

PREPARING **FOR** POWER

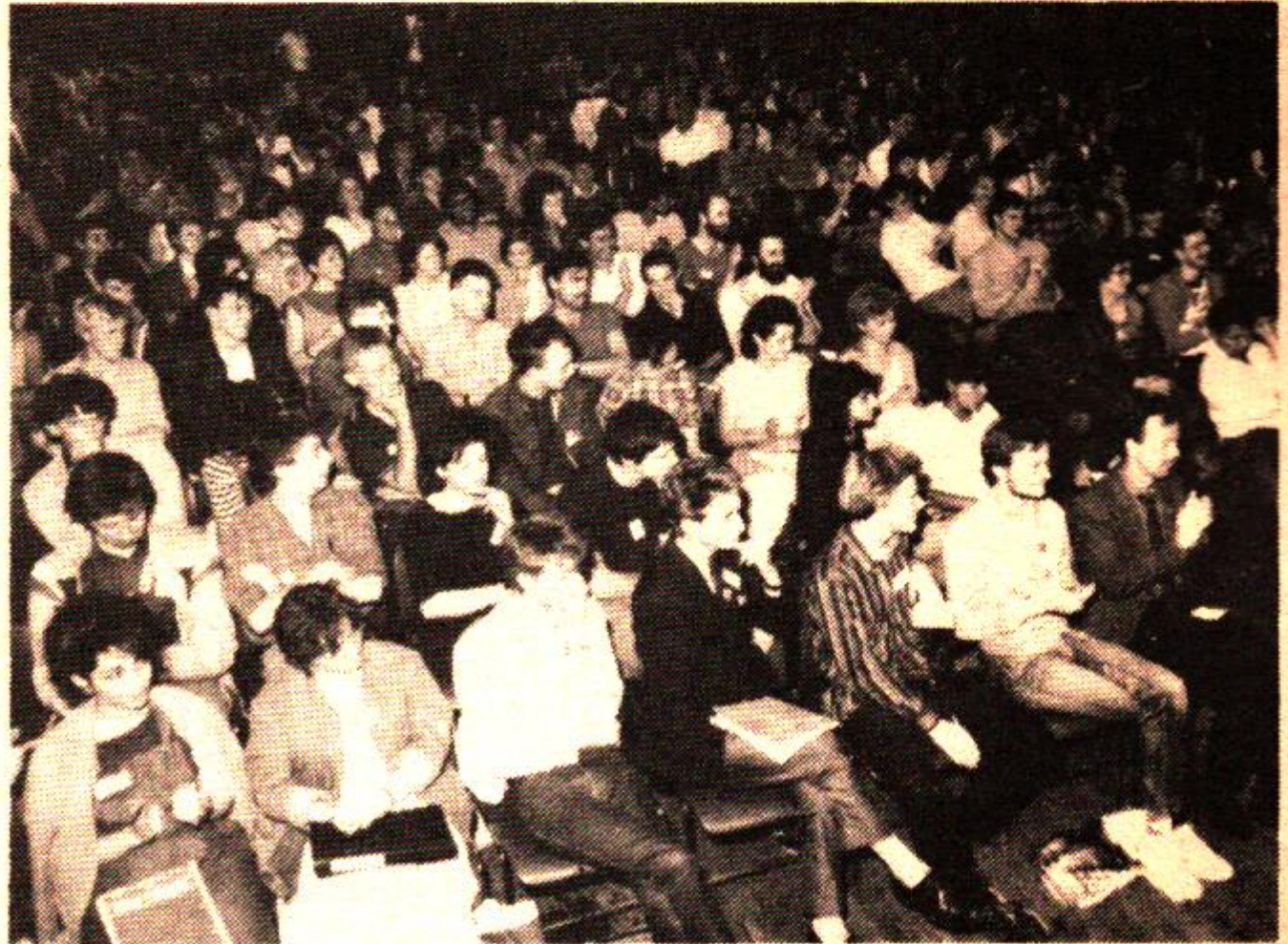


Preparing for Power, Summer
1985
week-long fighting conference
of the Revolutionary Communist
Party

●
Friday 19 July – Friday 26 July
University of London Union,
Malet Street, LONDON WC1
AGENDA & ARRANGEMENTS
30p

RCP

PREPARING FOR POWER



Summer 1985

Opening Saturday plenary discussion on *The class struggle worldwide* introduced by Mike Freeman, editor of *the next step*

- 64 workshops — subjects include *Thatcherism*, *Scargillism*, *star wars* and *test-tube babies*
- 13 specialist courses in Marxist theory — from *Ireland* through the *Russian Revolution* to *Religion & the decline of capitalism*
- Central London location
- Swimming pool, sports facilities
- shops, bar, music
- creche and accommodation
- Cheap transport from every major British city
- Revolutionary visitors from America and Europe
- Concluding boat trip up the Thames

Price: £15 for the week (£12 unwaged), or £5 for the weekend of 20-21 July only (£3 unwaged).

Boat trip £6 all-in

Introduction

Power is the issue of the eighties. Power was at the centre of the battle between the coal board and the miners. Power inspires Shiite suicide raids and Reagan's death squads in El Salvador. The new technology is powerful, but not powerful enough to deliver Ethiopia from famine or humanity from AIDS. Thatcher still has some power, Gorbachev would like more, and the Labour Party seems to have lost it for good.

Power is the dynamic of our times. The Revolutionary Communist Party is interested in power — in particular, in winning it for the British and international working class. We organise action to strengthen the power of workers in struggle. We campaign in support of women, blacks, the Irish and anybody else fighting for their rights against the power of the establishment. We publish books, videos and a weekly paper. Now, at our largest conference of the year, we want to talk with and listen to you — about power.

We need to understand today's power relations, get behind the charade of Labour and trade union power politics and build a power of our own. To become the real *enemy within*, we need fresh insight, fresh organisation and real power politics. On the first Friday night of Preparing for Power, and all day Saturday, we'll be looking at the key issues of the eighties. There will be both full-scale plenary discussions and smaller, more informal workshops. From Sunday, a total of 13 five-day specialist courses begin. Intended to build up a well-rounded grasp of different aspects of Marxism among a group of regular participants, the specialist courses run as follows:

- 1 Introduction to Marxism
- 2 Introduction to Marxist economics
- 3 The rise and fall of Labourism
- 4 The Britishness of British politics
- 5 Leninism: the politics of liberation
- 6 Marxism for non-beginners
- 7 The West and the South

- 8 The Russian Revolution
- 9 Religion and the decline of capitalism
- 10 The roots of racism
- 11 Women: their morals and ours
- 12 An anti-imperialist's guide to the Irish War
- 13 The West and the Eastern bloc

Throughout the week we'll be having a variety of debates in late afternoon workshops (4.30-6.30pm). Evenings will be taken up with lighter plenaries and entertainment — music, films, dance. Cheap transport will be available from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Bristol, Leeds, Wakefield, Sheffield, Bradford, Huddersfield, Pontefract, Nottingham, Coventry, Birmingham, Manchester and Brighton. Accommodation: please let us know if you need somewhere to stay — and bring a sleeping bag. A professionally-staffed creche will be available free throughout the conference. Phone now to book a place.

The University of London Union is near Goodge Street (Northern line) and Warren Street (Victoria line) tubes; it is due east of Tottenham Court Road. The building has a swimming pool, a gym and a full bar: it is also near a number of cheap restaurants. The concluding boat trip promises to form the highpoint of the conference: food and drink is included in the price of boarding.

Registration is by the form below: make cheques out to RCP Association and send to BM RCP, London WC1N 3XX. Your PFP ticket, badge and final timetable will be ready for you at the registration desks, which will be open from 4pm to 10pm on Friday 19.

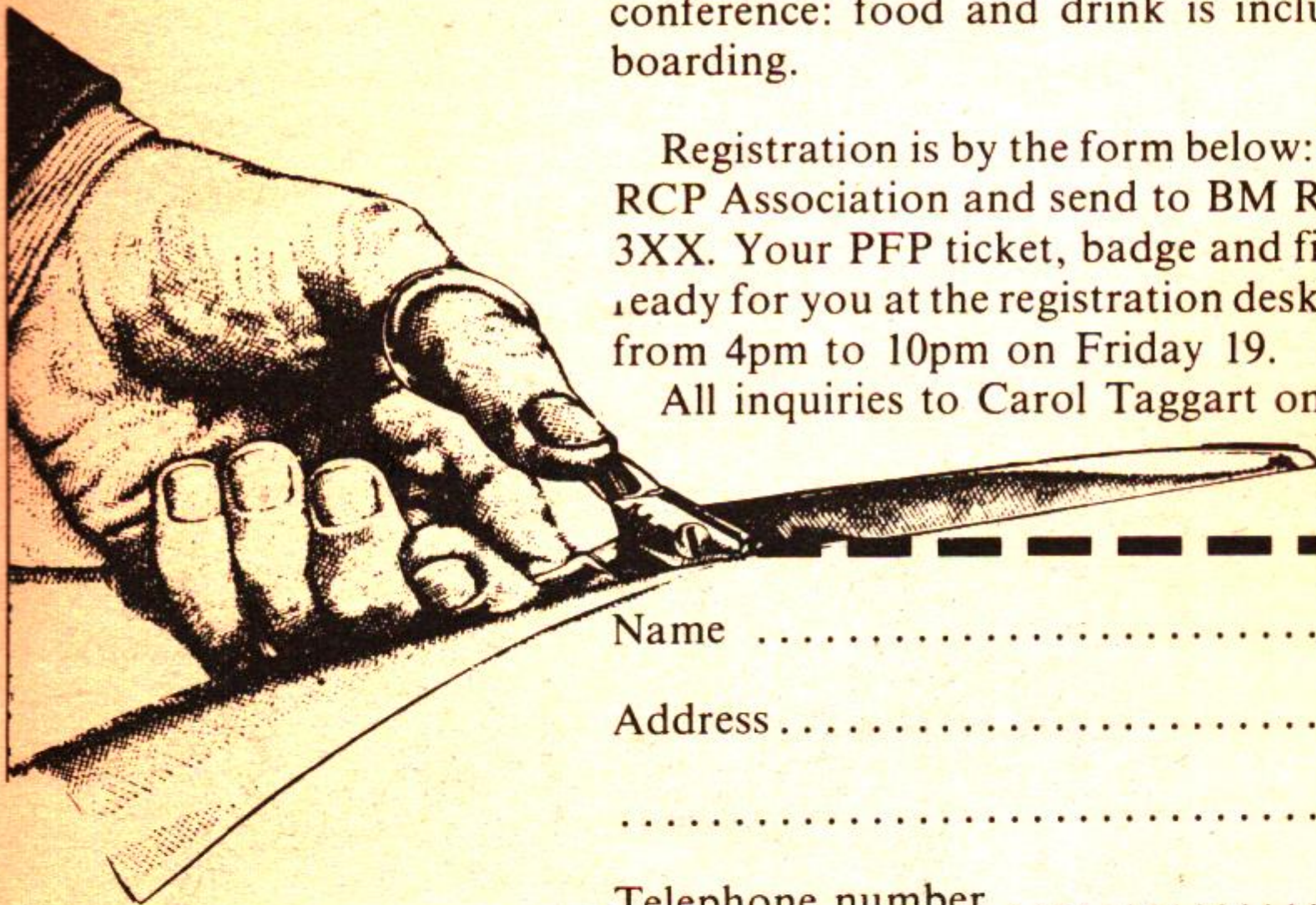
All inquiries to Carol Taggart on (01) 729 0414

Name

Address

Telephone number

I need creche facilities	☐	Price paid:	
		£12 unwaged	☐
		£15 full week	☐
		£5 weekend only	☐
I need accommodation	☐	£3 unwaged	☐
		£6 Boat trip	☐





Weekend

Friday night



Registration desks open from 4pm to 10pm. Bar open from 5.30pm to 11pm. Choice of three plenary discussions, each beginning at 8pm:

- 1 The royal family and the royal 'we'.** What is this Britain we're supposed to be part of? Is Princess Diana a fascist? Blue-blooded *Mick Hume* takes a stroll up to Buckingham Palace.
- 2 Sex and the British ruling class.** Author and women's rights activist *Kate Marshall* discusses the private lives of Mrs Thatcher, Cecil Parkinson and all the rest.
- 3 Preparing for Power: a beginners' guide to the RCP.** By *Frank Richards*.



9-10am Late registrations

10.30am-12.30pm Full plenary discussion: *Mike Freeman*, editor of *the next step*, on **The class struggle worldwide**

2-4pm **1 World Wars Two — and Three?** *Phil Murphy* and *James Wood* draw the lessons of Belsen and Stalingrad for 1985.
2 The left in continental Europe. *Sabena Norton* surveys the mess from Portugal to Papandreou.
3 The miners' strike in perspective. *Frank Richards* asks 'can the NUM be built to win next time?'

Saturday

4 Born in the USA. *Mick Hume* looks at the world of American youth.

5 Thatcher's targets. *Ann Burton* surveys Clive Ponting, picket-line militants, surrogate mothers, football hooligans and all the other people who get up Thatcher's nose.

6 Why workers should fight racism. *Joan Phillips* and *Kenan Malik* put immigration controls at the top of the trade union agenda.

7 Hating 'that woman' is not enough. *Keith Tompson* outlines the right way to fight the Tories.

4.30-6.30pm **8 Women: off the picket lines and into degrading part-time jobs?** *Jenny Morgan* and *Kate Marshall* look at women and work.

9 Kinnock and Hattersley, Skinner and Scargill, Healey and Benn. *Cathy Barrett* assesses the career prospects of today's Labour leaders.

10 'Socialist' councils — Red Ken's wage slave speaks out. *Don Mallory* reports from the County Hall bunker.

11 The banana skin factor. *Rob Knight* looks at splits in the ruling class and debates in the Tory Party.

12 The Irish dimension in British politics. *Carol Taggart* looks at the most menacing enemy within.

13 South Pacific. *Alan Harding* looks at the region that gave us Pearl Harbour and the Sony walkman

14 The Arab Revolution. *Inez Landa* and *Daniel Nassim* look at the spiral of conflict in the Middle East.

15 The African Revolution. *Jenny Graham* analyses Mugabe, Namibia — and Bishop Desmond Tutu.

8pm till late Live band and disco — and entertainment in the bar.

10.30am-12.30pm

- 1 Introduction to Marxism
- 2 Introduction to Marxist economics
- 3 Rise and fall of Labourism
- 4 The Britishness of British politics
- 5 Leninism: the politics of liberation
- 6 Marxism for non-beginners
- 7 The West and the South

2-4pm

- 8 The Russian Revolution
- 9 Religion and the decline of capitalism
- 10 The roots of racism
- 11 Women: their morals and ours

Sunday

- 12 An anti-imperialist's guide to the Irish War
- 13 The West and the Eastern Bloc



4.30-6.30pm

Full plenary: *Frank Richards* on The sources of stability and revolution in Britain

7.30-9pm

Evening workshops on:

- 1 Black resistance in South Africa *Jenny Graham*
- 2 The political levy and strike ballots *Keith Jackson* and *Helen Simons*
- 3 Who is watching you? State security in Britain *Andy Clarkson*
- 4 Scottish nationalism and the left *Mike Wall*
- 5 Anti-communism and the new right in Europe *Sabena Norton*
- 6 Star wars *James Wood*



Weekdays

Specialist courses run through till 4pm
Workshops 4.30-6.30 – seven to choose from each afternoon

4.30-6.30pm
British politics



The establishment
The far right who's who
Entrism and why the far left votes Labour
British militarism
Hooliganism, rioting and crime
Lloyd George and the Liberal/SDP Alliance
Trotskyism in Britain
The two Arthurs: Cook to Scargill
The British civil service
The working class
Strikes
Taking Control 1985
Sweated labour
Privatisation and the Trade Union Act
The TUC's new realism

4.30-6.30pm
International affairs



India
Famine in the Horn of Africa
Can there be a revolution in Germany?
Can there be a revolution in the USA?
Why yesterday's French Stalinists are today's French anti-communists
The Soviet Union under Gorbachev
Will Maoism come to Hong Kong
Apartheid and anti-apartheid
Israel and the USA
The PLO and the Palestinians
McCarthyism and anti-communism

4.30-6.30pm

Current issues



The NHS and the politics of medicine
Zionism and anti-semitism
What has happened to the peace movement
New technology
Technology and women
What about North Sea oil?
From Beveridge to Fowler: the collapse of the welfare state
The environment: why big can be beautiful
The media — how influential?
Is science a working class issue?
Do animals have rights?

4.30-6.30pm

Culture and heroes



Fashion
Irish jokes, rebel songs and the gaelic revival
Literature and revolution
Twentieth century design
Women in 19th century British fiction
The sixties: was it all fun?
Gramsci
Rosa Luxemburg
Trotsky
Marx and Freud



Evenings

From 7.30pm



Every evening will be packed with discussions, debate and entertainment. Throughout the week we will be showing communist and anti-communist films.

Monday



After the miners' strike — a round table discussion
Alan Harding on life north of the Watford Gap
Ann Burton on why Sylvia Pankhurst and her supporters
had the makings of a real revolutionary women's
movement
Rupert Murdoch vs *Marxism Today* — *tns* writers look at
the left press.
plus film show

Tuesday



The debate on the Soviet Union *Frank Richards*
The Bishop of Durham and the RCP *Mike Freeman*
Love and women's magazines *Cathy Barrett*
Discussion on the world economy *Tony Kelley, Inez*
Landa, Phil Murphy
plus entertainment

Wednesday



Kate Marshall and *Mick Hume* on Millwall fans and other
deviants
Moral panics under Thatcher
Frank Richards on British working class culture: has it got
one?
Discussion and debate on which way forward for the
working class
Sabena Norton: Marxism and art
plus film show

Thursday



'Any questions' with a panel of revolutionary
communists
Plus: surprise guests and debates — watch for further
announcements

Friday



Final full session, followed by a late night boat trip down
the Thames — complete with food drink and dancing —
£6 all in

Preparing for Power reading from Junius

Miners' strike

Our day will come: the miners' battle for jobs

Mike Freeman's controversial assessment of the lessons of the strike

50p (30p p&p)

The unions

Taking Control

Mike Freeman's handbook for trade union activists

£2.95 (85p p&p)

Ireland

The Irish War: Irish Freedom Movement handbook

The second, updated edition of this best-selling introduction to the Irish War

£2.95 (40p p&p)

Racism

The roots of racism

Workers Against Racism guide to action

£1.95 (40p p&p)

Women

Real freedom: women's liberation and socialism

Kate Marshall points the way forward in the fight for women's rights

£1.95 (90p p&p)

Women and the family

Moral panics and Victorian values

Kate Marshall's survey of their morals and ours

£1.50 (40p p&p)

Plus

Useful background reading

Bound volumes of *the next step* monthly covering the periods from September 1981 to December 1982 (Numbers 16-30) and from January 1983 to March 1984 (Numbers 31-45) are available at £15 each. Send cheques/POs payable to Junius Publications Ltd.

tns
the next step

Party time - why you need the RCP p6.7
Does the pill cause cancer? p5
Shlites at war with Israel p8

1

MINERS' FAMILIES SPEAK OUT 'Get my husband out of jail!'

Val Kestle's husband has
got two and a half years
for burning scab buses
during the miners' strike.
Val and the families of
other jailed Shroobroun
miners want something
done.

• Full story page 2.



tns
the next step

Kinnock and the left p8.7
Provocation in the pits p3
The truth about the IRA p5
Sex reforms in South Africa p6

2

THE POWELL BILL MEANS...

Women's rights down the tube

Even Powell's bill to
ban extra
women's rights is part of
the big plan to restrict
women's rights to
work and
education.

• Full story page 1



*Essential reading for
everybody who is preparing for
power. Weekly news and
comment on power politics in
Britain and abroad, in the labour
movement, the women's
movement and every other
movement fighting for a better
world.*

Annual subscription rates • Britain and
Ireland £19 • Middle East and North
Africa £26 • America, Asia and
Southern Africa £27 • Australasia £32
Europe £24 • Libraries, institutions £30
All cheques payable to Junius
Publications Ltd.

tns
the next step

Newham police riot p3
Pro life doctor debates p5
No Tory ballot rigging p4
Miners' elections p2

3

Irish freedom fighters are not British criminals Troops out now!

'I was only a working
class boy from a
nationalist ghetto, but
it is repression that
creates the spirit of
freedom. I shall not
settle until I achieve
the liberation of my
country, until Ireland
becomes a sovereign
independent socialist
republic.'

Bobby Sands died four years
ago this week. He was
a young man, the son of
an Irish mother and an
Irish father. He was
a member of the Irish
Republican Army and he
was a prisoner of war in
the British army. He was
a member of the Irish
Republican Army and he
was a prisoner of war in
the British army. He was
a member of the Irish
Republican Army and he
was a prisoner of war in
the British army.

• See centre pages



Specialist courses

We hope people will do some reading in preparation for these courses. All books can be ordered through the conference organiser. Everybody can choose two of the courses. Courses 1-7 are on in the mornings and 8-13 are run in the afternoon.

Introduction to Marxism

1

Convened by *Frank Richards*.

This course designed for beginners looks at theory as an analytical tool and as a weapon for action. It aims to show that Marxism is not an esoteric philosophy but an outlook that is readily accessible to those who want to change the world. Sessions on:

Historical materialism

Scientific socialism

Marx's theory of ideology

The Paris commune

The revolutionary party

Readings:

Marx: *Theses on Feuerbach* in *Marx and Engels collected works*, volume 5, p3-5

The German ideology, chapter 1 in *collected works*, volume 5, p27-93

On the Paris commune

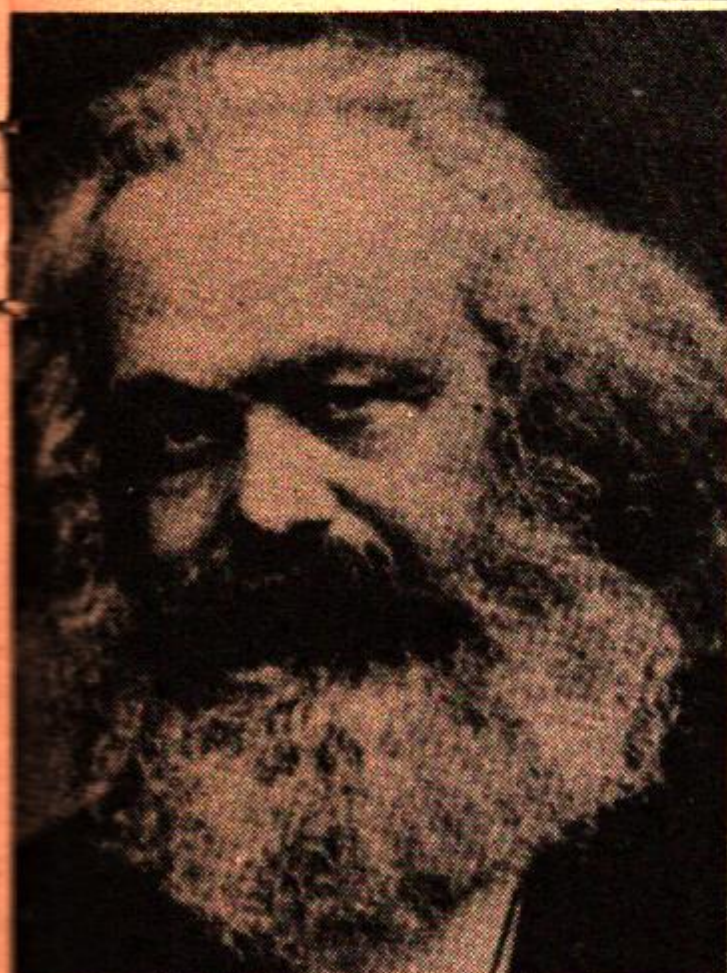
K Korsch: *Marxism and Philosophy*, p29-88

Three essays on Marxism, p11-38

The more ambitious should try

F Jakubowski: *Ideology and superstructure in historical materialism*, p13-65

2
**Introduction to
 Marxist economics**



Convened by *Helen Simons*.

This course is for activists who want to get to grips with Marx's *Capital*. Last year the discussions were very lively with many questions and disagreements as more experienced *Capital* readers tried to answer the problems raised by newcomers.

Sessions on:

Theory of value and capitalist society
 How the working class is exploited
 Capital accumulation and the basis for socialism
 The theory of crisis: why the rate of profit falls
 Imperialism, state intervention and war

Readings:

F Engels: *On Capital*
 P Mattick: *Marx and Keynes*, chapters 2-10
 Lenin: *Imperialism*
Revolutionary communist papers No 7

3
**The rise and fall
 of Labourism**

Convened by *Mike Freeman*.

This course examines the nature of Labourism and explains why it has been so influential for so long. We aim to put forward a unique analysis of Labourism, one that is at variance with the traditional views of the left.

Sessions on:

Dennis Healey: the Gromyko of the Labour Party
 Victor Grayson and the beast of Bolsover
 Clause 4: a study in duplicity
 Kinnock and Willis — breaking up is hard to do
 The rope and the hanging man

Readings:

L Trotsky: *On Britain*
 R Groves: *The strange case of Victor Grayson*
 E Heffer: *The class struggle in parliament*
 D Healey: *Labour and a world society*, Fabian Tract 501
 R Milliband: *Parliamentary socialism*
 RCP: *Slump socialism*
 F Richards: 'Prolonging the death agony: the rise, fall and reconstitution of social democracy' in *Revolutionary communist papers* No 8

4
***The Britishness
of British politics***



Convened by *Alan Harding*.

The object of this course is to examine the development of Britain into the first and most powerful imperialist nation, its decline from this position and the consequences for the labour movement. The historical strength of British capitalism has led to a remarkable continuity in institutions. It has also led to myths about the 'naturalness' of such institutions and the unique 'British character'. The course looks behind the myths, explains what really happened and why Britain will change.

Sessions on:

The peculiarities of British class relations
From Chartism to Labourism
Communists and the minority movement
Post-war class relations
The coming British revolution

Readings:

L Trotsky: *On Britain*

C Hill: *A century of revolution*

E Hobsbawm ed: *The turning point, readings in British labour history*

M Crick: *Scargill*

M Freeman: *Taking Control*

RCP: *Slump socialism*

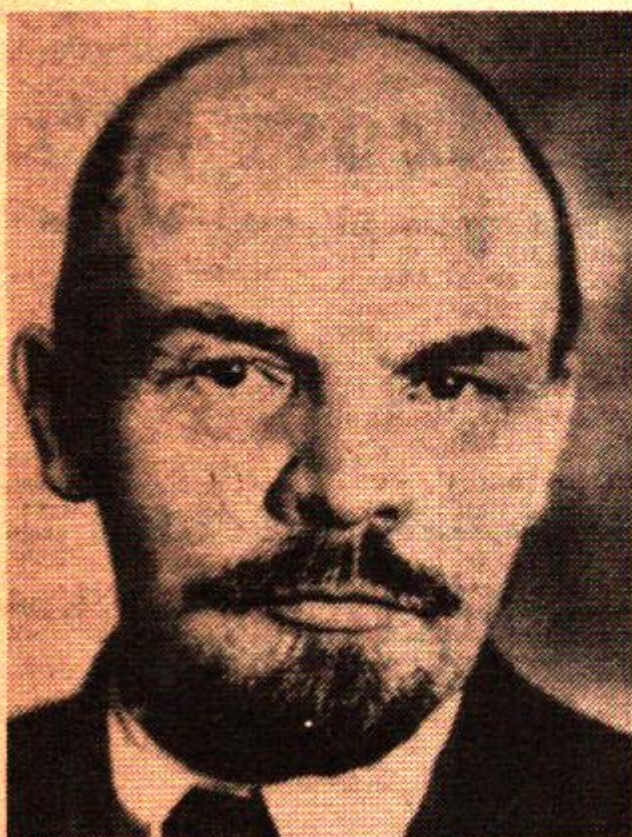
W Kendall: *The revolutionary movement in Britain*

K Middlemas: *Politics in industrial society*

5
***Leninism:
the politics of liberation***

Convened by *Rob Knight*.

The focus of this course is the relationship between Lenin's theory and the problem of revolution. It explains not only what Lenin said but also why he said it and draws out the relevance of this heritage for today. Throughout the course attention will be drawn to the main criticisms made against Lenin by the anti-Leninist left.



Sessions on:

The party

Democratic rights and political oppression

The state

Lenin and philosophy

The building of communism

Readings:

G Lukacs: *Lenin*

M Liebman: *Leninism under Lenin*

N Harding: *Lenin's political thought*

Lenin: *What is to be done?*

On the emancipation of women

State and revolution

Philosophical notebooks

6

**Marxism
for non-beginners**



Convened by *Sabena Norton*.

This is an ambitious course on the materialist method. Those who have not read *Capital* vol 1 or not done the course **Introduction to Marxism** will not profit from these discussions. We want a good working atmosphere so bring your notes and plenty of paper.

Sessions on:

Dialectics

The logic of *Capital*

Theory of value

Theory of imperialism

Marxism and revisionism today

Readings

Marx: Introduction to *A critique of political economy*

Theses on Feuerbach

The German ideology

K Korsch: *Marxism and philosophy*

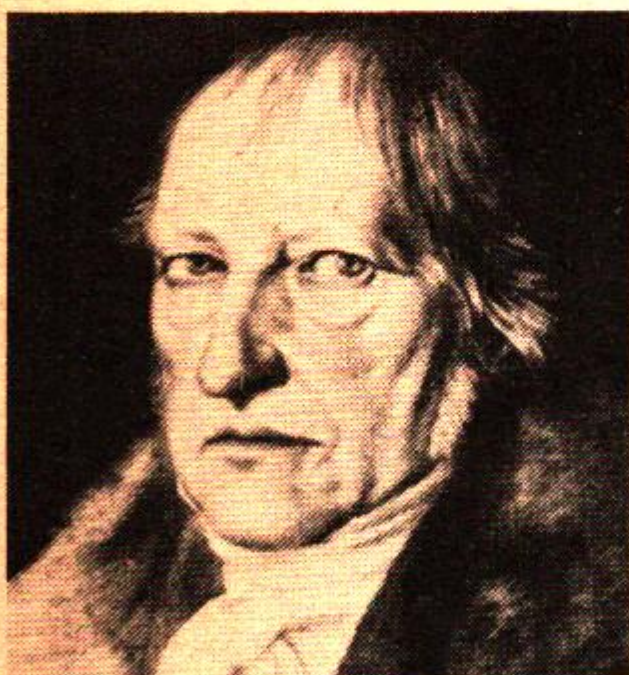
G Lukacs: What is orthodox Marxism? in *History and class consciousness*

E Ilyenkov: *The dialectics of the abstract and concrete in Marx's Capital*

J Zeleny: *The logic of Marx*

F Jakubowski: *Ideology and superstructure*

I Rubin: *Essays on Marx's theory of value*



7

The West and the South



Convened by *Inez Landa* and *Charles Longford*.

This course looks at the relationship between imperialism and the backward capitalist countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. The discussion will focus on the trouble spots that are always in the headlines.

Sessions on:

Famine and debt

Military juntas from left to right

The working class in the newly industrialised countries

Soviet 'imperialism'?

Anti-imperialist movements — results and prospects

Readings:

Lenin: *Imperialism*

EA Brett: *The world economy since the war*

J Steele: *World power*

T Hayter: *Aid*

Revolutionary communist papers Nos 5&6

8

The Russian Revolution



Convened by *Ann Burton*.

How did it happen? Why did it go wrong? The Russian Revolution was the single most important event this century. Yet, no event is so maligned, misunderstood and distorted. Whether we like it or not this revolution has come to shape both negatively and positively working class politics. So we might as well understand what happened.

Sessions on:

How the Bolsheviks won

Women and October

Britain and 1917

How Stalin triumphed

Could it happen here?

Readings:

A Rabinowitch: *The Bolsheviks come to power*

J Reed: *Ten days that shook the world*

M Ferro: *October 1917*

L Trotsky: *History of the Russian Revolution*

R Wade: *Red guards and workers' militias in the Russian Revolution*

A Shlyapnikov: *On the eve of 1917*

9 *The roots of racism*



Convened by *Joan Phillips*.

Joan Phillips clears away all the cant and sets the analysis of racism on a scientific footing. The course aims to show that racism is not an isolated issue but one that has profound implications for the working class as a whole. Many of the sessions will elaborate on the points raised in *Roots of racism*, the recently published analysis of Workers Against Racism. Sessions on:

Marx's theory of racism

Labour: architects of discrimination

The US experience

Racism in Europe

The communist tradition and racism

Readings:

P Fryer: *Staying power*

WAR: *Roots of racism*

Zig Layton Henry: *Race in British politics*

S Castles, Wallace and Booth: *Here for good*

R Miles: *Racism and political action in Britain*

Brookeman and Issel eds: *Race, reform and rebellion: the second reconstruction in Black America 1945-82*

10 *Religion and the decline of capitalism*



Convened by *Mike Freeman*.

Despite its decline, religion continues to play an influential role in politics. This course surveys the impact of religion and explains why millions are still moved to action by the call of God. Sessions on:

Marx on religion

Sectarianism in Liverpool and Glasgow

The moral majority in the USA

Islam

Liberation theology

Readings:

Marx & Engels: *On religion*

On Jewish question, collected works, volume 3

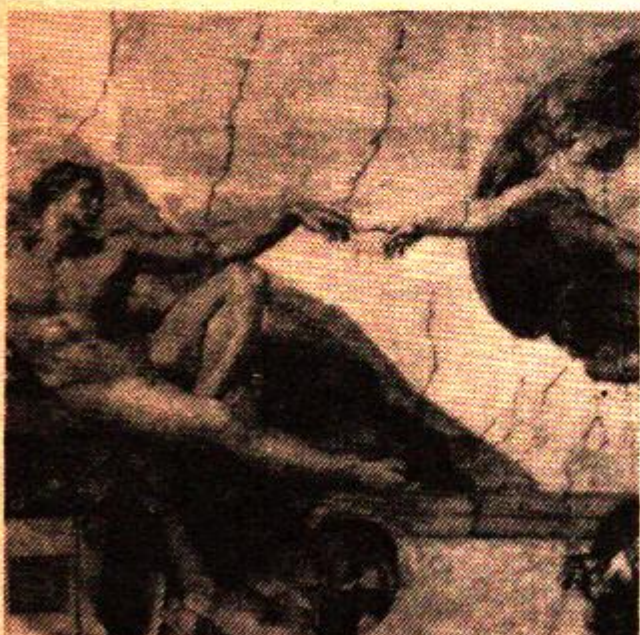
German ideology preface, parts 1,2 &3

E Mortimer: *Faith and power: the politics of Islam*

B Murray: *The old firm: sectarianism. sport and society in Scotland*

G Gutierrez: *A theology of liberalism*

M Paget-Wilks: *Poverty, revolution and the church*



11

Women: their morals and ours



Convened by *Kate Marshall*.

This course is on how to make a world where women are free. It will challenge the conventional left and feminist analysis of the causes of and remedies to the oppression of women. Its aim is to provide arguments against the present day ideological offensive against women's rights.

Sessions on:

Marx on the kitchen sink

Theories of patriarchy

Women and trade unions

Prostitution — a special case?

Will feminism and Marxism ever get married?

Readings:

Kate Marshall: *Real Freedom*

Marshall: *Moral panics and Victorian values*

S Benton: *Women and trade unions*

F Engels: *Origins of the family, private property and the state*

The Warnock report

R Rowland: *Women who do and women who don't join the women's movement*

12

An anti-imperialist's guide to the Irish war



Convened by *Mick Hume*.

Ireland is one of the most unpopular issues on the British left. For the RCP it is one of the most important. This course explains why Irish freedom has to be one of the key objectives of British revolutionaries. The Irish issue is often presented as complex and beyond the power of human understanding. Yet in reality it is one of the most exciting and straightforward questions facing the working class movement.



Sessions on:

Why Britain stays

Loyalism

The Catholic church

Class struggles in the South

The movement we need

Readings:

IFM: *An anti-imperialist's guide to the Irish war*

B Bell: *The secret army*

K Kelly: *The longest war*

M Farrell: *The orange state*

JH Whyte: *Church and state in modern Ireland*

Andy Clarkson: *The Loyalist working class in Revolutionary communist papers No 7*

13 *The West and the Eastern bloc*

Convened by *Phil Murphy*.

East-West tensions are the regular topic of international affairs. This course is designed to explain what's going on behind the headlines.

Sessions on:

The new Cold War

The Soviet Union and the arms race

China — is it going capitalist?

Cuba

Nicaragua

readings:

F Halliday: *The second Cold War*

J Steele: *World power*

EP Thompson ed: *Exterminism and cold war*

J Pearce: *Under the eagle*

M Chossudovsky: *Toward capitalist restoration in China*

