



FIGHT LABOUR-TUC TREACHERY

EDITORIAL BOARD STATEMENT

THE strikes and demonstrations which have erupted since early February urgently require a revolutionary programme of action to take them forward. This is the most important conclusion which every class conscious worker must draw from the struggles in the health service, in the car industry, by ferry workers, and in local government and education.

Only a revolutionary socialist programme can prevent the Labour and trade union bureaucracy from diverting this spontaneous upsurge into an empty 'protest' against Tory policies.

Faced with simultaneous strikes in Ford's, the ferries and the NHS, the reformist leaders of the Labour Party and TUC moved to suppress in rapid succession the strikes of car workers and seamen, and attempted to isolate the health workers.

The Thatcher government, buffeted by the world economic crisis, rests not upon any inherent strength of its own, but upon the treachery of the Labour and TUC bureaucracies and their various centrist allies. Their record in relation to the struggle in the health service is a case history of this misleadership.

Leaders of all the major health service unions attempted to prevent the NHS Day of Action on February 3 from taking place. Once it became clear that strikes would go ahead in any case, NUPE and COHSE branches were urged by their leaders *not* to call a united action of all health workers, but to limit it to nurses only.

Faced with the mounting frustration of NHS workers, TUC and health union chiefs resorted to their 1982 ploy of attempting to dissipate the rising militancy through regional days of action. Despite the wrecking activities of the Labour and TUC leaders, the fight waged by health workers has won support from the widest sections of the working class. Every single call from the top, no matter how feeble, has evoked a powerful response from below. In Liverpool, car workers and firemen, amongst others, took action alongside nurses. In Scotland on February 24, 70,000 workers struck and demonstrated.

In an attempt to sidestep demands from health workers for the escalation of

strike action, the TUC called a national demonstration on Saturday, March 5. It drew the support of well over 100,000 workers, including many NHS staff who had never taken action before, as well as large groups of industrial workers. At the rally following the march, TUC leaders barred hospital workers from speaking, and Norman Willis was booed off the stage.

Local government and education workers staged a well-supported Day of Action on March 8. The COHSE-sponsored eve of Budget protest on March 14 was supported by strikes of London busworkers and shipyard and aircraft workers in the north of Ireland.

A major contradiction exists, therefore, between the willingness of the working class to fight and the cowardly attempts of the bureaucracy to limit its struggles to 'symbolic' days of action. When confronted by one angry nurse in Manchester, and asked why he would not lead a fight, NUPE leader Rodney Bickerstaffe told her not to plead with him, but to plead with Thatcher. This, indeed, sums up the bureaucracy's position — that the NHS is an issue around which all classes can unite and put 'moral pressure' on the Tories. This 'charitable' humbug was echoed by Arthur Scargill when he addressed a lobby outside the TUC General Council meeting on February 24. The duty of trade unionists was, he said, 'to defend those who cannot defend themselves'.

The open treachery of the bureaucracy is complemented at every stage by the confusion-mongering of the various centrist and revisionist groups. The 'Mili-

Build Councils of Action!



Health service workers on the March 5 demonstration in London organised by the TUC

tant' group, which made strident calls for a one-day general strike, conceives of this weapon in entirely reformist fashion as a means of 'forcing' the Tories to increase NHS spending in place of tax cuts.

With the Socialist Workers Party, cynicism joins hands with scepticism. SWP leaflets insist that 'we can stop the Tories in their tracks' while covering for the bureaucracy at Ford's, arguing that the central question was to 'build the pickets necessary to win'. 'Socialist Worker' of February 13 told SWP branches 'to keep up the fight even if the present revival is short-lived'.

The Revolutionary Communist Party urges health workers to abandon the struggle within the existing trade unions on the grounds that they are hopelessly bureaucratized. This group of de-classed elements insist that the real struggle is not the defence of the gains of the working class embodied in the NHS, but a bread-and-

butter question of wages and conditions.

According to these great 'organisers of the rank-and-file', it is permissible to go cap in hand to Thatcher, but not permissible to put the leaders of the Labour Party and TUC to a serious test in front of the working class. The American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon once summed up the nature of such professional rank-and-fileists, pointing out that the slogan of 'no leaders' was the 'slogan of demagogues who themselves aspire to leadership without qualifications'.

Beneath the radical-sounding demagogy of these groups lies the ingrained scepticism of those who reject the struggle for revolutionary leadership, and refuse to conduct a comprehensive exposure of the Labour and trade union bureaucracy.

While the SWP and RCP 'ignore' the role of the reformist leaders, other revisionist groups attempt to

jump over the question by toying with the slogan of the general strike. As Rosa Luxemburg warned, the general strike is not a pocket-knife which can be produced at will. Nor is it a weapon of protest to 'frighten the enemy'. 'The entire history of the working class movement proves that every general strike, whatever may be the slogans under which it occurs has an internal tendency to transform itself into an open revolutionary clash, into direct struggle for power.' (Trotsky: 'On France', Monad, p.94). Precisely for this reason it requires the most thorough political preparation of the widest sections of workers.

The revisionists, tail-ending Kinnock, screamed 'Make Budget Day into NHS Day'. To the budget of the capitalist class we counterpose — **Nationalise the drug monopolies and all major industries under workers' control without compensation!** To those who say that the NHS is

'ours' we say — **not until it is run under workers' control, privatisation reversed and private practice abolished!**

The working class spontaneously feels the need to unite its struggles. But the 'unity' preached by the Labour and TUC leaders is a complete fraud. They mean unity between the classes to exert pressure upon an enemy who has no intention of surrendering. **Demand that the Labour and trade union leaders mobilise the working class to bring down the Tories! For a Labour government pledged to socialist policies!**

The task is not to plead with the Tories, but to unite the working class in revolutionary action. **Occupation of hospitals, factories and services threatened with closure!** Not parliamentary manoeuvres, but the creation of fighting organisations to unite the trade unions, workers' political parties, the unemployed, women and youth. **Build Councils of Action!**

The Tories are preparing the state forces for use against the working class; the 'leaders' of the working class cling, despite everything, to the apparatus of the capitalist state. **Dem-and that they break with the state! Withdraw from the MSC/Training Commission, the NEDC and ACAS!**

The policy of 'wait and see' must be replaced by the vigorous defence of democratic rights. **Repeal the anti-union laws! Defend the picket lines against strike-breakers and police; defend the black and immigrant communities against racist attack! Build workers' defence squads!**

The struggle for this programme requires the building of revolutionary leadership. **No confidence in Kinnock, Willis or their 'left' hangers-on! Build the Workers International League.**

FERRY WORKERS BETRAYED

A CLEAR demonstration of the role played by the trade union bureaucracy in policing the working class on behalf of the Tories is provided by the betrayal of the ferry workers' national strike by the leadership of the National Union of Seamen.

Sam McCluskie, who doubles as general secretary of the NUS and treasurer of the Labour Party, capitulated to the High Court interpretation of the ferry dispute as 'secondary action' and rushed to call off the strike in order to avoid a major confrontation.

McCluskie, like his predecessor, Jim Slater, has worked might and main to hold back the struggle of seamen. So willing has this leadership been to agree to the cuts in manning levels and changes in working practices demanded by the shipping companies that, over the past five years, the NUS has experienced a decline in its membership of over 30 per cent.

The number of British ships registered in home ports has fallen from 1,614 in 1975 to only 635 last year, as the employers have 're-flagged' their vessels abroad to avoid taxes and take advantage of cheap labour and less stringent safety legislation.

When 161 NUS members were sacked by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company on January 28, after being on strike for over a month, the long-suppressed anger of seamen exploded. The company — 42 per cent owned by Sealink UK — was attempting to impose a new pay and conditions package by unilaterally breaking from the Merchant Navy Establishment (MNE). The MNE is the national negotiating body for all shipping companies, tying them to the British registry of pooled labour, which consists mostly of NUS members, and agreements covering minimum terms of pay and conditions.

NUS members recognised the sackings as the prelude to a concerted attempt by ferry owners to smash up the MNE and open the way to a major assault on working conditions, pay and the union itself.

McCluskie's reaction to the determination of his members to resist these plans — the calling of a one-day protest strike on February 2 — was intended to reverse the growing disaffection with his leadership throughout the NUS. Since his election two years ago, McCluskie has been increasingly at odds with rank-and-file members of the union, opposing occupations of ships in defence of jobs and negotiating away hard-won rights. At the union's bi-annual conference in May, he faces a series of branch motions condemning his

By Daniel Evans

conciliatory attitude to employers whose actions threaten the very existence of the NUS. His aim in calling the strike was to win some credentials as a 'militant' and thus undermine the attacks on his leadership.

The union leaders failed, however, to limit the strike to 24 hours and were obliged to put themselves at the head of a spontaneous movement of over 7,000 NUS members, which quickly spread to nearly all British-flagged passenger and freight ferries at all the major ports. As a result, McCluskie was catapulted into the head-on conflict with the employers and the state which he had been desperately trying to avoid.

The ferry owners Sealink and P&O were able to take the union to court under the Tories' anti-union legislation, on the grounds that the strike constituted 'secondary action' and that it had been organised without a ballot.

McCluskie assured the judge that he would do everything in his power to halt the strike, justifying his capitulation by saying it was essential to avoid sequestration of union funds if the NUS was to remain intact.

He left the court making a public statement that the strike was over and that ferry workers had been instructed to return to work. Resistance amongst crews to this cowardly retreat was widespread and full-time NUS officials had to put pressure on branches which were determined to continue the action, repeatedly warning them that they were putting the union's funds at risk.

The collaboration with the High Court and the employers received warm thanks from the judge who said that the NUS was 'extremely fortunate' to have McCluskie as its general secretary. For his part, McCluskie left the court 'very happy', saying that the judge had 'shown an understanding'.

The judge's 'understanding' consisted in the fact that he recognised McCluskie's difficulties in betraying a determined strike, with virtually unanimous support, in such a short space of time.

By this action, P&O ferry workers at Dover, in dispute with their own management, and the sacked Steam Packet Company workers were left to fight on alone.

At the forthcoming NUS conference, the battle to oust the McCluskie leadership must be stepped up. With ferry owners determined to slash costs, only a revolutionary struggle for workers' control of the industry can guarantee jobs, wages and safety conditions. Ferry occupations in October 1986 were a spontaneous recognition of this necessity, but the success of this policy requires the building of a Trot-

skyst leadership amongst NUS members and throughout the working class.

● After six weeks on strike, 2,300 P&O ferry workers in Dover were sacked on March 14, when talks between the company and the NUS at ACAS broke down. Along with dismissal notices were sent new contracts outlining the harsh conditions for re-employment. P&O are imposing new manning levels on all their cross-channel ferries — at present they operate 3.6 crews per vessel against the 2 to 2.5 of foreign operators. The NUS negotiators had agreed to abide by the new working practices, which mean a cut of over 400 jobs, if they were introduced over three years. On March 16, a mass meeting of the sacked NUS members voted overwhelmingly to reject the company's offer and return the new contracts.

Steel jobs threatened

THE privatisation of British Steel, planned for later this year, will result in 11,000 redundancies in Scotland, according to a survey carried out by accountants Arthur Young for Motherwell District Council. The closure of Ravenscraig hot strip mill and the Dalzell plate mill — both near Motherwell — would lead to 3,900 job losses, with a further 7,100 lost in contracting and other dependent industries.

Cuts strategy

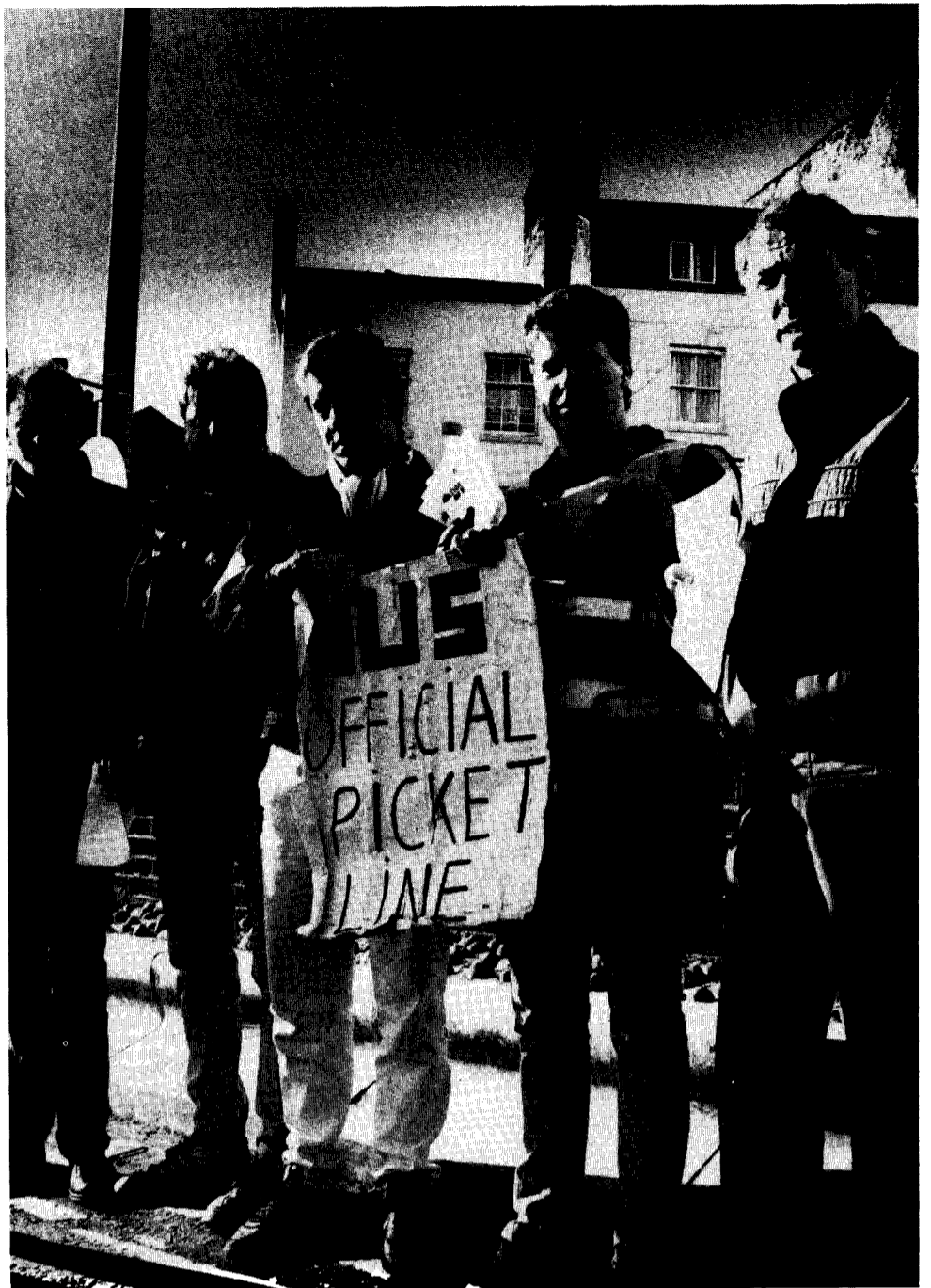
ISLINGTON's Labour council launched an all-out assault on the employment safeguards of its 7,000-strong workforce in March, when it announced the abolition of tribunals at which dismissed workers can put their cases. In their place, a single officer will be responsible for passing judgement. The new plan is designed to give the council the power of instant dismissal as it pushes through Tory cuts.

Gill heads prototype for 'business union'

THE merger of the two white-collar unions, TASS and ASTMS, into one new union, cryptically named Manufacturing, Science and Finance, will reinforce the rightward move of the bureaucracy in the trade unions.

The omission of the word 'union', or any of its synonyms, from the name of this new organisation signifies its 'new-wave' pretensions.

In a breathless piece in the 'Morning Star' announcing its launch, joint general



Ferry workers manning the picket line outside the Dover terminal during their national strike in February

Sapper must call a national strike!

By Eugene Ludlow

THE failure of ACTT union leader Alan Sapper to organise national action in support of TV-am technicians on strike since November 24, 1987, has given the green light to management to step up its union-busting operation.

On February 16, all 229 technicians were sacked and management have proceeded to hire scabs in their place. Leaflets circulated by the ACTT leadership called on members to do nothing other than write letters to

the TV-am bosses. The offer by TV-am's managing director, Bruce Gyngell, on March 11, to rehire 70 of the sacked technicians is a tactic designed to destroy the union by splitting its membership.

The events at TV-am are closely connected to government moves to reorganise the entire TV network. Following a decision by a cabinet committee chaired

by Thatcher in February of this year, all the regional independent TV franchises are to be auctioned off to the highest bidder in 1992. This is a break with the previous practice of awarding franchises according to certain minimal social, as well as commercial, criteria.

Trade unionists working in the media must take clear warning from the struggles at Wapping, the North London Advertiser and TV-am. All have a common feature — the smashing of long-standing union agreements and the mass sacking of trade unionists. TV-am is a test case for the rest of the industry — all the television companies will seek drastic cuts in manning levels to cope with the flood of cheap programming beamed in by Satellite TV.

London Weekend Television has been stockpiling programmes, as well as booking studios and transmission equipment abroad, in anticipation of a lengthy struggle with its own technicians.

ACTT members must demand, without delay, that Alan Sapper organises a national television strike, and that he insists on the support of all other unions in the entertainments industry.

secretary and leading Communist Campaign Group Stalinist Ken Gill pledged the MSF to 'strengthen the fight to rescue British manufacturing'. Any talk of taking British manufacturing out of the hands of the capitalists would of course be out of place in such a forward-looking body as MSF.

National Officer for Information Technology Tim Webb is a little less coy than Gill about some of the less traditional aspirations of

MSF. Announcing a recruiting drive amongst computer staff, he was reported as having dismissed the idea of collective bargaining in favour of offering legal and specialist advice.

Webb is a protege of Gill's fellow joint general secretary, Clive Jenkins. Jenkins' long-time balancing act between the Stalinists and the right-wing will come to an end with his forthcoming retirement, leaving Gill, the old-style Stalinist in control of the new-wave union.

Withdraw from MSC

- say T&G stewards

OVER a hundred shop stewards from the Transport and General Workers' Union met in Manchester early in March to discuss their union's involvement in Manpower Services Commission cheap-labour schemes.

The stewards, representing branches organising youth in MSC schemes, heard reports from T&GWU national officers and representatives of the independent Unemployment Unit.

After listening to a number of reports, a group of stewards intervened to insist that discussion was necessary on the role of trade union participation in the MSC. The officers convening the meeting were forced to withdraw their agenda and accept one put forward from the floor.

The meeting went on to vote unanimously for: immediate T&GWU withdrawal from all participation in the schemes; full trade union rights to be extended to youth on MSC schemes; and for a fight to be taken up in T&GWU branches to make the national leadership end all collaboration with the MSC.

Ron Todd, T&GWU general secretary and a TUC commissioner, is currently performing his annual act of 'threatening' to withdraw from participation in the MSC. Without a fight being waged inside the T&GWU conference to force him to withdraw, Todd will remain firmly tied to the MSC.

Guinness: fifth man charged

By Graham Fenwick

LORD SPENS, managing director of merchant bankers Henry Ansbacher, became the fifth leading City figure to be implicated in the Guinness affair when he was arrested by the fraud squad on March 10.

During the Guinness takeover bid for Distillers, it is alleged that the Henry Ansbacher bank helped to boost the Guinness share price by buying up a vital block of 2.15 million shares at a cost of £7.6 million.

Lord Spens is charged on four counts including: accepting a loan of £7.6 million from Guinness to Ansbacher to finance the deal; misleading Guinness as to the whereabouts of the loan; and falsely boosting the price of Guinness shares.

In 1974, his father, the second Baron Spens, was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison for embezzling £151,000 from the Federation of British Carpet Manufacturers.

Leadership crisis deepens in NUM

IN the national pit-head ballot held on March 4, miners voted by a 58 per cent majority to call off their overtime ban. The ending of the ban, introduced on September 21 last year to protest at the imposition by British Coal of a new disciplinary code, reflects the continuing crisis of leadership in the National Union of Mineworkers.

The NUM National Executive recommended the ballot after a special delegate conference, held in London on February 3, had voted by 57 votes to 52 not to extend the overtime ban.

NUM President Arthur Scargill, commenting on the ballot result, identified its

cause in the fact that many of the NUM area leaderships had been actively campaigning against the ban, and also that many miners considered it an 'ineffective action'. That this is pure demagoguery is shown by his total lack of support for the unofficial strike-waves which engulfed the South Yorkshire coalfield in July last year and January this year. These were directed specifically at the British Coal disciplinary code and were a clear indication of the willingness of the miners to fight, given leadership.

As Workers News warned, the ban was an entirely inadequate response and could only encourage management to step up their offensive against the miners and their union. The decision to ballot on continuing the ban was likewise interpreted by

By David Lewis

BC as a sign of weakness. The day after the NUM conference, BC revealed that it was shutting down Abernant and Lady Windsor pits in South Wales. The following day, closure of a third South Wales pit, Seven Bells, was announced.

A further turn of the screw by British Coal came on the day after the ballot result, when BC chairman Sir Robert Haslam said that last year's 4.2 per cent pay award would not be backdated to November. He also threatened that he would respond to further industrial action by closing 20 more pits, leading to the loss of 20,000 jobs. Two days later, BC said that it was going to close South Kirkby in Yorkshire and Mansfield in

Nottinghamshire. Scargill's 'threat' to call a special conference to consider industrial action over pay unless BC enters talks 'without strings' underlines the dangerous role he now plays.

The majority on the NUM executive is now prostrate before British Coal management and the 'left' around Scargill have consistently turned their backs on the militancy of rank-and-file miners, abandoning any attempt at leading a fight against BC in favour of empty bluster.

At the February special conference, the executive recommended that the NUM should attend consultative meetings with British Coal alongside the scab Union of Democratic Mineworkers. This was thrown out by the delegates, along with another proposal, from the North Derbyshire

and South Wales areas, which would have allowed the UDM trial negotiating rights at pits where it was in a majority.

Scargill's refusal to mobilise the NUM membership has given the initiative to the Stalinists and the right wing in the union — and encouraged British Coal to go on the offensive — at the very point when miners' jobs are most at risk. The Tory plans to privatise the electricity industry open the way for a huge cut-back in the deep-mining of coal in England and Wales, and its complete demise in Scotland. It underlines the urgent necessity of building a revolutionary leadership in the NUM. Miners must demand that Scargill calls a national strike against pit closures and fights for workers' control of the coal industry.

Ford agreement tied to new work practices

THE first national strike at the Ford Motor Company since 1978 came to an end with a return to work on February 22, after only two weeks. Ford managers had been prepared for a long strike but the Ford workers' leaders clearly were not. Having desperately tried to sell the three-year strings-attached deal before the strike started, they went into overdrive to stitch up a deal once it had started.

The betrayal began with a decision by the union national negotiators, right-winger Mick Murphy of the T&GWU and Stalinist James Airlie of the AEU, to hold a national ballot on industrial action after the breakdown of the fifth round of talks on Ford's 'final' offer. This was for a pay increase of 6.5 per cent this year and increases in line with inflation for the following two years. Tied in with this was a range of new working practices known to Ford as AJ — 'After Japan'. They included the introduction of teamwork, the ending of demarcation between skilled and unskilled workers, the introduction of quality discussion groups and the use of temporary workers to meet peaks in demand.

Murphy was reported as saying that the unions would favour accepting a three-year deal, subject to the offer being improved and employment levels guaranteed. The ballot of Ford's

32,500 manual workers showed a massive majority of 88 per cent in favour of strike action. With the strike set for Monday, February 1, Murphy and Airlie, concerned to avoid a 'most damaging' strike, begged Ford's for more talks.

At three hours to midnight on Sunday, January 31, the strike was called off and Mick Murphy recommended acceptance of a new offer: in exchange for a seven per cent rise and two years of rises 2.5 per cent above inflation, all the company's demands on flexible working were conceded. However, within a week, and to the evident dismay of Murphy and Airlie, workers at all Ford's plants had voted to reject the deal and go on strike. On Monday, February 8, Ford UK was at a standstill.

Within days, such is the interdependence of Ford's European activities, Transit van production at Genk and tractor output at Antwerp in Belgium were halted, and Escort and Orion production at Saarlouis in West Germany was cut by 30 per cent.

Leaders of I G Metall, the main West German Ford union, undertook not to increase overtime working to replace components usually made in Britain. By Monday, February 15, Sierra production at Genk and, by Wednesday, engine production at Cologne were halted.

Meanwhile, top union leaders were holding secret talks with Ford managers.



Health visitors turned out in force to support the TUC's March 5 demonstration through London, which saw over 100,000 NHS workers and other trade unionists protesting against Tory attacks on the health service

Ron Todd, general secretary of the T&GWU, and Bill Jordan, president of the AEU, set up the basis for the eventual betrayal: a two-year pay deal and each plant left to fend for itself over the speed-up proposals.

On February 16, union negotiators recommended acceptance of a revised Ford offer, based on these secret discussions, which dropped the original three-year pay deal, offering a pay rise of about 14 per cent over two years in its place, but which required union agreement in principle to major changes in working practices. The 'compromise' offered by the company was that none of the changes would be implemented without local plant agreement. Union leaders hailed the deal as an 'historic' agreement.

They have, in essence, given the Ford company everything it wanted. Des-

pite a 40 per cent increase in its annual profits to a record £2.6 billion world-wide, the deepening capitalist crisis requires Ford to drive productivity up to Japanese levels. This entails a doubling of output over the next four years.

The proviso that new methods of work will only be introduced with local agreement will come as no comfort to Ford workers. At Dagenham Assembly, the only plant in the country where a majority voted against the final deal, local leaders moved immediately to stifle discontent amongst their members. Early in March, shop stewards voted by 20 to 19 to ban unofficial actions. This is a clear signal that the Dagenham PTA stewards will attempt to push through the productivity measures demanded by Ford. It also shows that the new look 'left wing' Na-

tional Executive of the T&GWU will be just as treacherous as the old one. Steve Riley, newly-elected Broad Left member of the executive, was one of the supporters of the ban at Dagenham which was proposed by the convenor, Joe Gordon.

FUNDS

Workers News must become the weapon for organising the working class in the struggle for the socialist revolution. This means extending our coverage and appearing more frequently. To make this possible, we must urgently boost our £10,000 Building Fund, which stands at £723.93. And please don't forget your contribution to the £300 Monthly Fund to help us pay our regular expenses.

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Classes polarised in South Africa

THE banning orders introduced by the racist South African regime on February 24 were both a product of the rising militancy of black workers and a concession to the extreme right wing of white nationalism.

Confronted with the growth of support for the Conservative Party and the Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging (AWB), particularly among young white farmers, and with the prospect of his own National Party losing further ground in elections, President P.W. Botha complied with a number of extremist demands.

In the weeks leading up to elections in two marginal constituencies in early March, Botha intensified military attacks on Angola, rapidly suppressed an attempt to overthrow the black stooge administration in Bophuthatswana on February 10 and gave police protection to Inkatha raids on trade union offices. He went on to ban 17 organisations from 'carrying out or per-

By Ian Harrison

forming any activities or acts whatsoever' and placed individual restriction orders on 18 leading black militants.

Those affected by the banning orders include: the United Democratic Front; COSATU, South Africa's largest and growing trade union federation; the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), founded in 1977 under the influence of the Black Consciousness Movement; the Detainees' Parents Support Committee, formed in 1987 to campaign for the release of the 10,000 school youth detained by the Botha government last year; a number of trade union groups and committees organising black students and school children; and the End Conscription Campaign, which supports white youth opposed to the draft.

Following his party's defeats in the March elections, Botha banned the Committee for the Defence of Democracy, newly-formed

by Archbishop Tutu in the wake of the initial banning.

The Botha regime has just announced a wage freeze in the public sector and a programme of privatisation. In spite of the assault on workers' organisations, average earnings for black workers rose by 18 per cent under the state of emergency last year, whilst the income of the debt-ridden small white farmers continued to decline.

In the forefront of struggle have been the Highveld Mills steelworkers at Brits. Their wages have increased by over 70 per cent since they were organised by the metalworkers' union NUMSA, making them the highest paid black workers in South Africa.

Brits is the birthplace of the AWB, the extreme right-wing Afrikaner nationalist party. Its reactionary call for the establishment of a white farmer homeland seeks to turn the clock back to when Boer farmers set up free republics in the Orange State and the Transvaal.

The 'free' republics were designed to preserve black slavery after its abolition by Britain in 1836.

But the prospect of small farmers achieving self-sufficiency in South Africa today is non-existent. The AWB has set out to harness this reactionary social layer in order to split the National Party's vote and force Botha to suspend parliamentary institutions and unleash the military on the black working class.

The increasing class polarisation in South Africa indicates the rapid transition to a pre-revolutionary situation. COSATU has called an emergency congress in April to discuss the implications of the banning. Its leaders have announced that they will call for nationwide industrial action in May if the government prevents the congress from taking place. The sustained struggle of the black working class against the apartheid state is a clear indication that they are entering the rapids of revolution.

Steel jobs fight sold out by IGM

By Eugene Ludlow

UNION leaders are dropping their opposition to steel plant closures in West Germany's industrial heartland, the Ruhr, in return for a one billion Deutschmark (£333 million) investment in new jobs.

After talks with the Bonn government and employers on February 24, negotiators from the main steelworkers' union, I G Metall, accepted government promises of DM 400 million towards encouraging light industry into the area. Already available for the scheme is DM 100 million from Common Market funds and DM 500 million from the regional government of North Rhine Westphalia.

The decline of West German heavy industry is symbolised by Krupp's vast Rheinhausen steel plant near Duisberg. A workforce of 20,000 in the early 1950s has dwindled to only 5,300 today. Those remaining are scheduled to go when it shuts down completely at the end of this year, bringing the number of job losses in steel and associated heavy industries to 20,000 in two years within a ten-mile radius of the Rheinhausen plant.

This latest betrayal by the IGM Metall bureaucracy started with an agreement in June 1987 to a reduction of 35,000 jobs throughout the steel industry. In September, Krupp's promises that

Rheinhausen would be cut back but not closed were taken at face value. By November, basing themselves on the union leaders' capitulation, management announced the complete closure of the plant. Calls for national support for the retention of the works by militant demonstrations of steelworkers and their supporters — the largest in West Germany since the six-week metalworkers' strike in 1984 — have been diluted by local union leaders. Rather than fight, they have lamely called on Krupp to postpone closure for five years, by which time they hope that new industries will have been established.

Only six per cent of I G Metall's membership work in steel production and the leadership is anxious to distance itself from the fight to save Rheinhausen, which it refers to contemptuously as a 'rust bowl' dispute. To this end, it has kept the steelworkers' struggle localised and isolated from the rest of the Ruhr. Conniving with government and employers in this way is a bid for privileged status in union recruitment in new industries. In their quest for a 'high-tec' image, the I G Metall leaders are cynically condemning the steelworkers of Rheinhausen to become just another statistic on the rising curve of West Germany's unemployment figures.

Pamphlet exposes house demolition in the West Bank

By Susan Keepence

THE vicious policy of house sealing and demolition in the Occupied Territories has been central to the Zionist attempt to intimidate Palestinian resistance since 1967.

'Punishing the Innocent', published by the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding, is a comprehensive account of the effect of this policy in the West Bank. It provides an important key to understanding the depth of anger throughout the Palestinian population which has sustained the present spontaneous revolt against the Israeli military authorities.

About 20,000 Palestinian homes in the West Bank, Gaza, Golan Heights and East Jerusalem — the areas occupied by the Israelis since the 1967 war — have been demolished as a form of summary punishment. Military rule has resulted in the destruction of entire villages, hospitals, shops and other Arab-owned properties.

The Israeli authorities issue demolition orders routinely, using the pretext that Palestinian houses have been built without proper building permits. Under the military regulations governing the Occupied Territories, obtaining a permit is a highly complicated process. Palestinian land seized in this manner is then used by the military or handed over

to Israeli settlers.

Palestinian families who have had any of their members detained by the military also become the targets for such action, frequently after a 'confession' has been beaten out of the detainee. Their houses are then bulldozed, blown-up or either completely or partially sealed.

Demolition or sealing orders are not dependent on any judicial procedure. They are issued directly by the military commander of the Central Area under the Defence (Emergency) Regulations 1945 introduced by British imperialism during its rule over Palestine.

After the initial unrestricted application of the tactic, it was less widely used in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Its use has been escalated, however, since the introduction of the 'Iron Fist' policy in May 1985. During the first 25 months of this policy at least 135 Palestinian houses in the West Bank were demolished or sealed.

The authors cite the example of an 82-year-old man, resident in the same house for 60 years, whose land was 'sold' over his head to settlers and his house bulldozed. In another instance a family of 24 were evicted, their home demolished, and they were forced to live in a



Palestinians outside the cave where they were forced to live after their house was demolished

An invaluable pamphlet for its well-documented exposure of the brutality of Zionist imperialism; but when it proceeds to any conclusions, all the weaknesses of well-intentioned liberalism are revealed.

The authors do not call for international working class action in support of the Palestinian national struggle. Instead, they propose 'a concerted international

publicity campaign' to persuade Israel's imperialist allies to condemn the practice, backed up by a campaign of protest letters to Shamir, Rabin and the rest of the Zionist leaders.

'Punishing the Innocent', published by the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding, 21 Collingham Road, London SW5 0NU.

Swedish strike-wave

AFTER years of comparative 'calm', militancy is growing among Swedish workers. Rising inflation and government wage controls have provoked a series of strikes in both the public sector and private industry.

The largest action, which ended on February 8, saw over 90,000 members of the Swedish Union of Clerical and Technical Employees on strike for three weeks demanding a six per cent wage

increase. The strike, which affected Volvo and 40 other major companies, ended in a deal worth 4.7 per cent.

A government ceiling of four per cent on this year's pay round, however, is set to lead to further strikes. A Swedish Labour Ministry report published in early February advocates legal limitations on the right to strike in the public sector, and restrictions in essential private industry.

German reformist urges wage cuts

A LEADING member of West Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD) has proposed that wage-cuts should accompany any reduction in the working week. Oskar Lafontaine, the Prime Minister of the Saarland region, and reputed to be on the left of the SPD, made the call, in his capacity as a spokesman for the employers, during recent negotiations with local government trade unions.

As over 100,000 workers belonging to the Transport and Public Service Union (OETV) took strike action at the end of February, Lafontaine emerged as the champion of increased exploita-

tion. The strike by West Germany's second largest union was called to protest against unemployment of 2.5 million, a wage rise of only 1.3 per cent, and in favour of a 35-hour week.

Lafontaine disputes the claim, widely made by trade union leaders, that cuts in working hours create new jobs despite the increase in unit labour costs. In bluntly pointing out the facts of life under capitalism, Lafontaine has inadvertently highlighted illusions being peddled by the trade union bureaucrats — and given advance warning to the working class of struggles to come.

Arafat calls for talks

WITH the uprising in the Occupied Territories in full sway, Yasser Arafat has once more indicated the PLO leadership's readiness to recognise the state of Israel preparatory to a Middle East 'peace' conference.

Answering questions in Tunis as to the PLO's attitude to Israel, Arafat replied: 'I am not Shamir. I am going to deal with my enemies.' He also reaffirmed the PLO leadership's commitment to the 1985 Cairo declaration which suspended all military



Yasser Arafat

actions against Israel outside the West Bank and Gaza.

GORBACHEV SUES FOR AFGHANISTAN PEACE

ON March 3, Afghan Foreign Minister Abdul Wakil announced that an agreement had been reached at the UN-sponsored talks in Geneva designed to end the eight-year war.

Subject to Pakistan signing the deal, Soviet troops supporting the regime of Najibullah will leave Afghanistan over nine months, starting on May 15, with half going in the first three months. A coalition government will be formed in which leaders of the mujahedin guerrillas, the former King and all ex-ministers in every previous government will be invited to participate with 'no preconditions'.

It was in mid-February that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev announced the speed-up of troop withdrawals. Interpreted in the capitalist media as a clear case of Gorbachev outmanoeuvring US imperialism, it is, in fact, exactly the opposite. It demonstrates the willingness of the Stalinist leaders to capitulate fully to the strategic requirements of imperialism in return for its economic assistance in 'restructuring' Soviet industry.

The Red Army entered Afghanistan in December 1979 to prop up the Stalinist People's Democratic Party (PDP) government. During the subsequent war against the mujahedin guerrilla groups backed by Pakistan and the United States, 30,000 Soviet troops and 1.5 million Afghans are estimated to have died. In addition there are three million refugees camped in Pakistan and Iran.

The recent history of Afghanistan provides a classic example of the foreign policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy. In 1967, the PDP split three ways, with the two main factions, the Parcham and the Khalq, divided over the extent to which they should opportunistically adapt to the 'tenets of Islam'. When, in 1973, Khan Mohammed Daoud seized power from the feudal ruler, King Zahir Shah, and declared a republic, he rested on a very weak national bourgeoisie and needed the support of Stalinism. It came in the form of the Parcham, led by Babrak Karmal.

By Graham Fenwick and Daniel Evans

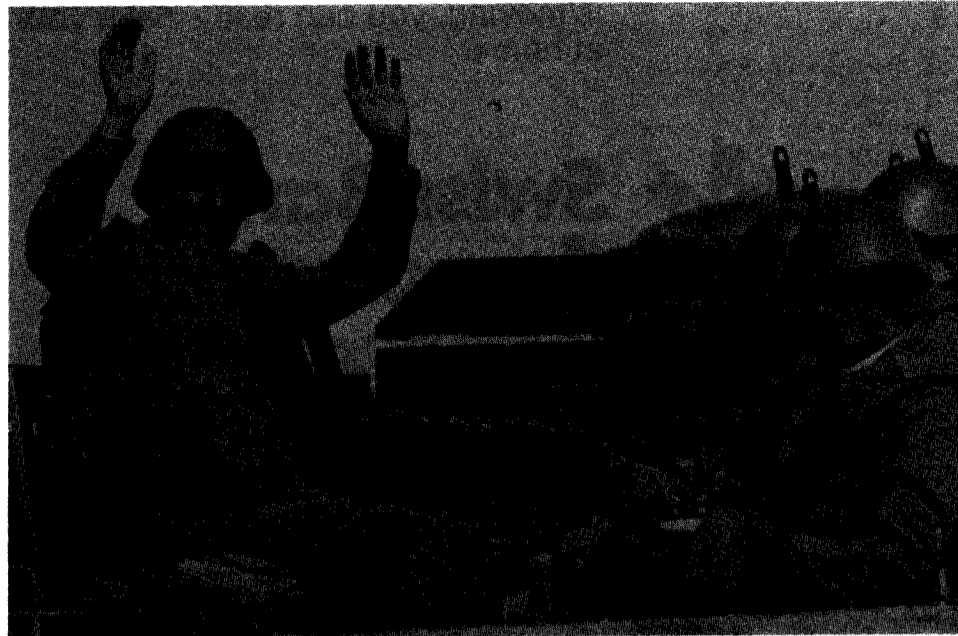
Unable to resolve the problems of industrial and agricultural backwardness, Daoud remained a prisoner of the feudal aristocracy he had sought to replace and turned to imperialism for aid. By 1977, his purges against the left drove Parcham to join forces with the outlawed Khalq, headed by Mohammed Taraki and Hafizullah Amin, and led to the re-forming of the PDP.

On April 17, 1978, during a further crackdown, a prominent Parcham leader was assassinated by Daoud's troops. The PDP responded by organising demonstrations and Daoud ordered the arrest of its leadership. Khalq supporters in the armed forces launched a coup and took power in the name of the PDP on April 27, after only twelve hours of fighting.

The new government was dominated by the Khalq, with Taraki installed as president and Amin his second in command. Moscow and Karmal, however, were anxious to stress that the revolution was national in character and not socialist.

While the Kremlin leaders promoted gradualism through Karmal, Taraki and Amin recognised the need to consolidate the regime's base of support if they were to hold on to power.

Leaving the old feudal state bureaucracy intact, the PDP embarked on an ambitious programme of reform in the countryside, intended



Soviet troops in Afghanistan

to win the peasantry. But with little party organisation outside the towns, Taraki was dependent on a hostile provincial administration to implement these measures. In a desperate attempt to step over these problems, the Khalq faction purged the Parcham from the government, blaming



NAJIBULLAH

them for blocking the way to progress. Karmal took refuge in the Soviet Union. Resistance in the countryside was met with brutal force, serving only to strengthen the hand of the Islamic guerrilla groups. The Iranian revolution in the summer of 1979 gave these groups a substantial

boost.

Alarmed by the rise of Islamic fundamentalism close to its Central Asian states with their large Muslim populations, the Kremlin put pressure on Taraki to change his course. He visited Moscow in September where he met with Karmal, but on his return he was shot by Amin for capitulating to the Soviet line.

As the collapse of the regime seemed inevitable in December 1979, the Soviet bureaucracy sent in 100,000 troops to take control. Amin was shot and replaced by Karmal who proposed a programme of 'national reconciliation'. But the seven major Islamic groups could not be placated.

In 1986, Moscow replaced Karmal with Najibullah as a further conciliatory gesture. Najibullah personally renounced 'communism' in favour of Islam, dishing out bribes to win support, but succeeded only in further isolating the regime.

The 1979 invasion was a bureaucratic attempt to maintain control over a region of vital strategic importance and secure the Soviet Union's southern borders. Such an adventure, which substitutes armed might for a political struggle to win the masses, is completely inadmissible even if it is intended as a means of extending nationalised property relations. But the Soviet Union had no such intentions.

The Moscow bureaucracy immediately began to reverse the reforms Taraki and Amin had carried out. They hoped to tempt the national bourgeoisie into a Popular Front alliance with the Najibullah regime.

The planned withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan is in no sense a belated recognition of the incorrectness of the 1979 invasion. On the contrary, it marks a further right turn in Moscow's foreign policy.

Gorbachev's retreat from the position of a four-year timetable for withdrawal and the maintenance of a

pro-Soviet government in Afghanistan, to a nine-month timetable and a willingness to accept the possibility of a hostile pro-imperialist government on his doorstep, arises from the severity of the internal economic crisis of the Soviet Union. The war in Afghanistan is expensive and potentially a political time-bomb internally. Gorbachev hopes that this concession to imperialism can be used as a bargaining counter in the nuclear arms reduction negotiations, thus freeing a proportion of the massive Soviet expenditure on arms to tackle the domestic economic crisis. It is also intended to smooth the way to Western loans and investment for the same purpose.

For the Stalinist bureaucracy, solving the economic problems which threaten its rule at home takes precedence over holding onto Afghanistan. 'Peaceful co-existence' with imperialism takes on more and more the form of an open invitation for capital to flood into the Soviet Union.

The defence of the property relations of the Soviet Union, and their extension across the world through the defeat of imperialism, will only be achieved by the working class behind a Trotskyist leadership. The resolution of the tasks of the democratic revolution in Afghanistan can only be carried out under the slogan: 'For an independent soviet Afghanistan!'

Stroessner's rigged election

By Martin Sullivan

THE 're-election' of President Alfredo Stroessner of Paraguay to his eighth successive term was accompanied by the flagrant violations of democratic rights which have sustained his 34-year rule. For 33 of those years, Stroessner maintained a state of siege, outlawing workers' trade unions and opposition parties.

On polling day, February 14, oppositionists were beaten up, and leaders of the various liberal and Christian Democrat parties, who had called for a boycott of the 'election', arrested. Foreign observers reported widespread and blatant election fraud. Stroessner officially polled 89 per cent of the vote, the remainder being divided between two bogus 'opposition' candidates, who are alleged to have been paid \$50,000 each to stand, in order to give the 'election' a semblance of credibility.

Under Stroessner, who took power through a military coup in 1954, Paraguay became a haven for fascist and right-wing exiles, including Josef Mengele, the camp doctor at Auschwitz, and the former dictator of Nicaragua, Anastasio Somoza, who was killed in 1980.

The grinding exploitation of workers and poor peasants has been increased, driving thousands from the land. Currently three per cent of landowners own 80 per cent of the land. Stroessner rewards his military, capitalist and landowning backers with a share in the vast smuggling trade conducted through Paraguay.

But Stroessner's rule is far from secure. The ageing dictator is now 75 years old, and has no recognised successor. Last August, the ruling Colorado Party split, with a breakaway group favouring a gradual return to civilian rule.

The liberal opposition parties, however, all stand for an alliance of 'progressive' capitalists and the Catholic Church. The Paraguayan working class must place no confidence in them, and requires, above all, the building of a Trotskyist revolutionary party.

Nasser's son on trial

KHALED ABDEL NASSER, the 38-year-old son of the late Egyptian nationalist leader, Gamel Abdel Nasser, who has been put on trial in absentia, in connection with the activities of the illegal 'Egypt's Revolution' movement, announced on Febru-

ary 25 that he would return to defend himself against the charges.

Nasser, who has been living in exile in Yugoslavia, is charged, along with 19 other defendants, with murdering two Israeli officials and injuring two US embassy staff and

financing an underground anti-Israeli group. Since making the statement, Nasser has been offered political asylum by Algeria. 'Egypt's Revolution' is opposed to the Mubarak government's support for the Camp David peace treaty with Israel.

Portuguese workers protest

ANTI-UNION measures proposed by the conservative government of Anibal Cavaco Silva, aimed at strengthening the 'right' of employers to sack individuals or groups of workers, have been met by an angry response.

Eighty thousand Por-

tuguese workers joined a demonstration called by the Stalinist-led CGTP confederation on February 7. The other major confederation, the General Union of Workers, has called a general strike to coincide with the new law's passage through parliament.

Widespread strikes dem-

anding wage increases to keep pace with inflation, currently at seven per cent, took place in February involving post office, airport and railway workers. A three-week action by Lisbon public transport workers, working only half days, ended with an injunction instructing them to work normally.

JOIN

THE WORKERS INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

I would like details/to join the W.I.L.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

TRADE UNION.....

Post to:-

Workers International League
1/17 Meredith Street, London EC1R 0AE

EDITORIAL

Hands off the republicans!

THE murderous assault on thousands of mourners gathered in Milltown cemetery, West Belfast, on March 16, was the direct result of the Tory government's shoot-to-kill policy against the IRA.

The decision to execute three unarmed IRA volunteers in Gibraltar on March 6, taken at the highest levels of the British state, was equivalent to declaring an 'open season' against the nationalist population in the north of Ireland. Far from being a gesture of 'reconciliation', the absence of the Royal Ulster Constabulary from the funerals of the Gibraltar volunteers was intended to give loyalist paramilitaries the opportunity to launch a reign of terror.

According to eye-witnesses in Gibraltar, Mairead Farrell and Sean Savage were shot repeatedly at close range while they lay on the ground already injured. Daniel McCann was gunned down as he made for the Spanish border. The assassins were plain-clothes members of the SAS.

Not only were initial accounts of the 'discovery' of a 440lb-bomb lies — the nearest explosives were discovered two days later in the Spanish resort of Marbella — but it became clear, subsequently, that both Spanish and British police had tracked the IRA unit for several weeks, if not months.

The murders were endorsed with the near-unanimous approval of the Parliamentary Labour Party on March 7. Labour spokesman George Robertson said: 'These people are evil... they must be dealt with if any democratic answer is to be found.' Only Eric Heffer rose to question the Tories' action, having first earnestly declared himself an opponent of the Irish liberation struggle: 'How can this help in the fight against terrorism — won't that help terrorism?' Only after such notorious reactionaries as SDP leader David Owen had begun to voice criticisms, did Labour MPs raise half-hearted demands for an inquiry.

Repressive measures against the Irish national struggle have increased in recent months. They include:

- The decision on January 25 not to prosecute senior officers of the RUC found to have 'perverted the course of justice' by the Stalker Inquiry into the shoot-to-kill policy;
- The rejection of the appeal by the framed 'Birmingham Six' on January 28;
- The announcement on February 16 that the Prevention of Terrorism Act would be made permanent;
- The shooting on February 21 of 23-year-old Aidan McAnespie at an army checkpoint in Co Tyrone, following his frequent harassment by the security forces;
- The revelation on February 23 that Private Ian Thain was back on duty with his regiment, having served only three years of a life sentence for killing the 22-year-old road manager of the group Bananarama in 1984.

Police-military rule in the north of Ireland would be impossible without the twin support of the British Labour Party reformists and the southern Irish capitalist class. Under the Anglo-Irish agreement, the southern Irish bourgeoisie delivered closer cross-border security against the IRA in return for cosmetic employment reforms in the north.

Frightened by the development of the economic crisis and the class struggle in Ireland — unemployment north and south stands at over 20 per cent — Irish Prime Minister Charles Haughey has been forced to let off steam against British imperialism, whilst at the same time launching the widest-ever sweep against republicans in the 26 counties.

To both British and Irish workers, we say: do not place the slightest confidence in the jackals who sit on the Labour front benches and in the Dail. The police-military apparatus developed over the past nineteen years in the north of Ireland is being prepared for use against you! The 'left' Labour MPs who parade their consciences from time to time are resolutely opposed to the socialist revolution on both sides of the Irish Sea.

Only the working class is capable of uniting Ireland, and uprooting British imperialism. In order to do so it requires the building of a revolutionary party, basing itself upon the theory of permanent revolution. The struggle for national liberation is indissolubly connected to the class struggle, which must be directed against both the imperialists in Westminster and their agents in Dublin.

If heroism and self-sacrifice were sufficient, then the republican movement would have freed Ireland long ago. But the petty-bourgeois outlook of Sinn Fein and the IRA cannot advance beyond the perspective of an independent capitalist Ireland. They attempt to substitute themselves for a 'revolutionary' capitalist class which never has, and never will, exist — rather than basing the national struggle upon the revolutionary role of the working class.

The policy of the Workers International League is:

- For the defeat of British imperialism!
- Withdraw all British troops now! Disband the RUC and the Ulster Defence Regiment!
- Unconditional support for the Irish national liberation struggle — hands off Sinn Fein and the IRA!
- Smash the Anglo-Irish agreement!
- Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act — release all Irish political prisoners!
- Build a Trotskyist party in Ireland!
- For a United Socialist Republic of Ireland!

INTERIM REPORT

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE COMMISSION

THIS commission was established by the International Committee on October 25. The ICFI put forward the following resolution: 'Full collaboration by every member of the WRP with an International Control Commission to investigate, but not limited to, the corruption of G. Healy, the coverup by the Political Committee and the financial crisis of the WRP.' This resolution was carried unanimously.

On October 26, it was endorsed unanimously by the WRP Central Committee and on October 27, it was endorsed by the Special Congress of the WRP which the Healy rump refused to attend. It was reported in the News Line of Tuesday, October 29, 1985, page 7. (See News Line statement Exhibit No. 1).

Commission members AP of North America and PS of West Germany arrived in London to begin the work of the Commission on Sunday, November 17. They completed the first stage of the Commission's work on November 26, 1985.

The files examined were the finance records of New Park Publications, News Line, Copsecroft Ltd, WRP, College of Marxist Education and Astmoor Litho Ltd; News Line circulation reports; auditor's reports from 1979 to 1983; and files from G. Healy's office.

It should be noted at this time that the finance office is in a state of chaos. There were frequently long delays in obtaining files and records necessary for this examination. It is known that boxes of records were removed by the Healy rump when they were in control of the premises.

We worked with the comrades from the finance department which included comrades [names missing] who returned from vacation on November 25, and [name missing]. There was one other comrade working in the finance dept when we arrived named [name missing] who had volunteered from the Special Congress to help because he has had work experience as a bookkeeper.

While we were there the WRP Finance Commission established by the WRP Central Committee arrived to begin their investigation into the party's financial crisis. This included 4 comrades: [names missing].

The IC Commission also worked with [name missing] and [name missing] in establishing the present situation in the WRP and the events leading up to it.

THE PRESENT STATE OF FINANCES

Present Financial Crisis

At present the Workers Revolutionary Party is in an extremely serious financial and political crisis. The financial crisis is exacerbated by the fact that the full extent of it is still to be established. This is because under Healy there were no proper books and methods of finance allowed.

Warnings by the Accountant

There are statements by the accountant, [name missing], to the effect that proper books have not existed for a very long time. There is a present debt owing to the accountants of £30,000 for their work done to bring the books up to March, 1983. The accountant warned in October 1985: 'I can only say once again, therefore, that as matters are becoming increasingly urgent, priority must be given to the accounting problems if financial disaster is to be avoided.' (See full letter Exhibit No. 2).

Accounts Payable System

An accounts payable system to determine liabilities was missing. We could not determine the exact amount owed by each of the WRP's different companies to its creditors.

Cash Books

Cash book entries are made after the deposits are put together — sometimes with delays of weeks or months. The problem is so serious that the books do not properly balance. For example, in the News Line Cash Book — fiscal year April 1983 to March 1984:

£477,352.96 was recorded received from the branches for News Lines, Monthly Funds, Sundries and invoiced sales. But only £324,970.34 was the amount banked. This leaves £152,382.62

HOW TO ITS

unaccounted for on the basis of the official records.

Again for the fiscal year April 1984 to March 1985, there was £499,264.48 recorded received from the branches for News Lines, Monthly Funds, Sundries and invoiced sales. £384,204.97 was the amount banked. This leaves £115,059.51 unaccounted for. (Exhibit No. 4).

State Attack

These chaotic conditions are compounded by the state attack being carried out by the Healy clique, which is attempting to wind up the party's major companies and reclaim vital party assets such as the College of Marxist Education.

BACKGROUND OF THIS CRISIS

Relations with the Colonial Bourgeoisie

The Commission was able to secure a section of the correspondence relating to the Middle East from the files in G. Healy's former office. The documents examined by the Commission are 7 relating to Iraq, 4 relating to Kuwait and other Gulf states, 23 relating to the PLO and 28 relating to Libya. The following report bases itself mainly on these documents.

From internal evidence in the documents under our control, it is obvious that much more material must exist, which was either taken out of the center when the rump was in control or kept elsewhere. Therefore the actual amount of money received from these relations and the extent of these relations must be considerably bigger than what we are able to prove in this report.

The documents at our disposal clearly prove that Healy established a mercenary relationship between the WRP and the Arab colonial bourgeoisie, through which the political principles of Trotskyism and the interests of the working class were betrayed.

In late June 1976, the ICFI was informed for the first time that the WRP had established official contacts with non-party forces in the Middle East. These contacts were with the PLO, a national liberation movement. However, in April 1976, two months earlier (and more than a year before a public alliance was announced between the WRP and Libya), a secret agreement with the Libyan government was signed by [name missing] and Corin Redgrave on behalf of the WRP. (Exhibit No. 5). This was never reported to the ICFI. The Commission has not yet established who in the leadership of the WRP, beyond the signatories, knew of the agreement.

This agreement includes providing of intelligence information on the 'activities, names and positions held in finance, politics, business, the communications media and elsewhere' by 'Zionists'. It has strongly antisemitic undertones, as no distinction is made between Jews and Zionists and the term Zionist could actually include every Jew in a leading position.

This agreement was connected with a demand for money. The report given by the WRP delegation while staying in Libya included a demand for £50,000 to purchase a web offset press for the daily News Line, which was to be launched in May 1976. The Commission was not able to establish if any of this money was received.

In August 1977, G. Healy went himself to Libya and presented a detailed plan for the expansion of News Line to six regional editions, requesting for it £100,000.

G. Healy also discussed the Euromarches with the Libyan authorities and responded positively to a proposal to have the 'Progressive Socialist Parties of the Mediterranean' participate in the marches. This would have included PASOK, a bourgeois party in Greece. These plans did not materialize. G. Healy reported this in a letter to Al Fatah leader, [name missing]. (Exhibit No. 6).

This letter and a number of further letters to [name missing] (Exhibit No. 14) demonstrate that the relations with the PLO — which, according

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THE WRP SOLD PRINCIPLES

the split in the Workers Party in October 1985, a short period before the other WRP majority group, the International Committee for the Fourth International, the IC-4I, investigated the political activities of its British section. This report presents the findings of the investigation for the first time in full (the original and attached files). Extracts from the 'libertarian' journal, which includes amongst others the anti-communist journal *Blick*, with the intention of 'Solidarity', the corruption flows from 'masochis-

tic party or leader fetishism' and 'the amorality stemming from Leninist ideology: the denial of any relationship between means and ends'.

On the contrary, the 'means' adopted by the WRP — the raising of large sums of money from the Arab bourgeoisie — were intimately connected with the 'ends' it pursued after the mid-1970s: political adaptation to Social Democracy and bourgeois nationalism, culminating in the mid-1980s with the rejection of Trotskyism by the two foremost leaders, G. Healy and M. Banda, in favour of Stalinism.

The Workers International League publishes this document as part of the struggle for Trotskyist principles and against the degeneration of the WRP.

legal and building expenses for seven Youth Training Centres as of May 21, 1982, was £152,539.

In April 1980 a WRP delegation led by G. Healy visited Libya, presenting his redrafted WRP perspective and asking for more money.

From March 5 to 17, 1981, G. Healy made a further visit to Libya, putting forward demands totalling £500,000. The Commission found a report in Healy's handwriting which stated:

This report contains the following statements: 'In the evening we had a two-hour audience with [name missing]... We suggested that we should work with Libyan Intelligence and this was agreed... March 13. The delegation was visited by [name missing] from the Intelligence. This has a special significance, considering the fact that the Libyan intelligence has excellent relations with the German Special Branch (BKA). The Commission has not been able to establish to whom in the WRP leadership, if anyone, this written report was shown. The same applies to all other written reports and correspondence.

At that point G. Healy had considerable difficulty getting all the money he was asking for. The report goes on: 'March 15th. We were told that [name missing] had promised £100,000 which we said was welcome but inadequate... April 9th. Met [name missing] for the first time since he returned from Tripoli. He had no news but paid up £26,500 to pay for youth premises already decided. This brings the total to date paid from the promised £500,000 to £176,500. It looks as if our visit made no impact whatsoever.'

In May 1981, G. Healy's letters asking for the money become more and more desperate. On April 15th he writes a letter marked 'confidential' to [name missing] of the People's Committee in the Libyan People's Bureau, (Exhibit No. 12) urging him to give the money. On May 17, 1981, a 'private and confidential' letter is sent to 'dear [name missing]' (Exhibit No. 13) through Alex Mitchell.

On August 25th Alex Mitchell asks PLO representative [name missing] for an immediate meeting to discuss 'the very grave questions which have arisen regarding our revolutionary solidarity work in the Middle East'. He informs him that 'with the full agreement of the Political Committee, our Party's proposed visit to Beirut and Tripoli has been cancelled'.

In a Memo to G. Healy, Alex Mitchell reports, that [name missing] proposed to write a letter to Gaddafi and forward it through [name missing] of Libyan Intelligence.

On August 28th, G. Healy writes a letter to [name missing] in the name of the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party, complaining that he didn't get the money from Tripoli and blaming the Libyans for the price raise in the News Line. (Exhibit No. 14).

The same day G. Healy writes another 'private and confidential' letter to 'Brother [name missing]' (Exhibit No. 15).

The last document in the hands of the Control Commission is a letter from G. Healy to the secretary of the Libyan People's Bureau, dated February 10th, 1982, under the heading 'Re: 1982 Budget'. (Exhibit No. 10).

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 and the right-wing turn of the Arab bourgeoisie led to the drying up of the finances coming in from the Arab colonial bourgeoisie. Only a few documents could be found on the relations with the Iraqi bourgeoisie, although we know that many trips have been made there. The relations came to an abrupt end when the Iraq-Iran War started in 1980. The total amount obtained through these relations, according to the available documents, is listed below.

The Commission has not yet been able to establish all the facts relating in the case of the photographs that were handed over to the Iraqi Embassy. We do know that two WRP members

were instructed to take photos of demonstrations of opponents of Saddam Hussein. One of the members, Cde [name missing], refused the order. A receipt for £1,600 for 16 minutes of documentary footage of a demonstration is in the possession of the Commission.

Money Received from the Middle East

The following report on monies received from the Middle East was put together by the Commission from a careful analysis of many documents and cash books. We were told repeatedly that Healy wanted no formal record kept of the money coming in. A full list and graph of what was found is in Exhibit No. 16. A list by year shows the following amounts coming in:

	£
1977	46,208
1978	47,784
1979	347,755
1980	178,677
1981	156,500
1982	261,702
1983	19,997
1984	19,697
1985	542,267
1986	156,500
1987	50,000
1988	25,000
1989	19,997
1990	19,697
Total	1,075,163

The following table shows the breakdown of the amounts received from the Middle East:

	£
Libya	542,267
Kuwait	156,500
Qatar	50,000
Abu Dhabi	25,000
PLO	19,997
Iraq	19,697
unidentified or other sources	261,702
Total	1,075,163

The Commission was told by both [name missing] and [name missing] that frequently cash was brought in to the center which would not be immediately banked. Therefore, it was possible for large sums of cash to come in and go out without ever being recorded.

Money Received from the IC Sections

In addition to tremendous sums from the Middle East, during much the same period (1978-1982), there were large sums paid from IC Sections (and from the Workers League, which is only in political solidarity with the IC) to the WRP, which requested such sums on the grounds that they were vitally necessary for the development of the British section. This was justified politically with references to the historical role of the WRP in the building of the Fourth International and the advanced political situation in Britain. Sections of the IC were continuously bled dry of any large sums they were able to raise, thus gravely impairing the development of their own work and the building of the international movement as a whole.

The following sums were raised, expressed in British pounds (It is necessary to keep in mind that for much of this period the pound-dollar exchange rate was in the area of \$2.25): [See box on page 8]

It should be noted that after the drop in contributions after 1982, the 1985 amounts were in response to the bogus report given by G. Healy, C. Redgrave and [name missing] to the IC on August 17, 1985, of a crisis in the News Line (IC contributions see Exhibits No. 17). As late as mid-September, more than a week after Healy had been retired, the WRP took, on false pretences, the final £10,000 installment on the payment that had been pledged by the Australian section.

It was also learned from cde [name missing] that one large IC donation of \$140,000 to the party was never recorded. Under instructions from G. Healy it was given to Vanessa Redgrave who had run into tax problems.

Vanessa Redgrave Productions

One further source of funds during this period of 1978-1982 was income from the sale of films. This was regulated through the company of Vanessa Redgrave Productions which had its own bank account. The Commission was unable to get the records of this account, since it was told this was not a party account, but V. Redgrave's own account which she took with her. We were also unable to substantiate whether every amount deposited into her account was properly transferred to the party's accounts, or were perhaps presented as a gift from V. Redgrave.



by the WRP before the ICFI, based on the principled foundations of the Second Congress of the Fourth International — were cynical — the PLO an instrument for ob- the Arab bourgeoisie, thereby ce of building a section of the ittee among the Palestinians. tical opportunism of the rela- colonial bourgeoisie is most redraft of the WRP perspec- Healy. (Exhibit No. 7). This ted to the Libyan authorities pril 1980. It reconciles the ith the Green Book. Instead y find 'the masses' and the y Committees are identified iterior of the class character etely abolished. Like almost ound by the Commission e East, it ends with a request ublicly with the reactionary le East. During a trip to Dhabi and Dubai in March-

April, 1979, G. Healy, V. Redgrave and [name missing] met with the Crown Prince of Kuwait, Sheikh Sa-ad, and some of the ruling bourgeois families. When they were invited however to have dinner 'with a group of left oppositionists led by the Sultan family', according to their own report 'the delegation declined to accept this invitation as we did not wish to intervene in the political matters in Kuwait'. (Exhibit No. 8). The sole purpose of this trip was to raise money for the film 'Occupied Palestine'.

The trip ended finally by the delegation urging the feudal and bourgeois rulers to censure a journalist of the Gulf Times, who had written an article on the real purpose of their visit. The delegation finally received £116,000.

In October 1979, Vanessa Redgrave visited Libya and asked for £500,000 for Youth Training. (Exhibit No. 9).

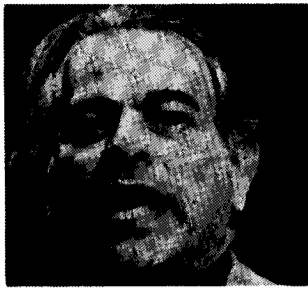
As of February 1982 the WRP had received 'just over 200,000 pounds' from Libya for Youth Training. (Exhibit No. 10). In addition to this a £100,000 fund was raised in the British working class. While approximately £300,000 were raised for this project, the real cost for the purchase,



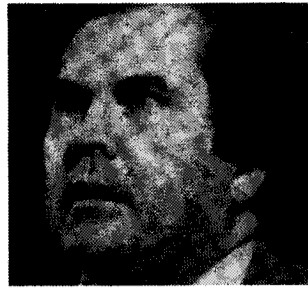
COLONEL GADDAFI



GERRY HEALY



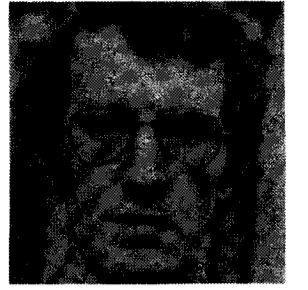
MIKE BANDA



ALEX MITCHELL



VANESSA REDGRAVE



CORIN REDGRAVE

HOW THE WRP SOLD ITS PRINCIPLES

Cont. from page 7

WHAT WAS DONE WITH THE MONEY

It appears as though the initial sums of money acquired by the WRP were used for capitalization, particularly through 1981. The following are excerpts from the report given by cde [name missing] to the Special Congress of the WRP. (See Exhibit No. 18 for the full text of the report).

'Although the party members worked might and main to sell the paper, collect the funds, ensure good attendance at Party events, their achievements were always overshadowed by the fund-raising of the clique, and the Party's assets seemed to be imposed from above rather than derived from the struggle of the whole Party.

'From September 1974 to April 1981, we spent £686,802 on capital equipment for our Printshop. Included in these figures is £188,500 for the Hunter presses — half of these are never used. G. Healy — without any reference to any Committee — bought enough printing machinery to print a paper run 50 times larger than we have. We have a single-colour offset press, purchase price £34,230, and a two-colour offset press, purchase price £61,770, which is rarely used! He bought a sewing machine for £23,750 on the basis of a job he hoped to get from the Libyans, but this never materialised. We have boxes containing electronic keyboards, which have never been opened, and we have four electronic typewriters which are still in their boxes as delivered. We have about £100,000 of international keyboards, which have never been sent to the international sections!

'In addition the Party bought and renovated the College of Marxist Education premises at Parwich for £74,000, and we bought and renovated or started to renovate 7 Youth Training Centres at a cost of £207,762; we bought motor bikes for £32,000, 5 trucks for £55,399, equipment for the News Line Office for £70,000, radio equipment for £23,000, closed circuit television for the Centre and the school for £33,000. All in addition to the previous figure of £686,802 for equipment at the printshop.'

According to this statement, the total spent was £1,181,961[3].

News Line Crisis

Beginning in 1981, a political crisis broke out in the WRP expressed in a severe drop in the News Line circulation and income. Figures are taken primarily from reports prepared by cde [name missing] for the PC and CC of the WRP. Where it was possible they were extended and verified by the Commission.

What is shown in the figures is that there was a general increase in the papers paid for from 1969 to 1981. Then in 1981 there was a precipitous drop which has never been recovered from. (See Exhibit No. 19).

Fiscal year	Avg copies/week paid
1980-81	90,162
1981-82	63,350
1982-83	63,939
1983-84	51,223
1984-85	50,449

Also a report on News Line Circulation prepared on September 9, 1985, by cde [name missing] states: 'In the course of the last 2½ years at least, debts on existing orders built up to the tune of thousands of pounds each month.

'News Line debt on October 25, 1985, before they were wiped off:

London	24,286.56
Provinces	42,338.48
Total	£66,625.04

'The only reason we have been able to hold our ground from an accounting point of view in relation to the News Line has been the price increase in the paper — not any increase in real circulation.' (Exhibit No. 20). It appears that this crisis, at least initially, was covered up and managed through the continuing reserves obtained from the Middle East.

1982: A Milestone in the Party Crisis

By the end of 1982, a huge crisis had developed in the finances of the WRP, which was rapidly heading towards bankruptcy. The following events took place:-

October 21-23: D. North, fraternal member of the ICFI presents criticism to G. Healy and the Political Committee on the political and theoretical line of the WRP, and asks for a discussion of these differences. The Political Committee on October 22 defends Healy's 'Studies', but M. Banda informs North following the meeting that he agrees with the criticisms and proposes the formation of a 'bloc' within the IC. On October 23, North speaks to C. Slaughter who agrees that criticisms of Healy's philosophical method are correct and should be pursued.

October 23: Brendan Martin writes to M. Banda criticizing the Party leadership for failing to make a principled correction of its false position on the Malvinas War and also criticizing the line of the Party in the Middle East.

October 25: A £35,000 overdraft is negotiated with the Westminster National Bank by [name or names missing].

These five days were a crucial turning point in the development of the Party crisis. Simultaneously, a financial crisis and political criticism from both within the WRP and the IC threatened to expose the opportunism of the WRP's political line before the entire Party membership and put an end to the grotesque exaggeration of Healy's personal authority. The unprincipled manner in which the Party leadership then closed ranks behind Healy to preserve his authority by covering up the financial crisis and suppressing the political differences were to have reverberations over the next three years — leading directly to the present financial collapse which threatens to destroy a very large portion of the material assets built up by the WRP over decades.

The Suppression of Political Differences

The private notes of G. Healy, obtained by the Commission, indicate how he moved, with the direct collaboration of certain party leaders, to expel B. Martin, a member of the Central Committee, and to suppress criticisms of his own theoretical and political work within the IC. We cite the following dates and entries:-

Oct 27: 'IC — (1) D.N. went in for cadre busting on w/end Oct 23/24 1982 (2) Thornett engaged in it during end of November 1974 (aggregate in Oxford).'

Oct 28: 'D. North seeks to take advantages in theoretical indecision and backwardness in the approach which he makes to comrades.'

Nov 13: 'PC Agenda . . . 3. Expulsion of Brendan Martin.'

Nov 14: 'Political Committee — Agenda . . . 2. Letter to B. Martin — Brief statement

Money paid from IC Sections to the WRP

Date	N. America	Australia	Germany	Others	Total
1975	—	5,000	3,750	—	8,750
1976	—	—	—	—	0
1977	4,247	750	8,991	—	13,988
1978	118,376	8,633	—	449	127,458
1979	13,296	3,315	3,223	—	19,834
1980	73,557	18,160	22,248	—	113,964[5]
1981	450	2,975	16,011	—	19,436
1982	75,718	33,090	59	—	108,867
1983	—	3,776	—	—	3,776
1984	—	11,450	—	—	11,450
1985	3,333	35,046	15,275	15,596	69,250
TOTALS	£288,977	122,195	69,557	16,045	496,773[4]

for branches — outlines violations of conference decisions . . . 7. A.O.B. B. Martin, Pilling, Slaughter, P. O'Regan.'

Nov 15: '— PC Agenda — . . . 3. Charge Brendan Martin! with conduct detrimental to the interests of the Party.'

Brendan Martin was expelled from the Party in November. One month later, D. North arrived in London on December 18, 1982. Both Banda and Slaughter changed their earlier position of supporting the criticisms that had been made by North. During meetings of the WRP Political Committee that lasted through the weekend, attended by C. Slaughter and G. Pilling but not by Healy, the US Workers League was threatened with an immediate split by the British section unless criticisms were withdrawn.

The Cover-up of the Financial Crisis from the WRP Membership and the IC

In addition to the overdraft negotiated with the bank, the following measures were taken to cover-up the crisis:

1) Massive borrowing from [name missing]

\$20,000 — July 1, 1983 (no interest loan, no date of recall)

£10,000 — 1983 or 1984 ([name missing] could not remember exact date)

£50,000 — Feb 8, 1984 mortgage on 7B Old Town, Clapham, which was purchased by [name missing] on September 28, 1981

£43,000 — 1984 (loan)

£34,600 — Mar 27, 1984 (loan)

£10,000 — Sept 6, 1984 (loan)

£69,081 — May 21, 1985 (loan)

2) Sale of property to [name missing]

£32,000 — Mar 1985 (purchase of Nottingham Youth Training)

£8,000 — Sept 1985 (purchase of Glasgow Youth Training)

Not counting mortgages and property which [name missing] now owns, the WRP owes [name missing] in cash £166,681 plus \$20,000.

3) Bailiffs taking control of party property:

For lack of time we were not able to go through all the boxes of bills and letters to completely research the following problem, but on a cursory investigation we did find that from June 1984 to the present, the WRP had its most important properties attached by the state, including the printshop, where bailiffs have taken walking possession of the presses, cameras, trucks and newsprint for unpaid rents and rates; the party center has been attached, the main bookshop, and various youth training centers, for unpaid bills totalling £20,796.39 which were 'overlooked or forgotten' ([name missing] interview, Nov 25). The fees and levys connected to this,

total at least several hundreds of pounds. In addition there were reports of phones shut off, electricity cut, etc. (See Exhibit No. 21 for some sample bailiffs' notices).

4) Bounced checks:

Another situation which has gotten completely out of control is the occurrence of bounced checks. Almost on a daily basis for the last few years, a letter arrives from the bank listing the day's bounced checks. The Commission copied the records from Nov 5, 1985, back to Mar 23, 1984 — a little over 19 months — and there were a total of 495 bounced checks which cost the party in bank charges at £2 each for a total of £990. In analysing the checks we were concerned about the political implications of so many members bouncing checks on the party. But it was noticed that on many of the checks listed by the bank, it is the same person and the same amount being deposited five and six times. Why, for instance, would the WRP be depositing the same check from S. O'Regan for £4,000 on Mar 29, 1985; Apr 19; May 10; May 16; May 21; May 30; and June 4? Or 2 checks from [name missing] for £451.31 and £625.62 on Apr 23, 1985; Apr 29; May 3; May 13; May 20; and May 28? One possibility which is suggested here is that checks which bounced and were known to be no good were deliberately held and deposited to 'cover' any additional overdraft at the bank beyond the £35,000 allowed for at least a couple of days until it bounced again.

At best this situation reveals totally unprincipled relations and cover-ups within the party.

5) Falsification of figures:

The Commission uncovered that for at least the last 2½ years the figures on the Monthly Funds have been falsified in the News Line and to the membership. Exhibit No. 22 shows a graph of the totals on the Monthly Fund for this period, the average amount received from the branches was £6,400, not the £8,000 being reported.

The same situation existed on the membership figures which were reported at 10,000 (Exhibit No. 23 taken from S. Torrance's file) and were in reality closer to 3,000.

The methods used in the finance office of loans and massive falsifications of the true state of party accounts, regardless of the subjective intentions of the comrades involved, kept the growing financial crisis from the membership and the ICFI, maintained the authority of G. Healy, and contributed to the virtual destruction of the material assets of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Submitted to the ICFI
December 16, 1985

IN DEFENCE OF THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION

ACCORDING to his biographer, Isaac Deutscher, the publication of Trotsky's short book 'Results and Prospects' in 1906 aroused considerable controversy, but exerted negligible influence in the Russian revolutionary movement. Nevertheless, it is unquestionably one of the greatest landmarks in the development of Marxism.

Written during imprisonment in the Peter and Paul Fortress, 'Results and Prospects' derived the most essential lessons of the revolution of 1905 and their implications for the world socialist revolution.

Russia's combined and uneven development had given rise to a stunted bourgeoisie, entirely subservient to the military-bureaucratic Tsarist state. The stagnant urban craft industries led to the insignificance of the petty-bourgeois 'democracy' upon which the rising bourgeoisie had rested in western Europe. Thus the bourgeoisie and the working class faced each other from their birth as clearly demarcated classes and open enemies.

Rejecting the Menshevik view that the prospects for the socialist revolution depended upon the level of capitalist development, Trotsky argued that: "To imagine that the dictatorship of the proletariat is in some way automatically dependent on the technical development and resources of a country is a prejudice of 'economic' materialism simplified to absurdity. This point of view has nothing in common with Marxism."

"In our view, the Russian revolution will create conditions in which power can pass into the hands of the workers — and in the event of victory of the revolution it must do so — before the politicians of bourgeois liberalism get the chance to display to the full their talent for governing" ('Results and Prospects', New Park, p.195).

In parentheses, it must be said that this 'prejudice' which Trotsky is combatting remains the last refuge of every scoundrel today who opposes permanent revolution. Laying bare the sophistry of the abstract criterion of 'maturity', Trotsky insisted that it was the relations in the class struggle, the international situation and the preparedness of the working class which were decisive.

On the question of governmental participation, Trotsky was unequivocal: 'But the participation of the proletariat in a government is also objectively most probable, and permissible in principle, only as a dominating and leading participation.' (Ibid, p.202).

His analysis of the agrarian revolution showed, as the experience of 1917 would prove correct, that the heterogeneous nature of the peasantry required that the working class deepened the class struggle in the countryside in order to bring the poor peasants to its side.

Having fought for the completion of the democratic

PART FIVE

By Richard Price

revolution, the abdication of the working class in favour of the bourgeoisie was unthinkable. Therefore, once in power, the old division of the socialist programme into two parts — a minimum and a maximum programme — no longer held any significance for the working class. With the revolution in full sway, the bourgeoisie would oppose even the reform measures of the proletariat. The question would be posed: either abject surrender or proletarian dictatorship.

Once it had carried the working class to power, the logic of permanent revolution would immediately pose the extension of the revolution into Europe, and especially to Germany, in order to defeat European reaction. Under such circumstances, the greatest danger lay in the growing conservatism of the German Social Democratic Party: '...'

Social Democracy as an organisation embodying the political experience of the proletariat may at a certain moment become a direct obstacle to open conflict between the workers and the bourgeois reaction.' (Ibid, p.246).

Trotsky's views evoked a greater response outside the Russian movement than within it. Already, in January 1905, Rosa Luxemburg had written: 'Russia is stepping onto the revolutionary world-stage as the politically most backward country... Precisely and only for this reason, contrary to all the generally held views, the Russian revolution will have a more pronounced proletarian character than any previous revolution.' (P. Frölich: 'Rosa Luxemburg', Pluto, p.91).

In her pamphlet, 'The Mass Strike', published in the autumn of 1906, Luxemburg sought to draw out of the events of 1905 implications for the German revolution.

Karl Kautsky wrote a series of articles in 1905-6 on Russia defending the policy of a workers' government with a Social-Democratic majority. This was, however, a short-lived 'Indian summer' for Kautsky. In domestic politics Kautsky was moving to the right, opposed to Luxemburg's demand for the 'mass strike': 'Let us continue with the strategy of attrition used up

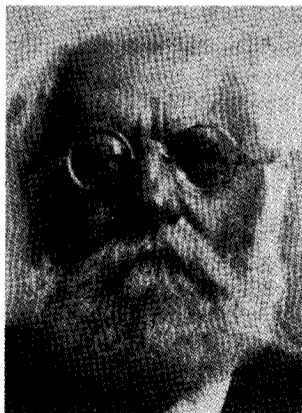


ROSA LUXEMBURG

until now.' (Kautsky: 'Selected Political Writings', Macmillan, p.72).

The Polish revolutionary party, the SDKPiL, led by Luxemburg and Leo Jogiches, occupied a position mid-way between Trotsky and Lenin, and advanced the slogan of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry' after 1905.

At the united Russian 5th party Congress held in mid-May 1907, Lenin, Trotsky and the Polish delegates drew closer together. In his report to the Congress on the policy of the party towards the bourgeois parties, Lenin stated: '... we are



KARL KAUTSKY

united with the Poles by genuine solidarity on the fundamental points in the question of the attitude towards bourgeois parties... A few words about Trotsky. I have no time to dwell here on our differences with him. I shall only note that in his book "In Defence of the Party" Trotsky expressed, in print, his solidarity with Kautsky, who wrote about the economic community of interests between the proletariat and the peasantry in the present revolution in Russia. Trotsky acknowledged the permissibility and usefulness of a Left bloc against the liberal bourgeoisie. These facts are sufficient for me to acknowledge that Trotsky has come

closer to our views. Quite apart from the question of "uninterrupted revolution", we have here solidarity on fundamental points in the question of the attitude towards bourgeois parties.' (Lenin: 'Collected Works', Vol.12, p.470).

In contrast, Lenin attacked Martov's amendment on the grounds that while rejecting the agrarian revolution, it conciliated with the liberal bourgeoisie. In relation to a further amendment introduced by the right-Menshevik Martynov (later to become a leading Stalinist theoretician), Lenin was even more ruthless, declaring that if it were passed, it 'would undoubtedly make a laughing stock of Social Democracy.' (Ibid, p.482).

Rosa Luxemburg made three speeches sharply attacking the Mensheviks. 'On the question of the so-called permanent revolution, Rosa took the same stand as I did.' (Trotsky: 'My Life', Penguin, p.209).

During 1908, Trotsky returned once more to deepen the positions of 'Results and Prospects'. His article 'The Proletariat and the Russian Revolution', published in Kautsky's journal 'Neue Zeit', was a remorseless polemic against the Menshevik theoretician, Cherevanin, whose principal contention was that the proletariat had itself caused the defeat of the 1905 revolution by alienating the liberal bourgeoisie: 'Cherevanin replaces any materialist analysis of social relations by a formalist deduction along the following lines: our revolution is a bourgeois revolution; a victorious bourgeois revolution must transfer power to the bourgeoisie; the proletariat must collaborate in the bourgeois revolution; consequently it must collaborate in transferring power into the hands of the bourgeoisie; hence the idea of power be-

ing taken over by the proletariat is incompatible with good tactics by the proletariat in an era of bourgeois revolution; the actual tactics pursued by the proletariat led it into a struggle for state power, and were therefore bad.' (Trotsky: '1905', Penguin, p.303).

Against the national horizons of the Mensheviks, Trotsky based himself upon an internationalist perspective: '... if the proletariat succeeds in using all means to achieve its own political hegemony and thereby breaks out of the national confines of the Russian revolution, then that revolution could become the prologue to a world socialist revolution.' (Ibid, p.304).

Ridiculing the Mensheviks' 'building-up' of the liberals, Trotsky remarked that Russian liberalism was notable only for its 'intrinsic shoddiness and concentrated imbecility'. (Ibid, p.308). Cherevanin's conclusions could lead in only one direction: '... that under existing conditions there was no room for the application of his tactics — and that, of course, is precisely why men who thought like him played no role whatever in the revolution.' (Ibid, p.313).

In a second polemic, 'Our Differences', printed in the SDKPiL journal, Trotsky outlined his differences with both Menshevism and Bolshevism. Among his sharpest arrows were those reserved for Plekhanov, the founding father of the Russian Marxist movement, now in full retreat after 1905: '... Plekhanov indulges in endless variations on the theme of that empty syllogism whose chief premise is that our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, and whose conclusion is that we must show tact in our dealings with the Kadets. He gives us neither theoretical analysis nor revolutionary policy, only a tedious reassembler's notes in the margin of the great book of events.' (Ibid, p.321).

In summing up his dif-

ferences with both main factions, Trotsky writes: 'Whereas the Mensheviks, proceeding from the abstract notion that "our revolution is a bourgeois revolution", arrive at the idea that the proletariat must adapt all its tactics to the behaviour of the liberal bourgeoisie in order to ensure the transfer of state power to that bourgeoisie, the Bolsheviks proceed from an equally abstract notion — "democratic dictatorship, not socialist dictatorship" — and arrive at the idea of a proletariat in possession of state power imposing a bourgeois-democratic limitation upon itself. It is true that the difference between them in this matter is very considerable: while the anti-revolutionary aspects of Menshevism have already become fully apparent, those of Bolshevism are likely to become a serious threat only in the event of victory.' (Ibid, p.332).

The inherent contradiction of Trotsky's position lay not in the correctness of the theory of permanent revolution, but in his remaining a 'conciliator' in inner-party relations. As he subsequently recognised, he underestimated that 'along the line of the disagreement between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, there were being grouped inflexible revolutionaries on the one side and, on the other, elements which were becoming more and more opportunist and accommodating.' ('Permanent Revolution', New Park, p.164).

Still later he wrote: 'A whole row of persons can, with every justification, point to their correctness and Lenin's errors in given, sometimes very important, issues... the author of these lines was correct in his general prognosis of the character of the Russian Revolution. But in the struggle of tendencies, groups and persons, by far no one was able to yield an account with a credit like Lenin's.' ('Trotsky's Notebooks 1933-1935', Columbia, p.84).

To be continued

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British Stalinism heads into deepest-ever crisis

IN late April or May this year, the split between that section of the British Stalinist movement grouped around the 'Morning Star' and the official Communist Party of Great Britain dominated by the Euro-Stalinists will be formalised.

At a location yet to be fixed, the supporters of the 'Morning Star', at present calling themselves the Communist Campaign Group, will hold a congress 'to re-establish the Communist Party on the basis of its rules, constitution, and programme prior to the November 1987 congress'. ('Morning Star', February 11, 1988).

The same issue of the 'Morning Star' tells us that 're-establishment had been made necessary by the abandonment of the Communist Party's Marxist-Leninist policies by the present leadership, by its violation of rules, gerrymandering of congress, dissolution of branches and districts, and the expulsion and exclusion of committed Communists, all of which had destroyed the party's democratic-centralist structure'.

The CCG's commitment to democratic centralism is completely bogus. There are still many in the ranks of the CCG who voted enthusiastically for every bloody crime of Stalinism from the Moscow Trials to the brutal suppression of the Hungarian revolution, and who supported the expulsion from the CPGB of genuine communists — Trotskyists.

The immediate cause of the CCG's move to 're-establish the party' was the decision of last November's CPGB congress to delete the rule requiring members to read the 'Morning Star' and also its ratification of the expulsion of 22 CCG members. But the roots of the split may be traced back to the reactionary theory developed by Stalin of 'national roads to socialism'.

In the mid-1970s, the Euro-Stalinists gained majority control of the CPGB. Adapting themselves more and more to their 'own' ruling class, the Euros rejected any defence of the Soviet Union in favour of pacifism and overtures to the SDP. The minority around the 'Morning Star', whilst also practising class collabora-

tion, was obliged to put a 'left' face forward, retain close links with the Soviet bureaucracy, and maintain its positions within the trade union hierarchy.

The chairman of the Communist Campaign Group is Mike Hicks who, together with fellow CCG member Bill Freeman, led the SOGAT strike at Wapping. For twelve months they marched their members down from Tower Hill without once posing a serious challenge to the right-wing national leadership under Brenda Dean. CCG national steering committee member Ivan Beavis is also Metropolitan District Secretary of NALGO, in which capacity he has ample scope for his counter-revolutionary activities.

Readers of Workers News will recall that we reported in January his attempt to slander the campaign for the release of South African trade union leader Moses Mayekiso by implying that it was being manipulated by the South African secret police. That this outrageous

liar considers himself a 'genuine Communist' is an indication of the true character of the CCG.

'Marxism Today', the monthly organ of the Euro-Stalinists, is scathing about the ambitions of the 'Morning Star' group. Dismissing them as a 'tiny faction', the January edition of 'Marxism Today' refers contemptuously to the CCG's 'romantic attachment to the USSR' and predicts that, in these days of 'glasnost' and 'perestroika', the Soviet bureaucracy may well cancel its 12,000-a-day 'Morning Star' order. 'Marxism Today' is the flag-ship of the CPGB's Popular Frontism. Alongside calls for proportional representation and acceptance of the anti-union laws are pages crammed with advice to yuppies on investment, clothes, pop music and all things trendy.

To complete the picture of disarray and disorientation in British Stalinism, mention must be made of two smaller groups around the papers 'Straight Left' and 'The Leninist'. The former

attempts to outdo the 'Morning Star' in its slavish adherence to the Soviet, trade union and Labour bureaucracies, while the latter's claims to uphold 'Leninism' are based upon re-cycling old Stalinist lies against Trotsky.

The crisis of world economy is accelerating the process of break-up in all the once monolithic Stalinist parties, as different sections are forced to choose between the shelter of the Soviet bureaucracy and allegiance to their own bourgeoisie.

Their 'strength', which grew on the basis of the defeats of the working class in the 1930s, has been shattered and a period of terminal crisis has begun. Both wings of Stalinism, however, remain thoroughly counter-revolutionary and can only be defeated by the building of Trotskyist parties in every country.

• Another CCG trade unionist, Ken Gill, is now joint general secretary of Britain's second biggest white-collar union, the MSF. See story on page 2.

By David Lewis

Hiatus over Spanish succession

THE deepening crisis in the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) has been given a further twist following the resignation of general secretary Gerardo Inglesias on February 19.

It is indicative of the state of affairs within Stalinism's main Spanish organisation that all three of his possible successors — deputy secretary Enrique Curiel, aristocrat Nicolás Sartorius and Julio Anguita, the mayor of Cordoba — initially refused to stand. On February 22, Anguita reluctantly took over as leader of the ailing organisation.

In 1982, Inglesias ousted Santiago Carrillo, the godfather of Euro-Stalinism, from the leadership. Carrillo

went on to form his own breakaway organisation, the Party of Spanish Workers (POE). A further pro-Moscow faction formed the Communist Party of the Spanish Peoples (PCPE). Jointly, the so-called United Left Coalition of the various Stalinist parties polled a disastrous 4.6 per cent in the 1986 general election.

Whilst PCE 'Euros' have held onto control within the Workers' Commissions trade union confederation against a challenge from Carrillo's supporters, major divisions have emerged over how to prevent the party's continuing decline. Some favour a reunification of the Stalinist parties; others want to broaden further the existing 'Popular Front' policy.

Rift in Italy's Popular Front

By Ian Harrison

WITH Italy's five-party coalition government in continual crisis, a series of skirmishes is taking place between leaders of the reformist and Stalinist parties.

Claudio Martelli, vice-secretary of the Socialist Party (PSI), has mounted an attack on the role of Palmiro Togliatti, who led the Italian Communist Party (PCI) during and after Stalin. Martelli called upon the Stalinists to condemn Togliatti's support for the Moscow Trials and the Stalin-Hitler pact. He also called for the PCI to drop the phrase 'dictatorship of the proletariat' from its programme.

That Togliatti lived and died an unregenerate Stalinist is scarcely a new discovery. It becomes an issue today for the reformists because they need the Stalinists to sanitise their party in the eyes of bourgeois 'public opinion', in order to provide the basis for a

revamped 'Popular Front'. The PSI leaders want the policy of class collaboration to be on hand to contain the working class should the creaking rule of the Christian Democrats fail. They are also aware that the crimes of Stalinism have badly discredited the PCI in the working class.

This clash has also brought forward a revelation from Salvatore Pirastu, a Sardinian member of the PSI since 1945. According to Pirastu, the underground socialist group, 'Giustizia e Libertà', approached Togliatti's party with an offer to mount a joint operation to free Communist leader, Antonio Gramsci, who had been imprisoned by Mussolini in 1926. The Stalinists turned down the offer, leaving Gramsci (also a Sardinian) to languish in jail, where he was held until shortly before his death in 1937.

Slaughter's 'Workers Press' closes

By Richard Price

ON March 12, in a brief front-page statement, the closure of the 'Workers Press' was announced. With its international 'regroupment' campaign in tatters and its weekly paper ditched, the Slaughter-WRP's chickens have come home to roost.

Since the summer of 1985, Cliff Slaughter has pursued almost every revisionist tendency on the planet. In January 1987, 'Workers Press' issued a call for an international conference to 'rebuild' the Fourth International to be held in the autumn of last year. In April, a 'Preparatory Committee' was established in which the prime movers were Slaughter's WRP/ 'Workers Press' and the international tendency led until his death by right-wing Argentinian Pabloite Nahuel Moreno.

Some of the revisionists who had clustered around the Preparatory Committee found the stench of opportunism exuding from Moreno's Movement for Socialism (MAS) a little too strong to stomach. Slaughter, who had for two years been parading his readiness to 'discuss' with anybody, promptly forbade any criticism of the Morenoites.

On September 26, 1987, Geoff Pilling filed a report



CLIFF SLAUGHTER

from Buenos Aires hailing the votes gained by the MAS in the Argentinian elections as 'an event of considerable significance for the international Trotskyist movement'.

In November 1987, Slaughter's WRP published a book by fellow-traveller Peter Fryer entitled 'Crocodiles in the Streets'. Fryer, who deserted and viciously attacked the Trotskyist movement almost three decades ago, describes his account of his tour of Latin America and his discussions with Moreno's tendency as 'frankly personal and impressionistic'. Here, for once, Fryer speaks the truth!

At the rally held by 'Workers Press' and the Preparatory Committee on November 8 to 'celebrate' the 70th anniversary of the Russian revolution, the Morenoites once more held pride of place. A statement was also read out from a section of the Pabloite United Secretariat.

As recently as January 9,

'Workers Press' carried an uncritical report of meetings held by MAS on the Russian revolution.

Behind the scenes, however, the Preparatory Committee had broken up amid reports that the Morenoites, whom Slaughter had spent no little time attempting to build up as 'veteran Trotskyists' and 'anti-Pabloites', were carrying out their latest discussions on 'unity' with the official Pabloite United Secretariat.

In a desperate attempt to rescue some credibility out of the whole reactionary farce, Slaughter has been attempting to reintroduce a few teaspoonfuls of 'orthodoxy'. Having declared after 1985 that the entire struggle of the SLL and the ICFI against Pabloism during the 1950s and 1960s was merely 'a matter of taste', Slaughter is now fraudulently trying to cover his nakedness by invoking this history against the MAS.

Bill Hunter, who has followed Slaughter's liquidationism to the letter, merely carried it to its logical conclusion when he walked out of the 'Workers Press' group on February 20 with a dozen followers to found the British section of the Morenoite LIT (International Workers League).

Slaughter reveals his differences with Hunter to be solely of a factional character, and confirms that his 'Workers Press' group will

continue to give an unprincipled cover for the pro-Stalinist politics of the MAS: 'We do not consider our discussions with the LIT to be at an end but have entered a new stage. We remained (sic) determined to draw the LIT into a common process of re-building the Fourth International.' ('Workers Press', March 5, 1988). In other words, the only 'sin' of Hunter is that he has jumped the gun!

The Slaughter group has, whatever its protestations, renounced all claims to defend Trotskyism. Simon Pirani flirts with Scottish nationalism and openly capitulates to Irish republicanism; Dave Temple ties himself to the coat-tails of Arthur Scargill; Peter Fryer extols the virtues of marijuana; and Charlie Pottins bows to both the Palestinian bourgeoisie and Zionism, and accepts the Zionist state. Lest it should be said that Pottins merely expresses a 'personal view', we will recall that 'Workers Press' itself described him as 'responsible for making sure that all major international developments are analysed in the paper'. ('Workers Press', October 24, 1987).

The collapse of the Slaughter group into a faction-ridden swamp is the most eloquent expression of the price paid by those who renounce revolutionary internationalism in favour of national opportunism.

CINEMA

The Emperor rehabilitated



Game interrupted for Pu Yi as he is told he must leave the Forbidden City



John Lone as Pu Yi

THE return to the screen by Bernardo Bertolucci after an absence of seven years, and an artistic decline of more than a decade, comes in the shape of an epic biography of the last Manchu emperor of the Ching dynasty of China, Pu Yi.

Filed on locations in China including the Forbidden City, with the cooperation of the Chinese authorities, **The Last Emperor** combines the superb photography of Vittorio Storaro with an excellent cast led by John Lone as Pu Yi.

In 1908, the three-year-old Pu Yi was nominated by the venomous and tyrannical Empress Dowager to ascend the decaying Dragon Throne. Riven by internecine feuds, the imperial clans were powerless to halt the collapse of the old China, crushed between the rising national movement and the pressure of the imperialist powers.

Swept aside by the republican government of Sun Yat Sen in 1912, the imperial court maintained its rotting feudal splendour within the walls of the Forbidden City for a further twelve years.

Bertolucci skilfully evokes the decadence of the imperial court, with its army of eunuchs and ladies-in-waiting. Unable to go outside its 250 acres for sixteen

years, the child-emperor remains a god, acting out elaborate rituals, while the struggles which convulse China proceed beyond the gates.

In 1924, the warlord Feng Yu-hsiang occupied Peking and expelled the former imperial family which took up residence in Tientsin. After living the life of a Western playboy for several years, Pu Yi fell increasingly under the influence of Japanese secret service agents.

When, in 1931, Japan invaded Manchuria, Pu Yi became first 'chief executive', and then emperor, of the Japanese-controlled puppet state of Manchukuo.

Captured by advancing Russian troops at the end of the Second World War, he was imprisoned in Siberia until 1950, when he was handed over to the Chinese Stalinists. Following almost a decade of 're-education' and 'remoulding through labour', Pu Yi was released in 1959 and allowed to take up a supervisory role in Peking's Botanical Gardens (rather than the 'humble gardener' portrayed in the film). He died in 1967.

An extraordinary life by any standards, and worthy of a film of this quality and scale. But Bertolucci is clearly out to present something more than a straight bio-pic. He writes: 'All my previous films were journeys from light towards darkness. "The Last Emperor" goes the opposite way, from darkness to light... Pu Yi is not responsible. He is a victim of history.' It is this aspect of class reconciliation which ultimately attracts Bertolucci, and provides the key to the film's flaws.

Although he does not spare the crumbling corruption of the old regime, Bertolucci extracts a certain pathos from Pu Yi as an individual. To this end he glosses over the supreme treachery of his support for the brutal war of Japanese imperialism against China, and ignores his admiration for Hitler. Puppet or not, Pu Yi played his imperial role for all it was worth. We might add that the emperor's Scottish tutor, Sir Reginald Johnston (played by Peter O'Toole), was more than an eccentric mystic; he was a rabid opponent of Bolshevism and on one occasion urged the British authorities in China to launch a crusade against the Bolsheviks from Tientsin.

The transformation of the former emperor in his final

years into a 'model cadre' had its advantages for the Stalinist regime in removing a potential rallying point for reaction from the stage.

The 'angle' chosen by Bertolucci — long associated with Italy's Euro-Stalinist Party — also holds its attractions for Deng's China today. Ying Ruocheng, who plays the governor of Fushun prison in the film, is currently China's Deputy Minister of Culture. In an interview on BBC television on February 24, he called for the end of state subsidies for the arts in China, saying 'we must let the market take over'. And a key scene at the end of Pu Yi's life portrays the Cultural Revolution unfavourably, in line with present official reassessments.

Despite its considerable technical and artistic achievements, therefore, 'The Last Emperor' is carrying out an important task for both the Chinese bureaucracy and imperialism. In telling the story of the 'rehabilitation' of an emperor, Bertolucci has bathed Stalinism in a favourable light. The real purpose is to attempt to 'rehabilitate' Stalinism in order to assist its turn to the West. The outcome can only be the stepping-up of the capitalist penetration of China.

BOOK REVIEW

Life of a revolutionary journalist

Larissa Reisner by Cathy Porter
Virago £5.50

By Richard Price

LARISSA REISNER was undoubtedly one of the most brilliant revolutionary journalists of the generation which came to maturity with the Russian revolution, ranking alongside John Reed, the author of 'Ten Days that Shook the World'.

Her heroic life, tragically cut short by typhus at the age of 30 in 1926, embodied the noblest ideals of October.

Cathy Porter's biography — the first published in English — is valuable in certain respects. Based upon Russian sources and containing many fragments of Reisner's writings never previously translated, it forms a useful companion to her 'Hamburg at the Baricades', published in Britain in 1977.

Larissa Reisner was born into a Russo-German family with socialist sympathies in 1895. Her father was associated with the Bolsheviks in 1905, and was later called upon by Lenin to help draft the Soviet constitution.

In her youth, she moved in the avant-garde literary circles which were springing up in Petrograd. Her ardent

sympathies with the October revolution led to her joining the Bolsheviks in 1918, and in the same year she married F.F. Raskolnikov, the leader of the Kronstadt sailors.

Together they played a heroic role in the civil war, she being appointed the first woman political commissar. Her experiences were vividly recorded in her book 'The Front' (never published in full in English).

In 1921, Raskolnikov and Reisner were sent as leaders of a Bolshevik diplomatic mission to Afghanistan, in an attempt to defeat the influence of British imperialism. In September 1923, Reisner travelled illegally to Hamburg to report on the aftermath of the abortive uprising. The following year she returned to write her unforgettable portrait of the shattered German economy and the effects of 'stabilisation'.

Although never directly a member of the Left Opposition — recurrent illness and travel kept her away from the centre of the emerging

struggle against Stalinism after 1923 — she voiced her disquiet at the continuation of NEP by Stalin. Moreover, following her separation from Raskolnikov, she became the companion of Left Opposition leader Karl Radek. Had she lived, she would surely have taken her place at Trotsky's side.

Cathy Porter attempts to impose her own politics on Larissa Reisner from time to time. She writes, for example, that 'for socialist feminists now, Larissa Reisner is a pioneer and a model of female strength', while acknowledging that there is no trace of 'feminism' in her writings. Porter also declares her support for Gorbachev's reforms ('the optimistic reconstruction of Soviet life now under way').

Leon Trotsky wrote a fitting obituary of this revolutionary heroine, which Porter does not quote:

'Larissa Reisner, who called Ivan Nikitich "the conscience of Sviyazhsk", was herself prominent in the Fifth army, as well as in the revolution as a whole. This

fine young woman flashed across the revolutionary sky like a burning meteor, blinding many. With her appearance of an Olympian goddess, she combined a subtle and ironical mind and the courage of a warrior. After the capture of Kazan by the Whites, she went into the enemy camp to reconnoitre, disguised as a peasant woman. But her appearance was too extraordinary, and she was arrested. While she was being cross-examined by a Japanese intelligence officer, she took advantage of an interval to slip through the carelessly guarded door and disappear. After that, she engaged in intelligence work. Later, she sailed on war-boats and took part in battles. Her sketches about the civil war are literature. With equal gusto, she would write about the Ural industries and the rising of the workers in the Ruhr. She was anxious to know and to see all, and to take part in everything. In a few brief years, she became a writer of the first rank. But after coming unscathed through fire and water, this Pallas of the revolution suddenly burned up with typhus in the peaceful surroundings of Moscow, before she was even thirty.' ('My Life', Penguin, p.425)

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Police actions illegal

- report claims

A REPORT published in February confirmed that young people arrested following the clashes at Broadwater Farm, north London, in October 1985 were systematically denied democratic rights.

Police refused detained youths access to lawyers and forced them to sign confessions. The authors of the report, Amnesty International, whilst they call for a review of the trials of Broadwater Farm youth, claim that they 'cannot establish the validity of the suspects' allegations'.

Youths were detained for long hours by police for interrogation, and denied the right to have a solicitor present or to inform relatives where they were. Many of those detained were threatened with violence. One 13-year-old boy was questioned for 15 hours, wearing only a blanket and underwear. He was later charged with murder.

At his trial, the judge dismissed the prosecution case, ruling that the police had refused him legal representation and had placed 'unreasonable and unjust burdens' upon him. But in another case, a 19-year-old, who was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment for murder, claimed that police had made threats against his girlfriend and their child.

Many more of those jailed alleged similar treatment and a total of 37 Tottenham youths remain in prison.

The Occupied Territories . . .

REVOLT AGAINST ZIONISM GROWS

LABOUR PARTY leader Neil Kinnock has delivered a calculated insult to the uprising of Palestinian youth and workers in the Occupied Territories.

During his recent tour of the Middle East, Kinnock made a public statement upholding Israel's 'right' to control indefinitely the Golan Heights, which were

occupied in 1967 and subsequently annexed from Syria in 1973. This places Kinnock further to the right even than the United Nations, which recognises Syria's historic right to control the area.

On February 22, Kinnock confirmed his earlier statement, which some Labour leaders had attempted to brush under the carpet as a blunder, adding that the

By Lizzy Ali

'Golan Heights and the circle of mountains in northern Israel are vital to the security of that country'.

Kinnock wants to present the Palestinian people as an object of charity and 'humanitarian' concern — in order to deny even more forcibly their right to self-determination. His major concern is, in his own words,

'the complete security and permanence of the state of Israel', after which there should be 'arrangements which insure the aspirations of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Territories can be met'.

In a bid to outdo Tory Foreign Office minister David Mellor, Kinnock was obliged to express hypocritical 'sympathy' for Palestinian youths shot in the back by Israeli forces. His position, however, is no different from the long line of treachery stretching back to the Attlee Labour government which, in 1947-48, helped bring into being the state of Israel. The resulting mass expulsions of Palestinian Arabs created the very camps in Gaza and the West Bank over which Kinnock now sheds crocodile tears.

Youth are at the heart of the Palestinian resistance, and of more than 85 Palestinians killed and hundreds wounded by the Israeli security forces during December, January and February, the vast majority have been youths and children.

The systematic use of beatings, from which several Palestinians have died, was explicitly sanctioned by Zionist Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin on January 19 when he called for the use of 'force, strength and blows' to break up demonstrations.

On February 5, four Palestinian youths from the West Bank were buried alive by Israeli soldiers using a bulldozer. In another notorious incident on February 25, four Israeli soldiers beat two Palestinian youths for 45 minutes, breaking their arms and fingers.

In addition to the attacks of the Israeli army, well-armed Zionist settlers have been allowed to shoot down young Palestinians unhindered. Curfews have also been imposed on Palestinian refugee camps, obstructing the arrival of food and medical supplies. But this regime of terror has failed to quell the rebellion.

The events of the past three months have once more proved that Palestinian self-determination is entirely incompatible with the continued existence of the racist Zionist state.

The Workers International League rejects any idea of a 'solution' to the Palestinian national struggle through the creation of South Africa-style Bantustans in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Only the creation of a socialist state covering the whole of Palestine can answer the national aspirations of the Palestinians. This requires a class alliance between Palestinian and Jewish workers and the building of a Trotskyist party.



Thousands of students from all over the country turned out on February 27 to march through London against the Tories' Education Reform Bill

The case of Simeon Collins

IN an important decision in the High Court in February, City and Hackney Health Authority were found to have acted negligently in the treatment of Simeon Collins, a 17-year-old Hackney youth who died after sustaining serious injuries in December 1982.

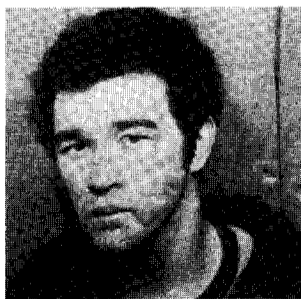
The court victory is a tribute to the tenacious five-year struggle waged by Simeon's family, and particularly his mother Joan, to bring to light the circumstances of his death.

On December 8, 1982, Simeon left home at 8.00pm, and went to a party at a friend's house. He left at about 11.00pm. At 12.10am on the morning of December 9, police received a call reporting a man staggering outside a block of flats. A further call received an hour-and-a-half later led to Simeon being picked up by police and taken to City Road police station at 2.20am. At 2.45am he was examined by a police surgeon who found him un-

conscious and soaking wet on the floor of the charge room.

On admission to Bart's Hospital he was noted to be seriously unwell and hypothermic. He was, in fact, as was subsequently revealed at the post-mortem, suffering from serious internal injuries to the liver, spleen and other internal organs.

His initial hospital treatment resolved the most dangerous symptoms, but it failed to detect acute kidney failure, caused by shock resulting from blood loss. Continued blood transfusions worsened the effects of the undetected kidney failure, leading to acute respiratory distress. Despite the seriousness of his condition,



SIMEON COLLINS

Simeon was neither put on an artificial ventilator nor was he transferred to the intensive care unit. He died at 9.20am on December 10.

From this point on the family's attempts to uncover the real causes of death encountered every obstacle. The family were never officially informed of the opening of the inquest in March 1983. The coroner ruled out, in advance, a verdict of 'lack of care' and blocked an enquiry from the jury in relation to an open verdict. Police evidence was contradictory in a number of

respects. Following the inquest, Mrs Collins was unable to obtain a transcript of the evidence.

Distrusting the results of the first post-mortem (which had been carried out by Professor Keith Simpson, one of the most senior pathologists in the country), Simeon's mother pressed for a second post-mortem. This revealed the kidney failure, not detected on the first examination.

Although Mrs Collins was a long-standing member of the Workers Revolutionary Party, and Simeon had taken part in Young Socialists activities, leading members of the WRP attempted to dissuade her from taking legal action, and took no interest in the inquest. Instead, they attempted cynically to use her as a calling card to establish contact with the family of Colin Roach (who died within weeks of Simeon in Stoke Newington police station).

At the hearing from February 15 to 19, City and Hackney Health Authority admitted negligence on three counts — failure to transfer the patient to intensive care, overtransfusion and failure to use a ventilator — but defended the case on the grounds that correct treatment would not have affected the outcome.

The judge, however, accepted evidence from Mr David Hamilton, a renal specialist from Glasgow University, and pathologist Dr Ian West, that routine treatment of kidney failure would have probably resulted in recovery.

The real cause of the injuries sustained by Simeon Collins, who was young, fit and healthy, have never been satisfactorily established.

The Workers International League extends its congratulations and sympathy to his family in their courageous battle.

ILEA agrees to Tory cuts

THE Labour-led Inner London Education Authority agreed on March 1 to carry out a £93 million cut in its budget.

Having surrendered to the Tories, ILEA leader Neil Fletcher (who only three years ago was pledging to go to jail rather than carry out cuts) stated: 'Our job now is to mount a vigorous campaign against the government's bill to break up ILEA, and to try to limit the damage to the quality of education in the capital.'

Cuts carried out by the Labour majority will, however, have a swingeing affect upon students and school youth and result in a ten per cent cut in ILEA's workforce.

- 1,200 teachers and 830 lecturers will lose their jobs;
- 4,000 other jobs will be cut;
- Discretionary grants to students will be reduced from 4,415 to 2,000;
- Funding for polytechnics in Inner London will be cut by £7 million.