

Workers Press

18p

ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY
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£60,000 legal fund appeal

Hull £20, Leicester £2, Harlesden £5, BBC £5, Canning Town £10, Basildon £7.80, Bethnal Green £99, Crawley £34.34, Tooting £25, P.O. £3, M.G. £5, M.S. £15, R.G. £10.00, A.J.M. £50, Collection £18.84, Brixton £4, A.R. £66, Forest Gate £10, London lectures £50.91, London members £88.47.

Total £529.36
We now have a total of

£32,065.36 for our Legal Fund, and we urge you to keep up the collections.

Once more we want to establish that Healy was expelled from our Party for refusing to answer charges of sexually abusing women comrades, physical attacks on party members, and slander in a leader of the US Workers League as a CIA agent.

Following the charges being made a section of the Party, including the Redgraves, Mitchell from the News Line Editorial Board, and Torrance, former Assistant General Secretary the Party formed a minority. But they did not follow through their rights as a minority, and instead walked out of the Party, formed their own bogus WRP and News Line, and

started a series of court actions against us.

We are fighting every inch of the way, and will not be intimidated by this treacherous bunch of renegades. We ask you to make a donation to our Legal Fund. Send it to:

Workers Revolutionary Party, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT.

FIGHT MURDOCH'S UNION-BUSTING!

THE printworkers' battle against Rupert Murdoch, the electricians' union leadership and the Tory courts, and thereby the Tory government, is not about issues special to the newspaper industry.

It begs questions vital to every worker in the land. They are:

Does an employer have the right to junk his workforce without even compensation the instant he can introduce new technology.

Can he then start up again with a smaller scab work force of people outside the skills and trades of the original; can he smash up the Bridlington 'spheres of influence' rules?

Can he impose a legally-binding, no-strike, no-union-organisations-on-site agreement, one resting on hire-and-fire conditions, compulsory arbitration, a jacked-up work-rate and continuous run-down of the labour force, based on ever-extending flexibility and every more technology?

Can he then use the courts to prevent picketing, stop solidarity action and smash unions simply for protecting jobs and conditions?

The answer to all of these is that legally he can. Only the power and combined fighting strength of a united labour movement is going to say otherwise.

Print

Consider what has happened in the printworkers' case. On the claim that he must compete with the proposed non-union newspaper of Eddy Shah (Thatcher's hero of the Warrington union-busting battle), Murdoch sought to introduce new technology in association with a legally-binding deal enabling him to operate with a fraction of the workforce under a regime of total despotic authority.

Although the plans he advanced ought to be abhorrent to anyone believing in free democratic trade unionism, all five print unions were prepared to negotiate.

However, in defiance of the TUC instruction that

BY BERNARD FRANKS

they should all work together, the electricians' union outflanked the others and grabbed sole bargaining rights for itself.

It then began supplying the new, fortified plants at Wapping and Glasgow with a large enough scab labour force to run all Murdoch's titles.

EETPU district officers at Southampton and Motherwell rerouted electricians and others who were prepared to take over printers' jobs, work under the new-style regime, work the new printing presses secretly imported from America and cross picket lines.

Eric Hammond, general secretary of the EETPU, had previously provide his worth in this direction by his famed — and filmed — ride through ladders' picket lines in the 1980 Isle of Grain dispute.

When the rest of the print union leaders realised what was going on they caved in to Murdoch's demands all the faster.

But with the type of support Hammond was now giving who needs negotiations?

Having prepared his new plants and an alternative distribution system, Murdoch now provoked a strike, transferred his four titles — the 'Sun', the 'News of the World', 'The Times' and the 'Sunday Times' — to the new buildings and on expert legal advice (see the letter reproduced in the 'Morning Star') sacked his entire print workforce without a penny in compensation or redundancy payments.

Men and women who have given years of service and contributed massively to the company's vast profits were simply dumped onto the dole (though the DHSS is recognising their role only as strikers even though they are officially sacked).

Murdoch's action left the remaining union leaderships out on a limb, having to pretend that they were hostile to aspects of the deal anyway and willing to fight.

Even so, when the huge vote in favour of strike action came through (NGA 7-1, SOGAT 5-1), they used it only to try and get negotiations restarted.

Claim

'We want to negotiate but if you want to fight so be it,' was the comment of SOGAT 82 general secretary Brenda Dean ('SOGAT Journal,' January 1986).

More relevant was a comment from the Imperial FoC at the 'Sun'/'News of the World' that to continue negotiating now would be 'to commit ritual hara-kiri.'

Under the cover story that Wapping was a separate company to produce a new London evening paper, the 'London Post' (which never materialised) Murdoch and Hammond claimed that it was a new 'greenfield' site, open to new arrangements and not therefore covered by the Bridlington rulings on union spheres of influence for recruiting members.

However, using exactly the same argument, of being a new company,



Wapping is now declared to come under the secondary picketing laws barring solidarity action against another firm — even though the pickets are acting to hold up the same titles that they worked on in Fleet Street.

To tell his union members in Wapping not to work would be illegal, says Hammond, and he can't possibly do anything illegal (although he had threatened to pull out power workers over the GCHQ affair).

Meanwhile Murdoch rains down court injunctions like confetti on those who dare to take action to save their jobs.

However, it would be totally wrong in these circumstances to see the Murdoch proposal simply as a means of provoking the strike. Both he and Hammond advocate this type of deal and would like to see it universally applied.

On the basis that it

could be taken as a model agreement by employers throughout the country it should be looked at in some detail, though with some collection together of related issues which appear in separate paragraphs in the document.

Titled 'London Post (Printers) Limited, Amended Proposal' and dated November 22, 1985, it quickly gets down to basics. The first paragraph states: 'There will be a legally-binding collective agreement(s) between the Employers and its recognised Union(s). Such agreement(s) will be based on this Proposal.' (Section 1.1).

In fact, legally-binding agreements are not traditional in Britain. They occur on the continent and in Japan and often in places of weak or defeated trade unionism.

Their aim is to squeeze just about every aspect of working, payment and conditions, including a long drawn out grievance

procedure topped by compulsory arbitration, into a no-strike two or three year deal enforceable through the courts.

This is often overtaken by circumstances, for example inflation, new technology or changes in working operations (conveniently allowed for in the agreement) yet workers are tied hand and foot by breach of contract laws against taking any action to protect themselves.

Conclusion

Such an agreement of course is wide open to provocative action by management, their stooges on the shop floor, to incite action which can lead to the workers concerned and their union being sued for damages and possibly ruined.

The same section in the document also requires the union(s) to formally acknowledge their dedication to the principle

of private enterprise — 'a recognition that security of employment and optimum working conditions for employees can only be achieved through the Employer's commercial success'. (1.2.1)

The key to this is found in flexible working practices, a many-headed monster.

There is flexibility of working operations: 'Employees will undertake tasks within their competence, but otherwise with complete flexibility. There will be no demarcation lines.' (1.2.3)

There is flexibility of working times (and possibly of hours worked): 'The starting and finishing times of an employee may be changed upon . . . days' notice.' (5.1)

Last, but certainly not least, there is to be flexible manning: 'manning levels will be determined by the Employer' (1.2.1);

● TURN TO PAGE 12

COMMENT

by Mike Howgate

Once more on Bonapartism

YET AGAIN the Healy rump paper trumpets forth the well-worn 'Bonapartist' alarm call. No mention this time of Heseltine, maybe because the tumbrils at the Young Conservative conference have already carried off this 'young pretender'.

The old cliché resurfaces last Wednesday to explain the crisis in the Tory government over the Westland affair. Editor Alex Mitchell babbles:

'What is now indisputable is that the Thatcher government is deeply involved in a major constitutional crisis. It regards itself as above the bourgeois rights of the elected Commons and a law unto itself. It does not regard itself as accountable to MPs or to the general public.'

'This is what gives the Thatcher regime its authoritarian character. It is not a government of the old bourgeois parliamentary type, it is Bonapartist. It rules by decree and by open reliance on the physical force of the capitalist state machine — police, judiciary, etc.'

Now no one can disagree that the Tory government is racked by crisis, nor that Thatcher might like to abrogate the bourgeois rights of parliament in order to extricate herself from undue embarrassment. The fact is however that she is having to make concession after concession to purely parliamentary demands for an investigation into the affair, and witness the heads of her nearest and dearest colleagues roll in the process.

Like most governments of the 'old bourgeois type' she has a certain room for manoeuvre. She can institute a type of rule that circumvents to some extent the elected members of the House. But this is not new — remember Wilson's 'kitchen cabinet'.

Once elected to office, like any bourgeois administration, her government is no longer accountable to the general public except at the next election. Or does Mitchell think that bourgeois regimes have some sort of 'accountability' clause written into the constitution?

Even Mitchell cannot believe this, so his talk of accountability 'to the general public' is so much blather. If lack of accountability to the general public was a hallmark of Bonapartism then every single parliamentary administration in Britain has been Bonapartist.

He also seems to be under the misapprehension that Thatcher 'rules by decree'. Maybe in his next outpouring on this topic he can cite some of the draconian decrees which have emanated from Thatcher's pen.

The nearest events which bear comparison with 'rule by decree' since World War II were the declarations of 'states of emergency' during the Seaman's strike (Wilson's Bonapartist regime) and the 'three-day week' (Heath's Bonapartist regime).

As is obvious to the most myopic political observer Thatcher's massive majority in parliament means that she does not have to resort to extra- or supra-parliamentary rule. Parliament is quite good enough for her purposes at present, thank you very much.

As for the increasing reliance on physical force, the judiciary, etc. This definitely represents a tendency in an increasingly authoritarian direction, as does Mitchell's latest indicator of rampant Bonapartism — MI5 involvement in jury vetting. However a collection of isolated facts cannot immediately lead, for a Marxist at least, to a redefinition of the mode of class rule. Especially such a totally one-sided collection as 'This Morning . . . presents.

All the term Bonapartism does is obscure the contradictory nature of the current stage of bourgeois rule with a neat phrase which is never explained. The Euro-stalinist term 'Thatcherism' has the same content and purpose. One could justifiably ask the rump to explain how under a Bonapartist regime hundreds of miners had riot charges against them dismissed, GCHQ could go on strike, BBC workers man the picket line against censorship and demonstrations take place against the imperialist Malvinas war!

If there are members of the rump still capable of independent thought then maybe, just maybe, they could address their attention to this question.

TUC 'opened way for Murdoch' Scots meeting told

BY SIMON PIRANI

THE TUC's betrayal of the mineworkers opened the door for newspaper boss Rupert Murdoch to hammer the unions, Durham miner Dave Temple told a public meeting in Stirling last week.

'Murdoch wouldn't be able to do what he's doing now, had the miners had the support they deserved,' said Temple, a member of the Workers Revolutionary Party central committee.

'There was support for the miners in big sections of the working class, and of the middle class. The dockers went on strike twice to support the miners; and we should have in an inquiry in to NUM about what became of that strike.'

'The miners' strike was unsuccessful because the TUC didn't support the miners and didn't take

action, especially early on in the strike when I believe successful solidarity action could have been organised.'

Temple added: 'We have to spell out to steelworkers that no matter how much they supported the government, it didn't save Gartcosh and it won't save Ravenscraig.'

The meeting, called by the Stirling miners' support group on the issue of victimised men, was an opportunity for lessons to be drawn about the 12-month struggle.

The strike had been called in difficult circumstances, but on a matter of principle, said Temple. The NUM leadership had not been prepared to compromise in the early stages.

There were people who had said the settlement should have come earlier. 'But by staying out as long as we did, we learned lessons about the real nature of the state, and about the police.'

Temple defended the Durham Mechanics' deci-

sion to expel scabs early on in the strike. This principled line meant that the NUM was now in a better position to break the scab CTAWA union.

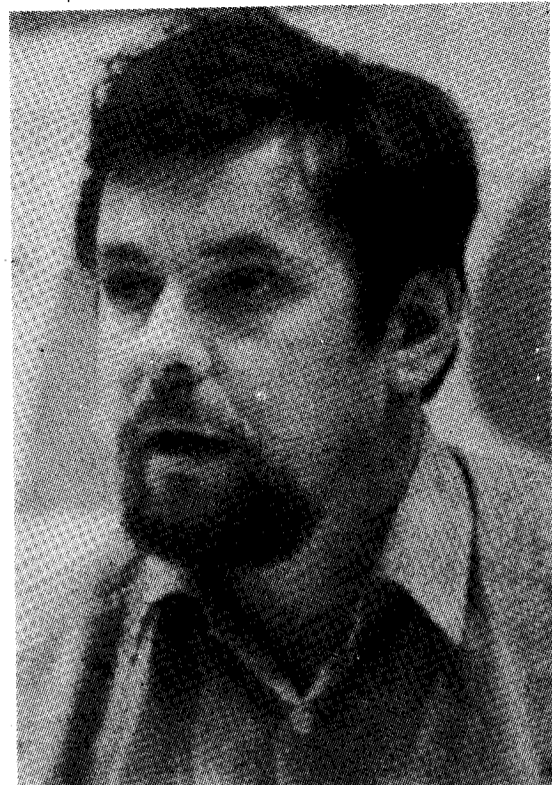
Tam Coulter, of the Scottish NUM executive, told the meeting that victimisation would no more intimidate miners now than it had done in the 1930s, when union leaders like Alex and Abe Moffat had been kept outside the pit gates until the war in 1939.

Thatcher's government was 'more rigorous than many juntas in Africa,' said Coulter, a Communist Party member.

Monktonhall NUM delegate David Hamilton, himself sacked, referred to recent strikes in the Scottish coalfield as proof that the miners 'were not down and out'.

The attacks on Fleet Street unions, and on workers such as the Glasgow railwaymen were 'a direct outcome of the miners' strike'.

During discussion, a speaker from Polmaise, Stirling's last pit, one of



DAVE TEMPLE

five over which the miners' strike erupted, said a proposal was going from the NUM branch to the Scottish area for a one-day stoppage in support of the sacked men.

Retired miner John McCormack, former delegate at Polmaise, called for 'grass roots action' against the Tories, insisting that initiative would not come from the top of the unions. He conde-

mned overyime working in the pits while men were victimised.

A Labour Party member from Sauchie, Clackmannanshire, agreed with speakers' attacks on Neil Kinnock and said he did not represent the Labour Party. Among speakers from the floor were members of Maryhill miners' support group and the public employees' union NUPE.

Hospital closure arouses anger

WANDSWORTH district health authority has decided to close down St James' Hospital, Balham.

The decision was taken at a meeting on January 30. Although much reasoned opposition was raised the outcome was very much a foregone conclusion as was evident from the way the meeting was chaired.

The motion for the closure of St James' was taken first and no other motion was allowed to be debated.

Dr Lovel, a member of the district health author-

ity, who spoke against the motion, recalled that during the debate on the closure of the South London Hospital which it was said 'would provide funds for other priority groups' the point was made that no further closures of hospitals in this district were envisaged. And yet 2½ years later it was proposed to close St James'.

The reason given is that the regional health authority plans to redistribute funds away from Wandsworth.

They are trying to force a£10 million a year cuts in the next ten years.

The regional strategic plan is a fraud is full of errors or in many places is total rubbish.

A delegation from St James' was at the meeting. I spoke to nurse Penny Wright the NUPE branch secretary. 'The reason for these cuts are always given as government limits,' she said.

'They are trying to say that they are improving the health service by making these cuts. I would like to say that the health workers and the people who use the health service are not responsible for this crisis and we will not pay.'

Justice for mineworkers campaign

AS a result of the 1984-85 miners strike, over 500 miners remain sacked while some remain in jail for the crime of fighting for their pits, jobs and communities and protecting them and their trade union from state attacks.

To highlight this and to provide financial assistance to these miners and their families, the National Justice for Mineworkers Campaign (formerly called Amnesty Campaign) will be launched at a rally and demonstration on March 2.

The demonstration will start at 1.30 p.m. from Jubilee Gardens, County Hall, London S.E.1, and will call for:

- The release and reinstatement of all sacked and jailed miners.
- Re-imbursement of the NUM's stolen funds
- Review of cases of jailed miners.

At 4.30 p.m. a rally will be held at Hyde Park where speakers include Peter Heathfield, Anne Lilburn, Liz French, Dennis Skinner and Tony Benn.

In the evening the GLC are to fund a concert which is based around the 'Heroes' LP produced after the strike by Northumberland and Durham Miners Support Groups.

The concert will take place at the Royal Albert Hall, Kensington, London and starts at 7 p.m. (door open at 6 p.m.) with an exhibition of banners.

Tickets for the concert are £3.50 and further details for the concert can be obtained from an office in Greenwich staffed entirely by sacked miners.

The address is Greenwich Labour Offices, 32 Woolwich Road, Greenwich SE10 (01-858 7055).

The sacked miners on the campaign include a number from Kent, Durham and the North West.

Accommodation is being provided by trade union activists and members of the Labour Party whilst Greenwich Council are assisting in any way they can.

Sacked miners are also visiting meetings in the area to which they are invited to speak and are receiving an encouraging response.

MerseyBooks announces the Liverpool launching of

'Shifting Horizons'

by Lynn Beaton

published by Canary Press at £5.65p.

The story of two women in a Nottingham pit village who fought through the miners strike, along with thousands of others, for their communities and their dignities.

Friday 21st February, 7.30pm

Merseyside Trade Union and Unemployed Centre (Family Lounge)
24, Hardman Street, Liverpool 1.

Speakers: Marlene Newman (Lancashire Women Against Pit Closures), Steve Parry (chairman, Merseyside and Cheshire FBU), Ray Williams (secretary Liverpool NGA), A Nottingham striking miners wife, Chairman, Bill Partington, (president of Liverpool Trade Council) Lynn Beaton will sign copies of the book.

All supporters of the miners strike welcome.

HYPOCRISY AND TRAFALGAR SQUARE

FURTHER proof, as though it were needed, that successive British governments have raised hypocrisy into an art form when it comes to dealing with the Irish people and the so-called 'Irish question'.

Fourteen long years after the massacre of innocent Irish working

class people in Derry by members of the British army of occupation, a march to commemorate that particular atrocity was being organised in London. Not unnaturally the proposed location was Trafalgar Square. Just one minor snag — Irish people are forbidden by law to congregate there!

So permission was requested from the Secretary of State for the En-

vironment, one Mr Kenneth Baker. However, in his letter to the rally's co-ordinating committee, the minister states that it would be 'both inflammatory and offensive' for permission to be granted in the light of continuing violence in northern Ireland.

Of course he doesn't go on to explain that hideous statement. However, it most certainly does raise some interesting questions. Who, for example, would find a peaceful demonstration 'both in-

flammatory' and or indeed 'offensive'?

Who, that is, outside of the Tory Party? Perhaps the Minister would care to explain.

And what of the untold thousands of Irish families living and paying rates in Westminster? Now that there is an exclusion order on all those people, are they entitled to a rate rebate?

Irony is heaped upon hypocrisy for it is very important to note that Baker makes his 'not an inch' statement at the

same time as the political savage Botha is hinting that even South Africa may scrap the Pass Laws!

In Derry, Sinn Fein councillors are calling for the council to confer the freedom of the city on jailed African National Congress leader, Nelson Mandela. Councillor Hugh Brady has also called on the council to write to Botha urging him to unconditionally release Mandela to enable him to receive the honour.

And this at a time when

black people here are — quite correctly — demanding that their voices be heard in our society and have finally decided that enough is enough; from here on in they will organise and articulate.

What unnerves the Tories and their political plants on the right-wing of the Labour Party is the fact that the British working class are rapidly realising that class unity is strength.

There is absolutely no doubt that the inevitable combination of these

forces is what the self-styled ruling class really find 'both inflammatory and offensive'.

Of course the nonsense of the ban in Trafalgar Square would have given something of a laugh to the great Indian leader, Mohandas K Gandhi — why he would simply have organised a mass gathering of the millions of people concerned and orchestrated a day of national peaceful protest in and around Trafalgar Square.

L. Quilty

Irish march attracts 5,000

MURDER in Ireland by the British authorities is nothing new, Sinn Fein councillor Francie Molloy told a London demonstration to mark the 14th anniversary of Derry's Bloody Sunday.

The 5,000-strong, highly-successful march set off from Hyde Park and ended with a rally in Kilburn square.

Molloy emphasised to marchers, who stood in freezing temperatures, that the Derry massacre had been directed from the highest levels of the British government — 'the orders were: go into Derry and teach the republican people a lesson.'

The past 14 years had contained a major lesson, Molloy went on. It was no use in simply going out and asking for civil rights. The two-pronged republi-

can struggle against the British government would continue with the Provisional IRA's military campaign, and with the rise of Sinn Fein as a political opposition not only to Britain but also to the 'constitutional nationalists'.

Jack Collins, Kent NUM leader, said that Irish people, the miners and printers were all fighting the same enemy.

'It is not possible to have democracy in a society run by the bosses for the bosses,' said Collins. Other speakers included Terry Harkin, from Belfast, on behalf of the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

● **BANNERS** from Workers Revolutionary Party and YS branches were carried by party delegations on the march.



Black flags at the front of the march in London earlier this month to commemorate Derry's Bloody Sunday massacre by British troops; (left) Part of the WRP and YS delegation on the demonstration

Jack Gale's lasting monument

Dear Comrades,

After many years I have just picked up and re-read the booklet, *Oppression and Revolt in Ireland*, by Jack Gale (New Park Publications, June 1975). Never have I read a piece of such sensitivity, and with the best historical exposition of the class nature and suppression of the Irish peasant and worker.

This booklet debunks the whole concept of religious warfare on the island of Ireland. It monitors the anti-republicanism of the Roman Catholic church from 1154 with the authorisation by Pope Adrian IV to Henry II of England to invade Ireland, up to the anti-nationalism of the modern day church.

Counterpoised to this, the late Comrade Gale showed clearly the part played in the foundation of the modern republican movement by great Protestant radicals, e.g. Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmet. This piece also clearly analysed the class relationships between the established Episcopalian church and the Presbyterian workers and peasants, with the struggle that came from this relationship.

Cde Gale continued with the making of more salient points, for instance Marx and Engels' support of the Irish Nationalists movement with the organisation of a rally in Hyde Park in support of republicans, the

writings of Marx on the plight of Irish nationalist prisoners and Marx's involvement with the International Workingmen's Association and their support of the republican movement (Healyites please note).

This little booklet relates the philosophy of the revolutionary party and the fundamental weakness of republican politics where it chronicles James Connolly's (that great revolutionary fighter) philosophical weakness, i.e. his idealist stance, his Roman Catholicism, with the following passage:

'Connolly did not create a Bolshevik party and Lenin did. But Lenin

achieved this, not because he was a better tactician or organiser, but because he devoted his lifetime to the struggle for dialectical materialism and the organisational concepts of the revolutionary party, based on democratic centralism and the unique revolutionary role of the working class.

'This could only be done by absorbing and developing the theoretical and practical conquests achieved by Marx and Engels and applying them to the development of capitalism and the oppressed masses.' (Once again Healyites please note — by this I in no way equate the Healyites with either Connolly or Lenin).

If this little book were the only contribution made by Cde Gale to revolutionary politics, his life would indeed have been of great significance to the Trotskyist movement. However, it was not, indeed Cde Gale gave in his many lectures to the party crystal clear analysis of the class question — but for me this work, *Oppression and Revolt in Ireland*, will always remain a permanent example of his ability to understand and explain in great depth all questions of class within the context of the Irish dimension.

I recommend all party members to read it, indeed any person with a particular interest in the Irish struggle should possess this definitive little book

Yours fraternally,
P.M. London



BOOKS

LONDON · GLASGOW · LIVERPOOL

The Paperbalks Centres

28 Charlotte Street, London W1P 1HP
Tel: 01 636 3532

10/12 Atlantic Road, Brixton, SW9
Tel: 01 274 8342

389 Green Street, London E13
Tel: 01 470 1388

321 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 3PT
Tel: 041 332 8881

34-36 Manchester Street, Liverpool L1 6ER
Tel: 051 236 0438

BOOKS

Israeli political thriller

The Road to Ein Harod by Amos Kenan. Al Saqi Books £3.95.

THIS novel created a sensation when it first appeared in Israel a couple of years ago, and it's not hard to see why.

Starting ostensibly as a thriller, it is set in a not-too-distant future when the military have seized power, political opponents or those thought suspect are being rounded-up and shot, and Arab villages ruthlessly destroyed.

The hero, once an Israeli patriot, but in little doubt over his fate now if caught, steals out of a Tel Aviv under military terror. He aims to reach kibbutz Ein Harod, rumoured to be the centre of resistance.

Symbolism

On the way he meets a young Arab, who is making his own way to a destination 'beyond Ein Harod'.

The symbolism is evident, though without detracting from a gripping tale. Like Amos Kenan himself (in his youth a member of the Zionist 'Stern Gang'), the hero recalls wryly his own part in driving Arabs out in 1948.

Can he and the young Palestinian, forced

together by new circumstances, overcome decades of bitterness and trust each other, to beat a common foe?

Is Ein Harod (not just any kibbutz but an ideological centre of the kibbutz movement, a symbol of 'Socialist-Zionist ideals') really a centre of resistance, or a myth? Have the right-wing militarists crushed all resistance?

Can the heroic pair reach Ein Harod — or 'further' — without having to go via the Hill of Megiddo, site of many a Biblical battle, and the prophets' Armageddon, where the last great battle is to take place?

Realism

As befits a leading Israeli journalist who is also a significant Hebrew poet, Kenan blends outspoken realism about the brutalities of Israeli life and rule (he has often exposed ill-treatment of Palestinians) with a feeling for the Land, and Biblical allusion.

His novel is a grim warning for his compatriots, reaching a powerfully-imagined climax when he confronts the crazed paranoid-right general who thinks his technology can destroy all enemies, and history itself. And Kenan offers no happy ending. He leaves that to others.

C. Pottins



Struggle of South African women

South African Women on the Move by Jane Barrett, Aneene Dawber, Barbara Klugman, Ingrid Obery, Jennifer Shindler, and Joanne Yawitch. Zed Books, £5.95.

WOMEN'S central role in political struggles in South Africa is shown by the photographs assembled by the Vukani Makhosikazi Collective, a group of women in Johannesburg that includes social workers, health professionals and trade unionists.

They set out to document the women's oppression - and resistance - as Africans, as members of the working class, and as women.

Interviews and life stories are used alongside the pictures. Unemployed women, and women who live a subsistence or semi-subsistence existence in the rural areas are given a rare opportunity to speak.

Domestic workers live separated from their families, and factory workers travel into town often leaving in the dark and returning late at night to cook and clean for their families.

One chapter focuses on the Knitmore factory where 600 women make socks and jerseys for the major chain stores.

The women speak of low wages, poor conditions, and above all fear of losing the job altogether.

One woman contracted TB at the age of 25 after



Sewing dresses in a back yard in Tembisa (above); A supervisor checking garments at a knitwear factory in Johannesburg (top)

working in the dust at Knitmore for eight years. The steam presses are called 'abortion machines' because of their effect on pregnant women.

Many of Johannesburg's women workers come in to clean up at night. These night shift workers suffer a range of health problems and complain in addition of sexual abuse from the supervisors.

Women with jobs leave

their children with older relatives or child minders. Many find the fathers unable or unwilling to support their children.

Every year 20,000 black women in South Africa die because of illegal abortions, and 30,000 or more have been left sterile.

But the book gives space to the women who are organising, like 'Mama' Lydia Kompe, the Transvaal branch

secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union.

She has spent her adult life in the battle not just on trade union questions but against circumcision and 'lobola', the money paid to the family of a girl on marriage.

Photographs show community meetings, May Day demonstrations, and self-help projects like the 'trench gardens' where communal labour produces better vegetables

The book's last chapters outline the history of several women's groups, and conclude with an account of the conditions for women in prison, a reminder that this experience is common for women who take things into their own hands in South Africa.

But the central proclamation of the book is in its title — the women are in the move.

Bridget Dixon

RELEASE THE JAILED MINERS

NORTHUMBERLAND

WILLIAM SMITH: Whittle — 2½-year sentence from February 1985. E44975, Durham Jail. Old Elvet, Durham DH13HU.

DURHAM

JOHN MATTERSON: Murton — Two years and three months youth custody from December 1985.

JOHN HEMINGWAY: Murton — One year and three months from December 1985.

JOHN ROBSON: Murton — One year and three months from December 1985.

ROBERT HOWE, 22, miner, affray, attempted not guilty (judge refused to allow change of plea), 21 months

ANTHONY RUTHERFORD, 24, miner, affray attempted not guilty, 18 months

JOHN ROBINSON, 21, affray, attempted not guilty, 18 months jail

GARY BLACKMORE, 19, charge affray, attempted not guilty, 2 years youth custody

ANTHONY HOWE, 19, affray, attempted not guilty, two years youth custody

WILLIAM BELL, 20, affray, attempted not guilty, 18 months youth custody

WORKSHIRE

MARTIN HODGSON: Wakefield — Three-year sentence from November 1985. Armley Jail, Leeds.

NIGEL HODGSON: Wakefield — Three-year sentence from November 1985. Armley Jail, Leeds.

PAUL WRIGHT: Saville — 18-month sentence. G76424 Kirkham Jail, Freckleton road, Preston Lancs.

CLIVE THOMPSON: Frickley — Three-year sentence from April 1985. G79348, Acklington Jail, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9XF.

N. DERBYSHIRE

PAUL BROTHWELL: 12-month sentence.

DAVID GAUNT: Shirebrook — 2½-year sentence from December 1984. E71037, A Wing, Millers Park Youth Custody Centre, Doddington Road, Wellingborough.

KENT

TERRY FRENCH: Betteshanger — Four-year sentence from January 1985. B73383, Weald Wing, Maidstone jail, Kent

CHRIS TAZEY: Betteshanger — Three-year sentence from January 1985. A29398 Youth Detention Centre, Springfield Road, Chelmsford

SOUTH WALES

DEAN HANCOCK: Oakdale — Eight-year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicester.

RUSSELL SHANKLAND: Taff Merthyr — Eight-year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, Leicester.

Mike Banda and the Bad Men theory of History

By Bill Hunter

The document — 'Twenty Seven Reasons Why The IC Should Be Buried Forthwith' (published in Workers Press on Friday, 7 February, 1986) — is, among other faults, one-sided.

This survey of the history of the Fourth International is highly subjective. History is written here in terms of the nature of the men and women who came into the leadership of the Trotskyist movement.

Throughout the document runs a parade of despicable characters. There are 'disgusting' accomodators, capitulators to left-Rooseveltianism, the 'greatest' betrayers of Trotskyism 'shamelessly' abandoning revolutionary defeatism, abstainers from struggle and people who committed the crime of being confused. In the period are practitioners of revisionism, and such people led the movement ever since Trotsky died. They are people who, even when they struggle for correct things, carry out the struggle as an 'alibi' or a 'diversion' (Cannon against Morrow and Goldman). Or — like Lambert and Just — their organisation is 'perfidious' and, while they were the first to break with Pablo, it was on the 'invidious' position of being based 'largely in the ultra-conservative Force Ouvriere unions.

The later split with Pablo, in 1953, becomes one between leaders resting on the Stalinist bureaucracies in Italy and France as against those 'orientating rapidly towards the labour and reformist bureaucracies and the state'.

This is no way to conduct discussion. In verbal polemic a certain emotional invective exaggeration is understandable, although not to be recommended. However, it is impermissible in a written discussion, on a central question before our Party. Particularly is it wrong in the present stage of the Party. We have broken out of a stifling regime. We have to take up discussion with full consciousness of the need to avoid anything like the way questions were dealt with in the past.

Issues

The Party members are facing many fundamental issues for the first time and are now seeking to tackle the questions of: What is the International; what happened to it; what stages did it pass through? These are to be met with serious analysis and not the invective which so recently reigned in discussion in the Party. There is the horrible example of Mitchell — the man who made the adjective the enemy of the noun. Every move a 'foul' move; denunciation a substitute for politics.

We should take the advice of Engels to Lafargue, criticising an article which Lafargue had written on the 'Possibilists' — right-wingers in the Social Democratic movement of the time.

'When you come to the Possibilists', wrote Engels, 'you simply state they have sold themselves to the government, without an iota of proof or a single fact. If you can't say other than that about them, better say nothing . . . the bare assertion . . . has no effect whatsoever.'

The bare assertions in this document, however luridly posed, certainly do not prove that the IC as a 'sorry little gang of liars' are the inheritors of a 'foul' history. Nor, of course, does the assertion that they are a 'sorry gang of liars' prove it. And I don't care a fig whether North is an 'infant pro-



digy' or not! I am concerned with his politics, where they come from in the development of the IC and the Workers League.

To reduce everything to the manoeuvres and motives of leaders tells us nothing about the role of leadership or about the movement itself and its relationship to the world-shaking changes since 1939. Invective stops us answering questions before we begin.

I am fundamentally opposed to the conceptions of North and his supporters on the 'world party' and his refusal to carry through a struggle against 'Healyist' philosophy and practices in the IC. His 'authority' is based on the Eighth Congress of the IC, the congress which, out of the very air, declared the IC the nucleus of the world party. Every proceeding at that congress, every word which came out of it, is a monument of 'Healyism'.

However, the struggle against the IC's false foundation cannot be carried out by denunciation. We must fight through, and answer, concrete questions. How did subjective idealism show itself in the IC? How was the Permanent Revolution destroyed while being academically defended? What did North's criticism of Healy's 'dialectics' mean?

Mike Banda describes the whole history of the FI as a 'sorry repugnant tale'. However, if the history of the FI is that which comes out of this document, then we cannot stop at the assertion that this repugnant story only begins after Trotsky's death. An immediate question must be asked: If Trotsky's programme could only attract this sorry band of adventurers, manoeuvrers and repellent individuals, what is to be said for that programme?

Before the war, when Trotsky was alive, Fenner Brockway and other centrists used to declare that the Trotskyist movement was by its very nature fractional and nurtured splits. Stalinist fellow-travellers would say it was the repository of malcontents, sectarians and generally impossible people. Were they right? Is Mike

Banda going towards agreeing with them when he declares that: 'Not even in Trotsky's time was there a cadre capable of sustaining his monumental work. Not surprisingly he spent the last few years conflicting with almost every group in the FI — the Chinese, the Indo-Chinese, the French and above all the SWP . . .'

Why not add that throughout the history of the Left Opposition, Trotsky was in conflict with all sorts of people who supported him in all parts of the world? Has any real Marxist not been engaged in struggle continuously inside his own movement?

Let us start with Comrade Banda's point (2) which reads:

'The history of the FI, unlike the history of the previous internationals, has proved to be far more complex, tortuous, contradictory and protracted, leaving little room for complacent analogies and facile comparisons and defying even the prognosis of LT about the rapid growth of the FI following upon the Second World War.

'Contrary to Trotsky, what we have seen is an uninterrupted series of crises, splits, betrayals, treachery and confusion — a process characterised by a total lack of strategy and perspective, a manifest failure in theory and practice to grasp the nature of the epoch and concretise and enrich Trotskyism as contemporary Marxism.'

It must be noted, first of all, that the history of all the internationals is far more tortuous, contradictory and protracted than any of their members foresaw. Crises and splits certainly, and indeed, betrays, treachery, stagnation and confusion, are to be found in their history. Leaving aside facile comparisons — although we are not told by Comrade Banda what they are — there were crises and splits in the First International with the Bakuninists and with the English trade union leaders. It was eventually necessary to transfer the headquarters to America and then dissolve the International.

As to the Second International — at its beginning there were two conferences which claimed to be the International. There were bitter struggles between Engels and Hyndman, between the Marxists and the revisionists. Finally, there was the great betrayal at the beginning of the First World War.

The Communist International (do we need to mention this?) also had a tortuous, crisis-ridden history. The very fact that we have had four internationals shows how complicated the development of international leadership has been.

Difference

The important difference, of course, between the Fourth International and the other internationals is that it never was a mass movement. When it was formed and during the war, the majority of its members did expect to be a world party leading masses of workers in the period after the war. They expected Stalinism to be destroyed in the revolutionary wave engendered during the war or immediately afterwards. The old bureaucracies arose on the defeats of the working class, therefore the rise of the working class would destroy them — this appeared incontrovertible. The Communist Parties would betray the coming world revolutionary events and Stalinism would be finished.

In September 1939, Trotsky wrote in 'The USSR in War': 'If this war provokes, as we firmly believe, a proletarian revolution, it must inevitably lead to the overthrow of the bureaucracy in the USSR . . .'

He declared further:

'The question certainly stands as follows: Will objective necessity in the long run cut a path for itself in the consciousness of the vanguard of the working class; that is, in the process of the war and these profound shocks which it must engender, will a revolutionary leadership be formed capable of leading the proletariat to the conquest of power?'

'The Fourth International has replied in the affirmative to this question, not only through the text of its programme, but also through the very fact of its existence.'

The 'profound shocks' engendered by the war did not resolve the central question of socialism. That remains what it was in 1939. It is in relation to this that we have to understand the prolonged development, crises and contradictions of Trotskyism.

Does the history of the Fourth International show that historical necessity cannot carve out a path in the consciousness of the vanguard? Mike Banda's bulletin does not face that question squarely but its whole direction is answering: Yes! We are left with the picture of a Fourth International attracting only the practitioners of cowardly, opportunist policies — an organisation devoid of any expression of 'historical necessity'.

However, Trotsky's confidence in the revolutionary nature of the working class was not misplaced. The very problems posed to the Fourth International in the last decades came to some extent from the very revolutionary potential of that class after the war and the retreats forced on imperialism. The Transitional Programme of the Fourth International retains its vital power as a guide in the struggle for socialism. The labour, trade union and Stalinist bureaucracies

remain incapable of leading the working class to socialism.

There remains a crisis of leadership that can only be overcome by the leadership of a principled Trotskyist international. Once more, in the erection of it, there is more on the ground than there is on the map.

However, the whole struggle for socialism has been tortuous and contradictory; it has been more complicated than the general outline of the development of the working class in 'The Communist Manifesto' of 1848.

It was in 1938 that the founding conference of the Fourth International was held. No one can deny that there is a great question in that, nearly 50 years later, there does not exist a Fourth International with any authority among the world's masses. But, being a serious question, it demands a serious answer and not a blast of one-sided invective.

It further demands an answer, not for oneself. It demands an answer for, and to, the comrades who have gone through the experience of the split and are breaking from the philosophy and the politics of an opportunist propaganda sect. The questions of internationalism are being posed before this cadre in a way they have not been posed to a Trotskyist movement for many years.

The theoretical development of the Fourth International out of the conditions of its development was unable to meet the reality which obtained. This did not arise because the leaders of the Fourth International were people who congenitally made mistakes. They certainly made mistakes, they certainly had weaknesses, but the biggest weakness in the Fourth International was that it was not able to develop theory in relationship with a mass movement.

All the leaders who moved to the right and broke with the Trotskyist movement — in France, in America, in Britain — from the end of the war to the end of the '40s, in one way or another, pointed to the failure of history to honour the 'promissory note' of Trotsky.

For Trotsky himself, of course, his prognosis would be conditional. He did not consider that Marxism gave him the properties of a seer. He was concerned primarily with essential contradictions, with the conflict of living forces which cannot conform to the dead letter. He knew, as Lenin remarked, that there are no laws without exception. There are laws of human development, however. The crisis of Stalinism, which proved to be more tortuous, etc. than foreseen, has also proved that there is a conflict between the historically necessary movement of the working class and the bureaucracy. The basic question of 1938 — socialism or barbarism — remains, only posed far more critically. Then it meant the barbarism of fascism or war. Now it is socialism or fascism or nuclear destruction. The decline of capitalist society continues, it remains an epoch of wars and revolutions.

The great contradictions did not work out in what we now may see as the simple form in which the majority of members of the Fourth International expected it. It behoves us, however, when looking at history to attempt to place ourselves in the context of the time. We certainly learn nothing if we dismiss the activities of those we are surveying — even if policies

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Mike Banda and the Bad Men Theory of History



Leading defendants at the Minneapolis trial, left to right, James P. Cannon, Felix Morrow and Albert Goldman

● From page 5

were wrong — with a contemptuous sneer. Such an attitude, which was evinced over Indo-China, taught us nothing about Trotskyists there. They were dismissed as hopeless sectarians in a phrase — see Stephen Johns' articles in the 'Fourth International'. Perhaps they were sectarian, but that was *our* movement, and to dismiss their policies in two or three words shows more about what Trotsky called the 'worship of the accomplished fact' — the victory of the Vietnamese Communist Party — than it does about the desire to develop theory.

During the war, in many cases, the Trotskyists were just beginning to make their links with the working class. Throughout the world they were members of mainly propaganda groups, built during the war. There was thus a tendency to mechanical and formal thinking. Mike Banda declares that dialectics had long ceased to inspire the FI. As if it had all been learned at the beginning and then thrown away. Aren't we learning that, in the period when we declared more for dialectics than any Trotskyist movement has ever done, we all the more rapidly moved further away from dialectical materialism? Further, are not we learning a dialectical lesson in that we are finding that North, who defended dialectics against Healy on an academic plane, at the same time takes his authority from the Eighth Congress of the IC. That Congress embodies, not the traditions of Trotskyism, but is built on, and impregnated with, the subjective idealism of Healy. That is the case also with the resolution of the Twelfth Congress of the Workers League of America which took place only last July.

From the declaration of the Fourth International and before, the struggle for dialectical materialism against French rationalism, British empiricism, American pragmatism and other expressions of bourgeois ideology was continuous. It came out mainly from conflicts on the relationship of the

Trotskyist organisations to the working class and over its programme and policies. A very worthwhile task would be to trace this conflict, but in all the concreteness of its stages. It is not done by a dismissive wave of the hand. That is in no way better than the IC Bowdlerisation of history in which the explanation of British Trotskyist history is just simple 'nationalism'. By dogmatic nostrums we understand nothing. For example, in relation to what North says: the overriding result of the national development of Britain is in British empiricism, insidiously pervading the labour movement including the Trotskyist movement. In America, of course, it is pragmatism.

The unity of pragmatism and empiricism, we might add, was expressed in tactics adopted by the minority faction in Britain at the end of the struggle for entry and also in the beginning of the Pablo split. Suffice to say on this at present, that the last document of the minority faction, before the IS suggested the division of the two sections of the RCP, was written by a leader of the SWP under the name of the minority, deliberately to blow up the situation in the RCP. When later, after the re-fusion of 1949, I asked Healy why the regime in the RCP and restriction of the minority were exaggerated, he told me the document had been written as a tactical weapon to help forward the division.

We learn nothing by the characterisation of leaders without taking, as concretely and completely as possible, the issues at stake at various stages of the development of the Fourth International. We are left with nothing to build on. If Trotsky had to fight leaders of the international on all fronts, then the most important thing for comrades, surely, is to be told what his positions were and urged to build on them.

Let us follow through some of the issues in Comrade Banda's points. Comrade Banda refers to these issues, in order to sustain the picture of the Fourth International since Trotsky as the repository of one bunch of scoundrels after

another — the personality interpretation of history.

In Point (3) he refers to Trotsky conflicting 'above all' with the SWP, 'in particular with J. P. Cannon in the famous discussion on the capitulation of the SWPA to Left-Rooseveltianism and their refusal to consider the US CP as a legitimate part of the working class. This capitulation — let us recollect — was preceded by Cannon's previous disgusting accommodation to Norman Thomas and the US Socialist Party in '34-'35.'

What do we learn from that? That Cannon was a 'disgusting' capitulator. We learn nothing in fact about Trotsky's real contribution on work in the trade unions in this discussion of 1940; we learn nothing about what he tried to teach in regard to Stalinism.

We might say here, in parenthesis, that Trotsky's contribution here has a great deal of relevance to some of the statements of IC members in their attack on Cliff Slaughter over the by now well-known handshake!

The discussion took place between Trotsky and several American comrades, some prominent in trade unions, as were the comrades in the Minneapolis teamsters. It was held in June 1940, just after the split with Burnham and Shachtman (see 'In Defence of Marxism') and immediately after the machine-gun attack by Stalinists on Trotsky's house in Mexico.

Cannon had asked if tactics applicable to the 'socialists etc.' were also applicable to the Stalinists. He went on:

'There is a strong tendency to regard the Stalinists as different. Not as a labour tendency. The crassest expression of this tendency is exhibited in the American Labour Party in New York. They regard the Stalinists, not as a working class party, but as an agency of a foreign power. This was the position of Lovestone and Hook on the Browder passport case. It was Burnham's position on the CC. We held for critical defence. If O'Neal for example, was arrested we would defend him similarly. There is no fundamental difference between O'Neal of the Second International

and Browder as representative of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Both are treacherous to the Labour Movement. Burnham held that the Stalinists are not a labour movement at all. That they are like the German Nazis. We should defend neither. This point is important in elaborating our general political tactics . . .'

Movement

So Cannon begins by saying that the Stalinists are a part of the labour movement, and how Burnham was fought on this.

Trotsky drives the point home:

'Of course, the Stalinists are a legitimate part of the workers' movement. That it is abused by its leaders for specific GPU ends is one thing, for Kremlin ends another. It is not at all different from other opposition labour bureaucracies. The powerful interests of Moscow influence the Third International, but it is not different in principle. Of course we consider the terror of the GPU control differently; we fight with all means, even bourgeois police. But the political current of Stalinism is a current in the workers movement. If it differs, it differs advantageously. In France, the Stalinists show courage against the government. They are still inspired by October. They are a selection of revolutionary elements, abused by Moscow, but honest.'

Later he goes on:

'We must consider them from the objective Marxist viewpoint. They are a very contradictory phenomenon. They began with October as the base, they have become deformed, but they have great courage.'

Then comes a statement which will surely shock all those who get no further than the formula (albeit a very true statement) that there are rivers of blood between Trotskyism and Stalinism. Remember the recent attempt to assassinate Trotsky. We find Trotsky saying the following:

'We can't let the antipathies of our

moral feelings sway us. Even the assailants on Trotsky's house had great courage. I think we can hope to win these workers who began as a crystallisation of October.'

Here is the real content of Trotsky's criticism of the American comrades. He says:

'We see them (the Stalinists — WH) negatively. How to break through this obstacle? We must set the base against the top. The Moscow gang we consider gangsters but the rank and file do...t feel themselves to be gangsters, but revolutionists. They have been terribly poisoned. If we show them we understand, that we have a common language, we can turn them against their leaders . . .'

We should re-publish this discussion on June 12 - 15, 1940, even in duplicated form as it was circulated in the Socialist Labour League many years ago. We learn nothing if we settle for the slick description of Trotsky conflicting with the 'capitulation of the SWP to left-Rooseveltianism'.

The discussion took place just nine months after the Stalinists, in line with the Stalin-Hitler pact, made a drastic turn in opposition to the imperialist war. Their leader Browder was imprisoned on passport charges. The CP supported strikes, denounced Roosevelt as a 'fascist' and put Browder up for President.

The discussion at this series of meetings centred around the attitude to the Stalinists, particularly in the trade unions. The resistance from members of the leadership was to a turn to Stalinist workers. They had made advances in the previous years when the Stalinists were pursuing a right Popular Front line and had formed alliances in unions to fight Stalinist bureaucratic control.

Cannon began the discussion by saying:

'... The general perspective is quite optimistic. The Stalinists are the problem. By their change in line they dealt a heavy blow. We were forging ahead when they made the switch, paralysing our work. The workers are unable to distinguish the real difference between us, especially with the faction fight compelling us to give undue emphasis to our defence of the Soviet Union.'

In the discussion which follows, Trotsky is fighting for a policy to break the rank and file from Stalinist leaders and to prepare a struggle from the Stalinist ranks when the Party changes its policy again — which he expected even then. The leaders resisted. They had built their trade union faction by alliances against Stalinist bureaucratic leadership operating right-wing policies and, yes, in some cases with 'progressives' who supported Roosevelt. Trotsky was not opposed to these alliances as such. He had this to say:

'These progressive bureaucrats can lean on us for advisers in the fight against the Stalinists. But the role of an adviser to a progressive bureaucrat doesn't promise much in the long run. Our real role is that of third competitor. Thus the question of our attitude towards these bureaucrats — do we have an absolutely clear position towards these competitors? These bureaucrats are Rooseveltians, militarists. We tried to penetrate the trade unions with their help. This was a correct manoeuvre I believe.'

'We can say that the question of the Stalinists would be resolved in passing insofar as we succeed in our main manoeuvre. But before the presidential campaign and the war question we have room for a small manoeuvre. We can say (to the CP — WH) your leaders betray you, but we support you without any confidence in your leaders, in order to show you that we can go with you and to show that your leaders will betray you. It is a short manoeuvre not hinging on the main question of the war. But it is necessary to know incomparably better the Stalinists and their place in the trade unions, their reaction to our party. It would be fatal to pay too much attention to the impression that we can make on the pacifists and our "progressive" bureaucratic friends. In this case we become the squeaking lemon of the bureaucrats. They use us against the Stalinists. . . .'

war nears they call us unpatriotic and expel us. These Stalinist workers can become revolutionary, especially if Moscow changes its line and becomes patriotic.

To be sure, Trotsky was concerned with deeper issues in finding a correct manoeuvre for the party. He was concerned that the trade union comrades, leaders in the party, were resisting a response to a changed situation under adaptation to alien pressures arising from previous trade union work. However, consider how he viewed the question and how he handled it.

At the beginning of the session on that last day, Hansen begins by giving Trotsky a lead-in. Possibly Hansen, who was Trotsky's secretary at the time, had discussed with Trotsky how to proceed the following day.

Hansen said:

'Yesterday Comrade Trotsky made some remarks about adaptation to the so-called progressives in the trade unions, he mentioned the line of the Northwest Organiser (a trade union paper in Minneapolis run by our comrades) and also our attitude in connection with the elections and the Stalinists. I wish to point out that this is not something completely new on Comrade Trotsky's part. More than two years ago over the Transitional Programme, he discussed exactly the same position, with due regard for the differences in time and that then it was not the elections but the Farmer-Labour Party that was to be the fore. Comrade Trotsky has also written some letters regarding the Stalinists and the need for a more positive line towards them. In the past faction fight too, Comrade Trotsky mentioned in his polemic, "From a Scratch to a Danger of Gangrene", the following point, which he underlined: More than once the party will have to remind its own trade unionists that a pedagogical adaptation to the more backward layers of the proletariat must not become transformed into a political adaptation to the conservative bureaucracy of the trade unions. I am wondering if Comrade Trotsky considers that our party is displaying a conservative tendency in the sense that we are adapting ourselves politically to the trade union bureaucracy.'

Trotsky answered:

'To a certain degree I believe it is so. I cannot observe closely enough to be completely certain. In observing the Northwest Organiser I have observed not the slightest change during a whole period. It remains a-political. This is a dangerous symptom . . .

'Turning to the Stalinists does not mean that we should turn away from the progressives. It means only that we should tell the truth to the Stalinists, that we should catch the Stalinists beforehand in their new turn.'

Today

This is an important discussion for today because Trotsky brings out lessons on trade union work, the building of a party and the dangers which all trade union factions face. The linking of all this to the cowardice and capitulation of one man — Cannon — is to degrade the discussion and teach us nothing. These were the problems in a Party that was making a central contribution to world Trotskyism at the time. You will, of course, have none of these problems in a Party isolated from the working class and degenerating into a sect. So nothing is learned and we apply our abstractions to smother everything that lives and moves. Such a discussion could not have taken place in the WRP during the last decade and a half. It will, however, occur in the Trotskyist movement of the future and will signify a beginning of its penetration into the working class.

One final quote from this discussion. Trotsky had complained that it had been agreed the previous January to have a campaign on a presidential candidate. Said Trotsky:

'We were to address Tobin. We were to propose to him that we would vote for him if he were nominated. Even Lewis. We were to begin the campaign for a labour president. But not a thing was

done. Nothing appeared. Nothing in the Northwest Organiser.'

Dobbs: 'Perhaps it was my fault

He was cut across by Trotsky:

'No. That is the bad Hitler theory of history . . .

Trotsky had not the slightest interest in interpreting the issues before the meeting in terms of individuals.

Continuing with point (4) Mike Banda declares that:

'In Britain the most active group — the WIL — refused for four years to affiliate to the FI.'

That is untrue. It comes from Healy's snatches of history. I want to use this opportunity to give the record. North, also adopting a selective approach to history, has based his conclusion of a long re-

ment conducted a struggle against imperialist war and upheld the principles of the Fourth International. The French Trotskyists published 'La Verite' as the first workers' paper to appear under the occupation. They worked underground and some were arrested by the Gestapo on lists supplied by the Stalinists.

Trotskyists worked inside the German army and French and German Trotskyists produced a paper, 'Arbeiter und Soldat'. Some of them were executed. Most members of the Trotskyist movement in Europe were recruited during the war. Only a handful of German Trotskyists survived the concentration camps. The leading cadres in Austria were placed on trial and executed by the Nazis. One of them was beheaded in front of his young brother. Experienced leaders were destroyed in France, Belgium,

Trotskyists as I remember it was for participation in all organs of mass resistance but opposition to organisations led by the bourgeoisie, Allied agents and agents of the Soviet bureaucracy.

After the war, the IS reported that the policy had been to promote everywhere the differentiation between workers and capitalists, and that:

'it was necessary to develop thoroughly the elements of civil war which existed in a veiled or open form throughout the struggle of the masses under the occupation.'

Was this policy a desertion of 'revolutionary defeatism'?

A few words on what Mike Banda says on revolutionary defeatism and the American SWP. In November 1941, 28 members of the SWP and the Minneapolis Teamsters local 544-CIO went on trial.

which contain no attempt to elucidate what any of the political positions were?

'Socialism on Trial' containing Cannon's testimony at the Minneapolis trial was certainly an exceedingly popular pamphlet. It had a wide circulation in Britain under the name of 'The ABC of Communism'. I do not now possess a copy of this pamphlet which was based on the court record, nor do I now have a copy of the criticism by Munis of the way the trial was conducted. I do know that I felt, as the majority of Trotskyists of the time felt, that Munis' pamphlet was sectarian as were the general policies of his group.

Counts

The main counts of the indictment of the 28 were 'conspiracy to overthrow by force the government and to oppose the authority thereof' and a count of 'advocating the desirability of overthrowing the government by force and violence'.

The attraction of the pamphlet, as I recall it, was that, in the form of question and answer, it pinned the responsibility for violence upon the ruling class. Further, the prosecution has charged that the accused had conspired with an 'ideal formula' based on the Russian Revolution. It was alleged by the prosecution that the Czarist regime was overthrown by a coup and a conspiracy. Because of this, Goldman, the defence lawyer and one of the accused, was able to lead Cannon through the history of the Russian Revolution and the Trotskyist position on it.

If I remember correctly, the criticism of Munis related to the 'military policy' which Cannon supported. America, by the way was not in the war at the time the arrests, but declared war immediately after the trial. This 'military policy', however, was advanced by Trotsky. It was an attempt to develop transitional demands in a period of militarisation. I think we will find that, in respect of war, all Cannon's testimony is based on Trotsky's articles. Of course, the military policy can be criticised, it was criticised by the RSL in Britain, but whoever does so should fire at the right target.

To give comrades an idea of what the 'military policy' was, here is a quotation from a letter of Trotsky's dated August 13, 1940:

'The liberals and democrats say: "We must help the democracies by all means except military intervention in Europe". Why this stupid and hypocritical limitation? If democracy is to be defended, we should defend it also on European soil; the more so as this is the best way to defend democracy in America. To help England — to crush Hitler — by all means, including military intervention, would signify the best way to defend "American democracy". The purely geographical limitation has neither political nor military sense. "That which workers find worth defending, we are ready to defend by military means — in Europe as well as in the United States. It is the only possibility we have of assuring the defence of civil liberties and other good things in America.'

'But we categorically refuse to defend civil liberties and democracy in the French manner; the workers and farmers to give their flesh and blood, while the capitalists concentrate in their hands the command. The Petain government should now form the centre of our war propaganda.' (Trotsky is referring to the capitulation of the French ruling class to the Nazis as expressed in Marshal Petain who became ruler of Vichy France — WH.) 'It is important, of course, to explain to workers that the genuine fight against fascism is the socialist revolution. But it is more urgent, more imperative, to explain to millions of American workers that the defence of their "democracy" cannot be delivered over to an American Marshal Petain — and there are many candidates for such a role.'

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After the trial, the defendants surrender to the authorities to serve their sentences

cord of British opposition to internationalism on an odd quotation from Cannon and Healy. I, therefore, add as an appendix to this document, a further document which deals with the history of the WIL and was written in answer to Comrade North. It also has a relevance to Comrade Banda's document.

In point (5) of his document, Comrade Banda says that the war 'accelerated the disorientation of cadres — a process which was undoubtedly assisted by the repression of the Nazis and the criminal activities of the Stalinists and Social Democrats in the occupation. However, in the US, there were no such extenuating factors and here the greatest betrayal of Trotskyism took place, in the Minneapolis trial.'

Papers

A reading of war-time Trotskyist papers — the British 'Socialist Appeal', the American 'Militant', and other papers and journals does not give the impression of 'disorientation'. Any criticism of the Trotskyist movement during the war based on a serious objective survey must accept that generally, the Trotskyist move-

Holland and Czechoslovakia. The Polish party was wiped out.

Mike Banda condemns Trotskyists out of hand because he says they did not participate in the resistance movements. We could on this and other questions have an educative discussion. However, it is a discussion which must be conducted by first laying out the positions. Let me just say here that the position of the French Trotskyists, first, in a copy of 'La Verite' published in June 1942 criticised the political adventurism of the Stalinists with their support for individual terrorist acts which did not do much damage to the oppressors but cost the lives of revolutionists. It supported all forms of sabotage of a mass character, for example slow-downs in the factory. By this time, incidentally, the French Trotskyists were producing a printed paper about every 15 days, with a run of about 3,000 copies, limited because of difficulties in securing paper. When the Resistance Movement grew in strength the Trotskyists opposed the demand for the unification of the various forces belonging to the resistance movement from the workers' formations to De Gaulle. Let us start, however, with the documents. The line of the European

The Minneapolis Trial was the greatest betrayal of Trotskyism, declares Mike Banda, and asserts that:

'The strategy and tactics of revolutionary defeatism were shamelessly abandoned by Cannon, Hansen and Novack in favour of a semi-defencist policy and this act of criminal betrayal was endorsed by the IEC and IS and challenged only by G. Munis.'

'Cannon's political cowardice and capitulation to the backward sections of the US working class became the pattern for the WIL-RCP in Britain and his book 'Socialism on Trial' became the gospel for world Trotskyists and the basis for further revisions of Trotskyism after the war.'

'Gospel'

Like other assertions his readers are expected to accept this on his say-so. With all due respects to a friendship with Mike Banda going back over 30 years, I have to reply: 'Absolute rubbish'. What is meant by the words 'gospel for world Trotskyism'? What sort of Marxist precision do such phrases mean, coupled with assertions

Mike Banda and the Bad Men Theory of History



Nye Bevan with European reformists Mendez-France and Nenni
● From page 7

The 'military policy' demanded schools under the control of the trade unions for the training of worker officers.

If we are to discuss 'Socialism on Trial' and the military policy let it be from what Trotsky called 'an objective Marxist viewpoint'. Let the positions be properly laid out and an attempt made to understand the context in which they were advocated. Denunciatory definitions asserting the very things that have to be proved hinder that discussion.

That applies to every point of this document which I cannot here follow through point by point. However, there are one or two more comments which must be made.

Again, if we are to have a discussion on entry let us make it a proper discussion. Surely that is elementary if we consider the complete lack of perspective and confusion on Labour Party work in the past period. One of Comrade Banda's passing references is to entry in America and Britain. There is the phrase:

'Cannon's disgusting accommodation to Norman Thomas and the US Socialist Party in '34-'35.'

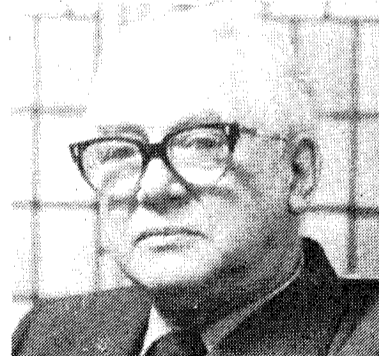
Presumably, this is a reference to the fusion of the American Trotskyists with the Workers' Party of Muste and their subsequent entry into the Socialist Party. The very fact that we have to *presume* this is so, is in itself an indictment on the clarity of the document.

If we refer to a 'disgusting accommodation', what does anyone learn from that? Are we opposed to entry on principle now? If we want to take up Trotsky on entry (not Cannon — the source: Trotsky) then by all means let us do so. That means, if we are serious, let us come to the question with records in hands and again, not just with invective. I think Trotsky was right when he posed entry as a permissible tactic. However, a discussion which sought to *prove* positions could once again prove valuable.

Before I pass off this ques-

tion, let me say that there is nothing correct in the specious dismissal of the experience in Britain. We are told that entry in Britain was an example of the 'most shameless toadying to bourgeois democracy in W. Europe'. It is denounced as the 'transformation of the Healy group into an adjunct of the Bevanite left'.

An adjunct of the Bevanite left? We have to remember that while we were in the Labour Party it came to the verge of a split over 'Bevanism'. Bevan himself came within one vote of being expelled. By linking the Bevanites with the dock struggle we played a big role



George Novak (William F. Warde)

in widening that division. We were never an adjunct to the Bevanites in the Labour Party, whatever the formulations in William F. Warde's article under Healy's name in Labour Review. In the Korean War we stood against the chauvinism that ran through the LP in the first six months, consequently 'Socialist Outlook' lost the support of left MPs. We stood with China against imperialism and clashed with the Tribunes over China's demand for Quemoy.

What can our comrades build on if they are told that all that history has shown is the perfidy of Cannon and Healy? If entry was so disastrous then let us not reduce serious questions of history to: 'Yah! Yah!'

By all means let us draw up the balance sheet of entry in France, America and Britain. But a balance sheet, not impressionis-

tic totals! One thing at least will come out. The fact that the open work of the RCP collapsed and that the minority led by Healy had been proved correct in the eyes of the Trotskyist cadre was a big step in establishing Healy's authority. Further, the roots of the 'Militant' tendency are in these years of struggle for entry in the RCP and the entry itself. There are a hundred and one educative aspects to these experiences.

There is much more to take up in this document — the Second Congress, he says, supported the formation of Israel — I can only find the opposite. There are his references to syndicalist policies in relation to Pilkingtons and other struggles in Britain, etc. However, these will have to be left out of this document.

Assist

Our discussion on the history of the Fourth International must be directed to assist those who want to resolve the crisis of leadership which Trotsky posed in the Transitional Programme. If our purpose is not to help the cadre who rose up against Healy, then we were better not writing at all. The comrades who carried through the split with Healy and want to build on it, the majority comrades in the WRP, are concerned very deeply with the problems of the Fourth International because of their experiences in the past three or four months. A great development of thinking is taking place in our Party as a result of the reality of struggle. It is the split which has brought every comrade to thinking on basic problems.

This struggle is the starting point of all knowledge in the Party today. Very correctly, one comrade in the North West, has insisted once or twice at aggregates that the IC 'missed the split'. He does not mean that they missed it physically. He means that they missed it in that they have not the slightest intentions to probe it and penetrate its meaning in their thought, or learn from the experiences of WRP members.

The question of whether the WRP is a revolutionary party which came up at the special conference, is not to be answered by abstracting aspects of history with our emotions as a guide, nor through a contemplation of ourselves. We answer it from the standpoint of a participant in the split and the struggle it opened up in the WRP.

We start with the reality that there exists in the WRP a revolutionary struggle, a struggle of men and women who have been driven back to the principles of the revolutionary movement; who have grasped eagerly at what has been revealed in the first four Congresses of the Communist International on how communists develop the concept of power in the working class out of the reality of all workers' struggles. They are grasping at the meaning of transitional demands and at the writings of Trotsky on how Trotskyists should intervene in the working class and labour movement.

Out of the struggle with Healy — who taught us, in life, what subjective idealism is — real advances in theory are being prepared out of the struggle of the Party.

The majority split with Healy on the axis of the Transitional Programme — that the crisis of humanity is the crisis of working-class leadership. That was the central question involved in revolutionary morality. Every comrade who was incensed at Healy's activity and participated in his expulsion was answering the question: What sort of leader does the working class and its revolutionary vanguard need?

The force which overturned Healy is a revolutionary force because it is asking for revolutionary answers. Its existence, in itself, answers the question as to the contradictory nature of the WRP and whether it has been destroyed as a revolutionary party. There also is to be found the answer to whether there is anything in the history of the Fourth International except a sorry tale of 'betrayals', 'perfidy' and 'corruption'.

At the meeting of the major-

ity CC members and visitors when Comrade Banda's document first appeared, one could see various comrades representing the past stages of British Trotskyism. Pre-war and wartime Trotskyists, recruits from entry into the LP, from the Communist Party crisis, from the youth of the '60s and '70s and recruits during the period when weaknesses accelerated into degeneration and corruption. All those comrades, like their counterparts throughout the Party, were not attracted to Trotskyism by perfidy and betrayals, but out of their desire to fight as communists.

Yes! In that meeting there were people who carried out tasks for Healy; there were people who were both victims and executioners. If the question was taken metaphorically we would distribute various degrees of guilt and innocence. A fruitless task! We cannot postpone our fight for leadership at any time and we both pay for and overcome our mistakes, and even grave errors, in that fight. The IC want to distribute revenge as a substitute for a struggle to develop revolutionaries. They remove the right from leaders of the WRP who want to correct their mistakes to assist the Trotskyist movement to root out 'Healyism'. That must earn our sharpest condemnation! The fight of people, who participated in the 'healyite' regime, to correct the party — that is based not on its degeneration but on its revolutionary roots.

The dialectical contradiction is that by ruthlessly pursuing a struggle against 'healyism', theoretically and politically, nationally and internationally, the errors and the most obscene of corruptions and degenerations can be the source of a movement the like of which has not been seen since Trotsky died. That is possible because the consciousness of the crisis of leadership has made an enormous leap through the split. Authority of leaders has now to be won politically; discipline has now to be built on conviction and political relationships. Leadership is posed before every member — that every member of the party is an officer in the proletarian army gains a new meaning for party members. Members see their own development as Marxists in connection with the development of the working class.

Spirit

In the Party there can be a real spirit of Bolshevism, not the 'self-critical' humiliation, which is a carry-over from Stalinism and became a terrible feature of the WRP and the IC. Instead, we can have the critical atmosphere of a Bolshevik party where comrades will fight questions out seriously and, like Lenin, be at times in a minority on a question, with the confidence that experience would prove the issue.

The very fact that we reached the depths we did therefore means we can spring to great heights. Cognition can become, not an individual method of thought, to be learned like 'positive thinking'. It can advance through the Party. Theory can develop in connection with penetrating and intervening in the contradictions in the working class.

Comrades are coming into struggle against subjective idealism and anti-Marxism in a way never before experienced in the Trotskyist movement because there was never before such a degeneration. The questions of leadership are posed to the advanced guard as never before. That is the source of progress. There is a desire to take leadership and there is an evasion of leadership which finds its most organised and acute expression in the minority faction and the IC. They resist the real meaning of the split and a ruthless carrying through of the struggle against 'healyism'. They ignore the central question of how to build a world party with sections which have a mass following.

To face that question we have to make a serious objective Marxist appraisal of the past of the Fourth International. That cannot be begun by reducing the past to a negative as Comrade Banda has done

LETTERS to the Editor

THE EDITORIAL board welcomes letters from readers. They can be sent to Letters Page, 21B Old Town, Clapham, London SW4 0JT. Those letters published do not necessarily reflect the views of Workers Press

Perspectives were anti-Marxist fraud

NEVER has there been so much discussion in and around the WRP as now, with Workers Press as our forum.

Expressed in the new paper's policy are the lessons of the united front discussion on the old Central Committee, documents from which were published in News Line after the split.

That debate showed up the other-worldly ignorance of Torrance, Healy's adjutant, about the united front or any other question of Marxism.

But I now want to offer some criticisms of the contributions of our Central Committee comrades, in the light of the discussion which publication of the united front documents originally threw open.

David Bruce's document, though to Torrance it strikes of rank right-wing heresy, advances the assertion that 'every day the tensions in society sharpen.' It must be pointed out that this is part of the ultra-left madness that Comrade Bruce is attacking.

The 'every day' for-

mulation is bound up with the 'new line' of Stalin's 'social fascist' period. When Stalin's henchman, Molotov, applied it to the approach of imperialist war, Trotsky remarked:

'All this is so absurd, so obviously stupid, that it even disarms irony... The newly appointed leader of the Comintern does not know at all how the growth of the war danger proceeds in reality. It is absurd that it increases "every day" just as it is absurd that the masses move to the left daily. We have before us a dialectical process... ("The 'Third Period' of the Comintern's errors", Writings of Leon Trotsky (1930), page 64.)

On the other hand the international perspectives resolution of our 8th Congress (published in the January 1985 Labour Review) proclaims that 'Every single day is a movement of the revolutionary flux of developments... the crisis must deepen every day.' (Emphasis in original.) Was this perspective the fruit of the mysterious 'theoretical leap' referred to later in the resolution?

This brings me on to Simon Pirani's document, which, while it

rightly criticises the 7th Congress resolution, treats it as a curate's egg. The fact is that the whole thing is rotten. Carefully study that resolution and we get the following analysis:

1. The capitalist boom is over.
2. The working class is 'undefeated' (whatever that means).
3. Therefore there is a **revolutionary situation** (to which the daily paper bears witness).
4. This requires revolutionary leadership.
5. Only G. Healy can provide revolutionary leadership.
6. Understanding and accepting this is revolutionary consciousness.
7. When cadres acquire this, revolution immediately happens: 'against all tendencies to contemplate the "building up" of the struggle and thus obscure its immediacy, we must insist on acceptance of the profound objective implications of the objective reality which has revealed itself in the world economic and political crisis, the driving force of the world revolution. This is what guides our theory and

practice.' (emphases added.)

That is to say, our practice was guided by a gross anti-Marxist fraud. Nor can a pragmatic turn to the working class set it right. What it crucially does do is to open the way to Workers Press becoming a worker's paper. But we shall not have revolutionary analysis till we get to the bottom of the fraud, which means fathoming Healyite philosophy.

K. Moxham



Stalin at the time of his 'Third Period' theory of imminent revolution throughout the capitalist world

A defence of promiscuity

IN HIS speech to the October 18, 1985, aggregate, Cyril Smith — as recorded in News Line — very correctly detailed how the indefensible corrupt morality of G. Healy, and its acceptance by the rump, is inseparable from their political theory and practice.

However the suggestion that sexual promiscuity in itself — 'we are not talking... only of promiscuity' — is incompatible with the struggle of the working class for power, must not go unchal-

lenged. Whether or not this was the case in Lenin's time, the question has to be considered in the light of today's reality.

All morality, as all philosophy, is determined by material conditions, and sexual relationships are presently undergoing revolutionary changes in the wake of scientific progress in the matter of contraception.

This has enabled women for the first time to have a measure of independence, thus undermining the previous basis of sexual relationships. Women can now enjoy re-

lationship without the fear of unplanned pregnancy which usually has meant economic disaster for the 'unattached'.

The essential difference is that sex and reproduction can now be consciously separated and promiscuity in itself is not necessarily socially irresponsible. Men and women can enjoy equal and satisfying relationships, unfettered by religious superstition, the material base of which has now been destroyed in the march of history.

This whole question is, I believe, of great importance, particularly to the

youth, and it is really not good enough to assume the correctness of any proposition because a 60- or 70-year-old quotation can be used in support. This is surely no substitute for analysis in the dialectical method of Lenin, Trotsky, Marx and Engels.

After all, if everything said and done by Lenin had, and still has the certainty of concrete truth and correctness, why only Lenin? Why not other great leaders? Does this sound vaguely familiar?

David McIlwaine
Stirlingshire

Anglo-Irish deal

THE agreement between Thatcher and Fitzgerald on northern Ireland is calculated to destroy politically the Sinn Fein in Ireland.

Every previous attempt since 1969 onwards by successive British governments to destroy and defeat the Republican movement has failed to push back the struggle in Ireland.

Now however we are going to see open collaboration between Dublin and London and this as far as I can see will take the form of Sinn Fein being banned from poli-

tical activity and the re-introduction of internment last used in the South during the second world war.

The recent arrests of prominent Sinn Fein members Martin McGuinness, and Owen Carron is a foretaste of what is to come in the future months.

Thatcher and the Tories I believe have no use at the moment for playing the Orange card because she has a far more potent weapon in the use of the Green Tory card of the Republic which she sees as the most important strategy

in defending the Republican movement.

The attacks on Sinn Fein will be coupled with further attacks on the working class in both Britain and Ireland and to see it any other way would be to be blind to present stark economic reality facing the ruling classes of both countries.

No Socialist worth his salt should endorse this conspiracy of Thatcher and Fitzgerald. It is a sell-out and a denial of the historical rights of the Irish people to self determination.

Likewise the working

class both Protestant and Catholic, North and South can only solve their problems in the context of a United Socialist and Secular Ireland united on a class basis in a Revolutionary Socialist party and rejecting the old Orange and Green constitutional parties which have nothing to offer them.

This is the only way forward for the working class in Ireland and it is to this problem that the WRP and other socialist groups in Britain should be looking too.

Charlie Walsh
Kilburn WRP

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LETTERS

Not so welcome

I WAS surprised to learn from an editorial note in Workers Press (February 1) that the editorial board 'in fact welcomes Ann Goodier's letter'.

Comrade Pirani, who was acting editor for that issue, may welcome the letter on his own behalf. But I can state categorically that the editorial board extended it no special welcome.

I resent Comrade Goodier's snooty dismissal of my letter to News Line as 'facetious and light-minded'. My letter made a serious point, but it did not pretend to be an

exhaustive reply to John Robinson.

I have no specialised knowledge about the main issues Robinson raised, so I was not in a position to make any useful comment on them.

Only a fool would believe that publication of John Robinson's or indeed any other letter implies endorsement of its contents.

If Goodier wants an editorial board which is ready to hand down a pofaced 'line' even on issues it knows next to nothing about, perhaps she should be taking Healy's new daily News Line rather than the Workers Press. John Spencer, London

Class struggle and the family

I WISH to present my views on the article by an unnamed contributor, entitled 'Class Struggle' (News Line Friday 15th February 1986). Healy's explanation and point of view is that the article is a 'particular instance of the struggle between the forces of production and the forces of relations of production'. In the stage of capitalism, the forces of production are the means of production and the workers who produce them. The forces of relations of production are the relations between the workers and the means of production. The article is a 'particular instance of the struggle between the forces of production and the forces of relations of production'.



Class The assertion that the class struggle requires the class struggle to be understood in terms of the forces of production and the forces of relations of production is a 'particular instance of the struggle between the forces of production and the forces of relations of production'. In the stage of capitalism, the forces of production are the means of production and the workers who produce them. The forces of relations of production are the relations between the workers and the means of production. The article is a 'particular instance of the struggle between the forces of production and the forces of relations of production'.

The original letter in the December 13th News Line

Workers Revolutionary Party MARX'S CAPITAL AND THE WORKING CLASS

1986 series of lectures
Saturday February 15, Saturday February 22,
1.) The relevance of 'Capital' today
3.) 'Capital' and the Working Class
Sunday February 16, Sunday February 23,
2.) Commodities, Value and Money
4.) 'Capital' in the age of information technology
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Glasgow
Lecturers: Tom Kemp & Geoff Pilling
Tickets: 50p
Complete series: £1.50

Workers Revolutionary Party MARX'S CAPITAL TODAY

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Lecturer: Tom Kemp
4. Friday 21st February
Capital and the rate of profit
Lecturer: Geoff Pilling
5. Friday 28th February
The contradictions of capitalism
Lecturer: Cyril Smith
6. Friday 7th March
Capital in the age of information technology
Lecturer: Cyril Smith
Reading: Marx, Capital vol 1
Marx, Wage Labour and Capital
Tom Kemp: Marx's Capital Today
Conway Hall
Red Lion Square, London WC1
Starts 8pm
Tickets 50p each lecture; complete series £2

WRP's attitude to gay rights

IN LIGHT of the important discussions that have taken place in the Workers Revolutionary Party and its paper since the split, I would like to discuss what I consider to be the prevalent attitude in the party towards gays. At the beginning of the explosion in the party brought about by the revelation of G Healy's abusive practices and consequently the bureaucratic degeneration in the party. An argument broke out between another comrade and myself over a discussion between other members concerning an attempt by the

bureaucracy of the party to discredit, alienate and possibly frame a certain comrade (whom I shall call A). What came out of this discussion was that A had been accused of having a lesbian relationship with another comrade and that this was 'a vile and disgusting lie'. Now I considered this question for a long time and concluded that the allegation (or rumour) was untrue, and that this was a disgusting way in which to discredit a comrade, but what was disturbing or shall I say implied in this discussion was that to be lesbian is 'vile and disgusting' and not that certain sexual relations preferences can

be used against a person in such a way. (May I add here that I do not believe that G Healy's abusive practices against the female comrades in the party can truly be called sexual relations in the sense that I am referring to). This discussion led me back to something I had initially been disturbed by in one letter of Aileen Jennings. In the beginning of her letter it says: 'During the course of action on the Manchester area certain practices have come to light as to the running of Youth Training by a homosexual and the dangers this holds for the party in relation to police provocation. I believe the Political

Committee was correct in stating that a cover-up of such practices endangered the party from a serious provocation.' It has to be asked, what kind of practices endangered the party to a serious provocation? What seemed to be the central issue was that a homosexual was running the youth training, and therefore one could speculate, would come into close contact with young male users of the centre and possibly strike up close sexual relations with a youth — and that possibly here lies the fear of state provocation. I can think of no other reasons why a person should be singled out for their sexual preference, with regards to party security and the correct precautions taken against police provocation.

under the legal age of consent? And if so, why? There is another issue concerning gays and the party which I wish to bring up. I started to get the (then) Newsline about 3 months into the miners strike during the summer of 1984, at that time there was considerable coverage in some London magazines about the police raids and subsequent state censorship and court actions against the bookshop (Gays The Word).

Comment needed on homosexuality

I AM worried that there has been no comment in the News Line-Workers Press on the homophobic content of Aileen Jennings' letter to the Political Committee, exposing G. Healy's practices. The party has been greatly in error due to its violent anti-homosexual position, a position introduced by G. Healy who stated that all 'queer boys' were security risks. It should be obvious to all readers of the paper that Healy's own practices were in fact the greatest security risks and that any potential risk caused by having homosexual members arose because of the Party's bigotry. By this, I

mean that no-one could blackmail a homosexual member unless being homosexual was unacceptable to the Party. I am told that the Party's attitude has changed and that Aileen Jennings only used the Manchester investigation as a device to get her point over to the Political Committee. If this is the case, surely the Party should not fear reflecting these changes in its newspaper. I would like to make two further points: 1 What type of Party did those members who knew homophobia to be a backward and dangerous policy think they were members of? 2 When I raised several

points concerning this matter at a WRP public meeting, one comrade stated that 'Polly (homophobia) went with Healy'. While it is undoubtedly a step forward to change from the Party's previous practices, it is surely necessary to know why you are no longer supporting anti-homosexual attacks rather than just saying it 'stopped' with Healy's expulsion. In the coming months I hope that there will be clarification on these points and also that an attempt at a class analysis of homosexuality and its place in the struggle for socialism. B.D., north London

Relations
One presumes that it is general knowledge that the law states that homosexual relations can only take place between consenting men over the age of 21 (there are no such laws with regards to women), the gay community are campaigning for the age of consent for homosexual men to be lowered to the existing age of 16 permitted to heterosexuals, until that campaign successfully manages to get the law changed the age of consent for homosexual men stands at 21. If my conclusion as to why action was taken over this issue is correct, I have to ask the question: was it feared that this comrade would have close sexual relations with young male users of the centre who were

Events
I imagined that there would also be coverage of these events and some support for the campaign against this state attack in our paper, I cannot remember seeing anything about it. It would be interesting to know why this was so. It must be said that there have been occasions when I have witnessed leading comrades openly ridicule and even encourage others to ridicule gays, like on demonstrations where gay groups have supported the miners, anti-apartheid, Newham Seven campaign etc. Surely the time has come when this sort of behaviour must stop. With the continued discussion on sexual morality and the revolutionary party I hope that the questions around gays and the revolutionary party will be dealt with seriously, with possible active support and involvement in this particular area given due consideration. I look forward to any contributions on this question. Sonia Boyce London

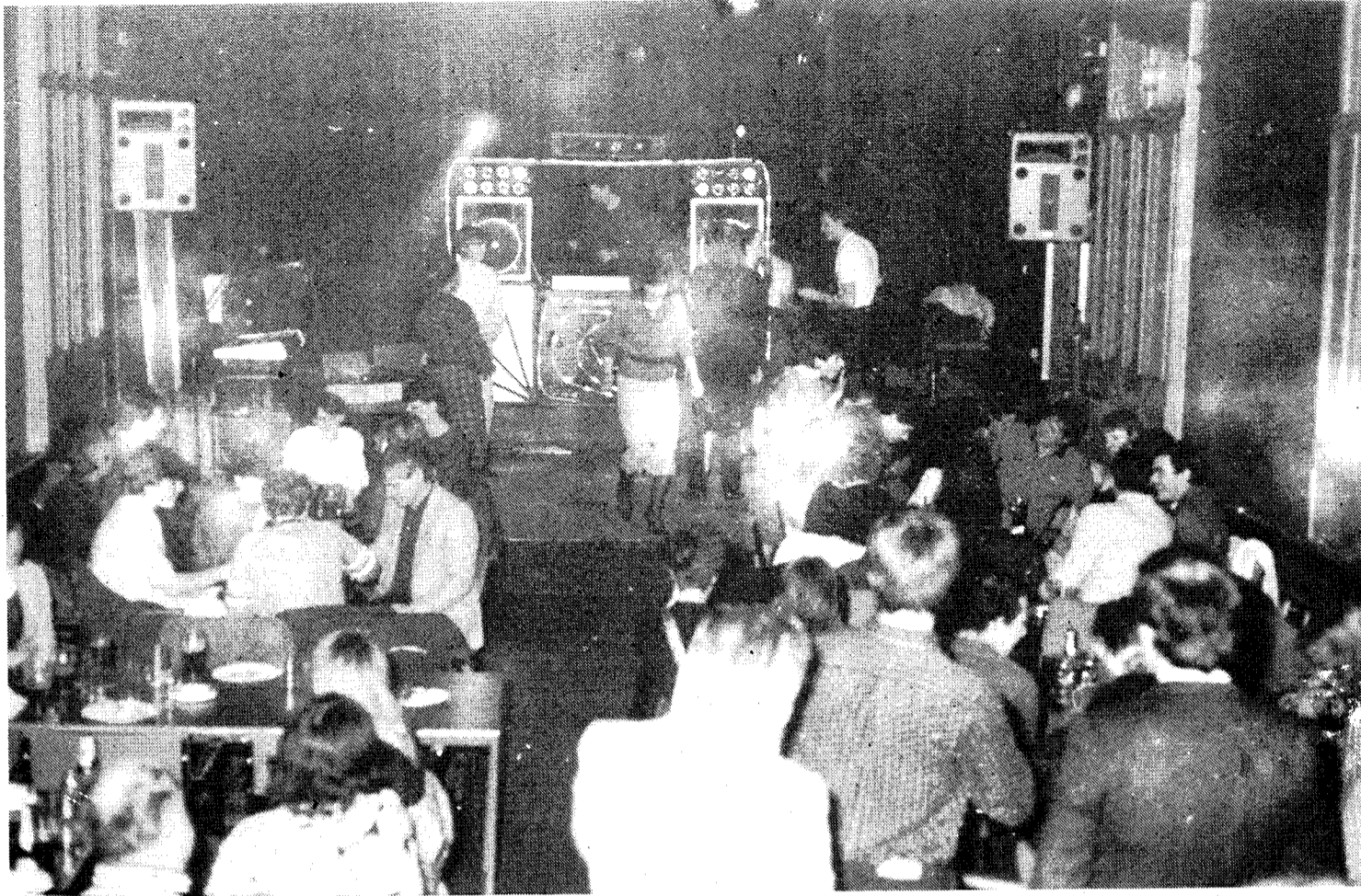
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Members and supporters of the Workers Revolutionary Party crowded into the David Gareth Jones theatre in the Merseyside Trade Union, Community and Unemployed Resources Centre,

Liverpool, on February 1, To lively music provided by (Chic) disco, and popular entertainment by live duo (Motions), comrades sang and danced the night away in what one guest

described as the most enjoyable evening he had had for years. A special vote of thanks was giving to Rita, Alison and Phil, who had worked all day to provide the magnificent buffet.

Torrance's tears of treachery

BY CHRIS CORRIGAN

SHEILA Torrance burst into tears shortly after sending a young woman to a flat where expelled WRP leader Gerry Healy was waiting.

The tears? They were because Torrance, the party's ex-assistant secretary, knew exactly what abuses lay in store for the female comrade, then in her early 20s.

It happened on a Saturday in the mid-1970s — while a WRP Central Committee meeting was in session.

Healy had as usual departed from the CC early, but before doing so left a message asking Torrance to call the woman out of the meeting... and send her to his flat nearby.

Witnesses saw Torrance weeping a few minutes later. She occupied a flat in the same block as Healy's. It was only subsequently that the extent of her cynicism was to emerge.

It was, after all, neither the first time — nor by any means the last — that Torrance, and others, were to enable Healy to secretly carry out vile practices. It had been going on for years, and continued in the WRP right up until autumn last year.

Over a period of decades, Healy used his position as party leader to subject dedicated, socialist-minded women to a systematic process of, first, political humiliation and demoralisation, and then, attempted physical and sexual subordination. A clique around Healy covered up, equally systematically, for his crimes.

Even after Healy's sexual abuses were publicly revealed by the WRP last October, Torrance,

Vanessa and Corin Redgrave, Alex Mitchell, Richard Price, Ben Rudder, Simon Vevers, Stephen Miller, etc, went off with Healy and formed their own 'party'.

The incident concerning Torrance and the CC meeting has been related to Workers Press. Much more detailed and extensive evidence concerning the activities of Healy and his clique is being gathered by the WRP Control Commission.

Welcome

The investigations of this Commission are continuing and all who wish to give evidence to it are welcome to do so.

As we have seen above, evidence need not be limited to Healy alone. Others are implicated in his crimes too. Without pre-empting the findings of the WRP Control Commission, questions can certainly be asked in the time being... such as questions to Alex Mitchell, who remains Healy's main mouthpiece.

Perhaps in the new daily paper 'News Line' which Mitchell, Rudder, Vevers and others are currently producing, Mitchell would turn his attention to the wrongful expulsions of Alan Thornton, Tony Richardson, and other Western Region WRP members 11 years ago?

Evidence

Firm evidence exists to show that Richardson was brutally beaten up by Healy just prior to those expulsions. Richardson, by all accounts, was held in half-nelson to enable Healy to do this.

Will Mitchell tell the tiny readership of his daily rag whether he was present at that beating? And if so, what he saw and what he did on that occasion?

SCIENCE NEWS

Compiled by Mike Howgate

Moons of Uranus found

THE Voyager 2 fly-by of Uranus has produced enough new data to keep hundreds of scientists occupied for years according to a report in the latest edition of the science journal 'Nature'.

However at least some of the problems raised by information sent back may be partially answered in a 30-day post-encounter report to be published soon.

New discoveries are a very faint tenth ring and ten new moons, two of

which are associated with and 'shepherd' two of the rings. Surprisingly the rings are composed of quite large particles, most greater than a metre in diameter, unlike the rings of Jupiter and Saturn.

Masses

The question of the masses of the moons has been answered and their low densities and greyish colour suggests that they are composed of 50 per cent rocky material and 50 per cent ice.

Photographs of the ura-

nian moon Titania show a surface pockmarked with impact craters and crisscrossed by bright linear markings. These are probably canyons and the fact that they are primarily in two directions indicate that this small moon has a dynamic interior.

The possibility is that this is due to tides caused by the countervailing gravitational effects of Uranus itself and the larger moons outside the orbit of Titania.

By far the most interesting phenomenon observed in the flyby is an

atmospheric emission called 'electroglow'. This is 'visible' only at ultraviolet wavelengths, and is thus unlike earthly aurorae which are in the visible spectrum.

Electrons

They also appear to be produced by very-low-energy electrons while aurorae are produced by high energy particles. While this phenomenon had been observed on both Jupiter and Saturn it was only with the Uranus observation that it became obvious that they

were dealing with something totally new.

It also appears that Uranus has an internal heat source, part of the evidence being that the poles are no warmer than the equator. And no, that is not a typographic error, the poles of Uranus do face the sun.

One piece of information that confirmed expectations is the composition of the uranian atmosphere. The 88 per cent hydrogen and 12 per cent helium composition is consistent with the composition of the sun!

Yo-yoing volcano

A NEW island appeared on the map last month when a submarine volcano, Fukutokuoka-noba, appeared above the waves south of the Japanese island of Iwojima.

Within a day an island one kilometre long had been built up and a plume of smoke 50 metres wide was belching skywards. However, within a week, the island had been reduced to half this size due to rapid erosion.

The volcano which produced the island was previously active eighty years ago. On that occasion it built an island 150 metres high and 5 kilometres in circumference. It was named Shin (new)

Minami (south) Iwojima, but in less than six months it was reduced to a mere shoal and by 1910 was 200 fathoms below the waves.

This yo-yoing island lies at the southern edge of a volcanic arc which stretches 1,250 kilometres to Mount Fuji. The rocks of the volcano are untypical for its position at the edge of a plate and in front of a subduction zone, and are more akin to those found on volcanoes beyond the subduction zone.

Researchers at Tokyo University believe that this may be due to the very steep inclination of the subducting Pacific plate in this area which produces the Izu-Bonin trench just opposite the Iwojima group of islands

Activate all brain cells!

If a recent article in 'Nature' is to be believed the Bulgarian Stalinist state is indulging in some 'Healyite' dialectics and distinctly 'Rudderian' anthropology.

Reports in the Bulgarian media of a major research project by the Institute of Brain Research have stressed the following Central Committee declaration. 'The construction of a developed socialist society not only asks for but demands the activation of the brain cells'.

The 'Nature' article maintains that this is not just an exhortation for intellectuals to work harder

but is part and parcel of the claim to 'ethnic purity' advanced in the so-called research.

This blatantly racist research project appears to be designed to show that the Bulgarian people have been a racially pure entity since at least the tenth century.

The research is supposedly the fruit of more than 30 years work, using what must be considered very suspect anthropometric measurements.

According to the findings the Bulgarian people show such a remarkable degree of homogeneity that foreign incursions over the past 1,000 years

have left no trace in the population.

Particular emphasis has been placed on showing that the Bulgarian minority populations, primarily of Turkish and Greek extraction, are really ethnic Bulgarians.

It seems that the official line is that the centuries of rule by the Ottoman empire resulted in nothing more than a change of religion and names by a section of the population.

In line with this policy it is reported that large numbers of Bulgarians with Turkish-sounding names have changed them to Slavonic ones.

Workers Revolutionary Party

PUBLIC MEETING

Abolish the P.T.A.!

End Super-grass trials!

Stop the strip searching of women in Armagh and Brixton!

Troops out now!

For a socialist united Ireland!

Monday February 17th

7.30pm

Anson hall,

Anson Road,

Cricklewood, N.W.2.

Speakers: Dr. Maire O'Shea

(Irish in Britain Representation Group)

Cliff Slaughter — W.R.P. Central Committee

Gerry Downing — Kilburn W.R.P.

Chair:

Sam Cox W.R.P. London District Cmtee

Ticket: 50p

Backing for Contracts

strikers

LONDON trade unionists and political organisations have set up a support group for the 22-week Contracts-French Connection clothing strike on Tyneside.

There has been a tremendous response to the team of ten strikers sent to London this past week to gain support and finance to sustain their struggle for trade union recognition.

The Contracts delegation also marched to Wapping in support of the sacked printworkers and joined the picket line to show their solidarity in the struggle to defend trade union rights.

At a rally in support of the strike NUTGW shop steward Jane Kingsland said: 'Never in all my years working in the clothing industry have I worked for an employer such as Contracts in South Shields. We had our wages cut by £12 a week. He never asked us, he just did it'.

On September 16th 1985 the workforce of 160, mainly women and young girls, held a one-day token strike to try to force the employer to recognise their trade union, the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers (NUTGW).

Sacked!

Nine members were immediately sacked!

A mass meeting the next day voted 100 per cent for an all-out strike to demand trade union recognition. After 22 weeks on strike there are still over 100 still determined to stick it out and win.

Some have left for other jobs, some have broken the picket lines to scab. The strength and determination of those who continue the fight for their trade union rights have won the respect and admiration of the entire labour and trade union movement of Tyneside and the Durham coalfields.

An investigation compiled by the Trade Union Studies Information Unit on Tyneside has revealed what type of company Contracts is and who is behind it.

Contracts is part of the French Connection group owned by Stephen Marks, ranked 15th in a recently published list of Britain's top 100 richest men. Jordan's directory of the top 2000 companies lists French Connection 11th in terms of profitability.

Stephen Marks himself has done very well out of French Connection. He gave up the pro-tennis circuit to found the com-

pany in 1969 and still has an 80 per cent share in the business. His personal wealth was recently estimated at over £40 million.

In recent years the company has been expanding and has made particular efforts to penetrate the US market. In 1983 it purchased a 50 per cent share in the US firm 'Best of All Clothing' for £3.6 million.

Altogether the French Connection group comprises 15 different companies in the USA, Hong Kong, France and the Netherlands as well as Britain.

The Unlisted Securities Market was created by the Tory government for firms not large enough or ready for the full Stock Market.

French Connection was launched onto the unlisted market in November 1983 with market capitalisation of £40 million.

French Connection is one of the fastest growing companies in Britain and its sales have grown consistently over recent years: up 25 per cent in 1982/3, 22 per cent in 1983/4 and 125 per cent in 1984/5 (due to the acquisition of 'Best of All Clothing').

Profits grew by 2700 per cent in 1982/3; 307 per cent in 1983/4; and 130 per cent in 1984/5. In just three years, profits rose from £28,000 to over £7.5 million.

Seeking to establish more control over its supplies, the company has also been expanding in the UK.

In 1984 the South Shields factory was bought from the receivers of S. Newman for £280,000. BUKTA, the 103-year-old sportswear firm, was also purchased from the receiver this year.

French Connection showed no hesitation in cutting jobs in the name of rationalisation. In taking over BUKTA, it was apparently only interested in the stock and trade name and made 180 workers redundant from the Stockport factory.

In setting up business in South Shields, the firm received a £50,000 grant from Tyne and Wear Labour council. £43,000 was also claimed from the Department of Trade and Industry.

Tyneside trade unionists call Stephen Marks the 'Eddy Shah' of the clothing trade and have thrown their full support behind the struggle for trade union recognition being fought for on Contracts picket lines.

FROM PAGE 1

'... New technology may be adopted at any time with consequential reductions in manning requirements' (1.2.2); 'there will be no minimum staffing agreements or understandings' (1.2.3), i.e., rundown of staff is a continuous process and is not negotiable.

Also in this context, the term 'lay-off' appears under the heading 'management rights', indicating possibly the use of casual labour or short-term contract system (taken on as and when needed) infamous for their past use in the docks and the building industry.

Employer

There are in fact eight reasons that the employer can give for dismissing an employee, although the eighth simply covers any reason he might like to think up. They are: 1. incapacity; 2. incompetence; 3. neglect of duty; 4. misconduct; 5. breach of office rules and regulations; 6. redundancy; 7. because they cannot continue to work without contravening some statutory or other duty; 8. 'for some other substantial reason' (6.2)

Such a ruthless hire-and-fire regime implies an equally severe repression of genuine trade union activity and such proves to be the case.

'There will not be a closed shop' (1.2.3) This is of course allowed in law but not in Murdoch's law. 'The Employer will not recognise or negotiate with any subdivision of employees into chapels or branches or other groups of any kind' (5.6)

This strikes at the heart of workplace organisation and defence of rights.

At the 'News of the World' and the 'Sun' there are altogether seven branches and twenty chapels, their work vital to the interests of members.

The document also states in this respect: 'The union will not be recognised in respect of employees of Supervisory and Management grades' (4)

Active

In fact the unions involved have a tradition of such grades not only being members but of playing an active role in workplace organisations.

Individual workplace representatives are, apparently, to be allowed, but with the employer not only dictating how the union system shall operate but who the representatives shall be. It states:

'No more than (...) (left blank) Union Representatives will be recognised by the Employer at any one time. (11.1)

'The Union Representatives shall be elected by secret ballot by all employees who are union members ... and will serve for one year. (11.2)

'... to be eligible for election as a Union Representative an employee must have been employed

by the Employer for a minimum of (...) years.' (11.3)

At the same time 'No individual who has received any formal warnings from the Employer under its Disciplinary Procedure will be eligible for election.' (11.3)

In addition, any representative receiving such a warning 'shall cease at once to hold office' (11.6). Once again, such an occurrence would be simplicity itself to arrange.

The disciplinary procedure mentioned is not in fact outlined in the document but details are given of a grievance procedure (or at least its top end) in which disputes referred by either side move successively from a Joint Standing Committee to the state-sponsored Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), and if this fails, to arbitration by one or three arbiters.

Essential to this procedure is that during its operation the union must accept that for itself and its members: 'It is understood and agreed that Union Representatives and other officials have a special duty to enforce this section, including the obligation not to engage in any stoppage of work.' (6.2)

Strictures

As if worried that loopholes have been left in these strictures and controls, a paragraph on the Employer's 'right to manage' seeks to cover every eventuality. It states:

'The Employer's rights to manage its business and direct its working forces include, but are not limited to, the right to plan, direct and control all the operations and services performed, to schedule the working hours, to classify and re-classify employees, to hire, promote, demote and transfer employees as required to suit the need for efficient production, to determine the make-up of its workforce and the assignment of work within the workforce, to suspend discipline, dismiss, lay off employees from work, to make and to enforce work rules and other standards, to introduce new technology and to improve methods, materials equipment or facilities or to change or eliminate existing methods, equipment or facilities.' (10.2)

Finally, provision is made to draw in any other area of work or conditions under the 'legally-binding' umbrella: 'Wages, Hours of Work, Vacations, Public Holidays, Industrial Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures, Redundancy Policy and Check-off. Proposals covering the above will be presented to the Union during the course of negotiations' (16).

Imposing

It must be re-emphasised that if Murdoch is successful in imposing this type of agreement, every management, of industry or services, is going to want one.

It is no consolation in this situation to think of the 180 EETPU members at Wapping who might at some stage like to try and tell Murdoch that they are electricians and don't want to do this or that task.

In Japan, union-busting in the 1950s led to the widespread introduction of such agreements, seeking permanent suppression of union activity and gross extension of labour exploitation.

Often such two- or three-year deals for a group of full-time 'core' workers are associated with a series of short term contracts which reduce the rest to the status of self-employed or casual labour, without rights or protection.

In America, professional union-busting companies operate. The novelty in Britain is that such work is being carried out by a bona fide trade union.

It is not necessary here to look at the new technology available to the printing industry. Suffice to say that the printers are not being 'luddite' in their actions.

Their enemy, they know, is not new technology but the employers who use it as a weapon to destroy jobs, smash unions and intensify working, instead of to bring benefits to workers and customers alike.

It is, however, necessary to look at the 'fight' put up by the union leaders in this dispute.

Guardian labour correspondent Patrick Wintour wrote on January 22 this year: 'Few employers have prepared so long or so thoroughly for such an event as has Murdoch'.

Policy?

So where were the print unions parallel preparations for war? There appears to have been none. And what is the policy now?

It is ludicrous simply to urge trade unionists not to buy newspapers which should not be on the streets anyway. True, visits are made to union branches and Trades Councils for support, which, however, is said to be wanted on a 'low-key' basis so as not to alienate 'public sympathy'.

So no mass picketing, and don't pull out the rest of Fleet Street because Murdoch will be more worried if he thinks he is losing readers to other papers.

But the rest of the industry is facing a similar onslaught, based on change of premises, new technology and similar deals aimed at operating with only a tiny fraction of the original labour force.

The fact is the entire newspaper and printing world is in the process of a rationalisation similar to that, for example, which cut back the docks in the 1960s.

The entire industry should be out on its own account, as well as in solidarity with News International workers. So what?

Within the tightening circle of Tory laws, not to conflict with them is to do nothing at all as jobs, unions and livelihoods disappear.

But the fact is the Tories have suffered major political setbacks in the past weeks. Huge and growing unemployment, their trade mark, makes them universally hated. New blows could bring them down. Only the fearful cringing before them of the labour and trade union leaders allows them to survive.

And in this context nothing has been worse than the TUC's failure to deal with the EETPU over its acceptance of state cash for union ballots and in the present dispute.

Failure to expel it for its strike-breaking activities is a blow not only to the printers, but to the electricians like those who support the health workers and the miners who want to see the principles of solidarity and of independence from the employers and the state, protected and extended.

All union members and organisations should demand that the TUC act now to expel the EETPU for strike-breaking and union-busting.

Issues

Finally, it is necessary to state that even more fundamental issues are at stake here and they are to do with new technology.

British capitalism is not simply collapsing but is furiously rationalising itself to stave off decline in conditions of a world slump.

In order to match its competitors who are caught in the same trap it shuts down unprofitable industries, hurling whole workforces onto the dole while modernising others with the same effect.

Where new concerns open up they must operate on a virtually a no-labour basis or they won't even get off the ground.

So if the companies don't modernise they will go broke and jobs will disappear, and if they do

modernise they can only do so on the basis of destroying jobs, what is the answer?

Capitalism has not got one. Even in its decline and decay it continues to revolutionise the forces of production to a level where they churn out more profits and more products at ever greater speed with fewer 'hands', in a process which, paradoxically, turns society into a nightmare struggle for subsistence for more people.

Wars

The situation resolves in one of two ways; either by imperialist wars of mass destruction to enable a new journey along the same road, or, a revolution is made to establish a new system of society which can harness the new levels of productivity to the benefit of its workers. The history of this century shows that no middle way and no gradualist solution exists.

This does not mean there is nothing to be done now. On the contrary, to avoid the effects of ferocious cut-throat competition and destruction of companies we must say that where they cannot survive as profit-making concerns without destroying workers' livelihoods they must be converted into public services run by their workers for the benefit of the consumers, not for commercial gain.

The newspapers are a classic example. They must cease to be the house organs of millionaires and property combines and become true vehicles for public news and views, nominally state owned but under control of those who produce them and those who read them.

Anyone concerned to discuss more about the fundamental problems of society and to hear the Marxist view on the subject should try to attend the classes on Marx's capital and other subjects currently advertised in Workers Press.

NATIONAL JUSTICE FOR MINWORKERS CAMPAIGN

MARCH, RALLY & DEMONSTRATION

2nd March, 1986

Assemble: 1.30pm, Jubilee Gardens, County Hall, London SE1, (with speakers)

March to Hyde Park

Rally: 4.30pm in Hyde Park

Speakers

Chair: W. Etherington (NUM Nat. Exec. Comm.)
(Confirmed) Peter Heathfield (Gen. Sec. NUM), Tony Benn MP, Dennis Skinner MP, Ann Liburn (Chair. Women Against Pit Closures), Tony Banks (Chair. GLC), John McDonnell (GLC), Eric Clarke (NUM Scottish Area), Martha O'Samar (Broadwater Farm Defence Committee), Roy Butlin (Coalville NUR), Sarah Roelofs (Loshams & Gays MSG), David Nellist MP, Liz French (Kent gaoled miner's wife), Sean Geraghty (EETPU Fleet St)
(Invited speakers) Brenda Dean (SOGAT), Ron Todd (Gen. Sec. T&GWU), Ken Cameron (FBU), Ken Gill (TASS), Diane Abbott (Nat. Comm. Black Sections)

HEROES CONCERT

Contemporary songs of struggle for the Working Class
(Based on the Heroes LP, produced after the Miners' Strike in N. E. England)

Royal Albert Hall, Kensington, London

Doors Open: 6pm. Show starts: 7pm

Paul Weller, Lindisfarne, Hank Wangford Band, Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, Flying Pickets, Prelude, Worktickets, Annie Orwin Band, Ed Pickford, Robbie Burns, Eve Bland, Mal Finch, Mike Elliott, Andy Kershaw, John Peel, Tom Pickard, Jack Purdon, Wildon Bros.

PLUS: as an added attraction: Dennis Skinner sings!
(accompanied by David Nellist MP on piano)

Tickets: £3.50: available from Sacked Miners Office,
Greenwich Labour Rooms, 32 Woolwich Road, London

Tel. 01-858 7055