

Unity!

CENTENARY SPECIAL

FREE



100 years for socialism

WELCOME to our Party's centenary and to this special celebratory supplement.

It is very fitting that this pull-out is an edition of *Unity*. A hundred years ago the founding event of our Party was a Unity Convention in London on 31 July and 1 August 1920, bringing together the most progressive organisations and individuals into a revolutionary force to fight for socialism.

Our first chair, elected by the convention, Arthur MacManus welcomed the delegates, presented a report on the unity negotiations that had led to the great coming-together of the day, and read greetings from sister parties and leading comrades, including one from Lenin himself.

by Liz Payne

Communist Party chair

Today, our Party welcomes all of you as we reflect once again on all that unites us in our struggle against British imperialism and for ever greater democracy and justice as we take our first steps into our second century along Britain's Road to Socialism.

We invite you to join us, not only in celebration, but in the class struggle to win state power and build a Britain free of all oppression and exploitation. Forward to the next 100 years!

100

100 International greetings to Britain's Communists

Vera Dehle-Thaelmann, granddaughter of Ernst Thaelmann

Dear comrades,

I, Vera Dehle-Thaelmann granddaughter of Ernst Thaelmann, would like to congratulate you on the 100th anniversary of the founding of your party.

I wish you, all of us, a lot of creative energy for the struggle of the unity of the working class, for the unity in action of all anti-fascist forces.

We cannot rely on parliaments

and others to solve the problems for us. We must remain active ourselves and stay in dialogue with all people who fight against all kinds of racism, anti-semitism and sexism.

For a world of peace and freedom, international understanding and international solidarity against war and destruction.



Communist Party of China



On the occasion of the centenary of the founding of communist party in Britain, the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) would like to extend its heartfelt congratulations to all comrades of the Communist Party of Britain (CPB).

For years, the CPB has made positive efforts to disseminate Marxism, uphold British workers' rights and interests and promote social justice.

The CPC stands ready to further strengthen exchanges and co-operation with the CPB and learn from each other, so that we can make new contributions to enhancing China-Britain relations and safeguarding world peace.

International Department Central Committee Communist Party of China.

Communist Party of Cuba



On behalf of the Communist Party of Cuba, we extend our congratulations on the occasion of the centenary of the foundation of the Communist Party of Britain. This commemoration takes place amid an extremely complex international situation, which demands higher unity and co-operation among communist and left-wing parties against imperialist aggression.

We take advantage of this opportunity to express gratitude from our Party for the permanent solidarity work developed by the Communist Party of Britain to end the criminal economic, financial, and commercial blockade imposed on the Cuban people for more than 60 years.

We reiterate the willingness to con-

tinue strengthening the relationship of friendship between our parties.

Progressive Party of Working People (Akel, Cyprus)



On the centenary of the Communist Party of Britain, the Central Committee of Akel extends to you fraternal greetings and wishes every success in the challenges ahead.

Akel highly appreciates the struggles waged by British Communists for the rights and interests of the working people, the longstanding internationalist and principled solidarity extended throughout the years to national liberation movements, against British colonialism, against fascism, for the noble ideals of peace and socialism.

British and Cypriot communists fought together in the International Brigades, their relations were forged in the class struggle in Britain. Akel values particularly the CPB's solidarity in the struggle to end Turkish occupation and achieve the reunification of Cyprus and the dismantling of the British bases in Cyprus.

Communist Party of Finland



On behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Finland I would like to extend to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Britain and the leadership of the Communist Party of Britain my best regards and wishes by congratulating the Communist Party of Britain in its 100 years celebration.

The Communist Party of Finland finds it for the international communist movement highly important that CP of Britain has campaigned a monumental

time – a century, as a Communist Party for working class unity for socialism, for the international solidarity of working people and against imperialism and war.

We also think that there is no class struggle without international collaboration and unity of the comrades abroad. Therefore we highly welcome all initiatives for future collaboration between our two parties.

I wish you good health, happiness and success. May our traditional relationship be strengthened and further developed.

JP (Juha-Pekka) Väisänen, Chairperson, The Communist Party of Finland

Communist Party of the Russian Federation



The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation warmly congratulates you on the occasion of the 100th anniversary since the foundation of the CP Britain.

Since that date in 1920 the Party has covered a long way of struggle for peace, human and democratic rights, justice and socialism in the country heading the fight of national proletariat along with contribution to the international struggle for our common ideals and socialism.

The centenary of the CPB is marked by uneasy atmosphere of global economic crisis followed by Covid-19 pandemic covering all countries of the world and aggravating social conflicts.

But despite such a complicated situation, communists of Great Britain are always at the front line of social battle keep on fighting for national proletariat and Marxism-Leninism.

The CPRF expresses its solidarity with your fight. Today our joint efforts are required more than ever, we appreciate them and pay tribute to your contribution in our joint activity.

South African Communist Party



The South African Communist Party (SACP) congratulates the Communist Party of Britain (CPB) on its 100th anniversary since its founding on 31 July 1920.

The founding of the CPB marked a welcome development in the building of the world working class movement against the system of capitalist exploitation and its consequent forms of dispossession and oppression.

The CPB has endured attacks from among the most advanced capitalist regimes of the world, based on its structural location in Britain, an imperialist and former colonial power.

Despite the relentless attacks, the CPB continued to wage the struggle for socialism and played its internationalist role.

The SACP acknowledges the invaluable role played by the CPB and the British working-class in our South African struggle against apartheid.

The SACP expresses its message of solidarity with the British working-class as it battles the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) and its impact. The SACP further conveys its sincere condolences to all the families that lost their loved consequent on the deadly disease.

Communist Party of Ukraine



Please accept my personal and the Communist Party of Ukraine's sincere and heartfelt congratulations on the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

We, the Communists of Ukraine, are convinced that the Communist Party of Britain consistently and principally upholds the position to protect the real interests of workers. The Communist Party of Britain makes every effort to fulfil its role as the revolutionary, ideological and political vanguard of the working class.

It is our joint task to rally the communist and workers' parties in a single international movement in the struggle for the triumph of socialism — the most just and humane society.

Today, the international communist and labour movement, the working people of all countries must organise and show their strength, giving a decisive rebuff to imperialism, anti-communism, neo-fascism and terrorism, while breaking the multifaceted traps that the bourgeoisie and imperialist unions like the EU and Nato set up.

Workers of all countries, unite!

Long live the 100 years of the struggle of the Communist Party of Great Britain!

Petro Symonenko, First Secretary, Communist Party of Ukraine

Communist Party of Venezuela



With great joy, the Communist Party of Venezuela congratulates you on the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Britain.

Safeguarding for 100 years the very existence of the Communist Party against multiple attacks by the class enemy, consequently carrying the flags of Marxism-Leninism, defending the rights of the working class and of all workers is a great example for the Venezuelan communists. Our parties will strengthen their ties and we will fight together for social justice, peace and socialism.

Long live the Communist Party of Britain! Long live proletarian internationalism! Long live socialism!



STANDING UP:
Women march against unemployment in the early '30s

Visit our website
communistparty.org.uk
for more centenary greetings

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PIONEERS:
The first
Communist
Party central
committee

Uniting Britain's working class

by Mike Squires

More discussion took place throughout 1918 and in May 1919 the main constituents of what was to become the CPGB held a representative meeting.

The core of the new party was to be made up of members of the BSP, the largest group; the SLP; the Workers Socialist Federation (WSF), mainly based in London's East End and a virtual fiefdom of Sylvia Pankhurst; and the South Wales Socialist Society.

The SLP later split over unity. Those supporting the proposal became known as the Communist Unity Group.

Numerous local groups had sprung up in the immediate aftermath of the war, Hands Off Russia committees, militant shop stewards in Glasgow and Sheffield began liaising and organising. Daily Herald groups and local socialist societies proliferated.

Members of all these groups played a part in the first Communist Unity Convention in July/August 1920 alongside the parties mentioned.

There was much that the delegates agreed on at the founding conference, but two issues divided them: seeking parliamentary representation and affiliation to the Labour Party.

These issues would effect com-

munist strategy for years to come, delegates voted to do both.

Although the July Unity Convention had united the bulk of the organisations wanting a Communist Party, there were still significant groups and individuals outside.

Some of these had been attending the Second Congress of the newly created Communist International in Moscow, which took place at the same time as the Unity Convention

On their return they pressed for a further convention that would incorporate those groups and individuals who were still outside the CPGB. These included the Shop Stewards and Workers Committee Movement, the newly created Scotland-based Communist Labour Party — of which Willie Gallacher, later a Communist MP, was a member — various communist guild groups and some from the WSF whose leader Sylvia Pankhurst had just returned from Moscow.

The Second Unity Convention took place in Leeds during January 1921. It was pretty much a done deal. The delegates agreed to merge their respective organisations into the CPGB and accept the 21 conditions for affiliation to the Communist International.

Although Sylvia Pankhurst in Moscow had agreed with the merger plans,

her opposition to the majority view of parliamentary struggle led her to stay outside the new party.

There was a sizeable number of ILP members, known as the Left Wing Group, who observed the merger process rather than participate while pushing for the ILP to affiliate to the Communist International after staying outside the reformed Socialist International at its 1920 conference.

The next year it also decided against affiliating to the Communist International, leading around 500 ILP members to jump ship to the new Communist Party.

These included another future Communist MP, Shapurji Saklatvala; Emile Burns, who became a prominent Marxist theorist; and Rajani Palme Dutt, editor of Labour Monthly who would become a leading party theoretician and activist.

The CPGB came about after the world turned upside down amid the first world war and Russian Revolution.

Those heroic pioneers here who created the Communist Party did so against a backdrop of police surveillance and persecution, plus the usual onslaught from the press.

They and their successors kept alive the hope of a socialist society. That dream still lives thanks to their efforts.

Meet the party of a new type

by Rob Griffiths

THROUGHOUT its 100-year history, the Communist Party has never had a membership of more than one in 625 of the adult population in Britain or one in 150 of the unionised workforce. Individual membership of the Labour Party has usually been at least 20 times higher than that for the CP, even before taking several million political levy payers into account.

Yet Communists have played outstanding roles in a wide range of popular movements and mass struggles over much of that period, out of all proportion to their number.

This is not due to any superhuman qualities on their part. While they have shown themselves to be among the most dedicated, hard-working and clear-headed activists in the trade union, peace, tenants and other movements, many others have been their equals if not their betters.

Clearly, working in alliance with non-CP activists has often helped elevate Communists to influential positions at every level.

But even this cannot explain the achievements and acclamations won by CP members over the decades.

The key to their disproportionate impact in the labour and progressive movements has been their active membership of a party of a different, special type.

The new updated edition of party programme Britain's Road to Socialism identifies the essential features which, combined, distinguish the Communist Party from all others.

First, the CP bases itself on the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin about the class character of capitalist society, the exploitation of labour power, the role of the state, the development of imperialism and the need for a revolutionary party to ensure that the working class and its allies take political power and use it to overthrow capitalism and its state.

This means that, as a top priority, the CP consciously and actively engages in the battle of ideas against those which serve the interests of the ruling class.

Hence the emphasis within the party's own ranks on political education, discussion and debate.

Hence too, the role played by Communists through a range of bodies, publications and initiatives to place those ideas before masses of people.

Second, because theory and practice must constantly enrich and reinforce one another, the CP also seeks to organise

itself in every major area of economic, social, cultural and political struggle.

Thirdly, the Communist Party bases itself on the working class, as the force in society with the potential and the necessity to liberate itself from the exploitation, crises, insecurity, inequalities and inhumanities of capitalism.

Understanding that this alone makes possible the liberation of society as a whole, the CP welcomes all into its ranks regardless of class, race, nationality, sex, gender and sexual orientation.

We promote unity in the common struggle to abolish all the forms of exploitation and oppression fostered and sustained by capitalism's class-based society.

Fourth, the CP seeks to assist the labour and progressive movements to fight consciously and strategically, not just from day to day. Ideally, today's victories should help lay the basis for bigger victories tomorrow, enabling the working class and its allies to make ever deeper inroads into the prerogatives, wealth and state power of the monopoly capitalist class.

Fifth, as a small party, it is all the more important that the CP draws upon the commitment, creativity and initiative of its members in order to make the most effective contribution possible to the labour and progressive movements.

One of the ironies of recent decades is that the party's "anti-Stalinist" critics include political organisations which tolerate little or no internal dissent and are dominated by leaderships that dictate policy with little or no regard for the preferences of their members.

Finally, the CP in Britain is part of the international communist movement. It participates in the annual meeting of more than 90 Communist and workers' parties and benefits from extensive bilateral links with scores of parties and national liberation movements around the world.

The struggle for human emancipation and socialism is universal.

But our first responsibility is, as Marx and Engels put it in the original Communist Manifesto, to "settle accounts" with our own ruling capitalist class. Only then will the peoples of England, Scotland and Wales — and their united British labour movement — develop their own forms of socialism.

However, as recent events clearly confirm, there will be no significant advance towards socialist revolution without a stronger, more influential Communist Party.

AS THE Communist Party celebrates its centenary, the newspaper it founded in 1930 marks 90 years of struggle for peace and socialism.

When the first Daily Worker, as we were then called, rolled off the presses Communist Party general secretary Harry Pollitt declared: "The paper is born and must never be allowed to die."

Since Lenin founded *Iskra* in 1902, revolutionary Marxists had seen the relationship between a revolutionary party and a revolutionary paper as crucial.

A newspaper was "capable of uniting all forces and guiding the movement in practice" and could be "ready at any time to support every protest and every outbreak," the Russian revolutionary wrote in *What Is To Be Done?*

Those aims have been at the heart of everything the Daily Worker and, since 1966, the Morning Star have done. The paper was established at the start of a turbulent decade. The 1930s saw mass unemployment and poverty as the Great Depression devastated working-class communities; it saw the rise of fascism and the descent into world war.

The paper plunged into action straight away as an uncompromising champion both of the British working class and of oppressed peoples internationally, especially in Britain's colonies.

It immediately provoked Establishment hatred that we have lived with ever since: on its second day, the *Times* called for the government to act against the paper for printing greetings from the presidium of the Communist International.

But the Worker and the Morning Star that succeeded it have never shied away from challenging the crimes of our ruling class and its allies.

In the '30s we condemned the brutal attacks on those struggling for Indian independence; in the '50s we exposed war crimes such as the use of napalm on Korean civilians by US forces in the Korean war, and published photographs showing a British marine commando holding up the severed head of a rebel during the so-called "Malayan Emergency."

Our reporter Sam Russell was on the spot when a CIA-backed coup brought Augusto Pinochet to power in Chile and we covered the dirty wars that secured US dominance in Latin America in the 1980s.

The counterpart to our relentless exposure of imperialist crimes has been an equally impressive record of solidarity with the oppressed and those fighting for social justice in Britain.

In the '30s the paper gave unrivalled coverage of the hunger marches and the National Unemployed Workers Movement — that concern for the most vulnerable endures in modern times, with the campaign against today's inhuman benefit sanctions and "fit for work" tests.

In the same decade it was the foremost anti-fascist voice in the British media. Our founding editor William Rust was among those who covered the Spanish Civil War, while other Daily Worker staff fought among the International Brigades.

The paper championed those who came together to beat back the Blackshirts at the Battle of Cable Street and was the only paper on Fleet Street to

READ ALL OVER: Builders on the Royal Festival Hall site read their papers of choice in 1951



Workers' voice as loud as ever

by Ben Chacko

object when the England football team gave the nazi salute in Berlin in 1938.

The paper campaigned for a united front against fascism and against appeasement.

Its support for the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in 1939, signed to buy the Soviet Union breathing space after France and Britain betrayed Czechoslovakia and rejected Moscow's efforts to form a united front against the nazis, was controversial.

Its justifiable doubts about British ruling-class intentions during the "phony war," combined with a relentless focus on the government's failure to protect working-class people in the Blitz and the use of war powers to suppress the labour movement and the left in France and Britain, led to it being banned by order of Labour home secretary Herbert Morrison.

The 14 months of illegality — broken by mass campaigning — are the longest period any British paper has been outlawed by government fiat.

From then the Daily Worker campaigned for the transformation of the war into a people's war against fascism.

It gave extensive coverage to the

Beveridge report outlining recommendations for the shape of the post-war welfare state, including an exclusive series of articles by Beveridge himself.

Its determination that the world should not be allowed to return to its pre-war shape included a focus on decolonisation.

And it ended the war with a giant conference, "with delegates representing nearly 1,900,000 organised workers" from across the trade union movement, to place the paper on a new footing, transferring ownership from the Communist Party to a co-operative, the People's Press Printing Society.

To this day, we are the only national daily in Britain owned by and answerable to our readers.

It was in the postwar period that the Daily Worker began to earn the name "daily paper of the labour movement," building up over decades a reputation for unrivalled coverage of trade union and industrial matters that ensured prime ministers from Winston Churchill to Margaret Thatcher considered it essential reading.

The Morning Star (as it became in a 1966 name change) fought for the causes of the Pentonville Five and the Shrewsbury Pickets, exposed the duplicity of Rupert Murdoch at Wap-

ping and gave unstinting solidarity to the miners during the great 1984-5 strike.

This close connection to the labour movement meant that the Morning Star and its shareholders resisted the advance of "eurocommunism" in the Party, and the paper became the champion of those members of the CPGB who fought to keep it a Marxist-Leninist party in the 1980s in a bitter dispute that saw rival factions organise coaches to thousands-strong PPPS AGMs and even punch-ups on the meeting floor.

The collapse of the Soviet Union was a serious blow to the paper, but it survived. Under the editorship of John Haylett from 1995 it continued to fight against imperialism, prominent in support of the Stop the War Coalition, and reached out to the trade union movement, bringing trade unions onto our management committee when they bought maximum shareholdings — the first to do so was transport union RMT under Bob Crow.

We now have 11 national trade unions and one trade union region on board, representing a majority of Britain's organised workers.

That ownership structure is what makes us unique — the Morning Star cannot be bought. It belongs to its

readers and to the labour movement.

It maintains its anchor in our editorial commitment to the Communist Party programme Britain's Road to Socialism, but has become a paper of the broad left, with regular contributions from MPs, trade union activists, left parties and campaign groups.

2020 has been a troubled year. The Covid-19 pandemic has killed tens of thousands in Britain, one of the worst affected countries in the world, its public services and infrastructure weakened by privatisation and austerity, its government irresponsible and incompetent. It now looks set to cost millions of jobs and employers are taking advantage to drive down wages and conditions.

The United States is whipping up a new cold war against China, tearing up international disarmament agreements and walking out of global bodies like the World Health Organisation and Unicef. Britain's government is going along for the ride, egged on by a pro-imperialist Labour leadership.

The role of the daily paper of the left, fighting workers' corner in the workplace while providing a consistent principled voice for peace and socialism is more vital than ever in a world that is becoming more dangerous. Buy, read and support the Morning Star!

Getting hands on to halt imperialism



IN MARCH 1918, Britain led the military intervention in Russia by more than a dozen foreign armies in the hope of destroying the young Soviet Republic led by Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

An expeditionary force landed at Murmansk, soon followed by a Japanese invasion on the other side of Russia in Vladivostok. When counter-revolutionary “White” forces led by Tsarist officers launched their full-scale revolt against the new regime, they received arms, training and troops from the Western powers and Japan.

British and Empire forces were sent to Arkhangelsk and Siberia as well as reinforcements to Vladivostok. Romanian, Polish, French, Italian, Greek and US soldiers joined the fray along with a rogue Czech and Slovak legion, Ukrainian nationalists, anarchists and ultra-leftists.

In Britain, a coalition of socialist and trade organisations formed the Hands Off Russia Movement in January 1919. Its first executive committee included Pat Coates (national secretary), Harry Pollitt (national organiser) and other soon-to-be Communist Party members William Paul, Willie Gallacher, Alex Gossip, Mary Bamber, Tom Mann and MP Colonel Malone as well as labour movement leaders such as John Bromley, James Winstone, Rhys Davies, Archie Kirkwood and George Lansbury.

Huge rallies and marches were held across Britain as the Red Army fought back heroically, culminating in the withdrawal of most British personnel by early autumn 1919.

Nonetheless, the major imperialist powers had not given up all hope of strangling the Bolshevik baby in its cradle. British diplomats and agents continued their plotting with White Russian,



by Rob Griffiths

Polish and Ukrainian representatives.

In spring 1920, imperial Japan sent more troops to Siberia. Marshal Pilsudski's Polish forces, armed and financed by France and the US, launched a fresh offensive to extend their occupation of western Ukraine eastwards in alliance with anti-semitic Ukrainian nationalists.

In Britain, prime minister Lloyd George's government decided in secret

to assist the Polish aggression with munitions, while denying the policy in public.

On May 6, the Daily Herald revealed that a Danish steamship had just left the Port of London for Poland, carrying six military aircraft. Another Polish-bound vessel had been forced by firefighters and a collision to unload its heavy guns and planes at Gravesend in Kent.

Now the Jolly George was being loaded in the East India Dock with aircraft, guns and ammunition cases for shipment to Polish-occupied Danzig.

Working as a docker in east London, Harry Pollitt had refused to load two barges with munitions for Poland. He was sacked, while his workmates carried on earning double-time.

Already a popular speaker for the Workers Socialist Federation in places such as Whitechapel, Bow and Poplar alongside Sylvia Pankhurst and Melvina Walker, Pollitt helped lead the fight to stop the Jolly George from sailing.

Their speeches, pamphlets and leaflets had the desired effect. Early on Monday afternoon, May 10, the stevedores stopped loading the ship. In solidarity, the “coalies” refused to supply any more fuel.

The 4,000-strong local dockers' union branch decided to stop all munitions exports. Liberal MP Capt Wedgwood Benn and railway workers' leader JR Clynes tried to raise British arms to Poland in the House of Commons, but the speaker ruled their motion out of order.

In the face of a gathering storm, the Walford Shipping Line quickly backed down. Later that week, by agreement with the union, the military supplies were taken off the Jolly George and replaced with non-lethal merchandise.

One large unloaded cargo bore the label: “This case is RAF property.”

The Miners Federation of Great Britain and the National Union of Railwaymen demanded an end to British military support for Poland's offensive. In August 1920, the TUC and the Labour Party formed a National Council of Action to organise a general strike should Britain go to war with Russia again.

Not for the last time, a combination of left unity, working-class action and public opinion had frustrated the ambitions of British imperialism, with Communists making a prominent contribution.



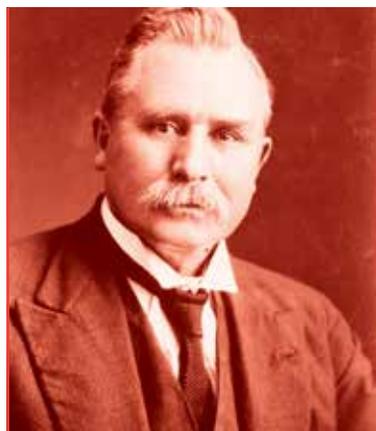
ONE OF THE great editors of the Morning Star/Daily Worker, John Haylett dedicated himself to the labour movement, the struggle against racism and the cause of the exploited and oppressed around the world.

A native of Liverpool, he became the secretary of a large, militant branch of communications workers in London.

His fluency in French and Russian and close links with South African and Caribbean revolutionaries served him well as the Communist Party of Britain's international secretary. As editor of the Morning Star from 1994, he forged a dynamic alliance with Labour left MPs Tony Benn and Jeremy Corbyn and trade union leaders such as Rodney Bickerstaffe, Mick Rix and Bob Crow.

His strategy for expansion ensured the survival of the paper through one of its most perilous periods.

ROBERT GRIFFITHS



RED LIVES

Tom Mann

TOM MANN was born in 1856 in Foleshill, Warwickshire. His mother died when he was two and he left school at nine to work in the fields, then in coal mining aged 10 to 14, before starting a toolmaking apprenticeship in Birmingham.

Mann left the pits to become a highly skilled engineer, but took with him an unyielding hatred of the capitalist system. The rest of his life was spent at the pioneering edge of the new ideas which forged our modern labour movement, passing from temperance and the Christian church movement, to new unionism, social democracy, then syndicalism, to communism. In each shift of political gear, he was an agitator, organiser and above all, educator.

It was Mann who embedded the struggle for an eight-hour day into the DNA of the British and Australian labour movements. He signed up to the socialist movement when it had

barely 500 members in all of Britain, joining the Social Democratic Federation, the first Marxist party. He, along with lifelong friend and brilliant organiser, and sometime Liberal lord, Ben Tillett, led the Great Dock Strike of 1889. Mann became president of the Dockers' union and later founder of the militant Workers' Union.

In the heat of the struggles that followed the first world war, including the great engineering lock-out, it was but a short step for Mann to join the Communist Party. He would be a prominent member for the next to decades.

His note to the founding Communist Unity Convention held 31 July 1920, in the Canon Street Hotel, states: “I desire therefore to express my sincere hope that real success will attend the efforts of those who assemble, and that we may as a result have a thorough-going Communist Party, equal to carrying on the educational and propagandist work needed

to develop and focus opinion, and ere long enable us to reach the communist ideal.”

In 1932, aged 77, he went to Belfast, helping to bring together religious communities in a struggle against the Means Test. He was imprisoned for sedition. The judge said to him on sentencing: “Someone your age should know better.” Mann responded, “Sir, the longer I live and the more I see here and around the world, I know my course is right.”

The last words should go to the man himself, “Trade unionism is of no value unless the members of the unions are clear as to their objective — the overthrow of the capitalist system — and are prepared to use the unions for that purpose. Political action is of no value unless all political effort is used definitely and avowedly for the same end, the abolition of the profit-making system.”

PHIL KATZ



Plaid Gomiwnyddo I Cymreig – Welsh Communist Party

**Celebrating 100 years of struggle
for socialism**

**Y GIG – ganwyd yng Nghymru. Edmygir ar
draws y byd.**

**The NHS – born in Wales. Admired across
the world.**

Today, the Welsh Communist Party and the Welsh Young Communist League are growing, united around our programmes Britain's Road to Socialism and Real Power for the People of Wales/Grym Go lawn i Bobl Cymru.

Join us and help us build the non- sectarian alliances with other left and progressive forces that will advance us to socialism in Wales, as part of a socialist federated republic of Britain.

A biennial Welsh Communist Party Congress elects an Executive Committee that organises members in our six branches: North Wales; Cardiff; Swansea; Pontypridd; Merthyr Tydfil & Cynon Valley; Newport and Valleys.

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Communist Party Executive Committee

For 100 years, resisting capitalist exploitation, oppression and imperialist war!

Forever dedicated to the struggle for socialism and the liberation of humanity!

“Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution!”



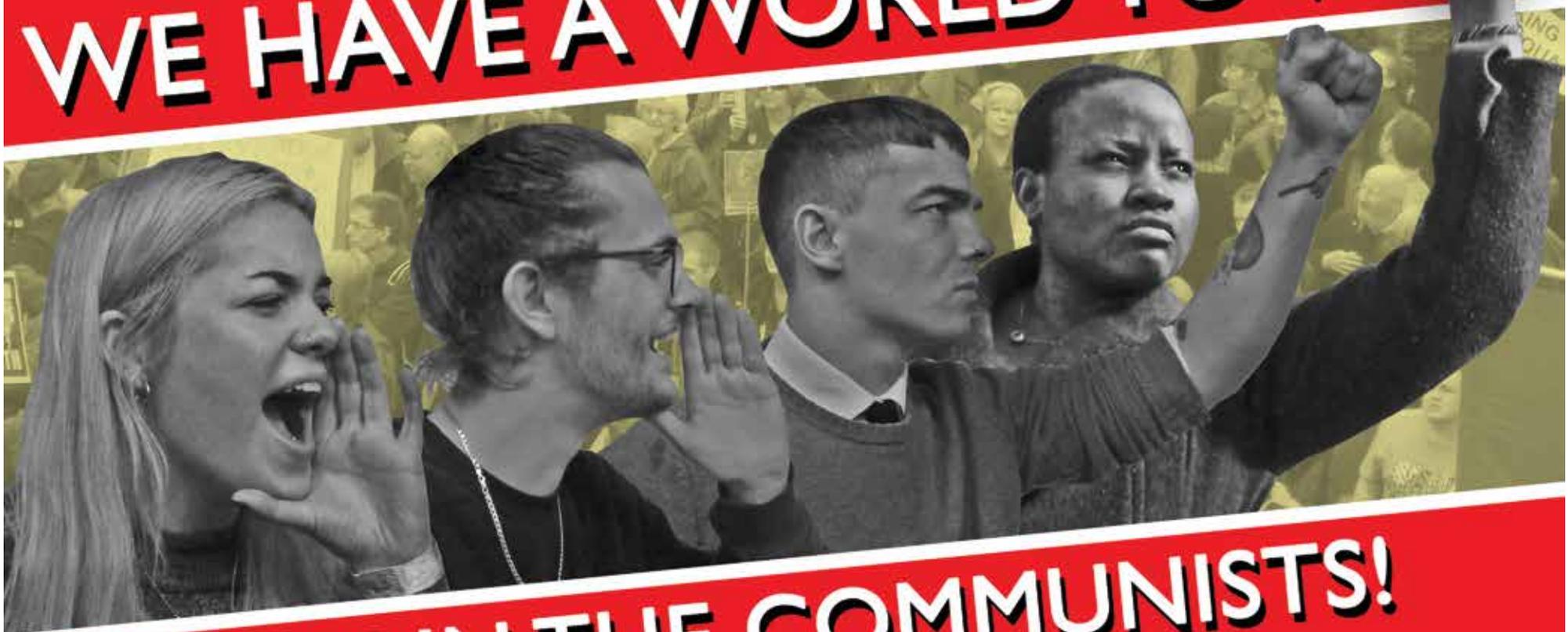
Communist Party South East London

100 Years
Organising
South East
London
Workers



South East London Branch: selcp.org

WE HAVE A WORLD TO WIN!



JOIN THE COMMUNISTS!

Nine days that shook capitalism

BRITAIN experienced a rising spirit of working-class militancy in 1925, culminating in Red Friday on 31 July, when a united alliance of mine, rail and transport workers forced the government to temporarily subsidise the coal industry and avoid huge cuts to colliers' wages.

But later that year, the Labour Party banned Communists — the government saw the opportunity to attack the most advanced working-class organisation and within days, arrested 12 leading Communists.

Five defended themselves in court and harsh sentences were handed down. Willie Gallacher, Albert Inkpin, Wal Hannington, William Rust and Harry Pollitt received 12-month prison sentences, with Tom Bell, Arthur Macmanus, Robin Page Arnot, JT Murphy, Tom Wintringham, Ernie Cant and JR Campbell getting six months.

Despite its leading members being in prison, the Communist Party repeatedly made unheeded calls for the trade unions to prepare, pointing out that the subsidy on Red Friday was only due to last for nine months.

By contrast, the government built its defences. It supported a new Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies, a group of volunteer strikebreakers set up in the wake of Red Friday. Even the Daily Express branded it fascist but it received tacit support from the government and when the strike was declared it folded into the government.

In the event, the sterling work of Wal Hannington and the National

by David Horsely

Unemployed Workers Movement meant the government was largely unsuccessful in recruiting scabs from the large ranks of the jobless.

The government refused to extend the subsidy, instead supporting mineowners' drive to reduce wages and lengthen hours. Reluctantly, the TUC declared a general strike, intending to call out successive waves of workers rather than all unions at once.

The CP swung into action, calling for councils of action to be set up, drawing in "every political, industrial co-operative and unemployed organisation" to defeat mine owners and the government.

Many local councils organised successful mass pickets, for example in London the workers immobilised Clapham tram depot.

Local bulletins and leaflets were produced throughout the country often showing great humour directed against scabs.

The strike was solid from the first day, with the TUC General Council admitting it was having more difficulty keeping its second wave to go to work than call members out.

But after nine days, with the strike at its strongest, the

TUC capitulated and called off the strike. The miners fought on with the full support of the Communist Party.

The strike did not fail because British workers lacked of solidarity but because their leaders feared the revo-

lutionary opportunity presented by a general strike.

National Union of Railwaymen leader CT Cramp declared: "We have not to blame the General Council for taking the action they did in calling off the strike. The pity of it is that it was ever called on."

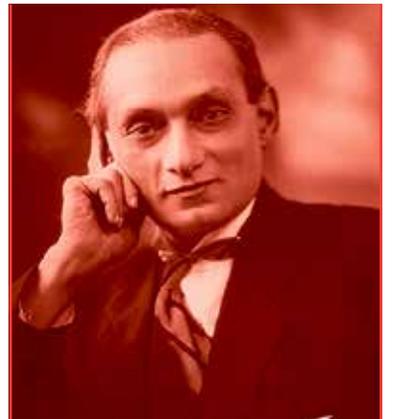
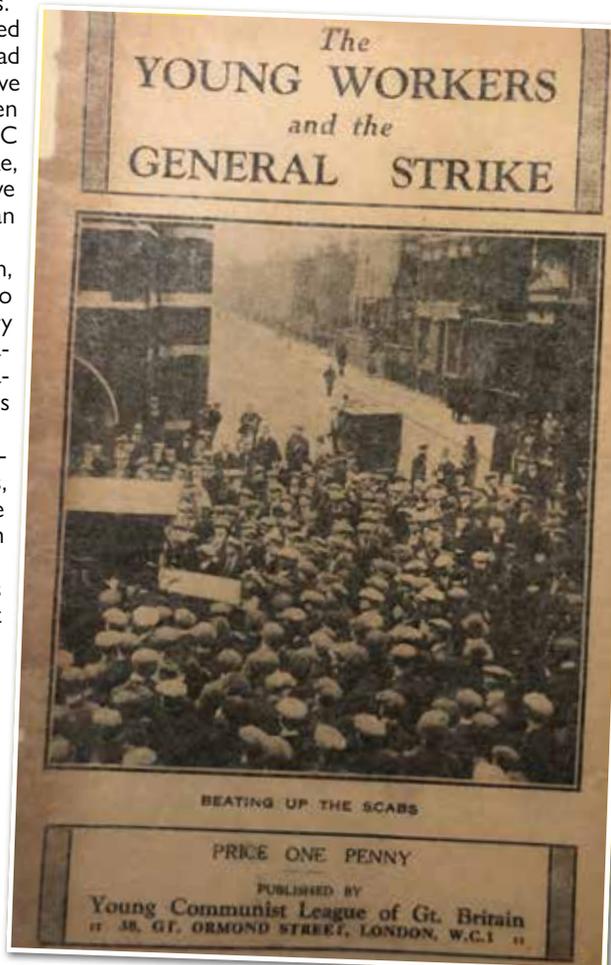
Nonetheless, the still fledgling Communist Party equipped itself well.

As Communist historian James Klugmann wrote: "The Party itself and its members put themselves at the service of the manifold strike organisations without demanding a receipt."

Forty thousand copies of *Workers Daily* were issued by the Communist Party on the first day of the strike and then for 10 consecutive days, they distributed many thousands of copies of *The Workers Bulletin*.

All this despite the police raiding homes of Communists, confiscating printing materials and arresting many.

During the strike, 2,500 women and men were arrested, half of them Party members. Such was the respect felt by many that the Party doubled its membership to 10,000.



RED LIVES

Shapurji Saklatvala

SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA, Sak to those who knew him, was briefly the Labour MP and then the Communist MP for Battersea North, south-west London, in the 1920s

He was a remarkable individual. Born into the wealthiest family in India he came to Britain in 1905. Originally for a short stay but upon meeting his future wife, who was English, he made Britain his home.

Already a supporter of the Indian National Congress, upon his arrival he gradually became influenced by socialist writers and speakers and joined both the Independent Labour Party and the Social Democratic Federation. After the outbreak of the first world war he became an increasingly active member of the ILP. He joined the Communist Party after the ILP refused to affiliate to the Communist International in March 1921.

At the 1922 general election he was elected as the Labour MP for Battersea North. He lost the seat the following year but regained it at the 1924 general election, this time standing as a Communist, though backed by his left-leaning local Labour Party.

By the 1929 election the ban on communists in the Labour Party had come in and he lost his seat to the Labour candidate.

Unlike many Labour MPs, Sak involved himself in the extra parliamentary struggle. He was arrested in 1926 during the General Strike and on his release addressed mass meetings all over the country. He was a fantastic orator and one of the CP's leading and most popular speakers.

He visited India in 1927 and met Gandhi. Both men agreed over India's freedom from British rule but disagreed how this was to be achieved. While there, Sak met many Indian communists and laid the basis for the cotton workers strike in Meerut, which led to the famous Meerut Conspiracy Trial.

He wrote pamphlets about India, contributed to commissions on India's welfare and was regarded by some in the right-wing media as India's MP in Parliament.

In 1934 he visited the Soviet Union. He spoke at meetings about the progress its eastern Muslim republics had made under Soviet rule on his return. It was on his visit that he suffered a heart attack.

He survived another two years and died in January 1936.

MIKE SQUIRES



RED LIVES

Fanny Deakin

BORN ON 2 December 1883, Fanny Rebecca Davenport spent her early years at her parents' farm on Farmers Bank, Silverdale, a mining village near Newcastle-under-Lyme.

She married Noah Deakin in 1901 and she and her husband moved to Wolstanton, today on the north side of Stoke-on-Trent.

Throughout her life, she was noted for her campaigns for better nourishment of young children and maternity care for mothers.

On leaving school, she worked on the farm where her family lived but her lifelong vocation came to her after being the first woman to be elected onto Wolstanton Council as a Labour member in 1923.

During the General Strike in 1926, she was a major figure in local activity in support of the miners. One observer recalled seeing her "coming up past St Giles Church in Newcastle-under-Lyme at the head of these miners, 200 or 300 miners ... Fancy, one woman — and she's leading them!" She herself used to say: "I'm fighting

for the mothers. If she had a coat of arms they'd put it in Latin: Fighting for the mothers."

In 1927 she retained her seat, this time standing as a Communist. She was very popular with local people, who nicknamed her Red Fanny after she visited the Soviet Union in 1927 and 1930.

Of her five children only one survived into adulthood.

In an era of high infant mortality she campaigned for better maternity care of women and free milk for children under five.

She went to Downing Street with unemployed miners to see prime minister Ramsay MacDonald and demand that local councils give free milk to pregnant mothers and children up to the age of five.

Re-elected to the now merged Newcastle Council in 1934, again as a Communist, she became a County Councillor. She played a key role in several committees relating to maternity and child welfare.

During the war years she could be

seen working with others in the Catholic church showing children how to put on gas masks. In 1941, she became the first Communist in the country to be appointed an alderman, in this case for the Newcastle-under-Lyme borough, with the honour being extended to Staffordshire county level in 1946.

The following year, she achieved what most local people remember her for when a maternity home was opened bearing her name for use by the women of the borough.

She is still popularly remembered through the many children born there and also due to a ward named after her in a local hospital.

Although Fanny died on 24 March 1968, she is still regularly remembered locally. In 1991, Joyce Holliday wrote the play *Go See Fanny Deakin!* about Silverdale's mining community that appeared on BBC local radio. Joyce Holliday also wrote "Silverdale People" which includes a biography of Fanny Deakin.

BIRMINGHAM AND DISTRICT CP BRANCH

RED LIVES

Spike
Robson



ALEC 'SPIKE' ROBSON was born on 18 March 1895 into a coalmining family in South Shields.

At age 11 he started work at the Cambois pit near Blyth, participating in 1910 in the national miners' strike for an eight-hour day. At 16 he joined a boxing booth, travelling country fairs and boxing for a living.

In 1912 Spike joined a tramp ship as a cabin boy, learning about class politics from old sailors.

After he was demobbed from the first world war he married his sweetheart Evelyn and signed on a stoker on the SS Tzarita, carrying 700 British troops for Murmansk and Archalgensk.

Fraternising with Red Guards in Murmansk, he learned about the class struggle, and on return to Liverpool joined the Hands Off Russia movement.

During the winter of 1920-1, unemployed in London, he came across a protest march which led to his joining the Communist Party and becoming

active in the seamen's section of the Minority Movement (MM), and in the National Unemployed Workers Movement (NUWM).

In early 1937, during the Spanish Civil War, Spike was shipped on the SS Linaria in Boston, US, when the crew learned that they were to deliver nitrates to Seville, the fascists' headquarters.

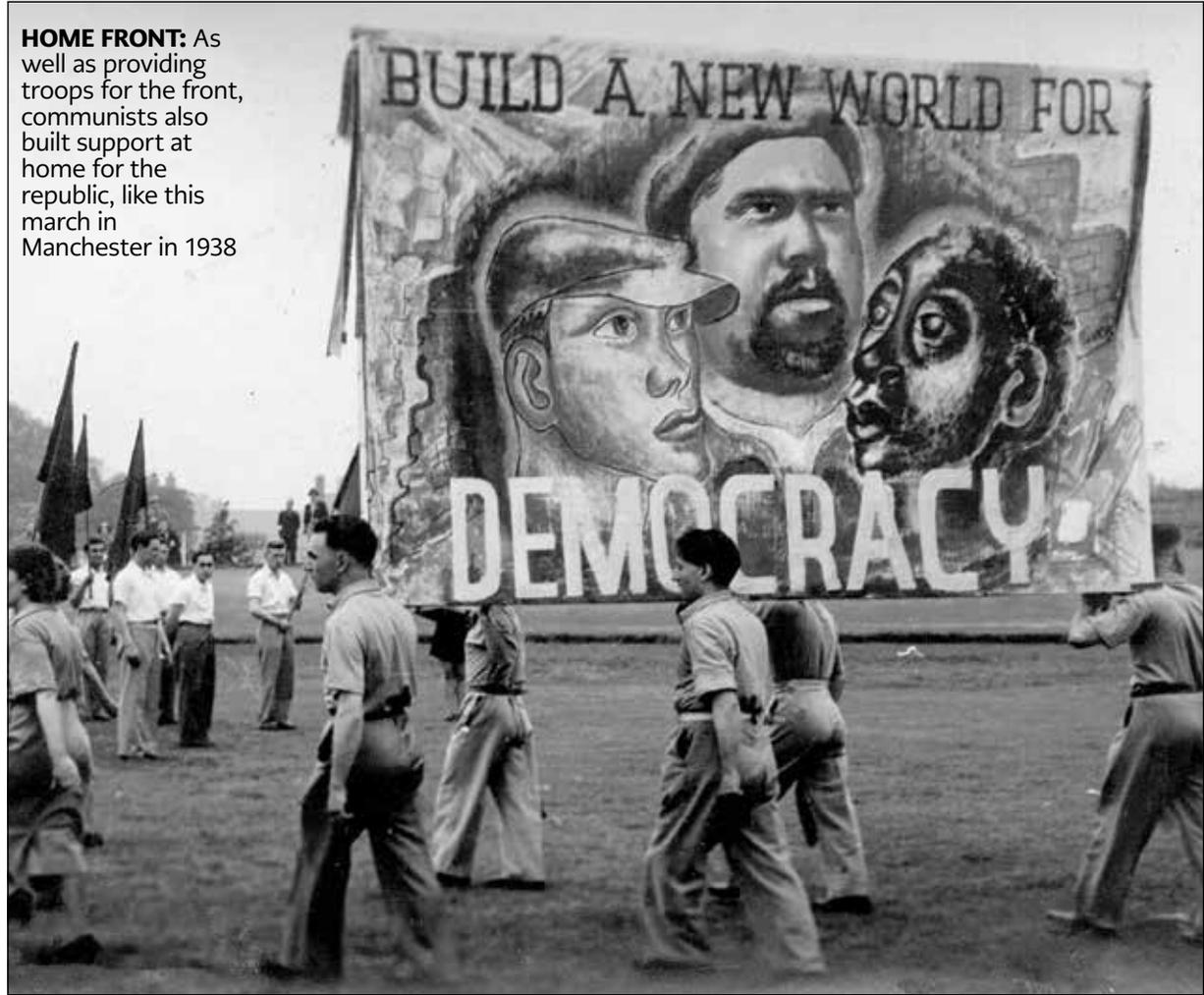
Suspecting that the cargo was to be used for explosives, Spike led the crew in holding a sit-down strike for three weeks. They were deported and charged at Liverpool under the Merchant Shipping Acts. They were fined for "impeding the navigation of a ship," but this was overturned on appeal.

Blacklisted until the outbreak of World War II, Spike then joined the Royal Navy as a petty officer.

After the war, Spike went back into the Merchant Navy, and in 1947 became the first communist to be elected to the NUS executive.

MARTIN LEVY

HOME FRONT: As well as providing troops for the front, communists also built support at home for the republic, like this march in Manchester in 1938



Their open eyes could see no other way

by Lynne Walsh

STAND on the battlefield in the Valley of Jarama today and see, between the rows of olive trees, trenches, dug-outs and machine-gun positions.

With your boots tramping over wild thyme, follow in the footsteps of the International Brigaders who fought fascists here.

March up to the splendid Clenched Fist memorial, a rusting metal behemoth on a plateau.

Look across the open plains and hilly areas where hundreds died.

Look down at the soil, picture it red with blood, know that there are good comrades there, their bones forever mingled with the soil of Spain.

There is often a romanticism in recalling this fighting force. There is poetry, magnificent memorials, songs sung, and flowers laid, almost always in the red, yellow and purple of the Spanish Republican flag. Add the three-pointed red star to that flag and you have the emblem of the International Brigades. Some 2,500 volunteers came

from Britain, Ireland and the Commonwealth. More than 500 died.

Were they the poets and dreamers that some cynics claimed? Were they misguided adventurers or escapees from unemployment at home? It was certainly in the interests of the British government to portray them as such.

Typical brigaders, though, included an artist from suburban Surrey, a taxi driver from Swansea, and an Egyptology graduate from London.

These knew what was needed. The democratically elected government desperately needed help in overthrowing Franco and his fascist allies Hitler and Mussolini.

Artist Felicia Browne, the first Briton to die, had said: "I am a member of the London Communists and I can fight as well as any man." She had seen fascism rising in Berlin in 1933.

Taxi driver Harry Stratton was a member of the CPGB, a considerable force in his native south Wales val-

leys. Only weeks after the falangists revolted, some 10,000 people turned out in Neath to support Spain, with party pamphlet 'Spain' being sold in such number that its immediate reprint brought 140,000 copies into mining communities.

On the instruction of CP leader Harry Pollitt, South Wales district secretary Will Paynter demanded to see prime minister Stanley Baldwin. Paynter took Stratton and although ambushed by police, their effort made the BBC national news. The following year, they were both in Spain.

That Egyptologist was Sam Lesser, who had joined the Party at university in 1935. He told his mother he was joining a dig in Egypt, but went to Spain in September 1936 as one of the first Britons to join the International Brigades.

He saw action around Madrid, was injured at Lopera, and unable to rejoin his comrades, went to Paris and the IB recruitment office, before returning to Spain and working on radio broadcasts from Barcelona. Using the byline Sam

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the Communist Party.



BATTLE FRONT:
Communist leader
Harry Pollitt
addresses Brigaders
on the Ebro Front in
1937 during one of
his numerous trips
to Spain



Russell, he became a correspondent for the Daily Worker.

The British government response was shameful. The non-intervention agreement in August 1936 was signed by 28 countries, including Germany, Italy and Russia. The London committee overseeing this “pact” allowed no Spaniard to sit on it, banned sales of arms to the elected Republican government and did nothing to stop supplies to the Francoists.

Baldwin said: “We English hate fascism, but we loathe bolshevism as much. So, if there is somewhere where fascists and bolsheviks can kill each other off, so much the better.”

The then foreign secretary Anthony Eden advised him: “On no account, French or other, must [you] bring us into the fight on the side of the Russians.”

Far from those safe committee rooms, Elizabeth Wilkinson, in the US Daily Worker (12 May 1937), reported on communities outside Bilbao razed to the ground, where a devastated citizen said: “I should like to put the London Non-Intervention Committee right in the middle of all this.”

For Communists — and the Independent Labour Party — there was mobilisation. Senior party member Bob Cooney of Aberdeen recalled campaigning and fundraising for Spain was “almost a full-time job of the party and the YCL.”

Volunteers came from every walk to life, hearing about the war at meetings and rallies, and reading the Daily Worker.

If the party branch deemed them eligible, they went to the CPGB office in Covent Garden, where they were usually interviewed by RW Robson. Memoirs and archive accounts show he never sugar-coated the risks.

The clandestine journey to Spain was risky in itself, with government goons looking out for those defying the non-intervention laws. Some recruits crossed the Pyrenees, heading for the training base at Albacete.

The stories of brigaders’ experiences are preserved for us, in memoirs, in the wonderful archives at the Marx Memorial Library, and in audio

accounts at the Imperial War Museum.

While Paul Preston’s canon of work is seen as the heft of this history, look also to Richard Baxell’s *Unlikely Warriors*, which makes these lives leap from the page. Hywel Francis’s *Miners Against Fascism* is a superb source, reminding us that many struggles are fought in spite of parliament, not because of it.

Many surviving brigaders came home to unemployment, with more than half helped by the IB Dependants and Wounded Aid Committee. Feminist author Charlotte Haldane, a CPGB member from 1937, was its secretary.

The Daily Worker reported in March 1938 that a deputation of six wounded volunteers and six widows of men killed in Spain asked to see Labour leaders and TUC general secretary Walter Citrine, who refused to meet them.

If you look for the motivations of these anti-fascist comrades, read the denouement of Cecil Day Lewis’s poem *The Volunteer*: “It was not fraud or foolishness, glory, revenge, or pay: We came because our open eyes could see no other way.”

And come to Spain. Join comrades as we follow in those anti-fascist footsteps. As Dr Almudena Cros, president of Spain’s association of friends of the International Brigades (AABI), says: “It is so heartening to welcome international delegates every year who come to honour their relatives, friends and admired comrades in the fight against fascism.”

“We are united in this important recognition of the struggle for social justice that the International Brigades embodied. People come from all sorts of political, social, ethnic and religious backgrounds — just as the volunteers did in 1936.”

The Communist Party played a huge and vital role in this “unrecognised” and inconvenient war. For all those who fight fascism, wherever we find it, the phrase heard to this day, on the battlefields of Spain, will ring loud and true: “They thought they buried bodies here. We know they buried seeds.”

Additional research by **Stuart Walsh**, *Working Class Movement Library* volunteer.

CLEM BECKETT was a champion speedway rider who throughout his all-too-short life put his political and trade union values ahead of fame or monetary rewards.

On 12 February 1937 he made the supreme sacrifice while manning a machine-gun at the Battle of Jarama.

Born in Oldham in 1906, Clem became a blacksmith on leaving school and his radical politics were forged in the hardship and discrimination he suffered during the 1920s. He was saved from unemployment by his skills as a speedway driver.

He began his speedway career in 1928 at Audenshaw, when dirt track racing was in its infancy, and he was soon the leading rider of his day.

When he won the Golden Helmet at the Owlerton Stadium, 15,000 spectators watched him. His presence was in such demand that he would often have to hire a plane to fly to three different events in a single day.

But at the height of his fame, angered by the growing exploitation in

the sport, particularly the rising death toll among untrained youngsters, he formed a union for speedway riders, the Dirt Track Riders Association.

He wrote an article for the Daily Worker headed *Bleeding the men who risk their lives on the dirt track*, prompting promoters to blacklist him.

As an exhibition rider he inaugurated the Wall of Death in Sheffield and toured Europe and the Soviet Union in 1931.

Despite all the success, his daredevil exploits won for him, Clem remained loyal and committed to his working-class origins and socialist philosophy. So, when in 1936 General Franco launched his fascist uprising he joined the International Brigades.

In November of that year he set off to join the anti-fascist forces, in which he was in turn a mechanic, ambulance driver and machine-gunner. He explained why he had gone in a letter to his wife: “I’m sure you’ll realise that I should never have been satisfied had I not assisted.”

JIM JUMP



RED LIVES

Clem
Beckett



RED LIVES

Bill
Alexander

BILL ALEXANDER commanded the British Battalion of the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War and was for 30 years until his death a leading member of its veterans’ organisation, the International Brigade Association.

In various capacities, from IBA vice-chair to secretary, he was a formidable defender of the honour of his comrades in Spain, doing battle in particular with anyone who used cold war and anti-communist tropes to denigrate the memory of the 2,500 volunteers from the British Isles who went to Spain — and those 530 of them who gave their lives.

Born into a large, working-class family in rural Hampshire — his father was a carpenter — Bill Alexander joined the Communist Party in 1932, influenced by his mother’s politics and the sight of the hunger marchers.

He joined the International Brigades in the spring of 1937 and was assigned

to the 15th Brigade’s Anti-Tank Battery, an elite unit equipped with high-calibre Soviet guns.

He became the battery’s political commissar and was promoted to commander of the British Battalion at the Battle of Teruel, during which he was wounded in the chest and shoulder and eventually repatriated in June 1938.

On his return to Britain he became Merseyside area secretary of the Communist Party until 1940, when he was accepted for a commissioning course at Sandhurst.

He finished top of his year and served in north Africa, Italy and Germany, rising to the rank of captain in the Reconnaissance Corps.

On his return he spent six years as secretary of the Midlands area, and another six years as secretary for Wales, became assistant general secretary of the party in 1959, a position he held until 1967. He later taught chemistry in south-east London until retirement.

JIM JUMP

THORA SILVERTHORNE was born in the south Wales mining town of Abertillery on 25 November 1910, daughter of George Silverthorne, a miner at the Vivian & Six Bells Pit and Sarah Boyt of Bargoed.

Thora recalled that “everyone in Abertillery talked politics” and in this cauldron it is little surprise she followed her father, who was not only active in the South Wales Miners Federation but a founding member of the Abertillery Communist Party, in joining the Young Communist League at 16.

She left for England after her mother’s death, initially working as a nanny for Reading’s newly elected Labour MP Somerville Hastings.

Thora then followed her sister Olive into nursing in Oxford, securing the nickname “Red Silverthorne” at the John Radcliffe Infirmary.

While nursing in Oxford, Thora

became heavily involved in the Communist Party activities in the city, taking time to tender to the health needs of the hunger marchers that regularly passed through Oxford on their way to London.

At the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Thora volunteered for the medical unit and was one of the first four nurses assigned to aid the republic.

Once in Spain, her skills as theatre nurse were so highly regarded she was “elected” matron at Granen hospital, initially caring for many anti fascist German soldiers in the Thaelmann Centuria.

She returned from Spain in September 1937 and became involved as a subeditor at *Nursing Illustrated*, leading to her establishing the new National Nurses Association in opposition to the reactionary (Royal) College of Nursing. It would later merge with Nupe, now part of Unison.

MICHAEL WALKER



RED LIVES

Thora
Silverthorne



The biographies in this centenary edition of *Unity!* are shortened excerpts from new book *Red Lives – Communists and the Struggle for Socialism*, an inspiring account of more than 100 rank-and-file communists and their part in the workers’ fight out now from Manifesto Press

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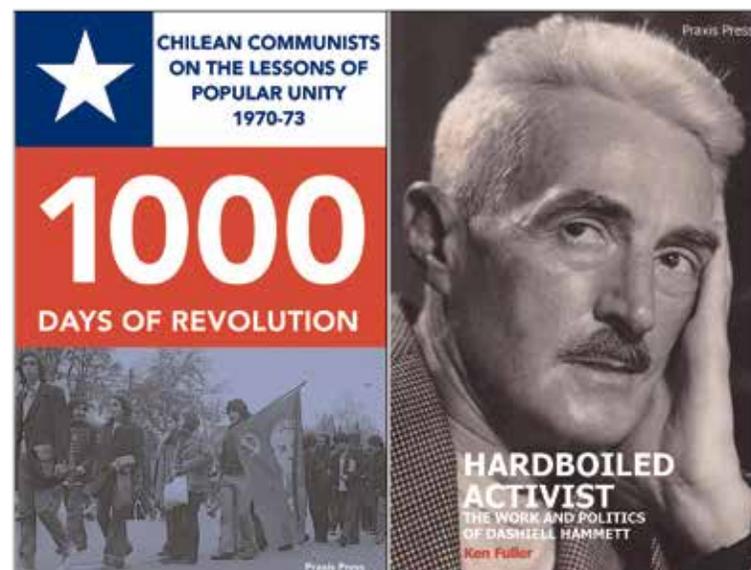


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UNITY: Cable Street mural unveiled in Shadwell in 1982 and painted by Paul Butler, Dave Binnington, Ray Walker and Desmond Rochfort

4.10.1936: When east London routed the Blackshirts

OSTENSIBLY, the Battle of Cable Street was a clash between the Metropolitan Police, protecting the British Union of Fascists, and anti-fascists. Many of the anti-fascists came from outside the area, but without local support the BUF would not have been stopped.

It was estimated at the time that around 200,000 people joined the anti-fascists — communists, socialists, anarchists, Jews, Irish dockers and the Independent Labour Party — against some 3,000 fascists and 6,000 police.

Before the march, around 100,000 residents petitioned the home secretary to have it banned, fearing the likely violence of fascists going through predominantly Jewish neighbourhoods.

Communists argued that a broad anti-fascist people's front had to be built. But Communists also recognised that Mosley had built up support among workers, the unemployed and small traders. There needed to be a strategy to win these away from fascism. To do this required basic solid work.

In the run up to October, using future Communist MP Phil Piratin's house as the centre of operations, anti-fascists got organising, calling union meetings, holding street meetings in areas where the fascists were strong, emboldening local residents to speak out. The work in organising among tenants and the unemployed bore fruit as many saw the fascists for what they were.

On the day itself each London Communist Party branch had been told where to assemble. The National Unemployed Workers Movement branch was well represented and had been knocking on doors since early that morning.

Piratin's quote of the day is worth reproducing: "I myself saw the way in which they were stacking up the barricades with mattresses and the way in which these dockers and labourers were working alongside Jews. The important point to me was that Mosley was trying to divide the nation and this counteraction helped in uniting the very people he was trying to split."

It is vital when considering the events before and after Cable Street the absolute necessity of building that broad-based approach with workers at its core. This as shown requires an organised approach — uniting unions with communities.

A lesson for all of us in this time of coronavirus and the government's anti-worker, anti-migrant programmes.

TONY CONWAY

A century battling anti-Jewish racism

FASCISM in Britain in the 1930s is often presented as a freak and fringe movement. Yet the British Union of Fascists and its leader Sir Oswald Mosley had powerful and influential friends.

Pro-fascist sympathies had been expressed by some Conservatives. Winston Churchill spoke approvingly of Mussolini in 1927: "If I had been an Italian, I am sure I should have been whole-heartedly with you from the start to finish in your triumphant struggle against the bestial appetites and passions of Leninism."

There were nazi sympathisers among the aristocracy and even the short-reigning Edward VIII, later the Duke of Windsor, was beguiled by Hitler.

In the mid-'30s, Daily Worker reporter Claude Cockburn coined the term Cliveden Set to describe a group of Establishment figures including Nancy Astor, Lord Halifax, Times editor Geoffrey Dawson and others.

The only MP to be interned during WW2 was Captain Archibald Ramsay, a lifelong anti-semitic and Tory MP. Ramsay had established the Right Club and had declared: "The real power behind the Third International is a group of revolutionary Jews." Among the right Club's early supporters was the 5th Duke of Wellington.

The close connection between anti-semitism and the British elite

by **Kenny Coyle**

was not lost on British communists.

The party's tactics were two-fold, to deny the fascists the opportunities for mass rallies and demonstrations wherever possible and, as Phil Piratin details in *Our Flag Stays Red*, to deny the fascists working class support by taking up in practice the issues of unemployment, evictions and slum landlords.

Anti-fascist counter demonstrators disrupted BUF rallies at London's Olympia, and suffered significant physical violence from fascist stewards.

At Manchester's Belle Vue in September 1934 a Mosley rally was stopped by a mass anti-fascist protest including a contingent from Cheetham "comprised in the of main young working class Jewish activists from the Challenge Club, the Youth Front Against War & Fascism and the Young Communist League."

The single most important confrontation of course was in London's East End at Cable Street in 1936.

A number of academic studies of the role of Jewish communists have portrayed their commitment as being connected primarily or mainly to the "Cable Street moment," when the CPGB could claim to be the primary anti-fascist force. It has a certain truth and through the International Brigades,

the anti-nazi war and the post-war mobilisations against the Mosleyite Union Movement, Jewish communists could count on party support.

Yet Communists of Jewish origin played key roles across all areas of party activity, which defy such pigeon-holing.

Foundation member Andrew Rothstein's father Theodore came to Britain to escape the repressive anti-semitism of the tsarist regime as did the parents of Rose Kerrigan, a teenage Socialist Sunday School activist on Red Clydeside.

There were Party intellectuals such as the cultural academic Margot Heinemann, Marxist Today editor James Klugmann, world-renowned historian Eric Hobsbawm, economist Sam Aaronvitch, translator Jack Cohen, and many others helped the CPGB's work among intellectuals.

The trespass of Kinder Scout in 1932 was organised by Benny Rothman a YCL activist and member of the British Workers Sports Organisation. Rothman helped build Cheetham YCL into one of the largest branches in the country and, as we have seen, a thorn in the side of the British Union

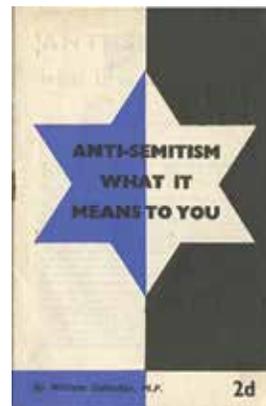
of Fascists in Greater Manchester.

While work in certain industries with a substantial Jewish workforce was an obvious area of activity for Jewish communists, tailoring and garment workers being a particular centre, Jewish communists also played critical roles in the wider labour movement.

Abe Lazarus organised Firestone workers in Brentford and then spearheaded the unionisation of Oxford's emerging industrial sectors. East Ender Julie Jacobs led the London Trades Councils in the post-war period and one of the legendary figures of communist work in the labour movement in the heyday of the 1970s was the legendary Bert Ramelson.

In the fields of art, drama and culture we find a crop of Unity Theatre actors such as Alfie Bass and Harry Landis all associated with Jewish East End working class backgrounds but also names such as Ivor Montagu, a talented writer and cinematographer from a very different class background.

At a time when the relationship between British Jews and the left have become strained, reviewing the historical record in all its complexity is more important than ever.





RED LIVES

Len
Johnson

LEN JOHNSON was an important black communist and top professional boxer who was denied his chance of fighting for a middleweight championship because of the colour bar in British boxing.

He was born in Manchester, where he spent much of his life, on 22 October 1902. When he left school, he found work at Crossley Motors, but was later offered a spot in one of the many boxing booths touring Britain in the inter-war years.

With his father, a former boxer, as manager, Len fought across the country and even travelled to Denmark and Belgium to compete in the early 1920s.

In 1925, his biggest opportunity came in a match with the reigning British champion in Manchester. After a 20-round fight, he beat his opponent and repeated the feat later that year.

Len should have now been given the chance to fight for the British championship but was denied because of his skin colour. Despite challenges by Len and his father, who had fought in the trenches in the first world war, the racists who ran the sport would not be moved.

So, in 1926, he left for a tour of Australia where he defeated the incumbent middleweight British Empire champion he was hailed the

new Empire champion — British authorities overturned that when he returned home.

In 1928 he beat the European middleweight champion, but was again denied the title and by 1933 he retired to concentrate on training young boxers.

His encounters with racism and his observation of the poverty of most people of his class in Britain, led him to radical politics. He was also aware that the Daily Worker had waged a ground-breaking campaign against the colour bar in boxing.

During the war he worked in a civil heavy rescue squad and then as a physical training instructor. By war's end he had joined the Communist Party.

He wrote a boxing column for the Daily Worker and became a popular speaker in his native city, working as a bus driver.

He was a CP representative to the important Pan African Congress in 1945 in Manchester and would help found the New International Society later in the decade.

Len contested six elections for the Party between 1947 and 1962 but was unsuccessful. As the years passed in his retirement, he was rediscovered by the boxing world, being asked to write articles on his career for the boxing press.

DAVID HORSLEY

ON THE STREETS: Anti-racists in 1974 and (below) a Morning Star poster taking on the National Front



Anti-racist to the very core

by David Horsley

SINCE 1920, the Communist Party, as part of the world communist movement, was internationalist, anti-racist and anti-colonialist.

During the 1920s, the most high-profile communist was the Indian Shapurji Saklatvala, MP for Battersea.

The father of lifelong Party members Clemens and Rajani Palme Dutt was a Bengali surgeon. Rajani was the leading theoretician of the Party for decades.

The involvement of black workers was unique in British politics.

During the late 1920s, the Communist Party campaigned alongside black and Asian people in London, Cardiff, Liverpool and north-east England.

Through the League Against Imperialism a worldwide organisation of communists, socialists and national liberation fighters, British Communists fought against imperialism in the British empire.

An outstanding example of anti-racism by the Communist Party took place when Shaukhat Usmani, one of those accused in the Meerut conspiracy trial in India, was selected as candidate for Parliament in the 1929 and 1931 general elections, despite being imprisoned in his homeland.

The Negro Welfare Association was formed by Communists in Liverpool in 1930 and Barbadian Party member Arnold Ward became its leading member throughout the 1930s. It played a leading role in the successful international campaign in defence of

the Scottsboro boys, young African Americans falsely accused of rape and sentenced to death.

Throughout the 1930s, other black communists came to the fore. Oxfordshire-born Charlie Hutchison became the only black British volunteer in Spain.

North-west England would provide two outstanding black communists.

Manchester's Len Johnson could have been a champion boxer but was denied the chance to fight at the top level by the colour bar. Johnson and the Daily Worker campaigned against the ban. Johnson had retired by the time the bar was lifted but stood for

the Communist Party six times in his native city.

Liverpool-born Dorothy Kuya became a pioneer in anti-racist education. The party's anti-imperialist work continued with an important conference of Communist and Workers Parties from the British empire held in London in 1947.

Jamaican Billy Strachan, an RAF officer during the war, joined the Communist Party in 1947, helped form the London branch of Caribbean Labour Congress and served as a mentor to many from the Windrush generation.

Perhaps the most gifted Caribbean Communist was Trinidad-born Claudia Jones, the driving force behind the Notting Hill Carnival.

The Indian subcontinent also provide a number of important Communists in Britain, particularly through the Indian Workers Association, which worked closely with the Party.

Another outstanding Communist was Vishnu Sharma a leading activist and author of the important anti racist, anti fascist pamphlet No Racist Immigration Laws, which is being reproduced as part of the Party's centenary celebrations.

This brief outline, pays tribute in particular to some of the outstanding black Communists in Britain since 1920.

Our stand against all forms of oppression, particularly against racism, fascism and colonialism is one of the elements which attracted these exceptional women and men to join the Party.

RED LIVES

Charlie
Hutchison



CHARLIE HUTCHISON was born in Oxfordshire on 10 May 1918, his father was from the Gold Coast, now Ghana, and his mother a local woman. The couple had five children and Charlie's father often traveled back to Africa and eventually did not return, leaving his wife in financial hardship as well as mental anguish.

Concerned for her children, she asked for Charlie and one of his sisters to be taken temporarily into care. They spent several years there until being allowed to leave and rejoin their mother, now in Fulham.

By 1935, working as a lorry driver and aware of his race and class, he joined the local Young Communist League and was quickly elected chair of the branch.

He went to Cable Street when Mosley's fascists attempted their provocative march through the predominantly Jewish East End of London and played his part in forcing them to turn away in defeat.

Two months later, in December

1936, the 18-year-old Charlie was among the early British volunteers to go to Spain to help defend the Spanish Republic from Franco's fascists, who were supported with huge military aid from Hitler and Mussolini.

He explained his decision to go: "I am half black, I grew up in the national children's home and orphanage. Fascism meant hunger and war."

He has the distinction of being the only Black British volunteer in the International Brigades in that momentous struggle for freedom and against the twin evils of fascism and racism.

He served for two years until the end of the war, being reassigned as an ambulance driver after getting injured.

During the second world war he was one of those rescued at Dunkirk and then served in north Africa, Italy, France and into Germany. He was one of the British troops that liberated Bergen Belsen concentration camp — the ultimate in the fascist ideology he had spent the last decade fighting.

DAVID HORSLEY



The rising of the women means the rising of us all

OUR PARTY celebrates and honours women comrades involved prominently in the struggle for a better world from the time the Party was founded.

The women's suffrage movement of the early 20th Century drew women from all backgrounds into action. Many recognised the class nature of the demand that women should have the vote.

Helen Crawford and Dora Montefiore linked their experience of working with people living in abject poverty and deprivation to the struggle for a socialist society characterised by equality and production for people's needs.

They realised the necessity of having a political organisation based on the Marxist understanding of the contradictions in society to be able to take socialist demands, including women's rights, forward in a structured way.

Helping to found the Communist Party, they worked tirelessly for improvements to the economic and political position of women within society, for peace and in defence of the Soviet people.

As women joined the workforce, taking leading positions as shop stewards, their political understanding grew.

In the 1930s, Jessie Eden organised her women workmates into union membership and led them in militant action against the factory owners' attempts to lower the cost of their labour. Jessie was a community campaigner too, leading rent strikes opposing unfair rent rises in her neighbourhood.

Communist women have always been in the fore in the battle for equal pay, particularly as more women entered traditionally male workplaces during the second world war. In 1941, Tamara Rust helped organise the Women's Parliament to promote women's rights.

Ida Hackett helped miners' wives set

up Nottinghamshire Women Against Pit Closures for striking miners when the National Union of Mineworkers called their members out in 1984. She travelled throughout the country raising funds and support.

Communist women have never been afraid to show commitment to internationalism. Joining the fight against General Franco's fascist forces, Thora Silverthorne went to nurse in Spain at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War as part of the International Brigades defending Republican Spain.

Claudia Jones was deported to Britain from the US in 1955 for her work for peace and civil rights. She is remembered and honoured for her work with the African-Caribbean community in London and her role in the celebration of black culture and the beginnings of the Notting Hill Carnival.

Women comrades have always been to the fore in denouncing and campaigning against racism. Dorothy Kuya, educator and civil rights activist, was influential in establishing Liverpool's International Anti-slavery Museum which opened in 2007.

This year saw the 50th Anniversary of the first Women's Liberation Conference in Oxford, beginning the Women's Liberation Movement.

Communist women remain in the forefront of the struggle for the demands made then, but still relevant today: equal pay, equal educational and job opportunities, free 24-hour nurseries and defence of abortion rights.

Women play leading roles in our Party through their Women's Commissions which inform and guide Party policy and take forward issues that face working-class women through education and action.

A woman's place is in her union — and in the Communist Party!



ON THE MARCH:
Manchester communists demonstrate in the early '20s



RED LIVES
Dorothy Kuya

DOROTHY KUYA was one of the Communist Party's most important black members from the 1940s to the 1980s.

She was born in Liverpool in April 1932, her mother a Liverpudlian and her father from Sierra Leone. He disappeared and when her mother married a Nigerian, young Dorothy took his surname and regarded him as her father.

She and her family lived in Liverpool 8, which was virtually a ghetto, with mainly black and mixed-race families living in one of the oldest black communities in Britain.

In an interview she remembered: "You'd be hard pressed to find a black face in Liverpool city centre only 20 minutes away by foot." But the people

of Liverpool 8 were a close-knit community with social clubs that reflected the culture and nationalities in the area.

Young Dorothy Kuya was aware of the class divide and poverty in the city, as well as the racism and discrimination so as a teenager she joined the Young Communist League.

One of her proudest moments was when she met the great African-American Paul Robeson and presented him with a bouquet of flowers during his tour of Britain in 1949.

Despite the onset of the cold war she continued to be an active Communist. On a personal level she trained first to be a nurse and then a teacher. In the latter role, she excelled showing her talents as a gifted communicator with the sharpest of minds.

She moved to London, joined her local party and began teaching in a north London school. She and Bridget Harris, another Communist teacher, set up the pioneering Teachers Against Racism that was particularly active in the 1970s.

Dorothy was a member of the National Assembly of Women and ensured anti racism was on the forefront for the members and she eventually became general secretary of the organisation.

Her contribution to a 1981 Communist conference on racism and the police was central to a Party pamphlet later that year titled Black and Blue: Racism and the Police. By now she had become head of race equality for Haringey Council and worked closely

with Tottenham MP Bernie Grant.

As the divisions in the Communist Party increased in that decade, she drifted away from the Party and devoted her time to working with the black community and fighting racism.

She returned to Liverpool where she had bought a house in Liverpool 8. She worked tirelessly opposing racism and urged the setting up of a slavery museum in the city, as much of Liverpool's wealth had been as a result of the slave trade. She was overjoyed when the Slavery Museum opened.

Dorothy died on 23 December 2013. Her whole life was devoted to people's struggles in the fight against racism and discrimination, she was always a leader.

DAVID HORSLEY

Bright sparks' revolution – science serves the left

A NUMBER of outstanding scientists have swelled the ranks of the Communist Party, including crystallographer John Desmond Bernal, geneticist JBS Haldane, the physicist Eric Burhop and Nobel prize-winners Maurice Wilkins (molecular biology 1962) and Dick Syngé (chemistry 1952).

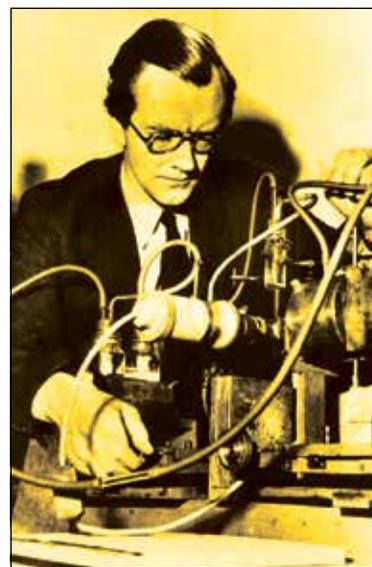
In the 1930s, under Bernal's leadership, and spurred by the Spanish Civil War, the Cambridge Scientists Anti-War Group (CSAWG) undertook experiments that directly examined the likely consequences of aerial attacks on the public.

In 1939 Bernal published his seminal work, *The Social Function of Science*.

During World War II he became a government "boffin," employing his expertise in the design of the D-Day Mulberry harbours, as well as testing the suitability of the Normandy beaches for the landings.

He became vice-president of the World Peace Council on its foundation in 1949, and its president from 1958. Papers relating to his peace activities are held by the Marx Memorial Library, whose president he was from 1950 to 1971.

Haldane was drawn sharply to the left by the fight for democracy in Spain. He advised the Republican government on precautions against gas attacks, and



SOCIALIST SCIENCE: (left to right) Eric Burhop, Dick Syngé and Maurice Wilkins

by Martin Levy

then threw himself into the Aid Spain movement in Britain.

He became science correspondent for the *Daily Worker*, for which he wrote more than 300 articles, and whose editorial board he chaired from 1940 to 1951.

He was an ardent champion of air raid protection. During the second world war he undertook dangerous

physiological investigations for the Admiralty.

Haldane joined the Party in 1942 but left around 1951 after the Lysenko genetics affair in the Soviet Union.

Wilkins and Syngé were also involved with the CSAWG. Wilkins may have left the Party around 1939 but he remained close.

During the war both he and Burhop worked on the Manhattan Project in the US, helping design the atomic bomb.

Afterwards they campaigned against

nuclear weapons, becoming members of the Pugwash movement. Syngé was involved in the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR and Scientists Against Nuclear Arms.

Throughout the postwar period to the 1980s, the Party maintained an active science committee.

Initially, work centred on promoting science for material progress, encouraging the labour movement to develop technical understanding, winning scientists to the side of the working class

and campaigning against the militarisation of science and weapons of mass destruction.

Much of that was expressed through the left-led Association of Scientific Workers (AScW).

Bernal was AScW president in 1947, and one of the first vice-presidents of the World Federation of Scientific Workers (WFSW), which the AScW helped establish. Burhop was WFSW president from 1969 to 1979.

When the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science (BSSRS) was established in 1969, many senior Party scientists joined and took an active part. Maurice Wilkins became the first president.

Now subsumed into Scientists for Global Responsibility, one of BSSRS's great achievements was, with trade union support, the Hazards Campaign and health and safety at work legislation.

Over the years, the party's science committee produced bulletins and reports on important issues such as the pharmaceutical industry, food and agriculture, and energy policy.

At that time the Party was ahead of much of the left on environmental issues, although it did not abandon support for peaceful uses of nuclear power until the 1980s.

In 2003 the CP's new science, technology and environment advisory published the pamphlet *A World to Save*.

Under occupation

THE ANSWER to the question "How would communists react if an invasion came," was clearly spelt out by the party in the Channel Islands. Despite some scholars' continued assertion that communists were defeatist, they became the main resistance on the islands.

The nazis occupied the islands in July 1940, with the British government advising citizens to stay calm and stay put — and advising government officers to remain in post.

This controversial instruction covered those who tried in every way to alleviate the suffering of citizens, but it also covered those who enacted the nazi anti-semitic laws and offered rewards for the discovery of other citizens engaged in anti-German activity.

Trade unions were dissolved, then banned. But a number, including the printers and teachers, continued a basic network.

When the Jersey TGWU branch

by Phil Katz

voted to dissolve, it is recorded that only a single vote, of communist Cliff Tucker, wanted to keep going. Later in 1941, a resistance began to emerge on the main Islands including the Jersey Democratic Party and the Jersey Progressive People's Party, sometimes led by the Communist Party and always with Communist involvement.

By 1942, the party had brought both together to form the Jersey Democratic Movement. The leading figure was the heroic Norman Le Brocq, stonemason and CP activist.

The party took the decision to relaunch the TGWU, and managed to lay hands on printing machines, paper and ink stocks, some of it stolen from German supplies, to distribute propaganda.

The resistance was, by and large, protected by the local population. It carried out reconnaissance of military installations, hid Soviet prisoners of

war and prevented some Jews from being deported to their death.

For nearly five years communists earned the gratitude of many islanders, as they led an active resistance, when even defacing a poster could carry a death penalty. Some of those jailed and detained for acts of protest, were later deported to Germany, and some did not return. By the end of the war, the party was producing a monthly newspaper, the *Jersey Democrat*.

The Resistance was implicated in some sabotage. It made inroads into the German garrison, establishing contact as high as the garrison commander, through a group of German communists and anti-fascists led by Paul Huelbach.

Evidence exists that these soldiers and the resistance were planning a mutiny among troops when liberation intervened. As soon as the occupiers were defeated, the communists called the biggest political meeting ever seen in Jersey.

The only newspaper, the *Evening Post*, refused to even accept an advert for the event.



OCCUPIERS: Nazis in Jersey



RED LIVES

Sam
Watts

“THEY DON’T realise that strength they’ve got, do they? They don’t realise that power they’ve got — the working class can change the whole history, as quick as that, they just don’t realise, they haven’t grasped it.”

So said Sam Watts, a formidable and lifelong Communist Party member in his native Merseyside, in a stand out contribution to Ken Loach’s 2013 film *The Spirit of ’45*.

Born in February 1925 in Liverpool’s Great Homer Street area, he lived through the direst poverty as a child.

His mother’s task was not eased in 1933 when her husband, a timber yard worker, was removed to what was then called the lunatic asylum at Rainhill. He suffered from post-traumatic stress brought on by experiences in the first world war trenches that were further aggravated by his brother William’s execution for supposed cowardice.

Sam’s father remained in Rainhill without speaking until he died in 1943. In reality, William was suffering from shell-shock and exposure to gas, as were many of the 306 British soldiers shot by firing squad in that conflict. Sam campaigned for years for these men to be pardoned and was delighted in 2006 when this was belatedly agreed.

He had proudly but provocatively waited in line on Armistice Day to incur the wrath of the British Legion by laying a wreath of white poppies at the war memorial in memory of the uncle he had never known.

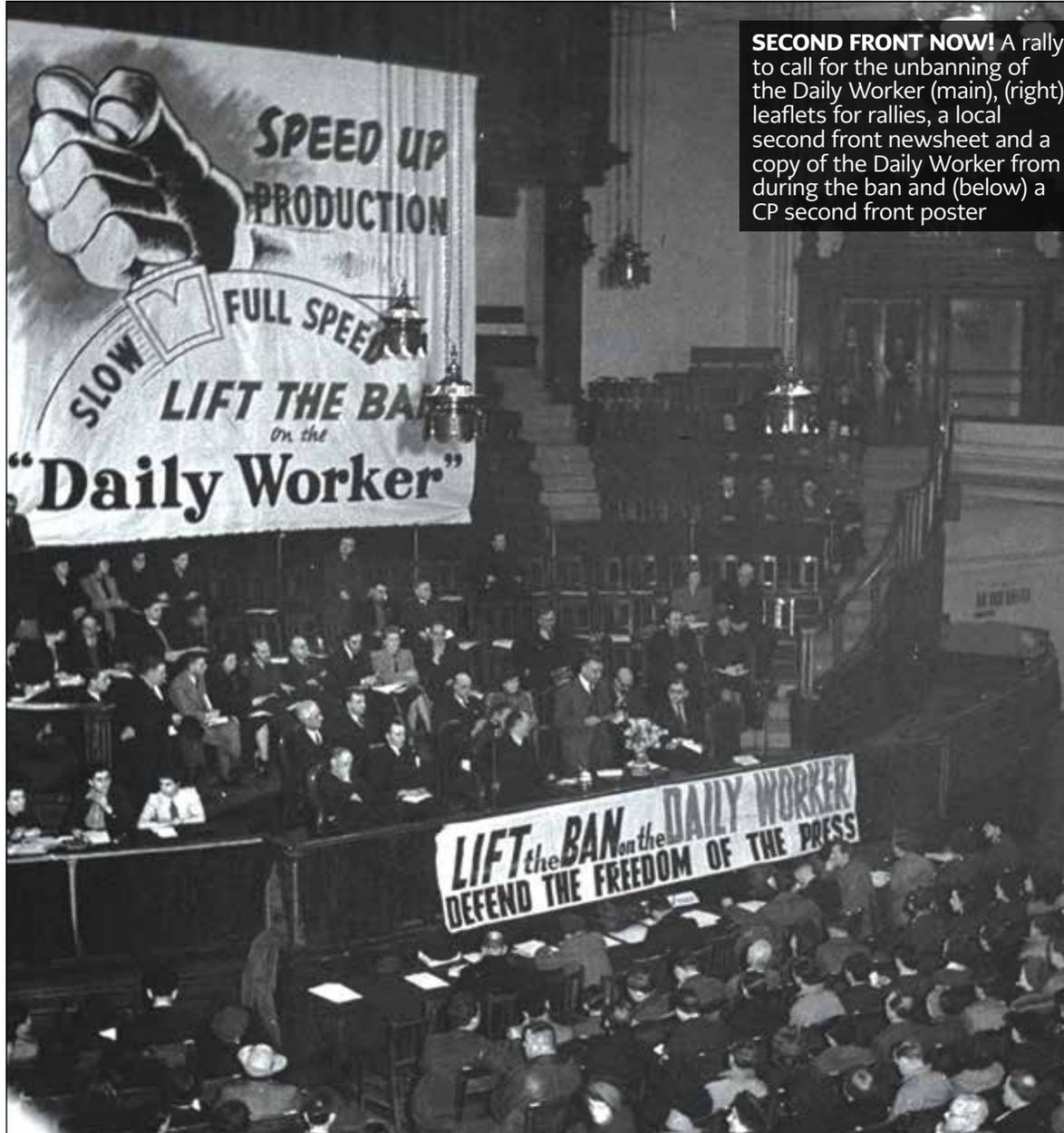
Sam joined the Royal Navy in 1943, but, after being demobbed, he returned to the same slum conditions before going to London then Liverpool for work.

Returning to Liverpool, he survived on dead-end jobs and then benefited from the post-war economic upturn to find work as a rigger on Liverpool docks and become a shop steward. Leading shop steward Alec “Bunny” McKechnie invited him to a Communist Party rally at St Georges Hall.

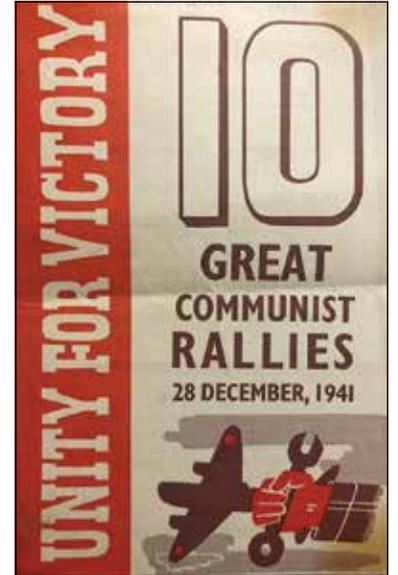
“It was addressed by general secretary Harry Pollitt and I joined the party at that meeting. I became a regular reader and seller of the *Daily Worker* from then onwards.”

From that day until his death at the end of 2014, Sam spent over 60 years as a Communist Party activist. His activities included being lifted, literally, by police when he protested against Margaret Thatcher’s visit to the Eldonian housing estate in Liverpool’s Docklands in 1989.

KEVAN NELSON



SECOND FRONT NOW! A rally to call for the unbanning of the *Daily Worker* (main), (right) leaflets for rallies, a local second front newsheet and a copy of the *Daily Worker* from during the ban and (below) a CP second front poster



Waging a people’s war on the nazis

FROM JUNE 1941 the push for a second front to catch the nazis in a pincer movement and relieve the pressure on the Soviets became central to Communist strategy. Government ministers did not agree.

Party leaders were on first name terms with many of the European communists now facing death. It was not a question of what tempo would be required to direct the war effort — it was of principle.

In 1942, the navy and air force were fighting to full capacity, but most British troops were stationed in Britain. Churchill wanted to delay the opening of a new front to allow the principle adversaries, Germany and the USSR to exhaust each other. But for the communists and millions of workers, this would never do. Arguably the party has never been so at one with the general outlook of organised workers. And it struggled alone as Labour

by Phil Katz

toed the government line, with only its

dissident members calling to support. With parliament slow to respond, the Communist Party marshalled its forces to hit the streets. On 26 July 60,000 met in Trafalgar Square to demand a new front in Europe be opened without delay. On 29 July, 1,500 delegates rammed home the call for unbanning the *Daily Worker*.

It organised delegations to parliament to push the demand and organised hundreds of meetings. On August 22, there were 22 demonstrations in towns and villages across south Wales. On August 30, 80 meetings were held in London — the Hammersmith meeting, with 2,500 tickets sold, unanimously declared for a second front.

Still Churchill dragged his feet, even though he had been in Moscow to meet Stalin in August and agreed a “common aim of complete victory over fascism.”



Labour also rejected Communist overtures for joint action in favour of the second front.

But the CP packed Trafalgar Square on October 25, with Aneurin Bevan and the editor of the *Daily Express* on the platform.

CP leader Harry Pollitt was particularly scathing of TUC general secretary who sought to line the unions up with the “not now” group opposing a second front. Also attending the Trafalgar Square rallies were soldiers in uniform, who had ducked the conditions of their leave of absence to take part in politi-

cal displays. Some appeared on the plinth below Nelson’s column

Shortly after, the Soviets performed their stunning counter offensive at Stalingrad. It was a turning point in the war.

Soon after, a very large meeting of the Women’s Parliament met at the Bedford Music Hall. It discussed training and part-time workers rights, the provision of nurseries and works canteens in factories but it also found time to make clear, its support, for a second front.

When D-Day did arrive it had more than a military impact. It united the working class and it began to divide the country further along class lines.

The question being asked was, how could the interests of one class who supported private ownership and anarchy in production remain allied during peacetime, to that class whose interest was in socialism and the planning of production for the common good?

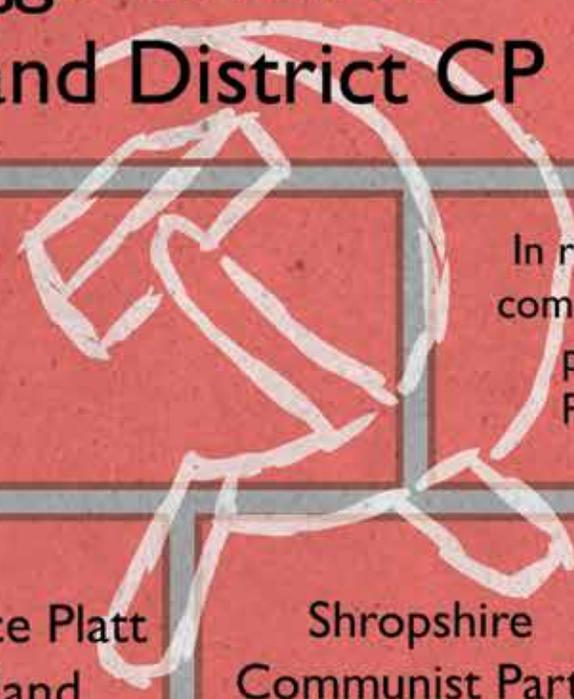
Building on 100 years of struggle towards a Socialist future - Birmingham and District CP

In Memory of Comrade and Grandpa Joseph Syrota. Long time member of the Communist Party of Canada. Viva La Revolucion. We fight on. Kevin Patrick Vaughan

It really is quite simple - Communism is the answer' Red salute to the CPB Gordon Scobie

In recognition of comrades driving party forward Phil Cosgrove

Frenheit fur Thalmann!



Ted Rogers 1918-2008 Sunderland & Crawley David Grove

For Sam Steinlauf communist printer, French army officer and hero of the resistance - murdered in Auschwitz and for Thalmann - never forgotten! Phil K

For Laurence Platt Phil Oakland

Shropshire Communist Party

They shall not pass!

Sid Frisby 1946 - 2013 Communist, Music Photographer

Les Thompson 1923-2010

Leslie Malcolm Warsop 13.01.1934 - 16.05.2019 South Yorks

Blanche Flannery 12.01.1921 - 25.10.2010 South Yorks

NORMAN LEVY 1909-72: AScW executive member, CP local and parliamentary candidate, chair Teesside District CPGB.

MARGARET LEVY 1915-99: women's group member, bazaar activist, Stockton CP literature organiser and treasurer

HENRY LEVY 1922-2020: lifelong communist and AScW executive member

JEAN LEVY, née COLQUHOUN 1924-2016: lifelong communist and AScW executive member and journal editor

DAVID McDOWALL 1922-2002: full-time Party and YCL worker in Scotland 1946-57, parliament candidate 1970-8

MARGARET McDOWALL 1919-2009 played various roles in Clyde Books, Glasgow, for many years

GLASGOW YCL CHOIR: founded and conducted by Jimmy Callan, took the name of the YCL to places it had never been before

Birmingham Clarion Singers singing for Socialism since 1940 Jane Scott

Martin Marshall 1912-1984 Communist, NUR member, actor, Clarion Singer, the best kind of working class artist

Angela Gradwell 1906-1994

Ike Gradwell 1906-1979

Terry Bayes

No... Daily W...

Marshall 1915-2008
Communist, Rent Striker,
musician, inspirational
teacher, a director of
Clarion Singers

Bessie Abrahall
1905-1981
Communist, YCL
member, Rent Striker, a
founder member of
Clarion Singers

EJF (Ted) Poole
1925-2018

George Thomson
1902-1987
Lifelong communist
and distinguished
scholar of Marxism,
Greek and Irish

all
the

Katharine Thomson
1906-2006
Communist, musician,
authority on Mozart,
generous teacher, a
director of Clarion
Singers

In memory of Roy
Green 1918-2000 a
pioneer of the Cornwall
Branch of the CPB
1959-2000
Jenny Colwell

Derby CPB remembers
ALICE WHEELDON
1866-1919
Derby Communist
fighter against
imperialist war, and
for votes for women

Arthur Cox
1902-1990
a member of YCL in its
first days and the
Unemployed workers
Movement, lifelong
Communist

Comiwnyddion Cymru, Cangen Pontypridd
Er cof am ein cyfaill a'n cymrawd, Gwyn Griffiths, awdur, newyddiadurwr,
ymgyrchydd droid heddwch ac adolygydd llyfrau i'r Morning Star.
Welsh Communists, Pontypridd Branch
remembering our good friend and comrade, Gwyn Griffiths, author, journalist,
peace campaigner and Morning Star book reviewer.

Norfolk Communist Party
branch promoting
radicalism in the spirit of
Kett's Rebellion,
Thomas Paine, Burston
School Strike and
Wilf Page, the 'Norfolk Red'

ician,

Bristol Bath & Gloucester
Branch CPB
Learning from history to
shape the future.
bristoldistrictcpb@hotmail.co.uk

Jim & John Douglas,
brothers & comrades
remembered with
pride by Lorraine

Jean and Maurice Styles,
communists, trade unionists,
and fighters against women's
and black people's
oppression. Working class
warriors, gone but never
forgotten.

Lilla Fox
1914-2015
L, CPB, peace activist,
artist and teacher
loved but not forgotten
Keaveney family.

William Paul Society
remembers
BILL "WILLIE" PAUL
1884-1958
Derby founder member of
the Communist Party
and organiser of independent
working class education

Read Britain's
Road to Socialism!

LL

IVY WOODS
1914 -2005.

Long time Co-operator , Chair of the West of England
District Communist Party, and long time seller of the
Daily Worker and Morning Star. (Treasurer of the
Bristol bazaar committee, her coconut ice sold well.)

Mike Cattell sends
centenary greetings
to comrades
everywhere

Leslie Malcolm Warsop
A strong trade unionist,
a fine comrade and friend.
13.01.1934 - 16.05.2019
South Yorks

emory of John Haylett:
wonderful friend, a great
or, a loyal Communist
and a lovely man
Rob & Irene

Blanche Flannery -
Sheffield TUC President &
campaigner for women's
sexual health &
reproductive rights
12.01.1921 - 25.10.2010
South Yorks

In memory of past
comrades, we salute
the efforts of those
fighting to achieve a
new and better world.
Cad & Regi

Gordon Norris
NUS 'politically
motivated man'

Paying homage to
Minnie Martin 1909-86 and Jack Martin 1917-87,
both active in the Party in Cardiff from 1938/39.
In retirement, Jack helped in the Party office in Cardiff and in
the 1984/85 miners strike used his wartime GPO telephone
operator experience to be alert to telephone tapping.
Vivian Martin

Capitalism is the virus
enabler -
eliminate now!
Shropshire CPB

Different fronts in the ideological war



RED LIVES

Ivy Woods

IVY OLIVER was born in Holborn, London, in 1914, living above the shop where her father was a grocer. In the mid 1920s, after stopping a bailiff removing Freemason regalia from a tenant's flat, he lost his trade from all the surrounding hotels.

They moved to Bristol in 1926, where she lived for the rest of her life.

She worked in the Bristol Central Library, where she met her future husband, Stephen Woods, already a Communist Party member. They married in August 1939 and had three children.

She joined the party in 1940 at a time when members were encouraged to spend at least half their time on work outside the party, she joined the Sea Mills Co-op Guild, and soon became secretary.

Jack Webb, the Communist president of the Bristol Co-operative Society, got Ivy involved in the co-op. By 1946 she was attending society meetings. She was elected to the Society Party political committee in 1947 and immediately faced hostility as a member of the CP.

This was a time of bans and proscriptions. She was defeated in 1951 but would be on the political committee for a total of eight years, standing 24 times. She was elected to the management committee in 1964 at the 14th attempt.

Ivy did not slacken that year, as she took on adult literacy work. It was the time of "On the Move" and she got huge satisfaction helping Caribbean women to learn to read.

She went on a CP women's delegation to the Soviet Union in 1963, visiting Siberia and Leningrad and returned early to Moscow to meet Valentina Tereshkova, who had just returned from space, along with Yuri Gagarin and Valery Bykovsky.

When she returned Ivy gave at least 50 report back meetings — many of them to Co-op Guilds.

Ivy was also very active in the peace movement, and a lot of her talks were on peace: the immorality of war, the vested interests of the arms industry, against the H-bomb tests in 1957, unilateral disarmament and Aldermaston marches.

In 1968 she spoke to a rally in Bristol against the war in Vietnam.

"A real love of peace is something active. It is not passive.

"It is good, but of little practical value at this time, just to want peace, if you are not prepared to do something about it.

"We women want peace and we women mean to have it."

ELEANOR LEWINGTON

British communists have always insisted that only a politically conscious majority of the working class and its allies can defeat the ruling class. The British Establishment has been successful in securing and maintaining its dominance primarily through consent rather than brute force, thought that is rarely used and never ruled out.

This illustrates Marx's famous insight that in every period the ruling ideas are those of the ruling class.

Throughout its history the Communist Party has played its part in developing and promoting a socialist political consciousness. This is a major difference between the communist perspective and the dominant outlook of the reformist wing of the labour movement in Britain, which has generally derided theory of any kind.

Former Labour leader Harold Wilson, an Oxford don in economic history, famously said he had given up reading Marx's Capital because the footnotes were too long.

Communists built on a quite different tradition within the British working class, that of collective education, which from the time of the Chartists had emphasised that "knowledge is power." It was also built around the fundamental concept that socialist ideas had to be developed in a scientific way and would not emerge fully formed from spontaneous working-class actions.

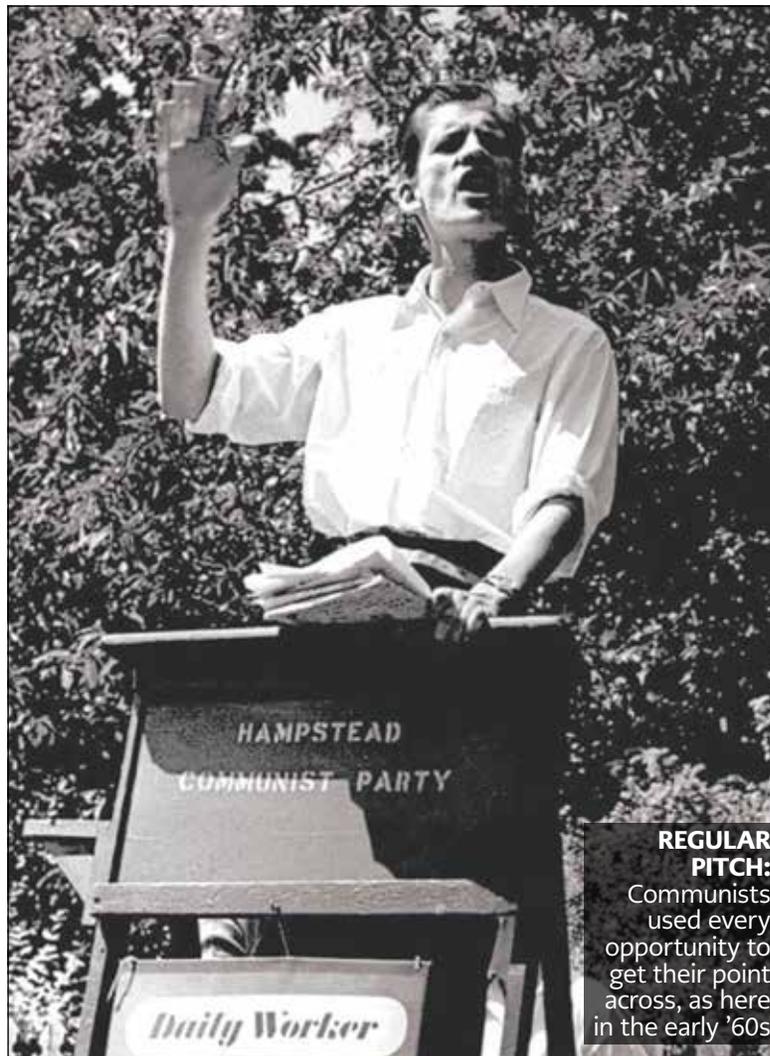
Over the years, the CPGB established many specialist magazines to discuss theoretical issues, the most important being Communist Review (a name used in several different periods), Modern Quarterly, Marxist Quarterly and Marxism Today, all published either by the party directly or through its publishing arm Lawrence and Wishart.

L&W also published and printed the main works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, as it still does to this day, and distributed works from the Soviet Union's foreign languages publishing houses.

The party's obsession with promoting political reading and publishing is a story in itself. When non-communist Victor Gollancz established the Left Book Club in the 1930s, its huge success owed much to the communist contribution to its administration and distribution.

Internally, the party's education department developed schools, lecture programmes, reading lists and tutor-training aids to be used at every level of party organisation from the national centre out to the furthest-flung branch.

The party created specialist groups of academics in both the social and natural sciences. Advisories, papers and conferences multiplied. The contribution of the Historians Group has always stood out, the power of Marxist insights into history could not but



REGULAR PITCH: Communists used every opportunity to get their point across, as here in the early '60s

by Kenny Coyle

be recognised in the wider academic world, no matter how reluctantly.

However, specialists in all areas were expected to use their expertise for the benefit of working people, all too often denied the fullest educational opportunities. Outstanding scientists such as JD Bernal and JBS Haldane published widely in CP publications. Haldane's regular science columns for the Daily Worker in the 1930s, covered everything from the chicken-and-egg conundrum to the military dangers of poison gas, still shine more than 80 years later.

However, the CP was up against powerful entrenched ideological opponents. Ideas never float free but are always tied to the material possibility of spreading them — the means of production are also the means of producing and sustaining ideas. With the forces of state broadcasters, the corporate media and often the church ranged directly against the party, this was always an uphill battle.

The publication in 1924 by the Daily Mail of the so-called "Zinoviev Letter" a faked document purporting to tie the Communist International to the Labour Party, was designed to derail the election

of a left government. The first of many such "red scares" perpetrated by that paper and other media right through the Corbyn era to the present day.

Anti-communist bans and proscriptions even filtered into the labour movement, especially after the defeat of the General Strike and the TUC's 1934 Black Circular proscribing communist-influenced unions and trades councils. Anti-communist bans remained well into the 1980s in a number of unions such as EETPU and APEX.

The Daily Worker's exposés of war crimes in Korea and Malaya came at a price. Alan Winnington, one of the paper's greatest correspondents, was threatened with treason charges for covering the Korean war and he lived most of his life in exile.

McCarthyism in the United States had some odd cultural repercussions. Left-wing Hollywood screen writers and directors moved to Britain and other parts of Europe.

Charlie Chaplin left the US for Switzerland. Even the CPGB itself "benefited" from this diaspora.

John Williamson and Charlie Doyle were two British-born members of the CPUSA who were deported. Williamson became a full-time party

worker and Marx Library stalwart. Doyle arrived with his US-born wife Mikki, who went on to be a legendary women's editor at the Morning Star.

Another CPUSA arrival was Caribbean-born Claudia Jones, stalwart anti-racist and creator of the Notting Hill Carnival.

However, the chilling effects of the Cold War fell on British communists working in the Civil Service, education and the media.

The Attlee government's devotion to bolstering imperialism in Greece and Malaya especially, were also marked by shifts in Britain. London's May Day marches organised by the communist-led London Trades Council faced bans in the late 1940s.

Communist "infiltration" of the BBC was one of many pretexts to eradicate left-wing producers, researchers and presenters throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Aided in large part by witch-hunters such as George Orwell, whose notorious blacklist of names for what was to become the Information Research Department (IRD) reeks every it as much of homophobia, racism and anti-semitism as it does anti-communism.

The IRD was not wound up until 1977. That same year, newsreader Anna Ford was investigated for BBC security clearance by MI5, simply on the grounds that she was living with a former communist journalist. The political snooping was exposed again in 1985 where it was revealed that Room 105 in Broadcasting House was home to the head of the Beeb's staff surveillance unit.

Fuller details about the close links between the state intelligence services and the mainstream media were exposed in Britain's Secret Propaganda War: 1948-1977 by investigative journalists Paul Lashmar and James Oliver. It exposed British Cold War propaganda to trace IRD involvement in Korea, Malaya, Indonesia Suez, Northern Ireland, and the campaign for British entry to the EEC in the 1970s.

By the '70s, the Party was faced with an internal battle of ideas, with the founding principles of the CP being challenged by revisionists.

Party education schools, where industrial militants rubbed shoulders on equal terms with Oxbridge dons, were taking second place to a focus on theory drawn from the seminar rooms of the "red brick revolution," where post-structuralists were more important than postal workers.

In recent years, the CPB has initiated a number of educational programmes and events, the quarterly Communist Review carries all manner of theoretical and discussion articles and once again there are modest publishing projects promoting Marxist theory. The battle of ideas has no truce.

LOUD AND CLEAR:
Communists campaign calling for homes in 1949



On the socialist road

ONE UNIQUE feature of the Communist Party in Britain over the past century has been the attention it paid to developing a long-term programme for socialist revolution.

Rather than simply producing short-term election manifestoes or abstract propaganda denouncing the evils of capitalism, communist programmes have attempted to apply the general principles of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of contemporary British society.

The party has generally revised its programme every nine or 10 years to take into account new features in Britain's economic, social and political life or the international situation.

The main themes have all outlined the basic economic features, class structure and nature of state power pertaining in Britain at the time.

As they developed, more detailed analyses were elaborated, such as the different phases of capitalist development, the international position of British imperialism, evaluation of the socialist and ex-socialist countries, the national questions within Britain, the interlinking of racial and sexual oppression with class exploitation and the government and state apparatus. The shifting cultural and ideological currents of British society also received more attention.

However, there are two recurring questions throughout the past cen-

by **Kenny Coyle**

tury that seem likely to be subjects of heated discussion for some time to come.

These issues centre around the nature of the Labour Party and the potential of combining parliamentary majorities with powerful extra-parliamentary mass movements to assist the advance toward socialism.

These debates strongly marked the first dozen years of the Communist Party. On the eve of the party's formation, Lenin's 'Left-Wing' Communism an Infantile Disorder (1920) devoted an entire chapter to the situation in Britain, decisive in defeating sectarian positions in the formative years of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB).

However, by the late 1920s this united front perspective was lost. After the defeat of the 1926 General Strike and the anti-left witch-hunt that followed, the party's manifesto-cum-programme Class Against Class denounced the Labour Party as "social fascist" and made an entirely rhetorical call for the creation of a CPGB-led revolutionary workers' government.

By 1933, following the disastrous defeat of the divided German working class movement, the CPGB began a turn back to the united front.

But the turn was neither immediate nor straightforward as the party's 1935 programme For Soviet Britain (FSB) showed. FSB suggested the choice was

between a workers' revolution led by the CPGB and based on as-yet-non-existent workers councils on the one hand, or fascism on the other.

FSB was in any case soon redundant. The 7th world congress of the Communist International decisively broke with left-sectarian perspectives, and the British party was urged by the Comintern to renew demands on a future Labour government to defend working class interests.

A draft programme was due to be debated at the party's 1939 congress postponed due to the outbreak of war.

In the post-war period, the defeat of nazism, the creation of new socialist states, mass communist parties in major capitalist countries and vibrant national liberation movements in Asia suggested that multiple new paths to socialism were possible.

The first edition of the British Road to Socialism, published in 1951, reflected both wider discussions in the world communist movement — party leader Harry Pollitt spent time in Moscow discussing the draft with Soviet theoreticians and even Stalin himself — as well as the three decades of accumulated national experience by the CPGB.

The 1958 version of the BRS was heavily influenced by crises of 1956, namely the armed revolt in Hungary and the attack on Stalin's "cult of personality" in the Soviet Union.

References to "people's democracy" in the 1951 edition were replaced by

a section on "socialist democracy," which more explicitly than before outlined the necessity of extending democratic rights and freedoms as an essential part of building socialism.

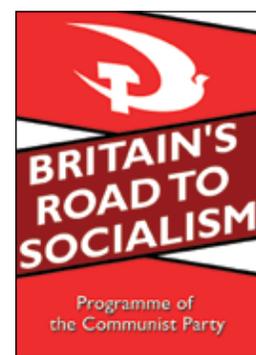
A decade later, the 1968 BRS deepened the party's political and economic analysis of what was termed "state monopoly capitalism" and the need to create a working-class led anti-monopoly alliance.

However, the discussions around the 1977 BRS draft showed the extent of divisions within the CPGB.

A revisionist current, associated with Eurocommunism, began an attempt to dilute the party's traditional focus on the working class in favour of "new social movements." These debates did at least allow the BRS to acknowledge the key importance of the women's movement and the experience of struggles of Britain's Black and Asian communities against racism.

As a result of the differences, the final programme published in 1978, suffered from vague formulations on class and state power that allowed conflicting interpretations of the text by different wings of the party.

When the Eurocommunists eventually gained control of the CPGB leader-



EVOLVING: The 2020 edition of the BRS

ship in the mid-1980s, they soon abandoned the BRS.

The re-established Communist Party of Britain, by contrast, took over the BRS in 1988, redrafting it in 1989. While this offered a greatly strengthened overview of the situation in Britain, the international section was dramatically overtaken by events.

The party's hopes for the successful renovation of socialism in the Soviet Union and other European countries had to be abandoned as powerful pro-capitalist forces gained control.

The party's response was to draft new documents assessing the collapse of the Soviet Union and to redraft the BRS taking into account the new unfavourable balance of forces internationally.

By the early 21st century, Britain's Road to Socialism, as it was now known, was monitoring new factors such as the crisis of the European Union and the rise of China on the world stage. It advanced thinking in terms of the financialisation of capitalism globally and increasingly recognised the central threat to the planet posed by environmental destruction.

The next 100 years will undoubtedly throw up new challenges and phenomena and it will be up to future generations of communists to keep their programme relevant to the struggles ahead.

Shining a light on the Murdoch conspiracy

ROLLING BACK the frontiers of socialism' was prime minister Thatcher's own slogan for the conspiracy of employers, the government, the law and the press to shed jobs and eradicate militant trade unionism from the world of work.

The Morning Star was along among national newspapers in supporting workers' prolonged struggles against job losses, derecognition and the full force of the state.

The main target of this Ridley conspiracy, or "plan," was the miners, but the Morning Star revealed the background to another plot: to smash the Fleet Street print unions.

Throughout 1985, a small hand-picked management team carried out a plan to destroy the unionised workforce. It was led by Rupert Murdoch, a man who used deception and lies to justify the most outrageous industrial action of his time.

Rumours, stories and hard evidence emerged gradually, although the full extent of the Wapping conspiracy came to light only after the strike began in January 1986.

Murdoch's pretence that the company wanted to launch a new newspaper to justify new conditions at the new Wapping site in east London, was a complete sham. The planned London Post never materialised.

Ten days after the strike began and 5,500 workers had been instantly dismissed, a letter from royal solicitors Farrer's to their client, Murdoch-owned News International, was leaked.

No other newspaper would print it, but the Morning Star did, in support of the workers and their unions.

It advised Murdoch how to get rid of the workforce by provoking a strike and

Murdoch deceit unmasked

We reproduce in full a letter from News International solicitors Farrer & Co to NI Managing Director Bruce Matthews. The letter shows clearly that, far from pursuing a negotiated settlement, NI was preparing to get rid of its workers on the cheap.

FARRER & CO
65, Lincoln's Inn Fields
London, W.C.2A 3EN
25th December 1985

Dear Bruce,

Since the very first day I was involved in the London newsprint I have advised that, if a dismissal case which it was necessary to dispute with the present workforce at 75% and 80% the cheapest way of doing so would be to dismiss employees while they were on strike or other industrial action. It is a well known fact that it is easier to identify a strike as being only one or two people who have a particular piece of equipment, and there may be a dispute as to whether others can be required to work on it or not.

This advice remains sound. Dismissing a man on strike has the following advantages:

- (a) he will almost certainly be in regularity breach of contract, and can thus be dismissed accordingly;
- (b) he is not entitled to a redundancy payment, unless under statutory notice of redundancy before the strike began;
- (c) he will have no claim in unfair dismissal, provided all strikers have been dismissed and not selectively re-employed; and
- (d) the only question will be whether the employer does not have to give a reason for dismissal.

Given that we are now much nearer the date of a possible approach to you regarding the new "reorganised" approach may still (temporarily) be adopted. I thought it would be desirable for you to know the reasons for our only on Wednesday if I dismissed the advice already given. It will be useful to the very people on the subject have the best principles of law firmly in their heads at all times.

Employees who go on strike i.e. a concerted stoppage of work which terminates their contracts of employment or breach them in a way which enables their employer to "accept" the breach and dismiss them without notice.

- Under the employment legislation industrial tribunals have no jurisdiction to hear unfair dismissal claims if at the time of the dismissal:

 - (a) the employee was taking part in a strike or other industrial action;
 - (b) all those so participating are dismissed; and
 - (c) none of those dismissed are re-employed within three months of the dismissal.

- What happens in practice is that people are dismissed, unfair dismissal applications are made, the employer says that the applicants were dismissed during the course of a strike or other industrial action and the tribunal holds a preliminary hearing to see if the employer's contention is correct. If it is, that is the end of the matter. You will appreciate that it is for the employer to prove that there was a strike or other industrial action and that the said employees took part during the course of it. As I said on Wednesday, this is not a difficult task other industrial action is more difficult than suspecting it.
- Helpfully, however, the courts have been reluctant to place any limit on what might constitute "other industrial action." It includes a genuine, work to rule, concerted non-cooperation and (usually) a plant of the employer's premises, the conduct does not have to be in breach of contract. A refusal to work voluntary overtime - if done for the purpose of the strike - has not been held to be industrial action in the case of unorganised workers. Certainly it does when the workers are on strike. This may be a difficulty for us, not least because of the large number involved. However, in the context of the times of Fleet Street, where a chapel administration held such particular sway, it may be easier to persuade an industrial tribunal that action by a chapel is indeed action by each and every member.
- Having made those general remarks, there are two categories of employee to consider in particular:

 - (a) frightened employees i.e. those who do not support the dispute, but stay at home and/or do not cross picket lines. There has not been judicial uncertainty, but most judges have held that it is not practicable for an employer to enquire into the reasons or motives of employees for attendance at work; and
 - (b) sick employees: again there had not been judicial uncertainty. In one case a newspaper employee who participated in an overtime ban, but was away sick on the critical day when the newspaper resumed work was held to be on strike. He was held to have been taking part in industrial action even though he was not working on that day as an employee was sick throughout the period of industrial action. The court held that the employer's "sick leaving arrangements" between a sick employee and his striking colleagues did not amount to participating in the strike. I think the similar sorts of provision might arise in the case of employees on holiday, and that arrangements for absence during the time of their absence.

To repeat the central point is that it is for the employer to prove participation.

- The employee must be taking part in industrial action on the date of dismissal. In, if a strike starts at 10.00 a.m., an ECU shareholder at 1.00 p.m. to say that his own intention to work and at 2.00 p.m. dismissal notice are issued the strike will have ceased and the immunity from unfair dismissal actions will have been lost.
- It is a general principle that a contract of employment is not normally terminated until the employee is actually notified of the dismissal. A business industrial tribunal will have some sympathy for the position of an employee working hundreds or thousands of employees on a time and again allow some latitude, and it will obviously be very difficult to communicate the fact of dismissal to each employee individually. Dismissal notices will need to be posted over the various buildings immediately the decision is taken to dismiss; chapel administrations must be informed and letters should be sent out to each employee as quickly as possible.
- There may be merit in having piles of dismissal letters at each floor, even if they involve an element of duplication. We talked about this some months ago, and it may be desirable to talk about it again in the New Year.
- Very often an employer is told that a strike will take place in a "hour" or "day" time. The actual industrial action may only occur when the industrial action has actually started. On the other hand when a strike has already begun and an employer is told that a strike has already started, it would be unwise to participate from the time that he makes his attendance at work.
- That brings me to the last point. With you and the agency very complicated systems in many departments, and both public and private and Sunday newspaper, many of the employees are different to the regular employees. The latter are those who are employed on the net as possible, and it seems to me likely that they will be dismissed if the dismissal takes place at the weekend rather than the beginning of a week.

Let me know if you would like to see or speak on any of this in discussion.

Yours sincerely,
R. P. Matthews
R. P. Matthews Esq
News International plc
200 Gray's Inn Road
London WC1R 4EH

VICTORY: Pentonville dockers, and communists, Vic Turner and Bernie Steer dockers are chaired out of prison after being cleared



NMIDDLE ENGLISH, a steward was the word used to describe an overseer of workmen answerable to the master, nowadays the steward is elected by and accountable to their workmates.

When properly harnessed, the relationship can forge great strength in numbers.

Shop stewards first appeared in the engineering industry among skilled male workers in shipbuilding and engineering at the very end of the 19th century—there were very few female shop stewards until the first world war.

Initially, the steward's function was to collect dues and check that members were paid up. But as they began to take up the concerns of fellow workers they became increasingly recognised as workplace representatives.

It was during the first world war that stewards came to the fore. The Labour Party and TUC had abandoned their anti-war positions in the run up to the conflict and declared an "industrial truce" in August 1914, pledging there would be no strikes to help the war effort.

Ignoring the legitimate interests of their members in this way forged a deep gulf between militant rank-and-file members and union leaders.

But it did not deter workplace reps — a 1915 strike in Clyde munitions factories saw around 10,000 engineers in over 25 factories come out.

Without official union support the strikers had to find new ways to co-ordinate their activity and so set up the Central Labour Withholding Committee. This was later replaced by a permanent committee, the Clyde Workers Committee, under chair Willie Gallacher, a founder member of the Communist Party in 1920.

Like Gallacher, many of the socialist trade union stewards, including Tom Mann and Wal Hannington, turned to the CP after its foundation.

Shop stewards and workers' com-

by Ann Field

timing it to maximum effect, suggesting that the "cheapest way to dispense of the present workforce" would be "to dismiss employees while participating in a strike or other industrial action."

It said: "All those who are on strike, etc must be dismissed, and not re-employed."

The letter went on: "There may be merit in having piles of dismissal letters at exit doors, even if that involves an element of duplication. We talked

about this some months ago, and it may be desirable to talk about it again in the New Year."

The final, chilling point stated: "The idea is to catch as many employees in the net as possible, and it seems to me likely that that will be done best if the dismissals take place at the weekend rather than near the beginning of a week."

Documents subsequently disclosed by News International during court hearings revealed the six shadow companies set up during 1985. When the strike prompted dismissal of existing

staff, all four national newspapers were immediately transferred to Wapping overnight to be produced by a new company.

Electricians union EETPU supplied the workforce for these shadow companies. A substitute transport agreement with TNT bypassed British Rail distribution of newspapers to depots nationwide. And all this was carried out with legal impunity.

Murdoch plotted with union-busters and the right-wing leadership of the EETPU who had supplied the pirate workforce.



RED LIVES
Mark Ashton

THE EARLY '80s were a turbulent time in Britain. The CPGB and YCL were active in organising large events and Mark was always there, leafletting, selling papers or carrying the banner.

It was for his work during the miners' strike that he is best known. When Thatcher provoked the strike he swung into action, setting up Lesbians & Gays Support the Miners with Mike Jackson — a story partly told in the hugely successful film Pride.

Of course that film glossed over Mark's politics and said nothing about the fact he subsequently became general secretary of the YCL. Mark was tireless in his support — out "on the bucket" around the London lesbian and gay clubs virtually every night of the strike. It was during the strike that Mark was diagnosed HIV+, in those days a death sentence. He was frightened but refused to let it interfere with his campaigning.

During the strike and afterwards Mark was frequently exasperated by identity politics. Mark was clear about the importance of equal rights, fighting discrimination and prejudice because they were tools used by the ruling class to divide us, rather than supplanting class struggle with "new social forces."

By making the links in this way he was able to counter the prejudices that existed against the LGBT community within the trade union movement, and vice versa — culminating in the NUM helping carry a resolution supporting LGBT rights at the TUC. Communist miner's leader Mick McGahey was pivotal in winning the TUC to this progressive policy position.

Little has been written about Mark's involvement in the Wapping dispute of 1986/7. This was the second great defeat for the working class

under Thatcher's reign, no coincidence that destroying the print unions was a political priority given their ability to stop the presses in support of the working class, something they did in support of the nurses and the miners.

Mark was present at most of the Saturday night demonstrations and quite a few of the mid-week ones too.

He was at Wapping on the night of the police riot on the anniversary of the strike, 25 January 1987. I remember it was freezing and admonished him for only wearing his customary double denim and T-shirt. He grinned and said he was fine. A few days later he was admitted to hospital with pneumonia and soon died.

I only knew Mark for about four years. He made a lasting impression on me as a friend and an outstanding comrade, and I think of him daily with love and Pride.

LORRAINE DOUGLAS



Rank and file takes on the government

by Anita Halpin

mittees were formed throughout the country in factories involved in war-time production and were seen by the workers as the union leadership.

Founder member and CPGB general secretary (1929-1939 and 1941-1956), Harry Pollitt explained why in autobiography *Serving My Time*: “The militants never let an occasion pass, where attempts were made to worsen conditions, without making a fight, and it was this that gave the shop stewards their influence and power, and led to the growth of the National Shop Stewards Movement.”

By the end of 1920 the post-war boom in British industry was at an end and unemployment reached 700,000, rocketing to two million by June 1921. Militants soon found themselves on the dole and many, like Hannington, became involved in the National Unemployed Workers Movement which was active until 1936.

Shop stewards organisation was revived during the re-armament years

and stewards were active in war-time joint production committees and their power grew successfully in the post-war years with near full employment in the '50s and '60s.

In 1966 Labour introduced a statutory incomes policy which was a clear attack on trade union rights and freedoms.

Springing into action, the CP's industrial department consulted activists in key industries and leading trades union councils.

It decided to set up a national campaigning body to co-ordinate the counter attack, led by rank-and-file stewards but realising getting “official” leaderships on side would be important to success.

This was the birth of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trades Unions which was pledged to “organise unity in which and assist in mobilising solidarity throughout the movement.”

Over the next three decades the committee was very effective in building unity of purpose among shop stewards and works committees to “defend and advance,” in the words

of the LCDTU slogan, the rights and freedoms of organised labour.

The LCDTU fuelled a national movement that was able to call unofficial strikes that saw off Labour's *In Place of Strife* in 1969 and had killed the Tories' Industrial Relations Bill by 1972.

Having a large network of militants from different industries and unions was crucial from protesting against the jailing of the Pentonville dockers in 1972 to building support for and solidarity with striking miners and others in struggle.

The shop stewards of today owe much to those rank-and-file workers who kept effective trade unionism alive during two world wars in the face of their leaders' preoccupation with the war effort.

And now the shop stewards movement is back in the arena, with organised workers in Royal Mail, hospitals and schools defending their members against pro-employer Covid instructions and will be vital as lock-down eases and the “masters” seek to impose cuts and worsening conditions they feel necessary to economic revival after coronavirus.

Always with the miners

by Brian Topping

DURING THE 1926 General Strike and miners' lock-out, the new but small Communist Party stood full-square behind the miners.

In 1972 and 1974 the Party and the Young Communist League (YCL) were well placed in the working class and labour movement to mobilise support and leadership during the historic struggles of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM).

The Party had traditionally been strong in the Scottish, south Wales and Kent coalfields. And, by the early 1970s, as the result of years of patient Party work, the right-wing grip on Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire was being loosened.

In the 1971 NUM presidential election, despite a virulent anti-communist campaign, Mick McGahey polled 92,883 votes against right-winger Joe Gormley's 117,663. Mick was elected NUM vice-president the following year, and the left, with deep grassroots support, had gained positions on the national executive.

Through a well-organised industrial department, the Party and YCL branches, based close to or in mining communities, made it a priority to build solidarity with the NUM in 1972 and 1974, including support for pickets and a YCL campaign to supply candles and torches to working class homes hit by cuts to the electricity supply.

In 1972 widespread rail solidarity action stopped fuel getting to power stations and the decisive point of solidarity occurred at the Saltley Coke Depot in Birmingham on Friday 10 February, with the Party playing an outstanding role.

There was a mountain of over 100,000 tonnes of coal being shifted by road out of Saltley.

By Monday 6 February, the Midlands NUM had secured the support of hundreds of flying pickets from Yorkshire, led by Arthur Scargill, to stop coal leaving the depot and the Transport and General Workers Union instructed drivers not to cross the picket lines.

But by the next day scab lorry drivers had been recruited, backed up by more than 1,000 police to keep the pickets at a distance.

Local engineering shop stewards were brought to Saltley to see the battle for themselves. They reported back to the factories. Scargill won support from the district committees of the engineering and vehicle builders' unions, and on the Wednesday, a meeting of nearly 400 shop stewards endorsed that support.

On Friday morning, tens of thousands of workers from all over Bir-

mingham marched to Saltley with one demand: “Close the gates.” The police were forced to accede.

That victory at the Battle of Saltley Gates was made possible by the style of Party work in Birmingham: building factory organisation, providing political education, and winning key positions in the official leadership of the trade union movement.

In the '70s it was relatively easy for the NUM to mobilise workers in industry despite, or perhaps rather because, the original vision offered by nationalisation in 1947, had almost evaporated and the real value of miners' wages had been severely eroded.

By the '80s the situation was very different: the coal industry had been ruthlessly exploited by private interests, especially on the machinery and supply side, while the Conservative government elected in 1979, still smarting from defeat at Saltley Gates, made no secret of its hostility to the NUM.

Part of this effort to undermine the NUM meant repositioning the whole economy away from British coal, both through imports from abroad, mainly apartheid South Africa, and securing cheap oil from the Middle East.

At the start of the strike in March 1984, the role of Communists and allies in the NUM throughout the 1970s and early '80s, had helped lay the basis for a strong broad left national leadership in the union, around Arthur Scargill.

Paradoxically, at the same time a majority in the CP leadership had essentially abandoned commitment to class struggle, turning to “new social forces” as the route of left advance. The Party was in danger of being isolated from key areas of the struggle.

But revolutionaries in the Party, including many working in the *Morning Star* and others active in their communities and nationally, committed themselves to the miners' cause.

Crucial in the battle against mass pit closures was activity to build miners support groups, miners' wives' organisations and solidarity from local authorities in strengthening solidarity and alleviating suffering in mining communities. In traditional mining areas and large conurbations support groups flourished.

This creative approach to grassroots working class politics, including international solidarity helped sustain the struggle and resistance for a full year in the face of unprecedented state violence and propaganda against the NUM and its supporters.



CP Newcastle and Gateshead branch

Pays tribute to all the comrades who campaigned, struggled and laboured before us.

We vow to build Socialism in our time!



Greater London East CPB

Proud to mark the centenary of the Communist Party in Britain.

Onward to the next 100 years!



Communist Party Derby branch

Celebrating 100 years of the Party in the struggle of our working class.

Uniting the people against the monopolies and their government.



Edinburgh Branch salutes the centenary of the Communist Party.

Forward march comrades to the defeat of the capitalists, the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism.



CPB Northern district

Salutes the dedication of the many comrades who

- ★ built the Party and the labour movement
- ★ fought fascism
- ★ and campaigned for peace and socialism

We carry on the fight!



CPB Leicester

With Marxist praxis we defeat racist oppression!



Communist Party Govan branch

Celebrating 100 years of class struggle on the road to socialism.



Coventry, Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Communist Party branch

STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

We salute those that have been before us by carrying on their struggles, campaigns, words and deeds.

We remember those who fought against Fascism in Spain and Apartheid in South Africa.

We remember those who camped at Greenham Common.

We remember those who escaped from Chile.

We remember those who helped form our Trade Unions both Industrial and Rural.

We commit ourselves to continuing their fight for International Solidarity, Peace and Socialism.



Communist Party South Yorkshire

Celebrates the lives, sacrifices, work & vision of our comrades over the last 100 years, from George Fletcher, local baker, a founder member of the Party in 1920 & the Sheffield Unemployed Workers Movement, to the present.

And looks forward to the next 100 years: to socialism, to communism.



Communist Party Scottish Committee

One Hundred Years of Analysis, Strategy and Struggle.

Always putting our class's interest first.



**Remember Hiroshima
For a world of peace
and socialism**

Newport & Gwent
Valleys Branch CP

gwent@communistparty.org.uk • 01633431228

**Communist
Party of
Britain**
Cambridge Branch



A CENTENARY FOR SOCIALISM

The Cambridge Branch would like to wish the Communist Party a happy 100 years of struggle, as well as to commemorate the many fantastic members of our branch throughout the years, including (but not limited to):

Arnold Kettle, David Guest, Eric Hobsbawm, Freddie Vickers, James Klugmann, John Cornford, Maurice Cornforth, Maurice Dobbs, Ram Nahum, Ruth Wallis and many more...

1920 - 2020

www.cambridge-communists.org.uk / office@cambridge-communists.org.uk



Eastern rising!

We salute those who started us out on the path to socialism in the East of England.

Forward for the rural and urban working class.

Eastern District Communist Party



**Bedfordshire communists
want you!**

Get active in the community and workplaces with our new Party branch.

Contact us at
Bedford@communistparty.org.uk



**Northwest District
Committee CPB**

Here's to the next 100 years of solidarity – there is a world to win.



CPB Dumfries

Erich "Vatti" Hoffmann,
13/2/1906-4/2/1959

German Communist, Brigadista, prisoner at Auschwitz and Buchenwald. Saved the lives of 158 Jewish children.



GREATER MANCHESTER BRANCH

“ No matter how small and unimportant what we are doing may seem, if we do it well, it may soon become the step that will lead us to better things. ”

Harry Pollitt
1890-1960



The London District Committee of the Communist Party celebrates 100 years of fighting for socialism and will continue the struggle for a different world for the workers of this country.

**North London branch
celebrates the centenary
of the Communist Party**

**The fight for
socialism continues**



"...working people must enjoy the fruits of their common labour. Machines and other improvements must serve to ease the work of all and not to enable a few to grow rich at the expense of millions and tens of millions of people."

IER's Manifesto for Labour Law sets out policies that will empower workers at work, across their sector and in Government. Empowering workers and their unions reduces inequality.

www.ier.org.uk

IER

Institute of
Employment
Rights

¡NO PASARÁN!

The IBMT salutes the Communist Party and members for their leading role in the fight against fascism in the Spanish Civil War



International Brigade Memorial Trust
www.international-brigades.org.uk

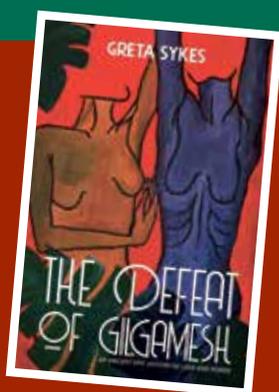
The Defeat of Gilgamesh

by Greta Sykes

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Country Standard

For Peace and Socialism in the Countryside

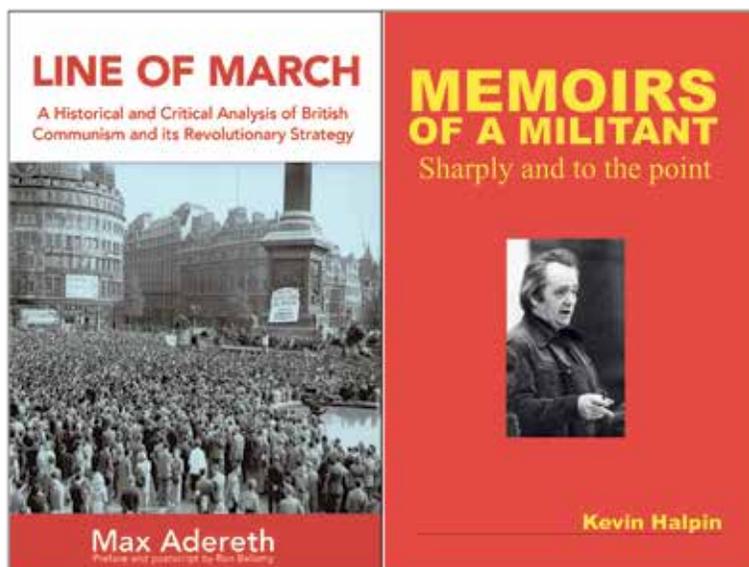
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Blocking Britain's bases

OPPPOSITION TO British imperialism's network of military bases at home and abroad and the nefarious purposes for which they have been utilised in facilitating US, British and Nato plans has been a consistent and key focus of our Party's campaigning for decades. This aspect of our work is particularly important at present, given the prominence being accorded to Britain's 'special relationship' with the US and the grave dangers this poses.

Post second world war, certain military facilities on British soil were given over to the design and manufacture of atomic weapons — such as Aldermaston, which became the focus

by Liz Payne

of mass anti-nuclear demonstrations every Easter from 1958, in which the Communist Party participated.

Other bases housed US troops, war planes and other military hardware, together with stockpiles of lethal weaponry — once primed for use against the USSR and other socialist countries, now for pursuit of other cold and hot war goals.

Today, our Party continues to expose them as a very real and present danger, designated, as some are, for US Visiting Forces (USVF), while others host key Nato command and intelligence centres, including its Joint Electronic Warfare Core Staff at Yeovilton, Intelligence

Fusion Centre at Molesworth, Allied Maritime Command at Northwood and Allied Rapid Reaction Corps HQ at Tewkesbury, together with strategically critical listening stations like Menwith Wood near Harrogate.

The best known base protest was that at Greenham Common near Newbury. Instead of marching away to war, women from all over Britain left their homes and families for the international cause of peace.

They camped for short or long periods to demand the removal of US cruise missiles from the site and an end to the threat of nuclear war.

Little would the first 36 marchers from Wales, one of them a communist, have thought, when they arrived in September 1981, that the peace camp

would continue until the summer of 2000. Communist women and our Party supported the peace camp and all it stood for throughout its existence.

Closure of British overseas bases, those very dangerous so-called outposts of empire, which are not "outposts" but integral to imperialism's hegemonistic designs, has also long been one of our key demands.

Two examples demonstrate the contemporary urgency of this. In 1965, Britain unlawfully detached the strategic Chagos archipelago in the Indian Ocean from Mauritius, expelling the population and setting up the notorious Diego Garcia military base.

Britain permits its US ally to occupy the island and from it to bomb the Middle East and threaten with impu-

nity the peoples of the Indian sub-continent and eastern Africa.

In Cyprus, the Akrotiri and Dhekelia bases underpin imperialism's stranglehold of the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East, turning Cyprus into a potential theatre of war, and preventing the creation of an independent progressive federal state. The Party joins with the Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus (Akel) and the Cyprus Peace Council in demanding their immediate shut-down.

Moving into our next century for socialism, Communists say the fight against British imperialism and militarism is crucial to the international struggle for a just and peaceful future. It is a task for which the working class of this country bear special responsibility.

Turning the tide against more and more war

THE STOP THE WAR COALITION fused the best elements of Britain's labour and peace movements, gathered every left-wing and progressive tendency prepared to embrace the self-discipline of coalition politics and reached important Muslim communities and millions of young people. From its very inception Communists were deeply involved.

An unceasing rain of criticism descended on it from the beginning, but Stop the War's case against the Iraq war is now widely accepted.

When Tory premier David Cameron wanted to involve Britain in a bombing campaign for regime change in Syria he had an interventionist alliance made up of elements of the so-called liberal left — including Labour MPs — alongside jihadi insurgents.

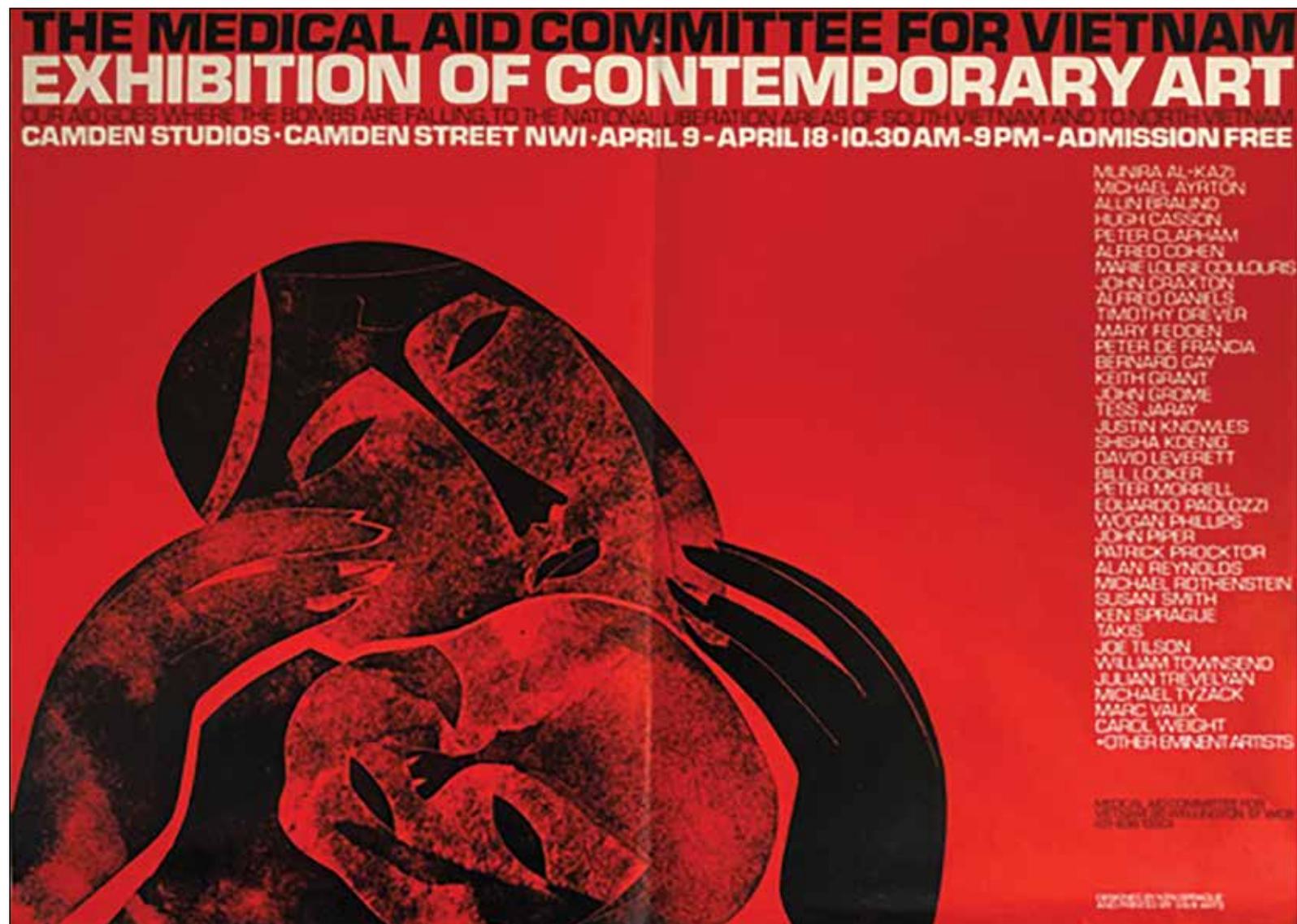
The Stop the War Coalition held to its principled position and Labour leader Ed Miliband found, for the first time in constitutional history, sufficient support (on both sides of the Atlantic) to compel a parliamentary block on war.

The political establishment in Britain — which until Jeremy Corbyn's election included the leadership of the Labour Party — is now obliged to take into account of a new political geometry.

Stop the War subverted the unspoken rule that questions of war and peace were royal prerogatives — and solely the business of the political class — today these questions are mass issues.

It is precisely the failure of a great mass of opinion to divert the elite from its symbiotic incorporation in an imperialism led by the US that has led to the emergence in Britain of a distinctly anti-imperialist current of opinion that is increasingly conscious of the roots of war in capitalist exploitation.

NICK WRIGHT



Sweat and blood for the people of Vietnam

WHILE MANY know about the huge demonstrations against the Vietnam war, not so many know about the work of Medical Aid for Vietnam (MAV).

I joined the Communist Party in 1967 in West Hampstead, the year of the 50th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. The branch secretary was Ron Champion and he and his wife Barbara gave me some pamphlets by Marx, Engels and Lenin to read before

making a final decision (theirs or mine?).

I was only 21 so they wanted me to join the YCL first, which rather deflated me. I had wanted to join a revolutionary party, not a kid's club! Still, before I knew it I was a fully fledged Party member, attending branch meetings, selling the Star, giving out leaflets and helping at jumble sales.

Local Party members were very active in MAV, which was making

urgent calls for donations of blood to help the Vietnamese, and in Hampstead these took place at Swiss Cottage Library on Saturday afternoons.

After giving blood I must have foolishly offered to help because soon after I was meeting the Cartwrights in South Hampstead. They ran a van hire company and needed someone to collect the blood and take it to the airport for onward shipment. I now

know that it was the GDR's airline that was flying it to North Vietnam.

It was no big deal to drive a van to Crawley and back, and I knew it was an essential job. I did this several times during the first half of 1968, but moving to a flat above the Party's district offices in South Essex effectively ended this work for MAV in London. A small part, but not forgotten!

PETER SINCLAIR

Internationalism at its best

OVER THE past century there has been a very close relationship between the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) and the Communist Party of India (CPI).

This was initiated in the 1920s and continued right until the 1940s and the independence of India from British colonial rule in 1947.

A key moment in the evolution and formation of the Indian Communist Party is signified by the so-called Meerut Conspiracy Case of 1928-33.

This was an attempt by the colonial authorities to attack and destroy the burgeoning trade union movement, initiated by communists, which erupted across the principal cities of India.

The depression of the 1930s had opened up a space for the communists to organise workers in industries and the railways.

Significant assistance and guidance in this endeavour was provided by BF Bradley, who was sent to India from

by **Nisar Ahmed**

Britain to promote anti-colonial activities related to class struggles. He served as secretary of the League Against Imperialism and was later part of the CPGB's Colonial Information Bureau.

Along with 27 Indian comrades Bradley, HL Hutchinson and P Sprat formed the British contingent of this movement and were sentenced alongside their CPI counterparts.

This was a direct response to the fear, stirred up by the British government, that left leaders — Muzaffar Ahmed, PC Joshi, G Adhikari, Gopal Basak, A Dange and others — were coming of age and the solidarity cemented by British comrades. It was a key turning point in making the CPI a mass party.

In the 1930s it was not only in India that the seeds of future revolutionary struggles were being planted — Indian students arriving in Britain were influenced by the CPGB and its steadfast opposition to colonialism and fascism.

Scores of such young people

embraced Marxism and on their return to India plunged into communist activities. Perhaps the most celebrated among them was Jyoti Basu who became one of the first Communist MPs in 1946 and was later the chief minister of West Bengal for 23 years.

Leading CPGB theoretician Rajani Palme Dutt was an influential figure in tackling the question of strategy and tactics of the Indian communist movement.

He wrote a number of articles on India, Gandhi, the British empire, and Indian politics, culminating with the ground-breaking book *India Today* (1940), the iconic work providing “concrete analysis of concrete conditions” in a colonial setting. It also had a great impact on the progressive milieu as the people of India struggled to combine anti-imperialist and anti-colonial causes into a single movement.

Equally influential was the joint article he wrote with Bradley, *Anti-Imperialist People's Front in India* (1936), which came to be dubbed the Bradley-Dutt Thesis. It argued for a broad-based popular front that could

unite the overwhelmingly colonial nation in a progressive direction.

It was not only in the political arena that CPGB had close links with Indian comrades. There was a parallel stream in the field of culture that created a massive progressive movement in India which was critical in bringing the communists to the national stage.

A number of writers led by Sajjad Zaheer (later to be the first general secretary of the Communist Party of Pakistan) and Mulk Raj Anand met in 1934 to form the Indian Progressive Writers Association (IPWA) in London.

They came in contact with Ralph Fox who was on the editorial board of *Left Review* and inculcated a broader view of progressive culture as being appropriate for India's conditions.

The draft manifesto of IPWA was published in *Left Review*. The rest is history. For nearly two decades IPWA and the Indian People's Theatre Association were the fulcrum of left cultural activities that drew together a wide spate of personalities and organisers in India.

The links between CPGB and CPI

were not simply at the macro level of strategy formulation or ideas generation. What sometimes remains unnoticed are the myriad connections, relationships, and assistance given at a micro level.

Michael Carritt, a member of the Indian Civil Service, serving in colonial India as a judge is one such example of this. He happened to be a member of the CPGB and one of his brothers had died in battle in Spain.

Jogen Babu, a lawyer appearing on behalf of progressive political workers was mystified when the magistrate let the accused go free. Carritt's only acknowledgement of this was a “half-wink of a drooping eyelid.”

More significantly, when the CPI was banned, general secretary PC Joshi spent his underground days in Judge Carritt's Kolkata flat.

The internationalism that marks the relationship between the CPGB and CPI through the difficult colonial era is a tribute to the two parties, their countless members and workers, and remains a constant inspiration.

RED LIVES in the arts

SYLVIA TOWNSEND-WARNER (1893-1978) was a novelist and poet who regularly published many short-stories in *The New Yorker*. Her novels included *Lolly Willows* and *Summer Will Show*.

Arguably the most important Scottish poet of the twentieth-century, **Hugh MacDiarmid** (1892-1978) was expelled by the Communist Party for being a Scottish nationalist and expelled by the SNP for being a communist.

Lewis Jones (1897-1939) was a miner, unemployed leader and Communist county councillor. He wrote two novels about work and politics in south Wales, *Cwmardy* and *We Live*.

Daily Worker film critic **Honor Arundel** (1919-73) wrote several best-selling children's books including *Emma in Love* and *The High House*.

One of the Party's most public literary figures in the 1930s, **Cecil Day Lewis** (1904-1972) was appointed poet laureate in 1968.

Did you know? Scotland's current Makar (national poet) Jackie Kay was in the YCL as a teenager. So was Hilary Mantel the award-winning author of *Wolf Hall*.

Montagu Slater (1902-1956) devised and scripted Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* and wrote the libretto for Britten's opera *Peter Grimes*.

Barbados-born poet **Peter Blackman** (1909-1993) was chair of the Negro Welfare Association and editor of the *League of Coloured Peoples' journal*. After the war he worked as a railway engine fitter in London, where — thanks to his religious training as a young man — he was the only member of his NUR branch who could read Greek and Latin.

Randall Swingler (1909-1967) was an editor, poet and playwright. His

poems were set to music by Benjamin Britten, Vaughan Williams, Elizabeth Lutyens, Alan Bush, Bernard Stevens and Alan Rawsthorne. During the Spanish Civil War he published *Writers take Sides*, in which almost all the most famous writers of the day declared their support with the Spanish Republic. In 1939, he packed the Albert Hall with a pageant starring Paul Robeson.

Did you know? Doris Lessing (*The Golden Notebook*), Graham Greene (*The Third Man*), Kingsley Amis (*Lucky Jim*), Jessica Mitford (*Hons and Rebels*), Robert Bolt (*A Man for All Seasons*) and Julia Darling (*Crocodile Soup*) were members of the Communist Party when they were younger.

Ralph Bates (1899-2000) was a Swindon railway worker who served as a political commissar with the International Brigades. He wrote a biography of Schubert and several novels, including two set in Spain.

Australian-born **Jack Lindsay** (1909-1990) published over 200 books of poetry, fiction, science, translation, history, archaeology and art-criticism. In 1937 he filled Trafalgar Square with a performance of his mass-declamation *On Guard for Spain*.

Poet and folk-song collector **Hamish Henderson** (1919-2002) won the Somerset Maugham Prize for *Elegies for the Dead in Cyrenaica*. Together with other writers on the Scottish Communist Party district cultural committee, he organised the first *Edinburgh Fringe*.

Did you know? Some of the biggest hits of British TV drama in the 1960s were written by ex-Unity Theatre writers Ted Willis (*Dixon of Dock Green*), Eric Paice (*The Avengers*) and Malcolm Hulke (*Doctor Who*).

Writing in the service of the working class

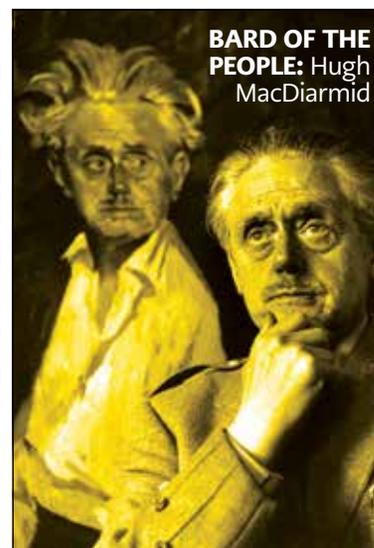
IT IS OFTEN said that no British political party ever attracted or inspired so many writers as the Communist Party. Less well-known is the fact that it published so many literary magazines.

Some were highly professional operations: wartime magazine *Our Time* was launched with an advertising campaign on the London Underground. Some were put together on a shoestring: when the poet Cecil Day Lewis offered to help produce an issue of *Poetry and the People*, he succeeded in stapling the covers upside down.

Not all these magazines were directly owned or funded by the Party. But each was designed by its editors to provide a meeting place for radical and working-class writers, published and unpublished, and all encouraged their readers to put their experiences into words and their ideas into print, in an attempt to challenge and expand the narrow world of contemporary publishing.

One of the most successful was *Left Review* (1934-8). It quickly became one of the best-selling cultural magazines of the decade, publishing young working class writers like Simon Blumenfeld and Jack Hilton alongside well-known writers like Rex Warner, Edward Upward and Sylvia Townsend Warner.

At the same time the Party's publishers Lawrence and Wishart began putting out Ralph Fox and John Lehmann's ground-breaking journal *New Writing* (1937-39), publishing writers like Christopher Isherwood and WH Auden as



BARD OF THE PEOPLE: Hugh MacDiarmid

by **Andy Croft**

well as some of the first translations of Bertolt Brecht, Jean-Paul Sartre and Federico Lorca. In 1940 Allen Lane took over the magazine and re-launched it as *Penguin New Writing*.

By the end of the decade, the magazine *Poetry and the People* (1938-41) had successfully established a network of working-class and amateur poetry groups all over Britain, publishing young working class poets like Fred Ball, Idris Davies and Julius Lipton. George Bernard Shaw liked the magazine so much he took out a subscription for 11 years.

In 1941, *Poetry and the People* was absorbed into the hugely influential

Our Time (1941-1949). Able to attract contributions from writers as varied as JB Priestley, Eric Hobsbawm and Penelope Mortimer, *Our Time* was soon selling 18,000 copies a month.

Meanwhile, its sister publication *Seven* (1941-7), devoted to documentary writing about working-class life, was selling 60,000 copies a quarter. Sid Chaplin and Ray Waterman were among the young working-class writers first published in *Seven*.

During the Cold War, Jack Lindsay and Randall Swingler launched the magazine *Arena* (1949-51), publishing new work by Boris Pasternak, Albert Camus, Paul Eluard, Tristan Tzara, Edith Sitwell, Hugh MacDiarmid, Pablo Neruda, Louis Aragon and Nancy Cunard.

When *Arena* ceased publishing, the Party launched *Daylight* (1952-4) edited by Margot Heinemann, and publishing young writers like EP Thompson and Doris Lessing.

In the 1970s, there was *Artery* (1971-84), *Red Letters* (1976-91) and *Fireweed* (1975-78). Elsewhere, communists were involved in establishing and maintaining the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers, which for many years published the magazine *Voices* (1980-4).

Long before the Guardian began publishing a weekly poem, John Rety's *Well Versed* column was a regular feature in the *Star*. Today, *Culture Matters* runs the annual *Bread and Roses Award* (sponsored by *Unite*) for radical and working-class writers.

CLEAR LINE:
 A 1973
 Communist
 poster against
 the European
 Economic
 Community

BRITAIN'S
 CONTRIBUTION
 TO THE
 EEC BUDGET

GET
 BRITAIN
 OUT

BEEF
 MOUNTAIN

BUTTER
 MOUNTAIN

No capitalist Europe

by Robert Wilkinson

COMMUNISTS in Britain have been the only consistent opposition to the European Union and its predecessors going back to 1950.

Right from the beginning, the Communist Party exposed the fact that the economic integration of the Schuman Plan linked to military co-ordination in the Pleven Plan for a European Defence Community and the revival of German industrial might.

Communist opposition to Britain's membership was consistent whether it was the application by the Conservative government of 1961 or the Wilson Labour government of 1967.

When it came to Heath's Conservative government joining the EEC in 1973 it was a consequence of enough right-wing Labour MPs voting in sup-

port that outweighed the Conservative rebel MPs who voted against.

Nevertheless most trade unions and left-wing Labour MPs stood alongside the Communist Party in campaigning to leave in the 1975 referendum.

Despite the defeat, communists continued to publish a steady stream of pamphlets exposing the reality of aggressive state monopoly finance capitalism behind the appearances of peace and harmony of a "United States of Europe."

Communists were well aware of how Lenin had denounced such a slogan in 1915 as "impossible or reactionary." Lenin acknowledged that "temporary agreements are possible ... but to what end? Only for the purpose of

jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty."

Ted Ainley's 1962 pamphlet *Say NO* to the Common Market set out the arguments that were reiterated in later publications: lowering of wages and living standards; loss of independence; loss of traditional markets; threat to agricultural production; end to full employment commitment; worsening of balance of payments; and reduction in standards of social services.

Although some Party members were blinded by Eurocommunism and the seduction of the trade unions by Jacques Delors in the 1980s, the CPB returned to the offensive in a series of pamphlets by John Foster and Robert Griffiths that argued for an analysis of EU membership that exposed the essence of its reality behind the idealism of its supporters.

London helps end apartheid

by Ken Keable

IN 1964, after Nelson Mandela and other leaders of the African National Congress were jailed for life, almost all ANC members who were not in prison had to go into exile to avoid arrest and torture.

They then had a problem: how could they continue their struggle when they couldn't enter the country? How could they show the people that the ANC was not defeated?

Their solution was to recruit young, white, non-South Africans, unknown to the regime, who could enter the country without arousing suspicion. Much later, they became known as the London Recruits.

A meeting was held between Joe Slovo and Ronnie Kasrils of the South African Communist Party and John Gollan and Jack Woddis (International Secretary) of the British party (CPGB), at which a plan was agreed: the London district secretary of the Young Communist League would select suitable members for sending into South Africa.

None of those who were asked refused. Most of the London Recruits were recruited by this method. Most were young workers. Two-thirds of the recruits were members of the Young Communist League, CPGB or both.

Some of the Recruits planted leaflet bombs — non-lethal devices, invented in Britain and tested in Bristol, the Somerset countryside, Hampstead Heath and Richmond Park, that distributed hundreds of leaflets high into the air — and street broadcasts using amplified cassette players often hitting five cities simultaneously. No-one was injured by these devices.

Other Recruits smuggled huge amounts of weapons into South Africa

from 1986 onwards (as told in the film *Secret Safari*).

Some posted thousands of smuggled letters and packages or carried messages to individuals. Some did reconnaissance or gathered information.

Some kept safe houses in Botswana, close to the South African border, helping fighters from MK, the SACP and ANC armed wing, cross over.

Some were Liverpool seamen who made a failed attempt to land MK fighters on the South African coast.

Some received training in the Soviet Union or Cuba.

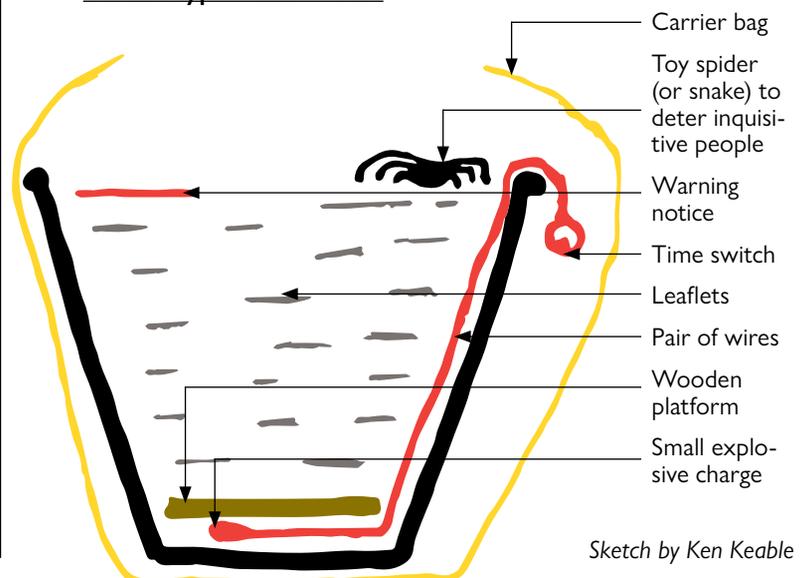
Three of the Recruits (all communists) were arrested, tortured and jailed.

The London Recruits did some kind of agitational work inside South Africa at least once a year every year from 1967 to 1973, hitting the headlines, proving that the ANC was alive and rallying support to MK.

A few of the London Recruits were mentioned in *Armed and Dangerous: My Undercover Struggle against Apartheid* by Ronnie Kasrils, published 1993. Much more was told in *London Recruits: The Secret War against Apartheid* by Ken Keable, Merlin Press 2012. More Recruits became known after this book was published and most of their stories appear on www.londonrecruits.org.uk.

In 2017, the South African Communist Party, at its national congress, honoured the London Recruits with its Special Recognition Award. Their contribution is also acknowledged by a special section in the Museum of the Armed Struggle at Liliesleaf Farm, Rivonia.

Bucket-type leaflet bomb



Sketch by Ken Keable

Answering the national question with socialism

THE PRESENT and future relationship between England, Scotland and Wales is one of the burning issues of British politics.

In four of eight Scottish opinion polls since the December 2019 general election, more Scots have expressed support for their country's independence than opposition. In two others, views have been evenly divided.

This is the most sustained pro-independence mood since a four-month period shortly after the Scottish independence referendum delivered a 55 per cent No vote in September 2014.

Brexit, the election of Boris Johnson's government and the different responses in Edinburgh and London to the Covid-19 crisis are doing nothing to swing the pendulum back towards the union of Great Britain.

Yet the labour movement cannot say it was not warned that the national question might one day explode in its face.

When the Labour Party and the trade unions abandoned "home rule all round" for Scotland, Wales and England (and Ireland previously) in the late 1920s, it was in the belief that social progress, even socialism, would be won by electing a Labour government with a majority of MPs in the Westminster parliament.

For much of the left — including the Communist Party, the ILP and Labour Party socialists and social-democrats — the policy of parliaments for Wales and Scotland was a diversion from



by Rob Griffiths

both reformist and revolutionary roads to socialism. Any political expression of patriotic sentiment in Scotland or Wales was seen as intrinsically reactionary, allowing the nationalist parties more space to promote ideologies which rejected working-class politics (albeit with little immediate success).

In R Palme Dutt's view, the ruling class had crushed English patriotism in order to fill the vacuum with jingoism, racism and an imperialist British nationalism. Politically, Scottish and Welsh patriot-

ism had been treated with contempt.

From the mid-1930s, however, the Communist International urged affiliated parties to seize the banner of patriotism and national self-determination from the conservatives and fascists. Working-class internationalism should be combined with a celebration of the progressive and revolutionary struggles and traditions of each nation's own history and culture.

This was the spirit which inspired the ground-breaking work of Communist Party historians such as AL Morton, Christopher Hill, Dona Torr, Margot Heinemann, Dorothy Thompson and Rodney Hilton with

their "people's histories" of England: history from below.

The likes of George Thomson, TE Nicholas and the iconoclastic Hugh MacDiarmid promoted the Celtic languages and cultures, expressing democratic and socialist ideas and aspirations through them.

Politically, and almost alone on the left in 1938, the Communist Party began to advocate self-government for Wales and Scotland as instruments to serve the interests their peoples and of the working class generally.

The refusal of the Labour Party, with honourable exceptions, to take

the national question seriously enabled Plaid Cymru and the SNP to make their big breakthrough from 1966.

Even so, Communists such as Mick McGahey and Jimmy Milne won back the Scottish TUC for legislative devolution, while Dai Francis and D Ivor Davies played leading parts in the struggle to establish the Welsh TUC with a similar policy.

But continuing and widespread Labour hostility eventually provoked the SNP to join the Tories in bringing down the Labour government and installing Margaret Thatcher in 10 Downing Street in 1979.

Eighteen years of right-wing rule from London laid the basis for victory for Labour's proposed Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly in the 1997 referendums. Since these were established, their lack of economic powers and financial resources have been exposed in the face of neoliberalism, austerity and privatisation.

Nor has the question of national self-determination and devolution for England been seriously addressed, least of all by the labour movement.

Today, once again, it is the Communist Party and its closest allies on the left who lead the discussion, proposing progressive federalism: an equal partnership of the Scottish, English and Welsh peoples, based on labour movement unity, a redistribution of wealth from the capitalist class to the working class, extensive powers of intervention in the capitalist market and the devolution of powers repatriated from the EU as a result of Brexit.



COMRADES: MPs Phil Piratin (Stepney) and Willie Gallacher (West Fife)

Reds on green benches

SEEKING communist representation in parliament was a hotly contested issue at the first Unity Conference in 1920, with those who wanted to engage in the parliamentary struggle winning the day.

The party had a couple of early successes, winning two seats in the first general election it contested in 1922.

J Walton Newbold was elected as a Communist in Motherwell with widespread local labour movement support.

Shapurji Saklatvala was elected for Battersea North on a Labour ticket. Although Labour had rejected the Communist Party's bid to affiliate, individual communists were still allowed to be Labour members until 1925 so Saklatvala was endorsed as Labour candidate.

They both lost their seats at the second 1922 general election.

Saklatvala regained the Battersea

by Mike Squires

seat two years later. This time standing as a Communist but supported by the local Labour Party and trades council. He remained the MP until 1929.

Newbold left the Communist Party in 1924, rejoining Labour and going on to support Ramsay MacDonald in the 1931 split.

Communists would re-enter parliament in 1935 when Willie Gallacher was elected to West Fife. Phil Piratin won Stepney, east London, to join him in 1945 but both were defeated in 1950.

What did these Communist MPs have in common?

All but one remained loyal party members, even after losing their seats.

There were a diverse group. One Indian, one Jewish and two Scottish, what united them was their popularity with their local labour movement.

They had all been at the centre of many struggles. Against fascism, for Indian Independence, strikes on the Clyde, action against racketeering landlords.

In line with communist strategy, election to parliament was not the end, but only the beginning. They used it to popularise working-class demands. Keeping their constituents informed, and publishing their actions in Parliament with leaflets, pamphlets and other publicity for distribution to the wider public.

They showed that the goals of winning a socialist majority in parliament is only part of the equation. Progress needs struggles in all spheres of activity, the class struggle being central.

Parliament and extra-parliamentary struggle are two sides of the same coin. One reinforces the other.

Previous Communist MPs are a shining example of how this can be done.

REVOLT OF THE FIELD: Communists at Tolpuddle in 2015 and (below) distributing the re-established Country Standard



Active reps must have a real class grounding

TRADE UNION activists — reps, shop stewards, and others active in the union democratic structures — are the unsung heroes of our workplaces. They take their trade union duties very seriously and most continue to help their fellow workers on collective and individual issues well into their own time.

The activist's journey probably begins with seeing that others need help at work and volunteering or being pushed into the role.

The unfairness in most work situations is obvious and some reps may see trying to better balance this as the limit of their involvement.

Others may want to challenge things at a higher level and work within their union structures to take on their company or other employer, recognising that the policies of the workplace are set at that level. The union may or may not encourage local reps to push for such wider actions and support beyond the workplace.

Trade union training may take reps to a level of political awareness where they do not accept that their relationship with management, and challenges to it, depend purely on the workplace.

They understand that necessary improvements can't be made without changes in the law and the balance of power between the bosses and the workers. Without this level of consciousness the rep will be less likely to win the best for the workers in their workplace.

However, knowing that laws need to be changed and the balance of power altered is not enough. To understand the structural contradictions built into capitalist economies, that companies tend towards maximising profits to meet shareholder demands and this is usually in direct conflict with maintaining pay and conditions for workers, is essential knowledge for trade unions, their staff and representatives.

Even that level of understanding will hold us back if we don't get the international workings of transnational corporations and the history and motivation of imperialism. They determine government policies and actions and so the environment that employers operate within, which at some point will inevitably conflict with the interests of workers.

It is this class consciousness and an understanding of Marxism that the Communist Party can provide you with. The class struggle will continue and for us to eventually become the class that governs we need class conscious trade unionists.

ANDY BAIN

Sharpen the sickle

A NOTABLE casualty of the Black Death in 1348 was feudalism. The pandemic returning in 1361 and 1369 cut a huge hole in the agricultural workforce.

The resultant labour shortage led the feudal lords to tie down their serfs ever-tighter, refusing them the right to buy their freedom.

Together with the imposition of the hated poll tax and the rise of merchants requiring paid labour, their rebellious mood culminated in the Peasants Revolt of 1381, a precursor to the end of serfdom.

Sometimes characterised as deferential, farmworkers, on the contrary, have a long and honourable history of standing up to the landed gentry, the squirearchy, the church, judiciary and employers who could kick you out of the tied cottage which often went with your job.

Witness the six men of Dorset, the Tolpuddle Martyrs transported to Australia in 1834 for the crime of forming a union branch to fight cuts in their miserable pay. An action that brought such huge demonstrations from a nascent labour movement that they had to be brought back home.

Think too of Joseph Arch leading the National Agricultural Labourers Union from his Warwickshire base later in the 19th century, to be followed in 1906 by the formation in Norfolk of the NUAW under George Edwards.

By the time I came to work at its Headland House HQ in 1974, they had added an extra 'A' to the title of

by Chris Kaufman

National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers in 1968.

The NUAAW newspaper, which I went on to edit, told readers: "The new name will be welcomed by our forestry, land drainage, roadmen and British Sugar members, besides the growing membership in industries like poultry processing and packing."

Until the late 1970s a right-wing union leadership had kept Communist Party members at arms length. But this did not stop inspiring work from a number of CP members including Arthur Jordan in Dorset, Jack Dunman in Oxford and the towering figure of Wilf Page in Norfolk.

It was Wilf who wrote the Party pamphlet *Farming to Feed Britain* on behalf of the CP Agricultural Advisory Committee in 1976. It propounded policies for farmers, farmworkers and consumers which have mostly stood the test of time.

Indeed, the updated edition of *Britain's Road to Socialism* draws on that work, calling for "sustainable agriculture and fisheries" to replace "degradation and depletion, with support for ecologically efficient producers and maximum possible re-use, recycling and safe disposal of all forms of waste."

The formidable Jack Boddy's accession to NUAAW general secretary then reflected a leftward move in the union and much of the *Farming to Feed Britain* agenda chimed with the union's enhanced campaigning agenda.

That included the production of a

publication championing land nationalisation called *Planning or Privilege*.

Norfolk activist Dougie Osrick told the union conference: "God made the land for the people. He never said anything about those lords and ladies owning it." Ironically, it won support from CP member Lord Milford, formerly Wogan Phillips!

Often the issues first raised by the union had wider relevance for workers and the community. The campaign for a ban on the use of the weedkiller 245T led to the involvement of all unions and the public in imposing a people's ban (shops stopped selling it to gardeners) despite the familiar story of the government hiding behind the "independent scientists." It was the first TUC-wide environmental campaign.

The CP's *Country Standard*, with its banner "For peace and socialism in the countryside" was established in 1935 under a succession of editors from Dunman, Wynn and Page to several comrades who have revived and invigorated it, not least the late lamented Mike Pentelow, has continued in support of progressive causes in the last decade.

Now a section in the T&G successor union Unite, the rural and crucial allied industry workers are able to use the clout of a larger union to recruit and organise many

thousands of workers, for example, in the meat industry.

The highly effective shop stewards combine has been able to bring powerful supermarkets to the bargaining table to win better conditions, especially for migrant agency workers at the meat processing plants.

Successful long battles to set up the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (and its successor body); the establishment of the Ethical Trading Initiative for international labour standards and legal systems for controlling the use of agrochemicals show that it is not simply the five million

workers in our countryside, but workers across industries, continents and the community at large who benefit from the solidarity they have shown for their country cousins.



With a combined YCL/Party membership of 116 years,

MARGARET and MARTIN LEVY

send greetings to all comrades on this centenary, while remembering all the women and men of the Communist Party who led, encouraged and inspired us.

**The past we inherit,
the future we build!**

In memory of Roy Green (1918-2000)

a pioneer of the Cornwall Branch of the CPB

1959-2000

JIMMY PRENDERGAST

Irish Worker's Group (CPI), Lenin International School, Moscow, XV International Brigade wounded at Jarama, National Union of Railwaymen (Marylebone branch secretary)

Smashed the colour bar on British Rail!

Ted Hollamby

(1921-1999)

David Gregory Jones

(1925-1994)

Communists and Young Turks of the LCC architects housing department with a common goal of social progress and a view of architecture that was "anti-monumental, anti-stylistic, and fit for ordinary people."

CENTENARY GREETINGS TO COMRADES OF THE BRITISH PARTY FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION (CPB) AND THE GROWING YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE

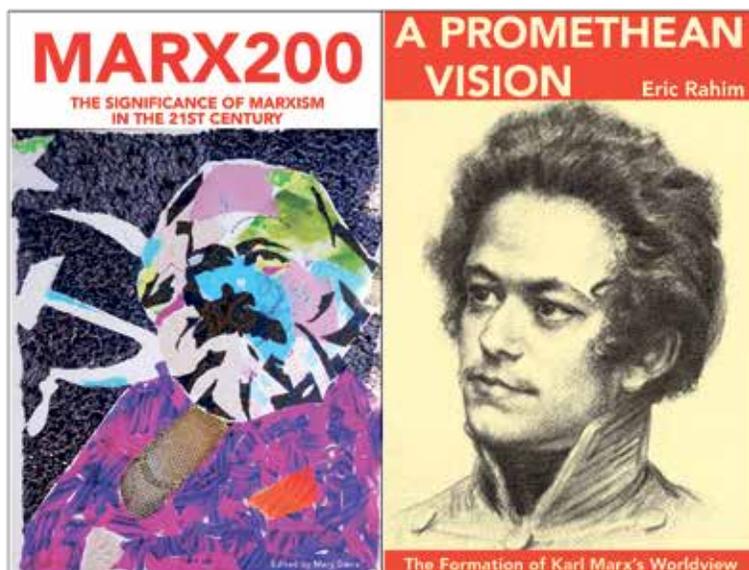
**Mick Costello,
Maidstone, Kent**

National Assembly of Women



Pays tribute to the contribution made by communist women in the formation of our organisation in 1952 and the continued support of our sisters in the fight for peace, equality and socialism.

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HAPPY CENTENARY CPB

www.wcml.org.uk/explorefromhome

Follow us via [wcmlibrary](#) on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to keep up to date with what is happening

My road to socialism...

Communist Party membership has been booming in our centenary year. Some of our newest members explain why they dedicated themselves to the finest cause in the world

ZOE

I FIRST GOT into politics when I was around 14 or 15. My initial politics weren't shaped by Marxist or feminist theory, but just my own lived experiences of being a young woman in a patriarchal, capitalist society.

I had always enjoyed politics at school, especially debates and discussions involving class, feminism, or human rights.

I have quite a vivid memory of the

tampon tax being debated in parliament. The wider discourse around this made me realise how women, under capitalism, will always come second to men, and this is even more pertinent when economics are brought into play.

Around the time of the above being debated, I was also starting to take notice of what Jeremy Corbyn was saying in the chamber and in his bid for Labour leadership.

I remember seeing a clip of Corbyn throughout the years, consistently

being against war and poverty and all the other things which had defined my childhood under Blair and then later Cameron and Clegg.

My road to socialism wasn't started by Jeremy Corbyn alone, but he was the only politician to give me the hope that a better world was possible, one built on compassion and solidarity, not wars, private property and greed.

His successes were huge: he politicised an entire generation into actively working towards public ownership and

strikes, even though most of us don't remember a time when they happened freely and frequently.

My road to socialism and class politics has not been a particularly fast one and I feel honoured every day to have my roles within the party, as well as having brilliant comrades.

As Angela Davis said: "Yes, I am a communist, and I consider it one of the highest honours, because we are struggling for the total liberation of the human race."

PHIL

MY ROAD TO socialism started when I joined the military at 16 straight from school. After a couple of years I started to become disillusioned with it and questioned what I was actually a part of. I came to the opinion that I was just a part of the US war machine.

We carried out exercise after exercise with Nato allies on the doorstep of countries the US deemed hostile. I thought we wouldn't like this on our own doorstep.

The final straw for me was when a cocky US Navy officer came onboard to thank us all for doing our job properly. It just put it into perspective for me that I'd spent months on end in the Middle East following US orders.

I left the military and soon realised why so many veterans suffer when they leave. I can see why so many end up homeless, turn to drink and drugs or even take their own lives.

I got myself back to sea again as a merchant seafarer as it was all I knew.

I soon joined my union. My shipmates pushed this on me straight away and clued me up with the situation seafarers were going through. I thought I'd made the wrong choice going back to sea.

The industry itself isn't in decline, it's just British seafarers that are on the decline.

I don't resent international seafarers. I resent the shipping companies which pay less to foreign labour who won't stand up to them as most don't have unions representing them.

The shipping companies are based in tax havens and fly under a flag of convenience paying that country a pittance to what it would here.

The workers pay British taxes but the billionaires avoid them.

After a while my new career started to disgust me as much as the navy. It was capitalism having a negative affect on workers' rights and having a total disregard for us — as long as the money keeps rolling in.

During the coronavirus, one profession seems to have been forgotten once again by the government and public.

Shipping brings in 90 per cent of goods to this country. Our supermarkets would be empty and people would be without medication if it weren't for shipping.

I saw it as a natural decision to join the Communist Party as I could identify with its beliefs and most of all I share its morals wanting to destroy the class divide that plagues all workers and the downtrodden.

The party is growing by the day and people are realising how unfairly the system is we live under even more so now with the coronavirus showing the blatant gaps in our society.

I'd recommend anybody joining the Party who has passion and wants a better society for us all.

ORIGINALS: Delegates to the Unity Congress in 1920



DAISY

I JOINED THE Communist Party after one of my friends Michael introduced me to it. He was able to explain to me and my boyfriend about it in depth and what it means to be a communist and I realised that it's what I've always believed in I just never joined a party for it.

I met Party members and they were lovely people who educated me more hence I chose to join.

Also, as someone from a socialist country, if I was to pick a party where I'm at, I'd have to go with the Communist Party it's close to what we believe in Tanzania.

I joined the Communist Party because I believe in stateless and classless society, a central planned economy, and common ownership for the means of production you know just everyone and everything should be beneficial and equal in all aspects and I think that's what the party is trying to achieve.

I joined the Communist Party because in this whole world the only party that is truly fighting for the liberation of every human being is this one. For example in the YCL they have done a lot for the community and are still doing their best to help those in need.

SCOTT

I AM A trade union rep for the RMT and standing up for workers' rights and the working class has always been a passion of mine.

For years I had seen the flaws in the system, living through the global crash and seeing my family struggle for work, leaving school and looking for a job and later seeing communities brutalised through years of austerity.

However even having the experiences of the negatives, I never knew how to overcome them. I knew a radical alternative of how society should be ordered was needed.

I started looking into working class his-

tory and seeing that communist movements all over the world have always led the charge for social change. This led me to start reading Marx and Lenin.

After a giant Tory majority and a pandemic where workers are being sacrificed for the status quo, I knew there was no better time to get organised.

I will admit at first I was a little hesitant about joining, I don't know whether that was due to me being relatively new to Marxism, but I now know I had nothing to worry about and that joining was the best decision I could have made.

There is always someone on hand willing to help or discuss things with you. This enabled me to become involved straight away, along with being asked to speak at a recent Red Wedge event, I

LAURA

I LARGELY CREDIT the autobiographies of Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X with shifting my vague high school perception of politics to a more developed, radical approach.

Further reading on race, empire and colonialism cemented the link between social inequality and economic oppression, which formed the foundation of my later appreciation of Marxist theory.

While at university, I read core com-

munist texts (the Manifesto, Capital, etc) in order to inform my social and historical analysis of literary fiction.

At this point, my views were informed by Marxism, but still marred by the hypocritical idealism common to campus politics — "radical," but still wishing to succeed within the capitalist system.

It is only my experience of the working world post-university which fixed my student political analysis in a real social context. Living and working in a post-industrial Lancashire town uncovered contradictions in my

then-simplistic conception of Marxism. Radical social media soundbites and edgy memes are lost on the general working class, for whom revolutionary politics seems a childish daydream. In reality, the only way communists can appeal to the broad working class is if our narrative is informed by relevant theory. Sound ideas — developed through the application of Marx's method to the specific circumstances of the 21st century — delivered by those who can relate to the working class on both an economic and cultural level.

The Party is full of people from all walks of life committed to learning, committed to teaching and committed to changing things for the better, so I urge you to get organised and join — and those who have recently joined I implore you to hold nothing back in our fight to realise Britain's Road to Socialism.

10 GOOD REASONS

to join the Communists

- 1 Communists **unite**: in our Party we are a force for collective action across the workers' movement
- 2 Communists are **internationalists**: we support the workers of the world, by relentlessly fighting British imperialism
- 3 Communists stand for **equality**: we strive to remove all forms of exploitation and oppression
- 4 Communists are **revolutionaries**: we apply the theories of Marxism to the class struggle and show that workers can win
- 5 Communists challenge the **ideology** of capitalism: we educate and organise workers to raise political consciousness of the need for socialism
- 6 Communists have a **proud history**: we respect and learn from our history but don't get lost in it
- 7 Communists have a **programme**: Britain's Road to Socialism challenges every aspect of the capitalist system
- 8 Communists fight for **popular sovereignty**: as democrats, we oppose membership of Nato and the EU bosses' club
- 9 Communists fight for **progressive federalism**: we are for the unity of the working peoples of England, Scotland and Wales in a federated Britain
- 10 Communists fight for the **workers' paper**: we are proud of the Morning Star and its 90 years of achievement

Why not join us?

www.communistparty.org.uk/join/

A Party organising for Britain's future

THE COMMUNIST PARTY has big plans for the future. We are focused on fighting the battle of ideas, tackling the immediate effects of capitalism especially unemployment, inequality and austerity, organising workers to uproot the power of the monopolies and opening up the road to socialism.

We have major events planned as soon as it's safe to get together again. We want you to get involved!

Salute the Brigaders

In co-operation with the International Brigades Memorial Trust, we're organising a weekend of solidarity to mark the contribution of the Volunteers for Liberty regardless of party affiliation, if any. We plan to hold wreath ceremonies and public gatherings at the many statues and commemorative spaces dedicated to the Brigaders.

Red Lives

Publishing on 1 August 2020 and available from our online store (shop.communistparty.org.uk), the new book tells the individual stories of over 100 communists and their struggle for socialism.

The editors wrote an open call for biographies of "ordinary and rank-and-file activists of the CP and YCL" in September 2019 and were so overwhelmed there'll have to be a second volume. This first, priced £9.99, paints the picture of the remarkable men and women who gave their all for a better world and did much to shape the society we live in.

The Reds

Centenary film The Reds brings together previously unseen footage of the struggle of the Communist Party and wider organised working class since the 1920s. Expect rare interviews with legendary figures and a thematic account of a 100-year struggle for socialism. The film will be available as a free download at the CP YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/CommunistParty) and is a great introduction to meetings.

CP history

For the first time ever, the Communist Party is publishing a book spanning its whole history so far. Other volumes have covered specific periods but this edition, the product of 15 writers and editor Professor Mary Davis, views a 100-year arc of political development, achievement and set-back, closely mirroring the development of the workers' movement. It is a must-read and will be sold at a very reasonable price to make it available to all.

Women and Class

A new edition of the Communist Party publication Women and Class

in book format, written by Professor Mary Davis is available from our online store (shop.communistparty.org.uk). The book, which has sold out time and again, traces the roots of women's exploitation and oppression, taking in contemporary debates and a call to action, in The Women's Charter.

Travelling exhibition

A travelling exhibition is ready to hit the road as soon as the situation allows, and there are already bookings the length and breadth of Britain — so many we've had to have three sets made up to cover everywhere. It's got enough information to keep the attention of newcomers and seasoned Communists alike.

Remember Cable Street

In October, the Communist Party will host an anti-racist and anti-fascist event to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street. It will not only discuss the historical role of the Party in the anti-racist and anti-fascist struggle but also contemporary racism and fascism, demonstrating our continuing focus on the unity of working class communities.

Future of work

The Party is planning to organise a Future of Work conference, bringing together trade unionists and researchers, planners and campaigners to discuss Marxism and technology, including AI and how to fight for jobs.

Political education

New courses of political education are being developed and made available on the CP website (www.communistparty.org.uk/education) where they follow a popular format, designed to encourage collective study and discussion. New courses in the pipeline include Women and Class; Establishing Class Organisation in Workplaces; and Anti-racism and Anti-fascism.

Residential school

The CP is bringing together the next generation of union and party organisers to acquire the skills of building the labour movement anew, at a residential weekend

LIVING HISTORY: Part of the centenary exhibition

school for young organisers, in the north of England.

Following on from the successful Kevin Halpin School, named after a past CP industrial organiser, those attending will be able to use the full range of learning techniques to develop the politics and organising skills needed for class struggle. Some places on the course are open to those who are considering joining.

Digital steps

As the pandemic hit, the CP built a new website packed with information and resources, using the latest technologies. This allowed us to conduct meetings, education and campaigning online. It's linked to a database project which will open up a whole new layer of campaigning potential for local branches. In addition, we have established an all-Britain YouTube channel, which will carry films of meetings and events.

New branches

Across England, Scotland and Wales, the Party has been growing, in some areas rapidly and in places we have wanted to establish local campaigning capacity for a long time. New branches are springing up to take the message of Britain's Road to Socialism to every locality. If you want to join, go to our joining page (www.communistparty.org.uk/join) and you will be contacted by a local Party representative. If you want to start a new branch with workmates or other activists, get in touch.

YCL centenary

April 2021 starts the centenary of the Young Communist League, which will celebrate its birthday in style and with a year of full-on campaigning. The YCL has been busy opening new branches and conducting political education for its many new recruits. The best way to celebrate the centenary is to join Britain's fast-growing revolutionary youth movement.

LIZ PAYNE & PHIL KATZ

