



TIM BUCK

January 6, 1891

March 11, 1973

IN MEMORIAM

TIM BUCK -- MAN OF THE FUTURE

January 6, 1891 -- November 3, 1973

Tim Buck was a man of action who, following Lenin's advice, made politics a science and an art. His intellectual excellence as a theoretician earned him world-wide recognition. His determination and political courage earned him the admiration and support of his colleagues.

He became a master of political manoeuvre because he squarely faced up to reality, realistically assessing the situation. He was ready to break with the old and to adopt new concepts when needed. He engendered enthusiasm for the cause.

On this occasion we reprint selections from introductions to his writings which have a bearing on the present. We believe the Party can only become stronger if it adopts the Tim Buck approach to solving the difficult, complex and inspiring challenges of the day with courage and confidence.

In his forward to **30 Years**, Leslie Morris wrote, "Tim Buck's book conveys the terribly important lesson that it is not enough to criticise capitalism; one must organize the masses to change Canada. He shows that opinions and ideas must lead, not to frustration and cynicism, but to action."

Again, in 1959, Leslie Morris wrote in his introduction to **Our Fight for Canada**, "During the 37 years since I first met and began to work with Tim Buck I have been constantly impressed by the way in which he combines theory and practice. The reader's attention is drawn to the original work he has done with respect to Canada's historical development: his exposure of the Abbott Plan, the elaboration of his studies of Canadian imperialism and the bold and creative exposition of the policy of Canadian independence, the positive, optimistic enlargement of the vision of Canada, which only a Communist can truly possess, that is to be found in articles such as **New Horizons for Canada's Youth** and the **Developing Canadian Dream**."

Those who were Party members prior to 1973 are aware of the fact that important differences had arisen in the Party, differences which involved, among other things, the concept of the anti-monopoly front, the leading role of the Party, industrial concentration, work in mass organizations, what kind of an organization is the YCL (even do we need one?), the practice of democratic centralism and criticism and self-criticism, and much more.

These differences, many of which remain unresolved to this day, culminated in the election of W. Kashtan as the Party's general-secretary in 1965. His election represented a defeat for many of Tim Buck's ideas and certainly for his style of work.

Since that time the Party leadership has attempted to bury Tim Buck and his political legacy, not too successfully--and he even had to be "resurrected" so that his name could be used to help raise the money needed to rebuild 24 Cecil Street when it was torched.

That is when his name was tacked onto the Bethune Centre, which, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Tim Buck's death, ought to be renamed after him.

During the course of those inner-Party struggles, most of them not without bitterness, Tim Buck wrote **Put Monopoly Under Control** as a special effort to clear up differences concerning Canada's relations with United States.

Finally, he wrote three works which were his last political legacy and testament to the Communist Party.

Two of the three are **Canada and the Russian Revolution**, 1967, and **Lenin and Canada**, 1970, which were published by Progress Books with the Party's official blessing.

His final work which, unfortunately, he was unable to fully complete is **Yours In the Struggle, Reminiscences of Tim Buck**, 1977, which was published over the opposition of the Communist Party. W. Kashtan and his colleagues on the CEC, did everything possible to frustrate Tim Buck, who was sick, from completing his legacy, and to hold up publication of what he had left.

Its publication galvanized W. Kashtan and the CEC into an unheard of and unprecedented attack on the book and those who had worked for its publication. Democratic centralism was invoked to justify suspensions and expulsions--public attacks on the book--and an instruction to Party members not to read it. W. Beeching was expelled forever! Party book stores would not put it on their shelves.

Norman Penner wrote a review of **Yours in the Struggle**. He has just written a book called **Canadian Communism**. It is to be remembered that Norman Penner authored a resolution at the 1957 Party convention which challenged the existence of the Communist Party as a vanguard party of the revolution.

Penner's critique of **Yours In the Struggle** coincided in content, almost exactly, with the critique published in the Canadian Tribune on behalf of the CEC.

D. Currie wrote a letter to the CEC responding to both Penner's and the CEC's critiques. His response drove the CEC into a frenzy. The CEC demanded Currie withdraw his letter. He didn't, and another promising cadre was disposed of .

George Shlakoff called these inner-Party struggles conducted by the CEC "Witch-hunts conducted in the name of democratic centralism". He got blitzed too.

Tom McEwen, one of the eight Communist leaders who served in Kingston Penitentiary, and at one time Canada's representative on the Comintern, eagerly wrote the forward to **Yours In the Struggle**. We reprint parts of it,

"It was indeed a happy hour for me to learn that this valuable book is now soon to be published, and that I would be honoured to write a brief forward. It is of vital import that it will now be available to a very large audience of Canadian workers

who loved, respected, and honoured the author as few men have been so honoured or held in such high esteem...Indeed it could be said in all humility and pride that this final effort of Tim's, sick and ailing as he was, is his last message to the Canada and Canadians he loved above all else.

"This book centres upon two particular events in Canadian history, recalled by a man who was the moving figure, a maker of history, in both.

"First, is the long and tortuous course of the development of socialist thought and organization in Canada from 1911 on, rendered ever so much more difficult by having to work under conditions of illegality...The names and identities of heroic fighters for socialism long gone; the stirring events, times and places; the forging of a Communist Party of Canada out of many organizations calling themselves 'communist'. The task of bringing order out of chaos by imbuing the anarchy of communist thought and actions with the steadying and scientific influence of Marxism-Leninism.

"The second is a dramatic and authentic narrative of the Kingston Penitentiary Riots of 1933, told by a man who, just because he was a confirmed and devoted Communist, was sentenced to five years' penal servitude and was caught up in the whirlwind of this stupendous event. And, as in the larger world outside, Tim Buck conducted himself with great dignity, courage and honour, human characteristics which no penal authority could destroy, no matter how long or how hard they tried.

"Speaking of myself as a 'youth' of 85 summers, and one who has been privileged to work closely with Tim Buck for well over half a century in the building of a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party in Canada, I feel deeply grateful that he was able to make available the material for this brilliant volume before death closed the last chapter.

"...rest assured, future generations of Canadians, the inheritors of his riches, will yet write much of Tim Buck and the goal of a socialist Canada." -- Tom McEwen, 1975.

May the 1988 convention of the Communist Party of Canada be a convention truly in the spirit of Tim Buck and the Marxist-Leninist clarity for which he fought so hard!

-- The Committee of Canadian Communists
January, 1988