

Special Report

SPECIAL BRANCH

9th day of October 1975

SUBJECT

WRP

1. The following information has been received from a reliable source:-

Reference to Papers

588/75/17

2. "On Monday 6 October 1975, from 8 pm to 10.30 pm, at Chelsea Old Town Hall, Kings Road, SW3 an aggregate meeting for London members of the Workers Revolutionary Party was held to discuss the General Secretary's report on 'The campaign to defend the basic rights of the Party and the investigation into the police raids'. About 400 persons attended and the chairman was Sheila TORRANCE (Deputy General Secretary).

3. The meeting got underway half an hour later than anticipated and, after a brief introductory speech, TORRANCE called upon Gerry HEALY, the General Secretary, to give his report.

4. HEALY said that the raid on the Party's Education Centre was symptomatic of the deepening crisis of capitalism throughout the world. It was one of the preparatory stages of a Police/Military dictatorship. Similar signs could be seen throughout the world and the fascist dictatorship in Spain was preparing for a massacre of peasants and the working class.

5. In Britain the ruling class had suddenly become aware and frightened of the WRP, which it knew represented the working class. It now needed to smash the workers to ensure its own survival and to do this it needed to defeat their leadership. That meant the Party. In this first direct encounter the authorities had badly underestimated the WRP and they would be made to pay for it. In many ways it was a good sign because it meant that they had not grasped the nature of the WRP or its leadership. They had classified the WRP along with the revisionist band of the International Socialists and the International Marxist Group. He warned, however, that the ruling class should not be underrated because it had some powerful weapons at its disposal and would fight tooth and nail to survive. Pretence at democracy would disappear overnight but the Party was prepared for it.

6. The police raid had been carried out illegally. They had refused to let anyone see the search warrant and had kept Party members imprisoned for one and a half hours. HEALY said that the police had only let him and other leading members out because the students had refused to answer their questions. During that time the police, Special Branch and others had swarmed over the building and discovered nine .22 bullets, which must have been planted there. It was because of WRP discipline that within hours of the raid comrades had produced copies of a petition protesting against police action and obtained signatures from Labour Party delegates and trade union officials at Blackpool.

7. Jack JONES (TGWU) had been the first to sign the petition even though he hated the Party. He had no other choice because he had been exposed for what he was and in order to prevent further clarification of his wage cutting stance he was obliged to sign. This was the reason so many of them had signed and even WEDGWOOD-BENN had promised to take the matter up with the Cabinet as a matter of urgency.

8. The petition had opened the way into the trade unions and labour movement and the WRP would have to take advantage of it to increase its membership and win support.

9. HEALY said that the article containing Irene GORST's allegations about the Party, that appeared in the Sunday Observer had led to the editor, David ASTOR, being forced to resign. The newspaper would pay in full and to ensure this the WRP was taking legal action against it. Many thousands of pounds would be needed for this and a special fund would be set-up. The Party had to be defended at all costs and comrades should be conscious of the need for security. Lists of names should not be carried. The circumstances surrounding Irene GORST's attendance at the WRP Education Centre would be subject to an enquiry by the Control Commission.

10. HEALY referred to a Sunday Times article on the WRP but dismissed it as a pack of lies and half truths.

11. He said that ultimately the only defence against such attacks was to build the Party and increase sales of the Workers Press. The paper currently had a deficit of £1,750 per week.

12. TORRANCE made an appeal for funds and a collection raised in excess of £300. It was announced that a public meeting to discuss 'Police raids' would be held at the Montague and Park Room, Bloomsbury Centre, Coram Street, W.C.1 on Monday 13 October 1975, commencing at 8 pm."

14. The persons identified as having attended the meeting and others mentioned in this report are listed together with their references in Special Branch records on the attached appendix.

[Handwritten signature]
Chief Superintendent

Kalson
CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

A P P E N D I X

Privacy

Privacy

Gerry HEALY

402/41/455A

Privacy

Privacy

Corin REDGRAVE

Mentions re
405/70/284

Vanessa REDGRAVE

405; Privacy

Privacy

Sheila TORRANCE

Privacy

Irene GORST

Privacy

405 Privacy

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