

TORIES

MANS LAUGHTER

BY GEOFF PILLING



THIS week 100 people died in Britain for lack of adequate food and heat during one of the severest winters on record. Last winter over 1,000 people died of hypothermia and another 40,000 from cold-related illness. Age Concern says these figures are bound to be far exceeded this winter.

The Tory government is responsible for these deaths.

Labour MP George Foulkes said this week Thatcher should be charged with manslaughter for condemning elderly people to death. 'Many hundreds of old people are going to freeze to death because of the inadequacy of government help. Are we to find old people dying unnecessarily of hypothermia? Mrs Thatcher should

be charged with manslaughter,' said Foulkes.

The £5 freeze pay-out which Thatcher announced this week goes nowhere near compensating pensioners for the cut in their living standards under the Tory government. At best, £5 will heat two rooms for two days. Hundreds of thousands of pensioners eligible for Thatcher's miserly handout will never claim it. Age Concern told Workers Press only one in ten of those entitled to receive the benefit last year actually got it.

Millions existing just above the supplementary benefit poverty line will get nothing. Those with savings of £500 — often put aside for burial expenses — will also not get a penny.

The cynicism of the Tories is shown by the facts:

- Gas prices were forced up last year more than any other item, to make the industry profitable before the City sharks took it over under the Tory privatisation measure.
- The demand for free TV licences for all pensioners was this week rejected by Home Secretary Douglas Hurd in the House of Commons.
- The Tories have rigged the old-and-cold payments scheme so that money will hardly ever be handed out. Under the new scheme devised by Social Security Minister John Major these payments are being cut to almost nothing this year for the elderly and scrapped entirely for young people on supplementary benefit. The young make up half of those entitled to apply.

'The DHSS came to us for meteorological advice,' said one expert at the government's weather centre at Bracknell, Berkshire. 'They asked: "What temperature is likely to be reached one winter in five in the major population areas of the country?" We said -1.5 degrees.'

The government has also ruled that this temperature must last from Monday to Sunday. Even a single day's break in the weather will rule out any payment. In February last year — the coldest since 1947 — only half the country would have been eligible for money.

- The Tories are considering plans to herd the 100,000 homeless into tube stations, disused hospitals and civil defence fall-out shelters.

Labour leaders have actually welcomed these despicable moves. The best the trade union leaders could do was to demand the doubling of the cold weather payment to £10.

The elderly and the homeless don't want Tory or Labour charity. They

want policies which guarantee everybody as of right a proper standard of living.

The trade union and Labour leaders must be made to fight for such policies. It is, literally, a life or death question.

New developments in Workers Press

WORKERS PRESS editorial board is pleased to announce some new features in the paper.

■ **THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL TODAY** is a column which Cliff Slaughter will contribute regularly. It will analyse developments in the world Trotskyist movement and be an important part of the international work of the Workers Revolutionary Party in the coming year. The first contribution, dealing with some aspects of 'Security and the Fourth International', starts on page 11.

■ **ROBSON'S CHOICE** will provide a weekly round-up of all the best — and the worst — TV. Tom Scott Robson's first column appears next week.

■ Starting in February **MARXISM AND SCIENCE** will provide a monthly survey of the latest developments in science and consider their implications for Marxism.

■ We are to expand our **INTERNATIONAL NEWS** and analysis in the future to carry regular on-the-spot reports from Latin America, the United States, Europe and Australia.

■ Starting next week, we are pleased to announce that **PETER FRYER** has accepted our invitation to write a weekly personal column. Peter was the first editor of the 'Newsletter', the paper which became a rallying point for dissident members of the Communist Party in the period after 1956. He was driven out of the Trotskyist movement by Healy's anti-communist methods and we are pleased to welcome him back to our pages.

We are sure readers will greet these new features. They show that Workers Press, the paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party, continues to emerge as one of the liveliest papers on the left — necessary reading for all those engaged in the struggles of the working class.

We want to hear from even more of our readers than we do at present. Send us news of disputes in which workers are involved. Let us know of developments in the unions, the Labour Party and other workers' organisations.

Caterpillar Occupied

BY SIMON PIRANI

WORKERS occupying the Caterpillar tractor factory in Lanarkshire in defence of 1,221 jobs are appealing to the whole labour movement for support.

'We have been betrayed. We are not going to accept the job losses,' said shop stewards' convener John Branman as the round-the-clock sit-in began last Wednesday.

A mass meeting took just 15 minutes to decide unanimously to back the occupation. Posters went up telling workers who did not support it not to enter the factory.

If Caterpillar closes, the unemployment level in Uddingston — which has lost 8,000 Honeywell jobs and suffered from pit and steel closures — could go up to 50 per cent for adult males. As a whole, Lanarkshire already has one in five jobless.

Caterpillar workers' anger has been fuelled by the fact that only four months ago, a £62 million expansion was announced with promises of

a rosy future.

In his New Year message, Tory Scottish secretary Malcolm Rifkind — who had promised £5 million state support for the American-owned factory — specifically praised Caterpillar as a company which had 'become more profitable and competitive, so helping to make employment more secure.'

Workers' 'shock and disgust' last week was all the greater because they had made 'really heavy financial decisions in recent months, believing their jobs were safe', shop steward John Gilen told Workers Press.

Rifkind said Caterpillar's decision — announced from Chicago without even telling the British Tories — was 'difficult, if not impossible, to understand'.

He is weeping crocodile tears. His government has dealt crushing blows to the Scottish coal, steel, shipbuilding and manufacturing, together with all Britain's

major industrial centres.

As the closures have rolled on — Leyland's Bathgate, Invergordon, the Scottish pits, Lower Clyde shipyards, Gartcosh, Babcock power, Kestrel Marine — Scottish TUC leaders have trooped to the Scottish Office, knowing their words would fall on deaf ears.

● The Scottish TUC last week said Scotland had 'consistently failed to meet its moral obligation to contribute 1 per cent of its gross national product to the Third World to prevent starvation,' and that by making such a contribution, Caterpillar — which builds earth-moving equipment of the type needed desperately in starvation-ridden Ethiopia — could be kept open.

Financial support is needed. Send donations to: T. Stevenson, Treasurer, Shop Stewards Committee, Caterpillar Tractory Company, Old Edinburgh Road, Viewpark, Uddingston, Lanarkshire.

£10,000 Special Fund

IN SO FAR: £8,166.56
TARGET: £10,000

The Workers Revolutionary Party urgently needs the last £2,000 of the Special Fund. Our international exchange visits with members of the Trotskyist movement in Ireland, Europe, Australia and the Americas have cost a great deal of money in fares. We allocated half the £10,000 fund for international work, and have already spent a large part of it. We are sure you support this work politically but we need you to support it financially as well, either with a donation or by raising money from branch members and sympathisers. We have also spent half the fund as it has come in on moving the party offices and printing facilities.

Please continue to send contributions, large or small. We have had a number of cheques for £100. We are aiming for 50 donations of £100 — to raise £5,000.

● Please send donations to: Workers Revolutionary Party PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

Workers Press

Some Lessons from France

THE FRENCH rail strike appears to have ended for the time being. But the issues which it brought to a head are by no means over. Its lessons concern every worker and socialist.

One of the Gare du Nord strikers is reported to have said: 'We didn't do this to bring down the government of Mr Chirac. I am defending my conditions of work.'

The fact remains that, whatever the consciousness of the workers, from day one the strike was political, a confrontation with the French state.

Here it was directly in line with the character of the British miners' strike.

Like the miners, the French railway workers were forced to confront the government to protect their jobs and living standards.

The action of the railway workers and the widespread support it received throughout the French working class came immediately after the climbdown which the French students forced from the right-wing Chirac government.

Students are the most explosive element of the middle class, the section least tied to the capitalist order. They are a classic barometer of the class struggle.

The size of the student movement and the immediacy of Chirac's retreat indicated the depth of the social forces which have erupted on the surface of French political life.

The railway worker's strike was neither initiated nor led by union leaders. It was started by a group of workers with little previous experience of struggle. Many were non-unionists.

Here again is an indication of the profound struggles opening up in Europe. The miners' strike also pulled behind it some of the most oppressed sections of society, particularly women. They were the backbone of the fight, the force that sustained the miners for more than a year.

The French rail strike comes after a decade of sharply falling union membership. There are now only some three million workers in the unions.

The Communist Party-led CGT has lost almost 1.5 million members since 1975 and is down to 1.1 million.

The strike also arose after the election of a right-wing government in March of last year.

Many interpreted this parliamentary swing to the right as a defeat for the working class. They have been shown to be utterly wrong.

Those who judge the fighting capacity of the working class merely through the strength of its traditional organisations and voting behaviour have once more been exposed as the reformists they are.

The rail strike polarised the French middle class. It gained widespread sympathy from groups such as the students and at the same time it fuelled demands for tough action from Chirac.

This week in London, 3,000 teachers marched through a near-blizzard in opposition to the Tory education Bill that will take away their trade union rights (see page 16).

The march was in protest against the suspension of the Inner London Teachers Association leadership. They have been suspended by a national executive determined to undermine the struggle against the Tories.

As in France, the teachers' stubborn resistance to the government expresses the combativity of large sections of the middle class.

With a determined fight in the working class such layers can certainly be won to the struggle for socialism.

The Anti-Apartheid Annual General Meeting

THERE was a problem getting into the Anti-Apartheid Movement annual general meeting. Everyone had to queue for an hour in the street to register one at a time and then queue again to be searched. Any non-AAM literature was confiscated. Then finally into the meeting.

There were at least 200 stewards, and a line of them, 50 at times, was always between the platform and the members.

On the second day someone pointed out in debate that if all these stewards moved there was hidden behind them a banner saying 'Release Nelson Mandela'.

Scottish Labour MP Bob Hughes, chairman of the AAM, opened the 1986 AGM and apologised for it being in 1987, explaining there had been a problem getting a hall.

(Hughes had signed the advert in the press during the Commonwealth Games last year calling on Commonwealth countries not to join the boycott over Thatcher's support for Botha.)

The standing orders report was challenged by a City of London Anti-Apartheid Group member. City Group doesn't exist as far as AAM is concerned but they were there as individual paid-up members of AAM.

Catch 22

He demanded the right to bring literature into the hall. Standing orders said this was not part of their report so it could not be challenged — Catch 22, since it was standing orders who ordered the action.

Another challenge was made by someone else but before he finished Hughes took the vote and declared it carried.

Abdul Minty then began the Annual report over a barrage of protests about the vote, lasting for ten minutes.

At that point the chair closed down the conference and called on everyone to leave. Many of the delegates left but all the protesters stayed. Arguments everywhere.

Eventually the chair came down from the platform and spoke to leaders of City Group. He agreed to re-count the vote. The delegates were then invited to come back into the conference.

Standing orders report was carried by 410 to 190. Most split votes throughout the conference went the same way.

Abdul Minty's report continued, shortened due to the interruption. The phrase 'pressure on the government' began to echo around. It was used so much during the weekend that collected up, put in a bag and dropped on No.10, it would surely kill the lot.

There was great praise for last year's work which amounted to:

- The mass demonstration last summer which ended up with a deficit of £42,000 and not many new members, as seen by the fact two months later only 400 could be got to picket the Commonwealth summit.
- A cycle ride for Mandela.
- The scabbing advert for

BOB MYERS gives his account of last weekend's AGM. Next week Workers Press will be publishing comments on the way forward for the anti-apartheid struggle from the Trade Union Sanctions Campaign and from City Group. We welcome other contributions. (Please limit them to 500 words.)

the Commonwealth Games.

Next, speakers from ANC and SWAPO. Liberation movement speakers and the authority of their movements were used several times to defend the leadership from criticism.

At lunchtime a fight broke out when supporters of Viraj Mendis, an AAM member facing deportation, tried to bring in leaflets. These were only given out the next day after the national committee was forced to recommend an emergency resolution supporting Viraj.

After lunch the constitutional changes were discussed. A resolution opposing all the changes was ruled out of order and the changes were moved bit by bit.

They are contained in a long document called 'Challenging Apartheid' which nowhere mentions challenging anything (except critics in the movement). This is only one bit of the Orwellian doublespeak which dominated the whole conference.

Many changes were proposed but the nub of the matter was to make AGMs only open to delegates from recognised local branches and trade unions and not to all members.

Many speakers waxed lyrical about the changes. A Labour MP from Sheffield talked about the North-South divide and poor hospital workers who can't afford to be individual members, but did not suggest as some voices from the audience did, that AAM lower its subscriptions for the low-paid, unemployed, youth and pensioners.

A trade union official spoke about how well trade union delegate conferences work.

Of course many seasoned Marxists supported this move to greater accountability and democracy. Both branches of Usec (Socialist Action and the International Group) were united again in constructing vast dream castles of mass democratic movements.

City Group, the RCG (Revolutionary Group), Workers Revolutionary Party and Workers Power pointed out that the changes are only proposed for one reason. To keep opposition out of next year's AGM.

An ACTT delegate, a steward from Grampian TV whose members have put their jobs on the line by not

handling South African material, could restrain himself no longer. He stormed to the rostrum and turned to those who were laughing and jeering a pensioner from City group. 'What is wrong with a group that can bring so many to conference, what is wrong with picketing the South African embassy?' he asked, and appealed for unity.

Then a storm broke out over resolutions from Wakefield and Dundee condemning Hughes and Scottish AAM secretary Brian Filling for their actions during the Commonwealth games.

An amendment moved by the Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS) gave a gentle slap on the wrist — and praise for their hard work.

The debate took place with chants of 'resign' and 'scabs'.

We were told it was a bit of a mistake, a tactical error. Most disgusting of all, Chairman Hughes blustered: 'Our letter got Budd and Cowley out of the games.'

Moving another resolution calling for their resignation, one speaker reported she was in Zimbabwe during the Games. The papers were full of denunciations of Thatcher and support for the boycott — and AAM leaders were trying to break it.

The gentle wrist slap was carried.

Responsibility

At the end of the first day Zolile Keke from the PAC reminded conference that Britain bears the main responsibility for the situation in South Africa and that the solidarity movement bears a grave responsibility likewise.

'Please,' he said, 'we in South Africa say, please, no more mistakes.'

Last year this speaker had to fight for his right to speak. This time he paid tribute to David Kitson:

'I was 18 when Kitson was jailed. I remember his speech from the dock where he sent a message to his children: "I love you. I did what I did because it was right." This inspired us to fight.'

The Kitson family was sitting amidst the City Group members.

Keke paid tribute to City Group and the Non-Stop picket at South Africa House

and pointed out the PAC welcomes action from every quarter of every kind. He appealed for unity.

He spoke of the prisoners (he spent ten years inside). He told conference that the leader of the PAC Zephaniah Mthopeng, who is doing life on Robben Island, is being operated on without his consent.

Keke appealed for the movement to demand his release and right to come abroad for medical treatment.

Many did not stand for the ovation, which was given to all other liberation speakers. The next day the PAC was attacked from the platform despite their own constant message that it is not our right to criticise the liberation movements.

Torchlight

When conference closed, City Group and its supporters held a torchlight demonstration to the South African embassy to join those who maintained the picket throughout the day.

SUNDAY was much the same.

The trade union debate, on which there were more resolutions than any other topic, was cut off after ten minutes. Many long, well-thought-out speeches on trade union work never got made. Some blamed City group for its disruptions.

SATIS, the AAM body supposed to deal with prisoners, was congratulated for its work. Someone asked why SATIS allows the position where some prisoners do not have the money even to buy soap for their cells, and why the families of leading comrades in jail are selling eggs on the streets to feed themselves.

A motion supporting the Non-Stop picket was dropped because of 'lack of time'.

Many worthy resolutions committing nobody to anything in particular were nodded through.

The financial deficit was praised.

An unemployed black member from Liverpool called the conference a 'white, middle class, fat-arsed farce'.

The last stages of the conference were drowned out by justifiably angry City Group members demanding the taking of resolution 16 on the Non-Stop picket.

As 400 delegates out of the 600 left, City Group continued the conference and passed resolution 16.

This would be funny if it were not so serious.

Bring back Victoria Williams!

ELECTRONICS student David Williams came home from college one day to be told by neighbours that immigration officials had called at his home and taken away his wife!

On May 14, 1986 Victoria Williams was deported to Ghana, separated from her husband after only six months of marriage.

Both Victoria's parents are dead and she has no family in Ghana.

She has no means of support and is virtually destitute. She has had to sell her clothes just to survive.

BY VICTOR STOCKPOLE

Her health has suffered considerably and she is now being treated for severe depression caused by the separation from her husband.

Appeals by the United Kingdom Immigration Advisory Service (UKIAS) and local MP Sir George Young have failed to move the Home office.

A letter from Victoria's psychiatrist in Ghana, appealing to the Home Office to allow her to rejoin David on humanitarian grounds,

has also received a stony response.

A campaign is being launched in the labour and trade union movement to fight for the resettlement of Victoria Williams in Britain.

The scrapping of all racist immigration laws must be part of the transitional demands on any future Labour government.

● The first meeting of the campaign will be:

**Friday January 23, 7.30p.m.
West London Trade Union Club
33 High Street, Acton
London W3.**



Glasgow strike against sack plans

WORKERS at Hussmans factory in Shawfield, Glasgow, stayed out on strike last week against a management plan to save costs with sackings and pay cuts.

Representatives of the American-based multi-national, which took over the firm last year, were expected to arrive for talks during the week.

'I am sure this is the beginning of attacks on trade union rights, not the end,' said one worker on the picket line. 'They want to get the workforce under their thumb.'

BEWARE PRINT SELL-OUT

COMMENT BY
ALAN CLARK

SACKED PRINTWORKERS are preparing for the first anniversary, on January 24, of their bitter dispute with Murdoch.

But they must beware a sell-out, especially now that the 58p levy of SOGAT members to support those sacked has been rejected by the membership.

The union leadership and Willis never wanted a long drawn-out dispute and every effort will now be made by them to bring it to an end as quickly as possible.

But the printers will not be sold out so easily, not after a year of sacrifice and fighting for their jobs and union recognition.

They have stood firm and shown that, as far as they are concerned the dispute is

not about money, but about principles.

The barbed wire fortress at Wapping, presently staffed by members of the EET-PU, whose leaders conspired with Murdoch months in advance of the mass sackings, have scabbed for the last 12 months, producing his papers.

Every effort by the print unions to get the EETPU expelled from the TUC has come to nothing.

All the TUC general secretary has done has been to gently slap the wrist of EETPU general secretary Eric Hammond.

What the printworkers need more than anything on

January 24 is a resounding show of strength from the trade union movement as a whole.

The rest of Fleet Street must join their sacked colleagues on this demonstration, and show Dean, Dubbins and Willis they won't accept a sell-out at any price.

The printworkers need the help of the trade unions to beat Murdoch, not just in boycotting his papers but in a physical display of solidarity.

But what they need more than anything is a leadership that will show them how to win.

The dispute has shown the

need for the newspaper industry to be taken out of the hand of owners like Murdoch and put into the hands of the men and women who have been in the printing trade all their lives.

Along with other industries — the land, banks and insurance companies — the newspaper and printing industries must be nationalised under workers' control in a socialist planned economy, and run for the benefit of the working class and not for the few to make exorbitant profits.

We have to say that this will not be done under a Labour government, but only by the working class taking power.

Partial climbdown by shipyard bosses

THE SEVEN week lock-out at Austin and Pickersgill, Sunderland, part of British Shipbuilders, has ended.

A mass meeting decided by a majority vote to accept the deal worked out by the Shipbuilding National Committee and British Shipbuilders at national level.

Angry shipyard workers demanded to know why the SNC had been reluctant to support the men in dispute.

During seven weeks locked out by the shipyard bosses, not one single national union endorsed the men's stand by paying strike pay.

The dispute over sub-contract work and overtime erupted after management locked out 53 men for refusing to work overtime. The 850 men then voted by 19 to one in a secret ballot on industrial action to defend the locked-out men.

Behind the issue of sub-contract work are the sav-

age jobs cuts announced in early 1986 and still to be implemented.

Austin and Pickersgill are the only section of shipyard workers to have opposed compulsory redundancies demanded by the nationalised company.

In two successive strikes over the past months they have consistently challenged the way sub-contracting is being used to reduce the labour force.

Management planned to sub-contract steelmaking outside the yard, leaving the workforce to install it.

This is the second strike that has resulted in a partial climbdown by the bosses. Shop stewards have warned they will fight any plan to introduce compulsory redundancies over the coming months.

BY HUGHIE NICOL

Some workers demanded they should stay out to recoup the Christmas statutory holiday pay management had refused to pay.

But the yard committee argued they had achieved 85 per cent of the demands and this was in no way a defeat.

Balloon

ENTREPRENEUR and Thatcher acolyte, multi-millionaire Dickie Branson, is directing his capacity for releasing hot air in a new venture: he is making plans for an Atlantic crossing in a solar-powered balloon.

The furthest a hot-air balloon has travelled before is said to be 940 miles (overland). Gas-filled balloon crossings of the Atlantic have been achieved but never one generating its own hot air. With Branson aboard it should be a doddle.

Free Brutan Perera!

The Workers Revolutionary Party has received the following letter supporting the international campaign for the release of Brutan Perera, a Sri Lankan Trotskyist, who faces a frame-up charge of bank robbery from the Jayawardene regime.

Workers Revolutionary Party
Dear Comrades,

**Release Brutan Perera:
Defend All Political Prisoners**
Thank you for your letter dated 26 November, 1986 regarding the above which was considered by my Area Executive Committee at their meeting of 16 December, 1986.

I was instructed to write to you and state that we support the campaign to release Brutan Perera.

I wish you success with the campaign.

Yours faithfully,
Wm. Etherington
General Secretary
Durham Mechanics

THATCHER'S BRITAIN

A SHORTAGE of ambulances and properly trained ambulance staff brought about by budget cuts affecting the Ealing area could put hundreds of lives at risk. Untrained volunteers and minicabs are being employed to overcome this shortage but the cost involved could be better used employing properly trained staff, Stuart Barber of NUPE said.

As hospitals are forced to reduce their quota of beds by 0.5 per cent each year the increase in the numbers of outpatients correspondingly rises.

'Put your foot down and get to hospital as soon as possible' is the sort of advice given as substitute for lack of real medical training.

ONE entire wing of Albany prison on the Isle of Wight has been closed down by the local health officer because urine was seeping down into the cells, passageways and food serving areas.

Such is the critical state of overcrowding in the prisons in England and Wales generally, the government may well reopen disused army camps to deal with the overflow in a measure to avoid the threat of rioting similar to those that have broken out in Scottish jails in recent months.

SEVEN years of Thatcher have left many writers unfocused. This is the opinion of artistic director of the Royal Court Theatre Max Stafford-Clark.

Defending the forthcoming production of a new play by Jim Allen which takes as its subject the wartime role of Hungarian Jews, Stafford-Clark stated:

'Too many senior writers have got stuck. Some of the younger ones seem quite conservative.'

ELEVEN years of equal pay legislation has hardly improved women's pay. In 1975, when the 1970 Act was implemented, women's average gross hourly earnings were 72.1 per cent of men's. They have now increased — but only to 74.1 per cent of men's.

Keeping women segregated in particular jobs means they are not in grades where their work can be compared with that of men.

Nearly always (98 per cent), men are supervised by

men, yet only 43 per cent of women are supervised by women.

Even where women are highly qualified, they are often segregated away from men. Only after considerable union pressure in particular firms have women achieved higher grades.

ASIAN women bear the brunt of racism from housing departments, reports Pragna Patel of the Southall Black Sisters group.

When they apply for housing they are often subjected to discriminatory passport checks; they are accused of making themselves intentionally homeless by leaving their countries of origin; they are fobbed off without being told their rights; they are offered properties on run-down estates which are sites of National Front activity, and when they are subject to attacks, are told that racial attacks are not a valid reason for transfer.

RESTART, the government scheme set up to provide jobs for the long-term unemployed, has achieved a success rate of less than 1 per cent, according to details revealed in an internal document sent to the chief executive of the Manpower Services Commission.

This sensational admission is based on statistics from nine pilot schemes covering an area between Dundee and Plymouth.

Out of 2,009 people 'submitted' to jobs (to use the official jargon), only 120 actually ended up with paid employment, explained away rather conveniently by the MSC who claim the point of the scheme is in 'trying to restore their (the long-term unemployed applicants') motivation and sharpen their job search skills'.

THE government's 'north-south' myth took another knock last week when figures were published which showed unemployment rising in the south east.

There are more people unemployed in London than in any other region of the United Kingdom except the North west.

In inner London, one person in four is unemployed, and London has lost a third of its manufacturing jobs since 1978.

The Distinguished, Polite Foreigner

MRS THATCHER, like many Tory and Labour politicians, has spent the last days reminding us that Harold Macmillan was a 'Tory of the people', 'a Conservative with the common touch'.

As expected, Labour leader Neil Kinnock echoed these sentiments when tributes were made to the late Lord Stockton in the House of Commons last week.

In 1959, when Prime Minister, Macmillan went to Sunderland on a Meet-the-People tour. He had been MP for that constituency for 18 years. Yet when he went to the shipyard he was baffled by a sudden change in the behaviour of the workmen when the hooter gave its bronchial blast.

At one moment, they were standing about... watching him watching them. At the next, they were flooding around and past him out of the shipyard gate. His eyebrows twitched in surprise and he muttered something to his wife. Lady Dorothy was quicker on the uptake.

'When the whistle blows,' she explained, 'they all go for their luncheon.'

The January 23 (1959) issue of the 'Spectator' that carried the story observed so many details of ordinary life appeared mysterious to the Tory Prime Minister that 'the impression given was of a distinguished, polite foreigner being steered round the backwoods of some remote colony'.

Public Order — the new law

SECTION 11 of the 1986 Public Order Act came into force on January 1, 1987 along with Section 38.

What does this new Act mean for organisations in the labour movement and on the left?

This first part lays down conditions for notice to be given to the police for demonstrations and pickets and allows for a three-month prison sentence or £1,000 fine for infringement.

Restrict

The rest of the Act comes into force on 1 April 1987 and enables the police to restrict demonstrations and pickets — their duration, location and size.

For example, police will be able to restrict an action like last week's Broadwater Farm picket at the Old Bailey by saying, for example, that it may not be held at the Old Bailey and should be limited to half an hour and 20 people.

A Campaign Against Police Repression has been set up to fight the law, based at 83 Blackstock Road, London N4; tel 01-881 2938. The campaign is planning to demonstrate immediately after the rest of the law comes into force on April 1, following their January 1 march.

Notice

● SECTION 11 reads as follows:

1. Written notice shall be given in accordance with this section of any proposal to hold a public procession intended

(a) to demonstrate support for or opposition to the views or actions of any person or body of persons

(b) to publicise a cause or campaign, or

(c) to mark or commemorate an event,

unless it is not reasonably practicable to give any adv-



An arrest made on the January 3 CAPR march against the Public Order Act

ance notice of the procession.

2. Subsection 1 does not apply where the procession is one commonly or customarily held in the police area (or areas) in which it is proposed to be held or is a funeral procession organised by a funeral director acting in the normal course of business.

3. The notice must specify the date when it is intended to hold the procession, the time when it is intended to start it, its proposed route and the name and address of the person (or one of the persons) proposing to organise it.

4. Notice must be delivered to a police station

(a) in the police area in which it is proposed the procession will start, or

(b) where it is proposed the procession will start in Scotland and cross into England, in the first police area in England on the proposed route.

5. If delivered not less than six clear days before the date when the procession is intended to be held, the notice may be delivered by post by the recorded delivery service; but Section 7 of the Interpretation Act 1978 (under which a document sent by post is deemed to have been served when posted and to have been delivered in the ordinary course of post) does not apply.

6. If not delivered in accordance with subsection 5, the notice must be delivered by hand not less than six clear days before the date when the procession is intended to be held or, if that is not reasonably practicable, as soon as delivery is reasonably practicable.

7. Where a public procession is held, each of the persons organising it is guilty of an offence if

(a) the requirements of this section as to notice have not been satisfied, or

(b) the date when it is held,

the time when it starts, or its route differs from the date, time or route specified in the notice.

8. It is a defence for the accused to prove that he did not know of, and neither suspected nor had reason to suspect, the failure to satisfy the requirements or (as the case may be) the difference of date, time or route.

9. To the extent that an alleged offence turns on a difference of date, time or route, it is a defence for the accused to prove that the difference arose from circumstances beyond his control or from something done with the agreement of a police officer or by his direction.

10. A person guilty of an offence under subsection 7 is liable to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

● SECTION 38 concerns the contamination of or interference with goods with intention of causing public alarm or anxiety etc.

Scots Republicans fingered

CRUDE fascist-style threats against socialists and pro-Republicans in Britain, feature in the latest issue of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) magazine.

A witch-hunting article bears all the paw-marks of the British National Party (BNP) and other fascist groups, who distribute the magazine, 'Ulster', in Britain.

A recent anti-internment demonstration in London is described as 'a scruffy band of Pakistanis, Iranians, Communists, Lesbians and Homosexuals as well as other sub-humans'.

The Longsight area of Manchester, where this year's march commemorating the Manchester martyrs took place, apparently 'houses rat-bags in the shape of left-wingers, Asians and is totally devoid of real British people.'

Labour councillors who dared to attend pro-Irish demonstrations are singled out for attack.

Such views would pass unnoticed in the BNP's own

rag, but it is a sign of their increasingly close contact with right-wing Ulster groups that they appear in 'Ulster', a large-circulation legal publication.

The article, written by 'John Dunbar', provides names and addresses of political activists and members of Republican flute bands in Scotland.

Dunbar gives the telephone number and address of someone he claims is 'a very important IRA organiser/co-ordinator' in Glasgow, and the ex-directory number of someone who allegedly 'collects and parades in Ulster for the Provisional IRA'.

Particularly outrageous is the inclusion of the names, address and telephone num-

ber of an elderly couple in a Glasgow suburb. Their crime is that their son is 'a person involved in the tutoring of republican bands', who 'now resides in London'.

'Fingered' as 'stockists of Republican books and papers' are the Hope Street Book Centre and Clyde Books.

There is concern among labour movement activists in Glasgow at the links between British fascists and right-wing Ulster groups. Some of those named in the article are taking legal advice.

Low pay conference

THE concentration of low pay among women, who represent the majority of its membership as well as 50 per cent of the local government workforce, will be one of the main topics on the agenda of a conference to be held on February 7 in Sheffield by NALGO and the City Council.

According to a recent survey 241,800 non-manual staff out of a total of 722,700 in the area are paid less than the low-pay threshold of £115 per week. Despite being only 50 per cent of the workforce, 80 per

cent of this figure are in fact women. NALGO believes low pay among women is not only due to the widespread nature of the problem. It is also due to the lack of equal opportunities for women in local government employment. Women are concentrated in the job segregated areas of clerical, typing and secretarial work.

The conference in Sheffield will discuss strategies for combating low pay among women and other groups of workers. Further information may be obtained by ringing NALGO on 01-388 2366.

BUS DEREGULATION

January 26 is D-day

JANUARY 26 is when the government's bus deregulation begins to bite.

All over the country private bus companies have given notice they will cease to run unprofitable routes from that day.

BY ROY THOMAS

The first effect of bus deregulation last November was the shutdown of the bus manufacturing industry.

New bus purchases have fallen from 3,000 per year to under 300. There is now a roundabout of second-hand buses. London's 30-year-old 'Routemaster' buses are used in Glasgow and Blackpool and ex-Glasgow Corporation buses are used in London.

In Lancashire, 'Ribble' are using a 25-year-old vintage bus on a school bus contract.

London Buses (the bus-operating subsidiary of London Regional Transport), instructed by the secretary of state to cut their 1987 budget by £24 million, has abandoned its bus purchase programme to update its fleet of 4,500 buses. Instead they propose to buy back ten-year-old fleet lines sold off three years ago.

A poll by Harris Research in Manchester showed 31 per cent thought the service a little worse, 27 per cent much worse, 28 per cent claimed their use of buses had decreased.

Only 3 per cent claimed greater use of buses since deregulation while 54 per cent said deregulation had caused 'a great deal of inconvenience'.

But more inconvenience is yet to come!

● Greater Manchester Buses has told Lancashire Council it will cease to run five of its routes, won by tender, after January 26.

The council will have to pay out hundreds of thousands of pounds of subsidy to other bus operators if there is to be any public bus service at all on these routes.

● In Solihull three routes have already been abandoned and notice has been given to the council of the intention of private bus companies to drop more services on January 26.

● In Scotland many evening and weekend services have already been dropped from rural areas.

By the end of January the flood of buses (up to 350 per hour) will have gone from the streets of Glasgow.

Wage cuts

AT conferences of bus managers the talk now is: how to overcome the resistance of workers to work longer hours for less pay.

While in the north bus managers talk of cutting wages below £2 per hour by using '18-year-olds and women from other service industries where low wages have been traditional'.

Higher wages in London and the South East — £3 per hour for minibus drivers and £4 per hour for London one-person drivers — faces the employers with a problem. The move towards 90-per cent one person operated

buses (OPOs) in London has led to a massive increase in the number of drivers being medically retired, unfit and unsafe to drive.

The 1986 total medically retired will be over 500 — out of 12,000 drivers employed.

But since safety standards must not be allowed to stand in the way of making a profit, ten-year-old buses sold off by London Buses as below standard three years ago are being repainted and driven on routes taken over by private bus companies by some of those drivers medically retired by London Red Buses.

Profit strip

THE object of bus deregulation outside London and the break-up of London Transport is to open public transport to the profit strippers.

But money could not be made out of bus services with the standard of service, safety and fares maintained under elected councils like the GLC or South Yorkshire.

Standards had to be brought down before a profit could be made.

Higher fares, longer waits, fewer buses hit every family every day. They make a more sustained impact on more working people than any of the other attacks on public services mounted by the Tory government.

Like the health service and education, the problem of Public Transport cannot be solved without tackling who controls the finance: the banks and City finance managers or the working class, who create the wealth in the first place.

Yet the Labour Party does not even have a Front Bench spokesman on Transport.

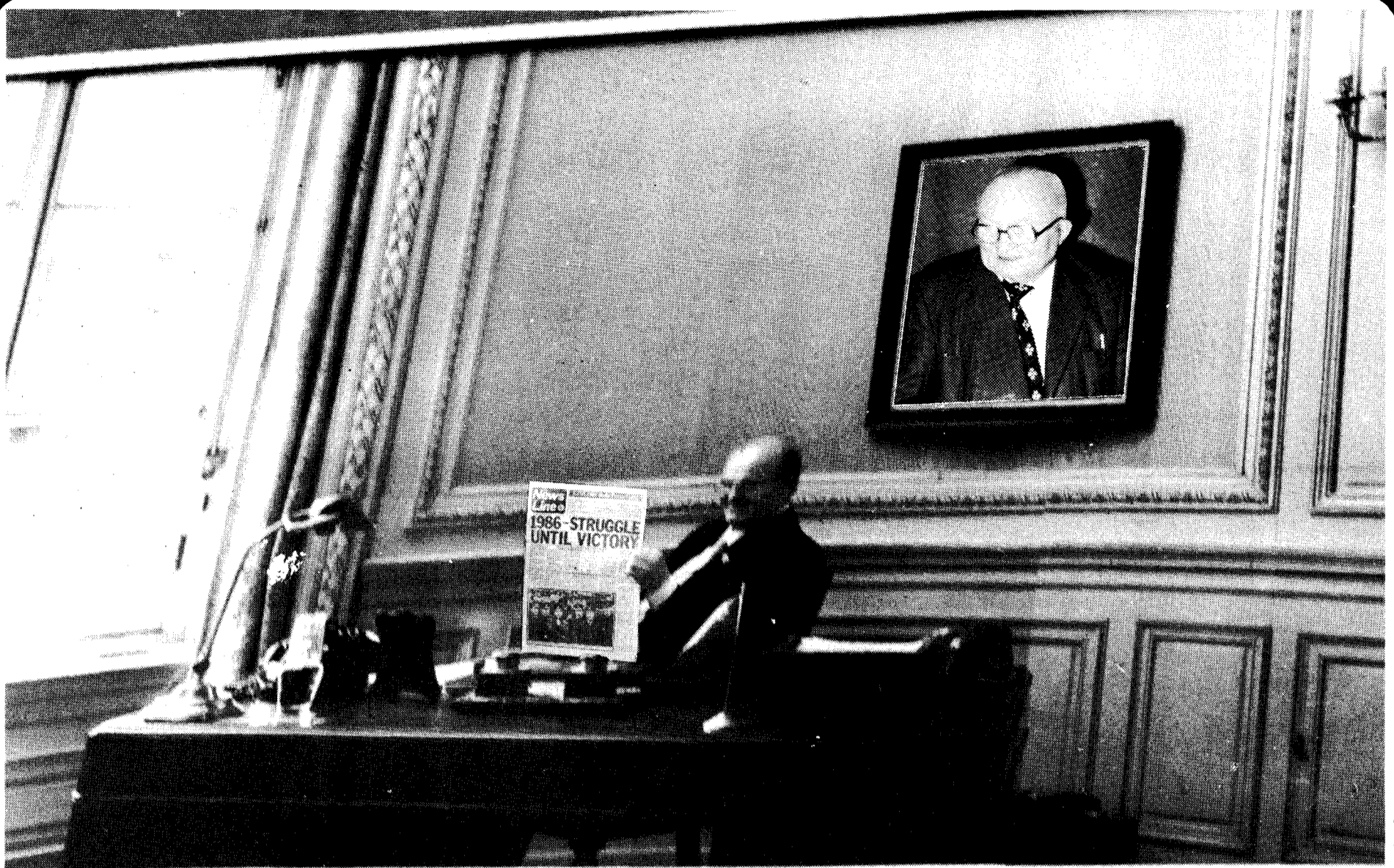
The Labour Party says it will renationalise. But since the object of the government is to break up the main bus organisations like London Transport and South Yorkshire Transport Authority, what will there be left to renationalise?

The increasing demand for community control of bus and rail services is sending shivers down the spines of Labour leaders at national and local level.

The fiasco of bus deregulation proves that in a civilised society the needs of the mass of the people cannot be met under a system based on profit.

● The growing opposition to the profit-making orientation must not be taken for granted, but organised.

● The growing hostility to the dismantling of the health service, the worsening housing shortage, inadequate education and disappearing bus service must not be allowed to become the basis for parish pump politics but must instead be the spur to the urgent reorganisation of society on a socialist basis.



Gorbachev studying what is right.

Photomontage by Tom Scott Robson

Torrance and Healy: What next?

BY CYRIL SMITH

OUR INFORMATION about the goings on in the Healy-Redgrave-Torrance group is necessarily scanty. But as Workers Press has reported, there are now indications that Healy is no longer in charge, and that the Redgraves and a handful (mostly Equity members) are left supporting him against Torrance and the rest.

How should we assess this development? I believe it would be quite wrong to simply rub our hands, congratulating ourselves on seeing our predictions confirmed.

The Workers Revolutionary Party, after many months of internal crisis following the expulsion of this group, is now beginning to find its political feet and its theoretical bearings.

We have begun to grasp the international significance of ejecting Healy from his previous dominant position, and of his degeneration over the previous decades.

This is the context in which we should view the breakup of this group — if this is what it turns out to be. When Healy ran away from the WRP, unable to face the charges against him of sexual and other abuses, this was the group which came together to defend him.

But I don't feel like laughing at their present predicament. Having followed a Guru rather than Marxist principles, they now find they have thrown away their political lives.

Instead of sacrificing themselves for the revolution they have died politically in the battle for a reactionary perversion of

revolutionary politics.

The dispute between Healy and his former allies seems to have erupted over his discovery last summer that the political revolution to overthrow the Soviet bureaucracy was taking place in part at least under the leadership of Gorbachev and a group of Soviet philosophers.

We must take seriously the work of Evald Ilyenkov and his supporters. Beginning soon after Stalin's death, they fought to regenerate Soviet philosophy, rescuing it from the bureaucratic distortions that had predominated since the 1930s.

Returning to the writings of Marx and Lenin, they made an important contribution in placing this work within the context of the history of philosophy.

We can't blame them for not openly explaining the political significance of their ideas. Certainly, in the course of building sections of the Fourth International, this work will be put to good use.

But it is quite wrong to claim that these academic writings themselves are part of the overthrow of the bureaucracy, or that they can defeat its counter-revolutionary war against the spread of the October revolution.

Healy has only dared to make one public appearance since his flight from the WRP in October 1985. That was last August, when he popped up unadvertised on the platform of their Trotsky memorial meeting.

In his speech, he explained that 'Because of the world economic and political crisis . . . we have

within the Soviet Union . . . also a considerable crisis of leadership.

'The old Stalinist bureaucracy . . . is beginning to break up and on Gorbachev's own admission it cannot continue in the old way. And this means the political revolution in the Soviet Union is under way.'

Healy did point out the limitations of the Soviet philosophers, but in a peculiar way:

'They made these advances, not to advance the goal of the world revolution, but to develop the natural sciences within the Soviet Union. And it is here, of course, that we have a great contribution to make, an essential contribution.'

Alien

Now, we must not underestimate the importance of the changes taking place in the USSR. But we have to grasp them on the basis of Trotsky's analysis of the bureaucratic degeneration of the first workers' state.

The bureaucracy is 'a caste alien to socialism'. It acts as an agency of imperialism, both within the world labour movement and in the Soviet state.

Gorbachev's moves represent two things at once. To some extent they are an attempt to contain the demands of the Soviet workers within bureaucratic limits.

At the same time they are bound up with the economic requirements of the bureaucracy. Following the lead of Poland, the USSR and the rest of Eastern

Europe are now becoming large scale borrowers from the international banks.

In order to take Soviet technology into the 1990s, these states cannot avoid getting entangled in the net of the imperialist debt-system. This is the logic of 'socialism in one country' today.

There is a clear parallel between Healy's latest shift towards Moscow and his previous ill-fated plans to forge an alliance with left-talking politicians and militant union leaders.

In neither case does the independent action of the working class figure in his calculations.

A mysterious emanation, dubbed the 'world revolutionary crisis' would somehow carry the whole thing along.

Healy could magically tune in to this process by means of incantations from the idealist mysticism he had concocted out of Lenin's reading of Hegel. In this way, with the help of the Torrance machine, revolution was to be conjured up.

Now we can see the real meaning of this method: it is to hand over the fate of the revolution to the bureaucracy.

In the course of the miners' strike, the first of a series of class battles, reality forced its way in.

It came to the aid of Trotskyism, which had never been completely extinguished within the WRP. Healy and Torrance fell out, came together again, and were blown out of the party together.

A process of theoretical reconstruction and re-discovery began, both in the new WRP and interna-

tionally. The most promising situation in the history of the Fourth International was then opened up.

Healy's evolution is very important for this clarification. When he took over the leadership of the Trotskyist movement in the 1950s, he was a fervent admirer of Pablo's theories that 'automatic and irreversible processes' would push the bureaucracy on the road to revolution.

Then, in 1953, he joined with Cannon in opposing this line, which would have destroyed the entire world movement. In this fight, one of his most vigorous supporters was Mike Banda.

It is most significant that both Healy and Banda should have come out so openly and so rapidly as adaptors to Stalinism, in the wake of the explosion in the WRP.

Banda has gone deeper into the bureaucratic undergrowth, and will, no doubt, emerge in quite another part of the political forest.

We should recall the recent statement of Ted Grant. He too was once a leading Trotskyist. After years of studying Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, he has discovered the possibility of getting socialism peacefully. This will happen, if you please, by means of the next Labour government but one!

We have to probe more deeply the meaning of these rapid movements towards bureaucracy on the part of these former leaders of post-war Trotskyism.

It becomes ever clearer that the fight with Pablo was not a minor disagreement. It was fundamental to the continuation of Trotsky's struggle for the International and to the fight for the movement to break out of a propaganda circle existence and into the leadership.

Only by understanding the theoretical roots of the failures of these leaders can we succeed as Marxists today.



US rallies protest use of National Guard MILITARY BUILD-UP AGAINST NICARAGUA

BIG demonstrations have taken place in several parts of the United States opposing the Reagan administration's military build-up against Nicaragua, particularly the sending of reservists and National Guardsmen to Honduras.

US troops last week began work improving an airstrip in Honduras just 17 miles from the Nicaraguan border.

The 200 combat engineers flown in from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, were parachuted into the area ahead of more than 7,000 troops who will take part in so-called 'exercises' codenamed 'Big Pine '87'.

The airstrip near the border is at Jamastran, where last month US helicopters ferried Honduran troops to confront Nicaraguan forces pursuing US-backed Contra terrorists.

At least 67 Contra officers trained by the US military at a secret camp in Florida have recently returned to their bases in central America, according to a 'New York Times' report.

More than 300 more Contra commanders are being trained this year as part of the Reagan administration's drive to beef-up this motley right-wing crew into a more effective fighting force.

Congress has approved \$100 million aid for the Contras at Reagan's behest, though revelations of how their previous opposition was sidestepped in the 'Contragate-Irangate' affair could lead to this being questioned again.

The military want to speed their war preparations to make the most of their millions while they last.

At the same time, senior US commanders doubt the Contras can do more than harass and terrorise civilians. This has led to fears that Reagan may be tempted to direct US military intervention more closely.

Some 4,500 US Reservists are being sent to Honduras this month to take part in Terrenco Sierra '87, building military roads.

US government propaganda tells the reserves and folks back home they are going on a 'goodwill mission' to help poor Hondurans get to market and school.

But the 'National Guard Update', published by an anti-war group in St. Louis, Missouri, quotes a Missouri National Guardsman who took part in last year's similar programme as saying his unit carried rifles and sidearms at all times, and that

Honduran troops put a cordon around the road project to keep 'local bandits' away.

The 'Update' says: 'In reality the roads are being built to military standards in a strategic location in central Honduras in order to connect military bases and to facilitate rapid deployment of US troops into Honduras and to the borders of Nicaragua and/or El Salvador in the event of a mobilisation.'

Last month it was reported that 100 Florida National Guardsmen were training with Honduran troops in El Paraiso, 18 miles from the Nicaraguan border. They were artillery units, training with live ammunition.

By sending reserve troops into Honduras during their training periods, the Reagan administration dispenses with the need for Congress authorisation of military construction and deployment. Under 'training' the Department of Defence is answerable only to itself.

Opposition

To avoid any opposition from state governors, who officially have charge of the National Guard in each state, only National Guardsmen from certain states are being sent. The remainder of the force will be regular Army reservists, who are under direct federal jurisdiction.

In a further ruse, exposed by 'National Guard Update', the Defence Department is treating large scale military road projects as a series of small projects for accounting purposes. Each stage of a road is supposed to be a separate small road!

This way the Reagan administration evades having to officially report projects to Congress for authorisation.

In 1984, a General Accounting Office report on similar practices declared that evading accountability in this way was illegal.

Not that such considerations ever weigh much with Reagan or the Pentagon.

REAGAN ARMS ROW HITS U.S. MID-EAST ALLIANCES

FRESH documentary evidence of what US President Ronald Reagan was told about secret arms sales to Iran has added to the reverberations from the arms row.

The tremors from Washington have sent visible fissures through US imperialism's Middle East alliances.

A memorandum from Admiral John Poindexter, released by the White House on January 9, showed Reagan was asked to authorise arms sales over a year ago, and signed the papers. The White House claims the President signed without having read it!

US Middle East envoy Richard Murphy had talks with Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak last weekend and also met with King Hussein of Jordan.

Both Arab rulers, normally pro-US, have strongly criticised the sales to Iran, against which they have backed Iraq in the Gulf War. Mubarak said in November that the arms affair had damaged US credibility in the Arab world.

Last week the government-backed 'Egyptian Mail' complained: 'Mr. Murphy's tour appears to be mainly an attempt to soothe Arab anger over the arms deal without offering anything substantial to make up for that appalling decision.'

Embarrassed in Cairo

HAVING found the Gulf War useful as a diversion from the Palestine issue, a way of helping Iraq's Ba'athist regime realign with them and a cover for pro-imperialist dependency, right-wing Arab regimes have been embarrassed into anger by the exposure of US duplicity.

There is the further embarrassment that while Iraqis and Iranians have been slaughtering each other, Saudi business interests joined Israeli generals in profiting from the war.

Murphy asserted in Cairo that arms shipments to Iran were aimed at helping restore US relations with it. This fits with what Poindexter's memorandum said was the aim proposed by the Israelis for arms deals: 'To create conditions to bring about a more moderate government in Iran.'

This might please America's imperialist allies in Europe concerned that their hero 'Rambo' Reagan had broken his 'anti-terrorist' pose by backing down over hostages. It is far from reassuring for the Arab states.

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

They realise that if US policy seeks a 'moderate' (i.e. pro-imperialist) Iran, then — in line with Israeli strategy too — it will have far less use for the 'moderate' Arab states.

To salvage some credibility for its pro-US policy, the Egyptian government hoped the Reagan administration might offer some encouragement for Egypt's efforts to restart the 'Middle East peace process'.

Mubarak proposed a preparatory committee including UN Security Council



MUBARAK

For Arabs, this was one more sign that the Reagan administration regards its interests in the Middle East as identical with those of the Zionists.

Worried in Tel Aviv

MEANWHILE, the Zionists too were worried.

Not over the arms deals, of course, but about the way the White House is handling the scandal.

Even the thickest and most loyally pro-US of Israeli leaders are con-

'I lied for Reagan'

PRESIDENT Reagan's National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane says he wrote a lying memo pretending Reagan did not approve an Israeli shipment of US arms to Iran in 1985. McFarlane told NBC news last week that he did this after meeting with Admiral Poindexter and Colonel North last November, when they agreed to cover up for Reagan.

North altered a statement on what had happened to say the US had 'acquiesced' in the arms deal, rather than 'endorsed' it, as he had written earlier. Two days later, on November 19, after being briefed by Poindexter, the President claimed at a White House press conference: 'We have nothing to do with other countries or their shipments of arms.' McFarlane says now that Reagan approved the arms shipments in advance, in August 1985, and conveyed this to all his top advisers.

members to prepare an international conference on Arab-Israeli peace. This would move closer to the Soviet Union's call for such a conference, involving both Soviet and PLO participation.

But Murphy, most senior US official to visit Cairo since last year's US-backed Egypt-Israeli summit, which bore little fruit, had no comfort to offer. He said the United States did not see any value in such a committee, and repeated the standard US line of 'direct talks' — that is, in reality, talks between the Zionist state and Arab regimes, at the expense of the Palestinians who are directly concerned, and with the Soviet Union kept out.

fronted with what they hoped never to face — that imperialism's dogs-of-war can also be its scapegoats.

Ex-Carter Secretary of State Zbigniew Brzezinski protested soon after the 'Irangate' scandal broke that Reagan had allowed the Israelis to impose their own 'agenda' as America's policy. Senior US officials have evidently turned this criticism into a line of defence, when under attack.

Former Israeli Foreign Ministry director-general David Kimche complained that the National Security Council memorandum released by the White House created a misleading impression (an art with which he will be familiar from his Mossad days!), namely that

Israel had initiated the Iran deal. Kimche insisted that the Reagan administration had sought Israeli help to approach Iran, long before Poindexter's memorandum.

Prime Minister Shamir said the memorandum was 'far from the truth and contradicts reality.'

As top-level 'leaks' and allegations in Washington continued to point the finger at Israeli responsibility, an unnamed 'senior government official' quoted by Israeli newspapers last week called the allegations 'absurd and pathetic', and said US officials were trying to blame Israel for Washington's disaster.

In Washington last week it was being said that it was Amram Nir, adviser on terrorism to former Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres, who suggested diverting profits from the Iran arms deal to the Contras fighting Nicaragua.

Visiting Italy, Peres, now Foreign Minister, insisted: 'I can repeat categorically that Israel did not play any role in diverting money to the Contras.'

The Israelis were shipping arms to Iran as early as 1983, seeing neither Carter's embargo nor Khomeini's fierce vocal 'anti-Zionism' as obstacles. In the summer of 1985, the Reagan administration approached Israel to act as go-between with Iran, and US approved arms shipments began soon after.

Israeli involvement in central America has been considerable, including arms supplies to regimes which the Carter administration preferred not to be seen dealing with, and sending military advisers. The Contra connection would continue links with Nicaraguan dictator Somoza before his overthrow.

Whether or not they initiated the funds diversion, the Israeli government did at Washington's request ship Soviet-made arms captured in Lebanon to the Contras.

The Reagan administration is now trusted neither by its Arab or Zionist allies. But the Arab states have the advantage of room to manoeuvre.

The Soviet Union has resumed arms supplies to Iraq, and is pursuing diplomatic and trade openings with even the most conservative of Arab states.

Pitted against the Arab peoples, and having relied totally on military strength and US aid, the Zionist leaders have tied their state hand and foot to US imperialism.

Homework — with Sewing Machines and Computers

IN the United States 13 million are now estimated to be working from their own homes.

Officially, homework has been illegal since 1942 but a survey of job advertising in the New York newspapers shows that such work is openly offered and taken up.

The US government is willing to give permission for homework if minimum wages and certain conditions are guaranteed. This would then legalise approximately 100,000 jobs.

The unions are strictly opposed to this but the fact is, more and more people are working from home.

Experts estimate that in 40 to 50 years' time more people will be carrying out their jobs at home than will be working in factories and offices.

Following the introduction of electronic data processing

into offices and the development of personal computers, the transference of such work into the home followed almost inevitably.

At present most of these types of jobs are carried out by self-employed workers who of course have no conditions of work or insurance cover.

There are approximately 450 companies of varying sizes and types which count 'telecommuters' on their staff — people who remain static but who transmit data and textual copy by means of telecommunication.

Once the novelty and excitement wears off about the newly won 'freedom and flexibility' the nature of this employment claims to offer, the literal atomisation of millions of workers will be seen in its true light as a major retrograde step in the class struggle.

Destroyed files scandal in ex-GI radiation case

A JUDGE in San Francisco has fined a US government agency for deliberately destroying documents needed in a case brought by ex-servicemen over radiation.

US district judge Marilyn Hall Patel imposed about \$115,000 penalties on the Veterans Administration for destroying thousands of documents.

Judge Patel's ruling resulted from a lawsuit brought by the National Association of Radiation Survivors, campaigning on behalf of thousands of US forces veterans exposed to radiation when occupying Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or during later nuclear tests.

The Association says veterans need sophisticated, costly legal help, but are stymied by a Civil War-era law

which sets a \$10 limit on lawyers' fees for veterans seeking benefits.

The judge said there was 'significant circumstantial evidence' that last summer the Veterans Administration began deliberately purging its files of any documents that might help the veterans' case.

Two Veterans Administration employees who gave evidence during the hearings revealing the attempts to purge the files, were threatened with reprisals by their bosses.

Judge Patel ordered the Veterans Administration to pay a sum covering the veterans' legal fees and costs incurred in seeking access to the records, plus \$15,000 that will go to a legal fund.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

FRENCH RAILMEN RETURN UNDEFEATED

FRENCH railway workers started to return to work this week as the explosive wave of spontaneous strike actions began to ebb.

BY BOB ARCHER

Many workplaces, including the Paris-North depot that unleashed the strike wave, voted to resume work.

In general, groups of workers linked to the National Co-ordinating Committee set up by rank-and-file railwaymen had not yet voted to end the strike as we went to press.

Some lines on the Paris Metro (underground) were also still strike-bound.

The 'cheminots' (railwayworkers) are returning to work in a completely undefeated mood to take stock of their action and prepare for the next round of struggle.

As each group has returned, mass meetings have been held to draw a balance sheet of the dispute so far.

At Narbonne, in the south of France, returning railwaymen faced management victimisation and their mass meeting immediately voted to resume strike action.

Reports so far indicate that the SNCF (French nationalised railways) management will not apply heavy-handed sanctions across the network against the strikers.

The week opened with a campaign by the strikers to fight for support in other

industries and among the public.

A demonstration in support of the strike on Tuesday brought 3,000 rail and other workers together in Paris.

The previous day, the right-wing RPR Gaullist party had mobilised a similar number of demonstrators against the strike wave.

The extreme right-wing Front National mustered about 1,000 for another anti-strike demonstration.

The strike wave which started to affect other sectors besides the railways followed the huge revolt among school and university students against elitist plans for educational 'reforms'.

The rail strike happened despite, and often against, the main trade union federations and at first completely escaped the control of Stalinist and reformist union leaders.

A new layer of mainly young workers has emerged in this linked wave of struggles.

Now they are beginning to assess the struggle so far and prepare for the second round.

SPANISH DOCKERS ARRESTED

SPANISH police last week arrested 25 striking dockers after breaking up picket lines in the port of Barcelona, where workers are fighting a privatisation plan.

The Spanish government, under 'Socialist' Felipe Gonzalez, plans to abolish the state-run Port Works Authority which directly employs 9,000 stevedores, contracting them out to shipping companies.

Under its plan, the private companies will contract their own labour, and local port authorities involving private capital will be set up.

Trade unionists say 3,000 jobs would go under the privatisation scheme.

Since August, dockers have blacked the Contemarmar shipping line rather than accept individual contracts. The firm operated with non-union labour until December 31, but unions secured a court order stopping them from employing non-unionists.

Mine fights

A SUBSTANTIAL increase in outbreaks of factional fighting between groups of workers at South African goldmines is causing great concern to the owners.

In one recent incident, resulting in nearly 4,000 miners resigning their jobs, eight workers were killed and 53 others injured.

In a newspaper advertising campaign, one of the companies involved, Anglo-American, has put the blame on the government and the mineworkers' union.

The South African NUM has replied with an advertisement stating: 'The conflict is situated in the institutions of oppression and exploitation which exists... It is from this brutal and draconian system that (Anglo-American) has benefited.'

● The acting general secretary of the United Democratic Front Mohamed Vallie, who has been sought by the authorities for the past two-and-a-half years, was said to have been arrested in Johannesburg during another such incident. UDF is the largest of the anti-apartheid groups.



CHINA: STUDENT DEMOS BRING PARTY CRISIS

CHINESE scientist Fang Lizhi has been sacked from his university vice-chancellorship, and threatened with expulsion from the Communist Party, on account of his alleged encouragement of student demonstrations.

Party general-secretary Hu Yaobang has been attacked for failing to stop the student movement.

Hu reportedly took a severe dressing-down from premier Deng Xiaoping at an emergency meeting of party leaders on December 30, and has not been seen around since. Visiting Japanese Liberal Democrat party leader Noboru Takeshita was told the Chinese party leader was not well, due to 'overwork'.

Fang, an astro-physicist, was vice chancellor of the University of Science and Technology of China, at Hefei. Early in December thousands of students there staged the first of the big demonstrations which swept China, demanding free speech and democratic rights.

Chinese Stalinist leaders have denounced their demands as 'bourgeois liberalism', at the same time welcoming foreign bourgeois leaders like Takeshita whom they want to help woo capitalist investment.

During his visit the Japanese Tory leader told Chinese officials that Japanese businessmen were worried about the student demonstrations. They want assurances of stable conditions for profit-making.

Besides their rich experi-

ence of student radicalism at home, the Japanese capitalists may sense the dangers that workers too will demand democracy at work.

In their drive to improve scientific work and speed modernisation, the Party leadership seemed prepared to concede more freedom to academics.

In line with this, Fang said in an interview on December 15: 'The emergence and development of new theories necessitate creating an atmosphere of democracy in the university.'

He also said: 'In the university environment there should be nothing that can only be upheld and that allows no questioning of why it must be upheld.'

This might have upset party officials brought up in the quasi-religious dogmatism of the late Mao era. But worse still, the students took their questioning out of the lecture halls onto the streets.

One of the wall-posters pasted up by Peking students quoted an exchange said to have taken place between Deputy Prime Minister Wan Li and Fang late in November, and now famous.

Democracy was something granted the people by the Party, said politician Wan, according to the post-

er. No, replied academic Fang, democracy was won by the people through their struggles.

A fortnight ago, an apparently chastened university vice-chancellor Fang was assuring foreign reporters that he did not support the student demonstrations, the students were too impatient, any political change must be made through the Party and under its leadership.

Nevertheless, he has now been blamed for student unrest, and demoted from his senior post to work at the Peking observatory as a research fellow.

Attacking Fang, and writers Liu Binyan and Wang Ruowang, Prime Minister Deng said last week 'If these people want to be party members they must respect party regulations.'

Party general-secretary Hu may soon be replaced. His supporter Zhu Houze is understood to have already been suspended from his post in charge of propaganda.

The crisis in the party leadership, expressing serious contradictions in the way Chinese society is moving, is likely to exacerbate the crisis of party authority for the masses.

MOSCOW ROBBERS WERE COPS!

SOVIET officials have promised a crackdown on police corruption and inefficiency after admitting that armed robbers who raided a Moscow department store were former policemen.

Several security guards and a policeman were killed in the raid last November, when the gang hijacked a van carrying the takings.

Asked by a reader of the Soviet youth paper 'Konsomolskaya Pravda' whether it was true the raiders had been former police officers, Interior Minister Alexander

Vlasov said in an interview published last week:

'It's true. It was a very dangerous, armed criminal group.' He said gang members were ex-policemen sacked from the force in 1984.

There has been frequent criticism of the Soviet 'militia' (civil police) on the grounds that while the state organs assiduously pursue political offenders, they are not so good at detecting real criminals.

The authorities have said they intend taking measures to try and improve police effectiveness and root out corruption in the force.

Heavy metal safety valve for Soviet youth?

A LEADING Soviet rock artist, praising heavy-metal rock music as a safety-valve for angry Soviet youth, has revealed a picture of the Soviet youth scene very different from the familiar Stalinist fairy-tales.

Aleksei Kozlov, sax player and composer for the jazz-rock group Arsenal, says underprivileged working-class youth feel a strong antagonism for the rich and privileged in Soviet society.

'They just like to wave their hands and then calm down,' he told a press conference organised at the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 'If we forbid this music, they will display their aggressiveness in other forms.'

Heavy-metal, and rock music generally, have been exploding across Soviet culture recently and the disapproving bureaucracy have

begun bending with the storm.

The Young Communist League now holds discos and break-dancing contests, rock videos have appeared on prime-time television, and the Institute of International Affairs was venue for a heavy-metal rock festival this month.

While the sounds may be angry and the groups appear outrageous, correspondents in Soviet youth papers have criticised tame lyrics and called for more pointed social comment.

Kozlov says he would favour that, too. He also wants dancing allowed at rock concerts — though hall managers sometimes complain heavy-metal fans damage furniture.

If voices like Kozlov are heard, the Soviet bureaucracy may be saying: 'Let them rock — it's better than that our heads roll.' In the long run, it's a device that won't save them.

On reasons for the appeal of hard-rock, he says working-class areas are crowded with 'children from broken families', 'children of alcoholics', and youth 'without the opportunity to develop their talents, even in the factories'.

'They look at the youths from well-to-do families who have everything from the day of their birth,' he said.

'Between these youths, who have everything, and the heavy metallists, there exists a subconscious antagonism, and this situation is not well understood. It is expressed in the desire to listen to heavy-metal.'

● A teacher from Alma Ata, in the Soviet republic of Kazakhstan, where there were two days of riots last month, has been sentenced to five years in a labour camp for preparing 'provocative' literature for students.

YOUTH IN CARDI



No c

'Cardboard Box City' — every night young homeless people try to sleep

Steven Collins, 18, has been living under the Embankment bridge after coming from Scotland to look for work nearly a year and a half ago. He and many of his friends spend a lot of their time on the 24-hour South Africa House picket line.

'London is the only place where there is the slightest wee chance of getting a job. Maggie won't give us a house, she expects us to pay her and then walk the streets and starve all day. She thinks we're mugs but I tell you, if I get a chance she won't be in Downing Street.

'Sleeping on the streets is terrible,' he said. 'I woke up the other day and I couldn't stand on my own feet they were that cold.

'Maggie's government's responsible; she's only interested in the privileged because privilege is in her interest. She doesn't care about us living out on the streets and having no money.'

Steven's friend John, 23, told us they often received rough treatment by the police. 'It's out of



BOARD BOX CITY

Chance of finding homes

the most victimised layer of
ep here.



STEVEN COLLINS

order. We're not vagrants — we've
not nowhere else to go.'

Steven and John said suicide
was a regular occurrence for
homeless people. 'I've not gone
that far yet, but there is a right few
down here that's done it, and
others who have been done for
their suicide.'

WE'VE GOT NO TIME FOR YOU

Top left: There will be no
television and Horlicks for
these young homeless
people before bed in
'Cardboard Box City'.

Bottom left: A cup of tea
lasts much longer at
McDonald's! Especially
when you are homeless
and it is bitter cold
outside.

Bottom middle: . . . But
when the tea and the
money runs out, Shop
Manager Ronald
McDonald will see you on
your way because to him,
profit is more important
than human life.

Bottom right: Back out
into the snow until money
is found for another cup of
tea.

DURING this week's unusually bitter weather, 25,000 single people, mainly young, are sleeping out on the streets of London.

Every night 200 people sleep out in 'Cardboard City' on the Embankment. Workers Press spoke to some of them sitting in McDonalds trying to get warm.

Steven Jones told us: 'When you go to the DHSS and tell them you are homeless, you get kicked out.'

His friend said: 'At three in the morning you get woken by the council clearing the rubbish, then at 7a.m. the Old Bill come along, wake us up, and tell us to move on.'

When you tell the police there is nowhere else to sleep, their reaction is: 'It's vagrancy, isn't it?'

Pointing to his friend another one said: 'He was handcuffed and thrown against the wall four days ago. After a murder the other week, everybody from the Embankment was pulled in.'

There is no chance of finding homes.

Christine, a young German girl, told us why she was homeless: 'I don't get any money from the social. I've been here for more than a year. I'm unemployed and now they stop my money.'

Everybody agreed Thatcher was to blame for their condition but as to the future, one said: 'We've no chance with Labour.'

They had all been living on the streets for anything from one week to 12 years.

One young woman who had been homeless for a week described what it was like sleeping rough. 'It's f. . . . freezing,' she said.

Rising unemployment and cuts in government spending are driving thousands of young people on to the streets. The problem is now completely out of control and getting worse every year.

Attack

The attack on young homeless people through the Tory government's recent social security cuts is another expression of the collapse of the welfare system. This is only the start of drastic changes in the social security system.

They are designed to create conditions where young people will have the choice: work for slave labour wages and live with parents or be dumped on the streets to live an 'Artful Dodger' lifestyle. Families are being broken up. Young

BY CHRIS McBRIDE

people are forced to leave home and need more housing and benefits.

The process of butchering the social security system is already well underway. One of the hardest-hit sections of the working class are the homeless, especially the youth.

Limit

In April 1985 the Tory government divided the country into 131 regions and set a limit on the money people living in bed and breakfast were entitled to for board and lodging.

At the same time, people aged 25 or under were denied the right to stay in one of these districts for

standards, and will bid up the prices paid. There are even signs that demand will outstrip hotel supply.

'Several ALA councils have been forced to turn away homeless people in recent months in clear breach of their duties under the homeless legislation, because no hotel room could be found for them.'

Bill Moore is a founder member of 'Homeless Against Social Security Lodging Laws', (HASSLL). He is homeless and sleeps on the

involved in a joint campaign with Camden Unemployed Centre and Civil and Public Servants Association (CPSA) members to fight the social security cuts.

Anybody

He told Workers Press what faced anybody under the age of 25 who comes to London looking for a job.

'They have no rights to have accommodation, no rights to get

'They have no rights to have accommodation, no rights to get benefit, not even the basic democratic right to vote. These people have been completely neglected by the trade union movement who have a responsibility to do something about it.'

streets at night.

Bill told Workers Press: 'The problem is nationwide. The board and lodging regulations made an already bad situation worse. The new rules caught about 200,000

benefit, not even the basic democratic right to vote. These people have been completely neglected by the trade union movement who have a responsibility to do something about it.'

Implement

He said that the CPSA should not implement any cuts that attack young working class people.

There is 'no chance' of a future Labour government sorting the homelessness problem out, he said.

'If a fight isn't carried out now, a Labour government will carry on the same legislation as the Tories. I wouldn't even guarantee they would remove the draconian board and lodging regulations. I think there is every chance that they will leave them intact.'

Nile Rogers is an unemployed squatter. He has been homeless many times after being evicted from squats.

Homeless

He told Workers Press that more and more people are unable to pay council rents. 'The media tries to make out all squatters take heroin and are dangerous,' he said. 'From my experience squatters are not anti-social, they are genuinely homeless people who are not prepared to be pushed around by the authorities.'

Young people will have the choice: work for slave labour wages and live with parents — or be dumped on the streets to live an 'Artful Dodger' lifestyle. Families are being broken up. Young people are forced to leave home and need more housing and benefits. . .

more than eight weeks. Young people could be driven out of an area where they had lived all their lives.

Families living in bed and breakfast accommodation have increased by a staggering 35 per cent over the last year. The Association of London Authorities 'Housing the Homeless' Emergency Programme says:

'At these rates of increase, there is no way in which authorities can ensure that the hotel accommodation they are using is adequate, hygienic or even safe from fire.'

'Competition between boroughs for every vacant room will vitiate any attempt to enforce improved

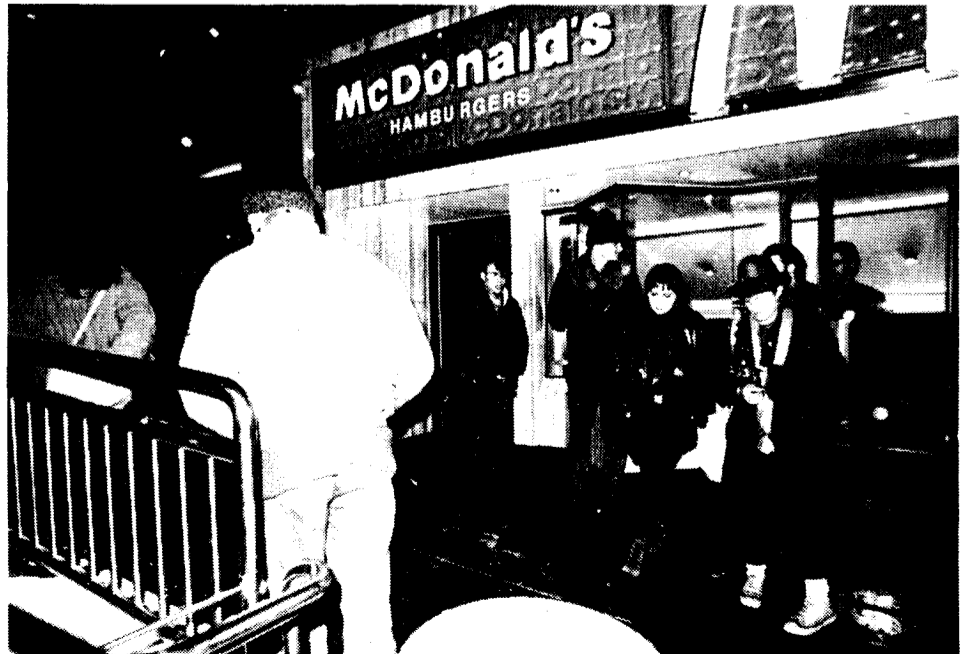
claimants, approximately 70,000 of them aged 25 or under. At a stroke, the government has increased the homeless situation by taking that last resort away from them.'

Because of the regulations, two young men hanged themselves and many others have attempted suicide.

Although the regulations were ruled unconstitutional by a High Court judge, the government was undeterred.

Bill felt the trade unions had not yet responded to the plight of the young homeless. 'Unity has to be built because it is the same struggle,' he said.

Mick Gavin is an active T&GWU member in London, at present in-



VIETNAM AND TROTSKYISM

Part 5

Our series on the history of the Vietnamese Trotskyist movement continues this week, with the second and final part of this eye-witness report of the struggles which exploded in Vietnam at the end of the second world war.

This revolution was effectively beheaded by the Stalinists of the Vietminh, who sought to take control themselves in north Vietnam, but to hand over power in the

south to the British and French imperialists, according to the deal signed between Stalin, Truman and Churchill at Potsdam.

The first part of this article, which appeared in Workers Press last week, described the revolutionary situation of August-September 1945. This second part details how the Stalinists of the Vietminh helped the French and

British to crush the working-class revolution and destroy the Trotskyist movement.

It was written by a member of the International Communist League (Ligue Communiste Internationaliste — LCI), one of the two Vietnamese Trotskyist organisations, and published in 'Quatrieme Internationale', the French-language journal of the Fourth International, in 1947. Here it is published in English for the first time.

SAIGON'S SOVIET

The Stalinist Counter-Revolution

FAITHFUL to its revolutionary programme, the LCI remained politically independent of the Vietminh Front, whilst constantly insisting on the necessity of pursuing the tactic of the anti-imperialist united front, a tactic in accordance with which the LCI marched separately from, but fought together with all popular organisations against foreign capitalism.

The LCI never stopped explaining in its leaflets and its press that the Vietminh was a form of bourgeois coalition in which the Stalinists played a key political role.

Whereas the Stalinists originally maintained in their propaganda that the democratic republic had already been established, we, internationalist communists, told the masses that the revolution had not yet been made.

While the Stalinists shouted: 'All power to the Vietminh!', we replied: 'All power to the popular committees!' Two days after his coup d'etat, the Stalinist minister of the interior, Nguyen Van Tao, threatened the Trotskyists in the following terms:

'Those who incite the peasants to seize landed property will be severely and mercilessly punished.

'We have not yet,' he added, 'made the communist revolution that will solve the agrarian problem. This government is only a democratic government, therefore it is not up to it to carry out such a task.

'Our government, I repeat, is a bourgeois democratic government, even though the communists are the ones actually in power.'

The day after this leader of Vietnamese Stalinism had made this statement, the entire Stalinist press viciously attacked the Trotskyists, accusing them of trying to stir up trouble and provoke social unrest.

Day in and day out, Dr Phan Ngoc Thach, a faithful lieutenant of Tran Van Giau, and a whole band of bureaucratic lackeys of the Stalinist government, constantly insisted to the people, through the press and radio, that the national independence of Vietnam was only a matter of diplomatic negotiations with the Commission of the imperialist Allies.

'Those,' said Tran Van Giau on September 1st, 'who incite the people to take up arms will be regarded as saboteurs and provocateurs, as enemies of national independence. Our democratic

freedoms will be granted and guaranteed by the democratic Allies.'

The Events of September 2nd

At noon on September 1st, the Nam-Bo government propaganda commission drove around Saigon-Cholon calling on the population to take part in the ceremony in honour of the Allied Commission that was to arrive in Saigon on the evening of September 2nd.

The members of the propaganda commission insisted again that the country's independence depended entirely on the will of the Allied Commission, which therefore meant, claimed the government, that the population had to observe perfect law and order. The people took the government at its word.

At 4p.m. the following day, more than 400,000 people, men and women, young and old, marched peacefully past Saigon cathedral in massed columns, armed with bamboo pikes and waving placards and banners above their heads.

Suddenly, from high up on the church, a burst of machine gun and pistol fire was shot into the peaceful and defenceless crowd. About forty marchers were killed and about 150 were wounded.

Loud cries went up: 'The French are shooting!' Madened with fury, the demonstrators forced the church doors, climbed to the roof and searched every nook and cranny that might hide their criminal enemies.

Facing the Common Enemy

The events of the evening of September 2 produced an unheard-of turmoil in the hearts of the people in Saigon. It had been proved that the government was incapable of defending the country and even more so of leading it to real independence.

From then on it was rumoured around the city that French imperialism would probably be helped by the Allied forces to reconquer its colony soon, and to slaughter the revolutionary people. It was a matter of life and death.

On September 4 the LCI Central Committee made an urgent appeal to the people for the revolutionary defence of national independence.

In particular it said in the following clearly Bolshevik terms: 'We, international communists, have no illusions at all that the Vietminh government, with its policy of class collaboration, will be capable of fighting the imperialist invasion in the days to come.

'Nevertheless, if the government declares itself prepared to defend national independence and to safeguard the people's liberties, we shall not hesitate to assist it and to support it with all physical means in the revolutionary struggles.

'But to this end, we are entitled to repeat again that



Ho Chi Minh negotiating with General Leclerc, who commanded the French forces that reached Saigon in September 1945. Despite the talks shown here, France turned on Ho's government in 1946 and began the seven-year war.

we shall strictly maintain the complete independence of our party in relation to the government and to all other parties, for it is on this political independence that the whole existence of a party calling itself Bolshevik-Leninist depends.' (LCI statement of September 4th).

The Popular Committees and the Massacre of the Trotskyist Militants

In the south of Vietnam (Nam-Bo) more than 150 Popular Committees were set up in three weeks under the influence of the LCI. One hundred of those in Saigon-Cholon were mainly working class.

A provisional Central Committee, the highest body of the Popular Committees, consisting at first of nine members and later of fifteen, had been formed after August 21, and its independent headquarters were guarded by armed workers.

That was where popular delegates of various political tendencies came to discuss and to study the problems of the revolution.

On August 26 the delegates of the people of Saigon-Cholon, gathered together in general assembly, decided on their common programme which can be summed up as follows:

'1. Recognising that the Indo-chinese revolution is an anti-imperialist revolution, we insist that the national bourgeoisie will be completely incapable of playing the role of revolutionary vanguard, and that only the popular alliance of industrial workers and rural toilers will be able to free the nation from the domination of the foreign capitalists.

'2. The Popular Committees are the most concrete expression of the alliance of the revolutionary classes. They therefore proclaim the necessity of bringing

together the proletariat and the peasants under the leadership of the Popular Committees.

'3. In relation to the bourgeois government and all political parties, the Popular Committees will maintain complete political independence.

'4. The Popular Committees recognise only the Central Committee, elected on the principle of democratic centralism, as their highest body.

'5. The Popular Committees recognise that they alone are the real basis of the power of the revolutionary people. Their highest authority will be the national assembly of delegates from all Popular Committees, which will take place in Saigon in the near future.

'6. The Popular Committees insist on the necessity of creating a single revolutionary front against imperialism, but categorically denounce all acts from whatever quarter that seek to sabot-

age the freedom of action of the working class and the popular masses. — Resolution of the assembly of popular delegates of the (...) district, August 26th 1945. (The place-name is illegible in the original).

Conferences were organised regularly at the headquarters of the Popular Committees at which participants were able to express their political position with the greatest of freedom.

The LCI led the revolutionary masses through the Popular Committees. It was due to these that it succeeded to a large extent in politicising the most advanced layers of the revolutionary masses.

For the first time in the history of the Indo-chinese revolution the LCI, in spite of its numerical weakness, carried out a great historic task, namely the setting up of Popular Committees or Soviets.

The defeat of Trotskyism in Indo-china by the counter-

revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy will never wipe out the correctness of putting Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution into practice in Indo-china.

Once the question of armed struggle against the imperialist invasion had been posed at the beginning of September, the Popular Committees played an extremely important role in making political and material preparations.

Hundreds of committee members came to the Central Committee with many valuable proposals, about which the bourgeois governmental and military leaders hardly ever found out anything.

The workers of the Banco district and of Phu-Nhuan proposed at the conference on September 4 to expropriate all imperialist enterprises and turn them into war factories.

Others suggested that we should turn the Bank of Indo-china building into a fortress that would be very resistant to bombardment by enemy ships in the ports. Many very important revolutionary proposals were put forward and studied.

The Popular Committee movement posed an increasing threat to the Stalinist government which was also the target of constant criticism from the bourgeois parties who accused it of impotence in internal affairs, that is, in repressing the revolutionary masses.

On September 6 the government launched a vicious attack on the Trotskyists, accusing them of being responsible for the unrest and provocations. The entire Stalinist press went into action against the Trotskyists in an attempt to divert the people from the imminent danger of imperialist invasion.

On September 7 Tran Van Giau gave the order to disarm all non-governmental organisations. The decree stated: 'Those who call the people to arms and above all to fight against the imperial-

The Trotskyists and the

WE have this week received further clarification of an important question of historical fact about the Vietnamese Trotskyists.

The question is: what were the Trotskyists' relationships to the United National Front (UNF) set up by the bourgeois nationalist parties in Saigon on August 16, 1945?

The front itself, formed to take administrative power from Japan's occupation army (who, having finally lost the imperialist war with the dropping of the atom bomb, were anxious to hand over to Vietnamese bourgeois forces rather than the British or French), lasted

less than a week.

At a meeting on August 22, 1945, its leaders were given an ultimatum by the Stalinists of the Vietminh, to submit to their power — which they did. (See Workers Press, December 20).

But the question of the Trotskyists' attitude towards the UNF is important. An old Stalinist slander (originated by Ho Chi Minh in 1939), that the Trotskyists were agents of the Japanese, has been bolstered with the argument of 'guilt by association': the Japanese handed power to the UNF, the Trotskyists were in it, therefore they were Japanese agents.

In compiling this series, I had to work mostly from secondary sources, and the question of Trotskyist participation in the UNF, like other important details, was unclear. (I felt we were right to publish anyway what we had in hand, i.e. the mountain of evidence showing that the Trotskyists were honourable revolutionaries who fought for working-class power, and were subject to Stalinist repression for doing so).

Reports from both Vietnamese Trotskyist groups, sent to the international secretariat of the Fourth International in Paris in the late 1940s, made no mention of either group participating in the UNF.

ix of a Workers Press series



Trotskyist leader Ta Thu Thau was killed with 'dozens' of his comrades

ist Allies will be considered provocateurs and saboteurs.'

On September 10 British troops disembarked at Saigon, while successive waves of French aircraft flew over the city. Faced with the approaching danger, the LCI put all its efforts into preparing the masses for taking up the imminent armed struggle, in spite of all the slanders and threats from the Stalinist government.

On September 12, the Popular Committees and the LCI issued a joint statement openly denouncing the political treachery of the Stalinist government in its capitulation in the face of the

threat from the British general staff. The turmoil of the masses grew every day.

At 4:30 pm on September 14 the Stalinist chief of police, Duong Bach Mai, sent an armed detachment to surround the headquarters of the Popular Committees where the assembly was in full session.

We conducted ourselves as true revolutionary militants. We allowed ourselves to be arrested without violent resistance to the police, even though we outnumbered them and were all well armed.

They took away our machine guns and pistols, ransacked our headquarters, smashing furniture,

tearing up our flags, stealing the typewriters and burning all our papers.

This was a defeat for Trotskyism in a two-fold sense: physical extermination of the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat, and the handing over of the people of Indo-China to democratic imperialism.

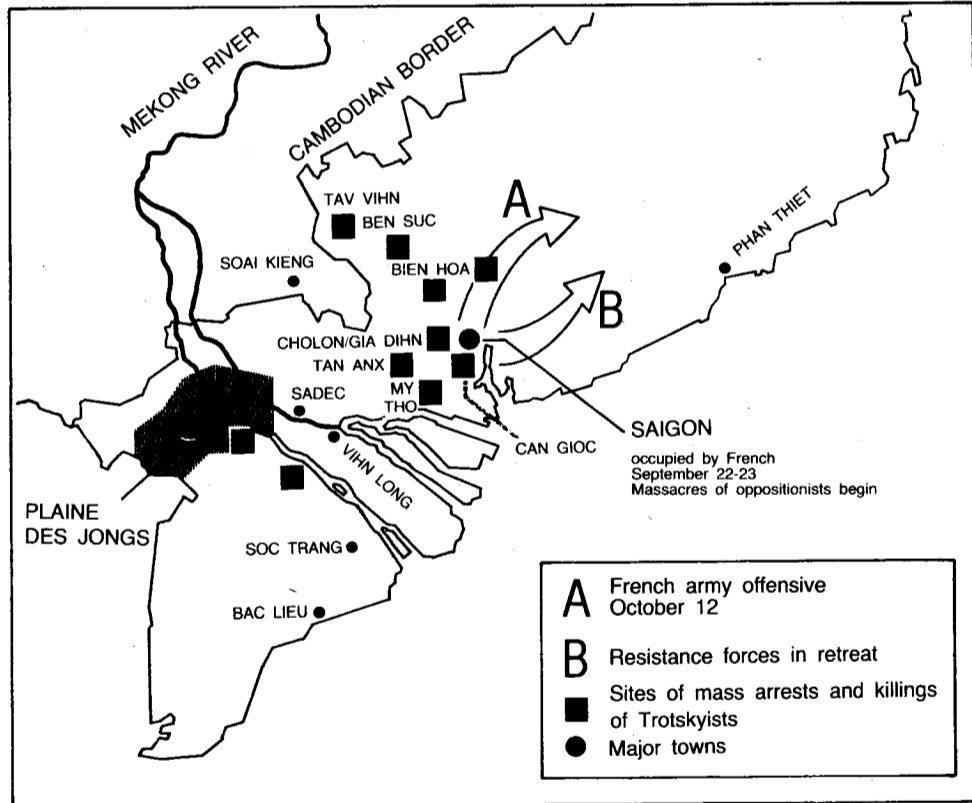
Having carried out this operation, Tran Van Giau, with the agreement of the government in the North, ordered the systematic killing of all Trotskyist elements in the country. Tran Van Thach, Ta Thu Thau, Phan Van Hum and dozens of other revolutionary militants were murdered in circumstances that to this day have not been properly established.

The two former chiefs of the Japanese police, the accomplices of Tran Van Giau in the carrying out of the Vietnam coup d'etat, were also killed, having been accused of Trotskyism.

For sympathising with Trotskyism, the woman doctor Ho Vinh Ky, a former member of the government, was shot together with the leaders of the Struggle group by one of Tran Van Giau's agents.

Our three most dedicated comrades, Lo Ngoc, a member of the central committee, Nguyen Van Ky, an engineering worker and trade union leader, and Nguyen Huong, a young Trotskyist and fighter in the workers' militia, were murdered by a Stalinist police chief in July 1946.

● NEXT WEEK: Vietnamese Trotskyism up to the present day



Southern Vietnam in 1945

United National Front

The report from the 'Struggle' group said they proposed a united front to the Vietminh, who turned this offer down; it also said they had refused practical collaboration with the bourgeois nationalist parties.

On the other hand, accounts by bourgeois academics — Milton Sacks, Phillippe Devillers and R. Turner — stated that the Trotskyists of the Struggle group, led by Ta Thu Thau, did participate in the UNF. (Sacks and Devillers quote no sources. Turner quotes 'A Modern History of Vietnam' by Nguyen Phut Tan, which I have been unable to obtain).

I argued (Workers Press, December 20) that if Trotskyists had participated in the UNF, this certainly did not 'prove' that they collaborated with Japan anyway.

Now a Vietnamese comrade with first-hand knowledge has kindly sent a copy of the manifesto issued by the UNF when it was set up on August 16, 1945.

The manifesto, which calls for resistance to French imperialism and 'all foreign aggression', was signed by the Viet Nam Independence Party, the Vanguard Youth, a group of intellectuals, the civil servants' federation, the Tinh Do Cu Si community (hermit Buddhists), the

Hoa Hao Buddhist community, and the Cao Dai religious community.

The Struggle group did not sign this manifesto, and this seems fairly conclusive proof that they did not take part in the UNF.

Only one question remains: why did academics like Devillers believe that they did?

It is possible that he was misled by the Vietminh disinformation campaign, launched against the Trotskyists to label them 'Japanese agents' and justify their massacre a few weeks after the UNF's brief appearance in history.

Simon Pirani

The Fourth International today



SINCE the expulsion of G. Healy and his supporters (Vanessa and Corin Redgrave, Sheila Torrance, Alex Mitchell and others) in October 1985 the Workers Revolutionary Party has devoted time to rebuilding the international work which was for so long broken up by the old 'International Committee'.

For Trotskyists, the starting point of political work is the building of an international leadership.

Under Healy's leadership the International Committee was turned into an appendage of the Workers Revolutionary Party, subject to the same abuses and political opportunism, in some cases leading to outright betrayal, as the WRP itself.

When Healy was expelled, two sections of the old International Committee (in Sri Lanka and Germany) and a marginally majority group in the Australian section took the line that the WRP leadership was responsible equally with Healy.

They sought to continue the old IC, and 'suspended' from it the WRP.

The 'leadership' for this course came from David North, Secretary of the Workers League (USA), which is barred by anti-communist legislation from having any international affiliation.

While the WRP has in the past year successfully initiated a series of international campaigns and discussions far beyond the scope of the old IC, and with the aim of reorganising the Fourth International, the North-led group has continued to call itself the 'International Committee' and has circulated the journal of that name in a special issue devoted entirely to 'How the WRP Betrayed Trotskyism, 1973-1985'.

The WRP will make its own review of those years (and the 20 years of the IC before 1973) but it is interesting to note just one characteristic of North's hurried 'balance sheet', a characteristic which discredits the whole 120-page exercise.

We will not go over the dozens of lies and distortions contained in North's account, and it is not necessary to respond to his subjective outbursts or his childish constant reference to 'the Healy-Banda-Slaughter leadership' — a very convenient amalgam.

In the midst of all this can be found a sentence which has truth — but when examined proves completely damning for North himself and his supporters.

In his 'Conclusion' he says: 'But there can be no doubt that the political decay of the WRP was inseparably bound up with its turn away from the international struggle against revisionism — the theoretical reinspiration of building the world party in the early 1970s.'

Revisionism in the Fourth International, explicit since the early 1950s, took the form of a capitulation to the strength and pressure of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The bureaucracy did all it could, including Trotsky's assassination, to physically wipe out the Fourth International.

Added to this came the political and theoretical capitulation to Stalinism by the Secretary of the Fourth International, Michel Pablo, and

his supporters, especially Ernest Mandel.

They developed the revisionist 'theory' that Stalinism had a 'dual nature' and had become, on its progressive side, the instrument of socialist revolution despite itself — out of objective necessity, as it were.

From this angle they talked about 'centuries of deformed workers' states' and opened the door directly to liquidating the Fourth International and its Trotskyist parties into the Stalinist parties who would do the job.

The International Committee was founded in 1953 in opposition to this revisionism, splitting from the 'International Secretariat' of the Fourth International of Pablo and Mandel.

Inside the International Committee there was an increasing tendency to opportunism, liquidating the independence of Trotskyist politics in favour of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois nationalist movements, especially in the Middle East.

Only in 1985, with Healy's expulsion, was the tendency arrested and driven out.

It is true that Healy's domination of the International Committee, especially after the break with its French and Hungarian sections in 1971, made impossible the development of Marxism in struggle against revisionism.

Indeed, Healy's politics were more and more 'Pabloite' themselves. He combined political opportunism with a messianic cult of himself as the personification of the continuity of Trotskyism.

Along with this went that grotesque campaign to be known as 'Security and the Fourth International'.

In place of the political struggle against revisionism and for a real, revolutionary, continuity of Trotsky's work, Healy utilised the resources of the Party and the IC to build up a case that Joseph Hansen, a leader of the US Socialist Workers Party since before World War II and one of Trotsky's secretaries, was an agent of the Stalinist GPU and of US intelligence working in the Trotskyist movement.

Evidence had come to light showing that agents had indeed deeply infiltrated the SWP. At the highest level, Sylvia Franklin, secretary to the founder of the SWP, James P. Cannon, was one of these.

A mountain of speculation and entirely circumstantial evidence was published and eventually this was used by a member of the SWP to try and 'prove' the whole construction... in the US courts! (the Gelfand case).

Workers Press will deal in more detail with 'Security and the Fourth International' in later issues — remembering of course that the US judge has not yet delivered her judgement.

We raise the question here only in relation to North's article. He knows that when there was the 'turn away from the international struggle against revisionism', as he puts it, there was a turn to something else — 'Security and the Fourth International'!

This was to be the 'real' fight against the revisionists. It was a substitute for the abandonment of that fight and a 'justification' of that abandonment.

Now, is it not strange that in 120 pages covering the years 1973-1985, North does not once mention 'Security and the Fourth International'?

No, it is not strange. The chosen 'experts' to do the job on Joseph Hansen were Alex Mitchell of the WRP and David North of the Workers League!

North likes to remind us at least once a day of the fact that he produced a document criticising Healy's 'philosophy' in 1982, but he has nothing to say in his 120 pages about his and Mitchell's devoted hack-work for Healy on 'Security and the Fourth International'!

The 'International Committee' continues to defend the whole journalistic and legal war on Joseph Hansen and condemns the WRP for not doing the same.

But North and his friends in the International Committee know that for ten years the 'struggle against revisionism in the IC was 'Security and the Fourth International'.

North cannot evade this, and his own role, by simply saying what everyone will agree with — that the real struggle was dropped.

In fact it was turned, misdirected and distorted into 'Security and the Fourth International', with North leading the turn!

All those who participated in the International Committee, including me and others in the Workers Revolutionary Party, share the grave responsibility for allowing this turn to take place. It is not only North's responsibility.

The big question is to acknowledge that responsibility, understand it, fight to overcome it in analysis and in revolutionary practice to rebuild the Fourth International. That is precisely what North and his friends will not do.

It is not North's past record which condemns him, but his attempt to ignore and escape from his responsibility.

A communist is not someone who makes no serious mistakes, but a communist must face up to and struggle to correct mistakes. When North supported those who excluded the WRP from the International Committee, we opposed them and broke with them on exactly those grounds.

The WRP leadership bears a grave responsibility for the Healy regime and its politics.

But the International Committee delegates from Germany, Australia and Sri Lanka who, with North's support, persisted in the exclusion of the WRP, cut themselves off from any real struggle to overcome the past and rebuild the Fourth International.

The notion of cutting off the WRP as some sort of poisonous abscess was completely un-Marxist.

It has landed North in the position revealed in his 'How the WRP Betrayed Trotskyism': 120 pages of denunciation, and no mention of what he and others said was the main fight against revisionism, 'Security and the Fourth International', no mention and no accounting of his own role.

Such a 'god's eye view' is far from anything to do with Marxism and the proletarian revolution.

CLIFF SLAUGHTER

LETTERS

Letters do not necessarily reflect the view of the Editorial Board. Letters over 500 words will normally be cut. Letters should arrive by first post Monday at: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS, and should include sender's address.

Maclean a nationalist

IN HIS kind reply to my letter (January 3), Terry Brotherstone asks 'those who agree with Broom (that John Maclean was a Scottish Nationalist), to at least clarify what they mean.'

Well, I cannot speak for them, but in calling Maclean a Nationalist, I mean simply that he believed that since Scotland is a nation, it is entitled, like any other, to independence.

Terry claims that it is misleading to describe Maclean as a Nationalist, since today the term is associated with the 'pro-capitalist Scottish National Party'.

In turn, I would contend that it is misleading to refer to the SNP as pro-capitalist, since it is, in fact, decidedly left-of-centre in the political

spectrum, advocating the removal of all nuclear bases from Scottish soil, the phasing out of nuclear power stations and the public ownership of the land.

It gave wholehearted support to the miners' strike and to the Scottish teachers' struggle for improved pay and conditions.

It may be of significance that Maclean's daughter, Nan Milton (herself the author of a fine biography), joined the SNP last year, on the grounds that it is the only Party wholly committed to Home Rule for Scotland.

Once this has been achieved, she argues, her father's goal of a Scottish Workers' Republic will be one step closer to fruition.

John L. Broom

Glorious 1688

IT APPEARS that some members of the Workers Revolutionary Party are opposed to celebration of the events of 1688 in England, because this might give offence to the boys with the rosaries and the Armalites.

Isn't this like letting the tail wag the dog?

Nobody, I'm sure, in the WRP would be against celebrating the English Revolution of the 1640s and 1650s — if only because Trotsky makes much of it in 'Where is Britain Going?'

But what happened in 1688? A counter-revolution was frustrated. King James II tried to undo the work of Cromwell and continue where his father, Charles I,

had been forced to leave off.

Thanks to the so-called 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 we had the agricultural revolution, the industrial revolution, the modern proletariat, trade unionism, Chartism and the whole 19th and 20th century development of the British labour movement.

Yes, of course, James II, backed by Louis XIV of France, raised troops among the Irish Catholics to try to carry through his counter-revolution.

If they were defeated at the Battle of the Boyne, was that such a bad thing, from the standpoint of world history?

Brian Pearce

Workers Press election confusion

LIVERPOOL Workers Revolutionary Party's call to vote for the Revolutionary Communist Party in the Knowsley North by-election raises general questions about socialists relating to the Labour Party in elections.

The RCP election platform didn't offer a way forward.

Every reformist can support slogans like 'Jobs for All' and 'Decent Housing for All', but the RCP had no demands to fight for jobs and housing, such as a sliding scale of hours with no loss of pay, nationalisation under workers' control etc.

The syndicalist and abstentionist politics of the RCP are only confirmed by their own Alan Harding (Workers Press, November 22).

Martin Ralph in the same issue complains that the logic of saying vote Labour 'means we would have to say: "Labour activists and workers, you were wrong to boycott the elections".'

But he himself says they were wrong — he is saying vote RCP, don't boycott.

The boycott decision was wrong.

The option not raised in Workers Press was to boycott the campaign of an imposed agent for an imposed candidate, while putting out Knowsley North Labour Party material calling for a Labour vote despite the candidate.

Activists could have explained Knowsley North's policies and opposition to Kinnock's rightward shift and imposition of a candidate and recruited to the fight against Kinnock/Howarth.

The WRP could have done the same from the outside,

calling for a Labour vote while putting forward its own policies.

More worrying is the confusion shown in Workers Press about election tactics and the general election (though correspondents say you will call for a Labour vote.)

Comrade Fitzmaurice, in attempting to justify a vote for the RCP, talks of Kinnock 'receiving enthusiastic backing from the capitalist media since the Labour Party conference' and lining up with the 'need of the ruling class to smash every basic right'.

To point out the exaggeration here isn't to deny Kinnock's programme is an illusory one of benevolent capitalism, but if he is out to smash every basic right you should oppose a Labour vote.

The media may back Kinnock in the witch-hunt but they aren't calling for a Labour vote.

Warnings against illusions in reformism are not helped by such wild statements.

Labour's election campaign will be on Kinnock's policies.

The RCP's claim to 'follow the traditions of the Communist International' is laughable.

Lenin's advice to the Communist Party stressed the need to recognise that, despite its programme, the Labour Party rests on the organised working class.

Socialists need to fight alongside Labour Party members, putting demands on the Labour leaders which present a socialist answer to the working class.

It is in rejecting this approach that the RCP are

IT WAS about time Workers Press had something about the McGoldrick affair in the London Borough of Brent, and Gerry Downing's article (Workers Press no. 55, December 20, 1986) was therefore welcome.

There are a few points I would like to see clarified.

One is the way the Labour leadership responded. It would appear Kinnock and co. made statements to the capitalist press without even bothering to contact the Labour councillors to hear their side of the story.

With reference to the Tory press campaign, however, the role of the Black nationalist-opportunist element also needs to be examined.

Gerry mentions Ambrosine Neil, advanced in the council by the 'Left' but who then crossed the council chamber and joined the Tories in 1983, handing them control for a time.

It was during the Tory period that the council's anti-racism advisers were appointed to schools — the 'race commissars' the Tory papers have raised so much hysteria about!

But we should know the capitalist press. It can swing into action whenever Thatcher calls the tune.

I was told it was the Tories Mrs Neil who nominated nationalist 'militant' Koba Assegai as a school governor in Brent.

Would I be mistaken in guessing that Assegai, in turn, was involved in the clique which reacted so angrily against Labour Party members challenging Mrs Neil's treachery in the council?

Assegai has now been barred from Brent schools, and I understand it was Black women teachers fed up with his arrogant posturing who insisted he be removed.

Another point that needs clarifying is how the National Union of Teachers behaved, and the role of the Euro-Stalinists.

If Mrs McGoldrick was as innocent as she claimed, the union could surely have taken her case up with the council without exposing her

Charlie Pottins takes another look at Brent

to national publicity and controversy.

Her case could have been settled quickly, without becoming a prolonged political wrangle.

Instead, Euro-Stalinist Dick Poole led unaccustomed militant action, providing work for the lawyers and a cause celebre for the capitalist press to use in its campaign to smash anti-racist policies.

This same Poole tried not so long ago to have Brent Trades Council closed down by the TUC. Now he's an interesting advertisement for the Communist Party's claims that it fights for ethnic minorities.

How often we've heard the 'Euros' and their admirers accusing the so-called 'hard Left' etc. of only being interested in 'white male trade unionists'!

But apparently a bit of 'workerism' is all right if the 'workers' in question are school heads.

NUT's Fred Jarvis made a heartrending plea for Mrs McGoldrick's right not to have to face a disciplinary hearing — i.e. not even to have to clear her name.

Perhaps NUT members can tell us whether the union leadership normally takes such a stand for teachers, say for Left-wing militants facing employers' disciplinary actions or victimisation?

Certainly I don't recall seeing Jarvis wearing his other hat — as TUC president — appearing on TV to speak up for miners jailed by the capitalist courts.

But not only did the union go to the courts, it appealed to the Tory minister to intervene and stop the council holding a hearing. This when teachers have been engaged in a prolonged struggle against this government to defend wages and jobs.

Incidentally, the dissident Communist Party paper 'Leninist', (December 4), had a full-page article dealing with the Brent affair very much in terms of divisions among CP members over the issues, but also making some useful points on how education cuts in Brent have hit Black schoolchildren, and saying the council's 'anti-racist' policy has hidden these realities.

But curiously, while mentioning Trades Council leader and Communist Campaign Group member Tom Durkin's relations with Labour Lefts, the 'Leninist' correspondent Jack Conrad does not mention Dick Poole or other NUT members.

Accusing the council of using 'anti-racism as a cover for its cost cutting and failure to challenge the government', Conrad concludes that 'workers should have no truck with those wishing to defend Brent Council'.

He adds 'We therefore reject all state interference in our class.' A bit incongruous when the union has invited both capitalist law courts and a Tory minister to interfere against a Labour council!

If there was an ounce of real Leninism in 'The Leninist' they would recognise that in the face of a reactionary, racist offensive from the Tories it was our duty to defend Brent council against the Tory government, while simultaneously conducting a fight for real socialist policies against the reformists.

Lastly, I want to disagree with Gerry on one more general point, though possibly he did not realise its implications, and that is when he says we should support 'the racialism of the oppressed against that of the oppressors'.

That we should distinguish between the two, since it is

the racialism of those holding power which is the main enemy, is right. But any form of chauvinism from oppressed groups, even if understandable as a reaction to racism, only serves to bolster racism in general.

Besides dividing workers, it creates a false consciousness among the oppressed, confusing their struggle, tying them behind their own petty-bourgeoisie, and diverting them from confronting capitalism itself.

Since Gerry mentions Zionism in passing, he should have thought of the historical precedents, as well as possible consequences! 'Reactive' racialism can become the ally of the very forces it was reacting against.

I know Gerry would be the first to condemn say, Catholic sectarianism as a response to Orange ascendancy.

Following their mentors in the American SWP, who supported the Black chauvinist and antisemite Louis Farrakhan, the 'Socialist Action' group have been trying to smuggle up to such similar elements as they could find here.

Actually, these petty-bourgeois adventurers have little support from the predominantly working class Black community. But if we had any doubt whose interests they served, we need only note the welcome Farrakhan's reactionary views have received from the National Front.

As Marxists, we should make no concessions to bourgeois ideology in any form, and while our main fight is with the Tory ruling class and its white racism, this cannot be served by compromises with petty-bourgeois opportunism.

Charlie Pottins

Anything 'out of bounds'?



HAROLD WILSON: Coup threat no secret

IT IS apparent that you are as keen as the bourgeois media to keep the political implications of the Wright case under wraps, if not more so.

Workers Press (August 2, 1986) carried an article which while coherently summarising much of the information publicly available at the time, suffered in two closely connected respects.

Firstly, its treatment of the anti-Wilson actions is confined to a single observation that, according to Wright, MI5 was 'involved in a so-far unknown "plot" against Harold Wilson in 1974'.

In fact, the plot in question is anything but unknown. As my previous letters (December 7, 1986 and December 20 1986) pointed out, it is reconstructed in admirable detail in issue 11 of 'Lobster', and Chapman Pincher, among others, has alluded to it in no uncertain terms.

Secondly, the article (by Comrade Westwood) correctly remarks that a future Labour government would be unable to control MI5.

This is certainly true. But Comrade Westwood's observation is obscured within his article as a whole, which concerns relatively routine issues such as MI5 bugging of diplomats. These will surprise no one.

The anti-Wilson plot is reduced to near-invisibility.

Apart from the plagiarism of my first letter in the editorial of December 13, 1986, Workers Press, I believe, has addressed the Wright

case on only two other occasions: in passing, on January 3, 1987, and within an account of the Guinness affair in the front page feature of December 6 1986.

The latter makes vague reference to 'the MI5 scandal... (which)... reveals... a system based on the rule of the faceless people who operate through lies, violence and intrigue.'

This non-news could have been written anytime in the history of capitalism about virtually any economic or political issue.

The editor of Workers Press suppresses my concrete analysis of the Wright case, yet prioritises this exercise in ahistorical formalism.

The editor or editorial board seems loath to 'tell the truth' in relation to MI5 and Wilson, except insofar as the latter — as a bourgeois politician — used the former against the striking seamen in 1966.

Yet Wright's charges are of particular concern to Workers Press readers.

Following the July 12 Special Delegate Conference in 1975, the old WRP called for the bringing down of the Labour government, whilst spreading confusion by demanding the adoption of a 'full socialist programme' by the reformist Labour Party.

It is all very well and correct to recall the Trotskyist interventions in the Stalinist crisis of the 1950s. But anything which might illuminate the relationship between the

WRP and social democracy in the mid-1970s (as distinct from the early 1980s) appears out of bounds.

Then, policy towards the Labour government was a central issue in the expulsion of working class cadres from the party.

How can the working class, or the WRP, orientate towards the next social democratic government without a reappraisal of that period, including the activities of the state against Wilson?

And which 'Marxist principles' are fought for by suppressing correspondence which addresses that period?

R. Bobinska

Editor's note:

The editorial which Workers Press published on December 13 1986 did contain some factual points from an unpublished letter from Comrade Bobinska. The comrades responsible for the editorial assumed the letter was written as a contribution to the paper and that its author, a frequent correspondent, would not object to some points, with which the board agreed, being incorporated into the editorial.

The issue could have been handled differently, but it did not represent any attempt to suppress discussion. Since the split with Healy and Banda, the Workers Press has won a deserved reputation for being amongst the most open papers on the left, while at the same time being clearly the paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party. We intend to keep it that way. As to the particular political points which the above letter raises, I am sure readers will let us know their views.

Marxists don't start with what workers are thinking

THE LETTER from Comrade Kevin Townsend (Workers Press, January 10) needs to be taken very seriously. Comrade Cyril Smith has never said that we should not listen to the working class: what he has said is that we should not base ourselves on what the working class is saying.

Comrade Kevin quotes Comrade Cyril:

'We try to set out from the objective nature of this crisis and not from the immediate consciousness of the working class. Only then can we decide on action to develop that consciousness.'

'We are opposed to those whose political mood is determined by reflection of the crisis in the actions of the Labour bureaucracy.' Comrade Kevin suggests that this is being contemptuous towards the working class and asks where we have heard it before.

I disagree very strongly with this and would like to ask where have you heard it before?

If we based ourselves on the immediate consciousness of the working class, we would have been supporting the Wilson government's attacks on the working class.

The miners in the Yorkshire coalfields looked on Wilson as their saviour and threw us out of the pubs when we were selling the 'Newsletter', and were very hostile indeed.

What would have been the position of the Trotskyists in the North East during the war to the strike movement

that we were involved in?

We listened to the workers whose problems led to the strikes and did not base ourselves on the views of the majority of the working class, Labour Party, Communist Party, or trade unions.

Trotskyists living in areas of the country where the only working class voice they heard was that of chauvinism did not base themselves on this; if they had done they would not have supported the strikes.

They based themselves on their Marxist analysis of capitalist society and the 'objective nature of this crisis'.

Do you abandon the need to build the revolutionary party in periods of boom because the voice of the working class is that of satisfaction and contentment?

I would like Comrade Kevin to explain what he means by 'complete and unconditional independence from the trade union bureaucracy.' And what is meant by making demands on the trade unions for trade union democracy?

I also fail to see where Comrade Cyril could be thought to be advocating a return to the old bureaucratic conception of the party (by using the word 'old' does Kevin mean a return to the party as under Healy?)

We listen to the working class, yes, but we do not base ourselves on the immediate consciousness of the working class.

Norman Harding

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN
HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ
LIAM BAKER: 20-year sentence, 464984.
JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sentence, 464989.
EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence, 338637.
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.
GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 132016.
JOHN McCOMB: 17-year sentence, B51715.
ANDY MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461576.
PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.

PARKHURST
HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX
NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence 879225.
PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603.
GERRY McDONNELL: Life sentence, B75882.
PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence, 863532.
TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence 69204.
PETER SHERRY: Life sentence, B75880.

WAKEFIELD
HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG
NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY
HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS
MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.
HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.
BILLY GRIMES:
SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661.
SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence, 341418.

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicestershire, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP
RONNIE McCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799.
STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence 758663.
JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635.
ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

FRANKLAND
HM Prison Finchale Ave, Braxside, Durham
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085
BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence, 758662.

PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence 119034.
CON McFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662.
EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence, 135722.

LEICESTER
HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ
PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1888.
BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, B26380.
PATRICK McGEE: Life sentence, B75881.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS
HM Prison, PO Box 757, Du Cane Road, London W12 0AE
DONAL CRAIG: 4 years.

LIVERPOOL
HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636.

WANDSWORTH
VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274064.

DURHAM
HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham.
MARTINA ANDERSON: Life sentence, D25134.
ELLA O'DWYER: Life sentence, D25135.

REMAND PRISONERS: BRIXTON
HM Prison, Jebb Avenue, Brixton, London SW2 5XF.
MICHAEL J MCKENNEY: L46486
G. (DANNY) McNAMEE: L48616
WORMWOOD SCRUBS
LIAM QUINN: L49930

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:
CAROLE RICHARDSON: 290719, HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire

PATRICK ARMSTRONG: HM Prison Gartree.
PAUL HILL: 462778. HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.

GERARD CONLON: 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin.
JUDITH WARD, HM Prison

Durham.
HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison Gartree.

JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Long Lartin.

BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.
GERARD HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison Frankland.

RICHARD McILKENNY, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs
PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison Gartree.

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

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KENT MINER
TERRY FRENCH: Betteshanger — Four year sentence

from January 1985. B73383, Northeye Prison, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex

PRINTERS

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JOINT MEETING AGAINST MASS VICTIMIZATION Organised by SE Region Justice for Mineworkers Campaign; sacked workers from Silent Night, Hangers and News International. Speakers: Peter Heathfield (NUM), Liz Short (Printworkers), Alan Barnes (Hangers), Irene Scott (Silent Night). Friday 7.30pm, January 30 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square.

IRELAND: A SOCIALIST SOLUTION A debate jointly called by Workers Power, Socialist Organiser and Workers Press at Conway Hall (small hall), Red Lion Square (near Holborn tube), Friday January 30, 7.30pm. Admission 50p.

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REVIEWS

BOOKS

One Girl's War. By Joan Miller. Brandon (Dingle, County Kerry), £4.95.

AN INTERESTING detection game might be played with this book. Having first got hold of your copy — which the British government does not want you to — find just what it is they're worried about.

Rogue right-winger Peter Wright, dealing with MI5's activity in more recent years, threatens to expose some of the real workings of British politics today. Joan Miller takes us back to the early years of the War.

Her first job with MI5 was to infiltrate the Right Club, founded by Captain Archibald Maule Ramsay, a Tory MP and friend of Sir Oswald Mosley, which used to meet over the Russian Tea Rooms, run by White Russian emigres, in South Kensington.

Caviar

After creeping around during the black-out to put stickers on lamp-posts denouncing what they called a 'Jews' War', Right Club members relaxed over their drinks and caviar, chatting about names of anti-fascists to go on a list for stringing-up once the Nazis arrived.

Joan Miller kept tabs on one particular Right Club member, involved in more serious activity. Anna Wolkoff, whose parents owned the restaurant, was in touch with William Joyce ('Lord Haw-Haw'), former Mosley lieutenant turned Nazi broadcaster.

Wolkoff was also obtaining secret documents from a cipher clerk in the US embassy, Tyler Kent, for transmission to Germany via the Italian embassy.

Tyler Kent and Wolkoff were arrested on May 20, 1940. Three days later Captain Maule Ramsay MP was arrested, and interned along with Mosley and others under the wartime 18B regulation.

There is little new about any of this. But it restores a picture which has been clouded by author Nigel West, whose books on MI5 the Tories — and the intelligence services — positively encouraged.

According to West, in the 'Times' a few years ago, Tyler Kent was really a Soviet agent, and his activities

were reclassified as 'pro-Communist' after the War.

Joan Miller clearly found this suggestion surprising, having known Kent's Right Club membership. While accepting that this was the period of the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, she sees no evidence that the American was not just as anti-communist as he made out.

She might also have noticed that curiously, author and journalist West (alias Rupert Allason, Tory MP's son and Conservative candidate for Battersea at the last General Election) did not mention Anna Wolkoff at all. (See 'The Lady Vanishes', Searchlight magazine, February 1984.)

Having retired to Malta, where she died shortly after completing this book in 1984, Miss Miller probably missed the BBC Newsnight interview with Tyler Kent in 1983, in America, where he showed himself still an unrepentant far-Rightwinger.

After helping bust the Right Club, Joan Miller's next assignment was against the Left. Tom Driberg, later a Labour MP, was being used as an agent in the Communist Party, Miller recalls, until rumbled by Anthony Blunt. The Party's phones were being tapped.

MI5 became interested in a deed box said to be under R. Palme Dutt's bed. Miss Miller 'was sent off to a very special department of the Post Office' to be taught how to open and reseal letters neatly, then learnt how to break open locked trunks.

Box

With another agent she broke into Palme-Dutt's home, where they discovered the box under the bed. Excitedly, Joan got it open, then the sealed envelope inside, and the two agents found themselves poring over ... Palme-Dutt's marriage lines.

Apart from such escapades, what else do we learn?

Well, Joan Miller's book is an interesting period description of life among the top intelligence set in wartime, the Old Etonians, debts, motor racing drivers as chauffeurs, working with Dennis Wheatley, parties

JOAN MILLER
ONE GIRL'S WARPERSONAL EXPLOITS IN MI5'S
MOST SECRET STATIONIntelligence
High life

with Polish officers etc.

'London was fun in the early part of the war, before the Blitz got under way ... there was always someone to take you to a night-club like the Four Hundred or the Milroy, where you danced until the early hours.'

There were less enjoyable aspects, of course: having to search for compromising letters in the flat of a friend and colleague who lay in bed drugged out of her mind; or being taken to L'Escargot, in Soho, 'and being too shy to mention my dislike of snails — I got the wretched things down somehow ...'

Miss Miller also provides an interesting portrait of 'M', (Maxwell Knight), the man in charge, 'enigmatic and debonaire', by whom she was 'captivated' at their first meeting.

About 'the Communist threat', Maxwell Knight's fears 'amounted almost to an obsession. He was equally adamant in his aversion to Jews and homosexuals ...'

After having moved in with M at his Dolphin Square home, the young Miss Miller began to realise that her presence, like his vehement homophobia, was a camouflage for his real proclivities.

'His tastes obviously inclined him in the direction of what, in a phrase not then current, is known as "rough trade"; she says of an episode in Surrey.

Her personal involvement and emotional distress may have led her to exaggerate. But her mental confusion at the time, frankly recalled, shows there must have been cause for it.

Fearing her boss might be blackmailed, she also began to fear something might happen to her because she knew too much.

'His first wife Gladys, I learnt, died in the Overseas Club after some sort of occult misadventure in which the notorious Aleister Crowley was involved — certainly I'd have been unwilling to enquire too deeply into that particular incident.'

'When I tore up a photograph of Aleister Crowley which he had kept, as I believed it to be unlucky, he only laughed.'

Some of M's interest in this occult business evidently rubbed off on Miss Miller during their acquaintance — there is an unfortunate passage about witnessing what she thinks was 'astral projection' by M, though admittedly this was while she was emotionally disturbed.

Odd

A reference to 'extra-sensory perception' also detracts from an otherwise sober, on-the-level account.

Some odd incidents involving M are simply narrated, without pretence at explanation. 'Something about his nature, and the more devious of his purposes, always eluded me whenever I felt I was on the verge of grasping it.'

Later she suggests that M was being subject to blackmail in the later part of his life.

Fascinating as such material is, damaging as it might be for the reputation of individuals, where is the risk to 'national security'?

We can only guess.

One byway to speculate on stems from a chance remark by Joan Miller about Anna Wolkoff as a dressmaker — 'one of her clients was the Duchess of Windsor.' Plus, that Anthony Blunt was in charge of MI5 activity against pro-Nazi groups in 1940.

The Windsors' friendships and political inclinations are no secret nowadays, (even in

postwar years they were on friendly terms with the Mosleys in Paris).

But there has been speculation in the past that Blunt enjoyed protection because of what he knew about the 'black sheep' of the Royal Family.

West/Allason's 'Times' article ('Moscow moles and the Nazi spy') appeared at the time of controversy over the Mosley papers.

Agents

He sought to suggest that certain papers were being withheld, not to protect Nazi sympathisers in the British establishment but Soviet agents allegedly around the late Roger Hollis.

Chapman Pincher's assisted work 'Their Trade is Treachery' first pointed the finger at Hollis.

Not that Joan Miller was not inclined to accept the notion — she says Hollis once rejected some information she'd been given which turned out to be true, about Burgess.

But unlike the 'approved versions', her book deals with what she knew or believed, not with the line that was fed. Why was it fed, and on behalf of whom?

Whatever detective games we play trying to read between the lines and make sense of these tangled webs, (and it has been suggested that the government was merely trying to appear consistent, the better to stop Peter Knight's book), one thing is very clear.

The current pre-occupation with book-banning, like the security services themselves, has little to do with bamboozling 'the Russians', even less to do with protecting 'this country', but everything to do with protecting our rulers and the way they rule from the prying eyes of the rest of us.

Charlie Pottins

● 'One Girl's War' is now on sale in Ireland, but British distributors of Brandon publications, Turnaround, have been forbidden to distribute this title. On December 18 they went to court to try and get and the injunction lifted — unsuccessfully. This small radical distributor is now faced with raising several thousand pounds for legal bills. Contributions should be sent to: Turnaround Distribution One Girl's War Appeal, c/o Bindman and Partners, 1 Euston Road, London NW1 2SA.

The
millions
behind
Hitler

LAST November West German television screened a drama series entitled 'Fathers and Sons — a German Tragedy'.

It followed the fortunes of a fictional factory-owning dynasty whose fortunes were linked to the 'rise and fall' of the chemical industry giant I.G. Farben, from the time of World War One to the era of its all-out backing for the Nazi Party.

Some of the facts about I.G. Farben's role left out of this fictionalised account are brought to light in three books published in West Germany last year, as we have learned from 'Der Gewerkschafter', the journal of the IG Metall union.

These books go some way to disposing of the ruling class myth that it was the German working class who brought Hitler to power 'democratically'.

'The Unholy Alliance of the I.G. Farben' by Joseph Borkin shows how the company, which advertised itself as an 'honest' multinational, fuelled and derived profit from the great Imperialist wars.

In World War One it provided the German war economy with the means of self-sufficiency by producing

artificial rubber and petrol from coal.

In World War Two the gigantic I.G. Auschwitz plant was built, using slave labour.

The company kept these workers in private concentration camps and handed over their wages to the SS.

Between 30,000 and 40,000 were worked to death.

Investigations into the I.G. Farben document the findings of a US military government inquiry into the company at the end of World War Two.

Equal

The report documents impressively how the managers worked hand-in-glove with Hitler; their plans to expand were equal to Hitler's.

The combine paid huge donations into Nazi coffers and its foreign representatives acted as spies and agents for the Hitler apparatus.

It was the industrial driving force of both German war efforts 'which were aimed at the destruction and enslavement of the whole civilised world', the report concludes.

Despite this, in post-war Germany the leading managers returned to their boardrooms. Only 24 were tried and they escaped with minimum sentences.

And Tomorrow the Whole World', by Otto Kohler is based on the most exhaustive research of available material on the I.G. Farben.

Kohler tells of its indispensable role both in dragging out World War One (when it prevented German speedily collapsing for want of ammunition) and in promoting the rise of Hitler, who received a blank cheque of financial and political support from the I.G. Farben under a pact of June 1932, the year before he took power.

These books provide an inside into who in Germany was really behind fascism — the ruling class and its moneybags.

But this is only part of the true picture.

The rich history of the indomitable struggles of the German working class before and under Hitler, as well as the international nature of ruling class support for fascism are subjects in urgent need of further study.

Trudi Jackson

OMGUS

Militärregierung der Vereinigten Staaten für Deutschland
Finanzabteilung — Sektion für finanzielle NachforschungenErmittlungen
gegen die
I.G. FARBEN

REVIEWS

ART

SONIA BOYCE: Recent work

EXHIBITION: Until January 25

Tuesday - Friday, 11am - 6pm. Saturday & Sunday, noon - 4pm

An exhibition of Sonia Boyce's latest work, including a room size mural which she created especially for the gallery, can be viewed at the Air Gallery, 6-8 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1 4TD until January 25. It will then have a short tour. The main themes of Sonia's work centre around 'a child's curiosity and fear of the adult world, religion and personal relationships . . . the familiar and the sensual, the familiar and the uncomfortable.'



Big Women's Talk

Self portrait

FILMS



An East End Story. Directed by Suj Ahmed. Produced by Suj Ahmed and Peter Thorn. Available as a 16mm film (distributed by the Other Cinema, 01-734-8508) or on video (from Albany Video, 01-692-6322)

'AN East End Story' is a half hour dramatised account of the racial terror endured by Asian families living in the east end of London.

It traces the story of an Asian youth whose family suffered racial abuse and attack and who become involved in a self defence group against fascist fire bombers.

This is an excellent film;

RACIAL TERROR

well-acted and well-filmed, which explores the harrowing experience of living in

constant fear of racial attack. It also examines the atti-

tudes of the police and the authorities to racist attacks.

During the opening and closing sequences, set in an anti-racist meeting, the anti-semitism of the 1930s is compared with the anti-Asian racism found today. It sets racism within an historical context.

The film ends with the arguments for organised self-defence squads.

This film deserves the widest possible exposure. It would form an ideal introduction to a discussion on how to defend Asian and other groups from fascist attacks.

Mick Daly

RIOTS AND ART



Handsworth Songs. Directed by John Akomfrah. Produced by Lina Gopaul. Distributed by Black Audio Film Collective.

'HANDSWORTH SONGS' is described as a film essay on the contours of 'race' and 'civil disorder' in contemporary Britain.

'The film attempts to excavate hidden ruptures/agonies of race in both its historical and contemporary movements. Tragedies and political expectations meet on a cinematic landscape where songs are heard from the ghosts of other stories where both mythology and history tell of unspoken agendas in contemporary Britain.'

Well, I did not understand that, nor did I understand this film.

It consisted of film of the Handsworth, Brixton and

Tottenham riots and their aftermath, of photographic stills and archive footage of the Caribbean and black settlement.

This was over with poetry and music.

What was there was very poetic and imaginative but there are important things about the riots which are not told, or only touched on.

The racism of the British state, the immigration laws, the racist speeches of Thatcher etc.

The constant harassment of black youth, the attempt to equate blacks with hard drugs. The police complicity in racist attacks. The high unemployment among the black population, the bad housing etc. etc.

'Handsworth Songs' as an art film is fine but ends up telling us very little.

Mick Daly

REINSTATE OUR LEADERS!

— demand London teachers

Scottish teachers smoke out their leaders

THE pay and conditions package recommended to Scottish teachers by their leaders has provoked a discussion which is raging in the union and the press.

Opposition to the deal, spearheaded by six members of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) who voted against it, has forced Communist Party Stalinists to publicly defend their crying disregard of union conference policy.

Defending the deal in a 'Glasgow Herald' article, Stalinist Frank Docherty — who chaired the committee which negotiated on conditions — said the deal was 'all that can be negotiated, warts and all'.

'Drawbacks' such as the extended working week were 'a bitter pill'.

Docherty points out that an EIS special general meeting in November 'instructed us to seek a negotiated settlement'. This is true.

But he is suffering from the perennial Stalinist syndrome of selective recall.

There is no mention of the fact that the Special General Meeting went on to instruct the executive to reject any package based on, or derived from, the Main report — and to reject any deal that undermined teachers' conditions.

But Docherty's main theme is that the deal is preferable to legislation.

In fact, it is almost identical to education secretary Kenneth Baker's legislation for English teachers — and Docherty is asking Scottish teachers to accept it on a voluntary basis.

Rather than defy the Tories' threat to impose the

settlement by law — with all its dictatorial implications — Docherty insists that the threat means 'the battle cannot continue in its present form'.

His most frenzied attack is on 'talk of rallying other trades unions around us in a continued campaign', which he condemns as 'sheer fantasy'.

So he accepts that 'major concessions' have to be made to the Tories, declares 'public and media support the essential ingredient for success, dismisses as fantastic the possibility of trade union solidarity — and advises Scottish teachers to accept Tory demands voluntarily in case the Tories impose them by law.

On one point, however, Docherty is correct: the pay campaign has radically and permanently changed teachers' views.

There is proof of this even in the wealth of letters to newspapers — whole pages in the 'Scotsman' — most of them hostile to the deal.

This, and the rejection of the deal by the union's two biggest associations, Glasgow and Lanarkshire, has brought the EIS dirty tricks department to life.

Unnamed sources are quoted in the Scottish 'Sunday Mail' and the 'Glasgow Herald', claiming that militants around the Scottish Socialist Teachers' Federation were planning to split from the EIS.

This smear follows threats by general secretary John Pollock — followed by other executive members including Docherty — that he would

resign in the event of a 'no' vote.

At the back of it all is the 'big stick' of Tory legislation, which teachers should treat with the contempt it deserves.

Only by creating an atmosphere of confusion and fear among rank-and-file teachers can the Stalinist 'soft left' majority on the executive hope to get the 'yes' vote.

But their 'black propaganda' — which English teachers should take note of, as it may come their way — has misfired.

Not only has Glasgow association's leadership flatly denied they have any intention of breaking from the EIS, it has been pointed out that it has been the left which insisted on maximum unity from the start.

Willie Hart, one of the deal's opponents on the executive, wrote in last Thursday's 'Glasgow Herald': 'I know that speaking out has been regarded by some as being disloyal.

'But I hope that by the executive minority so doing, it will encourage frustrated and angry members to stay active in the EIS and fight for consistent policies.'

The fact is that the deep-rooted opposition within the union to the deal has forced the Stalinists to declare their stand openly.

The more frequently they are forced to do so, the sooner they will be brought into open conflict with the membership, and the sooner will their insidious influence within the union be brought to an end.

THE coldest weather London has seen for 40 years did not stop 3,000 Inner London teachers from demonstrating enthusiastically against the Baker Bill.

The one-day unofficial strike closed or partially closed over 200 schools.

The action was two-pronged:

FIRSTLY it was against the Baker Bill which will give the Education Minister the power to dictate teachers' pay and working conditions, remove teachers' rights to negotiate nationally and bypass the powers of the local education authorities.

SECONDLY it was the biggest challenge to the right-wing NUT executive ever seen.

The national executive of the NUT suspended over 80 leaders of the Inner London Teachers Association, including the secretaries of the 11 associations, even before they had been informed their planned strike was not sanctioned!

The suspensions made teachers more determined to strike.

They had already seen the NUT leaders accept the ACAS pay and conditions deal which takes teachers back 50 years, and the betrayal supported by Labour authorities such as the Inner London Education Authority.

The day before the strike ILEA sent a letter warning that any teacher who participated in unofficial action could be liable to disciplinary proceedings.

What shocked teachers was the NUT executive policing their own members,

BY PAM HENRY

disciplining the entire leadership of the 13,500 London teachers, and threatening to expel all those who participated in action.

This would halve their London membership.

The executive is prepared to do this to have a tame union which would acquiesce with Baker — and the plans of a Kinnock government.

The leadership of the TUC is equally cowardly and is prepared to see union rights destroyed in order to keep good relations with their masters. An alternative leadership is the need of the hour.

A packed meeting after the march heard Bernard Reagan, one of the two Inner London members of the NUT executive, and Dick North, ILTA treasurer.

The meeting was chaired by Jane Shallice from the ILTA executive.

Dave Ellis MP said the ILEA and NUT leaders should have supported the action, and stressed the Bill cannot just be fought in parliament — the teachers' action was necessary.

Genuine

He ended by saying that what was needed was a 'genuine socialist Labour government'.

The next speaker was NAS/UWT representative Peter Herbert, who said he hoped his union could collaborate with the NUT — but he hoped the schools would not be disrupted! This last remark did not go down very well.

Dave Gallop from GCHQ called for support for the demonstration marking the third anniversary of the out-

lawing of unions in GCHQ, on January 24 in Cheltenham.

Pointing out that only 45 union members were left out of 4,500, he said this was a lesson to Lord Len Murray of Epping whose attacks on teachers' unions had been widely publicised.

Graham Steele, assistant branch secretary of ILEA NALGO, linked the Baker Bill with the attack on national negotiating machinery in the public sector and the threat of privatisation.

Messages of support for the ILTA action were received from the EIS in Scotland, Bradford and Leeds NUT officers, schools in Hull and North Yorkshire, the NUT in the outer London boroughs of Waltham Forest and Bromley, two schools in Newham and one in Corby.

The following resolution was passed unanimously:

● This rally of ILTA members recognises that the Baker Bill represents one of the most serious attacks on the right to organise in defence of salaries and conditions that the NUT has had to face.

This legislation can only be defeated by a well-prepared plan of industrial action and not by a campaign that relies only on propaganda and persuasion. Accordingly, we demand that the NUT executive should:

a. Call a national one-day strike on February 19 in opposition to Baker's proposals

b. Declare that NUT members will not cooperate with any changes in conditions of service that may be imposed by the government

c. Continue to use the full resources of the union in campaigning for salary policy as agreed at NUT conference.

We further recognise that important improvements in conditions of service, particularly in relation to Cover, were secured during the course of the salary dispute and we resolve to ensure that these are maintained.

Finally, we deplore the decision to suspend the whole membership of ILTA council, and demand their reinstatement. ●

All teachers should support this resolution, and we urge Labour Party members and other trade unionists to do likewise.

● It is important the London teachers are not allowed to become isolated and expelled.

We urge teachers to attend the Local Association Pay Action conference on January 31 at the University of London Union, Malet Street, London W1, from 10.30a.m. to 5p.m.

This conference offers the opportunity to become the alternative centre of leadership to the present NUT executive.

The movement of teachers shows the working class in Britain is not in a downturn but on the contrary looking for ways of challenging and defeating the traitors who lead both the trade unions and the Labour Party.

Those who collaborate with the capitalist system can never lead the working class — a revolutionary party is necessary.



The banner of the Inner London Teachers Association heads Tuesday's 3,000-strong march which defied freezing snow, Baker's Bill — and the NUT executive's suspension of their leadership