

CLASS STRUGGLE



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25P

AFTER THE BUDGET

ONE NATION ~ OR TWO CLASSES?



The Budget was a bit of a damp squib after all the pundits' expectations. Those who have jobs will doubtless find a use for the extra £1 to £3 in their pockets. Those without can get lost as far as the government is concerned - unless they have kids, of course. Then they can wait excitedly for their 15p allowance increase due soon.

Before anyone gets too carried away by the great handout, it is worth remembering that Tory tax policy has always been to cut income tax and increase direct tax. In other words, the more you earn, the bigger the cut in your income tax. But prices are forced up. So the unemployed and the low-paid pay more tax on what they pay out. Lawson's £6 billion windfall came precisely from a great increase in the amount of VAT collected.

LABOUR

Labour's reaction was, as expected, too. Unemployment was their theme. "This budget does nothing for the unemployed," they cried. True enough. But Labour will fight the next election on the issue of unemployment (see p.4.) The surprise, if it was a surprise, is that they did not mention the plight of the low-paid.

But then Labour are not too keen to make low pay a central issue in an election. They are busy back-peddling on their previous pledges. Promises in this area

are getting rather thin on the ground.

TWO NATIONS

Instead, Labour fell back on old slogans. Thatcher has created two nations, they solemnly declare. Mainly, they emphasise the North/South divide. (Perhaps they should take a walk round Brixton or London's East End, or the working class areas of Bristol.)

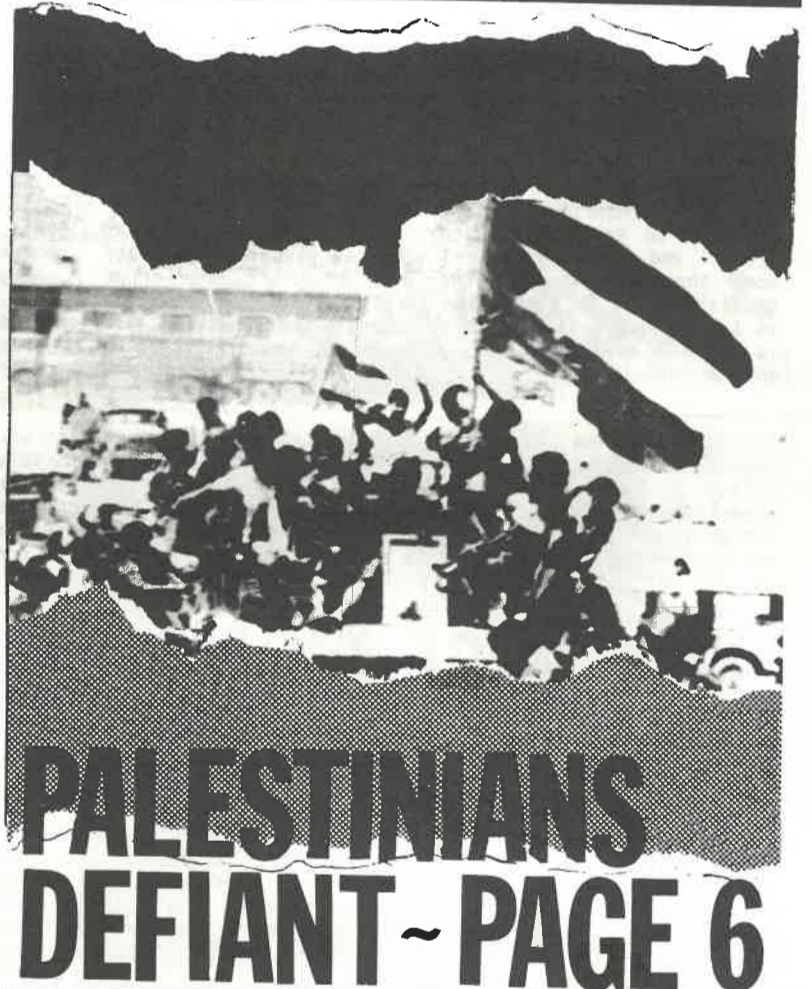
They call for the unity of the "British nation" and say that Thatcher has created a divided Britain.

But this is a lie. The division of Britain into different classes is nothing new. Nor is Labour's position. Labour has always stood for the reconciliation of classes. Labour denies the fundamental clash of interests between British imperialism and all those exploited and oppressed by it - both in this country and around the world.



Photo: Allan Naldo

GERRY ADAMS IN LONDON.....P.8....



PALESTINIANS DEFIANT ~ PAGE 6

★ Urgent appeal for funds to send medical team with supplies to Palestinian camps ★

MEDICAL APPEAL P.7

TRIAL REPORT.....P.5..



SCRAMBLE FOR PROFIT KILLS FERRY PASSENGERS

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

At the time of writing, the outcome of the Zeebrugge ferry disaster inquiry is not known. What the disaster does highlight however, is the effects of the imperialistic system's mad scramble for profits and its ability to exploit the needless deaths of ordinary people.

No time was lost to take the opportunity to promote the royals being shown expressing concern for their subjects. Thatcher was quick to take the opportunity to promote herself in what is likely to be an election year. All sections of the media competed to get close-ups of relatives and victims, at a very distressing time for them.

DISASTER NOT UNEXPECTED

One thing is clear: the disaster was not unexpected. Many shipping regulations on safety are only recommendations, not enforced by law. In particular, the design of 'roll on, roll off' ferries has been criticised many times over during the last decade, by shipping experts and the seamen's unions. According to NUMAST, the officers' union, Townsend Thoresen had refused requests for a loading door warning light system to be fitted to the Herald of Free Enterprise, which was built in 1980. Such a warning system has only got to be fitted to ships built from 1984 onwards.

THE WARNINGS THAT WERE IGNORED

Freight News 16th October 81

RO-RO SHIPS UNSTABLE

Shipcare & Maritime Management

When ro/ro means "roll-on, roll-over"

Six point plan for improving ship survival

rethink on watertight doors

Move to make ro-ro ships more safe

The ships that sink with an inch of water

Shipcare February 87

Lloyds List 19th May 83

Lloyds List 7 February 85

Journal of Commerce 17 January 84

The Sunday Times 1 February 81

Warnings: shipping press headlines about the ferries

Only last year, the International Maritime Organisation warned that this type of ferry was exceptionally vulnerable to possible human error.

Seaspeed to merge and then they were taken over by Sealink.

COMPETITIVE PRESSURES

Whatever the immediate cause of the ferry's capsizing, the fundamental cause is the massive competitive pressures facing ferry companies from cutthroat competition.

Last year, about 28 million people used ferries to and from Britain with about 14 million from Dover alone. International road haulers demand huge discounts for laden lorries and other cargo. Competition has increased the exploitation and job security of seamen. Since the mid-1960's, the number of registered merchant seamen in Britain has dropped from 150,000 to 30,000 last year. There is a growing reliance by ship owners on manning agencies.

Price wars have taken a heavy toll on ferry firms:

* Belfast Car Ferries is up for auction.

* Dundee-Rotterdam Ferries only lasted a few months before closing down.

* Sally Line has just changed hands.

* Losses forced the two hovercraft firms, HoverLloyd and

* The Brighton-Dieppe hydrofoil service was forced to close down. As was P&O's London to Ostend hydrofoil service.

* The Prins Line Harwich to Hamburg ferries have had financial problems.

* DFDS Seaways brought out Tor Line.

* European Ferries which operated the Townsend Thoresen fleet was in severe trouble last autumn and was taken over by P&O for £287 million.

* Sealink UK has had a series of crises since Sea Containers bought it from British Rail for £66 million in 1984. Last autumn it suddenly shut its Weymouth to Channel Isles route after £11 million losses caused by competition with a cut priced service operated by Channel Island Ferries.

The motives behind all these take-overs and cuts are profits and not the safety and efficiency of the service provided. The tragic deaths of the ferry passengers would, no doubt, not have occurred if safety had come before profit.

'PROGRESSIVE' PRINTERS SACK SIX WORKERS

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

Morning Litho Printers Ltd., is supposed to be a progressive printers. Some of the employers are connected with the Turkish left-wing Iscinin Sesi (Workers' Voice). However, six of their print workers have recently been sacked and have issued an appeal for support.

The sacked workers have explained their case in a leaflet:

"At a time when thousands of miners have lost their jobs and thousands of print workers are being sacked in this country, when millions more are unemployed in Turkey where we come from, you may think that six workers losing their jobs is nothing out of the ordinary. But we feel that our cause should concern you because we were sacked by so-called left wing employers, claiming to defend workers' rights, who took advantage of the fact that we are unauthorised workers and therefore cannot claim any rights.

ARBITRARY ACTION

"Just before Christmas, the employers phoned to tell us that they did not have any work for us for the time being and would contact us in the future if we were needed again. We were not paid our outstanding wages till the New Year and had to manage during Christmas without any money. When we went to see the employers and complain against this arbitrary action, we were told that we were sacked in any case, and that we did not have any case because we were not on contract.

"The real reason for our dismissal was the introduction of piece work in the work-place which was opposed by the finishers."

The employers at Morning Litho have refused to listen to the sacked workers and have told them that they could "do nothing because they had no rights".

When challenged as to the political views of some of the

employers, they said: "Even though some of the employers were socialist, Morning Litho was a capitalist enterprise and would lose money if it made certain concessions to the workers."

The employers are refusing, at present, to negotiate with the sacked workers.

The sacked workers have been active in support of the Wapping printers. They have appealed for support for the Wapping printers, through 'Gokyuzu', a Turkish youth magazine. One of the sacked women print workers was injured during police attacks on the mass demonstration on 24th January.

They have called on all progressive organisations who have their printing done at Morning Litho, to take their work elsewhere. They have also appealed for general support. Messages of solidarity can be sent to:

Morning Litho Six
c/o 203 Seven Sisters Road,
London N4 3NG.

ATTENBOROUGH'S 'BIKO'~ REWRITING HISTORY FOR PROFIT

A forthcoming film by Sir Richard Attenborough has been condemned by the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) for giving a distorted view of the late Steve Bantu Biko, the Black Consciousness leader murdered in police detention in September 1977. AZAPO activist, Muntu Myeza, is reported saying: "The film is not a documentary, nor does it depict the turbulence of the 1970's. It's a movie intended to portray the warped perspective of a white liberal making a statement against apartheid."

Criticism of the film comes after AZAPO organiser, Peter Jones, who was arrested and detained with Biko, was invited to read the script and see rushes of the 40 million dollar film. The working title 'Biko'

is misleading. The film is, in fact, based on two books by exiled South African journalist, Donald Woods who has been rebuked more than once for his failure, as a white liberal, to understand the Black Consciousness Movement.

"SELLING TICKET"

Suspicion that Biko's name is being used as a "selling ticket" are reinforced by the fact that the film is not centred on Biko, with only 40% being about the Black Consciousness leader. In an interview with 'The Independent', Donald Woods described the film as being "about apartheid: what is it actually like to live under it. It deals with two families, mine and Biko's."

Devised as a Hollywood drama to bring in the profits like Attenborough's flawed Oscar-winning 'Gandhi', the film, under whatever title it is released, is unlikely to do justice to the uncompromising, revolutionary struggle that Steve Bantu Biko personified. AZAPO has expressed the warning that: "If Attenborough tries to distort Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement, we shall drive the film off the screens."

(Advance, Resist, Defend is a journal of the Black Consciousness Movement (Azania) activists in Britain. The current issue carries a brief history of AZAPO.

£1.00 + 37p P&P
from New Era Books)

£ AIDS IS BIG BUSINESS £



'Class Struggle' correspondent.

The market for AIDS-related products is predicted to grow over the next 10 years to a £1,000 million source of profits. Investors are rushing to cash in. Companies are in a mad dash to corner the market in anti-HIV (the virus that can cause AIDS) drugs and vaccines:

* Smith and Nephew is buying Alberto Fernandez, the Spanish maker of examination gloves and condoms for £2.3 million cash.

* Shares in Wellcome, a drug company, have doubled.

* Glaxo, another drug company, has seen an 82p increase in share price.

* London International, which manufactures over 90% of condoms in Britain, has had a big increase in value.

* One company, BTP, trebled the value of its share because it makes a disinfectant that is claimed to kill the HI Virus.

* Condom manufacturers such as Carter Wallace (USA) and Okamoto (Japan) have trebled in value recently.

Of course, while this profiteering goes on, people still die. This is particularly true in Africa which has a very large number of AIDS victims.

Health problems in the Third World are a direct result of imperialist exploitation and oppression. Indeed, the medical establishment in the imperialist countries did not take the AIDS problem seriously until it affected white middle class Americans.

In some African countries, the cost of the test used to screen blood donations in Britain to detect antibodies against the HI Virus is half what those countries have to spend in a year on total health care for their people.

UNEMPLOYMENT: SCROUNGING VOTES

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

None of our readers need to be told about the grim realities that lie behind statistics on unemployment. Recent minor falls in official unemployment levels remain only statistics. The new cross examination techniques applied to dole applicants, the effect of compulsory interviews for Job Restart and the continuous alterations made to how figures are calculated may alter the statistics, but the reality is actually worse.

While productive employment in industry has collapsed, the Tory government seeks to conceal the real decline by pointing to those areas where employment has expanded over the last few years - namely the 'service' sectors. They fail to point out that this growth in the service industry provides low-paid jobs, often part-time. Job security is minimal and trade unions in this area are weak. Some of these service jobs are not even new. They arise from the "contracting out" of "services" such as canteens, by industry. The job remains the same, though conditions are often worse.

There is little point in examining the Tory programme for the future. It is only more of the same - and the last eight years experience has taught us all what it means. It is Labour's promises on paper that need to be put under the spotlight.

LABOUR'S 'PROMISES'

To gain political power, Labour has to promise 'real change'. Those who can control themselves sufficiently to sit through an entire party political broadcast, will have grasped the main promises that Labour is making.

schemes are merely cheap labour schemes, and those that offer real training either used to exist anyway, or would have developed anyway. After all, whatever happened to apprenticeships? It has been pointed out that in effect, 'YTS trainees' are often used as a replacement for workers on real wages. The lower wages and the fact that pay is subsidised by the government, makes YTS very attractive for your average employer who wants bigger profits. Now, we recall criticising the last Labour government on precisely the same grounds back in the seventies, when it started similar schemes (YOPS). The Tories have simply expanded them and made them semi-compulsory.

The Community Programme presents another good example. Tories used to attack such schemes as "make work". Then, the Community Programme was developed. The tables turned and Labour, who used to be quite keen on them, started criticising them. These days political expediency has made Labour councils the biggest promoters of the Community Programme - often using them to cut costs (cheap labour) and replace

by "dealing with the 'lump' in the construction industry, and further, unquantified, jobs in areas such as tourism and leisure".

In plain English, this means that snooping on the unemployed to track down those with jobs on the side is to receive a big boost.

"ECONOMIC ENTERPRISE"

Labour promises to cut National Insurance contributions. But, before we get too excited, we must make clear that this applies only to the employers' payments. Labour reckons that by giving the employers more profits, this will create 150,000 new jobs. Now, haven't we heard certain other political parties saying something similar? Grants and allowances will also be given to industry to "stimulate investment", particularly in "the regions". Very original. All in all giving more money to capitalists out of our taxes is expected to create a total of 250,000 jobs.

BUILDING

The 250,000 jobs to be created through a major building programme on roads, homes, schools, sewage etc. is definitely different to Tory proposals, and it is probably true that dole queues would be cut. But what is on offer "in the first two years" of a Labour government has begun to look decidedly thin.

And then comes the cost.

THE PRICE TO BE PAID

It is, we hope, already plain that changes proposed by Labour have nothing to do with abolishing capitalism. On the contrary, they are changes in the management of capitalism. So the underlying problems of the capitalist system are to be left unresolved.

Boosting profits and government expenditure will cost money - to be provided by, guess who? And as Labour says, there is a price to be paid. Remember the social contract? Labour has some old ideas up its sleeve. But that's another story - to be told in another article.



Labour wants an election to centre on the question of unemployment. This, they are convinced, is a vote-winner. After all, they reason, Maggie Thatcher got elected in the first place when she attacked the last Labour government over unemployment. Big posters depicting the long dole queues that had grown under Labour, were pasted up everywhere with the captions 'Get Britain Back to Work' and 'Labour isn't Working'. If it worked for Maggie Thatcher, they reason, it should work for us. However, aware that voters might be just a little bit cynical of such a promise from a party whose record is so dismal, they have had to make specific statements of just how and where jobs will be created, and unemployment figures cut.

"TRAINING"

No-one should be surprised to hear that the biggest cut in unemployment (360,000) is to be achieved by expanding "training" schemes. Now Labour are fond of attacking the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) and other existing schemes - quite correctly. Many "training"

council direct works! Whilst claims are made that Community Programme workers are paid the "rate for the job", the fact that the work is part-time, so families must exist on low incomes is ignored.

Labour's promise to cut unemployment statistics by creating 360,000 training places begins to look decidedly dodgy.

SERVICE INDUSTRIES

'Real' jobs are promised through Labour's "service quality package" - 300,000 of them. In the broadcasts, these are referred to as "in the NHS and Education". In the small print, the 300,000 figure is arrived at by lumping the NHS and Education with customs and excise and Inland Revenue (to collect the extra taxes perhaps). Also contributing to the magic 300,000, we find the DHSS. Now, this is very interesting because down in the very small print, we find a promise to cut unemployment figures



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STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...

EELAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

DEMONSTRATION LONDON

Saturday, 4th April.

Assemble Hyde Park, 11.30 am.

* * * * *

CONDEMN THE LIES OF

At a meeting of the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign, held in March on the three defendants remaining on trial. "Whether they are convicted the struggle must continue," said Stafford Scott, from the Broadwater Farm and saw it as one more attempt to criminalise the whole of the black community.

On Thursday, March 19th, Winston Silcott, Mark Braithwaite and Engin fact that the only evidence against them were their uncorroborated statements from Broadwater Farm made the response clear: "This trial was not appealing and the campaign to set them free will continue."

The following extracts are from a statement made at the beginning of the trial by the Black Liberation Front, Black Socialist Workers Movement and Black Unity and Freedom Party:

"The opening of this show trial of these six youths who are victims of a spiteful state frame-up, was greeted with a massive and viciously racist propaganda campaign. Working hand in hand the police, the courts and the mass media tried to present the defendants as "savages" who wanted to "cut off people's heads and stick them on poles".

"This campaign of evil lies has one intention only and that is to brainwash ordinary people into believing that these defendants are criminals and that it is the police who are the victims. That is the opposite



Stafford Scott and Mr Silcott at Press Conference.

of the truth. It is these defendants who are the victims of a state frame-up, it is the police and their political allies who organised the attack on the people of Tottenham in October 1985, including

Show Trial

Contributed.

On Wednesday 11th March, about 100 people met at Tottenham Town Hall to hear the latest information on the murder trial at the Old Bailey arising from last year's uprising at the Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham. Those familiar with Irish affairs will recognise the sorry tale of police coercion, media fabrications and uncorroborated confessions that was recited at the meeting.

However, it would appear that this time the police have overstepped the mark to such an extent that even a usually sympathetic judiciary was forced to move for acquittal for three juveniles on the charges of murder against them.

CHILDREN ABUSED

Under the 'Children and Young Persons Act', it is clearly set out how police must proceed when interrogating juveniles. If the parents are not available, then a social worker or teacher or some other "appropriate adult" must be present. Yet, during interrogation this was not immediately adhered to and these youngsters were denied access to solicitors and their families were not informed of their whereabouts.

One child was questioned whilst dressed only in his underpants. Another was never informed that he was being questioned as a murder suspect. He thought he was there with regards to a burglary. Contrary to the clear guidelines, one of the children was kept in police cells over night and no attempt was made to place him in local authority care. One thirteen year old was found to be 'educationally sub-normal', with a mental ability of a seven year old. He made his confession purely to placate the police.

CULTURE SHOCK

Police and media alike have orchestrated a web of racist references to fuel prejudice among the public and secure revenge in the form of convictions. They forced a child to confess to having "ritually marked" Blakelock on the leg and arm. Yet the coroner could find no evidence

of such markings. At the time of the killing, the press gave much coverage to the police supposition that a machete had been used. However, even Tottenham police have had to concede that the machete theory stretches credibility just a little too far.

The policeman's head was said to have been held aloft on a pole and the police claim they are looking for a "Mr T" character who was supposedly seen marching round the body in a "Zulu fashion".

These kind of racist myths objectify the residents of the estate in such a way that it is possible for the police to treat them differently from other people and get away with it. The police were, for instance, able to implement the sweeping powers they now hold under the 'Police and Criminal Evidence Act' before it became the law.

PAID PERJURER

No state frame-up would be complete without its paid perjurer and the Broadwater Farm show trial is no exception. Jason Cobham has been given a job, a new home and a derisory £200 fine. The people he testified against were sentenced to up to 7 years for the same offences.

One family was particularly hard hit by Cobham's perjury with two members in jail for long periods of time and another harassed by the police. The mother-in-law of one of the men told the meeting in Tottenham how her phone has been tapped and she has been threatened with violence by Cobham's girlfriend.

DIVIDE AND RULE

Sadly, it has to be accepted that, as in Ireland, there has been no outcry among the English working class at the violation of human rights. In fact, in the case of Broadwater Farm, the postal and milk services were suspended for some time and Council workers staged a demonstration against the residents of the Farm. Just as the public has ignored the travesty of justice that passes for justice in the north of Ireland, they have largely ignored the Broadwater Farm show trial.

THE RICH & THE MEDIA

... supporters pledged that the fight would go on, whatever the verdict, convicted, or walk free, we will continue our support. Whatever happens, Farm Youth Association. Other speakers branded the trial as a "farce" community.

... n Raghip were all convicted and given savage sentences in spite of the statements to the police. At a press conference on the next day, people justice. It was revenge" they stated. All three defendants will be



and shot her in her bedroom in front of her children, crippling her for life. There were no screaming headlines denouncing this brutal crime nor presenting Lovelock as a savage who had shot and maimed an innocent woman.... Not surprisingly, and in line with past practice, Lovelock walked scot-free from the court, while Mrs Groce will spend the rest of her life in a wheel chair. That is the real face of the 'British justice' of the ruling class.

"Today, in the face of the attempts to lynch the Broadwater Farm Defendants, the Black Community, workers, all democratically minded and decent people must raise our voices in opposition to this state frame up. We must condemn the lying propaganda campaign of the rich and their mass media. We must demand the state stops its frame up of these young people and puts an end to its attacks on the Black Community and other working people."

RELEASE THE PRISONERS OF THE UPRISING!

Friday's

... murder of Mrs Jarrett, who are the criminals.

RELEASE THE PRISONERS OF THE UPRISING

... ts who while bosses ple of g the

"This lying propaganda campaign against the Broadwater Farm defendants is in sharp contrast to the mass media coverage of the so-called trial of Inspector Lovelock. Lovelock is the policeman who broke into Cherry Groce's house in September 1985

"NO MURDER COVER UP: WE WANT JUSTICE"

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

On 20th February, 1987, Clinton McCurbin, a young African man from Wolverhampton, was brutally murdered by West Midlands police. Those police are not in prison waiting trial for murder. They have been given some time off on full pay.

relations man for West Midlands police, saying that Clinton had died of a drug overdose. Even when this vicious racist lie was exposed by the autopsy report that Clinton died of asphyxiation and that there was no sign of drugs, the police made no apology.

PROTEST MARCH

A march was held in Wolverhampton on 6th March to protest against the murder and demand justice. The police mounted a full-scale mobilisation hoping to get a chance to cause more injury and mayhem. They appeared with horses and dogs, and the riot gear was ready.

As it turned out, heavy snow affected the turnout at the demonstration. Nevertheless, 2,000 people braved the constant snow and bitter winds to march through the town. The police barricaded the shopping precinct and only allowed relatives of Clinton to go through and lay a wreath near the place where he died.

BLACK COMMUNITY DEMANDS

The Black Community Action Group demands are:

The police officers involved in Clinton's death to be charged for MURDER.

Those people from the public who assisted the police should be charged for CONSPIRACY and COMPLICITY to MURDER.

All charges to be dropped from those arrested as a result of the police riot on Friday, 20th February.

A full and public inquiry which is representative of the community to prevent any future 'cover-up' of police violence.

We further demand that the police and their local propaganda machinery - 1) Express & Star 2) Beacon Radio - be charged with inciting a riot, in light of statements made by both.

Mrs McVoy (right) on her way to lay the wreath

The youth of Wolverhampton quickly expressed their anger by demonstrating outside the 'Next' shop where Clinton was strangled. The police reacted with full riot precautions.

A statement was issued by Martin Buxton, the public

WOLVERHAMPTON CONFERENCE

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

A conference held in Wolverhampton on 28th February, was attended by many victims of the racist immigration laws.

SOM RAJ

The conference was called by the Som Raj Defence Campaign. Som Raj, who lives in Wolverhampton, told the meeting that he had come to the UK in 1983 as a visitor. While here he met a woman who was to become his wife. They married and set up home and now have two children. He applied for leave to stay in UK and appealed against the immigration officer's refusal. The adjudicator allowed his appeal, but the Home Office reversed the decision. They now sought to deport him, to break up his family and deny the rights of his wife and children.

"Thousands of black people go through the indignity of separation by these racist laws," he said. "250 people are deported every month because they are black."

VIRAJ MENDIS

A speaker from the Viraj Mendis Campaign spoke of how Viraj Mendis had taken sanctuary in a Manchester church as the only way to escape deportation. He is a Sinhalese left-winger who supports the Tamil cause and is in great danger from the Sri Lankan government if he returns.

PAREM JIT

Parem Jit, from Birmingham, said he had come to the UK on a visit and fallen in love with a woman who is a British citizen, Krishna Devi. She is expecting his child. Only the fact that she had to undergo psychiatric treatment prevented him from being deported.

AMIR KABUL KHAN

Amir Kabul Khan, from Birmingham, said he had applied to come to the UK as a fiance. Leave was refused because the immigration officer said he did not believe the marriage would take place. He came as a visitor, married and took his wife to Kashmir with him. He had proved to the Home Office that the marriage would take place and that he and his wife were cousins. (Kashmiri customs prefer cousin marriage.) But the Home Office were now saying that the marriage was for the "primary purpose" of staying in the UK in order to deport him.

BABA BAKHTAURA

Baba Bakhtaura, of Birmingham, thanked everyone who had taken part in his long campaign ever since he was imprisoned for "overstaying". His case had now been through all the courts in the land. He had contributed towards the struggles of the Bradford 12 and Anwar Ditta. He pointed out that Labour and Tory both deported black people. "Whether a Labour or Tory government is in power, if they are racist, we must fight them," he said.

LISA HUEN

Lisa Huen, of Birmingham, said she had come to the UK as a student in 1982. While at Leeds University she met her future husband and gave birth to her son, Silas, who is now 19 months old.

"I went back to Hong Kong because my student visa expired," she said. "I stayed there two months. But I got no support from my parents. I ended up squatting around. After two months I spoke to my husband on the telephone and he proposed to me. I came back to the UK in November 1985. I loved my husband and I still do."

"I was given three months to stay as a fiancee. We married

'Here To Stay'

on 8th February, 1986. Then my husband became suspicious and beat me up and hurt Silas by accident, as well. I went to a women's refuge. The Social Services warned me that if I went back to my husband, they would take my son away."

"I can now see that my husband has a problem he has to sort out himself. I would be prepared to forgive him. We might get back together again. But

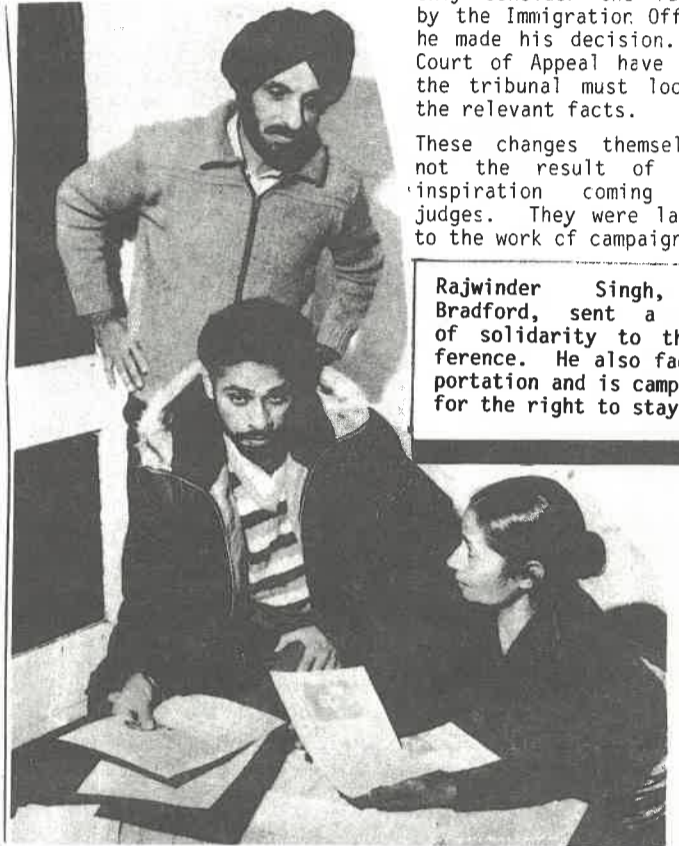
to two years ago, almost every campaign was successful. And the more campaigns there are, and the more successful they are, the more difficult it is for the Home Office to have their way and deport people.

Ian McDonald explained how the courts have made about-turns in immigration law.

An example was the decision that an appeal tribunal could only consider the facts known by the Immigration Officer when he made his decision. Now the Court of Appeal have said that the tribunal must look at all the relevant facts.

These changes themselves were not the result of a sudden inspiration coming to the judges. They were largely due to the work of campaigns.

Rajwinder Singh, from Bradford, sent a message of solidarity to the conference. He also faces deportation and is campaigning for the right to stay.



on the one hand, the Social Services are going to take my son away. On the other hand, there is the Home Office. They interviewed me and asked about the domestic violence. But it seems they wouldn't take into account my links in the UK. My brother and my best friends are here. My child was born here and has the right to stay. Back home, there is prejudice towards a child born illegitimate."

"If the Home Office deports me, I have to leave my child in care while I go to Hong Kong to sort myself out. I don't know what will happen to my child."

Lisa said she was still waiting for the Home Office to give its decision, which might take three to six months.

KULVINDER

Kulvinder from Wolverhampton said he had come in August 1985. He married a divorced woman who had two children. At the airport, he had said he would only stay two or three weeks, but he fell in love and married. Leave to remain was refused because the officer said the primary purpose of the marriage was to stay in the UK. On appeal, the adjudicator refused because he said that the law in Indian society is that divorced women cannot marry again. This fabrication is another example of how the racist immigration authorities claim to know black people's customs better than the people themselves.

CAMPAIGNS AGAINST THE HOME OFFICE

Other speakers at the conference included the leading expert on immigration law, barrister Ian McDonald. He praised anti-deportation campaigns and said that they are much more effective than they are given credit for. Up

LABOUR/TORY BOTH PLAY THE RACIST GAME

A speaker from the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) said that all of the four people so far expelled on the grounds of "national security" were NUJ members. The Labour government expelled the Americans who exposed CIA tactics, Agee and Hosenball. The NUJ later took up the case of Palestinian journalist, Nazir Hijaj, married to a British citizen. He had attended a Sinn Fein conference and interviewed Sinn Fein members. Appeals on his behalf fell on deaf ears and he was deported last December. Amanullah Khan, editor of the 'People's Voice of Kashmir', was also a NUJ member. He was arrested and spent months in prison on conspiracy and explosives charges.

The NUJ speaker said that the union must now support Som Raj, who is also their member. He believed that it was time the union took industrial action to prevent deportations.

Inevitably, the conference included the usual vote-scrouring propaganda of the Labour Party. A speaker on behalf of the local Labour MP promised to sweep away the racism of the past and put on the statute book practical and positive measures of humanity and tolerance to ensure that there would be no further need for such conferences. The Tory government was responsible for the denial of human rights in this country.

As Anwar Ditta told the conference, it was a Labour government which refused to let her children come to join her. That shows what faith can be put in their promises.

Philippines

US BASES~ WHOSE SECURITY?

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

"US bases did not drop from the sky," said Jose Maria Sison. "In order to establish their military bases on Filipino soil and establish colonial rule in the Philippines, the US had to kill 10% of the population. 600,000 people were killed, according to a US general, in the US conquest of the Filipino people at the turn of the century."

He and his wife, Julieta, were speaking at a meeting in Bradford on March 11th, organised by the Philippines Support Group as part of their European tour as representatives of Partido ng Bayan (People's Party).



Both Jose and Julieta Sison were speaking, in the first place, about the presence of US bases on Filipino soil and in particular about the shifting position taken by Mrs Aquino at different times in relation to these bases. In discussions after the main speeches, other questions were covered.

The main reason for the existence of the US bases is that they provide an ultimate guarantee for American investments, safeguard its monopoly position and help to maintain its hegemony in Asia. The amount paid for their use is, in Jose's own words "chicken-feed". In addition, the bases are involved in sabotage of the economy and have thrown up a whole range of anti-social activities, such as prostitution and drugs.



The bases also make the Philippines a prime target for nuclear attack and in this way, threaten the lives of the entire nation. Jose said: "There can be no price put on the life of the entire Filipino nation..."

CHANGING STAND OF AQUINO

Julieta Sison outlined how the position of Mrs Aquino has changed towards the bases. Initially, as part of the broad anti-dictatorship movement, during the days of Marcos, she had signed a declaration of unity which included a commitment to the immediate removal of the bases. On coming to power, she began to change her tune and now has indicated that the bases agreement should be allowed to run until 1991, and may even be extended after the expiry date.

Julieta noted in her speech that the Aquino government was the fruit of people's power. But as time has passed, the US has increasingly come to determine the character of the Philippines government, even forcing changes to be made in the cabinet. Despite the 60-day truce which the New People's Army initiated, the government has clearly shown that it is not interested in tackling the two fundamental issues in the country, land reform and the removal of the American bases.

Jose said that there were two possibilities for a truly progressive government coming to power in the Philippines. One way would be a coalition between Mrs Aquino and the revolutionary forces. However, at present this looked more and more unlikely. The only other way was through the strength of the revolutionary movement itself - a movement that is drawing increasing support every day.

FIVE YEARS IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

Only after several questions towards the end of the evening, did Jose and Julieta talk a little about their own very significant involvement. Jose let slip almost, that he had spent eight years in one of Marcos' jails, including five years in solitary confinement for his political activity. He was only released in 1986 because he had never been convicted of his alleged "crime" of being the Chairman of the Communist Party.

What many found particularly telling, was Julieta's reply to the person who asked her why she had first joined the struggle for national independence and democracy. She explained that when she was still at school, a class-mate had died because her parents, poor peasants, had not been able to afford medicine. "When I saw my class-mate lying there, dead, prior to the funeral, and I saw worms wriggling out of her ears, then I realised that I had to do something to help change the way things were."

Half a million people, led by Kulusang May Uno (KMU) and Partido ng Bayan, join the funeral march for Rolando Olalia and Leonor Alay-ay, in Manila last November.

The meeting was concluded with Jose reading one of his own poems on people's war. Readers of 'Class Struggle' who want to know more, can contact either their 'Class Struggle' seller or write direct to: Philippine Support Group, 1/2 Grangeway, London NW6 2BW. Tel: 01-624-7819.

At present the PSG has local groups in South and North London, Oxford, Manchester, Bradford, Cambridge, Liverpool, Chelmsford and South Wales.

Lebanon

PALESTINIANS DEFIANT

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

The current phase of warfare in Lebanon erupted with the beginning of the siege of Rashidieh camp, near Tyre in south Lebanon, on September 30th. Forces belonging to the Amal movement closed around the camp, pouring in gunfire on the Palestinians inside. To relieve pressure on Rashidieh, the PLO's fighters in the Sidon area to the north, went on the attack against Amal, to which Amal responded by laying siege to the two remaining Palestinian camps in West Beirut.

Amal claimed that it was acting to stop PLO Chairman, Yassir Arafat's supporters from re-establishing an armed presence in south Lebanon, saying that Arafat represented a trend in the Arab world that was ready to sell out to Israel.

This claim was not taken seriously by the Palestinians in Lebanon, who saw Amal's attack as one on the whole Palestinian movement and indeed, on the whole Palestinian population in south Lebanon. Amal has killed unarmed Palestinian civilians living outside the camps, and its snipers around the Beirut camps have shot at and killed unarmed women and children who moved into any open space to fetch water or search for something to eat.

Many Palestinians believe that Amal has an understanding with Israel, as well as an alliance with Syria, aimed at crushing any independent PLO presence in Lebanon.

NATIONAL PACT

Amal's role is not difficult to explain. It arose in the late 1970's in south Lebanon among the Shi'ite Muslim population of the area, and then spread to the southern slum areas of Beirut, where refugees from Israeli bombing of their homes and villages fled, and joined their co-religionists who were already established there.

The Shi'ite community had grown into the largest of the many religious minorities which make up Lebanon, since the National Pact of 1943 divided government offices and power between the established leaders of the different communities. Under that agreement, the Maronite Christians gained the lion's share of power and influence in Lebanon, including the Presidency and most of the key posts in the army, while the Sunni leadership became, effectively, their junior partners.

The Shi'ites were the third largest community in Lebanon at the time of the National Pact. Their established leadership won only a small share of the spoils, but the mass of Shi'ites got nothing. They saw their position relative to other communities' decline over the years, even as they grew to become the largest religious group in the country. During the 1960's and early 1970's, Beirut, Lebanon's capital, became a banking and business centre for the Arab world. But it was the property-owners and business people of the Maronite and Sunni communities who benefited from this, while south Lebanon remained impoverished and poorly developed.

There were two ways that this situation might be changed. One was to accept the sectarian basis of the Lebanese state, but to demand a re-division of power, influence and resources to give the Shi'ites as such a bigger share at the expense of the Maronites and Sunnis. This is the direction Amal has taken.

The other possibility was to work for a non-sectarian, democratic and progressive Lebanon, where wealth and power was no longer controlled by narrow sectarian cliques. This was the vision of the Lebanese left, including the pro-Soviet Communist Party of Lebanon and the Organisation of Communist

Action of Lebanon. These organisations especially the CPL, won significant support among the Shi'ites, and their influence was growing among the industrial and agricultural workers of all communities in the early 1970's, undercutting sectarianism.

This was seen as a threat by all the sectarian leaders, but especially by the main Maronite factions, who provoked the outbreak of civil war in 1975 in order to combat this trend and defend their privileges. While they took a battering themselves by their savagery towards Muslims and Druses as a whole, they did to a large extent re-inforce sectarian divisions - not unlike what loyalist terror gangs have done in the past in Ireland.

THE PALESTINE FACTOR

These specifically Lebanese conflicts were inevitably intermeshed with the struggle between Israel and the Palestinians and the other Arab peoples. Palestinians who were driven from their homes by the Zionist armed forces and who fled to Lebanon were put into refugee camps on the fringes of Lebanese towns or near villages. They were stateless and without rights in Lebanon, and subjected to repeated harassment by the Lebanese army and police - especially if they became politically active.

But, following the 1967 war, the PLO and its member groups won mass support from the Palestinians of the camps, who armed themselves and asserted their right to fight for the liberation of their homeland - a right that the Lebanese government had to recognise under the 1969 Cairo Agreement with the PLO.

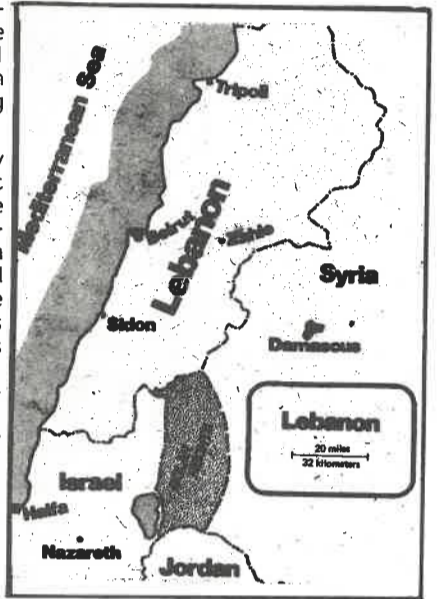
Israel responded to Palestinian operations by large scale bombing and shelling of south Lebanese towns and villages, as well as Palestinian camps. These attacks were aimed at making the people of south Lebanon turn against the Palestinians, so that they would be prevented from growing stronger and continuing to hit Israel from there. Coupled with the arrogant behaviour of a minority of Palestinian fighters (very much exaggerated in Israeli propaganda ever since), this did have an effect in encouraging large numbers of Shi'ites to turn against the PLO and the Palestinians. This led to the situation in 1982, when Amal did little to oppose the Israeli invasion army at the start of its massive attack on the PLO in Lebanon.

PLO IN LEBANON

Israel attempted to hang on in south Lebanon after the PLO forces had left Beirut in August 1982, but met rising popular resistance, in which Amal played a significant role. The Israelis were forced out of the south, except for a "security zone" along the border, which they and their puppet "South Lebanese Army" held. This left Amal in a powerful position.

AMAL'S SECTARIAN NATURE

At this point, the sectarian character of Amal became crystal clear. It controlled much of south Lebanon and much of West Beirut. It attempted to enforce its ideas of Islamic rule on the areas it ran. Amal leader, Nabih Berri, a member of the Lebanese cabinet, sought a re-writing of the National Pact in the favour of the Shi'ites, and allied with Syria to win this. In 1985, with a new generation of PLO fighters arising in the camps, and some of those expelled in 1982 slipping back, Amal launched its first assault on the Beirut camps, with Syrian support.



This also coincided with Israel's interests. Syria wants a PLO which it controls, and has played upon and encouraged divisions among the Palestinians to destroy PLO independence. Amal fears a revival of the non-sectarian Lebanese National Movement of the 1970's, which acted in alliance with the PLO; it fears a return to the pre-1982 situation in the south, and wants a situation where it controls the area with the tacit acceptance of Israel, which will not attack Amal areas providing Amal keeps the Palestinians down. Israel, for its part, wants the PLO destroyed, and was happy for Amal to try to crush the re-emergent PLO presence, and, more recently, was ready to give a nod and a wink to Syria to send its troops into Beirut.

Since the camps war began, the position of Amal has deteriorated. Though heavily outnumbered and faced with Syrian-supplied tanks, rockets and artillery, the PLO forces have given a good account of themselves - a fact admitted by worried Israeli military analysts. The Palestinians of all groups have joined together to resist the threat of the liquidation of the camps, and there are good prospects for the restoration of PLO unity in the near future. The contrast between Amal's furious attacks on the Palestinians and its passivity towards the continued Israeli occupation of the "security zone" in south Lebanon has been widely noted among the Shi'ite population, leading to large scale defections from Amal to the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) which has sworn to liberate every inch of Lebanese soil from Israel. Hizbollah's relations with the PLO are good. Berri has become so hated and despised that he has spent most of the last four months in safety in Syria, only coming back to Lebanon when the Syrians began to occupy West Beirut.

Amal was threatened with total defeat in February when a clash with the Communist Party over

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one of its offices in West Beirut escalated into full scale war. The Druse Progressive Socialist Party militia joined forces with the CP to sweep Amal out of nearly all the northern part of West Beirut. The PSP had protected Palestinian civilians fleeing from Amal, and had allowed Palestinian fighters to shell Amal positions from within their areas. There was a serious possibility that the Communists, PSP and others would join forces with the Palestinians to end the siege of the Beirut camps and drive Amal, defeated, back into its strongholds. It was only at this point, on 23rd February, that the Syrian army moved in: just in time to save Amal from a good thrashing.

At the time of writing, the siege of the camps goes on. 95% of Shatila camp is destroyed and 90% of Burj al Barajneh: perhaps 2,000 people have been killed. Some food supplies get in, but Amal is preventing medical supplies from being delivered. Women are sometimes allowed to leave the camps to buy food, and then have much of it taken from them by Amal when they are on their way back; some women are allowed out, but then prevented from returning to their families; some are killed: no-one knows what will happen to her when she tries to go out. Yet many women still try because they do not want their children to starve.



Syria could end the sieges in a day but does not do so, because it wants the Palestinians to submit, and accept a leadership of its choosing. Still the Palestinians stand firm for the PLO. They want their own leadership, their own armed forces for protection, and they want to be able to carry on the struggle to return to Palestine, their occupied homeland, and establish their own state there.

MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS

Medical Aid for Palestinians, a British-based charity, maintains a medical team in Burj al-Barajneh camp in Beirut. It has made an urgent appeal for money to send out a new team, with medical equipment and fresh supplies. (There are, for example, no anaesthetics left in the worst affected camps.)

Once the British media took notice of the situation in the Palestinian camps (people had to begin starving before they became "newsworthy") and MAP was able to get its appeal to a wider public, it managed to raise £100,000 in ten days. But more is needed.

Contributions can be sent to: MAP, 29a Enford Street, London W1.

Soviet Union

On this page, we print an article and on page two a letter about the Soviet Union. While the aggressive and imperialist nature of the USA is widely recognised, its relations with the other superpower and the present state of arms negotiations between the two is an important question to be discussed. Recent changes in the Soviet Union have also led many people to ask whether these changes affect the fundamentally exploitative and oppressive nature of the Soviet system.

REFORMING THE SYSTEM?

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

Since Mikhail Gorbachev's election as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), the speculation that he is a reformer has been confirmed. There has been a noticeably new style, if not substance, to the conduct of Soviet affairs.

'Glasnost' (openness) has become a characteristic of Soviet life under Gorbachev's stewardship. But it would be a mistake to personalise recent developments as due solely to Gorbachev. Our task is not to analyse his personal choices but more to understand the society of which he can emerge as a leader. The truth is that Gorbachev would not have achieved the heights he has, without conforming to the requirements of the Soviet system, as it was, and is.

The reason why Gorbachev has publicly voiced the need to embark upon a search for reforms was frankly spelt out at the CPSU's 27th Congress in February 1986. Signs of stagnation had begun to surface in Soviet society. Gorbachev spoke of the need to discuss openly the deficiencies in all activities and unfavourable tendencies in the economic, social and moral spheres. Acknowledging the intensely conservative pattern inherited from Brezhnev, Gorbachev committed himself to struggle against "the inertness and stiffness of the forms and methods of administration, the decline of dynamism in our work and an escalation of bureaucracy".

JUSTIFYING THE SOLUTIONS

Gorbachev's admissions were not only an indictment of his predecessors from whom he wishes to distance himself, but also an indispensable requirement to justify the "solutions" advocated. The public attack on the CPSU record, the ossified attitudes and social stagnation seen in increased alcohol consumption, drug abuse, crime and disaffected youth have been topics for private conversations for years in the Soviet Union. In fact, these topics have been the subject of many newspaper and journal articles, and at least one major TV documentary type drama, during the last years of the Brezhnev reign.

What is different is the extent of debate about causes and solutions. Public revelations of failings and abuses known to all helps to promote a public opinion favourable to the reform rhetoric.

Likewise, Gorbachev's call for social discipline and order is not one that wishes to impose a rigid orthodoxy. It is an appeal that has some social attraction as a framework within which economic efficiency can be improved and personal responsibility established. The ambiguous references to "democratisation" in relation to Soviet elections are less a call for greater political activism of the masses than a means to greater efficiency. Such means are regarded by reformers as needed if the technological lag with other developed industrial countries is to be overcome.

Mikhail Gorbachev



Gorbachev may represent a tendency that wants to offer more than just a new Soviet style. But the reality is a social and economic system in severe crisis. So, there is an overt appeal to idealism, the chance of building an efficient, decent society rather than one that churns out drunks, idlers, thieves and con-men along with a corrosive corruption that reaches into the very heart of the CPSU. But whilst the scope for public criticism and debate has widened in the Soviet Union, the spirit of openness has its limits. This was demonstrated in January, when 'Pravda's' editor, Viktor Afanasyev, was rebuked for publishing readers

letters that attacked the privileges available only to the party elite.

CHANGES: ONLY COSMETIC

The sense of a new era is little more than cosmetic unless the Soviet public benefits from perceivable changes. The food shortages, endless queues, dowdy shops and lack of choice that provide so much copy for Moscow-based Western correspondents, seem unlikely to change.

In the decade up to 1980, each extra one per cent in the Soviet Gross National Product required 1.4% increase in investment, 1.2% increase in raw materials and 0.2% increase in the labour force. What are the prospects when the Soviet Union is having to spend more and more to get less growth, at a time when oil production is beginning to fall, the labour force looks like declining and the economic gap with the USA widens each year.

NEED TO MODERNISE

The need to modernise, at a time when the rates of economic growth are declining, means that partial remedies for economic difficulties are no longer acceptable. Gorbachev, in a speech given in private but subsequently leaked in June 1986, firmly nailed his colours to a Great Russian chauvinism when he told party officials: "There must be one criterion only - let the Mother country live!"

The regeneration of the economy, and the process of accumulation and profitability therein, may incidentally result in a rise in general living standards. But more central is the inherent self-interest of the CPSU.

The reform campaign unleashed by Gorbachev has little to do with a return to the Leninist concepts of socialism, as is claimed. The re-organisation and re-structuring advocated is designed to replace a rigid, inflexible state monopoly system with one more receptive to change, more directly suited to the operation of an economy in crisis. But adaptations needed to try and counter such contradictions face resistance from those closely linked with the old management methods.

(To be completed in the next issue of 'Class Struggle'.)

CHERNOBYL NEVER DISAPPEARS

With the first anniversary of Chernobyl coming up on April 25th, the chinks in the armour of secrecy and silence are very few. But they let out an awful lot of horror.

Nearly 300,000 sheep are still affected by the emergency movement restrictions in Britain. Readings taken at a number of sites in Cumbria and North Wales show that the radioactivity levels have not fallen significantly. The sheep cannot be sold for meat or moved to another area - the lambs of last year's spring grass are still contaminated and poisonous.

SAMI LIVELIHOOD DESTROYED

The same effect, but on a much more devastating scale is ruining the livelihood and culture of the Sami people in north Norway. A recent television programme described how seriously the Chernobyl radioactive cloud has contaminated the lands of the Sami where they graze their reindeer herds. Following Chernobyl, the Norwegian government decreed a "safe" level of radioactivity in meat as under 600 bequerels/litre. When the first batch of reindeer were killed for meat, the level in them was 7,000 bequerels/litre and compensation was paid.

However, by the next cull, the levels in the reindeer meat were of the order of 40,000 bequerels/litre and still rising. This was particularly annoying to the government which had raised the level of "fit to eat" from 600 to 6,000 bequerels/litre.

The Sami are already a threatened national minority in Norway. They depend on reindeer for meat, skins and income. Also, their cultural and social calendar revolves around tending the herds and communal culling and using the meat.

All this has been wiped out by a single nuclear accident thousands of miles away. No-one knows how long the environment will remain contaminated. But it is certain that while we increase nuclear power, nuclear weapons testing and deployment, we are poisoning the most vulnerable on our planet, bit by bit, each adding onto the last.



The Stalker Affair Frank Doherty

"Attention has been distracted", observes the author of this book. The main focus of the 'Stalker affair' became the suspension of a Manchester policeman, instead of the shoot-to-kill incidents; the illegal operations of British intelligence; or the political figures who authorised them. This book redirects our attention to these matters, and includes an account of British Secret Service operations in Ireland. 90 pages.

£3.95 + 24p P&P

KNOWING WOMEN - Women and Educational Alternatives worldwide.

Latest issue of 'Links' brings together ten articles by Third World and British women exploring women's challenge to male-dominated educational systems, and describes experiments in a woman-centred approach.

£1.95 + 24p P&P.

HEAD ABOVE WATER

Buchi Emecheta

This autobiography of the Nigerian author evokes with wry humour what it is to be poor, black and unrecognised in London. "I did look back a good deal in my early novels, dwelling mainly on the first twenty years of my life, but 'Head Above Water' is one in the almost now: the last twenty years during which time I made England's North London my home. 243 pages.

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THE CIA - A Forgotten History

William Blum

Gathered here are the facts about the role of the American intelligence service interventions in more than 50 countries. Catalogued in its 400 pages are the CIA's ongoing activities in overthrowing governments, perverting elections, assassinating leaders, suppressing revolutions, manipulating trade unions and 'manufacturing' news.

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FREEDOM FOR IRELAND

GERRY ADAMS IN LONDON - 'ONLY SOLUTION IS BRITISH WITHDRAWAL'

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

Sinn Fein leader, Gerry Adams, came to Britain at the beginning of March. He spoke to an enthusiastic audience at the Town Hall in Hornsey, North London, on March 4th.

In greeting the audience, Adams said that he was glad to come to this country, and to speak to such an audience: "If the Prime Minister of this country came to my country, she wouldn't be able to speak to an audience of this size - north or south, loyalist or nationalist!"

TROOPS OUT

Despite a very obvious desire on the part of the people in Britain to get the troops out of Ireland, as shown in one opinion poll after another, Adams pointed out, it was notable that none of the main parties had a policy for withdrawal from Ireland. On the contrary, they have the same approach on this issue. The Labour Party is critical of the government on other issues. But when it comes to the Hillsborough agreement, made by Thatcher's government, Labour supports the government's policy.

The partition of Ireland was undertaken in order to keep Britain in control of the whole of Ireland, and the Hillsborough agreement is intended to keep it that way.

"The reason why there are so many Irish people here," said Adams, "is because we don't have the political and economic sovereignty to make our country a really independent nation."

There has been talk about the benefits of the Hillsborough agreement. But, Adams said: "There have been no fundamental improvements in the lifestyle of the people of the Six Counties. If there's been any gain, it's been that the fascist nature of loyalism has been clearly demonstrated."

The only solution is a British withdrawal, said Adams. "This means the British government adopting a strategy for withdrawal; it means abandoning the Government of Ireland Act; it means declaring that Ireland is no longer part of the United Kingdom, and that the troops will only stay for as long as it takes to arrange their orderly withdrawal."

"Possibly people will say to us: what about the loyalists?.. The scenario of bloody civil war which they present need not happen. The British government has the power to ensure an orderly transition to independence. Anyway, we don't need to advise them how to do it: they've been withdrawing

from places around the world for 70 years!"

"... I believe that most of the loyalists would accept the inevitable when they saw it and would then work for the best solution. A conference of all significant forces in Ireland could hammer out the shape of the post-withdrawal arrangements."

"MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT"

Turning to what people here could do, Gerry Adams appealed to both the Irish in Britain and the anti-imperialists "not to vote for any candidate in the coming general election unless he or she will give a commitment to the decolonisation strategy outlined here tonight."

Speaking particularly to the many Irish people present, Adams said: "I'm told that there are three million Irish people over here. I'm told that 60% of you vote Labour. Why is beyond me!"

"The Labour Party has the same policy as Margaret Thatcher's Tory Party on Ireland. It's time that the Labour Party were told that they can't take the votes of Irish people for granted... Ireland must be made an issue in this election."

Adams went on to suggest the sort of issues that should be raised, mentioning the strip-searching of women prisoners, and the use of plastic bullets as questions that should be made into issues in each constituency.

"Why should any person of Irish descent elect people to repress us? Why should any anti-imperialist vote for a politician in this country? ... Discrimination is institutionalised in the Six Counties. Catholics are 40% of the population, but 2½ times more likely to be unemployed. A figure of 23% for overall unemployment whitewashes a situation where 82% of the people of Ballymurphy (a nationalist area: CS) are unemployed."

"If it were happening in South Africa, Latin America, Afghanistan or elsewhere, there would be fierce criticism of the government responsible - and rightly. But why not when it happens in Ireland?"

"The struggle is going to continue. We have the fighters of the IRA showing that of all generations of Irish people, this one is unbeatable. Britain has thrown all that it has learnt at the fighters and it hasn't worked. I have a message for Margaret Thatcher, here in the heart of London: It will not work!"

"You don't have to be one of the volunteers who carried out the Brighton operation, or to be of the calibre of Bobby Sands. You don't have to work as the women of Ireland work. You just have to make Ireland an issue in this election."

It was a speech punctuated with applause, and it finished with a standing ovation.



Sinn Fein President, Gerry Adams, addressing a thousand strong audience at Hornsey Town Hall in London, on March 4th.

Photo: Allan Naldo



EVENTS

LONDON

Saturday, 4th April

**MARCH FOR THE RIGHT TO MARCH!
DEFY THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT!**

Assemble 1 pm, Malet Street, London WC1.
Details: 01-274-6655

Organised by the Coalition Against the Public Order Act

* * * * *

MANCHESTER

PALESTINE LIVES

Season of films organised by: Workers Film Association Film Society and

Palestine Solidarity Campaign including:

Saturday 4th April
THE MASSACRE OF KAFR KASSEM

Wednesday 15th April
ON OUR LAND

Saturday 25th April
OCCUPIED PALESTINE

Saturday 2nd May
LEILA AND THE WOLVES

Saturday 9th May
BATTLE FOR BEIRUT & Summing up Session (PSC)

For more details, contact:
WFA, 9 Lucy Street, Manchester M15 4BX
Tel: 061-848-9782

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ALTERED IMAGES
Myths, Media and Misunderstanding

THIRD WORLD FIRST
National Conference
10-12th April, London.

* * * * *
REMEMBER THE LIBYA BOMBING

DEMONSTRATE
Saturday 11th April

The Long March
Upper Heyford to Oxford

The Short March
Cutteslowe to Oxford

April 14th and 15th
Vigil at USAF Upper Heyford
Contact: Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

* * * * *

LONDON

Saturday 25th April
CND NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

Chernobyl Never Dies!

* * * * *

STOP STRIP SEARCHES

...DURHAM PICKET

A group of Irish women braved a night of heavy snow and freezing temperatures to mount an all night vigil at Durham Prison, from early evening on the eve of International Women's Day until the morning of Sunday March 8th. The women were expressing solidarity and sisterhood with two Irish women POWs, Martina Nic Andreas and Ella Ni Dhuibhir, both serving life sentences there, since July last year.

Those present received greetings

from Martina and Ella in a letter which thanked all who have demonstrated support for them since being arrested.... Messages of solidarity were relayed with a megaphone to Martina and Ella inside..including greetings from the Irish POW Campaign, Birmingham Women and Ireland, The Irish Hunger Strike Committee (Birmingham), Birmingham Black Sisters, Pakistani Workers Association and others.

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIONS

EASTER COMMEMORATION

Sunday 19th April, 1987.
3 pm - 7 pm
The Triangle, Gosta Green,
(near Aston University)
BIRMINGHAM

To mark the 71st anniversary of the Easter Rising in Dublin, against the British occupation of Ireland.

Hunger Strike video
New strip searches video
Irish POW campaign speaker
Strip searches campaign speaker

Organised by the Irish Hunger Strike Commemoration Committee (Birmingham) and the Irish in Britain Representation Group (Birmingham)

IRISH HUNGER STRIKERS COMMEMORATION MARCH AND RALLY

Saturday, 9th May, 1987.

Assemble 12 o'clock, Small Heath/Spark Hill area of Birmingham.

March into the city centre. Indoor rally in the central library in the afternoon.

Speakers include: Sinn Fein, IRSP, PAC, KWA & PWA.

Organised by the Irish Hunger Strike Commemoration Committee, (Birmingham)

To obtain more details, posters, leaflets, etc. the organisers can be contacted at:

IHSCC, PO Box 540,
Sparkhill,
Birmingham B11 4AU.

(Please note new contact address)