waged in their homeland, it was Curiel who mobilised solidarity with them.

The Soviet embassy in Cairo refused to see the Greeks' delegation, and Churchill insisted on crushing them.

We might add that some of the British soldiers who took part in the famous Cairo Forces 'parliament' in 1943 (dissolved by the War Office when it got too left-wing) used to get their literature from Curiel's Rond-Point bookshop.

Curiel's Democratic Movement for National Liberation (DMNL) aimed to become a mass communist party. He made Marxist works available in Arabic, extended the movement's roots among working people, helped organise strikes, and made contacts in the army, including among the nationalist Free Officers who overthrew King Farouk in 1952.

The post-war struggle against British imperialism

# LIFE AND DEATH STRUGGLE OF HENRI CURIEL



Like many a revolutionary, Curiel saw the inside of prisons, and used his time to study, write, and even organise. Above, he is in Fresnes prison, France, where he did two years from 1960-1962 for his backing of the Algerian liberation struggle.

was interrupted by the Palestine war. The DMNL had urged an independent Palestine for Jews and Arabs, and Marcel Israel formed an Anti-Zionist League, but now they were saddled with the Soviet bureaucracy's support for partition and the State of Israel.

The monarchy was able to use the war as a chauvinist diversion, the Moslem Brotherhood whipped up hostility to Jews, and under martial law the police rounded up communists.

Later, having refused to accept departure for the Zionist state as the price of freedom, Curiel was able to establish fraternisation in prison with Moslems jailed for opposing Farouk's betrayal of the Palestinians.

Curiel insisted the Palestinians should not be forgotten after the 1949 armistices, and that they had a right to a state. This was not the only thing distinguishing his movement from Stalinist orthodoxy.

The DMNL supported the Free Officer's coup in 1952, on which their 'big brothers' of the French Communist Party fixed the label 'fascist'. The British Communist Party, at first sympathetic to the overthrow of Farouk, was quickly pulled back into line by Palme Dutt.

Some British Stalinists had apparently already labelled Curiel a 'Trotskyist' for his principled line on self-determination for the Sudan. But this was nothing.

In November, 1952, the French Stalinists announced their own East European-style show trial, expelling veteran Communist Party hero Andre Marty as an alleged traitor, and citing wartime contact with 'a du-

bious Egyptian couple', who in turn had contact 'with one of their relatives who is . . . a Trotskyist accused of having been an informer'.

Curiel was denounced for having accommodated 'a senior member of British intelligence' (actually a British Communist Party member) at his flat in Cairo during the war, and as an 'international spy in the Trotsky mould'.

The Egyptian communists, already badly split at this time, were thrown into chaos by the accusations and suspicions. Curiel, already exiled to France by Farouk, was now almost totally isolated.

The Algerian war provided Curiel with a cause to support, and earned him a jail sentence. The struggle in South Africa brought the opportunity to assist those engaged in clandestine work, although the network he helped (involving Breytan Breitenbach) was apparently infiltrated, if not betrayed, at the French end.

## Just

Curiel also worked unceasingly for a just peace in the Middle East, at first mainly through 'big name' colloquiums with little fruit, later through acting as go-between in the first contacts between the PLO and dissident Israelis.

Any of these activities could have contributed to making him a target for assassins. Forensic and other evidence links the killing of Curiel with that of an Algerian worker, Laid Sebail, possibly mistaken for an Algerian immigrant leader.

But it would not have been beyond those who organised the killing to lay a false trail.

My own view, for what it's worth, is that the murder of Henri Curiel was one of a series, including that of Said Hammami in London earlier in 1978. Whoever was used to pull the trigger, those who wanted him dead were those who want the Palestinians silenced.

We shall have to await the promised next volume from Gilles Perrault to find out more.

Perrault, whose book on 'The Red Orchestra' is well-known here, is a highly professional writer with several best-sellers to his credit. Although I'm no expert, I'd

guess 'A Man Apart' has literary merit as well as political fascination.

The original was highly praised by French critics — 'Le Matin' thought the sections on Egypt were 'rich, fascinating and poignant', while 'Le Monde' said it 'makes one think of Hitchcock'.

Yet the author had to search high and low to find a publisher in France willing to touch this one, and it has been a further three years before Zed, much to their credit, have made it available in English.

Someone is still frightened of the dead Henri Curiel.

Charlie Pottins

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# Workers Press

Call by Trotskyists throughout the world to the youth, the workers and the intellectuals of the USSR, the Eastern European countries and the capitalist countries.

# Restore the truth about Trotsky and all the assassinated Bolshevik leaders



1917 — 1927 — 1937. Three anniversaries.

● October 1917, which 'shook the world'. ● Ten years later the Left Opposition in the Bolshevik Party was crushed by the repression; its members sent to concentration camps; its leader Leon Trotsky exiled. ● Another ten years, and 1937 ended with the first group of Stalinist trials which sent to execution Kamenev, Zinoviev, Radek, Bukharin, the leaders of the October Revolution which the working class and the masses had made against Tsarism and capitalism.

After the assassination of Trotsky by Stalin's agent in 1940 in Mexico, there remained alive only one member of Lenin's Central Committee: the one who conducted the massacre of Bolsheviks — Stalin.

The 70th anniversary of the October Revolution will be celebrated from official platforms, but above the official speeches, other voices will be raised, this time, in the USSR itself.

Millions of people, young and not-so-young, want to know the truth, not only about October, but above all about the fate of its leaders, Lenin's comrades, the true his-

tory of the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International.

All those, East and West, who want to remain faithful to the heritage of October — even though they may have different political opinions — must take account of this renewal of interest, this insistent demand coming out of the masses to know the truth about the leaders of the October Revolution. It is to them we address this call for a common fight for the truth!

In the Soviet press, echoing this preoccupation among the people, there is discussion about whether or not it is necessary to 'rehabilitate' Trotsky and his comrades.

Trotsky's grandson, Vsevolod Volkov, has stated that his grandfather is in no need of rehabilitation, and that the Kremlin rulers must 'restore the historical truth' about him and publish his works.

He is right! It is this honest position which we must support; it is on this foundation that our common struggle must be taken up!

Gorbachev talks about 'glasnost' (openness). Behind this call for openness he and the bureaucracy open the door wider and wider to the imperialists.

The politics of both the old-guard Stalinists and the Gorbachev faction are determined solely by the bureaucracy's struggle for preservation of its own privileges, its own survival.

The working class will reply that what is necessary is workers' democracy, and that along the road to that, the demand must be raised for openness on all the essen-



ZINOVIEV

tial questions facing the working people of the Soviet Union.

We must struggle together to force the Stalinist rulers to admit that the Stalinist trials were frame-ups! That the so-called 'confessions' were forced by physical and mental torture! That the assassinated victims, like Trotsky himself, were butchered by the Stalinist terror.

Gorbachev talks about 'glasnost', but it is known that on government orders the archives of the KGB and of all trials during the period 1930 to 1950 are being burned. It is essential to speak out against this attempt to rub out all trace of the victims of the Stalinist terror.

Demand that these actions be stopped at once! Demand the opening of the archives! Their contents concern all those who are faithful to socialism.

In the workers' parties and trade unions of the capitalist countries, let us fight for the setting up of a Commission of Inquiry of the international working class movement, which must go to the USSR and be able to freely consult these archives and report to



RADEK

the workers of every country.

But it is not just a question of knowing the names and the fate of the victims. All the works of the assassinated Bolsheviks, and especially those of Trotsky, must be available for all to know. Let us fight together for their publication and republication!

No one can deny the urgent necessity of restoring the historical truth. But there is more. The Soviet working class, youth and intellectuals are seeking today for the way out of the dead-end in which the USSR finds itself — in the economic sphere and and in the question of democratic liberties.

## How?

They want an answer to the question: how is socialism to be built? How can we continue the road opened up by the October Revolution? Even the Kremlin leadership recognise that the USSR has entered a grave and unprecedented crisis.

In their day, the old Bolsheviks gave answers to these questions, but they were reduced to silence, on the orders of Stalin and his clique, by the GPU. With Trotsky at their head, they denounced Stalinism — they analysed it, they fought it.

Similarly for the oppressed nationalities (Tatars, Letts, Lithuanians... ) of the USSR who fight against the bureaucracy's oppression, the works of the old Bolsheviks, of Trotsky, contain the Leninist answers!

It was the workers and the oppressed masses as a whole who made the October Revolution, and for that they needed the works and the leadership of the Bolsheviks. Today they urgently need

those works for their struggle against the bureaucracy.

The Soviet workers and youth have the right to know the full range of proposals of Trotsky, of Zinoviev, of Rakovsky, of Bukharin for the building of socialism.

They must be able to judge the validity of these for themselves! Yet these works are hidden today in the secret archives, accessible only to the leaders of the Party and the government.

Let these works be published in their entirety and without censorship. They are not the concern of a handful of 'specialists', and must be published in mass editions available to all.

Let the youth, hungry to know their past and to prepare their future, have the right to meet freely, without bureaucratic control, to form study and discussion circles around the works of Trotsky and the other assassinated Bolsheviks. For this purpose let the Komsomol premises be opened up for their use.



BUKHARIN

The working class, yes, will celebrate the October Revolution, celebrate the party of Lenin. The Stalinist bureaucracy, which under Stalin butchered that party and betrayed the October Revolution, cannot celebrate October!

Against them, the Soviet workers will fight to launch and conduct an appeal for a fund for the purpose of erecting a memorial to all the victims of the Stalinist terror.

Let Soviet writers, artists, and film directors be encouraged to create works which restore the true picture of the October Revolution, of the struggle of the working masses who made it, of their leaders and the struggles they conducted.

**Workers, youth and intellectuals of the USSR!**

Your struggle for the truth about your revolution, the truth about the assassinated leaders of the victory of October, is our struggle. Again, 70 years after you awakened an immense hope among the oppressed of the entire world!

**Workers of the Eastern European countries, of China, of Cuba...**

... countries where the bourgeoisie has been expropriated! You are faced with the same problems as the workers of the USSR!

You sense more than anyone the importance for your life and your future of the struggle for a real opening up of the truth in the USSR. Let us fight together for these aims!

**Workers of the capitalist countries...**

... you who are confronting imperialism and the attacks of your own bourgeoisie; communist militants who want to fight the class enemy and remain faithful to the October Revolution: organise to support the Soviet workers in this fight — it is a fight for your own future.

Capitalism is bankrupt and threatens to drag down with it the working class and the oppressed of the whole world. Socialism is the future!

The October Revolution shows the way to the overthrow of capitalism. It lights the way to a socialist society along the road taken by the Bolsheviks.

This is the road, this is the future, which is aspired to by millions of workers in the countries where the capitalists have already been expropriated.

**For these life-and-death reasons the fight for the truth about October, its leaders and their fate, is your fight.**

Fight in your parties and trade unions to make them support the struggle of the Soviet workers for the truth!

**Preparatory Committee for the International Conference of Trotskyists**  
12 October 1987



KAMENEV