

CLASS STRUGGLE



Political Paper of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain

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ARMAGH PICKET



"From Nicaragua to Palestine, from Southern Africa to the women's support groups in the mining communities in Britain - our message is the same - we are with you in spirit on this historic day."

This message of solidarity and unity in struggle was the theme of the statement by women Republican prisoners in Armagh to mark International Women's Day on March 8th.

The statement was read out to a militant rally outside the prison on March 10th by former Armagh prisoner of war, Breige Brownlee.

The women prisoners particularly applauded "our sisters engaged in the armed struggle for Irish freedom who daily confront the prospect of death or imprisonment ..." and "women political activists within the Republican Movement striving for fundamental social change."

The message was heard by one of the biggest demonstrations held for years at the prison. Over 700 people, including more than 120 women who travelled from Britain, listened to the statement which went on to a strong attack on strip-searching which was condemned as "a vain attempt to break our spirit of resistance."

"Strip searching is, to date, the most dehumanising and repugnant tactic used against us by the British prison authorities."

"They're trying to take the privacy of our bodies away from us now, and we must make sure they'll never do it."

The mother of Mary McArdle, a remand prisoner, exposed the lies of the Northern Ireland Office, who claim that strip searching is necessary for 'security reasons' and is carried out with 'sensitivity'.

The Head of Sinn Fein Foreign Affairs Department, Sile Darragh, showed that the struggle of the Armagh women was important to the liberation of Irish women in general. She went on to demonstrate the integral relationship that exists between the struggle for national liberation and the struggle for women's liberation:

"Without the participation of women, the national liberation struggle is lost, and without that struggle Irish women are lost, for only through the overthrow of a divisive, oppressive, government and state, can we be free. We cannot be liberated

o emphasised: "Namibian women, like our sisters in this jail, are not defeated yet and never will be." Nicola Boyle, whose husband and three brothers, all striking miners in England, were sentenced to 28 days in prison at the end of March, spoke of the miners' strike and pointed out: "What we have been through in the last year is nothing to what has happened in Ireland. People in England only know what the British Government wants us to know."

Other speakers at the rally were Maere Foreman of Dublin Sinn Fein, a Chilean exile in Britain, and a representative of Sheffield Black Women's Group, and Ann Godfrey of the London Armagh Women's Group who condemned strip searching as "organised sexual harassment" and strongly supported the struggle to end it completely.

Despite the humiliation and degradation of strip searching and other tactics of imperialism, the women prisoners remain defiant and committed to the continuation of the struggle. This spirit was summed up in the conclusion of

"Sisters, let us today pledge ourselves to strive relentlessly so that we may one day share triumph in our respective struggles."

The exposure of the strip searching tactic was continued outside the prison by Pauline McKinney, who was strip searched 225 times on her way to and from court during the Christopher Black show trial:

women in an enslaved country. It is our duty to liberate it."

Amongst other speakers was Tarin Borkenshire from the SWAPO Women's Solidarity Campaign and the Namibia Support Committee,

their statement:

"Sisters, let us today pledge ourselves to strive relentlessly so that we may one day share triumph in our respective struggles." In spirit our support goes with you."

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VICTORY OVER FASCISM?

Dear Editor,

Again 'Class Struggle' is being unhistorical and one-sided (like in the NHS article). Because fascism will continue to arise in different capitalist countries now, and in the future, it does not mean that a particular fight against it in the past was not a particular victory. No final victory - meaning fascism cannot arise again - is possible until imperialism is defeated world-wide; but to deny victory at a certain stage is wrong. It's like denying the victory of the Bolshevik revolution because now that revolution has been overtaken in the USSR.

Also the article gives the distinct impression that fascism is here in Britain today. We are getting nearer it year by year. But anyone who recognises the Europe of the 30's and 40's will know that we are not fascist yet. I find the article an insult to the great anti-fascist fighters like Dimitroff downwards and to all who suffered.

A London reader.

Dear Editor,

The two articles on war in the February issue of 'Class Struggle' - 'VE Day: Victory Over Fascism?' and 'War and the Peace Movement' - raise certain historical questions which need to be discussed by all revolutionary and progressive people.

Yes, wars must be classed as just or unjust, as 'Class Struggle' pointed out. The mainly inter-imperialist conflict of World War One was an unjust war; but World War Two? This problem cannot be answered by dogmatic regurgitation of Lenin's views on the nature of the First World War; but neither can it by uncritical acceptance of the views that the second such war was a 'war against fascism' or a 'war in the defence of the Soviet Union'. The war had many facets and careful distinctions have to be made. The war of the Soviet Union against German imperialism was certainly just, as was the war of China against Japan. But what was the nature of Britain's (and the other allied imperialist powers) war against Germany, Japan and Italy?

Dogmatists argue that because inter-imperialist conflicts are unjust, there can be no circumstances in which imperialist states can play an objectively progressive role and that therefore the working class must always oppose the war effort of their 'own' bourgeoisie. This was the stance that the Trotskyites took throughout World War Two, even after the invasion of the Soviet Union by Germany in 1941. An analysis of the actual situation in the war though, shows that certain factors made it possible (though very difficult) for there to be a principled united front of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the allied imperialist countries. (In my opinion, the fact that Germany was "aggressive" and "started it" is not one of these factors, as this view obscures the actual class and national content of war, which is not determined by who fired the first shot, etc.) Firstly, there was not a revolutionary situation in these countries, nor was one likely to arise in the course of the war, as history has confirmed. The best contribution the proletariat of these countries could make to the world revolutionary struggle was to give the maximum possible support to those revolutionary struggles actually going on, as in China, Indochina and the Soviet Union. After 1941, when the allied powers were fighting

on the same side as many of the revolutionary forces (though for their own reactionary reasons), it became possible to do this on a large scale, as in the production campaigns in Britain and the US to send military aid to the Soviet Union and China. Further, the defence against fascism of democratic rights and other hard-won gains of the working class and people was a just fight; moreover the objective factors were such that the working class was not in a position to go beyond this level of struggle.

DIFFERENT SITUATIONS: DIFFERENT STRATEGIES?

Given this situation, how was it possible to make this sort of contribution without at the same time entering into an unprincipled alliance with the imperialists in defence of their colonial empires? In my view, the main (not the only) content of World War Two was an inter-imperialist battle for dominance over the colonies. Here the 'war against fascism' and 'war in defence of the Soviet Union' analyses are incorrect. Unless, that is, we postulate in a Eurocentric and social-chauvinist way, that the interests of the overwhelming majority of the world's peoples should have been subordinated to the defence of 'democracy' in the imperialist countries (a 'democracy' only made possible by imperialist plunder) or to the defence of the Soviet Union.

I don't think that the communist movement handled this contradiction at all well, and did practice the sort of Eurocentric social-chauvinism described above. For instance, in India, the main enemy was British imperialism. And yet Bose who took arms from Germany and Japan to fight the British, was condemned by the CPGB. If it had been realised at the time that it was the oppressed peoples and countries, not even the Soviet Union, who were in the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle, then 'Class Struggle' might well have been able to publish a far more uplifting article on the occasion of the anniversary of the victory over fascism.

I do not have the answers to these questions. But in view of the current international situation, I consider that they need to be taken up for discussion. Many people are pointing to the similarities between today's situation and that of the thirties. Some have suggested, for instance, that a united front should be formed with the United States against the Soviet Union. I do not think that this is correct but whilst concrete analysis will be the main method of analysing a Third World War, we must also learn from the past.

A Manchester reader.

'Class Struggle' replies: The criticism by the reader in London is valid in that the article did not adequately draw out its main point and submerged the victories that were made in 1945 in trying to make its point. The article was not intended to play down the suffering or justice of the struggle at that time.

The fact is that the defeat of the fascist Axis was a victory - as indeed was the successful defence of the Soviet Union and the establishment of People's Democracies in countries under the fascist heel.

However, given that, the point is to understand clearly not only what was won, but what was not won. This is what the article attempted to deal with, at least on the question of fascism in Europe. Given the reluctance of the Tories to celebrate the anniversary, and their fear of upsetting their "German allies and friends" in NATO and the EEC, many people, both from those who supported, and those who opposed celebrating the anniversary, see Nazism

as a 'monstrous aberration'. This is the situation the article was responding to.

The defeat of Nazism should be remembered for the victory it was, but we must recognise that fascism was not some bizarre psychological disease afflicting various countries in the 1930's and 1940's. It represents an inherent tendency of imperialism, and particularly of imperialism in crisis. Whilst commemorating the particular victory against fascism, we should also remember that the threat of fascism exists as long as imperialism exists. Fascism is the direct and open dictatorship of finance capital. It is the stripping away of the cloak of bourgeois respectability and parliamentary democracy. It is the crushing of the limited rights that do

exist. And it can and will happen again, as long as imperialism exists.

Of course fascism does not exist in Britain now. But it is necessary to grasp the direction that the politics of radical conservatism is going in (without forgetting the corporatist tendencies in the Labour Party). We should be aware of the continuing centralisation of power in the state apparatus. In this light we should also understand the great limitations of the imperialist powers that opposed fascist Germany and Italy. We should know, as Tom Bowes' book 'Blind Eye to Murder' shows, the lack of enthusiasm with which Britain and America investigated Nazi atrocities, and that within months of Germany's surrender, fascists and their sympathisers

were back in control of much of the police, the judiciary, education and other arms of the state.

As the reader from Manchester points out we should also recognise the role of the imperialists in the Third World during the war. After the defeat of Japan, the imperialist powers went on to attack Third World liberation forces. Was it therefore correct to assume that the strategy of alliance against Germany, Italy and Japan, the 'United Front Against Fascism', which was followed in Europe was also correct in all Third World countries?

All these questions are indeed of relevance in deciding how communists should act today, and we welcome further debate.

MINERS' STRIKE AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM



Dear Editor,

I have just finished reading the February issue and I am astonished. The miners' titanic struggle which has changed the face of class struggle in Britain is accorded only a bare quarter page on p.3. and that is only there to illustrate that black people are showing solidarity.

You may be right in believing that the Irish people's struggle for a United Ireland free of British imperialism is the main struggle in Britain and that this struggle will bring down one of the pillars of British imperialism. You may also be right in thinking that the struggle to maintain the rights of immigrants is of profound importance. The struggles in other parts of the world may also be crucial. But what about the working class in Britain who are the only class that can make revolution in Britain. Their struggles are the core and centre of movement that will eventually bring socialism to Britain. All other struggles can solidify the united front and chip away at the bastions of monopoly finance capital. But the basic struggle is the class struggle in all its manifestations and the centre of it is the miners' fight. They have shown unity by having their whole families involved unlike as in the past when the wives urged the men back to work. Go into the mining areas. Study the situation at the core of the struggle. Learn from the miners as Mao did from the peasants of Hunan. You will find rich lessons in revolutionary struggle there and by learning from the workers you will build much more quickly the proletarian Marxist revolutionary party so urgently needed in Britain. The shades of fascism are falling heavily. If we do not form our revolutionary party soon, when will we do so? But we can only do so by learning from the workers in struggle and applying our advanced ideas to their needs.

Fraternally,
JS, London.

'Class Struggle' replies: The above letter arrived after the March issue went to press. We would like to make a number of points in response.

Firstly, we would say that we

do not regard the Irish people's struggle as one within Britain. It is the struggle of a nation which has been divided by Britain and part of which still lives under British rule.

Secondly, the struggles of black and other national minorities in Britain are not to "maintain the rights of immigrants". The majority of "immigrants" are people of the oppressed nations oppressed by British imperialism for centuries. Their racist oppression within this country is a continuation of the national oppression on which British imperialism has been built. Within Britain, they make up national minorities whose struggle is against the racist British state and for their national rights.

We believe that Marxists have to analyse the conditions in the country in which they're working and decide concretely what the forces for revolution are. It is no good just sticking to the well-worn line that the working class is the only class who can make revolution here, when a large section of that class is solidly reactionary in its stand, and will remain so for some time to come because its economic and social position in relation to other elements of society is a privileged one, in Britain and even more, in the world as a whole. It is unnecessary to look beyond the miners' strike to see this: solidarity from within many trade unions, such as the AUEW or the TGWU, was weak.

At the same time, there are forces who do not belong to the "classical" working class. These forces come into sharp conflict with the state and such contradictions can only be resolved through the overthrow of imperialism - the national minorities, the unemployed (many of whom have never had a job) and women. We do not pose such forces as an alternative to the working class (many belong to it, or have close links with it, even if the primary forms of oppression they face are not class ones). But we do pose the necessity for all the progressive forces in society to ally with each other, support each others' just demands and fight to bring down British imperialism.

That was the significance of our article on black solidarity with the miners. It was not

there to say "black people show solidarity", but to point to the links that have been made and to highlight the importance of developing a strategic alliance between the working class and national minorities, with a strong internationalist outlook ...

As a monthly paper, 'Class Struggle' cannot compete with a daily, or even a weekly in terms of detailed reporting. However, we have tried to draw out lessons from the miners strike and have given it our support.

In fact, what makes the miners' strike significant is not what it has in common with other struggles of the labour movement in Britain, but the ways in which it was different. On a mass scale, there was the support built up in the mining communities, and especially, the women's support groups. The latter were not organised by the miners but by the women themselves. Much of the financial support for the miners came from fund-raising work at a grassroots level - in the unions sometimes, but also on the streets, by benefits etc, not the TUC, Labour Party-controlled structure. There was the building of links between men and women in the mining communities and black activists, and changes in the outlook of many towards black people, towards the Irish struggle and towards the British state.

Much of this does not sit easily within the established understanding of the capital/labour contradiction, of a conflict between capitalists and predominantly white male trade unionists, uncomplicated by national and sexual contradictions. But we say that the struggle to smash British imperialism is a complex, many-fronted one, and it will take a strategic alliance built on a clear understanding not only of class exploitation but of the importance of national oppression both here and around the world.

Our coverage of the strike could, of course, have been better. The RCL is a small organisation at this stage, with limited resources. We have done work in support groups, visiting miners' communities, supporting demonstrations, pickets etc, fund-raising and other things. We have learnt much in the course of this work. It is true that we could have done more.

But we do not think it would have been right to abandon other work that we are doing, in Ireland solidarity, in anti-racist campaigns or other anti-imperialist fields, to concentrate exclusively on the miners' strike.

We have a lot of work to do to make concrete the strategy of the revolutionary alliance between the national minorities and the working class. But to have abandoned such work in favour of the miners strike would have been to throw over any hope of building an alliance that is truly revolutionary.

The Fight Goes On

Tuesday, March 5th: at 9.00 a.m. miners and members of the local women's support group began to gather outside Maltby Miners' Welfare Institute, ready to march down to the colliery. The union banner was already up, and soon others appeared, billowing slightly in an early morning breeze. A woman turned to two young children and said: "You ought to be in school." But she didn't send them away: as the miners prepared to march back to work, they joined in.

At 9.30 a.m., the march began. Six men led it: six men who had been fired by the National Coal Board (NCB) for "offences" committed during their fight to defend their jobs and communities. Behind them came the banner of Maltby Women's Support Group, whose members picketed alongside the men, and put so much work into the strike that many miners said that they couldn't have lasted half a year without them.

Most of the miners themselves followed their union branch banner. They had stood firm

fought hard, and not surrendered. Most miners believed that they had to go back to maintain the union's strength: they want to continue the fight with their union intact, and did not want to see the strike collapse through men being forced back to work through hunger and debt. Others had wanted to carry on at least while there were still 900 men who the NCB refused to

many say they did not know they possessed, and achieved much by organising together. They want to continue working with each other.

Solidarity is still needed. No-one knows how the struggle against the sackings will go, and there's the very real problem of the debts, and rent and rate arrears, which miners and their families owe.

"I'm not a miner's wife. Neither are the other women here, except for one. But I'm unemployed. And I know what hardship means. That's why me and other women have supported this strike." - Women's Support Group member.

reinstate in their jobs. Either way, they didn't strike in order to give up now, nor will they abandon the men who have been fired for what they did as part of the last year's struggle.



"The government's got one Iron Lady. We've got thousands of them." - Maltby miner.

for a year and were going back with their heads held up. Some wore the badge just produced by Yorkshire NUM: "I'm not a scab."

The women of Maltby Women's Support Group want to stick together in the future. For the couple of weeks following the end of the strike, there

"My father told me about what happened in 1926. One day, I'll tell my son what he did in 1926, and what I did in 1984. We're going to go on fighting until we win." - Maltby miner.

As the march went through Maltby people came to their garden gates or lined the street, applauding and cheering. At the front of the march, the support group sang "Here We Go" and "I'd rather be a Picket than a Scab". Catching sight of them entering the colliery gates, three of the strike breakers scurried for cover: they must know that they will never be forgiven.

was the practical job of keeping a kitchen going for miners who didn't have the money to buy food for another two weeks. Beyond that, they don't want to go back to life as it was before the strike, during which they've built up abilities which

frequently running into thousands of pounds. The prospect of living with serious financial problems for several years to come is a grim one, and whatever support groups do to help will assist people in the mining communities to cope and to rebuild their strength for the struggles ahead.

The men and women of the mining community, and those who worked hard to support them, regret that the strike has finished without a clear victory for the miners. But at the same time, they believe that they have

On March 6th, Maltby was, on the surface, back to normal. But it will never go back to what was 'normal' before: too much has happened, too much has been experienced and learnt for that.

From a school yard, near the Miners' Welfare Institute, the sound of a child's voice singing drifted over to the road: "Here we go, here we go ..."



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Martyrs' Day

On March 23rd, the Asian Collective of East London organised a rally to commemorate Martyrs' Day. We reprint below a statement taken from their leaflet advertising the event:

INQUILAB ZINDABAD!

LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTION!

The Asian Collective of East London is organising a rally to salute the martyrs of the long revolutionary history of British India

The history of British India is the history of exploitation, torture, murder, brutality, slavery; and also a history of heroic resistance, martyrdom, organised workers, peasants and youths' revolutionary struggle.

INALIENABLE RIGHT OF MANKIND

The true socialistic principles, the anti-imperialist stance, the relentless efforts to organise the workers and youths to fight for a revolution - which was not merely the demand of a particular historical situation in India - it was "the inalienable right of mankind", the complete solidarity of our revolutionaries with all anti-imperialist struggles in Asia, Africa and Ireland are our inspirations, part and parcel of our struggle in Britain today. It is our responsibility to fulfil their commitment which found expression in the slogan - Inquilab Zindabad: Long Live Revolution!

The rally to commemorate the martyrs' day on 23rd March '85, will be to uphold and work for the revolution that will ring the death knell of capitalism.

April 1929, the Trade Dispute Bill introduced by the British Raj in India, intended to curtail the rights of labourers to strike, was being discussed in the Legislative Assembly in Delhi. The British government also sought to introduce the Public Safety Bill to check the communist movement in India by cutting it from external influences.

**REMEMBER
BHAGAT SINGH and
BATUKESHWAR DUTTA**

Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutta threw two bombs in the Assembly Hall while the Bills were being discussed only to create disruption, not to kill. They were apprehended and brought to trial in June 1929 in High Court, Delhi. Sentence was "Death by hanging". They were hanged on 23rd March 1930.

With the recent miners' strike which ended, if nothing but in the tremendous solidarity with the working people in Britain, and with the Tory government's every attempt to crush the rights of workers (including our right to work and right to strike) the relevance of our revolutionary past is a great way forward and inspiration for the workers and youths of Britain today!

INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR OF RADICAL BLACK AND THIRD WORLD BOOKS...

'Class Struggle' correspondent. language, Urdu.

The International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books has closed in London. Organised by three black publishing groups this fair is now in its fourth year, and has eclipsed the old Socialist Book Fair in popularity and political level.

REVOLUTIONARY CULTURE

More than just a publishing event, the Book Fair week includes a range of discussions, films etc. making it one of the major cultural activities in this country. These included a forum on the 20th anniversary of Malcolm X's death, and an international poetry evening, the latter giving a remarkable demonstration of the vitality of revolutionary culture: the work of the Afro-American Jayne Cortez and the Jamaican Jean 'Binta' Breeze were overwhelming. It was also important that Ahmad Faraz, from Pakistan, could read in his own

The Book Fair was held in an imperialist heartland, nearly all the books were published in the metropolitan countries, and in European languages. This reflects a neo-colonial situation which is not the fault of the organisers. But the Fair did not altogether reflect the richness of what is being done. In parts of Africa, like Tanzania, very specific works are published uncovering the real history of popular anti-colonialism; interesting works giving a non-Eurocentric view of the world system are appearing in countries like India or Algeria. There is no sign of a forum on the work of the outstanding African theoretician, Samir Amin. But despite these shortcomings, the Black Book Fair is ... we can't really say the tip of an iceberg, but more appropriately a burst of smoke signalling the seething volcano of creative activity which exists among the oppressed nations and nationalities.

Mining Communities Still Need Solidarity

The government believes it has won a considerable victory over the miners. But it was hardship which made the miners return to work after a year on strike: there is no question of them having "seen the error of their ways" and returned because they believed that the government and NCB were right.

During the strike, people in the mining communities sold possessions and went into debt in order to obtain food and other necessities of life, so just because the strike is over, it doesn't mean that there is no need either for support in the continuing fight against pit closures or material solidarity. Money continues to be needed to assist mining communities to cope with financial problems, and to support the hundreds of miners who were victimised by the NCB for their

part in the strike and sacked from their jobs.

This means that there is still much for the miners' support groups which arose in many



Women on the march against pit closures.

places during the strike to do. Hopefully, as many as possible will continue their work for some time to come. "Class Struggle" readers who want to make financial contributions

to support the people of the mining communities in their ongoing struggle can send them to the address on the back of this paper, with a covering note saying what the money is for. We will make sure that the money is forwarded.

The faster the mining communities can overcome the problems left over from the last year of struggle, the readier they'll be to plunge into the big fights which lie ahead as British imperialism moves into worse crises and increases its repression and exploitation of the people.

We intend to carry an article in our next issue on what we think are the main things to be learnt from the strike, and on what its significance has been for the class struggle in Britain.

HERE TO STAY - HERE TO FIGHT! HERE TO STAY - HERE TO FIGHT!

LONDON:

ANTI-DEPORTATION MEETING

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

"Campaigns are about more than one person. There are thousands deported, divided from their families. We are fighting against racist laws."

Muhammad Idrish reflected the mood of the whole meeting organised by Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign on March 18th. About 100 people packed the room to hear a succession of speakers from various campaigns testify to the racist nature of immigration controls. As Muhammad told the meeting: "We are not special cases. We are establishing our rights and defeating the racism that is the law. We are not in the business of begging the Home Office. We are in the business of beating the Home Office."

Different views were expressed in the meeting. One speaker denounced the media coverage, saying: "The television has shown enough tears. It must show us fighting." Another theme that ran through many contributions was the need to proceed from individual legalist battles to emphasise the political dimension and take up a general struggle against the immigration laws.

Some speakers expressed the view that immigration controls are essentially an attack on the working class, aimed at dividing the working class by tying white workers to the ruling class by apparently giving them a shared interest against black people. Many conclude therefore that it is to the trade unions that the campaigns should turn for support.

However the facts do not reflect this argument. In the first place, most of the people at the meeting were not from trade unions but national minority people. And the state's attack on black people is not restricted to working class black people. The presence at the meeting of social worker, Muhammad Idrish and fellow NALGO member Shahid Syed, an accountant and ILEA teacher Zabair Ali, is evidence of this.

Immigration controls, rather than simply an attack on the working class, are part of the century-long history of British imperialism and racism. One speaker put it into perspective when he said: "I am up against the administrator whose father was running India."

Speaking for the Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign, Alok Biswas, from the East London Asian Collective, said that the existence of black people in Britain is politically significant. They bring with them a history of fighting imperialism. To support their demands is to accept an anti-imperialist perspective. For the working class to support anti-deportation campaigns is to challenge the racist ideas about immigration controls being a question of numbers. That anti-deportation should be an issue around which the trade union movement should mobilise is not to be questioned. But we need to be aware of the difficulties of winning support from a body deeply imbued with racist ideology and practices. The main strength of any campaign lies in its own active base. The attempt to court influence through Labour Party contacts is in danger of becoming a substitute for political activity against the racist state. The building of unity on the terms of those who have political responsibility for racist practices, even at local council level, is acceptance of the agenda of the state.

VICTORY FOR THE ASLAM FAMILY!

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

Spirits were high at the victory celebration organised by the Aslam Family Defence Campaign on March 26th in Longsight, Manchester. And the supporters of the family - of whom 200 were present - had every reason for their jubilation. In only four months the campaign had won a clear victory in its struggle against the Home Office. In November Mr and Mrs Aslam were told that they were under threat of deportation-which would have split them from their children, who were born in Britain, and from Mrs Aslam's elderly parents who are both resident here and depend on her for help. On March 5th they were informed that they could stay.

REASONS FOR VICTORY

Mr Aslam used the celebration to thank everyone who had supported the campaign and to express his hopes that all other anti-deportation campaigns would be equally successful. A spokesman for the campaign gave an analysis of the reasons for the victory on behalf of the campaign committee and with the agreement of the family. He pointed out that the history of the Pakistani people in this country over the years has witnessed their oppression at the hands of both Tory and Labour governments. He reminded us that British governments had oppressed them for centuries in their own country and had continued the oppression in Britain, letting them in to do dirty jobs and then making racist immigration laws to keep them out when they were needed no longer. Referring to the facilities and money which Manchester City Council is making available to anti-deportation campaigns, he stated: "If first they break our legs, we don't want their crutches". Instead, he said: "We must take our plight to the people." (This referred to a discussion we had on the day we heard about the victory, where it was emphasised that our speedy success completely vindicated the view that what counts is the independent mobilisation of the masses and such campaigns must take care to maintain their independence and their integrity.) The speaker went on to remind listeners how time and again parasitic groups try to use the struggle of the Pakistani people for their own ends; he regarded the campaign's ability to resist such efforts by the RCG as a contributing factor to its success.

RELYING ON THE PEOPLE

This speech reflected the fact that the main force in the Aslam Family campaign was the local community: relatives, friends, neighbours and work-mates had crowded into the regular meetings. 200 attended the demonstration in December and 300 came to the previous social. The campaign had indeed relied on and become aware of its own strength and had retained its independence despite the RCG's efforts to get us to rely on the City Council. The campaign had some useful experiences in dealing with the Labour Party. On two occasions, it witnessed Gerald Kaufmann MP, trying to make political capital on the backs of the family and its supporters, once at a public meeting called by the campaign, where he tried to stop his party being attacked for its racist track record with regard to immigration laws. Also, at the picket of the Home Office, he tried to steal the limelight and use the action as propaganda for himself as Shadow Home Secretary.

On the other hand, the members of the campaign realised that individual members of the Labour Party may well be sincere and strong in their opposition to racism. This enabled them to elect a chairperson with precisely this background. The people who carried the campaign were not after power or prestige - they just wanted to keep the family here.

The campaign refused to be intimidated or overawed by the laws and institutions of this country as was shown in the recent Home Office picket where about 700 people made their support for the family known in a noisy and confident manner to the Home Office, showing no concern for the fact that it is 'illegal' to demonstrate within one mile of the Houses of Parliament when in session. Another important feature of the campaign was the active role played by women, who were involved on the committee, at the picket, publicly leafletting on the streets and on the platform after the demonstration.



FIGHT DEPORTATIONS!

UNITE FAMILIES! FIGHT RACISM!

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

The national demonstration called under the slogans:

FIGHT DEPORTATIONS!
UNITE FAMILIES!
FIGHT RACISM!

for Saturday 23rd March in Manchester was a strong expression of the unity of the various campaigns involved in struggles on these issues. The demonstration had been called by all the anti-deportation campaigns in Manchester, supported by the City Council. It was attended, despite the rain, by about 1500 people, with those currently under threat of deportation carrying the lead banner. The Aslam family, who had recently been informed that they may stay in Britain, were at the march to show their support for the continuing war against the immigration laws. Pedro Galleguillos was there after having been released only a few days before - after regular Saturday prison pickets organised by his defence campaign - from Strangeways prison, where he had been held since before Christmas awaiting deportation. These two recent successes filled the other campaigns with enthusiasm, and in particular the front of the demonstration, where the various campaigns and black organisations were marching, was very lively and militant. Their slogans included: "Labour, Tory, both the same. Both play the racist game".

RALLY

At the rally in the Town Hall after the demonstration, women comrades dominated the platform on which Nigat Butt was chair-

In March, Jackie Berkeley was found 'guilty of wasting police time'. Pickets organised by the Jackie Berkeley Defence Committee protested outside the court where Jackie, who had made a complaint against police after she was raped by them, was tried. Jackie has to reappear in court on April 11th for sentencing. The campaign is calling for support outside the court. See Diary of Events.

Iqbal Begum has now been given a date when her appeal against a life sentence in prison, will be heard. The 'Free Iqbal Begum' campaign is calling for support outside the Appeal Court in London on April 18th. See Diary of Events.

Fuller reports on these campaigns will be carried in forthcoming issues of 'Class Struggle'.

BOOK REVIEW...

AIN'T I A WOMAN?: by BELL HOOKS

Contributed.

This book is not about white women. Nor does it attempt to excuse the behaviour of white men. This book is not for the faint-hearted white honkies. Equally the Empire loyalists amongst us black folk should not go near this book. It is remotely possible that some black women may not like the truth expressed in this book. But I doubt it.

This book must be part of any reading list for every Afro-American man. It is also essential reading for every African, South American, Pakistani, Indian, Palestinian, Chinese ... man. I don't think any white male Caucasian should read this book. All it will do is remind them of the suffering their fore-fathers have caused and the terrible revenge that awaits them.

This book must also be read by every black woman. For Afro-American women, this book will provide a terrible reminder of your own history. Further it

tells you that Afro-American women have struggled hard in the past, won famous victories and will continue to do so. Asian women will find that many historic incidents described in this book are similar to their own experience.

SISTERHOOD EMPOWERS WOMEN

Bell Hooks, who wrote this book, dedicates it to her mother who taught her and her sisters that Sisterhood empowers women by respecting, protecting and loving each other. Let's take up those words and see how they are reflected throughout the book ... And if the descriptions offend the white men and women, then ... It's all true. This is what your parents carried out. And this is what your system is doing to us right now.

Imagine the slave trade. What do you remember? "Roots", or "Gone with the Wind" or maybe "Mandingo". Some of you may even know of Malcolm X's speech where he talked, at length, about field niggers and house niggers. Malcolm X was very derogatory about house niggers. Guess what sex the house niggers were? And think about

what happened to them. They started working in the house at a very young age. And they were usually raped by the time they were 12 or 13. For a male house nigger life was merely intolerable. But for a young female child, life was Hell on earth. We should start at the beginning...

SLAVE CARGO

Think about being a woman as part of a slave cargo. Black women were ready targets for any white male who chose to physically assault and rape them. And to exercise their white sadistic fantasies, women were stripped of their clothing and beaten on all parts of their body. In their insanity, these white men also poked sharp sailing hooks, about two centimetres wide in a woman's vagina. Now think about what happened to women once they landed. The truth is they were unprotected either by law or white public opinion. They were the property of their white masters. They were not allowed any sexual scruples. They had to be entirely subservient to their owner or else they would be whipped to death if the white owner so chose.

FIGHT BACK

Did they fight back? What would you do? Indeed they did fight back. It is very complicated because so little is published about the famous slave revolts that took place. But, according to Bell Hooks, they did fight back, except that they had to take on, not just the white men, but also the white women.

So, what is the situation now? Black females regularly get angry about sexual approaches made to them by white men, in the streets, in lifts, in cafes. The popular films and books have continued to propagate the myths about black women. The white working man's thinking reeks of lust, sadism and sheer pleasure at the prospect of continuing to rob me of my sisters. It is their fault. They should read Bell Hooks' book. Because, there will come a time when we will wreak an awesome vengeance. And they will pay, not just for their own sins, but also the sins of their parents.

Read this book. It is published by Pluto Press, 105a Torrington Avenue, London NW5 2RX. It is also available in New Era Books on Seven Sisters Road.

Occupation Collapsing

LEBANON:

When Israeli forces invaded Lebanon in 1982, rabbis attached to the army distributed maps to the troops with the biblical names of various Lebanese towns. They portrayed South Lebanon as part of the "land of Israel", which Israel had a "right" to occupy permanently. Now the Israeli army is pulling out of Lebanon before the morale of its troops collapses totally.

Israel's main objectives in 1982 were to smash the PLO and to impose its own order in Lebanon; preferably, a single Lebanon under a President of Israel's choice who would sign a binding peace treaty with the Zionist state, but failing that, a Lebanon fragmented into half a dozen Israeli-dominated mini-states.

Israel came closest to realising its plans for Lebanon on May 17th, 1983, when it signed a "peace" treaty with the Lebanese government of Amin Gemayel providing for an Israeli withdrawal conditional on a Syrian pullout. But the agreement ran into widespread opposition and was finally repudiated by the Lebanese government after a popular uprising swept its army out of West Beirut in February, last year.

LNRF

Israel faced repeated strikes and escalating armed resistance in South Lebanon. Spearheading the struggle against occupation was the Lebanese National Resistance Front, which included the independent Organisation of Communist Action of Lebanon, the pro-Soviet Communist Party, members of the Shi'ite "Amal" movement and others.

Israel pulled out of the Shouf area, south of Beirut, in September 1983 to reduce its casualties: almost immediately, the fascist Lebanese Forces militias who had entered the region under Israeli protection were driven out.

Attacks in the areas still held by Israel continued to increase however, despite curfews, the demolition of houses of suspected resistance fighters and roundups of the civilian population. By the end of 1984,

Israeli troops could only move about the town of Sidon in force and had to travel in the countryside in heavily armed convoys. They became so nervous about attack that they frequently fired into vegetation along the roadsides in case there were resistance fighters waiting in ambush.

On March 4th, a bomb exploded in a mosque in the village of Maareke, occupied South Lebanon, killing resistance leaders meeting there. New leaders chosen immediately, vowed to hit back at Israel for the bombing, including striking within occupied Palestine itself. Seven days later, a

message on a wall, "This is the revenge of the Israeli Defence Corps".

CAR BOMBS

Besides direct attacks by the Israeli army, the Zionist state has struck back at the resistance in other ways. There have been a series of car bombings in Lebanese towns, the worst of which, in Beirut on March 8th, killed 80 people. Lebanese remember that a similar campaign was launched in September 1981, aimed at inflicting large numbers of casualties on people living in areas controlled by Lebanese nationalist and Palestinian forces. Over 1,000 people were killed over the next two years by car bombs, for which the "Front for the Liberation of Lebanon from Foreigners" claimed responsibility. Whoever actually planted the bombs in this terrorist campaign, it was Israel that supplied the explosives, and no doubt the training for the bombers too.

LEBANESE FORCES REVOLT

On March 13th, control of large areas of the Maronite Christian heartland, north of Beirut, was taken over by forces under Samir Geagea, who challenged President Amin Gemayel's recent co-operation with Syria. Geagea was one of the right-hand men of Bashir Gemayel, Amin's brother, who was assassinated in September 1982. The Lebanese Forces militia was loyal to Bashir and it has remained close to Israel, even maintaining an office in Jerusalem. This has set it in opposition to Amin, who has tried to win some sup-

port for himself as the President of the whole of Lebanon by adopting a more "nationalist" posture towards Israel. Few doubt that Israel backs Geagea's move.

Lastly, Israel is also believed to be behind sectarian attacks by Phalangists in Maronite Christian suburbs of Sidon on Muslim residents, which forced 20,000 to leave their homes. By such methods, Israel hopes to direct the attention of the resistance away from itself and to create such a mess generally in Lebanon that the various political forces hostile to it either agree to leave Israel in peace or have no choice but to do so.

But there is no sign of any let-up in resistance activities. Israel's Lebanon war was meant to be won in a week in June 1982, but it is still going on. Up to October 10th, 1982, it lost 368 soldiers according to official figures; now admitted Israeli losses are nearly 650. Rising casualties have strengthened calls within Israel for the army to be pulled out quickly: on March 16th, over 10,000 Israelis gathered in a Tel Aviv square to launch a campaign for the withdrawal to be accelerated.

When Israel eventually withdraws behind the northern border of Palestine, it will be the first time in history that an Arab people has driven the Zionist army from its territory, and it will be remembered throughout the region that it was a people's war that succeeded where the armies of Arab states, relying on conventional warfare, had failed.



The Lebanese community, ravaged by the 'Iron Fist' policy, is left to pick up the pieces as the Israelis withdraw.

Heavy losses forced the Israeli Cabinet to decide on January 14th, to begin a phased withdrawal from South Lebanon, which Prime Minister Peres said he hoped would be completed within nine or ten months. The first stage retreat included a pullback from Sidon. When the Israelis left on February 16th, people poured into the streets chanting and clapping.

IRON FIST

The Zionist forces were given no rest behind their new lines. Guerrilla attacks reached an average of twelve per day. Israel responded with a new "Iron Fist" policy. Resistance attacks were to be followed with massive retaliation and collective punishments. Cars which failed to stop when ordered, would be immediately fired upon. Troops detained, beat and questioned people at random.

Lebanese drove his car at an Israeli convoy and detonated a bomb inside, killing 12 soldiers. The following day, the Israelis stormed the village of Zrariye and killed 34 people, both fighters and civilians: they left behind a

Azania Defies Botha

The 25th anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre on March 21st was marked by the racist South African regime in its own way - by a massacre of 19 unarmed black people taking part in a march to a service in the town of Langa.

Since P.W.Botha became Prime Minister of South Africa, he has supposedly been following "liberal" policies. Yet between last September and the Langa killings, 234 people were killed by the South African police. Following these latest massacres, demonstrations and protests spread across Azania. One target of the protesters was Africans who have collaborated with the regime, some of whom were killed or driven from their homes. These were mainly policemen and officials, who have acted as the eyes and ears of the colonialist regime.

"AMNESTY"

One objective of the South African regime's recent "liberalisation" measures (measures which do nothing to change power relations within South Africa) has been to encourage opposition forces to enter into a dialogue with it and abandon their struggle to smash the system. The recent protests have put another nail in the coffin of this strategy. Another blow has come from the black political prisoners in the colonialist jails. The regime has offered dozens of them an amnesty on condition that they renounce armed struggle, but so far has found few takers. Both Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress, and Zephania Mothopeng, probably the highest ranking member of the Pan Africanist Congress held by the regime, have rejected

release on such conditions. Mothopeng, who is serving a 30-year sentence, told his wife when she visited him that he would only accept an amnesty if the PAC and other outlawed organisations were unbanned, restrictions on their political activities removed and the system of oppression and exploitation dismantled.



Some prisoners have been released, but it is not clear that they have all accepted the regime's terms. Three PAC members who were released after 22 years in prison, denied that they had made any deals. On behalf of his colleagues, Isaac Mthimunya of PAC told a Johannesburg paper on 17th February:

"No-one made a conditional offer to us. We were just told on Thursday night that we must pack our belongings. At 8 p.m. we left Robben Island and the following day we were released from New Look Prison in Pretoria."

LESOTHO SHOOTINGS

Earlier this year, PAC abroad decided to try and move exiled members back into Azania to strengthen work at home. While returning to their country in March, 6 armed members of PAC were shot by Lesotho security forces.

Later, the same day as the massacre at Langa occurred, police raided offices of the Azanian People's Organisation, which has been at the forefront of much of the recent protest and which earlier this year mounted demonstrations against Edward Kennedy's electioneering visit to South Africa. Equipment was seized and 4 people arrested.

In London, the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania organised a picket of South Africa House on March 25th. The previous week the PAC had held a Sharpeville Commemoration Rally at the Africa Centre, London which was attended by about 150 people. Speakers included BCM, All African People's Revolutionary Party, RCL and PAC itself and African Dawn performed as part of the rally.

The PAC speaker told of the influence of Kwame Nkrumah on the Pan Africanist trend in Azania and of how PAC had emphasised its independence and its unity with the rest of Africa in the fight for Azanian freedom. It was a theme which other speakers also referred to.

The meeting remembered Sharpeville in a militant atmosphere and honoured both those who gave their lives for Azania in the past and those who fight for its liberation today.

At the Sharpeville Commemoration Rally, Hamilton Keke, former political prisoner on Robben Island and at present PAC representative in Britain, announced that he is soon to return to work in Africa. RCL members who have worked with him, will remember him as a good comrade, a strong Pan Africanist and internationalist. We wish him well in his future labours for Azania's liberation.

WAR AND THE PEACE MOVEMENT *Cont. from p.6.*

and that planning for it was not realistic. For this country, the first priority must be the reduction in targets - meaning the kicking out of the all-enveloping American military presence - before civil defence can be useful in any real way.

Non-aligned and non-nuclear countries such as Switzerland, Sweden, Norway and Canada have made extensive preparations for nuclear war. Switzerland had spent 2.4 billion dollars by 1980 and plans to spend another 4 billion by the year 2000. This provides shelters of a high standard, evacuation plans, stockpiles of food and drugs. In contrast, West Germany has only shelter provision for 1.8 million out of 62 million population; and France, like us a nuclear power, has basically no plans. In the USA, Reagan approved a 4.2 billion dollar programme in 1982 for 'crisis relocation' (evacuation) signifying an interest in a limited nuclear war. The USA military command will be airborne in a converted Boeing 707 in the event of war - accepting that it is impossible to build a bunker immune to attack. The USSR has extensive civil defence plans and since the 1950's all

new buildings have shelters.

FIGHT FOR PEACE

The third cover that needs to be lifted off in discussing war and nuclear weapons is the blanket of helplessness and despair, so many people feel powerless to alter what they see to be wrong all around them. The very enormity and terrible danger of that wrong seems to make that blanket heavier. The last article in this series will describe and assess the various movements for peace in the world today, draw conclusions on what our attitudes, as communists, should be, and how we can unite with people all over the world to move towards a true and lasting peace.

APOLOGY: In the last article in this series, there was an error. In the second column, 12 lines below the picture - "They are accurately targetted on cities..." should have read: "They are accurately targetted (except for the few which crash or go off course) and can destroy small targets such as missile silos and bunkers. They are not primarily targetted on cities..."

War and the Peace Movement

The following article is Part 4 in the series on War and the Peace Movement. This series has been contributed to 'Class Struggle' with the aim of promoting debate and study on questions on the international situation, the threat of nuclear war and the peace movement. We welcome contributions from our readers to this debate.

USA'S UNSINKABLE AIRCRAFT CARRIER

In discussing war, and especially nuclear war, with people in this country, some questions occur again and again. The most pressing is, perhaps, how we are to defend ourselves from the USSR if we have no nuclear weapons. As highlighted in the first article in this series, the USSR is certainly an enemy of the people in the world, and a very dangerous and aggressive one. As communists, we in no way go along with the trend which plays down this danger, says that the USSR is only aggressive because we are, or that peace will come about by turning the other cheek, or in any way appeasing the USSR. It is certain that in the long term, the people of the USSR will rise up again and overthrow the present social imperialist leadership and re-establish a socialist state. But there is little sign of that at present. In the short term, the USSR shows itself in its actions to be an aggressive and expansionist state: it is actions not words that tell the truth. However, it is equally true that the USA is also seeking world domination: to people living in Central America, Palestine, the Philippines, it is the USA which is the main enemy. If we are seeking to defend ourselves, as a small, independent peace-seeking country, it is imperative that we are independent of both superpowers.

This in no way must leave us devoid of allies. We should ally ourselves with both other Western European countries, and more importantly, with the huge strength of the Third World and socialist countries. They are the main force against the superpower rivalry and in favour of world peace.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS: A DETERRENT?

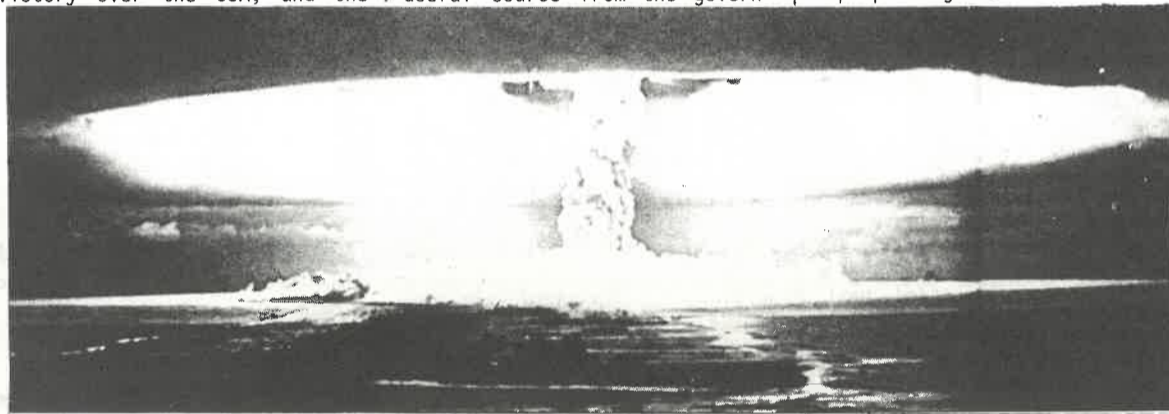
Nuclear weapons are traditionally seen as defending us from attack by the USSR by acting as a deterrent. It is said: "They won't dare drop one on us because they know we will then drop one on them." But nuclear weapons now held by the superpowers and other nuclear countries, are no longer deterrent weapons. In the 1950's, each had a few, big bombs trained on major cities of the opposing country - that "worked" (if it "worked" at all) by deterrence. However, as described in the last article, this has now changed. The article described both the terrible devastation caused by nuclear weapons and the type of weapons at present deployed. Both the Cruise land-based missiles and our Polaris (soon to be Trident) submarines are designed as first-strike weapons. They have multiple warheads, each accurately trained on missile silos and military installations and are designed to fly swift and low to avoid the enemy's sensors. In the event of mounting international tension, in what way would they deter a nuclear attack? Such an attack could easily destroy the submarine base in Scotland along with much of the complex and vital submarine guidance

and tracking systems which exist on bases round these islands. Indeed our missiles are only worth their billions if we use them to wipe out the USSR's missile silos etc. before they are emptied i.e. as a first strike. Modern nuclear weapons are not defensive weapons and the old talk of deterrence is a thing of the past.

New technology is producing a whole new battery of defensive weapons - based on electronic sensors and automatic firing against attack. These systems do not feature in the "defence" policies of the nuclear powers.

PEOPLE'S DEFENCE

Defence of a country against aggression - defending the UK against the USSR - is, however, much more than a system of weapons. Third World struggles have shown us that people and politics are much more important than weapons and technology. The Vietnamese victory over the USA, and the



An explosion of a hydrogen bomb 50 times more powerful than Hiroshima.

victory of the Chinese revolution demonstrated this in a concrete way. However, the imperialist powers can never build a defence policy this way as their very existence depends on oppressing their own working class as well as Third World peoples. They can never arm and depend upon their own populations. Therefore for the working people of an imperialist country, such as the UK, any effective defence depends in the long term on kicking out their own ruling class as a first step. The strongest defence this country could have, would be based on the majority of the population united behind a socialist government which had destroyed the old state machine which depends on exploitation, profit and international aggression and replaced it by a state which serves the working people. In this context, the USA could be booted out, aggressive nuclear weapons scrapped and money invested in the defensive high-tech weapons, proper civil defence and a people's army. This 'scenario' is obviously a long way off but gives us a context in which to evaluate present defence plans. It is also something which haunts our government and the reason why the primary stated aim of Home Defence is now the securing of the UK against the "internal threat".

CIVIL DEFENCE

Another important question which recurs in debate is the extent to which we can defend ourselves from nuclear attack in the present situation. What does the government's recent talk about civil defence amount to? Should we be agitating for more in the way of bunkers, evacuation etc.? In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to assess firstly the sort of attack we're defending against, and secondly, the

details of government plans in the event of war. It is notable that information around both these points is not published by the government and not taught in our schools or by the media. Surely there is no hope of proper civil defence without such public knowledge?

A good source of information are two books by the journalist, Duncan Campbell: 'War Plan UK' and 'The Unsinkable Aircraft Carrier' which quote extensively from government documents. Estimates of the likely scale of attack on this country in the event of a world war are not given by this, or previous, governments. The GLC, for example, requested guidance from the Home Office in 1982, on how London might fare under conventional or nuclear attack. Home Office Under-Secretary, David Heaton, wrote back after three months of "urgent consideration" on "complex points" and was unable to offer any guidance at all! The only useful source from the govern-

ment is their civil defence exercises such as Square Leg in 1980, and Hard Rock planned for 1982 but abandoned because of non-cooperation by local authorities. Even here though, the truth is far from told. The original plans for Hard Rock were "sanitized" by the Ministry of Defence so that, for example, the nuclear submarine bases around the Lower Clyde received no nuclear bombs at all! And neither did central London!

The earlier Square Leg exercise was more realistic although still a very 'moderate' scale of attack. That resulted in 29 million people dead and 6.4 million injured in the first month. Perhaps a better way of imagining the effect of a full-scale attack is to re-read the description in the last article of one 1 megaton bomb and then look at a map of military and communication targets around the country.

USA'S UNSINKABLE AIRCRAFT CARRIER

Any map of likely targets illustrates that we are a small, densely-populated island, absolutely bristling with targets - and a large percentage of these are, in fact, United States installations. There are over 100 US bases here and Cruise missiles under their direct control. We also have our own forces armed in very aggressive terms with Polaris/Trident submarines, and important NATO control centres. The term, the USA's unsinkable aircraft carrier is very apt. The extent of the USA's military presence in this country is almost totally concealed from the population. It is only the efforts of various peace groups in recent years which have started to highlight major USAF bases. In addition to these, there are innumerable vitally important tracking and

guidance stations, communication stations of all kinds, often equipped with the latest in billion dollar computer hardware. The British government has virtually no control over any of this activity and receives very little intelligence from it - much of it is not NATO. For example, American servicemen committing civil offences in this country are immune from prosecution. For example, nuclear 'red alerts' involving American aircraft loaded with nuclear bombs taking off from bases here, were not, on several occasions, notified in any official way to any government or British military official. Not that we are alone in hosting superpower armoury. Besides other European countries, both superpowers have bases all round the world - particularly in the Pacific where whole islands have been taken over. Vietnam and the Philippines are just two examples of Third World countries used as pawns in this superpower game.

SECRET WAR PLANS

Meanwhile our government makes detailed and secret war plans and attempts to fob us off with talk of nuclear deterrence, and unrealistic 'civil defence'. Detailed plans are laid down for a pre-war situation where all pretence of democracy would disappear and a fascist state become open. During the 1950's, £100 million was spent on civil defence involving bunkers and evacuation plans, organisation for first aid, welfare, housing, food, fire-fighting etc. But by 1960, developments in the destructive power of the new H-bombs made all these plans obviously futile. An exercise in 1962, called Fallex 62, found plans totally inadequate. By 1963, civil defence memos started to put the maintenance of law and order as a higher priority than succour and the civil defence corps was run down and finally disbanded in 1968 (by Harold Wilson). The warning systems, communication systems and government bunkers were the only things to survive! In 1971 Home Defence was re-organised into Emergency Services Division (F6) of the police with the primary stated aim as securing the UK against 'internal threat'. The 'Police Manual of Home Defence' gives the first task in a pre-war stage as "detention or restriction of

NEWS FROM MOLESWORTH

Cambridgeshire police are pressing ahead with their plan to issue vehicle identity passes to local people living around the proposed Cruise missile base at Molesworth. Not only is the base area now sealed off with fence, armed guards and criminal law, but the public roads around are subject to repeated weekend roadblocks. Flack-jacket Heseltine may be enjoying the military take-over but the NCCL is protesting strongly and anti-nuclear demonstrators are posting him bits of the fence that they have cut out! Molesworth will be the scene of a big Easter CND demonstration. And it will need more than identity checks to stop that.

Also at Molesworth, a number of people phoning a local contact number, recently heard an "answering machine" reply: "X and Y are out at the moment. Please leave your message after the tone". The people at the contact number do not have an answering machine..

movement of subversive or potentially subversive people". Some 20,000 names are thought to be on arrest lists held by MI5. Food stocks will be under armed guard, petrol rationed, roads closed, media censored, telephones cut off. Police Support Units (at present anti-riot control) will be dispersed to 'safe areas'. These plans for war are intimately linked with control of civil unrest in other situations. (This has been amply demonstrated in the miners' strike.) The government also has a complex system of regional nuclear bunkers, communications HQs, underground telephone links etc., where a microcosm of the ruling class will retire in times of danger. The rest of us are advised to stay in our homes (middle of big cities included) and hide under the stairs. There is really no provision for survival for the general population.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

The last two years have seen an increase in government directives to local authorities to organise "civil defence" at a local level. These orders run alongside the refusal to give information about likely attacks and very little in the way of funds. Emergency planning officers have been appointed and in some areas are grouping volunteers for such things as soup kitchens and first aid posts. Some Regional Health Authorities are discussing stocking health centres with a few hundred extra bandages, pain-killers and intravenous sets. Looked at in the face of the reality of the effects of nuclear weapons this is obviously a public relations game, and a sick one at that.

Serious defence from nuclear attack would need billions of pounds. For example, the £7 billion at present going into Trident missiles over the next ten years. It would also need honest, open discussion of war. In areas where bombs are likely to fall evacuation is the only possible way of survival. No shelter is strong enough to withstand a direct hit by modern nuclear weapons and over an area of many square miles raging fires may cause people in bunkers to roast or suffocate to death. In areas away from a direct hit, nuclear shelters could provide protection from radio-activity if it was possible to survive in them for several weeks and they filtered the air effectively during that time. However on emerging from the shelter, survivors in this country are likely to find terrible destruction of buildings, services and agriculture, no uncontaminated food and water, infectious diseases epidemics and the prospect of a nuclear winter. A British Medical Association Working Party Report in 1982 concluded that there was no way the NHS could provide any semblance of medical aid after a nuclear war.

Cont. on p.7.

FREEDOM FOR IRELAND



ANNIE MAGUIRE RELEASED

"I have come here today simply to assert my innocence and that of the other members of my family who were convicted and of Patrick O'Neill."

With these words, Annie Maguire showed that she was not going to stop fighting British injustice. Annie Maguire was released from prison on 23rd February this year after spending ten years in English jails. In 1976, her family and three others were convicted of possession of explosives.



The trial took place in a blaze of publicity and racist anti-Irish hysteria. The family and others had been arrested after being named by a nephew, Gerard Conlon, in a statement he made under interrogation while being detained under the PTA. In fact under considerable pressure Gerard named 30 people including his parish priest!

The evidence that convicted Annie Maguire and her family was a forensic test which has now been discredited - the Greiss test. Several items from her home were tested and all but one were negative. However one sample, on a rubber glove, proved positive in the test which claimed to detect the

presence of nitroglycerine. In fact it was later shown that combinations of common substances can also produce a positive result. The test itself, was also conducted by an inexperienced 17-year old technician, who failed to follow the rules and keep part of the sample as a check.

Yet on this basis the family was found guilty and imprisoned. Even Annie Maguire's two sons, 14 and 15 years old, were found guilty and sentenced to 4 and 5 years respectively. One of those imprisoned, Guisepe Conlon, died in prison in 1980.

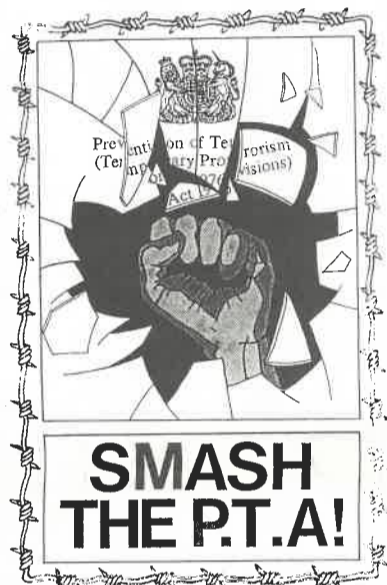
The family have so far failed to get their case re-opened despite support from Cardinals

Thomas O'Fiach and Basil Hume, Labour MP Christopher Price and Tory MP, John Biggs Davidson. Why is that?

The brutal treatment of this Irish family by the British state shows the contempt that has existed by Labour and Tory governments for Irish people in general. Denied their national rights, and denied their democratic rights, the Irish people cannot rely on any type of justice from British imperialism.

This is the reality of British law and order, and British rule. And this is the background to the impending trial of those arrested in Liverpool at Christmas.

The Maguire family at a press conference in London following Annie's release from prison on 23rd February, 1985.



got off lightly at the hands of the Liverpool police, and that this pressure was the main reason for her being granted bail.

"I was told by my solicitor that I mustn't build my hopes up... But when she saw how many people were supporting me by sending letters for the court and the Home Office and how many people were prepared to stand bail, she decided to go all our for it, then."

CATEGORY A

Category A restrictions were lifted the day before Maire was granted bail. She commented on this: "Looking back they must have taken me off Category A because it had been decided to give me bail because of the pressure, and this stopped a legal precedent being made."

Maire, along with five men arrested during the same period, still face charges of conspiracy to cause an explosion. The five men are all still being detained on Category A restrictions. The committal proceedings are now fixed for May 10th.

Meanwhile support for all those detained and charged is being built around the country in

different campaigns and meetings.

200 people attended a meeting at the end of February, at the Camden Irish Centre, London and heard speeches from Maire O'Shea and others.

Another man from Bristol, detained at Christmas and released without charge after seven days, described how eleven police officers entered his house: "My children were literally thrown out of bed during the search that followed and toys, Christmas cards and books relating to Ireland were taken away..." He also suffered degrading and disorienting treatment while held by police.

□ West European governments are dismayed at Britain's reluctance to support an important UN convention that declares torture to be an international crime. The convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December, after seven years of committees. Since being open for signatures on February 4th, it has been signed by 22 governments, 13 of them from Western Europe. Britain, the US and West Germany have not yet signed. It is seen as important 'as it contains the principle of "universal jurisdiction" i.e. known torturers could be arrested in any country. It also contains an inspection procedure for investigating complaints... Surely Mrs T. isn't worried about practices in the north of Ireland? Strip searching? Solitary confinement? Regular beatings by the screws?

BUILD BROAD SUPPORT

Over 6,000 people, most of them Irish, have been detained under the PTA since its introduction. It is essential that the use of the act to intimidate and harass Irish people is exposed in general. In particular, we must campaign in the coming months for broad and united support for those awaiting trial.

* * * *

Sunday, 21st April in Leeds National Delegate Meeting organised by the Birmingham Campaign Against the PTA.

To discuss national campaigning.

DIARY OF EVENTS

Three sponsored marches to Molesworth. Leave Stevenage, Leicester, Cambridge, 10 a.m. GOOD FRIDAY (APRIL 5)

EASTER SUNDAY

Arrive Molesworth early evening. Light up the base through the night. Bring candles, torches etc.

EASTER MONDAY

Ring the base. Bring bells etc. 2 p.m. Mass planting of pennants.

APRIL 11th, THURSDAY

DEFEND JACKIE BERKELEY!

Picket of Manchester Magistrates Courts, where Jackie has to appear for sentencing.

From APRIL 12 for one month... 'Leila and the Wolves' The Gate Cinema, Notting Hill, W. London. Film shows the struggle of Palestinian women from the early days of Zionist occupation.

April 18, Thursday

Picket Appeal Courts, The Strand, London.

FREE IQBAL BEGUM!

10 a.m.

"The worst feature was the total isolation. I wasn't allowed my watch, no newspapers, so after a couple of days I didn't know what day it was."

This was how Maire O'Shea spoke of her detention under the PTA in the New Year in Liverpool. Since being granted bail, Maire has spoken at meetings and revealed details of her treatment. She makes it clear that because there was a lot of publicity and protest surrounding her detention, she

'A History of the Irish Working Class' by Peter Beresford Ellis. Pluto Press.

BOOK REVIEW...



"Takes on where Connolly left off," blurbs Paul Foot: a worrying source given the SWP's pro-imperialist stand on the question of Ireland. But don't be put off. Ellis does approach the sweep of Irish history in the spirit of Connolly and although no author could match the excitement that Connolly's pioneering work 'Labour and Irish History' holds for the reader, it is not totally undeserved praise.

Ellis reaffirms the existence of 'Celtic Communism' in opposition to those who wish to eliminate it from history. And he proceeds to detail how English feudalism and the Catholic Church destroyed Celtic society by a steady process of undermining its kinship attitude to property and its democratic approach to rulers and ruled. He establishes here and maintains through the book that each stage in the development of Irish history can only be under-

stood as the unfolding of the development of the conflict with Britain. This theme is developed in close unity with the other main one - that it is the people who make history!

In the various anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles that are analysed, the notion of the various classes and their changing responses are well outlined. Ellis reveals when there were points of real unity between the various classes in the struggle, albeit for their own class reasons, and when the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie turned traitor to their own self-professed ideals for those self-same class interests. It

A HISTORY OF RESISTANCE...

becomes clear that only the 'men of no property' have remained steadfast and loyal to the cause of Irish freedom.

In addition the book is clear on the divisions between the Protestant and Catholic community and where there were links built in class struggle against their common oppression. Ellis remains concrete in his analysis and does not fall into wishful thinking regarding these very real divisions. His analysis extends to showing how various forces of reaction have used these divisions for their own purposes again and again throughout Irish history.

The book shows weakness in not clearly attacking the treachery of the British 'labour' movement towards Ireland. Ellis is much too gentle on the sellout of the Dublin workers in 1913-14 by the TUC and cohorts, who of course went on to repeat their activity in 1926 and 1984/5.

In conclusion, the book is fairly clear on the present struggle in the north, particularly that: "The length of the war and more particularly the activities of British counter-insurgency groups with their random sectarian murders, propaganda and attempts to create and maintain the polarisation between the two communities has made any natural reunion or consensus between the Catholic and Protestant working classes impossible while Britain remains involved." He goes on to show that the British by their own admission can never hope to smash the IRA or the INLA, and that there can be no hope of working class unity before the withdrawal of Britain.

The book has much to recommend it for both the more knowledgeable reader and the novice seeking more understanding of the Irish struggle against British imperialism.

NEWHAM 7 INNOCENT

SATURDAY, APRIL 27th, NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

Assemble 1 p.m. Plashet Park, Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 (East Ham tube).

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE KANAK PEOPLE FOR THEIR INDEPENDENCE

The FLNKS, the liberation movement of French-occupied New Caledonia, has called for an international day of solidarity with the Kanak people on April 20th. Two of its leaders, Eloi Machoro and Marcel Nonnaro, have recently been murdered by right-wing French settlers who want to maintain French rule. The FLNKS hopes to win worldwide support for Kanak independence.