

ON INSIDE PAGES

CP veteran crosses Wapping picket line
— see page three

Anniversary of Easter Rising
— see centre pages

Readers' letters — pages 12 and 13

Strip-search protest meeting

IRISH women political prisoners in Brixton and Armagh jails are being constantly strip-searched in an attempt to break their spirits, a street meeting in Kilburn was told last Saturday.

The meeting was organised jointly by the WRP and the Irish Solidarity

Movement to campaign against the strip searches which are being carried out on women who are in the remand section of the prisons and have not even been charged with any offence.

● See page 12 for details of Brixton jail picket.

Mobilise against US aggression

CAMPAIGN TO DEFEND LIBYA!

BY CYRIL SMITH

WITH Thatcher's enthusiastic backing, United States imperialism last week launched a terrorist attack on the Libyan revolution and rights of the people of the Middle East.

The entire labour movement must take a decisive stand against Reagan's aggression in the Bay of Sirte.

Arguments about who has the legal right to the waters of the Bay are entirely beside the point.

The decision of the Americans to hold naval 'exercises' in the Mediterranean at the beginning of this year was a deliberate act of provocation, designed to 'destabilise' the Gaddafi regime.

The imperialists are searching for forces within Libyan military circles who

the efforts of the US military to force more money out of Congress.

The US war machine has also taken advantage of this opportunity to test out some of its new hardware, particularly the latest High Speed Anti-radiation Missile (HARD) under real-life conditions.

Reagan is determined to press ahead with his plans to attack the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. For this, fresh funds are needed, whatever the views of Congressmen may be.

Not surprisingly, Kinnoch told Thatcher on Tuesday that 'the rights of the US Navy to be in international waters are not in question'.

It is precisely the right of imperialism to send its aircraft carriers into the Mediterranean that is in question here and no cowardly chauvinistic speeches in the 'Falklands spirit' will change that.

The US presence is aimed not only at the Libyan revolution and its important economic and social gains but also at the struggle for the liberation of Palestine from Zionism.

Anathema

The struggle of the oppressed to free themselves from the yoke of imperialism is anathema to Reagan and his backers. It is not simply the economic question of falling oil prices, although this is a factor.

Imperialism has suffered military and political defeats in Nicaragua, Haiti, the Philippines and elsewhere. Congress refusal to fund Contra mercenaries for the overthrow of the Sandinista revolution expresses a profound political crisis for US imperialism.



Colonel Gaddafi will get popular support for his anti-imperialist stand

Unable to placate the US middle class with tax cuts but too weak to inflict a decisive defeat on the working class in America, its brutal foreign policy is also an expression of impotence at home.

The Israeli rulers are understandably delighted at the US action. Their own piece of terrorism last year in launching a raid on Tunis, aimed at murdering Yasser Arafat, shows that their allegations about Libyan 'terrorism' are pure hypocrisy.

Backers of Reagan in the capitalist press have tried to justify his war moves in by referring to the hi-jacking of the Achille Lauro. Leaving

aside the question of the right of the Palestinians to fight Zionism how they see fit, there is not a shred of evidence connecting this with the Libyans.

Defend

The Soviet bureaucracy is no more prepared to help the Libyan people to defend itself against aggression than the Labour leaders. When the spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry was asked on Tuesday what steps the USSR was going to take to aid Libya, he refused to go beyond formal condemnation of the US action. It is certain that the Soviet government knew well in adv-

ance what Reagan was planning to do.

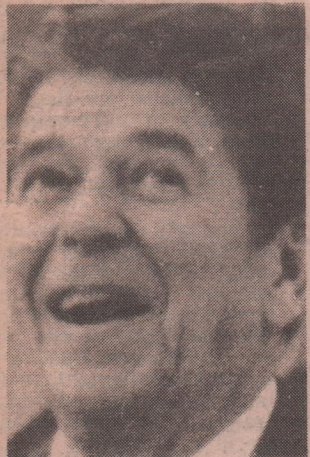
The overthrow of the rotten British-backed Idris monarchy in 1969 ushered in a period of economic and social development for the Libyan people. The poorest country in the Middle East and one of the poorest in the world became a symbol of struggle against imperialism.

The Libyan people backed their leaders when the US imperialists were booted out of the massive Wheelus Field air base in northern Libya. This was a military setback for the US predatory plans for the area. No Guantanamo in Libya! (Guantanamo is one of the largest

overseas US military bases — in Cuba).

When the struggle of the Libyan masses hit the streets of London in the state organised provocation of the Peoples Bureau which ended in the death of a policeman, the Workers Revolutionary Party wrote a piece in News Line but did nothing.

● Fine slogans are meaningless by themselves. If the Healy/Mitchell leadership was paralysed then, the WRP is not paralysed now. We pledge to campaign the length and breadth of the labour movement. We will fight to mobilise the working class in the principled political defence of the gains of the Libyan revolution.



REAGAN

might be persuaded to turn against the revolution.

Reagan's murderous action is closely connected with

A QUESTION OF RAPE

— See page 5

Scottish strikers draw net tighter

GLASGOW furniture workers, who have been on strike for ten months, will step up their action at a public meeting next Thursday.

The thirty-five courageous strikers from Morris, Glasgow, believe they are tightening the net around their employer, who sacked them last May when they refused to accept the imposition of a 41-and-a-quarter hour week.

Shop steward Brian McKee of the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union (FTAT) told Workers Press:

'We have tracked down Morris' most recent source of glass for shelves and we have had an assurance he won't get any more from there.

'We now need to stop his supplies of veneer from Northern Veneers, Leeds. We are going down to tell the workers there that what is happening to us today could happen to them in future.

'We hope to start leafletting all the shops that sell Morris' furniture every Saturday.

'We are asking people, especially shop workers, to help us by looking out for furniture with his distinctive "M" symbol on it, or "Morris of Glasgow" embedded in gold inside the drinks flaps of wall units.'

Meeting

Brian called on trades unionists from the whole of Scotland to attend the public meeting called at Glasgow's McLellan Galleries at 7:30 pm on Thursday April 10.

'Although only 35 people have been sacked by Morris, it is a precedent for all managements.

'The anti-trade union laws have been made for a new breed of employer who don't want anything to do with the working class. They will lower themselves to the extent of relying on scab labour for their company to survive.

'We know that our employer will never have trade unions back by choice. With these new laws, why should he?'

'We have to ask for the repeal of all the trade union laws before there will be an upsurge of trade union activities in this country.

'It's not a case of keep the laws you like and do away

BY SIMON PIRANI

with the ones you don't. This is what Neil Kinnock wants because once he's in he won't want trouble with unions either! The lot must be scrapped.'

Brian explained how the Morris strikers have come up against Thatcher's law at every stage of their struggle:

At their first mass picket, a cine-camera at the top of Morris' factory recorded which banners were present; later Yarrows shipyard received a phone call threatening the shop stewards' committee with legal action for 'secondary picketing'.

'Evening Times' printers refused to handle Morris advertisements, whereupon Morris threatened to sue the paper, who threatened the print union SOGAT in turn.

Civil servants at Job Centres who refused to advertise the sacked strikers' jobs were threatened with discipline on the grounds that they were taking secondary action.

In fact Morris carried out the original sackings after taking advice on the anti-union laws, in a move almost identical to Murdoch's dismissal of the 5,500 News International printers. He blocked all exits to the factory except one.

As union members filed out 2½ hours early, in protest at his plan for extra work without extra pay, he called out to them 'you're sacked; you'll be notified by post in the morning' — and so they were, by special delivery.

Defiance

Since then, the strikers have provided an example of stubborn defiance which has made 'Red Clydeside' blush.

When Morris planned a special double-glazing exhibition at the factory last September, pickets turned away the Lord Provost's limousine, persuaded all but 10 customers to stay away, and had a band hired by Morris for the occasion playing 'The Red Flag'!

When the strikers marched to an official Glasgow



city reception before Christmas. Morris thought he had got one back at them by mobilising his scab workforce for an anti-strike demonstration.

Next week's public meeting is the chance for the strikers, and every trade unionist in Scotland, to show him wrong. Make sure you are there.

What you can do about the Morris' strike:

1. Attend the public meeting next Thursday, April 10th, 7.30 pm at the McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow.
2. Attend mass demonstration every Friday at 4.15 pm at Milton Street, Glasgow G4.
3. Black Morris' furniture. This includes tables, chairs and wall units. The strikers are particularly appealing to USDAW members on this score.

Black steel-framed chairs and tables from Morris of Campsie, a factory owned by Morris whose T&GWU workforce has stayed at work. Local authority unions please note these items are often ordered by councils.

4. Black Morris of Glasgow double-glazing products.
5. Send donations or requests for speakers to Morris shop stewards' committee, c/o FTAT, 83 Carlton Place, Glasgow.

Contract strike return

THE 94 clothing workers who returned to work on Monday, March 17, after a 6½-month strike for trade union recognition, marched back to the Contracts factory in a defiant mood.

Strikers were joined by supporters from trades councils and unemployed groups and despite a raging blizzard they marched through South Shields singing the songs of the strike to

the music of the Tyneside Stumbling Band.

As they began proudly to sing the song of the strike — 'Recognition' — onlookers cheered and as they reached the factory, management gazed in amazement out of the windows.

Scabs peered out from the canteen as the women and young girls who had waged this valiant struggle stood for one last time on the picket line before being led into work by their 2 shop stewards.

Contracts Managing Director, Tommy Coburn said, 'I am really relieved that the Strike is over, it has cost us dearly. If we hadn't been part of a very successful company, this place would have folded.' He went on to insist that there would still be no trade union recognition.

Notably, none of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers officials were present. Although the strike has drawn massive support from the working class of around Tyneside there are those who have supported the treacherous role of the union leadership.

Alec McFadden, Secretary

of the County Association of Trades Councils and a prominent Communist Party member in the area, who refused to support the strikers and condemn the union leadership at a Trades Council meeting has kept close contact throughout the dispute between McFadden and Bailes, the NUTGW official dealing with the negotiations. In a letter dated March 20 Bailes thanks McFadden for 'all your help (and advice)'

He also says 'In reply to your letter dated March 13 I can now tell you that at a meeting of the Strikers held on Wednesday March 19 they agreed by a majority vote to accept the unions recommended offer which was put to them by me on February 28.

The executive decided to withdraw official support on the 28th February, this decision has caused the union and myself much anguish and will ultimately damage the union locally. However considering the unions recent intervention which has resulted in our members returning to work together and with 75 per cent of what they came out for I think you will agree that there is an

attempt by the union to build bridges and make reparation.

'It must be somewhat unusual in the 1980s to have a six and a half month strike and have no-one arrested, no court injunctions served or court action taken and be able to get all those on strike back with a job without being dismissed. All this has been done and a settlement reached and our members must be applauded for their gallant struggle.'

The elected representative of the strikers with the shop stewards did all of the negotiations with the Management of Contracts, it was they who insisted on no dismissal for the 12 who had occupied the factory in January.

The return to work was on proposals that could have been accepted months ago and only exposed more fully the cowardly role of the Trade Union leadership.

The saving of the jobs of the strikers has a hollow ring, they will work for two days only and then will all be laid off. Twenty will then return on April 7 and then 10 each week — the last not being re-employed until June 16.

● Next week Workers Press will publish an exclusive on the role of youth in this important dispute.

Iraqi regime lashed

A MASS of evidence of executions and torture of political prisoners, and other brutal policies carried out by the regime in Iraq, was given to a well-attended conference in London this week.

'One of the most horrendous denials of human rights anywhere in the world,' was the way the regime was described by Islington North Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn.

Corbyn opened the conference, held in the House of Commons' grand committee room, and brought together by a body called the Organisation of Human Rights in Iraq.

Speakers gave detailed accounts of life for people under the rule of the Ba'ath Socialist Arab Party following the military coup in 1968. 'We would like to ask: why do you protest against violations of human rights in Poland and Iran and ignore Iraq?' says an open letter to world governments.

One speaker concentrated on the way the Kurdish population had been placed under siege by occupying forces. 'The government has yet, however, to succeed in crushing the fire out of the hearts of the Kurds,' he added.

Stop the strip-searches

PICKET

Every Saturday
11.30am - 1.30pm
Brixton Prison
Jebb Avenue SW2

Against the strip-searching of Martina Anderson and Ella o'Dwyer, and also in support of the women in Armagh Jail who are undergoing similar treatment. Support this important campaign organised by the Irish Prisoners Appeal, Women and Armagh and the Troops Out movement.

A picket is held every Saturday outside Brixton jail.

A street meeting will be held in Kilburn Square on Saturday in support of the campaign against the strip-searching of Irish women prisoners in Brixton and Armagh.

Organised by the Kilburn branch of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Commencing at 11am

AN IMPORTANT amendment was omitted from last week's publication of the WRP Eighth Congress Resolution on Ireland. The first paragraph should have contained the following:

... heroic fighters of the IRA and the INLA who oppose the occupation forces

We apologise to readers for this error.

● Please note that Workers Press welcomes comment and critical appraisal of this resolution from the Republican movement and from the labour movement.

● Due to production difficulties, our feature by Tom Kemp on the lessons of the French elections has had to be held over to the next issue.

Monthly Fund
£470.62 received this week.
Total now £1,357.11
Our special fund received

£181.93 and now totals
£32,971.23
Send to Workers Revolutionary Party, 21b Old Town
London S.W.4 OJT

CP veteran's shame

EXCLUSIVE

by Matthew Nugent

TWO COMMUNIST Party members are among the journalists crossing printers' picket lines at Rupert Murdoch's scab printing plant at Wapping, east London.

They are Stanley Levenson, former Morning Star sports editor and Chris Nawrat, who also worked on the Stalinist paper's sports page for several years.

Levenson was for many years the deputy father of the National Union of Journalists chapel at the Morning Star.

Ex-'Star' men cross Wapping picket line

On Tuesday of this week Nawrat openly boasted to Workers Press: 'I am not hiding and I am quite happy to say publicly that I am crossing the picket line.'

The Communist Party is acutely embarrassed about this situation. The fact that its members were scabbing first emerged publicly last weekend with a brief story in The Observer

This forced the CP to issue a statement on Tuesday in which they called upon all their members not to cross the picket line — eight weeks after the strike began.

Nawrat complains that he was not consulted before the statement was issued. Asked whether his Party had ever instructed not to cross the picket line, Nawrat said:

'We have never been instructed one way or the other. I think it's one of those things that you don't ask the question because you know what answer you get.'

He added: 'I rang both my district secretary and the Communist Party headquarters today and said that my position is that I will cross the picket line. I said I wanted to have discussions

with their industrial organiser about this.

'My position is that I am a member of a chapel which spent an entire day discussing and debating it. That chapel voted democratically to come into work here and as far as I'm concerned that vote binds me to come in.'

'I mean individually I could leave the paper if I wanted to, but that's not what I choose to do.'

Asked about his own, personal feelings regarding the 5,000 sacked printers, Nawrat said: 'I have very, very great sympathy for them and I hope that SOGAT the NUJA and Murdoch can come to an honourable settlement.'

However, Levenson's actions have left his former comrades on the Morning Star puzzled considering his history on the paper. In the 1960s Levenson was one of the Morning Star's leading industrial correspondents and was involved in many of the major building trade disputes during this period.

There is probably even more embarrassment within the Levenson household. Levenson's wife is the sister of Betty Heathfield whose husband Peter is secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Betty Heathfield has taken part in the picketing of Murdoch's Wapping plant.

Support groups for printers

MURDOCH'S sacking of his 6,000 workforce is, without doubt, not simply about new technology but about union busting on an unprecedented scale.

A letter leaked from his legal advisers has proved that he provoked the sackings and planned all along to use the full weight of the anti-union legislation.

It must be said that he could never have got away with this had not the EETPU been so helpful in organising the scabbing.

At stake is the very right to belong to a trade union at all. If Murdoch gets away with this, what is to stop any other employer doing the same?

One important aspect of this dispute is the setting up of Printworkers' Support Groups. These were quickly off the ground and already function both inside and out of London.

They are organising for the mass picketing in Wap-

ping on Saturday nights, picketing and leafletting local shops, wholesalers and railway stations.

Public meetings are going ahead and the involvement of printworkers and their families should be developed.

Crucial

The Union of Printworkers Support Groups (UPSG) brought together at its first meeting a total of 14 groups and expects 50 to attend its second meeting on April 3 (See advertisement page 4).

Advertising the meeting, UPSG spokesman Larry

Hyett says:

'Support groups have a crucial role to play in this fight. It is essential that rank and file printworkers are centrally involved in the groups, which should meet regularly and be open to everyone.'

Lawrence Jenkins of SOGAT '82 says:

'If Murdoch wins then all printworkers are for it — the same treatment. We've got to realise that new technology is something in the interests of printworkers — but only if it is under workers control...'

'The Tory anti-union laws have been used in their true

nakedness — and they are now seen to be horrific — so I think that the way we can bring many other unions into the fight is by stressing that it is now legal to sack workers without compensation and illegal for workers to resist.

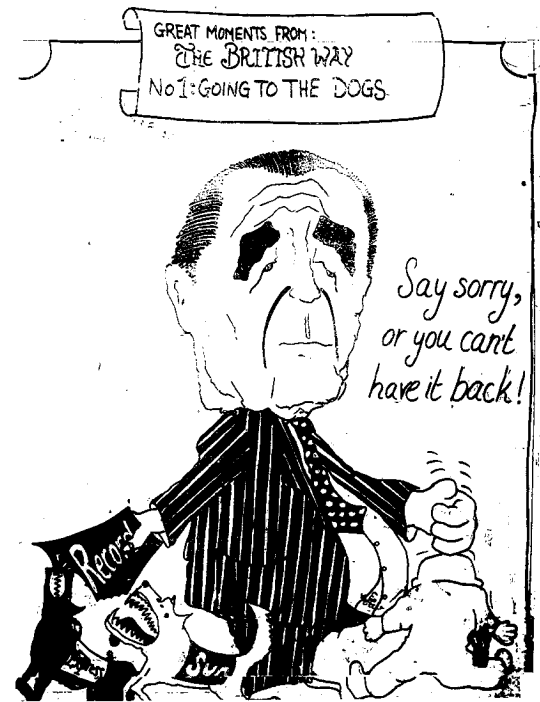
Active

'Support groups are so important because they allow workers to get fully active even if their union leaders are hesitant about fighting.'

● If you are in a support group or about to set one up, then make sure you come along to the meeting.

The headquarters for the UPSG is at 102 Cromer Street, London, WC1.

By Alan Clarke Sogat 82 member



Bus battle ahead

LONDON Bus management have written to the Transport and General Workers' Union withdrawing their notice to terminate the agreement with the union on wages and conditions.

They have agreed to return to normal negotiating procedure and drop their plans to go over the heads of the union with plans to cut wages by £40 a week at Potter's Bar and Hounslow garages.

London Transport also agreed to abide by the agreement on severance pay over the closure of Loughton garage.

A special conference of Longon garage delegates voted on Tuesday not to go ahead with plans for a strike

ballot on March 27.

London Transport have now agreed to answer the union's claim for 1986 wages on April 7.

Speaker after speaker from the floor of the conference in support of the withdrawal of strike ballot warned that London Bus crews must prepare for a major strike because the management strategy was to force down wage levels.

Harry Mead speaking for the London Bus Committee said: 'We may have won a skirmish, but the big battle is still ahead.'

He urged delegates to prepare their garages for the battle in front of London bus crews.

Laings mass picket planned

ROY MILL is one of the bricklaying gang locked out by Laing's, the construction firm in London several weeks ago. He has given Workers Press an update on the dispute.

Our reporter spoke to him on the picket line at the Hay's Wharf site in Tooley Street, near London Bridge.

'None of the workers here are directly employed by Laing's,' he said.

'All the work here is sub-contracted out and these sub-bies sub-contract it out again.'

'Many of the workers here are on the cards and have union tickets and have been given many of their rights since we began picketing.'

'After Easter we will be arranging mass picketing here of all the gates as this is the only major organised site Laing's have.'

Roy thanked Workers Press for the coverage given to the men's dispute. He said he was especially grateful to Des Warren and Mike Farley for visiting the Laing strikers.

Des Warren was jailed on a conspiracy charge for his part



in organising the 1972 building workers strike and left in jail by the incoming (then Labour) Home Secretary Roy Jenkins.

Mike Farley was one of the leaders of Wigan building workers' marches to demand the release of Warren and Ricky Tomlinson..

Roy Mill said he looked forward to a public meeting being called to bring the experiences of the 1972 building workers' strike into the present dispute. (See Des Warren Campaign report, p16.)

The five sacked bricklayers support the campaign against the strip searching of Irish

prisoners in Brixton and Armagh jails and have visited the picket line outside Brixton prison.

● Roy Mill, speaking on behalf of the five, condemned the vile practices being used against Ella O'Dwyer and Martina Anderson and pledged to continue the campaign.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

LECTURE

Modern technology and capitalism

Wednesday April 2, 7.30

Family lounge, Flying Picket

MTUCURC, Hardman St

Liverpool

Histadrut firm discriminates

A factory owned by the Israeli trade union federation, the Histadrut, is refusing to employ Arab workers.

Scores of Arab workers have applied for jobs at the Iskoor factory in Kiryat Gat, southern Israel, but all have been turned away.

Director Itzhak Ran says it is company policy not to employ 'members of minority groups'. This was to prevent arguments between Jews and Arabs in periods of tension, he told the Israeli newspaper 'Ha'aretz'.

'Unemployment in this country is high and we need jobs for Jews', a anonymous supporter of the firm's racist policy was quoted as saying.

Iskoor is part of the Histadrut-owned Koor industrial corporation, a major concern with big exports.

Last month Israeli president Haim Herzog visited the Kiryat Gat factory.

Histadrut ownership and investment in industry is often cited by admirers of 'Labour-Zionism' as evidence of the 'progressive' character of Israeli society.

In fact, besides its long-standing contribution to Zionist colonisation projects, the corporatist Histadrut is involved through Koor in extensive trade and investment with racist South Africa. It is also carrying out racist policies in Israel itself.

Star-gazing Stalinists

COMMUNIST Party local election candidates seem to have joined those politicians who say 'we haven't got an answer to your problems, but at least we'll give you a laugh'.

Voters in the London borough of Kensington and Chelsea can forget boring issues like housing, education, rents and rates. They are being told the CP candidates' 'birth signs'!

Mary Attenborough is a Tauren, her comrade Brian Nicholls is Gemini and Danielle Stone is Capricorn, the CP literature says. 'I'm not a believer in horoscopes', Nicholls confessed to the 'London Standard', 'but there's a good deal of interest among voters in the ward where I'm standing.'

We've always said Stalinism was a Cancer in the labour movement, but never realised till now what a load of 'Taurus' they could come out with.

TEACHERS ROUND-UP

More lessons from the teachers' strike

WHILE many important issues are raised in the teachers article in Workers Press (March 15), some further points need discussion.

The recent sell-out deal was forced through by teachers' organisations other than the NUT; they signed the ACAS agreement.

The immediate treachery was by the NAS/UWT, a TUC affiliate.

It has claimed for years to be the most militant teachers' union but failed at its first test.

After the sell-out was signed, the NAS/UWT agreed to a three-point clarification, in case any doubts lingered.

They agreed that 'the position of each organisation reverts to that in force before the dispute began'.

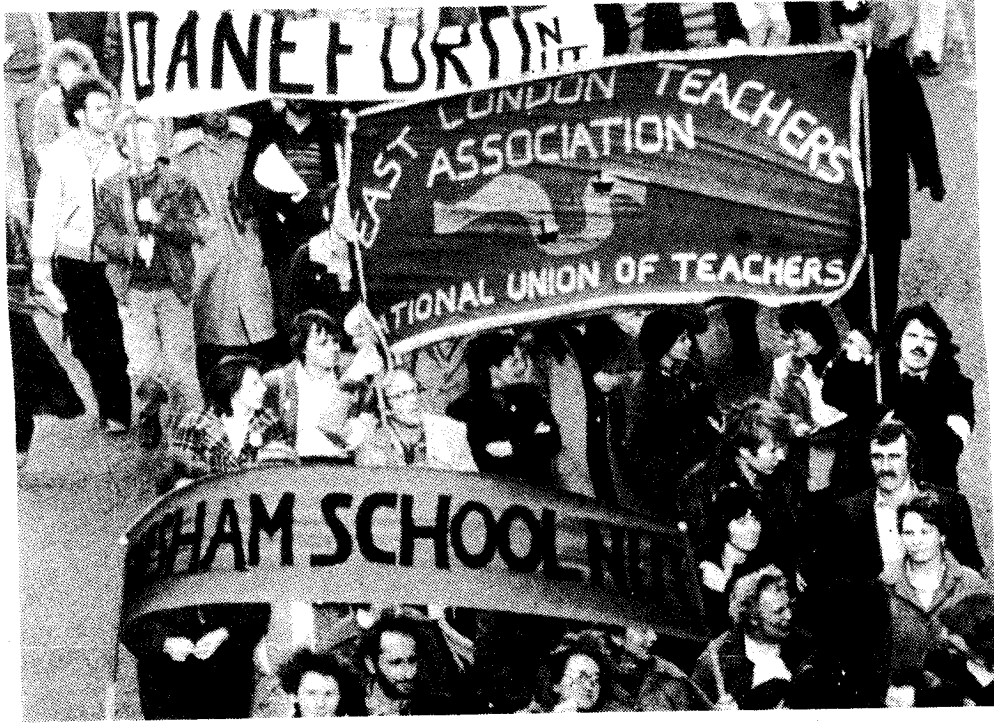
The parties, they said, should take steps to secure an atmosphere of calm in the schools.

The 70 local authorities who sent out disciplinary letters to the NAS/UWT membership are not asked to withdraw their letters.

'So long as those talks are in progress, no action should be taken which is likely to make the existence of letters the basis of a dispute.'

Having signed away the right to strike for six months and agreed to force their membership to return to work unpaid overtime, they allow the authorities to hold a gun to their members' heads.

The signatories to the ACAS agreement, like the print workers union leaders before Murdoch refused to talk with them, will sell any previous gains of teachers including conditions, appraisal and allowing privatisation.



Why is it that a union that was militant in the past agreed to a sell-out but another, which has not been noted for its fighting qualities, has maintained a principled stance of opposition?

The actions of such leaders result from the reciprocal action of the membership and the leadership. The NUT executive has been defeated twice at conferences and brought very close on a number of other occasions in the last couple of years.

Action

Such a struggle forced the NUT leadership to maintain their stance, while at the same time allowing them not to develop the action.

The leadership are allowed to get away with their support for the YTS and TVEI (school course) precisely because no fight has yet been engaged against union involvement in these schemes. The NAS/UWT, having only recently been tested out, have had little or no internal struggle. There is a warning here for

the NAS/UWT members who are resigning and joining the NUT.

No problem can be resolved simply by joining the NUT. A political fight will have to take place whether they stay in their union or join the NUT.

The main criticism to be levelled at the NUT national executive, and this includes those that belong to the Socialist Teachers' Alliance (STA), is that they refused to step up the action and campaign with all the other public service unions against the cuts.

The NUT did not fight within the TUC for an anti-cuts campaign.

Such a campaign must be linked with the MSC and the YTS, TVEI and CPVE schemes. Money is being poured into these types of schemes.

Lord Young, Minister of Employment, is developing plans to force through a system of 'vocational education' run in co-operation with private enterprise. Education resources can, in this way, be split up and sold off to local firms.

Those leaders within the NUT that refuse to break with the YTS and TVEI, that allow any form of appraisal and sell teachers' conditions of service, will have to be forced out of the leadership and replaced by others that are willing to fight.

The STA and the Communist Party have supported the executive on these issues.

The immediate problem is to rally all teachers and leaders that are willing to fight. Teachers will not turn to the problems of building a revolutionary leadership until they have tested out and gone through a long series of struggles with all sorts of leaders.

The struggle for leadership was witnessed at the special wages conference in January. The national executive used their incoming president and Ken Bore (Maoist) to try to defeat an amendment for a one-day national strike.

For one moment there was a complete rift between the executive and the delegates as the latter forced through, overwhelmingly, the amendment.

Leadership needs to be given on all issues facing teachers.

For instance, the 'small' problem of the introduction of GCSE. In some authorities teachers have been victimised because, quite rightly, they refuse to implement this course.

For taking such action the employers will try to sack them in future.

The unprecedented level of discontent will continue. Teachers for the first time ever have established their conditions of work in practice by refusing to do unpaid overtime. The authorities must claw this back.

Very few of the 220,000 teachers in the NUT have gone back to the conditions before the strike. Others have continued a work to rule. The importance of this is to give teachers confidence in their ability to fight and that they realise they can change things by their actions.

Fighting

They also learn who they are fighting.

There is a complete identity of view concerning the necessity to force teachers to do unpaid overtime by the Tories and the Labour Party representatives on the Burnham Committee.

Nicki Harrison (Labour Party), spokesman for the management side of Burnham Committee, has stated this.

David Blunkett stated on radio recently that the NUT should accept the deal. Teachers are becoming more politicised by their experiences.

The issues raised in this letter and the article of March 15 should be considered by teachers.

In addition, all those interested in the defence of education and the public services should write to the Workers Press with their comments.

Martin Ralph
NUT Buxton and Area Association Secretary

UNION OF PRINTWORKERS SUPPORT GROUPS

calling all support groups to

A MEETING

Every printworkers support group is invited to send up to four representatives to the next meeting of the Union of Printworkers Support Groups

Thursday, 3rd April, 6pm

Camden Town Hall, Judd St, NW1

- Build Support Groups
- Organise mass picketing of Murdoch's Wapping
- Break the Tory anti-union laws

BUILD YOUR OWN SUPPORT GROUP

LETTERS

An SWP viewpoint

I MUST take exception to your article in Workers Press of March 15.

The first part was fine in that it explained the real struggles that have emerged in the schools in the last 22 months.

However the last section, dealing with the role of the SWP and the STA, was erroneous. Throughout the dispute, the STA and the

SWP were calling for and organising more action.

It was them — nobody else — who won the vote at the January special conference for the one-day strike.

I would have thought that when you broke with Healy, you wouldn't break with Trotskyism but try to re-establish it.

By this I refer to the tactics relating to the united front with the bureaucracy,

social democrats, etc.

When Carole Reagan wrote in Socialist Teacher about linking up with the NAS/UWT on the Burnham Committee, it was to act together in action as the only two TUC-affiliated unions and force the NAS/UWT to break from collaborating with the anti-union PAT.

Thankfully, the SWP and the STA were leading this

strike on the left or we may have ended up making huge ultra-left errors.

As it is, despite the sell out, we are building a real opposition to the executive. We will undoubtedly make mistakes but certainly are not the left critics of social democracy as you claim.

Charles Derr
East London Teachers Association and SWP

A QUESTION OF RAPE

Is there substance to the recent 'media panic' about rape, or is it all a 'monstrous political diversion', as the Healy News Line would have us all believe?
MAGGIE OBANK reports

THE recently proposed guidelines for tougher sentences for rapists has brought forth a host of comment from all sections of the media.

It would appear that the suggestion has caused something approaching panic from the so-called moderate 'Guardian' which has been joined by Healy's 'News Line' in hanging on to 'some facts and to a sense of proportion', unlike the 'panic' of the 'rape-obsessed tabloids'.

In last Saturday's edition of Healy's paper, the editorial describes the institutions of the ruling class — the judiciary, the police, the capitalist press and TV, and finally the church as getting into 'a frenzy' about rape — 'every television news programme gives the latest 'rape report'.

Powers

The purpose of the "rape crisis", the editorial concludes, is to create a monstrous political diversion. It is to whip up a "law and order" atmosphere in which the police, the judges and the courts can seize more powers.

Healy was expelled from the WRP last October for raping and sexually abusing numerous women members over many years. After first admitting the charges, he and his followers left the WRP, then changing their



G. HEALY

tune, denied anything had taken place apart from a right-wing 'split' by the 'Banda-Slaughter clique'.

Healy's press quotes from the 'Guardian', figures issued by the Home Office in their Statistical Bulletin on notifiable offences for 1985.

The increase in rape offences by 29 per cent in 1985 is in part due to the 'new police interviewing techniques', notes the 'Guardian' — these techniques encourage the victims to go ahead with their complaints.

However, this figure of 1,842 is for rapes recorded by the police. The numbers of unrecorded rapes and assaults is unknown, but can be estimated.

Healy and his followers, however, have nothing to say about rape as such. They consider that the present media and judicial attention to rape is a 'diversion' — perhaps they think there is no such thing as rape, after all, Healy himself said that his behaviour was 'nature'.

Why, you might ask, have new measures for handling rape victims been brought in? Is it the work of 'moral crusaders' as the Healy press cynically describes those opposing rape — including ourselves in the WRP today — or have the police turned over a new leaf?

Rape dehumanises a woman and shows, in the most brutal way, the real social relations under capitalism — the relations of utter oppression and exploitation, where the first class

oppression was historically that of the female sex by the male, as Engels explains in depth.



If the police are developing more sympathetic ways of handling rape victims, if the bourgeois press is sensationalising rape cases, if the judiciary is bringing in new guidelines on tougher sentences, then there are reasons for it.

It is not as the Healy press tries to claim — an invention for the state to bring in more 'law and order'.

Frightened

Of course, in the year after the miners' strike which saw the transformation of many women's lives and communities, it is quite in the interests of the media to shout 'Rape' to try and put women back in their 'place' — at home, too frightened to go out at night.

And, it is already clear from a recent survey about Islington, London, that a very high percentage of women never go out alone after dark, through the fear of being assaulted.

Everyone knows that the institutions of the state are being strengthened — but is the explanation of how it happens really as Healy would have us believe?

Over the last 10 years, women in particular have begun to do something themselves about being raped — about the individual and social effects of being raped and then being blamed for it.

US attorney Judith Rowland, in her book 'Rape — the Ultimate Violation', (Pluto Press, 1986), makes an extremely important contribution to our understanding of rape and what it means for the 'hundreds of thousands of women who have for centuries suffered unjustly a stigma of guilt and shame'. She challenges that stigma.

Rape is an assault on the sex of women, not just an act of violence — it is an act to dehumanise a woman, to pour all the frustrations, despair and anger against her womanness, which of we wouldn't expect Healy and his supporters to understand.

Slowly, women have been resisting and challenging the rapes and assaults against them. Support groups, advice centres, refuges, self-defence groups have been formed.

They challenge the traditional view that if a woman is raped, then it's because she asked for it — as Sheila Torrance said of one of Healy's victims, 'she asked for it, she wore a see-through blouse'.

They challenge the fears and prejudices that have prevented thousands of women from admitting they have been raped.

Inquiry

In January 1985, Women Against Rape published 'Ask Any Woman: a London inquiry into rape and sexual assault', the result of three years' work by the Women's Safety Survey, set up at the King's Cross Women's Centre.

The inquiry was the first survey into rape in London: 2,000 questionnaires were given out throughout London boroughs in August 1982, with 76 questions to complete.

Of the 2,000, 1,236 were returned filled in and produced some harrowing results. The survey attempted to assess the 'far-reaching social effects as well as personal misery' of women subjected to rape and sexual assault. Amongst the results were the following:

- More than one in six of the women replying had been raped (17 per cent);
- Nearly one in three had been sexually assaulted (31 per cent);
- One in five had suffered attempted rape (20 per cent);
- Eleven women had been raped or sexually assaulted by a gang or pair of men..

Altogether two in five women the the survey, more than one-third, had suffered either rape, sexual assault or attempted rape, and 16 per cent of the women had been raped or sexually assaulted before the age of 16.

On January 23 this year, figures for recorded rapes from 1979-84 were released by Home Office Minister David Mellor in a House of Commons written answer. It is instructive to compare these with 1985 figures.

In England and Wales in 1979, the number of recorded cases were 1,170, in 1984 it had risen by 263 to 1,433, an increase of 22 per cent. In 1985, the recorded cases were 1,842 — an increase of 19 per cent.

Such cynical and degenerate remnants as Healy and Co. think that 29 per cent is not worth bothering about, just as when the revelations of Healy's real lifestyle and 'habits' emerged, we were told by the Corin Redgrave that 'it didn't matter', that it was 'nature', even though they had required Healy sign a statement promising to cease all contact with the youth comrades.

In Healy's editorial last Saturday we are now called 'moral crusaders'. This is nothing new: as Healy was about to be expelled for his actions, Redgrave was saying we were bourgeois moralists for complaining about rape: that we were Mary Whitehouses.

History has proved to us that women have a rightful place in the struggle for socialism alongside and with men and youth as class fighters.

History has also proved Healy wrong — rape isn't 'nature', sexual abuse of women does 'matter' — and quite rightly he and his blind followers have been thrown right out of this movement.

Whatever they say about 'Thatcher the rapist' (the headline of Healy's editorial), they know the truth, as we and thousands more do, about Healy the rapist.

Generation

To be a revolutionary socialist, we do have to take cognisance of the complex developments in class society, which includes the institutionalising of rape as a terror weapon to enforce the first class oppression against women.

I will end with giving the last word to Engels, as I quoted him at the last London members' meeting with Healy's supporters:

Talking about the state of sexual relationships after the overthrow of capitalist production, Engels (in Origin of the Family, Private Property and State), says that 'it will be settled after a new generation has grown up: a generation of men who never in all their lives have had occasion to purchase a woman's surrender either with money or with any other means of social power, and of women who have never been obliged to surrender to any man out of any consideration other than that of real love, or to refrain from giving themselves to their beloved for fear of the economic circumstances.'

HAITI: A HISTORY OF STRUGGLE

In the wake of the overthrow of the hated 'Baby Doc' Duvalier regime in Haiti, our correspondent ESTELLE SCHMID outlines the violent history of one of the poorest countries in the world.

This two-part series continues next week. It shows how the present movement is based on a tradition dating back to the slave revolts which defeated French colonialism to achieve independence in the days of the Napoleonic empire and outlines its social and economic background.

ON February 7, 1986 the Haitian masses brought to an end 29 years of brutal dictatorship.

Following in the heroic footsteps of their slave ancestors, led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, Haitians overthrew the rule of the Duvalier family who had served as overseers to the plantation owners of United States imperialism.

As Gerard Pierre-Charles, Haitian delegate to the Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean, said in Managua in February:

'The people of Haiti have liberated themselves from one of the most horrendous dictatorships in the world.'

He emphasised the connections between the struggle of the Haitian people and the defeat of imperialism by the Nicaraguan revolution:

'The Sandinista revolution has inspired the Haitian youth who defied and finally defeated the Duvalier dictatorship.'

Haiti occupies the western third (10,700 square miles) of Hispaniola, the second largest island in the West Indies.

The French began colonisation in 1697 naming the area Saint Domingue and bringing in several thousand slaves to work the plantations.

The French revolution of 1789, which attacked the authoritarian power of the French aristocrats in the name of liberty and equality, blew apart the colonial state in Saint Domingue.

Two years later, in 1791, the slaves struck their own blow for liberty and equality. Starting at a voodoo cere-

mony in the north of the country, the revolt spread with great speed.

Within six weeks, 1,200 coffee estates and 200 sugar plantations were burned. Over 1,000 whites and 10,000 slaves were killed.

Compared with previous slave revolts, this was remarkable both in its scale and in the degree of organisation.

The slaves, initially led by Boukman, had co-ordinated their plans and succeeded in keeping them secret, so that the plantation owners were caught by surprise.

Boukman was captured and beheaded in the early stages of the uprising. Shortly after this Toussaint L'Ouverture, who had learnt to read and write and held the relatively privileged position of plantation steward, joined the revolt. He introduced guerrilla tactics to the slave army.

He was Governor-General until 1802 when the French resumed control. L'Ouverture was captured and imprisoned in the French Jura where he died in 1803.

Another former slave, Jean Jacques Dessalines continued the struggle and proclaimed independence in 1804. The country thus became the first independent Black Republic and its name was changed to Haiti (mountainous).

There was a conflict after independence between the Black majority and the mulattos (mixed French and black) who claimed rights to land through their French ancestors.

But independence and the right to own land is what the blacks had fought for. They thus drove the mulattos to become merchants.

Haiti was the most intensively exploited French col-



LES SALINES, a suburb of Port au Prince, Haiti's capital. Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world - children starve in the streets and the per capita income is about £30 per year

ony. The fabulous profits made from sugar and coffee provided a mighty impetus to industrial development in the 'mother country'.

In 1767 some 72 million pounds of raw sugar was exported and 51 million refined. Coffee exports had increased from seven million pounds in 1755 to some 68 million by 1789.

The 800 sugar plantations produced more than all the English Caribbean islands put together. Of course, the price for all this wealth was a high one - paid in sweat and blood by Haiti's enslaved workers.

It was not until 1825 that Haitian independence was recognised by France, and

even then only on extremely onerous terms.

France required an indemnity of 150 million French Francs, payable mainly to French planters who had lost their property in the revolution.

The sum was reduced in 1838 to 60 million, but was nevertheless a burden which the devastated Haitian economy could only repay by borrowing from French, and later US, banks. The debt was not repaid until 1922.

As the nation's indebtedness increased, the growing financial chaos and the increasing impoverishment of the countryside put the system under a severe strain.

The unrest of the rural poor began to threaten the security of the ruling classes and no faction was strong enough to retain power for long.

Seized

Between 1911 and 1915, seven presidents were overthrown, the last of whom was President Vilbrin Guillaume Sam, who was torn apart by an angry crowd in July 1915.

The United States used Sam's death as a pretext to occupy the country. In December 1914 a detachment of US Marines seized the government's gold deposits from the Banque Nationale at gunpoint.

The gold, valued at 2,500,000 was deposited in the vaults of the National City Bank in New York.

The United States disbanded the army, replacing it with a national gendarmerie under US officers. It established a customs receivership, took effective control of the national finances, and rewrote the constitution to promote foreign ownership of property.

Initially welcomed by the

urban bourgeoisie, the Marines faced a severe test between 1918 and 1922 with the outbreak of a peasant uprising against the occupation.

The leader of the resistance, Charlemagne Peralte, set up a provisional government in the north in 1919, but was captured and killed. The US called in reinforcements who put down the movement with bloodshed, killing several thousand.

Economically, the occupation elevated the mulatto bourgeoisie into the top ranks of the government.

Driven from participation in political life, the new black urban middle class of doctors, lawyers and teachers developed the theory of 'noirisme' which emphasised Haiti's African links and reaffirmed voodoo as a key feature of Haitian culture.

One of those involved in the 'noiriste' movement was Francois Duvalier.

When the Marines departed in 1934, Haiti remained firmly under US domination. The national finances were still controlled by US officials, and the Banque Nationale remained a subsidiary of the US Export-Import Bank.

A concession to Standard Fruit for banana production entailed the mass eviction of peasants from their smallholdings. The hungry and landless Haitians were driven to work on the sugar plantations of the Dominican Republic which led to a massacre of approximately 30,000 Haitians organised by Trujillo in the Dominican Republic.

During the Second World War there were further evictions as land was turned over to production of fibres and rubber for the US war effort. Shortage of food and imported goods had brought disastrous increases in the cost of living.

The pressure of mass revolts forced the army to support the election of a black ex-teacher, Dumarsais Estime, as President. Although regarded as a progressive and supported by the left, his first act was to ban Communist organisations.

The racial and class divisions intensified and he was deposed of in 1950 by Colonel Paul Magloire, an army officer.

Magloire's blatant corruption led to his downfall. He had to flee into exile, leaving the traditional empty coffers. Nine months of political chaos followed in which Haiti saw five provisional governments and a civil war in which 17 people died.

Ruthless

The elections of 1957 brought to power Francois Duvalier, popularly known as 'Papa Doc', who had built up support in the army and among the black middle class.

Duvalier ruthlessly brought everything under his control: he institutionalised the hated para-military, the Tontons Macoutes by renaming them Volontaires de la Securite Nationale (VSN) and making them accountable to the presidency.

The trade unions, the Union Intersyndicale d'Haiti and the Federation Haitienne des Syndicats Chrétiens were dissolved, their leaders arrested and forced into exile.

An avid anti-communist, in 1966 he declared himself for the defence of 'Christian civilization against atheist materialism'.

The 1964 Constitution, which made him President for life, also gave him such baroque titles as Sublime Maquisard, Apostle of National Unity and Renovator of the Fatherland.



Peasant women ride their small bourriques, Haiti's main mode of transport

History of the Young Socialists Part Two

Stalinist infiltration in the League of Youth

THE REBELLION among the youth in 1934 worried the Labour Party national executive committee considerably.

A lively debate in the 'New Nation' about the fight against war and fascism was stopped with the editorial note 'This correspondence must cease.'

At the 1935 conference the delegates demanded the age limit for the LLY be raised from 25 to 30, so the more experienced members could stay with them.

The 'Daily Herald' (the daily which backed the Labour Party) criticised the LLY conference because of the 'class line' it took.

In August 1935 there was a sudden change in Communist Party policy. From then on they supported a 'League of Nations War.'

They increasingly turned away from the class struggle and tried to find allies in the Tories and the Liberals in the hope they could encourage the government to form better relations with the USSR.

This meant not only a break in the LLY between the Stalinists and the Trots-

kyists, but an attempt by the former to destroy the LLY as a working class organisation.

At the end of 1935, Willis and a few followers broke with 'Youth Forum' and set up the crypto-Communist paper 'Advance'.

The 'Advance' group, backed by the YCL, fought in the early months of 1936 for autonomy and democratic rights in the LLY, and in this they were supported by the Trotskyists.

At the easter 1935 conference the 'Advance' group gained control of the NAC (national advisory committee) and the conference put

forward a programme of demands for self-government of the League.

They wanted to elect their own Youth Officer, control their own paper, etc, and above all, have the right to discuss party policy.

The 'Advance' group proposed a merger of the LLY and the YCL for 'working class unity'. Transport House replied by disbanding the NAC and promulgating a 'Memorandum' to 'reorganise' the LLY.

The age limit was to be dropped to 21. The NAC representative was to be barred from NEC meetings and the 'New Nation' was to be sus-

pending. The 1937 conference would be stopped.

After this the LLY must stop all talk about policy, and confine itself to recreation and educational work. At first, 'Advance' said, 'We shall not surrender' (August 1936), but by November Willis wrote, 'Any talk of a new organisation, of a split from Labour, is extreme folly.'

The same November issue wrote of the need for 'youth of all opinions' launching a 'youth crusade for peace'. It carried an article by Kosarev, leader of the Soviet YCL, calling to 'unite all sections of the youth without political, religious or other discriminations.'

They decided their tasks were to liquidate the YCL (and especially the Trotskyists) as a working class and socialist organisation, and fight for unity with Liberal and Conservative youth. This could be best done by accepting the 'Memorandum.'

● Last week I omitted to mention the source of much of my information for these first few articles, the excellent pamphlet 'The Story of Labour Youth' by Pat Sirockin, published by Keep Left in 1960.

● NEXT WEEK: Part 3, 1937. The Stalinists attack the Trotskyists.

YTS: An attack on all workers

By Victor from Tooting WRP

THE YOUTH Training Scheme is one of the most important issues facing the Workers Revolutionary Party and the labour movement as a whole. Without doubt, the YTS forms a central part of this Tory government's attacks on youth and workers in general.

Its implications are as dangerous for the trade union movement as the Thatcher government's 1980 and 1982 anti-union legislation. Like the Employment Acts, YTS is designed to undermine the trade union movement and to condition youth to accept the role of being a cheap labour workforce.

Organisations

Like the former YOPS, brought in by a Labour government, YTS is nothing but a state controlled scheme involving trade union officials and representatives of the working class alongside employers' organisations like the CBI.

It is important for all militant workers to launch a campaign in the class to expose these union officials who co-operate with these cheap labour schemes.

They sit on the MSC control board helping the employers and capitalist state use one section of the working class against another. We demand not an adaptation to the MSC but a total break from it.

While 400,000 youth remain on these schemes, and their numbers continue to grow, we cannot abstain from fighting for their immediate demands; we ignore them at our peril.

Trotsky said in 1922: 'Working youth have also been badly hit by the capitalist offensive. Wage cuts, the lengthening of the working day, unemployment and exploitation at the workplace have an even harsher effect on them than on adult workers and make life even more difficult.'

'In this situation, working youth become a weapon in the struggle against the adult workers; they are used to increase adult unemployment and break strikes.'

'This situation damages the whole working class but is supported and promoted by the treachery of the reformist trade union bureaucracy, which neglects or even sacrifices the interests of working youth and alienates

the masses of young workers from the adults' struggle.

'Moreover, the bureaucracy frequently prevents them from joining the trade unions.'

We demand trade union rights for all trainees, topping up of allowances, oppose by all means possible any attempt to cut back existing benefits, apprenticeships and job substitution, 35 hour week with five weeks paid holiday for all trainees.

We call for trade union safety representatives elected from the youth and giving time off to attend safety courses, monitored by trade unions, a guaranteed job for all trainees who complete their course with contracts signed in writing.

The WRP should advise all members and non-members who are unemployed and have no intention to go to college not to abstain from the class struggle and fight within the class, even if that means that youth have to join the YTS agitating inside schemes to organise youth alongside adult workers to defend and fight for all rights won and gained by the working class which are under attack by this vicious class enemy.

Youth today face a horrific future either of long term unemployment or of dead end cheap labour schemes.

Very few apprenticeships still exist and many of these are outmoded, out of date with modern needs. The main task facing the labour



Youth work appeal

AFTER the departure of the Hylandite 'YS National Committee' two months ago, strategy, tactics, programme and policies for future youth work can only be drawn out through collective discussion throughout the party involving party members, supporters, unemployed, youth on YTS schemes, and trade unionists.

Please send all your ideas and experiences of youth work to Youth News, Workers Press, 21b Clapham Old Town, London S.W.4 OJT.

NON-STOP OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA HOUSE TRAFALGAR SQUARE

PICKET

■ RELEASE NELSON MANDELA
 ■ RELEASE ALL SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS
 ■ CLOSE DOWN THE RACIST SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY

19 APRIL DEMONSTRATE
 Assemble 2pm
 Bidborough St, Nearest tube Kings Cross.

MARCH TO TRAFALGAR SQUARE TO START THE NON-STOP PICKET AT 4PM

CITY OF LONDON ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP Tel 837-6050 FOR DETAILS
 FUNDED BY THE GLC

COMMENT

by Charlie Pottins

IT IS reported that Vanessa Redgrave, who was expelled from the Workers' Revolutionary Party last year, is pushing a resolution in the actors' union Equity calling for a 'cultural boycott' of the State of Israel. It would mean banning artists from going there, stopping films and so on.

As is well-known, Redgrave was expelled for defending the corrupt and reactionary practices of G Healy, and since then she has acted as a real bourgeois in her efforts against this Party through the courts. Some people have seriously questioned whether the Healy-Redgrave outfit are really part of the workers' movement. One does not have to go all the way with that, though; there could be circumstances where we might have to defend them (though not their practices.)

However, we can at the very least express some reservations about this 'boycott' proposal. Would it really help the Palestinian people's struggle? Is it the kind of solidarity they want?

Consider the following scenarios: The Arab theatre in Jerusalem (incidentally, Redgrave's motion brackets 'Israel/occupied Palestine', making no distinction) invites some British actors to appear in a play there. The Israeli authorities, who frequently interfere with Palestinian cultural activity, want to ban it, but are embarrassed by the international publicity. No problem — if the Redgrave move was carried, Equity would have instructed members not to appear there anyway.

Again, let's suppose the Israeli Black Panthers, organising among slum youth and against Kahane's fascists, were to invite British film-makers to assist with a documentary; or that peace campaigners asked British entertainers to help with a joint Arab-Jewish rally, and concert. (Some Israeli artistes who opposed the Lebanon war and want talks with the PLO have been proposing just such an event.) Would left-wing Equity members want to refuse such solidarity?

The Israeli author Amos Kenan wrote a gripping political thriller, 'The Road to Ein Harod' warning of a right-wing military coup, which caused great controversy and was reviewed in Workers Press recently. Suppose someone wanted to film it, would Redgrave's ban apply?

The Redgrave motion even wants the BBC and ITV to ban sales of recorded material for broadcasting or exhibition in Israel. This is ironic, because a few years ago the Israeli TV authority itself boycotted the Auschwitz play 'Playing for Time', because it starred Redgrave. Some Zionists would like to ban all her films. Their opponents challenge this McCarthyism. Now, her policy would take the wind out of their sails, and save the Zionist censors a lot of trouble!

I doubt whether Equity will adopt the Redgrave motion. The union has failed to stop people going to South Africa and it has no policy at all on entertainers going to bolster British military rule in the north east of Ireland. The Redgrave motion, unlike the South Africa boycott, is not related to the struggle in the country concerned, nor called for by those waging it. It will only divide the left-wing and anti-racist forces in Equity, and be used by the right-wing leadership to avoid any international responsibilities.

Instead of the empty boycott call, entertainment union members could take positive steps to assist the Palestinian struggle, by fund raising for Bir Zeit university and the Palestinian Red Crescent, by performances in occupied Palestine, and by producing plays and films about the struggle.

Knowing the Healy leadership's mercenary relations and opportunism, they're probably just desperate to salvage some credibility for themselves, and more interested in what they can get out of it than in helping the Palestinians. Redgrave may be more sincere, but to put it mildly, misguided. For us, it is necessary seriously to examine all tactics and slogans, from the standpoint of strategies for real, effective solidarity.

1916-1986

Ireland's Easter Rising

IN BRIGHT sunshine on Easter Monday in 1916 a small group of armed men some wearing the uniform of the Irish Citizens Army and some of the Irish Volunteers marched to the General Post Office in Dublin.

They charged the building, ejected visitors and took it over. They displayed a banner inscribed in gold letters 'Phoblacht na hEireann' (Republic of Ireland).

Then Padraig Pearse, President of the Provisional Government of the Republic, stepped out onto the steps of the GPO and read a declaration which included the clause:

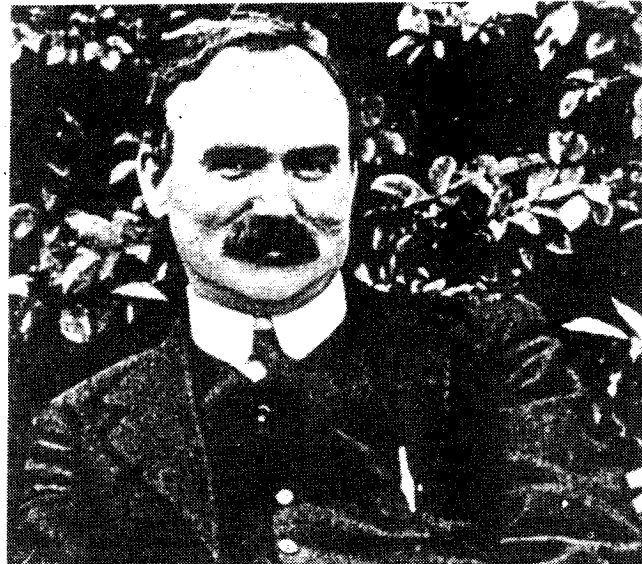
'We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible . . .

It was signed by seven men, the veteran republican Thomas J. Clarke being given pride of place: Sean MacDiarmada, Thomas MacDonagh, Padraig Pearse, Eamonn Ceannt, James Connolly and Joseph Plunkett.

The small groups looking on little understood what was taking place; the British authorities were taken by surprise and it took them a day to muster their reinforcements.

The rebels all told numbered only 750 men: 200 men of the Irish Citizens Army, formed by the trade unions during the bitter strike of the Dublin transport workers in 1913 and the rest from the nationalist and Republican Irish Volunteers.

Within a week the rising



'The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour. They cannot be dissevered.' JAMES CONNOLLY (1886—1916)

had been crushed; within three weeks all the signatories of the Easter Proclamation had been executed by the British and it was the national and international reaction of horror at the summary executions that made the Rising and the actions of those who took part a rallying cry for subsequent generations of Irish freedom fighters.

Finally on May 12, 1916 two men, who were crippled and unable to walk, faced the firing squad. They were the Republican Sean MacDiarmada and the socialist and trade union leader James Connolly, military commander of the Rising forces. In all, 15 men had been executed. The death sentence on Constance Markievicz was commuted to life imprisonment.

There was widespread condemnation of the murders. But inevitably there were some voices of dissent.

One was that of William

Martin Murphy, owner of the 'Irish Independent' and leader of the employers who had organised the Dublin lockout.

The Labourite Arthur Henderson, who was then a member of the British War Cabinet, refused to even make a plea for the life of a fellow socialist.

Executions

In Parliament, only one Nationalist MP dissented as his colleagues applauded the announcement of the first executions.

Those on the left of the Labour Party, the anti-war socialists, could not understand what a socialist like James Connolly was doing involved in a Republican Rising; others did, among them Lenin.

Within 18 months the Russian Revolution had triumphed and the first workers'

state had been born. To those who had called the Easter Rising a 'putsch', Lenin replied:

'To imagine that a social revolution is conceivable without revolts of small nations in the colonies and in Europe . . . is tantamount to repudiating social revolution.'

'The misfortune of the Irish is that they rose prematurely, when the European revolt of the proletariat had not yet matured . . .

In Ireland there followed wholesale arrests and deportations to concentration camps in England and Wales.

On their release, these men brought with them a new determination learned in the harsh conditions of the camps.

They fought for political status. Sinn Fein was reformed with an entirely new constitution and programme and in the December 1918 elections won an overwhelming victory against the Nationalists and Unionists.

Prior to the elections, the Liberal prime minister Lloyd George had attempted to impose conscription in Ireland — an issue that had been fought by Connolly and the trade unions since the beginning of World War I in 1914.

Issues

In 1918, the unions replied to the threat with a national one-day anti-conscription strike. Only the Unionists in the north did not join in. Lloyd George withdrew.

The Republicans thus elected (those that were not in jail) met in Dublin and declared themselves the governing body of 'the Republic established in Easter Week', 'Dail Eireann'.

In 1919, the government was forcibly suppressed by the British and all national movements banned.

Thousands of English troops were poured into Ireland. They brought tanks, armoured cars, lorries and other weapons.

It cost nearly £13 million a year to maintain! They were supported by nearly 10,000 men of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC).

There was widespread union opposition to the occupation and a new form of movement started to appear it was the growth of co-operatives and soviets in the wake of the Russian Revolution.

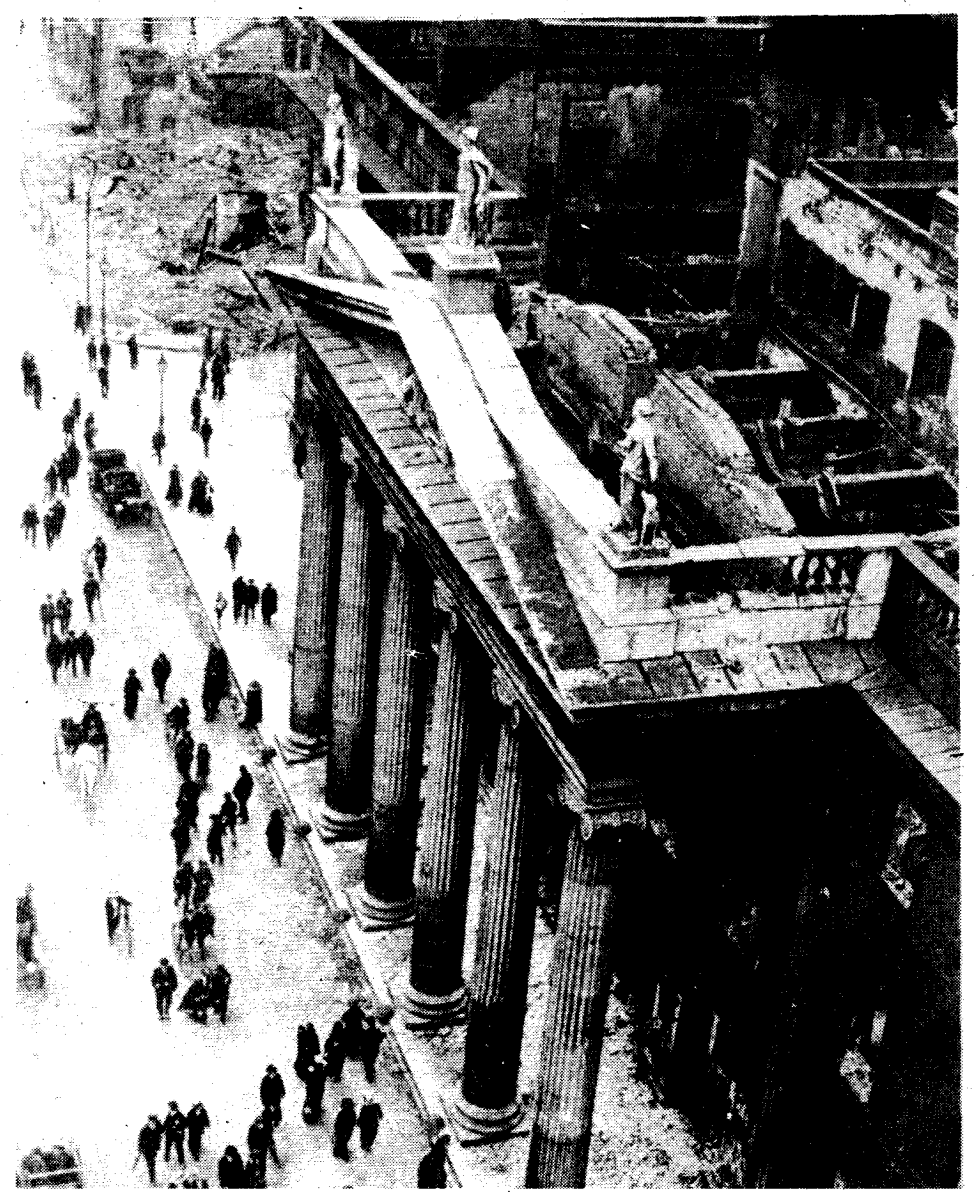
Creameries, butter factories and coal mines were siezed and run as co-operatives. The port of Cork was taken over and run as a soviet. Lands were siezed too and run as communes.

The leadership of the Irish Labour Party refused to accept responsibility for the soviets. Although Thomas Johnson told the 1921 Dublin Trades Congress that their establishment was ' . . . the most important question that could be raised in the Labour Movement or in Social Economy . . . It is a challenge, and let us make no mistake about it, to the rights of property . . .

The British army was very class-conscious about its response. By April 1921, they had attacked and destroyed 61 co-operative creameries alone as part of a systematic attack on soviet-type ventures.

Others were eventually destroyed by a boycott of big

'The cause of Labour is the cause of Ireland'



Women unloading guns on the Asgard, the ship which smuggled arms into Howth for Irish volunteers in July 1914

A view of the interior of the GPO, the rebel head quarters, several days after the Rising. Much of central Dublin was destroyed by British bombardment of republican positions

farmers and ranch-owners. In May 1920, the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union had declared a strike against English military occupation. Dockers and railwaymen refused to handle arms and refused to drive trains for troops.

The strikes lasted for nine months and virtually all railway traffic was halted. Over 1,500 strikers were sacked.

In the Six Counties of the north of Ireland, there were widespread pogroms against Catholic workers 5,000 were driven out of their jobs in the Belfast shipyards. Men, women and children were attacked, driven from their homes and killed by mobs of Orangemen.

From 1919 until July 1921, the army of the Republic, the IRA, was involved in a bitter war with the numerically superior British army, reinforced by the infamous Black and Tans who plundered, murdered and literally burned their way through the Irish countryside. At some stages entire villages were razed to the ground.

While a truce was declared between the IRA and the British forces in 1921, there was no let-up in the ferocity of the attacks of the Orange mobs.

In December, after prolonged negotiations, and the immediate threat of a new war, a treaty was signed in London by Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith. The Dail voted by a narrow majority to accept the Treaty and the partition of Ireland.

Minister for Labour in the Sinn Fein government Constance Markiewicz declared in

opposing the treaty:

'My ideal is the Workers Republic for which Connolly died. And I say this is one of the things that England wishes to prevent. She would sooner give us Home Rule than a democratic republic. It is the capitalist interest in Britain and Ireland that are pushing this treaty to block the march of the working people in Ireland and England.'

It would seem she was not far wrong. Sections of the Tory Party representing the more aggressive elements of finance capital, who had taken alarm from the Bolshevik Revolution and were preparing to take on the British working class, were behind the move.

They were later to rule through Stanley Baldwin, who prepared and executed the attack on the miners and their supporters in 1926.

Majority

The splits over the Treaty's acceptance led to the Civil War between the 'Free State' forces and those of the Republic, led by Eamonn de Valera.

The Citizen Army leaders declared for the Republic. The IRA was split, with a majority supporting Cumann na Poblachta (Republican Party).

The Labour Party tried to reunite the factions and a pact was agreed between Collins and deValera to form a national coalition.

In the election that followed, the pro-Treaty faction won the largest number of seats and Collins repudiated the pact.

With Winston Churchill applying pressure from London, the newly constituted army of the so-called 'Free State' opened up with borrowed English guns on the Four Courts, headquarters of the Republican section of the IRA.

The urgency from Britain was dictated by the fact that Rory O'Connor, leader of the Republican IRA, was determined to take his forces into the north for a war of reprisals against the non-stop Orange pogroms which had followed the Treaty.

Under the guise of a law imposing penalties for possession of firearms, a wholesale attack was launched on West Belfast. When it was over, 9,000 Catholics had been driven from their work and a total of 23,000 left homeless. 428 people had been killed and nearly 2,000 made homeless.

The Civil War was a bitter fight which lasted 10 months. The 'Free Staters' had the advantage of unlimited supplies of arms and ammunition.

Four of the Republican leaders were executed, among them O'Connor and Liam Mellows, a member of the Dail (Parliament) while held prisoner in Mountjoy jail.

The executions brought condemnation from the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in December 1922. Its resolution declared:

'... The Free State, which has unhesitatingly used British-supplied artillery with munitions, rifles and bombs, and even aeroplanes with death-dealing machine guns on crowds of ordinary people

as well as on armed revolutionaries, has capped all this by the brutal execution of five men on the charge of merely having arms in their possession.

'This desperate shooting of prisoners is a direct outcome of the declared bankruptcy of the Free State and is a last resort on its part to crush the resistance of the Irish masses fighting against their enslavement to the British Empire.

'The crushing of the Republicans can only result in firmly establishing an imperialist terrorist government which will not hesitate to attack the Irish working-class movement with the same brutal weapons with the first glimpse of any advance to power on its part, or a fight to better its conditions.

Criminal

'This being so, the action of the majority of the Labour Party, headed by Johnson, in supporting the executions, is the most criminal betrayal these traitors to the working class have yet perpetrated

The IRA declared a cessation of hostilities towards the 'Free State' on April 30, 1922.

On the same day, James Connolly's fellow trade union leader in the Dublin lockout struggle, James Larkin, landed in Ireland after three years in jail, a victim of a red scare.

He said of the Treaty: 'It was born in dishonour and shame... We pledge ourselves now and in the future, to destroy this plan of a nation's destruction. We

propose carrying on the fight until we make the land of Erin a land fit for men and women — a workers' Republic or Death'.

He was to comment later of the Irish Labour leaders:

'We had the honour of initiating the Irish Labour Movement. We return to find a Labour Party lost to all sense of dignity, manipulated by ambitious self-seekers, a feeble imitation of the English Labour Party, and which, parrot like, repeats the phrases of its prototype, but in a less vigorous manner.'

Today the Irish Labour Party is part of the coalition government of Garret Fitzgerald and his Fine Gael party, the political offspring of Collins and Griffith and the pro-Treaty supporters who abetted the partition of Ireland.

Last November the present Dublin regime signed a pact with Britain, the Hillsborough agreement, which continues partition in perpetuity.

It forms the basis for a new onslaught against Republicans in the Irish Republic. They can now be extradited to the Six Counties to face charges, in spite of the fact that their offences are political in nature.

The defence of a political offence has been a constitutional right in Ireland until this year. The Dublin government has also signed the European Convention on Terrorism, another plank of its deal with British Imperialism.

Of course, the widespread publicity given to the present-day Orangemen's ac-

tions against the Anglo-Irish deal has led to the erroneous conclusion that Dublin intervention in the affairs of the Six Counties might be beneficial for the nationalist population.

The issues on which Dublin is allegedly asking for 'changes' — security, the no-jury Diplock courts, the police — are all issues on which Dublin's record is as bad as that of the Loyalists and British-army regime in the north.

There are no concessions on the way and none are intended.

Conditions

For the Tory government in Britain and Fine Gael in Dublin the fear is of a mobilisation of the working class in common with the unemployed and farmers against the conditions they now face.

In spite of 17 years of British army occupation in the Six Counties, the forces of Republicanism have not been defeated and their stand has won increasing support in Ireland and Britain.

It is no accident that British imperialism and the Irish national bourgeoisie take their stand as they have always done to drive a wedge between British and Irish workers and the oppressed, to extend the division they have created between north and south in Ireland on the spurious issue of religion and Loyalism.

Our most powerful common bond is class unity on class issues for the defeat of British imperialism.

e of Ireland' James Connolly

Resolution of the 8th Congress of the Workers



LEON TROTSKY. . . . 'Without inner democracy — no revolutionary education. Without discipline — no revolutionary action. The structure of the Fourth International is based on the principle of democratic centralism: full freedom in discussion, complete unity in action.' (Transitional Programme)



MITCHELL, NORTH and HEALY. . . . accomplices in the bogus investigation 'Security and the Fourth International', which was used to prevent discussion of political differences

Dissolve the International

1. The Workers Revolutionary Party appeals to Trotskyists throughout the world to support its struggle against Healyism and for the building of the Fourth International.

We declare our determination to construct an international revolutionary leadership based on the first four congresses of the Communist International, the Permanent Revolution, the struggle of the International Left Opposition, the Transitional Programme and the other founding documents of the Fourth International.

We will engage in a full discussion with all of those internationally who stand on these programmatic foundations. This discussion will range over all of the theoretical, historical and political problems which confront Trotskyists the world over.

We firmly believe that the essential pre-condition for the building of the Fourth International is a thorough re-examination of its history. The WRP will work for an international conference on these lines before the end of 1986.

2. The Workers Revolutionary Party declares that the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) is not the continuation of the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938.

The ICFI continues the politics of Healyism and is an obstacle to the task of

building the Fourth International.

The WRP rejects the traditions of the ICFI as anti-communist and considers its claim to be the World Party of the Socialist Revolution as having no basis in reality.

The character of the ICFI is revealed in the three main aspects of its international work.

Firstly, Healy's so-called 'cadre-training' which was in reality a systematic attack on the ideological foundations of Marxism. In practice it was the moral, political, theoretical, personal and physical destruction of the movement's cadres in Britain and internationally.

Opportunist

Secondly, opportunist relations with national bourgeois regimes in the Middle East which were an abandonment of the Permanent Revolution in practice.

This led to support for the Saddam Hussein regime's murder of 21 communists in Iraq, the characterisation of the Libyan regime as socialist, and the Iranian revolution as the greatest blow to world imperialism since the Russian revolution of 1917.

Thirdly, the frame-up of the late Joseph Hansen and George Novack of the US Socialist Workers Party as GPU-FBI agents in the bogus investigation of Healy, Mitchell and North entitled 'Security and the Fourth International'.

This is continued in the US courts through the Gelfand case, which calls for the capitalist courts to determine the membership of the SWP, a working-class political organisation.

The refusal of the WRP to

subordinate itself to the ICFI is not a rejection of democratic centralism, but is based on our rejection of the ICFI as reactionary and anti-Trotskyist and we call for its immediate dissolution.

The discipline of the ICFI has nothing in common with the democratic centralism of Lenin and Trotsky but is a means of maintaining Healy's ICFI without Healy.

The membership of the WRP will no more subordinate itself to Healy's ICFI than it would to Healy's Political Committee. We hereby sever all organisational links with the ICFI and its national sections.

3. In October 1985 there was a consciously led explosion in the WRP which resulted in the expulsion of T.G. Healy, a leader of the Trotskyist movement for more than 40 years and of the ICFI since its formation in 1953.

Healy was expelled for the sexual and physical abuse of party members and slandering Workers League National Secretary Dave North as a CIA agent. This led to a split with the Healy-Torrance group in the WRP, and the Greek and Spanish sections of the ICFI, on the question of revolutionary morality.

This group rejected revolutionary morality and the need for communist relations in the Trotskyist movement. They defended Healy's corruption rather than face up to the moral, political, theoretical and organisational bankruptcy of the WRP and its leadership.

Behind this split were deep going ideological differences. Their defence of the rapist Healy revealed a deep seated anti-communism

which was a manifestation of the degenerate ideology of the bourgeoisie.

The WRP was an organisation that was not revolutionary. Our programme involved opportunist adaptation to sections of the reformist labour and trade union bureaucracy in Britain, and the national bourgeois regimes in the Middle East. This opportunism was covered up with ultra-left phrases.

Practice

The WRP's theoretical work ignored political economy and historical materialism, concentrating on Healy's subjective idealist philosophy. Contrary to Healy's assertions it was not a party based on revolutionary theory, but in practice on an ingrained anti-theoretical outlook.

Relations within the WRP were anti-communist and corrupt. The Healy regime attacked and destroyed the party's cadres. Relations with the working class were devoid of revolutionary morality. Our organization was based on a reactionary anti-theoretical activism and was financially crippled.

4. The expulsion of Healy and the split with the Healy-Torrance group ousted the old party leadership, with one section rejecting Healy and helping to defeat his clique. This brought out into the open the extent of the crisis in the party.

With Healy's apparatus broken the conditions emerged for a serious re-evaluation of the history and character of the WRP and ICFI. The leaders of the ICFI tried to use the crisis of

leadership in the WRP to stifle this discussion and keep it under their control.

The leaders of the ICFI rejected revolutionary morality as a diversion and tried to introduce 'internationalism' as the main question. They defined as 'internationalists' those who were for the ICFI.

Anyone who was opposed to the ICFI they branded as national chauvinist. This has nothing to do with the revolutionary internationalism of the proletariat.

These leaders could not face the re-evaluation of the movements history and tried to stifle any serious discussion of it. The questioning of the nature of the ICFI led to the challenging of the bogus investigation conducted by Healy, Mitchell and North on behalf of the WRP and ICFI, fraudulently called 'Security and the Fourth International'.

Rather than face the real political bankruptcy of this, and the ICFI as a whole, the leaders of the ICFI framed the present leadership of the WRP for Healy's crimes.

They suspended the WRP, without written charges to answer, on the basis of the Interim Report of an unconstitutional International Committee Commission.

This fraudulent report was only produced in writing after the suspension had been voted upon. The report was a cover-up of the role of the leaders of the ICFI and a preparation to bureaucratically remove the anti-Healy leadership of the WRP.

The WRP Central Committee rejected the report and suspension, taking up the fight for an international discussion on the nature of the

ICFI and all of its sections, including the WRP.

The WRP Central Committee went on to call for an internal re-evaluation of 'Security and the Fourth International' and reject the re-registration of the membership of the WRP on the basis of subordination to the ICFI as unconstitutional and an attack on the rights of party members. The leaders of the ICFI responded by organising a split in the WRP.

5. The Hyland-Short group formed a faction in the WRP on the basis that revolutionary morality was a diversion. They acted as the agents of the ICFI within the WRP and called anyone who opposed them liquidationists.

Activism

They campaigned for the continuation of the daily News Line and against facing the real situation of the party. This revealed their failure to break from the reactionary activism of Healy and Torrance.

This group defended the ICFI, and claimed that 'Security and the Fourth International' was a great gain for Trotskyism. They continued the anti-theoretical outlook of Healyism, launching a witch-hunt of intellectuals in the party.

The real character of this group was revealed in their anti-communist behaviour. They disrupted party meetings, verbally abusing and physically threatening party members who disagreed with them.

They rejected revolutionary morality and communist relations in practice, as well

Revolutionary Party



The late JOSEPH HANSEN. . . ex leader of the American SWP, which now repudiates Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution

I Committee!

as in words. They stole party funds and conspired to steal party vehicles and premises.

For four months the anti-Healy WRP fought a battle against attacks on three fronts, all of which were aimed to destroy the WRP and the fight to re-evaluate its history and character.

While the Healy-Torrance group was trying to destroy the WRP's fight against Healyism through the courts, the leaders of the ICFI tried to keep the discussion within the confines of their political strait-jacket. The Hyland-Short group played the role of disrupting the discussion with their anti-communist behaviour inside the WRP.

6. The WRP rejects the characterisation by the ICFI that the splits in our ranks are over the question of internationalism. The split with the ICFI developed out of the expulsion of Healy and is over the question of revolutionary morality.

The depth of the ideological differences between the WRP and the ICFI is revealed by the fact that the leaders of the ICFI reject revolutionary morality as a diversion from the real issues. Revolutionary morality is the central question.

The WRP believes that these ideological differences are fundamental. We contend that the establishment of socialism requires the critical assimilation of all the cultural conquests of bourgeois society, both material and ideological, by the working class.

The development of the world capitalist economy has long ago created the economic pre-conditions for

socialism. The establishment of socialism requires the expropriation of the capitalist class and social ownership of the means of production.

This can only be achieved through the socialist revolution, in which the working class overthrows the capitalist class and its state, and establishes itself as the ruling class of society.

The ideological precondition of the socialist revolution is the development of Marxism as the ideology of the working class, and this can only be achieved through the construction of a revolutionary party at the head of the working class.

Marxism arose out of, and is continually developed through, the critical assimilation of all the positive developments of the bourgeoisie ideologically.

We therefore believe that a real development of political economy, historical materialism and dialectical materialism, as the theoretical foundations of Marxism, is vital to the building of a world revolutionary leadership.

It is only from the standpoint of the world scientific outlook of Marxism that it is possible to develop the programme, perspectives, strategy and tactics of the revolutionary party of the working class.

7. The WRP rejects the January 27 resolution of the Workers League Central Committee. Reference to the membership of the WRP as 'disoriented petty-bourgeois', 'a pack of stampeding petty-bourgeois' and the party's 8th Congress as 'a bogus conference packed with anti-Trotskyists' re-

veal their contempt for the membership of the WRP.

Having failed to win a majority in the WRP for continuation of the ICFI they have split in order to try and defend the Gelfand case.

The WRP undertakes to conduct a full investigation into the circumstances of the so-called 'Security and the Fourth International'.

This was initiated by the WRP, in particular Healy and Mitchell, with the assistance of North in the Workers League of America. The slander campaign against the late Joseph Hansen, George Novack and the present leadership of the SWP in the US, led to the Gelfand case.

Assertion

This case is an attempt by Gelfand to get the US courts to determine his eligibility as a member of the SWP. At the centre of this case is the assertion that the entire leadership of the SWP are FBI agents. This campaign is a diversion from the discussion of political differences with the SWP.

While the WRP does not in any way endorse the political line of the SWP, we are opposed to the use of capitalist courts against working-class political organisations. The Gelfand case sets a dangerous precedent, and we support the SWP's right to determine its own membership.

The WRP call on the Workers League to withdraw from the Gelfand case and make an out of court settlement with the SWP on the court costs. The WRP will make every effort to assist in this.

MERSEY MARCH AGAINST CUTS



SEVERAL hundred demonstrators marched through St Helens last Saturday to protest against government attacks on social security and other benefits.

Pensioners' organisations brought banners from Manchester and Liverpool. One especially attractive banner was carried by the Haydock and Ashton Retired Miners and Widows Association.

Other banners on the march included St Helens Trades Council Unemployed Centre, CND, North West All Trades Unions Alliance, St Helens Unemployed Workers Association, Prescot and Whiston TU Unemployed Resource Centre, NALGO, Child Poverty Action Group and the Merseyside Campaign against Social Security Cuts.

Claimants

National Co-ordinator of the Campaign Against Social Security Cuts Steve Briggs told the rally that the 'Social Security' bill at present going through the House of Commons was only part of an attack on claimants by the Tory government that has been going on for seven years.

The government was now planning to abolish 50 per cent of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

Meanwhile, money from public funds would be channelled into private pension schemes.

He said that measures included the abolition of the supplementary benefit in favour of 'income support', denying payments to the 18 to 25 age group, who would be forced to live with their parents.

Single payments for special needs such as requirements arising from medical diets would be abolished and replaced by a Social Fund.

Payments from this fund will be in the form of repayable loans. Another cut will be the abolition of the death grant. People will have to borrow during the upheaval of a bereavement.

Briggs said that while the new Social Security Bill would only save £1.5 billion out of £40 billion expenditure on social security, it had to be looked at together with other Tory measures such as

the Local Government Bill, the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill and the privatisation of many vital state services.

Jim Dowd, regional organiser of the North West Pensioners Associations, called on all Labour council candidates to adopt the pensioners' statement of intent and warned the rally that we are moving into a police state.

St Helens Labour Deputy Council Leader Brian Green detailed the effects the cuts would have on local working class families living in the town.

Local Euro-MP Les Huckfield congratulated the marchers who turned out:

'If you can get a gathering like this when you are not allowed to have a Labour Party, what would you get if you were? This march was organised by the voluntary section and the pensioners. You deserve a pat on the back'.

St Helens North and South constituency Labour Parties are at present under suspension, along with a good part of the Labour Party organisation in the Merseyside area.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

PUBLIC MEETING

Why we expelled Healy Revolutionary morality and the split in the WRP
Tuesday April 1, 7.30
 Swan and Sugarloaf
 London Road
 South Croydon

Speaker: Dot Gibson (WRP Central Committee)

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY Midlands Area

WHAT IS TROTSKYISM?

A Day Conference on the History of Trotskyism and its importance today

Saturday April 26, 10am - 5pm
 International Community Centre
 Mansfield Road
 NOTTINGHAM

Speakers: Bill Hunter (WRP Cen Ctte)
 Dave Temple (WRP Cen Ctte, Murton Mechanics NUM in personal capacity)

For conference details phone Nottingham 619109, Leicester 707730, or write to YSTC, 4-8 Commerce Square The Lace Market, Nottingham.
 Conference charge: £1.00

LETTERS

The Editorial board of Workers Press welcomes letters on any topic from all our readers. Please address them to The Editor, Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London, SW4 0JT. Please try to keep your letters short — they have much

Bar staff: exploited low-paid workers

READING the article on the 'Tories onslaught on low paid', in the Workers Press of March 8th, I thought I should write about a section of low paid workers who aren't discussed much in trade union circles.

These workers are those working in pubs.

For well over a year, my union — the Transport and General Workers Union — has been running a campaign among bar staff in Merseyside.

Like all other workers who were covered by wages councils, they need organisation.

I have taken an interest because I have always been a part-time worker and felt for a long time that unions were not interested in the likes of me.

I understood that part-time workers did not work just for 'pin money'. Like me, they needed the wages; they couldn't manage on what their husbands earned.

A lot of bar staff are terribly exploited. It is going to be worse when the wages councils go in July.

Mind, the standards set by these councils was low, and, when an increase was given, the employers would cut down on hours.

The big breweries, who control the trade, are making profits. You can see it in

the financial columns of the papers.

But they are pushing on to make more profit through reorganising the big pubs through bringing in youth and increasing the casual nature of pub employment.

They are extending these bigger pubs and making them into 'fun' pubs, with discos and dances.

When they close down for refurbishment, they lay off their old staff. Except in cases which the union has won, they pay no wages whatsoever and say to the staff: 'We'll open on such a date. Come back then.'

Replace

When they open, they take on a few more staff and these are invariably youngsters in the 18-21 age. Then, as the older staff leave, they replace them with this age group.

They want young pretty barmaids wearing mini skirts and nice looking young men in dickie bows.

The result of all this is that there are fewer and fewer permanent staff compared with people working a few hours a week.

In the past, everyone in a pub would average generally twenty hours a week. Now, the average hours are something like ten; some bar staff work less than eight.

You don't have many rights if you work under sixteen hours, but at eight hours you have none at all.



With the abolition of Low Pay Councils working conditions are deteriorating for unorganised workers

Only if bar staff work 16 hours or over are they entitled to holiday pay and double-time on bank holidays. The breweries have no insurance to pay on these people, and, if they are not organised, they can hire and fire at will.

Sixteen hours pay isn't much, but most of these young people gladly do eight or nine hours. It is sad to hear them say: 'If I work hard and I'm good at it, I'll get a full time job.'

The breweries, in one way, aren't particularly interested in people being good at their job. The traditional role of the bar staff, on the old pumps, serving five or six people at once, is going.

The old skills in handling the job are being done away with.

There are machines now

behind the bars. When you pull a pint it registers on a screen. The machines are doing all the stocktaking.

You only need to be a sort of robot behind the bar.

The breweries have also put snoopers into the pubs, who watch the staff and report on them. Also they make enquiries into the background and personal history of their staff.

Sharing

Where you used to have a full-timer working 38 or 39 hours a week, you are now getting four people sharing those hours.

If you ask: 'How many hours a week were you taken on for?' these youngsters will usually say something like this: 'Last week I did ten hours, this week it's four-

teen. Over Christmas I did 40 hours.'

They don't even get told the conditions of the job when they are taken on. They get told: 'Start tonight'. At the end of the night they will be told something like: 'Come back next Wednesday.'

They never know exactly what they are doing from one week to the next.

The vast majority of bar staff don't know they have rights. Sometimes just by giving them information their confidence is increased. If they see that something can be done, that draws them more than anything else.

Last year there was a 16-week strike at one pub. It was a solid strike of eight bar staff and won back the job of union member.

She had worked for the brewery for thirty-six years and was really sacked because she was an older type of barmaid.

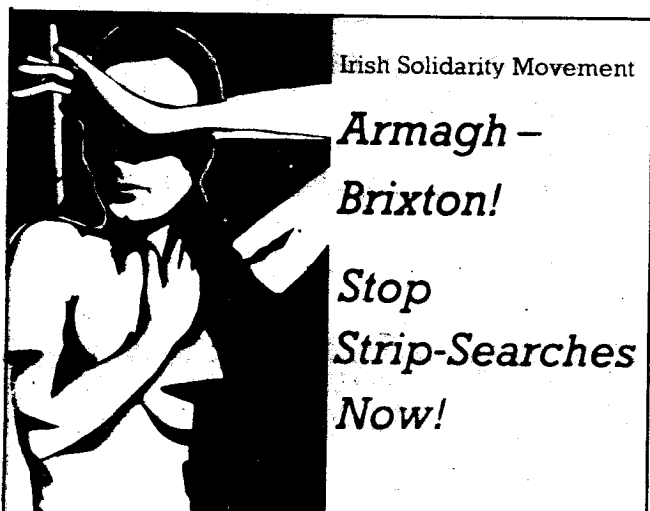
It was a great picket line because nobody ever crossed it! It was amazing — the quietest picket line ever! People going past were shouting: 'Hello love. Hello girls!'

Locals

None of the locals would go into the pub and there was no ale or soft drinks delivered.

This is what is encouraging about pubs, in showing there can be a fight back against low pay. Most of the people who go in to pubs get to know the bar staff and, if there is a dispute, they support them.

Celia Jones. Toxteth



Irish Solidarity Movement

Armagh —
Brixton!

Stop
Strip-Searches
Now!

DEMONSTRATION and PRISON PICKET

Saturday 5 April, assemble 11.30am

Kennington Park (Oval Tube)
Demonstrate against strip-searches
Join the march to a picket of Brixton Prison
(1pm onwards)
Speeches ● Songs ● Solidarity

A refreshing change

HOW very refreshing to read the articles in Workers Press written by Lynn Beaton.

But what a shame that we have had to wait so long for someone to acknowledge women's role in history.

These articles would never have been published under the Healy regime, because, for Healy, women were nothing more than sex objects.

In the Patriarchal Capital-

ist system under which we live, women are doubly oppressed. Not only as members of the working class, but also by virtue of their gender.

Women are oppressed both at work and in the home; they have twice as much reason to fight for a change in the system as men do.

Healy's regime has been described as 'near fascist',

but his relations with women were, I believe, worse than fascist.

Women under Healy were never allowed to develop their full potential, they were degraded and demoralised, used and abused.

Any orientation towards feminist socialism was dismissed as a diversion and women's historical role was denied to them. But now we

have a new beginning so let's make the most of it.

Let us make sure as many women as possible read Engels' 'The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State'.

Thank you Lynn Beaton for opening a door which was previously closed to us.

M. Morris
Ellesmere Port

LETTERS

Building an NUM rank and file movement

ONE OF the most important lessons of our year-long strike was the need to organise a rank and file movement in the NUM based on militant class struggle, anti-bureaucratic policies.

Despite his far greater militancy than any of the other leaders, Arthur Scargill still played a bureaucratic game during the strike.

In particular he did a deal with the TUC which actually made the job of winning solidarity action and generalising our struggle a hundred times harder.

Since the end of the strike most of the left officials have been moving right. The Communist Party are leading the charge to the right and disgracing the name of communism.

Once again, despite some signals that he opposes the shift to the right, Arthur is not appealing to the rank and file to oppose it and to organise against it. He is playing things by the rules of the bureaucratic game, claiming that he can do nothing other than abide by executive decisions.

In fact while he is constitutionally bound to carry out such decisions he is not

bound by any rule to abstain from organising members to oppose them. That is something he has chosen to abstain from.

The job of building a rank and file movement, therefore, is still with us. Building it, we think, is something that real (revolutionary) communist miners must take a lead in.

In Workers Power we are trying to win more miners to revolutionary communism through publishing 'Red Miner' (8 issues so far) and building a communist fraction around it.

While such a communist fraction cannot be substituted for a united front of rank and file militants in a rank and file movement, it is indispensable to building that movement. Only communists can see what needs to be done and take the lead in actually doing it.

With 'Red Miner' we will be involving ourselves in all forums in the NUM — the Broad Left, the Barnsley Forum etc — to argue for our politics. We would welcome collaboration with WRP members in this work.

In carrying out such work we always need to state what the reality in our union is. On that score we think that 'Workers Press' has been weak in its coverage of the fight against the UDM. There has been an absence of criticism of the NUM leaders in the scab areas.

For example in 'Workers Press' of February 22nd, a report of a meeting in Notts addressed by Chadburn con-



A miners barricade at Allerton Bywater, North Yorkshire in september 1984

tained not one word of criticism of this right-winger whose role at the beginning of our strike (he opposed it) opened the door to Roy Lynk, Chadburn and Richardson (the so-called left) cannot be trusted with the leadership of a rebuilt fighting NUM in Notts.

Likewise, neither can Jack Jones of Leicester. Yet in 'Workers Press' of March 8th, a report of a meeting he spoke at again contained no criticism of the man who knifed the heroic 'Dirty Thirty' Leicestershire strikers in the back repeatedly during the strike.

Nor has there been any editorial criticism of these characters outside of the reports.

In building both a communist fraction and a rank and file movement we will find ourselves up against the likes of Chadburn and Jones. Unity in action with them against the UDM is one thing.

Entrusting them with the leadership of the NUM is another and we believe that must be said openly. These men failed us at the start of the strike. They will do so again. And, if Arthur Scargill won't fight them, then we will have to.

We make these points in a spirit of fraternal criticism, not carping and we hope that in the tasks that face communist and militant miners

in the months ahead Workers Power supporters in the NUM and those of the WRP can work together.

Brian Wood
N. Derbyshire NUM



SCARGILL

Effects of new technology

I THINK the Workers Press should open up a discussion on the effect of new technology in all industries.

I am an AUEW shop steward and a member of my union's district committee. Engineering trade unionists must be concerned about the changes in the industry.

The employers are having to modernise or go under (which leads to another point — they could go under anyway, because they can't pay back the money they have borrowed to invest).

Traditional machines are still the most widely used in engineering factories in this country with a number of 'add on' parts that make them semi-automatic or automatic.

In the last few years, the Numerical Controlled (NC) machine has appeared. The mechanical operation of the machine was taken away from the operator. The NC is controlled from a console by the side of it. An advance on this machine is the Computer Numerical Control (CNC) with a visual display unit.

Minor

Now coming into factories is Direct Numerical Control (DNC). This gives control of machines to a central console or set of consoles in the office. The worker will only have minor functions, changing tools or feeding material.

So far, the computer side

of this technology far outstrips the mechanical side and is only reliable in mass production and not in production of small numbers of components.

But the changes will continue and already they are breaking up the old craft relations in the industry.

The leaders of the electricians' union have a policy to become the 'elite' union and (with the engineering union leaders looking on enviously) they are prepared to trample other unions into the dirt to reach this goal.

The Executive Council of the AUEW would like to amalgamate with the EEP-TU but this has been rejected by their National Committee. They want to do this, not just because this would put the squeeze on the hated TASS but also because

they are in a financial crisis. They have lost quite a few members over the past few years.

The obvious need to meet these technological changes is for the unity and amalgamation of the unions involved. However, it is very clear, that, with the present leaderships and policies of these unions, this would not be progressive.

Gains

We have to fight then for leaders and policies that will not only defend what gains we have but we have also to fight for the consciousness that unions will not solve problems of technology without ending capitalist production.

R Hunter.

Promiscuity is bourgeois

THE LETTER of David McIlwaine (February 15) reveals a conflict between sexual relationships and sexual freedom.

Advances in contraception have given women and men the ability to choose more accurately whether or not their sexual activities will lead to a triggering of the reproductive process.

The freedom to have sex whenever a couple desires is an advance — so also is the protection given to the female against the unwanted advances of the male — i.e. rape.

For your correspondent to say that promiscuity is not necessarily socially irresponsible really pushes us backwards.

Promiscuity is indulging in casual sexual relationships. The liberal view that 'sex is fun and should be enjoyed by all', ignores the caring aspect of love-making.

It is an abuse of someone else's body if there is no genuine feeling or love for that person.

The 'social irresponsibility' in the letter presumably refers to unwanted pregnancies and the 'economic disaster' of un-

wanted babies.

What is condoned by its absence is the social irresponsibility of abuse of another individual in the flighty type of relationship that he is suggesting is now acceptable.

May I suggest that D.M. refers to Cde Maggie Obank's contribution to the London aggregate of October 18, 1985 (News Line, November 23, 1985) — a contribution that was punctuated by titters from female supporters of Healy.

She quoted Engels writing in 1884 about sexual relationships after the overthrow of capitalism.

The template for human relationships is there for us to use and build on.

A striving towards mutual respect in all aspects of human relationships must take place if the party is to become revolutionary — a long hard haul as we pull ourselves out of the era of personal, physical and sexual abuse.

Geoffrey Thurley,
Lewisham

Loveable comedy with a serious side

'Mr Love': Written by Kenneth Eastaugh; directed by Roy Battersby.

Warner West End, Screen 5

EVERYONE will certainly love 'Mr Love' . . . I think.

It's just a light comedy about a municipal gardener who hasn't got much except a marriage neither he nor his wife ever wanted and a love of nature, which of course he can't own. And then, late in life, he falls in love with a lot of women at once, and . . .

No, maybe that's not it at all. He only really fell in love once, and since he's dead before the film begins, we know he couldn't have got very much out of that. It must be a tragedy about 'the common man' . . .

Hang on. It's just a small-scale, wistful, sometimes very funny film, beautifully performed by every concerned.

Emerge

It's brilliantly conceived, pretty well written and directed by someone who has obviously really got into the thing so as to let everything in it emerge just about right.

It's presented over with delicious avuncularity by incomparable Maurice Denham.

Yes, that's all there is to it. But then, when you think about the Maurice Denham character, what are you meant to make of him?

He hardly seems real, the way he talks to the birds about their bowel movements, and reads More's 'Utopia'.

And yet he's the character who keeps us straight about what the film is about — the way people manufacture myths to satisfy particular needs and, sometimes, apparently quite by accident, an individual seems to provide a focus for a myriad

BY A GUEST REVIEWER

of conflicting individual needs, and is turned into a 'great man'.

So, interacting the lightness of it all, is a serious theme.

You might even find yourself thinking of all sorts of cinematic references in it — from Robbe-Grillet to Woody Allen, with even, in a funny sort of way, a touch of Hitchcock in between.

But then, if you're enjoying yourself, as I was, you'll chop yourself down to size and tell yourself not to be pretentious, because the film certainly isn't.

'Mr Love' is a fantasy ab-

out the common man in bourgeois society and it is a realistic story about municipal myth-making. (It even contains a splendid visual joke about the relationship between "Victorian values" and "socialist realism"). It is little and large. It is funny and sad.

It would be silly to exaggerate its stature . . . but then it encourages you to think there can be a serious point in being silly.

You can't really sum up 'Mr Love'. Best just recommend everyone who can to go and see. Of course, I can't guarantee everyone will like it. But I'm pretty sure anyone I might ever love will love 'Mr Love'.



The eccentric Melanie (Julia Deakin) teases Donald (Barry Jackson) with lighthearted impersonation in 'MR. LOVE'

Papa Jack

Papa Jack and the era of the White Hopes. By Randy Roberts. Robson Books. £9.50.

RANDY ROBERTS has obviously done a lot of research. This is a supreme biography, not the usual sports biography trivia.

Although Johnson was the first black heavyweight champion, this book tells the story of the man. Boxing is only incidental.

The white American champions had always refused blacks the chance of a title fight. In 1908 Canadian Tommy Burns became champion and, after much chasing, Johnson finally caught up with him in Australia.

Johnson had no trouble in lifting the crown.

In the upper circles of white society, the lurking fear that a black man could dominate a white spewed out

BY JIMMY BURDETT

a paranoia unequalled for many years.

When no 'white hope' could be found good enough to take on Johnson, former undefeated champion Jim Jeffries was forced out of retirement, not just to win a boxing match, but to fight 'for the honour of the white race', as one leading churchman said.

It was not to be. Jeffries received not only a good hiding, but was humiliated into the bargain.

The result prompted random violence and brutal deaths.

Right across the United States racist riots erupted, in New York, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Baltimore and many other locations. Lynchings were not uncommon in the South.

When Johnson came to London to fight the British champion, Bombardier Billy Wells, the bout was halted before the contestants even entered the ring.

The bishop of Winchester and leader of the High Church, Dr. Edward S. Tal-

bot, protested about the racial implications and demanded it be stopped.

Winston Churchill, then Home Secretary, announced that the fight was illegal, thought the legality of boxing was never questioned after Johnson's departure.

Churchill's ruling effectively denied Johnson the right to engage in his profession in England.

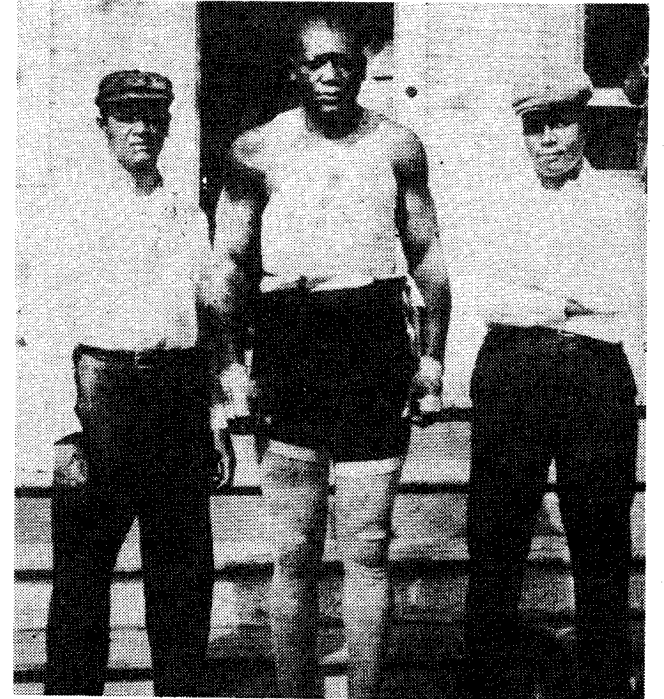
The American State Department went even further.

Prior to Johnson's becoming champion, he had lived with a white prostitute who had travelled all over the country with him.

After the relationship ended, she was pressurised by the State Department who had her arrested. She was held in custody for over six months without any charges being laid against her.

Eventually she gave evidence against Johnson and he was charged with violating the Mann Act, which makes it illegal for a woman to cross state boundaries for immoral purposes.

Johnson fled the country and lived the life of a pauper for several years, eventually returning to the United



Training at Ric's Resort in Reno — JOHNSON, his trainer, DOC FUREY, and KID COTTON a sparring partner, on his right

States to serve a term of imprisonment.

What comes out clearly in Randy Roberts' book is that Johnson could in no way be described as a black liberator. In fact, once the championship was his he refused to fight blacks.

A massive ego even affected his attitude towards his own race. When it suited

his fancy he wore the cloak of a Black Moses, but he was never really concerned with the advancement of his race.

Taken a whole, however, his life inspires respect. He faced a sea of white hate without fear.

He refused to consider himself a second class citizen, and he tried to write the rules of his own life.

Freedom fighter's story

BY LIZ LEICESTER

'Anne Devlin'. Everyman Cinema, Hampstead, London, NW3

Directed by Pat Murphy, with Brid Brennan, Bosco Hagan 'ANNE DEVLIN' is dedicated to the 'forgotten women' of history who have fought and suffered in liberation struggles.

Based on the journals of Anne Devlin, housekeeper to the Irish patriot Robert Emmet, the film opens in 1798, the year of the defeat of Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen by the British forces.

Anne's family come from Wicklow. Her cousins, uncles and brothers fought with the Wicklow men who entered Dublin on the night of Emmet's ill-fated insurrec-

tion and who were hidden by the Dublin working class until they could return safely home.

After Emmet's defeat, Anne loses count of how many of her family are in prison.

As the British torture, murder and burn the countryside around her, the Irish fight for freedom is paralleled by Anne's personal struggle for freedom as a woman.

She volunteers to act as Emmet's housekeeper, not to be a servant but to make the rebels' headquarters look more like an ordinary businessman's home.

That home becomes the centre for all the forces organising against the Act of Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

Anne is bombarded by new

ideas as the date of the insurrection approaches and the great issues and ideas of the French and American revolutions are argued while uniforms are stitched and guns and rockets forged.

Robert Emmet was a Protestant who, more than Tone, recruited his forces from the industrial working class.

A Protestant worker from Belfast tells Anne there is no point in fighting if the revolution is only to exchange one master for another.

As Anne listens, she begins to develop her own independence and inner strength. Brid Brennan's performance allows the delicate interplay of the psychological and political processes to reveal itself so that Anne's endurance of the terrible torture and suffering at the hands of

the British after Emmet's defeat becomes totally believable.

Her tormentors cannot understand where this strength comes from. She is moved from prison to prison and torture to torture.

But she proved stronger than many of Emmet's middle-class supporters who turn informer and try to include Anne in their treachery.

The film does not give easy answers to Anne's personal struggle for freedom. Like Ireland in 1802 and 1803, the price of that struggle is very high.

The muted colours of the Irish countryside and the strong faces of generations of fighters for that land match the restrained but always moving and compassionate, quality, of this film.

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BOOKS

Party discussion

Conceptualising the FI's history

IN THE continuing discussion on the history of the Fourth International (FI) the essential arguments of Bill Hunter's opposition to Mike Banda's article have been amplified by Cyril Smith.

By characterising Cde Banda's contribution '27 Reasons' as one-sided and subjectivist, Cdes Hunter and Smith raise fundamental considerations of dialectical materialism, the Marxist method of analysis.

What has emerged is that, at the heart of the discussion lie problems of conceptualising the history of the FI. Within that are basic methodological propositions which challenge our understanding of the Marxist method.

Moreover, central to our perception of the party's past is our perception of its future.

Therefore, when the latest contributor to the discussion, John Spencer, raises the question, 'to what extent does Trotskyism have a past in the WRP never mind a future,' he accurately resolves discussion around its most elementary point.

Cde Spencer's answer, however, is not at all encouraging. He says for instance that 'Nobody has any title deeds to history'; and that the WRP does not have 'some proprietorial interest in its own (sic) history' and that history 'belongs indifferently to everyone'.

Future

But, surely, it is ABC to Marxists that the ruling class, for instance, has a material interest in propagating its view of history. That history is presently being made through the class struggle, and ideologically being fought out not only by the bourgeoisie but also by the Marxist movement.

In fact, the revolutionary leadership engages here, in a keenly self-interested way, precisely in order to facilitate leading the working class in revolutionary struggle.

Therefore to assert that history is the neutral property of all is to deny class forces at work in the appropriation and transformation of history.

Contained within Cde Spencer's objectivist view of history is the abdication of the role of the subjective factor, the revolutionary party.

More specifically, it counters the party's declared aim of finding its way back to the high road of revolutionary theory and practice.

In fact, his method of treating the history and future of the WRP — not from the standpoint of resolving through our own practice the

contradictions encountered therein, but as mere objects for speculation — leads to a liquidationist position. Ironically, this sceptical basis enables him to point to the most fundamental question.

In relation to Cde Smith's letter to Cde Banda, Cde Spencer makes some correct criticisms without, however, raising the question of method.

The letter labours under the long shadow of Healy. It is Healy-centric; it is true that Healy's degeneration and expulsion are not comparable, and it is necessary to challenge the idea that



WRP members demonstrating against the Egyptian invasion of Libya 'An active unit of many opposites'

crimes are inevitable in building the party.

Also in need of refutation is the mechanical materialist view that Healy was simply an expression of the boom period.

Cde Smith, from the standpoint of defence of the party, advises examination of the history of the FI in the light, 'one, the powerful effects of Healy's degeneration, two, his expulsion'.

Neither can be grasped without the other, he says, and adds: 'If we do not begin to see our history in their light (emphasis added), then we are indeed without hope.'

In fact, methodologically, not only is it necessary to reverse this dualist proposition, but to assign primacy of one over the other.

Far from anything being lost, everything is gained by agreeing with Cde Spencer that it is hypothetical as to whether or not the WRP can 'be described as revolutionary', and that proof is required to Cde Smith's claim that 'Healy's overthrow signified the continuity of the struggle for Bolshevism'.

Inadvertently, Cde Spencer has provided us with the means of conceptualising the history of the FI. Using the Marxist method of analysis, we can test just this hypothesis, namely that there was a struggle for Trotskyism in the movement.

Moreover to demonstrate the nature of the object (history of the FI) is to demonstrate the nature of the subject (the movement today).

Centrally, such an analysis will test our understanding of historical and dialectical materialism, the successful resolution of which

will undoubtedly strengthen us, in terms of theory and practice for the future.

It would be wrong, therefore, to start, as Cde Smith suggests, with the effects of Healy's degeneration in unison with or apart from his expulsion.

For only in the light of our hypothesis will it be possible to establish the reality of Bolshevik continuity, no matter how slender, between past and present, and thereby illuminate the nature of the decay.

Cde Smith says that our 'errors and crimes... had an objective foundation (which) in many cases... could have been avoided only by giving up the attempt to build the movement'.

This sinister comment is the opportunist theoretical basis and justification for crimes and errors, and not their explanation.

Methodologically it is objectivist or mechanical materialist, that false one-sided appreciation of objective reality which writes out, from the whole the interven-

ing object-transforming subjective factor, namely the revolutionary party and its inner conflicts.

It excludes (therefore conceals) the universal need for us all to challenge (as some did) errors and crimes, and to ascertain, if such exists, their systematic and interconnected nature — and to say (and to struggle to say) what exactly it represents.

The fact that many of us did not do this, may well have had a material basis, but this cannot be used as a means to leap over the subjective side of the objective process as if it did not exist.

Surely we are already in a position to say, facing a difficult truth, that Healy continued to dominate only to the degree that we permitted it, a matter made demonstrably clear in a positive way in October 1985.

Central

Fundamentally, however, Cde Smith's formulation closes the door on discussion of the relative strengths and weaknesses of our understanding of Marxist theory in the movement, yet such an evaluation is central our entire endeavour.

The Healy-centric character of Cde Smith's letter is just the other side of its objectivism. This subjective-idealist concentration upon Healy and his personal traits, relegates the rest of the party to a passive object (Healy's standpoint) rather than objectively looking at it as it really was, namely an active unity of many opposites which not infrequently came into conflict with Healy et al.

From the standpoint of our hypothesis, it is possible that such conflicts (ascertainable only through study) represented that line of Bolshevik continuity in which the question of determining the nature of Healy's political domination, although a part of the analysis, is of a relative and secondary order.

In the light of above, it would be no more correct, therefore, to sav with Cde

Smith that Healy's domination was 'an expression of the contradictions of the boom period' any more than, as he rightly observes, it would be correct to say that this downfall was 'the automatic reflection of "class forces"'. For again it omits the intermediary conflicting political role of others in the party.

Surely it is truer to say that the organisation, its policies and theoretical development helped to shape Healy (and everyone else) as he helped (with others) to shape the party in conflicting unity with objective conditions.

That is the 'cell', the contradictory cellular form of the problem which has to be explained from the standpoint of Trotskyism, and in relation to decaying capitalist social relations of production, not, as Cde Smith suggests, in relation to technology which by itself does nothing, dehumanising or anything else.

Despite the polarity of standpoints then, represented by Cde Spencer's liquidationism on the one hand, and Cde Smith's defence of the need for revolu-

tionary leadership on the other, all three contributions (Cde Banda included) are united methodologically by the false objectivism of mechanical materialism, through failure to recognise the subjective factor and its contradictory nature.

It is the standpoint of those of us who failed to fight systematically prior to October 1985, and who now over-emphasise the significance of Healy in order to conceal that failure to do so, along with a possible refusal to continue fighting for Trotskyism in the future.

The hypothesis that there was a struggle for Bolshevik continuity is based on just those who did fight and will continue to do so.

Using the hypothesis as a powerful torch to shine into what became a 'heart of darkness' within the party, it will become possible to orientate ourselves in establishing that line of continuity between past and present, thereby strengthening the movement's desire to re-establish revolutionary theory and practice in full.

Norah Wilde
London

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

MARXIST STUDY GROUP

Every Monday 7.30pm
starting Monday March 17
Student Union
Strathclyde University
John Street
GLASGOW

The first series of discussion will be opened by Alex McLarty (WRP Central Committee) followed by discussion.

Reading: 'Capital' by Karl Marx Volume One chapters 1 to 3.

ALL WELCOME

Ransome on history

AFTER reading John Spencer's reply to Cyril Smith's letter to Mike Banda I would like to make a very short point on the concept that 'nobody owns the title deeds to history'.

True nobody does own the titles deeds to history, but some are interested in historical questions and some are not.

I hope John Spencer would agree that a Marxist should be interested in history.

To develop this assertion may I give the example of

Arthur Ransome (who many readers of the old 'Labour Review' will be aware married Trotsky's secretary).

In an essay in a book of articles mainly written as the angling correspondent of the 'Manchester Guardian' he expands on the virtues of fishing.

He recalls that during the height of the Russian revolution in Petrograd, while the guns of the Aurora sounded the call to insurrection, a fisherman continued to fish on the banks of the Neva.

Now quite plainly that

fisherman had no personal interest in the October revolution; it was not his revolution. But Marxists were, it was their history.

We must therefore acknowledge, as Trotskyists, the last 50 years of the struggle to build the Fourth International and accept it, warts and all, as an intricately woven tapestry and in so doing take our first steps to rebuild the international.

Peter Windeler
Stockport

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FACE TORY ATTACK



Settlement vindicates Des Warren

THE Des Warren Defence Fund has received the final payment including an out-of-court settlement of Warren's claim against the Prison Service for medical maltreatment and drug abuse during his 3-year jail sentence.

Warren was one of the Shrewsbury building workers arrested on frame-up charges following the 1972 building workers' strike.

Twenty-five active strikers were arrested following the very effective flying pickets which brought large sections of the industry to a halt throughout the country.

The arrests took place several months after the strike ended and followed urgent discussions between the Tory government, the police and the building employers.

Having just had a bloody nose from the miners, the Heath government was anxious to find some way of hitting back at the unions.

Despite dozens of police on every picket who travelled with the flying pickets from site to site, they were unable to produce any evidence against the arrested men until they were finally ordered by a political directive to bring charges under the notorious Conspiracy Act.

Justice Mais defined

Des Warren

during conspiracy during their trial:

'I must tell you that conspiracy, generally speaking, is a matter of inference. It is seldom expressed in words, still less is it written, and it can be inferred from conduct by the words and by the acts of those concerned.'

Crown Prosecutor Maurice Drake was even more outspoken:

'The agreement which must be proved in a charge of conspiracy to intimidate is rarely proved by anyone actually hearing parties sitting down and reaching an agreement'

Des Warren received the harshest sentence: three years jail. He served all but a few days and lost several months remission because of his intransigent refusal to accept criminalisation for leading workers in struggle.

Despite the fact that thousands of trade unionists struck work, marched and demonstrated in defence of the Shrewsbury pickets, Warren was railroaded into prison by Tory-police connivance, kept there by a Labour government and abandoned by a treacherous TUC.

As he wrote later:

'The TUC had the key to my cell in their pocket all along and they refused to use it.'

While in prison, he was pressing to bring criminal charges against the then Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins when he was given drugs by a prison doctor which resulted in his developing Parkinson's disease.

The Des Warren Defence Fund was set up by Croydon (Surrey) and Wigan (Lancs) trades councils to raise funds so that Warren could take his case to court and publicise the treatment of class-war prisoners in Britain. As he explained to Workers Press:

'The Shrewsbury case was the foundation on which all the later legislation against the trade unions was built. The fact that the Labour and trade union leaders allowed Shrewsbury to go unchallenged gave the state a green light to go later for others like the miners.'

'It's about time we learnt the lessons. The fight to free the jailed miners and our fight to publicise the treatment of political prisoners is part of the same offensive against a capitalist state trying to smash all the

hard-won rights of the labour movement.

'The fact that the Home Office has been forced to admit liability for my treatment is an important victory but we must keep up the fight until all the class-war prisoners are freed.'

'This means, above all, a fight to clear out the traitors in the labour and trade union movement whose cowardice helps the capitalist state to inflict these blows on our members.'

'The struggle continues. The purpose of the campaign was to expose the rottenness of the whole system and this fight goes on.'

Des was very grateful to his solicitor David Biggerstaff who has waived all his fees for 1985 and to his counsel who has accepted only half his usual fees for this case.

The Communist Party lawyer who first took on his case and then told Warren he had no chance of winning was paid in full.

The Des Warren Defence Fund will be issuing a full statement shortly and circularising all the hundreds of working class organisations which donated money.

They will be given a full accounting of the fund and an outline of plans for the continuation of the campaign.

● See Laing's story page three

WORKERS throughout industry face mounting problems which seem insoluble. From postmen to printers, new technology and unemployment is undermining the unions' ability to maintain conditions.

The trade union leaders' fear of the anti-union laws and sequestration in many cases stops even traditional protests against these changes. The artificial limb industry is no exception.

In the American civil war, a Colonel Hanger lost his leg and subsequently designed and made a new one for himself.

Such was the demand for his design that he went into business. His firm later opened a branch in Britain. Demand grew rapidly in the aftermath of World War I.

Today the Hangers firm is part of the British Tyre and Rubber conglomerate (BTR).

BTR also own two other limb producers, Vessa and Kellie, and control over 70 per cent of leg production in the UK.

Today, though, as the number of maimed survivors of two World Wars declines, the major customer is the DHSS on behalf of National Health patients, mainly elderly people.

For many years, the design and manufacture of limbs has changed very little, but, recently, wood, metal and leather are being replaced by plastic and other man-made materials.

Legs which were individually made to suit each patient's requirements are replaced by an 'off-the-shelf' modular system.

This new technology opens up for the employers the prospect of a growing use of semi- and unskilled labour to replace the traditional craftsmen; metal workers from TASS and wood and leather workers from FTAT.

Pressure

This potential for cuts in rates by the employers comes alongside pressure from the major customer — the government — for cuts in its own spending. Already this year the DHSS refused to renew Hangers' annual contract and insisted on new lower limb prices.

Hangers refused and for the moment are operating on temporary contracts, preparing to pass the eventual price cuts onto the work-force.

The opening shots of the government's bid to cut the money it spends on artificial appliances comes as a report into the service is published.

The McColl review now going through committee stages in the House of Commons, is scathing in its criticisms of surgery, fitting and supply of limbs.

While the report makes many proposals, only those changes which fall into line with the cost-

BY OUR OWN REPORTER

cutting demands of the government will be implemented.

The manufacturers will seize on those recommendations which will enable them to maintain their profits, in particular the proposal to decentralise production to numerous local branches.

Hangers, for example, are establishing the new technology production facilities at all its small branches round the country.

These branches, which only used to do repairs, employ a handful of men at each site.

The main production area at Roehampton, the centre of trade unionism in the industry, is being cut back with redundancies and the right of the stewards at Roehampton to represent the branches has been curtailed.

In the face of this mounting preparation for 'de-skilling' and 'de-unionising' the industry the trade union bureaucracy has done no-

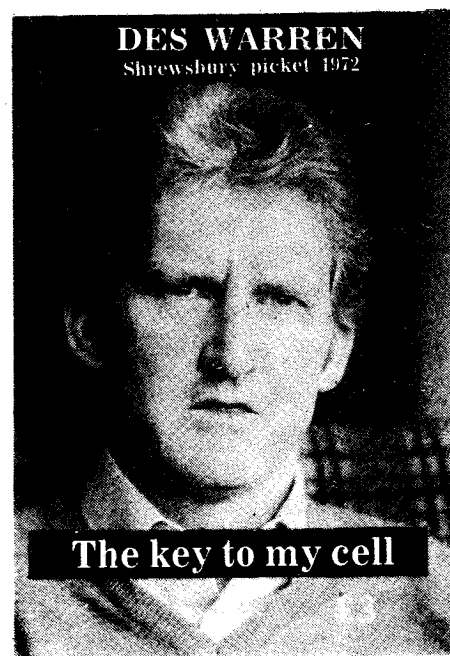
thing but collaborate with the employers.

They have no strategy for defending jobs and conditions. Officials of both unions involved, heavily influenced by the Stalinist policies of the Communist Party, call only for the workforce to end demarcation, to make themselves more efficient and to call for import controls to stop limbs from Germany and Taiwan.

Nationalisation

The only policy to defend the interests of the workforce and the patients, whose choice of suitable limbs is also being reduced by the new technology, is to campaign for the nationalisation of the entire artificial limb industry under the control of doctors, trade unions and patients, without compensation to the firms which for years have lived parasitically off the National Health by charging inflated prices.

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