

workers power

PUBLIC MEETING

British Trotskyism 1938-49

7.30pm Monday October 27th

SPEAKERS

Al Richardson
(co-author of "War and the International")

Mark Hoskisson
(Workers Power editorial board)

Small Hall
Conway Hall
Holborn Tube

Admission 50p

A Message to Conference from Al Richardsom

Dear Comrades,

Some of you will notice in your conference material an item relating to a talk by Al Richardson about the book "War and the International" recently published. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend to deliver it.

When my participation in this conference was first asked some weeks ago, it was verbally agreed over the telephone. I was told then that the subject would be about United Front and Popular Front politics in Britain. But when "International" magazine for September/October subsequently came out, it had a long list of speakers with my name not included. The same was true in the advertisement for this conference in "Workers Press". I assumed that, as the book "War and the International" had come out in the meantime, which is sharply critical of this type of politics, that the invitation made to me to speak to you had quietly been shelved.

Only a few days ago I received another telephone call. This time I was told that the subject of my talk was now to be about the book "War and the International". By then, because I had received no written confirmation, I had made other arrangements for Saturday night and Sunday, 18th and 19th October. I tried to alter them, but failed. I have still not received the conference material that is in your hands with my name upon it, or the exact time or venue of the proposed talk. But even if I were able to attend, the sudden change in subject would make it difficult to do so.

You have among your speakers two who spent the late sixties and early seventies attacking those who believe that Socialists should work inside the Labour Party ; another who supports breaking up the structure of the Labour Party into interest groups along the lines of sex and colour ; another who attacked Marxist organisations as "Fragments" but is now an employee of the bourgeois state ; others who counterpose themselves to the working class parties of Europe as the "Green Movement"; another whose part in the institutions of local government leaves much to be desired from the point of view of Marxism.

This is thus a Conference to promote Popular Front politics of the type so sharply criticised in the books written by Sam Bornstein and myself, and removes the grounds for any principled participation on my part. I regret therefore being unable to attend, and apologise for any disappointment that may have arisen.

Fraternally,

Al Richardson