

SOLIDARITY

A Journal of Libertarian Socialism. Issue 16. Spring 1988. 80 Pence



Exclusive

How the WRP obliged its Arab paymasters

Stalin's Poland
My party right or wrong



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SOLIDARITY JOURNAL NUMBER 16 SPRING 1988 ISSUE

Published four times a year by Solidarity (London), c/o 123 Lathom Road, London E6, United Kingdom.

Edited and produced collectively by the London Solidarity Editorial Group.

Solidarity is also the imprint of a series of pamphlets and books which now numbers more than sixty titles; and which have been variously translated into fifteen foreign languages. A list of those titles currently in print will be found elsewhere in this issue.

Publishing history. The present Solidarity Journal is the latest in a line of magazines produced by the Solidarity Group and stretching back to the early sixties. Solidarity for Workers Power, first in this sequence, was founded in 1960 and ran to 89 issues. This was succeeded by the nationally produced Solidarity for Social Revolution which ran to 16 issues and was in turn succeeded by the current journal. Our publishing history is complicated further by the existence in the sixties and early seventies of six or seven regional Solidarity magazines, among them those produced by the Scottish, South Wales, and North Western Solidarity groups; and by the publication of the shortlived, nationally produced, Solidarity for Self Management.

Printed by the Aldgate Press, London.

COVER PICTURE: Moammar Gadhafi, paymaster of Britain's Workers Revolutionary Party, twiddles his swaggerstick as he presides over military parades marking the 18th anniversary of the Libyan Revolution, on 1 September 1987.

Photo: Associated Press

AS WE SEE IT

TROTSKYISM

The revolution betrayed

Elsewhere in this issue, in a dramatic exclusive, we publish a damning extract from the secret report of an internal inquiry into corruption within the Workers Revolutionary Party. The full report, which has been leaked to us, chronicles an astonishing tale of abject perfidy by leading members of the group. In this article, TOM BURNS gives the background and comments on the inquiry's extraordinary findings.

WE PUBLISH THIS DOCUMENT in the interests of political hygiene. It consists of about half of the confidential internal interim report on Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party prepared by a

'Commission' of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). Following his expulsion from the WRP on 19th October 1985, Healy and his supporters were expelled from the



VANESSA REDGRAVE: leaked document alleges she received \$140,000 of party money.

ICFI in December 1985. This was as a result of allegations of sexual abuse, even rape, of women in the party, physical assault on other members, and the establishment of a 'mercenary relationship' with a number of Arab despotisms (see Solidarity Journal #11).

The text deals with the WRP's financial and other dealings with their foreign backers. It is largely self-explanatory, but a few background details may be helpful. The Commission was set up at the insistence of David North, long-time chieftain of the Healyite Workers' League in the United States. North, together with the anti-Healy coalition inside the WRP headed by Michael Banda and Cliff Slaughter, was instrumental in the summer of 1985 in the ousting of Healy.

The ICFI inquiry had the reluctant support of the Banda-Slaughter WRP, who correctly foresaw that an exposure of the facts could be a means of bringing pressure to bear to transfer control of the IC to North. (Indeed, the WRP was suspended by the ICFI on 16th December, the day this report was submitted).

The Commission nevertheless had an interest in protecting the reputations of Healy's erstwhile supporters, since they had all been aware (to some extent) of what had been going on. One result of this was that the report as circulated to the WRP's leadership in late 1985 was censored. The names of those who had taken sides against Healy, together with those of Arab politicians and intelligence agents, were suppressed, and the copies of the documents from Healy's files which were attached to the original report as exhibits were removed.

The Commission only had access to fragments of the documentary evidence. On 9th October 1985, when the crisis in the WRP came to a head, Mike Banda and his anti-Healy

supporters walked out of the party offices in Clapham. This left Healy's acolytes in control of the premises for about forty-eight hours, during which time they removed large quantities of the most sensitive documents. This report is therefore based on the few documents they overlooked, plus some material from other WRP files and accounts.

Healy of Arabia

Even these remnants disclose payments of over a million pounds to the WRP from Arab regimes and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The report clearly shows that for nearly a decade the WRP acted, quite literally, as the paid agent of brutal and oppressive foreign powers. This lasted from at least as early as 1975, when the first contact was made with the PLO, until 1983. During this period a series of agreements was concluded with the Libyan regime and the WRP's political perspectives were amended to suit their paymasters.

The document alleges that the WRP acted - through Gerry Healy, Alex Mitchell, Corin and Vanessa Redgrave, and a number of others - as a collector of information for Libyan Intelligence. This function had, as the report puts it, "strongly anti-semitic undertones". Put plainly, they were Jew-spotting in the media, politics and business. The Khomeini revolution and the Iran-Iraq war - in which the WRP's efforts to support both sides soon collapsed - put paid to their employment by the regime of Saddam Hussein. But before this disaster the WRP's connections with Iraq clearly generated more than the £19,697 identified in the report.

The Iraqi connection had sinister aspects. From 1979 on, the WRP provided the Iraqi Embassy with intelligence on dissident Iraqis living in Britain. Since Saddam Hussein's dictatorship does not scruple to arrest the relatives of opponents, to use torture on a vast

scale, or even to murder children, it seems likely that the WRP were accomplices to murder. One example of the depths to which these corrupt practices drove the party occurred in March 1979, when with only one dissentient the Central Committee of the WRP voted to approve the execution (after prolonged torture) of more than twenty opponents of the Iraqi government. One of the victims, Talib Suwailh, had only five months earlier brought fraternal greetings to the conference of the WRP's own front organisation, the All Trade Union Alliance (see the Slaughter group's Newsline, 20 November 1985).

In addition to the £1,075,163 identified by the document as having come from the Middle East and Libya between 1977 and 1983, the report gives, in a section dealing with the WRP's internal finances which we do not print, breakdowns of a further £496,773 received between 1975 and 1985 from other sections of the International Committee, almost entirely from North America, Australia and Germany. This raises further questions about how additional Middle Eastern money may have been recycled to the WRP via other IC sections; it is known, for example, that the Australian section received at least one substantial payment from Libya.

The death agony of the WRP

The WRP's fission products included, at last count, six organisations plus a large number of dispersed and semi-detached individuals. On the anti-Healy side, in early 1986 Slaughter's WRP was expelled from North's International Committee; it in turn ejected North's British supporters, led by Dave and Judy Hyland, who then formed the 'International Communist Party'. Mike Banda was also expelled with a more politically disparate group who established a short-lived discussion circle, 'Communist Forum'; Banda himself repudiated

trotskyism completely, and a number of his associates have joined the Communist Party.

In the summer of 1986 the WRP began negotiations with the LIT, Nahuel Moreno's Argentinian-based international apparat, (notable mainly for their enthusiastic support for the Argentine junta's invasion of the Falklands/Malvinas). These talks have, in turn, generated yet another internal opposition (Chris Bailey, Gerry Downing, David Bruce, et al), who face expulsion if the marriage is consummated.

It is certain that the anti-Healy camp know far more about the dirtier aspects of the WRP's past than they have so far publically admitted. Indeed, their coyness about the past is one of the few things which unites the warring factions. Probably none of them know the full story, but virtually all of them know more than they have revealed so far. These include North, who has resolutely chosen not to make public even the skeletal information we publish; Cliff Slaughter, who for many years was secretary of the International Committee; and Dot Gibson, who was responsible for running - and falsifying - the accounts of the WRP and its companies. Silence denotes consent.

Healy and a number of his supporters are even better placed to be held accountable for the despicable practices which this report alleges. It states, for example, that Alex Mitchell and Corin Redgrave were as deeply involved as Healy himself in the dealings with Arab governments. So was Vanessa Redgrave, whose personal finances are alleged to have merged with the inflowing money.

One part of the document not published here states, "It was learned from cde [name suppressed] 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".

The pro-Healy WRP which emerged from the October 1985 schism has also had its problems. From the beginning Healy had an uneasy relationship with Sheila Torrance, who ran the organisation and the restarted daily Newsline. In the summer of 1986, Mitchell suddenly quit, returning to Australia, and the association between Healy and his showbiz eleven on the one hand and Torrance on the other deteriorated. The break came in December. Torrance kept a majority of the remaining membership and Newsline, which by now had a circulation in the low hundreds.

Healy, the Redgraves, and a small rump, resurfaced in August 1987 as 'The Marxist Party', which has discovered a new messiah in Gorbachev, apparently due to lead a political revolution in the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, in early 1987 yet another faction, headed by Richard Price, broke away to refound trotskyist orthodoxy as the 'Workers International League'. Torrance, with what remains of her WRP, is currently embroiled in a tussle with yet another group led by Ray Athow over the party's remaining assets. Tedious, isn't it?

Their morals and ours

One important aspect of the corruption of the WRP not covered by the report is the mercenary relationship it established with certain local authorities. For example, the financially scandal-ridden Lambeth Council was effectively dominated by a group of councillors who were covert members or supporters of the party (one, at least, received a party salary and car) with all that implies in terms of jobbery and corruption.

The Labour Herald, an important journal of the Labour 'left' and formerly co-edited by Ken Livingstone and Ted Knight, was

financed and controlled by the WRP. The party also had important influence in, and access to, the highest levels of the GLC. We hope in future issues of Solidarity, with the help of our readers, to explore this further dimension of corruption. Incidentally, the WRP was far from being the sole beneficiary of such influence.

We apologise for what may appear to be an extended detour into political coprophilia. But the example of Healy's WRP raises questions which go far beyond that organisation alone.

What is relevant about this tale is not that the WRP was led by a monster (or monsters) - after all, there are plenty of those around - but that numbers of intelligent, self-sacrificing, and idealistic people (but what ideals?) accepted such a regime for decades. Psychiatry as well as ideology is needed to explain such a phenomenon. Masochistic party or leader fetishism is only one facet of the problem. Another is the amorality stemming from leninist ideology: the denial of any relationship between means and ends. For us repellent methods have only produced, and will only produce, repellent ends.

We cannot accept the attitude which says that if it is necessary to support, or keep silent about, the torture and execution of dissidents in order to augment party funds, so be it; or that ordinary people are simply there to be lied to, manipulated, exploited and sacrificed to the interest of the self-styled revolutionary elite; or that only the interests of the party - often embodied in its leader - are relevant. The symptoms presented by the WRP express in an extreme form the basic attitudes of a wide section of the authoritarian 'left', and this is true both here and now and in the societies they have brought or might bring into existence.

TOM BURNS

EXCLUSIVE

TROTSKYISM

The corruption of the Workers Revolutionary Party

Here, published for the first time, we extract four key pages of the twelve page report on corruption in the WRP, prepared by a special commission of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Extract from THE INTERIM REPORT OF
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
COMMISSION, 16 DECEMBER 1985

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 seven relating to Iraq, four 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 suppressed in original] and Corin Redgrave on behalf of the WRP (exhibit #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 anti-Semitic 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 Euro-marches 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 materialise. G Healy reported this in a letter to Al Fatah leader [name suppressed] (exhibit #6).

This letter and a number of further letters to [name suppressed] (exhibit #14) demonstrate that the relations with the PLO - which according to the claims made by the WRP before the ICFI were supposedly based on the principled resolutions of the Second Congress of the Communist International - were cynically used to make the PLO an instrument for obtaining money from the Arab bourgeoisie, thereby destroying any chance of building a section of the International Committee among the Palestinians.

The complete political opportunism of the relations to the Arab colonial bourgeoisie is most clearly revealed in a redraft of the WRP perspectives signed by G. Healy (exhibit #7). This document was presented to the Libyan authorities during a visit in April 1980. It reconciles the WRP perspectives with the Green Book. Instead of the "working class" we find "the masses" and the Libyan Revolutionary Committees are

identified with Soviets. The criterion of the class character of the state is completely abolished. Like almost every document found by the Commission relating to the Middle East, it ends with a request for money.

G Healy lined up publicly with the reactionary forces in the Middle East. During a visit to Kuwait, Qatar, Abu Dhabi and Dubai in March-April, 1979, G Healy, V Redgrave, and [name suppressed] 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 #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 #9). As of February 1982 the WRP had received "just over 200,000 pounds" from Libya for Youth Training (exhibit #10). In addition to this a £100,000 fund was raised in the British working class. While approximately £300,000 was raised for this project, the real cost for the purchase, 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 8 to 17, 1981 G Healy made a further visit to Libya, putting forward demands

totalling £800,000. The Commission found a report in Healy's handwriting of this (exhibit #11). This report contains the following statements: "In the evening we had a two hour audience with [name suppressed]. We suggested that we should work with Libyan Intelligence and this was agreed. ... March 13. The delegation was visited by [name suppressed] 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 suppressed] had promised £100,000 which we said was welcome but inadequate. ... April 9th. Met [name suppressed] 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".

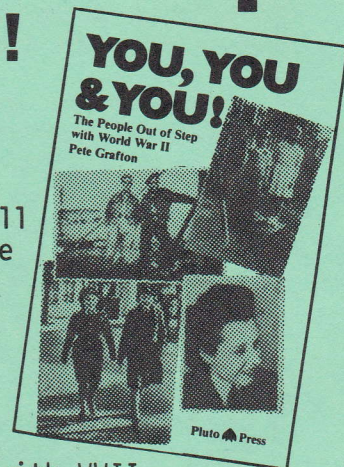
In May 1981, G Healy's letters asking for the money became more and more desperate. On April 15th he writes a letter, marked "confidential", to [name suppressed] of the People's Committee in the Libyan People's Bureau (exhibit #12) urging him to give the money. On May 17, 1981 a "private and confidential" letter is sent to "dear [name suppressed]" (exhibit #13) through Alex Mitchell.

On August 25th Alex Mitchell asks PLO representative [name suppressed] for an immediate meeting to discuss "the very grave questions which have arisen regarding our revolutionary solidarity work in

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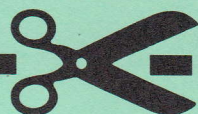
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the Middle East". He informs him that "with the full agreement of the Political Committee, our Party's proposed visit to Beirut and Tripoli has been cancelled".

In a Memo to G Healy, Alex Mitchell reports that [name suppressed] proposed to write a letter to Gaddafi and forward it through [name suppressed] of Libyan Intelligence. On August 28th, G Healy writes a letter to [name suppressed] 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 #14). The same day G Healy writes another "private and confidential" letter to "Brother [name suppressed]" (exhibit #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 #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 Iran-Iraq 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 suppressed], refused the order. A receipt for £1600 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 #16. A list by year shows the following amounts coming in:

1977	£ 46,208
1978	£ 47,784
1979	£347,755
1980	£173,671
1981	£185,128
1982	£271,217
1983	£ 3,400
1984	0
1985	0

TOTAL £1,075,163

Analysed by country, where it is possible to distinguish, the amounts are:

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 suppressed] and [name suppressed] that frequently cash was brought to the center which would not be immediately banked. Therefore, it was possible for large sums of cash to come and go without ever being recorded.

● Photocopies of the full ICFI Interim Report are available from us at a cost of £5. Cheques payable to 'Solidarity Publications'.

SEXUALITY

Winning the battle but losing the war

Barbara Ehrenreich, Elizabeth Hess,
and Gloria Jacobs
Re-making Love
the Feminisation of Sex
Fontana, £3.95

THIS IS AN UNUSUAL and interesting work which tries to untangle some of the knots in the messy web known as 'The Sexual Revolution'. The majority of today's feminist writers seem to follow Andrea Dworkin and Germaine Greer in arguing that either there was no sexual revolution or that any changes which did occur in sexual behaviour worked solely to the benefit of men. Ehrenreich, Hess and Jacobs follow a quite different line of reasoning. For them, the sexual revolution was about changes in female sexuality and men's behaviour changed little, if at all. They conclude by cautiously asserting that the sexual revolution was a minor victory for women, even if its final form was not that which many feminists had hoped for.

The book is principally a wide-ranging description of the difficult relationship between sexual ideologies (as expressed in sex manuals, advice books for young couples, and pornography) and sexual behaviour. The time period covered runs from the 1950s to the present day, and their analysis notes the interplay between socio-economic factors - such as the new, temporary economic independence won by some young women - and sexual behaviour.

The most valuable sections re-examine difficult, controversial topics such as the sex industry and the growth of sado-masochistic practices. To feminists such as Andrea Dworkin such developments can only mean one thing: the continuing oppression of women by men. In this work it is argued that such developments are the results of a deep-seated change in western sexuality and so, in a sense, are evidence of a growing assertiveness by women.

At first sight the book's chatty, anecdotal style seems a great advantage. It prevents discussions becoming dry, impersonal and academic, and leaves the reader free to agree or disagree with each section without feeling forced to accept or reject the whole argument.

But at times the evidence presented looks very thin. Certain chapters seem to read more like potted autobiographies than analyses of social change, and wild generalisations are offered with little sign of supporting argument. Far too much of the book seems to be based solely on the experiences of some white, middle class American women. At times it resembles Dworkin's: an attractive argument is presented, and the reader is supposed to be swept along with it.

Nonetheless this is an extremely useful work, which provides new insights and assessments of topics which need more discussion. The authors' image of women as assertive and active in their own right is a refreshing change from the mind-numbing severity of current orthodoxies, and the mild, cautious optimism which characterises the book is both much needed and very welcome.

JOHN COBBETT

STALINISM

Polish apparat's doublethink

Teresa Toranska

"Oni", Stalin's Polish Puppets

Collins Harvill, £9.95

AKI ORR writes:

ONI MEANS THEY in Polish, and the tendentious subtitle explains who "they" are - Stalin's Polish puppets. Despite the fact that both the writer and translator are nationalists, this is a fascinating book and an absolute must for anyone interested in Poland's postwar history.

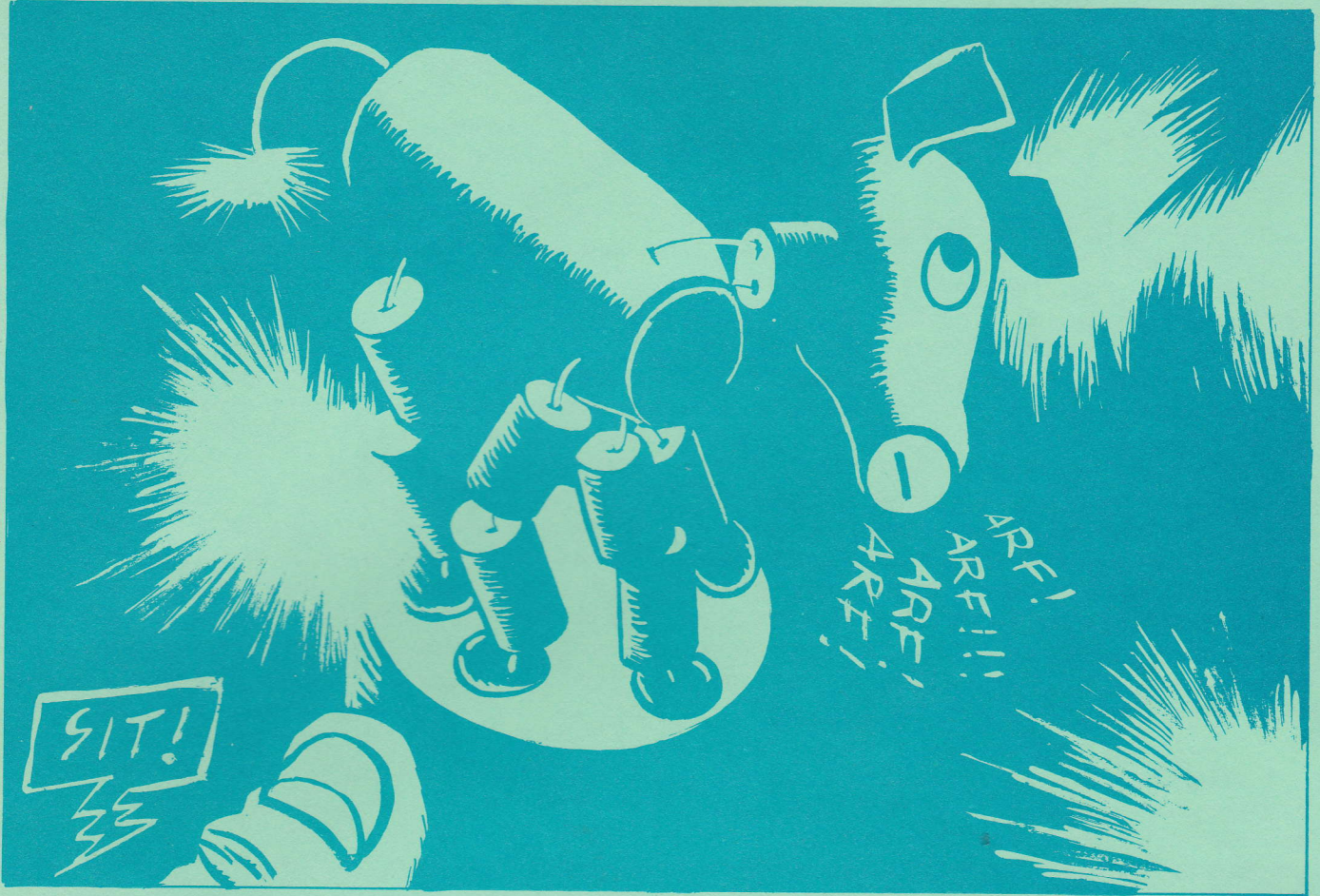
The book consists of interviews with five people who were at the very top of the leadership in Poland during the years 1945 to 1956: Julia Minc, Edward Ochab, Roman Werfel, Stefan Staszewski, and Jakub Berman. All were born in the first decade of this century and joined the Polish Communist Party before the Second World War. They dedicated themselves completely to revolutionary activity, and some suffered prison and torture, first in Poland, later in Russia.

The history of the Polish Communist Party (KPP) is a tragic one. It was founded in 1918 by a merger of two parties: The Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL), founded by Rosa Luxemburg and Julian Marchlewski, and the left wing of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), founded in 1892. In 1938 Stalin dissolved the KPP and killed many of its members. This was part of his accommodation with Hitler. A few members found themselves in gulags. Stefan Staszewski, for example, was born in 1906, joined the party in 1921, was arrested in Poland in 1926 and fled to Russia, was arrested there in 1938 and sent to the Kolyma prison camp. After his release in 1945, he

returned to Poland, where he served as deputy minister of agriculture, head of the Warsaw branch of the ruling Party, and was editor of the Polish Press Agency (PAP). He was expelled from the Party in 1968 because of his views, and is now sympathetic to KOR and Solidarnosc. Such a person is certainly not an opportunist.

I shall not describe the interviews, though some of the facts will shock even people who were critical of the regime at the time. For those interested in this subject there is no substitute for reading the book. The useful insights for revolutionaries which the book provides are to be found not in the motivations of these leaders, but in their beliefs. They all joined the KPP when it was highly dangerous to do so, and therefore cannot be considered simply as 'on the make'. They were deeply concerned about the well-being of the Polish working masses. They rejected the pursuit of money or power for its own sake. They risked their own lives more than once. They sacrificed everything for... I almost said 'the Revolution', but according to their own words, it was for the Party. They were ready to sacrifice their lives, freedom, integrity, friends, even family, to the Party. The Party was their god. They were extremely courageous, not always fanatic, but they put their loyalty to the Party above all else, including their own independent judgment. They accepted the principle of the infallibility of the Party, even when they were convinced that the Party was wrong. The results of this conviction caused an irreparable injury to socialism.

Unfortunately, the interviewer, born in Poland in 1946, is a nationalist, and her main accusation is that these leaders "sold Poland to Stalin". Their answer, that unless they were willing to run the country according to Stalin's orders he would have run it himself with the help of the Red



Army, is reasonable. Most of the questions and answers hinge on this issue. It would have been a far more interesting book if the interviewer had been concerned with revolutionary rather than nationalist politics, but even so it provides essential lessons to revolutionaries on how not to conduct revolutionary activity.

ROBIN BLICK writes:

'Oni', Stalin's Polish Puppets, is a reviewer's nightmare in more ways than one. Its subject matter is often horrific, revealing dimensions of totalitarian morality rarely probed in more conventional accounts of modern communism. Polish journalist Teresa Toranska took advantage of the brief 'thaw' made possible by the rise of Solidarnosc to address a series of searching and often revealing questions to five leaders of post-war stalinist Poland - Jakub Berman, Edward Ochab, Stefan Staszewski, Roman Werfel, and Julia Minc. One way to

do justice to her efforts is simply to extract from the text assertions and admissions that exemplify the direct antithesis of the standards of honest thought and action to which libertarians should aspire. Some of the choicest and purest statements of the leninist credo are made here by Julia Minc. Quizzed about her attitude to the frame-up trials of East European leaders in the late Stalin era, she retorts,

"Look, in banking you have assets and you have losses... there were some bad things. But the victorious war compensated for all the bad. And anyhow, if you have to choose between the party and an individual, you choose the party, because the party has a general aim, the good of the people, but one person is just one person... You can rebel against particular people, but not against the party because that would mean you were rebelling against socialism..."

All of which reminds me of a

certain speech made by Trotsky in 1924: "It is only possible to be right with the party and through the party, for history has not created other ways for the realisation of what is right".

Minc's notion of what constitutes a socialist society also has a trotskyist ring about it: "The working class is a class which owns the means of production and has its own party, which acts, and its actions represent the workers' participation in government... it's the workers' avant-garde that governs, the most militant, select core... They are the ones who set the party's tone and represent the interest of the working class". As for Lech Walesa (and the ten million other members of Solidarnosc), "he is a worker who didn't follow the path that Poland is taking".

Socialism is also defined as "a higher standard of living for everyone", leaving the reader wondering what then to make of the socialist credentials of such pauperised workers' states as Poland, Albania or Ethiopia. Minc has her answer ready; it might seem bad here, but it's much worse in the West, where "the shops are full but people haven't got the money to buy anything: they go hungry and sleep under bridges". Shades of the days when Stalin's starving subjects were shown news-reels of English football queues and told they were queues for food. Low wages aren't a problem in Poland either. "That's not exploitation... the state doesn't exploit, the state provides". As for Stalin's concentration camps, where many of Minc's compatriots and comrades were worked to death, "There weren't any". And the so-called kulaks? If they were sent to Siberia, "so much the better for them, because they got what they wanted: more land to cultivate".

Minc describes with unconscious irony the class relations of her socialism: "If a worker damages a piece of machinery then he's a

saboteur and he'll be locked up".

As for the 'cadre' who rules in this worker's name, he "has to have appropriate living conditions guaranteed according to his rank... under socialism, you can't have a minister earning and living like a shopkeeper". So Bierut had his nine villas, a Polish worker's family two rooms.

Others interviewed were more prepared than Minc to concede that under Stalin all had not been sweetness and light. Hence their search for political alibis, which have a distinctly trotskyist ring to them. Ochab still saw the stalinist seizure of power in 1944-45 as a "revolutionary stage of development" which "no-one can erase from the pages of our history... the foundation of a new era, a people's era, in the march to the classless society". What Ochab termed "diseases" and "rashes" (that is, mass murder of opponents and even comrades) were only "painful for individual people". And as every marxist knows, it's classes that count. The USSR was a state which "resists the ideas and schemings of billionaires and monopolists; a country of enormous deformities" (a degenerated workers' state, perhaps?) "yet one which represents a different road for the development of mankind...".

I could cite a dozen other instances of the same reasoning, each pointing to the same conclusion: that in the name of the emancipation of the proletariat it is possible, justifiable and necessary to enslave it, just as it is in order to conquer and colonise nations in the name of liberating them. As I have written in these pages before, in another context, revolutionary organisations need to look seriously at what can be flip-pantly dismissed as a diversion from the 'real issues', namely the relationship between means and ends. Teresa Toranska's "Oni" is a salutary reminder of what happens when it is ignored.

SCOTTISH RADICALISM

Self-organisation or nothing

From FRANK MAITLAND, Hastings:

Thank you for sending me issue 14 of Solidarity Journal. My name crops up in connection with the Wildcat reprint of articles from the Glasgow wartime paper Solidarity. In the thirties I was very active in Edinburgh, in a group grandiloquently entitled 'British Section International Socialist Labour Party'. We were a remnant of the De Leonist movement in Britain. Today it seems to me a real tragedy that De Leon's work has been forgotten: not that his position can be carbon-copied for today, but because of his emphasis on the action of the workers as opposed to political leadership.

We had friendly relations with the Glasgow anarchists and organised a meeting for Emma Goldman in our usual hall in Edinburgh, which we could pack every Sunday evening. Eventually our group moved towards Trotsky, who expressed our criticism of the Stalinist regime, but we were put off by the London groups - Healy, Grant, et al.

After the war I joined the ILP and wrote weekly for the Socialist Leader, but after the Hungarian affair in 1956, when I disagreed radically with the party position, I dropped out.

I have never been interested in doing anything but helping to educate people. I don't want to 'organise' people or play 'leader'. It is up to the workers themselves and if they can't do that we will never have socialism. I confess

that after half a century I have my doubts!

I have kept up activity in the Workers Esperanto Movement on the simple basis that if the workers of the world are to communicate with each other, understand each other and organise on a world scale, a world language is the basic necessity. My first international conference in Paris convinced me of that. Translation is only a waste of your effort. With best wishes.

Yours fraternally

THE MONOCLED MUTINEER

Client television

From RUNE HAGEN, Oslo:

When the series The Monocled Mutineer was shown on Norwegian television, I found it very interesting since I knew very little about the subject in general and the Etaples riot in particular (although I had read Dave Lamb's excellent pamphlet some years ago), but there was no way for me to judge the accuracy of the series and in particular the role Toplis was given. This prompted me to order The Monocled Mutineer and The Unknown Army. In that way, the showing of the series here was a useful stimulus for me and other comrades to occupy ourselves with this subject. In the meantime, before the books arrived, I read Solidarity number 14. To put it mildly, that changed the situation a bit - the series which had stimulated interest was severely criticised! Of course that didn't make us less interested - on the contrary we would like to get much more material on the subject and the series, particularly since some leftist journals here wrote

about the series. The articles by Julian Putowski and Ken Weller I found excellent, and Ken's attacks/remarks on the "media leftist" and those who want to "clientise the working class" particularly appropriate.

Best wishes

EMIGRATION

Answers on a postcard

From JOHN KING, Lancaster:

Thanks for the latest Soly. It's good to see that autumn really has arrived! Seriously, I found the interview with the 'Page 3' boy very interesting. I would like to see a sequel on the early days of Solidarity. I don't think a bout of navel-contemplating would do much harm at present. What happened to all the hopes and expectations of the early 1960s? Where did you (later we) go wrong? Or was there nothing that anyone could have done to prevent the present miseries? As one who's seriously thinking of emigrating, I'd like to see what you can offer.

Best wishes

Readers' meeting

We are planning an opportunity for readers to meet and discuss the content and direction of Solidarity Journal with us. The meeting will be in London, probably early in March. The exact date and location not yet being finalised, interested readers should send a note with their address or phone number to Readers' Meeting, 123 Lathom Road, London E6, as soon as possible. We will forward details to you in due course.

SOME SOLIDARITY PUBLICATIONS

THE MEANING OF SOCIALISM
by Paul Cardan (C Castoriadis). 30p.

HISTORY AS CREATION
by Paul Cardan (C Castoriadis). £1.20

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by Paul Cardan (C Castoriadis). 75p.

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by Paul Cardan (C Castoriadis). £2.50

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