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LABOUR PLEDGE TO BANKERS

LABOUR'S new campaign, 'Freedom and Fairness', has one purpose: to reassure the capitalist class that they have nothing to fear from a future Labour government.

Beneath the cheap gimmicks, which Kinnock pretends can win the middle class, is the clearest expression of the reactionary role which any future Labour government will play.

The programme will no doubt be presented as an expression of Labour's 'new realism' and the only way to win the middle class.

Such claims are a fraud. The reformist leadership of the labour movement has never been able to win decisive sections of the middle class.

Only a socialist programme based on the overthrow of capitalism can resolve the acute problems faced by large sections of this class.

There is nothing in the 'Campaign' to attract either the working class or the middle class.

● No pledge is made to repeal the battery of anti-trade union laws assembled by the Thatcher government. Such laws will be kept and used by the next Labour government.

● No promise is made to release the jailed miners. They would rot in prison under a Kinnock government.

● All commitments to nationalisation have been abandoned: even in words. No promises are made to re-nationalise the industries and services privatised by the Thatcher government.

● Despite much empty rhetoric about the 'housing crisis' there are no plans for the massive expansion of council house building which alone can begin to tackle this crisis.

● Nor is there any hint of a pledge to restore the savage cuts imposed by the Tories on the welfare state.

The Guardian, house-organ of the SDP, naturally welcomes Kinnock's programme. It is hailed as 'a really positive step forward'.

Praising the 'practical, political, common sense' and 'political maturity' of the 'Campaign', it welcomes 'the squeezing away of blazing belief in favour of a cautious re-

By GEOFF PILLING

arrangement of policies to catch the wind of public approval'.

Every worker must be warned that the only approval that interests Kinnock is that of the monopolies and the banks.

The real architect of the programme is the trade union bureaucracy. It is the right-wing in the TUC who placed Kinnock in power. It is they who would sustain him in office.

Significantly, the Stalinist- and 'left'-dominated Scottish TUC, in its economic package announced last weekend, supported calls for a pay policy under a Labour government and ditched a demand for nationalisation.

A Kinnock government is certain to come into direct collision with the working class. Unemployment continues to rise sharply. Revenue from North Sea oil is fast running out. A Labour government would force the working class to pay for this deepening capitalist crisis.

The lessons of France are clear to see. The Mitterand government, with a policy essentially the same as Kinnock's, betrayed the working class and strengthened the forces of the extreme right.

We call on all trade unionists and Labour Party members to reject the road of betrayal along which Kinnock and company are striding.

We invite you to read our paper and join the Workers Revolutionary Party in the fight for socialism.



Re-instatement order on NCB

THE National Coal Board were ordered to reinstate sacked miner Geoff Hartnell at an Industrial Tribunal in Newcastle last Wednesday (April 23) on the seventh day of the hearing.

This is the first reinstatement order to be issued to

the north-east area NCB since the end of the year-long strike. It is to be complied with by July 1.

Hartnell was sacked from Tursdale workshops, Co. Durham, on April 4, 1985. He continuously denied NCB management charges that he assaulted a scab in November the previous year.

He told Workers Press

that, whether or not the NCB comply with the order, the campaign for the release of the jailed miners and the reinstatement of sacked miners must be stepped up.

This could take place around the National Justice for Miners Campaign, which held a public meeting in South Shields on April 19.

Lobby over scab action

ANGRY seamen lobbied union officials last Friday after an official dispute involving a sit-in on a Townsend-Thorensen ferry in Felixstowe which was hijacked by fifty or so scabs from Holland.

Ronnie Carrol, National Union of Seamen's port organiser at Felixstowe, described the men as 'thugs' after showing Workers Press photographs of severe injuries received by one of the strikers during the 3.30 a.m. attack.

The dispute — over dangerous manning

levels — led to an official NUS-backed strike and the placing of pickets at Felixstowe.

The attack must have been cleared at government or Customs and Excise level for the scabs to carry out their operation.

It involved not only obtaining permission to leave the Dutch ship but also the sailing of the occupied ship to Holland afterwards.

A meeting of union officials on April 22 has decided to step up action in support of the strike and the victimised men.

Labour leaders and NATO

Trade unionists, youth and the CND movement have come together to protest against Reagan's brutal attack on Libya. Their response was immediate and strong. The demand for the expulsion of the US military from British bases is genuine and correct.

There is no doubt that a movement is building up in the working class to challenge the jingoism of the Thatcher regime. Four years of Tory rule since 1982 have served to exorcise the 'Falklands Spirit'.

It contrasts with the chauvinism of the Labour Party leaders who vie with each other to prove themselves more patriotic and more concerned about British 'security' than Thatcher herself.

In parliament last Tuesday, Kinnock urged the Prime Minister to put all possible pressure on Britain's European allies to impose economic sanctions, 'which are

more effective against Gaddafi while not being so lethal towards his people'.

Kaufman complained of Thatcher's 'complacency' after the 1984 death of WPC Fletcher and asked her why the government has 'at last realised following approaches from this side (i.e. Labour) two years ago that some potential terrorists are at large in this country?'

To whom is Kaufman referring? A handful of innocent students who are to be deprived — without even an appeal, let alone a trial — of the right to an education? Or is he talking of the thousands of US military personnel who have the right to mount armed guards over their bases, who can shoot and kill peace protestors and remain outside the jurisdiction of the law, such as it is?

Libyan Information Minister Mohammed Sherif Uddin is right: the expulsion of the 21 Libyan students is racism, designed to whip

COMMENT

by Dave Bruce

up backward elements in a war-mongering spree. It is an opening stage in a campaign to create the political conditions for the escalation of Reagan's imperialist plans for the Middle East and central America.

The hesitancy of the European bourgeoisie must be overridden, their fears calmed.

It was left to Tam Dalyell to expose the extent of the master/servant relationship of Reagan to Thatcher when he asked her at what stage she knew that Reagan was going to authorise the use of the barbaric anti-personnel cluster bombs. She replied:

'It is for them to choose the weapons to secure the defeat of those targets within the target permissions we gave.'

So much for the 'dual key' assurances on nuclear weapons!

This is why it is inadequate simply to demand that the US be forced out of bases in Britain or to give credence to Kinnock's notion that the US nuclear presence in Britain should be ended.

Leaving it at that level brings in the danger of a chauvinist Communist Party-style campaign on the lines of 'Yanks Go Home!'

Such a demand might enforce tactical changes in US planning. But the key question is strategy. The removal of US bases from Britain — nuclear or conventional — might inconvenience imperialism but it would not materially alter its plans. To head off a powerful anti-imperialist move in the British working class, social democracy could well make demagogic noises about Cruise or whatever.

The Spanish Gonzalez government, which refuses to allow a US nuclear presence in Spain, is a case in point.

What the chauvinists of the Labour Party will not do, any more than Gonzales did, is campaign for Britain's withdrawal from the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) which is decisive for imperialism.

The whole of western 'defence' strategy is centred on this ultra-reactionary alliance of imperialist butchers and has been so since the Treaty was signed in April 1949. Each of the 15 member nations has an important role to play, none more so after America than Britain.

Britain's withdrawal would deal a serious and crippling blow to imperialism's war plans for the Soviet Union. It would undermine America's ability to act as the world's policeman and be a serious political defeat for US imperialism.

The demand for Britain to get out of NATO is a mandatory transitional demand. The chauvinist labour leaders must not get off the hook on this question.

Labourites threaten strikers

LABOUR-CONTROLLED Central Regional Council in Scotland has threatened legal action against their striking sewage workers' five shop stewards.

The 138 sewerage workers are on strike demanding parity with the region's water workers. The pay difference between the two groups of workers at the moment is between £20 and £25 a week.

The dispute, which has been officially recognised by the T&GWU, was called after years of local and national talks had broken down, with the council refusing to settle the dispute at local level.

BY KENNY THOMPSON

The council is insisting that the dispute can only be settled at national level.

Local shop steward Doug Black rejected this and pointed out that the Highland Region had already given wages-parity to sewage workers.

The council has issued a circular to all the strikers stating their strike was unofficial and legal action would be taken against their shop stewards (Doug Black, Owen McFarlane, Willie Hamilton, J.R. Wilson and J. Hooper).

The council are justifying their actions by claiming the sewage workers have no rights to go on strike due to health hazards.

One Labour councillor told the strikers if he had his way, parity would be to cut the wages of the water workers by £20 a week.

The Labour councillors also tried to blackmail the strikers by suggesting they had picked the wrong time to strike as this action would cost the Labour Party votes at the forthcoming local elections.

This has not swayed the men who are in dispute.

The men feel it is about time the council started to act on their behalf and not help the Tories.

It is expected that Tory controlled councils should act in this way. It is totally criminal that Labour councils should treat their employees in this way.

Every trade unionist and political activist should write to the Central Regional Council at Viewforth, Stirling, condemning the council's actions.

Messages of support and donations can be sent to Doug Black, 23 Carronside Street, Bainsforth, Falkirk.

Bond quits over Apartheid ban

NEARLY all the 300 Equity members who attended the recent AGM were clarified on one issue: the bankruptcy of their right-wing leadership, whose weekend started badly with the news that a favourite tool, the referendum, had badly back-fired.

Members had voted, against the 'advice' of the ruling council, to black work in South Africa and to continue the ban on sales of recorded material to the racist state.

This immediately forced the resignation of Union President Derek Bond and threw the right-wing into disarray.

The 'Act for Equity' group are infamous for their promises to 'work in the interests of the membership' who soon got another taste of this in the debate on 'Action Projects In Education'.

This is a Cardiff council cut by a right-wing council in a clear case of political witch-hunting. Delegates told the meeting how the Equity Council had removed official backing from the dispute.

The councillors hid behind their order papers as the theatre organiser Peter Finch angered members with his bogus claims that nothing more could be done to save the company.

Council backs demo

LAST WEEK, Liverpool council agreed to support a demonstration against Reagan's bombing of the Libyan people.

On behalf of the labour movement, John Hamilton the leader, condemned 'state terrorism'.

It has now been agreed that there should be a joint May Day demonstration with the Liverpool trades council and Liverpool Labour Party on May 5, condemning the actions of the American government.

At a protest meeting called by Anti-Apartheid and CND last Tuesday, Hamilton declared that the use of United States bases had shown that 'Nationals no longer have any control of over what was

A motion calling for the restoration of full official backing to the dispute was carried overwhelmingly — a humiliating defeat for the right-wing even if they are not bound by the vote.

This set the tone for the whole AGM and the Council were heavily defeated in all but one of the contentious debates.

Censorship

On questions like the ITV commercials issue, overtime, theatre closures and censorship, the leadership were shown to be neither willing nor able to work 'in the members' interests'.

The print dispute, the anti-union laws and theatre fund-

done in their own territory.'

He declared that the Americans had a financial as well as a military grip over countries. There was grinding poverty in these countries because of its capitalist system.

'Why did they suddenly attack Libya?' he asked and declared it was for financial reasons. 'There is a drastic fall in the price of oil and petrol. The threat to the United States economy is part of the situation which led to the sending of bombers. It is state terrorism determined to destroy the lives of innocent victims.'

BY JAMES QUINN

ing were left undebated — 'increasing members' anger and frustration.

The final hour of the AGM, however, produced the real fireworks.

Ex-WRP member Corin Redgrave moved a call for a cultural boycott of Israel which created near pandemonium as Zionist members tried to shout him down.

Nigel Davenport, in the chair, seized the opportunity to suspend the meeting.

By the time standing orders were resumed, only half an hour remained. The debate on Redgrave's motion took up all but the last seven minutes and was lost 3 - 20, to the delight of the Zionists who had evidently organised for the occasion.

The contentious issue of control of entry was still undebated despite a string of motions on the agenda.

The right-wing made a pathetic statement that the Council was considering a deal with drama schools, clearly with a view to a privileged entry agreement.

The meeting ended in uproar with the membership refusing formally to vote the annual report.

With the state attacks on our industry through the Tory-controlled Arts Council set to intensify, the lessons of the 1986 AGM are clear.

The right-wing and centrist groupings are collaborating more than ever before, with attacks on members' living standards and the cur-

tailment of artistic freedom.

All progressive forces in the Union must work for their defeat and their replacement with a leadership that will fight to defend the membership in every section of our industry.

● Two points should be made about the intervention of the Healy-Redgrave rump at the AGM. They put two motions on censorship and many of the points they made were true. However, this group's cover-up of their crimes in the labour movement made their calls for 'Freedom of Information' a bit hard to swallow.

Israel

Secondly, whilst the Red-graves' motion on Israel expressed an apparently principled position in support of the Palestinian people, their subjective reasons for putting it must be remembered.

In 1978 the WRP under Healy supported the state execution of 21 Iraqi CP members. The reason for this was simple: a craven desire for an opportunist relationship with rich Arab regimes with a view to obtaining financial favours.

The rump's sectarian brand of politics seems to hold an attraction for a small but apparently loyal group of romantics within Equity. This clique apart, however, they are hopelessly isolated; it is our responsibility to see that they remain that way.

Mick Bishop

WRP member Cde Mick Bishop has asked Workers Press to state that he does not, has not and has no intention of owning shares in New Park Publications Ltd, a company associated with the Workers Revolutionary Party, or indeed in any company. His name does not appear on the company's share register.

LISTINGS

Workers Revolutionary Party Public Meeting: 70th ANNIVERSARY OF THE EXECUTION OF JAMES CONNOLLY. Monday 12 May, 7.30 pm. Anson Hall, Anson Road, Cricklewood, London NW2.

LECTURES: LESSONS FROM THE HISTORY OF THE MARXIST MOVEMENT. Every Wednesday, 7.30 pm. Family Lounge, Flying Picket, MTUCURC, Hardman Street, Liverpool.

IRISH PRISONERS APPEAL, fund-raising socials at the Old White Horse, Brixton Road/Loughborough Road, London SW9. Sunday 4 May, Emerald Occasional Band. Sunday 11 May, women only — with traditional Irish women musicians. Doors open 7.30 pm. £2, £1 concessions.

HUNGER STRIKE COMMEMORATION DANCE. Monday 5 May, 8-12 pm. Irish Centre, Murray St, Camden Town, London. Music by 'Bunch of Thyme', bar and food. Tickets £2. Proceeds to Dependents of Republican Prisoners. Organised by London-Birmingham Irish Republican POW Campaign Committee.

Monthly Fund

Received this week: £474.13
April Fund total now £1530.31
Legal fund total now: £33,271.40

March for Mendis

BY J MARKIN

A MANCHESTER meeting has voted unanimously to launch a march to London against the Home Office decision to deport Viraj Mendis to Sri Lanka.

A long campaign has been fought on Viraj's behalf. Over 23,000 have signed a petition — including MPs and other public figures.

The campaign succeeded in restoring Viraj's benefit, which was stopped by the DHSS, and forced police to drop charges brought last August.

Viraj is a known communist and supporter of the Tamil liberation struggle. He has applied for political asylum because, if deported to Sri Lanka, he faces persecution. The Home Office claims that Sri Lanka is 'inherently a democracy'.

In Manchester, many campaigns against immigration laws, often with Viraj's assistance, have been successful in the past two years.

For the Home Office, this is a political test case whose outcome will affect all campaigns against these racist laws.

Viraj said: 'I have no option but to fight the Home Office decision. If I was deported there is a chance of 99 per cent that I get arrested.'

Anwar Dita, who fought successfully for six years against deportation by the Home Office and proved that 'her children were hers', also spoke at the meeting.

The march will start on July 5 from Manchester and will be on the road for three weeks before getting to London on July 26.

You can help the march by joining it, getting people organising along the route, providing accommodation, raising funds or sponsorship, or with transport.

Please write to: VMDC, c/o North Hulme Centre, Jackson Crescent, Manchester M15 5AL

Scottish TUC boost for jailed miners

BY SIMON PIRANI

A SCOTTISH TUC decision has opened the way for the campaign on jailed and sacked miners to be stepped up in Scotland: this opportunity must not be missed.

A resolution, passed unanimously, urged all STUC-affiliated organisations 'to give support to the National Justice for Miners Campaign.'

It was moved by Fire Brigades Union President Ken Cameron who called the victimised men 'heroes of the movement'.

'We have seen miners who spent or months in jail and were acquitted — but did not get their jobs back. We also have miners who are still in jail.'

'The miners' strike took

place because this government decided to declare war on the trade union movement'

'We must stand united as we did against Heath in the early 1970s.'

Cameron was the only conference speaker to mention the jailed miners.

This was no accident: the Communist Party Stalinists who dominate both the STUC and the NUM Scottish area are trying to keep the campaign on the victimised men as quiet as possible.

While the Scottish area NUM has grudgingly affiliated to the National Justice Campaign, they have shown as much enthusiasm for it as they did for fighting the closure of Kinneil, Bogside and Polmaise pits.

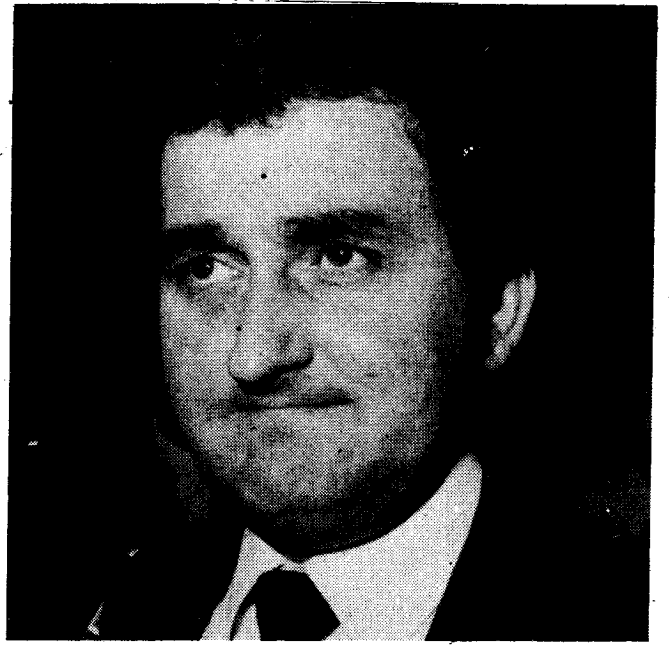
They did not organise a single coach to transport miners to the Justice Campaign's first national rally in London. For the recent highly successful rally in Nottingham, transport was provided for one delegate from each pit.

The 125 Scottish miners who have still not got their jobs back are ready to fight: most of them were at an STUC fringe meeting last week. Besides that, not a single rally, march or meeting has been organised by the Scottish NUM this year.

That fringe meeting was addressed by Mick McGahey and George Bolton who only proposed further pleas to Scottish NCB director John Loudon.

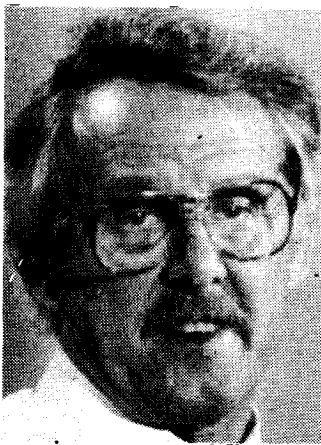
It was left to Ann Sherrell of the Aberdeen Trades Council to call on trades unionists to follow the example of Aberdeen and Stirling Trades Councils and affiliate to the National Justice Campaign.

She also called for the organisation of meetings and rallies and a campaign including resolutions against the UDM and scab union alliance which is now taking shape.



KEN CAMERON

More aid planned for South African unions



Peter Heathfield

FOUR HUNDRED delegates attended an Anti-Apartheid conference in Manchester to discuss how the British labour movement can help the black African struggle against Apartheid.

The opening speakers were Peter Heathfield (NUM), Diane Abbott (LP) and a speaker from SWAPO. The South African government prevented an ANC representative from attending.

Heathfield related how the involvement of British capitalists is the largest in the world. Of 2,000 multinational companies in South Africa 50 per cent are British

— not including banking facilities.

He went on to show the massive involvement of Barclays Bank who have a major stake in Barclays National, South Africa's biggest bank, which controls 30 per cent of the country's banking business.

He called on everyone to boycott Barclays Bank and its credit card facilities.

Since 1980 the bank has lost accounts with an annual turnover of over £6 billion due to the boycott. He asked all trade unionists to demand that pension funds should not be invested in South Africa.

Lastly, he called for establishing relationships with the equivalent trade unions in South Africa. The NUM had been trying for two years but had great difficulty in establishing contact.

Diane Abbott related the brutality of the South African system and condemned both the American attack on Libya and the British involvement.

Although a prospective parliamentary candidate, she avoided mentioning the role of the previous Labour government in maintaining Apartheid.

(The British Ambassador

to South Africa in 1977 said 'It is because we have so many interests in common with you, which we want if possible to maintain, because we have enormous investments in your country — the biggest investments of any country in South Africa' that we have 'exercised the veto in the UN security council during the life of the present government... in favour of South Africa'.)

Conference then broke up into smaller sections to discuss many issues relating to South Africa. The suggestions following a long discussion with contributions from many union delegates were:

Strengthen links with the Palestinian workers

BY MARTIN RALPH

A CALL for British trade unionists to strengthen their links with the Palestine Trade Union Federation was made at a Scottish TUC fringe meeting last week.

'A solution must be found to the Palestinian question and we hope that the working class will help us in this,' said Muhammed Rushaq, Jerusalem's transport union secretary and a West Bank trade union's executive member.

'We pushed and fought while the world ignored us: the world only listened to Israel's side of the story.'

'The media tried to call the PLO "terrorists". Since 1974 the PLO has condemned terrorism.'

'The terrorists are Begin and Reagan.'

Rushaq called for a UN-sponsored conference on the Middle East attended by all nations including the PLO.

Answering a question on the PTUF's attitude to the Israeli Histadut, Rushaq described how delegates of the Zionist controlled Histadut had walked out of a conference of the French CFDT socialist trade union federation rather than meet PTUF representatives.

The Histadut was itself the second largest employer on the West Bank: it supported the repression of PTUF officials.

Yakob Fawrah, a PTUF executive member, told the meeting that the PTUF's 116 affiliates had a total membership of 150 000 on the West Bank.

'Palestinian trade unionists faced daily harassment from the Israelis, including the closure of their offices and their officials being placed under town and house arrest. Often trade union organisers are deported from the Occupied Territories.'

Fawrah's point was dramatically underlined in a Trade Union Friends of Palestine leaflet outlining repression in recent weeks against Palestinian trade unionists actively developing links with their British counterparts.

Ahmed 'Attayah of Gaza and Nablus transport union official Yusef abu Jday were imprisoned without trial three days after meeting a T&GWU delegation to the Occupied Territories.

Mahmud Nofal, of the Beir Zeit Student Council, returned to the West Bank after visiting Britain with a folk troupe and a town arrest order was placed on him.

The most blatant case was that of Dr Fathiya Nasru, a trade unionist and educationalist from Beir Zeit University, whose trip to Britain to this year's NUT and TUC

women's conferences was banned.

The Trade Union Friends of Palestine, which is supported nationally by NALGO, SOGAT 82, NUM, ACTT, AUEW/TASS, FBU, Scottish TUC and many other trade union organisations, works within the British trade union movement for recognition of the struggle by Palestinian workers for basic trade union rights.

Trade unionists should write to TUFF, PO Box 196, London WC1X 0AT.

They are also urged to establish links directly with the Palestine Trade Union Federation, c/o 52 Green Street, London, W1.

1. All trade unionists should boycott South African commodities. Portsmouth NUPE health service workers and others carrying out a boycott should be supported.

2. Direct links with South African trade unions affiliated to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

3. Local affiliation of trade unions and trades councils to the Anti Apartheid Movement.

4. Investigation of links between teachers' organisations in this country and the school strike committees and parent support groups in South Africa.

5. Involvement of the labour movement at every level to demand the breaking of links with Apartheid South Africa.

This was just part of the conference but it did reflect the growth of the Anti Apartheid Movement and its increasing links within the labour movement.

CHILDREN OF EL SALVADOR

A reason to struggle

WHEN analysing the Salvadoran situation, we often discuss in depth the state of the war, political and military conditions in the country, the role played by different social forces within the current upheaval and so on.

Nonetheless, there is a large section of the population to which we seldom make reference but which, in the final analysis, is the main incentive for our struggle.

They will inherit the successes and errors of our generation — in other words we are working for a better future for our children.

As a women's association immersed in the process of liberation, one of our principle objectives is to reclaim the rights of Salvadoran children.

Because of this we are trying, through this article, to explain some aspects of the situation in which our children live and, through these details, to prove the necessity and justice of our propositions.

According to current statistics, 10 out of every 100 children born die before reaching one year of age due to malnutrition and gastrointestinal diseases.

Mortality

Official statistics placed the infant mortality rate at 49.5 per cent in 1984 and indicated an increase to 75 per cent in the past year.

The percentage of malnourished children less than five years old has increased by 93 per cent, the incidence of measles by 550 per cent and influenza and typhoid by 300 per cent.

Illiteracy now stands at 53.4 per cent and some 2,000 schools have been closed. At the present time, according to the Ministry of Education, there are 417 elementary schools operating in the country, served by only 22,000 teachers.

A quarter of a million children have no access to primary or secondary education.

These and other social problems have their roots in El Salvador's oppressive system. Throughout the

Turkish death sentences

A military court in Turkey has sentenced five members of an underground communist group to death for their activities before and after the 1980 military take-over. Another defendant was sentenced to life imprisonment, and 20 to jail terms ranging between three and sixteen years.

Turkey is a member of N.A.T.O. and the E.E.C., and part of the capitalist 'democracy' which Thatcher tells us U.S. forces are defending. The British government helped shield the right-wing junta from criticism in the European parliament,

years, the ambition and voraciousness of a few have made them even more acute.

With the deepening of the conflict, new social problems have arisen.

One of these is the displaced people and refugees who, because of indiscriminate bombings in the rural zones, have been forced to leave their homes for the cities or other countries.

There are currently about 400,000 people displaced within the country, one and a half million refugees in Mexico and another half a million in the United States.

More than half the total refugee population is under 16 and around 60 per cent is illiterate.

We should add that Salvadoran children are suffering emotionally as well as materially from the war. It will be many years before their generation is able to overcome the trauma of the war.

Our children are witnessing daily the horrors of death, captures, bombing and destruction.

Even if they cannot give an elaborate explanation of the situation, they feel the problems and consequences of the war in their own lives. This has left a mark on these innocent children.

The criminal military operations carried out by the



Against malnutrition, disease, military brutality. Salvadorean women fight for a better future for their children.

regime in search of 'guerilla units' affect the entire population regardless of age or sex.

Future

In the month of November 1985, three cases of brutal attacks against children were reported. One of these is the case of a child not ten years of age, who was captured by the regime's forces and later thrown out of a helicopter with both his arms mutilated.

On November 22, troops from a paratrooper battalion captured two children, 8 and 10 years old, during a military operation on the Guazapa volcano. The children

were savagely tortured and then murdered.

Given this situation, we do not accept that the reasons for our people taking up arms are to be found in external factors or 'foreign elements' who want to subvert the 'social order'.

The causes are inside El Salvador and are becoming clearer and clearer.

We now have the power in our hands — either these children will have to continue to fight for their survival or we will be able to offer them a more dignified and humane future.

Reprinted from the bulletin of the Association of Women of El Salvador (AMES)

'Thought control' in Indonesia

INDONESIANS are now prohibited from having any beliefs other than the official government view, Pancasila, which is a blend of racism and opposition to democracy, according to the latest issue of Tapol, the journal of the British Campaign for the Defence of Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia.

This 'thought-control' is backed by the full force of law — in a country which has between 55,000 and 100,000 political prisoners.

The figure, one Indonesian general boasted in 1979, fluctuates as often as the exchange rate of the yen.

Tens of thousands perished or were imprisoned in the wake of the CIA-inspired coup in 1965 which opened Indonesia to American and Japanese imperialism.

The Suharto regime is now one of the most repressive in Asia.

The 1985 report on 'human rights' to the US Congress whitewashed the Indonesian government, claiming that only several hundred people are imprisoned for subversion — but they admitted that 'in all such security cases, it is widely believed that the government will ensure conviction irrespective of the evidence presented in court.'

Victims

It also said that an Indonesian Moslem organisation had listed 40 people who had 'disappeared' after riots in 1984, but this conceals the real scale of the situation.

The Indonesian Legal Aid Institute estimates that there have been 5-6,000 victims of 'death-squads' since 1983.

The Tapol bulletin also reports the latest stage in 'transmigration', the forcible driving of thousands into outer islands.

At Donggala, central Sulawesi, troops moved in last November to put down riots among the migrants, whose subsistence rations had been withdrawn.

The government explanation for unrest among the settlers is that they are dissidents — and admit that nearly half a million former political prisoners are in the area, amounting to about 60 per cent of the settler population.

International discussions

WORKERS' struggle in South Africa and ways to build solidarity here were discussed by Workers Revolutionary Party comrades meeting in Derbyshire at the weekend.

The need for a Marxist internationalist perspective worthy of the struggles workers are engaged in has led comrades to form study groups which can examine the issues and help form our revolutionary policies.

This is the positive side of overcoming the Healy period when ignorance, secret deals and unprincipled relationships dictated the 'line' cynically imposed on the membership.

Discussion and education is part of rebuilding the Fourth International as a real world party of socialist revolution.

Party members discussing the Irish struggle helped give the WRP a policy to fight for. The work on Ireland and on South Africa is continuing. We will also be holding study and discussion groups in future on Iran, Iraq, and the Palestinian struggle.

If anyone would like to hear more, to participate in this aspect of Party-work, or to suggest further topics of concern, contact Wayne, or Bob Archer on 01-720 2000.

1936: General strike in Palestine

FIFTY years ago, on April 20, 1936, a small people began a courageous struggle for an independence they have still to win. Palestinians meeting in Nablus called a general strike against British rule and Zionist colonisation.

It spread through the country, and lasted six months. It was accompanied by a national revolt and guerrilla war which lasted three years and was put down by 20,000 British troops

with armoured cars and aircraft. Over a hundred Palestinians were hanged by the British military and collective punishments were imposed on towns and villages.

The Palestine Arab Revolt was an important turning point in their history and one whose lessons are still being digested in the Palestinian national movement today. Next week's 'Workers Press' will feature a full-length article by CHARLIE POT-TINS on this historic struggle.

Shopworkers in conference

Eastbourne 1986

Defend Wages Councils

TRADE unionists have always had reservations about the wages councils system, with its minimum rates set by committees of compromisers rather than by separate teams of bargainers.

It has tended to weaken free collective bargaining instead of being, as originally claimed, a temporary expedient until these develop.

The Inspectorate has been undermined and under-financed. Evasion and payments below the legal rates occur on a vast scale and are increasing.

The social security fraud squad which harasses claimants as potential criminals has been increased, but the Wages Inspectorate has been reduced by a third since 1979.

They treat cases of under-paying, i.e., lawbreaking on the part of employers, as a product of ignorance, to be corrected without re-education.

This is in sharp contrast to the treatment of social security defrauders, TV licence evaders, fare dodgers and motoring offenders who are arraigned before the Courts and quickly advised that ignorance of the law is no defence.

The greatest contrast of all is that between the huge amount of arrears of under-payment, in 1984 £2,430,177, confirming the vast extent of fraud, and the small number of prosecutions, just two the same year.

Important areas of work are not covered — butchers, florists shops, chemists, record shops, boarding houses, commercial hotels, contract cleaning firms and laundrettes.

Wages Council orders are written in near-incomprehensible language. Such a variety of rates exist they are not generally known about, as a single national minimum would be.

BY BERNARD FRANKS

In spite of all such entirely just criticisms, the Wages Councils should be unequivocally defended. The Tory plans for abolition are aimed at removing every last block to the return of the worst Victorian working conditions and wages, not at providing something better.

- No sell-out of vital struggles.
- Fight for the abolition of the anti-union laws.
- Defend the Wages Councils.
- Increase the powers of the Wages Inspectorate to deal with underpaying employers as thieves and criminals. Increase the maximum fines for illegal underpayment and failure to display information.
- Fight for a national minimum wage, negotiated by the unions or tied to the average national wage rather than to the suspect 'official' cost-of-living index.
- Wages Councils should be unequivocally defended, but the unions should be seeking to abolish them on their own terms. This involves establishing proper free collective bargaining machinery, so that legal protection is rendered obsolete.
- Oppose all cheap labour substitute job schemes.
- Pull out of the Manpower Services Commission, a body for organising cheap labour and scabs. Unemployed centres should be



'more protection needed now jobs harder to find' — Auld report.

funded by trade union or local authorities alone, not by the Manpower Services Commission.

● Fight rate-capping and demand that cash go to the health and social services and local authorities so they can offer proper employment to the jobless, making good the terrible damage done to health, welfare, housing the environment, local amenities and leisure provision.

● Build a revolutionary Marxist leadership for the labour movement. Finally, let us see these

struggles not in terms of reforms, all of which are taken back later so that the same battles have to be fought over and over again.

Rather, let us take them as the first step towards overthrowing a system of society based on exploitation, mass destruction, and creation of poverty in the midst of plenty, to be replaced with a planned, socialist society wherein new technology, the achievements of science and the resources of nature are used solely to advance the well-being, the rights and the care of all.

Sunday trading

THE COMMONS' defeat of the government's Shops Bill dealt a sharp reverse to the Tory plans to repeal the Shops Act. This would have stepped up Sunday opening and severely affected the lives of shopworkers.

The successful abolition of Wages Councils would be equally devastating for shopworkers and would open the way for a renewed drive to extend opening hours on the basis of de-regulated wages and holidays.

Even the Auld Report, which the government commissioned to advance its Sunday trading plans, expressed strong misgivings at

the possible winding-up of Wages Councils:

'We set great store by the preservation of the role of Wages Councils in fixing statutory minimum weekly rates, holidays and holiday pay for the retail trades.

'Shopworkers need their protection in this respect as much as ever, in fact, more so now when jobs are harder to find, and the already low membership of unions in the retail sector is declining.' (Auld Report, 1985).

Clearly, the battle to defeat the abolition of Wages Councils is vital to prevent any return to the super-exploitation of the shopworker which was a major feature of the Victorian era.

ILO codes broken

THE TORIES are set to break international agreements and codes of conduct covering the treatment of the low paid with their new Wages Bill.

All 94 countries which belong to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) have machinery to set minimum wage rates for workers in certain trades.

Britain will be the first country to renounce these agreements.

The ILO has a convention similar to British 'Truck Acts' that have ensured, since 1831, that wages are paid in money. This too is abandoned in the Wages Bill.

When the British government announced its Wages Council plans the ILO pointed out that most countries in the world operate minimum wage protection systems and none to our knowledge exclude young people.

Abolition would also leave workers in Britain as the only ones in Europe with no legal right to paid holidays.

Four countries in Europe have five weeks statutory holiday a year (Denmark, France, Luxembourg, Sweden), four have four

weeks (Belgium, Greece, Norway, Spain) two have three weeks (Netherlands, West Germany) one has two weeks (Italy).

Britain has only those which have been individually established by Wages Councils. If these bodies are abolished no one in Britain will

Wages Council and anti-union laws

THE wages and holiday rights of nearly three million workers are controlled by the Wages Councils — and the Tories plan to abolish them and drive down the wages of those who are already the lowest paid in Britain.

The incredible argument of the multi-millionaires who finance and run the Tory party is that workers on gross pay of between £50 and £80 are 'pricing themselves out of employment.'

Bernard Franks new pamphlet 'Defend Wages Councils' argues that the battles against cheap labour schemes, against unemployment, against the abolition of Wages Councils, against Sunday Opening, against attacks on the Welfare State and against the Tory anti-union laws are bound together and should link trade unionists with those on substitute job schemes and the unemployed in a united fight against the government.

Defend Wages Councils. By Bernard Franks. A Workers Press Pamphlet, £1. Available from Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT, price £1.50 including postage.

have a legal entitlement to paid holidays.

The European Social Charter imposes obligations on behalf of the Council of Europe 'to recognise the rights of workers to a remuneration which will give their families a decent standard of living' (article 4). Two specific

systems are recognised for achieving this — free collective bargaining and statutory wage fixing machinery.

The Tories are out to abolish both.

True, the British government is not going to renege on the Council of Europe's concept of a 'decency threshold'; it never subscribed to it in the first place.

The threshold is a percentage of the national average income below which no full-time wage should be allowed to fall. Currently set at 68 per cent of the average it would work out at around £116 a week or £3 an hour for Britain. More than seven million full-time workers in this country earn below that level today.

The Tories want to see wages cut to levels below those of the undeveloped nations so Britain can compete, that is, undercut the rest of the world on a 'free market' basis.

These international conventions and charters, have therefore been renounced prior to a complete destruction of the last line of protection for the lowest paid workers in the country.

Shopworkers' history

LAST CENTURY shop workers fought to reduce working hours, to end the 'living-in' system and to improve wages and conditions in the face of the colossal arrogance of autocratic store owners.

In the 1880s, typical shop hours were 8.00 a.m. to 9.30 p.m., (10.00 p.m. on Friday and midnight on Saturdays.) It was only in 1891 that an Act gave a weekly 'half holiday' and work ended at 4.00 p.m.! The hours of work for women and children in shop work were also reduced to a maximum of 74 hours a week.

Employers fined workers for misdemeanours, such as not dressing properly or unseemly conduct in the workers' own free time. Wages were established at the first interview with the question: 'What is the lowest possible salary you will take?'

If there is a story that shop

workers were passive, over-awed by paternalistic employers, or too divided to organise, it is a myth.

A meeting of shopworkers at Covent Garden Theatre in 1846, part of the Early Closing Campaign, was so well attended that thousands were left outside.

In the 1890s mounted police were used against shop workers' pickets, while in 1909 a 10,000-strong procession wound its way to Westminster with bands playing and banners flying in support of the 60-hour week. Early Closing riots became frequent in the 1890s.

From the many Half Holiday and Early Closing Associations the National Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen, and Clerks was formed in 1891, a forerunner of today's 400,000 member USDAW, Britain's sixth biggest union.

An open letter to youth m

DRIVE OUT FALSE

LEADERS

THE SPLIT which took place after the expulsion of G. Healy from the WRP last year, poses important political questions for all youth who have been connected with the party.

This letter is not an answer to the mealy-mouthed petty slander which is commonly found in the 'Worker's Notebook' column of News Line, but a genuine attempt to raise some basic and important political questions relating to our work in the Young Socialists before the split and your work since.

The questioning of a number of issues relating to 'revolutionary practice' can only benefit youth who see the necessity for building a revolutionary youth movement founded on the scientific socialism which was developed by Marx and Engels, and defended from the onslaughts of Stalinism, reformism and revisionism by Trotsky.

When he founded the Fourth International he set out its tasks in the Transitional Programme.

The first thing to be looked at is the politics of blind activism which was dominant in the WRP before the split, and is still dominant in your group led by Torrance and Co.

The fact that many youth like yourselves are prepared to put all of your time and effort into building a communist youth movement proves Lenin's conclusion that youth are the strongest section of the class, and, driven by their social and economic conditions, come to the forefront of the yet-to-be built revolutionary vanguard.

However, this conclusion will only be realised if the subjective factor, i.e. the development of Marxist theory, party, and programme, has immediate implementation in the daily practices and education of the youth cadres involved.

This is not done by forcing youth who are usually re-

cruited at YS discos, trips to Blackpool etc, out on to the streets to sell 'News Line' to OAPs, shopping housewives or school children.

After the expulsion of the YS from the Labour Party in 1964 Healy used the political motivation of the youth to set up the daily paper, which was done very successfully under conditions where it could only be maintained by developing a unique WRP philosophy.

This basically draws the conclusion that any youth who refuses to spend all of his or her time selling newspapers or raising money, or who raises any difference towards 'party policy' is suffering from a severe dose of what Healy and Torrance perceived as 'bourgeois ideology' or 'individualism'.

The integration of youth into the democratic centralist discipline of the party can only take place through a common struggle for revolutionary theory i.e. dialectical and historical materialism, and through experiencing the bankruptcy of reformism through work in the trade unions, anti-apartheid, unemployed groups, strikers' support groups, etc.

This process enables youth to adapt to and consciously recognise their role in the class struggle as revolutionary Marxists.

The Healyite conception of the building and training of young revolutionaries is very different from that of

Lenin and Trotsky. It is clearly outlined in political letter No. 7 which was written for discussion during the Seventh Congress before the split.

The letter was written by Healy and signed by Mike Banda. 'The importance of cadre training and building the YS' concludes as follows: 'a major element in cadre training is to learn how to... mentally and practically... subordinate oneself into this whole thereby acquiring a conscious party outlook'.

This is not Marxism — it is idealism at its extreme. This kind of philosophy is that of an insurance sales manager who wishes his employees to subordinate themselves to the company and its directors through 'willpower' or 'disciplinary stamina'.

His goal — a larger wage packet, or in your case a 'general strike and revolution'. 'A conscious party outlook' (which is not a Marxist outlook in your case) cannot be obtained by 'subordination to this whole'.

History

A scientific understanding of society and the class struggle can only be obtained through a tireless study of the history of philosophy, political economy, value, surplus value, capital and all their relations to the everyday life of human beings.

Anybody who believes that 'subordination' automatically turns one into a Marxist with a scientific world outlook will soon find themselves under the dense clam of institutionalisation. (Maybe Sheila Torrance, Claire Dixon or Paddy O'Reagan will explain a little bit more about this).

Political letter No. 7 continues: 'Cadre training must be continuously carried out under conditions where all the political skills and technical resources of the party are at the disposal and completely under the control of the leadership.'

First of all I would like to ask what skills? — Selling papers, raising money and organising discos? As for 'technical resources' being completely 'at the disposal and completely under the control of the party leadership' what technical resources? — assets, money,



MITCHELL



TORRANCE



DIXON



V REDGRAVE

cars, wages, etc? — What about the membership?

The Healyite literature on bureaucratic dictatorship continues: 'Since the political essence of cadre training is the transformation of the individual into a party leader, any resistance invariably has as its source "idealist individualism".'

Gasp! I challenge anybody to find a quote from Lenin or Trotsky which implies anything of the sort! The truth is now revealed.

The sect of which we were all a part and to which you still belong needs this kind of anti-democratic centralist dictatorship in order to keep youth away from any political study, keep the daily paper running, keep the money coming in and keep the party's 'technical resources' completely under the control of the party leadership.

Were Lenin's hill-climbing trips, and Trotsky's days out fishing products of their 'idealist individualism'?

All in all your party 'cadre training' is little more than selling newspapers and raising money while the real tasks of any communist youth movement are to study Marxist literature, work in trade unions, and intervene in struggles which involve the most oppressed and the most class conscious sections of youth, who have already consciously taken up a struggle against the bourgeois right to buy human labour power as they please.

No. 7 concludes: 'The

transmission mechanism of bourgeois ideology into the party is through middle-class members and older workers who have acquired party skills, but whose routinism in practice returns them to idealism.' More anti-Marxist, non-scientific rubbish!

Since when have different forms of thought and ideology been passed from one human being to another through 'transmission mechanisms'? Healy is obviously getting mixed up between social being determining social consciousness, and the great works of Haynes Car Manual Ltd (BMW).

In relation to youth work, News Line circulation and recruitment. Letter No. 7 continues: 'The dialectics of resisting this process must be manifested in the work of the central committee, political committee, and all the departments under their control'.

This is so that any organisational or political differences can be easily hidden from the membership and any victim who 'resists this process' can be isolated and expelled or brainwashed.

In opposition to your 'activity' I would like to bring to your attention a letter from Lenin addressed to revolutionary secondary school students which appeared in 'Iskra' in 1902.

'Welcoming wholeheartedly the energetic initiative of the students, we on our part give them the following comradely advice. Try to con-

centrate your efforts on self education as the main purpose of your organisation, in order to develop into convinced, steadfast, and consistent Social democrats. Draw the strictest possible line of demarcation between this extremely important, and essential preparatory work — and direct activity.' (Lenin Collected works, volume 6, page 284)

As we can see, Lenin's position on training youth contrasts sharply with that of Torrance, etc.

You have the right, even under your constitution (Section 10 clause b, have you seen it?) to demand the use of an internal bulletin for theoretical discussion and to raise differences of opinions.

You should also have trade union membership and should participate and put forward demands in trade union branches. Section 2 clause b. Demand this from your 'leaders'.

On Bonapartism

One of the main pillars which props up Torrance's right to run youth into the ground, is the false conclusion that the present Tory government is a 'Bonapartist dictatorship' and that 'this is the year of insurrection'.

The method of analysis which drew Healy to this false conclusion is the same method which was used to frame Pabloite leaders George Novack and the late Joseph Hansen as GPU-CIA etc, agents along with Trotsky's friend and bodyguard

JOIN THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

FILL IN THIS FORM AND POST TO:
The General Secretary
21B Old Town, Clapham
London SW4 0JT

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
TRADE UNION _____ AGE _____
DATE SENT _____

embers of the Healy group



Healy used the political motivation of the youth to set up the daily paper

Robert Sheldon-Harte, who was ruthlessly murdered by Stalin's hatchet men.

No. doubt, if you raise this in front of professional frame-up man Alex Mitchell, his face will go white with horror!

The method which draws these false conclusions, is that of 'the answer comes first, then go out and prove it', which is a method capable of falsely justifying anything except Healy, Mitchell, and North's inability to wage a political struggle against revisionism.

'Bonapartism in Britain' is falsely justified by the fact that the Tories are prepared to break a few parliamentary rules or issue the state with plastic bullets. This is far from being a Marxist analysis.

Bonapartism is a form of government which rules by decree and relies directly on the armed forces of the state i.e. the police and the army, to smash all political opposition.

Although the Tory government has plenty of 'would be' dictators, it is far from being a Bonapartist regime. Read 'The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte' by Karl Marx and Trotsky's writings in 'Germany 1931-1932'.

Torrance's 'Revolutionary Theory'

All 'revolutionary parties' must recognise the need for a thorough understanding of dialectical and historical materialism, which are inseparable from a real understanding that the class struggle,

commodity production, declining capitalism and the whole of class society itself is matter in motion.

The 'embodiment' and 'continuation' of all this knowledge i.e. Torrance, Mitchell, Redgrave, Healy etc, for some reason, are unable to explain anything about these subjects. That's because their 'tutor' Healy, has no understanding of the scientific method.

A close examination of Healy's pamphlet 'Studies in Dialectical Materialism' and a comparison with Lenin's writings on these subjects, will no doubt lead to some questions being raised. Not only is Healy's book incorrect, it is absolute gobbledegook which 'only Gerry understands'.

This mutilation of Marxism enabled Healy to keep a grip on the party and to justify his 'special authority'.

Anybody who criticised his subjective idealist philosophy was labeled 'brain damaged' because of their 'bourgeois education'. Were Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky brain-damaged because of their university education or did they go to 'Marxist universities'? I think not. How about you?

How not to build the YS

More evidence of the need of Healy, Torrance and their supporters to stop youth from fighting for communism, is the pamphlet 'How To Build The Young Socialists'.

The pamphlet diverts youth away from the need to intervene in the different

youth organisations politically by outlining the building of the YS as being purely organisational tasks.

The pamphlet is full of ways to organise football matches, days out at the seaside, committees, collections, paper sales, etc. which is all well and good, but gives no political guidance whatsoever on how to make a conscious political intervention in order to win over the best and most conscious layer of youth.

This is because the pre-split in the WRP and the Torrance, Mitchell, Redgrave outfit don't want any youth that might raise objections or political differences.

They lack the capability to take up a political struggle with youth comrades. They want youth who are prepared to collect lots of money and sell lots of papers.

Betrays

Over the years, a number of class betrayals were conducted by the WRP and were expressed in the News Line. I would like to bring to your attention two obvious ones.

The massacre of 21 Iraqi Communist Party members should have been defended by every organisation calling themselves socialist even if we have irreconcilable differences with them.

News Line tried to justify the execution in the name of defending the Arab Baath 'Socialist Party' and the 'Arab Revolution' which is another of Healy and Tor-

rance myths which have no class basis.

To add insult to injury — Mitchell ordered party photographers to take photos of Iraqi CP members, demonstrating in Britain against the executions, and to deliver them to the Iraqi Embassy in London. Is this how we fight Stalinism and its counter revolutionary politics?

Another betrayal was the News Line condemnation of the Brighton bombs. It described the heroic attempt of the IRA to blow up the entire Tory cabinet as an 'outrage' which was the same political line taken by the Tories themselves.

Miners

The News Line position was that the attack 'played into the hands of the ruling class'! Did the miners' defiance of the anti-union laws play into the hands of the ruling class? What should be our attitude towards the Labour Party Young Socialists, Anti-Apartheid, miners' support groups, etc?

Trotsky often emphasised the need to bring together all those groups and the different sections of the class, both organised and unorganised in a united struggle against capitalism.

It is necessary to use the marxist method to raise the political consciousness of these groups in order to break them from their spontaneous, reformist ideology.

This is done by fighting alongside them in their struggle against capitalism, while at the same time posing demands which will advance their struggle to a higher level.

This cannot be done by just insisting that they are all revisionists, and that a political and theoretical struggle with them is not necessary because 'we'll expose them when we get the general strike'.

Beware the distorters of 'freedom of criticism' in Lenin's 'What Is To Be Done?'.

I advise all the youth in the Healy group to beware of the 'teachers of Marxism' who distort this article in order to impose dictatorship. It must be understood that Lenin wrote this article in a theoretical battle with right-wing social-democrats Bernstein and Millerand who tried to butcher the Marxist analysis of the state and its fundamentally correct conclusion that it has to be smashed and replaced by a workers' state.

I emphasise this in relation to the constant talk of the 'Banda-Slaughter swamp' in the News Line, and the expulsion of Comrade Stuart Carter. (Remember the school after the National March to Release Jailed Miners, comrades?)

The split in the International Committee marks the end of an illusion of a 'world party of socialist revolution'. Its disintegration grew out of the lessons of the miners'

strike and the need to build the Fourth International.

The struggle which lies ahead of all Trotskyists is to drive out all those who retreat from the struggle to overcome the crisis of proletarian leadership.

Finally, if you recognise the necessity to build a mass communist movement based on Marxist theory and democratic centralism your first role is to drive out, and declare war on those 'leaders' who suppress, and try to crush the Marxist doctrine which is so desperately needed for the working class to fulfill historic tasks.

In your case this means the exposure and driving out of the Torrance, Mitchell, Redgrave clique. The best thing you can do to aid this inevitable process is to set up Marxist discussion groups.

● Investigate all charges laid against Healy and Co. by the WRP.

● Smash sectarianism.

● Smash Healyite revisionism.

● Drive Healy, Torrance, Redgrave and Mitchell out of the workers' movement.

● Put an end to the distorters of Marxist theory and practice.

● Build the Fourth International!

For confidential collaboration phone 'Youthpage' 01-720 2000.

Yours Fraternally,
Chris McBride

REBUILD THE WORKERS

OUR DISCUSSION on perspectives continues this week with a further contribution from TOM KEMP. Again, these Economic Theses are submitted for the fullest possible discussion. Correspondence is invited.

Draft perspectives for discussion

1. The world crisis of capitalism began with the First World War which opened an epoch of wars and revolutions.
2. It was sharply manifest in the world economic depression of the 1930s. This affected all parts of the capitalist system and brought in its train fascism and the Second World War.
3. The depression of the 1930s was never overcome: its form changed. There was another horrendous war followed by colonial wars and confrontation with the workers' states (degenerated and deformed as they were) in the Cold War which helped boost an inflationary boom.
4. With a high and steady demand for their labour power, the working class was able to build up its strength, but capitalism had survived only because of the betrayals of Stalinism and Social Democracy in the 1944-7 period.
5. Some concessions were won by the working class which also served the purpose of capitalism at the time (especially to provide a healthier and more qualified work force) — and were in any case paid for by the workers themselves.
6. The national liberation movements struck blows at the old colonial empires but, except where Stalinist regimes were set up, the new national bourgeois rulers remained dependent upon imperialism. Exploitation of what were euphemistically called 'developing countries' increased.
7. New agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank became the main imperialist agencies for the economic subjugation of the former colonies now ruled by the national bourgeoisie.
8. The United States was now the premier imperialist power. It alone had the resources to prevent the collapse of European capitalism through the Marshall Plan and reconstruct the Japanese economy.
9. During the boom, uneven development was manifest in the intensified capitalist development of some areas while the position of some of the older capitalist countries declined relatively.
10. Western Europe and Japan, though still dependent upon the USA in some respects (especially militarily and strategically), became economic rivals with newly equipped industries.
11. Massive investments were made throughout the 1950s and 1960s, increasing productive capacity far above its prewar levels, resulting in a great build-up of Department I industries producing means of production.
12. These investments, creating a high demand for labour power, enabled working class consumption levels to rise. Thus large new investments also took place in Department II industries, producing means of consumption.
13. As time went on, a greatly increased capacity in the older capitalist countries, including the USA, could no longer be profitably employed; the market for new plant and machinery began to shrink in both departments.
14. The crisis in industry showed itself in pressure on the rate of profit which further discouraged new investment. Growth rates slowed down, the demand for labour power fell off and unemployment began to appear on a large scale for the first time since the end of the war.
15. Unlike previous periods, prices began to rise rather than fall; this combination of recession with inflation was dubbed 'stagflation'. Bourgeois economics offered a variety of equally specious reasons for its existence.
16. Basically, the boom had been 'artificial'; it did not represent a new and healthier revival of capitalism which, it should be emphasised, had not basically overcome the causes of the depression of the 1930s.
17. It required the constant creation of fresh liquidity which, under the Bretton Woods system, had to be provided by the US Federal Reserve Board.
18. Only the continuous flow of new dollars into the world financial system made it possible for the national, and thus the commercial, banks to issue more and more credit money to finance government deficits and business investment.
19. This was the financial basis for the economic 'miracles' of the 1950s and 1960s, but which resulted in an inflation which became increasingly difficult to control without creating depression and unemployment.
20. With the breakdown of Bretton Woods in 1971, after a series of currency crises, governments now had to choose deflationary measures if they were to avoid currency breakdown and an uncontrollable succession of bank failures.
21. The ending of dollar convertibility and fixed exchange rates did not end the creator of new dollars to meet US foreign trade needs or to finance overseas military and other expenditure.
22. Without this flow of dollars there would have been a sharp aggravation of the crisis; in fact the US balance of payments deficit resumed its growth in the 1970s and 1980s. Other countries might complain but they could do nothing without taking measures which would harm their own economies.
23. This flow was already accompanied by another source of 'fictitious capital', the Euro-dollar market, which now provided credit for big corporations, public utilities, etc.
24. A vast increase in international financial deals took place. The pushing around of money by speculators and 'money managers' became much more lucrative than the direct extraction of surplus value in the process of production.
25. In Britain, while whole industries were shut down and industrial communities devastated, the business and profits of the City of London have soared (a doubling of invisible earnings 1978-82 and probably a further increase on the same scale since then).
26. Financial activities do not create surplus value, they merely provide a lien on surplus value created elsewhere. Thus the struggle for absolute and especially relative surplus value becomes increasingly acute, reflected in the class struggle.
27. The acceleration of inflation following the 'Nixon shock' of 1971 was followed by increases in commodity prices and the end of the era of cheap fuel (another factor in the 'boom') when OPEC adjusted oil prices in line with general inflation in the two 'oil shocks' of 1974 and 1979.
28. The 'Nixon shock' and the two 'oil shocks' were expressions of the crisis, not its fundamental cause, though in turn they exacerbated it.
29. It should be emphasised that accelerated inflation in the United States followed President Johnson's decision to finance the Vietnam war by deficit financing instead of by raising taxes.
30. This gamble on a short war was frustrated by the resistance of the Vietnamese Revolution and the eventual defeat of American imperialism.
31. As war costs soared, the dollar came under pressure and combined with other forces to make it impossible to maintain the exchange rate agreed upon under the Bretton Woods system.
32. The subsequent attempts at deflation under President Nixon contributed to the end of the sixties boom in the USA and the beginning of 'stagflation'.
33. In 1971 Nixon was forced to end dollar convertibility and thus put an end to the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates.
34. All these factors contributed to the new phase of the crisis which began in 1973, resulting in the first big worldwide depression since the 1930s.
35. Although manifesting itself on the surface in different ways the unsolved crisis which had revealed itself in that decade re-asserted itself.
36. The 'boom' was over and the slowdown, though uneven, was general, with short-lived and spasmodic revivals here and there.
37. In the intensified competition which followed, some countries (notably Japan and the four hungry tigers in the Pacific zone) increased their share of the world market and underwent a further process of expanded reproduction.
38. Unemployment began to rise sharply in advanced capitalist countries; the reserve army of labour was back.
39. Capitalist industry now faced higher costs both of inputs of constant capital (especially fuel) and of variable capital (wages).
40. Meanwhile, the social concessions made to the working class had now become an increasing financial burden on state budgets.
41. A period of cuts was at hand. Not only could no further concessions be made but existing concessions had to be cut back, meaning confrontation with the working class.
42. At the point of production the crisis manifested itself principally in a struggle for relative surplus value — e.g. new systems of wage payment, cutbacks in the labour force, resistance to trade union demands for wage rises in line with inflation, etc.
43. Although some features of the boom lingered on — especially in consciousness — the crisis factors predominated in most capitalist countries from the early 1970s and especially after 1973-74.
44. The giant multi-national corporations (MNCs) operating internationally began systematically to search out ways of increasing absolute as well as relative surplus value by shifting manufacturing facilities from the old centres to areas where there was an abundant supply of cheap labour.
45. The result was a flood of cheap commodities back into the advanced countries and the destruction of whole industries in the USA and Europe.
46. To some extent, in the struggle for surplus value and by intensified exploitation of the 'developing' countries, the MNCs were able to combat the tendency for the rate of profit to fall. In so doing they also further aggravated the crisis.
47. In an uneven way, new centres of capitalism grew while others declined (absolutely as well as relatively) in Europe and North America, while some new industries remained profitable even in the older capitalist countries.
48. There was, however, no great new outlet available for the massive investment of capital sufficient to counteract the continued pressure on the rate of profit; thus no renewed boom on a world scale.
49. Meanwhile the dependent capitalist countries reflected the crisis in a very uneven way. Some became centres of a new industrialisation drive fostered by the MNAs or benefitted from the high prices for their oil. Others stagnated in growing poverty or even famine; yet others found a temporary lifeline by borrowing on a massive scale.
50. Funds for international loans to the 'developing countries' came either from recycling of oil money or were based upon bank credit and the continuous creation of fresh money by the Federal Reserve Bank in the USA. This was required to finance that country's growing balance of payments deficit.
51. The borrowing countries found themselves caught up in a vicious debt trap with interest and repayments taking an ever larger share of their foreign earnings.
52. By the mid-1980s this meant heavily indebted countries unable to pay their debts or to go on buying the commodities of advanced industrial countries, or oil etc. without further borrowing.
53. At the same time, commercial banks in Europe and



World War I — opened an epoch of wars and revolutions; a world crisis of capitalism

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY



Revolutionary upheavals in France, May-June 1968 — highlighted the historic contradictions of European capitalism

America found themselves with a sheaf of bad debts with the prospect that, unless more credit was shovelled into the debtor countries, they would face collapse.

54. At the centre of all this is the USA which is still the hegemonic capitalist country: with a huge balance of payments problem, a massive and unprecedented budget deficit and a continued drive for armaments in the confrontation with the Soviet Union.

55. Whole sectors of the American economy have been devastated by the fall in investment, technological change, the growth of foreign, especially Japanese, competition and the shifting of manufacturing facilities abroad by the MNCs.

56. The US economy has kept going by sucking in vast amounts of foreign money to finance the budgetary and balance of payments deficits and by continuing to pay for its needs with newly-created credit money ('fictitious capital').

57. High government expenditure continued despite cuts in social spending, especially on arms, and such new projects as 'Star Wars' mean more spending.

58. Thus the big corporations, in league with the Pentagon and the Reagan administration ('the military-industrial complex'), become completely dependent

upon war orders to maintain profitability.

59. While Keynesianism has been abandoned in theory, 'military Keynesianism' rules in practice: huge budget deficits resulting from arms spending.

60. Meanwhile, high interest rates are necessary to attract more foreign money and to prevent the huge mass now invested in the US money market from leaving on the receipt of a telex message from Europe or Japan.

61. Other capitalist countries, including Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, etc. are highly dependent upon the US market, while protectionist pressures to restrict their imports are growing.

62. While the rest of the capitalist world depends upon US credit and sales to the US, high interest rates not only handicap some sectors of US industry not controlled by the MNCs but also have widespread repercussions on the industries of the old centres of capitalism in Europe.

63. The impact of the crisis upon Britain is many-sided: collapse of whole sections of heavy industry (steel, shipbuilding, engineering); decline of manufacturing industry as a whole; intensified drive to increase relative surplus value from the remaining industries, using unemployment as a weapon to discipline workers and undermine the trade unions; damaging cuts in govern-

ment expenditure of a social nature.

64. In the main these are the result of the objective forces of the world capitalist crisis to which government has to respond because it has no choice. It is an illusion to think that some change of policy or change of government could find a magic formula to overcome the problems.

65. So far, British capitalism has been saved from collapse by oil revenues, though even oil money is double-edged because of its uncontrolled effect on the exchange value of sterling.

66. Without oil money the situation will become desperate and will continue to deteriorate in any case. Whole sections of the economy are beyond redemption, the industrial base has been eaten away.

67. Dominated as it is by finance capital — which has seen a massive expansion of its business while industry has declined — British capitalism is now precariously balanced and is at the mercy of world forces as never before.

68. The oldest capitalist country is now one of the weakest links in the world capitalist economy, saved from rapid and irrevocable decline by North Sea oil revenues and a few remaining assets from the past, including the financial role of the City of London.

69. The combination of industrial decline, loss of overseas markets and the prospect of a reduction in oil revenues (due to falling prices and the exhaustion of reserves) will mean a much sharper deterioration of the economy than anything so far experienced.

70. Unemployment could rise to 25 per cent. The ability of the state to go on supporting the unemployed out of tax revenues and insurance payments would be in question. Massive cuts in social expenditure would become inevitable.

71. The struggle for surplus value would be intensified, involving speed-up, wage cutting and further cuts in the labour force.

72. Crippling blows would have to be struck against the trade unions. The ruling class will have to complete its preparations for civil war while using the labour and trade union bureaucracy to try to avoid its actual outbreak.

73. With its backs to the wall, the ruling class must know that defeat in such a struggle would mean its demise as a class.

74. The tempo of events cannot be calculated in advance but it is necessary to estimate carefully what stage the crisis has reached in order to avoid adventurism and a premature characterising of a revolutionary situation and talk about

Bonapartism being here already.

75. The British ruling class is sliding into an increasingly insoluble crisis which can only end in revolution. Signs of apprehension are apparent in divisions within the Tory party and the warnings of the Lords Select Committee about the grim future when oil revenues fall.

76. If it knows that it cannot go on ruling in the old way, it has not yet been able to determine just how it is to continue to rule in the future, knowing that unless it defeats the working class it is historically doomed.

77. It has been shaken by the tenacity of the miners (and thus is trying to buy them off) and other sections of workers in opposing cuts.

78. The eruption of discontent in the inner city areas has also caught it unawares and unprepared. It is not even able to explain why it occurred.

79. One of the important aspects of the riots is that few preparations had been made to deal with them despite the warnings of 1981 and that there was something like a panic in ruling-class circles.

80. The crisis of British capitalism has constantly to be placed in its world context. It is not foreordained that Britain is the next country in which revolution will take place.

81. Such an assumption would justify subordinating

the ICFI to the British section as has been the case in recent years.

82. There are important countries (such as France and Italy) where, as a result of mistakes in the past, no sections exist although big struggles are likely in the near future.

83. Capitalism is a decrepit system in decline and the conditions for revolution have been in existence ever since World War I.

84. The failure of the revolution to spread outside Russia because of the inability of the leadership to build revolutionary parties in time after the betrayals of Social Democracy in 1914 and 1918-21 resulted in the isolation of the Soviet regime and its subsequent degeneration into Stalinism.

85. From the time of the defeat of the Left Opposition and the subjection of the Comintern to the needs of the Soviet bureaucracy, the task was posed of building a new revolutionary leadership and revolutionary parties as sections of the Fourth International embodying the continuity of the Marxist movement.

86. Carried forward into the crisis is all the rotteness and degeneration of a social system which has long outlived its historical usefulness.

87. There is and can be no 'solution' of the economic problems of Britain without the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism on a world scale. This is the basis for exposing all the claims of the reformists and revisionists who think otherwise.

88. To expose them — and to lay the foundations for the construction of a planned economy after the establishment of workers' power — a thorough study of Marxist political economy must be made by the WRP.

89. All aspects of capitalist development must be grasped and studied. The most thorough analysis of the causes, natures and consequences of the world economic crisis must be made for the guidance of party work and especially for the drawing up of transitional demands and programme.

90. It is essential to understand that no element of 'socialism in one country' must creep back into the theoretical work on any pretext.

91. The crisis is a world phenomenon but each country is affected by it in specific ways determined by its relationship to the world market.

92. The struggle of workers and peasants against imperialism is world-wide. To carry it on successfully a correct approach must be made to the national liberation movement based upon the need to build independent revolutionary parties in such countries. This requires a study of the theory of permanent revolution which must form an essential part of the analysis and not something tacked on.

93. A programme of theoretical work must be developed with discussions, schools and documents — without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary party or revolutionary practice.

HEALY FINDS A D

ACCORDING to supporters of G. Healy, a 'new era for the Fourth International' has begun. A series of articles with this imposing title appeared in the pro-Healy group's paper 'News Line' (February 27th and 28th, and March 3rd).

It seems that this 'new era' is the period beginning with Healy's 'victory' in getting himself expelled from the Workers Revolutionary Party on October 19th, 1985!

We have been informed of this 'new era' by Savas Michael, who was secretary of the then Greek section of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Michael and other leaders of this group went with Healy, rejected the expulsion, and dismissed the charges on which Healy was expelled of physical and sexual abuse of comrades as insignificant.

They hail Healy as a great revolutionary in a line of descent from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, the great 'educator' of the Trotskyist movement. Savas Michael is a worthy product of this 'education'.

Theory

He knows better, having read more Marxist theory and philosophy than a hundred Healys, but he cannot face the self-criticism and correction necessary in front of his own members, and so he puts himself forward as the 'theoretical' apologist for Healy's practice and 'ideas'.

In his series of 'News Line' articles, Savas Michael devotes much space to the defence of Healy's 'dialectics' (really, Healy's distortion of dialectics into a mumbo-jumbo of individual brainwork, to facilitate his arbitrary control of the movement for political opportu-

ism) against the notes written by David North of the US Workers' League in 1982 and against Cliff Slaughter.

We will write on North's criticism in later articles. Here I respond only to what S. Michael writes under the heading 'Slaughter's reactionary philosophy' (March 3rd).

This type of article is written in a special style, the style of a trickster. Its aim is to discredit the opponent, not to teach anything or explain anything. And so Michael is careful not to quote too much from Slaughter — four lines from the WRP's paper from December 10th 1985, and three lines from 'Marxism and the Class Struggle', written fifteen years ago.

Extracts

These quotations taken out of context are then set alongside numerous extracts from Lenin to show that Slaughter rejects dialectical materialism.

S. Michael does not of course tell his readers that he could have found dozens of sentences from Slaughter which would have made the same explanations of Lenin, or that Slaughter many times made the same quotations as he does.

Of course it is not a battle of quotations that we are in. The split in the WRP and the International Committee was very real, and it was something new. All the logic-chopping and quotation-jiggling by S. Michael is meant to conceal the fact that he will not face up to the concrete issues involved in the split.

How can he explain the fact that Healy destroyed hundreds of young women and men — by sexual and physical bullying, by witch-hunting and slander when he failed to corrupt them, by spying and frame-up —

by Cliff Slaughter

HERE CLIFF SLAUGHTER OF THE WRP CENTRAL COMMITTEE ANSWERS SAVAS MICHAEL, A SUPPORTER OF FORMER WRP LEADER G. HEALY, WHO WAS EXPELLED FROM THE WRP LAST OCTOBER. MICHAEL LEADS A PRO-HEALY GROUP IN GREECE

while all the time peddling a version of dialectics which S. Michael tells us was the highest form of 'communist training'?

Is he going to tell us that the theory remained pure, despite the filthy practice? Nobody will believe him.

How does he explain another fact: that all this 'dialectical training' was accompanied by (and the justification for) craven betrayals such as endorsement of the execution of twenty-one Iraqi Communist Party members in 1979? And that the very 'dialectical' S. Michael ended up as a knee-bending worshipper of Islamic dogmatism and persecution in Iran? Facts, he should be told, are stubborn things.

This does not mean that dialectical materialism is wrong, or irrelevant. But it does mean that we must do what S. Michael will not do. We must question the way in which so-called philosophy, dialectical materialism in the Healy version, was distorted and turned against Marxism.

We have only begun to do this (see articles in 'Workers Press' by C. Bailey, D. Bruce, C. Smith and others). Healy presented dialectical logic as if it was a master-key to knowledge that could be grasped in the heads of individuals, and in the first place by himself.

He abstracted the form of this dialectics from its fundamental historical content. For him dialectical materialism developed only by in-

dividual brainwork, not as the scientific theory of the practice of mankind, and particularly of the revolutionary class which must end capitalism and build socialism.

S. Michael says that 'dialectical materialism is the science of the general laws of motion of nature, society and thought, while historical materialism is the extension of dialectical materialism in the sphere of social phenomena, a part of the whole of materialist dialectics as the logic and theory of knowledge of Marxism.'

String

This sounds very orthodox, but it is actually a statement to justify what became a wrong theory (and practice) in the Trotskyist movement under Healy's leadership. This wrong theory was the separation of dialectical logic (actually it was not dialectical logic, but a string of 'dialectical' terms, usually wrongly understood) as having some legitimacy independently of any historical content; so that these terms — like essence, appearance, etc. — could then be 'applied' (as one of Healy's disciples put it, 'we can then quickly mop up the natural sciences').

Now S. Michael picks up Slaughter for saying the following: 'We do not know the truth in advance, and we cannot develop it from "essence" or "pure essentialities".' One would have thought this was unexcep-



SAVAS MICHAEL: HEALY's defender in Greece

tionable, stating as it does that the truth about any real natural or historical process cannot be developed or deduced from the abstraction 'essence', but only by scientific study of the thing itself to discover what is essential in its development.

Instead of concentrating on that, Michael plays games. Thus, he says, Slaughter 'sees Essence only as a mental category'. He gives no evidence for saying that this is what Slaughter sees, and he avoids the fact that in this passage Slaughter is certainly discussing Essence as just that, a 'mental category'.

Let us return to S. Michael's own explanation of the relation of historical to dialectical materialism. He continues: 'Lenin with clarity makes the distinction between "dialectics in general" and its extension to the study of the socio-economic formations: "for with Marx, the dialectics of bourgeois society is only a particular case of dialectics".' (Lenin, *Philosophical Notebooks*, p. 61, Michael's own emphasis.)

But Lenin does not make a distinction: he says that

Marx's method in *Capital* should be viewed as only one example of 'the method of exposition (or study) of dialectics in general.'

This occurs immediately before the phrase quoted by S. Michael, and the whole paragraph follows a previous one in which Lenin has used *Capital* as the best illustration of how Marx conducts a dialectical analysis.

All of this is to build up the case that 'dialectics is the theory of knowledge of Marxism'. It is S. Michael, not Lenin, who insists on the distinction between dialectics and historical materialism.

This is false. The pre-Marxist materialists debunked Hegel's idealism, showing that the content of consciousness was a reflection of the material world. They did not raise the question of what was the meaning of the form of Hegel's thinking, the dialectic. Its content was the real historical development of the world of nature and of human society.

If this dialectical thinking is left as just a mental property, something to be studied and mastered separate from history, then we are back to Hegel himself, not with Marx. (See Engels preparatory notes for *Anti-Duhring*, printed in his *Dialectics of Nature*.)

S. Michael is cleverer and more literate than his hero, Healy, and so he makes a slightly better job of trimming the ideas of Marx and Lenin to opportunist purposes. But only slightly. He avoids the gross errors of fact and interpretation so common in Healy's writings, and so the content of the distortion is no longer in danger of being put down to sheer ignorance or willfulness, and can be seen as systematic distortion.

Clique

It serves the interests of a discredited clique. One should not be in a hurry to put this down to the pressure or interests of this or that class or section of a class. We are discussing a set of ideas characteristic of the relationships and politics which came to dominate an international movement which suffered decades of isolation from the mass movement, and in which individual and psychological factors inevitably came to play a disproportionate part, for very good material social reasons.

That these distortions of Marxism came to play a reactionary role — as now in mobilising to try and smash



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DEFENDER

up the WRP — is certain. We can also say that the anti-theory tradition in Britain, relayed from the ruling and middle classes into the working class and the labour movement, has provided fertile ground for the rise of a clique like Healy's to undermine Marxism. But we should face up to the fact that 'Healyism' was an international and not only a British phenomenon. More precisely, we should say it was a phenomenon of the Fourth International.

At no time after the death of Trotsky did the Fourth International prove capable of overcoming its isolation from great mass struggles. The war itself, in which many heroic Trotskyist fighters met their deaths, combined with Stalinist murders and frame-ups to decimate the ranks of the young International. This smallness and isolation were of course very powerful factors militating against the successful development of Marxist theory.

Sources

Only the recognition of these weaknesses and their material sources, and of the consequent fact that the Fourth International fell victim to a very great extent to the prevailing forms of bourgeois ideology such as empiricism and opportunism in Britain, provides the starting-point for regenerating and reconstructing the Fourth International on Marxist foundations.

S. Michael, demanding acceptance of the philosophy and politics of Healy, is working against this necessary process.

Again we return to S. Michael's series of articles in Healy's 'News Line'. Slaughter, he says, is 'nervous about Essence and sees it only as an abstraction' because 'the International Committee schools and the Tenth World Congress (January 1985) . . . stressed that the world economic and political crisis of capitalism is the Essence manifested in the class struggle of every country with different forms of appearance . . .', etc., etc.

Now of course all events and sets of events are the 'forms of appearance' of an essential process or processes. Which essential process they appear as the form of has to be established by analysis. What the Tenth Congress of the IC did was to (mis)apply the notion of Essence and then construe the situation in every country as nothing but the 'essential' (crisis, revolution).

The Tenth Congress resolutions actually wiped out the uneven development of imperialism, stating that the 'essence' of crisis and revolution now determined directly and without interruption the class struggle in every country. The 'best' example of how this was carried into practice was in S. Michael's own country, Greece.

Because the Tenth Congress perspective had to be correct ('in the beginning was the word'), the Workers International League had to be transformed (in name) into a party, and a conference in November had to proclaim it, together with plans for a daily newspaper in the next year.

This was of course totally out of line with the real situation in Greece. There, the

revolutionaries, Trotskyists in what was the WIL, had and still have the task of elaborating and fighting for transitional demands which meet the immediate and very pressing needs of the workers and poor peasants, bringing then together in struggles against the state, under conditions where the grip of Stalinism on the advanced workers can be broken and the revolutionary party built.

S. Michael's policy of shouting 'revolutionary situation' and 'we are the revolutionary party', preventing a real study of the relations of class forces (which would develop Marxist theory at the same time as providing the basis for elaborating the party's programme), is negative and destructive. And this is the real content of his defence of Healy's 'philosophy'.

Finally, we should refer to Michael's attempt to damn Slaughter on account of his having once said that he

stiousness, in this domination, and this led him to see the struggle for proletarian emancipation much in terms of ideals.

Behind this was Lukacs' rejection of the view of Marx and Engels that the dialectic in thought is a reflection of the dialectic of nature itself. Slaughter did not bring out these weaknesses in 1960. He mistakenly thought that Lukacs' analysis of ideological domination could be used to strengthen the point about Lenin's insistence on a revolutionary party bringing a class, political consciousness into the proletariat from the outside.

Later, and especially in *Marxism and the Class Struggle* (1975, based on articles appearing in Workers Press three years previously), Slaughter explicitly criticised the consequence of Lukacs' lack of consistent materialist outlook on these questions (Chapter VII).

Still, Michael, with the 1960 article in one hand and



LUKACS



BUKHARIN



GRAMSCI



HEALY

drew heavily on Gramsci and to a lesser extent on Lukacs (whoever edited and read Michael's article had obviously never heard of Lukacs, and managed to mis-spell his name throughout the piece. Nonetheless, the readers of 'News Line' must take their medicine).

The article Michael refers to was written by me in 1960 — 26 years ago! ('What is Revolutionary Leadership', *Labour Review*, 1960.)

Like many others Slaughter had recently broken with Stalinism and joined the Trotskyist movement, and looked for ways of reading materials by Marxists which had been suppressed by the Stalinists, or at least disapproved of. (Lukacs', 'History and Class Consciousness', was then available only in the French translation.)

The book was written before Lukacs became a Stalinist and before Stalinism itself was more than just beginning. There are many errors in the book. Lukacs explains very well many of Marx's references to ideological domination of the working class.

His grave weakness was that he tended to see only the ideal aspect, that of con-

sciousness, in this domination, and this led him to see the struggle for proletarian emancipation much in terms of ideals. . . . and he cannot resist adding . . . meanwhile shaking hands with the right-wing Euro-Stalinist M. Johnstone.

As for Gramsci, here again it was a matter of Slaughter and others studying and trying to learn from all the literature which Stalinism had suppressed. Gramsci was the Italian Communist Party's earliest leader. He was arrested in the early part of Mussolini's reign, and he died after living the rest of his life in prison.

Slaughter did, again, in 1960, take certain of Gramsci's writings to try and strengthen the case he was making for a theoretical underpinning of Lenin's 'What Is To Be Done'. (For example, Gramsci's remarks, 'The appropriate political initiative is always necessary to free the economic drive from the tethers of traditional politics', and 'every shortcoming in historical duty increases the necessary disorder and prepares more serious catastrophes'. These only go to show that even



Workers' barricades against Fascists, Parma 1922. 'The appropriate political initiative is always necessary. . .', wrote Gramsci.

without agreeing with the ideas of S. Michael on dialectics — and even without accepting all that Marx and Engels said — it was possible to say very correct things as well as to lead mass movements bigger than anything dreamed of by S. Michael.)

In Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*, all fragments and unfinished manuscripts, many things are written which are left undeveloped and some of which are mutually inconsistent. Michael says that 'Gramsci and even more Lukacs rejected the dialectical materialist theory of reflection' and he goes on to say that Gramsci 'claims that Marx never calls his conception "materialist" and describes as "reactionary" and "common-sensical" the view that "the external world is objectively real".'

Method

A number of brief points need making here to show the method of S. Michael once again. Gramsci's remark that Marx did not refer to his own theory as 'materialist' is at the end of a long passage where Gramsci criticises Bukharin for separating historical materialism from the dialectic. Gramsci's point is that such a separation tends to reduce the historical materialism of Marx to the level of pre-Marxist materialists with their absence of dialectics. Gramsci also makes the correct point that it is wrong to teach Marx's materialism from the standpoint that it is in agreement with the 'common sense', non-theoretical view of this philosophical question.

What Gramsci thought on these matters could easily have been quoted by S. Michael, but he chose to cover up the criticism of Bukharin, which would of course have raised exactly similar points to the ones we raised against S. Michael at the beginning of this article.

When S. Michael identified Gramsci with the early Lukacs in denying materialism, he lies, and he could have cited the following from the very work by Gramsci he has quoted from and has presumably read:

'Note. One must study the position of Professor Lukacs towards the philosophy of praxis (Marxism). It would appear that Lukacs maintains that one can spark off the dialectic only for the history of man and not for nature. He might be right and he might be wrong. If his assertion presupposes a dualism between nature and man he is wrong because he is falling into a conception of nature proper to religion and to Graeco-Christian philosophy and also to idealism which does not in reality succeed in unifying and relating

man and nature to each other except verbally. But if human history should be conceived also as the history of nature (also by means of the history of science) how can the dialectic be separated from nature? Perhaps Lukacs, in reaction to the baroque theories of the *Popular Manual* (Bukharin's book) has fallen into the opposite error, into a form of idealism.' (Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*, p.448.)

Savas Michael knows very well that during Healy's domination of the WRP and the International Committee, historical materialism was reduced to a version of mechanical or metaphysical materialism, as indeed it was by Bukharin in the book criticised by Gramsci. Thus a very important question shows through all S. Michael's verbiage of quotation-mongering.

It is the question of the role of the active subject in history, the role of man as producer of his own social life and not merely as 'reflection' of external necessity, the role of the working class as the revolutionary and not only the exploited class, and the role of the revolutionary party, the Fourth International, in resolving the crisis of working-class leadership.

Against this, in Healy's (and S. Michael's) version, the 'subjective factor' is re-

duced to the individual brain of Healy, equipped with some logical genius, while the 'essence' rolls on and there is history.

Pablo too thought this essence, the world revolution, was going on independently of the Fourth International, appearing in the form of Stalinism and centuries of degenerated workers' states.

The International Committee (in the 'Open Letter' of 1953) eventually rejected Pablo's capitulation to Stalinism, but never fully learned the theoretical lessons behind it, namely, that Pabloism had rejected what is essential to Marxist materialism, revolutionary practice.

Crass

Healy's capitulation to the Arab bourgeoisie, in the name of the 'Arab revolution' was the most crass example of the repetition of this same fundamental error, and Healy's farrago of nonsense called 'dialectics' was its 'theoretical' cover.

The fight against Healy and what he represented is above all the rediscovery of these basic foundations of Marxism. From that, the Fourth International will be built, and among those fighting for it, against Healy and against Savas Michael, are comrades in Greece.

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 ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.
 ANDY MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461576.
 PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.

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INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:

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 PATRICK ARMSTRONG,
 GERARD CONLON, PAUL HILL,
 JUDITH WARD, HUGH
 CALLAGHAN, JOHN WALKER,
 BILLY POWER, GERARD
 HUNTER, RICHARD McILKENNY,
 PADDY HILL.

They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

THE ARMAGH political prisoners have been whisked to the ultra-modern prison at Maghaberry. If ever there was an indictment of British imperialism it is their boast that they have the world's most sophisticated prisons!

The Stop the Strip Searches Committee has been very active throughout Ireland in defending the rights of the republican prisoners in Armagh jail.

Former prisoners who have been subject to the strip searches have spoken at public meetings; regular pickets have been mounted outside the jail; leading Catholic clergymen and public figures have been pressured to give statements condemning the searches; international tribunals have investigated and condemned the practices of the prison regime; numerous marches and letter-writing campaigns have been organised; a video has been made.

The committee is made up of former inmates of Armagh and relatives of those now incarcerated. Sinn Fein therefore have the leading role on the committee although women's groups have also been active in campaigning.

Like the campaigns mounted on other issues, such as the supergrasses and the plastic bullet, the strip search issue has been given the official support of a broad range of Irish and British political movements. The Communist Party of Ireland, Peoples Democracy, and the Socialist Workers Movement have all joined in the condemnation. The strip search campaign has also drawn support from a large number of feminist groups who feel strip searching is an important women's issue.

Church

In the early days the Catholic church, especially Father Faul, were also involved, though this has now been superseded by a republican political campaign. Faul's concern was not for the political dignity or courage of the republican women, but rather for their Catholic honour. When the campaign grew and began to incorporate more politics and less religion Faul's concern declined.

As can be appreciated from this sketchy description of the strip search issue and campaign a number of different tendencies are brought together in the defence of the Armagh prisoners.

Firstly and most importantly there is the republican movement itself. The women jailed are republicans. Their relatives are in turn republicans or supporters. Sinn Fein supports the campaign for this reason and because they also see the prisons as a serious arena in the war against imperialism, and imperialism's war on the Irish. The question of the relatives is important also because all the support and protest groups that have been formed since 1969 have been dominated or influ-

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enced by relatives and these are usually women.

One of the problems that the republican movement has had is its tendency to dismiss women. Again the roots of this are partly found in the influence of Irish Catholicism which is basically very hostile to women. There has been much contention in Sinn Fein between the women activists and the leading male figures on the abortion issue.

Our movement supports fully the right of women to have an abortion and also feels that the Pro-Life anti-abortion lobby have not been challenged on the essential questions of just what is human life and also the quality of this life.

The anti-abortionists claim they have a monopoly on the respect for life because they are opposed to abortion and yet the politics of this group, its activists with the shining eyes of righteousness, is decidedly right wing and thoroughly imbued with the worst middle-class prejudices. They confuse a genuine human respect and concern for other human beings with the religious notion of sacredness of human life.

Abortion

The church and its zealots have taken on themselves the exclusive right to pronounce on what is moral. We disagree with this notion entirely for there is a complete difference between a purely religious morality and a genuine human morality, based on love and concern, not righteousness.

The history of national oppression in Ireland is very closely, though not exclusively, connected to the oppression of the Catholic religion. The Catholic church has used this to say that any criticism of their theology and politics is criticism of a person's rights to hold religious beliefs. This type of blackmail is designed to use the legitimate fears of



Demonstration against strip searching in Brixton and Armagh jails.

Catholics as a shield to stop any attack on the stand of the Catholic church, whether it be on abortion or the right to wage armed struggle.

On the abortion issue and many others women in the republican movement have come up against some opposition from men and it is strange to find these men on the same side of the fence as Daly and Paul on these questions.

The Catholic church has a different perspective entirely on the strip searching issue from that of the political campaigners. The church, which takes upon itself the role of highest source of morality and righteousness, cares nothing for the ideas of the prisoners themselves but rather imposes a Catholic ethos on the prison situation. For Father Faul and Bishop Daly it is the sexual purity of the girls which is most important.

For the girls to remain 'untouched' by anyone but a husband bears heavily on these clerics' minds. The twentieth century has obliged the church to at least make a show of concern for the living human being as well, so they make references to psychological damage and trauma. But it is the church's obsession with sex (and for the Catholic church sex is something that only involves women, don't you know) that first brought Father Faul into the 'defence' of the prisoners.

The British torturers are experts in their trade. They know what means to use for whom and when. Thus they are able to prise new super-

grasses away from their former comrades because they spot a weakness and play on it with intimidation and brainwashing.

The Armagh women have been through a long struggle since 1976 and the strip searches have been developed by the prison regime in an attempt to break women who have refused to succumb to other barbarities.

The other major element in the strip searching campaign has been the feminists. Ireland is a land rife with male chauvinism.

The peculiarly arrogant dominance of men over women is sharply outlined in Ireland because many of the other ancient peasant, or tribal, values are still found among the Irish proletariat and among the women especially. The qualities of self sacrifice and fortitude of women are often contrasted in this country by boorishness, ignorance and little sense of responsibility among the men.

It would be wrong to go overboard on this, like some feminists do by painting all men as sinners so to speak, but it would also be wrong to deny that there is a very deep and very backward tendency towards a sort of male ascendancy.

On the question of the strip searching itself there is no doubt that among the women prisoners themselves the overriding issue is the struggle for national liberation, for which they are suffering such torture. As an integral part of the national struggle women have increasingly

realised the necessity to fight for and further the struggle to end sexual oppression, otherwise national liberation for them is meaningless.

Therefore they do see the strip searches as a despicable manoeuvre (they are conscious of the women's element), to break them, but they also know, only too well, that the imperialists want to break them not because they are women or the flower of Irish maidenhood but because they are freedom fighters!

There has been a tendency to patronise the women's contribution to the national struggle. Apart from the fact that they have been consciously excluded the input they are allowed to give has been belittled. There is an element of this in the whole attitude there has been to the Armagh prisoners, from internment to the present day. The strip searching issue is also interpreted by some people as a campaign to protect the 'weak' girls.

Some people have gone even further and try to turn the strip searching issue, along with other issues, into a humanitarian one.

The danger of this approach, which highlights the torture of the prisoners but leaves out, or only makes scant reference to, the political ideas of the prisoners and the reason why they are in prison in the first place; the danger is that it actually tends to accept the jailing of Irish republicans and only pays attention to the 'excesses'. Thereby recognising the legitimacy of the whole

ent in Ireland



The campaign against strip searching has recieved support from many different groups some of whom were represented on this demonstration in Brixton early this month.

imperialist role and presence in Ireland.

The danger for the republican movement is that in allowing these middle-class and religious ideas to come near them on the basis that the issues are 'humanitarian' (hunger strikes, strip search, supergrass, plastic bullet) the republican movement can itself begin to slowly trim its sails to allow for the pro-imperialist sensibilities of such 'supporters' ('private views on the national issue', 'all I want is peace').

It is a tricky question because there are many, many people in Ireland and Britain who are sincerely confused about Ireland and struggles generally (and the issues are complex). These people can be won to the working class with some patience and consideration. However, there are also many, many bitter enemies of the working class who cloak themselves in a liberal garb. Like the New Ireland Group, for example. Also quite a few clerics and even a section of so-called feminists.

Obviously the superficial similarity between those tentatively drawn to the working class and between those who definitely keep the working class at arm's length behind phrases like 'not taking sides', this similarity is only skin deep. That why it is important for people who have committed themselves to the struggle to use their experience to root out the charlatans. The struggle is only weakened by the 'support' of the frauds.

Firstly their support will

vanish at the first real test but more importantly their presence in and around the struggles confuses the most important issue of all — the integrity of the absolute commitment to finish imperialism, of the sacrifice and the willingness to go to the very end.

Surely the brave struggle of the Armagh women, to mention one case, deserves better company than that of the fly-by-nights and bleeding hearts. If those people who feign concern are given credence by the republican leadership then it must cause problems not only for those already committed but also for those who are really trying to join with the working class but perhaps have some unconscious sense of unease about some of the so-called 'friends of the people'. Let us look at the Communist Party of Ireland in this respect.

Stalinism

The Stalinists may place great emphasis on diplomacy and forming alliances with anyone who will support a single chosen issue, say the opposition to strip searches; but the Stalinists are masters at forming or joining unprincipled alliances. Thus some of their members marched on the strip search demo on the Falls.

It is interesting to note however that the Stalinist paper in the north, 'Unity', carried no mention of the Falls march or Armagh picket in its regular 'What's on' column. For the two weeks prior to these strip

search events 'Unity' carried articles on International Women's Day without referring to Armagh. They did advertise the women's demonstration in the Corn Market, Belfast, to be held on the day of the Armagh picket, in the two editions prior to Women's Day; but they could find no room to mention the Armagh picket and Falls march.

Now why is that? Could it be that a lot of Stalinist supporters and members are of the very type referred to above, secret sympathisers of imperialism; and 'Unity' is very concerned not to offend these readers and members by promoting a Provo (!) march up the Falls (!), of all places? Heaven forbid.

Better to promote a safer event in somewhere respectable like the Corn Market.

I can think of no other reason why the so-called supporters of the Armagh women could not promote the demos of those they claim to support (while being able to promote one in Corn Market).

A few Stalinists took part in the Falls march thus 'expressing their solidarity' (their favourite phrase) but they did not even have the guts to carry a CPI banner. The CPI have every right to go on whatever march they please. But it does not mean we have to bite our tongues, to not say what we think of them. They aren't too slow in holding their views on our movement to themselves.

Indeed they carry on a continuous slander campaign against our movement

and members among the contacts they have cultivated in the working class organisations. Typical cowards they are, however, they never challenge our movement or members openly. The classic sneaks giving no chance to refute their slanders. It's all done with a quiet word.

They are giving themselves some republican credentials by attending the march while at the same time they placate the timid 'communists' in the ranks by not giving public support, through their papers and banners. When it comes right down to it, the Stalinists are pro-imperialist themselves. They support the return of Stormont (with a Bill of Rights) and do not call for the withdrawal of the army.

They are frauds and we think the strip searching committee would be wise to pay attention to the views and antics of groups like the CPI and not just accept their 'support' uncritically, as they should watch what our movement does and says before accepting our support.

THE IRISH Prisoners Appeal has called a picket of the High Court next week during the hearing of Ella O'Dwyer and Martina Anderson's case against the Home Office which has systematically tortured the two girls.

Please phone 01-737 4144 for exact details as soon as they are known.

There will also be a picket from May 6 when the case begins against the two, now on remand. The Irish Prisoners Appeal expects the atmosphere around the case to be hysterically anti-Irish, which will inevitably affect the jury.

TIOC FAIDH AR LA!

(Bobby Sands, 1981)

COMMEMORATIVE RALLY

Saturday May 10 1986

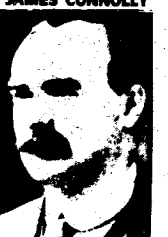
2pm - 7pm

BOBBY SANDS MP



MAY 5th 1981
5th anniversary

JAMES CONNOLLY



MAY 12th 1916
70th anniversary

Conway Hall

Red Lion Square
London WC1

MUSIC - VIDEOS
BOOKSTALLS

Speakers include

Jim McAllister

Sinn Féin elected
representative, South Armagh

Bob Doyle

Irish veteran of the International Brigade

Other speakers from Irish community and black, labour and trade union movement.

WE SHALL RISE AGAIN!

(James Connolly, 1916)

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.

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. Pressure on space is acute; some letters have been

waiting for publication for weeks, others have simply not made it. Please try to keep your letters short — they have much more chance of getting printed.

While we try to print letters as they arrive, we reserve the right to edit letters to give everybody a chance. Where letters have been edited, this will be indicated.

Marx's 'Capital' and contemporary crisis

WORKERS Power members attended all six of the recent 'Capital' lectures in London. The debate was, as Comrade Pilling indicated in his review in 'Workers Press' (No. 15), unrestricted and lively.

As the series progressed there was certainly some shift in the thinking of comrades Pilling, Kemp and Smith who were responsible for much of the 'catastrophism' in their economic writings in the 1970s, used to justify the 'permanent revolutionary crisis' perspective of the WRP.

Comrade Pilling himself recognised that this goes back a long way and was rooted in a one-sided concentration on the monetary aspects of crises.

However, this recognition seems to be somewhat contradicted in Comrade Pilling's article. There he says there is no direct link between 'Capital' and the contemporary crisis. He then goes on to say that 'Capital' is important for its ability to demystify capitalist social relations.

This is a shallow approach to 'Capital'. Marx did not write 'Capital' simply to demystify capitalism. 'Capital' most importantly, is an in-

vestigation of the laws of motion that govern capitalism.

Direct links do exist between 'Capital' and the contemporary crisis, but they do so in a partial way given the incompleteness of 'Capital' and the period that has elapsed since it was written.

The mistakes made with regard to the tendential movement of capitalism have always resulted from an inability to develop the links between 'Capital' and a particular crisis.

Healy's 'catastrophic perspective' was only made possible because he abandoned 'Capital' and Marx's method. If the links today are so tenuous, it is only because the FI failed to develop 'Capital' on the basis of Marx's method.

Another theme we introduced into the discussion was that even a correct grasp and concretisation of Marx's categories to analyse the economic crisis today is no guarantee of the correct political conclusions being drawn.

The critique of political economy is not a complete answer. The same economic crisis can produce very different political reactions within the ruling class (and its state) and the labour movement.

For example, the British working class response to the 1973 recession was very different to its response in 1979. The chief reason for this was not the class forces that existed at the time.

A confident, combative working class in the first, a weakened, disorientated and demoralised (by the Labour government) labour movement in the latter case.

It was our impression that many WRP comrades in the discussion have still to break with this one-sided 'the worse it gets, the better for us' syndrome; that slumps automatically give rise to an upsurge of class struggle creating favourable conditions for revolutionaries to intervene in.

Most worrying in Comrade Pilling's account of the lectures is the conclusion that he has reached concerning the post-war boom. Time and again he insisted that the FI had refused to accept that a bourgeois-democratic counter-revolution throughout Europe had 'stabilised' capitalism.

To this Comrade Pilling now retorts that this 'stability' did not exist in an 'absolute' sense. An unbroken series of colonial revolutions is advanced as evidence that the 1950s and 1960s still had the mark of imperialism

firmly stamped on them — an epoch of wars and revolution.

'In no sense did capitalism find some new reserve of post-war strength in the post-war period which allowed it to survive for a further period. It survived only because of the unresolved crisis of leadership.'

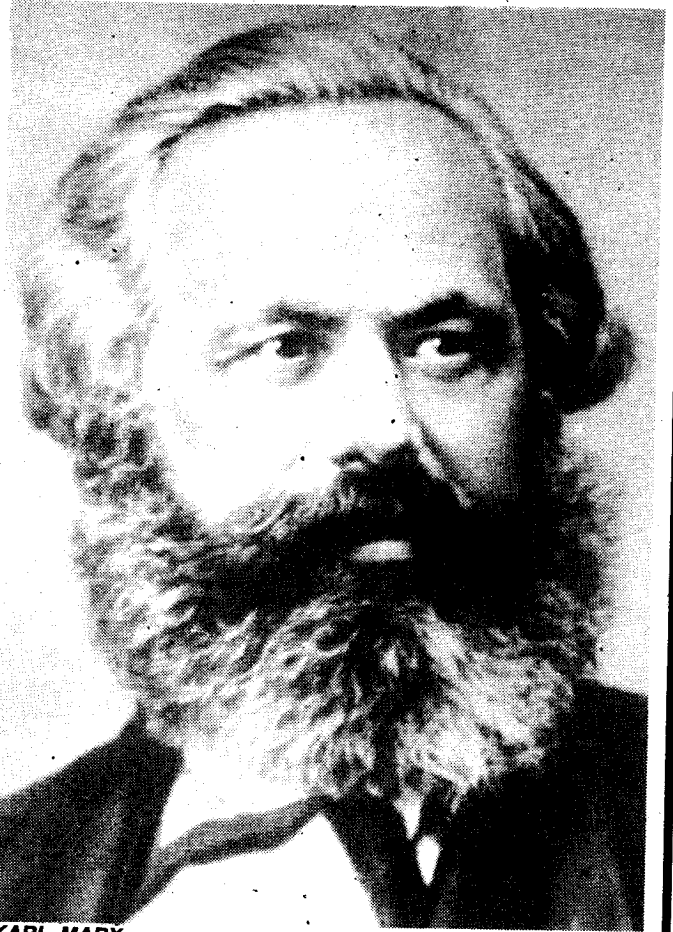
Again this is only half a truth and is therefore false. It is interesting, first, to note that Comrade Pilling only advances evidence of instability in the semi-colonies.

This conveniently ignores what was happening in the imperialist democracies — the heart of the post-war boom which saw world output double in seventeen years.

No-one denies that even in a period of boom under imperialism, that the features of the imperialist epoch do not disappear altogether. This would be crude and undialectical.

But the period did 'soften' certain contradictions within capitalism and underlay the strength of social-democracy and trade unionist consciousness — facts which the SLL often tried so hard to deny.

Workers Power political committee



KARL MARX

Leadership crisis the basis for capitalist 'stabilisation'

WORKERS POWER in their contributions to the London classes on Capital, and in other meetings and publications, have argued the necessity for the elaboration of a programme to meet the demands of the present period.

Indeed such a programme must be elaborated in the course of the struggle to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class. It will be developed not schematically but rather in response to developments of the class itself.

Marxists can only undertake this crucial task on the basis of both struggling to build the leadership and the struggle to arm themselves and the party with theory.

We do not arrive at the present situation without having undertaken these struggles in the past.

Indeed the struggle of those who maintained Lenin's and Trotsky's understanding of the nature of the epoch as 'Imperialism: the highest stage of capitalism' cannot be merely accounted for as some aspect of a movement which in other ways wallowed in a centrist mire.

Of course the period following the end of the second world, imperialist, war saw the emergence of US imperialism as the major imperialist power, displacing among others Britain.

Of course there was a boom in the metropolitan countries (incidentally, neither even nor linear in its development). However, the question remains, what was the basis for the 'stabilisation' of capitalism in this period?

For the Trotskyist movement it was, and is, the crisis of the leadership. The ruling

class will never declare itself bankrupt and hand over power, no matter what its crimes or its inability to satisfy the needs of humanity. The crisis of humanity is the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

It seems that for Workers Power it is the victory of the 'democratic' (?) forces in the war — the rapid development of monopoly in new sectors of industrial production — the hegemony of US imperialism — provided the material basis for the softening of contradictions.

Workers Power are at pains, when pressed, to draw a distinction between 'epoch' and 'period'. The former, they maintain, is that of imperialism, but the latter has been one of stability.

Do they not have to show the relationship between the two?

The 1973 perspectives document written by com-

rade Pilling, while over-emphasising the role of financial instability, did analyse the boom not as a consequence of the strength of capitalism, but of its weakness, its inability to resolve any of its contradictions and also from the crisis of leadership, which permitted the boom to begin and continue within certain definite limits.

That was the position of Trotskyists and it was fought for against all those who went along with surface impressions of the time such as the Socialist Workers Party (formerly International Socialists).

Imperialism does not lead to international co-operation, as Kautsky maintained, but rather to ever more sharp and deep divisions. It is on this basis that we understand and develop our knowledge of the present.

None of capitalism's contradictions were resolved by the war or boom; they were heightened. Periods of relative stability are periods of maturing revolutionary crisis.

The lack of dialectical understanding and crude analysis is characteristic of the impressionistic anti-Marxism of the SWP, from which I believe the error originates.

Space, and the need to do more reading, prevents a full examination here of the consequences of the Workers Power group's view of the significance of Capital today, but it does appear that Capital is seen as a work of political economy, not as a negation of political economy.

The laws of motion of capitalism are social laws, not natural laws. The resolution of the contradictions revealed by Marx is the task of the working class.

While it is vital to understand the development of these contradictions over the period since Capital was written, especially since the development of imperialism, as analysed by Lenin, that is not to say that we should (or can) develop an 'economics' which is separate or removed from the social relations of production.

Workers Power look back on the past and seek to rationalise a history in which the outcome of events was unknown to the participants. How foolish the movement was in 1951, surely we should have recognised the boom?

We are encouraged to make a study of the past to reveal the complex nature of the present, instead of recognising that the present is the highest point of the development of the continuing contradictions examined by Marx in Capital.

Mick Gentleman

BOOK REVIEWS

Decency of David Low

Years of Wrath: A Cartoon History 1932-1945. By David Low, with a new introduction by Michael Foot, MP. Gollancz paperback, £5.95.

MORE PEOPLE have probably heard of Colonel Blimp, or the adjective 'Blimpish', than are old enough to remember David Low's cartoons.

Blimp, the realistically-drawn archetypal Tory militarist, appeared regularly alongside such unlikely horror-fantasy characters as Adolf Schickelgruber, Signor Mussolini and Josef Stalin.

Low was a sharp observer of the age, a bold commentator, and creative artist. The remarkable thing about his collected cartoons is not only the way historic events and issues come alive, and in-

sights conveyed symbolically — and wittily, but also the honest expression of a definite outlook.

Low's idealism was that of liberal democracy, the League of Nations, and the 'common people'. He created the patronising yet sympathetic image of the TUC carthorse, (inspiring Orwell's similar creation in 'Animal Farm?'); but he also showed capitalist arms-dealers as gangsters, ridiculed bureaucrats and cabinet ministers, and was merciless with the fascist dictators whom British governments were fawning on.

Naive Low's political outlook may have been. But his honest decency stood out as rare among the pronouncements of some more 'serious' commentators, politicians and journalists of the time.

His anti-fascism also went with rejecting chauvinism — a cartoon on 'extending the hand of friendship to Germany', commenting on a proposal of the time, shows a heavy Nazi guard holding out his gloved hand in anticipation, while behind him from the bars of the prison the other Germany, a working-class political prisoner, tries to reach out his hand for our attention.

When we look at some of the crude, chauvinist and racist crap that is excused as 'humour' today — not least in the London 'Standard' for which Low once drew — we can see how far to the right the British bourgeoisie and its press have degenerated.

Oh, and by the way, I almost forgot — some of these cartoons are still very funny!



Tories and Fascists were Low's frequent targets, but here on August 28, 1936, was his comment on Stalin's execution of sixteen leading Bolsheviks.

Pit strike poetry

STRIKING STUFF is a book of poems by Jean A Gittins, mother of two miners from the Ludston Luck colliery. The poems in this little collection were written as a direct result of her experiences in the strike. Read at money-raising 'benefits' around the coalfields, they were used in a BBC2 documentary in late 1985.

'Striking Stuff' is published by the '1 in 12' (Publications) Collective, c/o 1 in 12 Club, 31 Manor Row, Bradford, 1. Price £1.50, cheques payable to NUM Solidarity Fund, to which the books proceeds are directed.

We reproduce 'Pity the Dodo', written in October 1985.

Is it over then, the Struggle
Have they won, and have we lost

Is the final outcome what we
should expect

Shall we 'wake up' in a year
or so

And realise the cost

When it's much too late to
save our self-respect

Should we 'give up the ghost
gracefully'

And slowly fade away

Should we disappear

Like out of date machines?

Well, I tell you

If you feel like I do

'That'll be the day'

You can't make Dodos

Out of Human Beings



'Funny thing about this industry. There's a love-hate relationship, something like the feeling fishermen have for the sea. But, like the dust that makes scars go blue, the pit that your men work at, 'gets under your skin'.'

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Food Additives: Taking the lid off what we really eat. By Erik Millstone. Penguin, £2.95

THE FOOD Advisory Committee, which advises government on the safety of food additives, includes a single 'consumer representative' — alongside experts like medical scientists, and senior executives of firms like Marks and Spencer, Unilever, Cadbury-Schweppes and Reckitt and Coleman.

Erik Millstone examines the recommendations of this committee about what can be safely added to food, and concludes that the needs of the industry — to add colours to make their products more attractive to purchasers, for example — predominate over the needs of the consumers.

Much of what is found out about toxicity remains secret. Very few additives are controlled in terms of specified quantities — usually it is left to 'good manufacturing practice' to decide how much is put into what we eat.

Millstone argues that, in any case, toxicology is a very unsatisfactory science. It is used 'to give industry inconclusive data with which to satisfy uncritical regulators'.

Safety tests for long-term effects are clearly difficult — the time-scale of the industry and the consumers is different. Consumers are more concerned about chronic conditions caused by toxic substances, like hyperactivity in children, while the industry asks 'Will consumers drop dead holding the product?'

Island of Barbed Wire. By Connery Chappell. Corgi, £2.50.

CONNERY CHAPPELL'S book doesn't lift the veil on British war crimes, but it certainly rustles it a little. Its subject is the wartime internment of 'aliens' on the Isle of Man.

It describes how thousands of men, women and children were rounded up — Nazis, anti-Nazis, Jewish refugees,

Rainbow Warrior: The French attempt to sink Greenpeace. Sunday Times Insight team. Arrow, £2.95

When the Greenpeace environmentalists' ship Rainbow Warrior was sunk in Auckland harbour, the papers speculated on all sorts of culprits except the obvious, and true — French government agents out to stop a protest against their neutron bomb tests.

New Zealand prime minister David Lange has described the Rainbow Warrior attack, in which a crew member was killed, as state-aided terrorism, and contrasted Western media outrage against Libya with the placid reaction to the French act.

President Mitterand awarded the Legion d'Honneur to Charles Hernu, De-

fence Minister who authorised the attack.

It's worth remembering that both Lange and Mitterand head nominally 'socialist', i.e. Labour parties just like Britain's. Some fraternity! So much for peaceful reformism!

With the Insight team's usual wealth of narrative detail, this book describes the background to the affair, how it was set up, and some of the persona involved.

If you like Hammond Innes and Desmond Bagley, you'll enjoy the seafaring detail of the yarn. I'd have liked a bit more of the international politics.

What does come out clearly is the arrogant contempt with which imperialist states have raped Pacific peoples and environment, and which France's secret state has for

French state terror



FERNANDO PEREIRA, photographer and crew member of the Rainbow Warrior, killed in the explosion

mere elected politicians. The way the 'socialist' Hernu crawled to the military, and was used by them, is also described.

So the book is well worth reading, and the issue well worth keeping alive. Even though there may be more of the background story to come out, there's enough there to learn something from.

CFP

The Tunnels of Cu Chi. By Tom Mangold and John Penycate. Pan, £2.95.

ONE OF THE most remarkable stories of the Vietnam war is told in this book, now in paperback. Below the bomb-blasted ground, the Viet Cong had living areas, ordnance factories, storage depots, hospitals, headquarters — and tunnels through which they could reach the centre of towns occupied by the American enemy.

Mangold and Penycate interviewed survivors from both sides and try to make heroes of the US tunnel rats who went down after the guerillas, but nothing can compare with the courage of the Vietnamese fighting to regain their country.

Portraits in Courage. By Dick Thompson and Peter Boyes. Thames Methuen, £3.50.

THE INTOLERABLE situations that people find themselves in, and the importance of confiding in someone, provided the material for the recent 'Someone to

Talk To' television series on which this book is based.

Transcripts of four of the programmes are adapted. Kristina, who was subject to sexual assault from her uncle from the age of five, blocked it out in her mind for many years. It was only when she heard about a similar incident that she was able to face what had happened to her; she was helped by talking to 'Incest Crisis Line.'

Peter Adams talks about rebuilding his life with the help of a group called 'Single and Loving It' after his wife's fifteen year battle against cancer was lost. Jim Fletcher speaks about the role of a 'Turning Point' hostel in his struggle against alcoholism.

The book shows how problems could be coped with, and the kind of help available. It also lists addresses of other organisations which can help with problems not discussed in detail in the book.

4,000 march against US

MANCHESTER: Four thousand protesters took part in a march and rally called by CND protesting against the American attack on the Libyan people.

It had been arranged in three days and the demands of the rally were: 'No American war against Libya! No to American bases in Britain!'

Many sections of the labour and trade union movement were represented on the demonstration: NUPE, NAPO, ASTMS representing branches from Manchester and the North West, Bury district and Moss Side Labour Parties, Nicaraguan Solidarity Committee, Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front, many CND branches, Miners North West Defence Committee and the Pakistani Workers' Association (Britain).

All sections of the march showed great hostility to Thatcher and Reagan. The Pakistani Workers' Association led the most fierce demands of 'Hands off Libya!' and 'Reagan, Thatcher, CIA, for your crimes you will pay!' Other sections then took up the slogans.

On the march a CND representative from New Mills told of a survey they had carried out the previous night. Interviewing 170 people they obtained the following:

1. Do you agree with the bombing of Libya — 75 per cent No and 15 per cent Yes.
2. Should British bases have been used — 75 per

NORTH WEST

cent No and 15 per cent Yes.

3. Should US bases be withdrawn from Britain — 45 per cent Yes and 37 per cent No.

An Anti-Apartheid meeting of 400 delegates that had been called in collaboration with the North West labour movement agreed to support the march and the rally that followed.

Speakers at the rally included representatives from CND, SWAPO, Women Against Pit Closures and a speaker for the Palestinians.

They all condemned the air attack by the F-111s on the Libyan people but differences were also revealed.

Mrs Gittings from Yorkshire Women Against Pit Closures said: 'If I was a Libyan housewife and my children were killed and my house bombed, do you think that they would want to make me give up?'

A speaker from the United Reformed Church was also invited by CND who criticised Reagan 'for using a sledgehammer to crack a nut'.

The main CND speaker said that people were here because 'they were frightened'.

Unfortunately, neither the speaker from SWAPO nor from the Pakistani Workers' Association were available for comment on these points.

REAGAN THE TERRORIST CONDEMNED

SCOTLAND

TWO thousand marched through Glasgow city centre last weekend in protest at Reagan's bombing of Libya.

Banners of local AUEW, NALGO and EIS teachers' union branches and trades councils swelled the demonstration, which was called by the Scottish council of Liberation, with the participation of the Scottish TUC and the Scottish council of the Labour Party.

Also participating were delegations from the Pakistan Peoples Party, the Workers Revolutionary Party, the Scottish Communist Republican

Party, the Communist Party and the Scottish National Party.

Local branches of the CND marched, in addition to holding their own vigil outside the new Ministry of Defence headquarters in Glasgow the same afternoon.

At a rally following the march, Bob Gillespie of the STUC general council said an emergency motion condemning Reagan's attack would be put before the STUC-congress this week.

He condemned Thatcher's subservience to the US government, and called for the re-election of a Labour government committed to 'peace and disarmament'.

State terror, said Gil-

lespie, was now being practised in Nicaragua and against both Catholic and Protestant workers in northern Ireland.

'Was it Colonel Gaddafi who defoliated Vietnam, made people live in holes in the ground, propped up the dictatorships of Papa Doc and Marcos, and overthrew a democratic government in Chile?' he asked.

Bill Spiers, from the West of Scotland Friends of Palestine, emphasised that peace was impossible in the Middle East without self-determination for the Palestinian people.

Condemning the hypocrisy of Reagan and Thatcher's 'moral crusade against terrorism',

Spiers asked:

'What is the distinction between leaving a bomb in an airport and carrying out a bombing raid? Simply that, in their terms, one is the act of a terrorist and one of a soldier.'

To applause, Spiers called for an end to all US bases in Britain.

Pakistan Peoples Party representative Adil Bati welcomed the spontaneous protests which had taken place all over Europe.

'The movement of the masses inspires more fear than parliamentary opposition in the imperialists, who are responsible for terrorism,' Bati said.

Willie Thompson of the Communist Party said Reagan's operations against Libya were an

attempt to prepare public opinion for similar attacks in Nicaragua and Angola.

'But he and Thatcher have been completely isolated by the world reaction. This could be Reagan's Suez — and it is up to us to ensure that it is.'

The call to rid Britain of US bases was echoed by Freda Barr of the Scottish Peace Assembly, who said that US and British targets were legitimately attacked because these governments interfered in the affairs of other people.

A message was read to the meeting from the League of Arab States, welcoming the concern of the Scottish people at the attacks of the US regime, 'a danger to the peoples of the whole world'.

NORTH EAST

Call by trades council

SPENNYMOOR trades council has passed a resolution condemning the attack on Libya and the use of British bases by the Americans.

The Durham County Association of Trades Councils has sent a resolution to the northern region TUC and to the General Council of the TUC calling on them to organise demonstrations and rallies against the bombing of Libya and against the use of bases in Britain.

The Turdsale workshops Durham Mechanics branch has sent a resolution of the area council of the Durham Mechanics along the same lines.

Labour government who allowed US bases in the first place.

'We must demand that any future Labour government gets rid of the bases and expose Kinnock who will not defend the jailed or sacked miners here and oppressed people in the Middle East.'

'A word must be said about the role of the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy. They are keeping such a low profile that it could be said the Russian bear is being kept in hibernation.'

No to Reagan terror bases

AROUND 750 demonstrators marched through Cardiff last Saturday protesting against American imperialism's unprovoked attack on Libya.

The march and rally, called by CND, was supported by Labour Party and Plaid Cymru supporters. Several other organisations were represented.

Among the Trade Un-

WALES

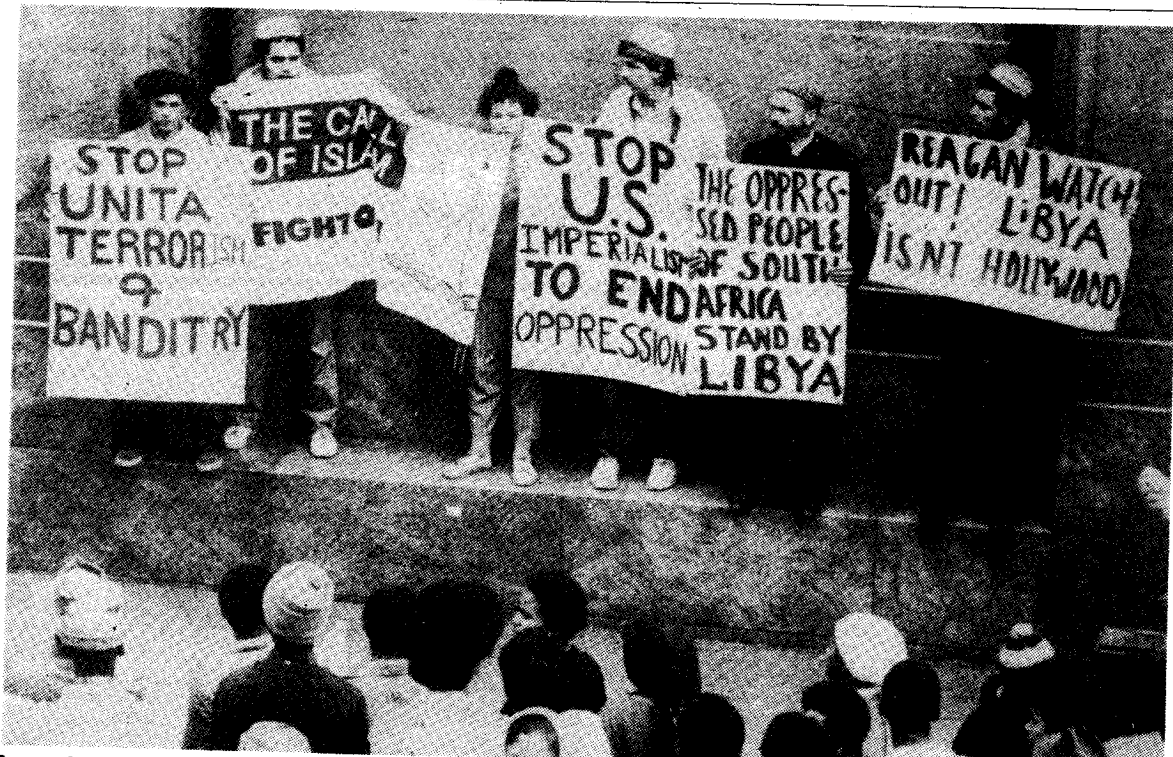
ion banners on the demonstration were Oakdale NUM Lodge and Merthyr Trades Council.

Cardiff City Labour Councillor Sue Essex told the rally that President Reagan was: 'Without doubt the biggest single terrorist in the world today.'

She also called for all American bases to be kicked off British soil.

Others speakers included South Wales Euro MP Win Griffiths and Dave Richards, Communist Party. The demonstrators were angry both at the outrageous attack of Reagan and of Thatcher's complicity in the terror raid.

Hunger Strike Commemoration — Black Flag Vigil
Kilburn Square
Sunday May 4
8.00pm to 9.30pm
Organised by the London Hunger Strike Commem Cttee



Reagan's Libya terror raid sparked demonstrations world-wide — including in Cape Town, where some 20 protestors took to the streets for a lunch-time demonstration last week. The protest may have been unusual for S Africa but the reaction was not. Police arrested the demonstrators

MORE than a thousand demonstrators marched through London's West End to support Libya against the bombings by US imperialism. Many more joined in as the march passed the American embassy in Grosvenor Square.

The march organised by the Revolutionary Communist Party was supported by several other groups including the Workers Revolutionary Party, Irish Solidarity, Troops Out Movement, the

LONDON

Bangladeshi Youth Organisation, Nicaraguan Solidarity, Turkish Students' Organisation, Pakistan People's Party and others.

Slogans included 'Ronald Reagan you won't win, we remember Ho Chi Minh' and 'Victory to the Libyan People'.

Speakers condemned Reagan and Thatcher as terrorists and war crim-

inals and drew a parallel between the Libyan and Irish struggles against imperialism.

Speaking for the Workers Revolutionary Party Richard Goldstein said that the WRP and Workers Press condemned the bombing raids in Libya carried out by United States imperialism which was a continuation of their barbaric aggression

against the oppressed peoples of the world.

'It is not enough just to condemn US aggression. We must stand unreservedly on the side of Libya for military victory in any conflict with US imperialism.'

'The trade union movement must be mobilised to get rid of the US bases in Britain.'

'Whatever pious condemnation Kinnock may make about Reagan and Thatcher he serves imperialism. It was Attlee's