

Dark Note.
Box

CONSERVATIVE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

32 SMITH SQUARE · SW1

MEMORANDUM

<p>From..... Peter Shipley.....</p>	<p>To..... The Chairman..... c.c. see below.....</p> <p>..... 19th February, 1982.....</p>
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You may be interested to know more about the Youth Training Centres run by the Workers Revolutionary Party, which were mentioned during Prime Minister's Questions earlier in the week.

The WRP is a Trotskyist organisation with about 2,000 members. It was formed in 1973 from a group called the Socialist Labour League (founded 1957) and its origins can be traced back to pre-war Trotskyist groups. The WRP is perhaps most well known for the support it enjoys from Vanessa and Corin Redgrave and other showbusiness personalities.

The WRP is the most fanatical, dogmatic and secretive of all far left groups in this country. It believes that the ruling class is preparing for civil war and that the workers must organise to defend themselves. It is contemptuous of the role of the Labour party and Trade Union leaders and is highly critical of the Communist Party, Socialist Workers and most other left-wing groups.

For such a small and sectarian body the WRP manages an extraordinary wide source of activity. It runs a daily newspaper (with its own fleet of lorries to distribute it), a residential training centre in Derbyshire, several bookshops up and down the country, and several subsidiary groups, including the Young Socialists and the All-Trade Union Alliance. Its capacity to do all of this is widely believed to have been made possible by its support for Colonel Gaddafi, The Libyan leader has given at least £20,000 to it.

The Youth Training Centre project took shape in 1980. At the YS conference that year the Young Socialist Secretary said it "must obtain centres in every region to use them for building and training a mass revolutionary youth movement."

The first centre was opened in Brixton at the beginning of last year and the Liverpool centre opened shortly after, and another in Glasgow. A network of 24 centres is planned.

Several sporting personalities have also been persuaded to give their blessing to the Centres, such as boxers Maurice Hope and John Conteh. Letters from Vanessa Redgrave have also been sent to many leading multi-national companies (including Fords) appealing for money. These appeals made no mention of politics but instead talk of offering course for unemployed young in car maintenance, engineering, hairdressing etc. I attach one such circular. The WRP's own manifesto for 1981 gives the gameaway when it says that at these centres "youth can train and equip themselves with the Knowledge and skills necessary to take part in the establishment of Community Councils, Workers' Defence Guards and the struggle for a Workers' Revolutionary Government."

Both through the centres and in its general campaigning the WRP has been

active in several inner city areas. That it is anti-police is beyond doubt. A Newsline leader after the Brixton riot spoke of a "systematic campaign of police harrassment which stoked up local hostilities to breaking point," and called for a "fight against the Tories and police-state violence." Like other left wing groups the WRP is conscious of the need to organise more effectively in areas like Brixton and Liverpool - but unlike, say the SWP, it does not favour foolhardy confrontations with the police: it would seek a much more disciplined approach in its own organisation, and although it has politically rejected the Labour Party it is prepared to work with people like Ted Knight, who was once a member of the old Socialist Labour League and remains close to the WRP leadership.

c.c. Peter Cropper
Sir Harry Boyne
Derek Howe ✓
David Nicholson

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