

CLASS STRUGGLE



Political Paper of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain

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25p

Robbing the Poor to Pay the Rich

If you are young or old, a woman or black, unemployed or low-paid, you are under attack in the latest round of the government's plans for cuts in benefits. "The most substantial examination of the social security system since the Beveridge Report 40 years ago," was how Social Services Secretary, Norman Fowler, described the government's Green Paper, published in June.

The details of the plans have not yet been published. But the proposals include: abolishing the earnings-related state pension scheme; cutting Housing Benefit; replacing Supplementary Benefit with a new 'Income Support' scheme; increasing means-tested and discretionary benefits while cutting single payments, and some cases replacing them with loans; abolishing certain rights of appeal against DHSS decisions.

No one who has ever lived off the dole would claim that now, it is easy to do so. In the future, it will be even harder. Some benefits have, of course, already been cut - such as earnings-related dole. Black people have long been subject to a 'pass system' when claiming benefits. Many are denied benefits because of their immigration status and others effectively denied benefits unless they want to risk deportation. Young people who live in bed and breakfast accommodation have already had their benefits cut after six weeks, effectively forcing them onto the streets.

POOREST - HIT HARDEST

The new proposals will hit hardest those already worst off. Black people find it hardest to get jobs and a greater proportion are unemployed. When they do have jobs, they are often the worst paid. Women, too, will be hard hit. They generally bear the heaviest responsibility for

family finance. They make up the highest proportion of single parents and the low-paid. The changes in state pensions will also particularly affect women. Young people will have their benefits cut even further.

The cuts in benefits are part of a general strategy of attacking the living standards of substantial sections of the working class and oppressed people through cuts in the 'social wage' and thus cutting public spending.

This particular set of proposals has come at a time when it is clear that unemployment will not drop, and may even rise as the crisis of British imperialism deepens. One recent indicator of the depth of the crisis was the fact that for the first time since the Industrial Revolution, Britain has become a net importer of manufactured goods.

The re-structuring of the British economy and restored profits for the big companies will not reduce the dole queues. Indeed, long dole queues are

essential to the restoration of British capitalism's prosperity under the government's plans.

Cuts in benefits are also another way to force people into low-paid work. The unions' ability to fight for better wages has already been undermined by the existence of a reserve army of four million unemployed. Privatisation and cuts have destroyed jobs and reduced wages in the public sector. The miners' defeat was a major setback for the organised working class who have fought and lost battles over jobs in key industries such as car or steel production. Having taken on traditionally well-organised sections of the class, the government is now taking on those it sees as weaker.

While benefits are being cut, government money is still available for 'Youth Training Schemes' and 'Community Programmes' and other such schemes. On one level these schemes are a public relations exercise to convince people that the unemployment figures are coming down. But they are also part of a plan to create a low-paid, unskilled workforce.

POPULAR RESISTANCE

There is money available too, for the forces of law and order. Police wages have rocketed (even without the overtime of the miners' strike) and new prisons are being built. Together with the strengthening of police powers in the new Public Order proposals, these show that the state is preparing for popular resistance.

We must support all such resistance to cuts in our living standards. At the same time, we should get rid of all illusions about the welfare state being a step to socialism. The welfare state has only been possible because of Britain's ability to exploit the people and countries of the Third World.

It is hopeless and reactionary to dream of turning the clock back. The old welfare state could only be restored through a recovery of British imperialism's former world position, which is neither desirable nor possible. It will take revolutionary change to create conditions for everyone's welfare needs to be met, and for unemployment pay to be made not reasonable, but unnecessary.



Cuts for the worst off, more cash for repression.

National Struggles

p.6



Photo: "Class Struggle"

Worldwide

INTERNATIONAL p.8 Lebanon Korea



40 years after the partition of their country, Koreans still want unity.

Miners Strike p.4



Photo: "Class Struggle"

'Left' Draws Wrong Conclusions

EDITORIAL

'Class Struggle' is the monthly, political paper of the Revolutionary Communist League. It carries reports and analysis on events in this country and internationally. It takes a stand with the oppressed and exploited people of the world and aims to be a weapon in their struggle for change.

AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND HEGEMONISM

While recognising that our main enemy in the struggle for revolutionary change in this country is British imperialism, 'Class Struggle' supports the struggles of the peoples and nations of the Third World against imperialism, especially the two superpowers. It recognises that the USSR is again a prison house of nations, based on a class system and a superpower aggressor contending with the USA for world domination. We also have a particular responsibility to give unconditional support to those fighting British imperialism from Azania to Ireland.

We do not preach to the liberation movements, tell them their alleged shortcomings, pick and choose between them, or qualify our solidarity. As much as possible in our small number of pages, we attempt to give them a platform to speak, reprinting articles, press releases and speeches, or using their sources for our reports.

NATIONAL OPPRESSION

Similarly, within this country we recognise the importance of the national oppression of black and Irish people and their struggles against it. We try to support their struggles and given them a platform. We recognise that British imperialism has been built on both national and class exploitation and oppression, and support the struggles of

the people of Wales and Scotland for national freedom as well as the many forms of struggle by the working class and progressive people in this country.

CENTRAL ROLE OF PAPER

'Class Struggle' also tries to do more than report on progressive and revolutionary struggles, important as this is. It is the paper of a communist organisation and aims to spread the ideas of Marxism-Leninism Mao Zedong Thought and apply them to the concrete conditions in the world today, particularly to the task of developing a revolutionary strategy for this country.

It attempts to show the inter-relationship between different struggles and to put the particular struggles in the more general context of the crisis of British and the world imperialist system today.

In this way, it has a key role to play in all our political work. The League organises round it, puts over its views and policies in its pages and seeks to pose an alternative to social-democratic and other trends which offer no real way out of the present system.

The paper has an important role to play as a collective organiser, bringing together people from different areas of struggle with a common general perspective and aim. It has a central role to play in the task of rebuilding a genuine communist party which can act as a centre of leadership for the working class and progressive people in this country. The fact that so many "revolutionary" groups have set themselves up in a sectarian way, isolated from the masses and claiming to provide all the answers, does not negate the need to build a genuine party.

'Class Struggle' can act as a scaffolding for this party-building work, and play a part in bringing together different forces with this common aim. It can begin to give a lead to draw in new forces. In its reporting, analysis and debates, it can play a part in the process of uniting theory and practice, so that the everyday realities can be seen as part of a general perspective. In giving a platform to oppressed people it applies the mass line - from the masses to the masses. In the debate and arguments in its pages, it can struggle for the policies which can take use forward. With an honest and open self-critical approach, we can build on what is right in our work and correct our mistakes.

The work of the monthly paper has to be complemented by other publications. In particular, after a long gap, our theoretical and political journal 'October' will be published again this summer. At a time when much of the left has shown itself confused or on a wrong track and yet the demands of the real world are more pressing than ever, the need for theoretical clarity should be obvious to all. The work of the journal will strengthen that of the paper.

The League is a relatively small organisation whose influence and resources are limited. Our stress on solidarity with the liberation struggles around the world, on support for the national minorities oppressed within Britain; our solidarity with the Republican Movement in Ireland; our refusal to romanticise the struggles of the working class, while supporting them; our insistence on an independent, revolutionary position, unaligned with either superpower, and free of illusions about the character of the Labour Party, all set us apart from nearly all the

rest of the left. The very fact that our position is so distinct means that it will take a lot of effort to win many people to it, going as it does against much of what is taken for granted on the left.

SUPPORT 'CLASS STRUGGLE'

'Class Struggle' has made a small beginning in carrying out these tasks but has a long way to go. In order to achieve its aims, it needs the support of its readers. We call on all readers to support the paper in whatever way you can:

* We welcome your comments and criticisms of the paper. We will only be able to improve 'Class Struggle' and make it a stronger weapon in the struggle for change, if we can strengthen it through practicing the mass line. We welcome contributed articles as well as printing those that reflect League policy.

* We need your support to sell the paper more widely and spread its ideas and influence among more people.

* We need money. We put our price up at the beginning of the year to offset rising expenses. But we still need donations and subscriptions to help us hold down the price, and produce the paper regularly and efficiently. New production and research materials are always needed. Our only sources of finance are our sales and money given by readers and League members. It has been a principle for us that we should never compromise our independence by relying on outside sources of finance.

We appeal to all readers who want to work with us to order extra copies of the paper, to sell it, to write for it, to join the League in its political work and collect donations for the paper. There is much to be done!

Felix Greene

Felix Greene, a long-standing friend of the Chinese people, died in Mexico City on June 15th at the age of 76.

Felix Greene was a Quaker, and therefore pacifism was a fundamental part of his beliefs. But while he supported peace movements throughout his life, he did not condemn oppressed peoples fighting for their freedom.

In the 1950's, there was a lot of western propaganda against the young People's Republic of China, depicting it as an impoverished country under a brutal dictatorship which had massacred millions of its citizens and routinely ill-treated the rest. Greene went to China in 1957, and was surprised at the reality. He went on to write 'The Wall Has Two Sides', a work which demolished many of the myths surrounding China in those days. This was an act of courage, given the intense anti-communist and anti-China barrage being put up at the time in the USA to which he had moved from Britain.

Greene went on to write 'The Enemy', a critique of imperialism centred on the role of the USA. His main work in later life was in film-making. He did a television interview with Chinese Prime Minister, Zhou Enlai in 1965, and, in the midst of the war, produced his first film, 'Inside North Vietnam' in 1967. His work included films on China, Vietnam and Cuba, to all of which countries he gave strong support.

During the 1970's, he was President of the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding. One of his last works was the book 'Let There Be A World', which was well received in the peace movement in Britain.

He will be missed by many.



CLASS STRUGGLE
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'October'

'October' is the political and theoretical journal of the RCL. After a long interval since the last issue appeared, 'October' No.3 is now out. It contains a critique of the Revolutionary Communist Group's policy document, 'Racism, Imperialism and the Working Class', and RCL policy statement adopted at our pre-Congress conference; an article on Eurocentrism and the British Marxist-Leninist movement and an interview with Kashmiri freedom fighter, Maqbool Butt (who was murdered a year and a half ago) published in English for the first time.

'October' No.3 costs 70p (plus 25p post and packing) from the address on the back of 'Class Struggle'. It will appear more regularly from now on; the RCL apologises to all current subscribers for the long delay in the appearance of the new issue.

The last issue of 'Class Struggle' carried an article on the famine in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

That article should have contained the addresses of the popular relief agencies which ensure that aid gets through to the people who most need it in the liberated areas and who are denied aid by the Ethiopian government.

The addresses are:

Eritrean Relief Association,
BCM Box 865,
London WC1V 6XX.

Relief Society of Tigray,
UK Committee,
PO Box 720,
London W6 4ET.

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Dear Editor, / / / / /

The author of the series 'War and the Peace Movement' is to be congratulated for the way in which a contentious and difficult issue has been tackled. The scope and breadth of the series is impressive. Many good points are made and the amount of concrete detail presented excellent. I would though like to make some comradely criticisms of the series.

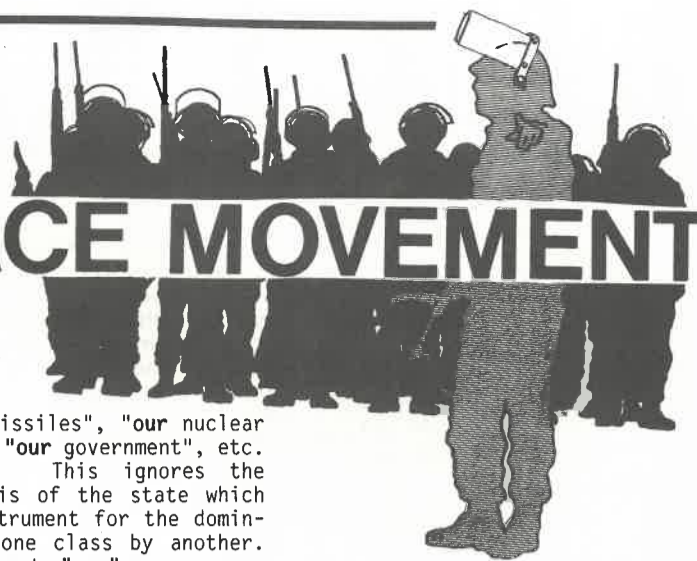
The writer does not appear to have thought through some of his or her ideas, and in consequence, in my opinion, some incorrect ideas were expressed. The presentation was sometimes confused and some contradictory ideas were expressed. For example, in Part Two, it stated that "any act of aggression against another nation is an unjust war". Is this true? I think that the Russian invasion of Finland in 1940 was 'just' and isn't it an "act of aggression", -but a just one, when the IRA take military action on the British mainland? Yet later the writer recognises this by rightly saying that wars of national liberation (which are usually 'started' by the revolutionary forces) are "just wars". In Part Three Britain is referred to as a "small, independent, peace-loving country". I think that the author had in mind a socialist Britain, but this is not clear from the text. It is not pedantic to raise these points, as they do show that the line presented is inconsistent and unclear at times.

ON POLITICAL ECONOMY

In Part One 'Imperialism: The Root Cause of War', the political economy of imperialism is treated superficially. Part Two makes some correct points about the economic roots of

LETTERS on

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WAR & THE PEACE MOVEMENT

World War One, but in the series as a whole the question of what concrete form the next world war will take, and the economic causes of it, are not addressed. The most likely conflict would appear to be between the Soviet and US blocs. The development of imperialism since World War Two has thrown together the various imperialists in their respective alliances as the only way to defend and extend their global interests. There is no way that one superpower could tolerate an attempt at annexation of one of its imperialist allies, say of Britain by the USSR or of Poland by the US. Because the accumulation of capital takes place on a world scale in the era of imperialism, these powers are so tied to one another by common interests in Azania, the Philippines, Poland, India etc., that they are bound to fight as alliances, not as single powers. The history of the twentieth century bears this out.

The series doesn't properly consider these inter-imperialist contradictions, and in consequence makes some errors in the way in which British imperialism is treated. The discussion of "defending Britain against Soviet aggression" detaches Britain from the real world in which it operates, a world in which it is one of the biggest imperialist powers, one of the biggest exploiters and oppressors of the peoples of the Third World. If Britain is involved in an imperialist

war, it will almost certainly be as a member of the US bloc against the Soviet bloc. I cannot see any reason which would justify a United Front with the bourgeoisie in such a war. But this is the implicit view of Part Four of the series. The author does not appear to have considered the likely conditions in which war will erupt or perhaps just assumes that Britain should be defended.

The series treats the Three Worlds theory in a way which blurs the more fundamental division of the world into oppressed and oppressor countries. It is necessary to make distinctions between the superpowers and the minor imperialist powers; and it is also necessary to make further distinctions among the latter. There is a huge difference between such countries as Greece, Portugal and Rumania on the one hand and Britain, France, Germany, Japan, etc. on the other. The former can and often do play a progressive role in world affairs; the latter generally play a very reactionary role despite their contradictions with the superpowers which occasionally impel them to take a good stand on this or that question. This is another reason why I disagree with the formulation "any act of aggression..." If, say, the Soviet Union invades West Germany and precipitates a world war, then the 'unjust' aspect of the war would lie with both sides, with their unjust domination of their own people, and not with Soviet "aggression" against Germany which would be immaterial. What matters is the actual class and national content of the war, in this case a battle for world hegemony between two rival bands of cut-throats.

Throughout the series such terms as "our missiles", "our nuclear weapons", "our government", etc. are used. This ignores the class basis of the state which is an instrument for the domination of one class by another. They are not "our" weapons or "our" armed forces; they are set up by and run in the interests of the imperialists, as is clearly shown every day in northern Ireland and was vividly demonstrated during the miners' strike. At the beginning of Part Four, it is said that "the most pressing (question) perhaps is how we are to defend ourselves from the USSR if we have no nuclear weapons". The words "we" and "ourselves" are neutral and don't look at the question in class terms. Britain is inhabited by classes, by oppressed and oppressor nations and by national minorities who do not all have a common interest in defending Britain. In my view, the most pressing question is: what attitude should communists take to the war which is probably coming - an inter-imperialist war between the rival imperialist blocs. In such a war we cannot advocate the defence of Britain by any means, whether by bows and arrows or by nuclear weapons.

ON PACIFISM

There is a pacifist strand in the series which is a consequence of its separation of politics from economics. There is a tendency to treat war as a policy of imperialism, which the imperialists can carry out or not, as they please, rather than as the inevitable outcome of the political economy of imperialism. Whilst it is true that the imperialists have some freedom, e.g. they do not have

to go to war this year or next, sooner or later they will have to go to war. There can be no real peace so long as imperialism exists.

The author is too uncritical of the pacifist illusions of the Peace Movement. He or she rightly points out that the revolutionary struggles of the Third World against imperialism, including revolutionary wars, are bringing about, in the long-run, a peaceful world. But the series doesn't seriously take issue with the central delusion of the Peace Movement - that disarmament is possible under conditions of capitalism. As long as imperialism exists the imperialists will build up their armaments and eventually use them. Any idea that the imperialists will disarm, even under the most vigorous and sustained mass pressure, is a dangerous illusion and should be combatted by communists.

Pacifism is, as Lenin pointed out, a characteristic delusion of the petty bourgeoisie and of small nations, who wish, in the midst of great class and national conflict, to find an easy way out. To an extent, these delusions are deliberately fostered by the imperialists as they are quite useful to them. This is one reason that imperialists engage in 'peace' and 'disarmament' talks. Since the SALT agreement of the 1970's the arms build-up of the two superpowers has continued unabated and has escalated dramatically in the last five years. What should we say about this? Should we say to the masses that more pressure is needed? Or should we follow Brecht's advice that "when the rulers talk of peace, the people should prepare for war"?

There is in the Peace Movement a strong feeling that the terrible destructive power of nuclear weapons has rendered outdated 'traditional' views on war and peace, including the Marxist view. The series quotes Mao's view that nuclear weapons should not fundamentally change the Marxist attitude to war and asks if his views are "still true". The author doesn't clearly answer this question, but the picture painted of the outcome of nuclear war indicates that for him or her Mao is out of date on this matter. I don't think so. Whatever the outcome of nuclear war, even if it is the destruction of the entire human race, the basic facts remain. If the imperialists have nuclear weapons it is because they need them, and they will use them when they have to. The only way to prevent this is revolution. The view that nuclear weapons alter this basic perspective ideologically disarms the people, and prevents them from being won to the revolutionary, not pacifist alternative to war; in the meantime imperialism does not and will not disarm.

Whilst uniting with the desire of the mass of people for peace, it is an important task for communists to firmly point out that the only way to a peaceful world is the violent overthrow of imperialism.

Dear Editor, / / / / /

I would like to make a few comments on the series on War and Peace that has been published over the last few months.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the author on the 'courage' shown in the attempt to cover the immediate issues of concern raised by those in movements such as CND, and to relate them to the theory of the three worlds. Much of what was written was useful in the sense of exposing the impact of nuclear war on Britain and the world, and the policies of the government towards this. However, I would like to raise a number of criticisms, that I believe are central to making a general analysis.

Firstly, although it was recognised in certain passages, the series was not written from a firm grasp of the fact that Britain is an imperialist power exploiting the third world. Its alliance with the US superpower is firmly supported by all the bourgeois parties, and our attitude to 'defence' must be viewed in this light. Secondly, even if those opposed to superpower domination of the world manage to build a movement which breaks this connection and establishes an 'independent' second world bloc opposed to both superpowers, this would not end the imperialist character of such a European-based alliance. It may be a desirable goal from the point of view of weakening superpower war preparations, but we would still be left in a situation of contending imperialist blocs. Such a goal may also be desirable by the third world, and may well give the third world more leverage in the struggle for a New International Economic Order, but again it would not end the imperialist exploitation of the third world, in which exploitative fascist European powers, including Britain, remain amongst the biggest and greediest participants.

In the real world, without a revolution in Britain, (which is hardly on the cards in the foreseeable future), the question of the defence of Britain as a "small, peace-loving nation" is not only an irrelevance but objectively serves to cover up the real issues and divert us from the real policies which we must adopt.

What must be grasped, without any qualifications, is that the principal division in the world is that between the oppressor and oppressed nations - between the First and Second World on the one hand, and the Third World on the other. The contradiction that exists between the First and Second World does exist and must be recognised, and used, but the moment we show any inclination to draw the main line between the First World - the superpowers - and the rest of the world, we gloss over the fundamental character of the world imperialist system, drift into chauvinism and become little more than another version of 'left' social-democrats, or Kautskyites.

It is potentially possible that superpower contention may lead to Soviet aggression against Scandinavia or south-eastern Europe and that in such a situation an independent European bloc could become involved in supporting the defensive struggles over those countries, and our present policies must recognise this.

But, at present, the situation is that the Second World countries are divided into certain of the larger imperialist powers seeing their primary interest in taking part in one superpower-led bloc over who exploits which parts of the Third World.

Even in the first (potential) situation, we would have to base our analysis on the fundamentally imperialist character of the European bloc, and in the second (actual) situation that is the be-all and end-all of the actual contradiction.

To talk of 'defence' outside of these realities will get us nowhere.

Whatever strategic and tactical decisions the Marxist-Leninist movement does take on the struggle against war and against imperialism, let it be based on this recognition. The series at times loses almost complete sight of this context and therefore much that can be valuably learnt is lost.

A reader in Tameside



Dear Editor, / / / / /

On reading the series on War and Peace, I thought that one important issue had been left out completely. That is the question of 'non-proliferation' of nuclear technology.

In essence the imperialist powers are relatively united in denying nuclear technology to the third world. The imperialists and the chauvinist elements in the anti-nuclear movement base their position on an argument which presents the third world as being 'backward', 'unstable' and more prone to allowing 'lunatic' leaders to start a nuclear war which could spread. In reality, it is the imperialists who cause most wars. The idea that nuclear war can be averted by keeping nuclear weapons and technology only in the hands of the biggest warmongers, is nonsense. They are the very people who oppose countries' rights to independence and self-determination and regularly commit all kinds of aggression to support their continued exploitation of the third world.

The question of whether or not a third world country acquires nuclear technology is entirely a matter for the people of each third world country. They have their own considerations as to whether or not they use such technology, which include the economic need for energy self-sufficiency. The matter is complex and for them to decide.

Anyone who wants peace should take as their starting point solidarity with those who are fighting for their independence and self-determination - economically, politically, socially and culturally. That is the context in which to view nuclear proliferation. If the people of a third world country oppose nuclear development in their country, such as in the Philippines today, they are entitled to our support. If the imperialists oppose nuclear development in another country, they are not.

In struggle,
A Manchester reader

Comradely greetings,
A Manchester reader

MINERS' STRIKE

In this article, we look at the positions taken by various British 'left' organisations in their summaries of the miners' strike, and pinpoint where we believe they are wrong. This is part of the process of summing up and learning.

It is also part of defining the League's own position. There are many left organisations around, and it is hardly surprising that many progressive people should distrust them in general, or should not see any reason why they should support one rather than another, especially if that one is as small as the League. Nevertheless, we think the most important thing about an organisation is its political line and its class outlook. If these are right then - given favourable external conditions - it can gain in numbers and strength, while those organisations which are today strong in numbers but basically wrong in their line and outlook are doomed to failure. Looking at how the British left summarised the miners' strike can help bring out concretely why political and ideological differences are important, and not simply a matter of academic point scoring.

in general still under the sway of social democratic ideology and in the main, it has the leaders it wants, or at least accepts. A portion of the class has remained relatively protected during the crisis, and the general attitude remains a desire to return to the 'old days' of relative stability of capitalism. This wishful thinking looks towards adjustments in the established order - such as more government spending, tax cuts, import controls - not towards a class struggle against the order. It is this outlook that has to be changed.

government legislation eats away further at the fighting abilities of the trade unions who fail to break with their social democratic traditions. Some of these forces represent a section of the working class, some contain working class trends, and some are forces with which the working class needs to form a revolutionary alliance. Whilst they have their own particular struggles to pursue, the unselfish solidarity which they have all shown towards the miners shows the spirit that must be spread amongst those workers who failed to back the miners' strike.

What then is the way forward?

The way forward is not the tailist line of the SWP adapting policies to accommodate an alleged working class move to the right; neither is it the CPGB's plan to form an alliance of everyone from themselves to moderate Conservatives against Thatcherism (presumably excluding lefties and uncouth workers who might repel a few bishops and Bow Group Tories); nor is it building a Labour Party with the fanciful idea of committing it to "socialist policies", which is flogging a dead horse; and it certainly isn't building the RCP.

If the miners' strike is seen in its full context some of the issues are more clear.

Fourthly, the strike could have collapsed after a few months if it had not been for the work of the women from the mining communities, picketing, organising, running kitchens, raising funds etc., a powerful sign of what working class women can achieve in organising themselves. Whilst for a long period organisations like SWP contemptuously dismissed much of this as 'welfare work', the reality is that a prolonged struggle can only be maintained by the organisation of the whole communities to live through a long period of great deprivation, and the development of the women's movement in all its aspects is essential to the development of the class struggle. Women have shown that they will come into the forefront of the struggle despite the difficulties placed in their way, and this is a lesson for all future struggles of every type.

BREAK WITH SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

In this context, we believe the way forward must essentially involve the bulk of the working class breaking with chauvinism, racism, sexism and social democratic ideology. The greater the success which is achieved in this, the easier it will be to change reactionary leaderships, to find the right demands, strategy and tactics in any particular struggle in the future, and perhaps, who knows, even to make a strong general strike a real possibility, and not just pie in the sky! The ways to do this will be many, and the main opportunities will arise in the course of struggle on various fronts. But the difficulties should not repel those who share this view with us. If we are right, then this view should be spread more widely, and we can move more decisively from a stage of trying to understand the major problems of progress and revolution in Britain to the resolving of the practicalities of overcoming those problems.

CAN REFORMS BE WON?

One final point is necessary. The whole logic of nearly all the left's analysis was that if only the NUM had adopted the right tactics, if only the miners hadn't been betrayed, and a dozen other "ifs", then the miners could have won. That's possible, but not certain by any means. "The workers, united, will never be defeated!" is a fine slogan, but doesn't correspond with reality. It will take not only unity, but a sound ideology, revolutionary politics and a strategy and tactics which enables the working class to build powerful alliances at home and abroad, and, not least, the leadership of a genuine communist party to ensure victory in the long run. With British imperialism turning increasingly to fascism to maintain itself, these requirements must be of even greater importance, for the contest will inescapably shift from the fight for rights, jobs and reforms within the system, to a struggle for power which challenges the system.



CONDEMNING 'VIOLENCE'

Some left organisations attached a lot of importance to failings - real or alleged - in the miners' strategy and tactics. From the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), via Industrial Organiser, Pete Carter came the winging statement ('Marxism Today', March 1985): "There should have been an early condemnation of violence from whatever quarter it came."

Apparently this was important in order to rally public opinion, according to the CPGB. This approach is in keeping with the CPGB's current strategy of forming an alliance with everyone up to "moderate" Conservatives against "Thatcherism". To unite with these people, you have to reject "sectarian" left wing policies: to unite with the right, you go and join them.

The revolutionary approach is opposed to this: tactical compromises may be necessary, but if we were to abandon revolutionary communism in order to win those who thought it "sectarian", we might as well pack up our struggle altogether. When it comes to the question of violence in the strike, it is no good condemning "all violence". We condemn the violence of the state against mining communities, as we condemn it against black national minority and Irish people. But we support the violence used by those who are oppressed and exploited when they fight for their rights. It is the duty of communists to rally support to the most militant and politically strong forces in a popular struggle, not to try and bring these forces into the well-worn ruts of traditional labour movement politics - or worse, in the CPGB's case.

MASS PICKETS

One of the main reasons for the miners' defeat, according to the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), was that the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) did not go for a repeat of the Saltley mass picket under the Heath government:

"The turning point of the strike came at Orgreave where mass police brutality smashed the picket and led to a wholesale retreat on the question of militant mass picketing." (Socialist Worker Review, Feb. 1985)

The SWP had advocated concentrating pickets at Orgreave to shut it down through daily mass picketing. But would that really have won? Even if there were two or three times as many pickets there as at the peak of the confrontation, and there on a daily basis too, it is also true that the enemy the miners faced was determined to break the strike whatever it took to do so, and it had not exhausted all its means of repression. More police could be drafted in, with water cannons and gas, possibly plastic bullets too.

And, there's reason to believe that the government whose whole strategy of restructuring the economy to rebuild British capitalism depended on defeating the NUM, would have refrained from bringing the army in if it felt it had no choice. Even had Orgreave been closed, a desirable goal, it is questionable how long it could have been

kept closed. For the SWP to think that those who organised the Saltley pickets had forgotten the lesson of it is the height of arrogance.

GENERAL STRIKE?

For some, the key to victory was a general strike. The Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) called for one, but they tend to do so at the drop of a hat anyway. "The Leninist", a paper published by a faction in the CPGB and 'Militant' called for one, while Socialist Action set its sights lower, calling for a one-day General Strike.

"The Leninist" believed that the general strike was, quite simply, the way to win. For the WRP, calling for a general strike is central to Trotskyist exposure of opportunists in the labour movement: You demand from union bureaucrats that they call a general strike, and when they don't, they'll be "exposed" to the

becomes possible to work out seriously how to change these realities - something which pretending they don't exist will not do.

'BETRAYAL BY LEADERS'

The most widespread and most simplistic explanation for why the miners were defeated can be summed up in one word: Betrayed.

This explanation was advanced by SWP, WRP and Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), among others. For SWP, it was the leaderships of the trade unions and Labour Party who were the traitors; for the WRP it was the TUC and Labour leaders with the help of the "Stalinists" of the CPGB (see "Lessons from the Miners' Strike - The Struggle for Power": statement by WRP's Central Committee on March 8th, 1985); for RCP, it was practically everyone apart from the RCP, including the NUM leadership:



Downturn in 'Left' Analysis

working class. This is a bit of warped reasoning: the more militant workers know the nature of the union bureaucrats all too well, while the others who aren't militant wouldn't want a general strike anyway, and would very much approve of the bureaucrats' decision. This is just a way of trying to manoeuvre workers into gaining a socialist consciousness - a dishonest, anti-Marxist approach.

The League did not endorse the call for a general strike, quite simply because it was obvious it would not happen. Support in the organised working class was patchy, with only a small proportion giving strong support. This was shown over such a small gesture as the TUC's decision to hold a pound a head levy on its members to give miners' families a good Christmas. It should have raised £10 million but in the end, it didn't even reach a tenth of that amount. Calling on the TUC leadership to call a general strike was a waste of effort and a diversion from getting on with the job of raising support at a rank and file level, and working with people from black communities, the unemployed and others outside the old labour movement who did strongly back the strike. Blaming the trade union leaders for not calling a general strike is all very well, but the fact is that the great majority of their members would not support such a move.

Communists do not like to say things such as this, which show most of the working class in a bad light, and some on the left would shrink from doing so. But we believe that we can be of more service to the working class in the long run if we face up to realities honestly, because then it

"Scargill was ... a hostage to his own reluctance to break with the ways of a union bureaucrat.

"The NUM's failure of leadership cannot be reduced to one man. The central explanation for the defeat of the strike lies in the policy of collaboration... (The miners) need leaders who will lead, who will take direct responsibility for giving a lead and who will fight for nothing less than the interests of the working class."

No prizes for guessing who the RCP has in mind for a new leadership. This is pretty rich coming from the party which earned the contempt of many miners by criticising the NUM during the strike for not holding a ballot at its start. Whether the NUM were right or wrong about this is not the issue: when the miners needed solidarity and were under attack from the state, NCB and media, to raise such criticisms publicly was nothing but a form of scabbing.

The whole "betrayal" theme is off course anyway. In the Labour leadership and that of the TUC, there are many who never owed any loyalty to the working class, and most of the rest have forgotten it as they have moved up through the party and union machinery. How can they be accused of betraying something to which they had no loyalty in the first place?

STATE OF THE CLASS

More fundamentally, in seeing the sole problem as 'betrayal' by the leaders, real analysis is avoided. As we have already implied, the main problems lie deeper within the class. The working class is not seething with militancy and solidarity, much less with revolutionary fervour. The working class is

THE MAIN LESSONS

Firstly, there is a general crisis in the imperialist system, which is having a more acute effect in Britain than in most of the imperialist world due to Britain's prolonged decline relative to its rivals. In previous boom times, militancy on its own could produce results and the working class could win economic demands from profitable companies. The crisis of imperialism means that the companies must fight back against the working class to regain profits. Militant social democracy can no longer deliver the goods even on the economic level, and this must be grasped by all engaged in struggle.

Secondly, the main force weakening the system is the struggle of the people and nations of the third world, spearheaded by the national liberation movements and genuinely socialist countries. These are objectively the main allies internationally of any truly progressive movement here. Of particular importance is the struggle of the Irish people whose armed struggle has mounted a consistent challenge to the British state for the last 16 years, in its present phase. The contact that developed between a section of the miners and the Irish Republican Movement is therefore of great significance.

Thirdly, much of the support for the miners came from outside the traditional labour movement - black organisations and communities, women's groups, unemployed youth, gay groups etc. Such forces with the new forms of struggle they have been creating will grow in significance as high unemployment and

Blood on the Terraces

CS Note: We print below a contributed article on the Brussels football tragedy. We would welcome readers' comments on this view. However, we would like to point out that in our view, although it is undoubtedly a fact that the fascist organisations have been active among football supporters and were present at this particular game, to pinpoint these groups alone for criticism and blame is, in some ways to miss the fact that chauvinism and racism has had a deep impact on the working class. The fact that the 'Falklands Spirit' lives on is shown, for example, by the way 'Argies' is used as a term of abuse at matches abroad. This ideology is rooted in the past history of British imperialism and is carried on by Tories and Labour alike in their defence of the British way of life and values.

Contributed.

On May 29th, at the Heysel stadium in Brussels, the annual showpiece of European club football was preceded by scenes of terrace violence which horrified millions of television viewers and led to a world-wide ban on English club football teams.

As a result of one section of the Liverpool supporters attacking a mixed stand, in response to what one eye witness called "a hail of missiles", a stand wall collapsed under the weight of Juventus fans and Belgian spectators trying to flee the fighting. All the dead were amongst those trapped in the fall of masonry, unable to move as thousands of panic-stricken fans trampled on them.

SLUGGISH RESPONSE OF THE AUTHORITIES

The crisis situation was compounded, and the fatality rate increased, by the sluggish response of the emergency, medical and police teams in the stadium. One eye witness report in the Belgian Marxist-Leninist paper 'Solidair' highlighted a failure on the part of the authorities to grasp the gravity of the situation: emergency procedures were only activated a full twenty minutes after the wall collapsed and were any way, woefully inadequate. No doctors, no medical supplies, no heavy lifting gear. The first ambulance arrived forty minutes after the masonry fall. Some of the victims took that



One of the dead carried from the Heysel stadium after the disaster that took place on May 25th, in Brussels.

long to die in the rubble; those that were rescued were pulled clear by other fans.

Since the tragedy severe criticisms have been made both of the safety standards of the Heysel stadium and of organisational aspects of the game, which breached UEFA rules on crowd segregation and match-day ticket sales. Once again, it seems, the safety and comfort of the crowd were the lowest of the priorities of the commercialised game.

FASCIST ORGANISATIONS

In the period since the disaster the usual platitudes about "football hooliganism" have been well aired, not least by the Thatcher government. The entire city of Liverpool has been seen to have been culpable; services of atonement and reconciliation have been held in its cathedrals. It is ironic that a team and its supporters previously held up as models of good behaviour throughout fifteen years of European competition should be thus stigmatised. No greater

testimony to the success of neo-fascist parties' infiltration of football supporters' clubs can be adduced. As the former fascist leader Ray Hill said on Belgian television, this infiltration has been particularly successful in England: Chelsea, Leeds, West Ham, Millwall, Newcastle, all have strong fascist cells, many of which were in evidence in Brussels, both in the stadium and in the city prior to the game. National Front and League St. George banners were prominent. One Belgian report tells of provocative expeditions into the city's immigrant quarters on the morning of the match.

The Italian fascists were also strongly represented; 'Ordine Nuovo' (New Order) was much in evidence. The final scenes of crowd trouble were of Italian extreme rightists hurling smoke bombs and fence poles at the Belgian police. One of them shot at the police, albeit with blanks, it later transpired. In the atmosphere of panic already generated, such actions could easily have led to further disaster.

Bradford City v. Deptford

"The Sun"-On Bradford and Deptford.

BRADFORD CITY

Date of Fire: May 11, 1985.

Number of people killed: 53.

Visits agreed from members of the Royal Family: two (Princes of Wales, Princess Diana; announced within week of fire).

Visits from Prime Minister: one, accompanied by Dennis Thatcher, within one week.

Money raised for appeal fund: £1,500,000 so far. Proceeds expected to top £2 million mark.

Charity records: 'You'll Never Walk Alone' sung by Gerry Marsden, Nolan Sisters, Rick Wakeman, Bruce Forsyth and others.

Media coverage: front page coverage, plus reports of up to five pages in all national Sunday and Monday papers after the fire. Extended TV and news bulletins.

Government donation to victims and relatives: £250,000.

Home Office inquiry into the origins of the fire and related safety: Announced within two days of fire, to be conducted under Mr Justice Popplewell.

Colour of victims: almost all white.

(The above item, comparing coverage of Bradford and the Deptford fire, appeared originally in the London magazine, 'City Limits'.)



DEPTFORD

Date of fire: Jan.18, 1981.

Number of people killed: 13.

Visits from Prime Minister: None. (A letter was sent from the Prime Minister's office six weeks after the fire, to a local social worker, after many protests.)

Money raised for appeal fund: £24,112.

Charity records: None.

Media Coverage: No front page mention on majority of daily papers. When a large protest march went through London and past Fleet Street to protest at lack of coverage, and investigation, the 'Sun' did run a front page story (see above).

Government donation to victims and relatives: None.

Home Office inquiry into the origins of the fire and related safety: None.

Colour of victims: all black.

A Ban on Human Embryo Research?

Contributed.

The Powell Bill, which won a majority of 172 in its second reading, was only prevented from becoming law last month by 'filibustering'. (That is MP's mucking about for so long that time runs out.... This is the way the House of Commons works!)

THE POWELL BILL

The Powell Bill, the "Unborn Children (Protection)" Bill, prevents a human embryo being created, kept or used for any purpose other than enabling a child to be born to a particular, named, woman. It attempts to pre-empt discussion of the Warnock Report: an extremely clear and balanced report by a committee of doctors, scientists and others, covering all aspects of embryo fertilisation, research, artificial insemination, surrogate motherhood, etc. These are very complex questions requiring wide ranging debate. The Warnock Report suggested as a matter of urgency some licensing and control of embryo use and research, which has been called for, for some time, by those actually involved. It also suggested that human embryos not be kept for more than 14

days.

IN VITRO FERTILISATION

Research and progress on in vitro fertilisation (i.e. uniting the egg and sperm outside the human body) has gone on for many years, and over 6 years ago, the first baby was born from in vitro fertilisation and re-implantation in the mother's womb. For some causes of infertility, this is the only chance of a baby, and, although it is a long and difficult treatment (in the best centres only 10% of re-implantations work), couples are queuing up for the chance. The Powell Bill purports to allow this to go ahead. But, in fact, the restrictions that it lays down, that an application for each named woman has to be made and then it can only last four months, would make it impractical. Also, there could be no ongoing work to try and improve the technique. The woman loses all her rights and has to have her name scrutinised by the Secretary of State who has absolute power. He will decide if she is a "suitable mother"!

MEDICAL RESEARCH

Closely related to in vitro

fertilisation, are many other aspects of medical research which are carried out on human embryos of a few days old. These relate to detection and treatment of genetic disorders such as cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, mongolism; for which there is no other cure later on. Great progress has been made in detecting these sorts of diseases at a very early stage of pregnancy and in the future such research could, perhaps, lead to the ability to alter the genetic defects that cause them. The chance to prevent a childhood of suffering and inescapable death is not one to be thrown away lightly.

ANTI-ABORTION LOBBY

The last aspect of the Powell Bill to be considered is its relation to abortion. Passing this sort of bill will give legal support to the concept that a human embryo of a few days old is a human life like any other. From there, an anti-abortion bill is only one step away. The anti-abortion lobby in this country is both strong and vociferous and has been both of these in supporting Mr Powell's bill. Many people, including MP's, have felt unsure

on the questions; quite rightly so in view of the present discussions around the Warnock recommendations; but they have been inundated with letters from the anti-abortion lobby. Huge petitions have been collected from the Catholic churches and hysteria has been whipped up with talk of "cutting up babies", and "crossbreeding with animals". The anti-abortion lobby should never be underestimated. It did its job well on the House of Commons.

REGULATION, NOT PROHIBITION

Another such bill will certainly come up fairly soon and next time will need informed opposition to defeat it. We should oppose it because it will prevent treatment and research into infertility, and is a backdoor to an anti-abortion bill. Both these attack women's right to control their own fertility and their civil liberties. The bill would also prevent vital medical research into common genetic diseases. Licensing and control of embryo research is certainly needed, and accepted by all; and further discussion on all aspects of the Warnock Report should go forward, particularly amongst women.

"WENDY MUST STAY!"

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

"Wendy Must Stay" was the slogan on the banner leading a march of 2,000 people demonstrating in support of Dr Wendy Savage on June 12th.

Dr Wendy Savage was suspended from her post as consultant obstetrician in the Tower Hamlets area of East London. (See last month's 'Class Struggle' for details.)

The marchers, mainly women, included mothers, children and health workers and reflected the widespread support for Dr Wendy Savage in the area where she has worked.

Dr Wendy Savage is the only woman obstetrician working in the area which includes a Muslim community of about 30,000. Her "woman-centred" approach to pregnancy and child-birth has won her wide support in the area from different sections of the community.

In addition, 68 GP's and 150 medical students whom she used to teach at medical school have also demanded her reinstatement and she has the support of the President of the National Childbirth Trust.

WE ARE HERE ~~~ BECAUSE ~~~ YOU WERE THERE

"We are Here, because You were There" sums up the link between the struggles against racism in this country and national oppression around the world. British imperialism was built on national oppression from the days of the "slave trade", to the colonising of the Indian sub-continent and up to the present day. The Soviet Union and its allies, once socialist countries, now oppress nations and national minorities, both within their states and abroad.

Since the Second World War, substantial black national minority communities have been formed in this country. This has brought the resistance to national oppression and support for national liberation movements into the heartland of imperialism.



At the time of going to press, we had just heard that Thelma Jackson, of Manchester, has definitely won the right to stay in this country. Among those still fighting deportation is Mabel Achinhu, a Nigerian woman living in Birkenhead (above). Mabel, who has lived here since 1976 and whose two children, Chine and Priscilla were both born here, is threatened with deportation in the next few weeks. Her defence campaign can be contacted: c/o Liverpool Black Sisters, The 'Coach House', Back Sandon Street, Liverpool 8.

NEWHAM 7 DEFENCE CAMPAIGN

As "Class Struggle" went to press, the trial of the Newham Seven was drawing to its close. Ever since the seven were arrested, the Newham 7 Defence Campaign has worked hard to build support for them, in the face of repeated acts of harassment by the police. When the Campaign organised a march of 3,000 people on April 27th, it was attacked by police outside Forest Gate police station, and 34 people were arrested. When a follow-up march was held on May 11th to protest against the police thuggery against the April 27th protest, as well as to support the seven, it was again subjected to police provocation and 15 more people were arrested.

Police conduct did not change with the start of the trial. Mass pickets at the Old Bailey, in the centre of London, were heavily policed by cops who used racist abuse towards the pickets with young children as their favourite victims. So far, ten people have been arrested on the picket, including a 14-year old who was playing around with a water pistol.

INFORMER

Inside the court, one of the chief police witnesses broke down and admitted to being an informer. Maria Isen said that she had been approached some time before the incident which led to the arrest of the Newham Seven and asked by Newham police to give information on the movements and activities of Asian youths in the area. During the support demonstrations, it was also noted how plain clothes police joined the protests and then picked up certain people.

A "CS" reader witnessed two of



Parvaiz Khan, beaten by around 15 prison officers on the first day of the trial, after refusing, for religious reasons, to eat a pork pie for lunch.

these vermin watching the march on May 11th and thought that they looked like a couple of fascist thugs; his suspicions were confirmed at the end of the march when they resurfaced amongst the marchers, arrested one man, and waved wallets with identity cards in them at nearby uniformed police. These incidents just show how far covert state operations against the black people of Newham and those who stand with them have gone.

THE ARRESTS

The Newham Seven were arrested a year ago. On Saturday, April 7th, a group of white racists drove around the Upton Park and Forest Gate areas of Newham,

attacking Asian people. These attacks included assaults on a family out shopping, on an Asian woman on her own, and on an apprentice returning home from work. In the worst incident, a partially disabled 16 year old was attacked with a hammer.

The base of operations for these racists was the Duke of Edinburgh pub. When young Asians hit back in self-defence, 15-20 racist thugs charged out of the pub and attacked them.

The police turned up almost immediately and arrested one of the Asian youths. Over the next few weeks, six more young Asians were arrested, but only three white youths.

Refugees From Terror

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

The latest in a series of massacres of Tamil people took place in Sri Lanka in July 1983. Ever since, Tamil areas of the country have lived under a reign of terror, sometimes involving arbitrary killings by the army and often, destruction of homes and shops, as well as widespread

arrests of young people. (One of the legal measures used to justify this state terrorism is known as the Prevention of Terrorism Act!) Some 5,000 people have been killed since July 1983.

To escape the perils of Sri Lanka, over 150,000 Tamils have left their homeland as refugees. They urgently needed to find somewhere to live. 100,000 went to India and 55,000 to Europe, including 45,000 to the EEC countries. Yet only 2,300 were able to come to Britain before Home Secretary Leon Brittan announced tight new restrictions on Tamils seeking to live here. MP's can usually hold up a

deportation for several months while they make representations to the Home Office. But Home Secretary Brittan has declared that the time allowed was to be reduced in the case of Tamils to a mere 24 hours.

The deportation of black people under Britain's racist immigration laws has brought hardship and misery to thousands already. But the implementation of this new policy could mean sending people back to their deaths: the murder of Tamils, carried out with support from leading members of Sri Lanka's ruling party, has been directed against Tamils in general, not only

those who were politically active. In such circumstances Brittan's assertion that "of course" people whose lives are in danger would not be sent back can be seen for the rubbish that it is. All Tamils' lives are in danger.

TAMIL REFUGEE ACTION GROUP

The established relief agencies did not meet the needs of the Tamil refugees, so Tamils already in Britain representing a wide range of Tamil opinion, got together and formed the Tamil Refugee Action Group (TRAG). TRAG is trying to assist refugees with the whole range of problems they face here

- legal difficulties and housing being the most pressing.

Refugees who are admitted to Britain generally have little or no money. If they have friends or contacts here, they may be able to rely on their goodwill: otherwise it's generally a matter of having to be isolated in bed and breakfast accommodation or hostels. Between when they apply for asylum and when (and if) they obtain it, refugees are not allowed to work.

ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS UNDER ATTACK.

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

For 50,000 years, the land of Australia belonged to the Aboriginal people. Until, that is, 1788, when European settlement began. Since then, they have lost nine-tenths of their land to those who originally came from Europe and now most of the land which remains to them is the sort of desert territory which the British and white Australians valued least. Because of diseases introduced by the European settlers and deliberate massacres, the number of Aborigines plummeted from an estimated population of well over 300,000 in 1788 to 70,000 at the start of the 1930's. Although the number of Aboriginal people has since risen to 160,000, they still only make up 1.07% of Australia's population.

"Aboriginal Social Indicators", a report recently published by the Australian Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs, illustrates the second-class position of Aborigines in Australian society today. Their average family incomes are half those of white Australians; their infant mortality rate is 2½ times that

of white Australians; Aboriginal life expectancy is 55 years, compared to a high 75 years for white Australians. One in four Aborigines seeking work are unemployed, compared to one in 17 white people. The figures for those receiving education beyond the age of fifteen, are one in 25 for white people and one in four for Aborigines.

LAND RIGHTS

These are the statistics for a people who have suffered a great deal of oppression and seen much of their former way of life totally destroyed. But they have always fought back, and much of their struggle has centred around the question of land. The demand for Land Rights means that Aboriginal communities should have control over the land they live on and the right to decide what to do with it. This will help them to defend their own society and ensure that all economic development in their areas is of benefit to Aboriginal people, not just to big business. The Aborigines also want their sacred sites protected, and the chance to claim Crown Land or land that comes up for sale on the open market.

Some victories have been won in recent years by the Aborigines, generally through protests, demonstrations and direct action, with support from some progressive white people. One success has been the recovery of Ayers Rock - a beautiful place for visitors, but also a sacred one for Aborigines, although the government has tried to make the hand-over a nominal one.

MINING INTERESTS

Before the Labour party was elected to office in Australia, it had a policy in support of Aboriginal Land Rights. It still does on paper. But that has not stopped the Labour government from setting in train plans which seriously threaten the whole Aboriginal position.

Land Rights mean little if a big capitalist firm can just come along and lay claim to Aboriginal land on the grounds that they can use it better; thus the right of veto on the intrusion of mining interests onto their lands is important to the Aborigines. In January, the Prime Minister of the state

of Western Australia approached the Federal Government for clearance to go ahead with legislation to take away the right of veto from Aborigines in his state, where mining interests are extremely powerful. He got what he wanted. The Western Australian Premier also said that the government had agreed that Aborigines should not be paid royalties or direct compensation as a result of minerals being found.

SUPPORT GROUP

Now Federal Prime Minister Hawke is set on legislation which will similarly threaten Aborigines throughout Australia. Campaigns against this move are under way in Australia, while in Britain, the Aboriginal Land Rights Support Group held a picket of Australia House on May 21st, and has called for protests to be sent to P.M. Hawke in Canberra.

The Support Group can be contacted at: 72, Cricketfield Road, London E5 8NS.



While the police tried to put the racists and those who had defended themselves on the same level, and suggest the whole thing was just some sort of "gang warfare", they did treat the two groups differently.

While the three whites were neither remanded in custody, nor did they face objections from the police to bail being given, five of the seven Asians were denied bail, spending up to seven weeks on remand while the police claimed to be preparing their case. The charges against them included possessing offensive weapons and criminal damage, but all seven were subsequently charged with affray and conspiracy to cause criminal damage.

The campaign won an early success when the conspiracy charges against six of the young Asians were dismissed at the committal hearings.

SELF-DEFENCE: NO OFFENCE

The basic issue is clear: it is one that is familiar to those who supported the Bradford 12 and the Newham 8. It is the right of black people to defend themselves against racist attacks, which the state regards as criminal activity, while literally letting racists get away with murder.

There can be few areas in Britain where the necessity for black people to defend themselves and not trust to the police has been so clearly demonstrated over the years.

On some housing estates or in certain roads or blocks of flats, there are no black families because when black people came to live there in the past, racists carried out physical attacks on them,

smashed their windows and sometimes, set fire to their property. There are still black families for whom such attacks are a regular part of their lives. When Newham Council eventually took action against the McDonnell family, who are National Front supporters and were involved in attacks on black people in their neighbourhood, much of the press coverage treated them as victims, although they had shown no concern for the black people assaulted by the likes of the McDonnells.

Back in 1976, on the streets of Newham, fascist leader, Kingsley Reed declared, following the murder of Gurdip Singh Chaggar in Southall: "One down, one million to go!"

KENNETH SINGH'S MURDER

On April 20th, 1978, 10-year old Kenneth Singh went out in the evening to buy cigarettes and sweets for his parents at a corner shop 200 yards away. He never came back. He was found on waste ground with severe bruising and stab wounds on his neck, back and arms. He was rushed to hospital but died an hour later. The police claimed that they could not find a motive for the murder, although it was clearly not robbery, as nothing was stolen from Kenneth's pockets. His parents were in no doubt about the motive. His mother, Estella, said:

"He was grabbed from behind because they thought he was a Pakistani."

Joseph Singh, his father, said: "There can be little doubt that this is a racial killing. The only way we can prevent this

sort of thing happening again is by uniting the Asian community."

A few weeks later, 25-year old Altab Ali was stabbed to death while walking home.

Later that year, three brothers, Mohinder, Balwinder and Sukhinder Virk, were repairing a car outside their home when five white youths attacked them. Another brother joined them and the racists ran off. The police then arrested the Virk brothers for wounding, assault and grievous bodily harm. All were jailed despite their plea of self-defence, Joginder being sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

In 1980, Akhtar Ali Baig was murdered; in 1982, the Newham 8 were arrested when they dared fight back against racist attacks. Their real crime in the eyes of the state was to defend themselves.

Black people have the right to hit back against racist attacks, and to demand solidarity when they do so. Those who perpetrate racist violence are vicious cowards, who attack those they imagine to be helpless; even when attacking children, these white "heroes" have to be in a gang. They understand no language but violence-when there has been a let-up in racist attacks in any part of Newham, it has often been because the culprits have been given some of their own medicine.

Whatever the court's findings, the Newham 7 have committed no crime. Their Defence Campaign must continue to be supported, both in case any of them is convicted by the court, and in order to back all those arrested for their part in support work during the campaign.



Pedro Galleguillos addresses a meeting organised by his defence campaign. Pedro is a 24-year old Chilean who has lived in Manchester for three years. He was jailed in November last year after a Home Office decision to deport him, but released four months later as a result of the defence campaign's work. On June 11th, he was told that the Home Office would make a final decision on his case within two weeks. A national demonstration to demand his right to stay took place in Manchester on June 29th.

Pedro's life will be at risk if he is forced to return to Chile, as he has been active in political and educational work against the military dictatorship which has ruled the country since 1973.

Legally, they are entitled to claim social security, but most do not, fearing that the DHSS will report their claim to the Home Office and it might weigh against them.

Because they have nothing on which to live, some refugees are driven into taking low-paid, sometimes dangerous, jobs, often with unsocial hours, such as in hotel, catering or security work. They cannot protest about their conditions or take action

against sharp practices by their employers, because they are working illegally.

Throughout its rule over Sri Lanka (then known as Ceylon), Britain played on divisions between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamils to undermine the independence struggle and weaken the potentially very powerful trade union movement. Britain bears a heavy responsibility for the present situation. There should be no

obstacles raised to Tamils seeking refuge here.

CEASE-FIRE

Meanwhile, back in Sri Lanka, a three month cease-fire was announced. Five major Tamil guerrilla organisations agreed to this move, but made it clear that they would want to see real signs of progress from the government side if the cease-fire is to be extended.

State Racism-Bulgarian Style

State racism-Bulgarian style is threatening the substantial Turkish national minority of nearly one million in Bulgaria. The state has embarked upon an assimilation programme, forcing Turks to change their names to Bulgarian-sounding ones under a drive to issue all citizens with new identity cards in advance of the next population census in December.

Amongst the catalogue of "Bulgarising" abuses is the denial of employment and medical facilities and other social services to those who fail to provide documents showing that they have taken Slavonic names. Resistance to the militia intrusions into the rural areas where they are concentrated has resulted in villagers of the Turkish national minority being killed in armed clashes. Emigre groups have claimed that up to 500 people have been killed, and there has been a worsening of relations with Turkey as a result of recent events.

FORCED ASSIMILATION

The pressure to change names reflects a racist concern about demographic trends in Bulgaria: the Turkish birthrate is four times that of the majority Bulgarian nation. The forced assimilation policy has led to Turkish language schools being gradually closed down, the shutting down of Turkish-language periodicals with circulations of 10,000, as well as a newspaper with a circulation of 20,000 well below its potential level. Fear of Turkish resistance to this policy is such that no Turk is allowed to carry weapons during military service, serving instead in military construction units.

Sofia's general policy is aimed at the creation of a homogeneous Bulgarian nation composed of

all the people who live within Bulgaria's borders.

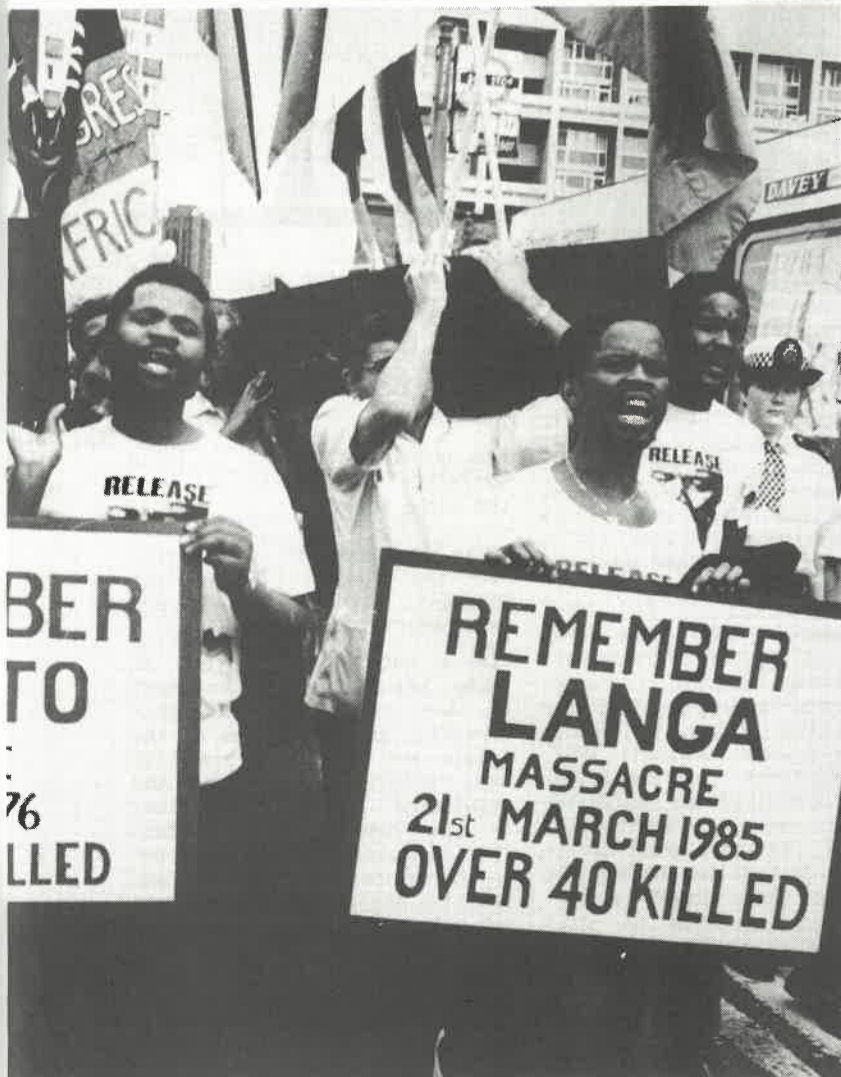
In the early '70's, this led to pressure on 120,000 Bulgarians who had adopted Islam during the Ottoman occupation to change their names from those with Muslim or Turkish associations to Slav ones-for example from Mehmet to Mikhail.

This policy is in contrast to that followed immediately after the Second World War, when the fascist regime was overthrown and a government in which the leading role was played by the Communist Party took its place. The party was led by Georgi Dimitrov, and it was then that Bulgaria showed the greatest respect for the rights of its minorities.

In particular, the national rights of the 200,000 Macedonian people, long oppressed by the old regime, were respected for the first time in Bulgarian history. However, following Dimitrov's death, the official policy reverted to regarding the Macedonians as "West Bulgarians". This stand not only served to deny their rights to the Macedonians within Bulgaria, but to advance Bulgarian claims to the Macedonian region of Yugoslavia.

VOLUNTARY UNION

National oppression has no place in socialism: the only basis for unity in a multi-national state must be a voluntary one, in which a real option of secession exists for the formerly oppressed nations, should they choose to take it. The elevation of national oppression to official policy in a state claiming to be socialist is not simply a sign of the degeneration of its socialist system, but is a fundamental part of the process.



Soweto Anniversary

June 16th: Demonstrators carry coffins representing all those murdered by the South African regime. They marched with the Anti-Apartheid Movement's demonstration to mark the anniversary of the Soweto Uprising, nine years ago.

The leading force in that uprising, which spread to many areas of Azania, was the Black Consciousness Movement. They were banned by the racist South African regime because of the work they had done in mobilising and organising the black people of Azania. The BCM argued that it was only the oppressed black people of Azania who could bring about their own freedom. They see the struggle in Azania as one directed towards the abolition of a colonial system and the establishment of a non-racial (rather than multi-racial) society, where everyone is judged according to their merits, not their "race".

The BCM also marked the anniversary of the Soweto Uprising with a rally in London, which was attended by 70 people.

(CS Photo)

35th Anniversary of the War in Korea

KOREAN PEOPLE WANT UNITY!

The history of any partitioned nation is always unhappy. Powerful demands for re-unification inevitably persist however many years pass: the bonds of a common history, common language and common culture, not to mention those between families, remain strong.

Korea is a country which has been divided for forty years. On liberation from the Japanese occupation in 1945, the Korean people hoped that their country would at last enjoy independence and peace under a government of their own choosing. But it was not to be.

At the end of the Second World War, the USA and Soviet Union had agreed to enter Korea to disarm the Japanese forces still there and return them to their country. The two armies were to meet at the 38th Parallel, half way down the Korean peninsula. But the US set about trying to impose a puppet regime in the south, and either extend its domination over the whole country or at least, make partition permanent. It set up an administrative structure which included people known to have collaborated with the Japanese occupation, and prepared to establish a reliably pro-US government in Seoul, south Korea. To this end, elections were organised for May 10th, 1948, in the south only.

PROGRESS IN THE NORTH

Meanwhile, since 1945, the north had been under a people's administration, headed by Kim Il Sung, who had spent years fighting for Korean independence. The power of the landlords, capitalists and collaborators with Japan had been broken, and the rebuilding of the economy on the basis of state and collective ownership of the means of production had begun. Yet the authorities in the north had not proclaimed a Korean government. They hoped for elections by secret ballot throughout Korea, but argued that they could only be free elections if all foreign troops were withdrawn. On April 23rd, 1948, the 'Joint Conference of Representatives of Political Parties and Public Organisations in North and South Korea' requested that the Soviet Union and the US simultaneously withdraw their forces to allow free democratic elections to take place. In the event, Soviet forces were withdrawn by the end of 1948, but there was still no move to pull the US forces out of the south. On April 30th, leaders of organisations ranging from communists to right wing nationalists and with a membership of ten million people, (a majority of eligible voters), issued a statement opposing the separate elections.

All the same, the elections went ahead in an atmosphere of intimidation by supporters of the US puppet, Syngman Rhee. Even some official US observers on the spot voiced unease about the methods used by Rhee to win these elections. However a "National Assembly" was formed in Seoul and the "Republic of Korea" was proclaimed. It was only then that elections were held to form a Supreme People's Assembly in the north, but with the maximum possible southern participation. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was declared on September 9th.

The new DPRK still hoped for peaceful re-unification, and made repeated proposals for achieving this. But it was not what either the US or the Syngman Rhee regime in the south wanted.

WAR BREAKS OUT

On June 25th, 1950, 35 years ago, soldiers of the Rhee regime attacked DPRK positions on the

border. The DPRK forces struck back immediately, and the Rhee army's resistance began to collapse rapidly. Within three months, most of the south was liberated. The US and the Rhee regime claimed that the DPRK had attacked first and its "attack" was branded as yet another example of "communist aggression".

The DPRK has always denied this, and there was evidence from sources hostile to the DPRK which supported its denial.



DPRK troops celebrate a victory.

John Gunther, who wrote a biography of McArthur, the US commander at the outset of direct American intervention in the Korean war, records an outing in Japan with two prominent members of the US occupation forces there on the day the war began. One of them was called to the phone unexpectedly and returned to inform the party that: "A big story has just broken. The south Koreans have attacked north Korea." Gunther dismissed this as a mistake, but it seems far more believable that the officer concerned reported the truth, and it was only later that all leading US personnel were briefed with the story of "North Korean aggression".

On July 30th, 1950, a US intelligence staff officer in Tokyo, told the press that: "The North Korean army had not carried out its mobilisation plans at the time the war began... Only six full divisions had been ready for combat when the invasion started, although the North Korean war plans called for thirteen to fifteen." Yet this was said to be an army which had committed an act of calculated aggression, an army which had no air force to speak of and no up-to-date tanks, and which would face an opposing army of 100,000 men with better armaments and with prepared defences.

AN INTEREST IN WAR

Those who had most to gain by a war were not to be found north of the 38th Parallel in Korea, but elsewhere.

For leading circles in the US, it was important to maintain an anti-communist atmosphere and pull foot-dragging European allies into line both to contain the national liberation movement building up in the colonies and to counter the strength of the socialist camp. Military leaders and powerful industrial interests wanted to see the US's

armed strength boosted for strategic and commercial reasons respectively. Influential figures such as John Foster Dulles, Chief Advisor to the US Secretary of State, endorsed these views, and, more particularly, sought the building of an anti-communist front in East Asia, with active US support. The Truman administration had focussed its attention on Europe, and had previously resisted taking on heavy US commitments in East Asia, to the point of deciding not to back Chiang Kai-shek's regime in Taiwan if the victorious People's Liberation Army (PLA) should cross the Taiwan Straits to complete the liberation of China.

In south Korea itself, the Rhee regime was in trouble. On May 30th, elections relatively free of intimidation brought a crushing defeat for Rhee: his committed supporters had only 45 seats, while independents held at least 128 of the 210 seats in the "National Assembly". Many of the independents were responsive to the DPRK's overtures for the overthrow of Rhee's rule and steps towards re-unification.

The fact of the matter was that there was a range of US interests as well as the Rhee regime in Korea and Chiang's regime in Taiwan, that had an interest in a war. And sure enough, they gained most of what they wanted.

US military spending had steadily escalated since the

backing the US by a mixture of propaganda about "communist aggression", and US pressure; others needed little persuasion. The DPRK was condemned, the withdrawal of its forces behind the 38th Parallel was demanded, and the UN called on its members to aid the Rhee regime. This resulted in 15 states, including Britain, Canada, Australia, Turkey, Greece and Ethiopia, joining an anti-communist crusade in Korea under US command.

The real character of the US intervention in Korea was soon proved by US actions. With the balance of forces sharply tilted against them, the DPRK forces pulled back behind the 38th Parallel. But McArthur, the US/UN commander, now declared his objective to be the overthrow of the DPRK government and the extension of the Rhee regime's rule over all Korea. More than that, once the UN forces had crossed the 38th Parallel and were nearing the Korean-Chinese frontier, McArthur sought to extend the war into China.

US BARBARITY

There was a great contrast in the way the war was fought by the two sides. The DPRK army tried not to harm civilians in the course of fighting; the US and its allies practiced a "scorched earth" policy during their retreats, and carried out heavy shellings before advances. Most devastating was US bombing: more bombs were dropped on Korea than had been dropped in all



that at the present day, its people enjoy a high standard of living and a great deal of economic security. DPRK society is not subject to the crime and corruption which characterises society in the south, where economic development has relied heavily on imperialist investments attracted by the cheap labour of an impoverished and repressed working people.

The DPRK continues to call for national unity. It advocates the establishment of a confederal republic. It has called for talks with the US and the present regime in the south, that of Chun Du Hwan. With demand mounting for a meaningful response to recent DPRK proposals for talks between parliamentarians of the DPRK and the south, the south Korean "National Assembly" accepted a proposal for preliminary discussions in July which may lead on to more far-reaching talks. But progress will depend on the readiness of the US and the south Korean regime to respect the will of the Korean people. Their record in this respect is far from reassuring. Nevertheless, the DPRK thinks it is worth trying.

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For more information on the US conduct of the war in Korea, readers should see I.F.Stone's "The Hidden History of the Korean War", Monthly Review Press, £3.50.

THE JUCHE IDEA



The guiding idea for building socialism in the DPRK has been the Juche idea.

In an interview with journalists of the Japanese "Mainichi Shimbun" in 1972, Korean President Kim Il Sung said:

"In a nutshell, the idea of Juche means that the masters of the revolution and construction are the masses of the people and that they are also the motive force of the revolution and construction. In other words, it is an idea that one is responsible for one's own destiny and that one has also the capacity for hewing out one's own destiny.

"We are not the author of this idea. Every Marxist-Leninist has this idea. I have just laid a special emphasis on this idea."



In the modernised coal-mining industry of the DPRK, coal production is 80 times greater than in pre-liberation days.

war began; the European allies of the US did fall into line, some of them, including Britain, sending troops to Korea to fight alongside the US; the Chiang regime was promised US military support in the event of the PLA moving on Taiwan; and the other western powers dropped their objections to Japanese re-armament; Rhee got all the backing he needed from the US and was able to paralyse opposition in Seoul.

Following the outbreak of war, the US went to the United Nations (UN) for support. At the time the Soviet Union was boycotting the UN because the US was blocking the People's Republic of China taking its seat (occupied, then, by the Chiang Kai-shek regime). The US sought condemnation of the DPRK and intervention under the UN flag.

Some UN members were pushed into

sectors of the 1941-45 Pacific War, and the bombing of the DPRK capital, Pyongyang, was abandoned because there was nothing left to bomb. It seemed that the Korean people were to be "saved from communism" by being killed by the thousand.

In November 1950, the DPRK forces, along with volunteers from China, launched a successful counter-attack against the US and its allies. Although the war dragged on until 1953, it ended with the conclusion of an armistice approximating to the previous North-South boundary. It was a great defeat for the US and the others who intervened under the UN banner.

In 1958, the Chinese People's Volunteers withdrew from the DPRK, but the US forces have remained in the south to this day. The DPRK has seen steady economic growth since 1953, so

Lebanon:

-Palestinians Stand Firm

After a month of fighting, an uneasy peace came to the Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut, following a cease-fire agreement signed on June 17th. The agreement was made by representatives of Amal, the group which had been attacking the camps, the National Democratic Front of Lebanon, an alliance of leftist and nationalist organisations, and the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF), a Damascus-based alliance. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) was not a party to this agreement. But both al-Fatah, the largest group within the PLO, and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), a leftist group critical of the PNSF, welcomed the cease-fire because of the relief that it would bring to the people in the camps, while expressing reservations about some of its other consequences.

Syrian-backed groups joined the attack on the Fatah and PLO leadership, and formed the National Alliance (NA). The Democratic Alliance (DA) was formed by groups critical of both sides in the struggle - the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the DFLP and the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF). The DA refused to take part in the conflict as forces supporting the PLO leadership were forced out of eastern Lebanon, Beqa'a valley and back to their last desperate stand in Tripoli, arguing that the conflict should be resolved peacefully. Superficially, the National Alliance was established to combat the "capitulationist" course of Yasser Arafat and the PLO leadership so that the Palestinian armed struggle for liberation could be pushed forward. But, with the main forces of the PLO expelled from

of non-sectarian political groups.) The understanding between Amal and Israel would seem to be that Israel would pull out fast and leave the bulk of south Lebanon in Amal's hands on condition that Amal prevented the Palestinians from re-establishing themselves as a force in the area: the main stumbling block would be the Israeli "security zone" inside the Lebanese border, patrolled by the puppet "South Lebanon Army". Amal wants this zone abolished, and it is still possible that Israel will accept this on proof of Amal's "good behaviour".

The Amal leadership, for its part, wants a bigger share in Lebanon's sectarian power structure for Shi'ite leaders, and no independent Palestinian force in Lebanon. Thus, there was a coalition of forces who had an interest in attacking the Beirut camps.

NATIONAL UNITY
The Palestinians in the camps fought back heroically, using tunnels both for protection and to mount surprise attacks on the better-equipped Amal forces. After four weeks, Amal had only managed to win control of the smallest camp and had taken heavy casualties. Syria, too, was having second thoughts. The Democratic Alliance had already split, and the DFLP had now taken a firmer stand against Syria's role. The PFLP joined with the groups of the National Alliance to form the Palestine National Salvation Front in opposition to Yasser Arafat and the PLO's agreements with King Hussein of Jordan, and Syria had hoped to promote them as an alternative PLO. But the PFLP was unwilling to play this role, and the attacks on the camps brought criticism of Syria both from PFLP and several groups within the PNSF. Lastly, Syria had thought that it had a definite agreement with Lebanese President Gemayel on Lebanon's future. (It was to include a greater share of power for the Muslim elite, the disarming of the militias and extension of Lebanese government authority, and a greater role for the Syrian army.) But many of his Phalangist Party supporters showed renewed signs of resistance to an accommodation. The Palestinians might still be wanted as a counter-weight.

In the circumstances, faced with the condemnation of the rest of the Arab world and without the full support of its Soviet backers (the Soviet Union still wants cooperation with the PLO), the Assad regime was ready for a cease-fire.

Although Palestinians everywhere were glad to see the killing of their people in Beirut stopped by the cease-fire, there is concern that the cease-fire agreement might lead to the Palestinians in the camps eventually being totally disarmed. (The agreement provided for heavy arms to be surrendered.) And also, to the effective abrogation of the 1969 Cairo agreement between the PLO and Lebanese government. By its terms, the PLO was responsible for security in the Palestinian refugee camps, and free to launch military operations against Israel from Lebanon. The Palestinian people are passing through one of the most difficult periods of their history. The basic problem faced by the Palestinian resistance movement is that of preserving its independence and conserving its strength until conditions are more favourable for it to advance again. This is extremely hard when it has no secure territorial base and all the Arab regimes want to control the movement. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that there are sharp differences on matters such as relations with Syria, Jordan and Egypt, even though the Palestinian people as a whole want national unity and remain unbroken in their determination to free their homeland.

WHO ARE THE BARBARIANS?

If 700 westerners had been held by Arab nationalists, there would have been screams of outrage from the press and political leaders about "terrorists holding the west to ransom". Yet there was hardly a murmur of protest when Israel, in violation of international law, took 700 Shi'ite prisoners from south Lebanon into occupied Palestine as part of the withdrawal of its forces. The western leaders and press responded very differently when a group of Shi'ites hijacked a plane to Beirut and held 37 Americans prisoner. They had released non-Americans, a number of American women and children, and, later, a US citizen who became ill. But this did not stop western leaders calling them "barbarians", denouncing terrorism, and condemning "hostage-taking". Israel, of course, could napalm children, demolish houses, round up thousands of people for resistance activities and still remain "civilised".

It is the USA which is the main foreign backer of Israel, which has hijacked a whole country - Palestine. It was the USA who supplied Israel with the arms with which it devastated Lebanon. It is hardly surprising that Shi'ite fighters should see pressure on the US as a means to win the freedom of their friends and relatives held hostage by Israel. Imperialist intervention in Lebanon has always brought suffering to the Lebanese people. Whatever the current difficulties between different forces in Lebanon, no-one but the fascists wants the USA or other imperialists to step in. We stand with the Palestinians against the attacks on them in Lebanon, but we also stand with Amal and all other patriotic Lebanese forces against the US and Israel.



Top Left: Palestinians homeless in their own land because of Israeli Zionism.
Bottom Left: Palestinian fighters at the time of the evacuation of Beirut in 1982. Now, in 1985, as they re-establish their presence in their refugee camps, they have been attacked by the Shi'ite group Amal.



Above: Shi'ite women in south Lebanon village, hold photographs of relatives killed by the Israelis.

Tripoli at the end of 1983, the NA gave no evidence of making an effort to step up the armed struggle against Israel. Syria was calling the shots: it had backed the NA in a bid to win control of the PLO, not to carry forward the struggle against Zionism. The Assad regime wants to dominate Lebanon and recover the land Syria lost to Israel in 1967, without the destabilising effects that an independent Palestinian movement might have on the region.

AMAL'S ROLE

The attack on the Beirut camps was in line with Syrian objectives. The dominant section of the Shi'ite Amal movement, headed by Nabih Berri, along with the 6th Brigade of the Lebanese Army (a Shi'ite unit), went on the attack saying that they wanted to disarm the Palestinians in the camps. Syria undoubtedly supported Amal, fearing the re-establishment of an independent Palestinian presence in Beirut. There are also grounds for believing that Amal had, at the least, a tacit understanding with Israel. After violent clashes during the first three months of this year, fighting between mainstream Amal forces and the withdrawing Israelis sharply tailed off: Israeli officials seemed keen to point to pro-Iranian Shi'ites rather than Berri's group as those responsible for the attacks on them. (The last two major "suicide" bombings against Israeli troops were, in fact, carried out by members

The attacks on the camps started at the end of May, as Israel was withdrawing almost all of its army from south Lebanon. Since the start of its invasion, the Zionist state has admitted the loss of 650 soldiers and the war created significant divisions in public opinion in Israel, which historically rallied behind the government during wars. But the invasion has also had a deep effect on Lebanon and the Palestinians - one that goes far beyond the terrible casualty rate, too.

LIBERATION MOVEMENT UNDER ATTACK

In 1982, Israel set out to smash the PLO, and impose its own order on Lebanon. It realised neither of these goals, and yet it can draw some consolation from the present situation. It did manage to weaken the PLO militarily by bringing about the expulsion of its main forces out of Lebanon, and this led to serious political problems for the Palestinians. Syria, seeking to dominate and control the Palestinian movement, has played upon Palestinian divisions to serve its own ends. When, in 1983, disputes within al-Fatah erupted into violence, the Assad regime of Syria weighed in to back the "dissidents" against the overwhelming majority of al-Fatah.

International Notes

Indonesia

Before 1965, Indonesia had one of the biggest Communist Parties in the world. It was a party which had fought for Indonesia's independence, for the rights of the workers and peasants, and had widespread influence.

In 1965, a military coup took place, following which a wave of terror was unleashed against all progressive forces. Over half a million Communists and other working people were murdered by the military and right wing gangs. Hundreds of thousands were imprisoned, most of whom have only been released in recent years. Others still remain in prison, and some have death sentences hanging over them. The Indonesian government has now carried through some of these sentences on former leading trade unionists and communists.

On May 14th, Mohammed Munir, former Chairman of the All-Indonesian Trade Union Federation, was executed in Jakarta after 18 years in prison, and 13 years after being sentenced to death. Munir was not even allowed a last meeting with his wife before the execution.

Then in June, Gatot Lestario, Djoko Untung and Rustomo, all members of the Communist Party (PKI) were executed by firing squad, nine years after being sentenced. Before this, the last executions of anyone connected with the events of 1965, when the Communist Party was accused of launching a coup, took place 15 years ago.



The execution of these courageous people after such a long period in prison not only shows the vindictiveness of the Indonesian fascist regime, but its fear in the face of growing opposition, from the Indonesian peoples, from Fretilin, the movement fighting for the independence of East Timor, and from the OPM, the West Papua independence movement. Both East Timor and West Papua were annexed by Indonesia by armed force, against their people's wishes.

Zhao in Europe

On June 19th, Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang completed an 18-day tour of Western European countries. Vice-Premier Tian Jiyun, who accompanied him, declared that the tour "has achieved the expected results and is a complete success."

Last year, Zhao visited France, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Italy, and on this tour, he went to Britain, West Germany and the Netherlands. These visits reflect China's desire to strengthen relations with Western Europe in order to promote world peace and combat the threat of a world war being unleashed by the superpowers. China has also made new agreements on trade as a result of the tour.

During a speech in London, Premier Zhao said: "We seek a steady development of the Sino-US relations on the basis of observance of the mutual agreements by both sides. We hope to see the normalisation of the Sino-Soviet relations through the removal of the existing obstacles."

On other occasions, Chinese spokespeople have identified these obstacles as the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, support for Vietnamese aggression against Kampuchea, and the stationing of one million troops along the Sino-Soviet frontiers.

Zhao stated: "We support the improvement of relations between the countries of East Europe and Western Europe. We also wish to see the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union eased, for all these are in the interest of world peace."

Turning to the Third World, Zhao went on: "We firmly support the Kampuchean and Afghan peoples in their struggles against foreign aggression, the Arab people in their struggle against Israeli expansionism, the South African people in their struggle against racial discrimination and apartheid, the Namibian people in their struggle for national independence and the Central American people in their struggle against external interference."

THE WAR GOES ON

The Irish Soldier

Then came Cromwell, like a cloud
A sombre shadow passing,
Butchered men and bloody shrouds
Then I heard an army massing,

I was wakened from my sleep
By gunshots, screams and a blinding light;
I heard soldier's boots on cobbled streets
And knew the Tans were out this night!

I was re-born; I saw a land
Barren and torn. I saw children famished,
Starved by mercilious, cruel brigands
And heard the flight of Wild Geese.

I opened my eyes and saw
Through gunsmoke and cordite
Thirteen dead by the Free Derry wall;
So I picked up my Armalite

From the mist a fiery sun arose
Over Dublin streets and tenements;
As the city slept an Empire dozed
-Snared by foreign entanglements;

I am the sniper in the dark
I walk amongst crowds, anonymous,
I am a bird, a lark
With oppression my name is synonymous;

Dave



If the Irish Republican Army cannot be seen...



DUNNES STRIKE AGAINST SOUTH AFRICAN GOODS CONTINUES

Workers at Dunnes store, Dublin, have now been on strike for one year, after a worker was suspended for refusing to handle South African goods. We reprint below an interview with the strikers, given in Liverpool in March of this year.

Could you tell us how all this started?

At our annual delegate conference in April 1984, there was a motion passed that our members would not handle any produce from South Africa. We received this instruction on 16th July 1984, and we followed it. We informed management of the union's policy. For two days we were allowed to do this without any disciplinary action being taken against us. Then on the third day, management brought us to the office and said that if we continued to follow the instructions, severe disciplinary action would be taken against us.

WORKER SUSPENDED: TO WALK OUT

We, the eleven people who are out on strike, said that we would continue to boycott South African goods, but some of the members backed down. So, on 19th July, a member, Mary Manning, was discovered refusing to handle Outspan grapefruit. She was immediately suspended indefinitely, and ten of us walked out in sympathy and support. We offered management a compromise, saying that we would handle what was left in the store, if they refused to bring any more in. They would not accept this, and as a result official pickets were placed one the store.

Two weeks later, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions gave us an all out picket, which meant that they backed it. We had been informed by management (by letter) that if we didn't return to work by July 30th, we would be sacked. On July 30th, we were still picketing and the same manageress had to come out and give us another letter to the effect that the dismissal would be deferred until further notice, so we are still actually under the threat of being dismissed.

SUPPORT FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

We have had support from literally all over the world, Australia, New Zealand, America and we have been in touch with South African non-racial trade unions. They have sent us letters of support and congratulations on our stand. We are now into our eighth month on strike. We are still as determined as ever, even more so. We are looking for support from Britain and Ireland. At the moment, we are trying to escalate the strike in Dublin which we hope will happen pretty soon. Management refuses to speak to us or negotiate. We wrote to the government to Mr Gareth Fitzgerald who is the Taoiseach. He is a sponsor of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in Ireland but three weeks later he resigned rather than say anything about the strike. We find it very difficult to believe that many government ministers are sponsors of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and yet still support trade with South

Africa.

We have had harassment from the police and management and there have been bad scenes of violence on the back door of the store. On one occasion, there were 14 policemen, 2 superintendants, 5 managers and scab deliverymen, pinning five women pickets up against the wall. One of the girls was kicked in the back by one of the managers and she suffered two bruised ribs. The police stood by and did nothing, pretending they hadn't seen anything. There is actually a white South African policeman superintendant in Dublin, who obviously does not support us.

A WIDER ISSUE

How much did you know about South Africa when you started?

We knew very little about South Africa when we started. We were merely following union policy on the boycott of South African produce, but over the last eight months we have learned a lot about South Africa and even if we got a union instruction to go back to work, we would not follow it. We would never handle South African goods again. It's gone slightly beyond the trade union issue now.

Tell us a little about the conditions in Dunnes and the effects of the strike on them?

The effects of the strike have been excellent as far as we are concerned. Dunnes have actually admitted to losing 50-60% profits which indicates that they are actually losing a lot more. Conditions in Dunnes before the strike were not good. They are very bad employers. They normally employ young girls aged 16 to 22 approximately. Some of the rules and regulations are very petty, e.g. going to the toilet. We are allowed to go two times a day. If we go any more then we are asked to see a company doctor. We are allowed eight minutes to go to the top of the building and return, this is on a rota basis! They actually wanted us to clock in and out when going to the toilet, but we refused. The majority of the management are men, young, jumped up and sexist. They ask young girls what they want to go to the toilet for, and behaviour such as that. We have only one manageress in our store.

What has been the reaction of other Dunnes employees nationwide?

We have been in touch. They have helped us financially, but there has been little positive action. We had a meeting recently with Dunnes Store staff in Dublin, and it seems hopeful that the strike will escalate within the month or so. We will have to work really hard at this. Some shops in Dublin have actually sent back clothes and shoes to South Africa.

We heard you had some successes with the dockers?

Yes. We approached the Dublin docks before Christmas and asked them not to handle any goods bound for Dunnes Stores. It wasn't South African produce but Dunnes goods in general. They impounded goods. We then discovered that they were getting them through Belfast. We took similar action there and they have agreed to do likewise. We have been in touch with several docks with the same request, but have discovered that there are about 35 countrywide which they can use. We are endeavouring to get in touch with those, but it will be a long process - there are only eleven of us on strike and we have to maintain a picket line at all times.

What are the trade union officers doing? Couldn't they be aiding you in this task?

The union leadership is not as effective as they should be. They have given verbal support but anything which has been done in this strike we have done ourselves and we feel that this will be continuing in the future. Most unions in Ireland have a policy on South Africa. It's just that they don't implement it. It's the 'trendy' thing to have.

MEETING WITH BISHOP TUTU

You met Bishop Tutu. Tell us about that and any other international solidarity you have had?

Our meeting with Desmond Tutu was when he was on his way to Oslo to pick up the Nobel Peace prize, and he stopped off at London and invited us over to meet him. He congratulated us on our stand and through the media he spoke to Ben Dunne,

BIRMINGHAM FRAME-UP..

- At the trial of the Winson Green warders, Dr. Paul distinguished between two sets of bruises, basing his evidence on photographs.

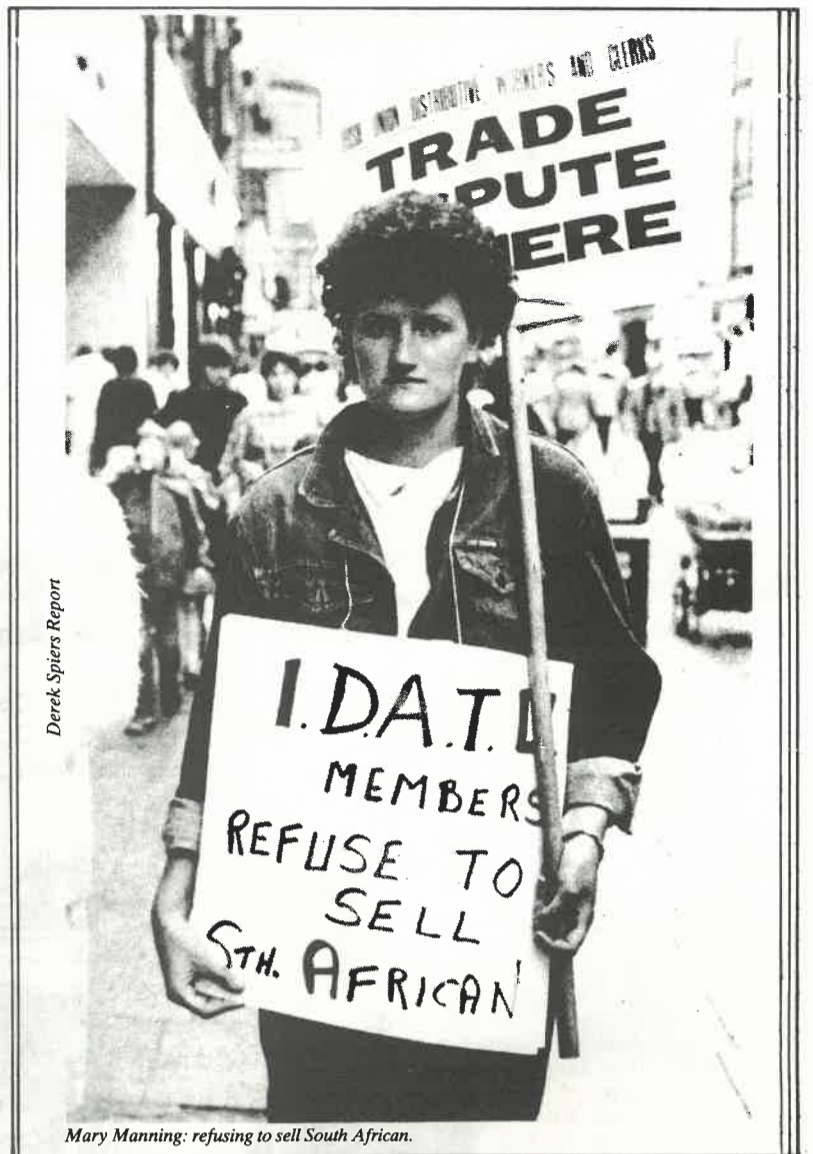
- Evidence was also indicated by some of the warders that the 6 men already had injuries when they arrived at the prison.

Nonetheless Judge Bridge decided to allow the confessions. Interestingly enough, he did not however allow the jury to look at the confessions - they were not admissible enough to undergo scrutiny!

DISPUTED FORENSIC EVIDENCE

The only other evidence used to convict the 6 was forensic. The forensic expert called for the defence regarded this evidence as inconclusive and further doubts have been cast on the methods used since that time.

The explosive substances used in the bombs were nitroglycerine and ammonium nitrate. In order to test for the presence of these substances, ether and water swabs were taken from the hands and from under the finger nails of each of the accused.



Derek Spiers Report

Mary Manning: refusing to sell South African.

and asked him to reinstate us. He said that Ben Dunne should be proud to have people like us working for him instead of fighting us. He made a great impression on us ...

The international support from trade unions and anti-apartheid groups worldwide has been amazing. We have had letters of support from individuals worldwide. We started off with one small file. We now have seven huge files. We get about 20 letters per day. It's really unbelievable. We have been besieged at the store by radio reporters, TV cameras. We couldn't believe that ten women and one man could cause such a stir. We realise the importance of this dispute not only for ourselves but for the black trade unions and we must show solidarity with these groups. After all, it was the international trade unions which called for this boycott.

How are you managing for money? What financial support are you getting?

Well, we are getting strike pay of £21 per week. It isn't a lot. We get financial help from

anti-apartheid groups or Labour youth groups. They run socials for us. We have had money from all over the world. The fund has sort of dried up at the moment. When we go on trips it's either the people who invite us over or the trade union who pay for it. We are lucky that nearly all of us live at home, because if we didn't, we would not be able to survive on the money we have.

Are your families supporting you?

Our families are one hundred percent behind us. They think it's disgraceful that we have been left out this length of time.

* * * * *

The Dunnes strikers have embarked on a remarkable action in solidarity with the South African people. Their case deserves a greater degree of support and publicity. The address for further information, messages of support and donations, is:

*Irish Distributive and Administrative Trade Union,
9 Cavendish Row,
Dublin 1,
Ireland.*

The TLC tests were negative. The tests for ammonium nitrate (the Aion and Nion tests) were far from conclusive.

Dr Black claimed that it was quite possible for both Aion and Nion to be present on someone's hands having arrived from quite innocent sources. The atmosphere, garden soil, human urine can all be sources of Aion. Motor exhaust and other substances in the atmosphere and garden soil are sources of Nion. The chemist who carried out these tests, Dr Skuse, also obtained a positive Nion result from a swab taken from his own hand!

The evidence against the 6 men consisted of confessions which had been obtained under duress and completely unsatisfactory and disputed forensic results. Under these conditions, the judge's comments on the verdict are noteworthy: "William Power, Hugh Callaghan, Patrick Joseph Hill, Robert Gerald Hunter, Noel Richard McKenny and John Walker, you stand convicted on each of 21 counts, on the clearest and most overwhelming evidence I have ever heard, of the crime of murder." The evidence was neither clear nor overwhelming: it was a frame-up.

FREEDOM FOR IRELAND



The end of June saw the arrest and 'conviction' of 17 Irish people in England and Scotland. The conviction, as with most Irish "trials", did not actually follow the normal procedure. Juries and courts were dispensed with in the first stage. The conviction was obtained firstly through the police announcing that they had arrested several Irish people, and warning that bombs may have been placed in several holiday resorts. Although no substantial evidence has yet been shown, the British media duly convicted those accused, and congratulated the police for averting the carnage that

they proclaimed would have arisen. As is normal in such "trials", no evidence was offered by the defendants, who are held incommunicado in police cells amidst a battery of media, attention-grabbing security measures. The cameras have zoomed in on police cars being searched and PC's (potential infiltrators presumably) being cross-examined to find out what possible reason they may have for visiting their police station. MP's of all bourgeois hues, from pink to blue, have leapt to congratulate their police service on smashing the alleged IRA cell.

anti-democratic legislation such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

IRISH PEOPLE ON 'TRIAL'

The British state will expect any future trial to ratify the "conviction" obtained by the police and the media, and this, of course, is the reason for the present publicity.

The scenes that have been seen in this recent period, are, by no means, out of the normal. Irish people have experienced them many times in the past. Long before any jury is selected the police allegations are well-known to the public. In most people's minds they are not just allegations, they are "fact". Further the sense of "outrage" and "vengeance" has been whipped to a peak, by the media. The coverage of the Irish struggle by the same media and the racist stereotypes of the Irish that they have created have already contributed to a deep-seated anti-Irish racism which pervades almost the entire English population, and which serves as the basis for implanting the desired reaction today.

Trials take place in this same atmosphere, driven to new



heights, and shaky evidence assumes weighty proportions, helped on by judges' directions.

Some of those who have been convicted in such trials are indeed liberation fighters. Others have been framed-up. None has received a 'fair' trial. 'Guilty' or not, a purpose has been served. British imperialism is seen to have won a battle in the war against Irish independence fighters. The Irish national minority in Britain is put under further pressure as the state attempts to frighten them out of supporting the struggle for independence and reunification of Ireland. Another step has been made in consolidating anti-Irish racism among the English people, and justification has been made for continuing and perhaps expanding racist and

Kenneth Newman and Labour Direct Ruler, Roy Mason. Ten years ago, Newman was in Ireland: now he co-ordinates "anti-terrorist" police activity in Britain.

The PTA is an integral part of a system which uses the partition of Ireland, the RUC, the UDA and repressive legislation to combat and criminalise the Irish national liberation movement, and to deny the rights of the Irish nation and the Irish national minority in England, Scotland and Wales.

The British state sees a victory in every conviction and in the publicity surrounding it. The truth of the allegations against any particular individual is secondary. The continued oppression of the Irish nation, and the Irish national minority in Britain, is paramount.

Below we print an article on the Birmingham trial of 1974, which clearly shows the sort of 'justice' the Irish can expect once they have got into a British court. It should be born in mind that it is normal practice for the IRA to claim responsibility for every military action in which it is involved, and this is true of unsuccessful as well as successful operations. The IRA has never claimed responsibility for the Birmingham pub bombings.

Birmingham Frame Up (1974)

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

Besides the 39 Republicans at present incarcerated in British prisons as a result of their activities in support of the Irish struggle for freedom, there are an additional 12 people in jail here who have not committed the deeds for which they were imprisoned and who are serving very long sentences after a series of frame-up trials.

Both categories of prisoners - those who do not dispute their involvement in acts of war against the British state, and those who have been convicted of acts that they manifestly did not commit - would not have seen the inside of a prison cell but for the war between Britain and the Irish people. The 12 who were framed are not, however, prisoners of war but hostages held by the British state. They are hostages held in an attempt to break the spirit of the Irish in Britain and to limit their support for the Republican Movement for the liberation and unification of Ireland.

HISTORY OF FRAME-UPS

Arbitrary sentencing and frame-ups are nothing new in the history of the war between Britain and the Irish people. In Coventry in 1939, Barnes and McCormack went to the gallows for a bombing despite the fact that Barnes had been arrested in London, almost 100 miles away from the scene of the Coventry bombing, only 30 minutes after the bomb exploded.



The 1974 Birmingham frame-up took place at a time when part of the Irish community had recently shown their commitment to the Republican Movement in their support for the funeral of Michael Gaughan, who died on Hunger Strike in Parkhurst on June 3rd, 1974. The hearse had been brought to London and had been accompanied by large numbers of mourners. On 14th November of the same year another Republican, James McDade, was killed when the bomb he was placing at Coventry Telephone Exchange prematurely exploded. The British Home Secretary said he would not allow a parade of any kind to accompany the transfer of the remains to Ireland. Clearly, the British state found the respect and love shown by the Irish in Britain for those whom they rightly regarded as their heroes and martyrs intolerable. The Birmingham frame-up is one way in which they tried to counter such sentiments.

On 21st November, McDade's body was flown to Dublin. On the same day at 8.25 and 8.35 p.m. there were explosions at two Birmingham pubs, the Mulberry Bush and the Tavern in the Town, which killed 21 people. 5 Irish men were then picked up by the police at Heysham on their way to McDade's funeral and another one was picked up in Birmingham.

BEATEN BY POLICE

These men were so viciously beaten by the police that a number of them signed confessions. The police arranged for the men to be beaten again, this time by prison warders, when they were remanded in custody to Winson Green prison, so that the prosecution could then argue that the confessions were admissible as evidence because no injuries had been sustained by the men before the confessions - all wounds being attributed to the

activities of the prison warders afterwards. The following facts bear out the accused men's claim that they were beaten up by the police:

- Anthony Graham Curtis gave evidence of seeing injuries when as duty solicitor he was appointed to represent Hunter, McKenny and Walker. He said of Hunter: "He told me that he had been treated badly since his arrest by the police. He told me he had had no sleep, that he had been made to stand up, and that he had been beaten. He undid his shirt and showed me his chest. His chest was covered from his navel up to his shoulders with diagonal scratch marks."

- William Power and Patrick Hill also drew the attention of their duty solicitor, Ian Gold, to the injuries on their chests.

Cont. on p.11.

DIARY OF EVENTS

NEWHAM SEVEN DEFENCE CAMPAIGN

MASS PICKETS OF OLD BAILEY LONDON

Monday, 1st July.
Weds. 3rd July
and all-night vigil.
Monday 8th July -
Final Mass Picket.

NICARAGUA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

PICKET OF US EMBASSY

Weds. 3rd July.

RALLY

Thursday 4th July,
6.45 Concert
Jubilee Gardens, South Bank.

Pan Africanist Congress

Martyrs Day Commemoration

London,
July 31st,
Venue to be fixed.

TROOPS OUT DELEGATION TO BELFAST

9th - 12th August.

The delegation will coincide with the annual demonstration in Belfast marking the introduction of internment in 1971. It will also enable delegates to see for themselves what British rule means in practice, as well as how the nationalist people continue to live unbowed after 16 years of war.

.... Delegates will be able to meet representatives from Irish trade unions, women's groups, housing associations as well as a range of political and community activists. With the cooperation of Sinn Fein there will be workshops on issues from the Irish labour movement to Irish language and culture. There will be a women's workshop.

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