

FIGHT STATE ATTACKS ON BRITISH AND IRISH WORKERS

TWO BLOWS were struck at basic working class and democratic rights by the Thatcher government last week:

They slapped a ban on all interviews with Sinn Fein and people supporting the Republican struggle in Ireland.

Four workers who refused to leave their union at GCHQ were sacked.

At first sight these groups could not be further apart.

On the one hand Republicans who support the armed struggle of the IRA against the British state. On the other GCHQ workers, many of whom stressed their patriotism when interviewed on the television last week.

These attacks indicate the nervousness of the Thatcher government and not its strength.

Thatcher is nervous because after 20 years of bloody war in the north of Ireland the British state has not been able to impose a military defeat on the IRA or the nationalist communities.

Despite nine years of onslaught against the working class this is by no means a defeated force, as Thatcher knows. Major battles on wages are looming this winter as workers fight to keep up their standard of living in the face of accelerating inflation.

Thatcher does not have complete confidence in the ability of the trade union and labour bureaucracy to keep the working class under the absolute control she and the capitalist system require.

It is the united working class, British and Irish, that will defeat Thatcher. This unity will be forged on the basis of the defence of democratic rights in Britain and the right of Ireland to self-determination.

Labour and trade union leaders who are 'loyal' to the British capitalist state are bound



Part of the audience at the meeting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Fourth International

to attack the rights of their members in the interests of this state.

Labour spokesman on Ireland, Kevin McNamara, attacked Hurd's ban on IRA interviews on the grounds that this would play into the IRA's hands! The fact is that these cowards are the playthings of the Tories. They have far more fear of the working class and the Republican movement than they do of the Tory government.

After last week's spontaneous walkouts by thousands of civil servants in response to the GCHQ sackings, Leslie Christie, general secretary of the Civil Service Union NUCPS, said the actions had taken the unions concerned 'by surprise'.

Needless to say these leaders never lifted a finger to mob-

ilise their members in defence of the sacked four!

John Foster, broadcasting spokesman of the National Union of Journalists said 'We are asking broadcasting organisations to make clear [that] reports have not been used because of legislation.'

Such leaders have no intention of calling on fellow trade unionists and the working class to act in defence of those who have stood on a basic working class principle: the right to belong to a union. They live in mortal dread of such action.

It is only through the mobilisation of the independent strength of the working class against the capitalist state as well as its reformist and Stalinist agents, that the attacks of the Tory government can and will be defeated.

PATRICK SLAUGHTER
NEXT week's Workers Press will contain an important article by Cliff Slaughter on the despicable position of the mis-named 'International Communist Party' on the jailing of his son Patrick, together with a statement on the same issue by the Group of Opposition and Continuity of the Fourth International.

WRITE TO WORKERS PRESS

WORKERS PRESS welcomes letters on all subjects, but please be as brief as possible. Only in exceptional cases are we able to print letters longer than 200 words.

Workers Press PO Box 735 London SW9 7QS

Workers Press

Spies and the media

Peter Wright's 'Spycatcher' lifts no more than the corner of the blanket covering the activities of the intelligence services. But even this glimpse raises some important issues for the labour movement.

The burgling, bugging and infiltration of left groups revealed in the book are well known. However, not surprisingly, another angle has been played down by the media. This is MI5's custom of domesticating selected pressmen to plant stories as part of their dirty work.

Wright refers particularly to William Massi of the 'Sunday Express' and to Raymond Jackson, 'Jak' the 'Evening Standard' cartoonist (the latter is infamous for his anti-semitic caricatures of Arabs along with other reactionary rubbish.)

People like this were used in the campaign to destabilise the Wilson government. Maybe they were also helping to get Thatcher into the Tory leadership around the same time.

Don't forget that Wilson's memoirs refer to a period in the 60s and 70s. You could be sure that the techniques of dirty tricks and disinformation have developed a long way since then.

* * *

The decision of the National Union of Journalists to back the call for a labour movement inquiry into the activities of MI5 - a call first made in the Workers Press - is therefore especially welcome. The NUJ have now taken this through the Trades Union Congress.

But those journalists who carried this decision might well think more about its implications.

The 'Guardian' and others of like mind rejoice that justice has finally been done and a great blow struck for freedom as a result of last week's Lord's decision. But the burglars and buggers are surely still at work.

Tony Benn, a member of the very government Wright and his friends were subverting, now advocate a 'Bill of Rights' to make the state more democratic. As if actions of the kind recounted by Wright and others were just aberrations or lapses from democracy.

* * *

This is what Engels wrote 100 years ago: 'The state is...by no means a force imposed on society from without...rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development. It is the admission that society has become entangled into insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispell.'

At that time, the modern imperialist state was still in its infancy. Today, because it defends the property of an ever-narrowing layer of capitalists, this 'Power seemingly standing above society' is obliged to engage in conspiracy against society at large and against the working class movement in particular.

* * *

Of course Marxists must not stand aside from any movement which tries to thwart the exercises of the state, and we support all those journalists who still try to bring the truth to their readers and viewers.

But at the same time it is our duty to warn that the remedy can only be found in the course of the struggle to overthrow this power. The instruments of open and concealed violence of the ruling class and their judiciary, their prisons, their armies, their intelligence services, their corrupted media - will have to be dismantled and replaced with armed organs of the working people.

That is the only way to end the rule of oppression, exploitation and lies.

WORKERS PRESS FIGHTING FUND

Total Received: £611.88

WE NEED £888.12 by the end of the month to complete our target of £1,500. At the time of writing there are 12 days to go. We assure our readers that this fund is crucial to maintain Workers Press.

I had a brief encounter with a young man at the entrance to Bricklayers' underground station selling 'News Line'. (This is the newspaper of the group led by Sheila Torrance who was expelled from the Workers Revolutionary Party in 1985). He was calling on people to contribute money in a collecting box for the release of Nelson Mandela and arms for the South African workers.

He was a young black man and it was quite an appealing sight to see those wishing to take a stand against apartheid. I asked him: 'You sure this money is being handed over for arms for the South African workers?' He replied: 'I'm not sure. They never tell us; I simply say that it goes into the funds.'

I pressed home my question, explaining that he was being misled and educated if he was expected to accept what they told him without asking a question. He replied: 'I believe half goes to the News Line and half to the South African workers, but I'm not sure.' He then told me that the main question was not the main question. I should be asking myself whether I was prepared to make a sacrifice for 'the cause'.

This reminded me of the story of the 'dedicated, self-sacrificing' priest who was asked how much of the collection in his local church went to his personal upkeep and how much was dedicated to the work of the Lord. He replied: 'I throw the money into the air. The Lord keeps all that does not fall to the ground.'

We are collecting our Fighting Fund for Workers Press as an integral part of the work to rebuild the Fourth International. Please assist us to complete the £1,500 by the end of the month.

Dot Gibson

Send donations to: Workers Press Fighting Fund
PO Box 735, London, SW9 7QS

LISTINGS

LONDON DISTRICT OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The following meetings will be held on Thursdays in Conway House, Red Lion Square, starting at 7.30 pm. Entrance £1, (unwaged 50p)

27 October - Tom Kemp on COLONIALISM, DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT

3 November - Meeting, Geoff Pilling: WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY - THREE YEARS SINCE THE EXPULSION OF G.HEALY

10, 17, 24 November - a series of three lectures given by Sima Pirani on: IMPERIALISM, NATIONALISM AND SOCIALISM IN IRELAND

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY/PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN GLASGOW. Sunday 23 October 1 pm, Blythswood Hotel, 320 Argyle Street, Glasgow

LEICESTER EDUCATION ALLIANCE

Demonstration to defend education and health - assemble 12 noon Saturday 29 October Victoria Park Gates.

After the demonstration there will be a rally in Nelson Mandela Park.

For information contact: Leicester Hospitals Branch NUPE, or phone Leicester Education Alliance on Leicester 707730 or 551537.

CITY OF LONDON ANTI-APARTHEID

Saturday 22 October, 3-6 pm Rally on the non-stop picket in support of Moses Mayerkiso and his comrades and against the Labour Relations Amendment Act. Bands, speakers, street theatre

Wednesday 26 October, join the non-stop picket to protest against the phony municipal elections

Friday 28 October, 6 pm, rally on the picket 'Free Ismail Ebrahimi kidnapped and tortured by apartheid.'

News Briefs . . .

Winning ways

SOVIET sportsmen were made to take drugs, according to a recent article in the weekly magazine, 'Ogonyok'. In what has been described as part of the rumblings of discontent among top soccer players and other sportsmen, ice-hockey player, Igor Larionov, severely criticised the leading Soviet trainer, Viktor Tikhonov, whom he described as a brutal dictator.

Tikhonov's policy was to win medals at all costs, alleges the article, even to disregarding the consequences to the players' health. Refusal to be injected with 'bio-stimulants' resulted in being reported to the State Sport Committee, Larionov said.

Ozone layer

UNLESS tougher measures are taken to protect it, the earth's upper ozone layer will be unable to recover from the deterioration it has suffered which was first observed by scientists five years ago. This warning, issued at a United Nations-sponsored two-day conference last week, also stated that the depletion was far more rapid than at first predicted, and that the hole which had occurred over the Antarctic could recur elsewhere. More effective measures needed to be enforced than those outlined in the 24-nation agreement signed in Montreal last year, a spokesman from the Nasa space agency said.

Press ganged

DENYING that students and workers had been involved in the round-up, a spokesman for the Burmese military council, which took power last month, said that more than 1,100 people had been picked up off the streets of Rangoon and sent to front-line positions to serve as porters.

'Waifs and strays', law-breakers and gamblers made up the bulk of these unwilling recruits. One eyewitness reported that army trucks had been patrolling the city's streets conscripting anyone they caught idling or fare-dodging.

The military government, in preparation for next month's so-called free elections, has announced that it is banning from standing any opposition parties advocating support for strikes as a means of obstructing government administration.

Left Bishop

BRADFORD Tory-controlled council's cuts programme, involving £5.8 million and the loss of 9,000 city hall jobs in the next five years, has been questioned by the Right Reverend Robert Williamson.

Inquiring whether there was no room for compromise, the Bishop expressed the view that all Christians in Bradford should ask themselves if they should not be more involved in politics and that, if the planned cuts were to mean 'the poor becoming poorer and the deprived even more so' then that would be 'unfair to say the least'.

LABOUR COUNCIL BANS IRISH MARCH

BY SIMON PIRANI

A CAMPAIGN has been launched in Glasgow demanding "Free Speech on Ireland" following a Strathclyde Regional Council ban on a recent "Britain out" march.

The Labour-controlled council, who had been informed of the march months beforehand and met with organisers, imposed the ban with only four days before the October 8th event, leaving no time for a legal appeal.

The Glasgow Ad-hoc Committee for British Withdrawal, which consists of Republican, Irish solidarity and left-wing groups, condemned the ban as "political".

"The banning notice said the march would cause 'intimidation and disorder' despite our obvious determination to make it peaceful", said a spokesman.

'Many of our committee members are labour movement activists, and we are particularly indignant at the notice's claim that the march would 'promote religious intolerance.'

'This is extremely ironic coming from a council which this summer gave permission for dozens of marches by organisations whose aims and membership qualifications are openly sectarian.

'While these marches went ahead, our march - on which people of differing religious backgrounds would have marched together for a political aim - was banned.'

The committee have issued a leaflet pointing out that two other major "troops out" events have suffered censorship this year: a James Connolly commemoration organised by Edinburgh's Rising Phoenix Republican Flute Band, which was banned; and a speaking tour about Irish political prisoners by Jack McGarry of Sinn Fein, who was silenced by detention under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and exclusion from Britain.

The demand for free speech will be taken up particularly in the Labour Party and trades unions, since it has been Labour doing the state's dirty work in clamping down.

Strathclyde councillor Jim McKechnie challenged the march ban at a Labour group meeting last Monday, and intends to take the matter further.

The "free speech" campaign was announced at a 400-strong rally which went ahead despite the march ban. Ad-hoc committee spokesman Josie O'Kane said that the other issue on which the committee would concentrate in the coming year was that of Irish political prisoners.

Jackie Donnelly of Sinn Fein, Alan Harding representing the Holloway Road 30 who were arrested at a recent internment anniversary march in London, and Durham miner and Workers Revolutionary Party member Dave Temple also spoke at the rally.

So did Una Gillespie of the "Lifers" campaign, which is demanding that release dates be given to 400 Republican prisoners serving life and "secretary of state's pleasure" sentences. At present release dates are often withheld from prisoners who continue Republican political activity, and transfer refused to de-segregated prisons where they would have to mix with loyalist and ordinary criminal prisoners.

At a discussion meeting the night before Saturday's rally, the Ad-hoc committee's attitude to the "Time To Go" charter launched by Labour lefts and show-business personalities was discussed.

Socialist Workers Party members, in particular, said the char-

ter should be welcomed with open arms and those calling for "troops out" should support it. Others pointed out that while any calls for British withdrawal were welcome, the "Time To Go" campaign aimed to convince the imperialists that they should withdraw, whereas the solidarity movement should concentrate on working-class mobilisation to support Irish self-determination.

A member of the WRP, again agreeing that any calls for withdrawal were welcome, pointed out that "Time To Go" was championed in Scotland by Labour MP Maria Fyfe, who had refused to attend last weekend's rally because that would mean sharing a platform with Sinn Fein.

Was this because under a future Labour government she would have government responsibility while SF members would be getting jailed as they were under the last Labour government?

* A fuller report on the "Lifers" campaign will soon be carried by Workers Press.

CAMDEN COUNCIL DEPORTS IRISH

BY LIZ LEICESTER

CAMDEN COUNCIL has refused to reverse its policy of issuing travel warrants to homeless people.

In a report commissioned by Camden, compiled over four years ago at a cost of £120,000, the Council is urged to make substantial changes in its housing policy.

But the Council maintains that the 'intentionally' homeless are not its responsibility. 57 travel warrants sending homeless people back to their place of origin have been issued since June - many to newly arrived Irish people.

As a direct result of this racist policy, the Labour Council has been called before the juvenile court to explain why it issued a travel warrant to a teenage girl from Cork, Ireland, who was due to appear in court.

The young woman subsequently went on board a United States destroyer and ended up in Norfolk, Virginia - her family is considering suing the US government.

12 High Court injunctions have already been brought against Camden Council by homeless families who say they have been refused help.

Since last winter, there has been a telephone-only service on weekday mornings in the Homeless Persons' Unit.

This has led to severe hardship for hundreds of people who are homeless in the inner London borough.

David Amery of the Homeless Persons Monitoring Group has said that the law is broken every day by the borough through its lack of a homeless persons service.

With the unprecedented increase in homelessness reported by all agencies - most recently by the Institute of Housing - the plight of the homeless becomes more and more desperate.

The Housing Bill in the House of Lords will give private landlords and property speculators the right to buy Council estates and raise the rents.

Thousands of people will not be able to pay and will join the ranks of the homeless.

PETER FRYER reports from Moscow

PETER FRYER, just back from the Soviet Union, thanked members and supporters of the Workers Revolutionary Party for the financial contributions which made his visit possible.

His first impressions of a 'highly paradoxical situation' came from 'Moscow News' handed to him on on Aeroflot plane.

It reported an exhibition at the Lenin Library of 800 de-suppressed books from the 6,000 suppressed (mostly from the 1920s); history exams had just been cancelled because the pupils had been taught from suddenly discarded textbooks; an opposition political party, the Democratic Union, had been launched four months before, with two factions: social-democrats and Euro-Communists; at the same time, a riot squad had been set up to suppress demonstrations, and a law had just been passed to fine or jail demonstrators.

Glasnost allowed people to speak, but demonstrations were suppressed.

By a decree adopted on 29 July people attending unauthorised demonstrations face fines of up to 300 roubles or arrest for up to 15 days; a second offence within a year is punishable by a fine of up to 1,000 roubles or forced labour for up to two months.

He had been told: 'They can now happily rehabilitate the victims of 50 years ago. But what they dare not do is allow a group of people to demonstrate in the centre of Moscow against Ligachev.'

Peter explained that discontent and frustration had led to 70 per cent of the population regularly drinking to excess, and 10 per cent of the population being alcoholics.

More and more children were born debilitated as a result of their parents' chronic alcoholism.

He was told: 'Under Brezhnev everyone stole. Everyone worked badly. People just walked off with what they wanted from their places of work. Labour morale was, and is, at rock bottom. The population was in a kind of stupor. No one believed in anything. There was widespread cynicism which remains today.'

The present situation was described as a kind of unstable stalemate, in which the frustration among the people grows from week to week.

Peter was told: 'This is the most important feeling in the country at the present time.' This frustration was not just

because things are failing to improve, it was also because an authoritarian tendency was growing among the 'liberal' wing of the bureaucracy.

Peter said that a number of possibilities were being discussed about the future, including military takeover, spontaneous sectional revolts, the toning down of glasnost, or a mass uprising. To his question about whether the latter was a realistic perspective the reply was emphatic:

'Yes indeed: the only unrealistic idea is that of western Sovietologists, who see only limited reform from the top. Even the first two years of perestroika show that it's absolutely impossible to avoid radicalisation of the process. They simply can't control it from the top.'

'The controlled reform was in 1985 and 1986. From 1987 it began to slip out of their control. What they are trying to do is keep the balance, and so far the Gorbachev leadership has been efficient in doing this. But it is an unstable balance. At some point the process will move rapidly in one direction or another.'

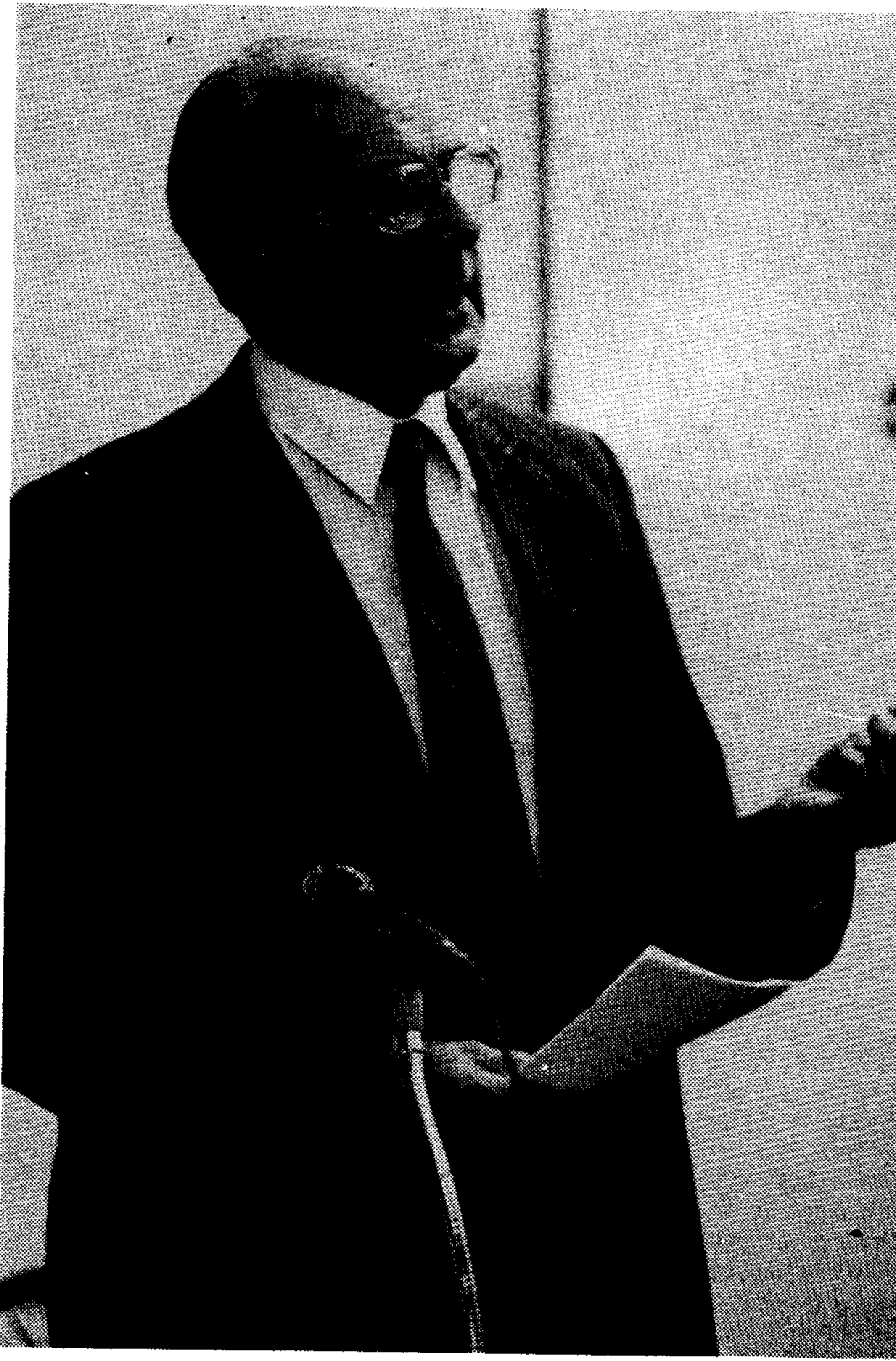
'The national movements are an indicator of this; so is the ecological movement, which is becoming a nationwide political challenge; already there are a lot of unreported strikes all over the country.'

'This process,' said Peter 'is the beginning of the political revolution. But... revolution is never a predictable process, taking place according to neat formulas and schemas worked out beforehand. The political revolution in the USSR and eastern Europe is beginning in a highly complex, contradictory, and paradoxical way, and will certainly continue in such a way...'

'All over the world there is an upsurge of the poor and dispossessed against the rich and privileged. In Armenia and the Balatic Republics, there is ferment. There are so many strikes in China, we read in the 'Independent' yesterday, that the bureaucrats there are sending people to Poland to be trained as riot police.'

'Yugoslavia is in ferment. So is Algeria. So is Burma. So is Chile. So is Palestine. So is South Africa.'

'After its first 50 years of work in exceptionally difficult conditions, the first chimes that herald the ultimate victory of the Fourth International are now sounding. And the workers of the Soviet Union are now beginning a struggle that will lead to their re-conquest of all the gains of October 1917 and to the extension of October throughout the whole of our planet.'



Cliff Slaughter speaking at the rally

CLIFF SLAUGHTER 'We are engaged in the reconstruction of the Fourth International...'

CLIFF SLAUGHTER, political secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party, told the meeting:

'It is 50 years since the Fourth International was founded. For us, it is not just an act of commemoration to call such a meeting. We are engaged in the reconstruction of the Fourth International.'

'We have laid great stress on the continuity of Marxism,' Cliff Slaughter said. Recalling the battles which had taken place in the Trotskyist movement against revisionism, he drew attention to how revisionist theories had fared since.

'Where are the "centuries of deformed workers states"?' he asked. 'Where are they now? That legacy is being destroyed by the working class in Eastern Europe, in the Soviet Union and in Poland.'

'Because the working class is not just an oppressed but a revolutionary class.'

Dealing with Stalinism and its international policy, Cliff Slaughter urged people to read the report which Mikhail Gorbachev had given to the Ninth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.

Thinking

The Soviet leader had spoken of the 'new political thinking' which had enabled them to 'appreciate the importance to international relations of the moral values which the nations had evolved.'

Gorbachev had gone on to boast of finding agreement in 'quarters far removed from us ideologically.'

'How does this work out in practice?' Cliff asked. He referred to Soviet diplomacy and deals with South Africa,

Speeches from the meeting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Fourth International

JOHN STEEL *We must build the Fourth International in Ireland*

JOHN STEEL, a former member of the Socialist Labour League (forerunner of the Workers Revolutionary Party) and the Young Socialists National Committee, came from Belfast to the anniversary meeting. He said he was proud to be associated with the Preparatory Committee and to speak there.

'This is not just a commemoration,' he said, 'but part of the struggle to build the Fourth International.'

'We must build the Fourth International in Ireland,' John said, and he paid tribute to the Workers Revolutionary Party for the work it has undertaken in Ireland since the 1985 expulsion of G. Healy and his supporters.

'We in Ireland must analyse what happened to our movement. While lip service was paid to the independence of the Irish section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, the greatest mistake was founding branches of the Socialist Labour League in Belfast and the North.

'In 1969 the Trotskyist movement was not in a position to lead in the way it should have been, given the leadership we had in the working class,' he said.

'This is the 20th anniversary of the Civil Rights movement,' John said. 'The world has seen the struggles of Irish youth against imperialism. The bravery

of these youth has never been in question.'

There are over 1,000 political prisoners held in jails by the British, but in spite of all the methods of violent repression, the struggle in Ireland against imperialism continued.

But leadership was the essential question, John explained.

'The response of Sinn Fein has been a rapid movement to the right.' This was clear in the recent talks between Gerry Adams and John Hume.

'Adams believes in the two stages theory - first national independence struggle and then, some time later, talk about socialism. Adams is only paying lip service to socialism,' he said.

'I believe that the British maintain their hold on the six counties for purely political reasons,' John said. There would be massive revolutionary repercussions throughout the world if the Irish won their freedom.

'The fight to build the Irish section of the Fourth Inter-

national must take on the unity of Catholic and Protestant workers,' he said.

The history of struggles in the working class and trade unions shows this unity can be forged, particularly now as the crisis of capitalism deepens and the Protestant workers lose their privileges.

'The building of the Irish section must take on the issue of the armed struggle,' John went on. The Stalinists and revisionists all reject the armed struggle. The Trotskyist movement must be very clear in its support for the IRA.

'But we must also be critical,' John said. 'There are some very right-wing elements within the IRA.'

The question of the revolutionary party is a burning issue in Ireland. Political prisoners are discussing the need for a vanguard party and calling for the development of an analysis of the Irish situation.

'From the prisons there are also calls for a new Republican Congress. We should back this, we should fight inside this movement,' John said.

where the Stalinists made clear they didn't want socialism.

'A Soviet spokesman says they don't want to disrupt the economic stability of southern Africa, and that they recognise the strongest economy is that of South Africa.'

Where was the 'moral value' in that, Cliff demanded?

Imperialism

'The working class of South Africa can be bought and sold like slaves, for Stalinism's deals with imperialism!'

Cliff Slaughter emphasised that we were living in an 'epoch of imperialist decay, of wars and revolutions'. All politics had to be understood from that standpoint.

'When we speak of scientific socialism, we are speaking about arming the working class, particularly the youth, with Marxist theory.'

Epoch

He said the present epoch had been prefigured in Marx's work, when the founder of scientific socialism uncovered the growing contradiction within capitalism, between its drive to develop the productive forces and its becoming a brake upon these forces.

'The drive to develop the productive forces becomes transformed under capitalism, into the development of means of mass destruction.

'That's the meaning of two world wars, it's the meaning of Hiroshima, it's the meaning of the nuclear threat that has developed.'

Referring briefly to the bankruptcy of Labour reformism, Cliff said social democracy was 'a stinking corpse'.

The future lay with our movement.

JIM BEVAN

The meeting was a milestone in the struggles of the last three years, said WRP central committee member Jim Bevan.

The WRP crisis had been brought about by the biggest class battle since 1926 - the 12 month strike by the National Union of Mineworkers against the Thatcher government's plans for the destruction of jobs and pits.

This struggle against the capitalist state posed all the questions for the Fourth International in the struggle to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership in the working class.

Both the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Labour Party had revised their programmes in line with the 'new realism'.

These traitors - reformists and Stalinists - take the road of the employer, just as the class comes forward in an increasing manner against the state and the employers.

He emphasised that it would be quite wrong to write off Stalinism as a spent force and outlined the reactionary role that the Stalinists in Wales and Scotland especially had played during the miners' strike.

Personal Column

Peter F

Two great human beings

AFTER six years, that section of the 'Collected Works' of Marx and Engels which is devoted to their letters to each other and to other correspondents has almost reached the half-way mark: six volumes have appeared, and seven more are to come.

The recently issued vol. 43 (Lawrence & Wishart, £15) contains 347 letters written between April 1868 and July 1870, no fewer than 222 of which are now published in English for the first time, while 87 of the rest have never been published in full in English before.

Not to mention its five predecessors, vol. 43 is a positive treasure-house, and one that is made all the more accessible and fascinating by the usual scrupulous editing (though I have noticed a slip in the name index: one Jones is identified as a 'librarian in the British Museum Library' whereas the text makes it clear that he was a familiar figure in the Cheetham Library, Manchester, where Engels worked in his spare time from the 1840s to the 1860s).

This volume opens with the co-founders of scientific socialism at the height of their powers. The first volume of 'Capital' had appeared in September 1867, and two years later Marx and Engels are still very much occupied with popularising the book and arranging for, and to some extent supervising, translations into French, English, and Russian.

In the summer of 1868, though intermittently plagued by carbuncles, Marx

resumes work on volumes II and III of 'Capital'. Soon Engels is hard at work on 'The History of Ireland', of which only the first chapter was to be completed, and reaching the conclusion, borne out by later scholarship, that 'as a result of the English invasion, Ireland was cheated of its whole development, and thrown back centuries'.

Ireland, indeed, is a red thread running through this whole volume. When the Fenian leader Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa is elected to the House of Commons in 1869, despite being 'a felon convicted' and under arrest at the time, Marx's daughter Jenny writes to his friend Ludwig Kugelmann:

'We are all of us downright Fenians. On the day we received the news of Donovan's election we all danced with joy - Tussy [Marx's youngest daughter Eleanor, then aged 14] was quite wild. . . .

'Meanwhile the noblest Irish are pining in British dungeons. It is impossible to describe the sufferings of these men. Donovan Rossa had been at one time for 35 days kept in a dark cell with his hands manacled behind his back, night and day, and was not loosed even to take food - thin porridge - which was left for him on the floor of the cell.'

One of Jenny Marx's articles on the Irish question in the Paris daily 'La Marseillaise' is quoted in the Liberal London daily 'The Echo', thus smashing through the conspiracy of silence in the British press on the treatment of political prisoners in Ireland.

'The idyllic days of systematic lying and hushing up the facts are over', her father comments proudly.

His own considered opinion on the Irish question appears in two key passages. Reminding Engels that he had once taken

the view that 'English working ascendancy' would end the oppress Ireland, Marx adds:

'Deeper study has now convinced the opposite. The English working will never accomplish anything but has got rid of Ireland. The lever must be applied in Ireland. That is why the question is so important for the movement in general.'

And again: 'I have become more and more convinced - and the thing now is to put this conviction into the English working class - that they will never be able to do anything decisive here in England but they separate their attitude towards Ireland quite definitely from that of the other classes.'

One of the great joys of this volume is that it shows Marx and Engels as human beings with human feelings and failings, taking deep and often enthusiastic interest in every aspect of the world around them, and revelling in the small daily delights of family life.

Marx becomes a grandfather for the first time. Engels at last, and to his great relief, gets rid of his business commitments in Manchester and prepares to move to London.

Having just seen in Moscow a statue of Engels that portrays him as some kind of Teutonic deity, I was refreshed to find in this volume his replies to one of the 'Confession' questionnaires that were so highly popular in those days.

His favourite virtue, he says, is 'joy' and his idea of happiness is 'Chateaubriand's Margaux 1848'.

I don't imagine this will please all our readers. But it pleases me no end.

AS I SEE IT

BY TOM OWEN

The Devil's Party

SOMEONE accused me recently of having an inappropriate enthusiasm for the 'bad' (evil) in literature. Did this moral inversion represent a perverse reading of what Keats called the negative capacity in literature? I have to say that many of the more striking literary creations have a demonic quality. Heathcliff is more interestingly human than the milksop Edgar Linton, Macbeth more dynamically tragic than the dithering Hamlet, and Milton's Satan more stunningly individualised than his featureless God and his insipidly luminous son, Christ.

The great demonic protagonists of post-medieval art are highly individualised. They step out of their roles in the allegory of morality plays and become realised as concrete historical figures. They make the transition from emblem to person with Promethian energy, in a desperate quest for the freedoms of power, knowledge

and sensuality. The infinite freedoms promised by individualism drives them against the fetters of temporal and spiritual authority and feudal obscurantism.

The triumphant predecessors of the English bourgeoisie not only cut off the king's head but internalised his spiritual mirror image, God. In so doing they internalised their own 'Hell' in the form of 'conscience'. As Christopher Marlowe's scholarly devil Mephistopheles so prophetically puts it:

'Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed in one self place, but where we are is hell and where hell is, there we must ever be.'

Two of the most durable literary myths of the Renaissance are Faust and Don Juan. Each felt free to 'sell' his soul 'to the devil' to realise his desires.

Don Juan, the arrogant libertine, is consumed by the fires of his own lusts and passions before being dragged off to hell. Faustus, who contemptuously dismisses divinely ordained knowledge, seeks a 'world of profit and delight, of power, of honour and omnipotence' in 'necromancy' or 'forbidden knowledge' - that precursor of modern science. However, he achieves the status, not of a deity, but of a trivial iconoclastic prankster.

The Faust myth is more

complete than that of the libertine Don Juan and the tragedy of his thwarted transcendence more profound. Don Juan's energies are trivialised in the pornography of the 18th century French libertine novel and its imitations, until de Sade revitalised the character during the French revolution.

It was that diffuse and contradictory movement, Romanticism, which resurrected the demonic mythology of the Renaissance. In France the quest for happiness after the revolution of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity is constantly frustrated in the great novels of Stendhal and Flaubert. In the literature of early British capitalism profound moral uncertainty and doubt and early radicalism replaces the optimism inspired by the rationalist beliefs of the eighteenth century that the arts and sciences in alliance with industry could nurture human perfectibility.

The 'workshop of the world' becomes 'the dark satanic mills' of William Blake, or the fiery infernal landscapes of the painter John Martin, drawn from the imagery of ironmaking.

The enormous natural and productive forces unleashed by the industrial revolution, far from liberating and perfecting the human spirit, are seen to enslave it ruthlessly, and human perfectibility through science and production becomes a monstrous fiction of art.

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein revives the obscene myth of resurrection through scientific natural energy (electricity) to create the hideous 'monster' man.

But Marx, writing of the men and women of the proletarian revolution, offers quite a different perspective.

'We know that to work with the new-fangled forces of science they only want to be masters of the new-fangled men - and not the working men. They are much the invention of machinery itself . . .

It was these new-fangled men and women of the proletariat of the 19th century intelligentsia to confront. The ex-revolutionary Wordsworth feared them 'yahoos', creatures of mere unproductive animal passion.

Emily Bronte's demon in the setting of the Pennines, has a recognisable social physiognomy: it is black, oppressed and powerless. The havoc he wreaks is the fearful presentiment of the vengeance of new men and women who could not be contained in the category of the 'social problem' or mollified by charity or reform.

When William Blake decried that John Milton, who had sought to justify the ways of God to man, was of the devil's party, he was being perverse.

On the contrary, he has expedited that dialectic of poetry towards points to freedom.

The Political Line of Gorbachev: a comment on Gorbachev's Report to the Nineteenth Special Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

IN KEEPING with its essential interests, the caste of usurpers is hostile to any theory: it can give an account of its social role neither to itself nor to anyone else. Stalin revises Marx and Lenin not with the theoretician's pen but with the heel of the GPU.

The moral qualities of every party flow, in the last analysis, from the historical interests that it represents. The moral qualities of Bolshevism, self-renunciation, disinterestedness, audacity and contempt for every kind of tinsel and falsehood - the highest qualities of human nature! - flow from revolutionary intransigence in the service of the oppressed.

The struggle against the Bonapartist bureaucracy is turning before our eyes into class struggle: two worlds, two programmes, two moralities. ('Stalinism and Bolshevism' 1937)

WRITTEN 51 years ago, on the eve of the founding of the Fourth International, these words of Trotsky's point unerringly to the real meaning of the line advocated by Gorbachev at the recent Special Nineteenth Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev centred his report to the Conference on what he chose to call the 'new political thinking' of him and his faction in the Stalinist leadership. As we shall see, there is nothing new about it, unless it is in the marked rapidity of the decay of the ideology of Stalinism in the recent period.

The so-called new political thinking is in reality only a flimsy covering for the latest phase of what the Stalinists have for decades called 'peaceful coexistence of the socialist and capitalist systems'.

This 'peaceful coexistence', under Stalinist leadership, was always the selling out of the interests of the international working class in line with the supposed willingness of the imperialists to have 'peaceful' relations with the USSR. But in earlier years it was dressed up with pseudo-Marxist language which could confuse millions of workers throughout the world who supported the Communist Parties and adapt their political activity to the needs of the bureaucracy.

Gorbachev has carried out a policy of 'glasnost' (openness) within the Soviet Union in which some of the truth about the regime of butchery instituted by Stalin and his faction has now burst out. However the bureaucracy in its various fractions may strive to control this breakthrough, it is now certain that many, many thousands of people inside the Soviet Union and throughout the Stalinist parties will not stop at the point where their leaders draw the line.

Now the role of Trotsky himself has come up for discussion. As Comrade Balasz Nagy pointed out at our meeting to commemorate the founding of the Fourth International, the Gorbachev faction seeks to stem the tide by placing an equals sign between Stalin and Trotsky. This is meant to eliminate the most important truth of

all: that Stalin led the faction in the CP-SU which was the instrument of the bureaucracy, and which set out systematically to destroy Bolshevism, physically and politically; while Trotsky led the Left Opposition and founded the Fourth International, for the continuity of Bolshevism.

For this reason, to make this equals sign between Trotsky and Stalin has another, very reactionary, significance.

We know that in our epoch the working class has need above all of a party based on Marxist theory, scientific socialism. The development and continuity of this theory, of the struggle for a party based upon it, is the most decisive question of all.

The betrayals and crimes of Stalinism could be carried out by the Communist Parties only after the corruption of those parties by the revision of Marxism, the abandonment of the fundamental positions of Marx developed by Lenin and Bolshevism.

Once the betrayals of Stalinism are exposed, two basic alternatives are posed: either conclude that the crimes and betrayals of Stalinism are the consequences of the nature of Marxism itself, of Socialism; or study the struggle of Trotsky and the Left Opposition, then the Fourth International, for the continuity of Bolshevism against the betrayal and conclude that Marxism and Bolshevism live in the struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International.

Gorbachev and the bureaucracy, by taking the line that both Stalin and Trotsky departed from the path of Lenin, condemn the advanced workers and the youth to the conclusion that Leninism, Bolshevism, leads only to the brutal, bureaucratized regime which the Soviet people have experienced in Stalinism.

It must be stated uncompromisingly that this conclusion is precisely the central idea of bourgeois ideology purveyed to the working class by every agency of imperialism, inside and outside the labour movement.

This enables us to pinpoint accurately the political role of the Soviet bureaucracy. It can confront some of the truth about the Stalin period only in conformity with its own counter-revolutionary nature, that is, in such a way as to draw conclusions which lead not to the restoration of the continuity of Marxism and Leninism, broken by Stalinism, but to the reinforcement of bourgeois ideology. One of the most important forms taken by this reinforcement is that of an opening to the capitalist class and all its agencies in the guise of 'democracy'.

That is why, now that the historical role of Trotsky can no longer be ignored, at the same time it must at all costs be distorted. In the work of Trotsky the Soviet working class and youth will find the way to arm themselves for the overthrow of the bureaucracy.

That is why, at the same time, one of the main forms taken by revisionism in the Trotskyist movement in this period is abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and a return to 'democratic' positions of the type developed long ago by Karl Kautsky in opposing the October revolution. In this way, we find self-styled Trotskyists (Lambert, Ramos, etc.) advocating the freedom of parties in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, abandoning the demand of our founding 'Transitional Programme', for freedom for soviet parties.

The same revisionists are for the bureaucracy being represented in the soviets of the political revolution, and they are for a parliament 'responsible' to the soviets, not the rule of soviets. In the articles which follow this introduction, we examine the political content of Gorbachev's report to the recent Special Nineteenth Conference of the Soviet Communist Party.

Cliff Slaughter

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HUNGARIAN YOUTH FIGHT BUREAUCRACY

REPORT OF A VISIT TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE LEAGUE OF DEMOCRATIC YOUTH IN HUNGARY

STUDENTS and young workers in Hungary will commemorate the 1956 revolution by wearing a black stripe on their lapel on November 4th - the date on which the USSR's tanks trundled across the border to crush the workers' revolt.

Most members of the League of Democratic Youth, which has called the commemoration, were not even born in 1956.

But the armed uprising of that year is their greatest inspiration - proof that the Hungarian people can and will resist Stalinist dictatorship.

'One of the aspects of Hungarian society which disturbs us most is that the state has educated us with lies', one of the League's leaders told me. 'The biggest lie is that 1956 was a 'counter-revolution'.'

Another League member said: 'The knowledge that the state lied about 1956, and that most of our parents didn't tell us it was a lie, is a burden for us.'

The League - formed in March in defiance of police threats - now intends to put this right. Their founding conference last month conferred honorary membership on Sandor Radz, chairman of the Greater Budapest workers' council in 1956.

'I have been fighting for what you are fighting for all my life', he told the conference, only a day after being judicially rehabilitated by the regime.

Besides Radz, the conference heard guest speakers from the Democratic Opposition, and Hungary's first independent union, the Democratic Union of Scientific and Technical Workers.

International greetings were brought from the Radical Party (a petty-bourgeois European transnational party), and the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference of Trotskyists (see last week's 'Workers Press').

The remainder of the weekend conference was spent discussing statutes for the new organisation. The election of committees and their relationship to members, rights of factions, and similar matters were dealt with in great detail. A draft programme is on the agenda for a second conference session later this month.

At a press conference, it was suggested to League leaders by officially-sanctioned journalists that the wall of press silence confronting their organisation was due to their stance on 1956, their demand for the rehabilitation of Imre Nagy, the Hungarian leader of that time, and their opposition to the Warsaw Pact.

The League leaders had dis-

cussed these matters with interior minister Imre Poszgay during talks.

They had said they were prepared to work with anyone, including the government, but not at the price of abandoning their democratic principles.

The League's founding document advocates a 'new Hungary' in which 'economic realities regulate the proportions of privately and state-operated property', and in which individuals and organisations can express themselves 'within the scope of democratic processes'.

The document calls for 'efficient progress in the interest of those remaining outside the Hungarian borders' - a reference to thousands of Hungarians in

Transylvania, where villages are being destroyed and communities are wiped out by the Romanian regime of Nicolae Ceausescu.

It seeks 'a demilitarised Europe... rationally realised', upholding the principles of national independence and the solidarity of eastern-middle European peoples.

(A critique of the founding statement and draft programme appeared in the recent issue of the Hungarian Trotskyist newspaper 'Negyedik Internationale', which was distributed at the conference).

The League of Democratic Youth was founded by students in Hungary's leading universities, but also includes a Young Workers' Group.

'After 1956, living standards improved - but the price paid was that workers kept their politics. This killed off initiatives. It killed off movements in the real world. 19-year old telephone operators Gyory Gyorgy, one of the organisers.

He believed that the quality of health care, social services, the absence of unemployment advantages in Hungary's system in comparison to the West - but that these things were endangered.

'We look forward to a new Hungary. But we think the movement may take the form of an independent political party rather than a trade union model. As was the case with Solidarity in Poland.'

Community defies Labour council

BY TOM SCOTT ROBSON

A 600-STRONG meeting representing 25 tenants associations in the London Borough of Brent voted overwhelmingly to step up their rent strike.

The £7 a week rent increase which came into force last week brings increases in the borough to a staggering 80 per cent in 13 months. Tenants will have no more of it. The rents issue is not the only one which is rapidly bringing the people of Brent into collision with the Labour-controlled council which was voted into office to fight Tory cuts and defend services. The social infrastructure of the borough has reached breaking point.

Dustbin collection has not been carried out for six weeks in most parts of the borough. So many dustmen have been made redundant that the remaining staff simply cannot cope with the volume of work.

Social Services staff have been on strike for three weeks in response to management's refusal to fill a key senior post, essential for the proper functioning of the department. On 9 August the Social Services Committee voted to close down the Respite Care Unit in Crawford Avenue, one of

the three units catering for approximately 100 families with severely handicapped children.

On 22 September workers and users occupied the Wembley premises to defend this service which today has a waiting list of over 39 families in need.

The Housing Department has ground to a halt due to lack of staff. Meanwhile it pays out £400 a week for every family in bed-and-breakfast accommodation awaiting permanent housing.

The section which is obliged by law to provide aids and adaptations for the disabled has been farmed out to the private sector - a cover for doing away with the service altogether.

Libraries in Kensal Rise and Cricklewood are due to be closed this week. The beautiful public library in Willesden, on which thousands of pounds were recently lavished, will not open in the foreseeable future due to lack of staff.

Most Youth and Community Centres are down for closure. The Parks and Recreation Department are preparing all the facilities they manage for sale to private enterprise.

Without a fight the people of Brent can look forward to paying heavily for what has hitherto been free, and see their favourite public parks turned into private housing developments.

Cuts in education have seen the loss of 232 jobs to date with a further 25 teachers facing compulsory redundancy.

The threat to their jobs has led off a three-day strike by the NUT and heavily supported by Brent parents who are losing their day nurseries.

Last week, in response to occupation of Winnie House, staged to underline workers' demands for better housing, the council is seen as part of a security operation for the Housing NUT (to protect staff from being reasonably frustrated and publicly), the Labour-controlled council, resorted to threats of dismissal, court bailiffs and the police to break the resistance.

Brent, the eighth poorest authority area in Britain, has cut a £17-million programme of cuts in services to be surcharged by Thatcher's Auditor. Over 1,000 jobs are to be axed immediately.

Countless more jobs will go if the £4-£13 million reduction in expenditure this year is to be achieved. It is clear it will not be achieved easily.

Any confidence the council had in the rights of ordinary people in Brent are fast disappearing. Most election time illusions have been thoroughly shattered. The defiant rent strike is an expression of this new awareness.

Meanwhile the Labour councillors themselves, caught between the Tory hammer and the anvil of the working class, face a serious danger of being